



P6

**'Attacks on our culture won't go far'**



P7

**Myanmar junta confirms deadly air strike**



P11

**Shakib adjudged March's best**



B1

**Motorcycle sales slower this Eid**

## Poverty drops but inequality higher than ever

REJAUL KARIM BYRON and MOHIUDDIN ALAMGIR

The poverty rate in Bangladesh has dropped significantly but income inequality is at an all-time high, according to the latest version of the Household Income and Expenditure survey -- in a puzzling development that raises questions about the nature of economic growth seen in recent times.

"If we take the HIES 2022 data highlights at their face value, there is both good news and bad news -- it raises more questions than answers," Zahid Hussain, a former lead economist of the World Bank, told The Daily Star.

The survey shows that poverty reduction was more in rural areas, where the income growth was less and inequality was less. It is the opposite in urban areas: poverty reduction was less, income growth was more and inequality widened.

"How do you explain that? Does higher inequality cause higher growth or vice versa? Higher growth with higher inequalities raises puzzling questions about causation," Hussain said.

The decline in the poverty rate comes at a time when the economy is grappling with the fallout of the Ukraine war, which occurred just as the world was shaking off the effects of the global coronavirus pandemic.

"We are elated," said Planning Minister MA Mannan at the unveiling of the survey data yesterday.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

### CHANGING FACE OF HOUSEHOLDS



	2016	2022
Access to electricity	75.92%	99.34%
Literacy rate	65.6%	74%
Drinking water from supply	12.01%	19.34%
Calorie intake per capita per day	2,210.4	2,393
Fruit (gram per capita per day)	95.4	35.8
Meat (gram per capita per day)	25.4	40
Fish (gram per capita per day)	62.6	67.8
Rice (gram per capita per day)	367.2	328.9
Egg (gram per capita per day)	13.6	12.7
Poverty	24.3%	18.7%
Extreme poverty	12.9%	5.6%
Inequality (Gini coefficient)	0.324	0.334

#### POVERTY RATE

2016	Rural 26.4%
	Urban 18.9%
2022	Rural 20.5%
	Urban 14.7%

#### EXTREME POVERTY

2016	Rural 14.9%
	Urban 7.6%
2022	Rural 6.5%
	Urban 3.5%

#### INCOME AND EXPENDITURE

Taka per month	
2016	2022
15,988	15,715
32,422	31,500
INCOME	EXPENDITURE



**We have to be mindful as vulnerability and falling back into poverty remains a real and present concern.**

XIMENA V DEL CARPIO, WB

**If we take the HIES 2022 data highlights at their face value, there is both good news and bad news.**

- ZAHID HUSSAIN  
ECONOMIST

## There will be conspiracies at home and abroad

**PM warns party members, urges them to stay alert**

UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday warned her party members that many anti-state conspiracies might be hatched nationally and internationally as vested quarters cannot tolerate the rapid progress of Bangladesh.

"There will be many conspiracies ... [in the coming days]. Because those who don't want development in the country have been working against Bangladesh."

Hasina, also the president of Awami League, made the remarks when leaders and activists of different district units of AL met her at the Gono Bhaban in the capital.

She asked the AL leaders to make the party stronger as an organisation and continue work with the next general election in mind.

The premier also said her government has been working relentlessly for the welfare of the people.

"That is why the people vote for us. It is the reality. So, we don't need to rig votes. Awami League comes to power as it gains the confidence of the people by serving them ... Awami League always came to power through votes."

Focusing her government's success in the development of Bangladesh, Hasina said it has connected the southern region with the capital

SEE PAGE 7 COL 1



## PROTHOM ALO Amnesty sees a deepening crisis of press freedom

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Increasing attacks, including intimidation and harassment, on the daily Prothom Alo and arresting its journalist signal deepening crisis of press freedom in Bangladesh, said Amnesty International in a statement published yesterday.

Earlier on Monday, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina in parliament called the newspaper an "enemy of Awami League, democracy and the people of the country".

On the same day, hours after prime minister's statement, a group of individuals broke into the Prothom Alo office, issued threats, vandalised its logo at the reception and wrote boycott all over it, mentioned the organisation.

Previously, Prothom Alo reporter Shamsuzzaman Shams was arrested under the Digital Security Act for writing a report on the rising cost of living and granted bail after five days. Its Editor Matuir Rahman has also been sued under the same law and named as the main accused in one of the two cases filed against Shams, read the statement.

Yamini Mishra, regional director for South Asia at Amnesty International, "This

SEE PAGE 2 COL 4

## A fighter till the end

GOLAM MORTOZA

Despite his failing health, Dr Zafrullah Chowdhury was more active and hard-working than many healthy persons. Death had knocked on his door several times before. But he kept death away and survived miraculously.

The valiant freedom fighter was born on December 27, 1941, in Chattogram's Raozan upazila. He was the eldest among his nine siblings. He did his matriculation from Nabakumar Institution in Bakshibazar, Dhaka. He passed intermediate exams from Dhaka College.

His life was anything but ordinary. After completing MBBS from Dhaka Medical College in 1964, he went to London to take the FRCS course. He passed the primary exam with flying colours. When the final exam of his four-year course was only a couple of weeks away, the Liberation War broke out in Bangladesh.

In such a situation, an ordinary person would probably have thought that he should take the exam. But Zafrullah thought otherwise. He decided to abandon his academic dreams and dedicate himself to raising public awareness about the Liberation War.

I once asked him how he made the decision to not sit for an exam he prepared for four years.

Smiling, he replied, "I heard about the genocide by the Pakistan army... I thought it was more important to stand by the people, raise public awareness in favour of the Liberation War than to take the FRCS exam."

"Many people were surprised to hear that I didn't sit the FRCS exam. I didn't have to think twice before making the decision. I find it funny that people were surprised at my decision."

At that time, expatriate Bangladeshis used to protest on the streets of London, holding photographs of the genocide. Foreigners also took part in those demonstrations. In one such protest, Zafrullah tore up his Pakistani passport.

SEE PAGE 7 COL 1



## Tributes pour in for Dr Zafrullah

STAR REPORT

Tributes and condolences continue to come in for Gonoshasthaya Kendra founder and Liberation War veteran Dr Zafrullah Chowdhury, who breathed his last at Gonoshasthaya Nagar Hospital on Tuesday night.

President Abdul Hamid and Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina have expressed profound sorrow at his demise.

In a condolence message, Abdul Hamid prayed for the eternal peace of his departed soul and conveyed his sympathy to the bereaved family.

Hasina in her condolence message said his contribution to the Liberation War, the pharmaceutical industry and the public health sector will be remembered.

Nobel Laureate Prof Muhammad Yunus said Zafrullah was a great man who could invent new practices, breaking away from old traditions.

SEE PAGE 6 COL 4

## Live wire around mango tree kills 2 kids

STAR REPORT

Two siblings, aged two and eight years, died after being electrocuted by a live wire set up around a mango tree to prevent theft of the fruits in Dhaka's Demra area yesterday afternoon.

Police said that owners of the house where the mango tree is located wrapped the live wire around the tree and the two children were electrocuted when they went near the tree.

The dead are Arian Mia, a local madrasa student, and his younger brother Raihan Mia.

The victims' mother, Anny Begum, said she rushed to the spot from the nearby factory she works in after learning about the incident. She said she removed her two children from the live wire.

Later, locals took them to Dhaka Medical College Hospital where doctors declared them dead, police said.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 4



Eight days after a devastating fire gutted the Bangabazar Shopping Complex, shop owners have resumed their businesses by setting up makeshift stalls on "chowkis" at the same place the three-storey structure once stood. On their one side, the damaged buildings are being demolished, and on the other, women labourers are carrying bricks meant to form the floor of the temporary market. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN

## BANGABAZAR FIRE Trade resumes, hope rekindled

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Affected traders of Bangabazar yesterday started their business by setting up makeshift shops.

Eight days after a massive fire that burnt down Bangabazar Shopping Complex to the ground, the traders set up cots at the site where the three-storey structure once stood.

Earlier, Dhaka South City Corporation prepared the place by dumping sand and laying bricks on the site.

Mayor Sheikh Fazle Noor Taposh, who opened the makeshift market, said the DSCC would provide Tk 2 crore as assistance to the affected traders.

He said, "We have given everyone the opportunity to sit here according to the list of the affected and location of shops. Since Eid is ahead, the time is very important for the traders. Considering it, we have made this arrangement of setting up cots. As the traders have to sit in the open, they are facing problems. We'll pitch tents here later."

Around 9:00am, this correspondent saw the traders bringing wooden cots on which they displayed their products.

They later started selling garments from the makeshift stalls, many of which had large umbrellas to protect them and buyers from the scorching sun.

Saiful Islam, who had two shops for children's clothes at Bangabazar Shopping Complex, said, "Now I will bring the remaining products from the wholesalers and sit here temporarily. We hope our business will be good before Eid."

Md Mohsin, owner of Allahr Dan Garments, said all

SEE PAGE 2 COL 4



## Follow print media rules

Says DFP; asks newspaper editors, publishers not to broadcast online shows

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Department of Films and Publications (DFP) has sent a letter to newspaper editors and publishers, with directives for online editions.

Issued by DFP Director General SM Golam Kibria on Tuesday, the letter said it has been noticed that some newspapers, approved as print media, have been broadcasting news or news bulletins, talk-shows and various live programmes in their online editions as visual media.

"The broadcast of such news is not consistent with the characteristics of print media and the conditions of being approved as a newspaper," reads the letter issued yesterday, adding that as a media, it is desirable for the newspapers to follow their own essence and characteristics in providing news to the people.

"Broadcasting such news or news bulletins, talk-shows and live broadcast of various programmes in the online version of the print media is against the prevailing laws and regulations of the country."

"In such circumstances, you [editors or publishers] are requested to follow the Printing Presses and Publications [Declaration and Registration] Act, 1973, and other relevant regulations in the operation of your newspaper and broadcasting of news," the DG said in the letter.

## Bangladesh regains ownership of 1 acre land in Naogaon

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

After a dispute with India that lasted four decades, Bangladesh yesterday gained ownership of one acre of land at Agradigun area of Dhamuirhat upazila of Naogaon.

The dispute was settled during a battalion commander-level flag meeting between BGB and BSF near border pillar no 257/20-R, said Lieutenant Colonel Md Hamid Uddin, commanding officer of BGB battalion 14.

The dispute began in 1977 when Indian farmers stopped Bangladeshi farmers from cultivating on the land, a BGB press release said.

The land is situated 100 yards inside Bangladesh from the border pillar mentioned above, the release said.

"We have been requesting our Indian counterparts to sit together for resolving the issue since the beginning of the dispute," Hamid said.

Responding to a latest call from BGB, a 12-member BSF delegation sat in the flag meeting with an eight-member BGB team.



PHOTO: MONG SING HAI MARMA

Members of the indigenous communities in the Chittagong Hill Tracts began their three-day long New Year festival, termed differently in their respective languages, yesterday. The festival features time-honoured cultural rituals. Story on Page 12.

### POW BEHEADING VIDEO

## Ukraine compares Russia to IS

Kremlin says US leaks of highly sensitive documents online may be intended to 'deceive' Moscow

AGENCIES

Ukraine compared Russia to Islamic State yesterday, after a video emerged online showing apparent Russian soldiers filming themselves beheading a Ukrainian prisoner of war (POW) with a knife.

Reuters could not immediately verify the authenticity or provenance of the video shared on social media, which showed a man in uniform beheading a man who wears the yellow arm band used by Ukrainian soldiers.

There was no immediate comment on the video from Moscow, which has denied in the past that its troops carry out atrocities during the full-scale invasion Russia launched last year.

"There is something that no one in the world can ignore: how easily these beasts kill," Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky said in a video message. "There will be legal responsibility for everything. The defeat of terror is necessary."

Ukrainian Foreign Minister Dmitro Kuleba said on Twitter: "A horrific video of Russian troops decapitating a Ukrainian prisoner of war is circulating online."

"It's absurd that Russia, which is worse than ISIS, is presiding over the UNSC," he said, referring to the UN Security

Council where Russia took up the rotating presidency this month. "Russian terrorists must be kicked out of Ukraine and the UN and be held accountable for their crimes."

Militants from Islamic State (IS) in Iraq and Syria were notorious for releasing videos of beheadings of captives when they controlled swathes of those countries from 2014-2017.

**Kremlin says outlook for Black Sea grain deal is 'not so great'.**

Ukraine's domestic security agency said it had launched an investigation into a suspected war crime over the video.

Meanwhile, Russian deputy foreign minister said yesterday the leak of a trove of highly sensitive documents online could be a move by the United States to "deceive" Russia, reports AFP.

"It's probably interesting for someone to look at these documents, if they really are documents or they could be a fake or it could be an intentional leak," Sergei Ryabkov told Russian news agencies.

The Kremlin said the outlook for the

landmark UN-brokered Black Sea grain deal was "not so great" as promises to remove obstacles to Russian agricultural and fertiliser exports had not been fulfilled.

Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said the current agreement was not working for Russia, despite some efforts by the United Nations to get the parts of the deal relating to Moscow's interests implemented.

"No deal can stand on one leg: it must stand on two legs," Peskov told reporters.

On paper, the deal allows for the export of food and fertiliser, including ammonia, from three Ukrainian Black Sea ports. But Moscow says that shipments are compromised by obstacles - such as insurance and payment hindrances - that it says must be removed.

Russia's deputy foreign minister Ryabkov yesterday acknowledged that detained US reporter Evan Gershkovich had not been granted consular access, two weeks after his arrest.

On Tuesday, US President Joe Biden declared the imprisonment "illegal" after the State Department classified the reporter as "wrongfully detained". Ryabkov said "for us, the status assigned in Washington does not matter."

## Secondary schools, colleges asked to celebrate Pahela Baishakh

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Directorate of Secondary and Higher Education directed secondary schools and colleges to celebrate Pahela Baishakh with due importance.

Prof Shahedul Kabir, director at DSHE, said an order was sent to the schools and colleges on Tuesday.

The DSHE ordered that the national anthem and the Rabindranath Tagore song "Esho He Boishakh" be performed on the day.

Additionally, the DSHE asked the authorities to publicise the Mongol Shobhajatra, which was declared an intangible cultural heritage by UNESCO in 2016.

It also asked schools and colleges to organise processions.

A recent legal notice sent to the government by a Supreme Court lawyer has called for an end to the Mongol Shobhajatra, a procession organised by the Fine Arts Institute of Dhaka University on Pahela Baishakh.

In response, cultural activists have said that Pahela Baishakh is not a celebration of a specific religion, but rather a long Bangali tradition.

## Man killed in hit-and-run

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Faridpur

A man was killed and another injured by a hit-and-run driver in Bhanga upazila of Faridpur early yesterday.

Akhtar Mollah, 35, was travelling on a rickshaw-van on Dhaka-Barishal highway around 3:00am when he fell on the road and got run over and killed, said Toumur Islam, officer-in-charge of Bhanga Highway Police Station.

The rickshaw-van puller was hit by the vehicle and sustained injuries.

Police are trying to identify the vehicle, added the OC.

## Woman jailed for 5 years for filing false rape case

UNB, Cox's Bazar

A Cox's Bazar court yesterday sentenced a woman to five years in prison for filing a false rape case.

The court also fined Runa Akhter Tk 20,000.

Women and Children Repression Prevention Tribunal-1 Judge Md Muslem Uddin handed down the verdict.

According to the complaint, Runa filed the case claiming that she was picked up from Cox's Bazar court premises in March 2022 and was gang-raped. After the case was proved false, the court acquitted the accused.

One of the acquitted men, Rasel Uddin, later filed a case against Runa.

The court announced the verdict after completing the judicial proceedings within a short time, officials said.

## Poverty drops but inequality higher than ever

FROM PAGE 1

When asked about the decrease in poverty amid a period of great economic hardship around the world, he said: "The government imposed limited lockdown and left the highways open. There were a host of stimulus packages to cushion the economy from the brunt of the shutdown. As a result, the poverty rate dropped."

However, the pace of poverty reduction has slowed. Between 2010 to 2016, poverty declined by 1.2 percentage points. Between 2016 and 2022, it was 0.93 percentage points.

But extreme poverty reduction picked up pace: from 0.78 percentage points between 2010-2016 to 1.2 percentage points between 2016-2022.

"Extreme poverty is down to 5.6 percent, suggesting Bangladesh is well on track to reducing it more than half relative to 2015 by 2030 as targeted under the Sustainable Development Goals," Hussain said, adding that the extent of poverty reduction has been palpably larger in rural areas.

The number of ultra-poor decreased because the government has been providing assistance through different food programmes, said Shamsul Alam, the state minister for planning.

The expansion of non-farming activities also played a role, he said.

"Given the high inflation, erosion of purchasing power and the hit to income amid the pandemic, it is surprising that extreme poverty has come down so much," Mustafizur Rahman, distinguished fellow of the Centre for Policy Dialogue, told The Daily Star.

Hussain, however, said the poverty data from the 2016 survey is not comparable with the 2022 numbers as different methodologies were used.

The upper and lower poverty lines used to determine the number of poor and ultra-poor in the country were reconstituted for the 2022 survey. The Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics has not disclosed the new poverty lines.

"It is therefore impossible to

compare the 2022 headcount ratios and poverty gap measures with their counterparts based on previous surveys. This is a crucial caveat that analysts and policymakers must not overlook. We hope BBS will finish this very important unfinished work sooner than later," Hussain said.

The spike in income inequality sours the good news provided by the poverty reduction data.

Of the 17 HIES conducted by the BBS, the rise in income inequality was the highest this time.

The Gini coefficient, which is the economic measure of equality, stood at 0.499 in 2022. It is measured on a scale of 0 to 1; the closer it is to 1 the higher the inequality is in society.

"The distributive justice of growth is deteriorating and we can't arrest it. If wealth concentration was looked into, then it would look even worse," Rahman said.

What is worse is the government is failing to arrest the rising inequality by increasing spending on social safety net due to the narrow fiscal space, he added.

When there is a growing economy, in the initial stages, the benefits of development will not spill over to all segments, said Dipankar Roy, joint secretary of the statistics and informatics division.

"There will be a concentration of income," he said.

Bangladesh has done a tremendous job of bringing down poverty over the last two decades, supported by strong economic growth and accompanying investments, said Ximena V Del Carpio, practice manager of the World Bank's poverty and equity practice group.

"We have to be mindful as vulnerability and falling back into poverty remains a real and present concern. The same is true about spatial disparities. Some regions are still lagging in their progress, and not only in rural-urban diversity but also between and within regions," she said.

All of the increase in income and consumption inequalities occurred in

urban locations where the apparent poverty reduction was also lower, Hussain said.

There is a need for further work to know the reason why rural inequality is decreasing while urban inequality is on the rise, said Binayak Sen, director general of the Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies.

"Extreme poverty in households is rare right now, so the extreme poverty rate of 5.6 percent is plausible," he said.

Shahnaz Arefin, secretary of the statistics and informatics division, said the survey will now be conducted every three years instead of six.

## Journos can't use

FROM PAGE 1

with the EC that the use of motorcycles should not be banned.

The Reporters Forum for Election and Democracy rejected the guideline, saying it was anti-journalist in nature, and demanded a new policy.

After the guideline was issued, journalists went to the room of EC Secretary Jahangir Alam, but he refused to comment on the matter.

According to the guidelines, journalists who receive cards from the EC will be able to film, take photos and gather information at polling centres by informing the presiding officers.

But cameras will not be allowed in the secret chamber where constituents cast their vote.

Taking interviews of polling officers, polling agents, and voters inside the rooms will be prohibited.

Journalists will be allowed to observe vote counting, but they will not be allowed to take photos, broadcast live, or use the live feature of social media.

Journalists will follow all legal instructions of the presiding officer and will not interfere in the work of polling officers. They will also be prohibited from touching election materials.

## Amnesty sees

FROM PAGE 1

is the latest in a series of attacks by the government of Bangladesh threatening press freedom in the country. Penalising a media outlet, publisher or journalist solely for being critical of the government or the policies it promotes is a restriction of the right to freedom of expression that can never be justified."

She added, "The attacks on Prothom Alo which has the largest daily circulation come close on the heels of the closure of Daily Dinkal,

the only newspaper belonging to the main opposition party last month. The use of the draconian Digital Security Act on journalists and attacks on some of the largest news publications in the country together indicate a worrying trend towards repression and a downward spiral of the right to freedom of expression in Bangladesh."

Citing the data published by rights body Ain O Salish Kendra, Amnesty stated that a total of 56 journalists have been tortured, harassed, sued, intimidated and obstructed from

doing their jobs in the first three months of this year.

Earlier on March 31, UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Volker Türk called on Bangladesh to impose an immediate moratorium on the use of DSA until it is reformed to ensure compliance with international human rights law.

The commissioner expressed concern that the DSA "is being used across Bangladesh to arrest, harass and intimidate journalists and human rights defenders, and to muzzle critical voices online".

Earnings of hundreds of tailors have stopped just before Eid. Now they are struggling to meet the expenses of their families, he added.

He said, "The city corporation prepared a list of the affected traders to provide them financial assistance. People are helping them. But we haven't got any help yet. We want financial assistance from Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, businessmen and the country's people."

Shafiqul Islam, officer-in-charge of Demra Police Station, said they brought four residents of the house to the police station for questioning.

The owners wrapped the live wire around the tree to prevent people taking the mangoes, he said, adding that one Dipu, a resident of the house, fled before police could reach the area.

"We are investigating the incident," he said.

and locals alleged that after the incident, the house owners blamed the children for going there. He fled the scene before police reached there, locals said.

Yasin Arafat, a resident of a nearby house, said the house owners had wrapped electric wires around the tree so that no one could take mangoes. They did the same thing last year.

The bodies were sent to the hospital morgue for autopsy.

## Trade resumes, hope rekindled

FROM PAGE 1

goods of his shop were gutted. "I took some products from the wholesalers on credit."

Faruk Hossain, owner of Humaira Garments, said, "We have started our business under the open sky. If it rains, our products will get wet."

Zahirul Islam, general secretary of Bangabazar Shop Owners' Association, yesterday said everyone would get the space for a shop

## Live wire around mango tree

FROM PAGE 1

"They attached a live wire to the tree. Is that something a human being can do?" Anny Begum asked.

"Are their fruits more important than the lives of my babies?" asked the mother in tears. "I toiled a lot to raise my babies. I want my babies back."

The victims' father, Marfot Mia, said, "They killed my children to protect their mangoes."

The victims' family members



LARGEST ONLINE BRANCH NETWORK

Sharia'h based Islamic Banking  
through 500 Branches & 150 Sub Branches

ESTABLISHED IN 1959

LARGEST PRIVATE COMMERCIAL BANK

**পুবালী ব্যাংক লিমিটেড**  
PUBALI BANK LIMITED

64 YEARS IN BANKING

Celebration of Eid

Take your Remittance  
Win your gift

Excellence in Remittance Service

FIVE CITY ELECTIONS  
41 mayoral aspirants  
collect nomination

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A total of 41 mayoral aspirants have collected nomination forms from Awami League, seeking the party's ticket to contest five city corporation polls -- in Gazipur, Sylhet, Khulna, Rajshahi and Barishal.

The form distribution started on Sunday and ended yesterday, according to an AL press release.

As many as 17 persons -- the highest number of nomination-seekers -- bought forms to take part in the Gazipur polls. Ten people collected forms for Sylhet while seven for Barishal.

Four mayoral aspirants, including the incumbent mayor Talukder Abdul Khaleque, took forms for Khulna, while three persons, including current mayor AHM Khairuzzaman Liton, bought forms for Rajshahi.

The Election Commission on April 3 announced the schedules of elections to five city corporations.

The elections will be held in Gazipur on May 25, Khulna and Barishal on June 12, and Rajshahi and Sylhet on June 2.

AL sources say disgruntled AL leaders running as independent candidates may become a serious issue during the polls this time too.

Since BNP boycotted most of the national and local elections held after 2008, ruling party nominees have faced major challenges from such independents, popularly known as "AL rebels".

This time, AL decided to go tough on the "rebels" and will deter them at any cost from participating in the polls, keeping in mind that BNP will not participate, said party insiders.

Awami League will finalise its candidates at a meeting of its Local Government Nomination Board, to be held on Saturday, AL office secretary Biplab Barua yesterday told reporters at the AL chief's Dhanmondi political office in the capital.

**This time, the AL decided to go tough on the "rebels" and will deter them at any cost from participating in the polls, keeping in mind that the BNP will not participate, said party insiders.**



Rickshaw-van pullers have an unusual, and illegal, way of parking their vehicles when they're not driving them. They turn the vans upright and tie them to the bars on the dividers in the middle of the road. The tires of the vans protrude outside the divider area, creating a scope for an accident to occur. This photo was taken near Ideal School and College in Motijheel recently.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

When cons use  
Facebook as a tool

MOHAMMAD JAMIL KHAN

They had a team to keep an eye on law enforcers.

Whenever the group would notice the movement of law enforcement agencies in the area, the members would swiftly give a signal and take shelter in a hideout.

This is how dozens of youths -- who are reportedly defrauding people and raking in huge sums through Facebook pages -- have

been evading the law over the years.

The majority of youths who are involved in this crime live in Chachuri Bazar village in Narail. To swindle people, they open Facebook pages and make posts, showing fake but attractive offers for gadgets, apparel and food.

They ask customers to make advance payments through mobile financial services (MFS). Soon after the payment, the criminals stop all communication.

The Cyber and Special Crime Division of the police's Detective Branch (DB) disclosed the information to this newspaper after a youth who is reportedly involved in this activity was arrested.

"We had to maintain pin-drop silence to conduct a drive in the locality, or else these fraudsters would get alerted through their security team," said Junaed Alam Sarker, additional

SEE PAGE 4 COL 6

AL govt always for  
ensuring rights of  
people of all faiths  
Says Hasina

BSS, Dhaka

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday said that when her party, Awami League, is in power, it always works to ensure the rights of people of all faiths.

She said this when leaders of Bangladesh Hindu-Buddhist-Christian Okya Parishad called on her at Gono Bhaban.

The PM told the leaders that religions belong to individuals but festivals are universal.

The premier's deputy press secretary Shakhawat Moon briefed the reporters after the meeting.

During the meeting, leaders of the parishad, led by its general secretary Rana Das Gupta, said that discrimination has been removed in all fields -- such as employment, recruitment and promotion -- in the country.



DSA is for info  
security: Quader

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The ruling Awami League General Secretary Obaidul Quader yesterday said the Digital Security Act has been enacted in continuation with different countries who have enforced similar laws to ensure the security of information on digital platforms.

"BNP has been politically opposing this Act as it has been indulging in conspiracies against the state and people using digital platforms," said Quader in a statement, protesting the remarks of BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir on DSA.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 5

A journey for improving  
millions of lives

MJF celebrates 20 years of partnership with UK

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

After Jahanara Akter Parul of Chandpur survived an acid attack back in 2001 at the age of 15, her family was not capable of bearing the expenses of her treatment at a Dhaka hospital.

At that time, Manusher Jonno Foundation (MJF) provided her with support through the Acid Survivors Foundation. Parul recovered from her injuries after a 10-year-long treatment course, which included 12 surgeries.

"My life almost stopped there. Because of MJF's help, I still carried on. I will forever be grateful to the organisation for their support," said Parul, while sharing her stories at an event celebrating 20 years of partnership between the United Kingdom and Manusher Jonno

**With support from the UK, MJF has contributed to ensuring rights for the poor and deprived people and developing their lives. Everyone, including MJF and the donors, has to work together to progress further in terms of these achievements.**

MA MANNAN, Planning Minister

Foundation at a city hotel yesterday.

Like Parul, MJF has stood beside around three million people -- mostly from the most marginalised communities in Bangladesh -- during its journey in supporting human rights and good governance

since 2002.

At the event, Shaheen Anam, executive director of MJF, highlighted the achievements of the partnership during her presentation.

She stated that around 400 local organisations received financial and technical support under the partnership.

"We are grateful to the UK government for their support through 20 years. It has sparked the ray of hope in the hearts of the deprived people," Shaheen Anam said at the event.

"MJF has received £107.24 as support from the UK government since 2002. We distributed around 72 percent of the funds among local partner organisations to implement different programmes," she said.

Speaking as chief guest, Planning

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

PAHELA BAISHAKH  
Letter warns of  
possible attack

DU CORRESPONDENT

The organisers of Mangal Shobhajatra have received a letter from anonymous sources that warned of an attack on the event.

Abatahi Rahman, one of the organisers, filed a GD with Shahbagh Police Station on Tuesday night, after discovering the letter attached to a chair at Dhaka University's fine arts faculty.

The letter stated that an attack could happen at any time during the celebration.

According to DU Proctor Prof Maksudur Rahman, law enforcers are alert to face any incident, and the threat should not deter people from participating in the event.

Nur Mohammad, OC of Shahbagh Police Station, said they are investigating.

However, Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan said yesterday that no security threat has been received centring Pahela Baishakh.

Construction of Kewatkhali  
bridge to begin in August

TUHIN SHUBHRA ADHIKARY

Physical works of the country's largest steel arch bridge in Mymensingh are expected to start in August, as the authorities have almost completed the preparatory works.

The project authorities have already selected consultants for the construction supervision of Kewatkhali Bridge, and a contract will be signed with a consultancy consortium today.

Road Transport and Bridges Minister Obaidul Quader is expected to join the signing ceremony at his ministry.

"We hope to sign the contract with

the contractor within June and start physical works of the bridge within August," said project director Noor E-Alam.

It would take three years to complete the bridge, he told The Daily Star yesterday.

Roads and Highways Department (RHD) is implementing the Tk 3,263.63-crore project to build the 1,100-metre bridge, which will include a 320-m steel arch over Brahmaputra river. The bridge aims to improve connectivity between the capital and the districts under Mymensingh division.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 3



The Daily Star  
**STELLAR WOMEN**  
Spark Your Inner Power

REGISTRATION  
ONGOING

Stellar Women is an initiative of The Daily Star and bti, through which we will be recognising one extraordinary woman every month (from January '23 to December '23), playing a vital role in their distinguished fields for the development of the society and nation.

WE ARE INVITING WOMEN TO REGISTER  
IN THE FOLLOWING CATEGORIES:

CULTURE  
REGISTER BY 15<sup>TH</sup> MAY '23

CORPORATE  
REGISTER BY 31<sup>ST</sup> MAY '23

AGRICULTURE  
REGISTER BY 30<sup>TH</sup> JUNE '23

SCAN OR VISIT  
btistellarwomen.thedailystar.net  
TO KNOW THE CATEGORY DETAILS

SCAN OR VISIT  


A JOINT INITIATIVE BY  
bti & The Daily Star  
in pursuit of excellence



## BANDARBAN ‘SHOOTOUT’ CHTC demands impartial probe

STAR REPORT

The International Chittagong Hill Tracts Commission (CHTC) yesterday demanded an impartial judicial probe over the death of eight indigenous men in an alleged gunfight at Rowangchari Upazila in Bandarban.

The statement signed by Sultana Kamal, Elsa Stamatopoulou, and, Myrna Cunningham Kain, co-chairs of the organisation, also demanded immediate and impartial judicial investigation into the exact circumstances of the event.

The statement said that according to various media reports, the killed persons belonged to the indigenous Bawm community and were members of the Kukl-Chin National Front (KNF). They allegedly died when a gunfight broke out between KNF and UPDF (Democratic).

The statement said, quoting a media report, that the KNF denied the deceased to be their members, and claimed the victims were innocent villagers.

Earlier, political and right groups from CHT – United Workers Democratic Front, Greater Chittagong Hill Students’ Association, Hill Women’s Federation, and Democratic Youth Forum – claimed that the victims were unarmed Bawn villagers from Jurhbarang Para of Paindu Union in Ruma. They were kidnapped before being executed, they alleged.

They also accused mainstream media of trying to hide the truth.

## Construction of Kewatkhali

FROM PAGE 3  
The bridge will also connect a land port and export processing and economic zones in the area and help flourish tourism.

The government in August 2021 took the project with financial support from Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB). The bank will provide Tk 1,909.79 crore as loan, while the government will bear the rest of the cost.

The deadline for the project is June 2025.

The objective of the project is to reduce congestion and improve mobility and connectivity by addressing the cross-river bottleneck between Mymensingh and Shambhuganj on the Dhaka-Mymensingh-India corridor, reads an AIIB document.

The project is expected to ease traffic congestion in Mymensingh city by diverting traffic away from

the city’s central area via the construction of Kewatkhali Bridge over the Brahmaputra river, it said.

Apart from the bridge, three overpasses – two railway overpasses and one road overpass – and a 6.20-km four-lane road with service lanes on both sides will be built under this project.

The project authorities have to acquire around 33 acres of land for the project, and they have already hired a non-government organisation for re-settling the affected people there, said RHD sources.

The Cabinet Committee on Government Purchase on March 9, 2023, approved a proposal to hire a consortium for supervising the construction of the project.

LEA Associates South Asia Pvt Ltd of India, Yongma Engineering Company Ltd of South Korea, and Desh Upodesh Limited and

Kranti Associates Ltd of Bangladesh will carry out the operations for four years at the cost of Tk 59.94 crore, according to sources.

The tendering process for hiring a contractor for the physical works is now at the evaluation stage, they said.

### DSA is for info

FROM PAGE 3  
At a party seminar, Mirza Fakhrul alleged, “As the election is nearing, the government is using the Digital Security Act to gag voices of dissent.”

Claiming that AL’s demand to restore a caretaker government in 1996 was a timely demand raised by the people, Quader said, “Caretaker government system was established in the wake of mass movement. But BNP later made the system controversial by misusing it as a tool to seize power by force.”

## A journey for

FROM PAGE 3  
executive director of MJF, highlighted the achievements of the partnership during her presentation.

She stated that around 400 local organisations received financial and technical support under the partnership.

“We are grateful to the UK government for their support through 20 years. It has sparked the ray of hope in the hearts of the deprived people,” Shaheen Anam said at the event.

“MJF has received £107.24 as support from the UK government since 2002. We distributed around 72 percent of the funds among local partner organisations to implement different programmes,” she said.

Speaking as chief guest, Planning Minister Minister MA Mannan said, “With support from the UK, MJF has contributed to ensuring rights for the poor and deprived people

and developing their lives. Everyone, including MJF and the donors, has to work together to progress further in terms of these achievements.”

Addressing as a special guest, Matt Cannell, acting high commissioner of the British High Commission in Dhaka, highlighted the undeniable role of MJF to activate the civil society in Bangladesh.

He hoped that the technical partnership will continue to ensure human rights and good governance.

Rasheda K Chowdhury, adviser to the former caretaker government; Rita Hukayem, second secretary of Canadian High Commission in Dhaka; Nazia Haider, programme manager at the Swiss embassy in Dhaka; Sanjeeb Drong, general secretary of Bangladesh Adivasi Forum; journalist Monjurul Ahmed Bulbul, and representatives of MJF’s partner organisations spoke at the event.

## Mother seeks

FROM PAGE 5  
hospital, she said.

“My husband is a plumber yet we have tried our best for the best treatment of our son,” she said. “My son has lost a leg while treatment of another leg is still ongoing.”

“We have already spent Tk 7 lakh for his treatment, and we are now unable to afford it,” she mentioned. “We filed a case with Banshkhali Police Station on March 8, but the case was recorded on March 21 for unknown reason.”

Moreover, police are yet to arrest anyone, she added.

Denying the allegation, Kamal Uddin, officer-in-charge of the police station, said the case was recorded

the very date it was filed, and they are trying to arrest the driver and helper.

Contacted, Abed Hossain, in-charge of S Alam Paribahan, said they initially offered them Tk 2 lakh as compensation but the family refused to take it. “Then, we offered them Tk 2.5 lakh but still they refused it.”

“They demanded Tk 7 lakh and also sought a job for the boy’s mother at a bank,” said Abed.

“Is it possible to provide a job at a bank to the mother?” he said.

“Assured her of providing a job at a private clinic... and requested them to receive Tk 3 lakh but yet they did not agree to it,” he added.

### INVITATION FOR TENDER

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

- Purchasing 01 (One) unit of 40 (Forty) KVA Online UPS for Software Development Division of Pubali Bank Limited.**

Please visit <https://www.pubalibangla.com/tender.asp> for more details. Interested Parties may purchase Tender documents by **25-04-2023** duly fulfilling all other requirements.

(Md. Helal Uddin)  
GM & Division Head

 **পূবালী ব্যাংক লিমিটেড**  
**PUBALI BANK LIMITED**

ICT Operation Division  
Head office, 26 Dilkusha C/A, Dhaka.

### INVITATION FOR TENDER

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

- Civil and Electrical works (Exterior Design) at present premises of our **Kawran Bazar Corporate Branch, Dhaka**.
- Supply, installation & commissioning of **12(twelve) nos. Note sorting machines at different 12(twelve) Branches of our Bank.**
- Supply, installation & commissioning of **vault room surveillance system for vault security (Auto alarm system)** at different Branches (all over Bangladesh) with connectivity to central information system of our bank.

Please visit our web site, <https://www.pubalibangla.com/tender.asp> for details. Interested Parties may purchase the Tender document by **02 May, 2023** duly filled up all requirements and submit their offer by **03 May, 2023 at 11.00 AM.**

Dilip Kumar Paul  
General Manager & Division Head

 **পূবালী ব্যাংক লিমিটেড**  
**PUBALI BANK LIMITED**

Establishment & General Services Division  
Head office, 26 Dilkusha C/A, Dhaka.

### মডিউলার ডাটা সেন্টার স্থাপনের পুনঃ দরপত্র আহবান

পপুলার লাইফ ইনস্যুরেন্স কোম্পানী লিমিটেড-এর প্রধান কার্যালয়ে ১টি মডিউলার ডাটা সেন্টার স্থাপনের জন্য নিম্নোক্ত বর্ণনা অনুযায়ী খ্যাতনামা অভিজ্ঞতা সম্পন্ন প্রতিষ্ঠানের নিকট থেকে নিখরাত সিডিউলে সিলমোহরকৃত খামে দরপত্র আহবান করা যাচ্ছে।

SL #	Description of item	Qty / NOS
<b>A. Networking Equipment , Integrated Server Rack &amp; Rack Server</b>		
A1	Core Router Brand: Huawei / Cisco / Dell Description: Support 2 x GE combo, 1 x 10GE SFP+ (compatible with GE SFP) WAN interface and 1 x GE combo, 8 x GE RJ45 (can be configured as WAN) LAN interface from day 1.	2
A2	Firewall Brand: Huawei / Cisco / Dell Description : 2 x 10GE (SFP+) + 8 x 1GE (Combo) + 2 x 1GE (WAN) from day 1	2
A3	Server Access Switch Brand: Huawei / Cisco / Dell Description : The equipment must support up to 24 Ethernet 10/100/1,000 ports, 4 x 1 Gig SFP port from day 1 The proposed equipment must support high switching capacity of at least 56 Gbps non-blocking. The proposed equipment must support high packet transfer rate of at least 42 Mpps (Million packets per second)	2
A4	Branch Router Brand: Huawei / Cisco / Dell Description : Support GE Support 1 x GE WAN interface and 4 x GE RJ45 (can be configured as WAN) LAN interface from day 1.	1
A5	Integrated Server Rack Brand: Huawei / Schneider / Nelt Description : A single module should integrate the cabinet system, power supply and distribution system, cooling system, management system and fire extinguish system in a cabinet.	1
A6	Rack Server Brand: Huawei / Cisco / IBM Description : 1 serial port, USB 3.0/2.0 ports & VGA video port.	2

বিস্তারিত বিবরণ সংক্রান্ত সিডিউল ১৫ এপ্রিল থেকে ১৬ এপ্রিল ২০২৩ইং অফিস চলাকালীন সময়ে কোম্পানীর প্রধান কার্যালয়ের আই.টি বিভাগ থেকে সংগ্রহ করা যাবে। দরপত্র আশাশ্রী ১৮ এপ্রিল ২০২৩ তারিখ দুপুর ০২:০০ ঘটিকা পর্যন্ত কোম্পানীর প্রধান কার্যালয়ে সঙ্কীর্ণ টেন্ডার ব্যস্তে গ্রহণ করা হবে এবং একই দিনে দুপুর ০২:৩০ মিনিটে দরদাতাদের উপস্থিতিতে (যদি কেউ উপস্থিত থাকেন) দরপত্র খোলা হবে। সর্বনিম্ন দরগ্রহণে কোম্পানী বাধ্য নয় এবং কোন কারণ প্রদর্শন ব্যতীতকে যে কোন বা সকল দরপত্র সম্পূর্ণ বা আংশিক গ্রহণ বা ব্যতিরেকে অধিকার কোম্পানী সংরক্ষণ করে।  
যোগাযোগঃ পিপলস ইনস্যুরেন্স ভবন (১৮তম তলা), ৩৬ দিলকুশা বা/এ, ঢাকা-১০০০। ফোনঃ ০২২২২৩৫৫৭৫৩৪-৩৮।

### পুনঃ দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি (সংশোধনী)

বাংলাদেশ পুলিশ কমান্ড ট্রাস্টের কার্যালয়ঃ “পুলিশ প্রাঙ্গণ কুড়িয়া” বাণিজ্যিক ভবনের জন্য ভার্টিয়াল ট্রাসপোর্ট (লিফট) এবং কন্ট্রোল রুম সিস্টেম ক্রয় ও স্থাপন করা হবে। উক্ত কার্য সম্পাদনের জন্য আয়োজী এবং যোগাযোগসম্পন্ন অভিজ্ঞ প্রতিষ্ঠানের নিকট হতে পুনঃ দরপত্র আহবান করা যাচ্ছে। পুনঃ দরপত্র জমাাদানের শেষ তারিখ আশাশ্রী ১৮/০৪/২০২৩ইং। দুপুর ১২:০০ ঘটিকার পরিকরে ৩০/০৪/২০২৩ইং। দুপুর ১২:০০ ঘটিকা পর্যন্ত বৃদ্ধি করা হল। পুনঃ দরপত্র প্রদানসহ বিজ্ঞপ্তি ক্রয়ের জন্য যোগাযোগঃ- বাংলাদেশ পুলিশ কমান্ড ট্রাস্ট, ৫ম তলা, পুলিশ প্রেসকোয়ার্টার্স, ৬, বনিরঙ্গ রোড, ফুলবাড়িয়া, ঢাকা- ১০০০।

### Corrigendum Notice

Following amendment has been made in the tender Package No. UHC/GOB/SD-2/2022-23, Package name: Outsourcing of Manpower Invited Memo No. UHC/Proc./GOB/Out. Sourcing-77/2022-23/1718, Dated: 22.03.2023

SL No. in IFT	Subject	Existing entry	Amendment entry
15.	Tender last selling date & time	19.04.2023, 3.30pm	27.04.2023, 4.00pm
16.	Tender closing date & time	20.04.2023, 12.00pm	30.04.2023, 12.00pm
17.	Tender opening date & time	20.04.2023, 12.00pm	30.04.2023, 2.00pm

  
**Dr. Md. Rizwanur Rahman**  
Line Director  
Upazila Health Care (UHC), DOHS  
GD-663 Sastho Bhaban (6th Floor), Mohakhali, Dhaka-1212

## When cons use Facebook

FROM PAGE 3  
the investigation, other police units issue requisition for investigation, and we always assist,” added Alam.

DB’s cyber division claimed to have learned about the syndicate following the arrest of a youth – Al Amin Islam, 19.

Investigators said Islam opened several Facebook pages using the name of a restaurant that actually exists – Café Rio – and gave offers for buffets. Islam used to take advance payment for these offers through MFS.

On March 3 this year, some people who were duped went to the restaurant’s Mirpur branch to have food. The establishment then informed them that they had been cheated by a fake page, said ADC Junaed Alam Sarker.

Regarding Islam’s crime, Junaed said during

primary interrogation, he admitted to being involved in this for over a year.

“Islam used to earn around Tk 1 lakh to 1.5 lakh every month through this fraud,” he said, adding that the restaurant later filed a complaint.

In reply to a query, the official said these youths are residents of a village. “They shared their expertise with each other, and dozens of youths in the area adopted this activity.”

“For instance, we know Faridpur’s Bhanga as a hub of Bkash fraud, as the majority of MFS-related crimes take place in this area. Similarly, Natore’s Lalpur is known as Imo-hacking village...,” added the official.

Azmal Hossain, manager of Café Rio’s Jigatola branch, said, “We will be aware so that nobody can create a Facebook page in our name. Besides, customers should be aware too.”

## Repeal DSA

FROM PAGE 5  
fundamentalist, and radical fanaticism, the organisation added.

TIB Executive Director I f t e k h a r u z z a m a n emphasised that the law has created an atmosphere of fear and insecurity among the media, civil society,

and ordinary people in the name of digital security.

“Repeal the draconian Digital Security Act and formulate a law specifically for digital infrastructure in the light of international experience and by involving all stakeholders in the relevant sectors,” he said.

### INVITATION FOR TENDER

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

- Renewal of 8,000 (Eight Thousand) Units of CISCO End Point AMP Software and CON/Warranty/Subscription/Support Services of related AMP Private Cloud Appliances for Pubali Bank Limited.**

Please visit <https://www.pubalibangla.com/tender.asp> for more details. Interested Parties may purchase Tender documents by **25 April 2023** duly fulfilling all other requirements and submit their proposal on **26 April 2023** up to 03:00 PM (BST).

(Md. Helal Uddin)  
GM & Division Head

 **পূবালী ব্যাংক লিমিটেড**  
**PUBALI BANK LIMITED**

ICT Operation Division  
Head office, 26 Dilkusha C/A, Dhaka.

### Postponement of Schedule and Date of Election of Directors from Shareholders of the Company

Pursuant to our earlier notice published in the Daily Star and the Daily Jugantor on March 30, 2023 regarding the Election of Directors from Shareholders of the Company, this is for kind information of all concerned that the schedule and date of election of Directors from Shareholders of the Company has been postponed. The fresh timetable will be notified in due course.

Date: Dhaka  
12/04/2023

On behalf of the Company  
Sd/-  
Company Secretary

 **Delta Life Insurance Company Ltd.**  
Delta Life Tower, Plot - 37, Road - 90, Gulshan Circle - 2, Dhaka - 1212, Bangladesh  
Phone : 09613666001, 55051919, FAX : 88 - 02 - 9899805, 8831739

### Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

Chittagong Hill Tracts Development Board  
Engineering Section, Head Office  
Rangamati


Memo No. 29.31.0000.011.07.181.21-122, Date: 12-04-2023

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

This is to notify all concerned that the following tenders have amendment through e-GP Portal:

Tender ID & Package No.	Description	Publication date & Closing date
812045 & CHTDB-RANG/2022-23/221001100-86	Renovation of Ashtal holders rooms in Raj Bana Bihar in Rangamati Sadar upazila	12-Apr-2023 09:00 & 03-May-2023 12:00
812049 & CHTDB-RANG/2022-23/221001100-87	Construction of Shantidham Buddhist Bihar at Sapchari in Rangamati Sadar upazila	12-Apr-2023 09:00 & 03-May-2023 12:00
812055 & CHTDB-RANG/2022-23/221001100-88	Construction of Lemuchhari Mosque in Rangamati Sadar upazila	12-Apr-2023 09:00 & 03-May-2023 12:00
812070 & CHTDB-RANG/2022-23/221001100-89	Construction of Kaindyia Dojri Para Lower Secondary School at Balukhali Union in Rangamati Sadar upazila	12-Apr-2023 09:00 & 03-May-2023 12:30
812103 & CHTDB-RANG/2022-23/221001100-90	Construction of Sukkur Club building in Rangamati Sadar upazila	12-Apr-2023 09:00 & 03-May-2023 12:30
812148 & CHTDB-RANG/2022-23/221001100-91	Ancillary work of building of Shalpur Motalin Jame Masjid of 3 No. Bangahalila Union in Rajasthali upazila	12-Apr-2023 09:00 & 03-May-2023 12:30
812300 & CHTDB-RANG/2022-23/221001100-92	Development of Ghagra Crematorium in Kawkhali upazila	12-Apr-2023 09:00 & 03-May-2023 13:00
812397 & CHTDB-RANG/2022-23/221001100-93	Construction of Kachukhali Headman Office in Kawkhali Upazila	12-Apr-2023 09:00 & 03-May-2023 13:00
813473 & CHTDB-RANG/2022-23/221001100-94	Construction of Gosalchiri Janakalyan Buddhist Bihar in Balachhari upazila	12-Apr-2023 09:00 & 03-May-2023 13:00
813531 & CHTDB-RANG/2022-23/221001100-95	Construction of Chota Harina Jame Mosque in Barkal upazila	12-Apr-2023 09:00 & 03-May-2023 13:30
813539 & CHTDB-RANG/2022-23/221001100-99	Construction of landing terminal in Chengimukh area in Rangamati Sadar upazila	12-Apr-2023 09:00 & 03-May-2023 13:30

The interested firms/persons may visit the website: [www.eprocure.gov.bd](http://www.eprocure.gov.bd) to get the details of the tender. 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 Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) is required. Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System Portal and from e-GP help desk ([helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd](mailto:helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd)).

  
**Tushar Chakrabarti**  
Executive Engineer (CC)  
Chittagong Hill Tracts Development Board  
Rangamati

GD-679



## Repeal DSA, amendment not enough Demands TIB

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Transparency International Bangladesh (TIB) has urged for the immediate repeal of the Digital Security Act, stating that merely amending the law will not suffice.

The law has been arbitrarily used to suppress dissent, stifle the media's voice, and arrest people without proper legal proceedings, violating the constitutional right to freedom of speech and expression, reads a statement yesterday.

It has led to insecurity, disappearances, and even deaths becoming common, and played a role in the alarming development of communal,

SEE PAGE 4 COL 7

PRAYER  
TIMING  
APRIL 13

Fazr	Zohr	Asr	Maghrib	Esha
AZAN 4:22	12:45	4:45	6:23	7:45
JAMAT 4:32	1:15	5:00	6:33	8:15

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

SEHRI, IFTAR TIMING

RAMADAN	APRIL	SEHRI	IFTAR
21	13		6:23
22	14	4:15	6:23
23	15	4:14	6:24

## Three suffer bullet wounds in clashes over drug trade

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Narayanganj

Three people suffered bullet wounds in clashes between two groups of drug traders at Chonpara in Narayanganj's Rupganj upazila.

The clashes started on Tuesday night and continued till yesterday morning over establishing supremacy in the area, said witnesses and police.

Two of the injured are Samrat Parvez, 21, and Roman, 18, while the other one is a 17-year-old. All of them are members of one of the criminal groups, claimed locals.

They were receiving treatment at Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH), said Inspector Bachchu Mia, in-charge of DMCH police outpost.

Dr Md Alauddin of the hospital said the 17-year-old's condition is critical.

Locals claimed that Bazlur Rahman, a union parishad member, used to control drug peddling in the area, but he died last month, while undergoing treatment at DMCH under the custody of Dhaka Central Jail. He was arrested by Rab on November 18. Since then, different groups are now trying to take control of the trade.

Abir Hossain, Narayanganj's senior assistant superintendent of police, also confirmed that the clash was over drug trading.

On information, police rushed to the spot and brought the situation under control, he added.

## CTG ROAD CRASH Mother seeks compensation for injured son

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

The family of a boy, who lost his leg in a bus accident in February, at a press conference in Chattogram yesterday demanded adequate compensation from the bus company.

During the conference at Chattogram Press Club, Purnima Dey from Banshkhali, said a passenger bus of S Alam Paribahan ran over her five-year-old son Agraraj Sikder while he was standing at his school gate at Napora Bazar in Banshkhali on February 16.

"Leaving my son critically injured on road, the driver and helper fled the scene," she said, adding that locals rushed him to a nearby hospital.

Later, his left hand to be amputated at another local

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

## ‘BCL HARASSMENT’ CU officials go on work abstention

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Officials of Chittagong University (CU) administration have started a work abstention to demand punishment for three leaders of Bangladesh Chhaura League's (BCL) CU unit for allegedly harassing the officials.

The officials took position in front of the office of the CU officers' association on the campus yesterday. The association alleged that a group of BCL leaders tried to take stored goods from CU's central warehouse without any tender on April 6, and they harassed some officials when the latter tried to stop them.

The association wrote a letter to CU VC Shireen Akhtar, accusing three BCL leaders -- Mofazzal Haider, Nazrul Islam Sabuj and Sadek Hossain.

Earlier, Nazrul claimed that the incident did not play out like it has been narrated.

The association's general secretary Md Abu Jafar said they will observe a three-hour working abstention every day until Eid vacation.

The CU administration formed a five-member committee to investigate. The committee was asked to submit its report in three days, the deadline for which expired on Sunday.

Institutional Quality Assurance Cell Director Prof Abdullah Al Mamun, who is leading the committee, said they started their investigation and are verifying the claims of both parties.

## Journo assaulted ‘over report’ in Jamalpur

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Jamalpur

A journalist was assaulted allegedly by followers of an Awami League leader in Bakshiganj upazila of Jamalpur on Tuesday night.

Golam Rabbani Nadim, 42, Bakshiganj upazila correspondent of Ekattor Television, claimed that he was attacked for reporting on the upazila AL president Shahina Begum's late father Kayum Munshi, who was allegedly involved in anti-liberation activities during the Liberation War.

The report was published on December 23, 2022.

He is currently being treated at the upazila health complex.

Nadim yesterday filed a complaint accusing five named, including Shahina, and 50 unnamed, said Shohel Rana, OC of Bakshiganj Police Station.

Talking to this correspondent at the complex, Nadim said, "After the news got published, she has been harassing me."

Nadim alleged that on Tuesday night, a group of Shahina's supporters attacked him at Bakshiganj Moddho Bazar. Later, locals rescued him.

Shahina denied the allegation.

Echoing Shahina, Shamim and Shopon, Shahina's supporters, said, "We didn't attack him, but rather saved him from mob beating."

OCSohel said, "We are investigating the matter. Action will be taken after the investigation."

**Locals claimed Bazlur Rahman, a union parishad member, used to control the drug peddling in the area, but he died last month while undergoing treatment under Dhaka Central Jail custody. Since then, different groups are now trying to take control of the trade. That's why the clash took place.**

গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার

পেশ্ব হাসিনার হাতটি ধরে  
পথের শিশু ঘরে ঘরে

সমাজসেবা অধিদপ্তর

উপ-তত্ত্বাবধায়কের কার্যালয়

সরকারি শিশু পরিবার (বালক), নেত্রকোণা

Web: [sspb.netrokona.gov.bd](http://sspb.netrokona.gov.bd)

দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি

০১	মন্ত্রণালয়/বিভাগ	:	সমাজকল্যাণ মন্ত্রণালয়।							
০২	এজেন্সি	:	সমাজসেবা অধিদপ্তর কর্তৃক পরিচালিত সরকারি শিশু পরিবার (বালক), নেত্রকোণা।							
০৩	সংগ্রাহক স্বত্বার নাম	:	উপ-তত্ত্বাবধায়ক, সরকারি শিশু পরিবার (বালক), নেত্রকোণা।							
০৪	সংগ্রাহক স্বত্বার জেলা	:	নেত্রকোণা।							
০৫	যে কাজের দরপত্র	:	২০২৩-২৪ অর্থ বছরে সমাজসেবা অধিদপ্তর কর্তৃক পরিচালিত সরকারি শিশু পরিবার (বালক), নেত্রকোণা এর নিবাসীদের জন্য খাদ্য ও খাদ্যানুসংগিক (পচনশীল ও অপচনশীল), শিক্ষা, স্বাস্থ্য, সাধারণ পোশাক, প্রসাধনী ও অন্যান্য এবং বিবিধ মালামাল সরবরাহ।							
০৬	দরপত্র নম্বর ও তারিখ	:	নং-৪১.০১.৭২০০.০৩৫.০৭.০০২.২৩.৫০ তারিখঃ ১০-০৪-২০২৩খ্রিঃ।							
০৭	দরপত্র প্রচারের তারিখ	:	১৩-০৪-২০২৩খ্রিঃ।							
০৮	সংগ্রাহক পদ্ধতি	:	উন্মুক্ত দরপত্র পদ্ধতি (ও.টি.এম)।							
০৯	বাজেট এবং তহবিল উৎস	:	রাজস্ব বাজেট, জিওবি।							
১০	দরপত্রের প্যাকেজ সংখ্যা	:	০৩টি।							
১১	দরপত্রের প্যাকেজ নাম	:	প্যাকেজ নং-১-এফ “ক” খাদ্য ও খাদ্যানুসংগিক (পচনশীল ও অপচনশীল)। প্যাকেজ নং-২-এফ “খ” শিক্ষা, স্বাস্থ্য, সাধারণ পোশাক, প্রসাধনী ও অন্যান্য। প্যাকেজ নং-৩-এফ “ঙ” বিবিধ মালামাল সরবরাহ।							
১২	দরপত্র দলিল বিক্রয়ের শেষ তারিখ	:	২৬-০৪-২০২৩খ্রিঃ বিকাল ৫.০০ ঘটিকা পর্যন্ত।							
১৩	দরপত্র দলিলের তারিখ	:	২৭-০৪-২০২৩খ্রিঃ সকাল ৯.০০ ঘটিকা হতে দুপুর ১২.০০ ঘটিকা পর্যন্ত।							
১৪	দরপত্র খোলার তারিখ ও সময়	:	২৭-০৪-২০২৩খ্রিঃ তারিখ বেলা ১২.৩০ ঘটিকায় সরদাতা বা তার মনোনীত প্রতিনিধির উপস্থিতিতে খোলা হবে (যদি কেহ উপস্থিত থাকে)।							
১৫	দরপত্র দলিল বিক্রয়, গ্রহণ ও খোলার কার্যালয়ের নাম ও ঠিকানাঃ ক. দরপত্র দলিল বিক্রয় খ. দরপত্র দলিল গ্রহণ গ. দরপত্র দলিল খোলা	:	সরকারি শিশু পরিবার, (বালক) নেত্রকোণা জেলা প্রশাসকের কার্যালয়, নেত্রকোণা জেলা প্রশাসকের কার্যালয়, নেত্রকোণা							
১৬	সরদাতার যোগ্যতা	:	(১) বৈধ সরবরাহকারী প্রতিষ্ঠান। (২) পূর্বে অনুরূপ কাজ করার অভিজ্ঞতার সনদপত্র, হালনাগাদ ট্রেড লাইসেন্স, ব্যাংক সঞ্চালতার সনদ, আয়কর সনদ এবং জাট প্রদান সনদ এর অধিকারী হতে হবে।							
১৭	দরপত্র দলিলের মূল্য জমা দিতে হবে	:	দরপত্র দলিলের মূল্য ট্রেজারি চালানের মাধ্যমে কোড নং-১-২৯৩১-০০০০-২৩৬৪ তে (অফেরতযোগ্য) জমা দিতে হবে।							
১৮	গ্রুপ	সংক্ষিপ্ত বিবরণ	দলিলের মূল্য	টেন্ডার সিকিউরিটির পরিমাণ	মন্তব্য					
	ক.	খাদ্য ও খাদ্যানুসংগিক (পচনশীল ও অপচনশীল)	২০০০/-	দলিল মোতাবেক	সরকারি শিশু পরিবার, (বালক) নেত্রকোণার জন্য প্রযোজ্য					
	খ.	শিক্ষা, স্বাস্থ্য, সাধারণ পোশাক, প্রসাধনী ও অন্যান্য	৮০০/-	দলিল মোতাবেক	ঐ					
	ঙ.	বিবিধ মালামাল	১০০০/-	দলিল মোতাবেক	ঐ					
১৯.	দরপত্র আহ্বানকারী কর্মকর্তার নামঃ তারেক হোসেন।									
২০.	দরপত্র আহ্বানকারী কর্মকর্তার পদবীঃ উপ-তত্ত্বাবধায়ক।									
২১.	দরপত্র আহ্বানকারী কর্মকর্তার ঠিকানাঃ উপ-তত্ত্বাবধায়কের কার্যালয়, সরকারি শিশু পরিবার (বালক), নেত্রকোণা।									
২২.	দরপত্র আহ্বানকারী কর্মকর্তার সাথে যোগাযোগের নাম্বারঃ ০১৩০৩-৬৫৩৯৬১/০১৭২২-৩০৫৯৪২									
২৩.	শর্তাবলীঃ									
(ক) পিপিএ ২০০৬ এবং পিপিআর-২০০৮ (সংশোধিতসহ) এ প্রদত্ত ত্রয় সংশ্লিষ্ট শর্তকি স্বাযথভাবে অনুসরণ করা হবে।										
(খ) পূর্নিত দরদাতার নিকট হতে উদ্ধৃত দরের ১০% পারফরমেন্স সিকিউরিটির অর্থ প্রাপ্তি সাপেক্ষে কার্যদেশ প্রদান করা হবে।										
(গ) “ঙ” গ্রুপের ক্ষেত্রে বরাদ্দ প্রাপ্তি সাপেক্ষে কার্যদেশ প্রদান করা হবে।										
(ঘ) কর্তৃপক্ষ কার্য দর্শনো ব্যতিরেকে যেকোন দরপত্র বাতিলের ক্ষমতা সংরক্ষণ করেন।										
(ঙ) বিশেষ নির্দেশনাঃ বিস্তারিত তথ্য দরপত্রের দলিলে বর্ণিত আছে।										

তারেক হোসেন

উপ-তত্ত্বাবধায়ক

মোবাইলঃ ০১৭২২-৩০৫৯৪২

[dys.sspb.netrokona@dss.gov.bd](mailto:dys.sspb.netrokona@dss.gov.bd)

GD-677

বাংলাদেশ ব্যাংক

(সেন্ট্রাল ব্যাংক অব বাংলাদেশ)

প্রধান কার্যালয়

মতিঝিল, ঢাকা-১০০০

ব্যাংকার্স সিলেকশন কমিটি সভাব্যবস্থা

তারিখঃ ২৯ চৈত্র ১৪২৯

১২ এপ্রিল ২০২৩

৭টি ব্যাংক ও ১টি আর্থিক প্রতিষ্ঠানে ২০১৯ সাল জিডিক 'অফিসার (জেনারেল)' (Job ID-10126) এর ২৪৭৮টি শূন্য পদে নিয়োগের লক্ষ্যে লিখিত পরীক্ষায় উত্তীর্ণ প্রার্থীদের মৌখিক পরীক্ষার আশিত পরিবর্তিত সময়সূচি।

ব্যাংকার্স সিলেকশন কমিটির সভাপতিত্ব ৭টি ব্যাংক ও ১টি আর্থিক প্রতিষ্ঠানে ২০১৯ সাল জিডিক 'অফিসার (জেনারেল)' এর সর্বমোট ২৪৭৮টি শূন্য পদে নিয়োগের লক্ষ্যে লিখিত পরীক্ষায় উত্তীর্ণ ৮৮৫৫ জন প্রার্থীর মৌখিক পরীক্ষা গ্রহণের সময়সূচী সংক্রান্ত একটি নিজটি নং-২৫/২০২৩ বিসত ১৬/০৩/২০২৩ তারিখে প্রচার করা হয়। একদল, আগামী ০২/০৫/২০২৩ হতে ১২/০৫/২০২৩ পর্যন্ত শুধুমাত্র বিকাল সেশনের পূর্ব নির্ধারিত মৌখিক পরীক্ষার সময়সূচী নিম্নোক্তভাবে পরিবর্তন করা হলোঃ

পরীক্ষার্থীদের রোল নম্বর	পূর্ববর্তী সময়সূচী	পরিবর্তিত সময়সূচী
162653, 162732, 162808, 162862, 162874, 162875, 162880, 162898, 162937, 162977, 162978, 162984, 163011, 163015, 163037, 163062, 163072, 163078, 163152, 163190, 163191, 163205, 163217, 163231, 163236, 163254, 163268, 163276, 163281, 163287, 163288, 163297, 163315, 163369, 163393, 163395, 163402, 163438, 163446, 163451, 163476, 163487, 163504, 163523, 163539, 163562, 163684, 163696, 163743, 163775, 163781, 163826, 163882, 163905, 163955, 163964, 163965, 164039, 164057, 164063, 164076, 164094, 164114, 164129, 164150, 164190, 164199, 164232, 164269, 164279, 164286, 164289, 164294, 164299, 164334 = 75 জন	০২/০৫/২০২৩ দুপুর ০১:৩০ টা	০২/০৭/২০২৩ (রবিবার) দুপুর ০১:৩০ টা
165428, 165436, 165462, 165480, 165481, 165483, 165501, 165503, 165517, 165525, 165538, 165551, 165599, 165739, 165796, 165818, 165927, 165936, 165944, 165955, 165971, 165979, 166022, 166038, 166143, 166201, 166202, 166224, 166284, 166294, 166312, 166319, 166500, 166537, 166547, 166554, 166607, 166624, 166635, 166683, 166711, 166724, 166734, 166772, 166799, 166816, 166857, 166859, 166869, 166889, 166901, 166941, 166954, 166964, 166976, 167019, 167033, 167038, 167067, 167127, 167144, 167148, 167156, 167168, 167213, 167221, 167227, 167274, 167277, 167303, 167317, 167337, 167347, 167409, 167429 = 75 জন	০৩/০৫/২০২৩ দুপুর ০১:৩০ টা	১০/০৭/২০২৩ (সোমবার) দুপুর ০১:৩০ টা
169007, 169022, 169035, 169042, 169047, 169061, 169075, 169081, 169117, 169134, 169136, 169163, 169257, 169288, 169289, 169316, 169351, 169357, 169374, 169391, 169403, 169453, 169501, 169502, 169567, 169584, 169611, 169620, 169631, 169636, 169661, 169735, 169778, 169824, 169871, 169909, 169910, 169918, 169924, 169930, 170002, 170049, 170057, 170085, 170110, 170121, 170142, 170170, 170175, 170182, 170187, 170218, 170231, 170238, 170245, 170288, 170294, 170334, 170339, 170350, 170384, 170423, 170482, 170522, 170547, 170550, 170613, 170638, 170686, 170704, 170737, 170749, 170782, 170787, 170815, 170831 = 75 জন	০৭/০৫/২০২৩ দুপুর ০১:৩০ টা	১২/০৭/২০২৩ (মঙ্গলবার) দুপুর ০১:৩০ টা
172021, 172030, 172039, 172057, 172119, 172147, 172172, 172179, 172255, 172271, 172304, 172306, 172312, 172431, 172472, 172497, 172537, 172542, 172554, 172612, 172628, 172635, 172640, 172683, 172698, 172784, 173076, 173083, 173097, 173103, 173169, 173188, 173197, 173211, 173216, 173229, 173239, 173251, 173253, 173255, 173256, 173278, 173282, 173299, 173312, 173322, 173386, 173389, 173409, 173421, 173432, 173488, 173538, 173572, 173681, 173688, 173709, 173714, 173731, 173742, 173776, 173782, 173795, 173805, 173825, 173838, 173859, 173872, 173893, 173906, 173932, 173935, 173939, 173970, 173978 = 75 জন	০৮/০৫/২০২৩ দুপুর ০১:৩০ টা	১২/০৭/২০২৩ (বুধবার) দুপুর ০১:৩০ টা
176552, 176571, 176633, 176657, 176674, 176691, 176694, 176719, 176722, 176723, 176725, 176732, 176745, 176768, 176788, 176824, 176833, 176845, 176849, 176883, 176897, 176906, 176914, 176925, 176951, 176962, 176964, 177004, 177011, 177088, 177092, 177115, 177127, 177155, 177192, 177201, 177204, 177230, 177274, 177278, 177344, 177369, 177427, 177437, 177449, 177452, 177467, 177471, 177494, 177533, 177542, 177545, 177646, 177677, 177706, 177729, 177769, 177777, 177846, 177853, 177891, 177918, 177921, 177933, 177964, 178045, 178080, 178105, 178148, 178160, 178195, 178197, 178241, 178246, 178274 = 75 জন	০৯/০৫/২০২৩ দুপুর ০১:৩০ টা	১৩/০৭/২০২৩ (বৃহস্পতিবার) দুপুর ০১:৩০ টা
180025, 180034, 180056, 180064, 180095, 180098, 180103, 180111, 180114, 180115, 180142, 180160, 180164, 180168, 180223, 180243, 180268, 180269, 180274, 180298, 180350, 180361, 180364, 180367, 180395, 180417, 180439, 180440, 180441, 180443, 180456, 180458, 180485, 180493, 180495, 180510, 180512, 180514, 180523, 180535, 180536, 180545, 180548, 180550, 180637, 180639, 180643, 180646, 180659, 180736, 180740, 180749, 180757, 180758, 180771, 180772, 180786, 180797, 180800, 180812, 180816, 180817, 180836, 180841, 180854, 180867, 180905, 180908, 180941, 181041, 181055, 181119, 181127 = 73 জন	১০/০৫/২০২৩ দুপুর ০১:৩০ টা	১৬/০৭/২০২৩ (রবিবার)
182818, 182876, 182916, 182945, 182947, 182958, 182961, 182969, 183012, 183034, 183042, 183055, 183093, 183102, 183108, 183123, 183171, 183213, 183244, 183323, 183331, 183344, 183357, 183366, 183426, 183444, 183456, 183510, 183543, 183612, 183626, 183627, 183632, 183634, 183650, 183664, 183684, 183765, 183803, 183857, 183923, 183943, 183956, 183958, 184048, 184055, 184088, 184141, 184150, 184157, 184178, 184180, 184216, 184221, 184232, 184234, 184268, 184282, 184287, 184312, 184321, 184329, 184362, 184380, 184392, 184401, 184417, 184420, 184425, 184440, 184443, 184460, 184496, 184504, 184511 = 75 জন	১১/০৫/২০২৩ দুপুর ০১:৩০ টা	১৭/০৭/২০২৩ (সোমবার) দুপুর ০১:৩০ টা

২. উপবিধিগত ০৭টি সেশন বাতীত অন্যান্য সকল সেশনের মৌখিক পরীক্ষার সময়সূচী নিম্ন ১৬/০৫/২০২৩ তারিখের প্রকাশিত নিজটি নং-২৫/২০২৩ অনুসারে অপরিবর্তিত থাকবে। এছাড়া, ১৬/০৫/২০২৩ তারিখের নিজটি নং-২৫/২০২৩ এর সকল নির্দেশনা অপরিবর্তিত থাকবে।

DCP:48/2023-995  
Date: 12-08-2023

যাকরিজ:-  
(মোঃ সাঈদুর রহমান খান)  
পরিচালক (বিএসসিএস),  
বাংলাদেশ ব্যাংক  
ও  
সভাপতি, সিএসসি

ব্যাংকিং ও আর্থিক সেবা খেতে হররমির শিকার হয়েছিবা  
কোনো অভিযোগ থাকলে ১৬২৬৬ নম্বরে ফোন করুন।

GD-684



# Attacks on Bengali culture WILL NOT GO VERY FAR

## RAMENDU MAJUMDAR

SHAH ALAM SHAZU

The renowned cultural personality is the current honorary president of the International Theatre Institute (ITI). Previously, he was the two-time president of the ITI.

Recently, a legal notice has been issued against 'Mongol Shobhajatra'. Speaking to The Daily Star, Ramendu Majumdar shared his thoughts on the issue.

"On the first day of the Bengali New Year, we all come together. This day belongs to all Bengalis. Everyone celebrates this day, irrespective of religion or caste. On this special day, for the welfare of people, 'Mongol Shobhajatra' is also celebrated. That's why I will say that 'Mongol Shobhajatra' is also for everyone."

"If this is mixed with religion, it will be unfair. They are two different things. The 'Mongol Shobhajatra' has even been recognised by UNESCO as an intangible cultural heritage."

"Pahela Baishakh is the main non-communal festival celebrated by Bengalis. So many things are tied with this festival. From the perspective of the Bengali consciousness, this is a very important day. It's that one day everyone celebrates together, which is not possible during other festivals. Pahela Baishakh is very important for our national life."

"A legal notice has been served opposing the celebration of 'Mongol Shobhajatra'. However, I believe this will not last. I don't know who is behind this, but it has also happened in the past. Since the time of Pakistan, they have been trying to suppress the Bengali consciousness. Thankfully, we are protesting against this notice and this will continue to grow louder. The collective cultural alliance has come forth to protest this notice."

"I believe that this notice will have no impact on the upcoming festivities of Pahela Baishakh. Rather, more people will gather on this day than ever before. Because it's a day for all Bengalis. These attacks on Bengali culture will not go very far. But it must be actively stopped, because evil forces like these need to be defeated. In the end, the truth will always win."

"How many times have we been hit? Many years ago, our language was attacked. But those evil forces were vanquished. We won. We were able to move from a cultural battle to a political one back then. And we will do it again."



PHOTOS: SHEIKH MEHEDI MORSHED

Renowned thespian and Ekushey Padak winner, Ramendu Majumdar, has been an essential figure in the theatre arena of Bangladesh. He is one of the pioneers in Bangladesh's theatre movement and is part of one of the most popular theatre troupes, 'Theatre'.



## Nusraat Faria calls Bhabna's painting a 'masterpiece'

Nusraat Faria loves collecting paintings and is an art enthusiast by heart. Recently, she shared a picture on her Facebook account, where she posed in front of a painting by actress Ashna Habib Bhabna.

The actress would also write a heartwarming caption to go along with the photo. In the picture, Nusraat Faria can be seen in a stunning off-shoulder orange dress.

"The picture I am standing in front of speaks for me and a lot of women in general. I am so happy Ashna Habib Bhabna allowed me to have her masterpieces all over my home. Thankful and blessed," read the post.

The *Bibaho Obhijaan* actress has collected about five paintings by Bhabna.

## Rihanna becomes most followed woman on Twitter

Global icon Rihanna has overtaken

Katy Perry to become the most-followed woman on Twitter. The *Umbrella* singer is now the fourth-most followed person on the platform in the world.

Following her worldwide success in the music, fashion, and cosmetics industries, the news marks a huge milestone in the pop icon's career.

According to Social Blade, the *Life Me Up* singer has 108,278,326 followers on Instagram.

After Rihanna, Justin Bieber, is third with 113,171,252 followers. Former President Barack Obama, is second with 132,941,739 followers while Elon Musk, the new owner of Twitter, is in first place, with 134,341,896 followers.

# NEWS

## Deadliest first quarter for Med migrants

FROM PAGE 12

"The complete absence of response to a seventh case claimed the lives of at least 73 migrants," it said in a statement, adding that non-governmental organisations' search and rescue efforts have markedly diminished in recent months.

"Over the Easter weekend, 3,000 migrants reached Italy, bringing the total number of arrivals so far this year to 31,192 people," the IOM said.

The UN agency's Missing Migrants Project is also investigating several reports of cases in which boats were reported missing, where there are no records of survivors, no remains and no SAR operations.

The fates of more than 300 people aboard those vessels remain unclear, the organisation said.

"Saving lives at sea is a legal obligation for states," said Vitorino.

"We need to see proactive, state-led coordination in search-and-rescue efforts. Guided by the spirit of responsibility sharing and solidarity, we call on states to work together and work to reduce loss of life along migration routes."

The IOM said the situation in the central Mediterranean reinforced the need for predictable state-led SAR, putting an end to the "ad hoc response" since the end of the Italian navy's Operation Mare Nostrum in 2014.

Countries needed to support the life-saving efforts of NGOs and end the "criminalisation, obstruction and deterrence" of those who do come to the rescue, it said.

"All maritime vessels, including

commercial ships, have a legal obligation to provide rescue to boats in distress," it added.

The agency also called for tougher action to dismantle criminal smuggling networks and to prosecute those responsible for "profiting from the desperation of migrants and refugees by facilitating dangerous journeys".

Even as the IOM released its findings, the Tunisian coastguard said yesterday that 10 migrants had drowned off the coast after their boat was wrecked in the Mediterranean.

"Seventy-two migrants were rescued and 10 bodies recovered after Tuesday's shipwreck" off Tunisia's second city of Sfax, spokesman Houssein Jebabli said, adding that the dead were all from sub-Saharan Africa.

## Give it to us before you publish

FROM PAGE 12

announced that the BRTA will publish reports on road accidents from now on.

Until January this year, BRTA used Bangladesh Police's data on road crashes. But the BRTA started publishing its own accident data in January. The data from these two government agencies do not match.

According to the BRTA, 636 people were killed and 752 others injured in 630 road accidents in January and February. Police say 542 people were killed and 420 others injured in 557 road crashes during the same period.

However, the numbers are much lower than that provided by NGOs working on road safety.

Over the last five years, the country has witnessed three major movements, including a massive one in July and August 2018, demanding safe roads. Road Transport and Bridges Minister Obaidul Quader on many occasions admitted his failure to bring discipline on roads.

On Tuesday's letter, BRTA said different non-government organisations have been publishing road accident data only on the basis of newspaper and TV reports.

Although the sources of all these organisations are almost the same their data on road accidents vary from each other, which is creating confusion among people, it reads.

Road Safety Foundation says 564 people were killed and 1,097 injured in 486 road accidents in March this year while Bangladesh Jatri Kalyan Samity said 538 people were killed and 1,138 injured in 487 road accidents in the same month, it mentioned.

BRTA claimed that it has scrutinised Road Safety Foundation's documents which show 460 people were killed and 322 injured in 322 road accidents. BRTA also believed that the number would be less if it is checked on the spot, it said.

"In this given situation, it is requested to check the information regarding road accidents on the ground and inform BRTA before releasing such data on the basis of newspapers and electric media reports," reads the letter.

Asked about the allegations, Saidur Rahman, executive director of the Foundation, said they collected the data from newspaper reports.

As per the newspaper reports they counted, 502 people were killed in 362 road crashes on spot in March, he said.

But many accidents, particularly in rural areas go unreported and many injured people died at hospitals later, he said.

So, they added 124 accidents, 4 accidents per day, with 362 and 62 deaths, two per day, with 502 deaths, making the total number of accidents 486 and deaths 564, he told The Daily

Star yesterday.

"We have given the clarification to the authorities," he added.

Contacted, Mozammel Hoque Chowdhury, secretary general of Jatri Kalyan Samity, said the is a strategy to give pressure on them.

"They [authorities] have failed to control road crashes and now they want to intimidate us so that we don't publish road crashes data," he told The Daily Star yesterday.

Contacted, Ilias Kanchan, chairman of Nirapad Sarak Chai, said if the government takes such a decision, they will comply with it.

"There should have a scope to verify data," he told this correspondent yesterday.

Mahbub-E-Rabbani, also the spokespersons of BRTA, said they did not forbid the organisations to publish data but requested them to authenticate the data before publishing.

Asked whether BRTA can give such directives to non-government organisations, he said, "Can't we ask them to publish genuine data if they publish false data? We are not giving pressure but want them to publish genuine data."

Asked if anyone questions BRTA data as it mismatches with police data what they will say, he said, police data is based only on the cases and FIR filed over the accidents.

## Over half of Rana Plaza survivors unemployed

FROM PAGE 12

15,000, while around 19.5 percent have a monthly family income between Tk 15,001 and Tk 20,000, and 11 percent get more than Tk 20,000 per month, indicating that that the household income of majority of the respondents is insufficient to cover their family expenses.

Nearly half of the survivors reported a monthly expenditure of around Tk 15,000, while many respondents do not have any savings to rely on in case of unforeseen expenses, such as a health emergencies.

Farah Kabir, country director of ActionAid Bangladesh, said, "There have been positive changes but many of them are suffering both physically and mentally. The most important thing is they have not been able to find

economic opportunities to move on. Rana Plaza survivors need support to find an alternative livelihood."

Tuomo Poutiainen, country director, ILO Country Office for Bangladesh, said, "It is important to recognise the significant strides made in occupational safety and health in the garment industry following the Rana Plaza tragedy. It is the responsibility of the government to implement the policies and regulations to ensure the safety of all workers."

Julia Jesmin, joint inspector general of Department of Inspection for Factories and Establishments, Rajekuzzaman Ratan, general secretary of Somajtantrik Sramik Front, and Wajedul Islam Khan, general secretary of Trade Union Centre, among others, attended the event.

## Tributes pour

FROM PAGE 1

"The nation will remain indebted to him."

Zafrullah was a vascular surgeon alongside a public health expert. He was the architect of the National Drug Policy-1982, which aimed to supply expensive medicines at a cheaper price for ordinary people.

He had been suffering from kidney and liver ailments, and also septicemia after contracting Covid-19.

The ruling Awami League also expressed deep sorrow at his demise.

The BNP, in a condolence message, said Zafrullah was a great hero of the Liberation War and contributed to the welfare of the country and the people throughout his life.

Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir, the party's secretary general, said Zafrullah always came forward as a fearless soldier during all the crises faced by the country.

Rashed Khan Menon, president of Workers Party of Bangladesh, said Zafrullah's demise caused an irreparable loss to the civil rights and public health movement.

Sushashoner Jonno Nagorik in its message said Zafrullah worked for the people's welfare till his last breath.

Gonosshasthaya Kendra Trustee Board Chairperson Prof Altafunnesa Maya said Zafrullah earned due respect from every member of the

Gonosshasthaya family because of his dedication, morality and diligence.

"Gonosshasthaya has lost its guardian. The country has lost a legend."

Among others, Road Transport and Bridges Minister Obaidul Quader, Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan, Agriculture Minister Muhammad Abdur Razzaque, Information Minister Hasan Mahmud, Fisheries and Livestock Minister SM Rezaul Karim, Education Minister Dipu Moni, Commerce Minister Tipu Munshi, State Minister for Labour and Employment Begum Monnujan Sufian, State Minister for Cultural Affairs KM Khalid, and Deputy Minister for Water Resource AKM Enamul Hoque Shameem mourned his death.

Dr Zafrullah Chowdhury's body will be kept at the Central Shaheed Minar for three hours, from 10:00am to 1:00pm, today (Thursday) for people to pay their last respects.

He will be given a guard of honour there, Altafunnesa Maya said at a briefing yesterday.

From Shaheed Minar, his body will be taken to Suhrawardy Udyan, where his first namaz-e-janaza will be held at 2:30pm.

Tomorrow (Friday), his body will be taken to the Gonosshasthaya Kendra in Savar at 10:00am for his second namaz-e-janaza after Juma prayers.

## New Year

FROM PAGE 12

celebrated Biju, the festival of the Chakmas, and Bishu of the Tanchangyas by offering flowers in the Shankha river at sunrise yesterday.

This is the biggest social festival of the 11 ethnic minorities in CHT.

Tariqul Islam, superintendent of Bandarban police, said security measures have been taken on the occasion of the New Year celebrations.

[Our Rangamati and Bandarban correspondents contributed to this report.]

## 2,000 judges

FROM PAGE 12

Court last year. Of them, 79,000 were disposed of. That means 95 percent cases were settled, he said.

"We are hopeful that the judges will be able to solve the cases by working hard," he said.

Supreme Court Registrar Tofail Hasan, Jhenaidah District and Sessions Judge Md Nazimuddoula, and Deputy Commissioner SM Rafiqul Islam, among others, were present.

## New Israeli spyware

FROM PAGE 12

computers and cellphones by phishing communications and backdoor exploits, and can survey and transmit information on the phone back to an operator without the user's knowledge.

The White House said in late March that Pegasus has been used by governments "to facilitate repression and enable human rights abuses."

Citizen Lab said that, one placed on a user's phone or computer, QuDream's spyware can record audio from a phone call, record external sounds from a device's microphone, take pictures from cameras, and search the device's files, all without the user's knowledge.

The spyware can also generate its own two-factor authentication codes to enable continual access to the device owner's cloud accounts.

The spyware includes a self-destruct feature to hide its previous presence once it is no longer used, Citizen Lab said.

Citizen Lab identified servers in 10 countries that received data from victims' devices, including Israel, Singapore, Mexico, the United Arab Emirates and Bulgaria.



## EMBASSY REOPENING

## Iran delegation arrives in KSA

AFP, Tehran

An Iranian delegation arrived in Saudi Arabia yesterday, Tehran said, to pave the way for reopening diplomatic missions as the Gulf rivals prepare to normalise relations, seven years after an acrimonious split.

The announcement came just days after a Saudi delegation made a similar visit to Iran's capital, following a historic meeting in China between the two governments' foreign ministers who vowed to bring stability to the turbulent region.

"In accordance with the implementation of the agreement between Iran and Saudi Arabia on the resumption of diplomatic activities... the Iranian technical delegation arrived in Riyadh at midday Wednesday and was welcomed by Saudi officials," said Iran's foreign ministry spokesman Nasser Kanani.

## KILLING OF DOZENS IN SAGAING

## Outrage as Myanmar confirms deadly air strike

AFP, Yangon

Myanmar's ruling junta has confirmed that it carried out an air strike on a village in which dozens of people were reported killed, drawing condemnation from the United Nations and Western powers.

UN rights chief Volker Turk said he was "horrified" by the deadly air strike, whose victims he said included schoolchildren performing dances, with the global body calling for those responsible to be brought to justice.

The death toll from the Tuesday morning strike on the remote Kanbalu township in the central Sagaing region remains unclear, with at least 50 fatalities and dozens of injuries reported by BBC Burmese, The Irrawaddy and Radio Free Asia, as well as

by a witness contacted by AFP.

Myanmar's military has cracked down on dissent following a February 2021 coup that toppled Aung San Suu Kyi's civilian government, with the ensuing unrest leaving more than 3,200 people dead, a monitoring group said.

Tuesday's strike saw military aircraft strafe Pazi Gyi village, where scores of locals had gathered to mark the opening of a local defence force office connected to junta opponents.

One fighter jet and a helicopter were involved in the attack. The junta confirmed yesterday it had "launched limited air strikes" after receiving a tip-off from locals about the event.

It did not say how many were killed but insisted the military had tried to minimise harm to civilians.



## There will be conspiracies at home and abroad

FROM PAGE 1

through the recent construction of Padma Bridge, and earlier connected the northern region through construction of Bangabandhu Bridge over the Jamuna during its rule from 1996-2001.

The scope for connectivity through the entire country has been created. And so, Bangladesh is witnessing socio-economic development and will

continue to do so, she said.

She added her government has ensured electricity supply in 100 percent of the houses, and is ensuring healthcare services. It has raised the literacy rate, and reduced the child and maternal mortality rates.

Referring to the outcome of the recent Household Income and Expenditure Survey, the PM said the poverty rate declined to 18.7 percent from 41 percent in

2006, while the extreme poverty rate has come down to 5.6 percent from 25 percent in 2006.

"No person will remain 'an extreme poor' in the country," she said.

The PM further said her government proved that AL in power means an improvement of the fate of the people.

She said the BNP and Jatiya Party "were born from the pockets of military dictators".

"Parties like BNP and Jatiya Party did not emerge from the soil and the people ... Since the two parties came to power with guns, the people rejected them."

Criticising BNP leaders and like-minded people for not seeing the development of the country, she said, "They continue telling lies everyday using loudspeakers. I don't understand why they continue to do so even during Ramadan."

## A fighter till the end

FROM PAGE 1

I asked him whether he did this impulsively. He replied, "Tearing up the passport was a protest against the Pakistan army's genocide. I wanted to tell them 'You are killing us, so I am destroying your passport and rejecting Pakistani citizenship'."

In May 1971, Zafrullah and Dr Mobin decided to travel to Kolkata. The two had no passports and citizenship. They collected travel permits and started for Kolkata on a Syrian airlines flight. They had a stopover in Damascus, and trouble occurred there. The Pakistan government was keeping a watch on their movements and tried to arrest them with the help of the Syrian government.

All the passengers disembarked. The two friends, however, didn't get off the flight, sensing danger. They knew that police could not arrest anyone from an international flight.

A Pakistani colonel at the airport claimed, "Two of our citizens are on board. Hand them over to us." They continued negotiations for a long time. Finally, the Pakistani officer was informed that Zafrullah and Mobin were not carrying Pakistani passports. Rather, they were travelling with travel permits. This is how the two escaped arrest.

In late May, the two reached Agartala which was under sector-2 of the Liberation War. Zafrullah built a field hospital there. This hospital ultimately became Gonoshasthaya Kendra in the independent Bangladesh, which primarily took shape in Bismariganj village of Agartala.

Khaled Mosharraf, sector commander of sector-2, was running the war from that region. Injured freedom fighters were treated at that hospital named "Bangladesh Field Hospital". The hospital, made of bamboo and hay, had 480 beds and an operation theatre. Complicated surgeries were conducted there to save the lives of the badly injured freedom fighters.

The hospital was the brainchild of Zafrullah and Mobin, the only cardiac surgeon of Pakistan at the time. They trained a group of volunteers as paramedics who worked as nurses. Rights activist Sultana Kamal was one of

the nurses.

When the hospital was about to be set up in Bangladesh, objections were raised from the administration. Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, then president of the newly independent Bangladesh, heard about it. Zafrullah met Bangabandhu at the Secretariat. He recalled what Bangabandhu had said to him that day.

Zafrullah said to Bangabandhu, "Mujib Bhai, no permission is being given for Bangladesh Field Hospital."

"Actually, when the word 'Bangladesh' is there, it gives the impression that it's a state-run hospital. Choose a better name for the hospital," said Bangabandhu.

After a lot of arguments, Bangabandhu said, "You choose three names and I will pick three more. Then we two will select the best name for the hospital."

Zafrullah then chose three names and got back to Bangabandhu.

Bangabandhu inquired, "What name did you choose?"

Zafrullah said, "The first one is Bangladesh Field Hospital and the second option is Gonoshasthaya Kendra."

B a n g a b a n d h u stopped him and said, "Gonoshasthaya is a beautiful name. This will be the name of your hospital. It will not only provide medical treatment, but also will contribute to building the nation. Gonoshasthaya Kendra will have to work in the education, agriculture and health sectors as well."

Zohra Begum, MA Rob, a joint secretary of the Pakistan government, and Dr Lutfor Rahman donated five acres of land from their family estate at Savar. Bangabandhu acquired 23 acres and donated it to the hospital. The Bangladesh Field Hospital, which served during the Liberation War, started its journey as Gonoshasthaya Kendra in independent Bangladesh in 1972.

It is an organisation of the people. Zafrullah challenged the stereotypes against women and initiated women empowerment in his organisation. He trained women as electricians, carpenters, welders – jobs traditionally done by men.

Gonoshasthaya Kendra employed female drivers who used to drive jeeps on

the Dhaka-Aricha highway in 1982. The total number of its staffers is around 2,500, and 40 percent of them are women.

Zafrullah managed to continue his work even though his kidneys were failing. He had to undergo dialysis thrice a week. It is an expensive treatment in Dhaka and elsewhere in the country. Gonoshasthaya Kendra now provides dialysis service to more patients than all government and non-government hospitals combined.

Zafrullah built a 100-bed modern kidney dialysis centre at Gonoshasthaya Nagar Hospital. He used to say that this is the biggest dialysis centre in Asia and it's more developed than those in any other countries. It charges patients very little for this service.

Zafrullah's most remarkable contribution after the Liberation War was formulating the drug policy. The pharmaceutical market in independent Bangladesh was entirely controlled by the multinational companies. There were around 4,000 drugs in the market at that time, many of which were nonessential. Some of the medicines were produced locally and the most had to be imported.

Immediately after independence, Zafrullah dreamed of building a local pharmaceutical industry. He talked to Bangabandhu about this matter. Bangabandhu agreed with the proposal of importing medicines from socialist countries at discounted prices.

He also convinced former president Ziaur Rahman about the importance of developing the pharmaceutical industry. Zia wanted him to join his cabinet and work on a drug policy. But Zafrullah rejected the offer as Zia had anti-liberation persons with him. He clarified his position in a four-page letter written to Zia.

Zafrullah later convinced HM Ershad and ultimately formulated the drug policy. Out of the 4,500 drugs available in the market back then, 2,800 were banned.

Establishment and expansion of the local pharmaceutical industry are the outcomes of that historic policy. Now 95 percent of medicines

needed for more than 170 million people of the country are produced locally. Bangladesh also exports medicines now.

Zafrullah is criticised for keeping on good terms with the dictatorial governments of General Zia and Ershad. It is not untrue. Is Zafrullah the only person who maintained a good relationship with Zia and Ershad?

Through these relationships, Zafrullah did something for the country. Nobody can accuse him of using these relationships to serve his own interest.

Many people and some newspapers say that Gonoshasthaya Kendra is owned by Zafrullah. But the fact is, Zafrullah is the founder of the organisation, not the owner. He has no right in its property. No individual can claim its ownership either. The organisation is owned by the people of Bangladesh.

Zafrullah was awarded "Swadhinata Padak" – the country's highest state award. He is also a recipient of the Ramon Magsaysay award.

His hospital doesn't look like a posh five-star hotel. It provides treatment to the poor at nominal cost.

Throughout his life, Zafrullah did what he thought to be right. He never thought about the consequences of his actions.

At the beginning, I gave some ideas about Zafrullah's lifestyle in London. After the Liberation War, he radically changed his lifestyle. He would wear clothes until they were absolutely worn-out.

One day I asked him about this habit. Pointing to the shirt he was wearing, he said, "This shirt is 30 years old. It is still in good shape. Why should I change it?"

Zafrullah's Bangladesh Field Hospital served during the Liberation War. He is not physically present amongst us anymore. However, his organisation is with us and it will be here for a long time. The physician will remain alive lovingly in the hearts of the people. And, it is the people who will keep Gonoshasthaya Kendra alive forever.

[This article has been translated into English from Bengali by Md Shah Nawaz Khan Chandan.]

## BBC DOCU ON MODI

## Unaware why Twitter India pulled posts Says Elon Musk

REUTERS, Bengaluru

Elon Musk said yesterday he did not know "what exactly happened" when Twitter took down content related to a documentary critical of PM Narendra Modi earlier this year, adding that some rules related to social media content were "quite strict" in India.

In January, India ordered blocking of a BBC documentary which questioned Modi's leadership during 2002 Gujarat riots, saying that even sharing of any clips via social media was barred.

## Restore power-sharing

## Biden urges Northern Ireland's parties

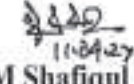
AFP, Belfast

US President Joe Biden urged political compromise in Northern Ireland yesterday, using a brief visit to promote benefits of enduring peace and investment, but faced criticism from pro-UK hardliners. "I hope the (Northern Ireland) Executive and Assembly will soon be restored," Biden said in a speech at Ulster University, urging feuding political leaders to restore power-sharing government which has been suspended since February last year. Biden touted the "unlimited possibilities" for investment and growth offered in the UK-ruled territory, 25 years on from a historic peace deal brokered by the US government. But peace must always be guarded, he added, saying January 6, 2021, riot in Washington had proved that in every generation, "democracy needs champions".

OFFICE OF THE BOGURA PAURASHAVA					
Phone No-02589902705, E-mail- bograpaurashava@yahoo.com					
Web- www.bograpaurashavabd.org.					
Memo No. Bog-Pou/Xen/2022-2023/799				Date: 11/04/2023	
Invitation for Tenders					
e-Tender (OTM) Notice No. 01/2022-2023					
e-Tender is invited in the National e-GP system portal ( <a href="http://www.eprocure.gov.bd">http://www.eprocure.gov.bd</a> ) for the procurement of the below schemes/Packages:					
Sl. No.	Tender ID No	Package No	Scheme Name	Tender Document Last Selling Date & Time	Tender Closing Date & Time
1	2	3	4	5	6
01	810674	LGCRPP/Bogura/2022-23/W-01	1) Improvement of BC Road, Drain & X- Drain Councillor Ward Office to Lalvita mour to Koton Shop ward no-08 (ch-00-540) , Link-1- Jamilnagar Sarker house to Green Lund Hooging ward no-08 (ch-0-150 m) under Bogura Paurashava,Bogura. (2) i) Construction of BC road with RCC drain from Kazikhana mor to Shamol house via Mou Clinic, length= (Ch 0-300m) at ward no-10, Under bogura pourashava, Bogura.(ii) Construction of RCC drain from Mosto house to Cader madrasa, length= (Ch 0-300m) at ward no-10, Under bogura pourashava, Bogura.(iii) . Construction of BC road from Zabbar road to Rahman nagar road, Length= (Ch 0-750.0m) at ward no-10 under bogura pourashava, Bogura. (3) Construction of RCC road fromm Shopno super shop to Malotinagar mor via Pour bokshi bazar, Length= (Ch 0- 756m) at ward no-11, under bogura pourashava, Bogura. (4) i) Construction of RCC road fromm Gohail road (TVS showroom) to Sutrapur central Eidgah, Length= (Ch 0- 260m) at ward no-09, under bogura pourashava, Bogura. (ii) Construction of RCC drain with slab & side CC work fromm Carmichael road (Wonderland park) to Poura Existing drain, Length= (Ch 0- 250m) at ward no-09, under bogura pourashava, Bogura.	08-May-2023 16:00	09-May-2023 13:00
02	810675	LGCRPP/Bogura/2022-23/W-02	1) Construction of new carpeting road at Manik Chalk Utom House to manik chalk Madina Mosque, Length= (Ch 0- 780.0m) in Ward No.19 under Bogura Paurashava, Bogura.(2) Construction of BC road from Upashor bazar road to 1st by-pass via councillor office & link Mr.Rofiq house, Length= (Ch 0-1100+ link 100.0m)= 1200.00m at ward no-16, under bogura pourashava, Bogura.(3) Improvement Carpeting Road at shotto kumira to Horo kumira Primary school ( Ch-00.00-1188.00 m ) ward no: 15 Under Bogura Paurashava, Bogura.		
03	810677	LGCRPP/Bogura/2022-23/W-03	1) Construction of RCC drain from (Matidali road) to Aramola Jame mosque in Bridabon Para , Length= (Ch 0- 385.0m) at ward no-02 under bogura pourashava, Bogura. (2) i) Construction of BC road from Upashor main road (Rayel Palace) to Mr.Mondol house in upashor housing road no-26, Length = (Ch 0-185.0m).(ii) Construction of BC road in upashor housing road no-27, Length = (Ch 0-180.0m). (iii) Construction of BC road in upashor housing road no-15 via road no-11& 12 Length = (Ch 0-350.0m). (iv) Construction of BC road in upashor housing road no-04, Length = (Ch 0- 420.0m) at ward no-04 Under Bogura Pourashava, Bogura. (3) Construction of RCC road with drain from Rail line to Chelopara madrasa , Length= (Ch 0-330.0m) at ward no-06 under bogura pourashava, Bogura. (4) Construction of CC road & drain with slab at sarali badsha nagar, Length= (Ch 0- 1195.0m) at ward no-20, under bogura pourashava, Bogura. (5) Construction of BC road from Baropur Moddho para (Mozid house) to Afriza house via Saiful house , Length=(Ch 0-520.0m) at ward no-17 under bogura pourashava, Bogura.		
04	810678	LGCRPP/Bogura/2022-23/W-04	1) Construction of RCC Road with Drain. from Manik (Tea Stof) to Fultola Baitul Aman Jame Mosque at ward no-13 Under Bogura pourashava, Bogura. Length= (Ch 0-0- 200.0)M. (2) Construction of BC road from Keetona road (Ulka math) to farhad shop in chalk lokman, Length=(Ch 0- 360.0m) at ward no-21 under bogura pourashava, Bogura. (3) Construction of BC road from malgrum (Three star mor) to Mr. Khairul house, Length= (Ch 0-320.0m) at ward no-14 under bogura pourashava, Bogura. (4) Construction of RCC road (i) Binda mor to lighth house road, Length= (Ch 0- 285.0m) . (ii) Hafizar mor to Abul kalam house, Length= (Ch 0-180.0m) & (iii). Mr. Atik house road , length= (Ch 0- 60.0m) in Zahurul nagar at ward no-04 under bogura pourashava, Bogura.		

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 is required.

The fee for downloading the e-Tender Documents from the National e-GP system portal have to be deposited on line through any registered banks branches up to 17.00 on 08-May-2023 Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP system portal and from help desk ([helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd](mailto:helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd))

  
**(S. M Shafiqul Islam)**  
 Executive Engineer  
 Bogura Paurashava, Bogura



## A life lived to the fullest

Dr Zafrullah Chowdhury will be remembered for his tireless pro-people activism

We're deeply saddened by the news of the passing of Dr Zafrullah Chowdhury, 81, who breathed his last at the Gonoshasthaya Nagar Hospital in Dhaka on Tuesday. Few stars in the socio-political firmament of Bangladesh shone as bright and for as long as he did. As Victor Hugo once said, "Short as life is, we make it still shorter by the careless waste of time." Life's potential, seen through this lens, is measured by not how long it is but how well and meaningfully it is lived, and Dr Zafrullah Chowdhury has surely lived his to the fullest. As a nation, we couldn't be prouder that he chose to do so in the service of our people, tirelessly working for them until the last days of his life.

Affectionately called "people's doctor" because of his lifelong work in public health, Dr Zafrullah's name will be forever etched in our history as the man who had founded Bangladesh Field Hospital to treat wounded freedom fighters during the War of Liberation. It was the seed of what would later be Gonoshasthaya Kendra post-independence. Designed to mainly serve the poor and disadvantaged, the centre would go on to have a revolutionary effect not just in the public health sector but also in the public perception of women, who make up 40 percent of the workforce at this multidimensional organisation. Today, it includes projects ranging from primary healthcare centres and hospitals, community schools, agricultural cooperatives, women's vocational training centres, to economic enterprises to help finance its Trust activities. But its most obvious success is its primary healthcare programme (mainly in the villages) which benefits over a million people.

Another notable achievement of Dr Zafrullah was his leading role in formulating the National Drug Policy, 1982, which served as a cornerstone of today's robust pharmaceutical industry in Bangladesh. His vision and activism in the dark days of the pandemic in Bangladesh were also exemplary. Overall, the scope of his works was as enormous as their effect. And the awards and accolades he received in the process were also legion. Among them were the Independence Award (Swadhinata Padak), the highest state honour given by Bangladesh government; a "Certificate of Commendation" for his contributions during the War of Liberation; the Swedish Youth Peace Prize for founding Gonoshasthaya Kendra and providing primary healthcare to rural communities; Maulana Bhashani Award; Ramon Magsaysay Award; The Right to Livelihood Award, Sweden; One World Action Award, UK; Fr. Tong Memorial Award, India; Doctor of Humanitarian Sciences Award, Canada, etc.

Despite all his achievements, Dr Zafrullah lived an ordinary life. He epitomised the philosophy of "simple living, high thinking" – and to his credit, he knew how to realise his thoughts and visions into a reality. His deep love for his country and the people also drove him to tirelessly campaign on various socio-political issues. Every time there was an injustice, he was among the first to speak up. So as we try to process the loss of this illustrious son of our soil, we can only hope that his rich legacy of pro-people, pro-poor activism will live on.

## Why are C-sections on the rise?

Take urgent measures to check the trend

We are alarmed to learn that the number of caesarean deliveries in the country has gone up amid lack of proper guidelines and interventions from the health authorities. According to a report of Bangladesh Demographic and Health Survey (BDHS) published recently, the number of C-sections performed in Bangladesh increased to at least 45 percent of all deliveries during 2020-2021, while it was 34 percent during 2017-2018 and 18 percent in 2011. The upward trend has been witnessed in both private and government healthcare facilities, even though this practice puts the health of both mothers and newborn children at unnecessary health risks. The question is, has the government done anything to check the trend?

Details of the BDHS survey are quite eye-opening. It has found that, of all the C-sections performed, 84 percent are done in private healthcare facilities, 14 percent are done in government hospitals, and two percent in different NGO-run facilities. Understandably, as the usually understaffed, under-bedded but overloaded government hospitals fail to properly cater to the needs of expectant mothers, private facilities have come up with healthcare packages for them in exchange for huge profits. In the majority of cases, doctors there suggest expectant mothers to have a Caesarean delivery instead of going for a natural birth. This happens even if they do not have any prior health complications for them to require such a procedure. It is this profit-driven mindset of private healthcare facilities that is leading to an uncontrollable increase in C-sections across the country. This trend must stop.

However, it must be acknowledged that in the last few decades, the government, with assistance from private organisations, took some much-needed initiatives including strengthening maternal and neonatal care at the upazila healthcare facilities, improving the midwifery services to ensure safe motherhood and decrease newborn deaths, and ensuring the availability of life-saving drugs, all of which have brought some positive results. We have seen a significant decrease in the maternal and child mortality rates. The BDHS survey has also revealed that the number of facility deliveries increased from 51 percent in 2017 to 65 percent in 2022, which is definitely a very positive achievement. But little has been done to discourage doctors from performing unnecessary C-sections, which is worrying.

We urge the government to formulate the necessary policy and guidelines to stop unnecessary C-sections. In this regard, there should be a mechanism in place to oversee the activities of private hospitals in particular, and all health facilities in general. According to the World Health Organization, the "ideal rate" for C-sections has to be between 10 and 15 percent of all deliveries – because on average, 10 to 15 mothers in every 100 pregnancies may experience some problem during childbirth. Our healthcare professionals must follow the WHO guidelines. C-sections should only be performed in cases where surgery is a must to save the life of expectant mother and child.

# The price of expensive development



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

KALLOL MUSTAFA

In 2014, when many international organisations including the World Bank were busy praising Sri Lanka for "sustaining development," a non-profit organisation named the Sri Lanka Campaign for Peace and Justice published a report titled "Roads paved with gold," which raised questions about the economic viability of expensive construction projects undertaken by the country, with loans taken mostly from China, Japan and the Asian Development Bank (ADB). The report mentioned that Sri Lanka's roads cost three and a half times the global average, and in some cases cost 11 times the cost of an Indian motorway, which was the result of "corruption at every level of the system, and that many people from the top of the process to the very bottom have taken a cut."

Sri Lanka's ruling elites did not pay heed to these questions. They continued to build grandiose and unaffordable public projects that served to distract both their people and the international community from the serious flaws in the island nation's economy. Initially, this huge expense in construction activities contributed to high GDP growth, but when it became evident that the country could no longer continue to borrow for newer construction projects, and the newly built highways, ports or airports failed to generate additional foreign currency earnings to pay back the loans, the economic growth started to slow down. These expensive, foreign debt-dependent projects, combined with other factors such as huge commercial loans from international markets, low tax-GDP ratio, budget deficit, decline of tourism and remittance earnings, and corruption, caused the serious economic crisis for which ordinary Sri Lankans are still suffering.

Although the fundamentals of Bangladesh's economy are different from that of Sri Lanka's in many respects, there are some eerie similarities – especially in the aspects of the public-sector-construction-led development model. Bangladesh too, has undertaken many construction activities that have been termed some of the most expensive construction projects in the world. The cost of road construction per kilometre is much higher in Bangladesh than in neighbouring India and China, and even in Europe. Construction of a four-lane road costs \$1.1-1.3 million per kilometre in India, \$1.3-1.6 million in China, and \$2.5-3.5 million in Europe. But in Bangladesh, according to the World Bank, the estimated cost of construction is \$6.6 million per



ILLUSTRATION: BIPLOB CHAKROBORTY

kilometre for the Rangpur-Hatikumrul highway, \$7 million per kilometre for Dhaka-Sylhet highway, \$11.9 million per kilometre for Dhaka-Mawa highway, and \$2.5 million per kilometre for Dhaka-Chattogram and Dhaka-Mymensingh highways. That means the construction cost of any road in Bangladesh is two to nine times of that in India and China and is as much as double the cost in Europe, although the cost of labour in Bangladesh is quite low compared to these countries.

The Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) project in Dhaka has also been named as the most expensive in the world. Usually a BRT takes less time and cost to build as it is built on the existing roads. The average cost of BRT construction in the world is \$ 6 million per kilometre, but in Bangladesh the cost is \$26 million per kilometre for the Airport-Gazipur BRT line. It's a classic case of delay and cost overruns during project implementation. When the 20.5km BRT project was taken up in 2012, the cost was estimated at Tk 2,040 crore, which doubled to Tk 4,264 crore by 2018.

The construction cost of the first Mass Rapid Transit (metro rail) project in Dhaka is also more than double the cost of that built in other countries in recent times. The construction of Phase I of the North-South line of the Jakarta MRT project in Indonesia

nearly \$1.63 million – \$60 million per kilometre.

In Dhaka, the cost of constructing the 21.26km MRT line between Uttara and Kamalapur is Tk 33,472 crore or nearly \$3.35 billion (considering \$1-Tk 100), i.e. the cost per kilometre is \$157 million – more than double the cost of the Jakarta and Lahore MRT lines.

The construction cost of power plants in Bangladesh is also much higher than the global average. According to a study published in the journal *Frontiers in Energy Research*, the global mean cost of a gas-based power plant, ultra-super-critical coal power plant, and nuclear power plant are \$551, \$1,600 and \$4,474 per kilowatt, respectively, but in Bangladesh the costs are \$1,177, \$3,343 and \$5,625 per kilowatt, respectively.

The cost of power plant construction here is also higher than that in India by \$500-4,000 per kilowatt. The Rooppur Nuclear Power Plant (RNPP) and India's Kudankulam Nuclear Plant are both being built by Russian company Rosatom, but according to a study published in the journal *Environmental Science and Pollution Research*, the construction cost in Bangladesh is \$5,271 per kilowatt, which is about 69 percent higher than India's cost of \$3,125 per kilowatt. As a result, the cost per unit of power generation in Bangladesh's nuclear power plants (9.36 cents/kWh) will be 75 percent

have to be incorporated at later stages, which invariably delays the project and raises the cost. In almost all megaprojects, these issues arise with no one held accountable or punished, and the taxpayers end up paying the price.

The high construction costs and consequently high fare rates of the first metro rail in Dhaka is an example of how people have to pay if the construction cost of a project increases abnormally. In 2021, the fare determination committee of metro rail calculated that the daily expense for MRT-6 would be Tk 2.33 crore. Of that, nearly Tk 1.54 crore will be needed for foreign debt repayment and Tk 49.91 lakh to meet government expenses. After that, due to the increase in the construction cost, the estimated daily expense of metro rail increased to over Tk 3.36 crore. To meet this higher expense, the metro rail fare has been increased from the initially (in 2021) proposed Tk 2.40 to Tk 5 per kilometre.

As a result of this cost escalation of megaprojects, people have to spend extra money in terms of tolls, fares and utility prices, and the burden of direct and indirect taxes on the people increases as well. Due to the increase in the amount of foreign debt repayment, pressure on our foreign exchange reserves also increases, which ultimately stands in the way of sustainable economic development.

## Politics is not a T20 game



THE STREET VIEW

Mohammad Al-Masum Molla is chief reporter at The Daily Star.

MOHAMMAD AL-MASUM MOLLA

Awami League General Secretary Obaidul Quader speaks to the media almost every day, and the BNP, quite predictably, is one of the key topics he addresses. Sometimes he is funny, sometimes he makes interesting points. One such comment caught my attention, because it is significant in the face of the upcoming parliamentary elections. On Monday, Quader said although BNP was yet to show any interest in taking part in the next general elections, many leaders of the party were secretly preparing for the polls. He said many BNP leaders and activists were communicating about the elections. "Among you [BNP leaders], there are many leaders like Ukil Abdus Sattar [Bhuiyan]. Many leaders are looking for a way to participate in the elections and are communicating secretly. Wait and see."

There are two points to consider in Quader's comment: one is that some BNP leaders may leave the party and take part in the upcoming elections; and the second – and possibly more

important – point is that they are communicating secretly. Although he did not mention with whom, the hint was obvious: it's with the ruling party, as he said there are many like Ukil Abdus Sattar – who broke away from the party to contest the by-election to Brahmanbaria-2 constituency independently – in the BNP.

Let's look at the first point. The BNP has been out of office for nearly 17 years. This is the longest period for the party's leaders and activists to remain out of power since the party was founded. Apart from that, the face of the party, party chief Khaleda Zia, has remained inactive in party affairs since 2018, and the party's second-in-command, Tarique Rahman, has been in London since 2008. So, it was a difficult task for the party to keep its leaders and activists united. And it is no secret that the ruling party of the day always wants to split the opposition through various means. So far, the BNP has been successful to cope with such tactics as none of the

stalwarts have abandoned the party.

But this time, it is rather challenging. To make the general elections credible, the Election Commission as well as the government will try to convince the BNP to participate in the elections. Since the BNP said it would not do so under the incumbent government, it would not be surprising if anyone left the party to contest in the elections as an independent candidate.

There are two reasons for this. First, almost all the prospective candidates of the BNP are facing a number of cases, and many want to get rid of them and return to normal lives. Leaving the party and contesting the elections as independent candidates may be a good way out of that situation. The second reason is that there are significant grievances in the party as many did not get expected posts and many have been cornered within the party for quite a long time. So, the ruling party might cash in on those grievances. It will serve two purposes simultaneously – splitting the party and making the elections seemingly inclusive.

So, if the BNP does not contest the elections and fails to convey its message properly to the grassroots, the party may face trouble, even if, so far, it has remained intact.

The second point of Quader's comment is that there are many Ukil Abdus Sattars in the BNP who are communicating secretly. We all know how a seasoned BNP leader like Ukil

Abdus Sattar Bhuiyan got elected in the Brahmanbaria-2 by-polls. The ruling party exercised their maximum strength to ensure the victory of Abdus Sattar (who was elected five times with the BNP ticket and was a technocrat minister during the BNP-led four-party alliance government in 2001-06).

But would it be that easy in case of general elections? In each constituency, there are a number of ruling party candidates. And we have seen how the ruling party suffered in the various local government elections due to infighting and intra-party rifts. Now, the question is whether the local Awami League leaders who are aspiring candidates would sacrifice themselves in favour of BNP leaders in their constituencies, where they have been working for years.

The BNP has said clearly and repeatedly that it will not take part in the elections, and that if anyone wants to do so by leaving the party, they can. Now, if the ruling party wants to split the BNP and coax a section of its leaders into joining the polls, then it will be the ruling party that will lose in the long run. Sure, politically the ruling party will get some mileage, but in the longer term, politics will be polluted and it will have to face even more disgruntled members, some of whom may decide to turn away when presented with a similar opportunity. This is the sort of horse-trading that we don't want to see.

The game of politics is like a Test match, not T20.



**SHAHEEN ANAM**

This affected Zafrullah Bhai so much that he decided to set up the kidney dialysis centre. He raised funds from private sources to set up the centre, making it the biggest one in the country providing free service to 20 percent patients,

He set up the kidney dialysis centre in the GK Nagar Hospital again with that same belief. I once asked him why he set it up, and this is what he told me: one day, while taking dialysis at a private hospital, a lady told him she would not return for dialysis from tomorrow. Shocked, Zafrullah Bhai told her that she would surely die without dialysis, to which she replied, "I know, but I can no longer pay for it."

There are so many remarkable aspects to his contributions to society that it is hard for me to write which one is the most outstanding. Is it the drug policy that he formulated, which resulted in affordable medicine for everyone, or the success of his family planning strategies, or is it his special

The health situation of women, especially from low-income groups, rural women and those living in remote areas, was a special concern for him. After retiring from GK, he devoted his time to addressing women's special medical needs through timely surgeries, obstetric care, etc. He remained forever



FILE PHOTO: STAR

**Dr Nawshad Ahmed,**  
*a former UN official,  
is an economist and  
urban planner.*

**NAWSHAD AHMED**

The upazila parishad consists of a chairman, two vice-chairpersons (one of them a woman), chairmen of all union parishads under that upazila, mayors of all municipalities (if any), and women members of reserved

Sound governance is a challenging task. People now have high expectations. Therefore, they look to elected leaders to create and sustain development of the economy, infrastructure, environment, and public utility services. For transparent, efficient and democratic governance, the upazila parishads need to follow rules and regulations properly. Their plans should be drawn up in a participatory manner so that they reflect the people's aspirations. The upazilas have huge potentials that the government should utilise for the development of a Smart Bangladesh.

# Chattogram City Corporation

Tigerpass, Chattogram

[www.ccc.org.bd](http://www.ccc.org.bd)

চট্টগ্রাম নগর  
কর্পোরেশন

Date: 12/04/2023

Memo No. 46.11.1600.002.31.23.270

**e-Tender Notice-CCC/XEN-3/2022-23/02**

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 of following packages from the National e-GP System Portal have to be deposited online through any registered bank branches up to 12.30pm, 02-May-2023.

Sl. No.	Package No.	Name of works	Tender ID	Last date & time of selling documents	Last date & time of submission documents
1	ccc/cc/div-03/w35/01	35 No. Baxirhat ward earthwork at South to mid Badarkhali drain, post office lane or backside drain of Sardar Bari, Amir Market side canal, Asadgonj Road canal, Khatungonj road both side canal, Chaktai Drumpottli Road drain, fire service office drain	816408	02/05/2023 11:30	02/05/2023 14:30
2	ccc/cc/div-03/w18/01	18 No. ward earthwork at Shah Amenat Bridge connecting road Fulkoli to Rajakhali drain, Birja canal, Krishi Khai & Nebi canal.	816420	02/05/2023 11:30	02/05/2023 14:30
3	ccc/cc/div-03/w19/01	19 No. Bakalia Road Pora colony drain, Sardar Bari drain, Khan Monil road drain, Badamtoli to fish market road drain, Khejurtali road drain, Ahmedur Rahman road drain, Masterpool lane drain, Char Chaktai School Road drain, Haji Mansur Ali Road drain, Gulam Kader Monsjid bylane, Soap factory adjoin drain, Monchor Ali Master Bari drain, flour factory drain, Hafezia Road drain, Abdul Karim Road drain, Arif Ali Member drain.	816423	02/05/2023 11:30	02/05/2023 14:30
4	ccc/cc/div-03/w17/01	Earthwork of Yunus Company, columnist Karim Sarwar house, Rahattarpul Bridge adjoin canal, Ujr Ali Shah canal, Syad Shah Road canal, alternative Chaktai canal, Yar Mohammad Road drain, Fringe of Chanda Pukur drain, drain of Kazi Bari, Nur Shoutagar Bari drain, Tofazzal Contractor House drain, Nazir Ahmed Tendol house drain, Sonar Baper house drain, Rasulbag drain, Rasulbag A,B,C block, Bara Miah Mosjid Road, Yunus Road Mohammad building drain, Abdul Latif bylane, DC Road drain, Shishu graveyard drain, Mousami R/A drain, Ahmedur Rahman Road adjoin drain, Balaka R/A west drain, Shantinagar Market drain, Afgan Mosjid bylane drain, Sadek Shah Major Road adjoin drain, DC Road Chawbazar, Dhupni Pole to Khaza Hostel, KB Aman Ali Road, Chad Miah Munshi lane and bylane drain, Tajur Circle join, Farmer road canal at 17 No. ward.	816426	02/05/2023 11:30	02/05/2023 14:30
5	ccc/cc/div-03/w34/01	Earthwork & filling of 34 No. Patharghata ward colony drain, Naju Miah lane 1, 2, 3 No. lane and main road drain, Brickfield road adjoin Motinabad R/A drain, Ashraf Ali Road adjoin Musa colony drain, Kalabagicha drain and Iqbal Road Tiltoma lane drain.	816427	02/05/2023 11:30	02/05/2023 14:30
6	ccc/cc/div-03/w33/01	Earthwork and excavation of 33 No. Firingi Bazar ward adjoin Alkaran 1 No. bylane to 3 No. lane waste and soil excavation and removal, Sabitri School drain, JM Sen School drain, Bangshal Road drain, Yakub Nagar drain, Dr Mannan lane drain, Katowali circle to Bridgeghat both side drain, Firingi Bazar circle to Kabi Nazrul Islam Road, then Tuki Taki Circle drain, AB Das drain both side, RC Church road and Nasir Ullah Chowdhury house, both side drain, Noapara and Tekpara drain, Dobash lane both side drain, and Churiatoli lane both side drain.	816429	02/05/2023 11:30	02/05/2023 14:30

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

**Md. Farhadul Alam**  
Executive Engineer  
Division-3  
Chattogram City Corporation

CCC/PRD-144/22-23

Size-10x4" col

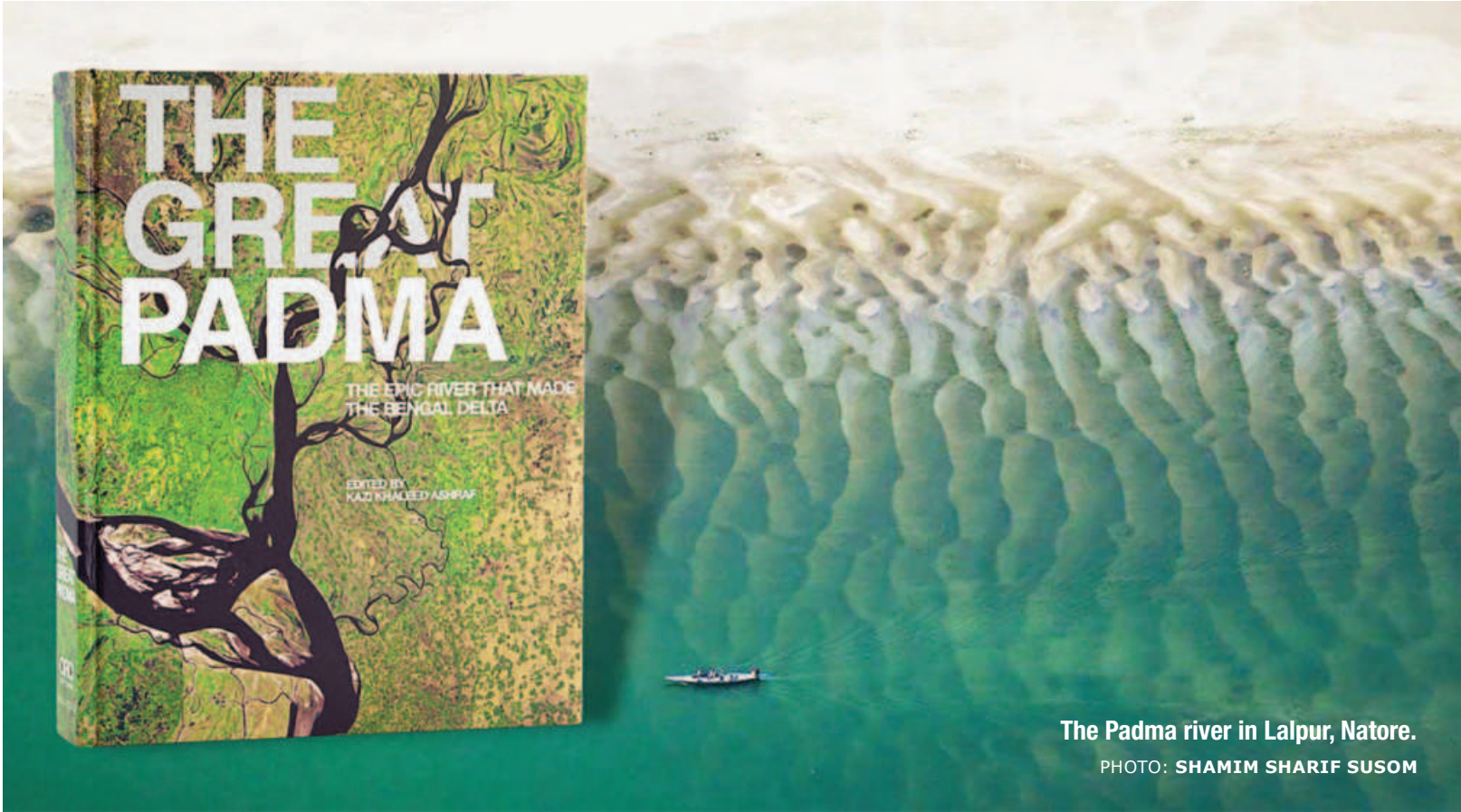
GD-681



BOOK REVIEW: NONFICTION

# The great Padma story

‘The Great Padma: The Epic River that Made the Bengal Delta’, ed. Kazi Khaleed Ashraf (ORO Editions and Bengal Institute for Architecture, Landscapes and Settlements, 2023)



Shorn of its sacred grandeur the Padma has embraced its secularised and earthier image with some muscularity, audacity and flair. The “mohonas” (meeting points) where it combines with the Brahmaputra/ Jamuna and later the Meghna in romantic and raucous exuberance, make the river almost “oceanic” in its scope, and create a river system that is not just mighty and heroic, but almost epic in its scale, consequences and contradictions.

AHRAR AHMAD  
In his introduction, the editor rightly and ruefully observes that there has been a plethora of studies on the Ganges with the emphasis almost always on where and how it begins (in the abode of the Gods), not where and how it ends (in the realm of men), as it empties itself into the Bay as the Padma.  
This substantively rich and handsomely produced volume relating to the complex and multi-dimensional phenomenon that this river represents, is a very comprehensive and authoritative corrective to that inexplicable neglect. In various chapters the book traces its historical, hydro-geological, and habitation context, and indicates its role in defining our identity, tastes, struggles, despairs, illusions and joys.  
The Padma had always been saddled with a mild inferiority complex. Though derived from the same source, it was denied the maternal status, the sacral aura, the veneration typically reserved for the storied, mythicized and worshipped Ganges. In his enlightened and elegant early chapter Ashraf describes how, through a quirk of fate

and nature, the Ganges bifurcated with the Hooghly-Bhagirathi draining off in one direction and the Padma continuing into today's Bangladesh as another.  
But shorn of its sacred grandeur the Padma has embraced its secularised and earthier image with some muscularity, audacity and flair. The “mohonas” (meeting points) where it combines with the Brahmaputra/ Jamuna and later the Meghna in romantic and raucous exuberance, make the river almost “oceanic” in its scope, and create a river system that is not just mighty and heroic, but almost epic in its scale, consequences and contradictions (simultaneously “sarbo-nasha” i.e. destroyer, and “jibondatri” i.e. life giver).  
The “Padma process”, skillfully delineated by Arfar Razi and Sanjoy Roy, or the “Padma dynamic”, perceptively explicated by Iftekar Iqbal, describe how the river has contributed to creating a restless, teeming, unique terrain of the largest and most populous delta in the world, not only as integral to this “ecological regime”, but also a dominant player in the region's formation, structure and evolution.  
It is also part of the creative magic

and madness that great rivers such as the Nile, Mississippi, Amazon, Volga, Rhine, Danube, Mekong or the Thames, usually evoke. Who can read Tennyson's “The Brook”, Langston Hughes' “The Negro Speaks of Rivers”, or TS Eliot's “Dry Salvages”; who can pick up Alex Moorehead's *The White Nile*, David Duncan's *The River Why*, Joseph Conrad's *The Heart of Darkness* (where the unnamed river is almost certainly the Congo), Mikhail Sholokov's *And Quiet Flows the Don*, or pick up Mark Twain (who derived his pen-name from the fiction of Mississippi boatmen), without thinking of the significance of rivers in our literary landscapes?  
The Padma is no exception. Dipen Bhattacharya alludes to it, Arijit Chatterjee analyses its influence on Tagore often living on the Padma in the Padma (which is what his river-boat was called), and Manzurul Islam's characteristically informed and insightful essay traces the river's long and lingering shadow on Bangla literary productions.  
There are also pieces on the river's role in cinematic classics such as *Jago Hua Savera* and *Padma Nadir Majhi*, on the architectural innovations

demanded by the challenges of “Inhabiting Wetness” (as Marina Tabassum calls it), and Yves Marre has a charming contribution on the variety of boats that ply on the river and the gradual evolution of their shapes, sizes and colours.  
But rivers are not merely to be romanticised, glamorised and spiritualized. There are several charming chapters on, what Redfield calls, the “little traditions” reflecting the lived experience of the people. There is one on the iconic ilish, the fish that is the culinary jewel in the crown of Bengali cuisine, another on the distinctive fowl curry and other delights found on the commercial hubs dotting the riverbanks, and one on the delectable sweetmeats unique to the region.  
Some aspects of recent transformation are addressed in several superb articles on the mechanics of the construction of the Padma Bridge, and its challenges, meaning and impact on the region. There is also an educational (though essentially descriptive) segment on the evolution of 14 human settlements along the river.  
The sheer range of the book, its scholarly content, the stunning pictures and the rare and fascinating maps, are all quite remarkable. However, there are probably some “absences” that are intriguing. Four may be mentioned in a supportive spirit.  
First, when we see Van Gogh's *Starry Night over the Rhone*, or Matisse's *Bathers by a River*, or Monet's *La Grenouillere*; or listen to Strauss' *Blue Danube*, Smetana's *Vltava*, or the Delta Blues of Black musicians in Southern US, we appreciate this relationship between rivers and the arts. The delta has also been reflected in the works of Zainul Abedin, Sultan, Qayyum Chowdhury and Alokesh Ghosh, or the music of the Baul, Bhatiyali, Bhawaiya, and Jari traditions, which are mentioned in Ashraf's essay, but could probably claim more exclusive focus.  
Second, there are political issues relating to hydro-hegemony and water-sharing which have left lower riparian countries like Bangladesh in vulnerable situations, and increasingly awkward. There are also the dangers of ecological violence in the service of predatory capitalism (both internally through pollution, deforestation, sand-lifting, river dredging, hill cutting and so on, and externally through the dynamics of climate change), which threaten the character, if not the very survival, of the delta in its current form. Additionally,

there are questions of river basin management and flood control vital to the lives of the people.  
Third, there are issues of historical sociology in the context of the new lands created by the silts and shifts of the river flows, which invited new migrants to settle, and necessitated different, more open and inclusive, structural arrangements and community attitudes. Richard Eaton, Akbar Ali Khan and others have theorised about how this could have facilitated the entry and accommodation of “new people” into the area till it eventually became a Muslim-majority island located within predominantly Hindu surroundings, often generating novel interactions and fusions in local culture, beliefs and practices.  
Finally, the political economy of rivers in India is contentious. Both Marx in his reference to the Asiatic Mode of Production and, from a different perspective, Karl Wittfogel in his *Oriental Despotism*, had postulated that in “hydraulic societies” (river-dependent agro-systems), the very control of water resources created the enabling conditions for the authoritarianism, disarticulation and stagnation inherent in the social formations of pre-colonial India. The resulting “mode of production” controversy has been spirited, and its relevance to the delta may have been interesting.  
There is one additional concern. The publishers, perhaps unwittingly, may have imposed a possible identity crisis on the book. Its aesthetic seductions may overwhelm its intellectual appeal, and it could end up gracing the coffee tables of the elite classes feeding their conceits and drawing room chatter, rather than on the carrels and tables of students and scholars provoking their curiosities and research agendas. That is not, as Hamlet would say, “a consummation devoutly to be wished”.  
But, a book cannot be all things to all people. These “criticisms” reflect the typical nit-pickery of pretentious reviewers who focus not on what is, but on what is not. Ashraf and his collaborators can claim full credit and our deep appreciation for their ingenuity and industry in producing a volume that is ambitiously imagined, intellectually stimulating and visually sumptuous. It is truly a most formidable accomplishment. The Padma deserved no less.  
Dr Ahrar Ahmad is professor emeritus at Black Hills State University in the US, and director general of Gyantapas Abdur Razzaq Foundation in Dhaka.

## THE SHELF

# 6 books to enjoy the spirit of POHELA BOISHAKH



NUR-E-JANNAT ALIF  
Pohela Boishakh, in all its mighty glory, has come bearing peace, prosperity, and pursuit. It is a day to showcase our heritage, manifest our culture, and embrace the warmth of being the proverbial “machh e bhaat e Bangali”. These books, among many others, can help readers feel the spirit of the Bangla new year in all its vibrant colours.  
KHEROR KHATA  
Leela Majumdar  
Ananda Publishers, 2014  
An exquisite collection of anecdotal vignettes, *Kheror Khata* by Leela Majumdar is a satirical memoir that profoundly examines Bangalis



throughout the span of a lasting century. There are fond paragraphs on her lineage, a perfectly bitter-sweet presentation of love and an absurd tale highlighting tigers. Most of all, these slice-of-life essays are insightful scriptures of the Bangali lifestyle, its culture and customs.  
PROTHOM ALO  
Sunil Gangopadhyay  
Ananda Publishers, 1996  
A classic staple to dive into the study of Bangali fortunes, this work of historical fiction by Sunil Gangopadhyay features the recital of the olden days with the rejuvenation of the new. It is an ode to the majestic Bengal Renaissance period, taking favours from the lives



of characters such as Rabindranath Tagore, Ramakrishna Paramhansa, Dr Mahendralal Sarkar, Aurobindo Ghose, and so on. There is also a nationalist notion permeating the book, and it keeps readers guessing between recounts of facts and fiction.  
MOSLAR JUDDHO  
Satyen Sen  
Muktothara Publishers, 1980  
Another historical retelling, this time showing an otherwise neglected portion of the history of Bengal, is *Moslar Juddho*. Moshla (spice) was at the center of many conflicts during the 15th to 17th centuries. Since the native Bengal was rich in its production of spices and herbs, the European militia



waged war against the subcontinent and halted its industrial progress. Readers who are simultaneously interested in analysing food and culture would highly appreciate this book.  
PANECHAR BANUR NOKSCHI KATHA  
Hasnat Abdul Hye  
Anyaprokash, 2010  
*Panechar Banur Nokschi Katha* is a lifetime portrayal of contemporary Bangladesh, incorporating picturesque depictions of rural living and national politics. The central character of the story, Panechar Banu, acts as a catalyst as the author makes variant discourses on classism, feminism, and Bangali culture.



BADSHAH NAMDAR  
Humayun Ahmed  
Anyaprokash, 2011  
Almost all Bangla literature readers are acquainted with Humayun Ahmed's popular fiction and the *Himu* chronicles. *Badshah Namdar* is his jovial dip into Bangali cultural writing, unfolding historical evidence from the period of King Humayun during the momentous Mughal empire. The book also includes hunger-inducing detailing of the then-popular food delicacies, which have ambled their way into our contemporary cuisine.  
SURAIYA  
Shibobroto Bormon  
Batighar, 2022  
One is a story of love, another of



a game of chess. Six men with identical faces and identical names—it is an eerie tragedy of an un-golden duck. These are some premises of the short stories collected in this analogy by Shibobroto Bormon. It is difficult to categorise his work under a specific genre, however, the unconventional amalgamation of strange narratives is a remarkable stroke into the world of contemporary Bangla fiction.  
Nur E Jannat Alif is a Gender Studies major and part-time writer, who dreams of authoring a book someday. Find her at @literatureinsolitude on Instagram or send her your book/movie/television recommendations at nurejannatalif@gmail.com.



## Shakib highlights England victory after ICC recognition

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh Test and T20I skipper Shakib Al Hasan was awarded the ICC Player of the Month for March, the International Cricket Council (ICC) announced on Wednesday.

The ace all-rounder amassed 353 runs and scalped 15 wickets in the 12 white-ball matches he played in the month against England and Ireland.

The 36-year-old, however, deemed his performance against England as the highlight of the month as he led Bangladesh to a historic clean sweep in the T20I series against the reigning world champions.

“If I was to pick my highlight from the past month, it has to be the T20 series sweep against England and, with the team continuing to perform beautifully as a unit in all departments, it is easier now for me to concentrate on my role and contribute.”

Bangladesh lost the ODI series against England 2-1 but Shakib was one of the standout performers for the Tigers as he was the highest run-scorer with 141 runs and picked up the most wickets (6) for his team. In the only victory in the series, Shakib starred with a 71-ball 75 and followed it up with a four-fer to take home the player-of-the-match award in the hosts’ 50-run win in Chattogram.

In the three-match T20I series, Shakib finished with 38 runs and three wickets.

When Ireland came to the Tiger’s den, Shakib scored a match-winning 93 in the first ODI and picked up a fiver in the second T20I in a comprehensive all-round display.



Former Bangladesh skipper Mashrafe Bin Mortaza came to the stadium on his yellow Vespa at the Sher-e-Bangla National Cricket Stadium in Mirpur yesterday and found Shakib Al Hasan. The all-rounder found it hard to not get a feel of the driver's seat.

PHOTO: BCB

## BFF to seek financial help from sports ministry

SPORTS REPORTER

The Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) yesterday decided to seek further financial assistance from the Ministry of Youth and Sports in order to facilitate the women’s football team’s international engagements in the coming days.

“We have discussed the advantages and disadvantages of the women’s football team’s tours abroad and will soon make a budget for those tours after taking account of the funds from FIFA, AFC and sponsors. We will seek financial help from the youth and sports ministry if needed, so that we don’t face obstacles,” BFF vice-president Ataur Rahman Bhuiyan Manik told reporters after an emergency meeting of the BFF executive committee.

Manik informed that the women’s teams had five international engagements -- AFC U-19 Championship Qualifiers round-1 and round-2 and three FIFA windows in July, October and December. He informed the BFF wanted the national women’s team to play home and away matches in each of the three FIFA windows.

## ‘Fizz has to work on alternatives’

SPORTS REPORTER

Mustafizur Rahman could have emerged as a hero for Delhi Capitals as the left-arm seamer played his first Indian Premier League game of the season, but two wrong deliveries from the ‘cutter master’ ultimately turned the tide in Mumbai Indians’ favour on Tuesday.

Although Mustafizur conceded 13 runs from his first over, he came back in the 15th over and stayed tight, giving away just two runs. In his third over, he removed Mumbai captain Rohit Sharma for 65 to bring Delhi back into the game.

But it was in the crucial 19th over of the innings, with Mumbai needing 20 runs off the last two overs, when a predictable Mustafizur was hit for two sixes by Cameron Green and Tim David. Both deliveries that were hit out of the park were slower off-cutters from the ‘cutter master’.

According to local pace bowling coach Mahbub Ali, a lack of skills development is the biggest reason Mustafizur has become predictable. He opined that the pacer needed to work a lot more to have an impact.

“When Mustafizur first played in the IPL, he was a surprise package around world cricket with his cutters and emerged as an extraordinary bowler. But over the years, players have become aware of those cutters. I think he needs variation in terms of pace as well, since he is not an express fast bowler. I feel he has not developed much or tried to work on alternatives as a bowler. You can see the young pacers are trying different pace variations and it is something you develop by working in the nets,” Ali told The Daily Star yesterday.

He added that a lack of skills development had hurt other players, saying that a majority of the other cricketers in the Bangladesh team were in a similar position.

“It is actually a problem with the entire Bangladesh team. We don’t see developments of their skills. We should be competing with the top six teams in world cricket. But if we had to fight hard against Ireland, then we need to think about our standards,” he said.



## A huge undertaking to draw the ‘big picture’

ABDULLAH AL MEHDI

Bangla Tigers is like an incubator for hatching not just cricketers who have surpassed the High Performance level, but also for those struggling for form or requiring preparation for an upcoming series.

The man brought in to look after these programmes and align them so the coaching style is similar through the various grades from HP through to Bangla Tigers and then the national team is David Moore, the BCB’s newly appointed Head of Programmes.

The work he is undertaking has never been done in Bangladesh cricket, which is structuring cricket in a way that coaching through the age-levels and the rest sees players progress in the right direction.

Talking to The Daily Star yesterday, Moore identified three key areas: Bangladesh Tigers, High Performance Unit and coach education programmes.

“My role is to work with the national coach and other coaches and departments like the game development committee to ensure the players we have are prepared when they get their opportunity in first-class and international cricket,” the Australian said.

His work will be the biggest factor in building a pipeline for the national team.

He came here following recommendations from head coach Chandika Hathurusingha, who he worked with at New South Wales. If Moore is pooling together all the required information, Hathurusingha would be a key end user of the information that Bangladesh need long term as well.

Why is Hathurusingha important to structuring? Moore believes because of the head coach’s specific planning around the needs of the team for various scenarios.

“His [Hathurusingha] preparation is immaculate, very specific. That’s why you need your data, your

AMS [Athlete Management system], and video footage. Because that allows him to build the picture to get the right guys in and prepare them well for the series,” he said.

It is not just about keeping players developing. “We want competition,” Moore said.

“Our role is to ensure there is enough depth in every position when someone gets injured, out of form etc. We need to make sure there is more than one person fighting to get into that position.”

“The selectors pick the head coach of both Bangla Tigers and HP, plus all the support staff like physios and fitness trainers. They will feed me the information and then I’ll pass that information on as required.

We don’t want to tell people what to do. We want to work with them and educate them on what we think is important.”

There is a lot of information to pool together to not only educate coaches to use such information for their own work, but also in feeding the information into the database which will be used for workload management and key information relating to each player.

But it is not all about the stats. “My role is developing relationships with coaches. We are dealing with humans so we have to make sure that players trust them and feel comfortable.”

On the players from the programme, he said: “We need to make sure they are good team people. We need to make sure we record information, not just data and stats, so that we draw a bigger picture and so that they aren’t forgotten.”

In this big undertaking, he cited ‘bringing all the systems together’ as his biggest challenge. “In Bangladesh, we have got 70 or 80 coaches in the divisions and the regions,” he adds.

The biggest cue on what he learned so far? “I know it sounds clichéd, but I am more interested in what I can do rather than what I can’t do.”



## Inzaghi hails unity and intensity

AGENCIES, Lisbon

Inter Milan coach Simone Inzaghi hailed his team’s unity and intensity in their 2-0 win in the first leg of a Champions League quarterfinal against Benfica on Tuesday.

The tie is still only half over, but the Nerazzurri put in a convincing display which gives them an advantage to hold onto in the second leg at the San Siro.

“The key to the win was unity,” Inzaghi said. “We’re enjoying this evening, but it’s only the first leg. They’re a great team and in eight days we’ll be in for a very tough match at the San Siro.”

The coach stressed that there was still a lot of work to do. “It’s an important result and gives us an advantage, but we saw what they did against Juventus and PSG. We have to repeat this performance in the second leg,” he added.

“We played a match with both our hearts and minds, which was what I asked for. It will take another 95 minutes at this intensity to reach the semifinals.”

Meanwhile, Benfica coach Roger Schmidt insisted all was not lost.

“Being 2-0 down at home is not good, but we are at halftime in the tie,” Schmidt said. “Of course we can go to Milan to win.”

“We had good moments but we also had bad luck with the penalty and we could have had a penalty or two ourselves. It’s football.”



“

“Every team has to fear this player because he is just a monster. He is a beast, congratulations to Manchester City for signing him.”

Former Bayern Munich and Germany striker Mario Gomez.

PHOTO: REUTERS

## HAALAND on a record spree

**Manchester City striker Erling Braut Haaland continues his phenomenal scoring spree this season, toppling records one after another, as he netted the third goal in his side’s comprehensive 3-0 win over Bayern Munich in the first leg of their Champions League quarter-final on Tuesday.**

» The Norwegian goal machine became the first Premier League player to score 45 times in a single season. Haaland surpassed Manchester United’s Ruud van Nistelrooy and Liverpool’s Mo Salah season tally in 13 fewer games (39).

» He broke a personal record, as well, for the 22-year-old had scored a total of 44 in 2019-20 (28 for Salzburg and 16 for Borussia Dortmund).

» More records await him: Haaland is five goals behind from breaking an age-old English record set by Clive Allen, who scored 49 goals for Tottenham Hotspur in the 1886-87 season.

» And five Premier League goals will take Haaland past Blackburn Rovers’ Alan Shearer (1994-95) and Newcastle United’s Andy Cole’s (1993-94) season record of 34 goals.

» His 11th Champions League goal this season places him one behind the Premier League player record of 12, registered by Van Nistelrooy in the 2002-03 competition, and six behind the all-time record set by Real Madrid’s Cristiano Ronaldo in 2013-14.

» Seemingly the most improbable of the lot, yet lurking in the horizon for Haaland, is Lionel Messi’s 73 goals for Barcelona in all competitions in 2011-12.





## ROAD CRASH DATA

# Give it to us before you publish

### BRTA asks road safety campaigners

TUHIN SHUBHRA ADHIKARY

The government has asked the non-government organisations working on road safety to inform the authorities concerned before releasing data on road crashes and casualties.

Bangladesh Road Transport Authority (BRTA) on Tuesday sent a letter to four non-government organisations in this regard. The Daily Star obtained a copy of the letter signed by Mahbub E-Rabbani, director (road safety) of BRTA.

The organisations are Nirapad Sarak Chai, Bangladesh Jatri Kalyan Samity, Road Safety Foundation and Save The Road.

The development came at a time when the authorities have been criticizing non-government organisations for publishing road accident data.

Road Transport and Highways Division Secretary ABM Amin Ullah Nuri at a programme on January 15 blasted the road safety campaigners for publishing “fabricated” reports on crashes.

He said the reports were creating confusion among the people and tarnishing the country’s image abroad and

SEE PAGE 6 COL 1



Preparation for the Mongol Shobhajatra on Pahela Baishakh is going on in full-swing at the Faculty of Fine Art at Dhaka University. The photo of a student arranging colourful masks on a corridor was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

## New Year celebrations begin in CHT

STAR REPORT

People of indigenous communities in the Chittagong Hill Tracts yesterday started their three-day celebrations for the New Year.

The festival is known by different names in different communities – Biju, Bihu, Bishu, Baisu, Sangrai, Sanglan, Chakran.

The festivals started yesterday and will continue for the next three days. During this time, they will pray that the new year brings blessings in everyone’s lives by removing all the sorrows and sufferings of the previous year.

They celebrate “Phul Biju” on April 12, the main function or “Mul Biju” on April 13, and Gojyapojya on the occasion of the new year on April 14. People wear traditional clothes and organise various sports and cultural programmes and prepare special food items.

People in Bandarban

SEE PAGE 6 COL 6

## 2,000 judges dealing with 40 lakh cases

### Says chief justice about case backlogs

UNB, JHENAIDAH

Chief Justice Hasan Foez Siddique has drawn a direct relationship between the number of judges, needed to dispense justice in the country, and the high number of cases pending with the judicial system.

He said the number of judges in the country is very low compared to the cases. As a result, the average time a case stays pending is increasing.

The chief justice said the judges are trying their best to reduce the case backlogs. The process of appointing new judges is underway.

He said for the 40 lakh cases (approximately the number of cases pending) with the country’s judicial system, from the lower judiciary all the way up to the Supreme Court, there are only 2,000 judges. But work is underway to appoint 102 judges, he said.

The chief justice made the comments after laying the foundation stone of construction of “Naykunja”, which will be a rest room of the justice-seekers, on the Jhenaidah court premises yesterday morning.

“We are working to alleviate the sufferings of the justice-seekers coming to the court. For this, Naykunja is being built in the district. The government has allocated Tk 35 crore for this purpose. At least Tk 50 lakh will be given to each district for the construction of Naykunja,” said the chief justice.

He said 82,000 cases were filed with the Supreme

SEE PAGE 6 COL 6

## Over half of Rana Plaza survivors unemployed

Finds ActionAid study

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Around 54.5 percent of Rana Plaza survivors are unemployed while 89 percent of them have been without work for the past five to eight years, said a latest survey.

The survey, conducted by the Institute of Social Business on behalf of ActionAid Bangladesh, said 5.5 percent have been unemployed for the last three to four years.

The key reason for those who are currently jobless is their health condition, suggesting that physical health continues to be a significant barrier to employment for many survivors, it said.

Additionally, 21 percent of the respondents reported that they could not find a suitable job.

The study findings were revealed yesterday at a multilogue titled “The Rana Plaza Experience: Tragedy to Transformation” at a city convention hall, marking the 10th year anniversary of the building collapse.

The study was conducted among 200 survivors (69.5 percent women) and families of the deceased

workers affected by the Rana Plaza tragedy.

The findings highlighted several key points related to the current condition of the survivors, including their current physical health status, psychosocial well-being, and financial status.

**More than one-third of the respondents said they are suffering from back pain, while a quarter complained about suffering from headaches.**

The study also found that the key reason for those who are currently unemployed is their physical health condition although the number has fallen from 67 percent to 47 percent from last year.

It also mentioned that the physical health status of the Rana Plaza incident survivors has not shown any significant improvement – the proportion of survivors claiming to be completely stable has decreased from 17 percent in

2014 to 7.5 percent in 2023, but the percentage of respondents whose health has deteriorated increased from 9 percent to 22.5 percent during the same period.

More than one-third of the respondents said they are suffering from back pain, while a quarter complained about suffering from headaches.

Other health problems include breathing problems, hand, and leg injuries, inability to stand and walk properly, vision and kidney problems.

In terms of psychosocial health, there is still a significant proportion (29 percent) of traumatised survivors whose condition is deteriorating.

Of the traumatised, 57.8 percent of respondents are living in fear because of their experience of the building collapse, while 28.9 percent complained of being worried about their health and safety.

The study also revealed the monthly family income of half of the respondent survivors was found to be between Tk 10,001 and Tk

SEE PAGE 6 COL 4

## Nasa unveils ‘Mars’ habitat on Earth

AFP, Houston



Four small rooms, a gym and a lot of red sand – Nasa unveiled on Tuesday its new Mars-simulation habitat, in which volunteers will live for a year at a time to test what life will be like on future missions to Earth’s neighbour.

The facility, created for three planned experiments called the Crew Health and Performance Exploration Analog (CHAPEA), is located at the US space agency’s massive research base in Houston, Texas.

Four volunteers will begin the first trial this summer, during which Nasa plans to monitor their physical and mental health to better understand humans’ fortitude for such a long isolation.

With that data, Nasa will better understand astronauts’ “resource use” on Mars, said Grace Douglas, lead researcher on the CHAPEA experiments.

“We can really start to understand how we’re supporting them with what we’re providing them, and that’s going to be really important information to making those critical resource decisions,” she said on a press tour of the habitat.

Such a distant mission comes with “very strict mass limitations,” she added.

## New Israeli spyware targets journos and politicians

### Says anti-tech abuse body

AFP, Washington

New Israeli-made spyware resembling the notorious Pegasus program has been used to target journalists and opposition politicians in several countries, a Canadian watchdog said Tuesday.

The spyware and related exploit or hacking software was created by the little-known firm QuaDream Ltd, which was established by a former Israeli military official and veterans of NSO Group, the creator of Pegasus, according to Citizen Lab.

Citizen Lab, which studies the abuse of digital technologies, said it identified at least five people targeted by QuaDream spyware and exploits in North America, Central Asia, Southeast Asia, Europe, and the Middle East.

“Victims include journalists, political opposition figures, and an NGO worker,” it said, saying it would not identify them at the moment.

Spyware like Pegasus has been widely used by governments and other actors to spy on opponents, media and activists.

The programs can be placed on

SEE PAGE 6 COL 6



The scorching heat over the last few days has made it difficult to stay outdoors at day time. The photo of a relatively empty Kalyanpur bus stop was taken yesterday afternoon.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

## Deadliest first quarter for Med migrants since 2017

Says UN as 441 people die attempting to reach Europe

AFP, Geneva

January to March 2023 was the deadliest first quarter for migrants crossing the central Mediterranean since 2017, the United Nations said yesterday, with 441 lives lost attempting to reach Europe.

The UN’s International Organization for Migration (IOM) said delays in state-led search and rescue (SAR) operations were a factor in several fatal incidents in the perilous crossing from north Africa.

And the IOM said the 441 known deaths in the first three months of the year was likely an undercount of the true number.

“The persisting humanitarian crisis in the central Mediterranean is intolerable,” said IOM chief Antonio Vitorino.

“With more than 20,000 deaths recorded on this route since 2014, I fear that these deaths have been normalised,” he added.

“States must respond. Delays and gaps in state-led SAR are costing human lives.”

The IOM said delays in such rescues were a factor in at least six incidents so far this year, leading to the deaths of at least 127 people.

SEE PAGE 6 COL 1