



YOUR RIGHT TO KNOW

SECOND EDITION

THE DAILY

Star

ON FRIDAY

DHAKA FRIDAY MAY 26, 2023

“Without an immediate and major injection of funding, emergency operations will grind to a halt, and people will die.”

UN chief Antonio Guterres on drought in Horn of Africa



REGD. No. DA 781

VOL. XXXIII No. 127

JAISHTHA 12, 1430 BS

www.thedailystar.net

ZILQAD 5, 1444 HJRI

16 PAGES PLUS TOGGLE: Tk 15.00

GAZIPUR CITY POLLS



ZAIDA KHATUN 2,38,934 (All 480 centres)



AZMAT ULLAH KHAN 2,22,737 (All 480 centres)



Flanked by her son, former Gazipur City Corporation mayor Zahangir Alam, Zaida Khatun flashes the victory sign after casting her vote at the Kanaia Government Primary School Polling Centre in ward-30 of the city yesterday.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

US VISA CURBS

Who said what

The US Secretary of State Antony Blinken on Wednesday announced that the US would impose visa restrictions on individuals and their immediate family members “if they are responsible for, or complicit in, undermining the democratic election process in Bangladesh”. The new visa policy for Bangladesh has triggered reactions from the government, political parties and others.

Bangladesh won't let polls be compromised: foreign ministry

STAR REPORT

Taking note of the new US visa policy, the foreign ministry yesterday said Bangladesh appreciates that the international community, including the US, firmly stands by the prime minister's commitment to ensure free and fair elections.

The ministry said the government would like to view the announcement in the broader context of the US government's unequivocal commitment to free and fair elections at all levels.

The government apparatus would take necessary measures to prevent and address any unlawful practice or interference by any individual, group or entity, which can compromise elections, the ministry said in a statement.

The electoral process will remain under strict vigilance and international observers would be there too, said the statement.

The government expects that the local undemocratic forces that resort to violence, arson, and destruction would remain cautious and refrain from their misguided efforts to jeopardise the electoral process, it said.

“It is entirely up to the people of Bangladesh to sustain the hard-earned democratic process, political

SEE PAGE 2 COL 4

‘It'll help us hold free, fair polls’

Says Momen; Haas termed it ‘show of support’ for those seeking fair polls

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Foreign Minister AK Abdul Momen hoped that the new US visa policy will help Bangladesh hold free and fair elections.

“We hope it will help us conduct free and fair elections, especially violence will not be there. Those who resort to violence will refrain from it,” he told reporters after a meeting with US Ambassador Peter Haas at the foreign ministry yesterday afternoon.

The minister said bilateral issues and the new

SEE PAGE 6 COL 1

AL loses in its bastion

Zaida elected Gazipur city mayor, defeats Azmat by 16,197 votes in peaceful polls; voter turnout around 50pc

MOHAMMAD AL-MASUM MOLLA, RASHIDUL HASAN, MOHAMMAD JAMIL KHAN and ASHIK ABDULLAH APU from Gazipur

It all happened quietly.

There were hardly any polling agents for Zaida Khatun. Even her supporters could barely be seen in the largest city corporation of the country. Even during the campaign, her posters were rarely seen.

But in Gazipur City Corporation polls, Zaida has won defeating ruling Awami League mayor nominee Azmat Ullah Khan by 16,197 votes.

Unofficial results show that Zaida bagged 2,38,934 votes while her nearest contender Azmat got 2,22,737, said Returning Officer Faridul Islam.

The voter turnout was 48.75 percent.

Zaida will be the country's second woman mayor of a city after Salina Hayat Ivy of Narayanganj.

Zaida is the mother of suspended Gazipur mayor Zahangir Alam. After the ruling Awami League nominated Azmat to run for mayor, a disgruntled Zahangir attempted to run as an independent.

He collected nomination papers for himself and his mother. After the Election Commission scrapped his nomination, he started campaigning for his mother.

After Zaida was unofficially elected early today, Zahangir said he would help his mother run the city corporation.

On the election day, the presence of Azmat's

supporters was overbearing at most of the polling centres.

The electronic voting machines (EVMs) slowed down polling as the devices took a long time to detect the voters' fingerprints at some centres.

The Daily Star correspondents visited at least 50 polling centres and found a thin presence of voters when polling started at 8:00am, but as the day progressed, people started pouring in.

After casting their ballots, Azmat and Zaida both expressed satisfaction over the voting atmosphere and said they were confident of victory.

At different polling centres in Gazipur, Azmat's supporters wearing badges of boat, the AL electoral symbol, were seen outside the polling stations in violation of the electoral code of conduct.

About the presence of AL supporters inside the polling centre at Rising Sun Academy, presiding officer Delowar Hossain said, “This was not supposed to happen. We will definitely look into it.”

At 22 polling centres in Tongi, the correspondents of this newspaper could not find any agent for Zaida.

A correspondent of this newspaper who visited 15 polling centres, found an agent for Zaida only at Sharifpur Government Primary School.

Abdul Kader, presiding officer at Shaheed Britti School and College told The Daily Star that only Azmat's supporters contacted him about being polling agents.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

‘We're very satisfied’ Says Election Commissioner Md Alamgir

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Election Commissioner Md Alamgir yesterday said they were satisfied with the Gazipur city polls.

“We are very satisfied... Voters and candidates are also satisfied,” he said while briefing reporters at the Election Commission office after the polling ended in the afternoon.

Alamgir said that they got information from their observers, law enforcement agencies, returning officers, election officials, and the media that the polls to Gazipur City Corporation was “very fair and peaceful”.

The mayor candidates said the election was held impartially and they would accept whatever the results are, he added.

Asked about the turnout, Alamgir said it was tough for him to mention any percentage. “But it was not less than 50 percent.”

About slow casting of votes at some polling centres, the election commissioner said, “Some voters might have faced difficulties understanding how to cast votes using EVMs. This might be a reason for the slow voting.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 6



“We believe Bangladesh is a true democracy that deserves to have free and fair elections.”

US Assistant Secretary of State Donald Lu



“Those who set fire to buses, vandalise those in the name of movement ahead of the election are engaged in political violence, and so they are the ones who will be in trouble.”

Awami League General Secretary Obaidul Quader



“The US move has sent a message that the people of Bangladesh can't exercise their right to franchise and their constitutional rights have been taken away.”

BNP Standing Committee Member Amir Khasru Mahmud Chowdhury

POLLING CENTRES Admin, police to be engaged in selection

EC brings changes to guideline; number of centres may come down

MOHIUDDIN ALAMGIR

The Election Commission has made major changes to the guidelines for selecting polling centres for the national elections, including a provision for involving the local administration and the police in the selection process.

The polling centres in the last several national polls were selected by the commission officials.

The guideline, passed by the election commissioners at a meeting yesterday, dropped a provision that allowed polling centres to be kept for use unless they were destroyed.

“We repealed the provision for retaining previous polling centres as many of them are old, some are dilapidated, and some had gone into the river or were destroyed,” Election Commissioner Md Alamgir told The Daily Star.

He said new polling centres would have to be set up ahead of the next general election. “The number of centres might decrease.”

In the last general election, there were 40,051 polling centres.

The next national election is likely to be held in late December this year or early January next year.

According to the guideline, a five-member committee

SEE PAGE 6 COL 1



A woman buys rice from an OMS truck in Khulna city's Sheikh Para yesterday. Inset, women line up under the scorching sun to buy the staple at subsidised price. They had to wait for about three hours before being able to buy a maximum of five kg rice at Tk 30 per kg.

PHOTO: HABIBUR RAHMAN

DEATH THREAT TO PM Rajshahi BNP leader arrested, remanded

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

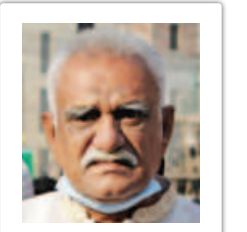
BNP's Rajshahi district unit Convener Abu Sayeed Chand, arrested for issuing a “death threat” to Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, was placed on a five-day remand yesterday afternoon.

The court of Judicial Magistrate Mahbub Alam granted the five-day remand in the case filed with Puthia Police Station under the Anti-Terrorism Act, said the court's Public Prosecutor Jalal Uddin.

The police produced him before the court at 3:30pm and submitted a 10-day remand appeal, he added.

Earlier in the day, a special team of police apprehended him at a checkpoint in the Bheripara area around 11:15am, said Rajshahi Metropolitan Police (RMP) Commissioner Anisur Rahman.

The police commissioner briefed journalists detailing the arrest at a press conference held at the RMP headquarters in the afternoon.



Abu Sayeed Chand

SEE PAGE 6 COL 1

PAKISTAN CRISIS Imran moves SC against 'undeclared martial law'

DAWN ONLINE

Pakistan's former prime minister Imran Khan yesterday filed a petition with the Supreme Court against the government invoking Article 245 in several provinces, terming it "undeclared martial law".

Under Article 245 of Pakistan's Constitution, the army can be called in to aid the civil administration to defend the country.

Imran, through his lawyer Hamid Khan, has requested the apex court to probe into the government's decision to call "in the aid of the armed forces in the Federal Capital Territory, Punjab, Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (K-P) in the purported exercise of powers under Article 245 of the Constitution".

In his petition, the PTI chief said the arrests, investigations and trial of citizens under the Army Act 1952 were "unconstitutional and void and of no legal effect and amounts to negation of the Constitution, rule of law and independence of the judiciary."

He also pointed out that the "dismantling of PTI through forcible quitting of party membership and office are unconstitutional and void being against Article 17 of the Constitution".

The ex-PM also urged the top court to order the formation of a judicial commission to probe the events of May 9 and 10.

The plea named Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, PML-N Supremo Nawaz Sharif and his daughter Maryam Nawaz, ex-president Asif Ali Zardari, Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari, JUI-F chief Maulana Fazlur Rehman and other as respondents.

Meanwhile, the Interior Ministry yesterday barred Imran, his wife Bushra Bibi among 80 members of the PTI from leaving the country by putting them on the no-fly list.

Prime Minister's special assistant Attaullah Tarar confirmed the development to Dawn.com. Tarar said the list of all the PTI members has been sent to all the exit points and airports in the country.

A Lahore anti-terrorism court yesterday approved the request to hand over 16 individuals accused of vandalising Jinnah House on May 9 in order to try them under the country's military laws.

The court ordered all 16 individuals, including ex-MPA Mian Akram Usman, to be handed over to commanding officer Irfan Athar.



We are unforgiving mothers. We take the job of motherhood so seriously that we can even ruin the child's entire childhood and be smug about it. We want it all – a successful career, well-mannered and well-fed goody-two-shoe children, a spick and span household, manicured garden, a good amount of savings in the bank, a docile and rich husband. I mean our list of necessities is boundless and all for the sake of a happy family picture at an Instagrammable event of family or friend. So, what if the stakes are too high? We are monsters in the guise of smart, happy, multi-tasking women.



DHAKA'S MOTHERS

PHOTO: STAR

RBR

We are anything but contented. We strongly believe that since we have borne the child for nine months, they are now our prisoners of conscience with zero freedom. Dhaka mothers are big drama queens too, if our child scores a 90 in their math test, we make a big, unnecessary fuss and stomp away from the room, giving the child a heart attack. We compel them to fare in everything in life, we make them competitive.

No pyjama parties, all group studies will be held in your living room, and no staying up late after 10:00pm; we need to control every fine detail of the child's life even if it is through shaming, withdrawal of love, or other punishments.

We act as if the children are our puppets or even worse our pets, we show them off to guests and relatives and make them perform a new trick every time. We expect the house to be unrealistically spotless when guests are coming, all has to be picture-perfect and the children and husband must willingly put a front of happy, social face. This is our litmus test, and we need it to be right, our social standing depends on it heavily.

We hardly knock on our children's

doors. In fact, they are not allowed to shut the door and of course, we do not know the meaning of privacy for children. We need to know everything



that is going on in their lives if they are going out with a friend then providing us with the friend's mother's number is mandatory. And also mandatory is answering, with complete satisfaction, questions like, where are you going?

Who are you going out with? How are you going? What time are you coming home? What is your friend's pet's name?

And if we see your party pictures then we assume that every friend is your boyfriend or girlfriend and expect you to duly make us understand otherwise.

We love our lectures and our favourite complaint is "Is this a hotel, am I housekeeping?" Or that famous line "You will understand my worth when I am no more". Then there is the subtle threat every Dhaka mum poses when she's cleaning the house that no one is helping her but at the same time declining any voluntary help. We Dhaka mothers are like martyrs, sacrificing everything for the sake of the family.

Yes, we are strict, authoritarian mothers but in our defence, we do all these so that our children can live a cushioned happy life. Our style of parenting emphasises on high standards, we are aggressive mothers, yet we are willing to fight your demons to plate you the best of everything in life.

Let all children remember their mothers as a soft yet firm elegant lady who always smells divine and has unlimited selfless love and all good intention for you.

JCD leader shot dead in Narsingdi clash

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Narsingdi

A leader of Jatiyatobadi Chhatra Dal was shot dead during a clash between two groups of the pro-BNP student body in Narsingdi town yesterday afternoon.

Deceased Sadekur Rahman, 32, was a former senior joint convener of District Chhatra Dal's convening committee.

Sadekur was declared dead at the Dhaka Medical College Hospital around 7:30pm after he was taken there with bullet injuries, inspector Bachchu Mia, in-charge of the DMCH police camp, told The Daily Star.

JCD leader Ashrafur Islam, 20, who was also shot during the clash, is under treatment at the same hospital, the inspector added.

Local JCD leaders said on January 26, the central JCD formed a five-member convening committee for the district.

Since then, JCD leaders and activists, who were did not get posts in the committee, have been demanding cancellation of the committee. They were protesting near the district BNP office in Chinishpur yesterday afternoon, said the district's former senior BNP vice-president Mainuddin Bhuiyan, adding that the leaders and activists of the other group then attacked the protesters.

2 students die on road

UNB, Kushtia

Two motorcyclists were killed in a head-on collision between their motorbike and a bus near Paikpara Mirzapur village in Kushtia's Khoksa upazila yesterday.

The deceased were identified as Abu Musa, 18, and Parvez Hossain, 18. Both of them were first-year students of Abu Taleb Degree College in Shomspur.

Sub-Inspector Mozammel Haque of Khoksa Police Station, who was present on the spot, said the highway police will prepare a report and decide on whether a case should be filed or not.

According to witnesses, the Kushtia-bound motorcycle collided with the bus coming from the opposite direction, leaving them dead on Kushtia-Rajbari road around 1:30pm.

The bus driver and other staff fled the spot following the accident.

Man held for killing wife

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Jamalpur

Police yesterday arrested a man for allegedly killing his wife in Jamalpur's Dewanganj upazila.

Helal Uddin, 35, of the upazila's Chikajani union, is a van driver.

His wife, Aklima Begum, 22, was found dead at his house in the union's Nayagram village yesterday noon.

She was the daughter of Ali Hossain of the upazila's Bahadurabad union.

Quoting family, Shyamal Chandra, officer-in-charge of Dewanganj Model Police Station, said Aklima and Helal married seven years ago and since then, she was being physically abused by Helal.

Police arrested Helal from his house around 12:00pm after he admitted to killing Aklima during a primary interrogation, OC added.

AL loses in its bastion

FROM PAGE 1

At Ummul Qura Hifz Madrasa, two polling agents of a woman councillor said an agent of Zaida entered the centre around 8:10am but he was driven out by the polling agents of Azmat.

Returning Officer Faridul and Gazipur Deputy Commissioner Anisur Rahman visited Joydevpur Govt Girls High School around 11:00pm and warned Azmat's polling agents against wearing badges of boat instead of the ID cards issued by the presiding officer.

"Our magistrate will arrest you unless you wear the designated ID card," Anisur was heard telling several polling agents.

There were almost no voters at the Bangladesh Rice Research Institute High School and BRRI Pragati Primary School 12:00pm, but Azmat's supporters were seen chanting slogans in front of the centres, which is a violation of the electoral code of conduct.

Members of law enforcement agencies present there did nothing to stop them.

Glitches in the EVMs resulted in long queues of voters in at least three centres.

Faruk Hossen, presiding officer at Ananta Model Kindergarten, said an EVM had to be replaced after it

stopped working.

"It took some time to replace and the voters had to wait," he added.

Around 1:00pm, there was a long queue in front of two booths at the



PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN

Voters queue up at Chhoto Dewra Agrani High School centre in Gazipur City Corporation polls. The photo was taken at 9:22am yesterday.

centre and only 15 percent votes had been cast by the time.

A garment worker named Kulsum Khanam said she had been in the line for two and a half hours.

Many voters at Kazi Azmat Ullah College, Gazipur Govt Women's College, and Madinatul Ulum Hafizia

Madrasa said they had to wait for hours to cast their votes.

Zahid Hossain, who was at Azmat Ullah College, said, "I arrived at the polling centre before 8:00am, and

now it is 9:30am. But I have not been able to cast my vote even though there are not too many voters."

Returning Officer Faridul said the use of EVM was new to many of the working class voters which caused delays.

Since the biggest influx in 2017, Bangladesh and Myanmar signed a bilateral deal for repatriation. But two repatriation attempts have failed so far.

This is the second delegation of Myanmar visiting Cox's Bazar to accelerate the Rohingya repatriation.

Around 1.2 million Rohingyas have been living in Bangladesh. Most of them fled a violent military crackdown in their homeland in 2017 and joined others who had fled to Bangladesh since the 1980s.

Since the biggest influx in 2017, Bangladesh and Myanmar signed a bilateral deal for repatriation. But two repatriation attempts have failed so far.

AL's information and research affairs secretary Selim Mahmud and central committee member Mohammad A Arafat, BNP's standing committee member Amir Khasru Mahmud Chowdhury and international affairs secretary Shama Obaid, JP Secretary General Mujibul Haque Chunnun, and praesidium member Major (ret'd) Rana Mohammad Sohel were present at the meeting.

Khasru hoped that the new US policy would play a supporting role in ensuring free, fair and credible elections.

"We welcome this decision of the US as it was made considering the concerns of the people of Bangladesh over the election," he said, adding that there was no reason for the BNP to be worried since it is not involved in election rigging.

The US move has sent the message that the people of Bangladesh cannot exercise their right to franchise and their constitutional rights have been

Who said what

FROM PAGE 1

stability, and development gains in the country," the statement read.

It said the electoral reform process in Bangladesh continues in a consultative manner involving all stakeholders concerned.

The statement said that the entire executive machinery would remain at the disposal of the Election Commission to help it discharge its responsibilities.

Talking to reporters, Foreign Minister AK Abdul Momen said there is no reason to worry over the new US visa policy.

He said the government was not under any additional pressure from the US and termed the relationship with the US "excellent".

Momen said Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina wants free and fair elections and this policy will further strengthen her position.

BNP, JP WELCOME US POLICY
US Ambassador Peter Haas had a meeting with key Awami League, BNP, and Jatiya Party leaders at his home yesterday.

The BNP and the JP leaders welcomed the US move afterwards and the AL leaders did not make any comments.

AL's information and research affairs secretary Selim Mahmud and central committee member Mohammad A Arafat, BNP's standing committee member Amir Khasru Mahmud Chowdhury and international affairs secretary Shama Obaid, JP Secretary General Mujibul Haque Chunnun, and praesidium member Major (ret'd) Rana Mohammad Sohel were present at the meeting.

Khasru hoped that the new US policy would play a supporting role in ensuring free, fair and credible elections.

"We welcome this decision of the US as it was made considering the concerns of the people of Bangladesh over the election," he said, adding that there was no reason for the BNP to be worried since it is not involved in election rigging.

The US move has sent the message that the people of Bangladesh cannot exercise their right to franchise and their constitutional rights have been

taken away, he said.

The ruling party should be worried about their future if they again indulge in vote rigging instead of restoring people's voting and democratic rights, Khasru said.

The JP secretary general said, "The US visa policy on Bangladesh suggests that the US wants fair and competitive

elections in Bangladesh. Our party also agrees with this stance."

Speaking to journalists at Dhaka University, AL General Secretary Obaidul Quader said the government will facilitate and extend all-out cooperation to the Election Commission for a neutral general election.

People, who set fire to buses, resort to vandalism in the name of movement ahead of elections, and are engaged in political violence, will be in trouble

because of the new US policy, he added.

Awami League presidium member and Agriculture Minister Abdur Razaque said, "We're not afraid of it ... our stance is clear. By no means we will do anything that thwarts the democratic process. We'll not do anything that deprives our people from getting visas."

Asked, Election Commissioner Md Alamgir said these are inter-state matters. "It is our duty to do whatever is necessary to hold free and fair elections," he said.

At Channel i's Tiritiyo Matra programme aired Wednesday night, US Assistant Secretary of State Donald Lu said their view is that the defence of democracy is both necessary and essential for Bangladesh to continue to move forward as a leader in South Asia and around the world.

He said the new US visa policy will be implemented in a way that is fair and constructive. These restrictions would apply both to those giving orders and those taking orders for acts of violence, voter intimidation, or vote rigging.

Lu said, "...We believe Bangladesh is a true democracy that deserves to have free and fair elections."

He said they want the new policy to contribute to the dialogue in Bangladesh and efforts by everyone – the government, opposition, civil society – to create the environment for a free and fair election.

"We're very satisfied"

FROM PAGE 1
But that's not the only reason."

Enquired about the absence of polling agents of independent mayor candidate Zaida Khatun, he said they didn't have any such reports.

Speaking to reporters in the morning, Alamgir said several EVMs were no working at the beginning of the voting, but the problem was fixed immediately and the voters were able to cast their votes.

He said that there were some problems with 10-12 CCTV cameras at some polling centres due to internet issues, but footage was still being recorded at those centres.

Voting ended at all 480 polling centres without any report of violence.

Rohingyas have to go through verification

FROM PAGE 12

Talking to The Daily Star, multiple Rohingyas said the delegation assured them of providing education, medical and other facilities.

"We requested them to prioritise our prime demand of Myanmar citizenship. Besides, we also sought for security after our return," said Bazlul Islam, an inhabitant of camp-26.

Mainul Kabir, head of the Rohingya wing in Bangladesh's foreign ministry, said that repatriation was "the only way to solve the Rohingya

issue", reports AFP.

He said the Myanmar delegation "assured that the confusions that are being created will be resolved gradually", AFP added.

The first Myanmar delegation arrived in Bangladesh on March 15 on a five-day visit to scrutinise the list of Rohingyas sent by Bangladesh to their country for repatriation.

Then a 20-member delegation of Rohingyas and seven Bangladeshi officials visited Rakhine state on May 5 to see the arrangements made by the Myanmar authorities for a

planned repatriation.

This is the second delegation of Myanmar visiting Cox's Bazar to accelerate the Rohingya repatriation.

Around 1.2 million Rohingyas have been living in Bangladesh. Most of them fled a violent military crackdown in their homeland in 2017 and joined others who had fled to Bangladesh since the 1980s.

Since the biggest influx in 2017, Bangladesh and Myanmar signed a bilateral deal for repatriation. But two repatriation attempts have failed so far.

DEATH OF PASSENGER ON FLIGHT What action taken against Biman captain?

Aviation ministry asks CAAB

RASHIDUL HASAN

Fariduzzaman, a flight operation inspector of Civil Aviation Authority of Bangladesh (CAAB), had violated the rules and sat in the captain's seat on flight BG 336 of Biman that departed from Jeddah for Dhaka on January 15.

At that time, the pilot in command Captain Dildar Ahmed Tufail was resting in the bunk, leaving the cockpit of a Boeing 777-300ER technically unmanned. He had Irfan Ul Haq beside him who was under training and not qualified to fly the aircraft. It was Irfan's test flight.

Meanwhile, a passenger had a heart attack.

No medical emergency was declared and the plane landed in Dhaka four hours after the incident. The passenger, Kabir Ahmed, a migrant from Noakhali, was pronounced dead on arrival. Kabir's death certificate, issued by Kuwait Bangladesh Friendship Government Hospital, shows that he was brought in dead.

Interestingly, CAAB recently proposed to send Fariduzzaman to inspect the simulator training facilities of Airbus in Singapore to pave the way for Bangladeshi pilots to receive training in the Asian

country.

However, the Ministry of Civil Aviation and Tourism has recently rejected the CAAB proposal and asked the regulatory authority to inform the ministry of what actions have been taken against Fariduzzaman for the alleged violation of rules and asked whether an investigation has been carried out in this regard.

CAAB recently proposed to send Fariduzzaman to inspect the simulator training facilities of Airbus in Singapore. However, the ministry has recently rejected the CAAB proposal.

In reply, CAAB told the ministry that Fariduzzaman is the only resourceful person in CAAB having experience of flying Airbus.

Airbus has recently offered to sell 10 aircraft to Biman. Two Airbus 330s with 436 seats each will soon join the fleet of US Bangla Airlines, a private airline in the country.

Captain Fariduzzaman, a veteran pilot,

SEE PAGE 4 COL 6



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina waves at people at Dhaka airport after a flight of Biman Bangladesh Airlines, carrying the premier and her entourage members, landed yesterday morning. The premier returned home after wrapping up her three-day official visit to Qatar to attend the Qatar Economic Forum at the invitation of Emir of Qatar Sheikh Tamim Bin Hamad Al Thani.

PHOTO: P10

4 including two Nigerians held on fraud charges

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Four members of an international fraud gang including two Nigerian nationals have been arrested on charge of defrauding a Bangladeshi woman in name of sending her a costly parcel.

A team of Rab-10 arrested the four -- Charles Ifennade Udezue, his associate Frank Coco Obierks, both Nigerian citizens, and Shafi Mollah and Moushomi Khatun -- raiding the city's Badda, Kadmtoli and Bashundhara residential areas on May 24 after the victim lodged a complaint, said Rab at a press briefing yesterday.

A member of the gang told the victim, a 26-year-old woman from Munshiganj, that he had sent a precious parcel for her and asked her to collect it from Dhaka airport.

Pretending to be a custom official, Moushumi then called the victim on May 18 and asked her to collect the parcel after paying customs charges.

Moushumi also gave her a bank and mobile banking accounts.

The victim sent over Tk 65,000 in three phases to the accounts. Eventually, the victim realised that she fell victim to fraud, said Rab-10 commanding officer Mohammad Farid Uddin.

Rab said Charles, who came to Bangladesh on a visit visa in 2019, is accused in a case filed under the Narcotics Control Act. He is the mastermind of the fraud gang, he added.

CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES

Inclusive education, still a far cry

Speakers discuss opportunities, challenges at roundtable

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government should implement a flexible education curriculum, develop infrastructure and create more job opportunities to implement inclusive education for children with disabilities, speakers said during a roundtable.

The roundtable, titled "Opportunities and Challenges to Inclusive Education for Children with Disabilities in Bangladesh", was organised by The Daily Star in association with Centre for Disability in Development (CDD) and Liliane Foundation at The Daily Star Centre yesterday.

While presenting the keynote, CDD Thematic Expert Jahangir Alam said more than half of children with disabilities are not enrolled in any formal education.

"Among the persons with disabilities aged 5-24 years, 40.90 percent have no formal education, which increases further with the increase in age," he said, quoting National Survey on Persons with Disabilities 2021.

Tahmina Khan Mojlish, project manager of Save the Children International, said, "The curriculum for disabled children is still going through experiments. Their assessment process is also the same as other children, which is not helpful at all."

Besides, there is no proper infrastructure for children with disabilities. Teachers also need more training to teach children with disabilities," she added.

Alodia Santos, development adviser at Liliane Foundation, said, "We see different efforts of the government. But their efforts will



PHOTO: STAR

Speakers at the roundtable at The Daily Star Centre yesterday.

only bear fruit if there is proper data on children with disabilities. There is a lot more to be done in this regard."

Saeeda Anis Pew of USAID project Shobai Miley Shikhi, said, "Inclusive education is not the only answer to every type of challenge that children with disabilities face. We are focusing on a universal design for learning for both classroom and community levels."

Nasrin Jahan, founder of Disabled Child Foundation, said only children with mild disabilities get included in mainstream education.

"However, those who have severe issues remain out of mainstream education. A new curriculum should be introduced which would be friendly to children with disabilities."

Mohua Pal, chairperson of Access Bangladesh Foundation, emphasised arranging more caregivers for children at educational institutions. She also stressed the importance of ensuring job opportunities for children with disabilities who complete their education.

Roos Sprangersm, inclusive education expert at Liliane Foundation, said it is been difficult to cater to the needs of children with disabilities in education systems all around the world.

"We should not compromise on the quality of education. We also want to focus on the needs of all children with mild or severe disabilities," she added.

Nazmul Bari, director of CDD, said, "We have to work together with persons with disabilities, their families, groups, and organisations. All of them will need to play the key role in ensuring an inclusive education system for children with disabilities."

CDD Executive Director AHM Noman Khan gave the welcome speech at the programme.

SM Ali Has Nain, project manager of CDD, Ahmed Towfiqur Rahman, deputy director of inclusive citizenship of Friendship NGO, and Amrita Rejina Rozario, country director of Sightsavers, also spoke at the roundtable, moderated by Tanjim Ferdous of The Daily Star.

16 BNP leaders get HC bail in violence cases

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday granted six weeks' anticipatory bail to 16 BNP leaders, including its standing committee member Gayeshwar Chandra Roy, in two violence cases.

The cases were filed with New Market and Dhanmondi police stations on May 24 on charges of attacking law enforcers, preventing them from discharging duties, and vandalism and violence during the road march enforced by BNP in Science Lab area in the capital on May 23.

Yesterday, the HC also ordered the accused BNP leaders to surrender before the lower court concerned in six weeks in connection with the cases.

The HC bench of Justice Mustafa Zaman Islam and Justice Md Aminul Islam passed the orders following two separate petitions filed by the accused BNP men seeking bail in the cases.

Earlier in the day, they appeared before the HC bench for bail.

Other 15 accused BNP leaders, who secured anticipatory bail, include its international affairs secretary Nasir Uddin Ahmed Ashim, Dhaka north city BNP convener Abdu Salam, Gazipur district president Fazlul Haque Milan and Jubo Dal president Sultan Salauddin Tuku. Lawyers AJ Mohammad Ali, Kayser Kamal and Md Ruhul Quddus Kazal appeared for the accused BNP men during hearing of their bail petitions.

Constable dies of gunshot wound from own firearm

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A police constable died after suffering a gunshot wound from his own firearm at a checkpoint in Dhaka's Banani area yesterday morning.

Ashrafuzzaman Roni, 22, was a constable posted to Public Order Management Division.

Sub-inspector Muntaharul Islam of Banani Police Station said the constable used to live in Mirpur police lines and was on duty around 6:00am at the Banani Road II checkpoint.

Minutes later, a gunshot was heard after Roni went to the toilet of the police box. His colleagues went inside and found him with a bullet wound in his chest, he said.

Roni was taken to Dhaka Medical College Hospital where the doctors declared him dead around 8:00am, the SI said.

"We are suspecting he shot himself," the police officer said, adding that they are investigating the incident.

Hailing from Dhamrai, Roni joined the police force in 2020.

GRAFT CASE AGAINST TARIQUE, ZUBAIDA Two prosecution witnesses testify

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday recorded the testimonies of two more witnesses in a graft case filed against BNP acting chairman Tarique Rahman and his wife Zubaida Rahman.

Judge Md Asaduzzaman of Dhaka Metropolitan Senior Special Judge's Court recorded the statements of Emraj Ali Shikder and Syed Azad Iqbal, both accountants of now defunct Daily Dinkal.

Tarique and Zubaida were shown as fugitives in the charge sheet and no lawyer defended them in court yesterday.

The court fixed May 28 for the next hearing. Previously on September 26, 2007, ACC filed the case with Kafrul Police Station against the two and Zubaida's mother for amassing assets worth Tk 4.82 crore through illegal means and concealing information of Tk 2.16 crore in their wealth statements.

RELIEF SCAM CASE SC upholds acquittal of BNP leader Falu

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Appellate Division of the Supreme Court yesterday affirmed its earlier verdict that upheld the High Court judgement which cleared BNP leader Mosaddek Ali Falu from trial proceedings of a relief scam case filed during the regime of army-backed caretaker government in 2007.

A full bench of the Appellate Division headed by Chief Justice Hasan Foez Siddique dismissed a review petition filed by the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC), challenging the June 2, 2021 verdict that upheld the HC judgement.

Lawyer Md Ruhul Quddus Kazal appeared for Falu, while lawyer AKM Fazlul Haque represented the ACC.

The ACC filed the case with Tejgaon Police Station against Falu and few others on charge of misappropriating the government's relief materials in 2007.

52 more get hospitalised with dengue

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

At least 52 dengue patients were hospitalised in the last 24 hours till yesterday.

With the new ones, the total number of dengue cases this year rose to 1,620, of which 578 are from outside Dhaka, according to the DGHS.

Some 178 dengue patients are still undergoing treatment across the country while 13 dengue patients have died so far this year.



Amid rods protruding precariously and no safety harnesses in sight, workers continue demolition work of a bridge in the Magrakanda area of Savar-Keraniganj road yesterday.

PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

PRAYER
TIMING
MAY 26

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

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION



This year's War Graves Week, an annual event organised by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission, is being held for the first time in Bangladesh from May 20 to May 28. As part of the event, forty students accompanied by their teachers participated in a session at Chattogram Commonwealth War Cemetery yesterday. Other than taking guided tours, students also learned about the history of the war cemetery and the Commonwealth soldiers and others who lost their lives during World War II.

PHOTO: RAJIB RAIHAN

Skilled workforce

FROM PAGE 5
He also said cost of migration in Bangladesh is too high compared to a neighbouring labour-sending country, which is another area to look at. Addressing as chief guest, Expatriates' Welfare Minister Imran Ahmad said there is a need to further increase the existing 2.5 percent incentive for remitting money home through banking channel. He said to ensure better protection of migrant workers, the ministry has recently upgraded the mandatory "Probashi Kormi" insurance for outbound migrant workers. Presenting a keynote paper, Prof Tasneem Siddiqui, chair of Refugee and Migratory Movements Research Unit, said between 2001 and 2009, Bangladesh's inward remittance flows have grown annually between 12 percent and 37 percent.

On the other hand, between 2011 and 2020, except for 2013, 2016, and 2017, the annual growth of remittance was between 10 percent and 18 percent, she said. She said multiple factors including Russia-Ukraine war, the pandemic, inflation and non-payment and irregular payments of wages contributed negatively to remittance inflow. Besides, domestic factors including difference in exchange rate in formal and informal markets contributed to this end, she added. Saudi Arabian Ambassador Essa Yousef Essa Alduhailan said sending more skilled Bangladeshi migrant workers to the Kingdom will be a win-win situation for both countries. He said his country has been working with Bangladesh to ensure recruitment of more skilled workers.

JCD leader shot

FROM PAGE 5
JCD leader Ashraf Islam, 20, who was also shot during the clash, is under treatment at the same hospital, the inspector added. Local JCD leaders said on January 26 this year, the central JCD formed a five-member convening committee of the district with Siddiqur Rahman Nahid as president and

Mehedi Hasan as general secretary. Since then, JCD leaders and activists, who were deprived of posts in the committee, have been agitating for the cancellation of the committee. They were protesting near the district BNP office in Chinishpur this afternoon, said the district's former senior BNP

vice-president Mainuddin Bhuiyan, adding that the leaders and activists of the other group of the JCD then attacked the protesters. Fazle E Khoda, additional superintendent of police in Narsingdi, said police visited the spot after receiving information. The cause of the incident is being investigated.

88 of 126 polling centres

FROM PAGE 5
while five cases are stayed due to court orders. Additionally, 99 cases filed against 55 candidates have been disposed of at various times. Regarding the reserved seats for women, among 42 candidates, two of the candidates face criminal charges, while six have been acquitted in 10 cases. EVM TRAINING In preparation for the election, the Election Commission provided a three-day training programme for individuals involved in the election process to familiarise them

with operating electronic voting machines (EVMs). EVMs will be used in all polling centres. Each centre will be equipped with an IT expert to ensure the smooth functioning of the machines. FINAL LIST OF CANDIDATES A total of seven mayoral candidates will compete in the BCC polls as one candidate recently got back his candidature. The number of councillor candidates in general wards stands at 116, with 21 candidates withdrawing their candidature. For the women

councillors in 10 reserved seats, the number of candidates remains at 42 as none have withdrawn their candidature. For the last few years, EC officials didn't use the word "risky" for those polling centres which were vulnerable to violence as it sends a negative message to the voters and a sense of fear is created among them. That's why they use the term "important", said officials.

ACC sues store

FROM PAGE 5
making a Tk 24.89 lakh mismatch evident to the investigators. A Tk 79.05 lakh gap between his wife's income and wealth were also taken into account during the scrutiny. According to investigators, the couple invested the illegally amassed amount (around Tk 1.04 crore) in real estate, buying a flat (worth Tk 45 lakh) in the capital alongside several plots in both Dhaka and Brahmanbaria.

AMUSEMENT PARK SALE / LEASE
Largest amusement park in Mymensingh division. Now in operations with 55 high land. Water park, dry park with all rides, resort, swimming pool & complete boundary wall and three high land in Uttarkhan Mouza, Uttara, Dhaka, for sale.
Contact : 01727-010028

খুলনা বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়
ইংরেজি ডিগ্রি প্রোগ্রাম
MA in English Language Teaching (ELT)
প্রোগ্রামে ভর্তি বিজ্ঞপ্তি
খুলনা বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের কলা ও মানবিক স্কুলের অধীনে ইংরেজি ডিগ্রি প্রোগ্রামে MA in English Language Teaching (ELT) প্রোগ্রামের ২০২২-২০২৩ শিক্ষাবর্ষের ২য় বাতাসে শিক্ষার্থীরা ভর্তি করার জন্য দরখাস্ত আহ্বান করা হচ্ছে।

MATRIMONIAL
Seeking for an eligible bridegroom for a highly educated young lady involved in research work in the US with the rank of Asst. Associate Professor and holding a Green Card. DOB: 02/11/82. Persons residing in the US will be preferred. Those who are interested may like to kindly email: al.haroon@yahoo.com. No brokers please.

BAF SHAHEEN ENGLISH MEDIUM COLLEGE (SEM)
TEJGAON, DHAKA
ADMISSIONS AVAILABLE
in AS and A Level for 2023-2024 Sessions
Limited seats are available in AS and A Level for 2023-2024 academic sessions. Admission forms are available in college website/SEM Accounts Office from 28 May to 07 June 2023. Visit: www.bafsemc.edu.bd for details.

Urgent Groom Required for Canada Settled Woman
Canadian Citizen, religious, well-educated never married Bangladeshi woman, age 37. Seeking Groom, age range: 34-42, well-educated with job experience and non-smoker. Contact: elderbrother7182@gmail.com

বিবিধ বিক্রয়
ঢাকাস্থে আত্মজীবনিকামানের কাছট টার হেডেল সাতশত গ্রিন (৭৩০/-) কোর্ট-৬মফ্লোর চাকার সাতশত বিক্রয় জমি একরে এক হাজার কোটি টাকার হলে পাঁচশত (৫০০/-) কোটি টাকার বিক্রয় হবে। সরাসরি প্রকৃত ক্রেতার জন্য # ০১৭১৬-৩৩৭-৩৩৫

TUITION WANTED
15 years of experience Maths teacher wants to teach O-A Level (Edexcel, Cambridge). Q/P solve, Mock test. B.Sc (Math), DU. **DIPAK BARMAN** 01712018889, 01777846252

জমি/বাড়ি বিক্রয়
ঢাকার বিলাপাট বানানবীন দাসেরকান্দী বাবুরজায়া ২০ ফিট রোড সংলগ্ন মাটি ভরাট করা ১৮.৫২ শতাংশ জমি বিক্রয় ও বনসীতে সম্পূর্ণ মৌজাহিককৃত বৈধ প্লাস চলমান ৬.৫ তলা টিপটপ বাড়ী বিক্রয় হবে। যোগাযোগ: ০১৭১৬-১১৩৮৮৮

TO-LET
Office/Residence, New Building at Uttara, Sector-9, Road-3/C, House-15 (G+7) x 1700 sq.ft/floor. Foreigner/Multinational preferable. **Mobile: 01711-535067 firozamin68@gmail.com**

পুট বিক্রয়
রাজউক উত্তরা তৃতীয় পর্বে ১৬ নং সেক্টরে ভি মুকে ৩/এ রোড ৫+৫ = ১০ কাঠা বাড়ীভাড়া করা ও ১৫ নং সেক্টরে লোকপাড় দক্ষিণমুখী পুট বিক্রয়। ০১৯১১০১৭০৪৫, ০১৭৫৭২১১২৫৫

What action taken against Biman

FROM PAGE 3
who has not had a valid pilot's licence in years, since he is well over the age limit of 65, was evaluating trainee Irfan from the jump seat in the cockpit. After Kabir suffered a heart attack, the chief purser went to the cockpit to notify the captain of the emergency and get an idea about when they would be making an emergency landing and where. The chief purser realised that the captain was resting elsewhere.

According to aviation rules, in such cases, a "medical emergency" is to be raised by the pilot, which notifies every nearby airport of a possible arrival with the need for emergency medical support. However, Tufail did not divert or raise the alarm, confirmed civil aviation insiders looking into the event. The mandatory air safety report was also not filed after the flight. In the absence of the captain, Fariduzzaman, who was an observer on the

flight, sat in the captain's seat, which is against the standard operating procedure. In the absence of Dildar Ahmed, Fariduzzaman landed the flight directly at the Dhaka airport without landing at any nearby airport. Upon landing in Dhaka, it took a further 40 minutes to get Kabir out of the plane due to a lack of preparedness, since a "medical emergency" was not declared. He was still alive then.

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Office of the Director
Central Cattle Breeding & Dairy Farm
Savar, Dhaka
Phone No. 02-224426010, E-mail: directorsavardairy@gmail.com
e-Tender Notice (Corrigendum)
Ref. No. 33.01.0000.301.07.001(9th).22-898 Date: 24-05-2023
This is an online tender, where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP Portal and no hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-Tender, registration in the National e-GP Portal (http://www.eprocure.gov.bd) is required.

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Local Government Engineering Department
Office of the Upazila Engineer
Senbag, Noakhali
www.lged.gov.bd
উন্নয়নের গণতন্ত্র
শেখ হাসিনার মূলমন্ত্র
Memo No. 46.02.7580.611.18.001.22.243 Date: 25/05/2023
Invitation for Tenders (OTM)
e-Tender Notice No. 08/2022-2023

Reference No. APP ID-185553
e-Tender is invited the National e-GP System Portal (http://www.eprocure.gov.bd) for the Procurement of following Tender ID & Schemes.

Tender ID No.	Package No.	Name of work	Tender/proposal document last selling date & time	Last date & time for tender submission
821945	e-Tender/PEDP4/NOA/SEN/2022-2023/W2.02127	Construction of Additional Class Room Chattarpaia GPS, Under PEDP-4 Project.	14-06-2023 17.00pm	15-06-2023 13.00pm
829325	e-Tender/PEDP4/NOA/SEN/2022-2023/W2.05090	Construction of Additional Class Room Niz Senbag GPS, Under PEDP-4 Project.	14-06-2023 17.00pm	15-06-2023 13.00pm
829326	e-Tender/PEDP4/NOA/SEN/2022-2023/W2.05146	Construction of Additional Class Room Birkot Atar Bhuyan GPS, Under PEDP-4 Project.	14-06-2023 17.00pm	15-06-2023 13.00pm
829327	e-Tender/PEDP4/NOA/SEN/2022-2023/W2.05147	Construction of Additional Class Room East Divingpur GPS, Under PEDP-4 Project.	14-06-2023 17.00pm	15-06-2023 13.00pm
829329	e-Tender/PEDP4/NOA/SEN/2022-2023/W2.05145	Construction of Additional Class Room Porikot GPS, Under PEDP-4 Project.	14-06-2023 17.00pm	15-06-2023 13.00pm
829330	e-Tender/PEDP4/NOA/SEN/2022-2023/W14.02115	Construction of Boundary Wall (1) Domnakandi GPS (2) Idilpur GPS (3) Maizipur GPS Under PEDP-4 Project.	14-06-2023 17.00pm	15-06-2023 13.00pm

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Local Government Engineering Department
Office of the Executive Engineer
District: Rangpur
www.lged.gov.bd
শেখ হাসিনার মূলনীতি
গ্রাম শহরের উন্নতি
Memo No. 46.02.8500.000.07.080.23-1800 Date: 24/5/23

Invitation for Tender (Works) [OTM]
e-Tender Notice No. 37/2022-2023
e-Tender is invited in the National e-GP System Portal (https://www.eprocure.gov.bd) for the procurement of following works, details are given below.

Sl No.	Tender ID No.	Package No.	Description of work	Tender last selling (date & time)
1	835660	IRIDP-3/RNG/DW-107	(a) Improvement of Gajagharat-Embic via Kauyafande Mosque Road at Ch. 00m-2200m. [R.ID. 185275040] [Gangachara] Salvage Cost Tk. 394767.00 (b) Construction of 7 Nos. 0.750m x 0.750m U Drain culvert at Ch. 6m, 436m, 640m, 780m, 1536m, 1632m, 2175m on the same road (c) Construction of 1 No. 1x1.50mx 1.50m RCC Box culvert Ch. 388m on the same road [Gangachara]	18/06/2023 15.00pm
2	835677	IRIDP-3/RNG/DW-111	(a) Improvement of Gangachara-Barobli RHD Kolkondo Khatib Master's Mosque to Changdoba GPS via H/O Molla Kabirul Road at Ch. 00m-2368m. [R.ID. 185275212] (b) Construction of 5 Nos. 0.750m x 0.750m U Drain culvert at Ch. 980m, 1048m, 1115m, 1300m, 1900m on the same road (c) Construction of 1 No. 1x1.50mx 1.50m RCC Box culvert Ch. 780m on the same road (d) Construction of 1 No. 1x4.00mx2.50m RCC Box culvert Ch. 2230m on the same road [Gangachara]	
3	835678	IRIDP-3/RNG/DW-114	(a) Improvement of Fakirhat - Ramnathpur Char Motha via Komorup GPS Road at Ch. 00-3270m. [R.ID. 185594193] (b) Construction of 09 Nos. 0.750m x 0.750m U Drain culvert at Ch. 310m, 368m, 1127m, 1774, 1952m, 2591m, 2775m, 2947m & 3125m on the same road [Mithapukur]	
4	837713	RDRIP-2W-VRB-330	Improvement of Gajagharata Hat Pacaker Pul-Kalpasa Manas Para-Joydeb GP-BWDB - Satanna Jamal BC Road near Abdul Hai house road Ch. 00m-3452m. ID. No. 185275170 [Gangachara]	
5	837723	e-Tender/LGED/Rang/GOBM/2022-23/W-51	Rehabilitation of NHW at Lalbag-Ranipur GC Road from Ch. 00m-3000m, Road ID-185492005 [Rangpur-S]	
6	837730	e-Tender/LGED/Rang/GOBM/2022-23/W-52	Rehabilitation of NHW at Lalbag-Ranipur GC Road from Ch. 3000m-5500m, Road ID-185492005 [Rangpur-S]	

'Over 8,500 law enforcers to ensure fair polls'

UNB, Khulna

At least 161 polling stations out of 289 under 31 wards of Khulna city have been identified as "important".

The Khulna City Corporation election is slated to be held on June 12.

According to the sources at the office of the returning officers and Khulna Metropolitan Police, there are 289 polling stations in the city, and to maintain law and order, the law enforcement agencies divided those into two segments - "important" and "general".

KMP Commissioner Masudur Rahman Bhuiya said the list of vulnerable polling stations has been prepared keeping various issues in mind.

Primarily, a decision has been taken to deploy seven policemen and 17 Ansar members to each polling station, declared as important while seven policemen and 15 Ansar members in the polling stations declared as general.

Besides, over 8,500 law enforcers - 3,567 police, 300 armed police, and 4,657 Ansar members - will perform their duties in Khulna city to ensure a free and fair election.



88 of 126 polling centres 'highly important'

SUSHANTA GHOSH and MD ABBAS

At least 88 out of the total 126 polling centres have been identified as "highly important" for the upcoming Barishal City Corporation (BCC) election scheduled on June 12.

According to sources from the Barishal Metropolitan Police, an additional 27 centres are considered "important."

The remaining 11 centres have been categorised as "general".

This identification is subject to change based on evolving circumstances, said BMP sources.

Monirul Islam, assistant returning officer of BCC, said the general centres would have approximately 20 to 22 law enforcement personnel deployed on the polls day.

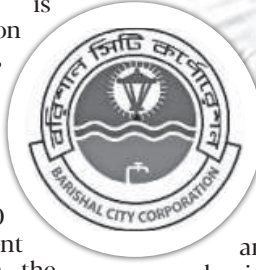
However, at important and highly important centres, an additional four to five law enforcement members will be assigned to ensure security, he said.

Judicial and executive magistrates will be present in all centres, in addition to law enforcers



As part of a three-day workshop on "EVM Troubleshooting", officials are being given training at the Regional Election Office in Barishal yesterday.

PHOTO: TITU DAS



and CCTV cameras will also be installed at every polling centre, he said.

Monirul also mentioned that the number of law enforcement personnel to be deployed in important, highly important, and general centres will be determined in the next joint meeting between law enforcement agencies and the district administration.

The categorisation of polling stations into important, highly important, and general is primarily based on their location and environment.

CANDIDATES AND CASES

As per the BCC election affidavit, 133 candidates are contesting in 30 wards of Barishal city polls. Among them, 29 candidates face 47 lawsuits,

SEE PAGE 4 COL 3

Nominations of 5 mayor candidates cancelled in Sylhet

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

The Election Commission yesterday announced the cancellation of nomination papers of five independent mayoral candidates of Sylhet City Corporation elections, slated for June 21.

After evaluating the nomination papers, returning officer and regional election officer Md Faysal Kadir made the announcement.

The candidates are Shamsun Noor Talukdar, Mohammad Abdul Mannan Khan, Jahid Uddin Chowdhury, Md Shahjahan Mia and Mushtaq Ahmed Rouf Mostafa.

Of them, discrepancy was found in the supporter lists of Shamsun Noor Talukdar, Md Abdul Mannan Khan and Jahid Uddin Chowdhury.

According to the EC rules, support of at least 300 local voters has to be shown in a list

to compete as an independent candidate for the post of mayor.

From the list, the EC verifies information of some voters randomly, and in case of inconsistency, cancels the candidate's nomination.

Meanwhile, Shahjahan and Mostafa did not submit their asset statements and copies of the latest income tax return. Hence, their nominations were cancelled.

The returning officer said candidates whose nominations were cancelled can appeal within the next three days.

Meanwhile, nominations of Awami League candidate Md Anwaruzzaman Chowdhury, Jatiya Party's Nazrul Islam Babul, Islami Andolan Bangladesh's Mahmudul Hasan, Zaker Party's Md Zahirul Alam, independent candidates Mohammad Abdul Hanif and Md Salah Uddin Rimon were declared valid.



Skilled workforce, proper channel key to boost remittance

Speakers tell seminar

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Upscaling skills training and sending more skilled migrant workers abroad are prerequisites to get more inward remittance, speakers told a seminar yesterday.

In addition, the government must resolve the difficulties faced by migrant workers and encourage them to use official channels to remit money home, they said.

Better Bangladesh Foundation organised the seminar on "Remittance Inflow in Bangladesh: Opportunities, Challenges and Probable Solutions" at the capital's Foreign Service Academy.

According to Bangladesh Bank, the country received \$17.71 billion in remittance in the first 10 months of the current fiscal year. In last fiscal, the country received \$21.03 billion in remittance.

Addressing the seminar, Ahsan H Mansur, executive director of Policy Research Institute, said Bangladesh's average inward remittance per migrant worker is one of the lowest across the globe.

"We need to take mid and long term approaches to come out of this," he said, adding, quality of the country's training institutes has to be enhanced to ensure standard training.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1

BAHADDARHAT BUS TERMINAL Transport workers demand immediate renovation

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

South Chattogram route transport workers observed a strike for two hours yesterday, demanding the renovation of Bahaddarhat Bus Terminal in the city.

Around 15,000 workers are dependent on this terminal for their daily bread. In a human chain formed during the strike, the workers warned of more serious steps if the authorities fail to start the renovation works by June 7.

As a result of the strike, many people had to suffer. Passengers were seen waiting at the terminal for a long time not sure when they would be able to find a vehicle.

"We have repeatedly requested Chattogram Development Authority and the terminal's management committee to start the works. We are aware of the inconveniences caused to commuters but were compelled to go on strike due to their inefficiency and negligence in this regard," said Mohammad Musa, general secretary of Arakan Road

Transport Workers Union.

Public transportation in seven upazila routes, including Chattogram to Cox's Bazar and Bandarban, were halted during the strike, starting at 11:00am.

"Every monsoon, waterlogging at the terminal ground damages our vehicles, which in turn increases the chances of malfunctions and accidents. There are no toilets for workers or passengers, no lights and no one to guard the place at night," he said.

According to workers, the leasing authority has been collecting Tk 60 per day for each vehicle as fare and service charge.

"We pay CDA Tk 46 lakh every two years but they do not provide any service in return," said Hazi Mohammad Yunus, the lessee of the terminal and acting general secretary of the management committee.

CDA Chief Engineer Hasan Bin Shams said they are planning to relocate the terminal to Moizzar Teck. "No major renovation work will be done till the relocation. However, repair works are undertaken when necessary," he added.



PHOTO: RAJIB RATHAN

The two-hour strike by transport workers caused inconvenience to many, as they were left stranded at the terminal unsure of when they would find transportation.

KUWAIT-BANGLADESH HOSPITAL ACC sues store officer, wife

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Anti-Corruption Commission yesterday sued a Kuwait-Bangladesh Friendship Government Hospital employee and his wife over possessing wealth beyond known source of income.

ACC assistant director Nazmus Sadat filed the case with its integrated district office in Cumilla against the hospital's store officer Habibur Rahman and his wife Sheuli Akhter, incumbent vice chairman of Brahmanbaria's Nabinagar upazila.

Habibur, in his 2017-18 income tax file, said he received total Tk 78.88 lakh as his salary and allowance. However, his total wealth adds up to Tk 1.03 crore,

SEE PAGE 4 COL 5

JCD leader shot dead in Narsingdi clash

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Narsingdi

A local leader of Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal was shot dead during a clash between two groups of the student organisation in Narsingdi town yesterday afternoon.

Deceased Sadekur Rahman, 32, was a former senior joint convener of District Chhatra Dal's convening committee.

Sadekur was declared dead at the Dhaka Medical College Hospital around 7:30pm after he was taken there with bullet injuries, said inspector Bachchu Mia, in-charge of the DMCH police camp.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 3

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Bangladesh Police
Police Telecommunication Organization
Police Telecom Bhabon, Rajarbag, Dhaka.
web: telecom.police.gov.bd

Invitation for Local Tender

1	Ministry/Division	Ministry of Home Affairs		
2	Agency	Bangladesh Police		
3	Procuring Entity Name	SP (Logistics), Bangladesh Police, Police Telecom		
4	Procuring Entity Code	Not used at present		
5	Procuring Entity District	N/A		
6	Invitation for	Tender	Works	Single lot
7	Invitation Ref No	44.01.0000.057.11.073.22/2182/Betar		
8	Date	25-05-2023		
KEY INFORMATION				
9	Procurement Method	NCT (National)	OTM	
FUNDING INFORMATION				
10	Budget and Source of Funds	GOB		
PARTICULAR INFORMATION				
11	Tender Package No.	WD1 & 2/4112316/2022-2023.		
12	Tender Package Name	180 & 150-Foot 3-Legged Self-Supporting Tower		
13	Tender Publication Date	26-05-2023		
14	Tender Last Selling Date	15-06-2023		
15	Tender Closing Date and Time	18-06-2023	11.00 AM	
16	Tender Opening Date and Time	18-06-2023	11.30 AM	
17	Selling Tender Document (Principal)	Address		
NO CONDITIONS APPLY FOR SALE, PURCHASE OR DISTRIBUTION OF TENDER DOCUMENTS				
18	Receiving & Opening Tender Document	Police Telecom, Rajarbag, Dhaka-1217.		
19	Pre-Tender Meeting (Optional)	Date	Time	Place
		01-06-2023	11.30 A.M.	Police Telecom, Rajarbag, Dhaka
INFORMATION FOR TENDERER				
20	Eligibility of Tenderer	1) Upto date trade license 2) Current income tax certificate, 3) VAT registration 4) Bank Solvency Certificate and 5) other requirements described in the Tender document.		
21	Brief Description of Goods or Works	Design, Supply and Installation of 180 & 150 Feet 3-Legged Self-Supporting Tower with an Equipment Shelter Room and Dismantle of existing Tower (If any) wind speed 40-80 ms-1 in 7 Police Station.		
22	Price of Tender Document (Tk)	5,000.00 (Five Thousand) only		
23	Lot-1	Design, Supply and Installation of 180 & 150 Feet 3-Legged Self-Supporting Tower with an Equipment Shelter Room and Dismantle of existing Tower (If any) wind speed 40-80 ms-1 in 7 Police Station.	Location	Tender Security Amount (Tk)
		As per BOQ		BDT 11,00,000/- (Eleven Lac) Taka only.
				Completion Time in Weeks/Months
				02 Weeks
Special instructions				
24.	a) No tender will be received after the deadline of submission time & date. b) The procuring entity reserves the right to reject all tenders or annul the tender process without assigning any reason. c) The Procuring entity also reserves the right to omit, increase and/or decrease the quantity of any item(s) of the tender. d) If not possible to receive/open the tender on the scheduled date for any unavoidable circumstance, the same will be received/opened on the next working date at the same time & same venue. e) Evaluation will be done by Lot basis. f) The Tenderer must comply with all requirements as per the tender data sheet provided with the tender schedule. g) The Procurement will be performed according to the Public Procurement Act-2006 and Public Procurement Regulation 2008.			

(M. Anwar Zahid)
SP (Logistics)
Police Telecom, Rajarbag, Dhaka.
Mobile: +880 1320 020041
e-mail: splog.telecom@police.gov.bd

edcl এসেনসিয়াল ড্রাগস কোম্পানী লিমিটেড
৩৯৫-৩৯৭, তেজগাঁও শিল্প এলাকা
ঢাকা-১২০৮

পুনঃদরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি

ইডিসিএল নিম্নোক্ত আইটেমটি প্রকৃত প্রস্তুতকারী/সরবরাহকারীদের (সংশ্লিষ্ট ব্যবসার সহিত জড়িত) নিকট হইতে সীলমোহরকৃত খামে দরপত্র আহ্বান করছে :-

ক্রমিক নং	দরপত্র নং ও তারিখ	বিবরণ	পরিমাণ
০১।	ইডিসিএল/ক্রয়/লোকাল/ডেস্টার/২০২৩/২২৩ তারিখঃ ২৫/০৫/২০২৩ইং	Povidone K-30 BP (সিডিউল মোতাবেক)	৩,০০০ কেজি
সিকিউরিটি/ আনুমানিক	দরপত্র সিডিউলের মূল্য (অফেরতযোগ্য)	দরপত্র গ্রহণের শেষ তারিখ ও সময়	দরপত্র খোলার তারিখ ও সময়
২.৫%	টাকা ১,৫০০.০০ প্রতি সেট	০৪/০৬/২০২৩ইং বেলা ১২-০০ ঘটিকা	০৪/০৬/২০২৩ইং বেলা ১২-১৫ ঘটিকা

সকল কার্যদিবসে অফিস চলাকালীন সময়ে উপরোক্ত কার্যালয় হইতে শর্ত ও নিয়মাবলীসহ দরপত্র সিডিউল ক্রয় করা যাইবে। উল্লেখ্য যে, যাহাদের ভ্যাট রেজিস্ট্রেশন নাই, তাহাদের দরপত্রে অংশগ্রহণ করার প্রয়োজন নাই।

দরপত্র খোলার দিনে কোন দরপত্র সিডিউল বিক্রয় করা হইবে না।

মহা-ব্যবস্থাপক, প্রকিউরমেন্ট
পক্ষেঃ ব্যবস্থাপনা পরিচালক।

(5inxc4column)



Pori Moni in and as 'Maa'

Film's theatrical release today

I am working on mentally preparing myself for a comeback. Recently, I took some time off to visit my hometown and Kolkata. As Rajya is still a baby, he requires my undivided attention.

SHAH ALAM SHAZU

Leaving behind her glamorous persona, actress Pori Moni has stepped into the role of a mother for the first time in her career for the film, *Maa*, which will be released today in theaters. The film recently premiered at the ongoing Cannes Film Festival, in the Marché du Film segment.

The sudden transition of portraying a mother in a pivotal stage of her career has definitely sparked curiosity among her fans. Pori Moni reflects on the initial shock and shares her joy that it coincided with her real-life pregnancy during the filming process.

"Everyone was shocked when I told them I was going to portray the role of a mother. At that time, I happened to be pregnant. Now, I am spending the best time of my life with Rajya. The journey was challenging, but fulfilling at the same time," said Pori Moni.

Set in the background of our Liberation War, Pori Moni portrays Beena, a woman who has a six-month-old baby. The story of the film revolves around the little baby. The actress believes that the audience will be captivated by the film's essence and resonate with its powerful themes.

"I was so enthralled by the name and the



PHOTOS: COLLECTED

story of the film, that I agreed to do Aranya Anawer's project instantly. Some people were surprised by my decision to play such a challenging role, but I think an artiste is capable of portraying any character, even a mother," shared the actress.

Since the birth of Rajya, Pori Moni has taken a hiatus from acting, dedicating herself to the joyous task of motherhood. When asked about

her return to the screen, she responds with honesty and consideration.

"I am working on mentally preparing myself for a comeback. Recently, I took some time off to visit my hometown and Kolkata. As Rajya is still a baby, he requires my undivided attention. However, acting is a full-time job. I can't focus in front of the camera if I constantly think about my son. Therefore, I feel it is necessary to give myself ample time before returning to work. Rajya needs his mother for a little longer," Pori Moni reveals.

Reflecting on her recent visit to her hometown in Pirojpur, Pori Moni fondly recalls the simpler times filled with nostalgic emotions.

"I remember how on rainy days; water would seep through the tin roof of my school due to holes. Now, as time has passed, they have a proper school building. Yet, I still somehow yearn for those pristine droplets of water on my face, as if to inundate me with endless nostalgia," said Pori Moni.

"It's a matter of great joy that my film was premiered at such a prestigious festival. I hope this paves the way for Bangladeshi cinema to achieve even greater global recognition in the future," responded the actress, when asked about *Maa's* stint at the Cannes Film Festival's Marché du Film segment.

Maa, for Pori Moni, is more than just another project, as both the shooting and release happily coincides with her real-life, ecstatic and joyful motherhood.



Salman's 'Kisi Ka Bhai Kisi Ki Jaan' releasing in Bangladesh

After the release of Shah Rukh Khan starrer *Pathaan* in Bangladesh, the Salman Khan starrer, *Kisi Ka Bhai Kisi Ki Jaan* will also be released in the country soon. The importer of the film has submitted an application to the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, to bring the film to Bangladesh. Sources from the company importing the film, confirmed the matter with The Daily Star.

Coke Studio Bangla pays tribute to Jashimuddin and Abbasuddin



Coke Studio Bangla released their latest song, a captivating rendition of "Nodir Kul", performed by Ripon Kumar Sarkar (Boga) yesterday.

Through this song, the digital-first platform pays tribute to our 'Polli Kobi' Jashimuddin, and legendary singer Abbasuddin Ahmed. "Nodir Kul" is a modern rendition of the timeless classic.

At its core, "Nodir Kul" is a heartfelt tribute to the rich cultural heritage of Bangladesh, showcasing the essence of traditional folk music while infusing it with a contemporary flair. Boga, who was featured in last season's "Chiltey Roud", lent his captivating voice to give "Nodir Kul" a fresh new outlook.

NEWS

'It'll help us hold free

FROM PAGE 1
visa policy were discussed in the pre-scheduled meeting.

According to the new visa policy announced on Wednesday, the US will impose visa restrictions on individuals and their immediate family members if they are responsible for, or complicit in, undermining the democratic election process in Bangladesh.

Similar visa policies were also announced earlier by the US for Nigeria and Somalia.

Momen said, "I asked him [envoy] if such policy is tested. He said it is a new policy which has not been tested yet."

"I asked if such policy worked for democracy. He said he cannot say this at this moment."

The foreign minister said the Awami League always fought for democracy and the peoples' rights. No government in Bangladesh would have been able to continue if elections were not acceptable, he added.

"So, we always want free and fair elections. We have held several

thousand elections since 2009 and those were fair. We don't want any violence...we are committed to free and fair elections."

Momen said the authorities prepared a biometric voter list, introduced transparent ballot boxes, and formed an independent Election Commission.

Apart from the EC, all other election stakeholders, including political parties, voters, the government, civil society and other organisations, need to have a commitment to free and fair elections, he said.

The minister said the US wants to promote democracy and Bangladesh also wants it.

He said the government is not feeling uneasy about the new visa policy.

Speaking separately to reporters, Haas said his country's new policy was a show of support to anyone who have called for free and fair elections in Bangladesh.

"This is something we have done in support of the Bangladeshi people,

and the Bangladeshi government, the prime minister herself, and everyone here in Bangladesh who have called for free and fair elections.

"So, the recent announcement was merely our way of helping to support the democratic electoral process," the envoy said.

Meanwhile, State Minister for Foreign Affairs Shahriar Alam yesterday said Bangladesh expects that the new US visa policy would not be implemented arbitrarily.

Asked how the government was looking at the visa policy, Shahriar told reporters at the foreign ministry, "It is not something for us to be happy or unhappy about. We are looking at it with a good spirit because they are saying that they announced the policy considering the prime minister's commitment to free and fair elections. "As a friendly state, we are considering it positively. Our engagement over the last year or two has increased manifold. Our businesses are growing."

"Then he will also be shown arrested in other cases filed against him in different parts of the country. Chand is also accused in four other cases filed with the RMP," he added.

Meanwhile, in a statement on Wednesday, the BNP termed Chand's remark as "an unwanted slip of the tongue".

Leveraging this situation, the ruling party is now trying to increase the level of repression on BNP men, said the statement signed by BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir.

distance between two polling centres should not be more than 3km, and those should be set up considering the voters' convenience.

Polling centres cannot be set up in establishments owned by anyone with political affiliations. Priority should be given to setting up centres in government establishments. Besides educational institutions, the centres can be in community centres, cyclone shelters, and other office buildings of government, semi-government and autonomous organisations.

Rajshahi BNP leader arrested, remanded

FROM PAGE 1
According to police, Chand went into hiding and was constantly on the move to evade arrest.

On information, a joint team of Rajshahi range and metropolitan police set up the checkpoint in Bheripara and arrested Chand as he was fleeing in a private car.

AL's Banerwar union unit General Secretary Abul Kalam Azad sued Chand, also a member of BNP's central committee, under the Anti-Terrorism Act at Puthia police station on Monday.

Admin, police

FROM PAGE 1
at the upazila level with the upazila nirbahi officer as convener and a seven-member committee at the district level with the deputy commissioner as convener will prepare draft lists of polling centres.

The committees will also have education officers, police officials and others.

The upazila election officer will be the member secretary of the upazila committees while the district election officer will be the member secretary

of the district committees.

The upazila committees will send their draft list to the district committees that will visit the possible polling centres and give its opinion. "The returning officer will finalise the polling centres," said Alamgir.

According to the guideline, a polling centre will be for about 3,000 voters. In the last two general elections, there was a centre for about 2,500 voters.

The guideline added that the

DSA goes against int'l rights treaty

FROM PAGE 12
anything in website or any electronic format which hurts religious sentiment or values, with an intention to hurt or provoke the religious values or sentiments, then such an act of the person shall be an offence.

The OHCHR said this section also appears to lack the precision required by article 19 (3). In addition, OHCHR notes the nature of the sentence is harsher than it is for a similar offence under the Penal Code.

The Penal Code indicates a punishment of two years and/or a fine while the DSA has provisions for five to 10 years with a fine.

The law minister said section 21 ensures protection of the dignity of the Liberation War, the spirit of the Nation, the national anthem or the national flag. "People have feelings about these things. Leering that, anti-liberation forces try to create anarchic situation. That's why the government will not repeal this section," he said.

On section 28, Anisul said there have been attempts to create an unstable situation by hurting religious sentiments through posts on social media. As a result, the government believes that this section cannot be abolished in any way.

He said the government was reviewing the law to stop misuse of the two sections.

AMENDMENT
The OHCHR proposed amendment of sections 8, 25, 27, 29, 31, 32, 43 and 53.

The OHCHR is concerned about the blocking and removal power, given to the authorities under section 8, of any data-information published or propagated in digital media that threaten digital security, hampers the solidarity, financial activities, security, defence, religious values or public discipline in the country or information that incites racial hostility and hatred.

The power is extremely broad and given to the executive body BTRC. And take-down orders do not require the content to be unlawful or criminal, thus it unduly restricts freedom of expression and access to information, it said.

Sections 29 criminalises "defamatory information", and section 25, criminalises "offensive, false or threatening data-

information". Both are considered civil liability issues in other countries, it said, adding that the DSA also has provision for harsher punishment in comparison to the Penal Code.

The OHCHR said defamation should be decriminalised as it discourages the media from publishing critical information.

It said that section 27 (d) criminalises a broad range of acts of accessing or interfering with computers and computer networks and data-information without establishing any clear link to the elements commonly understood to define "terrorism".

The section carries the potential for arbitrary application and misuse of the term "terrorism". It is recommended that in defining terrorism, the definition directed by the Special Rapporteur of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms is used.

Moreover, the possibility of data-information to be used against friendly relations does not constitute a sufficient basis for the criminalisation of accessing such information, it said.

Section 31 relates to an offence of "deteriorating law and order, etc" for the publication of material that "creates enmity, hatred or hostility among different classes or communities of the society, or destroys communal harmony, or creates unrest or disorder, or deteriorates or advances to deteriorate the law and order situation."

The OHCHR notes the vague and broad nature of the language and the harsh nature of the sentence.

Section 32 refers to "breaching secrecy of the government" for the commission or assisting the commission of an offence under the Official Secrets Act.

The OHCHR is concerned that the broad scope of this section, coupled with the harsh penalty of a maximum jail term of 14 years and/or a fine, could have a negative impact on investigative journalism.

Its note said section 43 allows warrantless searches, seizures and arrests by police officers and they are afforded "unfettered discretion".

Section 53 refers to offences that are cognisable and non-bailable.

"This means that the default approach is to keep the accused

persons in pre-trial detention. It is reported that 80 percent of detainees in Bangladesh are in pre-trial detention," the OHCHR said.

Under international human rights law, pre-trial detention shall be the exception rather than the rule.

On the amendment request for the eight sections, Anisul said the government is reviewing those. He, however, did not say when the reviewing will end.

Dhaka University Professor Emeritus Serajul Islam Choudhury said the DSA is curbing the freedom of the media and it should be scrapped immediately. "This law is being misused and journalists are being arrested."

Supreme Court lawyer Jyotirmoy Barua said, "... We are not calling for an amendment. Rather, our demand is repealing the law. Because the DSA is contrary to the constitution and fundamental rights."

A law is made to meet the needs of citizens. "If the citizens themselves say that there is no need for this law ... it is an oppressive law.... Then how can someone impose such a law? People are the owner of the state," he said.

EC scraps bids

FROM PAGE 12
who support the candidate.

From the list, information of some voters is verified randomly and in case of inconsistencies, the nomination gets cancelled.

Md Shahjahan Miah and Mushtaq Ahmed Rouf Mostafa did not submit statement of their assets and a copy of the latest income tax return.

Returning Officer Md Faysal Kadir said candidates whose nominations were cancelled can appeal within the next three days.

Meanwhile, nominations of Awami League candidate Md Anwaruzzaman Chowdhury, Jatiya Party candidate Nazrul Islam Babul, Islami Andolan Bangladesh candidate Mahmudul Hasan, Zaker Party candidate Md Zahirul Alam, independents Mohammad Abdul Hanif and Md Salah Uddin Rimon were declared valid.

The date of submission of nomination papers ended on Tuesday.

June 1 is the last day for the withdrawal of nomination papers.

LATEST CEASEFIRE BREACH

Sudan's warring parties trade blame

AFP, Khartoum

Sudan's warring sides yesterday accused each other of being behind breaches of the latest ceasefire that was negotiated by the US and Saudi Arabia, now in its third day.

The one-week truce was violated only minutes after it came into effect on Monday night, with residents of the capital Khartoum reporting air strikes and artillery fire shaking the city.

Breaches have since persisted of the ceasefire agreement, which is meant to allow for much-needed humanitarian aid to reach war-ravaged parts of the northeast African country.

It is the latest of a series of truces that have all been systematically violated.

Since April 15, Sudan's capital and other parts of the country have been gripped by brutal urban warfare between the regular army, the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF), and the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces (RSF).

But though the current ceasefire has been violated, it has allowed for a lull in fighting that has seen frightened residents cautiously venture out of their homes, some for the first time in weeks.

Many have gone out for supplies of food and water or to seek much-needed medical attention after nearly six weeks of war that have sharply depleted vital supplies and

pushed the healthcare system to the brink of collapse.

In a statement issued late Wednesday, the RSF, which is led by Mohammed Hamdan Daglo, sought to place the blame for ceasefire breaches on the army led by Sudan's de facto leader Abdel Fattah al-Burhan.

The army "launched a series of unwarranted attacks today", the RSF said, adding that "our forces decisively repelled these assaults".

"Our forces successfully shot down a SAF MiG jet fighter," it said, reiterating however that it remained "committed to the humanitarian truce" and called on the "aggressors to respect the ceasefire".

The army responded yesterday morning, saying it had "countered an attack on armoured vehicles by the militias of the Rapid Support Forces in a clear violation of the truce".

The United States and Saudi Arabia, which brokered the ceasefire, on Wednesday pointed to reports "indicating that both sides violated the agreement" but said "fighting in Khartoum appeared to be less intense".

But desperately needed aid has yet to reach the capital despite the brief lull.

The conflict has so far killed over 1,800 people, according to the latest figures from the Armed Conflict Location and Event Data Project.



Evacuees from Zaporizhzhia region walk along a platform after arriving by an evacuation train at the railway station in the western Ukrainian city of Lviv yesterday, amid Russia's military invasion on Ukraine.

PHOTO: AFP

Net migration to UK hits 'record'

606,000

PM Sunak vows to cut immigration

AFP, London

Net migration in the UK hit a record 606,000 in 2022, official figures showed yesterday, heaping pressure on the government, which has pledged to cut dependency on foreign labour.

Responding to the figures, Prime Minister Rishi Sunak described legal immigration levels as "too high". "It's as simple as that and I want to bring them down," he told ITV in an interview.

Measures announced earlier this week to tighten the number of international students allowed to bring their families with them would have a significant impact, he added.

Immigration has long been a key political issue in the UK and was one of the main battlegrounds of the Brexit referendum in 2016, which saw the country leave the European Union.

In 2021, net migration -- the difference between the number of people leaving the UK and those arriving -- was 488,000.

Jay Lindop, director of the centre for international migration at the Office for National Statistics (ONS), said world events such as the end of the Covid-19 pandemic and Russia's invasion of Ukraine played a part in the increase.

China's squeeze on civil rights in Hong Kong, which led to the UK relaxing entry rules for holders of British overseas passports, also had an impact.

"A series of unprecedented world events throughout 2022 and the lifting of restrictions following the coronavirus pandemic led to record levels of international immigration to the UK," said Lindop.

Chinese hackers spying on US critical infrastructure

Say Western intel agencies, Microsoft; Beijing rejects claim

REUTERS

A state sponsored Chinese hacking group has been spying on a wide range of US critical infrastructure organizations, from telecommunications to transportation hubs, Western intelligence agencies and Microsoft MSFT.O said on Wednesday.

The espionage has also targeted the US island territory of Guam, home to strategically important American military bases, Microsoft said in a report, adding that "mitigating this attack could be challenging."

While China and the United States routinely spy on each other, analysts say this is one of the largest known Chinese cyber-espionage campaigns against American critical infrastructure.

Chinese foreign ministry spokesperson Mao Ning said yesterday the hacking allegations were a "collective disinformation campaign" from the Five Eyes countries, a reference to the intelligence sharing grouping of countries made up of the United States, Canada, New Zealand, Australia and the UK.

Mao said the campaign was launched by the US for geopolitical reasons and that the report from Microsoft analysts showed that the US government was expanding its channels of disinformation beyond government agencies.

"But no matter what varied methods are used, none of this can change the fact that the United States is the empire of hacking," she told a regular press briefing in Beijing.

It was not immediately clear how many organizations were affected, but the US National Security Agency (NSA) said it was working with partners including Canada, New Zealand, Australia, and the UK, as well as the US Federal Bureau of Investigation to identify breaches. Canada, UK, Australia and New Zealand warned they could be targeted by the hackers too.

Microsoft analysts said they had

"moderate confidence" this Chinese group, which it dubbed as 'Volt Typhoon', was developing capabilities that could disrupt critical communications infrastructure between the United States and Asia region during future crises.

"It means they are preparing for that possibility," said John Hultquist, who heads threat analysis at Google's Mandiant Intelligence.

The Chinese activity is unique and worrying also because analysts don't yet have enough visibility on what this group might be capable of, he added. "There is greater interest in this actor because of the geopolitical situation."

As China has stepped up military and diplomatic pressure in its claim to democratically governed Taiwan, US President Joe Biden has said he would be willing to use force to defend Taiwan.

Security analysts expect Chinese hackers could target US military networks and other critical infrastructure if China invades Taiwan.

The NSA and other Western cyber agencies urged companies that operate critical infrastructure to identify malicious activity using the technical guidance they issued.

"It is vital that operators of critical national infrastructure take action to prevent attackers hiding on their systems," Paul Chichester, director at the UK's National Cyber Security Centre said in a joint statement with the NSA.

Microsoft said the Chinese hacking group has been active since at least 2021 and targeted several industries including

communications, manufacturing, utility, transportation, construction, maritime, government, information technology, and education.

NSA cybersecurity director Rob Joyce said the Chinese campaign was using "built-in network tools to evade our defenses and leaving no trace behind." Such techniques are harder to detect as they use "capabilities already built into critical infrastructure environments," he added.

As opposed to using traditional hacking techniques, which often involve tricking a victim into downloading malicious files, Microsoft said this group infects a victim's existing systems to find information and extract data.

Guam is home to US military facilities that would be key to responding to any conflict in the Asia-Pacific region. It is also a major communications hub connecting Asia and Australia to the United States by multiple submarine cables.

Bart Hoggeveen, a senior analyst at the Australian Strategic Policy Institute who specializes in state-sponsored cyber attacks in the region, said the submarine cables made Guam "a logical target for the Chinese government" to seek intelligence.

"There is high vulnerability when cables land on shore," he said. New Zealand said it would work towards identifying any such malicious cyber activity in its country.

"It's important for the national security of our country that we're transparent and upfront with Australians about the threats that we face," Australia's Minister for Home Affairs and Cyber Security Clare O'Neil said.

CAMBODIA ELECTION
Opposition party loses bid to overturn ban

AFP, Phnom Penh

Cambodia's main opposition party yesterday lost a bid to overturn its ban from the upcoming elections, paving the way for long-serving leader Hun Sen to run a one-horse race. Last week, the National Election Committee (NEC) refused to register the Candlelight Party -- the chief challenger to Hun Sen -- for the July polls after it failed to submit certain documents. The Constitutional Council said in a statement it had rejected the appeal against NEC's ruling. "We are so regretful... Our party was rejected (from the polls), we are so disappointed," Candlelight Party (CP) spokesman Kimsour Phirith told AFP. He said CP had hoped to take part in the elections "to restore the base of democracy in our country".

3 killed in Japan
gun, knife attack

AFP, Tokyo

A woman and two male police officers were killed in a shooting and stabbing attack at a farm in central Japan yesterday, media reported. A suspect, believed to be a farmer in his 30s, was holed up inside a building after the incident, which also left a fourth person injured, the reports said. Residents were urged by authorities to stay indoors in the semi-rural area around the city of Nakano in Nagano region, where the attack took place. NHK and other major outlets said the woman was stabbed and the two police officers were shot in the attack. Police did not immediately confirm details when contacted by AFP. A witness told NHK he had been working at a farm nearby when "a woman came running from the road saying 'help me', and she fell down". "Behind her came a man wearing camouflage and carrying a large knife, who stabbed her in the back," the 72-year-old witness said.



South Korea's K-2 tanks fire as an AH64 Apache helicopter flies during a South Korea-US joint military drill at Seungjin Fire Training Field in Pocheon, South Korea yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP



NORTH SOUTH UNIVERSITY

Center of Excellence in Higher Education

#1 University in Bangladesh

MPharm (PTB/ PCP)

2023

SUMMER 2023 ADMISSION

Graduate Application Helpline: 01886271722

Master of Pharmacy

- Pharmaceutical Technology and Biopharmaceutics (PTB)
- Pharmacology and Clinical Pharmacy (PCP)

Requirement: Minimum CGPA 2.75 in BPharm

Exclusive opportunities

- World-class research facilities
- Evening & weekend classes
- Classes conducted by PhD faculty members only

Benefit: Most popular graduate degree for jobs in pharma sector

Apply online
<http://apply.northsouth.edu>

We are accepting online applications till
7 June, 2023
Admission Test 9 June, 2023

Department of Pharmaceutical Sciences

Contact: 55668200 Ext: 1902, 1962, 6448, 6266, 1967, 01813962947

Email : pharmacy@northsouth.edu
graduate.admissions@northsouth.edu

Website : www.northsouth.edu

The Daily Star

FOUNDER EDITOR: LATE S. M. ALI

Will there be relief from waterlogging?

City authorities must bolster efforts to prevent it this monsoon

With the monsoon season approaching fast, there are growing concerns about waterlogging which seems certain to haunt residents and commuters in major cities, like in the past years. Already, intermittent rain has exposed cracks in the fragile defences put up by city corporations and other relevant authorities. On Wednesday, Chattogram, where waterlogging has long been a major issue, saw heavy rainfall causing waterlogging in various low-lying areas. People had trouble move freely as traffic was slow on many roads, because excess water could not be channelled away. Over the last week or so, we have had similar reports from Dhaka, Khulna, Sylhet, Cumilla and other cities on waterlogging thanks to clogged drains, blocked canals, and streets full of potholes.

The sufferings caused in the process are not unknown. First, there is the public health issue as stagnant water becomes a breeding ground for mosquitoes, leading to risks of diseases such as dengue, which last year saw the highest death toll on record. Moreover, waterlogged areas may cause accidents and hinder mobility, making it difficult for people to commute, access healthcare, etc. The question is, why does the problem persist to this day despite the many crores spent in upgrading infrastructure, clearing blockages in canals, and building drainage systems to dispose excess water?

In Dhaka, both city corporations have various projects in place, and the authorities are confident that streets will not be submerged after light rain. But in recent days, intermittent rain was invariably followed by waterlogging in many areas, suggesting that there will not be expected relief when the monsoon brings more frequent and heavy precipitation. At the DNCC, 103 places were apparently identified where sustained waterlogging is anticipated. At the DSCC, delayed dredging of four major canals, which remain clogged with garbage, is expected to exacerbate people's suffering come monsoon. In Chattogram, ward councillors at a city corporation meeting on Wednesday blasted the Chittagong Development Authority (CDA) and Wasa for lack of action and coordination on this issue.

Clearly, the authorities have a lot to do to address the impending waterlogging menace but little time to do it. This is totally unacceptable. Already, dengue is threatening to come back with greater force than last year. We urge the government to take the situation seriously, and direct all departments and agencies to bolster their efforts to prevent waterlogging and associated problems.

A reckless exercise in harming nature

Jashore government employee must be held accountable for filling up a pond

At a time when the need for protecting our rivers, lakes and ponds has become very urgent, it is frustrating to see the lack of efforts to stop those grabbing or polluting them. The result is, one by one, these waterbodies are disappearing or being degraded, with nothing being done to punish those culpable. The latest example of this has been reported at the Manirampur upazila of Jashore, where, according to a *Prothom Alo* report, a government employee has been filling up a public pond situated next to his house.

By doing so, he has committed at least two crimes. First, he disregarded the law prohibiting the fill-up of any such waterbody. Secondly, he extracted sand from a nearby river to fill it, which is also illegal. Reportedly, when the residents of the area brought this to the notice of the local Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO), the latter directed him to stop it and the work remained suspended for a few days. But it started again soon afterwards, with soil brought from another place.

We wonder what emboldens a person to carry on with such illegal and environmentally destructive activities despite being duty-bound to uphold the law. It may be mentioned that section 4 of the Sand Quarry and Soil Management Act, 2010 strictly prohibits sand or soil extraction in such manner. The Environment Conservation Act 1995 (last updated in 2010) also prohibits it.

Unfortunately, as various reports suggest, these legal provisions are often flagrantly disregarded by powerful land grabbers and encroachers with their political connections shielding them from any legal consequences. The involvement of government employees, or even institutions, in such activities is no surprise either. The truth is, unless we create an environment respectful of the law and our precious natural resources, such activities will continue to happen.

We, therefore, urge the local administration of Jashore to save the pond from being destroyed and take action against the person responsible. With Bangladesh fast losing its natural resources, the government must take stern action against such grabbers and polluters.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

letters@thedailystar.net

No more VAT on sanitary pads

Owing to the price of sanitary pads in Bangladesh, many women consider this essential item as a luxury. Pad use among menstruating women is 40 to 50 percent in urban areas, while it is only 12 to 15 percent in the country as a whole. A VAT waiver can reduce the cost of sanitary pads by 40 percent. All educational institutions and workplaces in the country should ensure that menstrual products are freely available to female students and working women. Money should be invested or budgeted for free distribution of sanitary products to the women of the country.

Ashikujaman Syed

Center for Research Innovation and Development (CRID)

What the upcoming budget must deliver



Dr Sayema Haque Bidisha is professor at the Department of Economics in Dhaka University, and research director at the South Asian Network on Economic Modeling (Sanem).

SAYEMA HAQUE BIDISHA

There is no denying the fact that the national budget for the 2023-24 fiscal year is facing at least three core economic challenges: recovering the economy fully in the aftermath of Covid, maintaining macro-stability, and containing the inflationary pressure. There are certain long-standing issues that need to be addressed as well – namely sluggish private investment, dismal performance of revenue mobilisation, inefficiency in the implementation of development projects, lack of effective governance in the financial sector, etc. Resource allocation of the budget must also address the fundamental issues of reducing poverty, stemming the rising inequality, sustaining growth, and generating employment. Though the recent budget structure is determined on the basis of medium-term budgetary framework (MTBF), a certain degree of adjustment based on short-term challenges is feasible as well. In addition, given the conditionalities associated with the recent IMF loan of \$4.7 billion, a number of reforms need to be initiated and effectively implemented, which is quite a challenging task in this election year.

Revisiting the key budgetary targets of the current fiscal year, it can be inferred that they have not been fully achieved. Both in the context of revenue earnings and the development expenditure, data till April 2023 shows that the actual figures are far below even the revised targets of the budget. For example, the initial target of GDP growth was set as high as 7.5 percent, though later revised down to 6.55 percent, but the provisional actual figure is just above six percent. Inflation was projected to be 5.6 percent, later revised upward to seven percent, but the actual data as of April reveals it reached as high as 8.6 percent on average. The performance in terms of implementing the current budget is, therefore, not satisfactory.

The most challenging task of the upcoming budget is addressing revenue earnings. While designing the tax structure, it should be kept in mind that it can be an effective tool in reducing income inequality. According to the Household Income and Expenditure Survey (HIES) 2022, inequality has increased in recent years, and that has been reflected in both income and consumption Gini (measure of inequality). For example, the income



ILLUSTRATION: REHNUMA PROSHOON

Gini coefficient has increased to 0.499 in 2022 from 0.482 in 2016, and the consumption Gini coefficient has risen from 0.324 in 2016 to 0.334 in 2022.

Here, we must remember that due to underrepresentation of those at the upper income decile as well as misreporting of income data, survey data like that of the HIES tend to underestimate the true picture of inequality. In order to reduce and reverse this trend, a progressive and transparent tax structure focusing primarily on direct taxation can be effective. In this context, a massive reform is needed, gradually shifting the focus towards direct taxation, while emphasising expanding the tax net and redesigning the income tax structure in a progressive manner.

In this regard, digitalisation at every level of monetary transactions and making the revenue collection mechanism fully automated can have a significant impact. Adoption of innovative strategies implemented in other countries can be considered, too. In addition, decentralisation of the tax system and tax offices, arranging tax fairs at different localities with certain incentives, severe penalty in case of corruption or harassment of clients, making submission of tax return certificates in as many cases as possible, redesigning wealth tax, making

the surcharges more progressive, redesigning the income tax brackets, etc can have important impacts. Besides, in order to boost trade-related taxation as well as put a constraint on the outflow of foreign currency, luxury commodities need to be taxed at higher rates.

The most important concern at the moment is to contain the inflation. The

e.g. agriculture (fertilisers, pesticides), subsidies should be continued, at least for the short run. In the case of energy subsidy, prices in the domestic market need to be aligned in a systematic manner, with price changes occurring at specific intervals. In this connection, a strict reform of the Bangladesh Petroleum Corporation is crucial to reduce losses and inefficiencies.

government should make necessary downward adjustments of value-added tax, regulatory duties, etc to give some relief to the general people from the rising prices. Import taxes on essential commodities need to be adjusted. As part of the government's safety net programme, the open market sale (OMS) activity should be expanded significantly. The number of items on the list should be increased, and they should be provided at even lower prices. At the same time, allocations for safety net, pension and interest payment should be increased substantially. In this context, a quick implementation of the National Social Security Strategy (NSSS) is extremely crucial, focusing on the urban poor living in slum areas. Given the high rate of inflation, the government can consider increasing the per capita allocation of safety net coverage. In order to contain the soaring inflation, it is also essential to minimise the involvement of middlemen and thereby make the supply chain efficient, and also to emphasise strict market monitoring mechanisms.

Another critical issue for the FY2023-24 budget will be allocation for subsidies. Given the IMF conditionalities of reforms and the necessary austerity measures, a specific plan of action in terms of subsidy/subsidy phaseout should be revealed in this budget. In certain areas,

There is no denying that the implementation performance of our development programmes is a key concern. Till April 2023, only 50.33 percent of our Annual Development Programme (ADP) allocation has been spent, which is even lower than that in the previous fiscal year (54.57 percent). Given our limited fiscal space, we cannot afford any wastage or inefficiency; therefore projects should be selected carefully, considering their implications on the development efforts of the country. In this connection, a regular (preferably quarterly) ministry-wise project-based micro-level monitoring and evaluation practice should be adopted and strictly followed.

Another crucial area that needs greater attention in budget allocation is the areas of social sectors, e.g. education and healthcare, along with social safety nets. An increased allocation that is consistent with the practice in other South and East Asian economies while focusing on better implementation is crucial in this context.

Given the challenges that our economy is going through, the government needs to prioritise its development targets. In this context, the core concern of the upcoming budget should be containing the inflationary pressure while generating employment and maintaining macro-stability.

C5 SUMMIT

Strong message from Beijing to Washington, Moscow



Dr Sayeed Ahmed is a consulting engineer and the CEO of BaySide Analytix, a technology-focused strategy and management consulting organisation.

SAYEED AHMED

Was the timing of the recent China and the five Central Asian countries' summit (C5) a mere coincidence? It took place almost simultaneously with the G7 event in Hiroshima, making similar headlines all over. The venue, the historic city of Xi'an at the eastern end of the ancient Silk Route that connected China with Central Asia and many other cities all the way to the Middle East, was no less significant either, aptly symbolising the summit's theme of connectivity and shared future shaping up in extensive transport and energy networks.

In stark contrast, the G7 summit in Hiroshima was mainly on two not-too-benevolent agendas: strangle-holding Russia and containing China. But is the rest of the world with them?

Indian Foreign Minister S Jaishankar was blunt about how Europe (and the US) is trying to impose its problems on the rest of the world. Delhi, defying Western sanctions, is also leading the "Laundromat" countries (India, China, Turkey, UAE, and Singapore) that are increasingly buying Russian crude and selling refined products to Europe.

Brazil's President Lula de Silva squarely pointed out who should be responsible for the Ukraine war and suggested that Kyiv should come to a settlement with Moscow. South Africa's Foreign Minister Naledi Pandor made scathing remarks about selective applications of "international order," referring to the different ways it applies to Palestine and Ukraine. The oil producing group OPEC+, led by Saudi Arabia, angered the US by refusing to increase production, and maintained warm relations with both Russia and China. Turkey, a Nato member country, positioned itself as a neutral player in the Ukraine war. Most other countries are watching precariously, trying hard not to appear to be on either side.

Amid such strong voices of dissent, China is steadily rising on the world stage as it brokered the Iran-Saudi Arabia deal, challenging US monopoly. It has also become a major player in the global arms trade on the back of its economic growth coupled with sustained military modernisation campaigns. Then there is the increasing push for de-dollarisation in the BRICS

and other economies such as Saudi Arabia. All these are telltale signs that Washington's global grip is steadily loosening.

The C5 Summit was just one of many ways the world is changing. But will the US and other G7 members care to admit?

Now let's see how Moscow may perceive its smaller neighbours' cosying up with Beijing.

Russia and China have long been competing for influence in the huge landmass that lie between these two powerful nations. Neither wants an Afghanistan-like situation to spill over, and both want to reduce American influence in their neighbourhood. Despite such common interests, they remain competitors and vie for influence that has a long history since the 1600s. It continued after the Bolshevik revolution as the Kremlin followed a cold-blooded geopolitical strategy against Mao's Communist Party and supported Chiang Kai-shek. Later, as the Communist Party defeated the Nationalist regime, they became strategic allies, though occasional border clashes continued.

During the Soviet era, Central Asia was under Moscow's control. Even after its dissolution in 1991, it acted as the power broker and security provider. But that started to wane as China's economic and military might grew. It became more prominent as Beijing launched the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) in 2001, which has all countries in the region as members

including Russia, India, and Pakistan, with Iran and Afghanistan as observers. After many years of watching from the sidelines, China has now secured a strong foothold in Central Asia, almost replacing Russia. In 2022, President Xi Jinping travelled to the Central Asian countries in a whirlwind tour that nearly resembled a victory lap, and inked several wide-ranging deals. The C5 Summit is a culmination of the last few decades of carefully choreographed plans where Beijing has made it clear that Central Asian countries should better turn to it for trade, commerce and security, more so when Moscow is bogged down in Ukraine.

The Central Asian countries have their own security calculations too. Moscow's invasions in Georgia in 2008 and Crimea in 2014 made the former Soviet republics nervous about what may happen if they don't abide by Moscow's wishes. Now that the power balance has shifted significantly towards Beijing, especially after Russia's Ukraine quagmire, they feel more comfortable in freely choosing a trading and security partner, allowing China to increase its influence. The C5 Summit has made it abundantly clear, sending an unmistakable message to Moscow.

Potentially, that is also opening another front for China-US rivalry – famously known as the Eurasian Heartland, a landmass of immense strategic importance that no superpower would like to let go of.



Dhaka has become a classic example of heat island effects, resulting in vast public health inequities.

PHOTO: STAR

Heatwaves, global warming, and the ethics of our cities



THE GRUDGING URBANIST

Dr Adnan Zillur Morshed is an architect, architectural historian, urbanist, and professor. He teaches at the Catholic University of America in Washington, DC, and serves as executive director of the Centre for Inclusive Architecture and Urbanism at Brunel University. His most recent book is 'Dhaka Delirium.'

ADNAN ZILLUR MORSHED

Recent heatwaves in cities across the world have stirred a lot of thinking about what to do with the "heat island effect." In layman's terms, a heat island is a localised thermal condition created by a city's built environment, in which we typically see a lot of concrete and asphalt surfaces, densely built houses, paved areas, absence of green spaces and waterbodies (relative to rural areas), carbon-emitting industrial activities and vehicles, and a lot of people and their daily work. A heat island reaches its peak during the night when the city's buildings and heat-absorbing surfaces emit heat they have accumulated during the day. The heat island's temperature is considerably higher than those of its surrounding areas.

Dhaka has become a classic example of heat island effects, resulting in vast public health inequities. In their labour-intensive jobs that often expose them to the scorching sun, the urban poor suffer the most in a heat island like Dhaka.

Dhaka's recorded highest temperature this year so far, according to the Bangladesh Meteorological Department, is 40.5 degrees Celsius. The Dhaka North City Corporation (DNCC) has recently appointed a chief heat officer (CHO), a local government position that emerged in many cities around the world in recent years. At a very basic level, the CHO develops strategies to alleviate the city's heat island effects.

The cumulative heat island effects of the world's cities have something to do with global warming and climate change. We often don't make this connection. It is important that we do, as there are robust policy implications. The world's aggregate urban areas cover only three percent of the planet's surface, but they produce 80 percent of the world's GDP. Those who occupy this meagre three percent area consume 80 percent of world's energy. Because of their high carbon footprint and heat-producing activities, cities are responsible for most of the global warming and climate change-related vulnerabilities. Thus, paradoxically, if cities are the root cause of global warming, they are also an opportunity for its mitigation.

That means urban planners, architects, local government officials, policymakers, and regulatory bodies must see the city's heat island problem through the broader lens of global warming, because both are the result of the same phenomenon at two different scales. That also means we must rethink how cities are planned, designed, and administered to combat the adverse effects of both the heat island problem and climate change.

This is counterintuitive because when we think of the effects of climate change, we usually conjure up haunting images of coastal areas, melting icebergs, deserts littered with animal carcasses, and drought-hit territories with burnt trees. We seldom think of the city as the cause of climate change. We rarely examine how the processes of urbanisation and climate-related vulnerabilities are deeply interconnected. Mitigating climate change problems, thus, requires a sustained and ethical engagement with the ways cities are developed.

Bangladesh has missed this policy focus so far. Here, the climate change

conversation has been singularly dominated by the spectre of a "southern threat." That is, with ongoing global warming and the resultant sea level rise, a significant landmass of Bangladesh's coastal south would disappear under water. And a vast coastal population would lose their livelihood and become climate refugees, destabilising local and regional security. Al Gore's Oscar-winning documentary, *An Inconvenient Truth* (2006), helped popularise this view of Bangladesh among the global community concerned with climate change and its disastrous effects on such low-lying countries as Bangladesh and the Maldives.

The susceptibility of Bangladesh's southern seaboard to global climatic catastrophes could not be underestimated. But a monolithic emphasis on the southern threat, unfortunately, blurs the urgency of the country's more immediate environmental threats due to rapid, ecology-defying urbanisation. An immediate environmental menace with long-term climatic implications lurks at the geographic centre of the country because of the uncontrolled urban growth of Dhaka and its deleterious effects on the fragile land-water ecosystem that has historically sustained the capital and its surrounding regions. Dhaka's frenzied growth in all directions – devouring rivers, water bodies, and agricultural lands – is as serious an environmental threat as the coastal dangers posed by the sea level rise.

The capital's frenzied urban growth – along with its skyrocketing energy consumption – should alarm us about the urgent need to view cities as the frontier of climate change. Time has come to realise that with smart energy consumption, environment-friendly, and people-centric urban design, cities present the most potent weapon to combat climate-related environmental problems.

This brings us back to the basic question. How do we lower the city's temperature as a solution to the problems of both the heat island and global warming? The easy answer is, regulate and reduce the city's heat-generating surfaces and activities without sacrificing its economic opportunities. There should be two sides to this task: a) design and planning resilience; and b) innovative regulation.

Let's talk about design and planning resilience first. We should consider the city's green as a soft and low-investment-high yield public health infrastructure. Just as we need vaccines to protect ourselves against the pandemic, we need green to survive well and remain healthy. Thus, rewrite the city. Strengthen the city's green lungs. Expand green spaces. Cover heat-producing pavements and building roofs with green canopies. Most authoritative research confirms that green helps mitigate air pollution, heat and noise, and enhance public health and mental well-being.

Planning resilience today must include environment-friendly mobility options in the city. Thus, create and promote an affordable mass transit network that serves most areas of the city, both creating a transit-oriented compact urban DNA and reducing the city's need to expand

into neighbouring floodplains and agricultural lands to house the growing urban population. Reduce dependency on private cars. Less private cars on the street means less emission, less carbon, less heat, and less noise. Champion bicycling and walking as carbon-free commuting options. Invest in bike paths and footpaths to minimise the city's carbon emissions. Today, there is a growing movement in Western metropolises to transform parts of vehicular road space into green space. This is how the rewilding of the city begins at a micro scale. If you visit New York or Washington today, you can't miss seeing how vehicular road space is shrinking in favour of green and pedestrian space. A fight against global warming can begin in one's neighbourhood.

Let's talk about the seemingly oxymoronic concept of "innovative regulation." Innovation implies free thinking, whereas regulation suggests control. So, how does innovative regulation work? In a free society, one can't control how an architect designs a building. But let's pose this question: should an architect design a tall building with an all-glass west facade? Under a fierce tropical sun, a building with a glass west facade literally becomes an oven in the afternoon. One can, of course, use up a lot of energy to cool the building by deploying an expensive air-conditioning system, which then becomes a key contributor to the heat island.

This is a case of environmental injustice, one in which a selfish building releases a lot of heat to the city, disregarding the city's public health. How do we, then, create a regulatory framework that ethically encourages the architect to design a building with a lot of natural shading and ventilation so that it doesn't need to depend on the wasteful, energy-guzzling artificial climate control of the building? This is both a design question and a moral quandary. Both should be part of necessary policy debates on environmental sustainability and urban equity. Innovative regulation may strengthen the ethical foundation of and incentivise environment-friendly architecture and cities.

To create a culture of innovative regulation in cities, the government may consider creating an autonomous executive agency to oversee environmental sustainability matters in Bangladesh. A good example could be the US government's Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), created in 1970 during the heyday of environmental movements in America. The US president appoints, and the Senate approves, the EPA administrator. In consultation with state, tribal, and local governments, the EPA sets national guidelines for the environmental well-being of the country. Empowered to create environmental regulations, such an autonomous executive agency can promote environmental research, education, awareness, and innovative regulation. If the mayor of the Dhaka South City Corporation (DSCC) applied to cut the trees on Satmasjid Road, an autonomous environmental protection agency would have denied him the permission. The world's liveable metropolises are reducing the road width to discourage automobile dependency and encourage both pedestrianism and greening. We are doing the opposite in Dhaka.

When development takes precedence over nature's balance, when human activities radically alter a place's elemental geography, their environmental consequences are bound to be calamitous. Since Bangladesh's future is urban, the most effective place to ensure the country's ecological well-being is its cities.

CONFRONTING RACISM IN LALIGA

At what point is it enough?



Raiyan Binte Rafiq is pursuing an LLM, while freelancing for FootballCo and INDIVISA to cover UEFA Women's Champions League and Women's Super League. She also oversees recruitment at Next Level Sports Management based in Bangladesh.

RAIYAN BINTE RAFIQ

LaLiga has problems. A lot of problems. But you can rest assured that racism is not a problem – at least not to them, and that is where the problem lies.

Last Sunday, Vinicius Jr, commonly known as Vini, the talented young Brazilian winger of Real Madrid, received a red card for angrily reacting during the game against Valencia. Throughout the course of the game, he was subjected to racist chants from the home fans and tensions eventually reached a boiling point. Tempers flared and Vinicius Jr was shown the red card for shoving Valencia's Hugo Duro. Interestingly, it was Vinicius Jr who was held back by the neck just seconds before he reacted, but the referee seemed to only perceive wrongdoing in Vini's actions.

The conversations that have taken place among fans, pundits and his fellow players since then have raised the same question that has persisted for a decade: at what point is it enough?

During the height of the pandemic, George Floyd's story shed light on the deep-rooted racism that permeates our society. Football, which rightly sees itself as a catalyst for change, decided to showcase its support to eradicate racism from the sports. We took knees, wore armbands, donned T-shirts, and created advertisements proclaiming that there is no place for racism in football.

Yet, one of the biggest leagues in the world continues to find itself embroiled in allegations of racism, time and time again. The unfortunate target of discrimination this time: a young man of Real Madrid who happens to be one of the most talented players of this generation.

The manner in which Vini reacted was not surprising. There is only so much someone can endure, and that is precisely what happened on Sunday. In fact, Vini was perhaps much calmer than how most of us would have reacted had we been in his shoes, especially since he has been enduring this brazen prejudice season after season.

It is not just a current issue; it has always been a problem and will continue to be, unless LaLiga takes significant actions. By the looks of LaLiga President Javier Tebas' reaction on Twitter, it is evident that the league is far more concerned about its own image, rather than the welfare of the player. The league's response is muddled with deflecting responsibilities and somehow diverting it towards the player himself, suggesting that the reaction from fans is more a response to how he plays the game, rather than a racist attack.

In whatever way you look at it, Tebas' stronger reaction to Vini's comments about Spain being a country of racists and racism being normalised there, rather than directing his anger or condemning the fans, reveals the deep-rooted problem of racism in Europe. Tebas' comment reflects that he, as a privileged white male, is completely unaware of the implications such vile discrimination may have – not just on the individual who is subjected to such harassment, but also on society in general. The cookie-cutter phrases of "Stop Racism" and "Say no to racism" are great campaigns, but unless stern actions are actually taken, all this will remain ineffective.

So, the question is, how do we eradicate this? As former footballer Ian Wright mentioned in his podcast this week, the answer is, "Walk out." Yes, walk out.

When you step onto the field as a player or as a member of the staff, you accept the possibility of criticism and jeering from fans as part of the game. However, once the fans cross the line, that's it. They do not deserve to be a part of the match any longer, and the only way to make a real stand is to leave the pitch and refuse to play in front of those who welcome racists. Only then will the authorities truly take notice, as it will hit them where it hurts the most – their wallets.

The loss of match day revenues and broadcasting streams will have a significant impact, forcing them to look beyond their distorted perspectives. Vinicius Jr is a world-class player, backed by one of the greatest clubs in the world, and yet LaLiga has turned a deaf ear to his repeated concerns, offering little protection. What happens when the

When you step onto the field, you accept the possibility of criticism and jeering from fans as part of the game. However, once the fans cross the line, that's it. They do not deserve to be a part of the match any longer, and the only way to make a real stand is to leave the pitch and refuse to play in front of those who welcome racists.

victim is another lesser-known player, who does not have the same level of influence as Vini? We never even hear about it.

For now, LaLiga has fined Valencia 45,000 euros and ordered a partial closure of the Mestalla Stadium's south stand, which Vinicius had pointed to during the second half on Sunday as the originating points of racist taunts. Valencia has appealed this decision, but it is crucial to remember that unless a collective punishment is imposed on the entire club or the league, meaningful changes will not occur. It is vital to address the issue seriously enough to make a club take drastic measures to tackle racism. It is all too easy to sweep it under the rug when it does not directly affect you.

As football fans, lovers, players or anyone remotely connected to the game, we must stop apologising or making excuses for the existence of racists within our society. We need to stop conflating racism with rivalry. They are not the same and they do not coexist. Racism is racism; there are no two ways about it. And if things do not improve, UEFA and FIFA will need to consider imposing sanctions on clubs embroiled in such incidents. They took action against English fans, the "Hooligans" in the 1980s, and significant progress has been made since then. So why are they hesitant to enforce anti-racism policies against clubs and leagues in 2023?

CROSSWORD BY THOMAS JOSEPH

ACROSS

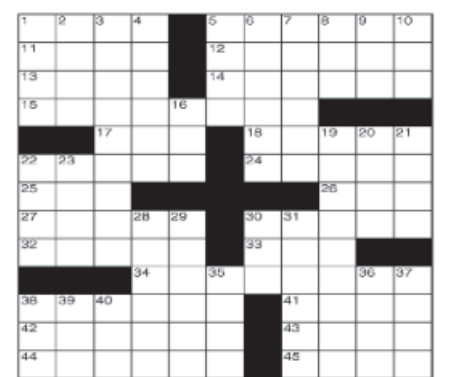
- 1 Arthur of the courts
- 5 Cup holder
- 11 Cajole
- 12 Take for granted
- 13 Easy win
- 14 Increase
- 15 Tangled up
- 17 Peyton's brother
- 18 Old characters
- 22 Historic event
- 24 Digging tool
- 25 Spanish gold
- 26 Words with pickle or jam
- 27 Batch of drinks
- 30 Energy choice

DOWN

- 1 Plot unit
- 2 Shortly
- 3 Produce after much discussion
- 4 Gives the boot
- 5 Window part
- 6 Fall flowers
- 7 Depleted
- 8 Recipe unit
- 9 Running bird

ACROSS

- 10 Gym unit
- 16 Use pews
- 19 Finalizes
- 20 Writer
- Ferber
- 21 Blacken
- 22 Course cry
- 23 Steel ingredient
- 28 Make void
- 29 Knight's foe
- 30 Tentative taste
- 31 Threat ending
- 35 Transmit
- 36 Keen
- 37 Tripod trio
- 38 Geologic period
- 39 Undoing word
- 40 Turn bad



WEDNESDAY'S ANSWERS



WRITE FOR US. SEND US YOUR OPINION PIECES TO dsopinion@gmail.com.

LAW INTERVIEW

FOR A SMART BANGLADESH

We must formulate sophisticated legal regime and encourage innovations in FDIs

Rumana Islam is a Professor of Law at University of Dhaka currently on deputation. She joined Bangladesh Securities and Exchange Commission (BSEC) in May 2022 as the first female Commissioner of the BSEC for a term of four years. She was nominated as a Panel Arbitrator designated by the Government of Bangladesh to the World Bank's International Centre for Settlement of Investment Disputes (ICSID) in April 2021 for a term of six years. She completed her LLB (Hons) and LLM from the University of Dhaka with first class in both. She earned another LLM (specialisation in commercial law) from the University of Cambridge, UK with a Cambridge Commonwealth Trust Scholarship in 2006 and obtained her doctoral degree from the University of Warwick in 2015 with Commonwealth Scholarship. During her PhD she also obtained Charles Wallace Bangladesh Trust Doctoral Bursary. Her seminal work has been published as a book titled as "Fair and Equitable Treatment in International Investment Arbitration: Developing Countries in Context" (Springer, 2018). She is also an alumna of Scholars Workshop (2011) of Institute of Global Law and Policy (IGLP) at Harvard Law School. She has acted as the Assistant Director of Research (Law) (part-time) in Bangladesh Institute for Law and International Affairs (BILIA), from September 2015 to September 2019. She has served as a consultant in different research projects led by the Faculty of Law, University of Dhaka; University Grants Commission (UGC), Ministry of Law, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Friedrich Ebert Stiftung (FES) and UNDP. She is an affiliated expert of Asia Pacific FDI network and a founding committee member of South Asian Economic Law Network (SAELN). **Law Desk, The Daily Star** speaks to her on some pertinent issues regarding the country's recent economic progress and the relevant legal concerns.

Law Desk (LD): How do you view the impact of the Russia-Ukraine war and the Covid-19 pandemic on foreign investments in Bangladesh? What are the proposed ways forward?
Rumana Islam (RI): The economic journey of Bangladesh over the last decade has been a remarkable one. The country once termed snappishly as a "bottomless basket" has now become the hub-spot for FDIs with phenomenal GDP growth. In 2018, the country had an increase of 67.94% in FDI inflow, becoming the second largest recipient of FDI in South Asia. But all the progress faced a setback when the world was hit by the Covid-19 pandemic. The UNCTAD's World Investment Report of 2020 predicted



that FDI flow will go down by 40% at the global scale. Therefore, it was foreseeable that Bangladesh would face a drastic decline of FDI inflow as a consequence of the predictable economic crisis due to the pandemic. To worsen matters for the struggling global economy, came the Russia-Ukraine war without giving the time and space for many countries to recover from the economic devastation from the pandemic. Bangladesh is no exception to that. The country's economy has rebounded quite well after the pandemic through efforts to increase the inflow of FDI through bilateral initiatives with different governments and multinational corporations and conducting roadshows in different destinations. Nevertheless, the initiatives got seriously interrupted by the war. Though the war is happening some 5800 kilometers away, the domino effect from multiple factors can be felt in everyday economic life of the country resulting in higher inflation. The maelstrom laid bare upheaval in many countries' economic and financial sectors. The

war and the sanction on purchasing Russian fuel has sent energy prices soaring, pushing up the cost for consumer and companies. This has increased the cost of doing business across borders for foreign investors. As a consequence, the foreign investors have reduced their share of earning in cross border reinvestment and are reluctant to go for new investment or mergers and acquisitions. In short, both the pandemic and the war have created short, medium and long-term negative effects on the foreign investment in Bangladesh. If we want to overcome these challenges, we need long-term planning from the policymakers as well as an increase in sustainable and diversified investments. I must emphasise that, for formulating such long-term policies in attracting FDIs, Bangladesh should consider the importance of delicate power balancing as part of its foreign policy in an interdependent and multilateral world.
LD: Recent reports have highlighted a depletion in foreign reserve.

What challenges will businesses in Bangladesh face due to the depletion?
RI: Again, this is not only a concern for Bangladesh but for many other countries including some developed economies. This has impacted the economy at both micro and macro levels. Being a highly import-dependent country for fuel and industrial raw materials, many companies operating in Bangladesh are now facing trouble in opening LCs as banks are now more restrictive due to the depletion of forex reserve. The reason for the current depletion is high import payments, imbalance in export-import, high dependency on imported oil and gas and decreasing trend in remittance flow due to the looming global recession. The expenditure to import LNG from international spot market to keep the industries afloat has become to be a double-edge sword for the forex reserve of the country. The US dollar is being expended at a rate higher than what exports and remittance are bringing in. To address these, Bangladesh Bank

needs to significantly diversify its forex reserves, prioritise diversification of our exports basket and take extremely restrictive measures to stop the illegal hundi business. Our policymakers need to address the supply side constraints and consider how to reduce the cost of doing business. Though Bangladesh is not in a precarious situation as the inflow of remittances is ascending, nevertheless immediately policies and strategies need to be taken to boost the forex reserve to meet the import demands for next one year.

LD: How has Bangladesh performed in upholding international standards on human rights and environmental protection as far as it relates to the requirements of foreign investors? What improvements would you recommend to balance between human rights compliance and development goals?
RI: The short answer would be that it has not been "up to the mark". These issues are of recent phenomenon in Bangladesh so far it relates to FDIs. If we look into our Constitution, we will find several references to human rights and environmental protection which can be directly related to the foreign investors and FDIs. These include fundamental rights i.e., art 31 (protection of law), art 32 (protection of right and personal liberty), art 33 (safeguards to arrest and detention) and art 35 (protection in respect of trial and punishment) and the Fundamental Principles of State Policies (FPSP). Among these FPSPs,

them belongs to the first generation of "investor-oriented" BITs. Along with a new genre of more balanced BITs, the constitutional mandates can also be useful in understanding a more balanced interpretation of investment treaties to address the issues like protection of human rights, environment, intellectual property rights, indigenous rights and sustainable development. These basic constitutional law principles encourage the regulatory space for Bangladesh as the host country to take measures for greater public policy, ensure transparent procedures of investor dispute settlement and protect the foregoing issues mentioned. Bare protection in the legal text is not good enough, stringent compliance of these requirements also needs to be ensured to fulfil the target of SDGs.
LD: What role can the relevant stakeholders play to improve Bangladesh's position as an investor-friendly country?
RI: There are many factors which need to be improved for making Bangladesh an investor-friendly country. Firstly, Bangladesh requires a sophisticated legal regime. Revising the Foreign Private Investment (Promotion and Protection) Act, 1980 is now long overdue. Some recent initiatives have significantly improved the overall environment for FDI. These include the establishing Bangladesh Investment Development Authority (BIDA), publishing "Bangladesh Investment Guide" and handbook on regular basis, conducting roadshows in different countries, introducing the One Stop Service Center (OSSC) for the foreign investors. All these aim to expedite, support and encourage foreign investors and provide guidance on the local legal system and investment environment of Bangladesh. Along with the national laws, Bangladesh is also signatory to different international treaties and conventions which provide protection, promotion, and regulation of FDIs in the host country. Being signatory to international treaties and conventions also encourages and builds the trust of the foreign investors. Foreign exchange regulations and paperwork requirements, entry requirements must also be simplified if we want to improve our index in the ease of doing business. Improving and upgrading legal regime and encouraging innovation in FDIs need to be a continuous process in this era of digital world if we truly want to become "Smart Bangladesh".
LD: Many thanks for your time.
RI: Thank you.

For formulating long-term policies in attracting FDIs, Bangladesh should consider the importance of delicate power balancing as part of its foreign policy in an interdependent and multilateral world.

art 18A is particularly important which requires for protection and improvement of environment and biodiversity. However, the Bilateral Investment Treaties (BITs) which regulate many of the FDIs in Bangladesh are quite silent on the investors' role in protecting the human rights and environmental concerns. Therefore, for a long time I and many other scholars have urged for a revision of all BITs signed by Bangladesh to keep pace with the demand of the time as majority of

RIGHTS WATCH

Data breach and information theft

There are several steps to prevent data breaches and information theft. It is to be ensured that organisations are compliant with relevant regulations in Bangladesh. Another step is to develop and implement a comprehensive data protection policy that outlines procedures for collecting, storing, and protecting personal information.

RAKIBUL HASAN MUGDHO

Data breach takes place when confidential or sensitive information is stolen, leaked or accessed by unauthorised individuals or entities. This can include personal information such as names, addresses, phone numbers, social security numbers and financial information such as credit card numbers, bank account details and more. Information theft refers to the act of stealing or taking someone's confidential data without their knowledge or consent. Unfortunately, the threat of data breaches and information theft is a growing concern in Bangladesh and around the world. In Bangladesh, some of the most common forms of data breaches and information theft include phishing attacks, social engineering tactics, malware attacks and insider threats. To be protected from these threats, it is important to practice good cyber hygiene by using strong passwords, avoiding suspicious emails or messages, and implementing multi-factor authentication on all accounts. Additionally, one should be cautious while using public Wi-Fi networks and never share sensitive information with anyone. One of the relevant laws in this regard is the Digital Security Act which was enacted in 2018 and contains certain provisions on data breach and unauthorised use of personal data. Additionally, Bangladesh Bank has issued guidelines for protection of customer data in the financial sector. These guidelines require banks



and other financial institutions to implement appropriate cyber security measures to protect customer data and prevent unauthorised access or disclosure. However, despite these laws and regulations, data breaches and information theft continue to occur in Bangladesh. Therefore, it is important for individuals and organisations to take proactive measures to protect their sensitive data and prevent such incidents from happening.

Preventing the growing threat of data breaches and information theft in Bangladesh presents several legal challenges. One of the main challenges is the lack of adequate legal framework to address the rapidly evolving nature of cybercrime and data breaches. As the threat landscape continues to evolve, existing laws and regulations may not be able to keep pace with the latest threats and vulnerabilities. This can create gaps in the legal framework

and make it difficult to investigate and prosecute cybercriminals. Another legal challenge is the lack of awareness and skills to investigate and prosecute cybercrime cases. This is due to the fact that cybercrime investigations require specialised skills and knowledge, which may not be available in all law enforcement agencies. Moreover, the use of encryption and other advanced technologies by cybercriminals can make it difficult to track and trace their activities.

Additionally, the lack of international cooperation and coordination in cybercrime investigations can also make it difficult to prevent data breaches and information theft. Cybercriminals often operate across international borders and the lack of cooperation between different countries can hamper investigations and make it harder to bring perpetrators to justice. There are several steps to prevent data breaches and information theft. It is to be ensured that organisations are compliant with relevant regulations in Bangladesh. Another step is to develop and implement a comprehensive data protection policy that outlines procedures for collecting, storing, and protecting personal information. Furthermore, step can be taken to regularly review security measures and update them as needed to stay ahead of potential threats and use encryption technology to safeguard sensitive data, such as customer information and financial records. However, users should be cautious with the information they share online and use secure passwords and encryption methods. It is also advisable to regularly update software and antivirus programmes to protect devices from potential threats. If someone is a victim of a data breach or information theft, it is essential to report the incident to the relevant authorities and take steps to mitigate the damage caused.
The Writer is a Student of Law, East West University.

Grand rehearsal for Fed Cup final

SPORTS REPORTER

Abahani and Mohammedan Sporting Club will have the chance to lock horns in a dress rehearsal for Tuesday's Federation Cup final as the two perennial foes play their Bangladesh Premier League (BPL) fixture at the Shaheed Dhirendranath Datta Stadium in Cumilla today.

Despite leaders Bashundhara Kings — with 43 points from 16 matches, 10 points ahead of nearest rivals Abahani — on the brink of ensuring their fourth league title with an outright win over Sheikh Russel KC today, the tie between Abahani and Mohammedan still promises to be a heated affair.

Mohammedan, who occupy fourth position with 22 points from 15 matches, has more at stake as they will look to exact their revenge of the 2-0 defeat against Abahani in the first-leg meeting as well as improve their position in the 11-team BPL table and overall head-to-head record over Abahani.

In 30 professional football league meetings between two sides, Abahani registered 15 wins and 10 draws against Mohammedan.



Skipper Nigar Sultana Joty hit a boundary-laden unbeaten 76-ball 100 during a mammoth 171-run third-wicket stand with Fargana Hoque Pinky, also unbeaten on 92, to propel Rupali Bank Krira Parishad to 286 for two against Gulshan Youth Club on the opening day of the Dhaka Premier Division Women's Cricket League 2022-23 in Fatullah on Thursday. Rupali Bank sealed a 148-run victory.

PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

Bangladesh A refuse to fold

SPORTS REPORTER

Pacer Tanzim Hasan Sakib was able to create a storm with the ball early in the morning session, picking up four wickets to stop West Indies A from taking a bigger lead and restricting them to 345 all out.

But Bangladesh A will have their work cut out for them as they look to avert defeat, having lost six wickets for 274 runs at the close of play on the third day at the Sylhet International Stadium Academy Ground yesterday.

The visitors were motoring along with Joshua Michael and Kevin Oswald, reaching 329 for six before Sakib castled the latter for 32. Windies A added just 16 runs after that wicket, with Sakib bagging all of the wickets yesterday morning with a new ball to finish with 59 for four.

Shadman Islam provided sturdy resistance, but wickets fell at intervals with Zakir Hasan, Saif Hassan and Mohammad Naim unable to spend much time at the crease.

First-innings saviour Shahadat Hossain Dipu once again steadied things, stitching a 68-run stand with Shadman, who eventually departed for 74. In the end, Shahadat's tenure at the crease lasted 68 deliveries and yielded 50 runs. Irfan Shukkur's scored an unbeaten 64 and stitched an unbroken 65-run stand with Nayeem Hasan.

Shahadat's 124-ball 73 in the first innings garnered praise from selector Habibul Bashar. "His batting was impressive. The wicket wasn't easy since there was 6 millimetres of grass in both games. They were seaming conditions."

With a 166-run lead, Bangladesh will look to pile up more runs on day four to make Windies A's task difficult.

Tigers have 'clarity' on home advantage

SPORTS REPORTER

Selector Habibul Bashar spoke about Bangladesh's confidence heading into the one-off Test against Afghanistan next month, but although that 'confidence' has never quite held up when judged by results in the longest format, there is a plan that the Tigers are focusing on.

National team stars such as Mominul Haque, Shoriful Islam, Nurul Hasan Sohan and Yasir Ali are in Sylhet attending the A team's game against their West Indies counterparts and may be included in the third four-day game at Sylhet. Pacer Khaled Ahmed is currently playing for the A side in the second four-dayer.

Meanwhile, the likes of Nazmul Hossain are batting on stone slabs in Mirpur. It seems there is an idea developing regarding Test stars getting some much-needed input on their performances according to various conditions.

"The A team's matches are very important, but this has gained more prominence this time around and benefitted us as it's before the Test against Afghanistan. That's why the Test players are here and it's a big opportunity. Not because of team selection but because they are getting practice," selector Abdur Razzak told The Daily Star yesterday.

"We aren't playing anyone without proper planning first. It's definitely not that we are playing someone without a motive. Some of them also need practice so we are ensuring that," he added.

The Sylhet outer stadium is hosting the A team's second and third four days

and Razzak believes the wicket was a 'good, friendly, sporting wicket'. While preparations continue, selector Habibul Bashar wanted to keep his cards close to his chest but mentioned that they had a clear plan.

"We have a good idea of how the surface in Mirpur will behave and the wicket will be prepared according to our needs," Bashar added.

The wicket in Mirpur will be in focus when Afghanistan play the Tigers on June 14, especially after the decision to curate a surface that slightly favoured spinners backfired in a defeat to Afghanistan last time around.

Ace all-rounder Shakib Al Hasan's absence from the Test due to injury will be another point of concern, especially as it brings the hosts' spin department into focus and in turn highlights Afghanistan's comparative spin strength. Without Shakib, the onus will be on the pacers, aided by spinners Mehedi Hasan Miraz and Taijul Islam.

Selection-wise, the biggest worry will be how to handle Afghanistan's spin threat given their past experience in Chattogram during a 224-run loss.

"Miraz and Taijul are bowling well in Tests. Our fast bowling department is rich so we will decide accordingly," Bashar remarked.

The team will be announced before Chandika Hathurusingha's arrival on June 3. Asked if determining where home advantage lies would be tough, Bashar remarked: "No it's not. I feel we are a confident team. We are clear about what wickets we should play on".

Asia Cup fate to be decided during IPL final

REUTERS, New Delhi

The fate of this year's Asia Cup, which may determine Pakistan's participation in the World Cup in India, will be decided on the sidelines of Sunday's Indian Premier League (IPL) final in Ahmedabad, Asian Cricket Council (ACC) President Jay Shah said.

Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB), host of the eight-team Asia Cup in September, has offered a "hybrid" model to stage some matches at a neutral venue after India refused to tour the country.

Owing to their soured political relations, bilateral cricket between India and Pakistan remains suspended and they play each other only in multi-team events.

Pakistan has threatened to boycott the World Cup in India in October-November should they be forced to stage the entire Asia Cup in another country, which could be the United Arab Emirates.

Shah said cricket chiefs from Sri Lanka, Bangladesh and Afghanistan would attend the IPL final in Ahmedabad on Sunday, where a final decision would be taken.

"We will hold discussions with them for outlining the future course of action in relation to Asia Cup 2023," Shah, also the secretary of the powerful Indian board, said in a brief statement on Thursday.

He was not immediately available to elaborate when Reuters contacted him.

PCB chairman Najam Sethi was likely to join the meeting virtually, a source said.

Bangladesh lose big against Malaysia

SPORTS REPORTER

On the back of a 2-0 win over Oman, Bangladesh U-21 hockey team failed to carry the momentum in their second match as they suffered a 5-1 defeat to favourites Malaysia in a Pool B encounter of the AHF Junior Asia Cup in Salalah, Oman, yesterday.

Malaysia, who beat Bangladesh 8-0 during the 2015 edition, converted four goals from penalty after opening the account in the eighth minute through an open play and, within a span of two minutes, had widened the margin further with two converted penalties by the 15th minute.

After resumption, Bangladesh had something to celebrate with Abdullaah converting a penalty in the 37th minute. Malaysia, however, did not allow Bangladesh to stage a turnaround as they struck two more goals in the third and fourth quarters and left the field with two wins in as many games.

Uphill task awaits U-23s

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh are again set to face a tough challenge in the AFC U-23 Asian Cup Qualifiers as the men in red and green were pitted alongside Thailand, Malaysia, and Philippines in Group H during the draw held in Kuala Lumpur on Thursday.

A total of 43 nations, split into 11 groups, are taking part in the fifth edition of the tournament.

The qualifying round will take place from September 4 to 12, with Thailand hosting Group H. The top team of each group will advance to the final round, scheduled for April 15 to May 3 in 2024.

Since the introduction of the U-23 Asian Cup, Bangladesh never progressed to the final round. In previous four attempts, Bangladesh finished bottom on three occasions — managing one victory in 11 matches. They also drew against India in 2016 edition qualifiers held in Dhaka in 2015.



'RACISTS, OUT OF FOOTBALL'

In a show of support for Vinicius Junior, his Real Madrid teammates and Rayo Vallecano players posed next to an official LaLiga banner "Racists, out of football" ahead of their league encounter at the Santiago Bernabeu on Wednesday. Real's players took to the pitch wearing shirts bearing Vinicius's number 20 while the Brazilian forward, who was subjected to racial abuse during their 1-0 loss at Valencia on Sunday, joined his team mates on the pitch for a standing ovation after he was left out of the squad for the game on Wednesday due to a knee injury. Meanwhile, on Thursday, four men detained on suspicion of hanging an effigy of Vinicius from a bridge were banned from Spanish stadiums. The men, detained on Tuesday and being investigated for a hate crime, were released on bail and banned from coming within 1,000 metres of a La Liga stadium during matches.

PHOTO: REAL MADRID

Tough road ahead for Alcaraz in French Open

REUTERS, Paris

World number one Carlos Alcaraz faces a tough path to a maiden French Open title after being placed in the same half of the draw as 22-times Grand Slam champion Novak Djokovic on Thursday.

In the absence of 14-times winner and defending champion Rafael Nadal, who will miss the claycourt major through injury, all eyes are on Djokovic and Alcaraz.

The 20-year-old Alcaraz, who will play a qualifier in the opening round, could face some treacherous match-ups en route to a potential semi-final against world number three Djokovic with 2021 runner-up Stefanos Tsitsipas, Lorenzo Musetti and Felix Auger-Aliassime in the top quarter of the draw.

Djokovic, who starts against Aleksandar Kovacevic, has a seemingly smooth journey to the last four with Russian seventh seed Andrey Rublev his main threat.

World number two Daniil Medvedev,

who plays a qualifier in the first round, is in the lower part of the draw and could face either last year's runner-up Casper Ruud or Norway's Holger Rune.

Sixth seed Rune won the Munich title on clay this season and reached the final in Monte Carlo and Rome, losing to Medvedev in the Italian capital.

No French man has won the singles' title since 1983 and it would take a miracle to see one of them lift the Musketeers Cup on June 11.

In the women's draw, defending champion and world number one Iga Swiatek will start against Cristina Bucsa, the world number 67.

She faces a potential quarter-final clash against Coco Gauff, the American she beat in last year's final.

French hopes will rest on the shoulders of fifth seed Caroline Garcia, who is on a quarter-final collision course with second seed Aryna Sabalenka.

Rome champion Elena Rybakina of Kazakhstan is expected to have a smooth run to the last eight, where she could face Tunisian seventh seed Ons Jabeur.

Fahad throws away lead

SPORTS REPORTER

International Master Fahad Rahman slipped to second position in the Hanoi Grandmaster Chess Tournament-2 after suffering a defeat and a stalemate in the seventh and eighth round matches, respectively, in Vietnam on Thursday.

Fahad, who maintained the lead till yesterday after beating two GMs and one WGM, has now 5.5 points from eight matches and shared the second position along with Swayams Mishra. In the seventh round match, Fahad lost to IM Tran Minh Thang of Vietnam and then drew against IM Labog Eric Jr. of Philippines in the eighth round to throw away his lead. He will play GM Tran Tuan Minh of Vietnam in the ninth and final round today.

NORTH SOUTH UNIVERSITY
 Center of Excellence in Higher Education

ESM

| Admissions open | Summer 2023 |

Master in Environmental Science and Management

- Classroom teaching complemented with field visit
- Weekday evening and Weekend classes
- Possible course waiver

Why our program

- Caters to one of the fastest growing job markets
- Designed to respond to some of the biggest challenges of our time
- Courses taught by faculty members with PhDs in wide array of disciplines from top-ranking universities of the world
- Funded research by faculty members who often hire research assistants
- Emphasis on practice and latest developments in theories, skills and tools
- Current and former students work in Government, Compliance, Public Health, Development, Banking, Textile & Garments and Real Estate sectors
- Hands-on exposure through field visit/lab work
- Possibility of paid work as research/teaching assistant

Areas of study

- Biodiversity conservation
- Disaster management
- Natural resource management
- Environmental and social impact assessment
- Urban environmental management
- Tools in quantitative and geographic analysis

- Climate change
- Industrial ecology
- Pollution control

Explore opportunities for financial aid at:
<http://www.northsouth.edu/resources/fao.html>

Application Information
 Student with background in Science, Engineering, Social Science, Humanities and Business can apply

Application Deadline: 7th June 2023
 Admission Test: 9th June 2023
 Apply at <http://apply.northsouth.edu>

For more information
 ☎ +880255668200 Ext. 2059, 6463, +8801886271722, +8801747013854 | ESM.NorthSouthUniversity

Apply Online



the BUSINESS

Tax return filing hits new record

The number of people who filed tax returns has crossed the 30-lakh mark for the first time in Bangladesh. The National Board of Revenue received 31.7 lakh returns from taxpayers in the first 10 months of the current fiscal year, up 22 per cent from a year ago. Credit lies with the tax authority's increased efforts aimed at expanding the tax net. Besides, awareness among taxpayers has also increased.

STORY ON B1



Lack of dredging and dumping of waste over the years have turned the Louhajang river in Tangail into a bush of shrubs. The river in many places has narrowed and lost navigability. The photo was taken in Tangail Stadium area on Saturday.

PHOTO: MIRZA SHAKIL

MYANMAR CITIZENSHIP

Rohingyas have to go through verification

Says refugee commissioner after Myanmar team visits camp

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Cox's Bazar

Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh will get Myanmar citizenship if they go through verification under the national verification card (NVC) scheme.

Mohammad Mizanur Rahman, refugee relief and repatriation commissioner (RRRC), yesterday made the comment after a Myanmar delegation visited refugee camps at Teknaf in Cox's Bazar.

The 14-member Myanmar delegation, led by Aung Mye, regional director of Myanmar's social affairs ministry, visited Bangladesh as part of the initiative that was launched to start Rohingyas' repatriation on a pilot basis.

The delegation talked to 280 Rohingyas. They mainly focused on creating awareness among the refugees about the repatriation process, said RRRC Mizanur.

During the talks, Rohingyas demanded Myanmar citizenships and told the delegation that they wanted to return to their homeland, said Mizanur.

"In response, members of the delegation said Rohingyas would have to apply for national verification card (NVC) to get citizenship," he said.

"Now we will work for the repatriation of Rohingyas who want to return to Myanmar voluntarily," Mizanur said.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

DSA goes against int'l rights treaty

Says UN human rights office, asks govt to scrap 2 DSA sections, amend 8

MOHIUDDIN ALAMGIR and ASHUTOSH SARKAR

The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) recommended over 11 months ago that the government scraps two sections and amends eight others of the Digital Security Act but the government said it will not scrap them and is reviewing the sections.

Experts said the DSA has become the government's and ruling party activists' favourite tool to muzzle critics. Despite harsh criticism from the media, rights bodies, and experts, filing of cases under this law and arrests of journalists continue unabated.

The OHCHR made the call as the sections concerned failed to meet the standard for upholding article 19 (3) of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), which protects the right to freedom of opinion and freedom of expression.

Law Minister Anisul Huq made it clear by saying that they have no plans to scrap the sections.

"Almost all countries across the world have laws like the Digital Security Act. The Digital Security Act has been formulated in Bangladesh to combat cybercrimes including hacking, and therefore, there is no question of scrapping the sections, let alone the law," he said.

More than 2,000 cases have been filed under the act, which came into force on October 1, 2018.

The abuse of the law came to the fore again on early March 29 when Samsuzzaman Shams, a journalist of Bangla daily Prothom Alo, was picked up from his home hours after a case was filed against him under the law.

Another DSA case was filed that night against Prothom Alo Editor Matiur Rahman and Shams. Shams was sent to jail the next day. He got out on bail on April 3.

The High Court on April 2 granted a six-week anticipatory bail to Matiur.

UN Human Rights Chief Volker Türk on March 31 called upon the Bangladesh authorities to immediately suspend the application of the DSA.

"My office has already provided detailed technical comments to assist with such a revision," he said.

The OHCHR, in June last year, submitted its recommendations titled "OHCHR Technical Note to the Government of Bangladesh on Review of the Digital Security Act".

Bangladesh has been a party to the ICCPR since 2000 and thus has obligations to uphold article 19 of the treaty.

Article 19 (2) says: "Everyone shall have the right to freedom of expression; this right shall include freedom to seek, receive and impart information and ideas of all kinds, regardless of frontiers, either orally, in writing or in print, in the form of art, or through any other media of his choice."

Article 19 (3) says: "The exercise of the rights provided for in paragraph 2 [article 19 (2)] of this article carries with it special duties and responsibilities. It may therefore be subject to certain restrictions, but these shall only be such as are provided by law and are necessary: (a) For respect of the rights or reputations of others; (b) For the protection of national security or of public order, or of public health or morals."

REPEAL
The OHCHR proposed repealing sections 21 and 28 of the DSA.

Section 21 says that if any person by means of the digital medium, makes or instigates to make any propaganda or campaign against the Liberation War of Bangladesh, the spirit of the Liberation War, the father of the nation, the national anthem, or the national flag, then such an act of the person shall be an offence.

The OHCHR said that given the overly broad language, section 21 risks criminalising legitimate expression that cannot be limited under article 19 (3) of the ICCPR.

Moreover, its lack of precision renders it difficult for individuals to regulate their conduct to avoid prosecution. The harshness of the penalty, including life imprisonment for repeat offences, could serve as a deterrent to legitimate public discourse, it said.

Section 28 of the DSA says that if any person or group willingly or knowingly publishes or broadcasts or causes to publish or broadcast

SEE PAGE 6 COL 4

SYLHET MAYOR POLLS EC scraps bids of five independents

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

The Election Commission yesterday cancelled the nominations of five independent candidates for Sylhet City Corporation elections slated for June 21.

After the evaluation of the nomination papers, the returning officer of the election and regional election officer of Sylhet Md Faysal Kadir announced the cancellation.

The nominations of Noor Talukdar, Mohammad Abdul Mannan Khan, Jahid Uddin Chowdhury, Md Shahjahan Mia and Mushtaq Ahmed Rouf Mostafa were cancelled.

Of them, discrepancies were found in the list of voters supporting Shamsun Noor Talukdar, Md Abdul Mannan Khan, and Jahid Uddin Chowdhury.

According to the rules of the Election Commission, an independent must submit a list of 300 voters

SEE PAGE 6 COL 6

Handing control of Bakhmut to Moscow

Says head of Wagner mercenary group

AFP, Moscow

The head of Russia's Wagner mercenary group yesterday said his troops had started transferring their positions in the flashpoint eastern Ukraine city of Bakhmut to the Russian military.

His announcement comes days after Moscow's military said it had deployed jets and artillery on Russian soil against a "sabotage" group that crossed from Ukraine.

The Kremlin said meanwhile that China's special envoy for Ukraine would be visiting Russia today as part of a tour of European capitals including Kyiv.

The battle for Bakhmut has raged for nearly one year, levelling the city and decimating waves of Wagner recruits who have led Russia's assault on the industrial hub.

"We are withdrawing units from Bakhmut today. We are handing over positions to the military, ammunition and everything," Wagner boss Yevgeny Prigozhin said in a video released on social media.

"We pull back, we rest, we prepare and then we will get new tasks," added Prigozhin, who was dressed in tactical body armour and a military helmet.

Earlier this week, he conceded that around 10,000 prisoners he had recruited to fight in Ukraine had been killed on the battlefield. Prigozhin's announcement came shortly after Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky accused Russia of again terrorising Ukrainians by launching a wave of Iranian-made attack drones at targets across his country.

"The enemy continued to terrorise Ukraine by launching 36 Shaheds. None reached their target," Zelensky said in a social media post. "I'm grateful to our air defence forces for the 100 percent result."

Probe reveals how Jupiter's lightning resembles Earth's

REUTERS, Washington

Hidden below the brownish ammonia clouds blanketing Jupiter are clouds that like on Earth are made of water. And like on Earth, lightning often is generated within these clouds -- an eerie sight spotted by various spacecraft that have visited our solar system's largest planet, including NASA's Juno probe.

Data obtained by Juno is providing fresh information on how the lightning processes on Jupiter are similar to those on Earth despite the dramatic differences between the two planets, according to scientists.

Earth is a relatively small rocky world. Jupiter, whose namesake ancient Roman god flung lightning bolts, is a gas giant so immense that all the other planets in our solar system could neatly fit inside it - including more than 1,300 Earths.

Tapping into five years of high-resolution data acquired by Juno's radio receiver as the spacecraft orbits Jupiter, the researchers found that the planet's lightning initiation processes pulsate with a similar rhythm to that observed inside clouds on our planet. The pulses observed on Jupiter as flashes of lightning were initiated with time separations of about a millisecond, similar to thunderstorms on Earth.



JELLIES OF THE BAY

A river jelly, or *Acromitus flagellates*, in the Bay of Bengal at Saint Martin's Island. Found mainly in brackish waters like mangroves, estuaries or coasts, these jellies aren't as harmful to humans as many others. The swarming of *Acromitus flagellates* occurs with the changes in the environment like habitat deterioration, overfishing, deep sea trawling, coastal pollution and climate change. So, swarms of jellyfish in a particular area isn't as good a sign as you would think -- it means we are destroying the environment there. Since they feed off zooplankton and ichthyoplankton, once they swarm, they can disturb the food web. However, according to research, their venom has shown anti-proliferative properties, confirming that it could be used for anti-cancer drug development in the future.

PHOTO: SHARIF SARWAR