

DHAKA MONDAY JUNE 5, 2023

REGD. No. DA 781

VOL. XXXIII No. 137

JAISHTHA 22, 1430 BS

www.thedailystar.net

ZILQAD 15, 1444 HJRI

16 PAGES : Tk 15.00

POWER SITUATION

Not improving anytime soon

Say experts; Nasrul Hamid hopeful things will change in two weeks

ASIFUR RAHMAN

Nobody knows exactly when the power cuts will end.

Nasrul Hamid, state minister for power and energy, hopes the situation will improve within two weeks because the government is trying to get coal, gas, and other fuels to run power plants.

But officials and energy experts believe that only a drop in temperatures or rain will reduce the outages. Since only then the demand for power would fall, with fewer people turning their ACs on, to the level of current power generation.

However, with the weather being what it has been for two weeks, there is no hope that power consumption will fall to the level of power generation, said an official of Bangladesh Power Development Board (PDB), wishing anonymity.

The Met office predicts rain in Dhaka after June 9. But that will only bring a temporary respite to people who are currently spending hours in the heat with no power.

Yesterday's highest temperature in the country, 41 degree Celsius, was recorded in Rajshahi, while in Dhaka it was 37.1 degree Celsius.

The government yesterday ordered government primary schools to remain closed this week because of the scorching heat.

The civil surgeon of Nilphamari on Sunday said health facilities in the districts were seeing more patients arriving with diarrhoea and treatments were getting interrupted due to power cuts.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1



Workers of a tannery are playing a board game on a mobile device as the machines do not work due to a power outage. Different trade associations have been complaining that businesses are suffering due to the frequent power cuts in recent days. The photo was taken at Savar Tannery Estate yesterday.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN



People in pain due to inflation, power cuts

Says PM, urges frugal use of electricity

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has said inflation and power cuts are making people suffer.

Power generation is being disrupted due to the rising prices of gas, coal, and fuel all over the world. "It is not possible to buy [gas, coal, and fuel] even with money," she said while addressing the commissioning ceremony of "Chilahati Express", an intercity train.

"For this, I know people are facing a few problems this summer," she said.

Later in the day in parliament, Hasina asked people to be frugal in consuming power.

"I will request everyone to be economical in using electricity. We have to practice austerity in every sector," she said in parliament yesterday while taking part in the discussion on a condolence motion on the death of ruling Awami League MP and former minister Alfaruk Amin.

Hasina said the government has provided everyone's homes with electricity as promised. She said the crisis of fuel, coal or gas is worldwide. "Still, our efforts continue," said the head of government.

"Steps have already been taken to buy coal so that we can restart power plants," she added.

Hasina said the government has signed agreements with Qatar and Oman to purchase fuel and

SEE PAGE 6 COL 1

Pry schools to stay shut June 5-8

Heatwave to continue for five to six days

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

All government primary schools across the country will remain closed for four days from today because of the ongoing heatwave.

The primary and mass education ministry issued a press release in this connection yesterday.

Mahbubur Rahman, public relations officer of the ministry, said the authorities of kindergartens can also follow the order if they wish.

Most parts of the country have been facing scorching heat since the last week of May. The temperature may not drop until June 9, said experts.

"There is no chance of significant rain in the heatwave-affected areas. There is a chance of rain after June 9," said Meteorologist Hafizur Rahman.

SEE PAGE 6 COL 1

Turning plastic perils into a prize

MOHAMMAD AL-MASUM MOLLA

The country has been seeing a worsening plastic waste problem over the last decade and a half, and recently, a small step has been taken towards possible mitigation.

For the last one year, Nazir Hossain, around 50 years old, has been turning plastic waste -- which causes harm to the environment when left in landfills or allowed to pollute lakes, rivers and oceans -- into low-cost tiles for pavements, rooftops and bathrooms.

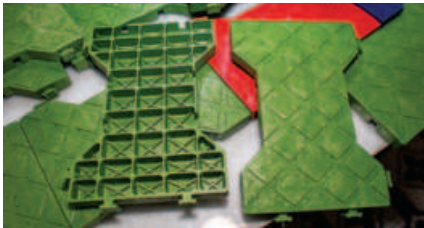
His working life has been dominated by plastic. He worked in a plastic factory for nearly 20 years since the early 1990s. In 2012, he became an entrepreneur making pattern moulds for plastic items at his own Hossain Engineering Workshop in Kamrangirchar.

Then one day, inspiration struck.

"I noticed that the pavement in front of my workshop was made with earthen tiles. I then wondered if we could use discarded plastic on this mould to make tiles," he said.

But he was not sure of how the process would turn out, and so communicated with a local NGO named Resource Integration Centre (RIC) about his idea.

SEE PAGE 6 COL 4



Plastic most lethal among all waste

Some businesses hold out hopes with waste recycling initiatives

MOSTAFA YOUSUF

Plastics are silently piling on the environmental miseries of Bangladesh, one of the most climate change-vulnerable countries in the world.

Among all wastes, plastic is found to be the most hazardous for this densely populated developing nation, where the garbage collection system is largely inefficient and, to some extent, non-existent. Thus, the plastic shopping bags or food wrappers that we use for a few minutes to hours will continue to exist in the environment for hundreds of years.

The developed world is dealing with the overwhelming plastic menace with a three-way approach -- reduce, reuse and recycle. A reality check can reveal why Bangladesh is precariously poised. The country has a law for reducing the use of plastic, but it stumbles on implementation. And a World Bank study in 2021 states, 69 percent of



the disposable plastic products in the country are left uncollected and only 31 percent are recycled.

Plastic recycling could play a pivotal role in mitigating the impact of plastic pollution, which persists on land and waterbodies, threatening a wide array of riverine and marine ecosystems in the country.

As per a 2021 World Bank study, the per capita plastic use in Bangladesh has tripled to 9kg in 2021 from 3kg in 2005. In Dhaka, the amount is 24kg, almost three times higher than that of other urban areas of the country.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 4

BUSINESS

Exports fetch \$50.5 billion in Jul-May

Bangladesh's exports bounced back in May after declining in the preceding two months, riding on increased shipment of garments, according to data released by the Export Promotion Bureau yesterday.

Exporters shipped \$4.84 billion worth of goods in May, up 26.6 percent year-on-year. It was \$3.83 billion in the same month a year ago.

Overall exports in the July-May period of the fiscal year of 2022-23 soared 7.1 percent year-on-year to \$50.5 billion with the major export earning sectors, excluding garments, registering a decline.

STORY ON B1



Wastes, mostly plastic, clog the Chaktai canal in Chattogram city's Chawkbazar area. It takes hundreds of years for plastic materials, including single-use plastics, to degrade in the environment. A holistic approach, based on reduce, reuse and recycle, is needed to save the country from this kind of pollution.

PHOTO: RAJIB RAIHAN

14-PARTY ALLIANCE New US visa policy sparks friction

PARTHA PRATIM BHATTACHARJEE

Partners of the ruling Awami League-led 14-party alliance were divided over the new US visa policy yesterday as left-leaning parties at a meeting welcomed Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's firm stance.

They said Bangladesh should not bow to US pressure and all should thank Hasina for her stance.

The AL and other partners of the alliance, however, opined that the government should resolve the issue diplomatically. They considered the PM's stance tactical with an aim to boost the morale of her party leaders and activists, sources said.

These views came up at the meeting of the allies with 14-party coordinator and AL leaders Amir Hossain Amu in the chair at his Eskaton home yesterday afternoon.

According to meeting insiders, Amu, at the beginning, said only the proposed budget and the new US visa policy were on the agenda.

Some leaders of the alliance said they want to talk about the current power supply situation and price-hike of essentials.

US Secretary of State Antony Blinken on May 24 announced a new visa policy for Bangladesh. He said the US will deny visas to people believed to be responsible for or complicit in undermining the democratic election process in Bangladesh.

AL Joint General Secretary Mahbubul Alam Hanif, Workers Party President Rashed Khan Menon, Samyabadi Dal General Secretary Dilip Barua, Jatiya Party (JP) General Secretary Sheikh Shahidul Islam, Bangladesh Tariqat Federation Chairman Syed Nazibul Bashar

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1



BSRM has achieved the 'SDG Brand Champion Award' 2023 in recognition of our green initiative in converting 'SLAG' into usable product



3 more die of dengue

97 hospitalised in 24hrs till yesterday morning

STAR REPORT

Three people died of dengue and 97 others were hospitalised across the country in the last 24 hours till yesterday morning.

With the latest deaths, all in Dhaka, the total number of deaths in dengue rose to 16 this year, according to the Directorate General of Health Services.

With the new cases, the total number of dengue this year rose to 2,376, of whom 682 are from outside Dhaka.

Some 387 dengue patients are still undergoing treatment at hospitals.

A total of 1,973 dengue patients were released from hospitals during the period.

Total number of deaths in dengue was 281 last year while the total number of cases was 62,382, of whom 23,162 were outside Dhaka, according to the DGHS.

Mob beats, stabs youth over FB post, 10 cops hurt

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A shopkeeper was beaten and stabbed by a mob in front of Police Staff College in the capital's Mirpur-13 yesterday for allegedly hurting religious sentiments.

A team of Kafrul Police Station rescued and sent him to Dhaka Medical College Hospital around 9:45pm, said Saddam Hossain, sub-inspector of the police station.

"Someone hacked my Facebook profile and shared a derogatory comment on religion. I was viciously beaten and stabbed by locals," said the victim.

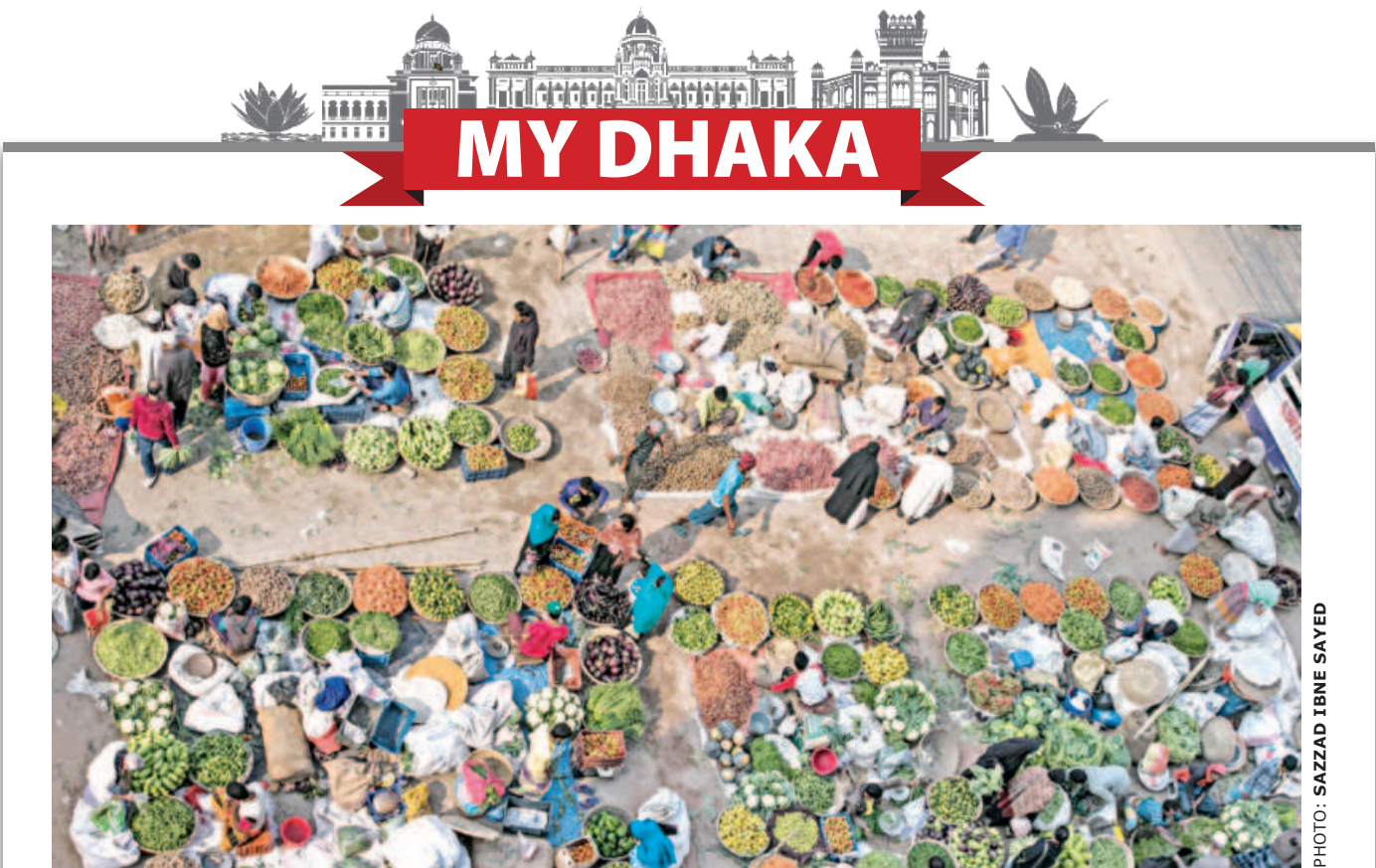
At least 10 policemen were injured while trying to rescue the victim, said Kamrul Islam, inspector (investigation) of Kafrul Police Station.

A group of people went to the victim's shop around 7:30pm, pulled him out and started assaulting him. Local councillor Jamal Mostafa, rushed to the spot to protect him but he also faced the mob's wrath.

After they were rescued, the mob grew larger and people started throwing bricks and other objects at police, the inspector said.

Chases and counter-chases between police and the mob lasted until around 10:00pm, said Khandakar Mahid Uddin, additional commissioner of Dhaka Metropolitan Police.

Three people were detained , Kamrul said.



Meradia kitchen market, next to Banasree, brings together buyers and sellers with its fresh produce.

Dhaka's bustling FARMER'S MARKET

RBR

Urban villages around Dhaka are pockets of areas that have gotten cramped amidst the rapidly rising city. One finds them in Uttara Residential Area (3rd Phase) – an extension to the Uttara Model Town, Purbachal, and Beribandh areas. Many residents of these places grow their own produce



and often sell them in nearby bazaars. That is how the farmer's market notion got popularised in the outskirts of the city.

When the Purbachal Expressway was under construction and the area was popularly known as 300 feet or Baluchar, there was a popular farmer's market, the Neela Market. The main attraction was that you got fresh vegetables and fish from the villages nearby, and many of the vendors there were the actual producers of these agro products. The market got demolished

once the expressway construction commenced.

The reason why a farmer's market is sought after in Dhaka is simply because of the fresh produce available there. It makes you willing to pay a higher price and travel halfway around the city to grab a basket of these seasonal vegetables.

And all for the reason that the products found in farmer's markets are organic and pesticide free. How much of that is true is debatable but the vegetables are indeed grown in the backyard of the seller's homestead.

One such market is Meradia Haat, beside Banasree, which brings together buyers and sellers with its fresh produce. While not the same as a traditional rural haat, the centenarian bazaar still brings back memories of a village haat for those who are blessed to have seen one.

Besides Meradia, the most recent favourite is Bou Bazar, a farmer's market found a little farther from

the roundabout of the metro rail in Uttara 3rd phase. Young wives, old mothers, and shrewd men all sit with their assorted seasonal vegetables and attract throngs of Dhakaites looking for fresh produce.

A young girl draped in an overused sari, with sindoor on the hair parting, was vending a basket full of helencha shaak, also known as buffalo spinach, for just a meagre Tk 50. An old lady was seen selling the rare dumur, or cluster fig. A chirpy couple was selling duck eggs and half-ripe mangoes from the tree in their backyard. The assortment of vegetables and rare finds were aplenty. There was invariably the snack van selling hot peyajju, beguni, and gurer jilapi.

Amid the hustle and bustle, children were having fun too. They were seen playing around their mothers.

The sellers at these farmer's markets are not regular vegetable vendors; they are suburb dwellers or migrants who want to live the life they left in their villages. They go for random farming according to their needs and sell off the excess for some extra income.

I found the mood and ambience at Bou Bazar subdued. A light wind was cooling off the humid evening, the sky was like an orange marmalade; as a bystander, the entire panoramic view of the market filled my heart with a kind of adoration for the hardworking men and women of Dhaka.

4 witnesses give depositions in case against Arav

COURT CORRESPONDENT

Four more prosecution witnesses gave their depositions before a Dhaka court yesterday against Robiul Islam alias Arav Khan and nine others in a case filed over the killing of Special Branch (SB) Inspector Mamun Imran Khan in July 2018.

The witnesses are Arifur Rahman, an inspector of the Detective Branch of police; DB Sub-Inspectors Shah Alam and Md Rubel Hossain and Assistant Sub-Inspector Md Enamul.

Judge Faisal Atiq Bin Kader of Dhaka's First Additional Metropolitan Sessions Judge's Court recorded their statements in the courtroom.

Later, the defence for all the accused cross-examined the witnesses on different points.

The court then fixed June 18 for the next hearing of the case.

Ex-SP Babul gets HC bail in DSA case

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday granted permanent bail to former superintendent of police Babul Akter in a case filed under the Digital Security Act.

Police Bureau of Investigation (PBI) Chattogram Metro's Superintendent of Police Naima Sultana filed the case with Kulshi Police Station on October 17 last year against four people including Babul and expatriate journalist Ilias Hossain on charges of making false and derogatory statements about her in a video uploaded on social media.

Babul's brother Habibur Rahman Labu and his father Abdul Wadud Miah were the other two accused in the case.

In her complaint, Naima alleged, "In order to implement an unknown agenda, a 42:21-minutes-long video was made with false statements and uploaded on YouTube."

BRTC, BUET to do study for expansion of Dhaka airport runway

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government has appointed BRTC and BUET as consultants for carrying out a detailed feasibility study and cost estimate for the expansion of the runway of Dhaka airport from 10,500 feet to 12,000 feet.

State Minister for Civil Aviation M Mahbub Ali yesterday told this in parliament in reply to a query from Awami League MP Kazim Uddin Ahmed from Mymensingh-11.

The junior minister, however, didn't elaborate in this regard.

Mahbub Ali said, Bangladesh hosted around 20 lakh foreign tourists in the last five years and earned around Tk 12,788 crore in foreign exchange.

The state minister said tourism industry is a prospectus sector and the government has declared this industry as thrust sector considering the importance of this industry and to attract domestic and foreign tourists.

Mahbub Ali also said the government has taken various measures to establish new tourist centres in the country.

Not improving anytime soon

FROM PAGE 1

Meanwhile, business association leaders have started complaining that production at the factories all over the country is being interrupted.

To make matters worse, coal shortage will see the 1,320MW Payra power plant, the country's largest, completely shut down tonight for at least 25 days. This will widen the gap between supply and demand and effectively cause more power cuts.

Production at one of its two units was suspended on May 25. Power cuts have been more frequent since then.

To get its shipment of coal, the Payra authorities must open Letters of Credit (L/C), which they have not done yet.

"LCs will be opened by this week.

But it will take at least 20-25 more days for the shipment to arrive," Shah Abdul Haseeb, superintendent engineer at the plant, told The Daily Star.

PDB officials say they have plans to operate several "unutilised" plants in Khulna and Barishal regions to increase production.

"A new coal-based power plant will start operation from this week, and we will import more electricity from India's Adani power," said PDB member SM Wazed Ali Sardar.

"We are taking measures to prevent

	GAS	FURNACE OIL/LAND DIESEL	COAL	IMPORT
CAPACITY	11039	7116	3360	1160
AVERAGE PRODUCTION IN LAST 7 DAYS	6538	3818	2258	1016

the situation from deteriorating any further," he added.

Adani Power has recently been supplying more than its commissioned capacity of 750MW. It supplied over 1,000MW yesterday.

Besides, Chattogram's SS power plant is going to supply to the national grid from this week, said the PDB member, adding that these would somewhat fill the gap created by the shut down of Payra plant.

However, energy expert Prof M Shamsul Alam said there was no logic behind the claim. "The government has power plants, but it doesn't analyse

how much coal or fuel will be needed over a certain period. That's why they blame the dollar crisis one moment, and talk about another crisis the next.

"It is not acceptable that the new power plants will fill the gap left by another power plant. They will only increase generation capacity, which often remains unutilised.

The country has been producing and importing around 11,500MW during daytime peak hours and around 13,500MW during evening peak for the last couple of weeks.

The total generation capacity is 23,370MW. Over the last couple of months, around 2,500MW capacity remained offline for maintenance and around 4,500MW for fuel crisis.

Yesterday, Dhaka's two power distribution companies were short of 570MW, which left the city dwellers with three to four hours of outages.

Nasrul Hamid yesterday said the ministry had been trying for the last two months to ensure uninterrupted supply of coal, gas and fuel to the plants, but it failed because LCs were not opened on time.

Payra, Barapukuria and some other power plants are running at half their capacities because of shortages of coal, gas, and fuel, he said.

New US visa policy sparks friction

FROM PAGE 1

Maizbhandari, Communist Kendro Convener Wazedul Islam and Ganatantri Party General Secretary Shahadat Hossain spoke.

Hanif told the meeting that Hasina's response to the new US visa policy was strategic and that the government was working to resolve this diplomatically.

Leaders of left-leaning parties, Dilip Barua, Wazedul Islam, and Shahadat Hossain, welcomed Hasina's response and said Bangladesh should not give into US pressure.

The premier on Saturday said there is no point in fretting over who will not give visas or who will impose sanctions.

Dilip said China came up with good offers for Bangladesh and the government should consider those.

Menon said the US visa policy was an ominous sign for Bangladesh and the

government should not take it lightly.

Responding to the left-leaning leaders, Amu said they should think twice before making such comments and asked them what would happen if the US imposed a ban on the country's garment products, said sources.

Maizbhandari said the government should take the issue seriously and Australia, Canada, the UK, EU countries, and Japan may follow suit.

He also said the policy was not introduced to bring the BNP to power but to remove Hasina and the AL government, sources said.

The leaders also criticised the current power supply situation and price-hike of essentials and said both would have adverse impacts on the alliance in the general elections.

They were also critical of the government's proposal to levy a

minimum income tax of Tk 2,000 even on those without taxable income and the 15 percent VAT on ballpoint pens.

The alliance leaders came down heavily on Foreign Minister Abdul Momen and State Minister for Power Nasrul Hamid for "their irresponsible statements", meeting insiders said. Menon expressed disappointment over the AL delaying the process of seat sharing with partner rs.

He said the AL has started its election campaign but the partners are in the dark about their next course.

He demanded an immediate meeting with the AL chief.

Talking to reporters afterwards, Amu termed the US visa policy ill-motivated and unwarranted. He said they think people who want to foil the election might use the policy as a tool.

Plastic most lethal among all waste

FROM PAGE 1

Another study, carried out in 2020 by the Environmental and Social Development Organisation (ESDO), found that 87,000 tonnes of Single Use Plastics (SUPs) are produced in the country every year. Of the SUPs, 96 percent contained food or personal care products.

That year, the High Court issued a directive to ban the use of SUPs in coastal areas, including in hotels, motels, and restaurants.

But the Department of Environment could neither comply with the court order nor properly enforce the ban on polythene shopping bags over the last 20 years.

In the Roadmap for Sustainable Plastic Management for Bangladesh, the World Bank recommended Bangladesh recycles 50 percent of all the plastic it uses by 2025, and 80 percent by 2030.

The roadmap also outlines phasing out 90 percent SUPs by 2026.

Today is World Environment Day. This year the theme is "Beat Plastic Pollution".

Prof Ijaz Hossain, former dean of the Engineering Faculty at Buett, told The Daily Star that every day about 24,000 tonnes of waste is generated in the country and 10 percent (2,400 tonnes) of it comes from plastics.

Referring to a study carried out by Waste Concern, he said most of the recycled waste are PET (PolyEthylene Terephthalate) bottles as they have market value.

"In plastic recycling, we face two kinds of problems. One is household source segregation and another is littering. In household source segregation, the plastic gets mixed with other garbage making it difficult to sort them out. If source segregation could be done properly, plastic waste collection would increase," he said.

HOPE IN RECYCLING

However, there is a silver lining with some large conglomerates coming forward to recycle various wastes with innovative technologies.

The country's steel manufacturing pioneer BSRM has recently launched a technology to turn the slag that comes from the metal casting and refining process into brick.

BSRM produces 0.12 million tonnes of slags a year, which is 33 percent of all slag produced by the steel industry. The remaining 77 percent of slag ends up in roadside ditches, canals or rivers.

Now BSRM's slag-turned-brick has made its way into road construction.

Tapan Sengupta, deputy managing



director of BSRM, told The Daily Star that the slag is successfully replacing the brick and stone chips used in road construction, including road dividers, pavements, and the loadbearing layers (sub-base aggregate) under roads.

BSRM converts all its slag into reusable products.

Recently, the introduction of the technology earned them the SDG Brand Champion Award-2023 given by Bangladesh Brand Forum.

Tapan said they came up with the technology as a part of their commitment to protect the environment. It will encourage others in the steel industry to follow suit.

The Roads and Highways Department in 2020 recommended the use of slag-turned-brick chips as sub-base aggregate.

Kamruzzaman Kamal, director (marketing) of PRAN-RFL Group, told The Daily Star that they have 10 mega collection centres of plastic across the country with direct engagement of 2,000 people.

Another 4,000 people are indirectly involved in plastic waste collection. They recycle 40,000 tonnes a year.

Ta Duy Tung, managing director of Coca-Cola Bangladesh, said plastic waste management has become a huge issue globally and the availability of Coca-Cola beverages in recycled PET bottles is in support of a circular economy in Bangladesh.

To achieve this, it is critical we have enough supply of food-grade recycled plastic to meet demand.

"This is why together with our bottling partners, the Coca-Cola system in Bangladesh is investing in the collection and recycling of PET plastic bottles. It is our ambition to help collect and recycle the equivalent of all the plastic bottles we bring to the market," he said.

Shamima Rahman, director (corporate affairs) at Unilever Bangladesh Ltd, told The Daily Star that they were prioritising the recycling of SUPs and multilayer plastics.

"Unilever managed to collect 7,000 tonnes of plastic in Chattogram since June last year and reached one million people through awareness programmes and ensured improved livelihood for 2,000 waste workers by encouraging them to collect plastic waste," she added.

Mohammad Mohasin, head of supply chain at Walton Group, told The Daily Star that they recycled 12,000 tonnes of plastic waste a year. Usually, they turned the waste into plastic tiles for their own use.

LARGEST ONLINE BRANCH NETWORK

LARGEST PRIVATE COMMERCIAL BANK

FIRST BANGALEE BANK

Sharia'h based Islamic Banking
through 501 Branches & 154 Sub Branchesপূবালী ব্যাংক লিমিটেড
PUBALI BANK LIMITEDTake your remittance
Smile with your gift

ESTABLISHED IN 1959

64 YEARS IN BANKING

Excellence in Remittance Service

Shut down 27 brick kilns in CHT

SC lifts status quo on HC verdict

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Appellate Division of the Supreme Court yesterday lifted its chamber judge's order that issued a status quo on a High Court verdict regarding shutdown of 27 brick kilns in Chattogram Hill Tracts.

The apex court also directed the environment committee under the environment ministry to dispose of in two months the applications submitted by owners of the brick kilns.

A three-member bench of the Appellate Division headed by Chief Justice Hasan Foez Siddique passed the order after hearing two appeals filed by the owners.

Following a petition filed Human Rights and Peace for Bangladesh, the HC in February withdrew its earlier order that in 2014 issued an injunction on shutdown of operations of the 27 brick kilns, as those were not relocated in line with section 8(4) of Brick Kilns Control Act, 2013.

On March 15, the SC chamber judge, following the appeals of the owners, directed the authorities concerned to maintain status quo on shutdown of their operations and also sent the appeals to its full bench for a further hearing.

HRPB lawyer Manzill Murshid told The Daily Star that there is no legal bar for the government to shut down the operations of 27 brick kilns following the SC directive.

Meanwhile, lawyer Ahsanul Karim, representing the brick kiln owners, said operations of the brick kilns cannot be shut down as their applications for selecting place for relocation were not disposed of yet.



Amid the ongoing heatwave, exhausted workers at the Gabtoli landing station seek solace beneath a sheltering tree. With the dredging pipes as their makeshift beds, they find a momentary reprieve from the scorching sun. This picture was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

Operations on to nab 'terrorists' in CHT

Army chief tells journalists

UNB, Bandarban

Chief of Bangladesh Army

General SM Shafiuddin Ahmed

yesterday

said army teams are finding out and capturing the suspected terrorists from their hideouts in different hills and have already succeeded to take control of their main training camp.

"They are no longer in the area... some of them have assimilated with locals. As they are also citizens of Bangladesh, we want them to play a role in the socio-economic development of the country like others," he said.

The army chief made

SEE PAGE 4 COL 6

'Impose tax on pollution'

TIB urges strict measures to control plastic menace

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Transparency International Bangladesh (TIB) yesterday called upon the government to ensure strict enforcement of law to control plastic pollution in the country.

Issuing a statement on the occasion of World Environment Day, the graft watchdog said Bangladesh banned use of polythene shopping bag in 2002.

However, concern remains over unabated plastic pollution as the relevant Bangladesh Environment Conservation Act of 1995 does not ban use of single-use and laminated plastic, it said.

TIB urged the government to immediately amend relevant clause of the law to prevent illegal production of plastic, its marketing and use.

Besides, it called upon relevant authorities to impose "pollution tax" and ensure effective enforcement of the environment conservation act to hold accountable persons, organisations and projects involved in plastic pollution.

"Although law has been formulated banning use of polythene, due to its lack of effective enforcement, environment pollution caused from plastic not only continued but increased alarmingly [in Bangladesh]," said TIB Executive Director Iftekharuzzaman.

He said massive dumping of wastages including plastics

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1

Although law has been formulated banning use of polythene, due to its lack of effective enforcement, environment pollution caused from plastic not only continued but increased alarmingly.

IFTEKHARUZZAMAN
TIB Executive Director

'He laid foundation for six-point demand'

Visionary economist Prof Nurul Islam remembered

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The concept of the six-point demand emerged from the writings of visionary economist Prof Nurul Islam in the late 1950s, said speakers at an event yesterday.

The event titled "Prof Nurul Islam: Perspectives from Different Generations" was held at the Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies (BIDS) to honour his remarkable legacy as a renowned economist and influential figure in Bangladesh's intellectual landscape.

The event, chaired and moderated by Binayak Sen, director general of BIDS, featured the participation of ministers, advisors, members of parliament, economists, journalists, as well as his friends, relatives, and colleagues, who fondly remembered Professor Islam.

Prof Islam served as a teacher at the economics department of Dhaka University from 1955 to 1964 before assuming the position of chief at the Pakistan Institute of Development Economics (PIDE).

During his tenure at DU, Prof Islam highlighted the discrimination prevalent in the jute trading industry, which was the main crop of East Pakistan at that



PROF NURUL ISLAM

He was a mentor for multiple generations... he was a spiritual teacher of modern economic lessons.

Wahiduddin Mahmud
Eminent economist

He tried to translate the six points demand into action and policy making for the movement of independence.

Mashiur Rahman
Economic affairs adviser to PM

time, said speakers.

The esteemed economist passed away at the age of 94 in Washington on May 9.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 6

Pvt companies supplying low quality milk

Alleges JS body

RASHIDUL HASAN

A parliamentary body has alleged that private milk supply companies supply low quality milk to the market.

The Parliamentary Standing Committee on the LGRD ministry said these companies buy low-quality milk from local and foreign sources and mix it with harmful substances and sell at lower prices than Milk Vita, a government milk producing company.

The parliamentary watchdog stressed the need for informing the public about this matter. This issue was also discussed in the previous meeting of the committee.

It is learnt that in the previous meeting, Awami League MP Shahe Alam said private milk suppliers buy low-quality milk from the market at a low price.

"Low quality powdered milk is imported from abroad with five percent tax and mixed and sold in the market at a relatively low price," he said.

In the meeting, State Minister for Rural Development and Cooperative Swapan Bhattacharya said Milk Vita products are 100 percent pure.

He also highlighted the need for proper quality control. He said currently they are buying such milk by paying 5 percent tax from the other countries.

The state minister proposed to impose 10-15 percent VAT on imported milk.

LGRD Minister Tazul Islam also said people

SEE PAGE 4 COL 3



ELECTIONS TO CITY CORPORATIONS

RAJSHAHI POLLS

Councillor candidate injured in knife attack

UNB, Rajshahi

Three people, including a councillor candidate of the Rajshahi City Corporation (RCC) election, were injured in a knife attack during a clash between followers of two candidates on Saturday.

The injured are Ashraf Babu, a councillor candidate and vice-president of Rajshahi city unit of Jubo League, and his supporters Rezaul Karim and Joy Hossain.

They were admitted to Rajshahi Medical College Hospital.

Saifuddin Shahin, deputy commissioner of Rajshahi Metropolitan Police (headquarters), said

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

'They're dishonest, traitors'

BNP expels 19 Barishal polls candidates; JP mayor candidate unveils manifesto

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barishal

BNP has expelled 19 candidates, including independent mayoral candidate Kamrul Ahsan Rupan, and 18 councillor candidates, due to their participation in the Barishal City Corporation election against party directives.

Bilkis Jahan Shirin, BNP organising secretary (Barishal Division), confirmed the expulsion in a letter signed by BNP Senior joint secretary general Ruhul Kabir Rizvi, which was sent to the candidates.

The letter stated that the candidates were served show-cause notices on June 2 for contesting in the BCC polls against the party's decision. However, their responses were deemed unsatisfactory, resulting in their expulsion.

The letter described the expelled candidates as dishonest and traitors.

According to the Barishal

city unit of BNP, the expelled candidates include Kamrul Ahsan Rupan, a former central committee member of Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal, and councilor candidates Habibur Rahman, Shah Aminul Islam, and Harun-or-Rashid.

In response to his expulsion, Kamrul Ahsan Rupan, independent mayoral candidate, questioned how he could be expelled from the BNP since he does not hold any party position.

In response to his expulsion, Rupan questioned how he could be expelled from the BNP since he does not hold any party position.

Meanwhile, Jatiya Party mayoral candidate Iqbal Hossain Tapos unveiled his electoral manifesto

at the Barisal Club Auditorium yesterday.

Tapos alleged that the local administration and the Election Commission have failed to maintain neutrality and have shown favouritism towards a particular party.

He further accused the ruling party of illegally occupying roads and canals by setting up offices, thus violating the code of conduct. Tapos unveiled a booklet containing 30 pledges to address civic problems, such as employment, domestic and foreign investment, road repairs, canal excavation, environmental initiatives in Barisal city, planned housing, and the establishment of women and children-friendly hospitals.

He also pledged to reduce the tax burden on people by focusing on increasing the city corporation's income.

41 BNP leaders show-caused for contesting SCC polls

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

BNP has served show cause notices on 41 candidates for participating in the Sylhet City Corporation elections in defiance of the party decision to boycott the city polls.

Of the candidates, one is contesting for mayoral post, 36 for general councillor posts and four for reserved women councillor posts.

BNP Joint Secretary General Ruhul Kabir Rizvi issued the show-cause notices on Saturday night, which was circulated by the Sylhet district BNP.

Independent mayoral candidate Salah Uddin Rimon, incumbent councillors Farhad

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

Redrew boundaries of 10 constituencies with voters on mind

Says EC Alamgir

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Election Commissioner Md Alamgir yesterday said they gave importance to what voters and locals wanted while redrawing the parliamentary constituencies.

The EC redrew boundaries of 10 parliamentary constituencies ahead of the 12th national election. The constituencies are Pirojpur-1, Pirojpur-2, Cumilla-1, Cumilla-2, Faridpur-2, Faridpur-4, Gazipur-2, Gazipur-5, Noakhali-1, and Noakhali-2.

While talking to reporters at his EC office, he said they did not consider whether any contestants will get any advantages from the delimitation process. "We followed the law. There is no chance to look beyond that," he added.

Alamgir said if anyone has evidence of financial transactions in the process of delimitation, they will have to go to the court or the Anti-Corruption Commission.

They can also come to the EC. The EC will look into the matter, he added.

After the EC published the draft of delimitation there were 126 applications for changes in the boundaries of the 38 seats. The commission then held hearings and it reviewed documents for a long time, he added.

He said according to the delimitation of constituencies law, boundaries of Jatiya Sangsad constituencies should be redrawn based on the distribution of population as

SEE PAGE 4 COL 3

Impose tax on

FROM PAGE 3
has polluted important rivers like Buriganga, Turag, Balu, Shitalakkhya and Karnaphuli.

Referring to the global “Environmental Performance Index-2022” on 180 countries, Iftekharuzzaman said Bangladesh stands fourth from bottom in preventing environment pollution. He called upon the government to immediately formulate

rules to reduce production and use of plastic products and proper plastic wastage management.

TIB said participation of people in different activities to fight plastic pollution has to be ensured.

Besides, transparency and accountability have to be ensured in implementing activities regarding conservation of environment including use of fund to prevent plastic pollution.

The tragic demise

FROM PAGE 5
Green activists said the municipality is carrying out drainage work over the rest of the canal at Biswas Betka, killing it in the process. Beradoma-Kagmara canal also faced the same fate.

SM Sirajul Haque Khan Alamgir, mayor of Tangail municipality, said they are building drains on the Biswas Betka and Beradoma-Kagmara canal to meet the demand of locals and ensure proper drainage.

However, Tangail’s River, Canal, Waterbodies Protection Committee member secretary Ratan Ahmed Siddique advised against such development works. He said most of the town’s drains are clogged with rubbish.

“Many canals have disappeared and others will soon perish unless strict measures are being taken against encroachers. Besides, many canal lands have been filled. Though the canals remain on official documents, they were grabbed a long time ago,” he said.

Bela divisional coordinator

Chandra Chanda said the canals must be recovered to restore the natural drainage system and prevent waterlogging.

BURAI BEEL NEARING ITS DEMISE

For decades, garbage has clogged Burai Beel, a natural waterbody in the eastern section of the town.

“Three decades ago, we could fish and bathe in Burai,” said Goutam, a resident of Biswas Betka.

Wishing anonymity, locals said influential people have filled the waterbody at different spots, claiming its ownership.

“After being informed about that, we foiled a bid to fill up the beel,” said Tangail Deputy Commissioner Jasim Uddin Haider.

“We have taken a vow to protect the natural waterbody and ordered officials to evict the illegal structures,” he added. “The administration has also ordered the office of the AC (land) to protect all waterbodies to save the environment.”

Contacted, Sadar upazila AC (Land) Atunu Barua claimed that they were working on it.

Pvt companies

FROM PAGE 3
have to be informed about the matter.

Sources at Rural Development and Cooperative Department said Milk Vita currently has the capacity to process 4 lakh litres of milk.

Milk Vita collects milk at an average rate of Tk 50 per kg but farmers sell the milk in the open market and fetch Tk 70-90 per litre in some cases.

The committee recommended to present Milk Vita more attractively to people through promotion and advertisement.


Awami League MP Nurul Islam Nahid presided over the meeting.

Redrew

FROM PAGE 3
given in the latest census report, keeping in mind intact administrative units and administrative convenience.

But this time there was less emphasis on the number of population, he said.

“If we put emphasis on number of population, number of seats at different districts might increase abnormally,” he said.

	
PRAYER TIMING JUNE 5	
Fazr	Zohr
Asr	Maghrib
Esha	
AZAN 4-05	12-45 5-00 6-45 8-15
JAMAAT 4-40	1-15 5-15 6-50 8-45
SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION	

Plastic waste plagues

FROM PAGE 5
approximately 23kg (22.77kg) of non-biodegradable waste accumulates on the beach daily.

Manik, a member of Blue-Gard, expressed concern over the deteriorating condition of the 18-km long Kuakata Beach, emphasising the need to quantify the amount of waste being dumped.

Sagarika Smriti, a research associate at Ecofish, a development organisation, emphasised the critical importance of preserving marine biodiversity and keeping oceans pollution-free. “The presence of various types of garbage, specially hazardous plastic materials, is increasingly harming the marine ecosystem, which greatly affects our survival,” she said.

Motaleb Sharif, general secretary of the Kuakata Hotel Motel Owners Association, acknowledged that the use of polythene and plastic by tourists contributes to the beach’s deterioration.

However, he suggested that by raising awareness among tourists and promoting alternatives to polythene, it is possible to reduce environmental pollution in the area.

Rumman Imtiaz Tushar, owner of Ilish Park, a resort, mentioned the recent distribution of 150 dustbins by the tourism board, which enabled tourists to dispose of their plastic waste responsibly.

While this initiative helped control plastic pollution to some extent, Tushar believes that encouraging both locals and tourists to use polythene alternatives will be crucial in maintaining a healthy environment on the beach.

In 2019, several environmental organisations, including the Bangladesh Environmental Lawyers

Association, filed a petition with the High Court seeking a ban on plastic products. The High Court subsequently prohibited the use of single-use plastic products in hotels, restaurants, and coastal areas, nationwide.

Additionally, the government was instructed to monitor the market, seize polythene manufacturing equipment, and shut down factories to ensure strict compliance with the ban.

However, despite the court’s directives, the production and marketing of these environmentally harmful products, including one-time use plastic polythene bags, persist unabated.

Lincoln Bayen, Bela’s Barisal divisional coordinator, emphasised that plastic and polythene waste entering rivers, canals, and seas pose a grave risk to the country’s environment and drainage systems.

The accumulation of non-biodegradable polythene bags in the soil has also led to a significant reduction in soil fertility, negatively impacting agricultural production.

Bayen stressed the urgent need for the full implementation of the court’s ban on one-time use polythene production and increased public awareness.

Contacted, Kazi Saifuddin, assistant director of the Patuakhali Department of Environment, acknowledged the ongoing efforts to discourage the use of plastic and polythene. He revealed that local licenses for polythene and plastic production have not been granted, and mobile courts have been conducting punitive measures against violators in various markets, hotels, and restaurants.

“However, due to a shortage of manpower, comprehensive actions against polythene usage have been challenging to carry out,” he said.

41 BNP leaders

FROM PAGE 3
Shamim, Syed Tawfiqul Hadi, Nazrul Islam Munim and ABM Zillur Rahman; and incumbent reserved seat councillor and president of Sylhet city unit of Mahila Dal Roksana Begum Shahnaz are among the candidates.

Sylhet District Mohila Dal President Shaleha Kobir Shepi and Sylhet District Chhatra Dal President Altaf Hussain Sumon are also on the list.

The show-cause notices

read that BNP is in a movement demanding election under a caretaker government. So, the party decided not to participate in any election under this government. But these candidates violated the party decision, the notice stated.

Emdadul Hossain Chowdhury, general secretary of the Sylhet city unit of BNP, said, “All of them are given 24 hours to respond to the notices. If they fail, stern action will be taken against them.”

Councillor candidate

FROM PAGE 3
the supporters of Babu and Touhidul Haq Suman locked into an altercation over putting up posters in the city’s Shiroil Colony area on Saturday evening.

At one point, the two groups attacked each other, leaving Babu and others injured, he added.

“Additional police were deployed immediately after the incident and preparations are underway to take legal action in this regard,” he said.

Councillor candidate Babu said, “When I heard about a fight breaking out

between the two groups, I went there to stop them. As I approached, they swooped on us with sharp weapons.”

Denying the allegation, Sumon, former joint general secretary of Rajshahi city unit of Jubo League, claimed that it was Babu’s aides who attacked his supporters.

He also claimed that the supporters of Babu vandalised his campaign office and Babu’s son threatened him.

“As the police did not register my complaint, I will go to the Election Commission,” he added.

Operations on to nab terrorists

FROM PAGE 3
these remarks while speaking with journalists at a briefing after a meeting with higher army officials at Bandarban cantonment.

“We don’t want conflict. Bangladesh Army will welcome if the terrorists hiding in the hills want to return to normal life,” he said.

Shafiuddin said the army started an operation in Bandarban as the terrorist activities increased at an alarming rate in the hilly areas. “We have lost some

of our soldiers, but that did not stop our ongoing operations.”

“We have continued our operations to nab the terrorists. I have come here today to see the difficulties faced by junior commanders on duty in Bandarban while conducting the operation,” he said.

He said they are also assessing what support is needed to make the operation a success.

Mentioning that the operation is almost in its final stage, the army chief

said the travel ban on tourists was imposed due to the unstable situation. The ban will be lifted once the situation calms down completely, he added.

Chief of General Staff of Army Lt Gen Ataul Hakim Sarwar Hasan, Commanding Officer of 24 Infantry Division Major General Mizanur Rahman Shamim and Director General of Border Guard Bangladesh Major General AKM Nazmul Hasan were present, among others, on the occasion.

He laid foundation for six-point

FROM PAGE 3
“Prof Islam never opposed anyone... He devoted himself to serving society, leaving his personal life behind,” he said. “Prof Islam’s concerns extended to economics, freedom of speech and democracy,” he added.

Ahmad Ahsan, director of Policy Research Institute (PRI), mentioned that after completing his studies at Harvard in 1955, Prof Islam had the opportunity to join the International Monetary Fund (IMF). However, he returned to Bangladesh and became a teacher at DU.

Renowned jurist and former foreign minister Kamal Hossain shared his first meeting with Prof Islam in 1954 at the Pakistan Student Convention in Chicago.

Hossain highlighted the significant discrimination faced by students during that time.

“Only five students from East Pakistan were sent to universities in the US, while the majority were selected from West Pakistan,” Hossain said.

He commended Prof Islam for consistently

raising his voice against such discriminatory practices.

Hossain also acknowledged that important decisions were made during meetings held at Prof Islam’s residence in Dhanmondi in March 1971, a significant period leading up to Bangladesh’s independence movement.

Roumeen Islam, daughter of Prof Islam and senior economic advisor to the managing director of the International Finance Corporation, World Bank, highlighted her father’s commitment to data gathering to support evidence-based policy-making.

She also mentioned that Prof Islam had expressed thoughts on the role of the younger generation and artificial intelligence.

Mashiur Rahman, economic affairs adviser to the prime minister, said Islam tried to translate the six points demand into action and policy making for the movement of independence.

Among others, Rashed Khan Menon, president of Workers Party and a member of parliament;

Planning Minister MA Mannan; Mohammed Farashuddin, chief advisor to East West University and former governor of Bangladesh Bank; Quazi Shahabuddin, former director general of BIDS, and Sajjad Zohir, executive director of Economic Research Group (ERG), shared their perspectives and reflections on the contributions of Prof Nurul Islam.

A threat to

FROM PAGE 5
Bengal. But now, only 18 to 20 species are visible...”

K a m r u z z a m a n Mojmuder, chairman of Department of Environmental Science at Stamford University, said plastic accounts 25 to 30 percent of total waste in Dhaka. Burning plastic also contributes to air pollution, he added.

Moniruzzaman, vice-chancellor of Stamford University, chaired the event while Khodeja Nasrin Akther Hossen MP and Mohammad Azaz, chairman of River and Delta Research Centres, spoke, among others.



REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP)

The International Labour Organization (ILO) invites proposal from interested firm/organization for Consultancy for translation and contextualization of Gender and Entrepreneurship Together (GET Ahead) Training Manual. The bidding documents can be downloaded from the ILO website at:
https://www.ilo.org/dhaka/Aboutus/WCMS_884114/lang-en/index.htm
The deadline for submission of proposal is **Sunday, June 25, 2023, by 04:30 PM (BST time).**




VACANCY NOTICE

World Health Organization (WHO) invites applications from the interested and eligible candidates for the following position under following contractual modality:

- Executive Assistant (Programme) / Fixed term
- National Professional Officer - EHA / Fixed Term

For further details on submission of applications including detailed post description please visit our websites:
<https://www.who.int/bangladesh/about-us/employment>
<https://careers.who.int/careersection/ex/jobsearch.ftl>
Qualified **female candidates** are highly encouraged to apply.
 **WHO has a smoke-free environment and does not recruit smokers or other tobacco users.**



Jamuna Oil Company Limited

(A Subsidiary of Bangladesh Petroleum Corporation)
Jamuna Bhaban, Agrabad C/A, Chattogram


e-Tender Notice No. 33/2022-23

Memo No. 28.24.0000.018.08.004.23 Date: 04.06.2023

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

Tender ID	Name of works	Tender document last selling date & time	Tender closing date & time	Tender opening date & time
749734	Construction of 20-Storeyed Jamuna Office Building (Jamuna Bhaban) at Kawran Bazar, Dhaka (2nd Phase & 2nd Revised).	12.07.2023 16:00 hrs	13.07.2023 12:00 hrs	13.07.2023 12:00 hrs

This is an online tender, where only e-Tenders will be accepted in the National e-GP System Portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted.


S.M. Oluzzaman
Project Director

GD-986

LAND PURCHASE

Wants to buy minimum 8 katha upto 20 katha (more/less) at any prime location of **Gulshan/ Banani/Baridhara** by EXPATRIATE BANGLADESHI.No commission or service charge is required from the seller. Only genuine sellers are request to contact. **01711-521084**

VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

e-Zone

Servicing Change Managers

E-Zone HRM Limited is a management consulting group providing one-stop HR solutions. We have a formal agreement with World Health Organization to provide outsourcing services under a third-party contract for the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare Coordination Centre (MOHFW CC), Cox's Bazar, and Dhaka.

We are now seeking applications from Bangladeshi Nationals for the following vacancies. For a detailed Job Description, please visit the following website link to apply for the post.

Duty Station: Dhaka

Title: ICT and Data Management Officer
Contract Duration: Upto 31 December, 2023 (Possibility of extension).
Number of Vacancies: 1 (One), Contract Type: Special Agreement with E-Zone.
Last Date of Application: **11th June, 2023**
<https://hotjobs.bdjobs.com/jobs/ezone/un172.html>

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

Office of the Executive Engineer
PWD Division, Noakhali
Phone: 0321-61606, Fax: 0321-61606
Email: ee_noakh@pwd.gov.bd

Memo No. _____ Dated: _____

e-Tender Notice

An e-Tender has been invited for the following work through e-GP Portal and that will be visible from 04.06.2023. Only the Person/Organization registered by e-GP Portal can visit (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) for clear observation.


Tender ID No.	Package No.	Name of works	Last selling date & time	Closing/opening date & time
773828	Noakh/PWD/Police/Rev/OTM	Construction of Multipurpose Hall at Noakhali District Police Lines in/c Civil, Sanitary and Electrification Works	25.06.2023 14:00	26.06.2023 11:00

This is an online tender where only e-Tenders will be accepted in the National e-GP Portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted.

To submit e-Tender, registration in the National e-GP System Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) is required. Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System Portal and from e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd).


Saad Mohammad
Executive Engineer
Noakhali PWD Division

GD-989



মাধ্যমিক ও উচ্চ মাধ্যমিক শিক্ষা বোর্ড, চট্টগ্রাম

সিডিএ এডিনিউ, মুরাদপুর, পাঁচলাইশ, চট্টগ্রাম
E-mail: info@bise-ctg.gov.bd, Website: www.bise-ctg.gov.bd

তারিখ: ০৪/০৬/২৩

দরপত্র/পুনঃ দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি (e-Tender Notice)

মাধ্যমিক ও উচ্চ মাধ্যমিক শিক্ষা বোর্ড, চট্টগ্রাম এর নিম্নবর্ণিত কার্যসমূহ করার মধ্যে ই লাবলিক প্রকিউরমেন্ট রেক্রুটমেন্ট-২০২৩ মোতাবেক দপ, অফিস, যোগাযোগসম্পন্ন একতর বাবসারী প্রতিষ্ঠান/টিকাদার/উৎপাদনকারী/সরবরাহকারীর নিকট হতে অনলাইন-এ প্রতিযোগিতামূলক উন্মুক্ত A, B, C পুনঃ দরপত্র (e-Tender) এবং D দরপত্র (e-Tender) আহ্বান করা যাচ্ছে।

ক্রমিক নং	দরপত্র/পুনঃ দরপত্রের নাম	শিফা
১	মহানগর/বিজ্ঞপ্তি	শিফা মহানগর/বিজ্ঞপ্তি/১ বাংলাদেশ সরকার।
২	এজেন্সীর নাম ও অবস্থান	মাধ্যমিক ও উচ্চ মাধ্যমিক শিক্ষাবোর্ড, চট্টগ্রাম।
৩	দরপত্র আহ্বানকারী কর্মকর্তার নাম, পদবী ও ঠিকানা	প্রফেসর মোহাম্মদ করিম, সচিব, মাধ্যমিক ও উচ্চ মাধ্যমিক শিক্ষা বোর্ড, চট্টগ্রাম।
৪	আহ্বানকৃত পুনঃ দরপত্রের নাম	একপ- A OBJECTIVE TYPE (MCQ) OMR FORM 2023 একপ- B রেজিস্ট্রেশন ফর্ম (ইউইবি), ১৫" x ১১", ১০০ ভিএসএস, ৪ কলার অফসেট কাগজে প্রিন্ট করা হবে। একপ- C প্রিন্টপেশন সীট (রেজিস্ট্রেশন) ১৫" x ১১", ১০০ ভিএসএস, ৪ কলার অফসেট কাগজে প্রিন্ট করা হবে।
৫	আহ্বানকৃত দরপত্রের নাম	একপ- D উন্নয়নগত (বহুমুখী) কাজের স্টেশন পরিদর্শন, মূল্য ও সরঞ্জাম।
৬	স্টেশন পরিদর্শন	উন্মুক্ত দরপত্র।
৭	অনলাইনে দরপত্র সিডিউল জাউনালোজ ও সার্বমিট হোয়ালাসেজ ও সার্বমিট হোয়ালাসেজ	দরপত্র সিডিউল জাউনালোজ ও সার্বমিট হোয়ালাসেজ ০৬/০৬/২০২৩ হতে ২০/০৬/২০২৩ রাত ১২:০০টা পর্যন্ত
৮	অনলাইনে প্রাপ্ত দরপত্র যোগাযোগ স্থান	মাধ্যমিক ও উচ্চ মাধ্যমিক শিক্ষাবোর্ড, চট্টগ্রাম।
৯	দরপত্র দলিলের মূল্য	সচিব, মাধ্যমিক ও উচ্চ মাধ্যমিক শিক্ষাবোর্ড, চট্টগ্রাম এর অনুমূল একপ- A' ৫,০০০/-, একপ- B' - ৪,০০০/-, একপ- C' ৩,০০০/-, একপ- D ২,০০০/- টাকা বোর্ডের "উপায় যোগ্য একক" ব্যক্তি নম্বর- ০১৯৯০০০০০০০০ অথবা অনলাইন পেমেন্ট গেটওয়ে বিকাশ/রকেট/ভিসা/মাস্টার কার্ড এর মাধ্যমে পরিশোধ করে অনলাইনে দরপত্র প্রাপ্ত করা হবে।
১০	দরপত্রপ্রাপ্তদের সাধারণ যোগাযোগ	হালনাগাদ ট্রেন্ড লাইসেন্স (০৩ জুন ২০২৩), হালনাগাদ ব্যাংক সলভারের সমন, আয়কর পরিশোধের হালনাগাদ প্রমাণ, ভাট নিবন্ধীকরণ সমন, অভিজ্ঞতার সমন (রোন সরকারী/আবা-সরকারী/বায়োজেনারেল প্রতিষ্ঠানে কাজ করেছে এর একম কার্যসম্পন্ন কপি) মূল্যকপি স্থানীয় করে অনলাইনে দাখিল করতে হবে।
১১	বায়নার অর্থ (আইনগত)	দরপত্রের সাথে A-একপ ৫,০০,০০০/-, B-একপ ২,৫০,০০০/-, C-একপ ১,৫০,০০০/-, D-একপ ২,০০,০০০/- টাকা সচিব, মাধ্যমিক ও উচ্চ মাধ্যমিক শিক্ষা বোর্ড, চট্টগ্রাম এর অনুমূল পে-অর্ডার/ব্যাংক ড্রাফট সচিব, মাধ্যমিক ও উচ্চ মাধ্যমিক শিক্ষা বোর্ড, চট্টগ্রাম এর অনুমূল ইউনাইটেড কমার্শিয়াল ব্যাংক লিমিটেড (UCBL) ব্যাংককে যে কোন শাখা বোর্ডের বিসাব নং- 0761101000000038-এ জমা দিয়ে পে-অর্ডার/ব্যাংক ড্রাফট এর ফটোকপি ও জমাচারের প্রতিলি জমা করে সিডিউলের সাথে জমা দিতে হবে।
১২	দরপত্র জাউনালোজ ও সার্বমিট সচিব/বিজ্ঞপ্তি/১ বাংলাদেশ সরকার	09611-991188/ 01819-543907 01981-562358/ 01837-685936
১৩	সিডিউল জাউনালোজ ও সার্বমিট	দরপত্র সিডিউল অনলাইনে জাউনালোজ ও সার্বমিট ইন্টার্নাল বিজ্ঞপ্তি তথ্যের জন্য বোর্ডের www.etender.bise-ctg.gov.bd থেকে জানা যাবে। দরপত্র সিডিউল বর্ণিত শর্তাদি বাধ্যবাধকতা পালন করতে হবে। বোর্ড কর্তৃপক্ষ কোন কারণ দর্শানো ব্যতীতই যে কোন দরপত্র গ্রহণ ও বর্জনের ক্ষমতা সংরক্ষণ করেন।

প্রফেসর মোহাম্মদ করিম
সচিব
মাধ্যমিক ও উচ্চ মাধ্যমিক শিক্ষা বোর্ড, চট্টগ্রাম
ফোন: ০২-৩০৩০০০৭৬৩
Email: secretary@bise-ctg.gov.bd

জিডি-৯৮৭



WORLD ENVIRONMENT DAY



Louhajang River in Tangail town is on its deathbed due to dumping of waste and encroachment, while at least 27 canals have fallen victim to urban sprawl. The photos were taken recently.

PHOTO: STAR

The tragic demise of Tangail's waterbodies

MIRZA SHAKIL

Tangail, once known for its picturesque waterbodies, now finds itself in the clutches of an alarming environmental crisis. Over the past three decades, this district has been transformed into an unforgiving concrete jungle at the cost of its rivers and open spaces.

Environmentalists have blamed the insatiable greed of the people, the indifference exhibited by a section of public representatives, and the sheer negligence demonstrated by the responsible authorities.

Tangail's natural drainage system, a lifeline that has sustained the municipality for 134 years, now lies in ruins, a casualty of rampant and reckless development. The consequences are dire, with the town's residents now grappling with the agonising aftermath of chronic waterlogging and its accompanying tribulations.

As we observe World Environmental Day today, it is a stark reminder that the urgent need for action cannot be ignored any longer.

LOUHAJANG RIVER FILLED UP

According to locals and environmentalists, the 76 kilometre-long river has already been filled up in the municipal area with waste.

Originating from the Dhaleswari at Baisnabbari in Sadar upazila, Louhajang flows through the district town and falls on the Banshi at Jamurki in Mirzapur upazila.

Till the '80s, launches and goods-carrying boats plied the river, said locals.

During a recent visit, this correspondent witnessed the waterless river bed filled with bushes.

Additionally, the continuous dumping of industrial

waste from mills and factories at Taratia, Bhatkura, and Khudirampur in Sadar upazila pollutes the river water so badly that locals can't utilise it.

Thus, the river's aquatic life has disappeared while odour from its stagnant and filthy water made living near the river a living nightmare.

Writer and environmentalist Masum Ferdous said illegal encroachment of the riverbank narrowed the river, especially in the municipal area. The river immediately needs dredging, he added.

27 CANALS LOST

Citing cadastral survey, Bangladesh Environmental Lawyers Association (BELA) officials said 27 canals flowed across 18 Tangail wards even three decades ago. As the canals were lost to urban sprawl, the natural drainage system has been destroyed, which resulted in perennial waterlogging.

With the Louhajang losing its navigability, many canals turned waterless, and have become vulnerable to encroachment and pollution.

The municipality has built roads, drainage, and markets, killing these canals. Shaym Babur Khal, also known as

Victoria Canal, which runs through the town is one of them.

The 5km canal used to flow into Burai Beel from Louhajang in Paradisepara.

In the 1990s, the municipality dug a drain on the 30-foot-wide canal from Paradisepara to Godown Bridge, allowing interest groups to claim the site permanently.

After 2001, the municipality built multiple concrete markets on the drain, ignoring objections from locals and environmentalists.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1



Join hands to save rivers

Speakers tell Rajshahi rally

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

Protesting some of the government's development plans that could affect the country's rivers, green activists brought out a rally in Rajshahi city's Shaheb Bazar area yesterday.

The rally was organised by Poribartan Rajshahi, Bangladesh Working group on External Debt, Coastal Livelihood and Environmental Action Network, and Asian People's Movement on Debt and Development.

The speakers said the plans for shrinking the width of some rivers and developing a city in the Padma in Rajshahi might be suicidal. They said these plans were formulated without the participation of people and would leave a negative impact on the environment and biodiversity of the river areas.

They called for a ban on plastic and urged the government to move to renewable energy. Afzal Hossain, director of RULEAO, and Rashed Ripon, executive director of Poribartan, also spoke.

Plastic waste plagues Kuakata

Despite ban, ineffective efforts fail to curb pollution

SOHRAB HOSSAIN, Patuakhali

Patuakhali's scenic coastal town of Kuakata is grappling with the persistent issue of non-biodegradable plastic waste, including one-time use plastic products and polythene, which are causing significant damage to the environment and neighbouring rivers.

The adverse effects of these pollutants are alarming, and despite efforts to tackle the problem, effective implementation of the ban remains a challenge.

Kuakata Beach, a popular destination for both locals and foreign tourists, has become a dumping ground for plastic and polythene waste. A recent survey conducted by Blue-Gard, a voluntary youth organisation, in a survey in 2022 found that approximately 23kg (22.77kg) of non-biodegradable waste accumulates on the beach daily.

Fisherman Abdul Alim, who relies on the Andharmanik river for his livelihood, said that he has noticed a considerable decline in the river's fish population, especially in the last couple of years, due to the presence of plastic waste strewn along the riverbanks.

The pollution of river water has worsened, primarily due to improper disposal of human waste in close proximity to the river, he added.

Kuakata Beach, a popular destination for both locals and foreign tourists, has become a dumping ground for plastic and polythene waste. A recent survey conducted by Blue-Gard, a voluntary youth organisation, in a survey in 2022 found that

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

A threat to marine life

Say speakers on plastic pollution

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Plastic pollution is not sparing anything from its wrath, from entering into human food chain to clogging rivers and damaging marine ecosystem, said speakers at a programme yesterday.


The event "Air Pollution from Plastic Burning: Environmental and Legal Aspect" was organised by the Department of Environmental Science of Stamford University on the campus yesterday.

Begum Habibun Nahar, deputy minister for the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, said, "We have to refuse or reuse plastic if we can't recycle it at individual level..."

Manjurul Hannan Khan, former additional secretary, urged the government to apply the law strictly to stop the menace.

Mohammad Anuwarul Haque, general secretary of Bangladesh Nature Conservation Alliance, said, "In a survey, Bangladesh Fisheries Development Corporation had found 475 species of fish in the Bay of

SEE PAGE 4 COL 8




বাংলাদেশ কৃষি গবেষণা ইনস্টিটিউট

Bangladesh Agricultural Research Institute

সংগ্রহ ও ভান্ডার শাখা

গাজীপুর।



কৃষিই সমৃদ্ধি

Office Ph : 49270140, 5390

E-mail : dd.procure@bari.gov.bd

younusali.bari@gmail.com

web site : www.bari.gov.bd

Memo no: 12.21.0000.024.03.653.22.7656

Date : 29 May 2023

e-GP: Re-Tender Notice No.29(2022-2023)

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

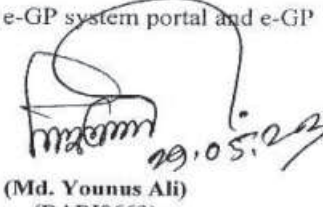
Sl No	Package no.	Tender ID & Ref No	Description of goods	Tender Documents Last selling (Date & Time)	Tender Closing date & Time	Tender Opening date & Time
1.	PN: 15	839794 & IRN : 653	Office Equipment 02 items	07.06.2023 16:00	08.06.2023 12:15	08.06.2023 12:15

The interested persons/firm may visit the website www.eprocure.gov.bd to get the details of the tender.

This is an online tender, where only e-Tender will be accepted in the national e-GP portal and no offline/hard copy will be accepted. To submit e-Tender, Registration in the National e-GP system portal is required.


Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP system portal and e-GP Help Desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd).

Budget Type : Revenue



(Md. Younus Ali)
(BARI0663)
Deputy Director (In-Charge)
On behalf of Director General

GD-985




Dhaka Power Distribution Co. Ltd.

ঢাকা পাওয়ার ডিস্ট্রিবিউশন কোম্পানি লিমিটেড (ডিপিডিসি)

(An Enterprise of the Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh)

বিদ্যুৎ ভবন (৩য় তলা), ১ আব্দুল গণি রোড, ঢাকা-১০০০।

Web site : www.dpdco.gov.bd



Memo No: 87.402.105.00.00.182.2021.495

Date: 04.06.2023


"2nd TIME EXTENSION NOTICE OF INTERNATIONAL TENDER"

The Following date of the below mentioned tender is hereby extended as shown below:

Sl. No. in the IFB	Item	Description						
4.	Invitation for Bids for (Package-2)	Renovation, Reinforcement and Augmentation (RRA) of 3 nos. 33/11kV Substations and AIS breaker replacement with GIS breakers at different substations under DPDC.						
5.	Invitation for Bids (IFB) No	87.139.103.00.00.2023.641; Date: 15.03.2023						
10.	Deadline for submission of Bid, Time and Place	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse; text-align: center;"> <thead> <tr> <th>Original</th> <th>1st Time Extended</th> <th>2nd Time Extension</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Date: June 06, 2023, Time: 12:00 PM (Bangladesh Standard Time)</td> <td>Date: June 06, 2023, Time: 12:00 PM (Bangladesh Standard Time)</td> <td>Date: June 20, 2023, Time: 12:00 PM (Bangladesh Standard Time)</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Address: Office of the Project Director, Construction and Augmentation of Substation, Installation of Capacitor Bank and Introduction of Smart Grid in Power System under DPDC Area (CSCSG Project), DPDC, House # 7(Ground Floor), Road # 17, Block-C, Banani, Dhaka-1213, Bangladesh.</p> <p>Email: cscsg@dpdc.org.bd; Mobile: +8801730335207; +8801730335121</p>	Original	1 st Time Extended	2 nd Time Extension	Date: June 06, 2023, Time: 12:00 PM (Bangladesh Standard Time)	Date: June 06, 2023, Time: 12:00 PM (Bangladesh Standard Time)	Date: June 20, 2023, Time: 12:00 PM (Bangladesh Standard Time)
Original	1 st Time Extended	2 nd Time Extension						
Date: June 06, 2023, Time: 12:00 PM (Bangladesh Standard Time)	Date: June 06, 2023, Time: 12:00 PM (Bangladesh Standard Time)	Date: June 20, 2023, Time: 12:00 PM (Bangladesh Standard Time)						
11.	Bid Opening Date, Time and Place	<p>Bids will be opened in the presence of Bidders' representatives (limited two members from each Bidder who submitted the bids and the bid security acceptable to representative of DPDC) at the following schedule:</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse; text-align: center;"> <thead> <tr> <th>Original</th> <th>1st Time Extended</th> <th>2nd Time Extension</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Date: May 16, 2023, Time: 1:30 PM (Bangladesh Standard Time)</td> <td>Date: June 06, 2023, Time: 01:30 PM (Bangladesh Standard Time)</td> <td>Date: June 20, 2023, Time: 01:30 PM (Bangladesh Standard Time)</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Address: Office of the Project Director, Construction and Augmentation of Substation, Installation of Capacitor Bank and Introduction of Smart Grid in Power System under DPDC Area (CSCSG Project), DPDC, House # 7(Ground Floor), Road # 17, Block-C, Banani, Dhaka-1213, Bangladesh.</p> <p>Email: cscsg@dpdc.org.bd; Mobile: +8801730335207; +8801730335121</p>	Original	1 st Time Extended	2 nd Time Extension	Date: May 16, 2023, Time: 1:30 PM (Bangladesh Standard Time)	Date: June 06, 2023, Time: 01:30 PM (Bangladesh Standard Time)	Date: June 20, 2023, Time: 01:30 PM (Bangladesh Standard Time)
Original	1 st Time Extended	2 nd Time Extension						
Date: May 16, 2023, Time: 1:30 PM (Bangladesh Standard Time)	Date: June 06, 2023, Time: 01:30 PM (Bangladesh Standard Time)	Date: June 20, 2023, Time: 01:30 PM (Bangladesh Standard Time)						

All other terms and conditions of the tender will remain unchanged.

(Md. Asaduzzaman)
Deputy Secretary
&
Company Secretary
Dhaka Power Distribution Company Ltd.



Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

Principal's Office

Bandarban Government College

Bandarban Hill District.

Telephone No:02333302021

Mobile No:01704447375

E-mail: bandarbancollege@gmail.com

Web site: bandarbangovtcollege.edu.bd

Memo No. BGC/CEDP/2022-23/19

Date: 04/06/2023

e-Tender Notice: 04/2022-2023

e-Tender is invite in the National e-Gp System portal (<https://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) for the procurement of following package;

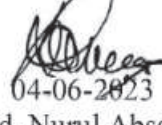
Sl. No.	Tender ID. No.	Name of Package	Last Date and Time of Tender Security Submission	Tender Closing Date & Time
01	839870	G-08: Campus Networking For Bandarban Government College	22- June-2023 01:00 PM	22- June-2023 02:00 PM

This is an on line tender, where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-Gp portal and no offline/hard copy will be accepted.

To submit e-Tender, registration in the National e-Gp portal (<https://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) is required.

The fees for downloading the e-Tender documents from the National e-Gp system portal have to be deposited online through any registered Banks Branches up to 22-June-2023, 1:00 PM

Further information and guideline are available in the National e-Gp System portal and from e-Gp Help Desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd).



(Professor Md. Nurul Absar Chowdhury)
Principal
Bandarban Govt. College,
Bandarban
Mobile: 01704447375
e-Mail: bandarbancollege@gmail.com

GD-988

Crossing borders,
WINNING HEARTS

Jaya Ahsan’s success knows no bounds

SHAH ALAM SHAZU

Equally popular in both Bengals, Jaya Ahsan, has been making a mark in the Tollywood industry for the past 10 years. Kolkata has become her second home as she garnered awards, respect, and the love of the Kolkata people through her artistic endeavours.

On Friday, her latest film, *Ardhangini* directed by Kaushik Ganguly, released in Kolkata. She is currently there, promoting her film.

In a candid conversation with The Daily Star, Jaya Ahsan shared her thoughts on the film and her experiences in the Tollywood industry.

How did you feel watching the first show of “Ardhangini”?

It is always difficult to talk about one’s own films. Nonetheless, I am very pleased with *Ardhangini*. The feedback and appreciation from everyone have been overwhelming. Hearing such positive responses feels great as an artiste. That’s what one strives for, and I’m grateful for it.

What has your time been like, in Kolkata?

I have been incredibly busy here. Friday was the premiere of *Ardhangini*, and I have been involved in promoting the movie for the past few days. On Saturday, I visited the theatres and observed the audience’s reaction closely. Witnessing their lovely expressions for a new movie is something I always look forward to

Can you tell us more about “Ardhangini”?

It is a deeply sensitive and emotional movie. It features a strong storyline that I believe will resonate with audiences. Kaushik Ganguly, the director, has poured his heart into making this film. I am genuinely optimistic about its response.

After a decade of acting in Tollywood movies and receiving numerous accolades, where are you at?

It feels wonderful, and undoubtedly brings happiness. Over the past ten years, I may not have appeared in numerous films, but I have had the privilege of working on a few exceptional movies that have earned the love and respect of the audience. I extend my gratitude and love to all the directors, producers, audiences, and cinema halls that have contributed to my journey.

As a Bangladeshi artiste, you hold a unique position in the Tollywood film industry. Have you ever felt that artistes should be free from boundaries?

Artistes should never be confined by boundaries. Their art should transcend borders. Artistes can aspire to work anywhere, crossing geographical limits. While I hold a Bangladeshi passport and my heart belongs to Bangladesh, when I am performing, I am simply an artiste. Of course, I love my country, and it holds a special place in my heart.

Could you share your experience of acting with

Churni Ganguly?

She is a remarkable artiste, and I am grateful to be given the opportunity to collaborate with such talented individuals throughout my career.

Is there anything you regret or find challenging in your work?

The one regret that always lingers is the limited accessibility of my movies for the audience in Bangladesh. Especially during the release of new movies, this feeling intensifies. It is an ongoing challenge that I hope will be addressed soon.



PHOTOS: TAKEN FROM FACEBOOK



Shishir-Rafa
collaborate again
after 3 years

Shishir Ahmed has released the music video of *Achi Kinba Nei* featuring Raef Al Hasan Rafa on vocals, three years after their initial collaboration in the song *Nijeke Harabar Bhoy*.

This song was created at a moment when the musicians behind it, were going through a similar emotional phase that the song narrates.

Nijeke Harabar Bhoy has been mixed by Shishir Ahmed and mastered by him and Ekram Wasi. Earlier in March this year, Shishir Ahmed departed from Aurthohin after 20-years with the band.



Jubin, King or
Darshan: who is
coming to Dhaka?

After Anuv Jain’s concert, music lovers are waiting in anticipation to dance to peppy tracks and popular Bollywood Hindi songs.

Yesterday, Pencil Box and Fiemus International Communication Limited announced a lineup with popular Bollywood singers and asked fans to guess who is coming next to Dhaka.

They shared a poster of Jubin Nautiyal, King and Darshan Raval and asked fans to comment with a crown, heart and starry eyed emoji to vote for King, Jubin and Darshan, respectively.

NEWS

Pry schools

FROM PAGE 1

According to the morning bulletin of the Bangladesh Meteorological Department yesterday, a severe heatwave is sweeping over the districts of Rajshahi, Naogaon, Nilphamari and Dinajpur.

Meanwhile, a mild to moderate heatwave is sweeping over Dhaka, Mymensingh, Khulna and Barishal divisions and the rest parts of Rangpur and Rajshahi divisions and the districts of Moulvibazar, Chandpur and Noakhali.

It may continue for next five to six days, it read.

The country’s highest temperature was recorded in Rajshahi at 41 degrees Celsius while in Dhaka it was

37.1 degrees Celsius.

With frequent load shedding, the suffering of people has immensely increased.

According to the BMD, when the daily maximum temperature goes past 36 degrees Celsius over a large area it is called a heatwave. Heatwave is classified into three categories based on temperature – mild, moderate, and severe.

A mild heatwave is when the temperature is between 36 and 37.9 degrees Celsius, moderate between 38 degrees and 39.9 degrees Celsius, and a severe heatwave happens when the temperature is 40 degrees Celsius and above.

People in pain

FROM PAGE 1

taken measures to import hydropower.

It is not only Bangladesh, but developed countries are also struggling to deal with the fallout from the Ukraine-Russia war, sanctions, inflation, and fuel crisis.

“There is a shortage of fuel in various countries including those in Europe and America. There is load shedding ... The price of everything, including food, has gone up. Many people are losing their jobs even in developed countries,” she said.

The PM said food shortages, inflation, operating and transportation costs, and electricity shortages have made life unbearable for people across the world.

She said that she apprehends that the present volatile situation in the

world might deteriorate.

“No one can say how long this abnormal situation in the world will continue,” she said.

“We also need to increase food production. No one can say how long this unusual situation in the world will continue ... We are doing everything to ensure food security.”

“We are trying our best to address the situation,” she added.

Remembering Afsarul Amin, Hasina said he played a role in every struggle. He was a devoted soul. His honesty and devotion towards the party is incomparable.

“He also achieved great success as a minister.”

After discussion by treasury and opposition bench MPs, parliament later unanimously adopted the condolence motion.

PM to decide

FROM PAGE 12

of corruption cases.

Replying to a question, he said the government will bring necessary amendments to the Digital Security Act in September in order to avoid its misuse.

In reply to another query about the amendment of the Representation of the People Order, Anisul said cancelling the whole election of a constituency for irregularities in one or few polling centres was unconstitutional.

Earlier in the day, the law minister

told the function that the nature and purview of corruption are extending in line with the change of time and development of technology.

The government has announced a zero-tolerance principle against corruption and has been implementing the policy, he said.

Bangladesh has become a role model of development in the world by removing the bad reputation of “champion in corruption” because of Hasina’s farsighted and courageous steps.

Fakhrul talks

FROM PAGE 12

overall electoral system of Bangladesh and the current human rights situation, he said.

The BNP leader said like other countries, Japan might have concerns about Bangladesh’s next election, human rights situation, rule of law, press freedom, and people’s security.

“So, they want to understand what is happening in Bangladesh, what is going to happen in the future, and where Bangladesh is headed,” he said.

Khasru said the Japanese envoy talked about his country’s investment in Bangladesh – both in the private and public sectors.

He said they informed Iwama Kiminori about the country’s overall situation.

The BNP leader said many countries are concerned about the investment atmosphere and the future of Bangladesh.

“The situation we are going through now has created apprehension among countries. So, they are trying to understand how Bangladesh will be in the future and how the election will be.”

Asked whether Japan will play any role in ensuring a peaceful and fair election in Bangladesh, the BNP leader said the democratic countries have already expressed their goodwill regarding the elections in Bangladesh. “Japan is no different. Everyone wants a free, fair, and acceptable election in Bangladesh.”

Azmat appointed

FROM PAGE 12

mega plans for the city development. It also approves structural designs to make the fast-growing city a planned, liveable and environment-friendly urban area.

Azmat is now working to reorganise Gazipur district and city units of the AL after he lost the mayoral polls.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina on May 28 asked Azmat about the reasons why he lost. She also wanted to know the number of votes he got in the neighbourhoods of certain party leaders and MPs. Azmat then presented the prime minister with voting data, according to sources.

Hasina told Azmat to visit each ward of the city and talk to local leaders to reorganise the party, the sources added.

Turning plastic perils into a prize

FROM PAGE 1

RIC facilitated this innovation with the support from Palli Karma-Sahayak Foundation’s Sustainable Enterprise Project.

“Then I created a mould and started making plastic tiles. I did not face any problem collecting raw materials as I have been preparing moulds for plastic products since 2012,” he said.

The plastic tiles would be lighter and cost much less than earthen or ceramic ones, he added.

He has so far made over 1,000 tiles on an experimental basis, and those would be on display at a fair starting today at the Bangabandhu International Conference Center on the occasion of World Environment Day.

According to a World Bank report, Bangladesh saw a sharp increase in both plastic use and pollution. The country’s annual per capita plastic consumption in urban areas rose to 9kg in 2020 from 3.0 kg in 2005 – a threefold increase in just 15 years.

It said that of the 9,77,000 tonnes of plastic consumed in Bangladesh in 2020, only 31 percent were recycled.

The most mismanaged plastic waste were single-use like shopping bags, packing material, and wrappers.

The National Action Plan for Sustainable Plastic Management sets a target of recycling 50 percent of plastics by 2025, phasing out 90 percent of single-use plastic by 2026, and reducing plastic waste generation by 30 percent by 2030.

After Nazir’s plastic tiles were made, some were tested at the Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology laboratory to assess the quality.

Abdus Salam Akanda, professor of mechanical engineering at Buet, said the first impression was good, but there was room for improvement.

“But one thing we must keep in mind is that plastic tiles cannot be a substitute for ceramic tiles as both have their advantages and disadvantages. Plastic tiles have better durability than ceramic or earthen tiles,” he said, adding that use of plastic tiles would obviously help reduce plastic pollution.

The use of plastic tiles is nothing new as some countries have already

started using this as a way of mitigating plastic pollution.

India, Egypt, Kenya, and some other countries have already started using this commercially as the tiles are more durable, lighter, and easier to transport and install than ceramic or clay tiles. They are also thought to be safer during rainfall.

Nafizur Rahman, principal research officer at the House Building Research Institute, said he had high hopes for plastic tiles as those are made from plastic waste, and usually such products have much more longevity than ceramic or earthen tiles.

“We have seen the product. Now we are planning to test these tiles in our lab,” he said, adding that once it passed it would be a great way to deal with plastic pollution.

Nazir Hossain said each tile weighed 280-300 grams and was 11 inches by 7.5 inches in dimension.

One piece of the tile could be sold at Tk 42-45, he said.

“The biggest benefit of the tile is that it can either be cemented or interlocked with other tiles.”

Contempt of court petition filed

FROM PAGE 12

asking him to explain why he should not be punished for his “flagrant, disregard and willful contempt of the office of the chief justice and highest judiciary”.

The lawyer, in the petition, also urged the SC to bring Taposh before it in person and impose a fine on him for his comments.

Citing the petition, Advocate Badal told The Daily Star that Taposh made those indecent, disrespectful and malicious comments about the

judiciary while he was delivering a speech at a function organised by Bangabandhu Awami Ainjibi Parishad at the SCBA auditorium on May 21 on the occasion of its sixth founding anniversary.

On May 23, Bangla daily Manab Zamin published a report containing his statements under the headline “Ekjon Chief Justice keo Namiye Diyechhilam (We had even removed a chief justice).”

“I wish I could resign and come

back here [at the SCBA]. I know where to use the hammer. We had even removed a chief justice,” the report quoted Taposh as saying.

“The civil society members, who want to preach to us, ... we will bundle them in a sack and throw them into the dark water of the Buriganga”, the report quoted him as saying.

The Chamber Judge of the Appellate Division may hold a hearing on the contempt of court petition soon, lawyer Shah Ahmed Badal said.

6 congressmen’s letter

FROM PAGE 12

the [Hindu] population declined.”

Since Bangladesh became independent, over the last five decades, the Hindu population declined by around 10 percent. Most of it happened when the country was ruled by the BNP and Jamaat, he said.

Nirmal Rozario, president of Bangladesh Christian Association, rejected the claim as well.

“It is an outright lie. Rather, the reality is that since the return of Awami League, our community has been living in harmony – with assistance from the prime minister. The government’s development schemes connect the minorities as well,” he said.

Eminent researcher and freedom fighter Ajoy Das Gupta, said, “A number of BNP leaders, including Rumeen Farhana, went vocal on

social media, justifying the letter.”

“The BNP and Jamaat hold a sordid record of attacking minorities,” he added.

Calling such assertions “biased, a travesty of justice, and highly motivated,” the minority community leaders also asked why the US congressmen did not bother to mention the “BNP-Jamaat sponsored hate campaign against minorities”.

‘Nato-like’ alliances could lead to conflict

China warns as US flexes muscles in Asia-Pacific

AFP, Singapore

China’s defence minister yesterday warned against establishing Nato-like military alliances in the Asia-Pacific, saying they would plunge the region into a “whirlpool” of conflict.

Li Shangfu’s comments came a day after US and Chinese military vessels sailed close to each other in the flashpoint Taiwan Strait, an incident that provoked anger from both sides.

“Attempts to push for Nato-like (alliances) in the Asia-Pacific is a way of kidnapping regional countries and exaggerating conflicts and confrontations,” Li told a conference in Singapore also attended by US Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin.

Li warned that these alliances would “plunge the Asia-Pacific into a whirlpool of disputes and conflicts”. Li’s comments echoed long-held Chinese criticism of the United States’ efforts to shore up alliances in the region and counter China’s rise.

The United States is a member of AUKUS, which groups it with Australia and Britain. Washington is also a member of the QUAD group, which includes



Australia, India and Japan.

“Today’s Asia-Pacific needs open and inclusive cooperation, not buddying up into small cliques,” Li said at the Shangri-La Dialogue security summit.

Li sought to paint the United States as the trigger of regional instability, and China as seeking to ease tensions.

“It cannot be denied that if a fierce conflict or confrontation occurs between China and the United States, it would bring unbearable pain for the world,” he said.

On Saturday, Austin called for top-level defence talks with Beijing to prevent miscalculations. “The more that we talk, the more that we can avoid the misunderstandings and miscalculations that could lead to crisis or conflict,”

Austin said.

Also on Saturday, the United States deployed a destroyer from its 7th Fleet along with a Canadian naval vessel through the Taiwan Strait.

China responded by sending one of its naval ships close to the US destroyer, the USS Chung-Hoon, according to the Pentagon. The strait is one of the world’s most tense potential military flashpoints.



Police detain a person in downtown on the 34th anniversary of the 1989 Beijing’s Tiananmen Square crackdown, near where the candlelight vigil is usually held, in Hong Kong yesterday. Hong Kong police detained several pro-democracy figures including the leader of a key opposition party.

PHOTO: REUTERS

‘They’re just out in the open’

Ex-Pak PM Imran openly accuses military of trying to destroy his party

REUTERS, Lahore

Pakistan’s embattled former prime minister Imran Khan has accused the powerful military and its intelligence agency of openly trying to destroy his political party, saying he had “no doubt” he would be tried in a military court and thrown in jail.

Khan has hinted previously at the military’s hand in a crackdown on his Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) party but his comments in an interview at his Lahore home on Saturday night were the most blunt yet.

“It is completely the establishment,” the former cricket hero told Reuters, when asked who was behind the crackdown. “Establishment obviously means the military establishment, because they are really now openly - I mean, it’s not even hidden now - they’re just out in the open.”

A spokesman for the military did not respond to a request for comment.

A year-long standoff between Khan and army came to a head when military property were ransacked last month, allegedly by his supporters.

Khan termed the violent protests, which erupted after he was briefly arrested, a “false flag operation” meant to target him.

“That’s the only way they are going to get me into prison,” Khan said, adding that the military wanted to stop him from returning to power in elections due by November.

Russian air strikes repelled over Kyiv

Regional airfield hit; missile attack on Dnipro kills 2-year-old, injures 22; five drones shot down in Crimea

REUTERS, Kyiv

Russia launched a fresh wave of air strikes against Ukraine early yesterday, striking an airfield in a central region but failing to hit the capital Kyiv, Ukrainian authorities said.

Air force spokesman Yuriy Ihnat told local television that four of six cruise missiles had been shot down by air defences but that two had struck an “operational airfield” near the central city of Kropyvnytskyi.

He added that two of the five Iranian-made drones launched by Russia had struck infrastructure in the northern Sumy region.

Kyiv officials said air defences had downed all projectiles that had been aimed at the capital before they reached the city.

Separately, a 2-year-old girl was killed and 22 people were wounded in an earlier Russian missile strike yesterday near the central Ukrainian city of Dnipro, the regional governor said.

Russia has stepped up regular attacks on Kyiv since May, especially at night, in what officials say is an attempt to damage morale ahead of a long expected Ukrainian counteroffensive to reclaim Russian-occupied territory.

“For the second night in a row, Kyivans are not hearing the sounds of explosions overhead,” Serhiy Popko, head of the local military administration, said on Telegram.

All of Ukraine was under air-raid alerts for nearly three hours.

Meanwhile, five drones were shot down and four were jammed and did not hit



their targets in Dzhankoi in Crimea, a Russian-installed official in the peninsula that Moscow annexed from Ukraine in 2014 said yesterday.

There were no casualties but windows were broken in several houses, Sergei Aksyonov, the Russian-backed head of Crimea’s administration, said on the Telegram messaging app.

He added that one unexploded drone was found on the territory of a residential house, forcing the temporary evacuation of about 50 people in the area.

Russia has a military air base near Dzhankoi. Ukrainian officials have long said the city and surrounding areas have been turned into Moscow’s largest military base in Crimea.

Shelling and strikes by Ukrainian forces on Russia’s Belgorod region killed two people on Saturday as hundreds of children were evacuated away from the border, Governor Vyacheslav Gladkov said.

“The children of Shebekino are very worried about their hometown,” Gladkov said on the Telegram channel after escorting about 600 of them from the region’s Shebekino and Graivoron districts to Yaroslavl and Kaluga.

A senior Ukrainian government official yesterday expressed “disbelief” after learning that nearly half of Kyiv bomb shelters inspected during an initial audit were closed or unfit for use.

President Volodymyr Zelensky ordered an inspection of all Ukrainian shelters on Friday, a day after three people were killed in Kyiv when they were unable to access one during a Russian air strike.

Oleksandr Kamyshin, Ukraine’s minister of strategic industries, said that out of 1,078 shelters examined on the first day, 359 were unprepared and another 122 locked, while 597 were found to be usable.

“I greeted with disbelief that fact that half were open and considered ready,” he wrote on the Telegram messaging app.

Kamyshin said the inspections would continue.

The Kremlin said yesterday that any supply of long-range missiles to Kyiv by France and Germany would lead to a further round of “spiralling tension” in the Ukraine conflict.

Britain last month became the first country to supply Ukraine with long-range cruise missiles.

Ukraine has asked Germany for Taurus cruise missiles, which have a range of 500 km (311 miles), while President Emmanuel Macron has said France will give Ukraine missiles with a range allowing it to carry out its long-anticipated counteroffensive.

World’s spy chiefs meet in secret conclave in S’pore

REUTERS, Singapore

Senior officials from about two dozen of the world’s major intelligence agencies held a secret meeting on the fringes of the Shangri-La Dialogue security meeting in Singapore this weekend, five people told Reuters. Such meetings are organised by the Singapore government and have been discreetly held at a separate venue alongside the security summit for several years, they said. The meetings have not been previously reported. The US was represented by Director of National Intelligence Avril Haines, while China was among the other countries present.

Erdogan unveils new cabinet

AFP, Ankara

Turkey’s Recep Tayyip Erdogan on Saturday unveiled a new cabinet lineup, naming a powerful spy chief as foreign minister and market friendly Mehmet Simsek as finance minister, hours after swearing in for a third term as president. Erdogan took oath of office in parliament after winning a historic runoff election to extend his two-decade rule and promised to serve “impartially”. He also called for unity and the anger and resentment of the campaign to be set aside as he spoke during a ceremony at his presidential palace in Ankara attended by dozens of world leaders. Turkey’s transformative but divisive leader won the May 28 runoff against a powerful opposition coalition.

N Korea slams UN meeting on spy satellite launch

AFP, Seoul

North Korean leader Kim Jong Un’s powerful sister Kim Yo Jong slammed the UN Security Council for holding a “most unfair” meeting over Pyongyang’s recent spy satellite launch, state media reported yesterday. North Korea’s new Chollima-1 rocket lost thrust and crashed into the sea with its satellite payload on Wednesday, Pyongyang said in a rare same-day announcement, adding that another test will be conducted as soon as possible. The US, South Korea and Japan slammed the launch. The UN’s under-secretary-general for political and peacebuilding affairs, Rosemary DiCarlo, took the Security Council to task on Friday for a “lack of unity and action” on North Korea’s tests.

14 killed, 5 missing in China landslide

AFP, Beijing

Fourteen people were killed and five are missing following a landslide in southwestern China’s Sichuan province yesterday, the local government said. The “collapse took place high on a mountain” at 6:00 am (2200 GMT Saturday) at a state-owned forestry station in Jinkouhe, near the city of Leshan, the local government said in an online statement. “As of 3:30 pm, the remains of 14 victims have been recovered, while five people remain missing,” it said. Authorities sent more than 180 people and a dozen pieces of rescue and recovery equipment to the site, according to the statement.



A man bathes in the polluted waters of river Yamuna laden with foam, on the eve of World Environment Day in New Delhi, India yesterday. The theme for World Environment Day on 5 June 2023 will focus on solutions to plastic pollution under the campaign ‘Beat Plastic Pollution’.

PHOTO: AFP

Why is govt aid for poor going to non-poor?

Only 40pc of social safety net budget catering to poor, vulnerable groups

There can be no debate that, in the worst economic crisis that Bangladesh and its people have faced in over a decade, an ever-increasing number of poor and vulnerable groups are in dire need of targeted assistance from the government. It was our expectation that the proposed budget for fiscal year 2023-24 would prioritise their sufferings and dedicate more money than was done in the past towards expanding and strengthening social safety nets. On paper, the proposed budget appears to have done just that – social safety nets, according to the government, constitute 2.52 percent of the GDP in the new budget. However, a closer look at the numbers reveals a distressing scenario, with a meagre 1.01 percent of GDP being allocated towards those most in need.

Where is the rest of the money that is being peddled as social safety nets by the government actually going? A whopping 22 percent of the sum will be spent in paying pensions for 800,000 government employees, while another 8.9 percent will finance interest for national savings certificates. Meanwhile, 17 percent of the social safety net budget is going towards agriculture subsidy and interest subsidy for loans to small and medium enterprises, including cottage industries. About 60 percent of the total social safety net allocation proposed in the budget is actually set for the non-poor. The obvious question is why the finance ministry would categorise pensions, subsidies and interest payments under social safety nets, unless it is to deliberately misguide people by flaunting a flashy and inflated figure. The next and equally urgent question is why the poor have once again been left out of the government's planning when they should have clearly been a priority.

Income inequality has risen at an alarming rate, even if we go by the government's own estimate, over the past decade. As our policymakers continue to pander to their already well-off interest groups, more and more low-income households are at risk of falling into poverty, with food and non-food prices long having spiralled out of control. It is shameful that instead of expanding the scope of the social safety net programmes, enhancing their efficacy, and introducing more targeted interventions for new and urban poor, the policymakers have chosen the questionable route of inflating the numbers. In the process, they have made a mockery of those most in need of its protection.

We urge the government to allocate the amount it claims to have dedicated to social safety nets to the actual vulnerable groups. Otherwise, it is tantamount to robbing the poor of their dues from the state.

People deserve answers

Shambolic decision-making has led us to suffer enough

As the ongoing heatwave gets worse, the country's power shortage is unfortunately showing no signs of improvement. In fact, it is likely to get worse as the Payra power plant is going to shut down completely – currently, one of its units is out of operation – after June 5 due to a coal crisis. According to the State Minister for Power, Energy, and Mineral Resources, Nasrul Hamid, power outages have increased alarmingly due to the shutdowns of several power plants. The government is struggling to import fuel for these power plants. So, even though it increased the country's power generation capacity to 23,370 MW – more than the real demand – what it is actually capable of producing at present is much less (around 11,753 MW during peak hours on Saturday, for example) than what is necessary. This is a perfect example of the poor planning and policies the government has pursued over the years in regards to the power sector.

Residents of Dhaka city have been complaining about their extreme suffering amidst frequent power cuts as the temperature rose to 37 degrees Celsius on Saturday. In many areas of the capital, power outages have been occurring seven times or more, and both during the daytime and at night. As a result, children and adults have been falling sick, and hospitals across the country have been struggling to operate. Industries are also being affected badly and are facing production losses. People living in rural areas are doing even worse, as they are reportedly getting electricity for only five to six hours a day.

It is shocking that after boasting so strongly about their power sector policies, government officials have brought the sector to such a disastrous state. How can the power ministry allow the plants to close over its failure to pay the coal bills? Simultaneously, the government has allowed for huge amounts of payments to be made to idle power plants in the form of capacity charges. So, while on one hand the people were made to foot that bill, on the other, it is they who are also being made to suffer through these frequent power outages. The energy minister in particular, and the government in general, must answer for this.

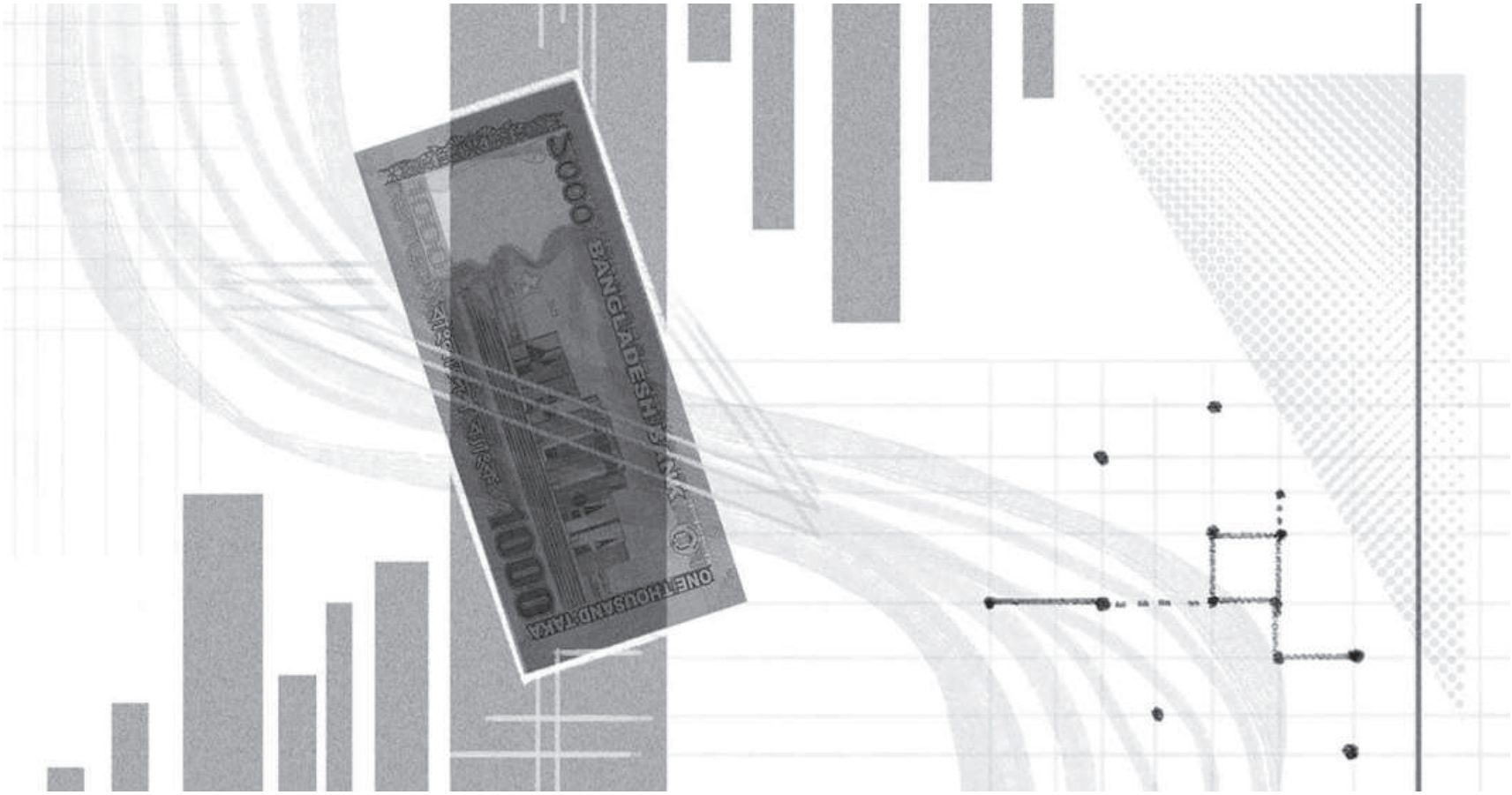
LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

letters@thedailystar.net

A discriminatory heatwave

I really doubt just how much our city authorities care for us when I see news of trees being cut down all around the capital. It really makes me wonder what privilege those who make the decision to fell trees during this heatwave must be living in. No doubt, they must have multiple air conditioners in their homes, alongside in their offices and private cars. Only those blissfully unaware of citizens having to swelter outside to make a barely-decent living could term such decisions to be “developmental”.

Selim Gani
Nadda, Dhaka



VISUAL: REHNUMA PROSHOON

NATIONAL BUDGET FY2023-24

Three perils unaddressed in the new budget



RASHED AL MAHMUD TITUMIR

Dr Rashed Al Mahmud Titumir is professor and chairman of the Department of Development Studies at Dhaka University.

The proposed national budget for FY 2023-24 has been placed in parliament amid mounting prices, rising shortage of cash, and swelling debt that have all triggered livelihood distress, fiscal imbalances, and put a dent in the overall balance of payments. It is not clear how the money needed to implement this ambitious budget will be sourced. Such an increase in expenditure without the cost provision of money is a cause for concern. This concern has intensified against the backdrop of international credit rating agency Moody's downgrading the sovereign rating of Bangladesh. The budget does not provide a road map on how to get out of the ongoing inflation either.

It is interesting that the ongoing loan package of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) did not prevent Moody's downgrade, though there is a general assumption that a country is under due diligence when it agrees to an IMF programme. Although the impact of the downgrading will not be visible immediately, they are far-reaching. Following the announcement, a foreign bank announced the suspension of credit limits set for Bangladeshi banks. Many other financial institutions and banks worldwide may follow suit. Raising funds from foreign sources, both public and private, may become more difficult than ever.

The woes of debt-servicing liabilities
The government has not been able to meet its revenue targets for over a decade. Every year, a large gap remains between actual revenue collection and the proposed target. In the outgoing fiscal year, the National Board of Revenue (NBR) has a deficit of more than Tk 34,500 crore compared to the target in the first 10 months (July-April). To reach its target, the NBR has to collect about Tk 122,600 crore by the end of the year (June 30). Since the beginning of FY2022-23, however, the average revenue collection per month has been around Tk 25,000 crore.

This shortfall in revenue may cause a major downward pressure in the coming days. The government, thus, will have to increase its dependence on large amounts of loans from domestic and foreign sources to meet the deficit. Whether this funding is secured or not, failure to generate the required revenue can be a major concern. Interest payments on debt have already become the second largest item in the government's operating expenditure. The added shortfall will add to the burden of the government's debt-servicing liability. Moody's downgrade has also undermined Bangladesh's creditworthiness.

The proposed budget contains a total deficit of Tk 261,785 crore. It delineates a target of Tk 155,395 crore

to be borrowed from domestic sources and Tk 106,390 crore from foreign sources (including Tk 3,900 crore of grants). Of the domestic sources, the budget estimates Tk 132,395 crore of loans to come from the banking sector. However, the banks themselves are now suffering from a liquidity crunch. In this situation, the government is left with the option of asking the central bank to print money to meet its demand. The Bangladesh Bank has already had to print Tk 70,000 crore to service the government requirement in the first 11 months of the current financial year, according to media reports.

Since the government has proposed an upturn of loans from banks by one-fourth for FY2023-24, the central bank will have to proliferate printing money, further fuelling the inflationary pressure. In Bangladesh, the money multiplier is five times. The excess money will power higher demand and raise prices, leading to inflation.

The central bank's belt-tightening measures have constricted the trade and current account deficits, dampening the much-needed import of capital machinery and intermediate goods, yet the balance-of-payment (BOP) deficit is swelling. In the first nine months of FY2021-22, the BOP deficit was about \$3 billion, which in the nine months of FY2022-23 swelled to nearly \$8.17 billion. This large deficit has also put the country's forex reserves under great pressure.

The greatest concern remains unaddressed, however. Recently, the deficit in the financial account of BOP has been surging on account of outflow arising out of debt servicing. As a result, the decline in forex reserves may not stop in the near future. Foreign debt more than doubled in just seven years to cross \$95 billion, rising from \$41.17 billion in FY2015-16. The ratio of short-term loans increased from 23 percent to 30.3 percent. During the same period, the per capita foreign debt increased from \$257.47 to \$557.59, as per the Bangladesh Bank data. The government's debt to GDP ratio jumped to 42.1 percent in 2023 from 28.7 percent in 2014. In this circumstance, debt servicing will become a headache.

Our forex reserves used to be flaunted. Now, the central bank's pride has been hit on both sides. After downgrading the country's rating, Moody's also downgraded the ratings of seven private banks. The adverse effects of this decision are starting to become visible. The three causes of downgrading – heightened external vulnerability, liquidity risks, and institutional weaknesses – are internal creations; there is hardly any space to blame external circumstances.

Unabated investment stagnation

Although there is barely any visible incentive to develop local industries in the proposed budget, additional VAT has been proposed. How will the ICT industry be protected if the tax increases from 5 to 25 percent for essential software like databases, operating systems, antivirus, word processors, spreadsheets, etc? Why is “Smart Bangladesh” amid the Fourth Industrial Revolution being made expensive?

According to the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS), private investment declined by 0.88 percentage points to 23.64 percent of GDP in FY 2022-23, after staying stagnant for at least seven years. The dollar crisis has reduced import of capital machinery and intermediate goods, unhelpfully impacting investment. If there is no rapid rebound, creation of new employment may come to a standstill. Inflationary pressure will not ease either. Small, medium and cottage enterprises in particular have been hit hard by price hikes. For example, the price of domestic yarn has increased due to increase in gas and electricity prices. Every day, the price of the dollar increases against the taka, and the cost of production rises.

Since the government has proposed an upturn of loans from banks by one-fourth for FY2023-24, the central bank will have to proliferate printing money, further fuelling the inflationary pressure. In Bangladesh, the money multiplier is five times. The excess money will power higher demand and raise prices, leading to inflation.

There is no direction in the proposed budget for a turnaround from premature deindustrialisation, diversification, enhancement of productivity, and technological catch-up. Moving away from the current consumption-expenditure-centric GDP growth model and towards sustainable green growth – centred on domestic and foreign investment – remains elusive as well.

Number of new poor may rise

The cost-of-living crisis is not addressed in the budget. As the prices of almost all goods and services have increased, the purchasing power of the common people has decreased. Inflation averaged 8.85 percent in the first 10 months of FY 2022-23, surpassing the budget target of 5.6 percent. The government still blames the Russia-Ukraine war for persistent inflation, and is proceeding with the assumption that inflation will come down automatically. Consumers are not relieved even though the prices of commodities have gone down significantly in the international market. Oil prices have been around \$70-80 a barrel for a long time, but there are no signs of lowering oil prices

in the domestic market as promised. The government could have reduced prices by adjusting taxes. Consumers remain hostage to a nexus of powerful middlemen, but the budget offers no structural reforms for the market system.

A recent survey by the Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies (BIDS) found that 51 percent of the total poor in Dhaka in 2022 are new poor. The employment, income, and savings of the lower and middle classes are severely affected, who are making ends meet by cutting down on their expenditure on food, education, and health. Food distribution programmes such as Food for Work and open market sales will have less food next year (3.09 million tonnes), down from 3.28 million tonnes in the outgoing fiscal year. The budget does not mention the government's strategies to curb non-food expenses such as housing rent, transport, and healthcare. The proposed hike in VAT on daily necessities like utensils, tissues, pens, sanitary napkins, etc will make survival even more difficult.

Allocations for social safety net programmes (SSNPs) are declining both as a proportion of the overall budget and the GDP. An increase of Tk 50-100 per month in an allowance is insufficient. The pension scheme for retired government employees is included in the SSNPs, taking up 22 percent of the allocation. The government has proposed changes to the fragmented, faulty SSNPs, marred with errors of inclusion and exclusion. But no funds have been specifically allocated for the preparation of databases, digital payment systems, and the selection of rights-holders.

Similarly, the proposed allocations for social expenditure such as health, education, and security have not increased.

The approach proposed in the budget 2023-24 may not create any sustainable solution for the tribulations of the poor and destitute. The government thinks that the country's poor population has shrunk to a large extent and that the ultra-poor are almost non-existent. But the reality tells a different story. Despite the questionable definition used to measure poverty, the BBS survey reveals the pace of poverty reduction to be slowing down. New poor are being created as inflation outpaces any rise in wages. The pursued poverty alleviation instruments are not capable of addressing external shocks. Added to this is the failure to create employment in the formal sector. In the absence of employment in the formal sector, the poor are forced into self-employment for survival. According to the BIDS, the rate of self-employment among the poor increased from 33.60 percent in 2019 to 38.56 percent in 2022.

The proposed national budget for FY 2023-24 is devoid of solutions to the ever-increasing structural disease of inequality. Biased policy structures have been pushing income and wealth inequality in Bangladesh. The Gini coefficient has been rising for 12 years, reaching the alarming level of 0.499 in 2022, making the pledge – taken during the Liberation War – of a society based on equity, human dignity, and social justice a distant dream.

WORLD ENVIRONMENT DAY

Living in the land of dying rivers



OF MAGIC
& MADNESS

Badiuzzaman Bay
is assistant editor at
The Daily Star.

BADIUZZAMAN BAY

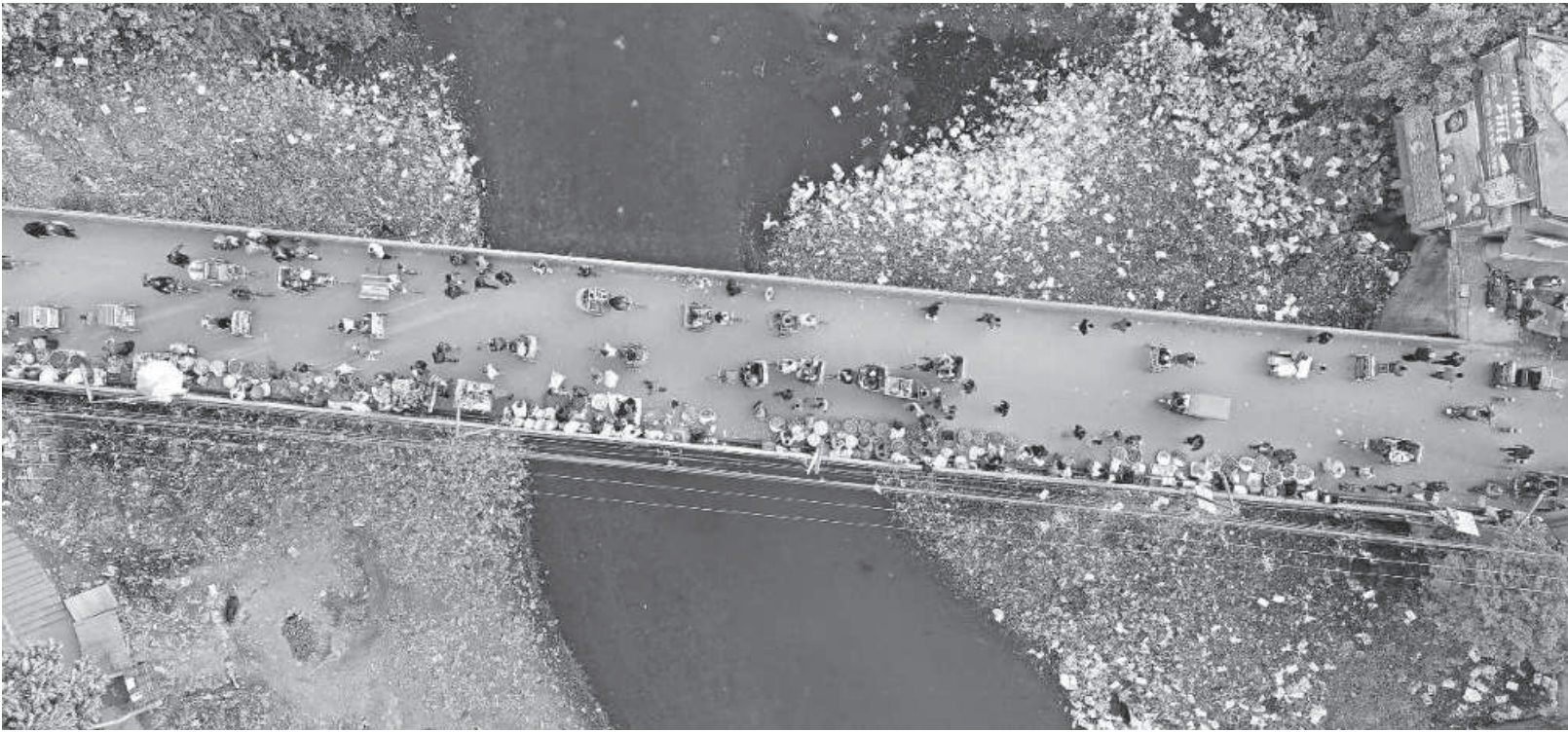
Don't look for rivers *in* rivers in Bangladesh.

For here, in this development wasteland, rivers don't live; they merely exist. They exist as relics of their halcyon days when rivers were truly wild, mysterious, free – or as a side character in their own story, as told through poetry and music. They exist in inherited nostalgia. They exist to serve, not to inspire imagination. Today, going through eponymous titles like Bibhutibhushan's *Ichhamati*, Manik Bandyopadhyay's *Padma Nadir Majhi*, Adwaita Mallabharman's *Titash Ekti Nadir Naam*, Samareesh Basu's *Ganga* or Debesh Roy's *Teesta Parer Brittanita* feels like walking past a film reel – each river a new negative, a wondrous revelation, but each also a cautionary tale: that nature may nurture us, but it needs nurturing, too. Like everything we hold dear.

This is what I tell myself every time I come across a “dying” or “dead” river these days. And I wonder how long we can hold on to the images of what rivers once were before the only image that remains of them is a natural has-been, decayed through neglect and overuse.

For many of us, images are a vital part of our relationship with rivers. They hugely influence our perception of how we connect to them beyond all the trade, transport, and agriculture that bound us together through the centuries. When Hemanta Mukherjee, in his song “*O Nodire*”, asks, “Say, oh river, where is your abode? Is there no end to your journey?” – or “You destroy one bank and build another, but what do you do for the bankside people you leave behind in ruins?” – it's not just curiosity driving these questions, it's also a deep sense of connection with something we at once feared and felt for. The fear is still there in some form. But the feeling is all but gone, thanks to the shifting images and realities.

Part of the reason why the 2019 High Court verdict that granted rivers the legal status of “living entities” seemed so special was because of its potential to reignite this feeling, from one living entity to another. As legal precedents go, this was a “historic” judgment. It wasn't meant to provoke



Bangladesh has essentially turned into a Land of Dying Rivers, in an astonishing shift for a nation that once ascribed motherly value to its rivers, endearingly calling itself “*nadimatrik*.”

FILE PHOTO: MOSTAFA SHABUJ

nostalgia for the good ol' days of undammed, unbridged rivers. It was more rooted in reality, in a vision that development, while inevitable, does not have to come at the cost of rivers. It envisioned a world in which they would be regarded as legal persons, treated as free and with respect, and have certain rights to be protected by the state. “Killing rivers” used to be a metaphorical expression until they were granted this status, which made it more literal, with a shock value attached to it.

Four years on, that semantic change, and the founding of a largely ceremonial National River Conservation Commission as the “guardian” of rivers, remain the only outcomes of this verdict. Its remarkable lack of impact, as evidenced by the deteriorating state of our rivers, can only be equalled by that of other court judgments on the conservation of forests and hills. In hindsight, the significance of the

history with rivers, they didn't need a superficial recognition in the first place. Howsoever you see this verdict today, the truth is, it has failed to prevent what environmentalists rightly called “rivercide.”

Bangladesh has about 220 small and large rivers, and 90 percent of them are said to be suffering from pollution and encroachment. More than 43 rivers dried up between 2000 and 2020. According to the Rivers and Delta Research Centre (RDRC), which unveiled the findings of a year-long study in March, at least 56 rivers flowing through different parts of the country are suffering from “extreme pollution” during the lean period, when natural flows of rivers are at their lowest. Even rivers that became household names through famous books have not been spared. A quick Google search will tell you: the once-mighty Titash is now a veritable canal, with many illegally built structures dotting the riverside; the Ichhamati

names now reduced to a harsh, prosaic existence. These rivers, like the ones before them, are being robbed of life, one aquatic species at a time. The same suffocating situation prevails at the Khowai, which flows through Habiganj, or the Mayur, which flows through Khulna, or the rivers surrounding Dhaka. Tonnes of household and industrial waste are dumped into them every day, untreated and unchecked, while marauding encroachers, both individuals and institutions, including those run by the state, go about building on dried-up lands, pushing further and further beyond the demarcation pillars in some cases. Add to that the mining of sand, brickfields on riverbanks, greasy pollutants from motorised boats, siltation – all contributing to their progressively unhealthy aquatic state. It's not just the life of rivers, canals, or wetlands that is being put to the test as a result. There are also

“*nadimatrik*.”

True, the attempt to control rivers has been there from time immemorial. It was there during the rule of the British, who sought to control the rough waters of Bengal through building road-rail networks. It was there during the rule of Pakistan, which undertook development projects. Their initiatives, in some cases, proved to be disastrous. Ruling or utilising rivers – just like hills, forests, and seas – has been an enduring pursuit of humanity. In the monsoon, you had encroaching rivers; in the summer, you had a pushback from encroaching men.

But what we are witnessing in today's Bangladesh is not ruling (“*nadi shashon*”), it is bullying (“*nadi shoshon*”). It's not driven just by necessity, but also greed, a general disregard for the sanctity of life, and a reckless can-do ism. Nowhere else will you hear a minister claim that we don't need wide rivers, and that

we have to narrow them down and recover land from the riverbanks to build resorts and roads and implement other forms of development! How can anyone, let alone a top government official, think like that? At the current rate, it may not be long before the country becomes known for having led a unique trend: Once a river, NOT always a river.

Perhaps this was bound to happen. Just imagine: over the last few decades, the more we urbanised, the more we sought to exploit and monetise rivers. The more our population grew, the more we came to treasure our land (and riverbed) as real estate. So, we put unwieldy dams around rivers, hollowed them out in search of sand, canalised and diverted them, constricted their navigation through encroachment, and in many cases, turned them into dumping zones. Anomalies and warnings abound simultaneously. “A dumping zone called Turag” – a newspaper headline screams, as if to parody the oft-quoted *Titash Ekti Nadir Naam* (A river called Titash). What was once a symbiotic relationship worthy of immortalisation in poetry, music and literature has now turned into an abusive relationship, with 170 million rudderless people wedged into a sparse landmass, all somehow complicit in the slow decay or death of their rivers.

All somehow ready to accept that their cities turning into heat islands, their rivers being robbed of aquatic species, their waters being contaminated, their fishes being filled with microplastics, their ponds and lakes disappearing, their haors being flooded because of the rapid spread of the built environment, or their children growing up without any connection with their riverine ancestry are not a big enough price to pay in their pursuit of development.

We must acknowledge, however, that there have been attempts to reverse this cycle of destruction. There is no dearth of policies, regulations, and responsible agencies in the country. Eviction and excavation projects to free rivers and riverbanks are routinely heard of. But these attempts are so few, so poorly planned, and so uncoordinated that any resultant effect fizzles out before it can be visible.

Clearly, we need a critical rethink about our whole approach to rivers and river management.

This is a revised and expanded version of an article originally published in the Jamini magazine.

The time to beat plastic pollution is now or never

Muhammad Muktadirul Islam Khan,
a development consultant, is currently studying at the
Department of Geology, Environment and Sustainability
(GES) of Hofstra University in New York.

MUHAMMAD MUKTADIRUL
ISLAM KHAN

Plastics have become an integral part of our life. The world purchases around one million plastic bottles every minute and uses one billion plastic bags every hour. Low cost, durability, light weight, and ease of processing have made plastics extremely attractive to both individual consumers and industries.

While there may be some social benefits of using plastic, these come at the cost of our environment, severely threatening humanity and biodiversity. While the efforts to reduce plastic pollution by governments, civil societies, and businesses are encouraging, there is still a long way to go as the amount of plastic waste is rapidly increasing. This year's World Environment Day is essentially a call for widespread action to beat plastic pollution and save humanity, wildlife, and our entire planet.

Plastic is a potential threat to life and is now considered the most pressing environmental concern. Almost half of all plastic products are intended to be single-use, and of the around 380 million tonnes of plastic produced each year globally, only nine percent is recycled. A report published by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) in 2022 says around three-fourths of plastic products worldwide end up in landfills or natural surroundings. Plastic waste takes a long time to decompose as the materials used in the products do not exist in our environment, and there are no naturally occurring organisms that can break them down effectively. The time taken for plastic products to decompose can differ depending on their type and the condition of exposure. For example, a plastic bag can decompose in 10 to 1,000 years, while a plastic bottle, an essential part of our daily life, can take up to 450 years to degrade. Untreated plastic waste also adds toxic substances to our environment.

Plastic is also impacting the atmospheric condition of the Earth's system. Almost 98 percent of plastic products are produced using fossil fuels, resulting in greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, a leading contributor to the global climate crisis.

The Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) reported that plastic currently accounts for 3.4 percent of the world's carbon budget and is projected to increase by five times in the next 20 years. A 2022 study identified that tiny particles of plastic can travel thousands of miles and affect the formation of clouds, and can impact temperature, rainfall, and even long-term climatic changes.

Bangladesh, too, is experiencing a spike in plastic production, which plays a crucial role in the nation's overall economy. It is the 12th highest source of income through export and is widely used in our RMG sector, healthcare, and automotive industries. In FY 2017-18, the country exported plastic and plastic-made products worth \$1 billion. And almost 80 percent of the local plastic demand, worth \$2.5 billion as of 2017, is met with domestic production. According to Bangladesh Investment Development Authority (BIDA), there are 5,000 plastic enterprises in Bangladesh, and 98 percent of these are SMEs. Plastic products have gained popularity over time both in local and global markets, and if the current trend of production is sustained, Bangladesh expects to earn \$115.10 billion from plastic export by the end of 2023.

However, the country is also battling plastic pollution. Alongside the growing nature of our economy, the per capita use of plastic in urban areas has tripled in the last 15 years. Although the per capita consumption in Bangladesh is less than that in many other developing and neighbouring nations, the mismanagement of plastic waste is what has led to Bangladesh ranking 10th globally in mismanaging plastic waste. It is also responsible for 2.4 percent of the global mismanaged plastic waste.

Unsustainably managing plastic waste is a growing concern in Bangladesh. The country generates around 3,000 tonnes of plastic waste every day. In Dhaka, around 14

million pieces of polyethylene bags are used daily. Most plastic products are discarded after the first use, and due to improper management, they pile up on the roads, in drains, canals, rivers, and open landfills.

As a riverine delta, our geographic characteristic plays a huge role in transporting land-based plastic waste to the ocean. An estimation shows that every day, around 73,000 tonnes of plastic waste ends up in the Bay of Bengal through the Padma, Jamuna, and Meghna rivers, polluting our aquatic ecosystem.



Plastic waste in the environment is a potential threat to life and is considered the most pressing environmental concern.

PHOTO: STAR/FILE

Plastic products can never fully decompose, and can only be reduced to smaller particles. The tiny particles also end up in the human body and incur severe health consequences. Meanwhile, burning plastic items (which is a common practice in Bangladesh) releases toxic gases and particles into the air. The Country and Climate Development Report published by the World Bank Group in 2022 says that around 32 percent of human deaths every year are associated with environmental

degradation, specifically outdoor air pollution, inadequate water, sanitation, and hygiene standards, and lead exposure among adults linked with plastic pollution. The estimated annual loss for environmental health amounted to Tk 4.4 trillion in 2019. Plastic waste is also responsible for clogging drainage systems, and developing breeding grounds for mosquitoes that result in incidents of vector-borne diseases such as dengue, chikungunya, and malaria.

Bangladesh has taken several bold steps by adopting legislative and policy

arrangements to reduce plastic pollution. We are the first country in the world that banned plastic shopping bags through a nationwide cut-off date on January 1, 2002. The country adopted the Jute Packaging Act in 2010, which promotes alternative packaging for six essential items, including rice, fertiliser, and paddy. In 2020, a High Court directive also banned single-use plastic in coastal areas, and in hotels and motels across the country. But all these measures have failed due to lenient

enforcement. Use of banned plastic items and mismanagement of plastic waste is seen all over the country. Our plastic market is anticipating significant growth and as such, plastic waste generation will also increase in volume, and the crisis will only intensify in the coming years.

Recycling plastic waste is an economically and environmentally viable way to address plastic pollution, though the progress of this is not significant in Bangladesh. In 2020, the nation consumed 977,000 tonnes of plastic and recycled only one-third of the total. In Dhaka, around 646 tonnes of plastic waste is generated every day and only 37.2 percent is recycled. A large amount of plastic waste remains in the environment. High costs associated with recycling, lack of technology, and lack of public awareness about the consequences of plastic pollution are key factors that hinder recycling in Bangladesh.

It is irrefutable that widespread access to plastic has benefited humans. But at the same time, mismanagement of plastic has left long-lasting environmental impacts. Alongside the rapid economic growth of Bangladesh, the consumption of plastic is likely to experience a spike in the coming years, resulting in more degradation of environmental bodies, and affecting humans and other living creatures.

Despite our country's strides in policy and legislative arrangements, the effective implementation of the policies and laws is still a far cry. Besides the need for effective regulation and enforcement initiatives from the government, individual-level awareness is also crucial in addressing this problem. A strong focus on the circular use of plastic, based on the 3R strategy (reduce, reuse, recycle) will result positively in creating new value chains of plastic, green skills, jobs, and innovative products, while also addressing social and environmental challenges that occur due to our widespread use of plastic. More research and knowledge processes, as well as engagement of stakeholders in multisectoral actions, will be driving factors in successfully curbing plastic pollution. Now is the time to act together and save our world from this impending crisis.

Humans of Climate Change

Stories to Learn Climate-Change Impacts, Solutions, and Hope

PHOTOS: PRITO REZA

Dulia Begum

“In the face of relentless hardships brought upon by the unforgiving river, I, Dulia Begum, a 40-year-old woman, was left with no choice but to seek refuge in a nearby shelter facility after the flood washed away my home and land. My speech impairment and poor hearing made my struggles seem insurmountable. In order to meet immediate medical expenses and repair my damaged home, I was forced to part with my beloved goat. Refusing to succumb to despair, I started to care for and sell ducks, a small endeavor that provided me with some stability. I now feel more empowered. Deep within my heart, I hold a cherished dream of owning a cow, a symbol of stability and prosperity that I aspire to attain one day.”



Sima Munda

“I am Sima Munda, a 28-year-old indigenous woman with a humble education level of just third grade. In 2020, the relentless floods brought the harsh reality of climate change crashing into my life, turning me into a helpless victim. My home and fish farm were swept away, leaving me homeless and shattered.

To make ends meet and survive, I resorted to selling fish and working as a day laborer. A new chapter in my journey began when I received assistance from the project.

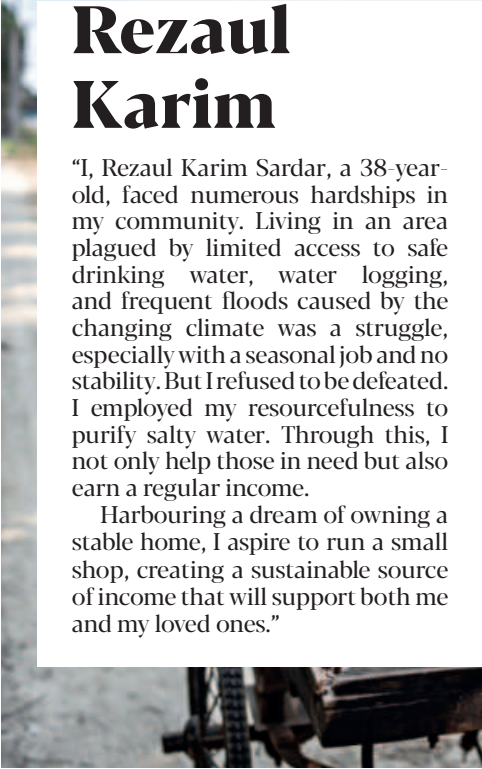
I seized the opportunity to start my own business and engage in agricultural work. I cultivated vegetables, raised fish, and explored various avenues to secure my livelihood. Gradually, I established my own shop, steadily improving my social standing through the fruits of my labor.

The possibilities for my daughter's future are boundless in my heart, and I dream of her becoming a doctor, breaking free from the constraints imposed upon us by our circumstances.”

Rezaul Karim

“I, Rezaul Karim Sardar, a 38-year-old, faced numerous hardships in my community. Living in an area plagued by limited access to safe drinking water, water logging, and frequent floods caused by the changing climate was a struggle, especially with a seasonal job and no stability. But I refused to be defeated. I employed my resourcefulness to purify salty water. Through this, I not only help those in need but also earn a regular income.

Harbouring a dream of owning a stable home, I aspire to run a small shop, creating a sustainable source of income that will support both me and my loved ones.”



Sheuli Rai

“I am Sheuly Rai, a shining example of an extraordinary individual who has undergone a remarkable personal transformation. Starting as an HSC graduate, I have blossomed into a self-assured and compassionate community worker, leaving a positive impact on those around me. My unwavering dedication and involvement as a volunteer with the support of LoGIC have not only uplifted my own life but have also touched the lives of my family and the wider community.”



Rahima Khatun

“My name is Rahima Khatun, and at 35 years old, I have faced the harsh realities of flooding, river breaks, and the hardships of being a climate refugee. Yet, in the face of these immense challenges, I have found the strength to persevere, driven by a deep-rooted commitment to forge a better future for my family and myself.

This project helped me to embark on my entrepreneurial journey, starting with just a few sheep. I seized every opportunity that came my way, buying and selling not only sheep but also goats, ducks, and other animals. As my business grew and flourished, I embraced the possibilities that unfolded before me. Today, I can proudly say that I have achieved a sense of stability and security, thanks to the success of my thriving fish farm”.



Kolpona Das

“My name is Kolpona Das and I am 45 years old. I have faced the unrelenting wrath of floods, enduring their ferocious fury time and time again.

My husband's unemployment forced me to take on the role of a day laborer, toiling in the rice fields and tending to the never-ending household duties. The weight of my family's well-being fell squarely upon my shoulders, and I knew I had to find a way to create a better future for us all.

Hope arrived in the form of LoGIC's support. Three years ago, armed with just three sheep and an unyielding determination, I embarked on an entrepreneurial journey that would change my life. Through sheer resilience and unwavering hard work, my flock expanded, each step forward bringing me closer to my dreams. With the proceeds of selling some of my sheep I acquired a boat.

As a mother, my heart is filled with aspirations for my sons. I dream of sending them to university, unlocking the doors to a world of possibilities.”



Najlima Khatun

“I am Najlima Khatun, a 39-year-old woman who defied societal norms and shattered myths that held me back. In the face of my husband's inability to work, I took it upon myself to shoulder the responsibility of providing for my family's necessities. Balancing my time between working on a humble sewing machine and teaching tuition, I tirelessly worked to put food on the table and secure a better future for my loved ones.

As a victim of the devastating impacts of floods, I experienced firsthand the havoc they wreaked upon my home. However, I embraced resilience and a determination to rise above the challenges that beset me.

I embarked on a remarkable journey of entrepreneurship with the invaluable support of this project. I started by selling chicks and ducks, gradually expanding my business to include quail, goats, and cows. Today, we are thriving, thanks to the steady income generated from my endeavors. I was also able to purchase an easy bike for my husband, easing his transportation burdens and further enhancing our quality of life.”



Local Government Initiative on Climate Change, (LoGIC) project, implemented by the Local Government Division of the Ministry of LGRD&C, is a joint initiative of the Government of Bangladesh, UNDP, UNCDF, EU and Sweden. The project was initiated in 2016 with an aim to deliver climate finance to the most vulnerable households and the local government institutions in 72 unions of Khulna, Sunamganj, Kurigram, Bagerhat, Barguna, Patuakhali and Bhola districts. The five-year project is designed to roughly support 400,000 most climate-vulnerable people (56% women) in Bangladesh.

World number three Novak Djokovic inched closer to a record-breaking 23rd Grand Slam title by crushing Peruvian Juan Pablo Varillas 6-3, 6-2, 6-2 on Sunday to reach the French Open quarter-finals. A two-time champion in Paris, Djokovic has now reached the quarter-finals at the French Open for a record 17th time, one more than 14-time champion Rafa Nadal.

PHOTO: REUTERS

PHOTO: REUTERS



SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh Hockey Federation's vice-president Sajed A Adel and general secretary Mominul Haque Shaeed traded blames yesterday ahead of the federation election, which is scheduled to be held on June 19.

Adel claimed that he was barred from placing his objection letter at the election commissioner's office at the National Sports Council by Shaeed and his associates. Shaeed, however, claimed that he was not even present there, adding that this could be a ploy by the vice-president to malign him.

"Shaheed told me you can't place your paper here, you better leave, Adel alleged, adding that Shaheed might have done this from fear that he might contest for the general secretary post against the incumbent one.

When contacted, Shaeed claimed these to be baseless accusations to malign him.

"I don't know why he's spreading propaganda against me. Since I was embroiled in a scandal, he's taking advantage of that," Shaeed added.

The chief election commissioner Saidur Rashid did not pick up the phone when contacted for a comment on this issue.



Ebadot Hossain (L) apparently tries to make a point to fellow pacer Taskin Ahmed and pace bowling coach Allan Donald (R) during a practice session at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur yesterday. Bangladesh Cricket Board yesterday declared a pace-heavy squad for the upcoming one-off Test against Afghanistan.

PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

PHOTO: **FIROZ AHMED**

SPORTS REPORTER

The Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) is focusing on the mental aspect of the cricketers and the appointment of psychologist Alan Brown ahead of the Tigers upcoming one-off Test against Afghanistan seems to be a part of the process.

Brown, who specialised in utilising the individual quality of a player to a team environment, was seen working alongside Bangladesh head coach Chandika Hathurusingha at the home of cricket in Mirpur yesterday. Brown, in fact, had already started working with the Bangladesh cricketers even before arriving in the country on Saturday.

“Through research, he (Brown) has been involved with the world-renowned Gallup Strength training programme, established in 1930. Mainly he works on the aspect on how to utilise the individual quality of a player to a team environment,” BCB’s cricket operations manager, Shahriar Nafees, told the media yesterday.

Meanwhile, the board is also planning to rope in another sports psychologist, Phil Jauncey, who has previously worked with the Tigers in 2014.

“Doctor Phill Jauncey will come to Bangladesh in August and he is a classical psychologist and worked with us before. He will work on the individual aspect of the players. Our plan is to provide such support throughout the year, whenever required. “Normally, we don’t require the support of a psychologist all the time as it takes some time for the players to practise on a specific mental aspect and after working on it, they will follow the process from time to time,” Nafees added.

Asked whether the inclusion of different sets of psychologists could create any conflict in working terms, the former Bangladesh opener replied, "Fitness is important in sports. Both fitness-trainer and physiotherapist work to enhance the players' fitness but operate on different aspects. Therefore, there is no chance for them to be in conflict and, I think, there will be coordination."

Nafees, however, was reluctant to comment whether the BCB is planning to have a permanent psychologist till the upcoming ODI World Cup in India, slated for October this year.

SPORTS DESK

On Saturday, as Manchester City coach Pep Guardiola went up to pick his FA Cup medal following a 2-1 win in Wembley – a score-line that does not justify how City never had to go beyond their second gear against Manchester United – Sir Alex Ferguson was there to greet him.

The two of the finest coaches in history shook hands and embraced a hug. Ferguson wore a smile as he congratulated the Spaniard, but perhaps there was more to it. One may also wonder what exchange of words took place between the two. More than a mere formality?

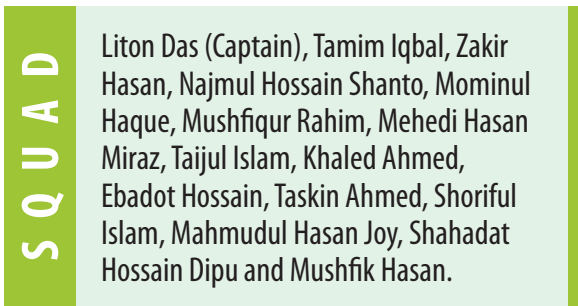
Ferguson, during his trophy-laden 26 years with Manchester United, has experienced all that a managerial career had on offer. The Scotsman, however, perhaps did not anticipate how English football was going to unfold once he retired with a fitting league title in 2013.

Ever since Ferguson stepped down and became one of United's directors and ambassadors, they still wait to get their hands on the familiar league trophy. Adding to their misery, "noisy neighbours"

SPORTS REPORTER

Liton Das is set to make his debut as Test captain, standing-in for Shakib Al Hasan who is out injured, as the Bangladesh squad was announced yesterday for the lone Test against Afghanistan, to be held in Dhaka from June 14.

The selectors have picked uncapped batter Shahadat Hossain Dipu and pacer Mushfik Hasan after the duo showed potential against West Indies A recently. Meanwhile, Zakir Hasan returned from injury and Mahmudul Hasan Joy was retained in the side and



the batter will carry confidence following his unbeaten ton against West Indies A in the third four-day game in Sylhet.

The selection under head coach Chandika Hathurusingha was supposed to be aggressive and the presence of five pacers gives credence to the idea of an attacking selection policy. The Tigers lost their maiden Test against Afghanistan by 224 runs in Chattogram in 2019 and it inflicted major woes, one that caused BCB president Nazmul Hassan to suggest he was going to investigate what went on in the strategic setup of the game despite the team management being aware of Afghanistan's spin threat.

The furore was created by the Tigers picking no specialist pacer in the line-up for the match and the wicket favoured spin which played into Afghanistan's hand. This time, there would be the opportunity to go for different conditions despite the Mirpur track not generally favouring pacers.



Mushfik Hasan



Shahadat Hossain Dipu

Soaring temperatures has been a major challenge to city dwellers and people across the country and the team management are concerned about it as well. Pacer Taskin Ahmed has been rehabilitating since his side strain injury that ruled him out of the Ireland Test recently. With their ace pacer still on way to recovery, the team management were not in favour of taking any chances in terms of having enough numbers in pace attack. Thus, Taskin was picked with backups in mind.

"We are happy with the pace strength," chief selector Minhajul Abedin told The Daily Star yesterday.

"It will be a challenging series since we are playing in such intense heat and the wicket will be very challenging. So, I am hoping that our players will do well. Afghanistan are a strong side and they will be facing a very good challenge."

Bangladesh picked two spinners in Mehedi Hasan Miraz and Taijul Islam while the pace attack also consists of Khaled Ahmed, Shoriful Islam and Ebadot Hossain.

Allan Donald was working closely with the pace group yesterday as the likes of Taskin, Ebadat, and Khaled bowled at a separate net against the likes of Tamim Iqbal, Mushfiqur Rahim, and Najmul Hossain. The conditioning would be necessary while the need to improve the pacers' arsenal would have been on the agenda, given that only two spinners have been picked.

Chandika, who arrived a day before, joined the session yesterday and oversaw the batters at work, focusing on Tamim during a majority of the left-hander's net session as preparation swung into gear.



NORTH SOUTH UNIVERSITY
Center of Excellence in Higher Education

ESM

[Admissions open | Summer 2023]

Master in Environmental Science and Management



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



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

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

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](http://www.northsouth.edu)



Apply
Online



PM to decide when election-time govt will be formed

Says law minister

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Law Minister Anisul Huq yesterday said Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina would decide when the election-time government would be formed.

The PM does not need to resign for the polls-time government to operate and may constitute a small cabinet if it's felt necessary at that time, he said.

"Our state is run under the constitution based on the Westminster-style parliamentary system of government. As such, when she decides, the prime minister will form an election-time government. There is no ambiguity in this matter."

"The prime minister has already given an outline to this effect and said who might be involved in the polls-time government," he added.

The law minister made the remarks while talking to reporters after attending as the chief guest a meeting organised by the Judicial Administration Training Institute (JATI) on the occasion of inaugurating a training course for judges involved in trials

SEE PAGE 6 COL 1



PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN

People trying to help a woman who fell off her wheelchair during a scuffle with policemen who stopped a procession of people with disabilities from heading towards the Prime Minister's Office to press home their demand for a monthly allowance of Tk 5,000.

6 congressmen's letter to Biden 'false projection'

Say community leaders on state of minorities in Bangladesh

UNB, Dhaka

Several noted minority community leaders yesterday said the picture of Bangladesh's minorities depicted in a letter sent by the six US congressmen to President Biden is "absolutely false".

They termed it a "threat to the existing communal harmony in Bangladesh."

Besides accusing the government of human rights violations, the letter also claimed that under Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's watch, religious minorities in the country are also suffering.

In the letter, the US Congressmen called for urgent actions to stop the "human rights abuses" by the Bangladesh government and "give the people of Bangladesh the best possible chance for free and fair parliamentary elections."

Rana Dasgupta, leader of Bangladesh Hindu Buddhist Christian Oikya Parishad, rejected the claim in the letter that the Hindu population has halved since Sheikh Hasina's rise to power.

"I will say this claim is a travesty of truth," he said, adding that a vested group was working behind a cloak ahead of the national election.

Referring to a number of surveys, he added, "Between 1947 and 1971, under Pakistani rule, a whopping 9.7 percent of

SEE PAGE 6 COL 4

DEADLY TRAIN CRASH IN ODISHA

Indian minister claims 'sabotage'

OUR CORRESPONDENT, New Delhi

Indian Railways Minister Ashwini Vaishnav yesterday spoke of "sabotage" as the cause of India's deadliest train disaster in decades was linked to the signal system.

The minister said tampering with the electronic interlocking system was likely the cause behind the incident in Odisha that claimed at least 288 lives.

This comes amidst opposition parties' growing demand for the resignation of Vaishnav for alleged negligence of safety.

Mounds of debris were piled high at the site of Friday night's crash near Balasore, in the eastern state of Odisha, as workers repairing the tracks cleared the debris.

Hospitals have been overwhelmed by the number of casualties.

"We have identified the cause of the accident and the people responsible for it," Vaishnav told news agency ANI. He said it was "not appropriate" to give details before a final investigation report.

Vaishnav, who has been camping at the accident site since Saturday, told reporters there that the "root cause" of the accident and the "criminals" responsible for it have been identified.

"It happened due to a change made in the

electronic interlocking and point machine," he said.

"It could be a case of tampering or sabotage from within or from outside. We have not ruled anything out," the minister said.

"The setting of the point machine was changed. How and why it was done will be revealed in the probe report," he said.

In Delhi, top railway officials explained how the point machine and the interlocking system function and insisted the system is "error proof" and "fail-safe." They did not rule out the possibility of outside intervention.

As the tragedy also triggered a debate over the installation of the anti-collision system in trains, the main opposition Congress yesterday joined other opposition parties in demanding the resignation of the railway minister.

Hospitals have been overwhelmed by the number of casualties.

There was confusion about the exact sequence of events but reports cited railway officials saying a signalling error had sent the Coromandal Express running south from Kolkata to Chennai onto a side track.

It slammed into a freight train and the wreckage derailed an express running north from India's tech hub Bengaluru to Kolkata that was also passing the site.



Fakhrul talks nat'l election with Japanese ambassador

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Japanese Ambassador to Bangladesh Iwama Kiminori met BNP's Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir yesterday and discussed the country's next general election and the overall political situation.

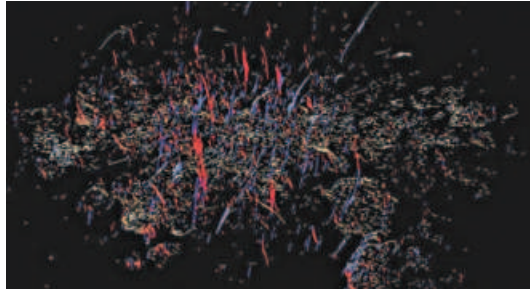
After the meeting at the BNP chairperson's Gulshan office, the party's standing committee member Amir Khasru Mahmud Chowdhury told journalists that Japan, like other democratic countries, wants to see a free, fair, and acceptable election in Bangladesh.

"Bangladesh's relations with Japan expanded significantly since we started the free market economy during the BNP government. That is why they [Japan] want that relation to continue even if the government changes," he said.

Khasru, along with the party's Organising Secretary Shama Obayed, was present at the meeting. They discussed the

SEE PAGE 6 COL 3

Mysterious cosmic structures found in Milky Way



CNN ONLINE

An international team of astrophysicists has discovered hundreds of mysterious structures in the center of the Milky Way galaxy.

These one-dimensional cosmic threads are hundreds of horizontal or radial filaments—slender, elongated bodies of luminous gas that potentially originated a few million years ago when outflow from Sagittarius A*, the Milky Way's central supermassive black hole, interacted with surrounding materials, according to a study published Friday in The Astrophysical Journal Letters.

The filaments are relatively short in length, each measuring 5 to 10 light-years.

The findings come nearly 40 years after Farhad Yusef-Zadeh, the study's lead author, and other researchers discovered another population of nearly 1,000 one-dimensional filaments, which are vertical and much larger at up to 150 light-years long each, near the galaxy's center.

Yusef-Zadeh and collaborators also found hundreds more paired and clustered vertical filaments in the same area in 2022. The new study both reinforces and builds upon the earlier findings.

Contempt of court petition filed against Taposh

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A contempt of court petition has been filed with the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court against Dhaka South City Corporation (DSCC) Mayor Sheikh Fazle Noor Taposh for his comments about a former chief justice and civil society.

Shah Ahmed Badal, member secretary of the Ad hoc Committee of the Supreme Court Bar Association (SCBA) submitted the petition on Saturday to the office concerned of the SC, saying that the utterances made by Taposh have constituted contempt of the highest court of the country and the judiciary as a whole.

In the petition, he prayed to the apex court to issue a notice to Taposh

SEE PAGE 6 COL 4



Emergency workers rescue a man from debris of a residential building heavily damaged by a Russian missile strike, amid Russia's attack on Ukraine, on the outskirts of the Dnipro city, Ukraine early yesterday. Story on page 7.

PHOTO: REUTERS

Eight injured in oil tanker explosion

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Narayanganj

Eight people suffered burn injuries in an oil tanker explosion on the Shitalakkhya in Narayanganj's Rupganj early yesterday.

The injured are Mannan Rahad, 23, Humayun Kabir, 54, Tajul Islam Limon, 24, Imtiaz Ahmed, 42, Rubel, 38, Sohel, 38, Nazmul, 33, and Rakib, 24.

Five of them are undergoing treatment at Sheikh Hasina National Institute of Burn and Plastic Surgery in the capital, said Ataur Rahman, inspector (investigation) of Rupganj Police Station.

Tariqul Islam, doctor of the emergency department of the burn institute, said eight persons were brought for treatment.

"Five of them are undergoing treatment in critical condition while the remaining three have received first aid and left."

The explosion took place at an oil tanker named "OT Shanghai-8" around 1:30am when it anchored at its own jetty at Dorikandi Dockyard near Gazi Bridge in Rupganj, said Inspector Ataur.

"It happened due to accumulated gas," he added.

Alamgir Hossain, deputy assistant director of Narayanganj Fire Service and Civil Defence, said four fire service units rushed to the spot and doused the fire.