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\$1b in budget support arrives next week

ADB, AIIB and Jica teamed up for the financing arrangement

REJAUL KARIM BYRON

About \$1 billion in budget support is set to arrive in the next few days from three development partners to help the government meet its deficit financing for this fiscal year.

Of the sum, \$400 million is coming from the Asian Development Bank, another \$400 million from the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank and \$216 million from the Japan International Cooperation Agency.

Yesterday, the boards of the AIIB and the ADB approved the loan. The approval for the loan from Jica is expected by next week.

The amounts would enter the Bangladesh Bank's vault as soon as the loans are approved by the boards as Bangladesh has been able to meet more or less all the conditions, The Daily Star has learnt from finance ministry officials involved with the proceedings.

However, the inflow would not be enough to prop up the country's net international reserves enough to meet the \$24.46 billion floor set by the International Monetary Fund to get the second tranche of the \$4.7 billion sanctioned.

All three loans' conditions are synchronised and drawn upon by the ADB, which is serving as the lead financier.

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Two students waded through ankle-deep water on the playground adjacent to Char Chaktai City Corporation High School in Chattogram city's Dakshin Bakalia area. Children cannot play on this ground, the only one in the area, as it has been under water for over four months. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: RAJIB RATHAN

Finish probe into Sultana's death within two months

HC asks govt-formed body

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday directed the government-formed committee to complete in two months the enquiry into the detention and death of Sultana Jesmineof Naogaon.

The HC bench of Justice Farah Mahbub and Justice Mohammad Mahbub Ul Islam passed the order following a petition filed by Deputy Attorney General Samarendranath Biswas on behalf of the state, seeking time to complete the probe.

"It is a sensitive matter. Don't cross the two-month time limit. Two months

SEE PAGE 6 COL 4

Child mortality rate rises

The child mortality rate in Bangladesh has increased significantly to 31 per thousand in 2022 compared to 28 per thousand in 2021, according to "Bangladesh Sample Vital Statistics (BSVS) 2022", launched by BBS yesterday. Deaths of children under one increased to 25 per thousand from 22 per thousand during the same period. Diarrhoea, malnutrition, acute respiratory infection and drowning were among the other reasons behind the rise. According to experts, this significant rise highlights the gap in child healthcare services in the country.

READ MORE ON PAGE 3

Tax bill proposes clipping ACC wings

Investigators to require court's permission to get graft suspect's tax return info from NBR

MAHBUBUR RAHMAN KHAN

Although tax returns are a key document for investigating illegal wealth, the Income Tax Bill 2023 proposes making it impossible for Anti-Corruption Commission officials to access a suspect's tax files without a court order.

ACC officers fear that if the bill passes, investigations will become unnecessarily complicated and lengthy.

"Investigation officers use the tax return as an authentic document while filing cases. But the power is curtailed in the proposed act," said an ACC officer, requesting anonymity.

"Many corrupt individuals may get away. We don't know for whose benefit the power is curtailed," the officer added.

A parliamentary body was asked on June 8 to examine the bill and come up with a report in five working days.

The provision curtailing ACC investigators' power is clearly contradictory to article 20(2) of the Constitution which criminalises unearned income, said Iftekharuzzaman, executive director of Transparency International Bangladesh.

Currently, the ACC launches an investigation after receiving a complaint of illegal wealth and asks the individual concerned for their wealth statement.

Officers then cross-check the statement in light of the tax return they obtain from the National Board of Revenue. Officers also verify the information of moveable and immovable properties with records from banks and other organisations.

If the officers detect irregularities, they file cases with the ACC's approval.

But section 309 (2) of the proposed income tax bill says the ACC cannot seek income tax return unless there is a court order.

One of the mandates of the ACC is to dig out illegal wealth and it often says it will not let owners of illegal wealth sleep peacefully, said an officer.

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Vendor beaten to death for 'skipping rally'

Family points finger at ruling party activists

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A street vendor has been beaten to death in the capital's Mirpur for not attending a rally organised by the Jubo League in the area, alleged family members and locals.

Several people beat Hafizur Rahman, 27, indiscriminately around 6:30pm on Monday in front of his cart, said witnesses.

As he fell unconscious, locals rushed him to a local hospital and then to Shaheed Suhrawardy Medical College, where doctors declared him dead.

Hafizur used to sell chicken fries from his cart on Folpatty Road near Mirpur-10 roundabout.

"Some Awami League men beat my brother to death as he did not join a rally as per their instruction. Hafizur assured them that he would join the rally but instead opened his cart for business," the victim's elder brother Shafiqul Islam told The Daily Star.

Shafiqul also claimed that most who run makeshift shops or carts on the pavement are forced to attend

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Jamaat regroups by stealth

Police documents show the party is swelling its ranks fast

PARTHA PRATIM BHATTACHARJEE and MOHAMMAD JAMIL KHAN

Contrary to the widespread perception that Jamaat-e-Islami has been on the wane for over the past 15 years, the Islamist party that actively opposed the birth of the nation is actually growing, according to intelligence and party documents.

In 2008, the number of the party's permanent members or Rukon was 23,863. That figure now stands at 73,046 -- a threefold rise, according to a police intelligence report.

The Islamist party also sees a threefold rise in the number of its activists, which has leapt to 6.39 lakh from 2.21 lakh during the same period, the report says.

Lately, Jamaat came into discussion again as it held a rally in the capital on Saturday after getting police permission. The party was given such permission for the first time in 10 years. Later, four ministers on Sunday tried to justify the government's decision.

About the permission, Agriculture Minister Abdur Razzak on Sunday said Jamaat has a support base and in light of this, the government gave the party permission to hold the rally.

The police intelligence report, which also contains Jamaat's strategy for the upcoming national election and funding, has recently been submitted to the home ministry.

It has been prepared based on information gathered from the party's top-secret documents, interrogation of top Jamaat leaders and interception of communication among party leaders.

The Daily Star has a copy of the report alongside party documents.

The documents show a nearly fivefold rise in the party's women Rukon, and a fourfold rise in women activists. Similarly, the number

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Mangoes galore at the Kansat mango market in Chapainawabganj's Shibganj upazila. Farmers say prices of different varieties of mangoes, including Guti, Langra, Khirsapati, Fazli and Amropali, are lower this year compared to those of last year because of good production. The popular summer fruit was sold for Tk 800 to Tk 2,400 per maund yesterday depending on variety and quality.

PHOTO: RABUL HASAN

Win fails to bring joy to AL camp

Party's campaign office found deserted after Khair's victory; unit leaders didn't greet mayor-elect

MOHAMMAD JAMIL KHAN and SUSHANTA GHOSH, from Barishal

Voter turnout was as low as 36 percent in neighbourhoods known as strongholds of incumbent Barishal Mayor Serniabat Sadiq Abdullah in Monday's polls to the Barishal City Corporation, according to centre-wise voting results.

Voters, AL leaders, and supporters from these areas abstained from voting because of tension between Sadiq and his uncle -- mayor-elect Abul Khair Abdullah, said sources.

Sadiq, also the secretary of the Barishal city Awami League (AL), who was in Dhaka on election day, did not even go to Barishal to vote.

Prior to the election, there were reports of a rift between Khair and his nephew Sadiq after Khair received the AL ticket to run for mayor.

Even, Sadiq's father, Abul Hasanat Abdullah, and his supporters also stayed away from Sadiq's election campaign.

Khair won the polls with 87,808 votes, which is more than 62 percent of the total votes cast (1.42 lakh votes).

In spite of the victory, the AL leaders and activists in the city did not arrange any celebration.

This newspaper yesterday found the city AL office locked. Even around the AL's central campaign office, very few leaders and supporters were seen.

Leaders of the city unit AL did not even meet the mayor-elect to congratulate him.

Speaking to this newspaper yesterday, Hemayet Uddin Sumon, office secretary of city unit AL, said, "We

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'Contribute to ensuring free, fair polls in Bangladesh'

6 European Parliament members write to EU high representative for foreign affairs

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Six members of the European Parliament have asked the EU high representative for foreign affairs to contribute to ensuring free, fair, and impartial general elections, possibly under a poll-time neutral

caretaker government, in Bangladesh.

They also called for "ending the violation of human rights, release of Khaleda Zia, and engagement of the government with the BNP and other major political parties to find a sustainable and democratic

SEE PAGE 7 COL 1

WE DEEPLY MOURN

Jahan Ara Chowdhury, wife of Late **Dr. Malik Khosru Chowdhury**, died of old-age complications at Uttara Crescent Hospital in Dhaka on the **12th of June 2023**, this past **Monday**. She was 84.

Jahan Ara Chowdhury, lovingly nick-named Dulali by her parents, and adoringly called Nanna by her grandchildren, was an indomitable spirit and an adventurous soul. She had many entrepreneurial endeavors, was ahead of her time, independent and modern when it was unthinkable. She was a force and an inspiration to her two daughters and her four loving granddaughters.

She left behind her three children, eight grand-children, her youngest sister, and a host of relatives and well-wishers to mourn her passing.

Jahan Ara Chowdhury's namaz-e-janaza will be held at Gulshan Azad Mosque on Wednesday the 14th of June, 2023, after Zuhr prayers. She will be laid to rest at the Banani graveyard afterwards.

Her relatives, friends, and her well-wishers are requested to pray for the salvation of her departed soul and to always remember her strength, her kindness and her beautiful light.

PM reaches Geneva to attend ILO summit



UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina reached Geneva, Switzerland yesterday to attend the two-day “World of Work Summit: Social Justice for All” to be held in the city today and tomorrow.

A regular flight of Biman Bangladesh Airlines carrying the prime minister landed at Geneva Airport at 5:10pm local time (9:10pm Bangladesh time), PM’s Speechwriter Md Nazrul Islam said.

Earlier, the flight departed Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport around 10:00am.

Today, UN High Commissioner for Refugees chief Filippo Grandi will call on the prime minister at the bilateral room of Hotel President Wilson.

Later the PM will call on the President of the Swiss Confederation Alain Berset at Palais de Nations. Afterwards, there is a possibility of signing a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on knowledge and skills enhancement between Bangladesh and Switzerland.

In the afternoon, the prime minister will address the Plenary of the “World of Work Summit 2023” at Palais de Nations.

She will also have a call with the President of Malta Dr George Vella.

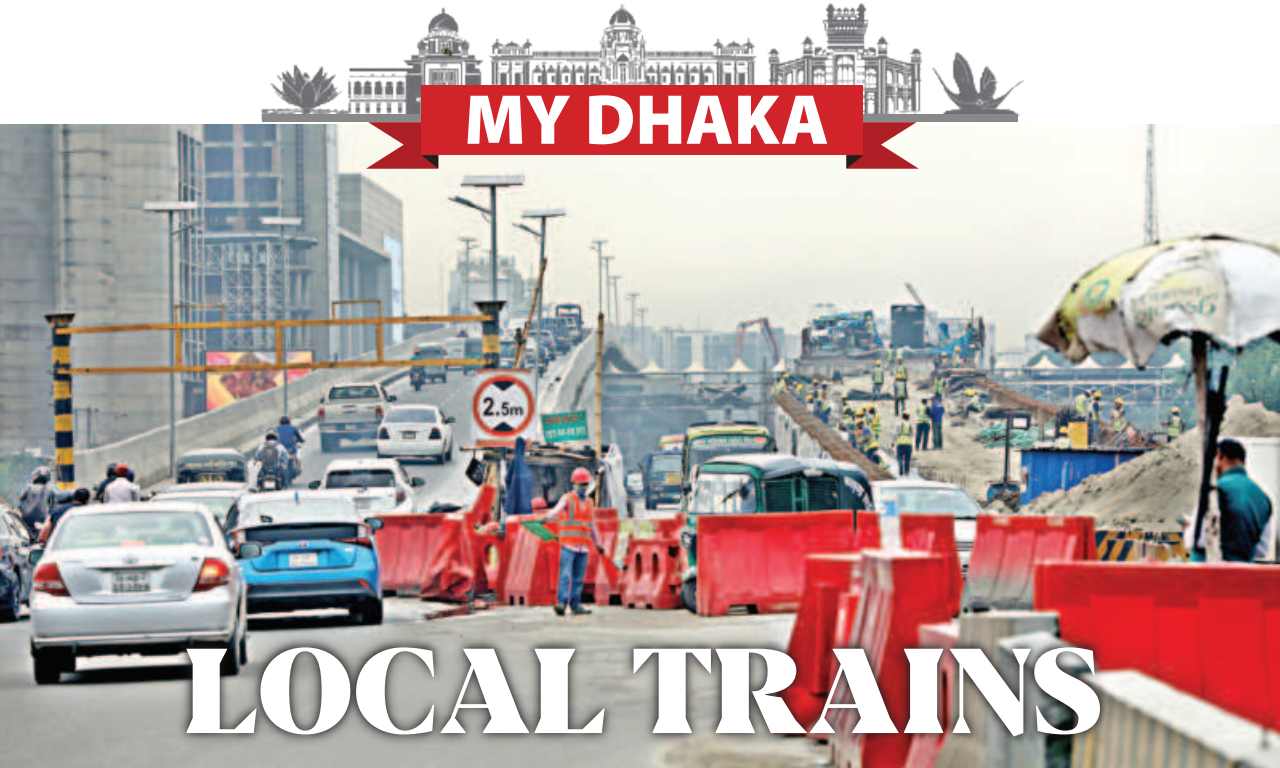
In the evening, the PM will attend a dinner with high-level dignitaries hosted by the International Labour Organisation at its headquarters.

Tomorrow, she will attend the “A talk at the WEF”, followed by a meeting with the founder of WEF Prof Klaus Schwab at the World Economic Forum’s Office.

There, she will address the event on “New Economy and Society in Smart Bangladesh”.

In the evening, World Trade Organisation Director-General Dr Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala will call on her at Hotel President Wilson. She will also attend a community event in the evening.

Commuting from Uttara to Karwan Bazar is a nightmare. If it has to be put into perspective in terms of hours, it takes approximately 1 hour and 30 minutes on a good day. When the traffic is not in your favour, there are instances of being stuck on the road for almost 2 hours 45 minutes.



a viable solution for Dhaka’s traffic woes?

RBR

Exiting Uttara, especially now with all the chaos of Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) construction happening around the airport area, is indeed a test of patience. The never-ending BRT project, which was supposed to ease the traffic congestion is now the sole reason for taking 30 minutes or more to just cross the airport intersection. Pedestrians, construction debris, and men at work have all added to the commotion, and Uttara residents try to avoid this main access road connecting Uttara to Dhaka like a rogue.

With the start of the metro rail, a lot of these traffic problems have eased further north of Uttara no doubt. In fact, there is a beautiful road joining Uttara to Mirpur giving the residents a better second option to commute. Then there is the detour of roughly 22 km from Ashulia to Dhanmondi via Beribadh Road. There is less traffic on this highway and is the most favoured option to commute from Uttara regularly.

The other non-conventional way to exit Uttara for central Dhaka is by availing the local train. This ride, as a means of public transport in Dhaka, is faster but not without suffering. Yet,



PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

for Uttara residents, availing the local train is far easier than a bus ride.

If you take an intercity train ride, the ticket comes at Tk 25. For the local train, the price is Tk 20. The train compartment is crowded and you do not find space to stand. Many office-goers to Motijheel, Sayedabad, and areas like Paltan choose this option of travel.

Dhaka as a city is now choked with traffic. While many theories are being projected to ease traffic congestion,

as a layperson, I believe improving our public transport system can be a viable option.

Trains bring in an air of nostalgia in many of us. It brings back childhood memories. The Uttara-Kamalapur train ride however has no romanticism attached to it. It is a hard reality for many. However, that does not have to be the case. Introducing a shuttle train between Uttara and Kamalapur will do marvels to ease the commute for a lot of people.

\$1b in budget support

FROM PAGE 1

The conditions would “enable Bangladesh to enhance revenues, promote efficiency and transparency in public spending and public procurement, deepen the reforms of state-owned enterprises and help small businesses and microentrepreneurs to access low-interest affordable credits from the banking sector”, said Aminur Rahman, principal public management economist for ADB’s South Asia region.

With a strong focus on gender, climate change and digitisation, the conditions would also enable the government to strengthen its efforts to support income generation for the poor and vulnerable, he said in a press

release.

One of the major conditions is securing parliamentary approval to amend the Income Tax Ordinance, 1984.

Finance Minister AHM Mustafa Kamal placed the Income Tax Bill 2023, which accommodated the lenders’ recommendations, in the parliament on June 8.

The draft was sent to the parliamentary standing committee for the finance ministry for scrutiny. The committee has been asked to submit its report within five working days.

Some of the contentious issues in the forthcoming income tax bill came at the lenders’ behest such as

the mandatory income tax return submission by any individual who has spent Tk 4 lakh abroad (excluding pilgrimage-related travels) in the previous income year.

Another condition is consolidating and revising the law on income taxes to address new and emerging issues such as base erosion and profit shifting by global internet-based entities, transfer pricing, derivative transactions in the capital market and thin capitalisation.

The government must also secure parliamentary approval to amend the Income Tax Ordinance, 1984 or issue SRO (as appropriate) for the withdrawal of selected income tax exemptions.

Enable improved tax compliance,

enhanced oversight over tax administration, ensure the integrity and accuracy of tax collections, and minimise tax avoidance through identifying discrepancies in respect of tax liabilities and payments of firms and businesses;

The National Board of Revenue will have to issue orders for information exchange between the large taxpayer units of VAT and income tax, introduce risk-based VAT audits and adopt a risk-based audit manual.

The revenue authority will also have to issue an order to expand the electronic deduction of income tax at source system in at least 6 more tax zones.

The revenue authority has also

mandated online payment of VAT amounts exceeding Tk 1 crore as per the ADB’s recommendations.

Online payment of income tax for amounts exceeding Tk 20 lakh and pilot online personal income tax return filing by taxpayers with income exceeding Tk 70 lakh are two more conditions.

The government has closed down loss-making sugar mills under the Bangladesh Sugar and Food Industries Corporation as per the lenders’ demand with the view to freeing up scarce public resources.

Facilitate streamlining of public procurement, strengthen professionalism in public procurement and enhance efficiency;

Another condition is securing cabinet approval for the Bangladesh Public Procurement Authority bill for the establishment of an autonomous public procurement authority.

Transparency and efficiency in public procurement will be enhanced through strengthening electronic procurement and electronic payment systems, while approval of public projects will be facilitated through the newly launched digital system of public project appraisal and approval process, according to ADB.

If the policy actions are implemented sincerely, Bangladesh’s tax-to-GDP ratio will increase to 8.8 percent from 7.9 percent at present by December next year.

Jamaat regroups by stealth

FROM PAGE 1

of associate members has now grown to 2.29 crore from 1.03 crore in 2008.

Asked about the party’s recent activities, Jamaat Naye-e-Ameer (deputy chief) Abdullah Md Taher told The Daily Star that they were not allowed to carry out political activities for over a decade.

“But we have continued our ‘dawati’ (invitational) activities secretly and will continue to do so,” he said.

About the spike in the number of its members, especially among the women, he said it is the result of their dawati activities. “Still, the number of men is much higher than that of women, but the increase in the number of women members is higher.”

Jamaat has faced myriad challenges since December 2008. Many of its leaders were also arrested in 2013-2015 when the BNP-Jamaat alliance staged a fierce anti-government movement.

However, it faced an existential crisis when most of its top brass were tried on war crimes charges at the International War Crimes Tribunal and executed.

Following the war crimes trial, five of its top leaders were hanged while three died in custody. Another two, who were sentenced to different jail terms, are serving their time at present.

According to Jamaat’s database,

around 1,850 Jamaat leaders are in jail as of March 31, while 15 Jamaat men were alleged victims of enforced disappearance. Around 294 Jamaat activists were killed in the last 12 years, the party claimed.

Established by the controversial Islamist scholar Abul Ala Moududi in 1941, Jamaat had been banned twice, in 1959 and 1964 in Pakistan, for its communal role.

During the Liberation War, the party had directly taken a stance against the country’s independence and carried out indiscriminate massacre of pro-Liberation forces and activists supporting the cause of independence.

The Al-Badr Bahini, an auxiliary force of the Pakistan army in 1971, played a key role in the killing of martyred intellectuals. Al-Badr consisted mainly of activists of Islami Chhatra Sangha, Jamaat’s student wing during the Liberation War.

In its verdict against former Jamaat ameer Ghulam Azam, the International Crimes Tribunal-I observed, “...Jamaat-e-Islami, as a political party under the leadership of accused Prof Ghulam Azam, intentionally functioned as a criminal organisation especially during the War of Liberation of Bangladesh in 1971.”

The party was banned again after

independence but was allowed back in politics during the rule of late president Ziaur Rahman. Justice seekers, and war crimes victims and their family members have long been demanding the trial of Jamaat as a party for its role in 1971.

According to Jamaat sources, the party never regretted or offered apology for its role in 1971. The issue of offering apology was discussed within the party in 2017, but no decision was made in this regard.

Jamaat’s assistant secretary general Barrister Abdur Razzaq resigned from the party in 2019, citing the party’s failure to apologise for its role in the Liberation War and bring reforms to its constitution.

The BNP allied with Jamaat in 1999 and formed a four-party alliance ahead of the 2001 national election. Later, the alliance formed government after a landslide victory in the election and Jamaat’s former Ameer and secretary general were made ministers in the Khaleda Zia-led government.

Using the state power, Jamaat then strengthened its organisational activities.

As the 2013-15 movement against the AL government was a failure and drew flak at home and abroad for its violent nature, the BNP and Jamaat had been very strategic in their relations.

However, the parties bridged the gap and got closer recently and agreed to wage a simultaneous movement to oust the government and materialise a polls-time caretaker administration.

In 2013, Jamaat’s registration as a political party was declared illegal by the High Court. Acting on the verdict, the Election Commission cancelled Jamaat’s registration in October 2018.

In last October, Bangladesh Development Party (BDP), which many believe is Jamaat-e-Islami in disguise, applied for registration with the EC.

According to some media reports, top leaders of BDP were involved with Jamaat. The general secretary of the party is a former leader of Islami Chhatra Shibir, the student wing of Jamaat.

Earlier this month, Amar Bangladesh Party, founded by some former leaders of Jamaat, also applied for registration as a political party.

Both the BDP and Amar Bangladesh, however, were denied registration.

Despite all the hurdles, the police intelligence report shows how the party has silently recovered over the past 15 years.

The party has adopted a dual policy regarding the upcoming national election, slated to be held towards the end of this year.

It has already prepared a primary list of candidates for all 300 constituencies and even potential ministers for 10 ministries. It will make the final decision considering the political situation, according to the report.

While selecting the candidates, Jamaat has preferred party men who are in various professions – businessmen, doctors, engineers, police and former bureaucrats.

People who are popular and have considerable influence in their areas have been selected.

The organisation has also started collecting election funds from its members. It wrote to all its units across the country, asking party members to pay extra for raising an election fund.

The organisation has adopted a unique strategy to increase voters in constituencies where it has a strong base. It has also mobilised its voters in towns.

Pro-Jamaat voters of the constituencies where the possibility of its win is slim will be migrated to its strongholds.

Jamaat is also trying to spread its wings abroad for broadening its organisational base, collecting new members and raising funds.

According to the police document, Jamaat sent letters last year to

different Muslim countries and Islamic organisations abroad, describing its current political situation in the country and branding the incumbent government “anti-Islam”.

The organisation wrote to the chairman of Muslim Brotherhood on December 8, the Malaysian prime minister on November 24, the chairman of The Welfare Party of Turkey on November 6, the president of The Felicity Party of Turkey on October 24, the Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan on October 17 and the Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman on September 30.

According to the document, as the organisation is running its activities under the banners of different organisations, and as it has no specific office now, Jamaat is conducting its political and organisational activities from rented houses.

It is also holding meetings, spreading its ideology and conducting its organisational activities through various types of religious gatherings, like Waz Mahfils, across the country.

Islami Chhatra Shibir, the student wing of Jamaat, mainly recruits activists and supporters for the organisation, persuading them to build an ideal and just Islamic society.

PM sends mangoes to Murmu, Modi

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has sent mangoes as gifts to Indian President Droupadi Murmu and Prime Minister Narendra Modi in a gesture of warm relations between Bangladesh and India.

Hasina also gifted mangoes to Sonia Gandhi, former president of Indian Congress, and other Indian dignitaries.

The prime minister of Bangladesh had also gifted mangoes to Indian dignitaries in the past as goodwill gesture, Bangladesh High Commission in New Delhi said in a statement yesterday.

Besides, mangoes were also sent to the chief ministers of India’s Northeastern states including Meghalaya and Assam, and to West Bengal.

Cabinet committee recommends extending Eid holiday by one day

BSS, Dhaka

A cabinet committee yesterday recommended to the cabinet for extending the Eid-ul-Azha holiday by one day. Chairman of the Cabinet Committee on Law and Order and Liberation War Affairs Minister AKM Mozammel Haque made the recommendation during a meeting.

The committee suggested that the Eid vacation will start on June 27 instead of June 28.

BARISHAL CITY POLLS Man held over attack on IAB mayor candidate

STAR REPORT

Police have detained a man for his alleged involvement in the attack on Muft Syed Faizul Karim, Islami Andolan Bangladesh-backed mayoral candidate in Barishal City Corporation election.

Members of Kotwali Police Station detained Mainul Islam Swapan, of ward 22, on Monday night, said police.

According to Barishal Metropolitan Police, Faizul Karim verbally complained to the BMP commissioner’s office that he was attacked while visiting Sabera Khatun Girls Secondary School in ward-87 of the city.

Salahuddin seeks to pull ‘defamatory’ statements

Files writ petition

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh Football Federation President Kazi Md Salahuddin yesterday filed a writ petition with the High Court seeking its directive on the authorities concerned to remove “defamatory and untrue statements made against him” at some programmes of Ekattor TV from all the public domains where they have been published.

In the petition, he requested the HC to order the authorities to stop broadcasting such defamatory and false statements and to properly ensure the National Broadcasting Policy to this effect, Adv M Saufullah Mamun, a lawyer for the petitioner told The Daily Star.

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Ensure justice President urges lawyers

BSS, Dhaka

President Mohammed Shahabuddin yesterday urged lawyers to extend optimum cooperation to ensure justice for the people of the country.



The president made the call when a 12-member delegation of the Bangladesh Bar Council, led by its Chairman Abu Mohammad Amin Uddin, paid a courtesy call on him at Bangabhaban.

"Lawyers are very conscious citizens of society... Justice can be ensured only through the coordination of the bar and the bench", he observed, urging every member of the Bar Council to ensure transparency and accountability in their respective works.

The president suggested the authorities concerned to ensure that only qualified and talented law-degree-holders can become members of the Bangladesh Bar Council as this would benefit the country's judiciary.

Referring Bar Council as the "Lawyers' Parliament", the president assured the lawyers of providing all necessary cooperation for its development.



A sweet smell emanates through the air, as the capital's trees are in bloom with the season's offering -- Kadam. Synonymous with the first rain of monsoon, the flower can be spotted in many corners in the city, especially in the hands of the many little boys and girls positioned around traffic stoplights, or the occasional street-side flower shops or even in the hands of those who want to gift it to someone special as a token of love. This photo was taken near Suhrawardy Udyan.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

PADMA RAIL LINK PROJECT Work halted for 2 days following arrest of workers River training likely to resume today, say officials

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Padma Bridge Rail Link Project's river training works on the Arial Khan River remained suspended for two days following the filing of a case and the arrest of workers involved in the works on Sunday.

Although the arrested employees were released on bail on Monday, the works carried out by a Chinese company remained suspended, halting the progress of river training works that are scheduled to be completed by September 16, according to officials.

Project Director Afzal Hossain sent a letter to the deputy commissioner and superintendent of Police in Madaripur yesterday, requesting that necessary measures be taken to resume the construction, confirmed two project officials.

Bangladesh Railway (BR) is implementing the Tk 39,246.80 crore project to build a broad-gauge rail line from Dhaka to Jashore via the Padma

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Dengue claims one more life

211 hospitalised in
24 hours

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

One more dengue patient died while 211 were hospitalised in the last 24 hours till yesterday morning. The total number of dengue-related deaths has risen to 27 this year, according to the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS).



The total number of dengue cases this year rose to 3,601.

Some 703 dengue patients are still undergoing treatment, of whom, 128 are from outside Dhaka. A total of 2,871 dengue patients were released from hospitals.

The total number of dengue-related deaths was 281 last year while the total number of cases was 62,382.

Significant rise in child mortality in 2022

Finds govt study, experts highlight gap in healthcare

MOUDUD AHMED SUJAN

A government study shows that the child mortality rate in Bangladesh has increased significantly in 2022 compared to 2021, which experts said highlights the gap in child healthcare services in the country.

In 2021, the mortality rate of children under five years of age was 28 per thousand.

It increased to 31 in 2022, according to the key findings of "Bangladesh Sample Vital Statistics (BSVS) 2022", launched by the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS) at an event in the capital's BBS auditorium yesterday.

We did not analyse the reasons behind child mortality. In 2021, we found that pneumonia was the leading cause, followed by jaundice and different types of fever.

MD ALAMGIR HOSSEN
Project Director

Similarly, deaths of children under one increased to 25 per thousand from 22 per thousand during the same period. The national estimated population has increased to 17.85 crore as of January

1, 2023, according to BSVS, which was prepared based on data collected from 3,06,954 households and 13,02,788 people in 2012 primary sampling units in eight divisions.

Of those, 50.67 percent are female and 49.37 percent are male.

BSVS is a report prepared by regular surveillance under a BBS project "Sample Vital Registration System", to determine the annual population change at national and district levels, based on 138 indicators.

"We did not analyse the reasons behind child mortality. In 2021, we found that pneumonia was the leading

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BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir addresses a rally prior to a road march organised by the Dhaka unit BNP (south) in Gopibagh area yesterday. The programme was arranged to protest the corruption in the power sector and price hike of essentials. He also alleged that the current Election Commission failed to hold a credible election or ensure security of a mayor candidate in Barisal.

PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN

Bapa mired in internal feud

Six executive members resign including president, general secretary

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh Paribesh Andolon (Bapa), which plays a crucial role in the environmental movement, has been bogged down in an internal feud leading to the resignation of its six executive members and a member of the national committee, including president Sultana Kamal and general secretary Sharif Jamil.

The president and the general secretary resigned on Sunday night citing personal reasons but Bapa insiders said a feud has long been brewing in the organisation over some disagreement regarding its leadership.

The others who resigned include vice president Md Abdul Matin, executive vice-president Rasheda K Chowdhury, executive member committee Farida Akther, Father Joseph Gomej and Abdul Qader.

Bapa has a national committee consisting of 53 members, while its executive committee has 19 members -- 11 of them joint secretaries and the rest are vice-presidents.

Six vice presidents convened a meeting on Monday to decide the next course of action.

Alamgir Kabir, joint secretary of Bapa, told The Daily Star that the

meeting was convened to determine the acting general secretary and acting president of Bapa.

They are expected to pick up new leadership within one and a half months.

Alamgir said Bapa could not wage any remarkable movement in the last four years. It could not keep up the pace and maintain the path based on which Bapa launched its journey.

Asked, Sultana Kamal told The Daily Star that as she cited personal reasons for resignation, she should not say anything about it in detail.

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Salahuddin gets travel pass to return home

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP leader Salahuddin Ahmed has gotten a travel pass to return to Bangladesh eight years after he was found in India.



He was reported missing in Dhaka in March 2015.

"I received the travel pass from Bangladesh High Commission in Guwahati yesterday (June 12)," Salahuddin, a BNP standing committee member, told The Daily Star yesterday.

"After completing some formalities and physical check-ups in India, I will return to the country," he added.

He is currently in Shillong of India. The pass was issued on June 8.

The development came after an Indian court on October 26, 2018 acquitted him from the charges of a case filed over trespassing into the neighbouring country and directed the authorities concerned to send him to Bangladesh.

The travel pass stipulates that Salahuddin will have to return to Bangladesh within the next three months.

PRAYER
TIMING
JUNE 14



Fazr	Zohr	Asr	Maghrib	Esha
AZAN 4-05	12-45	5-00	6-50	8-15
JAMAAT 4-40	1-15	5-15	6-55	8-45

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

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1971 GENOCIDE

Intensify campaign for int'l recognition Says president

UNB, Dhaka

President Mohammed Shahabuddin yesterday called upon the Sector Commanders' Forum to continue the campaign for creating public opinion from the grassroots to the international level to get the global recognition for the 1971 genocide in Bangladesh.

The president made the call when the forum's executive president Nurul Alam and its secretary general writer and journalist Harun Habib paid a courtesy call on him at Bangabhaban.

During the meeting, the freedom fighters informed the president that the Sector Commanders' Forum is working at the national and international levels to get international recognition for the 1971 genocide.

7 DIGs, 22 SPs transferred

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

In a reshuffle of the police administration, the government has transferred seven officials of the rank of deputy inspector general (DIG) of police and 22 superintendent of police (SP) to new postings.

The Public Security Division of the home ministry issued three separate circulars in this regard yesterday. The circular was undersigned by its Deputy Secretary Sirajum Munira.

US visa policy to help us hold fair elections Says GM Quader

UNB, Sherpur

Jatiya Party Chairman GM Quader yesterday said that the new US visa policy will be helpful in holding the next general election in a free, fair and credible manner.

"The United States expects free, fair and neutral elections in Bangladesh. What is said in the visa policy, goes in favour of Bangladesh and its people," Quader, also the deputy opposition leader in parliament, told reporters at the Sherpur circuit house before attending the bi-annual conference of Sherpur district unit of the party.

O Level Math
এ অত্যন্ত দুর্বল
এমন ছাত্র/ছাত্রীকে শুভসার
math পড়াবার
সুনতলিরঃ 01781449584



A MOMENT OF JOY... Children enjoy playing football on a rainy day, forgetting the summer heat. The smiling faces vouch for their happiness as they drift along the field and chase the ball. This photo was taken yesterday at the Khulna Home Economics College field in the city's Khalishpur area.

PHOTO: HABIBUR RAHMAN

Work halted

FROM PAGE 3

Bridge. The authority announced to open the Dhaka-Mawa-Bhanga section in September this year.

In a letter to the DC and SP, the project director said they have built a 600-metre-long bridge over the Arial Khan River taking navigation clearance from Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Authority (BIWTA).

They are currently conducting river training works on the eastern side of the river, which was also notified to the BIWTA, it reads. The projected completion date of the works is September 16 of

The projected completion date of the works is September 16 of this year.

this year.

Therefore, China Railway Group Limited, the contractor, has mobilised an excavator to dredge loose sediment from beneath the river and dump geo bags there.

However, the chairman of the National River Conservation Commission (NRCC) visited the site on Sunday and "expressed wrong perception" that sand was being illegally extracted from the riverbed and sold, and a case was filed

against the government project employees with Shibpur Police Station in the district.

The letter states, "As a result, river training works remained suspended now and apprehension has been created that the works would not be completed within September as per the contract."

Contacted, NRCC Chairman Manjur A Chowdhury said following the complaint, they went to inspect the site and found sand being extracted from the river.

"When we sought papers, they could not show any. So, they [workers] were detained for interrogation," he told The Daily Star last night.

"We will further investigate the issue and seek papers from the authorities concerned. If they fail to show the papers, we will prosecute them," he added.

Madaripur Deputy Commissioner Mohammad Marufur Rashid Khan admitted to receiving the PD's letter.

"We will provide all our support to implement the fast-track project," he told this correspondent last night.

Shamima Nasrin, deputy director (bridge and viaduct) of the project, said they have already talked with the contractor and hope to resume work today.

Dispose of application Significant rise in child

FROM PAGE 5

following two petitions, said the petitioners' lawyer Shamsuddin Babul.

He said Prof Zia Rahman, currently the dean of DU's social sciences faculty, had been responsible for irregularities in holding exams, grading students and publishing the results.

Under Prof Zia's supervision, the department published the results of a midterm examination after holding the final examination, gave the highest grades to

students loyal to him and sent the grade over the phone and WhatsApp, said Shamsuddin.

A few students of the department applied to the DU vice chancellor, requesting him to probe the allegation against Prof Zia two months ago. However, the authorities did not take steps, prompting them to submit the petition, he said.

Deputy Attorney General Sk Shaifuzzaman, who represents the state, could not say specifically about the HC order on this issue.

20,988 foreign

FROM PAGE 5

organisations in Bangladesh.

Among them, 6,075 are Chinese, 5,876 Indians, 2,468 Russians, 1,246 Sri Lankans, 924 South Koreans, 557 Japanese, 416 Pakistanis, 460 Filipinos, 399 Thais, 378 Belarusians, 269 Kazakhs, 168 Americans, 123 Malaysians, and 108 Indonesians.

In response to another query from AL MP M Abdul Latif, the home minister, said there is currently no street fire hydrants in Dhaka.

In response to a query from AL MP Abul Kalam Azad, the minister,

said currently there is a tendency among misguided children and adolescents to get involved in gang culture and commit crimes. He said law enforcement agencies are actively working to build a crime-free society.

While replying to a query from AL MP Haji Md Selim, the minister said the ratio of women to men in the police force is 1:8.

During the session, Planning Minister MA Mannan said 18.7 percent of the total population is poor and 6.6 percent is very poor.

Bapa mired

FROM PAGE 3

"My only expectation is that Bapa continues its journey in light of its previous glorious contribution to the conservation of nature and the environment. I hope the new committee will follow the path of its predecessors," she said.

A range of allegations was brought against the recently-resigned leadership of Bapa, which they categorically denied as baseless and fictitious.

Sources said Bapa used to hold four secretariate-level meetings a month. However, in the last 42 months, there were not more than 18 meetings. The atmosphere for collective decision-making was shrunk and the existing committee expired in 2021, while the formation of the new committee was being delayed.

Another allegation suggests that Bapa was being used as an individual's platform.

Sharif Jamil told The Daily Star that he removed himself from the post due to

personal reasons.

He said within three months of taking the leadership of Bapa, the Covid-19 pandemic broke out, which delayed the formation of the new committee, along with other challenging matters.

Denying the allegation of shrinking the space for collective decision-making, he said during his tenure, he activated sub-committees and a programme committee so that the organisation's decision reflects the broader opinion.

"However, some leaders did not like it as they feared Bapa would not be theirs to control," said Sharif.

Some environmental activists, requesting anonymity told The Daily Star that a stronger Bapa is the need of the hour given the extent of onslaught on the country's environment, rivers, forest and hills.

If Bapa gets debilitated, environmental offenders will be strengthened, they said.

EID-UL-AZHA

Advance train ticket sales start today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh Railway (BR) starts selling advance tickets for intercity trains online today ahead of the Eid-ul-Azha to reduce public suffering.

Like the previous Eid, all advance tickets will be sold online at two different time slots to reduce the load on its server.

The West Zone will start selling tickets online at 8:00am, while the East Zone will start at noon.

The tickets for trains on June 24 will be sold today, while tickets for June 25, 26, 27 and 28 will be sold on June 15, 16, 17 and 18.

BR will start selling advance return tickets from June 22. On the first day, they will sell tickets for July 2. Return tickets for July 3, 4, 5 and 6 will be sold on June 23, 24, 25 and 26.

The Eid-ul-Azha is expected to be celebrated on June 29. Moreover, BR will operate a total of eight special trains during the Eid rush.

Two special trains will be operated on the Chattogram-Chandpur route while one on the Dhaka-Dewanganj route, one on the Chattogram-Mymensingh route, one on the Bhairab Bazar Kishoreganj route, one on the Mymensingh-Kishoreganj route, one on the Dhaka Cantonment-Panchagarh route and one on the Dhaka Cantonment-Lalmonirhat route.

The operation of the Moitree Express on the Dhaka-Kolkata route and Mitali Express on Dhaka-New Jalpaiguri will be off from June 23 to July 3. The operation of the Bandhan Express on the Khulna-Kolkata route will remain halted on June 29 only.

The tickets for trains on June 24 will be sold today, while tickets for June 25, 26, 27 and 28 will be sold on June 15, 16, 17 and 18.

El Arefin, senior director of icddr, b's maternal and child health division, told The Daily Star.

The study also revealed some improvements in several other indicators.

Maternal mortality rate, for example, has decreased to 156 per lakh from 168 per lakh, while life expectancy has increased to 72.4 years from 72.3 during the same period. Besides, both the crude birth rate and the total fertility rate, have increased from 18.8 percent to 19.3 percent and from 2.05 to 2.15 percent respectively.

Meanwhile, the use of contraceptives has decreased from 65.6 percent to 63.8 percent.

Although 98.8 percent of the population has access to sanitation, access to safe sanitation is still low, around 66 percent. Around 99.4 percent of people have access to electricity. However, access to clean energy and technology in cooking is around only 28 percent. The percentage of homeless people has decreased to 3.93 percent from 4.52 percent.

There have been

improvements in several other indicators, including the literacy rate (76.8 percent for people aged 7 and above) and internet users (45.5 percent for people aged 15 years and above).

The population density per square kilometre was 1,163. Meanwhile, the migration rate per thousand to foreign countries has increased to 6.6 percent from 3 percent during the same period. Experts at the event termed it a result of brain drain.

"Brain drain will have a more tremendous impact than money laundering. We have to take it seriously while adopting any policy," said Shamsul Alam.

The divorce rate in Bangladesh doubled last year compared to 2021 -- from 0.7 per thousand to 1.4, according to the report. Meanwhile, the rate of marriage of girls below 15 years of age increased to 6.5 percent of all girls in the age group in 2022, from 4.7 percent in 2021. The rate of marriage of girls below 18 years increased to 40.9 percent from 32.4 percent in the same period.

They lose it all

FROM PAGE 5

of either BNP or any of its associate bodies. However, no BNP candidate ran for the mayor's office.

Thus, AL-nominated

mayoral candidate Talukder Abdul Khaleque was re-elected with a large margin of victory over the Islami Andolan Bangladesh candidate Abdul Awal.

Khaleque defeated IAB's Awal by a margin of 94,761 ballots, with the former receiving 154,825 votes compared to the latter's 60,061 in 289 centres.

CREDIT RATING REPORT

ONE Bank LIMITED
Corporate HQ
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ONE Bank Limited has been rated by the Emerging Credit Rating Limited (ECRL) on the basis of Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2022. The summary of the rating is presented below:

Valid From	Valid Till	Long Term Rating	Short Term Rating	Outlook
March 10, 2023	March 9, 2024	AA	ST-2	Stable
March 10, 2022	March 9, 2023	AA	ST-2	Stable
March 10, 2021	March 9, 2022	AA	ST-2	Stable

Long Term AA means:
Commercial Banks rated AA have very strong capacity to meet their financial commitments and is generally in a position to withstand adverse developments in the economy, business and other external conditions. These institutions typically possess a good track record and have no readily apparent weaknesses.

Short Term ST-2 means:
Commercial Banks rated in this category are considered to have strong capacity to meet its financial commitments in a timely manner. However, it is somewhat susceptible to adverse development in the economy, business and other external conditions.

John Sarkar
John Sarkar
DMD & Company Secretary

BANGLADESH UNIVERSITY OF ENGINEERING & TECHNOLOGY
DHAKA-1000
Office of the Chief Engineer

Corrigendum Notice

for
INVITATION FOR EXPRESSION OF INTEREST (EOI) FOR SUPPLY & SERVICE

CE/EOI/Corrigendum No.01/2023/E-765 Date:- 13.06.2023

This is to notify all concerns that the following EOI have published through the news paper of the Dainik Ittefaq & the Daily Star on 06th June, 2023.

1	EOI Ref. No. & Date	CE/EOI No-01/2023/EOI/2023/E752, Date :- 05.06.2023	
2	Package No.	CE/E-10(P)/22-23	
3	Identification of Package:	Supply & Installation of different parts for Top end overhauling 2MW CATERPILLAR Generator Unit#1 (3520C New) of BUET Power Plant.	

Corrigendum Details			
Sl.	Field Name	Old Date & Time	New Date & Time
1	EOI Last Selling Date	20/06/2023	26/06/2023
2	EOI Closing Date	21/06/2023	27/06/2023
3	Price of EOI Document	Old Price	New Price
		Tk 1000/-	Tk 2000/-

4	Eligibility of Tenderer/Participant	Old Eligibility of Tenderer/Participant	New Eligibility of Tenderer/Participant
		Minimum 15 years General Experience on Maintenance Work/Schedule Maintenance/Trouble Shooting Work on Gas Generator or Other Generator.	Minimum 2 years General Experience on Maintenance Work/Schedule Maintenance/Trouble Shooting Work on Gas Generator or Other Generator.

Others terms & condition of the EOI Notice will be remain unchanged and these corrigenda will be considered as the part of EOI documents.

GD- 1012

(Dr. A.K.M. Jahangir Alam, PEng)
Chief Engineer

‘Pay up our dues’

Workers of closed RMG factory go on strike

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Demanding Tk 14 crore in compensation from the Bangladesh Export Processing Zone Authority (Bepza), workers of Honour Way Textile and Apparels (Pvt) Ltd, a factory at Dhaka Export Processing Zone, went on a strike yesterday in front of Jatiya Press Club.

The RMG factory in DEPZ shut down fifteen years ago. However, the 1,400 workers who lost their employment are yet to receive their compensation.

Workers complained that despite being promised their due payments for the past 15 years, they have not received anything. The factory was sold out by EPZ (Export Processing Zone) since its owner, Alvin Di Lao, a Hong Kong resident, stopped showing up to work in 2008. However, the price at which the factory was sold has not been made public.

Rashed Khan Menon, president of Workers Party of Bangladesh, who joined the strike, said, “The carelessness of Bepza and DEPZ demonstrates their utter disregard for workers. The workers must receive their share of the proceeds since Bepza and DEPZ sold the property, factory building, and equipment.”

Amirul Haque Amin, president of National Garments Workers Federation, said Bepza must take responsibility and pay the compensation. About 200 workers participated in the strike.

SYLHET ROAD CRASH

Pick-up driver sent to jail after surrender

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

Following a road accident, a Sylhet court sent a pick-up van driver to jail after he surrendered before it yesterday.

Abdur Rahim, 30, of Bajitpur village in Sunamganj’s Dowarabazar upazila was driving the pick-up that collided with a truck in Sylhet’s Dakshin Surma upazila around 5:00am on June 7. The accident claimed the lives of 15 of its 28 commuting construction workers.

Eleven of the injured died on the spot while the other four succumbed to their injuries while undergoing treatment at Sylhet MAG Osmani Medical College Hospital.

A case was filed under the Road Transport Act with Dakshin Surma Police Station on the day of the incident, accusing unnamed truck and pickup drivers .

Rab arrested Rahim from Patuakhali on June 10. He surrendered before the Sylhet Metropolitan Magistrate Court-2 which sent him to jail.



Commuters of the Saat Rasta spend hours in traffic as two rows of illegally parked buses near the Mohakhali bus stop take up almost half the road. This photo was taken near Nabisco intersection in the capital’s Tejgaon yesterday.

PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN

They lose it all

Expelled for participating in Khulna city polls, BNP councillor candidates end up losing electoral race

ASHIK ABDULLAH APU

Eight Khulna BNP leaders, who were expelled for running for councillor posts against the party directives, lost the electoral race. Only an expelled female BNP leader, Mazeda Khatun, won the reserved councillor post for women in ward 9.

Although no BNP candidates were successful in the election, a Jamaat-affiliated candidate was elected councillor in ward 12.

The remaining 30 general wards were won by members of the ruling party. Of them, 15 incumbent councillors were re-elected.

Locals and politicians told the Daily Star that BNP’s defeat was primarily the result of an internal dispute.

BNP’s central leadership decided to boycott the city elections. Even, the party’s senior leadership

instructed its grassroots members not to run for office. Contrary to party directives, nine BNP executives ran for the city office in Khulna.

Consequently, many BNP activists collaborated with AL members to defeat the expelled BNP leaders in many wards. BNP even established a surveillance cell to determine whether any BNP men participated in electoral campaigns or visited polling stations. As a result, many BNP men did not vote on election day.

Sheikh Sajjad Hossain alias Totan, Ashfaqur Rahman, Md Mahbub Kaiser, Muhammad Aman Ullah, Mushfiqur Saleheen, Kazi Fazlul Kabir, Imran Hossain, and Delwar Hossain Matubbar are the eight candidates who contested but lost the election.

Before expulsion, each of them held different posts

SEE PAGE 4 COL 6

It was a govt decision

Says EC secretary on losing NID job to home ministry

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Election Commission has nothing to say about the government’s steps to task the home ministry with issuing national identity (NID) services, taking the job away from the commission.



The EC is following the government decision and will continue to do so, EC Secretary Jahangir Alam said yesterday while talking to reporters at the EC office.

The cabinet on Monday gave the final nod to the draft of the National Identity Registration Act-2023, which will allow the home ministry to issue NID cards instead of the EC, which has been doing it since 2006.

“The state is now amending the law to put someone else in charge. The Election Commission has nothing say in this regard”, he added.

20,988 foreign nationals work in country

Home minister tells JS

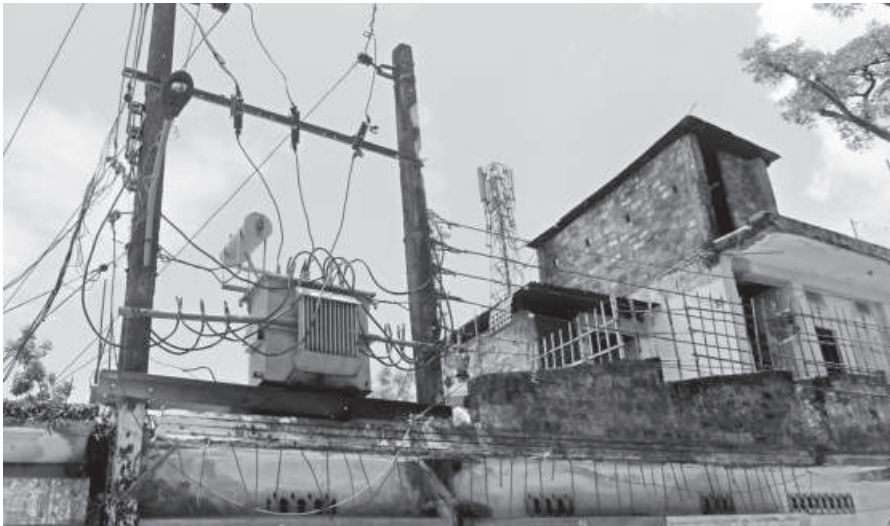
STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A total of 20,988 foreign nationals from 115 countries are currently working in Bangladesh with work permits.

“Of them, China has the largest while India has the second largest number of citizens working here,” said Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan Kamal during a question-answer session in parliament yesterday.

In reply to a query from AL MP Mamunur Rashid Kiron, the minister, said foreign citizens are working in development projects, industries, local and foreign NGOs, and various other

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4



A electric transmitter that was placed on the edge of this building temporarily upon requests from locals and power division officials, remained there for the last 13 years, despite repeated plea for its removal. As a result, residents are now compelled to live in grave risks. This photo was taken in Sylhet city’s Barokhola area recently.

PHOTO: SHEIKH NASIR

Trial of two BNP leaders begins in sabotage case

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

A Chattogram court yesterday started trial against two BNP leaders in a case filed in connection with sabotage and conspiracy to create unrest against the government in 2018.

The court framed charges against the party’s city unit convener Shahadat Hossain and Chattogram south district convener Abu Sufian. The accused were present at the court.

Police filed the case accusing BNP leader Shahadat and Abu Sufian and 38 others, saying that the party’s leaders and activists gathered on the port city’s Emdad Ali Road in Panchlaish to create unrest on November 2, 2018. After the investigation, police pressed charges against them on October 31, 2020.

Driver, helper get life term for yaba peddling in Ctg

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

A Chattogram court yesterday sentenced a driver and a helper to life term imprisonment in a case filed over yaba peddling in the port city’s Karnaphuli area in 2021. The court of 4th Metropolitan Magistrate Shariful Alam Bhuiyan passed the order.

The convicts are Md Taizul Islam Tazu, 29, a pickup van driver; and Md Rakib, 19, his helper.

According to the case statement, detectives arrested Taizul and Rakib with 5,000 yaba pills while they were smuggling the contraband drug from Cox’s Bazar to Chattogram. Later, police filed a case with Karnaphuli Police Station accusing them.

Dispose of application against Prof Zia in 2 months

HC orders DU authorities

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court has ordered the authorities concerned of Dhaka University to dispose of in two months the application that sought an enquiry into allegations against Prof Zia Rahman, former chair of the Department of Criminology, of irregularities in holding examinations and grading the undergrad students of the fifth batch in a course exam.

The court stayed the issuance of provisional certificates to this batch of Local and Global Terrorism (CRM-411) course.

The HC also stayed the DU authorities’ order that suspended Sakin Tanvir, an undergrad final year student of the department, on the charge of sexually harassing another student without issuing any show-cause notice to him.

The bench of Justice KM Kamrul Kader and Justice Mohammad Showkat Ali Chowdhury passed the orders on Monday

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

		গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার			
		বাংলাদেশ পুলিশ			
		স্পেশাল ব্রাঞ্চ, ট্রান্সপোর্ট শাখা			
		রাজারবাগ, ঢাকা।			
		দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি			
২০২৩-২০২৪ অর্থ বৎসরের দরপত্র অনুমোদন পূর্বক উন্মুক্ত পদ্ধতিতে চুক্তির মাধ্যমে এমটি সেকশন, এসবি ঢাকার আওতাধীন সকল যানবাহন খুচরা যন্ত্রাংশ আইটেম ভিত্তিক ও লট ভিত্তিক মেয়ামত এবং গাড়ি ভাড়াক্রমের জন্য অভিজ্ঞতাসম্পন্ন সরবরাহকারী/প্রদানকারীদের নিকট হতে দরপত্র আহ্বান করা যাচ্ছে।					
১।	মুদ্রাণ/বিভাগ	:	বাংলাদেশ পুলিশ, জননিরাপত্তা বিভাগ, স্বরাষ্ট্র মন্ত্রণালয়।		
২।	এজেন্সি	:	স্পেশাল ব্রাঞ্চ, বাংলাদেশ পুলিশ, ঢাকা।		
৩।	সম্মানিত সত্তা	:	অ্যাডিশনাল আইজি, স্পেশাল ব্রাঞ্চ, ঢাকা এর পক্ষে বিশেষ পুলিশ সুপার (ট্রান্সপোর্ট), স্পেশাল ব্রাঞ্চ, বাংলাদেশ পুলিশ, ঢাকা।		
৪।	অর্থের উৎস	:	রাজস্ব বাজেট (গভা)।		
৫।	স্মারক নং ও তারিখ	:	৪৪.০১.০০০০.০৯৪.২৬.০০১.২৩. ১৯১ তারিখ: ১৩-০৬-২০২৩ খ্রি:।		
৬।	দরপত্র নং ও তারিখ	:	০৩/২০২৩-২০২৪, তারিখ: ১৩-০৬-২০২৩ খ্রি:।		
৭।	ক্রয় পদ্ধতি	:	উন্মুক্ত দরপত্র পদ্ধতি লট নং- “০১ থেকে থেকে ২১ পর্যন্ত”।		
৮।	মূল্যায়ন পদ্ধতি	:	লট নং-১,২,৩,৪,৫,৬,৭,৮,৯ ও ১০ আইটেম ভিত্তিক; লট নং ১১,১২,১৩,১৪,১৫,১৬, ১৭, ১৮, ১৯, ২০ ও ২১ লট ভিত্তিক মূল্যায়ন করা হবে।		
৯।	দরদাতার যোগ্যতা	:	দরদাতার (ক) ট্রেড লাইসেন্স, জারি সনদপত্র, আয়কর সনদপত্র হাসানাদায় থাকতে হবে (খ) বাংলাদেশ ব্যাংকের তফসিলদ্রুত বাণিজ্যিক ব্যাংক হতে ইস্যুকৃত আর্থিক সঞ্চলতার সনদপত্র (গ) দরপত্র জ্ঞানমত হিসেবে তফসিলি ব্যাংক হতে ইস্যুকৃত পি-অর্ডার/ব্যাংক ড্রাকট (ঘ) সশস্ত্র বাহিনীর কমপক্ষে ০২ (দুই) বৎসরের অভিজ্ঞতার সনদপত্র এবং (ঙ) জাতীয় পরিচয়পত্র ইত্যাদি।		
১০।	দরপত্র বিক্রয়ের স্থান ও প্রিকানা	:	স্পেশাল ব্রাঞ্চ, বাংলাদেশ পুলিশ, ঢাকা এর নতুন ভবনের ৩য় তলা (কক্ষ নং ৩১৯) এবং ৬ষ্ঠ তলা (কক্ষ নং-৬১১)।		
১১।	দরপত্র দায়িত্বের স্থান	:	স্পেশাল ব্রাঞ্চ, বাংলাদেশ পুলিশ, ঢাকা অফিসের নতুন ভবনের নীচতলায় অভ্যর্থনা ডেস্কের সামনে রাখিত টেন্ডার বক্স।		
১২।	দরপত্র প্রকাশের তারিখ	:	১৪- ০৬-২০২৩ খ্রি: অথবা উহার পূর্বে।		
১৩।	দরপত্র বিক্রয়ের সর্বশেষ তারিখ ও সময়	:	১১-০৭-২০২৩ খ্রি: অফিস চলাকালীন সময় পর্যন্ত।		
১৪।	দরপত্র জমা দেওয়ার তারিখ ও সময়	:	১২-০৭-২০২৩ খ্রি: বেলা-১২.০০ ঘটিকা পর্যন্ত।		
১৫।	দরপত্র খোলার তারিখ ও সময়	:	১২-০৭-২০২৩ খ্রি: বেলা-১২.৩০ ঘটিকায় অত্র সংস্থার নতুন ভবনের দ্বিতীয় তলার মিনি কনফারেন্স রুম (রুম নং ২১৮) উপস্থিত দরদাতাদের সম্মুখে খোলা হবে (যদি কেহ উপস্থিত থাকে)।		
১৬।	লট সমূহের সংক্ষিপ্ত বিবরণ	:	লট সমূহের বিস্তারিত বিবরণ দরপত্র তফসিলে উল্লেখ আছে।		
লট নং	সরবরাহ/কাজের সংক্ষিপ্ত বিবরণ				
		দরপত্র সিডিংয়ের ক্রয়	দরপত্র সময়সীমা (ক্রেতারখোলা)	দরপত্রের মেয়াদকাল	
০১	বিভিন্ন ধরনের জীপ/এসইউভি (মডেল : নিশান পেট্রোল জীপ V-61, মিতসুবিশি পাজেরো V-73, মিতসুবিশি পাজেরো V-76, মিতসুবিশি পাজেরো V-96GL, মিতসুবিশি পাজেরো স্পোর্টস, মিতসুবিশি পাজেরো স্পোর্টস QX, মিতসুবিশি আউটলাইনার, ডাইহাটসু টেরিয়াল, টয়োটা ল্যান্ডক্রুজার গ্র্যাডা) এর সকল ধরনের যন্ত্রাংশ সরবরাহ/ক্রয়।	৮০০/-	৫০,০০০/-	২০২৩-২০২৪	
০২	বিভিন্ন ধরনের কার/সেডান (মডেল : টয়োটা এলিসার, টয়োটা করলা ফিক্সার, টয়োটা করোলা এলিও, হুডাই 95/97, মিতসুবিশি ল্যান্ডার এলজ-সিডিয়ান, নিশান এলজ সেলুন QG16, QG13, টয়োটা হাইব্রিড এলিও, মিতসুবিশি এলজপাড়ার) এর সকল ধরনের যন্ত্রাংশ সরবরাহ/ক্রয়।	৮০০/-	৫০,০০০/-	২০২৪ অর্থ বছর	
০৩	বিভিন্ন ধরনের পিকআপ (ডাকল কেবিন : নিশান KA, QD, টয়োটা হাইল্যান্ড KUN 25R, ফোর্ড UFLIRA 2499, ফোর্ড মডেল 2012, ইসুজু TFR-12, মিতসুবিশি এল-২০০ স্পোর্টস ও K14, মিতসুবিশি এল-২০০ KLI, মিতসুবিশি এল-২০০ কারিবার এবং সিলেক কেবিন ইসুজু) এর সকল ধরনের যন্ত্রাংশ সরবরাহ/ক্রয়।	৮০০/-	৩০,০০০/-	(জুন/ ২০২৪ পর্যন্ত)	
০৪	বিভিন্ন ধরনের মাইক্রোবাস (মডেল : টয়োটা হাইসেট, টয়োটা এলজ নোয়া, মিতসুবিশি এল-৩০০, P-13WLHZR, মিতসুবিশি এল ৩০০ P 15WHLNR, টয়োটা টাউনস EF1 7K, নিশান আরবান, টয়োটা নোহা হাইব্রিড) এর সকল ধরনের যন্ত্রাংশ সরবরাহ/ক্রয়।	৮০০/-	৫০,০০০/-		
০৫	বিভিন্ন ধরনের মিনিবাস/বাস/ট্রাক (মডেল : নিশান সিভিলিয়ান মিনিবাস TD42, মিতসুবিশি FUSU রোশা মিনিবাস, নিশান সিভিলিয়ান মিনিবাস, মডেল ২০১৫, মিতসুবিশি টয়োটা কোস্টার মিনিবাস, টাটা বাস টিপি, অশোক লেগ্যান্ড বাস, হাইকম ট্রাক মডেল 4HRI, স্বরাষ্ট্র মন্ত্রণালয় WT49/50, আইচার ট্রাক, ইসুজু ট্রাক NHR55E, NKR55L, ডায়না ট্রাক) এর সকল ধরনের যন্ত্রাংশ সরবরাহ/ক্রয়।	৮০০/-	২৫,০০০/-		
০৬	বিভিন্ন ধরনের মাইক্রোবাস (মডেল : টয়োটা হাইসেট, টয়োটা এলজ নোয়া, মিতসুবিশি এল-৩০০, P-13WLHZR, মিতসুবিশি এল ৩০০ P 15WHLNR, টয়োটা টাউনস EF1 7K, নিশান আরবান, টয়োটা নোহা হাইব্রিড) এর সকল ধরনের যন্ত্রাংশ সরবরাহ/ক্রয়।	৮০০/-	৩০,০০০/-		
০৭	বিভিন্ন ধরনের যানবাহনের টায়ার সরবরাহ/ক্রয়।	৮০০/-	৩০,০০০/-		
০৮	বিভিন্ন ধরনের যানবাহনের ব্যাটারি সরবরাহ/ক্রয়।	৭০০/-	৩০,০০০/-		
০৯	বিভিন্ন ধরনের যানবাহনের ডেংটিং ও পেইন্টিং এর আইটেম সরবরাহ/ক্রয়।	৭০০/-	৩০,০০০/-		
১০	বিভিন্ন ধরনের যানবাহনের এসি যন্ত্রাংশ এবং ডেকোরেশন আইটেম সরবরাহ/ক্রয়।	৭০০/-	৩০,০০০/-		
১১	বিভিন্ন ধরনের ডাকল কেবিন/সিলেক কেবিন পিকআপের যন্ত্রাংশ সমূহ প্রতিস্থাপন/মেয়ামতের কাজ।	৭০০/-	৩০,০০০/-		
১২	বিভিন্ন ধরনের জীপ এসইউভি (মডেল : Mitsubishi V96, 73, 76) এর যন্ত্রাংশসমূহ প্রতিস্থাপন/মেয়ামতের কাজ।	৭০০/-	৩০,০০০/-		
১৩	বিভিন্ন ধরনের জীপ (মডেল : Mitsubishi Sports,QX) এর যন্ত্রাংশসমূহ প্রতিস্থাপন/মেয়ামতের কাজ।	৭০০/-	৩০,০০০/-		
১৪	বিভিন্ন ধরনের জীপ (মডেল : Mitsubishi Outlander, Nissan Petrol) এর যন্ত্রাংশসমূহ প্রতিস্থাপন/মেয়ামতের কাজ।	৭০০/-	৩০,০০০/-		
১৫	বিভিন্ন ধরনের বাস/মিনিবাস/ট্রাক এর যন্ত্রাংশসমূহ প্রতিস্থাপন/মেয়ামতের কাজ।	৭০০/-	৩০,০০০/-		
১৬	বিভিন্ন ধরনের মাইক্রোবাস এর যন্ত্রাংশসমূহ প্রতিস্থাপন/ মেয়ামতের কাজ।	৭০০/-	৩০,০০০/-		
১৭	বিভিন্ন ধরনের কার এর যন্ত্রাংশসমূহ প্রতিস্থাপন/ মেয়ামতের কাজ।	৭০০/-	৩০,০০০/-		
১৮	বিভিন্ন ধরনের মটরসাইকেল এর যন্ত্রাংশসমূহ প্রতিস্থাপন/ মেয়ামতের কাজ।	৩০০/-	১৫,০০০/-		
১৯	গাড়ির ব্রেক/কমপ্রেসার/ফ্লিড সিস্টেম, ডেকোরেশন আইটেম, গাড়ির ভলকানাইজিং অন্যান্য যন্ত্রাংশসমূহ সংযোজন/ প্রতিস্থাপন/মেয়ামতের কাজ।	৪০০/-	২৫,০০০/-		
২০	কার ও মাইক্রোবাস ভাড়া	১,০০০/-	৫০,০০০/-		
২১	মিনিবাস ও বাস ভাড়া	১,০০০/-	৫০,০০০/-		
দরপত্র কার্যক্রম বিস্তারিত:					
১৭.	দরপত্র আহ্বানকারী	আবুল কাশেম ম্যো বাকীবিদ্যাহ			
১৮.	দরপত্র আহ্বানকারীর দাপ্তরিক পদবী	বিশেষ পুলিশ সুপার (ট্রান্সপোর্ট), স্পেশাল ব্রাঞ্চ, বাংলাদেশ পুলিশ, ঢাকা।			
১৯.	দরপত্র আহ্বানকারীর ঠিকানা	কক্ষ নং ১২১৩, এসএল, ট্রান্সপোর্ট শাখা, স্পেশাল ব্রাঞ্চ, বাংলাদেশ পুলিশ, ঢাকা।			
২০.	দরপত্র আহ্বানকারীর দাপ্তরিক যোগাযোগ	ফোন ও ফ্যাক্স: মোবাইল : ০১৩২০-০০৬৩১৪			
২১.	নিয়মাবলী	(ক) দরপত্রের কার্যক্রম উন্মুক্ত পদ্ধতিতে সম্পাদন করা হবে যা “The Public Procurement Act, 2006” ও The Public Procurement Rules-2008” মোতাবেক পরিচালিত হবে, (খ) দরপত্র জ্ঞানমত বাদে পি-অর্ডার “বিশেষ পুলিশ সুপার (ট্রান্সপোর্ট), স্পেশাল ব্রাঞ্চ, বাংলাদেশ পুলিশ, ঢাকা” এর অনুমোদন জমা দিতে হবে, (গ) দরপত্র সিডিং ক্রয়ের রশিদ দরপত্রের সাথে জমা দিতে হবে, (ঘ) কর্তৃপক্ষ কোন কারণ দর্শানো ব্যতিরেকে যে কোন দরপত্র গ্রহণ অথবা বাতিল করার ক্ষমতা সংরক্ষণ করেন।			

আবুল কাশেম ম্যো বাকীবিদ্যাহ
বিশেষ পুলিশ সুপার (ট্রান্সপোর্ট)
পক্ষে/-অ্যাডিশনাল আইজি, স্পেশাল ব্রাঞ্চ
বাংলাদেশ পুলিশ, ঢাকা।

GD-1013

AFRAN NISHO'S journey to the big screen

SHAH ALAM SHAZU

In the vibrant world of Bangladeshi entertainment, one name has been making waves with his remarkable talent and versatility – Afran Nisho. Now, Nisho is set to embark on an exciting new chapter in his career as he takes his first steps onto the silver screen with his debut film, *Shurongo*.

In an exclusive interview with The Daily Star, Nisho opens up about his journey, the challenges he has faced, and the tremendous popularity he has achieved.

From the small screen to OTT, then debuting on the big screen this Eid, how has the journey been?

I don't believe in categorising acting based on the medium. I consider myself an actor who can adapt to any medium. It's all about the art of acting. The audience watches an artiste perform, and as an artiste, I strive to deliver my best regardless of the platform. Acting is dynamic and requires understanding the context, the story, and adapting to different environments. At the end of the day, an actor should be able to perform in any medium.

This will be your debut film. How are you feeling?

While it's my first venture into the world of cinema, it's not my first acting experience. Throughout this long journey, I have faced numerous struggles and failures. I started my acting career in dramas in 2005, and prior to that, I began modelling in 2000. It has been a step-by-step process of proving myself.

I never had the opportunity to act on stage or receive formal training in acting. Instead, I learned by observing and studying senior actors. I didn't imitate them, but rather tried to understand their techniques, dialogue delivery, and overall approach. Senior artistes have been my mentors, my sources of learning throughout this journey.

When did you realise that you had become

popular as an actor?

Popularity didn't come overnight. It was a gradual process. As I continued acting, I started noticing that my work was being recognised by the audience. People began talking about my performances. Initially, there wasn't much discussion, but I didn't compromise on my acting style. I have always been a hard-working actor. It's about staying true to oneself and constantly evolving. I embraced a more natural acting style. Eventually, people started mentioning my name, and that's when I realised I had achieved a level of popularity. But it took time to reach that point.

How was the experience of transitioning to cinema?

Venturing into cinema is a significant responsibility. But is the big screen really different from the others? Making a movie involves a team effort, and I'm just one part of that team. Over the years, I have transitioned from low-budget dramas to OTT platforms. Each step has been a learning experience.

Do you have any fear, worries or doubts as your first movie is about to be released?

No, I am not scared. There's nothing to lose or win. I have received congratulations from many people for the release of *Shurongo*. My colleagues and fellow artists have been supportive and have shared their well wishes. The love and feedback I'm receiving before the movie's release is my biggest gain.

How confident are you about 'Shurongo'?

I have confidence in the movie. There are high expectations, and everyone will understand it's worth it, once it is released. The entire team has put in a lot of work, and director Raihan Rafi has worked tirelessly. I believe in fate, and if luck is on our side, something remarkable will happen.



PHOTO: COLLECTED & STAR



Three iconic heroes reunite on the streets of New York

The journeys of Dhallywood actors Misha Sawdagar and Amit Hasan can be traced back to their debut film, *Chetona*, directed by Chotku Ahmed in 1989. While the paths of the other lead actors diverged, fate recently brought Misha and Amit together again, this time in the vibrant streets of New York.

There, they met another hero from that film, Khalid Mohammad Bidyut, and clicked photos together.

They all gathered to celebrate the birthday of Khalid Mohammad's son in Long Island, New York. Sharing a treasured moment from their past, Misha posted a heartfelt picture on Facebook, reminiscing about their debut film and expressing gratitude to their mentor and director, Chotku Ahmed.

Anurag Kashyap to head the jury at Sydney Film Festival

Director Anurag Kashyap received a resounding response at the Cannes Film Festival with the premiere of his police noir, *Kennedy*. Building on the success of the film, Anurag Kashyap has achieved another milestone. He has been appointed as head of the jury for the main competition at Sydney Film Festival.

Joining him on the esteemed jury panel are actor Mia Wasikowska, film curator and journalist Dorothee Wenne, writer and director Larissa Behrendt, and filmmaker Visakesa Chandrasekaram.



NEWS

Vendor beaten to death

FROM PAGE 1

programmes of the AL and its associate bodies.

This newspaper talked to at least four locals who corroborated Shafiqul's claim, requesting anonymity. They, however, said that the rally was organised by Jubo League.

Police, however, allegedly made the victim's 19-year-old younger brother Md Sajib Mia to file a case with a different narrative.

According to the case statement, Hafizur was beaten by Asaduzzaman Chayon, Md Tareq, and three to four others following a brawl.

The brawl ensued after the victim asked Chayon, Tareq and their associates to change a torn Tk 100 note that they gave him to pay for chicken fries. After the beating, one Munna asked the attackers to leave the spot, reads the case statement.

When asked about the statement he made in the case copy, the complainant, Sajib, said, "Police wrote the case copy and asked me to sign, which I did. I did not even read what was written in the case."

Police arrested Chayon on Monday night.

"It is mandatory for every pavement vendor to attend Awami League

processions and rallies. My brother used to attend them sometimes, other times, he would avoid them," said Sajib.

Asked about the allegations made by Shafiqul and the witnesses, OC Mohammad Mohsin of Mirpur Police Station said, "The case has been filed after receiving firsthand information from the complainant and the detained accused. The facts will be uncovered during the investigation."

About the complainant's claim that he just signed the case copy as asked by police, the OC insisted that the case was filed based on the complainant's statement.

"After any incident, many people provide many versions of the event," he added.

Locals said Chayon and Tareq are associates of local leaders of pro-ruling party bodies and used to collect tolls from street vendors.

Contacted, Shafiqul Islam Akher, joint general secretary of local ward AL, said those who are responsible for killing Hafizur Rahman have no connection with him.

"There was a Jubo League rally at Mirpur-II. I heard that Hafizur was beaten by the accused as he did not attend the meeting," he added.

Islami Andolan

FROM PAGE 12

Though the IAB said that Monday's city polls were questionable and rejected the election results, its mayor candidates bagged the second most votes. The BNP boycotted the polls.

The nominees of the main opposition in parliament, Jatiya Party, lagged far behind the IAB candidates.

In Barishal city polls, IAB candidate Faizul Karim secured 33,828 votes against JP nominee Iqbal Hossain Taposh's 6,665.

IAB candidate Abdul Awal bagged 60,064 votes in the Khulna city polls against JP nominee Shafiqul Islam Madhu's 18,074.

Also on Monday, IAB favourites won the councillor by-polls to ward-15 of Dhaka North City Corporation and a councillor election to Cox's Bazar municipality.

The IAB mayoral candidate in the May 25 Gazipur city polls, Gazi Ataur Rahman, secured 7.9 percent of total votes cast when JP candidate MM Niaz Uddin got 2.9 percent.

Currently, IAB has two councillors in two Dhaka city corporations, and one each in Jhenidah, Kuakata, Faridpur Sadar, Nilphamari Sadar municipalities. The party also has 13 union parishad chairmen, said party sources.

Founded in March 1987 by Fazlul Karim, widely known as "Charmonair Pir", the IAB showed a demonstration of its organisational abilities in the 2018 national election.

The IAB candidates in that election bagged 12.55 lakh votes in 299 constituencies, which was 1.52 percent of the total vote cast. The party fielded candidates in 299 out of the total 300 constituencies – the highest by a single party. The AL fielded nominees in 262 constituencies, the BNP in 258, and the JP in only 45.

IAB candidates ran in the 2008 parliamentary polls in 160 constituencies and secured 733,969 votes, 1.05 percent of the total vote cast.

The IAB was among the three political parties, including the AL and the BNP, which secured more than one percent of the total votes cast in that polls.

HC summons OC, addl SP, magistrate

FROM PAGE 12

The bench of Justice Mustafa and Justice Md Aminul Islam ordered the trio to appear before the HC on July 16.

The boss of the two policemen concerned, Shariatpur Superintendent of Police Saiful Haque, has been replaced by Md Mahbul Alam, an SP of the Highway Police in Madaripur.

Speaking to our Shariatpur correspondent, Saddam and Bokul described the ordeal they went through in the early hours of May 30 during a police raid at their friend's home in Keraniganj of Dhaka.

Some readers may find the brothers' descriptions of the torture in the following four paragraphs very graphic and disturbing.

"The OC [Sheikh Md Mostafizur Rahman] held my mouth open, while Additional SP Rasel Monir continued to beat up my younger brother Bokul and ordered him to urinate into my mouth," Saddam told our correspondent.

"Bokul was being beaten up brutally and he was forced to comply. But he still managed to avoid the mouth and urinated on my body," said Saddam as Bokul sat next to him with downcast eyes.

"Additional SP Monir pulled out my nails with pliers," added Bokul. His digits still bear evidence of the torture. His left thumbnail has been pulled clean off, revealing a drying scab, while the big toenail is hanging by a thread of skin.

Marks of bruises are all over their bodies.

The brothers were accused of robbing Shahin Alam Sheikh, returning from

Kolkata on a Dhaka-bound bus with \$17,000, and another man on May 21.

In the case filed on May 23, police alleged that the brothers' cohort aboard the bus stopped the vehicle near the Bhanga-Naodoba culvert wishing to get off.

When the bus stopped, the brothers along with others got on board, dragged Shahin and his companion out, beat them up, and robbed them, the FIR claims.

Shahin trades foreign currencies in the black market.

The Chowdkar brothers deny the allegation. They say the case was filed because of political rivalry. Shahin is a relative of Zajira Chhatra League President Rubel Byapari.

"There was a scuffle but we did not rob Shahin," said Saddam.

Rubel was allegedly present during the raid in Keraniganj and participated in the torture, but this newspaper could not reach him despite many attempts.

Shahin's aunt told The Daily Star that his money, amounting to Tk 21 lakh, is missing.

The two brothers did not return home after the case was filed and went to the High Court for bail.

After they got bail in Dhaka, they headed for their home in Shariatpur with a stopover at a friend's place in Keraniganj on May 29.

Police raided the friend's house at 1:00am. "They forced their way in and even though we showed the police the bail order, they handcuffed us and started beating us up," said Saddam.

"The torture continued until 7:30 in the morning."

other relevant issues.

The HC also ordered the government to withdraw the Rapid Action Battalion officials, who were involved in picking up Sultana, and attach them to the Rab Headquarters, for the sake of transparency and neutrality in the investigation.

The probe committee was ordered to submit the report before the court in 60 days.

The court on the same day issued a rule, asking the authorities concerned to explain why Sultana's detention by Rab officials without any case against her should not be declared illegal and unconstitutional.

Those bound

FROM PAGE 12

road would not be a problem if traffic discipline could be managed.

The vehicles heading north will use the main road while Dhaka-bound vehicles will use a bypass from Bangabandhu Bridge.

Citing the experience of last Eid-ul-Azha, he said the root cause of the congestion was rundown vehicles as over 50 such vehicles broke down near Bangabandhu Bridge during last year's Eid journey.

Such rundown vehicles are a major concern, he said.

Shahabuddin Khan, additional inspector general of highway police, said this Eid journey could be challenging mainly because of three reasons – short vacation, roadside cattle markets, and a huge number of cattle-laden trucks.

"If people do not leave the capital in phases, there could be congestions,"

he told The Daily Star.

He, however, said they have taken special measures to cope with the challenges.

They have made a list of vehicle repairers and they will be on standby during the Eid journey so that they can repair vehicles immediately if any gets collapsed, he said.

"We will not allow any union or trade body to stop any vehicle on the highway in the name of collecting tolls," he added.

DIG Mozammel Haque said they have already requested the garments factory owners to declare the Eid holiday in phases so that people leave Dhaka by rotation.

He said south-bound people may not face any problems if the toll plazas are managed properly.

He said it would take 30 seconds to complete the toll process even if it was done the fastest way. "So, there is a risk there."

The HC asked the officials concerned to show causes why they should not be directed to take action against the Rab officials who picked up Sultana.

The HC bench issued the order and rule following a writ petition filed by Supreme Court lawyer Monoj Kumar Bhaumik.

He filed the petition on March 28 seeking HC directives on the government to form a committee, led by a retired HC judge, to probe the incident mentioned in the report run by The Daily Star on March 27 under the headline "Sued under DSA: Woman dies in Rab custody".

Cambodian leader orders election law change

AFP, Phnom Penh

Cambodian leader Hun Sen yesterday ordered election laws to be changed to ban anyone who fails to vote in an upcoming poll from ever running for office -- a move that will affect exiled rivals.

The kingdom votes in a general election next month with Hun Sen's party running almost unopposed, after the main opposition outfit was barred on a technicality.

Rights groups accuse Hun Sen of using the legal system to crush any opposition to his power.

Hun Sen said he had asked officials to add a clause to election laws saying that anyone who does not vote in the upcoming poll has no right to run in future ballots.

"If you don't vote on July 23, 2023, you will have no right to be elected" in any future elections, Hun Sen said in a speech to garment workers in Phnom Penh.

'Outright lie' India denies threatening Twitter with shutdown

REUTERS, New Delhi

India threatened to shut down Twitter in the country unless it complied with orders to restrict accounts critical of the handling of farmer protests, co-founder Jack Dorsey said, an accusation Prime Minister Narendra Modi's government called an "outright lie".

Dorsey, who quit as Twitter CEO in 2021, said on Monday that India had also threatened the company with raids on employees if it did not comply with government requests to take down certain posts.

"It manifested in ways such as: 'We will shut Twitter down in India', which is a very large market for us; 'we will raid the homes of your employees', which they did; And this is India, a democratic country," Dorsey said in an interview with YouTube news show Breaking Points.

Deputy Minister for Information Technology Rajeev Chandrasekhar, a top ranking official in Modi's government, lashed out against Dorsey in response, calling his assertions an "outright lie".

"No one went to jail nor was Twitter 'shut down'. Dorsey's Twitter regime had a problem accepting the sovereignty of Indian law," he said in a post on Twitter.

Contribute to ensuring

FROM PAGE 1

solution to the ongoing crises".

They made the call in a letter, dated June 12, to Josep Borrell, High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy.

The members of the European Parliament (MEP) who wrote the letter are Ivan Štefanec (the Slovak Republic), Michaela Šojdrová (the Czech Republic), Andrey Kovatchev (Bulgaria), Karen Melchior (Denmark), Javier Nart (Spain) and Heidi Hautala (Finland).

The EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs shapes the standing of the European Union on the global stage.

Charles Whiteley, EU ambassador to Bangladesh, has confirmed the authenticity of the letter, saying it reflects the opinion of the MEPs.

"With this letter, we would like to express our concerns about the violation of human rights in Bangladesh, and call to restore democracy and the rule of law in Bangladesh in view of its upcoming general elections," it reads.

The current government, in power since 2009, has curtailed the democratic space for the citizens and failed to show respect to their fundamental rights guaranteed by the constitution, it adds.

"To consolidate its powers, the regime has been resorting to extrajudicial killings, abductions, tortures and false cases against the leaders and activists of the opposition political parties. Freedom of expression including the freedom of press have been undermined in recent years, most notably since the enactment of the

corruption, call for any report or information from government organisations.

It also gives the ACC the power to request the government to take action against organisations that fail to provide information.

The tax return has specific information of moveable and immovable properties, an ACC officer said. "We cross-check those with the sub-registry office

and banks. We may soon have to make wild guesses while investigating. This will not only take time but also reduce our chances to prosecute a corrupt person."

Since the sub-registry offices maintain the records manually, it will be almost impossible to find immovable property, he added.

Contacted, ACC

POST-COUP MYANMAR

Over 6,000 killed in first 20 months: report

AFP, Oslo

More than 6,000 civilians were killed in Myanmar in the first 20 months after the February 2021 military coup, a report published yesterday by the Peace Research Institute of Oslo said.

"Our data shows that the human toll of the conflict is higher than previously reported, and while the junta is clearly the main killer, anti-junta forces also have large amounts of blood on their hands," Stein Tonnesson, one of the two co-authors of the report, said in a statement.

The report said 6,337 civilians were killed "for political reasons" between February 1, 2021 and September 30, 2022, and 2,614 were injured.

That toll is much higher than others that have circulated, including those from international organisations.

According to the report, almost half of the deaths, 3,003, were attributed to the regime -- the army, police and militias -- while 2,152 were attributed to armed opposition groups.

Twelve were attributed to other civilians not affiliated with either the regime or opponents, and 1,170 to undetermined actors.

"This is a larger number than is normally cited in the media, and yet it is only an estimate, based on reported killings gathered from reliable media reports," the report said.

"The actual total is surely higher since many killings have likely gone unreported".

Alleging massive fraud, the Myanmar military annulled the legislative elections won by Aung San Suu Kyi's party and overthrew her government.

Since then, the junta has carried out a large-scale repression of any opposition, arresting more than 23,000 people according to a local watchdog.

Meanwhile, the United Nations yesterday slammed the Myanmar junta's "unfathomable" decision to suspend travel authorisations for aid workers trying

to reach more than a million people in cyclone-ravaged Rakhine state.

Cyclone Mocha brought lashing rain and winds of 195 kilometres (120 miles) per hour to Myanmar and neighbouring Bangladesh last month, killing at least 148 people in Myanmar.

The cyclone destroyed homes and brought a storm surge to Rakhine state, where hundreds of thousands of Rohingya minority refugees live in displacement camps following decades of ethnic conflict.

But despite the towering needs, the UN said last week that junta authorities had suspended "existing travel authorisations... for humanitarian organisations".

"Four weeks into this disaster response and with the monsoon season well under way, it is unfathomable that humanitarians are being denied access to support people in need," Ramanathan Balakrishnan, the UN resident and humanitarian coordinator in Myanmar, said in a statement on Monday.

Since the cyclone hit on May 14, humanitarian workers have been getting aid to a growing number of people using limited travel authorisations granted to organisations with long-standing operations in Rakhine.

Jens Laerke, spokesman for the UN humanitarian agency OCHA, told reporters in Geneva yesterday that more than 110,000 people had received shelter and other relief items during that time, while food assistance had reached almost 300,000 people in Rakhine thanks to those approvals.

He slammed the "effective ban" on access by humanitarian workers, "paralysing the distribution of life-saving food, drinking water, shelter supplies and other relief to affected communities."

"We had plans and material relief available for distribution in the coming weeks and months for one million people in Rakhine alone. That has been stopped," he said.

of the people to choose their representatives is yet to be determined as no mechanism is in place for acceptable elections in the country.

"This is a problem, as riggings, manipulations, and non attendance of the voters marred the 10th and 11th parliamentary elections."

While the 10th general election was non-participatory with the major political parties, including the BNP, boycotting the polls, the 11th was concluded "the night before". Consequently, the governments have had no or little mandate from the people and failed to gain the approval of the international community, the letter says.

"We believe the EU has strong reasons to stand with the people of Bangladesh as the country

is our long-time partner in trade and development cooperation."

The EU needs to remain in constant dialogue with Bangladesh authorities on human rights agendas and produce tangible outcomes, adds the letter.

"Potential measures such as restriction of entry into the EEA zone of those responsible for and complicit in the human rights abuses, or regular reminding of the conditions for the GSP+ incentive to which Bangladesh is a bidder may be evaluated."

Earlier on January 20 last year, Ivan ŠTEFANEČ wrote a letter to Borrell, expressing concerns over human rights violations and deterioration of democracy.

In response, Borrell said the EU remains in constant dialogue with Bangladesh on the issues concerned.

Seven die as cyclone barrels towards India, Pakistan

REUTERS, Mumbai

Four boys drowned in rough seas off the western Indian financial hub of Mumbai yesterday as India and Pakistan began evacuating people from coastal areas, two days before a cyclone is expected to make landfall.

Classified as a very severe cyclonic storm, Biparjoy is expected to land around tomorrow evening between Mandvi in India's Gujarat province and Karachi in southern Pakistan.

Meteorologists predict maximum sustained wind speeds of 125-135 km (78-84 miles) per hour, gusting to 150 km (93 miles) per hour.

"Four boys drowned at Juhu beach on Monday evening. So far, we have found the bodies of two, and the search is still ongoing to locate the remaining two," said a police official in Mumbai.

High waves in the Arabian Sea, accompanied by heavy rains and gusting winds pounded Gujarat's coastal areas, uprooting trees and resulting in a wall collapse that killed three people in Kutch and Rajkot districts, authorities said.

Eight districts in coastal Gujarat are expected to be affected. Fishing has been suspended until Friday and schools have declared holidays.

SPYING, BASING OVERSEAS

US diplomacy slowed China's expansion

REUTERS, Washington

The Biden administration has taken diplomatic steps that have slowed down a Chinese effort to project military power around the world, Secretary of State Antony Blinken said on Monday ahead of a visit to Beijing later this week. Washington's top diplomat was asked at a press conference about Washington's response to a Wall Street Journal report last week that cited US officials saying a new spying effort was underway on Cuba. Blinken said China's efforts in Cuba were part of a global effort by Beijing to expand its presence overseas, and that US actions to address this.

Russian missile strike kills 11 in Ukraine

28 injured; Kyiv says troops make gains

REUTERS, Kryvyrih

A Russian missile strike killed at least 11 people in an apartment building and a warehouse in President Volodymyr Zelensky's home town yesterday, while Moscow's forces yielded ground in the early stages of a Ukrainian counteroffensive.

Residents sobbed outside the burnt-out apartment block and smoke billowed after the early-morning attack in Kryvyi Rih, a half-hour drive from the huge reservoir emptied last week by the destruction of a dam that flooded a swathe of southern Ukraine.

Officials said at least four people were killed in the apartment building and another seven in the warehouse. Twenty-eight were injured.

Broken glass and bricks were strewn across the street and courtyard outside the apartment block. At least five cars were ruined husks.

Survivors described two explosions. Olha Chernousova said she was thrown out of her bed by a violent blast wave. She escaped onto her balcony to wait for rescuers. "I thought I would have to jump into a tree."

"Russian killers continue their war against residential buildings, ordinary cities and people," Zelensky, who was born in the city, said on Telegram.

Moscow denies intentionally targeting civilians but has repeatedly struck apartment buildings with long-range missiles, often at perceived turning points in the war.

Win fails to bring joy to AL camp

FROM PAGE 1

have already issued a press release congratulating the newly-elected mayor. But we didn't get the chance to congratulate him in person."

Khair yesterday said that he did not want any division and was eager to work with everyone irrespective of party affiliation.

A day after winning the BCC polls, he made the remark when a reporter asked him whether he would work with all AL leaders and supporters as many were not seen with him during his campaign.

Speaking on the matter, Rafiqul Alam, secretary of Shushashoner Jonno Nagorik (Barishal city unit), said the city's development would encounter obstacles if the conflict within the AL was not addressed.

LOW TURNOUT OUT OF FEAR

The voter turnout was poor at the polling centres that are located in areas that are known to be dominated by Sadiq.

There was a 37.07 percent turnout at the Matri Mandir Primary School centre, 36.03 percent at the Abdur Rab Serniabad centre, and 38.05 percent at Adarsha Pouro Primary School centre.

Sadiq's followers were not a part of Khair's campaign and Khair also kept them aside since he got the party nomination.

As a result, most voters in these areas avoided polling centres for fear of harassment by Khair supporters, said an AL supporter close to Sadiq.

Prior to the election, there were reports of a rift between Khair and his nephew Sadiq after Khair received the AL ticket to run for mayor.

"We didn't go out on election day and a number of Sadiq's men left the city on the day," he added.

Even at the Barishal Government College centre, where Sadiq is a voter and where Khair cast his ballot, there was a 53 percent turnout.

Meanwhile, at polling centres on the city's outskirts, the voter turnout was between 60 and 73 percent.

MOST COUNCILLORS ARE SADIQ'S FOLLOWERS

According to election results, 21 of the 30 councillors are from the AL, six from the BNP, one from Jamaat, and two are independent.

Sources say, 13 of the 21 AL councillors support Sadiq, while the remaining eight support Khair.

Meanwhile, eight of the 10 female councillors are from the AL and two are from the BNP.

IAB WON ONLY TWO CENTRES

Mufti Syed Faizul Karim, the Islami Andolon Bangladesh (IAB) mayoral candidate, received 33,888 votes, which is 23.86 percent of all votes cast.

After analysing centre-by-centre results, it was discovered that the IAB nominee won in only two of the total 126 polling centres.

One of these two centres is Government Saheed Abdur Rab Serniabat High School, where Faziul voted, and the other is in the same area.

According to the result sheet, the IAB candidate received the majority of votes in the city's extended areas -- Sagordi, Harinafulia, and Koladema -- where the majority of the madrasas are located.

Tax bill proposes clipping ACC wings

FROM PAGE 1

"If the act passes without dropping the provision, such words will become a joke," he said, expressing his dismay.

Several officials pointed out that the proposed act would override the ACC Act 2004, which said that the commission might, at the time of inquiry or investigation into allegations of

corruption, call for any report or information from government organisations.

It also gives the ACC the power to request the government to take action against organisations that fail to provide information.

The tax return has specific information of moveable and immovable properties, an ACC officer said. "We cross-check those with the sub-registry office

and banks. We may soon have to make wild guesses while investigating. This will not only take time but also reduce our chances to prosecute a corrupt person."

Since the sub-registry offices maintain the records manually, it will be almost impossible to find immovable property, he added.

Contacted, ACC

Moizammel (enquiry) Commissioner Haque Khan said the government might have found the provision logical. "There is always an option to amend an act," he said.

Iftekharuzzaman said that the provision would drastically curtail the investigation capacity of the ACC.

"Creating such arbitrary barriers against access

to key information on the spoils of corruption will have a crippling effect on the process of ensuring accountability for corruption in general and accumulation of income and wealth disproportionate to legitimate income in particular," he said.

"In reality, this appears to be designed to protect and promote abuse of

power and corruption on the one hand, and further cripple the legal and institutional capacities of the state to control the cancerous disease of corruption on the other."

Abul Hassan Mahmood Ali, chairman of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Ministry of Finance, could not be reached over phone for comment.



A long-awaited nod to justice

ACC finally charge-sheets Basic Bank's Bacchu, but must explain the delay

We are pleased that the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) has at long last approved the charge sheet against former Basic Bank Chairman Sheikh Abdul Hye Bacchu, along with 146 others, in connection with 59 cases filed over the embezzlement of Tk 2,265 crore from the state-owned bank. The ACC, however, needs to explain why it took eight years to approve the charge sheet or implicate Bacchu, whose complicity has been heavily speculated on by financial analysts.

According to its rules, the ACC must complete investigations into a case within 180 days. If it cannot complete necessary work by then, it may extend it. But there is no excuse to delay it for as long as it did. So, naturally, the question is: why did the ACC do so despite frequent urgings by anti-corruption campaigners, and even the High Court, given its being one of the biggest embezzlement cases in the country's history? Were the people involved being protected? If so, who were protecting them? That in itself would be a crime worthy of investigation. Additionally, why weren't other board members of the bank implicated by the ACC? As one of the investigating officers has said, "Baachhu with the help of the then managing director and company secretary created fake documents and sanctioned a loan while keeping the board in the dark." Earlier, however, the Bangladesh Bank said other board members were also involved. Clearly, there is a contradiction between the two findings.

Moreover, the ACC charge sheet, it bears repeating, has been filed over the embezzlement of Tk 2,265 crore. But between 2009 and 2013, Tk 4,500 crore was swindled out of the bank. Even if the remaining money was recovered, crimes were committed to swindle it in the first place. What has the ACC done about those involved in it? Again, the ACC owes us an explanation.

The way the entire case has been handled so far is extremely disappointing. It has been clear from the start that some highly connected people were involved in the scam, and that government agencies have been reluctant to punish them for their crimes. While some headway has finally been made through the approval of the charge sheet, the authorities now must ensure that the entire workings of the scam are made public, and all the people involved are brought to justice.

Stop risky dwelling on hill slopes

Arrival of monsoon raises concerns of landslides, calling for safety measures

With the monsoon around the corner, the continuous presence of homes on hilltops or hill slopes in the country has raised concerns of deadly landslides. This threat is all too real for residents in Chattogram city, as in other hilly areas witnessing a rapid spread of the build environment. In Chattogram, for example, the number of houses in the hilly area of Moti Jharna has increased from around 200 to over 1,000 over the last 15 years. This is despite the fact that, since 2007, at least 27 people died in this area due to landslides. Besides, in 26 hills across five other wards of Chattogram, there are about 6,175 illegal (and risky) settlements now. Imagine the threat that residents will face after a certain period of above-average rainfall, which points to the lack of care and planning by those in charge.

Surely the authorities are aware of the houses being built and people dwelling on hill slopes? Just as they must be aware of the landslides that can occur anytime? In June 2017, we saw the tragic deaths of at least 133 people in landslides. Of them, 100 were killed in Rangamati, 26 in Chattogram, and 7 in Bandarban. We must ask: have the authorities who are supposed to prevent illegal settlements and protect people learned anything from such recurrent tragedies? Not much, apparently. Otherwise, how is it that homes are increasingly being built in landslide-prone areas with the uninterrupted supplies of electricity, gas, and water? The Hill Management Committee occasionally conducts eviction drives but those are clearly too infrequent and ill-planned to make an impact. Environmentalists blame corruption and political interference for the lack of effect of measures aimed at preventing cutting hills and building settlements.

This calls for strong and sustained interventions from the higher authorities. They must stop risky dwelling and illegal settlements throughout the year, particularly now when the risks posed by monsoon are grave. Residents who are at risk, including those at the Moti Jharna area, must be relocated to safer places urgently.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

letters@thedailystar.net

Save our oceans

According to a recent study, there are around 170 trillion plastic particles floating in the world's oceans, weighing approximately two million metric tonnes. Of this vast amount of plastic, 89 percent is single-use disposables. If immediate action is not taken, this amount could nearly triple by 2040. The Global Plastics Treaty establishes international pledges to decrease plastic waste and is critical for ocean protection. By holding governments and corporations accountable and fostering international cooperation, the treaty provides a comprehensive framework to safeguard the oceans' health and preserve marine biodiversity. Let's push for the treaty to come into action to save our oceans from the wrath of plastics.

It is about time meaningful actions were taken to solve this problem. The benefits of doing so would be too great for us to not to.

Saikat Kumar Basu
West Bengal, India

Power crisis: Perils of pursuing the old dangerous path



Dr Ijaz Hossain
is former dean of the Faculty
of Engineering at Bangladesh
University of Engineering and
Technology (BuEt).

IJAZ HOSSAIN

Bangladesh has been experiencing unprecedented load-shedding for more than two weeks now, and the scale of the current crisis certainly demands an answer from the power sector officials. People have been facing 2,000-2,500MW of load-shedding throughout the day. It is expected to get even worse with the Payra Power Plant shutting down last week. Routine excuses for failure from the power ministry cite the global fuel crisis as well as the dollar crunch, which has made it difficult to open letters of credit (LCs) to import fuel and coal. But the economic crisis resulting from the pandemic and the ongoing Russia-Ukraine war can no longer be used as excuses; it is open knowledge that fuel prices have gone down in the international market. LNG prices in the spot market have dropped substantially. Coal prices have also gone down. Oil has been trading in a tight range around the low \$75 per barrel, down from \$100 per barrel last year.

The dollar crisis, however, is a real issue for Bangladesh. The taka has been depreciating alarmingly against the dollar – the price of the dollar jumped to Tk 106 this year from Tk 89 in June last year. Our foreign exchange reserves slipped under \$30 billion in May, according to official figures. If the situation with our forex reserves is so dire that it's driving the whole nation down to a point where citizens have to endure long hours of load-shedding, and industries have to suffer production losses that may eventually lead to their shutdown, the government should just openly proclaim a state of emergency and address the issues that led to this crisis in the first place.

In that light, it is imperative to analyse the power sector's responsibility for this crisis. First, capacity charges are one source to point fingers at. The country has to pay capacity charges to privately-owned power plants in dollars, and these charges have to be paid even if a power plant does not produce any electricity. Idle power plants, and ones which are functioning at half its capacity, are still receiving full capacity payments.

Second, the overwhelming burden of fuel import needs to be reassessed. Our power sector is too heavily reliant on imports; the annual burden is more than \$2 billion, depending on the international price of oil, gas and coal.

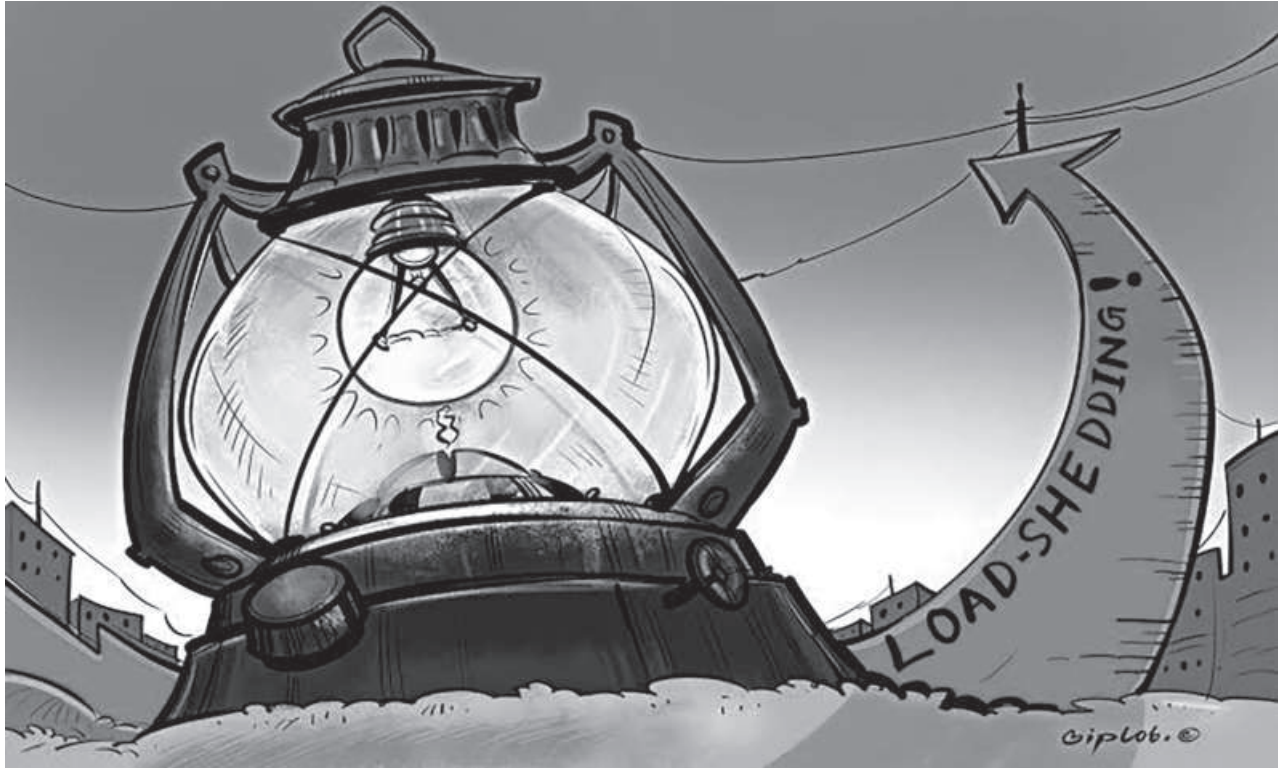


ILLUSTRATION: BIPLOB CHAKROBORTY

It is axiomatic that if oil-fired power plants are being used to generate baseload electricity, fuel expenses will be very high. But the interesting fact is that more than 5,000MW of gas-fired power plants are sitting idle across the country. Electricity from gas-fired power plants is substantially cheaper than oil-fired electricity, given the current stable price of fuel in the global market. Seeing as the price of LNG has dropped in the spot market, why are gas-fired power plants not being utilised? The answer lies in the fact that we have not built enough regasification facilities to import more LNG. It is hard to comprehend the logic behind building gas-fired power plants with thousands of megawatts of generation capacity – with more on the way – while not planning efficient ways to supply the fuel needed to operate them. When LNG prices were high, not using LNG made sense. But does it make any sense now?

Consumers are frustrated this time, because the authorities have consistently reassured the public that load-shedding would not happen this year. At the start of the load-shedding

declared how much they expected to generate from each source of power. Our political leaders also did not envisage electricity shortage, citing the new coal-fired power plants that have come into operation. Even when fuel prices were higher than what they are today, the authorities were somehow confident enough to claim that there would be little to no load-shedding this year.

With the serious dollar crisis, the only long-term solution is to lessen the import dependency of the energy and power sectors. Of course, this is easier said than done, but to what extent has the government seriously explored other options? After the onset of electricity shortage last year, the experts pointed to the serious neglect of domestic gas exploration. One year has gone by, but very little exploratory drilling has taken place. In the latest budget, very little has been allocated to gas exploration. To ensure even a minimum level of energy security through our own natural gas supply, the country needs to drill at least 25 exploratory wells every year. Assuming a success ratio of 1:5, and discovered gas reserves of 200-300 Bcf, approximately

power plants were available, we could save nearly \$1 million per day in fuel costs. These savings could even be used to pay off some of the overdue coal bills and import more coal. Of course, solar PV which is available only during the day (sunshine hours) cannot solve all our problems, but if designed correctly, it could save up to 20 percent of our fuel expenses. Along with more exploration for natural gas, a total of 30-40 percent savings in fuel cost is possible in Bangladesh.

It is unfortunate that the government is pursuing its old dangerous path of building more power plants and importing more LNG, coal and oil. Given our precarious dollar situation, this only forecasts more danger ahead. Fuel prices can escalate, the dollar crisis can deepen and consumers may resist further hike of energy prices. Given the difficult situation that the BPPB has put itself in, it is difficult to see a load-shedding-free Bangladesh anytime soon. In fact, it could conceivably get worse with the energy and power sectors becoming a huge burden on the economy and aggravating the dollar crisis.

Advancing the Glasgow Dialogue on funding to address Loss and Damage



POLITICS OF CLIMATE CHANGE

Dr Saleemul Huq
is director of the International Centre for
Climate Change and Development (ICCCAD)
and professor at Independent University,
Bangladesh (IUB).

SALEEMUL HUQ

One of the outcomes of the COP26 held in United Kingdom's Glasgow in November, 2021 was a decision to hold a series of three annual Glasgow Dialogues on funding to address Loss and Damage, with each dialogue to be held in Bonn at the annual pre-COP event.

I just attended the second annual Glasgow Dialogue, which was held over the course of three days. Since I had the opportunity to also attend the first Glasgow Dialogue in Bonn last year, I can say that this year's dialogue was much more fruitful as the decision taken at COP27 in Egypt to set up a funding arrangement to address losses and damages with a Transitional Committee was set up to take the decision forward.

While the first Glasgow Dialogue held last year felt like an orphan with no ownership, this year the Transitional Committee owned the dialogue. As such the discussions were much more concrete under the leadership of the committee's co-chairs.

However, having said that, it still felt like we missed the opportunity to get into more substantive discussions about the complex issues that need

to be resolved by the Transitional Committee before going to COP28 in Dubai this December.

Three separate sessions were held over three days, of which only the second day was in breakout groups which allowed inputs from non-governmental organisations, experts and others. On the other hand, the first and last days were one long series of prepared statements from groups of countries as well as individual nations, which felt more like a monologue rather than a dialogue.

I hope that the third and final Glasgow Dialogue next year is better organised to enable a real dialogue on the many substantive issues that need to be resolved.

I will attempt to highlight some of the substantive issues that were discussed:

The first issue causing differences of views amongst the parties was whether to focus on creating a new and separate fund for addressing loss and damage under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) or to simply acknowledge the ecosystem of different funds that already exist and bring them together

into a "mosaic" of connected funds.

The debate is between creating a "fund" or simply acknowledging "funding arrangements," with developing countries in favour of creating a new fund and most developed countries favouring existing funding arrangements.

While there are justifications for

While the first Glasgow Dialogue held last year felt like an orphan with no ownership, this year the Transitional Committee owned the dialogue. As such the discussions were much more concrete under the leadership of the committee's co-chairs.

both arguments, in my view, it need not be an either-or situation as we could create a specific new fund under UNFCCC which would then act in synergy with other existing funding arrangements. There are already some very specific aspects of losses and damages owing to the adverse impacts of human-induced climate change that are not being addressed by any existing funding arrangements.

One such issue is the forced displacement of millions of people, soon to be tens of millions, from low lying coastal zones and islands as well as from places like the horn of Africa. Just to cite one example, every day it is estimated that over 2000 migrants arrive in Dhaka mostly from the low-lying coastal districts with increasing numbers being displaced due to salinity intrusion into agricultural land. The number of climate displaced people will only increase and there are no systems in place to take care of them. Hence, helping these migrants should be the mandate and responsibility of a new Loss and Damage fund under UNFCCC.

Another major issue being discussed is how to raise additional funds needed for the new Loss and Damage Fund without cannibalising existing adaptation funds. There are a number of proposals for raising funds for loss and damage from innovative sources such as levies on maritime and air travel as well as taxing the profits of fossil fuel companies.

Let me end by sharing the proposal I made in my submission to the Glasgow Dialogue – I proposed that the incoming presidency of COP28 declare their intention to create the Dubai Loss and Damage Fund at COP28 and to put a solidarity levy of \$5 on all air passengers arriving in Dubai during COP28 and put the money into the Dubai Loss and Damage Fund. They could make the announcement now with six months left to challenge the Transitional Committee to come up with a plan to make the new fund operational.

Artificial intelligence is still far from being ‘intelligent’

Why does Big Tech want an immediate six-month pause on any further development?



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

SAYEED AHMED

Is artificial intelligence (AI) really “intelligent” in its creativity and decision-making? Or is it stealing others’ works and perpetuating existing human biases?

This January, three artists filed a class-action lawsuit with the Northern California District Court against AI imagery generators – Midjourney, Stable Diffusion, and DreamUp. They claimed these companies are using their artwork to generate newer ones – using a publicly available database of images including theirs called LAION-5B – though the artists had not consented to have their copyrighted artworks to be included in the database, were not compensated for the use of their works, and their influence was not credited when AI images were produced using said works.

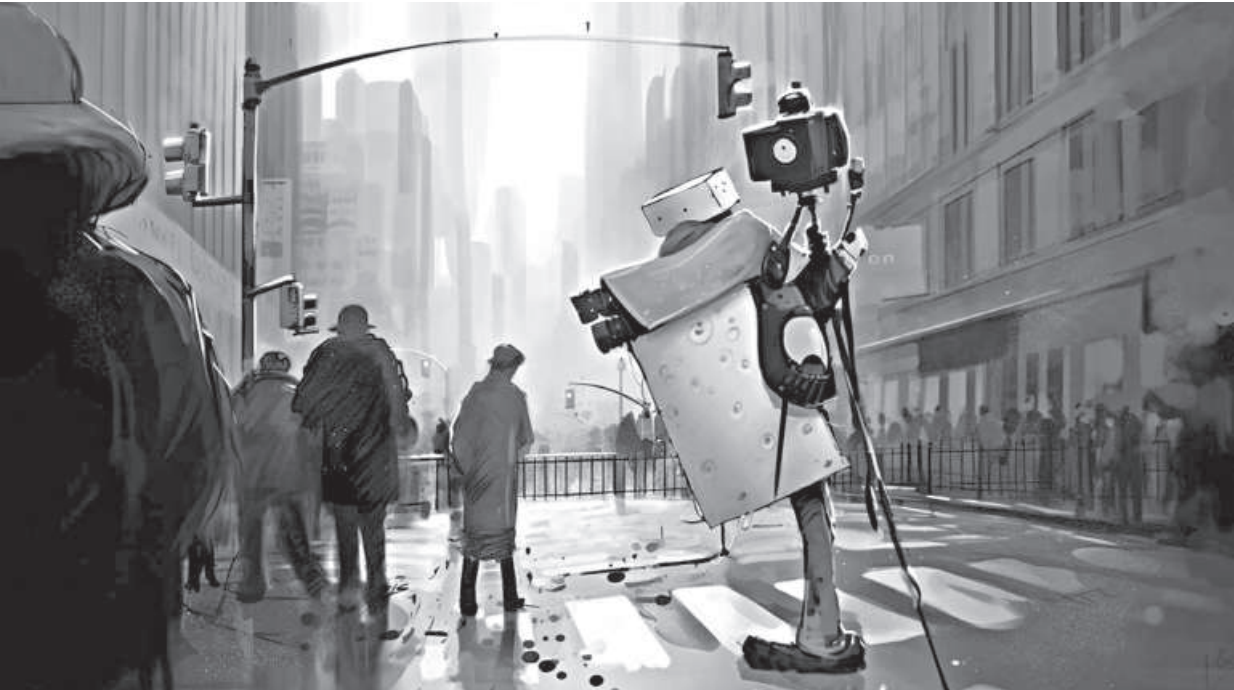
AI is literally scraping through billions of existing works produced by raw human labour to “produce newer ones.” That’s why several experts are already asking whether AI is at all “artificial” or “intelligent.”

Tech writer Evgeny Morozov has argued that while the early AI systems were mostly rules and programmes, and could have some “artificiality,” today’s AI models draw their strength entirely from the works of actual humans. Built on vast amounts of human work stored at mammoth energy-hungry data centres, AI is not “intelligent” in the way human intelligence is as it cannot discern

things without extensive human training, as Microsoft’s Kate Crawford has pointed out.

Even in decision making, AI models can have strong biases as a 2019 article published in *Nature* has confirmed. An algorithm common in US hospitals has been systematically discriminating against black people. The study found that hospitals traditionally assign them lower risk scores than white people. Automatically, the algorithm takes that as a cue and puts blacks in a lesser risk group, regardless of the prevailing medical conditions. In

Is this call for an immediate pause coming from genuine concern for human well-being? Or is there a commercial motive, as Michael Bennett, a PhD student at Australian National University (ANU) has pointed out? Potentially, AI can generate an enormous amount of wealth for whoever controls it.



An image of a robot taking picture generated by AI software Midjourney.

another case, a painting bot returned the image of a salmon steak in water when asked to draw a swimming salmon. The AI model couldn’t make this simple judgement that even a toddler could do.

However, despite not being anywhere near “intelligent,” recent developments, especially the release of ChatGPT in November last year, have raised dramatic concerns about the effects of AI on human society. Renowned tech experts have published an open letter calling for an immediate pause on all AI development for six months. Its signatories include many big names and AI heavyweights, including Elon Musk from Tesla, Emad Mostaque from Stability AI, Sam Altman from OpenAI, Demis Hassabis from

Google’s DeepMind, and Kevin Scott from Microsoft. Altman even advised the US government to issue licenses to trusted companies (Does this mean only Big Techs?) to train AI models.

Is this call for an immediate pause coming from genuine concern for human well-being? Or is there a commercial motive, as Michael Bennett, a PhD student at Australian National University (ANU) has pointed out? Potentially, AI can generate an enormous amount of wealth for whoever controls it. Let’s try to understand the premise of the call.

ChatGPT isn’t a research breakthrough, it’s a product based on open research work that is already a few years old. The only difference is that the technology was not widely

available through a convenient interface. Smaller entrepreneurs will soon develop better and more efficient AI-based models at much lesser costs, some of which is already available at GitHub, a popular repository for open-source non-commercial software. That worries the Big Techs, made abundantly clear by a leaked Google internal memo.

The long memo from a Google researcher said, “People will not pay for a restricted model when free, unrestricted alternatives are comparable in quality...We Have No Moat.” Licenses would be a “kinda moat,” as Stability AI’s CEO Emad Mostaque puts it bluntly, moat being jargon for a way to secure a business against competitors.

AI Now Institute, a research non-profit that addresses the concentration of power in the tech industry, highlights the perils of unregulated AI in its April 2023 report because the AI boom will make the powerful Big Techs even more powerful. AI models depend on vast amounts of data, and super-fast computing power to process it, both of which only Big Techs can afford. Without access to these resources, no entrepreneur or researcher can develop any meaningful AI application, as an MIT Technical Review article elaborates.

Yes, we need regulations for AI development, and a pause if necessary, but not for the reasons mentioned in the open letter. It’s to ensure that AI technology remains open source and democratic.

The other reason AI should be regulated is the way social media platforms have used it to fuel gender bias and extreme polarisation, and played on social divisions resulting in unspeakable violence on a massive scale (such as in Myanmar using Facebook). AI models will amplify both intentional misinformation (simple inaccuracies) and disinformation (false information) simply because they are trained on such data to produce more data (model cannibalism effect). Large language models can keep repeating fabricated and false information because of a phenomenon called ‘hallucination’ which independent watchdog NewsGuard has found in several online news portals.

Intentional or otherwise, all these could be quite handy in manipulating public opinion or creating biases to benefit those in power. That makes it even more necessary to regulate AI. To ensure that the benefits of AI reaches everyone, humans must always be on top of it.

In the land of elderly rickshaw pullers



A CLOSER LOOK
Tasneem Tayeb is a columnist for The Daily Star. Her Twitter handle is @tasneem_tayeb

TASNEEM TAYEB

The image of 60-year-old rickshaw puller Abdul Halim resting on a footpath beside Dhaka’s Gulistan Park, exhausted and drained under the heat of the scorching summer sun, has been haunting me since I saw the photo on the front page of this daily on June 7. The heart-wrenching image stayed with me the entire day, so much so that later that night, I was woken up by jarring dreams of the old man pulling the weight of a hundred passengers in flashy clothes – middle-aged men and women, young boys and girls, children cramped in the small rickshaw seat – through the messy streets of Dhaka, under the glaring sun. I saw Abdul Halim telling himself to keep pedalling, so that he would earn enough to take home some coarse rice and salt, and some

medicines for his ailing wife.

But then his ageing back and legs started giving away, and as the impatient passengers started yelling at him to peddle faster, he suddenly stopped. He looked at me, his weary eyes boring heavily into mine, and he gave a wail of anguish, the deafening sound reverberating into reality. And suddenly he was pulled into a black void by a long filthy hand. His passengers kept yelling, without even realising he was gone. That’s when I woke up.

What kind of a country do we live in where 60-year-olds are forced to pull rickshaws to earn livelihood?

The government has earmarked Tk 126,272 crore for SSN programmes, which is 16.58 percent of the total budget and 2.52 percent of the GDP. At first glance,

allocating Tk 126,272 crore to SSN in a budget of Tk 761,785 crore seems like a bold move, given the challenges the economy currently faces. But a closer look reveals that a whopping 60 percent of the funds are actually going towards the non-poor, in such things as pensions for 800,000 government employees, finance interest for national savings certificates, agriculture subsidy and interest subsidy for loans to small and medium enterprises. This means that only 1.01 percent of the GDP will actually be allocated towards those most in need.

The minimum age to be eligible for old age allowance is 65 years for men, and 62 for women. Based on what rationale has the government decided on this minimum age bar? In neighbouring India’s Haryana state, the minimum age for the Old Age Samman Allowance Scheme is 60 years. According to the Indira Gandhi National Old Age Pension Scheme (IGNOAPS), too, the minimum age is 60. Some might argue that the pension amount in India is not significant, but neither is their inflation, which was 4.7 percent in April 2023.

But even if Abdul Halim were

eligible for the allowance offered by the Bangladesh government, it would not have been adequate for him. The old age allowance has been proposed to be increased by Tk 100 to Tk 600 in the budget.

But in a reality where inflation is spiralling to record levels – rising to 9.94 percent in May 2023 – out-of-pocket healthcare expenditure is increasing – standing at 74 percent in 2020, according to World Health Organization (WHO) – how is an elderly individual expected to survive on Tk 600 per month? How are they going to pay for food, medical care, utility bills, etc with this amount? Remember the struggles of 82-year-old Shamsul Huda, whose story was featured in this daily last year? There are so many of them out there, hoping their miseries would end – if not through state support, then in death.

Coming to the former question, not all those at the receiving end of these SSN schemes are legitimate beneficiaries. In 2020, the Centre

for Policy Dialogue (CPD) conducted a study in Gaibandha, Kurigram, Nilphamari and Rangpur to understand the delivery efficiency of five SSN programmes: maternity allowance for poor mothers, primary school stipend programme (PESP), secondary school stipend programme (SESP), employment generation programme for the poorest (EGPP), and old age allowance.

The study unfortunately and unsurprisingly found that during Covid-19, almost two-thirds of the household receiving the SSN allowances were not eligible to receive them in the first place. The truth is, most of these SSN programme beneficiaries are politically connected, and as such are enlisted for these programmes, leaving out genuine beneficiaries who are in dire conditions and have limited opportunities for employment. While MFS services have done one good thing by enabling direct transaction of the allowances to the beneficiaries, unfortunately all these initiatives

remain counterproductive due to nepotism in beneficiary selection.

Coming back to the point of insufficient allowance, since the government is not able to adequately provide for the underserved communities, they should at least help them with some economic opportunities that are suitable for their age, abilities and social realities. The government cannot just think that by providing Tk 600 to selective elderly people, Tk 900 to students with disabilities, and Tk 550 to widows and “destitute” women, they would end poverty and enable them to live better lives.

It is high time the government revisited its social safety net strategy and came up with realistic solutions to provide for the marginalised population, and demonstrate strong political will to root out corruption and nepotism from the system. As a nation, we should be able to better protect and provide for the disadvantaged and marginalised population.



60-year-old Abdul Halim takes a rest on a pavement beside Gulistan park in the capital.

PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN



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Application deadline: 04 July 2023
Admission test: 08 July 2023
Classes start : 06 August 2023

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RAZING HILLS for chicken shed

“

We filed a case under the soil management act with the local police station against the owners of the hills on Tuesday.

Sabbir Ahmed Sunny
Upazila Nirbahi Officer
of Fatikchhari

SIFAYET ULLAH

A vested quarter has been accused of cutting hills in Chattogram's Dharmapur union of Fatikchhari upazila, to construct a chicken shed.

This act has been carried out without obtaining any approval from the Department of Environment (DoE), leaving locals and environmentalists dismayed.

The ownership of the hills is attributed to Abu Bakkar and Taslimul Alam, according to the land office of the union. However, a local source, seeking anonymity, has alleged that Nahar Agro, an agro business company based in Chattogram, is behind the hill cutting, using their connections with influential figures.

During a recent investigation conducted by this correspondent in the area, it was observed that workers were carving through the hills with heavy machinery, including an excavator and a soil-cutting machine. Additionally, an on-site mud house was being constructed to accommodate the workers involved in this project.

Mohammad Rashed, a day labourer said, "I have been working for Nahar Agro on this project for the past two days."



Nahar Agro... I cannot say whether there is permission to cut the hill."

Abu Bakkar, owner of a part of the hills, told The Daily Star, "We have sold the land to Rakibur Rahman Tutul, managing director of the Nahar Agro Group, but the registry deed has not been completed yet."

However, he did not disclose when he sold the hills.

Rakibur Rahman Tutul, managing director of the Nahar Agro Group, claimed that his company isn't cutting hills there.

"We are only talking with the owners of hills to buy the land. We haven't bought the land yet," he claimed.

However, the workers involved in hill cutting admitted that they are employees of Nahar Agro and they collect their salary from the nearby Nahar Agro office.

Mentionable, Nahar Agro has already constructed another shed next to the area where chickens have been reared for the past one year.

Meanwhile, upazila administration officials confirmed that they visited the area and found evidence of hill cutting.

Sabbir Ahmed Sunny, upazila nirbahi officer of Fatikchhari, said, "We filed a case under the soil management act with the local police station against the owners of the hills on Tuesday."

According to Bangladesh Environment Preservation Act 1995 (amended in 2000), cutting a hill without DoE's approval is illegal.

Punishment as per this act includes up to two years' imprisonment or Tk 2 lakh fine, or both for first-time offenders. For subsequent offence, it is up to 10 years' imprisonment or Tk 10 lakh fine, or both.

Meanwhile, DoE officials confirmed that none had taken any permission for cutting hills there.

Ferdous Anwar, deputy director of the DoE Chattogram, told The Daily Star, "We will take legal action against those who razed hills after necessary investigation."

According to data from Bangladesh Environment Forum, 120 hills disappeared from Chattogram city in four decades. In 1976, there were 32.37 square km of hills in the port city, which decreased to 14.02 square km in 2008.



CTG INTER-CITY ROUTE

Tourist bus launched for first time

FM MIZANUR RAHAMAN

For the first time, two double-decker bus services have been introduced in Chattogram city for tourists. The buses, operational since last Saturday, is set to ply the port city's Tiger Pass-Faujdarhat DC Park-Patenga sea beach route.

The Chattogram District Administration and Bangladesh Road Transport Corporation joint venture was inaugurated by ABM Amin Ullah Nuri, secretary of the Road Transport and Highways Division, on Saturday at the city's Circuit House.

The buses are making two trips on weekdays, with the first one starting at 3:00pm from Tiger Pass, followed by the second one an hour later from the same spot.

Three trips on the same route is available on Fridays at 9:00am, 3:00pm, and 4:00pm, while four others are scheduled for Saturdays at 9:30am, 10:30am, 3:00pm, and 4:00pm, according to Chattogram District Administration.

The return trips are scheduled from Patenga beach at 12:00pm, 7:00pm, and 8:00pm on Fridays, and at 1:00pm, 2:00pm, 7:00pm, and 8:00pm on Saturdays.

The ticket prices range between Tk 30-70 per person.

"These two buses were gifted by the prime minister to boost tourism in the district. We plan to introduce new buses with better facilities on other routes too," said Abul Bashar Mohammad Fakhruzzaman, deputy commissioner of the district.

Omar Faruq Emon, a local, said, "We had to spend much more to visit these spots. However, bearing the concerns over security in mind, I believe the tourist police should be engaged to serve local and foreign travellers better."

SHOLASHAHAR INTERSECTION

In dire need of a foot-over bridge

ARUN BIKASH DEY

Pedestrians are forced to cross the wide intersection of Sholashahar Gate 2 putting their lives at risk in the absence of a foot-over bridge.

The intersection is one of the most hectic spots in the port city with different public and private vehicles moving towards different routes.

According to Traffic Department at Chattogram Metropolitan Police (CMP), around 2,000 vehicles ply at this intersection in an hour at rush time.

Typically, vehicles traversing four routes within the port city must pass through this intersection.

Locals and traffic department sources said due to the construction of a culvert at Muradpur intersection, which has halted vehicular traffic on the Muradpur to Oxygen route for months, the majority of vehicles travelling on the route



also use the intersection. As a result, it has become busier and more chaotic.

"Every day, we have to cross this intersection putting our lives at risk," said 47-year-old Ismail, a resident of the area. "I am a local in this area and I've never seen a foot-over bridge in this busy intersection since my childhood," he added.

Farzana Akter, another local, said, "Nobody will understand what goes on in my mind when I cross the intersection with my seven-year-old son. Not even a zebra crossing exists in this intersection. Sometimes, I can hear my heart beating when I see any big vehicle coming towards us while crossing the intersection."

Tariqul Islam, traffic inspector of CMP, said, "Even officials of the department of traffic face difficulties in controlling traffic in the area. A foot-over bridge is badly needed in this intersection so that pedestrians can cross the road safely."

Contacted, Rafiqul Islam, chief engineer of Chattogram City Corporation, said a total of 38 foot-over bridges will be built on different roads and intersections in the port city under a mega project, which will start soon. "A foot-over bridge will also be built at Sholashahar intersection under this project," he added.

TOUGH TIME FOR RAWHIDE TRADERS

They want bank loans to survive



MOHAMMAD SUMAN

Chattogram rawhide traders want bank loans on easy terms to recover losses after the area's 50 percent of tanneries have been closed due to the absence of a competitive market in the port city.

They are going through a tough time with their business and forced to sell their rawhide at cheaper rates.

Rawhide trade was vibrant in Chattogram years ago, but now it has decreased significantly, said traders.

They said during Eid-ul-Azha, most of the rawhide is sold at a lower price than the price fixed by the government. Besides, collection of rawhide has been decreased as the processing industries have almost collapsed, as it is difficult to comply with the regulations of the Department of Environment.

According to the traders, there were at least 22 tanneries in the port city. Since 1971, various reasons contributed to the shutdown of the factories. Among them, only one named Riff Leather owned by TK Group has survived till now.

Due to such closure in Chattogram, the warehouses have to depend on Dhaka, and the arrears of sold rawhide have increased every year, they said.

According to the data of Chattogram Rawhide Warehouse Traders Association, a total of 112 rawhide merchants belong to this

association and another 150 are outside it in Chattogram. However, only 52 merchants, out of 112, are running their businesses and the rest 60 have closed down in the last few years.

Moslem Uddin, president of the association, said, "Most of the products have to be sold in Dhaka as there is no competitive market in Chattogram. Many businesspersons are closing their businesses due to financial crisis. They will be able to restore the business if the government gives bank loans on easy terms."

"In addition, the government should arrange a specific tannery zone for Chattogram and a central ETP, considering the environment pollution," he added.

Enamul Haque, a rawhide trader at Aturar Depot Bazar area, said, "Now Chattogram-based Riff Leather buy only 10-15 percent of total collection of rawhide. And for the rest we have to depend on the tanneries in Dhaka..."

He also said about 20,000 30,000 skins are wasted or damaged every year as the tannery owners are not interested to buy those.

This year, the Chattogram traders are expected to collect at least four lakh pieces of rawhide of cattle after Eid ul Azha. They collected 4.43 lakh in 2022, 4.82 lakh in 2021, 5.12 lakh in 2020, 5.5 lakh in 2019 and 5.75 lakh in 2018.



PHOTO: RAJIB RAIHAN

Tamim ruled out of Afghan Test

SPORTS REPORTER

After intense speculation over the past few days, experienced batter Tamim Iqbal was eventually ruled out of the one-off Test against Afghanistan starting from today, the Bangladesh Cricket Board confirmed in a press release yesterday.

Bangladesh's ODI had been struggling after an old back injury resurfaced during a training session on Sunday, leading to concerns about whether he would recover in time.

"Tamim has been experiencing lower back pain, which has troubled him from time to time. Our treatment and procedures focused on reducing the pain and improving his functional ability. Unfortunately, his condition hasn't improved sufficiently enough for him to play the Test match. He felt stiffness and pain while batting and fielding in training and has been unable to complete the physical preparations required to play for five days," team physio Muzadded Alpha Sany was quoted as saying in the press release.

According to sources, Tamim was keen to play but the team management were unwilling to take risks. Tamim had missed the series against India last year due to a groin injury before returning for the one-day series against England and also playing both the home and away ODI series against Ireland.

It was learned that Tamim first suffered the back injury during the India series last year. During the trip to England this year for the Ireland series, Tamim underwent an MRI which revealed that he had a tear.



Tamim Iqbal, who has been ruled out of the Afghanistan Test due to a recurring back issue, looks on as Mahmudul Hasan Joy trains with the team in Mirpur yesterday. In Tamim's absence, Joy and Zakir Hasan are expected to open the innings for the Tigers in the lone Test against the Afghans, starting at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium today.

PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

HIGHLIGHTS

- Bangladesh suffered a 224-run hammering in their only Test ever played against Afghanistan in Chattogram in 2019.
- In Shakib Al Hasan's absence, Liton Das will become Bangladesh's 12th Test captain today.
- This is set to be Bangladesh's second Test this year. The Tigers won by seven wickets against Ireland in Mirpur in April this year.
- This is going to be Afghanistan's first Test in over two years. Afghanistan won by six wickets in their previous Test, against Zimbabwe in 2021.
- Star Afghan leggie Rashid Khan, who had turned the destroyer in chief in the previous Test played against Bangladesh, has been rested for this Test.

'We are just as ambitious as Bangladesh'

SPORTS REPORTER

Since receiving Test status in 2017, Afghanistan have only played just six Tests, winning three, including a 224-run win against Bangladesh in Chattogram in 2019. Interestingly, the one-off Test at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur from today will be Hashmatullah Shahidi and Co.'s first Test in over two years.

Faced with the challenges that come from not playing a Test match since facing Zimbabwe in 2021, head coach Jonathan Trott looked at Bangladesh as an example of how to approach the early days in the longest format.

"I think we are just as ambitious as Bangladesh when they started playing Tests. You see Bangladesh now going on to beat other teams at home. I think it's important to have that ambition. I think it is what drives the game. All Test cricketers will tell you that they like playing Test cricket. They will say it is their favourite format because of the challenges and tests. Individually as well. It is an exciting thing, something that I am looking forward to seeing tomorrow [today]," Trott said yesterday.

In the absence of star cricketer Rashid Khan, at least six Afghan cricketers are waiting to make their Test debut. The 52-year-old Englishman admitted that the Tigers would have the advantage on their home turf.

"I think any team playing at home will have a bit of an advantage. Certainly a team that has played more Tests by a long stretch will also have a bit of an advantage. It doesn't mean they will play better than us tomorrow. We prepared really well. I feel the players have trained exceptionally well. They are excited to play a Test in Bangladesh. Whatever has happened in the past, whoever is the favourite and whatever the conditions, it is all about what happens tomorrow [Wednesday] and who does it the best. It is my job to make sure everyone is ready," he said.



Sporting conditions a test of Tigers' strengths

SPORTS REPORTER

The selection of five pacers in the Bangladesh squad was a major talking point ahead of the one-off Test against Afghanistan, slated to begin today at Dhaka. Inevitably, even a day ahead of the match, discussions surrounded the greenish pitch. However, conditions can change pretty fast in Mirpur, but above all else the Tigers were looking for good Test match conditions in order to grow.

Of the last 10 Tests that the Tigers have played, they won only one while losing eight. Thus their search for consistency in the format is an ongoing process. In the context of competitiveness, there are no World Test Championship points to be had from the match as it is not part of the WTC cycle.

Afghanistan left their best spinner Rashid Khan at home, which adds to the feeling that no one quite wants to risk stars during a World Cup year. The target then for Bangladesh will be to test their own strengths against an Afghan side that played their last Test in 2021 and are lacking in Test experience.

Tigers' head coach Chandika Hathurusingha has a good idea about conditions and bluntly said that the wicket would behave like a sporting track. The specific plan is to test the team's strengths in various conditions at home. After

preparing green wickets against Ireland in Sylhet, the plan for Afghanistan was an extension of curating conditions conducive for the pace unit.

"Grass is green because of the rain the last few days. I have seen green wickets here before. We played against Ireland on a green wicket," he said when asked about the greenish looking pitch.

"We have fast bowlers but we need to give them conditions that



suits their strengths. We have good spinners as well. So, this game is only starting as a green wicket. With this heat, it will deteriorate very quickly and then it may help the spinners in the latter parts of the game. So, I think this pitch is a good, sporting wicket for everybody: batter, fast bowlers and spinners. So, I'd like to see a good contest," Hathurusingha said at the press conference yesterday.

On the broader context of Test match philosophy, Hathurusingha was willing to let go of the rigidity

of playing only in spin-friendly conditions at home while the search goes on for a particular brand of cricket.

"Before that Ireland series, we wanted to play a certain brand of cricket, regardless of the result. So yes, our endgame is to get results, but we want to understand how our skillset would last over five days and varying conditions, challenging us to play in a certain way.

"When we wanted to play and get some points, when we play the Test championship, we might tactically do different things, but this game is giving us an opportunity to play on a sporting wicket," he added.

A member of the team management opined that such wickets would become more common at home if the pacers continued to rise. The top four pacers in Bangladesh Test setup -- Khaled Ahmed, Ebadot Hossain, Taskin Ahmed and Shoriful Islam -- have produced just 19 wickets at home in the last two years. The very same speedsters accounted for a whopping 52 wickets away from home in the same period.

"Whether it's a Test championship or not, we'll find the way best-suited to us when we are playing at home. At the same time, we keep an eye on our development to play away from home," the head coach said, driving his point home as Tigers look to test themselves and grow.

Nadal out of top 100 after 20 years

AGENCIES

While Novak Djokovic reclaimed the World No. 1 ranking from Carlos Alcaraz after winning a record 23rd Grand Slam title at the French Open, there were clear signs of the end of an era as Rafael Nadal dropped out of the top 100 and reached his worst position in the rankings since March of 2003, when he was just a 16-year-old.

Nadal, a 14-time French Open champion, has endured an injury-plagued season and not played since January because of a hip injury sustained during the Australian Open.

The 37-year-old has dropped from 15th to 136th in the rankings due to his continued absence from the tour. He underwent surgery earlier this month and is expected to be out for five months.

Meanwhile, Djokovic began his record-extending 388th week at the summit on Monday, jumping two places in the standings after his victory in Paris at the weekend. Alcaraz dropped to second place while Daniil Medvedev, who crashed out in the first round, also slid one place down to third. Roland Garros runner-up Casper Ruud remained in fourth place.

In the women's rankings, Iga Swiatek retained top spot after defending her French Open title. She has held the ranking since April 2022, moving to the summit following Ash Barty's retirement.

Women footballers return from break with not much to look for

SPORTS REPORTER

With no domestic or international engagement on the cards, the national women's team footballers started returning to the residential camp yesterday after enjoying a five-day break as the Women's Super League (WSL) failed to kick off.

The announced start of the proposed league has been deferred twice -- May 15 and June 10, leaving the players frustrated and they asked for a break from continuous training.

"Nineteen out of 34 players have joined the camp so far and the rest are on their way to Dhaka. Only Tahura Khatun will join the camp a couple of days later as she is suffering from fever," assistant coach Mahbubur Rahman Litu informed, adding that the players will resume training this morning.

"Maria [Mandal], Monika [Chakma] and Sabina [Khatun] requested us for four or five days' break. I conveyed the message to Paul [Smalley] sir and [Mahfuza Akter] Kiran apa, who granted a five-day break," added Litu.

Krishna Rani Sarker and Sanjida Akter were the first to return to Dhaka after enjoying their break in Rangamati along with Anuching Mogini and others. "I am now at the camp. I had a fine



time during the break and I'm waiting for another break ahead for Eid. Of course, I am mentally happy after the break," Krishna told The Daily Star. "Actually, I know nothing about our next engagements and don't want to say anything about the WSL."

As acting general secretary Emran Hasan Tushar did not respond to calls, assistant coach Litu informed that BFF is yet to finalise FIFA friendly matches but is still trying to use the upcoming

FIFA window.

Though there was no explanation regarding the deferment of the league by the BFF, Fahad Karim, CEO of the tournament's rights holder K Sports, gave his reasons for the deferral.

"The challenge is that I am not getting live broadcasting slot because of schedules of upcoming SAFF Championship while the cricket series between Afghanistan and Bangladesh conflicts with the WSL schedules. Out of the 13 match days, we would not be able to broadcast six match days live despite the league having commercial value," Fahad told The Daily Star.

"Another challenge was that one of the four franchise owners backed out, so I didn't want to start the league haphazardly. The other owners also requested me to not hold the league during the month of financial closing," Fahad said, adding that he would sit with the BFF officials within a couple of days to clear everything.

Asked whether there is any chance of the league getting underway soon, Fahad said, "Now I have confirmed all four franchises for the participation and WSL will be held. We may not do much for the players in the inaugural season but I think they will be happy with the first season."



PSG-Mbappe saga continues

AFP, Paris

Kylian Mbappe has never discussed extending his contract with Paris Saint-Germain beyond next year, the France superstar told AFP in a statement on Tuesday, the day after he sent a letter to the club confirming he would not take up an option to remain at the French champions until 2025.

The club "were informed on July 15, 2022" of his decision not to activate an option to extend his contract, which ends after next season, for an extra year "and the only aim of the letter was to confirm what had already been spoken about previously," said the statement.

"Kylian Mbappe and his entourage confirm that this matter has not been discussed since over the course of the year, except a fortnight ago to announce the sending of the letter.

"No potential contract extension has been mentioned," it continued.

"After maintaining publicly in recent weeks that he would be a PSG player next season, Kylian Mbappe has not asked to leave this summer and has just confirmed to the club that he would not be activating the extra year," Mbappe and his entourage explained.

The statement concluded by saying that the 2018 World Cup winner "and his entourage regret that the letter was circulated in the media and that these exchanges were made public with the sole aim of damaging their image and the discussions with the club".

Mbappe's letter to PSG comes a year after the 24-year-old France striker signed a new deal to stay at the French champions, turning down an approach from Real Madrid in the process.

According to sources with knowledge of the discussions, PSG were surprised that the letter was leaked and do not envisage letting Mbappe leave for nothing.

That means either renegotiating the contract or selling him in this transfer window.



The Dhaka Premier Division Women's Cricket League went down to the wire, with league leaders Mohammedan facing off against second-placed Rupali Bank, who were just a point behind, in the final round of fixtures yesterday. Led by a 90-ball 69-run knock from Mukta Ravindra Magre, Rupali Bank overturned their deficit and defeated last season's champions by 53 runs to claim the title.

PHOTO: BCB

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EID JOURNEY

Those bound for north may face hassle

Possibility of gridlock at 13 points on Dhaka-Tangail-Rangpur highway

MOHAMMAD JAMIL KHAN and TUHIN SHUBHRA ADHIKARY

Expansion work on highways, short holidays, and roadside cattle markets are likely to cause sufferings to north-bound Eid holidaymakers.

They may face traffic congestion at 13 points on the Dhaka-Tangail-Rangpur highway unless proper measures are taken. Incomplete BRT works may cause congestion on the Tongi-Gazipur section.

Non-automated toll collection at Padma Bridge and the Dhaka-Mawa-Bhanga Expressway could cause long queues of south-bound vehicles amid the Eid rush.

Besides, traffic could grind to a halt due to breakdowns of rickety, unfit vehicles and crashes caused by the large number of motorbikes that will be on the highways.

Road conditions from Elenga to Bangabandhu East and Sirajganj to Bogura may cause suffering unless proper measures are taken.

The Daily Star came to know about the situation after talking to police, officials concerned and transport operators.

In this situation, Road Transport and Bridges Minister Obaidul Quader and Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan are scheduled to hold separate meetings tomorrow and Sunday to make the Eid journey safe and smooth.

Last year, ahead of Eid-ul-Azha, people heading towards the north and north-western parts suffered immensely because of congestions. However, people's journey before this year's Eid-ul-Fitr was relatively smooth.

ROAD WORK MAJOR CONCERN

Roads and Highways Department (RHD) is turning the 190km Elenga-Hatikumrul-Rangpur highway into a four-lane highway. The Bangabandhu Bridge approach road in the east has two lanes, which could become a bottleneck.

The 13 choke points are Elenga intersection, Jhavel Bridge, Koddar Mor, Nalka Bridge, Hatikumrul intersection, Jura Bridge, Goga Bridge, Chandaikona Bazar, Goibgandaganj Bazar, Mokamtola, Polashbari Bazar, Shotibari and Boro Dorga.

Mozammel Haque, deputy inspector general (operations) of highway police, said some obstacles could be there on this highway because of development work.

"We have already held meetings with RHD officials and they assured us that they will make arrangements for uninterrupted transport movement," he told The Daily Star recently.

Mosharref Hossain, general manager of Hanif Paribahan, echoed him.

Road conditions from Elenga to Bangabandhu East and Sirajganj to Bogura may cause suffering unless proper measures are taken.

After the closure of garment factories for the holidays, Savar Chandina road may witness congestion if traffic movement is not controlled properly, he said yesterday.

Contacted on May 6, Project Director Waliur Rahman said there was no congestion during the last Eid and the road condition is now better than then.

Asked about the 13 points, he said they have already opened some bridges and flyovers at those points, so the

SEE PAGE 6 COL 1

Moments after a microbus, going against traffic, rammed a motorcycle and injured its rider near Sat Rasta yesterday morning. Motorists later made sure that microbus driver did not leave the scene before traffic police arrived.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

CUSTODIAL TORTURE

HC summons OC, addl SP, magistrate

Victims of Shariatpur give vivid description of ordeal

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday summoned the chief judicial magistrate of Shariatpur, the district's additional superintendent of police (Naria Circle), and the officer-in-charge of the Padma Bridge South Police Station to appear before it and explain the torture of two businessmen in custody and them being sent to jail even though they had secured bail from the HC.

The two policemen were sued on June 7 for brutally torture of businessmen and brothers Saddam and Bokul Chowkdar in Shariatpur, their unlawful detention, and extortion of Tk 72 lakh from their family.

The OC has since been withdrawn and attached to the police lines. "Can the police beat them in such a manner even if they did not get bail in the case against them? Withdrawal of the officer-in-charge from the police station is not a punishment for the incident. Rather it is like a promotion," said Justice Mustafa Zaman Islam.

SEE PAGE 6 COL 4

Star

SPORT

Tigers ready for Afghan revenge

Bangladesh will hope to avenge the 224-run defeat in 2019 when they face Afghanistan in a one-off Test at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur today. Shakib Al Hasan will miss the Test due to injury while Tamim Iqbal has been ruled out due to a back issue. Liton Das will captain the side. Meanwhile, the visitors rested leg-spinner Rashid Khan, who had turned the destroyer in chief last time the two sides met in Chattogram. The track for the Test is expected to be seamer-friendly as the Tigers included only two specialist spinners in their squad and are likely to feature three pacers today.

STORY ON PAGE 11

Islami Andolan looks to expand its horizon

Plans to tie up with like-minded parties to press home demand for polls-time all-party govt

PARTHA PRATIM BHATTACHARJEE

Islami Andolan Bangladesh wants to set up an Islamist alliance with other like-minded parties and wage a movement to press home its demand for an all-party election-time government ahead of the next national polls.

The organisation will now focus more on street agitations to realise its demand instead of taking part in elections to local government bodies, said party sources.

The IAB is taking the stance following Monday's polls to Barishal and Khulna city corporations. The party's mayoral nominee in the Barishal city polls, Syed Faizul Karim, also its nayebe-ameer, came under an attack on election day.

The party has already announced that it will not take part in Rajshahi and Sylhet city polls on June 21.

Sources said although the Awami League and the BNP are trying to bring IAB into their folds as an electoral ally, the Islamist party has decided to continue its activities following its "go it alone" policy as the leaders believe that adopting this policy yielded good results for them in the past.

Therefore, the party wants to form a "third alliance", apart from those led by the AL and the BNP. To make it happen, the IAB has already started communicating with like-minded Islamist parties, said the sources.

"We will concentrate on a movement to realise our demand for an all-party election-time government. Of course we will wage a movement. The word andolan [movement] is in the name of our party," Gazi Ataur Rahman, senior joint general secretary of IAB, told The Daily Star yesterday.

He, however, said that their movement will be peaceful as the party is against any violence.

Ataur said the AL and the BNP failed to meet the people's expectations over the years and that's why they were trying to forge a "third alliance".

About its decision not to participate in the elections to local government bodies, the IAB leader said they had decided to take part in the polls considering that it was the main way to strengthen the party grassroots. "But we have now decided not to participate in any elections."

SEE PAGE 6 COL 3

Billion-year-old rocks reveal traces of ancient life

CNN ONLINE

Plants, algae, fungi, and animals -- including humans -- are all eukaryotes: life forms with complex, nucleus-containing cells.

A recent discovery of organic compounds in ancient rocks in Australia helps illuminate the early history of eukaryotes, suggesting that this group was already abundant more than a billion years ago, according to a new study.

Eukaryotes are believed to date back 2 billion years, but scientists thought that they only became widespread about 800 million years ago, said Dr Benjamin Nettersheim, one of the co-first authors of the study published in Nature.

However, newfound traces of molecules possibly produced by eukaryotes are up to 1.6 billion years old, which indicates "that early eukaryotes were already ecologically important for all this time," said Nettersheim, who is a postdoctoral researcher in geobiology at the MARUM Center for Marine Environmental Sciences at the University of Bremen in Germany. "We just didn't see their traces until now. They've kind of been hidden in plain sight."

The evidence of these ancient eukaryotes took the form of biological molecules that they produced. Modern eukaryotes produce a suite of signature biomolecules, including cholesterol.

A view shows a residential building heavily damaged by a Russian missile strike, amid Russia's attack on Ukraine, in Kyryvi Rih, Dnipropetrovsk region, Ukraine yesterday.

PHOTO: REUTERS

Trump pleads not guilty in federal documents case

REUTERS, Miami

Former US President Donald Trump pleaded not guilty early today to federal criminal charges that he unlawfully kept national-security documents when he left office and lied to officials who sought to recover them.

Trump's plea, entered before US Magistrate Judge Jonathan Goodman in a federal court in Miami, sets up a legal battle likely to play out over coming months as he campaigns to win back the presidency in a November 2024 election. Experts say it could be a year or more before a trial takes place.

The hearing was closed to cameras and live broadcasts. Trump's former aide Walt Nauta, also charged in the case, pleaded not guilty as well, the Associated Press reported.

CNN reported Trump was allowed to leave court without conditions or travel restrictions and no cash bond was required. Goodman ruled that Trump was not allowed to communicate with potential witnesses in the case, the network said.

In Loving Memory of Late Freedom Fighter



Advocate Abul Kashem
(09 April 1933 – 14 June 1999)

Ex-Public Prosecutor Feni District Judge Court, Ex-President of Feni District Awami League.

Your life and teachings left an indelible mark on our hearts, guiding us with your unwavering principles.

You were a shining example of integrity and compassion, showing us the true meaning of living a meaningful life. Your ideals continue to inspire us, giving us the strength to face challenges and accomplish great things.

Every day, we carry your morals and values forward and cherish the memories we shared together. You are always in our thoughts and prayers. May Allah grant Late Abul Kashem eternal peace and a place in Jannat.

With love,
Mrs. Halima Kashem, Engr Md Golam Sarwar, Advocate Golam Mohiuddin, Ferdous Ara, Kamrun Nahar, Samsun Nahar

Daughters-in-law (Meghla and Shimul), sons-in-law (Arif, Pavel and Liton), grandsons (Pranta, Barshan, Megh, Zulkifli, Yafid, Taufiq, Sahir and Adiyar), and granddaughters (Rodela, Muntahina, Zarin, Amrin, Nora)


Prantik Group, Chattogram, Bangladesh
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