



YOUR RIGHT TO KNOW

Star

SECOND EDITION

THE DAILY

ON FRIDAY

DHAKA FRIDAY JUNE 16, 2023



REGD. No. DA 781

VOL. XXXIII No. 148

ASHAR 2, 1430 BS

www.thedailystar.net

ZILQAD 26, 1444 HJRI

16 PAGES PLUS TOGGLE : Tk 15.00



B1

11 banks face Tk 33,575cr capital deficit



P11

Aussies seek first Ashes on English soil in 22 years



P7

Russia hits industrial facilities in Ukraine



P6

Just keep loving me: Nusraat Faria

Respect our right to own policies

Foreign ministry urges all

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh expects all concerned to respect Bangladesh's sovereign rights to pursue its independent domestic as well as foreign policy based on the motto -- "Friendship to all, malice towards none" -- as envisaged by the Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.

In a statement, the foreign ministry yesterday said it notes the remarks made by the spokesperson for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of China in the context of some recent comments made by Bangladesh prime minister.

On Wednesday, Wang Wenbin, spokesperson for the Chinese foreign ministry, at a briefing said Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina spoke not just

SEE PAGE 6 COL 4



Dwellers of shanties built on the pavement of Atish Deepankar Road near Malibagh level crossing sleep on rickshaw-vans instead of the shacks due to the hot and humid weather. Experts say such high summer temperatures, caused by El Nino, may continue for many years to come. The photo was taken around 5 o'clock in the morning yesterday.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

Hotter, drier summers may be new norm

Experts urge all to be adaptive

MOHAMMAD AL-MASUM MOLLA

Expressing concern over the record temperature rise in April and May in Bangladesh, experts have warned that this can become the new normal for the country.

According to Bangladesh Meteorological Department (BMD), heatwaves swept over different parts of the country for 24 days in April and 22 days in May this year.

In 2018, heatwaves lasted 10 days in April and eight days in May.

These two months also witnessed very low rainfall this year compared to the average rainfall during the same period over the last 30 years.

The 30-year average rainfall for April was 134 millimetres while the figure was 284 millimetres for May. But this year, the rainfall was 66.4 percent less in April and 44.1 percent less in May than the 30-year average, according to BMD data.

"This year's weather pattern is very unusual. The frequency of heatwaves is increasing, the areas affected are widening gradually, and the temperature is also on the rise," Md Monowar Hossain, a meteorologist at the BMD, told The Daily Star yesterday.

Meteorologists said this change in weather conditions has become a new weather phenomenon in the country.

According to the World Health Organisation, a heatwave is generally defined as a period of at least five

SEE PAGE 2 COL 5

Grabbing land, stealing fertiliser his forte?

Ex-Narsingdi MP Poton forced many to sell land at low prices, faces Tk 1,163cr suit for fertiliser scam

SHARIFUL ISLAM

Abdul Kuddus and his brother Helal Uddin own 13 decimals of land in a plot jointly owned by several people under the Ghorasal municipality.

In early 2018, the two brothers received a proposal to sell their land at Tk 20 lakh. The market price for the land in Ghorasal's prime location was nearly Tk 1 crore back then. So they refused to sell.

In a couple of months, a group of men linked to Narsingdi Awami League leader Kamrul Ashraf Khan Poton filled the entire plot with earth and enclosed it with a boundary wall.

"Poton has turned the plot into a car parking facility and rented it out to an industry," Abdul Kuddus recently told The Daily Star.

Nearly fifty people from different areas of Palash upazila have brought allegations of land-grabbing against

Poton.

A former lawmaker from Narsingdi-2 constituency, Poton is the senior vice president of Palash upazila Awami League.

Asked whether he filed any case, Kuddus said he and his brother could not muster the courage to file a case against Poton who was evidently very powerful in his constituency.

Fearing backlash, nobody in Palash and Ghorasal speaks out against Poton or his family, allege locals and AL sources.

Poton's elder brother Anwarul Ashraf Khan Dilip is the incumbent lawmaker from the constituency.

His nephew Al Mozahid Hossain Tushar is the mayor of Ghorasal municipality.

Poton forced many people from Khudraban, Ghorasal municipality and Danga areas under Palash upazila

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

Fertiliser thieves to be sent straight to jail: HC

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday said that if necessary it would send those found involved in the misappropriation of imported fertilisers straight to jail.

"We will not tolerate any kind of corruption including money laundering. We have zero tolerance for corruption," said the bench of Justice Md Nazrul Islam Talukder and Justice Khizir Hayat Lizu during the hearing on a rule.

"Give us the specific names [of those] who are involved in misappropriation of fertilisers. We will take appropriate actions against them. No one involved in this scam will be spared," the bench said.

The court said this after Bangladesh Chemical Industries Corporation (BCIC) lawyer Molla Kismot Habib sought time for submitting its enquiry report to the court.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 4

Journalist beaten to death by 'UP chairman's men'

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Jamalpur

A journalist died yesterday, a day after he was attacked and injured allegedly by some supporters of a Union Parishad chairman in Jamalpur's Bakshiganj upazila.

Golam Rabbani Nadim, 42, was the Jamalpur district correspondent of Banglanews24.com and Bakshiganj upazila correspondent of Ekattor TV.

He died from his injuries around 2:30pm yesterday at Mymensingh Medical College Hospital, said hospital's Deputy Director Jakiul Islam.

The victim's family and colleagues said that on May 10, a woman at a press conference in Bakshiganj claimed Mahmudul Alam, chairman of Sadhurpara Union Parishad, had secretly married her but did not want to give recognition.

Nadim and several other journalists published reports from the press conference. As a result, the chairman was enraged, they said.

Mahmudul, also general secretary of Sadhurpara union unit Awami League, filed a case against Nadim and another journalist under the Digital Security Act with Mymensingh Cyber Tribunal on May 17.

But the tribunal dismissed the case on May 30, according to tribunal sources.

Nadim, whose report was run by Banglanews24.com, came to know about the dismissal of the case on Wednesday evening.

Talking to The Daily Star yesterday, Lalon Mia, Bakshiganj upazila correspondent of the daily Odhikar, who was with Nadim, said when they were returning home and reached Bakshiganj Bazar area around 10:00pm on Wednesday, an assailant hit Nadim.

As the journalist fell on the ground from his motorcycle, some others beat him up indiscriminately with iron rods, injuring him critically.



Golam Rabbani Nadim

SEE PAGE 2 COL 5

UNIVERSAL PENSION Govt to set up an authority soon

Rules drafted to recruit manpower

REJAUL KARIM BYRON and MAHBUBUR RAHMAN KHAN

The government is set to form the National Pension Authority (NPA) to execute the Universal Pension Scheme formulated to provide pension services for the common people.

The announcement for the organisation and its activities will be made by Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina most likely in July. The Daily Star has learnt from finance ministry officials involved with the proceedings.

The rules detailing competencies, salaries and benefits for the chairman and members of NPA have already been formulated and the finance ministry has already begun its recruitment.

For now, two additional secretaries of the finance division are in contention for the post of executive chairman.

The executive chairman and members must have a postgraduate degree in one of the following subjects: public finance, economics, accounting, finance, banking, public policy, public administration, actuarial science and public financial management.

The candidate must have 20 years of experience in administrative and executive positions within government or autonomous organisations, including ten years in public financial management.

SEE PAGE 7 COL 1



People queue up behind a truck of TCB to buy essentials like rice, lentil, and edible oil at reasonable prices at Sahapur Thukra Bazar of Khulna's Dumuria yesterday. Many travelled 4km to 5km to reach there way before the truck arrived. Food inflation, caused by global supply disruptions and economic slow down, the war in Ukraine, and market manipulation by some unscrupulous traders, has forced many to depend on TCB outlets.

PHOTO: HABIBUR RAHMAN

সুষ্ঠু চিকিৎসা প্রদানের স্বার্থে হাসপাতালে সেবা গ্রহণের সময় রোগীর জাতীয় পরিচয়পত্র/জন্ম নিবন্ধন সনদের ফটোকপি সাথে রাখুন।

এমআইএস, স্বাস্থ্য অধিদপ্তর স্বাস্থ্য ও পরিবার কল্যাণ মন্ত্রণালয়

Bangladesh's economy has a dignified position now: PM

UNB, Geneva

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has said Bangladesh now holds an economically dignified position in the world due to the continuation of democracy and stability in the country since 2009.

She was speaking at an event titled "New Economy and Society in Smart Bangladesh", organised by the World Economic Forum at its office in Geneva yesterday.

The PM's Speechwriter M Nazrul Islam briefed reporters after the event.

Hasina said that the country has made unprecedented improvements in various socio-economic indicators during the rule of the successive Awami League governments.

She said during the AL government, Bangladesh emerged as a developing country from the group of the least developed countries (LDCs).

The per capita income has increased to \$2,824 from \$543 in 2006, the poverty rate has declined from about 41.5 percent to about 18.7 percent and the extreme poverty rate has dropped to 5.6 percent from 25.5 percent, the PM added.

Hasina said the Covid-19 pandemic, the Russia-Ukraine war and the subsequent sanctions and counter-sanctions have put pressure on Bangladesh's economy.

She said that her government was trying to overcome this pressure.

BORDER KILLINGS

India promised cooperation

Says BGB chief

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Border Guard Bangladesh chief Maj Gen AKM Nazmul Hasan yesterday said the Indian home minister and home secretary assured cooperation in stopping border killings.

Maj Gen Nazmul said this yesterday after a four-day director general-level talks between the BGB and BSF in Delhi that concluded on Wednesday.

The BGB held a press conference at the BGB headquarters yesterday to brief journalists.

The BGB chief said, "Our first agenda at the talks was to stop border killing. I hope to get a positive result in this regard. After I took over, border killings have reduced."

At the DG-level talks, the BGB and BSF agreed to complete 10 suspended development projects with five each

SEE PAGE 6 COL 2



PHOTO: PRABIR DAS, COURTESY

FEED DOGGO FRIDAYS

Standing by stray animals

ASHLEY SHOPTORSHI SAMADDAR

A group of young, enthusiastic, and kind youngsters preparing to feed stray dogs near the capital's Dhanmondi Lake -- this is what I was welcomed to when I decided to join Feed Doggo Fridays on a fine summer morning earlier this month.

Fuelled by his profound love for animals, Shadman Ishrak, a 20-year-old preparing for his A' Levels back then, initiated the "Feed Doggo" project in September 2021. He realised the difficulties stray dogs would face during the tough times of the Covid-19 pandemic. However, due to certain difficulties, the team had to take a small pause from their cause in May 2022, only to return with a greater will this year in January.

Since its inception, the project has fed over 7,000 stray dogs and countless cats; even goats.

"Sometimes, we try feeding the crows and other such animals too as many of us believe they contribute a

lot to maintaining the city's ecological balance," said Ishrak.

The project is mainly run by a team of over 300 volunteers, aged between 13 and 27, who come together every Friday in Mohammadpur, Dhanmondi, and areas of Old Dhaka.

"Some of them are regulars while many try and make time on as many Fridays as possible. However, we see the faces being repeated frequently," mentioned Ishrak while serving a portion of the day's special to a group of three hungry strays near Dhanmondi Lake.

The project is self-funded with the volunteers contributing from their pockets. So far, the young team of animal lovers has contributed around Tk 50,000 to keep the project running.

"We don't want to run from door to door collecting cash. Rather, we try and save as much as we can and welcome anyone who's interested to serve our little friends," shared the founder.

Once the money is assembled, a group is assigned to set off to the

kitchen market while a few others start preparing for the cooking session. The team usually serves home-cooked rice and chicken, with just a pinch of salt and turmeric to ensure good health.

Starting around 9:00am every Friday, this young group spreads across different lanes of the aforementioned areas -- meeting, greeting, and finally dining with these neglected animals.

Anurag Biswas Koushik chose to join the cause after going through the trauma of losing a puppy to illness and has been a regular volunteer since the beginning.

"Feed Doggo Fridays has become a part of my life. The experience of meeting, interacting, and making friends with these animals is incredible. They teach me to be welcoming and humble while overlooking the negatives around me," said Koushik, the twenty-year-old volunteer who is preparing to join the fall session at the University of Alberta in Canada.

So far, the group of animal lovers has arranged around 50 Feed Doggo Fridays.

"We hope to see you all soon as I believe we need every set of hands we can find to help these animals," concluded Ishrak, as we parted ways near Dhanmondi 8 with smiles on our faces, and a sense of joy and contentment in my heart.



Grabbing land, stealing fertiliser his forte?

FROM PAGE 1

to sell their land at giveaway prices, said victims, requesting anonymity. A few of them did not get any money, they added.

Hamayet Ullah from the municipality alleged that Poton took away eight decimals of land that he and his three brothers owned.

"Before registration, Poton promised he'd give us Tk 24 lakh, but after registration, he offered us Tk 80,000, which we refused to accept," he told this newspaper over the phone.

In 2018, forty men and women of the Hindu community from the Khudraban area lodged a joint complaint against Poton with the then deputy commissioner of Narsingdi for grabbing their lands.

The Daily Star has obtained a copy of the complaint. Dated January 7, 2018, it states: "...we, the undersigned, are from Ward no 5 of the Ghorasal municipality in Narsingdi district ... We have been living in the Khudraban village for centuries. Activists working for lawmaker Kamrul Ashraf Khan Poton started erecting walls through our neighbourhood. When we tried to prevent them from grabbing our ancestral lands, we were told that the MP was in need of land. We were asked to leave our land for India."

Stressing that the undersigned have no intention to leave the country, the letter then begs the DC to protect their ancestral lands.

Requesting anonymity, seven out of the 40 complainants told this correspondent that they were forced to sell their lands at low prices. At least two of them left the country, they added.

They said the market value of per decimal land in Khudraban village was Tk 75,000 - Tk 80,000 in 2018, but the land owners got only Tk 40,000 to Tk 45,000.

Kanon Bala, whose son was one of the 40 complainants, said Poton's men started erecting a brick wall along the boundary of their 100-decimal homestead weeks after her husband Bimal Chandra had died in December 2017.

"We did not sell the land, nor did we take any money from Poton. Yet

his men raised around a 50-yard-long wall along the boundary of our house," said Kanon.

She could save the land because the government high-ups took notice of the incident, she added.

These correspondents saw marks of removed walls and pillars on Bimal's land during a visit there on April 4.

Contacted, Subhash Chandra Biswas, the then deputy commissioner of Narsingdi, said he recalls the complaint.

"After receiving such a complaint, I visited the area and before my visit, those who were erecting walls removed them," said Subhash who is now an additional secretary at the public administration ministry.

The Daily Star tried to contact Poton several times. Despite repeated attempts, he did not pick up the phone. This correspondent sent text messages to his mobile phone and Whatsapp number. He responded to neither.

MISAPPROPRIATION OF FERTILISER

Poton's interests go well beyond lands. He is also the president of Bangladesh Fertiliser Association (BFA) and proprietor of M/S Poton Traders, a contracting firm.

His firm worked with the state-owned Bangladesh Chemical Industries Corporation (BCIC) for over a decade. Using his power as the BFA president, he won major contracts to transport imported fertiliser from Chattogram and Mongla ports to government warehouses, according to BCIC sources.

But things changed in December last year when two BCIC probe committees found out that Poton's firm was involved in a major fertiliser scam.

The BCIC filed a Tk 1,163 crore money suit against Poton and his firm, M/S Poton Traders, on charge of misappropriating 71,801 tonnes of imported chemical fertiliser.

Though the market price of the misappropriated fertiliser is Tk 582 crore, Poton and his firm should pay up double the price for the loss the BCIC incurred due to his failure to comply with the agreements, says the

case statement.

The suit was filed with the 5th Joint District Judge's Court on March 20. Meanwhile, The Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) has also started an investigation over the scandal after a High Court bench issued a Suo Moto rule on January 5 and asked the ACC to submit a report after the probe.

The Daily Star has obtained copies of several letters that the BCIC sent to Poton Traders, urging the company to deliver the fertiliser.

In a letter dated October 31, 2022, the BCIC said that it signed 13 agreements with Poton Traders in the 2021-2022 fiscal year, which stipulated that from 13 ships Poton's firm would collect and transport 3.93 lakh tonnes of imported fertiliser from Chattogram and Mongla ports to different government warehouses across the country.

According to the letter, once cleared by the port authorities, the deadline for delivering bulk urea fertiliser was 50 days and for bagged urea 40 days. However, 3.21 lakh tonnes of fertiliser collected from six ships have so far been delivered in time. The deadline for delivering the last batch of the remaining 71,916 tonnes ended on 15 May, 2022.

On October 2, 2022, Poton Traders wrote to the BCIC mentioning a timeline for delivering the remaining fertiliser. In its letter, Poton's firm claimed that the fertiliser it had in its warehouses amounted to 66,222 tonnes.

As Poton's firm failed to deliver the fertiliser again within the deadline it itself set, the BCIC formed two probe committees who submitted their reports on December 8. After visiting Poton's warehouses, the probe body found that there were only 1,307.9 tonnes of fertiliser, which were substandard and couldn't be provided to the farmers.

Contacted, BCIC Chairman Md Saïdur Rahman Khan said they have already filed a money suit against Poton Traders and its owner over the misappropriation of fertiliser.

Replying to another query, he said they have already debarred Poton Traders from tendering for the BCIC

and now the BCIC has no deal with him.

Another BCIC top official said they have provided the ACC with all the necessary documents for the investigation.

ACC Deputy Director Md Rafiquzzaman, who is leading a three-member team investigating the allegation against Poton Traders, said the investigation is going on.

"We hope to wrap up our investigation by the end of this month," he added.

Several attempts were made to reach out to Poton for his comments on this. When he did not pick up the calls or respond to text messages, The Daily Star called his personal secretary Kamrul Islam Kamal who assured that he would call back with Poton's comments but he did not.

Fertiliser thieves

FROM PAGE 1

The HC bench set July 9 for further hearing on the rule and asked the BCIC lawyer to submit the report to the court by that date.

Khurshid Alam Khan, lawyer of the Anti-Corruption Commission, told the court that the commission would submit its probe report to the HC very soon.

On January 5, the HC bench directed the ACC and the BCIC to conduct enquiries into the allegation of misappropriating 72,000 tonnes of imported chemical fertilisers by Poton Traders, a contracting firm, and submit the probe reports to it. The government incurred a loss of Tk 582 crore for this misappropriation.

According to a report of Bangla daily Prothom Alo, Poton Traders has misappropriated 72,000 tonnes of imported chemical fertiliser without carrying those to warehouses after the consignment was released from the port.

Former lawmaker Kamrul Ashraf Khan (Poton), also the president of Bangladesh Fertiliser Association, is the owner of Poton Traders, the report said.

Shibir-run coaching centre evicted in Ctg

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Chattogram District Administration during a drive yesterday evicted a coaching centre run by Islami Chhatra Shibir on government land at Chawkbazar area in the port city.

A mobile court from Chattogram District Administration conducted the drive at Probaho Coaching Centre in Chawkbazar area near Parade Maidan around 11:00am, said Tauhidul Islam, senior assistant commissioner of Chattogram.

It was built up on a government khas land which was leased out to Azizur Rahman Islamic Research Institute in 2007, he told our Chattogram staff correspondent.

Breaching the conditions of the lease, the land was rented out to the coaching centre, he said.

Two killed in lightning strikes

UNB, Sunamganj

Two fishermen died after being struck by lightning in Chhatak and Dowarabazar upazilas of Sunamganj on Thursday.

The deceased were Md Ismail, 42, from Chhatak and Ameer Ali, 35, from Dowarabazar.

Ismail was struck by lightning while fishing in a waterbody near his house at Longipur village under Noarai union.

He was rushed to Chhatak Upazila Health Complex where physicians declared him dead, said Md Jakir Hossain, officer-in-charge of Chhatak Police Station.

Besides, Ameer sustained severe injuries when a lightning strike hit him while fishing at noon.

Dr Hassan Ahmad, a physician of Dowarabazar Health Complex, said Ameer was brought dead to the hospital.

WEST BANK RAID

Israeli army kills Palestinian

AFP, Nablus

Israeli forces shot dead a Palestinian fighter in the occupied West Bank yesterday, Palestinian officials said, as the army said it came under fire during an operation to demolish an apartment.

The Palestinian health ministry said in a statement that Khalil Yahya Anis, 20, was "killed by live occupation (Israeli) bullets in the head in Nablus".

An official at Nablus' Al Najah hospital told AFP that two others were injured in the overnight clashes which erupted when Israeli forces entered the city in the northern West Bank to demolish the home of an alleged attacker.

An AFP journalist saw a group of young men surveying the damage to the apartment after dawn yesterday. Twisted metal and piles of rubble littered the floor and a gaping hole was left in a wall.

A local Palestinian security official, who spoke on condition of anonymity, confirmed that Anis was a fighter, though he did not say with which group he was affiliated.

Another security source in Nablus told AFP that Anis was a resident of the city's Al-Ain refugee camp and belonged to Palestinian president Mahmud Abbas's Fatah movement.

Hotter, drier summers

FROM PAGE 1

days where temperatures in an area are five degrees Celsius above the daily average.

The Bangladesh Meteorological Department defines temperatures of 36 to 38 degrees Celsius as a mild heatwave, 38 to 40 as a moderate heatwave, and temperatures above 40 degrees Celsius as an intense heatwave.

Experts say that erratic rainfall, high temperatures, extensive areas under heatwaves and their frequency are the new worries for Bangladesh, one of the worst victims of global warming.

"Increased human activities both at the global, regional and local levels are responsible for the warming of the climate. In Bangladesh, the heatwave magnitude and frequency situation would become worse in future, especially in cities," Ashraf Dewan, professor at the School of Earth and Planetary Sciences of Curtin University, Australia said.

In Southeast Asia, April and May are usually the warmest months of the year.

Journalist beaten to death

FROM PAGE 1

Nadim was taken to Bakshiganj Upazila Health Complex and later shifted to Jamalpur General Hospital. As his condition deteriorated, he was moved to Mymensingh Medical College Hospital.

Shahidur Rahman, a doctor of Jamalpur General Hospital, said Nadim was hospitalised with serious head injuries.

Meantime, a video clip of the attack has gone viral.

Talking to this newspaper, Nadim's wife Monira Begum alleged that supporters of Chairman Mahmudul attacked Nadim.

"After the report was published against the chairman, he had been harassing Nadim. He killed my husband. I demand exemplary punishment to the killers," said Monira.

Contacted, Mahmudul rejected

the allegations and said he had no dispute with Nadim.

Mohammad Sohel Rana, officer-in-charge of Bakshiganj Police Station, said they have so far detained three people in connection with the killing.

Police are investigating it and the process of filing a case was underway, he added.

Meanwhile, Bangladesh Federal Union of Journalists, Dhaka Union of Journalists, Dhaka Reporters Unity and Broadcast Journalist Centre sought justice for the murder.

BFUJ and DUJ announced a protest rally in front of the Jatiya Press Club tomorrow.

In a statement, Kamal Uddin Ahmed, chairman of the National Human Rights Commission of Bangladesh, demanded punishment to the killers.



4IR shouldn't undermine humanity

PM tells WEF event in Geneva

UNB, Geneva

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday said it must be ensured that the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR) tools are not used to hurt or undermine humanity.

The prime minister said this while responding to a question in a programme titled "A talk at the event on New Economy and Society in Smart Bangladesh", organised by the World Economic Forum at its office in Geneva.

PM's speechwriter M Nazrul Islam briefed reporters after the programme.

The PM emphasised on putting safeguards against cyber-attacks, disinformation and other vices. Hasina called for ensuring that 4IR does not create further divides within the society.

She also said her government has started preparing the youth of the country for 4IR and the future of work. "I am confident that our boys and girls will not just follow 4IR trends but will actually lead them," she said. "We have also seen great enthusiasm among them at the innovation fairs."

She said Bangladesh would certainly welcome an independent 4IR Centre in partnership with WEF.



Numerous coaching centres continue to put up plastic banners to advertise their services in Farmgate, one of the busiest student zones in the capital. Though there is a government ban in place against using non-biodegradable plastics, they continue to do so. This not only leads to environmental pollution, but also remains an eyesore. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

Play your due role in curbing dengue

Health minister tells city corporations

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The city corporation authorities in Dhaka are not taking adequate measures to control mosquitoes, said Health Minister Zahid Maleque yesterday.

"We are working with them [city corporations] relentlessly. Our researchers are also assisting them with necessary information. I hope the city corporations will not ease off its efforts [in controlling mosquitoes] and keep any lapses," the minister said.

Speaking at a discussion programme on the occasion of World Malaria Day at a city hotel,



he also expressed concern over the increasing number of dengue cases across the country.

"We have all-out preparations to address the dengue crisis. Doctors, nurses and other healthcare professionals are on standby and fully prepared [to tackle the situation]," he then said.

It is crucial to remain vigilant as both dengue and malaria are transmitted by mosquitoes, the minister further said.

Meanwhile, a person died and 285 others got infected with dengue in the last 24 hours

SEE PAGE 4 COL 3

Government not curtailing media freedom

Info minister tells JS

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The incumbent government is not interfering in the free dissemination of news, Information Minister Hasan Mahmud told the parliament yesterday.

Responding to lawmakers' queries, he said action would be taken against any news portal accused of disseminating anti-national and fabricated news.

With Speaker Shirin Sharmin Chaudhury in the chair, the question-answer session of yesterday's parliament sitting was tabled.

In reply to a query of opposition

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1

'Some engaged in interfering with judiciary'

Says Justice Nuruzaman in his farewell speech

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Justice Md Nuruzaman, the senior most judge of the Supreme Court's Appellate Division, yesterday uttered terms such as "intellectual corruption in some cases", "uncle court" and "batchmate and classmate court" — saying some individuals are engaged in interfering in the judiciary and judicial activities.

"Meanwhile, if the learned lawyers observe that intellectual corruption is taking place in some cases — as there is such a buzz of having uncle court and batch mate and classmate court — people's faith in the judiciary is violated. The judges and court officials and staff members cannot remain dishonest, if the lawyers are competent and honest



If the judges are not independent, independence of judiciary will not be established.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 6

11 CASES AGAINST KHALEDA Charge-framing hearing on July 16

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday set July 16 for hearing on charge framing against BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia in 11 cases.



Judge Md Asaduzzaman of Dhaka Metropolitan Sessions Judge's Court adjourned the hearings and fixed the new date.

Khaleda, who is out of jail following an executive order from the government, is now unwell and is under treatment at Evercare Hospital.

Among the 11 cases, 10 were filed in the first three months of 2015 over arson attacks, while the rest was filed with a Dhaka court on charge of making seditious comments on freedom fighters and martyrs of the Liberation War.



People with physical disabilities stage a demonstration at Shahbagh yesterday to press home their 11-point demand, including a special quota in government service and an increase in monthly allowance. The protesters wanted to march towards the parliament but they were intercepted by police at Shahbagh. PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN

'Country is ours, but headache is theirs'

Says Quader pointing to letters by MEPs, members of congress

UNB, Dhaka

Pointing towards BNP, Awami League General Secretary Obaidul Quader yesterday said even though the party is not in power, they have the money to hire lobbyists using crores of taka.

"Today, the game is on not only in Bangladesh, but also abroad, centring the national election. A conspiracy is underway," he said.

Quader said those who make tall claims and lie in the name of politics, complain to foreigners so that Bangladesh falls into more trouble.

"Six members of the European Parliament and six members of the congress of the United States sent letters stating that human rights are being violated in Bangladesh, fair elections must be ensured. The country is ours, but the headache is theirs," he said.

He said this at Awami League office on Bangabandhu Avenue while addressing a discussion on a three-month-long tree plantation programme organised by the Krishak League. He also said BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul should apologise for his derogatory



SEE PAGE 4 COL 3

Govt plans to hold state-managed polls

Alleges Fakhrul on reshuffling police, admin

UNB, Dhaka

BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir yesterday alleged that the government has started reshuffling police and public administration to hold another state-managed election.

Speaking at a discussion, he, however, said the country's people will thwart all the "blueprints" of the government through a mass uprising in the days to come.

Jatiyatabadi Sangskritik Forum, a pro-BNP platform, arranged the programme at Dhaka Reporters Unity.

Fakhrul said there is no alternative to intensifying the ongoing movement to oust the current government. The BNP leader said the government has also been regulating media outlets through the Digital Security Act. He said it is the characteristics of the Awami League is that it cannot tolerate dissent.

Fakhrul said the current government must be removed through a strong movement to restore democracy and press freedom.

He alleged that their party chief Khaleda Zia was jailed unlawfully in "false" cases out of political vengeance.

JOIN
IFIC

IFIC

MANAGEMENT TRAINEE PROGRAMME

BE A FUTURE LEADER OF COUNTRY'S LARGEST NETWORK BANK >

Do you aspire to be a leader? The largest bank in the country is looking for Management Trainees who are ready to take charge and make the difference. With a focus on meritocracy and career advancement, there's no limit to what you can achieve.

Apply today and start your journey to the top.

Submit your CV on or before **June 25, 2023**
To know more, visit www.ificbank.com.bd/career

* IFIC Bank reserves the right to reject any or all applications without assigning any reason.



24 Jubo Dal

FROM PAGE 5

is an active activist of the college unit of BCL.

"Police arrested 24 leaders and activists of Jubo Dal, Chhatra Dal in overnight drives in Chawkbazar, Chandgaon and Bakalia area in connection with the vandalism... Among the arrestees, detectives held a Jubo Dal leader Md Nawshad Al Jashedur Rahman from Chandgaon," said ASM Mahatab Uddin, additional commissioner (crime and operations) of Chattogram Metropolitan Police.

Besides, a two-barrel gun was seized from his possession, said the official.

Addressing a press conference yesterday, he also said, "We are investigating the cases."



Islami Bank Hospital and Cardiac Center was inaugurated in the capital's Mirpur on June 14. Yousif Abdullah Al-Rajhi, vice chairman, Islami Bank Bangladesh Limited, inaugurated the hospital as chief guest. Dr Tanveer Ahmad, vice chairman of the bank; and Dr Aref Suleman, representative of Islamic Development Bank, attended the programme as special guests.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

Government

FROM PAGE 3

Jatiya Party MP, the minister said, "This government does not interfere with independent dissemination of news in print media and has continued to improve the quality of this sector through a variety of initiatives."

GAS RESERVES FOR 10YR

Nasrul Hamid, state minister for power, energy and mineral resources, told parliament that including

the reserves of the newly discovered gas field Elisha, the primary gas reserves are 40.43 trillion cubic feet and the extractable gas reserves are 28.76 trillion. Of this, 19.94 trillion cubic feet have been extracted till 31 May 2022 and 8.82 trillion cubic feet of reserves are remaining.

Considering the average daily gas production of 2,200 million cubic feet, this gas will last for 10 years, he added.

Asian Development Bank
Bangladesh Resident Mission
Change of Telephone Number

The Asian Development Bank (ADB), Bangladesh Resident Mission (BRM), Plot E-31, Sher-e-Bangla Nagar, Dhaka would like to inform to all concerned that the land phone number for voice call has been changed.

The new number is as follows:

Telephone Number: +880 2 55667000

Caution Notice

Our Company, Kiabi International Supply Service Ltd. ("Kiabi") a company incorporated in France having its liaison office at Shanta Western Tower 186 Bir Uttam Mir Shawkat Road, Dhaka-1208, is a reputed international garment supplier company.

It has come to our attention that some dishonest individuals have been attempting to carry out recruitment scams and extort money from innocent jobseekers impersonating certain former employees of the Company. The Company would like to clarify that it does not seek any payment for appointments, nor does it have any recruitment procedure outside its official recruitment process authorized and carried out by its HR team. If any member of the public comes across any suspicious recruitment activity in the name of Kiabi, they are requested to immediately report the same to the following email address: HR.DH@kiabi.com

The Company has already filed a General Dairy with "Tejgaon Industrial Police Station". (GD No-450, dated: 9th January-2023).

Md. Moinuddin Kaiser
Administration Manager
KIABI International Supply Services Ltd
Dhaka Office.

CRIMINOLOGY DEPT AT DU
Committee formed
to probe poor grades

DU CORRESPONDENT

The authorities of Dhaka University yesterday formed a committee to investigate a complaint from four students of the Criminology Department regarding the poor marks they received in a course taught by Prof Zia Rahman.

Prof ASM Maksud Kamal, pro vice-chancellor (academic) of the university, will lead the committee, according to a decision made at the syndicate meeting.

Multiple syndicate members have confirmed this to The Daily Star. The other members are Prof Shima Zaman, dean of law faculty; Dr Tasneem Arefa Siddiqui, chairperson of political science; and Baharul Haque Chowdhury, controller of examination.

Four 4th-year students on December 26 wrote to the VC and pro-VC asking that their answer scripts for the 7th semester final exams be re-evaluated by an independent exam committee. The students - Sakin Tanvir, Mehbez Binte Matuor, Shozayet Ullah Bhuiyan, and Tahnán Mahjabin Adhora - wrote the letter after learning that they got poor scores on a course taught by Prof Zia.

On January 19, they also learnt that they got 2 out of 20 on a mid-term test on Prof Zia's course.

The four wrote to the VC, while sending copies to the pro-VC and controller on June 1 demanding the same.

They alleged teachers do not hold required number of classes, deliberately delay publishing sessional marks, and fail to submit evaluated answer scripts on time, resulting in the delay of results publication and graduation.

Syndicate

FROM PAGE 5

of the bills. Despite repeated attempts by this correspondent, Kawsar could not be reached for comment.

However, Md Ibrahim Hossain, manager of Janata Bank's Tarash upazila branch, refuted the allegations.

He also said his bank [Janata Bank] disbursed the funds following proper rules.

"We have meticulously preserved all the official documents to prove that our bank officials disbursed the money following legal procedures," Ibrahim Hossain told The Daily Star.

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

Govt. Profulla Chandra (P.C.) College, Bagerhat

Memo No. CEDP/GPC/2022-2023/W-2/438

Date: 16.06.2023

e-Tender Notice 01/2022-2023

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

Sl No.	Tender ID	Name of package	Last date and time of tender security submission	Tender closing date & time
01	841199	Renovation and Refurbishment of Classrooms (Govt. P.C. College, Bagerhat)	06-July-2023 13:00	06-July-2023 14:00

This is an online tender, where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP Portal and no offline hard copy will be accepted.

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

The fees for downloading the e-Tender documents from the National e-GP System Portal have to be deposited online through any registered banks branches up to 05 July 2023, 03.00pm.

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

Professor Sheikh Ziaul Islam

Principal

Govt. Profulla Chandra (P.C.) College, Bagerhat

Cell No. 01558-313882

E-mail: pccollegc1918@gmail.com

GD-1019

TO-LET

Newly built 4 bedroom with attached bath lake & south facing 5th floor furnished apartment full generator backup, swimming pool at North Gulshan 2nd Circle.
Contact: 01841030041

FLAT FOR SALE

Uttara, Sector- 3 : 3200 sft
Uttara, Sector- 6 : 2400 sft
Bashundhara - G : 2900 sft
(4 Bed, Corner plot)
01713377885, 01713377886

FOR SALE

INDEPENDENT HOUSE ON 10 KATHA BANANI, DHAKA. ONLY GENUINE BUYERS
CALL 01327413961 D-77

ফ্ল্যাট বিক্রয়

জরুরি ফ্ল্যাট বিক্রি হবে। পরিমাণ ১,৫০০ বর্গফুট। ঠিকানা মধ্য বাজা গুলশান ১ থেকে ৩ মিনিটের দূরত্ব। 01711185044
01756-561074 D-76

Some engaged in interfering

FROM PAGE 3

in court," he said. If the judges are not independent, independence of judiciary will not be established, said Nuruzzaman.

He made the comment while receiving a farewell from the attorney general's office and Supreme Court Bar Association at Court-1 of the Appellate Division. He will retire on July 1.

"I have realised from my experience as a lawyer and judge that it will be possible to exercise and establish proper democracy in the country if justice is established in the court. But without accepting this truth, some individuals or classes are engaged in interfering in the judiciary and judicial functions, which create obstruction to the country, nation

and democracy. At the same time, the judges must realise this truth and discharge their duties with a commitment to establish justice," he said.

He said, "Learned attorney general and judges dispose of cases. But learned lawyers don't end their duties after merely assisting the court to ensure justice, they also observe the judges' potential and standard of dispensation of justice, honesty and principles."

"Neutral observation enhances the faith of people on the judiciary. If a lawyer observes that justice has been ensured after the Appellate Division cancelled the bail of an accused - such opinion from the lawyers must enhance the people's faith on the judiciary and

encourage the judges to ensure justice," he said in his written speech.

Nuruzzaman hoped that the Supreme Court will protect the rights of people by continuing to uphold rule of law and the constitution.

Chief Justice Hasan Foez Siddique, Appellate Division's Justice Obaidul Hassan, Justice Borhanuddin, Justice M Enayetur Rahim, Justice Md Ashfaqul Islam, Justice Md Abu Zafar Siddique and Justice Jahangir Hossain Selim were present in the courtroom. Attorney General AM Amin Uddin and SCBA President Md Momtaz Uddin Fakir delivered speeches. Justice Nuruzzaman was elevated as a judge of the Appellate Division on October 9, 2018.

DISTANCE LEARNING PROGRAM (DLP)
Diabetic Association of Bangladesh (BADAS)
Website: www.dlpbadas-bd.org

ADMISSION NOTICE
CERTIFICATE COURSE ON DIABETOLOGY (37th Batch)

Applications are invited from physicians (MBBS with BMDC registration) for admission into the 37th batch of Certificate Course on Diabetology (CCD) session July to December 2023. The course was designed by a joint committee of Diabetic Association of Bangladesh (BADAS) and Distance Learning Programmers of Open University of UK for providing standard diabetes care. Students can join the course in Online mode or Offline mode according to their preference. Doctors willing to get admitted into 37th batch are requested to do online registration for both online and offline modes through the DLP website (www.dlpbadas-bd.org). Selected candidates will subsequently get instruction to complete admission procedure. Students are requested to register early as seats are limited. For any query please call DLP office (+8801718851777).

National Prof A K Azad Khan
President, BADAS & Chairman, DLP
Diabetic Association of Bangladesh

Dhaka Residential Model College
An Autonomous Institution under Ministry of Education
Established: 1960
Mohammadpur, Dhaka-1207
Best Educational Institute (College)-2022-23 Sheikh Razi Padak-2022

INVITATION FOR TENDER

Tender Notice No. : Admin./23-2938 Dated : 14.06.2023

1. Ministry/Division	Ministry of Education (MOE)
2. Agency	Dhaka Residential Model College
3. Procuring Entity Name	Principal, Dhaka Residential Model College
4. Procuring Entity Code	N/A
5. Procuring Entity District	Dhaka
6. Invitation for	Works
7. Invitation Reference No.	College Board of Governors Meeting No. 151 decision No. 06
8. Date	17-04-2022

KEY INFORMATION

9. Procurement Method	Open Tendering Method (OTM) National
-----------------------	--------------------------------------

FUNDING INFORMATION

10. Budget and Source of Funds	Own Source of Dhaka Residential Model College
11. Development Partners	N/A.

PARTICULAR INFORMATION

12. Project Code	N/A
13. Project Name	06 Storied Residential Quarters for Teachers
14. Tender Package No.	package no 01 (one)
15. Tender Package Name	Construction of 44 Flats for Teachers at Dhaka Residential Model College
16. Tender Publication Date	15/06/2023
17. Tender Last selling Date	09/07/2023 during office hour
18. Tender Closing Date and time	10/07/2023 upto 12.00 PM.
19. Tender Opening Date and time	10/07/2023 at 12.30 PM.
20. Name and address of the office (s)	Dhaka Residential Model College, Mohammadpur, Dhaka-1207
(a) Selling Tender Document	Office of the Principal, Dhaka Residential Model College, Mohammadpur, Dhaka-1207
(b) Selling Tender Document (Others)	N/A
(c) Receiving Tender Document	Office of the Principal, Dhaka Residential Model College, Mohammadpur, Dhaka-1207
(d) Opening Tender Document	Office of the Principal, Dhaka Residential Model College, Mohammadpur, Dhaka-1207

INFORMATION FOR TENDERER

21. Eligibility of Tender	a) Having experience in successful completion of at least 02(Two) numbers of Building work showing at least an amount of Tk.02.00 Crore in a single tender in Government/Semi-Government/Autonomous Organization of Bangladesh during last 5 (five) years. b) With a minimum annual average construction turn over which shall be greater than Tk. 05.00 Crore over the last 3 (Three) financial years. c) The Tenderer shall have minimum liquid asset of Tk.02.00 (Two) Crore d) Other satisfactory criteria laid down in the tender data sheet of the tender documents.				
22. Brief Description of works	Construction Works.				
23. Price of Tender Document (Tk.)	Tk. 15,000.00 (Fifteen Thousand) only (Non-refundable).				
24. Package Identification of Package No.	Location	Tender security amount (Tk.)	Performance security amount (Tk.)	Completion Time	
WD-01	Construction of 06 Storied Teachers' Quarters (44 Flats) at Dhaka Residential Model College	Dhaka Residential Model College, Mohammadpur, Dhaka-1207.	69,00,000/-	5% of Total Value	24 Months

PROCURING ENTITY DETAILS

25. Name of Official Inviting Tender	Brigadier General Kazi Shameem Farhad, ndc, psc
26. Designation of Official Inviting Tender	Principal, Dhaka Residential Model College
27. Address of Official Inviting Tender	Dhaka Residential Model College, Mohammadpur, Dhaka-1207.
28. Contact details of Official Inviting Tender	Phone No. 02-58153774
29. The procuring entity reserves the right to accept or reject any/all tenders without any reason whatsoever.	

Kazi Shameem Farhad
Brigadier General
Principal
Dhaka Residential Model College

Infant among 3 killed as bus hits auto-rickshaw

STAR REPORT

Three people -- including a seven-month-old baby -- were killed and three others injured as a bus rammed into a CNG-run auto-rickshaw in Sirajganj's Salanga area yesterday morning.

"The accident took place on Sirajganj-Hatikumrul road near Nalka Bridge around 8:30am," said Hatikumrul Highway Police Station Officer-in-Charge Badrul Kabir.

The three auto-rickshaw passengers -- Chanbanu, 50, of Ullapara upazila, Dolly Akter, 25, of Fazle Khan Road in Sirajganj town, and her seven-month-old son Nihan -- died on the spot, said the OC.

OC Badrul said the auto-rickshaw was heading to Sirajganj town from Hatikumrul and the bus was coming to Hatikumrul from Sirajganj.

The injured were taken to a local hospital, the OC said, adding, "We have seized the bus but the driver and his helper fled."

TIPU MURDER CASE

Court to decide on accepting charges Jun 19

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday fixed June 19 to decide whether it will accept charges against 33 people, including at least nine leaders of different units of the ruling Awami League and its associate bodies, in the case filed over the murders of Awami Leader Jahidul Islam Tipu and Samia Afran Jamal Prity in March last year.

The magistrate summoned Tipu's wife Farhana Islam Doly, the complainant, to appear before it on the scheduled date.

Metropolitan Magistrate Rajesh Chowdhury set the date.

Md Yasin Sikder, a DB inspector, also the case's investigation officer, on June 5 submitted the charge sheet to the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's Court of Dhaka.

On March 24 last year, criminals opened fire at Tipu's car in Shahjahanpur area, leaving the AL leader and college student Prity dead.

According to the charge sheet, Suman Sikder Musa, who was flown back from Oman by DB several months after the killing, was the main coordinator of the double murder. He contacted Shamim Hossain. Later, Shamim picked his longtime friend Masum Mohammad Akash for the mission and assured him of accompanying him during the gun attack.

War crimes accused dies

STAR REPORT

A war crimes accused died after he fell sick at Dhaka Central Jail in Keraniganj yesterday morning.

Nizamul Haque Mia, 76, was declared dead at Dhaka Medical College Hospital after prison guards took him to the hospital around 6:00am, said inspector Bachchu Mia, in-charge of DMCH Police Outpost.

Hailing from Gopalganj's Kashiani upazila, Nizamul was arrested from Dhaka's Bhatara area on April 10.

His body was kept at the hospital morgue for autopsy.



Every day, Nurul Islam sets off with bamboo-made traps, locally known as "chai", to catch fish. He places the traps in various ponds and lakes hoping for a good catch during low tides. After keeping some of the fish for his daily needs, Nurul sells the rest at nearby markets. This photo was taken in Barishal Sadar yesterday.

PHOTO: TITU DAS

BORO, AMAN PROCUREMENT

Syndicate embezzles Tk 40 lakh public fund

Two food dept officials found guilty

AHMED HUMAYUN KABIR TOPU

A government audit team discovered that a syndicate in Sirajganj has embezzled over Tk 40 lakh public funds, designated for procuring Boro and Aman paddy.

According to sources at the department, Md Yasin Ali, food officer of Tarash upazila, and Kawsar Rahman, former in-charge of the upazila's food depot, have been found guilty in the act. SM Saiful Islam, Sirajganj district controller of the food office, said the authorities have initiated departmental proceedings against the accused officers.

In the 2021-2022 fiscal, Tarash upazila food office aimed to procure 700 tonnes of paddy from farmers.

Of this, 474 tonnes were procured transparently, and the corresponding bills were paid to the farmers, said Saiful.

However, an additional Tk 40.5 lakh was distributed to 50 bank accounts of Janata Bank Limited, allegedly for the procurement of an additional 150 tonnes of paddy.

It was later discovered that the additional 150 tonnes were not stored in the depot, revealing the suspicious nature of the transaction, explained Saiful.

The bank's financial statement indicated that Tk 81,000 was credited

to each of the 50 accounts, with the assumption that the accounts belonged to farmers who had supplied 3 tonnes of paddy each.

The list of the 50 account holders was obtained by The Daily Star, but the verification process to confirm their authenticity is yet to be completed.

"It appeared suspicious to us when we found that a Tk 40.5 lakh bill was paid but the rice was not stored in the depot."

"Then, an internal audit was conducted between January and February this year, and the irregularities came to light. We suspect that the money was withdrawn using fake documents and bills," Saiful added.

To investigate the matter further, a three-member probe body led by Md Tanvir Rahman, Naogaon district controller of the food office, has been formed.

Contacted, Tanvir said, "We have already started investigation to identify those involved."

Meanwhile, Md Yasin Ali denied any involvement in the corruption and claimed to be a victim of conspiracy.

"A group of locally influential people and some bank officials are involved in this plot," he said.

Yasin admitted that he had not thoroughly scrutinised all the documents to confirm the authenticity

SEE PAGE 4 COL 5

Ensure equal inheritance for the women

Speakers tell event

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Lack of equal rights in inheritance creates an undemocratic environment dominated by men, teaches women to view themselves as burdens, and causes adolescents of that family to manifest similar behaviour afterwards, stressed speakers at a seminar yesterday.

They made the remarks at "Democratic and Secular Values in Establishing Gender Equality and Co-Citizenship", a seminar jointly organised by Bangladesh Nari Progati Sangha and Centre for Peace and Justice (CPI) and Peace Cafe, Brac University, at the university's auditorium in the capital's Mohakhali.

Prof Dr ASM Anwarullah Bhuiyan of Jahangirnagar University's Philosophy Department, said, "Men and women are expected to play varying social and cultural roles defined by their gender identity. Identifying and accepting one's true identity is necessary as every member of the society has the duty to practice and promote equality -- a phenomenon we have been sidelining for centuries."

"It's high time we realise this and work to develop the lives of the ones we have left behind," he added.

"Democracy is defined by the state's accountability and transparency, not just voting rights. It can only be practiced when the society is able to hold onto democratic values," said Shahariar Sadat, director (academic and legal empowerment) of CPI.

"As citizens, we are entitled to civil rights defined by the country's constitution," said Dr Seuty Sabur, associate professor at department of economics and social sciences, Brac University.

"It is necessary for us to realise our rights and act upon them. Only then can equality be achieved," she added.

As citizens, we are entitled to civil rights defined by the country's constitution. It is necessary for us to realise our rights and act upon them. Only then can equality be achieved.

CULTURE OF PEACE

UN adopts Bangladesh's resolution

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

The United Nations General Assembly unanimously adopted Bangladesh's flagship resolution on the "Culture of Peace" on Wednesday.

While introducing the resolution, Permanent Representative of Bangladesh to the UN in New York Ambassador Muhammad Abdul Muhith highlighted the continued relevance of culture of peace in today's world is characterised by complex challenges and boundless opportunities.

The resolution was first adopted on 13 September 1999, during the first tenure of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina.

The recent High Level Forum, which was held on 06 September 2022, focused on transformative role of culture of peace to ensure justice, equality, and inclusion for advancing peacebuilding.

This year, the resolution centred on collective efforts to address global risks and challenges with the UN playing a central role. It underscored the importance of strengthening preventive diplomacy, dialogue and healthy debates at all levels.

This year's resolution has been cosponsored by more than 100 countries.

Meanwhile, the UNGA adopted by consensus a draft resolution piloted by India to establish a memorial wall in the UN headquarters to honour peacekeepers who laid down their lives on the line of duty, reports our New Delhi correspondent.

Improve quality of research

President urges universities

BSS, Dhaka

President Mohammed Shahabuddin yesterday asked university authorities to ensure the quality of research at educational institutions.

The president said this when a four-member delegation of Dhaka University led by its Vice-Chancellor Prof Md Akhtaruzzaman paid a courtesy call on him at Bangabhaban.

The president, also chancellor of DU, advised universities to focus more on research activities to explore time-befitting knowledge and keep pace with the competitive world.

President Shahabuddin said, "The incumbent government's continuity and political stability have contributed positively to this regard."

Later, VC of North South University Prof Atiqul Islam paid a courtesy call on the president.

NARAYANGANJ FIRE

Fourth family member dies

STAR REPORT

Another person, who was injured in a fire caused from a charger fan in Narayanganj's Fatullah on June 9, died at a city hospital yesterday morning.

Four of the five, all of the same family, injured in the fire have died so far. Tutul Mondal, 25, breathed his last around 9:15am while undergoing treatment at Sheikh Hasina National Institute of Burn and Plastic Surgery.

He suffered 60 percent burns, said Inspector Bachchu Mia, in-charge of hospital police outpost. The other deceased are Tutul's mother Bulbuli Begum, 40, father Abdus Salam Mondal, 55, and sister Sonia Akter. Sonia's daughter Mehejabin, 7, is fighting for life with 35 percent burns.

VANDALISING MURALS, CLASH 24 Jubo Dal, Chhatra Dal activists held, over 500 sued in Ctg

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Police arrested 24 leaders and activists of Bangladesh Jatiyatabadi Jubo Dal and Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal in Chattogram city early yesterday, over a clash with Chhatra League men and vandalising the glass murals of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman on Wednesday evening.

The arrest was made after police and a BCL activist of Chattogram Government College unit filed two cases against 138 leaders and activists and 400 unnamed persons on Wednesday night.

Sub-Inspector Imarnus Sazzad filed a case with Kotwali Police Station accusing 78 persons of vandalising the murals while college student Shafayet Hossen Raju lodged the other with Chawakbazar Police Station accusing 60 leaders and activists of attacking BCL men from a procession.

The murals were vandalised in the port city's Jamal Khan area following the clash in front of Chattogram Government College during a rally in port city's Kazir Dewri area on Wednesday evening.

However, no senior leaders of BNP, Jubo Dal and Chhatra Dal were not included in the FIRs, said police.

Jatiyatabadi Jubo Dal, Swetchasebak Dal and Jubo Dal of Chattogram organised the rally titled "Youth rally for saving country" demanding restoration of voting rights of youths and an election-time neutral government.

Shafayet, a 4th-year student of Chattogram College,



Three rows of illegally parked CNG-run auto-rickshaws take up a significant portion of this road at CANT Point of Sylhet city, resulting in long tailbacks in the area. This photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: SHEIKH NASIR

PRAYER
TIMING
JUNE 16

Fazr Juma Asr Maghrib Esha
AZAN 4-05 12-30 5-00 6-50 8-15
JAMAAT 4-40 1-15 5-15 6-55 8-45

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1

Just keep loving me NUSRAAT FARIA

SADI MOHAMMAD SHAHNEWAZ
She is beautiful, she is talented. She is confident enough to call herself 'The best in the business', which is backed up by her stellar track record of films like *Bibaho Obhijan*, *Boss 2*, *Operation Sundarban* and *Shahenshah*, along with her barrage of songs that exemplify her singing talent as well. Recently, Nusraat Faria once again bedazzled audiences in *Kolija Ar Jaan*, from Afran Nisho's debut film, *Shurongo*.

It has only been a few days, but 'Kolija Ar Jaan' is already trending on most platforms. Are you developing a liking for item songs?

I refuse to call it an 'item song' - I feel like it diminishes the actors who participate in it, and objectifies women as 'items'.

What would you call it then?

It is simply a song that is used to promote the film! So *Kolija Ar Jaan* is a promotional song. And yes, I knew that the song would go 'viral', because apparently, everything I do is viral! Before you ask, I don't want that kind of petty attention, I always focus on my work, and want people to know me for it.

You seem more confident than ever on-screen.

I have always been confident. I work hard, and am honest with myself - and that is why I am the best in the business.

Your friendship with Sabila Nur and Ashna Habib Bhabna is wholesome, and the talk of the town. How did you

become friends?

I am so lucky to have them. When I was with my ex-fiance, I didn't have many friends per se. They came to my life as a blessing, and now we are inseparable. Sabila, Bhabna and I are in different stages of our career, so it is

not always easy for us to meet up. But when we do, it is always a blast!

What are you busy with at the moment?

I just came back from India after *Bibaho Obhijan 2* released last month, I finished a commercial shoot as well. I signed two new films with Alpha i, one of which will be directed by Tanim Rahman Aungshu. I signed two films in Kolkata as well, one will be helmed by Baba

Yadav.

Any broader goals in the industry?

I would like to maintain balance between commercial and well-thought out, story-based films.

Leave a message for your fans.

Just keep loving me!



PHOTO: SHEKH MEHEDI MORSHED



Arnob to perform at World Music Day 23 in India

Arnob will be performing at the World Music Day 23 concert in Kolkata on June 21. The programme will take place at Biswa Bangla Convention Centre and Arnob will be seen alongside renowned celebrities including Sharmila Tagore and Gulzar.

The *Chitley Roud* singer announced the news on his Facebook account, yesterday.

"I'm super excited to be a part of this celebration, 'Tagore our way' on world music day. This means a lot to me, especially growing up in Santiniketan with all his songs. I am so glad to also represent Bangladesh with a song which captures the true spirit of our country and connects our lives with rivers and the bond between us," said the singer.

Alia Bhatt enroute to Netflix's Tudum festival



After signing on for Netflix's *Heart of Stone*, Indian actor Alia Bhatt is quite excited to attend the streaming platform's Tudum festival, an event where fans get a chance to see their favourite celebrities from upcoming and existing Netflix projects. The three-day-long event will take place in Sao Paulo, Brazil from June 16 to 18.

Sharing her excitement about attending Tudum with fans on social media, Alia shared, "No *Heart of Stone* here... just one filled with love... enroute to Tudum, São Paulo."

NEWS

Rejoinder, our reply

FROM PAGE 12
and mentioned updated working progress at the nine points and mentioned that works have not started four of these 13 points.

As we cannot accommodate the details work progress at these points, we are publishing a concise version of it, followed by our reply.

OUR REPLAY

The Daily Star published the report based on Highway Police, and transport operators' observations. The highway police identified 13 points from Alenga to Rangpur highway that may witness traffic congestion unless proper measures are taken.

Besides, the report also incorporated comments of Project Director Waliur Rahman regarding the 13 points on the highway, where he said they have already opened some bridges and flyovers at those points, which was actually mentioned in the rejoinder in details.

We stand by our report.

Life building block

FROM PAGE 12
"We have found abundant phosphorus in plume ice samples spraying out of the subsurface ocean."

Geysers on Enceladus' south pole spew icy particles through cracks on the surface out into space, feeding Saturn's E ring - the faint ring outside the brighter main rings.

Scientists previously found other minerals and organic compounds in the ejected ice grains, but not phosphorus, which is an essential building block for DNA and RNA, and is also found in the bones and teeth of people, animals, and even ocean plankton.

Two doctors

FROM PAGE 12
Sanjukta Saha was at the hospital, said the complaint.

Akhi had been under life support at LabAid Hospital since the C-section, Yakub told The Daily Star.

Other hospital employees accused in the case are Dr Mili, Jamir, Ehsan, Parvez and several unnamed individuals.

Police arrested Dr Shahzadi and Dr Muna after the case was filed and took them to a court yesterday.

The court of the Metropolitan Magistrate Anan Sumi recorded the confession of Dr Shahzadi while the court of the Metropolitan Magistrate Farah Diba Chanda recorded the statement of Dr Muna.

N Korea fires two short-range missiles

REUTERS, Seoul

North Korea fired two short-range missiles off its east coast yesterday, the South Korean military said, less than an hour after Pyongyang warned of an "inevitable" response to military drills staged earlier in the day by South Korean and US troops.

The latest action by North Korea came as US President Joe Biden's national security adviser, Jake

Sullivan, was in Tokyo for meetings with his Japanese and South Korean counterparts.

In a meeting with South Korea's national security adviser, Cho Taeyong, and Japan's National Security Advisor Takeo Akiba yesterday, the three discussed North Korea's missile programme and confirmed that they would work closely together to get Pyongyang to abandon its nuclear weapons, according to a readout of the meeting released by Japan.

Bangladesh improves

FROM PAGE 12

Department of State ranks countries by putting them in Tier-1, Tier-2, Tier-2 Watch List, and Tier-3, with Tier-1 being the best in terms of taking actions against human trafficking and Tier-3 being the worst.

Any country in Tier-3 faces sanctions on development assistance.

The country was in Tier-2 Watch List for three years - 2018, 2019, 2020.

It was pointed out that forced labour is still an issue and employers still confiscate the identity documents, like passports, of Bangladeshi migrant workers. Previous reports had documented numerous instances of employers retaining Bangladeshi migrant workers' passports in the Maldives.

The trafficking of Bangladeshis to Cambodia also came up in the report.

"Fearing significant downturns in revenue stemming from pandemic-

related restrictions, and witnessing widespread unemployment during the pandemic, traffickers in Burma, Cambodia, Laos, Malaysia, the Philippines, Ghana, and Turkey - including some with connections to the People's Republic of China (PRC) - saw an opportunity. They used fake job listings to recruit adults and children from dozens of countries, including [...] Bangladesh," said the report.

Some of the standards that countries must adhere to include implementation of human trafficking laws through vigorous prosecution and sentencing of trafficking; governmental measures to prevent human trafficking by cracking down on practices identified as contributing factors to human trafficking, such as employers' confiscation of foreign workers' passports and allowing labour recruiters to charge fees to prospective migrants, and expansive victim protection systems.

India promised cooperation

FROM PAGE 2

on either side of the border.

Replying to another query, he said the BGB started preparation for the upcoming national election long ago.

He also told his Indian counterpart that the Kuki Chin National Army, an armed group of the Chattogram Hill Tracts, may force a number of Bawm community people to go to India's

Mizoram. He was assured that if the group sent people to Mizoram they will be repatriated after confirmation of their nationality.

Bangladesh authorities launched a crackdown on the group after it came to light that the group has been giving shelter to and training newly formed militant group Jama'atul Ansar Fil Hindal Sharqiya.

Respect our right to own policies

FROM PAGE 1

about "the strong position of the Bangladeshi people, but also the mind of large part of the international community, especially the developing world" when she talked about the US sanctions on Rab.

Wenbin said this when asked about PM's recent remarks about the US sanctions and her comment that Bangladesh should stop buying from countries that impose sanctions.

"We firmly support Bangladesh in safeguarding its sovereignty, independence, and territorial integrity, upholding independent domestic and foreign policies, and pursuing a development path that suits its national realities," the

spokesperson said.

Bangladesh foreign ministry said that in this connection, it would like to underscore that Bangladesh, like any self-respecting country, attaches the highest importance to the values of sovereignty and freedom to decide its own course of action - both domestic and foreign - for the betterment of its people, to realise the dream of the father of the nation by implementing the visions laid by Hasina.

The ministry statement comes at a time when the world is witnessing a geopolitical shift.

The Indo-Pacific region has also come under focus of the global powers and Bangladesh is also under

the spotlights.

More than a year after imposing sanctions against Rab and seven of its current and former officials, Washington on May 24 announced a visa policy saying that it would restrict visas for individuals and their immediate family members if they are responsible for, or complicit in, undermining the democratic election process in Bangladesh.

It said the policy is aimed at supporting Bangladesh prime minister's commitment to hold free and fair elections in December this year or early next year.

China has not made any public statement on Bangladesh's elections.

Tigers on top

FROM PAGE 12

the ball neither zipped nor moved much despite the grass. The toss turned out to be a good one to lose as Bangladesh scored at over 4.5 runs an over on the opening day.

Najmul Hossain struck an attacking 146 while Mahmudul Hasan Joy also stuck around, making an important 76. The 212 run partnership between the two made a remarkable difference due to the mere fact that Bangladesh batted in the best batting conditions as Mirpur turned into a seaming track.

Despite having the experienced Mushfiqur Rahim and Mehedi Hasan at the crease, Bangladesh's innings was uprooted in seven overs on day two, six after the new ball was taken. But as the Afghan pacers' ran riot, Bangladesh's pacers were egged on by their counterparts' fearsomeness in

that morning session.

Mushfiqur Rahim had been done in by a sharp, rising delivery which he only could fend off to the slip cordon. The Bangladesh dressing room, especially the pace trio, took a cue from the bounce and movement on offer on a slightly gloomy and fairly windy day.

Ebadot bowled a mean rising delivery himself to remove Afghan opener Abdul Malik which complemented the one that Nijatullah Masood had bowled earlier in the morning.

"It didn't matter that we lost wickets as we scored a lot of runs. Because the weather was gloomy, we wanted to get on to the field quickly and get their wickets as quickly as possible," Ebadot said, adding that he always had confidence.

Asked if the way the Nijatullah got Mushfiqur out was inspiring, he said:

ACC sues cop

FROM PAGE 12

The ACC began enquiry against the police officer in 2020 upon receiving allegations of bribery and corruption. Abdullah amassed the wealth between 2007 and 2023, it found.

With the wealth, Abdullah bought two plots, six katha each, in the Ananda Police Housing Society of Narayanganj's Rugganj. He paid Tk 40.42 lakh so far.

His mother-in-law, Karima Khatun, signed a letter of allotment with Navana Real Estate to buy 3,909 square feet (sq ft) flat in Gulshan worth about Tk 8.75 crore on August 8, 2022.

About Tk 6.74 crore was paid from his wife's savings and business accounts.

Another Tk 2.09 crore was paid in cash.

Farhana bought a commercial space of about 2,386 sq ft in Kakrail for Tk 2.70 crore and a 2,150 sq ft apartment for about Tk 2.73 crore.

She spent another Tk 40 lakh for the construction of an apartment in the Police Project Southern Park-1 in Khilgaon.

Besides, the anti-graft watchdog traced deposits of about Tk 1.76 crore in Abdullah and his relatives' bank

accounts.

Farhana bought two savings certificates of about Tk 1 crore by using separate NIDs. The couple also has a sedan worth Tk 31 lakh.

To conceal his ill-gotten wealth, Abdullah kept the money in his wife's name, reads the statement.

The ACC also found suspicious transactions of about Tk 26.5 crore in Farhana's account.

Upon the ACC's application, the Senior Special Judges Court of Dhaka seized and froze the moveable and immovable properties of the accused.

Press India on media crackdown

CPJ urges US ahead of Modi visit

REUTERS, Washington

The Committee to Protect Journalists yesterday called on the US government to urge India to end a media crackdown and release six detained journalists.

A statement from CPJ President Jodie Ginsberg ahead of a state visit to Washington next week by Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi said there had been an increasing crackdown on India's media since he came to power in 2014.

"Journalists critical of the government and the BJP party have been jailed, harassed, and surveilled in retaliation for their work," Ginsberg said.

"India is the world's largest democracy, and it needs to live up to that by ensuring a free and independent media – and we expect the United States to make this a core element of discussions."



Cyclone affected people wade through water as Cyclone Biparjoy rises sea level in a coastal area in Sujawal of Pakistan's Sindh province yesterday. Authorities in India and neighbouring Pakistan evacuated more than 180,000 people from vulnerable coastal areas in the path of Cyclone Biparjoy, which made landfall last night. PHOTO: AFP

INDONESIA POLLS Court rejects ballot system change

AFP, Jakarta

Indonesia's constitutional court yesterday shot down a proposed change to the country's electoral system that rights advocates had decried as an attack on democracy, ahead of a vote next year.

The legal challenge stoked fears of a return to Indonesia's autocratic past and a potential delay to February's presidential and legislative polls, which could have allowed President Joko Widodo to extend his rule past the two-term limit.

The court rejected a bid by a member of the governing Democratic Party of Struggle (PDI-P) to move the world's third-biggest democracy to a closed-ballot voting system that would have only allowed party leaders to choose MPs.

Constitutional court chief justice Anwar Usman said in a hearing yesterday that he "rejects the plaintiffs' petition in its entirety".

A ruling the other way would have been binding and could not have been immediately challenged.

The closed-ballot system was used during autocratic former president Suharto's rule and kept after his downfall in the late 1990s.

Russia hits industrial facilities in Ukraine

Kyiv reports gains in southern front despite 'powerful resistance' from Russian troops

AGENCIES

Russian missiles hit two industrial facilities in the central Ukrainian city Kryvyi Rih in the early hours of yesterday, city mayor Oleksandr Vilkul said, with a drone attack also reported in Odesa.

Vilkul said three rockets hit two industrial enterprises "that had nothing to do with the military," injuring one 38-year-old man. One car was damaged with debris of missiles downed by air defenses.

"The destruction is significant," Vilkul wrote on Telegram messaging app. In the southern port city of Odesa, authorities said air defences yesterday downed all 18 Russian drones that approached the region.

Authorities in Russia-controlled Crimea also reported a drone attack, saying they had downed 9 Ukrainian drones, reports Reuters. Kyiv yesterday reported progress in its newly launched counteroffensive, despite strong resistance from Russian troops.

"There is a gradual but steady advance of the armed forces," Ukrainian Deputy Defence Minister Ganna Malyar told a briefing.

"At the same time, the enemy is putting up powerful resistance" on the southern front, she said, referring to mined fields, kamikaze drones, and intense shelling.

After months of building expectations Ukraine early this



month launched its offensive in the south and in the east, reports AFP.

Around the frontline hotspot of Bakhmut, "the enemy is pulling up additional reserves and is trying with all its might to prevent the advance of Ukrainian forces."

Still, Malyar reported an advance of more than three kilometres (1.8 miles) in the area of Bakhmut.

Ukrainian forces have recaptured seven settlements and more than 100 square kilometres of territory, said Oleksiy Gromov of the Ukrainian armed forces' general staff.

Russia claims to have repelled all Ukrainian assaults.

Meanwhile, Russia said yesterday that it would stage local

elections in September in four Ukrainian regions that it claimed to have annexed last year.

"Elections in the new territories of the Russian Federation will take place on a single voting day on September 10, 2023," Russia's election commission said.

UN nuclear chief Rafael Grossi yesterday said the situation at the Moscow-occupied Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant in Ukraine was "serious", but was being stabilised.

Grossi arrived at Europe's biggest nuclear plant to assess potential safety risks after the destruction of the Kakhovka dam, which caused huge floods and exacerbated fears for the facility's safety.

COVID PARTIES Ex-UK PM Johnson lied to MPs Parliament committee rules

AFP, London

Boris Johnson deliberately lied to MPs about lockdown-breaking parties during the Covid pandemic that would have seen him face a 90-day suspension had he not quit as a lawmaker, a parliament committee ruled yesterday.

The Privileges Committee, which probes breaches of House of Commons rules, concluded that Johnson was guilty of "repeated contempts (of parliament) and... seeking to undermine the parliamentary process".

"The contempt was all the more serious because it was committed by the prime minister, the most senior member of the government," they stated in a damning 106-page report.

"There is no precedent for a prime minister having been found to have deliberately misled the House. He misled the House on an issue of the greatest importance to the House and to the public, and did so repeatedly."

The seven-member committee has powers to recommend sanctions on rule-breakers that have to be voted on by MPs.

Sudan war death toll surges past 2,000

AFP, Khartoum

Sudan's devastating war raged on into a third month yesterday as the reported death toll topped 2,000 and after a provincial governor was killed in the remote Darfur region.

The army headed by Abdel Fattah al-Burhan has since April 15 fought the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces (RSF) commanded by his former deputy Mohamed Hamdan Daglo.

The fighting has driven 2.2 million people from their homes, including 528,000 who have fled to neighbouring countries, says the International Organization for Migration.

"In our worst expectations, we didn't see this war dragging on for this long," said one Sudanese citizen, Mohamad al-Hassan Othman, who has fled his home in Khartoum.

Everything in "our life has changed," he told AFP. "We don't know whether we'll be back home or need to start a new life."

The death toll has risen above 2,000, according to Armed Conflict Location and Event Data Project's latest figures which cover fighting until June 9.

In long-troubled West Darfur, the violence claimed the life of Governor Khamis Abdullah Abakar, hours after he made remarks critical of the paramilitaries in a telephone interview with a Saudi TV channel.

The United Nations said "compelling eyewitness accounts attribute this act to Arab militias and the RSF", while the Darfur Lawyers Association condemned the act of "barbarism, brutality and cruelty".

Greece scours shipwreck site Hundreds of migrants feared drowned in hold

REUTERS, Kalamata

Rescuers scoured seas off Greece yesterday following a shipwreck that killed at least 79 migrants, as hopes dwindled of finding survivors and fears grew that hundreds more might have drowned trapped inside the overloaded vessel's hold.

Reports suggested between 400 and 750 people had packed the fishing boat that capsized and sank early on Wednesday morning in deep waters about 50 miles (80 km) from the southern coastal town of Pylos.

Greek authorities said 104 survivors had been brought ashore.

As it began to flounder late on Tuesday night, people on the vessel's crowded outer deck repeatedly turned down attempted assistance from a Greek coast guard boat that was shadowing it, saying they wanted to reach Italy, according to Greek authorities.

"When you are faced with such a situation... you need to be very careful in your actions," coast guard spokesperson Nikos Alexiou told state broadcaster ERT.

"You cannot carry out a violent diversion on such a vessel with so many people on board... without any sort of cooperation."

As Greece declared three days of mourning, authorities said it was unclear how many had been aboard.

They were investigating an account from a European rescue support charity that there could have been 750 people on the 20- to 30-metre-long (65- to 100-foot) boat.



Govt to set up an authority soon

FROM PAGE 1

For members, the requirement is 15 years and seven years in public financial management.

Bankruptcy, loan default, moral turpitude and getting penalised by any professional organisations will be considered as incompetencies for the posts.

They can be appointed on deputation or contractual for three years, with the tenure extendable.

The chairman cannot be involved with any other organisation in a voluntary capacity or in exchange for benefits.

The monthly salary for the executive chairman would be Tk 3.5 lakh, which includes a basic salary of Tk 2 lakh and house rent and other benefits of Tk 1.5 lakh.

The members' salary would be Tk 3 lakh, including a basic salary of Tk 1.5 lakh.

They will also get a car and chauffeur round-the-clock.

If the chairman and members are appointed on deputation, they will get salaries according to their

grades. For contractual appointments, there would be two festival bonuses and a Boishakh allowance.

Once the NPA is recruited, more rules will be issued to implement the universal pension scheme, according to finance ministry officials.

Initially, two schemes will be launched for expatriates and insolvent people, they said.

In January, the government enacted the Universal Pension Management Act, of 2023. There will be a 16-member governing body headed by the finance minister.

Secretaries of different ministries, the Bangladesh Bank governor, the Bangladesh Securities and Exchange Commission chairman and the presidents of the Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce & Industries, Bangladesh Employers Federation and Bangladesh Women Chamber of Commerce and Industry will be its members.

In his budget speech, Finance Minister AHM Mustafa Kamal said he was hopeful about introducing

the scheme by the next fiscal year.

Under the proposed scheme, a beneficiary can enjoy pension benefits subject to the payment of a subscription fee up to the age of 60 if the person enrolls between 18 and 50 years of age. Those who enrol after their 50th birthday will have to pay the subscription fee for at least 10 years.

Expatriate Bangladeshis will be able to participate in the scheme.

If the pensioner dies before hitting 75, their nominee will be entitled to the pension.

If the subscriber dies before paying the subscription fee for at least 10 years, the deposited money will be returned to the nominee with the profit. A subscriber will be able to withdraw a maximum of 50 percent of the deposited amount as a loan.

Contributions to the pension fund will be treated as investments and tax rebates can be availed against it. Besides, the amount received as a monthly pension will be exempted from income tax.



Smoke bellows from a street after a standoff between mob and security forces at Sekhon in Imphal East during ongoing ethnic violence in India's north-eastern Manipur state yesterday. Some people have been injured, the police said, adding a few houses have been set on fire too. PHOTO: AFP

Can we finally expect some results?

Launch of largest-ever road safety project brings hope but also familiar concerns

We are delighted to see the launch of Bangladesh's largest-ever road safety project financed jointly by the World Bank and the government. Totalling Tk 4,988.14 crore, the five-year project marks a milestone in the country's ongoing battle against deadly road crashes. According to a report by this daily, the project will focus on comprehensive road safety measures, including improved engineering designs, road signs and markings, pedestrian facilities, speed enforcement, and emergency care. These measures, to be implemented along two specific highways, are expected to reduce road traffic deaths by over 30 percent. There will also be measures targeting selected urban areas and district roads.

Crucially, the World Bank's appraisal report highlights the lack of accountability and coordination among relevant government bodies, the importance of which cannot be overstated. It is thus heartening to see the involvement of vital institutions like the Roads and Highways Department, Bangladesh Road Transport Authority, Bangladesh Police, and the Directorate General of Health Services in the project. Their collaboration – which not only signals a shared commitment but also a recognition of the multi-faceted approach required to ensure road safety – is vital for the effective implementation of this undertaking.

However, to expect one project to bring dramatic changes would be expecting too much. It is also crucial to reflect on the longstanding systemic challenges that have derailed past endeavours. While improving infrastructure and post-crash care is certainly necessary to bring down casualty numbers, what is most problematic about our transport sector is the laissez-faire approach of those in charge, with the traffic and road safety rules barely enforced. Accountability should extend to not just officials at the government bodies but also transport professionals and their associations.

So as we embark on this project, we must remember that it is not just about financial investment or infrastructure improvements. Ensuring road safety in Bangladesh will require a fundamental shift in our attitudes, a culture of accountability and law enforcement, and continuous efforts to raise awareness among all road users. The success of this project will be measured not only in terms of reduced fatalities and injuries but also in changes brought to the mindset of all concerned, without which no initiative will be sustainable. It is also essential to ensure that such initiatives are extended to all regions of the country for a greater impact.

Tree for tree, but at what cost?

HC's call for planting new trees shouldn't be taken as a licence to cut trees at will

We welcome the High Court's directive for the authorities to plant 10 trees for every one tree cut for the sake of development work. The order came after an incident involving felling 30 palm trees for the construction of a road in Patuakhali. It hits especially close to home given how widespread the culture of cutting trees has become in Bangladesh. Time and again, we have warned about the environmental cost of destroying trees and forests under various pretexts, but there has been little effect so far.

Just days before the HC's rule, a vested quarter reportedly razed down hills in Chattogram's Fatikhkhari upazila to construct a chicken shed. Around the same time, it was reported that the Chattogram district administration decided to clear out a mangrove forest to build a sanctuary for birds and wildlife. How ludicrous is the idea of destroying a natural forest to create an artificial one? Meanwhile, in Dhaka, we witnessed how the two city corporations disregarded all logics to fell trees in the name of beautifying roads. It appears that those in charge of development work are somehow unaware that development at the cost of the environment is a lost game in the end.

As for the HC's comment, we must recognise that simply planting new trees after cutting down older, mature ones will not provide the same environmental benefits. Older trees absorb and store more carbon dioxide, and replacing them with younger ones not only degrades soil quality, but also impacts the new plant's quality and growth. What complicates it further is that often new trees are selected and planted arbitrarily, with very little aftercare.

Therefore, the court's directive should not be taken as a licence to cut trees indiscriminately, and those in charge need to ensure that new trees are planted carefully and judiciously. We also would like to urge all project authorities to ensure that their project designs are made by keeping the importance of nature in mind.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

letters@thedailystar.net

Improve passport office service

Recently, my wife and I went to the regional passport office in Dhaka's Agargaon to collect our passports. We went there at 9:30am and waited until 12:30pm, when the office authorities announced that their servers were down. Hundreds of people waited for hours and returned empty-handed. My question is, why can't they work manually when their servers don't work? They can take a signature from each passport seeker and deliver his/her passport. And when the servers start working, they can mark "delivered" on each one's page. Is it so difficult? Or they must come up with an alternative system for when their servers are down, so people don't have to suffer.

Md Sirajul Islam Molla
Pallabi, Mirpur, Dhaka

ECONOMIC CRISIS IN BANGLADESH

It all comes down to accountability



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

KALLOL MUSTAFA

Ministers and MPs of the ruling party often claim that Bangladesh has surpassed Singapore and Malaysia in terms of economic development. But in reality, depreciation of the taka against the US dollar, high inflation, energy crisis, and frequent load-shedding have all disrupted the country's economy and people's lives. In a sense, this crisis has been caused by the dwindling foreign exchange reserves, because Bangladesh's forex expenditure is higher than its forex income at present. As a higher demand for the dollar outweighs forex inflow, the value of taka against the dollar keeps falling, causing a crisis in the import of necessary fuel or raw materials too. But the events, decisions and processes behind this economic phenomenon are entirely political.

Although the government continues to blame the Russia-Ukraine war for the crisis, the issues of growing budget and trade deficit, money laundering, expensive development projects, using the forex reserves for infrastructure projects, and increasing import dependency in the energy sector were all already there long before the war broke out. If there was minimum accountability and an effective democratic process in the country's governance system, these issues would not exist year after year.

Due to a lack of accountability, the more development projects are taken up, the more corruption takes place and the more the development cost rises. Moreover, thousands of crores of taka have been embezzled in the name of loans from public and private banks under political institutional patronage. Money earned through corruption has regularly been laundered abroad. According to Global Financial Integrity (GFI), a Washington-based research institute, Bangladesh lost approximately USD 8.27 billion annually on an average between 2009 and 2018 because of traders misinvoicing the values of import-export goods to avoid taxes and/or to move money out of the country. If the government were accountable to the people, these incidents of corruption

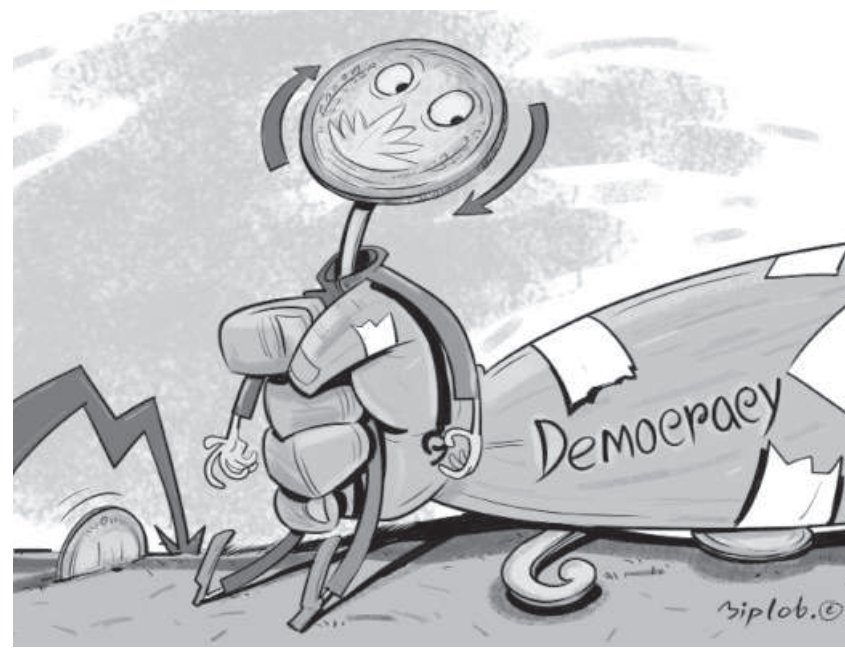


ILLUSTRATION: BIPOB CHAKROBORTY

and money laundering would have been minimised.

The government also fails to tax the rich adequately, and instead helps them grow through different incentives. Thus, tax collection in Bangladesh as a percentage of GDP has been stuck at around 7.6 percent (as of May 2022) – the lowest in South Asia and one of the lowest in the world. As a result, the government's budget deficit has increased, but that does not stop it from taking up costly development projects one after another. To fund these projects, it takes loans from various domestic and foreign sources, which in turn puts more pressure on the economy. Bangladesh's foreign debt more than tripled in just 10 years, rising to \$91.43 billion in 2021 from \$27.05 billion in 2011, according to a World Bank report.

One of the reasons behind the forex reserve crisis is that foreign loans have been used to fund costly and wasteful projects that do not generate enough forex earnings to cover the reserve deficit. A common trend in megaprojects here is the abnormal time and cost overruns.

Due to planning errors, irregularities and corruption, the costs escalate time and again. This trend has made Bangladesh home to some of the world's most expensive roads and highways, BRTs, metro rails, power plants, etc.

In the name of solving the power crisis, one after another rental and quick rental power plants and IPPs have

community in general have to suffer. In Bangladesh, all the people, including the businessmen, are suffering from the extreme power and energy crises created by policies that were designed to benefit a few local and foreign businesses, without considering the long-term consequences on the economy. Due to frequent load-shedding, industrial production has been reduced significantly. Production costs are rising for factories that are running on diesel generators during power outages. Most factories are unable to utilise their workers and machinery for a large part of the day. Factory machineries are being damaged and raw materials are being wasted due to frequent power outages. As the production of export-oriented industries are being hampered, industry owners fear the loss of foreign buyers, which would further jeopardise our export earnings.

The biggest problem of an authoritarian regime is that the decision-making power becomes centralised, with no check and balance in place, which creates great risks for a country. Moreover, arbitrariness and vested groups' interests trump public interests in major decisions. The grassroots reality does not reach the centre of power, or even if it does, there is a tendency to hide it with fabricated statistics, which after a certain point leads to an even greater danger.

Describing the importance of democracy, Nobel Laureate Amartya Sen in his book *Development as Freedom* highlighted its protective role, mentioning that when economic conditions are normal, the importance of this protective role of democracy is often not felt. But when the situation deteriorates, it becomes clear how important democracy is to prevent economic and social disasters.

As an example, he mentioned the 1997 Asian financial crisis, which was a result of lack of transparency, accountability and people's participation in policymaking. If democratic systems were effective in those countries, maybe investment decisions and the associated risks would have been scrutinised more deeply, which might have averted the crisis.

In Bangladesh, in the context of the ongoing economic crisis, those who have been putting emphasis on the growth-centric development model at the expense of democracy may have started to realise now the importance of democratic accountability in the governance system.

'Barn's burnt down – now I can see the moon'



Milia Ali
is a Rabindra Sangeet
exponent and a former
employee of the
World Bank.

MILIA ALI

I write this column with some hesitation, since many may regard it a bit preachy or elitist. Given that the entire world is experiencing turmoil – even an existentialist threat – most readers are anxious to inform themselves about the outlook on politics, economics and sociology. People prefer to sift through op-eds that predict future trends and global developments.

I, too, often reflect on these issues – not as an analyst or futurist, but as a humanist. I look at situations through the lens of my humane experiences, trying to understand how the decline of socialism, the rise of raw capitalism and authoritarianism may have impacted people's emotions, psyche and attitudes. In recent years, the pervasive culture of intolerance, selfishness and material greed has numbed me into inaction, and I have been afflicted by the common malaise known as "indifference," allowing myself to flow with the tide and embrace the comforts that a retired life in the West offers.

Once in a while, though, I receive a sudden jolt that forces me to focus on the cost of making compromises with the values of my inner core. The most recent awakening began with a late-night phone call from a cousin in Dhaka, informing me that my music teacher/mentor had suddenly passed

away. He was much younger than me – a talented classical singer, but more of a dreamer than a pragmatist. The thread that bound us was a passion for music. We first met three decades ago, and my daughter and I started taking lessons from him. My purpose was to hone my musical skills, while she received training in Hindustani classical music. With his low-key but dexterous handling and patience, he transformed into my music mentor and her guru.

I lost touch with him after moving abroad, but revived the old connection occasionally during my visits to Dhaka. Years passed by and both of us were engulfed in the usual challenges of our respective lives. Our bond became tenuous. The young man who had brought a fresh perspective to music years ago, was now caught up in the vortex of life's practical battles. He had progressed into a full-time professional music teacher, providing security to his family and struggling with his career and public recognition. I, too, had moved away from my ideological dreams to a more mundane existence.

On my last visit to Bangladesh, my teacher/friend texted me and asked for a music session like old times. I also wanted it but, once again, several obligations – some important and some

not – kept me busy and I neglected to respond. Was it a subconscious choice? Was I afraid to turn the wheel backwards and sift through the layers to rediscover the calling of my soul? It was, after all, easier to move on with the "new" life I had created. But, alas, we are more fragile than we realise, and nothing gives us full protection from

I look at situations through the lens of my humane experiences. In recent years, the pervasive culture of intolerance, selfishness and material greed has numbed me into inaction, and I have been afflicted by the common malaise known as "indifference," allowing myself to flow with the tide and embrace the comforts that a retired life in the West offers.

the randomness of destiny's hand...

After my cousin's phone call, I lay awake waiting for dawn to creep in and the world to wake up. I checked my phone for my mentor's last message sent in November 2022, "Apa, amra gaane ki ekebarei boshbo na?" (Apa, are we not ever going to sing together?) My answer was vague, "Yes, we will, let me find the time." I guessed his message was a coded appeal for help. What I didn't know was that he was facing health and monetary challenges. I didn't bother to ask and he was too

proud to tell me.

As I sipped my cup of morning tea, there was a lingering sense of loss. I had failed myself. The graceful Saraswati statue in my living room lay inert with her Veena – the statue meant nothing without the sweet sound of the Veena's strings. In an instant, I was smitten by the fact that none of the material possessions I owned were irreplaceable. However, the void that I had created within me by an insouciant disregard for a unique friendship would be difficult to fill.

I was stricken with grief and recurring remorse. But then, if we humans don't feel such extreme grief, how would we experience the intense passion that helps us revive ourselves? Gradually, as the first rays of the sun filtered through the windows, I began to gain a sense of clarity – an inner voice was asking me to reprioritise and change course. There was still time, not only to connect with my mentor's grieving family, but also to be attentive towards those that I had drifted away from. Individuals who had helped me grow emotionally and spiritually and who needed me now!

It will be a difficult road to traverse. I would have to revamp my lifestyle, losing a few social connections and material possessions on the way. But in shedding what I need to, I could rediscover what is essential – like the Haiku composed by 17th-century poet Mizuta Masahide: "Barn's burnt down – now I can see the moon."

Am I fully ready for this metamorphosis? Maybe not. But I now know that the force is within me, ready to make the right choice. And there are many out there waiting to receive the grace!



From the air, Bahadur Shah Park looks like an ecological oasis, but once you approach it as a pedestrian, a boisterous cafe drowns out the park's character.

PHOTO: ADNAN ZILLUR MORSHED

We need Park Design 2.0



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

ADNAN ZILLUR MORSHED

The other day I went to visit several urban parks in both north and south Dhaka. These parks represented what I would call the first generation of designed urban parks in the city, upgraded between 1990 and 2020. The Dhanmondi Lake Park, Bahadur Shah Park, and Justice Shahabuddin Park are among them. These parks, in many ways, showcased design choices that both reflected and supported the country's neoliberal economic growth since the early 1990s. From cafes to new construction materials, the market economy was allowed to play an important role in the ways the upgraded parks were conceived as public places.

But first things first. What are the key characteristics of these parks? First, they provide some basic urban services like walkways, benches, shades for sitting, and public toilets, while also raising public awareness about the need to preserve city parks. Second, these parks feature non-essential spaces like large, paved areas for public gathering and exercise, stepped areas for sitting and performance or amphitheatres along the water, sports areas, elevated pedestrian promenades and bridges, water fountains, etc. Third, the parks include commercial establishments like cafes, restaurants, and juice bars, reportedly for generating funds for their maintenance and upkeep. Fourth, the parks become places of entertainment and revelry, attracting people from far-flung areas of the metropolis and, thereby, transforming them from a neighbourhood scale to a city scale.

In the past three decades, these parks have served to expand the city's public sphere, altering the nature of neighbourhoods and their urban characters. At the Dhanmondi Lake Park, I have talked to people who came from Old Dhaka or Tongji to have food in some of its waterside restaurants. People came from Mohammadpur and Uttara, among other places, to meet friends in a café at the Justice Shahabuddin Park in Gulshan. The scale and the intended users of the park raise a vexing question about the political economy of urban development.

The first generation upgraded parks are no longer neighbourhood concepts, a phenomenon that sometimes tends to alienate local residents. They are more like multipurpose public spaces, where people come to walk, exercise, jog, bike, meet friends, date, play sports, sweeten their mouth with a café latte, browse books, take selfies, sing songs, and revel. All this is fun, particularly in a city beleaguered by a zillion pathologies like air and noise pollution, excessive heat, and *manusher gadaqadi*. Yet, the mood of these parks is predominantly that of entertainment and pleasure

– *hoi hullor, furti, addabaji, khaao daao* – not necessarily one of feeling harmony with nature, although there are exceptions.

With their tendency to cram too many structures and impervious pavements, the parks feel claustrophobic. In the ones with tall fences, people even feel caged. Shahid Dr Fazle Rabbi Park's super tall glass fence could not be a more haunting symbol of a heat-island city. From the air, Bahadur Shah Park looks like an ecological oasis amid Old Dhaka. But once you approach it as a pedestrian, a boisterous café drowns out the park's intriguing colonial history and overwhelms its character of a natural sanctuary.

Time has come to shift gears in our park design approaches. We need "Park Design 2.0" for Bangladesh. The overbuilt character of Dhaka parks is a solemn reminder for us to reclaim them as the last fortress of city green. Do we need the 24/7 hustle and bustle of Dhaka – the cacophonous dramas of this

The overbuilt character of Dhaka parks is a solemn reminder for us to reclaim them as the last fortress of city green. Do we need the 24/7 hustle and bustle of Dhaka reproduced in its parks too? Shouldn't the parks be our last refuge to be in and with nature, to hear birds chirp and winds blow, and to learn the names of trees and breathe their aromas? We need to protect our parks from false development and discriminatory gentrification, and the tyranny of unnecessary concrete pavements, steel canopies, and restaurants.

sleepless city – reproduced in its parks too? Shouldn't the parks be our last refuge to be in and with nature, to hear birds chirp and winds blow, and to learn the names of trees and breathe their aromas? With the alarming disappearance of green from our cities and daily felling of urban trees, we – design professionals, policymakers, and local government administrators – need to demonstrate an unwavering commitment to understanding urban parks as nature, as green lungs, and as places to find solitude and de-stress. We need to protect our parks from false development and discriminatory gentrification. We need to save them from the tyranny of unnecessary concrete pavements, steel canopies, and restaurants.

We need to preserve the organic conditions of our parks, rather than seeing them as opportunities for gifting business to cronies, securing inflated design consultancy fees, and playgrounds for using new building materials. Dhaka, which used to be a city of mosques, is now a city of restaurants, creating an unhelpful

impression that we are a nation of insatiable hunger. We don't need another restaurant or cafe in our parks. We have them aplenty on our streets and in our marketplaces.

In fact, given the vast social and economic asymmetries of Dhaka and other cities, placing a restaurant or a café – selling pricey food and coffee – in the public park would be a form of social injustice. These restaurants in a public park create an exclusionary culture of passive discrimination: if you can't afford a Tk 400 coffee, you don't fit in here. Given the lack of greenery and quiet spaces in our cities, our parks should be where people are able to walk, run, forest-bathe, and be class-free, not be sedentary in expensive café chairs. There are cafes in the parks of New York City or Paris. But these cities also feature 100 percent natural green parks.

The myth of "maintenance from earnings" as the basis of park upkeep should be questioned. There is no research, nor proof, that shows that the rent and profit from park restaurants and other commercial establishments are reinvested in park maintenance and improvement.

Instead of the highly commercialising model of income generating businesses, we should consider community-based maintenance of parks. Such a model creates a strong participatory

culture of local engagement and ownership – one of the central mantras of sustainable urbanism today. In exchange for a healthy, safe, and accessible park in their midst, local people are willing to pay a small monthly fee to create a co-management partnership to maintain and upgrade the park. This is the model we should institute for our parks' maintenance.

Instead of creating over-built spaces to meet the consumerist appetite of our rising urban middle class, the next generation of parks in Bangladeshi cities should inspire people to be citizen ecologists in a country that is environmentally vulnerable. We need more trees, not more restaurants, just as we need more footpaths, not more flyovers. This may sound like a simple statement, but it could be an effective development philosophy. Fifty-two years after independence, we should feel confident not to fall into the trap of generic development that doesn't speak to our ecological worldview.

Why more clinicians should join public health



ABMUDDIN is a healthcare consultant for the Florida Agency for Health Care Administration. Views expressed in this article are the author's own.

ABMUDDIN

As the dust has begun to settle on the global fight against Covid-19, new debates around strengthening public health systems are intensifying. Nations are evaluating their responses against the pandemic and delving into lessons learnt to reshape their public health infrastructure. Amid many fervent discussions, a bold and visionary idea is starting to emerge: more clinicians joining public health can fortify defence against future health emergencies.

Clinical health and public health are distinct yet overlap in many areas. Clinical health revolves around one-on-one patient care in the structured confines of hospitals and care settings, with healthcare

show that Covid-like phenomena are barely a hindsight. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in the United States has documented a multitude of outbreaks across the globe in recent years, indicating that more of these episodes are very likely. One analysis by the BBC concludes that contagious diseases will become the new normal for the world.

Given many predictions and dire warnings, nations across the world must prepare and bolster their public healthcare systems. And medical practitioners can play a vital role in accomplishing that goal.

First, by joining public health work, clinicians can strengthen the first line of defence against

these factors impact their lives and overall well-being. This puts them in an enviable place to tackle many socioeconomic drivers of health, which are at the core of promoting health equity.

Because of the importance of health justice and the pressing need for individuals that have direct knowledge of the patients' underlying social conditions, many public health agencies, government organisations, research firms, community health advocacy organisations, and non-profits in the US actively seek out healthcare professionals to join their ranks. Caregivers are seizing this opportunity to reshape the nation's healthcare landscape and promote equitable care for all, improving lives at all levels.

Last but not least, a public health system is inherently a multijurisdictional approach that promotes collective efforts from diverse disciplines such as epidemiology, biostatistics, social science, social work, and even medical science. Traditionally, medical graduates gravitate towards



FILE PHOTO: AFP

By joining public health work, clinicians can strengthen the first line of defense against health emergencies.

professionals like doctors, nurses, and allied health workers at the forefront. In contrast, public health work involves tackling various underlying causes of diseases and focuses on a wide range of determinants of health in defined population cohorts to eradicate illnesses from communities. Public health acts as the first line of defence against widespread outbreaks and prioritises prevention over cure. Public health graduates and professionals dominate the workforce.

Studies show that a robust public health system neutralises a large-scale outbreak and reduces mortality rates. According to an analysis, countries like China and New Zealand boast of significantly lower rates of morbidity and mortality against Covid because of their strong public health infrastructure. The two countries experienced only 3.21 and 10.14 deaths per million, respectively. New Zealand's 1956 Health Act required health practitioners to report cases that posed a threat to the public, serving as one of the country's best measures to defeat the pandemic.

However, many countries also underperformed dimly. Peru and Bulgaria experienced a staggering number of losses with 6,133 and 4,766 deaths per million, respectively. These countries lacked adequate systems and guidelines. Bulgaria's healthcare system was seriously strained by the lack of staffing. Unfortunately, evidence and data

health emergencies. Public health work inherently involves creating awareness, providing health education, promoting healthy lifestyles, and organising vaccination campaigns, thereby eliminating root causes of diseases fast in communities. Hands-on experience of doctors and nurses in triage and treatment in emergency rooms, with their knowledge of chronic and acute care, can help public health agencies to mitigate the impact of health emergencies and natural disasters.

With profound knowledge of individualised care, medical professionals can bring invaluable insights into outreach and education programmes to fundamentally improve public health methodologies and practices. Rather than treating one patient at a time, they can have a population-level impact, improving even millions of lives. Dr Tom Frieden, who is a luminary in this field, explains why he has chosen public health over clinical practice, "I loved clinical practice, but in public health, you can impact more than one person at a time. The whole society is your patient."

Second, by working in public health, healthcare professionals can also enjoy a paramount opportunity to drive health equity deep into a nation's healthcare. As the first points of contact with patients in hospitals and care settings, physicians and nurses have intimate access to the patients' various social and economic needs, and an understanding of how

clinical care, highlighting a profound lack of medical knowledge in public health systems. In fact, with their first-hand training in patient care, healthcare professionals can vastly improve many critical public health tools such as surveillance, disease tracking, early intervention, disease reporting, and so forth.

Public health also offers healthcare providers a variety of personal and professional growth opportunities. They can enjoy the privilege to work alongside traditional public health professionals in a wide range of leadership and critical thinking domains such as research, programme management, policy development, promoting regulations and legislations, etc. Many physicians in the US work as health information technology specialists, research leads, and even data scientists. This directly exposes public health to medical experiences so critically needed in this sector.

In the post-Covid reality, medical practitioners should think more seriously about joining public health to better serve the bottom line of healthcare. They must break free from the confines of clinical settings to meet the challenges of the rapidly changing healthcare dynamics. The traditional approach to improving healthcare is akin to living in a bygone era that is divorced from reality. Keeping our eyes on the ball requires shifting our attention to where it is needed most.

CROSSWORD BY THOMAS JOSEPH

ACROSS

- 1 Composer
- 5 Beach crawler
- 9 Travel guide
- 10 Lender's takebacks
- 12 "Bye!" in Baja
- 13 Last letter
- 14 Lab workers
- 16 Spring month
- 17 Previously
- 18 Birds, at times
- 20 Verandas
- 22 Savvy about
- 23 – Voce
- 25 Has a mortgage
- 28 Power problem
- 32 Bugs
- 34 Kilmer of "The

Downs

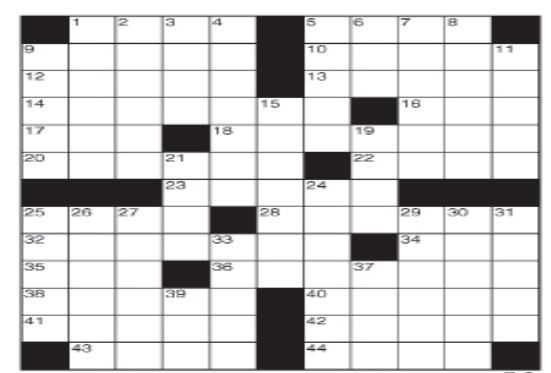
- 35 Phone bug
- 36 Funny fellows
- 38 Steaming
- 40 Hamilton of "The Terminator"
- 41 Like dunce caps
- 42 Periphery
- 43 Cartoonist
- Thomas
- 44 Spotted

DOWN

- 1 Urban grocery
- 2 Menlo Park whiz
- 3 Pillage
- 4 Hall of fame
- 5 Traverse
- 6 "Stand" band
- 7 Early hominids

8 "Key Largo" star

- 9 Deadly
- 11 Authority
- 15 Do museum work
- 19 Horn sound
- 21 Helper: Abbr.
- 24 Vigorous fights
- 25 Eye-related
- 26 Begin to annoy
- 27 Site of Sevilla
- 29 Pay back
- 30 Vegetable source
- 31 Lanchester and Maxwell
- 33 VCR button
- 37 Shore eroder
- 39 "My country – of thee"



YESTERDAY'S ANSWERS



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



Progressive Taxation in Bangladesh Why and How?

WAVE Foundation and Christian Aid, in association with The Daily Star, organised a roundtable titled "Progressive Taxation in Bangladesh: Why and How?" on May 23, 2023. Here we publish a summary of the discussion.



Sanjida Islam, Lecturer,
BBA Program, Daffodil
Institute of IT

The income tax system in Bangladesh is regressive. It follows a pattern where the tax burden increases proportionally with income until it reaches a stagnant rate of 30%. Ideally, a more progressive structure would have involved a higher tax rate.

Another significant finding of our research was that regardless of income class, everyone pays the same 15% VAT amount. VAT collection constitutes 36.5% of the total tax revenue, while individual taxes, including corporate taxes, account for 36.8%. This imbalance arises as the majority of the population is obligated to pay VAT, leading to an increase in the burden.

Based on our findings, the per capita or daily income in our country is approximately BDT 200 or around 2 USD (subject to fluctuation with exchange rates). If an individual's daily income falls within this range, they have to pay BDT 30 to the government as 15% VAT, which significantly impacts their earnings. Consequently, the poor bear a heavier VAT burden, which could have been alleviated by effectively tackling money laundering. Additionally, various exemptions granted to multinational companies to attract foreign investment create a burden that should not be shifted onto the poor.

Money laundering and tax exemptions for multinational companies result in an annual loss of BDT 5 thousand crores for the government. By taking appropriate measures to reduce such incidents, the government can generate significant revenue. This would be challenging if the burden is passed on to low and middle-income individuals. Another finding of our study is that the tax process itself is complex. Citizens often feel overwhelmed and seek assistance from others due to a lack of understanding of the terms and procedures. Simplifying and digitizing the tax process would make it more accessible and enhance citizen participation, thereby facilitating tax collection.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Introduce a just and poor-friendly tax regime.
- Political determination is crucial to establish and uphold progressive taxation.
- To prioritize the welfare of lower-income citizens, the government should shift its focus to other areas of taxation and consider reducing VAT.
- The government and non-governmental actors should come forward to make people aware of the importance of a just and robust taxation system.
- Increase direct taxes
- Determine indirect taxes based on an individual's ability to pay.
- Simplify the tax return process
- Prevent influential business groups from receiving tax breaks.
- Enhance the capacity of the National Board of Revenue (NBR).
- Transparency is essential to demonstrate the proper utilization of taxpayers' money, thereby motivating greater compliance and fostering trust in the tax system.

The combination of low revenue generation and annual budget deficits prevents the government from investing adequately in the social sector. Consequently, poverty, unemployment, lower living standards, and inadequate services in areas like education and health persist. It is crucial to raise awareness among citizens about taxation and simplify the tax process. Introducing a fair and poverty-friendly tax regime is imperative. Although Bangladesh is a developing country, adjusting the VAT amount according to an individual's income would create a more progressive system. Simplifying the tax return process would promote good corporate governance. NGOs and government organizations should collaborate to raise awareness and increase citizen participation.

The government's decision to increase taxable income from 3 lakh to 3.5 lakh does not account for the inflation rate, which raises concerns about its progressiveness. Some individuals purchase savings certificates just before filing their tax returns to benefit from the investment allowance. However, for low-



income individuals, even if they save 1 lakh taka and purchase a savings certificate, they still have to pay taxes, further burdening the poor. These aspects need to be considered more comprehensively to ensure greater citizen engagement and participation in the tax system.



Dr Sayema Haque Bidisha, Research
Director, SANEM

Progressive taxation serves not only as a means of revenue collection but also as a powerful tool to combat economic inequality.

It is logical to expand the tax threshold, taking into account overall price inflation, in order to provide relief to the middle class. Additionally, a more progressive approach is needed for lower income tax slabs, with higher tax rates implemented for upper income brackets.

A significant and progressive overhaul is required for the wealth tax slabs, ensuring a systematic structure that takes into consideration the rise of major industries in cities beyond Dhaka. Encouraging tax compliance among new taxpayers can be facilitated through incentives and benefits offered at tax fairs.

To eliminate harassment, bureaucracy, and corruption in the tax payment process, it is essential to digitize the individual identification system. By shifting the focus from individuals to their files or profiles, the process can become less intrusive. Promoting the Universal Self-Assessment system will further reduce harassment and corruption.

To combat tax evasion, it is crucial to accurately identify the rightful owners of assets, as individuals often attempt to avoid taxes by associating assets with family members. Digitalization can significantly reduce tax evasion and enhance accessibility to government tax-related services by minimizing associated costs.



Dr S M Zulfikur Ali,
Senior Research Fellow,
BIDS

Despite the challenges posed by Covid-19 and the Ukraine war, our efforts in poverty alleviation have shown significant progress, as indicated by research conducted by BIDS and the survey conducted by BBS in 2022. Prior to the pandemic, the poverty rate was declining by 1%, but it has now increased. The survey reveals that over 50% of the current poverty population can be categorized as the "new poor."

The "new poor" refers to individuals who hover around the poverty line and fall below it when their income decreases by just 5 or 10 percent. Compared to the existing poor, the progress in poverty reduction and graduation rates is relatively higher for the new poor.

Bangladesh's Tax-GDP ratio is the lowest among South Asian countries, and only one-third of individuals with taxpayer certificates properly submit their taxes. The burden of indirect taxes disproportionately affects the poor and extremely poor. Although the poverty rate may be decreasing, income inequality remains high. Therefore, implementing progressive tax distribution is crucial from an equity, fairness, and income redistribution perspective to reduce this disproportionate burden and address income disparities.

Moreover, progressive taxation is essential for economic stability and social cohesion. To foster a strong middle class, we must reduce income disparities and utilize tax revenues from the wealthy for public services and investments in social sectors that benefit the

middle and lower classes. This will promote social stability and cohesion.

Addressing the challenges posed by the informal economy is integral to implementing progressive taxation. We must also investigate the various ways in which individuals such as farmers and doctors evade taxes. It is crucial to ensure transparency in how taxpayers' money is utilized, fostering trust and motivating more people to comply with tax obligations.

Before addressing wealth tax, inheritance tax, and capital gains tax, it is necessary to establish a progressive tax system. Lastly, we should reevaluate the tax obligations for all individuals, irrespective of whether they currently pay taxes or not.



Dr MM Akash,
Professor, Department
of Economics, Dhaka
University

It is important to recognize the significant role of the state in the prosperity of developed capitalist

countries. Countries like South Korea and Scandinavian nations have implemented high marginal tax rates, reaching up to 90%. They also prioritize minimum income security, ensuring that even those who do not earn receive government support. This approach allows the wealthy to earn to their fullest potential, with their higher taxes contributing to societal welfare. The effectiveness of state capitalism depends on the nature of the state itself. If the state can redistribute the collected taxes equitably, it can achieve success.

In our country, even the poorest individuals who earn just two dollars a day contribute to taxes through VAT, despite their inability to pay income tax. Srarnik Karmachari Oikya Parishad (SKOP) advocates for a monthly minimum wage of BDT 20,000, while the tax threshold is set at BDT 30,000. By targeting the top 10% of the wealthiest individuals, the middle class could potentially be exempted from income tax. However, achieving this requires a shift in the state's income biases and a transition from an indirect to a direct tax system. Additionally, it is crucial to address the issue of expenditure bias, as people often do not perceive tangible benefits from paying taxes.

To ensure greater transparency and local initiative, development plans could be formulated at the upazila level, allowing tax collection at that level. Unfortunately, our current political system does not support this approach, as electoral success tends to favor those with financial resources. Once elected, individuals often prioritize maximizing their own financial gains. Ultimately, the decision to implement a progressive taxation system is a political one. By garnering widespread support for progressive taxation, the reliance on personal financial investments to attain success can be diminished.



Mamun Rashid,
Country Clients and
Markets Lead, PwC
Bangladesh

In my opinion, a progressive taxation system hinges on strengthening the ability-to-pay approach,

ensuring that those with higher earnings contribute a greater proportion of taxes. However, based on my experience, finance ministers tend to discourage tax exemptions prior to presenting the budget. They often seek assistance in identifying potential sectors for generating tax revenue, aiming to avoid criticism of the government's financial plans. While the government emphasizes the interests of the people in budget discussions, it is commonly observed that big business groups reap the benefits from the budget

before its finalization. We need to prevent these influential business groups from receiving tax breaks.

There is a prevalent notion that agriculture should remain exempt from taxation, but our studies do not support this stance. Presently, agricultural entrepreneurs are generating substantial profits through contract farming and manufacturing, yet we face challenges when attempting to impose taxes on them.

A feasible solution could involve utilizing IoT devices to trace individuals who purchase cars or luxury goods. By extending the IoT mechanism to track the earnings and expenditures of individuals, the government could make a political decision to enable effective tax collection. However, practical steps in this regard are often hindered by requests for tax exemption that originate from higher-level authorities.

There is an asset surcharge already in Dhaka practice, however while there is 2 hundred thousand people with more than 1 crore Taka bank deposits, only 11 thousand pay asset surcharge. In a country where tax evasion is quite rampant, political governance also play a significant role in progressive taxation.



Nuzhat Jabin, Program
Manager, Christian Aid

In a recent research conducted with CPD, we discovered that tax losses range from approximately 42 thousand crores to 2.25 lakh crore taka per year.

It is crucial to diversify our revenue base and focus on domestic resource mobilization, as emphasized by SDG 16. There has been discussion about implementing a minimum 2000 taka return, but it is important to note that simply imposing a minimum cap may not be effective. In fact, it could make the taxation system regressive rather than progressive. To address this issue, we need to ensure strong vigilance regarding revenue losses and tax avoidance.

For years, the capacity gap and weak administration of the National Board of Revenue (NBR) have been topics of persistent discussion. Addressing this matter requires strong political will, as it is fundamentally a political issue. It is imperative to reconsider and reform existing tax mechanisms and systems in order to effectively tackle this problem.



Mohsin Ali, Executive
Director, WAVE
Foundation

In Bangladesh, there is a lack of awareness about taxes among people from all economic backgrounds.

They harbor doubts regarding the positive impact of taxation and exhibit a strong inclination towards tax evasion. There is a unanimous belief that the tax assessment sector is highly corrupt in the country.

WAVE Foundation focuses on poverty elimination as one of its key objectives. To eliminate poverty, the government needs to allocate a larger budget, particularly in sectors like social safety nets, healthcare, and education. This is where the issue of tax justice comes into play. Presently, we collect only one-third portion of the income tax of the total expected amount, whereas we collect a large share of VAT, which is about two-thirds of the NBR-controlled source of financing for the national budget. If the government can collect more direct tax, it will reduce the burden of the indirect tax which is mostly vested on the poor, and certainly it is an unjust practice. By ensuring fairness in taxation, the government will have more resources to invest in these critical

sectors of development and can be a backup source to tackle the budget deficit.

To establish a robust and just taxation system, it is crucial for both governmental and non-governmental actors to actively engage in educating the public about its significance. This will contribute to an increase in the number of taxpayers.

One suggestion put forward during today's roundtable discussion is to increase direct taxes and determine indirect taxes based on an individual's financial capacity. Expanding the concept of tax at source is also recommended. I fully endorse these recommendations. Income tax and wealth tax should be increased and VAT should be differentiated by income and reduced. System of tax assessment, return submission and tax paying should be simplified with digitalized and user-friendly system. If we want to achieve the SDGs and become a middle-income country by 2030, we have to be undoubtful regarding accelerating our own financial capacity by establishing a progressive taxation system in Bangladesh.



M A Mannan, MP,
Honourable Planning
Minister, Government of
Bangladesh

While it is indeed true that income inequality is on the rise, the government is actively working to address this

issue by uplifting lower income individuals. One positive aspect is the absence of hunger poverty and shelter poverty, indicating progress. Furthermore, the living standards of low-income individuals have seen improvements. However, the income of higher-income individuals has skyrocketed, leading to a deepening of inequality.

To combat inequality, the government initiated income transfer programs through social safety net programs in 1996, marking the first of its kind in Bangladesh. However, the government is hesitant to increase the amount allocated to the social safety net fund, as it may inadvertently discourage self-sufficiency.

Many individuals are advocating for a reduction in the value-added tax (VAT) rate, despite its significant contribution to government revenue. VAT is a universal and unavoidable tax, and people tend to feel its impact the least. The challenge lies in the fact that numerous businesses do not adequately fulfill their VAT obligations to the government. Consequently, since 2012, the government has been endeavoring to digitize the VAT process. Nevertheless, it may be worth considering exempting essential food items such as rice, pulses, and oil from VAT.

There are numerous tax possibilities available, such as wealth tax, inheritance tax, debt duty, unclaimed assets, and waqf properties. It is essential for us to thoroughly explore these revenue opportunities.

Once proposed the idea of using the term "Assistant Revenue Officer" instead of "Tax Inspector" as the latter conveys a sense of fear. The suggestion was initially accepted and taken into consideration for implementation. However, it faced significant resistance and was ultimately abandoned. It is crucial for us to work towards changing such mindsets.



Tanjim Ferdous, In-
charge of NGO and
Foreign Missions at the
Business Development
Team, The Daily Star
& Moderator of the
session

The forthcoming fiscal year's budget is scheduled to be unveiled in the coming days. With a major portion of the expenditure budget anticipated to be sourced from taxes and Value Added Tax (VAT), the National Board of Revenue (NBR) has set a target to collect 4 lakh 70 thousand crore taka from this sector in the upcoming financial year. Currently, there are approximately 87 lakh individuals in the country who possess a Taxpayer Identification Number (TIN), but only 29 lakhs consistently file their tax returns each year. Many individuals within the tax system either struggle to obtain their TIN or, even if they have one, face uncertainty in complying with tax return filing requirements. In light of this situation, the government is considering the appointment of private organizations as tax collection agents for the upcoming year. Implementing progressive tax system will play a vital role in bringing benefits to bottom of the pyramids. Super rich people will pay more tax and by the trickle-down effect poor's life can be changed ensuring quality social services and safety net programs. It is also necessary to streamline the overall tax system.

Ebadot hands Afghanistan mission impossible

SPORTS REPORTER

Despite the fact that Bangladesh lost their last five wickets for just 20 runs upon resuming the second day on 362 for five, by the end of the days' play, it was the Bangladesh bowlers who kept the hosts in the hunt to clinch the lone Test at Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur.

It was a breath of fresh air to see the pacers utilised on a seam-friendly Mirpur surface to great effect, especially Ebadot Hossain, who picked up four wickets as the visitors were bundled out for 146 runs in their first innings just after the tea break. Another pacer, Shoriful Islam, also bagged two wickets and made a mark.

Ebadot also had no regrets about missing out on his second five-wicket haul as the seamer was happy to execute the game plan in such conditions.

"I think this is the first time we got such a pitch and I think we were fortunate enough to be able to play with three seamers in such conditions. We tried our best to bundle out the opponent cheaply and it feels good to be able to successfully execute our game plan," Ebadot said.

The recent rise in Bangladesh's pace-bowling unit has been significant in breeding a positive mindset for the team management in the longest format.

When asked if they were sending the message that the pace unit had the ability to make an impact in conducive conditions, the Sylhet native replied: "Our pace unit has improved a lot in the past three years or so. I won't say we have become good, but we have been trying to improve the graph for the past three years. We are trying to grab the fast-bowling dominated mindset which world cricket is witnessing at the moment," he said.

The hosts did not enforce the follow-on despite their 236-run lead and, with half-centurions Najmul Hossain Shanto and Zakir Hossain at the crease and the lead growing to 370 runs, Afghanistan will have a daunting task to save the Test match.

Visiting head coach Jonathan Trott admitted that it would be a tough task for the visitors but believed that they should play with pride when asked if it was possible to save the Test.

"It's going to be tough. Obviously, the way the pitch is playing, it's going to be tough. So, yeah, you just have to fight and put up as strong a performance as possible with a bit of pride and show a bit of character."

"We're going to have to bowl really well tomorrow morning and then have a mammoth effort with the bat. But anything's possible. We've seen some funny things happen in cricket before, but we are going to have to play out of our socks," said Trott.



Three slips and a gully -- a very common scene in cricket's longest version but not so much when the ground is the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur. Sidestepping the typical approach to overwhelm visitors with spinners on spinning tracks, Bangladesh prepared a green surface and employed three quicks in their one-off Test against Afghanistan. The ploy seems to have worked, especially with the hosts leading by 370 runs in their second innings at stumps on Day 2. PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

Mirpur turns face to bring Test cricket's beauty

ABDULLAH AL MEHEDI

Was that extra bounce? The ball kicked off from a length delivery from Ebadot Hossain and got Afghan opener Abdul Malik high on the bat with nowhere to go and Zakir Hasan gobbled it up diving forward from third slip.

If that action was surprising, the other delivery from Nijatullah Masood in the morning session, the one that caused Mushfiqur Rahim all sorts of trouble, was



was like day and night.

The beauty of Test cricket comes from the intense battle between bat and ball, a battle that forms the core of cricket's muse. Without it, Test cricket can have a dreary tone. When it comes to Mirpur wickets, Test matches have always been a drab affair. The carry for pacers is missing. The conditions usually do not allow swing and the grass on the surface lends to a slower surface rather than a seaming one where deliveries zip around.

Mirpur has always been dominated by spin thusly. Spinners go through their regular toil and while some with special tricks up their sleeves can get better purchase off the pitch, that beauty is often missing. Mirpur Tests become a drab affair with lots of overs and never the flurry of wickets and excitement that pace can produce.

After the first day's play, where bat dominated ball, the cue had been set that it was indeed another of those traditional Mirpur tracks.

But it was something else completely as Day Two began on Thursday.

On Wednesday, the new ball did not move around consistently and the Afghan pacers' inexperience in the longest format also showed in their indiscipline. By Thursday, Afghanistan

had to wait for one over to take the new ball and then everything changed.

In six overs, Bangladesh's innings was wrapped up, with Mushfiqur possibly getting the most unplayable delivery of the game. It was not just the bounce. The ball moved around all morning. All five remaining Bangladesh first innings wickets fell to pace as Nijatullah bagged three to complete a fiver on debut while Yamin Admadzai bagged two to wrap Bangladesh's innings up in a jiffy.

Ebadot and Co. seemed to have the winds in their sails after having to skip a nap or two, perhaps initially having felt that Mushfiqur or Miraz would go on and make the tail wag a bit longer.

The windy conditions helped with swing and the grass seemed to have finally decided that it was time for seam movement. Afghanistan's batters found it just as difficult as Bangladesh's on the second day.

Shoriful Islam bowled with five slips in one session. In 10.4 overs of the Afghanistan innings in the morning session, deliveries zipped past the bat and caused all sorts of trouble with Ebadot and Shoriful getting the ball to talk particularly effectively.

Three more wickets fell before lunch. Then five more in the second session as Afghanistan wilted to pressure. Mehedi Hasan Miraz and Tajjul too got on the act with two wickets each as Afghanistan were bowled out in just 39 overs. However, what will be remembered is the pacy, bouncy day, possibly a first in a Mirpur Test.

Asked at the end of the press conference, whether the pace unit would now seek such wickets at home, Ebadot was hopeful. "If you do well, you get the confidence of winning matches. As we are doing well, we can hope."

SCORES IN BRIEF

BANGLADESH:

First innings-382 all out in 86 overs (Joy 76, Shanto 146, Mushfiqur 47, Miraz 48; Ahmadzai 2-39, Masood 5-79) and Second innings-134 for one in 23 overs (Joy 17, Zakir 54 not out, Shanto 54 not out; Hamza 1-27)

AFGHANISTAN:

First innings-146 all out in 39 overs (Jamal 35, Zazai 36, Janat 23; Shoriful 2-28, Ebadot 4-47, Tajjul 2-7, Miraz 2-15)

similarly as exciting as it was surprising for when it comes to Mirpur wickets, extra bounce and seaming conditions all become oxymoronic. The stark difference between the first and second day's play

'Happy with the win but need to improve'

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh had a decent enough preparation for the upcoming SAFF Championship as the booters registered a 1-0 win over hosts Cambodia in a FIFA-friendly in Phnom Penh yesterday.

Winger Mojibur Rahman Jonny, who made his debut in March against Seychelles, netted his first international goal in the 25th minute to keep intact Bangladesh's unbeaten record against Cambodia, who suffered four defeats in five meetings against the booters.

With the focus on the SAFF Championship starting from June 21 in India, Spanish coach Javier Cabrera's main target was to figure out the right combination and fine-tune his playing eleven. The 38-year-old coach fielded almost the same eleven that beat Cambodian premier league outfit -- Tiffy Army FC -- during a warm-up game last Monday. Only two changes were made for yesterday's game, with Bishwanath Ghosh and



Jonny replacing Rahmat Mia and Mohammad Ibrahim.

"Obviously, we are happy with the win. But in terms of ball control and overall competency, we must improve," Cabrera said after the game.

Jonny's strike that came from a counterattack was against the run of play as the men in red and green looked unsteady throughout the first half. Bangladesh were reduced to 10 men in the final minutes when Tareq Kazi was sent off.

'Hybrid' Asia Cup to begin on Aug 31

AFP, COLOMBO

Pakistan will jointly host this year's 50-over Asia Cup tournament with Sri Lanka, organisers said Thursday, in a compromise aimed at forestalling a tit-for-tat boycott involving India.

Neighbours India and Pakistan have not met on either side's soil in a bilateral series since 2012, and only play each other in international tournaments on neutral grounds.

The Pakistan Cricket Board had threatened to boycott this year's ODI World Cup in India, which is due to start in October and its schedule awaited, if its Indian counterpart refused to play in Pakistan.

The six-nation Asia Cup will be played between August 31 and September 17, an Asian Cricket Council (ACC) statement said.

"The tournament will be hosted in a hybrid model with four matches being held in Pakistan, and the remaining nine matches being played in Sri Lanka," it added. The release did not mention the venues for the tournament or which team will play where but it is understood that India's matches will be held in the island nation.

Oman Cricket chief and ACC vice-president Pankaj Khimji intervened to broker the compromise between the two sides, according to media reports.

Meanwhile, the International Cricket Council (ICC) is expected to announce the ODI World Cup schedule this week.



Lionel Messi celebrates with teammates after scoring fastest goal of his international career during a 2-0 friendly win over Australia, netting after 79 seconds at a raucous Workers' Stadium on Thursday. German Pezzella headed in a cross to make it 2-0 in the 68th minute. A sea of blue-and-white had greeted the teams as they stepped out onto the pitch with an overwhelming majority of the 68,000-capacity crowd sporting Argentina jerseys. PHOTO: AFP

Australia braced for England storm

REUTERS, LONDON

England's barnstorming version of Test cricket has shredded the textbook of the sport's longest format but so-called 'Bazball' faces its biggest examination yet as they seek to regain the Ashes against world champions Australia starting on Friday.

Conventional cricketing wisdom has been turned upside down by England coach Brendon 'Baz' McCullum and captain Ben Stokes in a scintillating run of 11 victories from 13 Tests.

Scoring at a head-spinning average of almost five runs an over under McCullum, England's risk-takers have re-imagined the approach to test cricket and transformed the country's fortunes after a run of only one win from 17 tests previously.

It has bamboozled India, New Zealand, South Africa, Pakistan. England made a first-day record 506 runs in 75 overs in the first Test against Pakistan in Rawalpindi.

And against New Zealand at home last year, they made daunting fourth innings victory targets of 277, 299 and 297 look as demanding as a walk in park.

The big question, however, as the opening Test looms at Edgbaston on Friday is whether England will play with the same almost reckless abandon against an Australia side possessing arguably the best pace attack in the world.



"What we have done over the last year is show how we want to play. We found a way that we are able to get the best out of the team and also the individuals. We get asked if we will continue to play this way against this opposition or that opposition. This is how England play. It's worked more than it's not. There's no doubt about how we are going to play against Australia."

England captain, BEN STOKES



"We've been amazing over the last 20 Test matches. And I think you've seen a pretty similar style in the way we've played, so we don't want to lose sight of that. We're big on playing what's in front of you. Somewhere our batters might take 200 balls to get a hundred and that's totally fine."

Australia captain, PAT CUMMINS

THE POWER TO MINIMIZE THE DEVASTATION OF EARTHQUAKES IS IN YOUR HANDS

EARTHQUAKE AWARENESS DAY 2023

BSRM building a safer nation

SHAH CEMENT

THE MOST LOVED BRAND

BEST BRAND AWARD WINNER EVERY YEAR

Tigers on top

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Cries of 'Ebadot! Ebadot!' came from the stands as Ebadot Hossain walked back to the dressing room, signalling that Bangladesh had found pace heroes to cheer on. Despite adding just 20 runs and losing five wickets as their innings ended disastrously short of expectations at 382 all out, the Tigers' pacers rose to the opportunity provided by the conditions as Bangladesh took a big lead after the second day of the lone Test against Afghanistan.

Bangladesh had the kind of stroke of luck that only appears a few times in Test cricket. Both sides had wanted to bowl first with the greenish top on offer but Afghanistan were bamboozled somewhat after winning the toss as

SEE PAGE 6 COL 4



Pacer Ebadot Hossain was the most successful bowler for Bangladesh, returning figures of four for 47 as the Tigers bundled out Afghanistan for 146 in their first innings on Day 2 of their one-off Test in Mirpur yesterday. Bangladesh took a huge 370-run lead in their second innings by the end of day's play.

PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

ACC sues cop, wife for amassing Tk 18 crore

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Pirojpur

The Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) yesterday filed a case against a police inspector in Feni, his wife and mother-in-law for amassing about Tk 18 crore illegally.

According to the anti-graft watchdog, Syed Abdullah accumulated wealth through bribery and corruption while he was the officer-in-charge of Mathbaria Police Station of Pirojpur.

To dodge investigators, Abdullah's wife, Farhana Aktar, managed two separate national identity cards (NIDs) that she used to obtain separate Tax Identification Numbers (TIN).

She applied for a third NID, according to the case statement.

Abdullah joined the Bangladesh Police in 1991 as a sub-inspector, and in 2007, he was promoted to the post of inspector. He was the officer-in-charge of police for about a year from March 29, 2019. At present, he is serving at the crime branch of Feni's superintendent of police (SP) office.

SEE PAGE 6 COL 4



Syed Abdullah

TRAFFICKING REPORT Bangladesh improves, does not level up

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh is still unable to fully meet the minimum standards needed to eliminate human trafficking, according to the US Trafficking in Persons report 2023 released yesterday.

However, Bangladesh has been recognised for making significant efforts to bring itself in compliance with the standards, thereby keeping it in Tier-2 for a third year.

This report by the

SEE PAGE 6 COL 2

BOTCHED C-SECTION Two doctors land in jail

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday sent two physicians to jail over an alleged "mistake" that led to the death of a newborn and endangered the life of the mother during a C-section at Central Hospital in the capital.

The doctors are Shahzadi Mustarshida Sultana and Muna Shaha.

The incident happened on June 9 when Mahbuba Akter Akhi was undergoing a C-section.

Akhi's husband Yakub Ali filed a case with Dhanmondi Police Station on Wednesday accusing the doctors and the hospital authorities of wrong treatment and falsehood.

The accused falsely promised the patient and her family before the procedure that a doctor named

SEE PAGE 6 COL 1

World saw hottest early June ever: EU

AFP, Paris

Average global temperatures at the start of June were the warmest the European Union's climate monitoring unit has ever recorded for the period, trouncing previous records by a "substantial margin", it said yesterday.

The news comes as the El Nino climate phenomenon has officially arrived, raising fears of extreme weather and more temperature records.

"The world has just experienced its warmest early June on record, following a month of May that was less than 0.1 degrees Celsius cooler than the warmest May on record," said Samantha Burgess, deputy director of the Copernicus Climate Change Service (C3S).

"Global-mean surface air temperatures for the first days of June 2023 were the highest in the ERA5 data record for early June by a substantial margin", said Copernicus. Some of the unit's data goes back as far as 1950.

Copernicus recently announced that global oceans were warmer last month than in any other May on record.

The unit also said that at the beginning of June, global temperatures exceeded pre-industrial levels by more than 1.5C (34.7 degrees Fahrenheit), which is the most ambitious cap for global warming in the 2015 Paris Agreement.

According to the data, the daily global average temperature was at or above the 1.5C threshold between June 7-11, reaching a maximum of 1.69C above it on June 9.

Life building block found on Enceladus

AFP, Washington

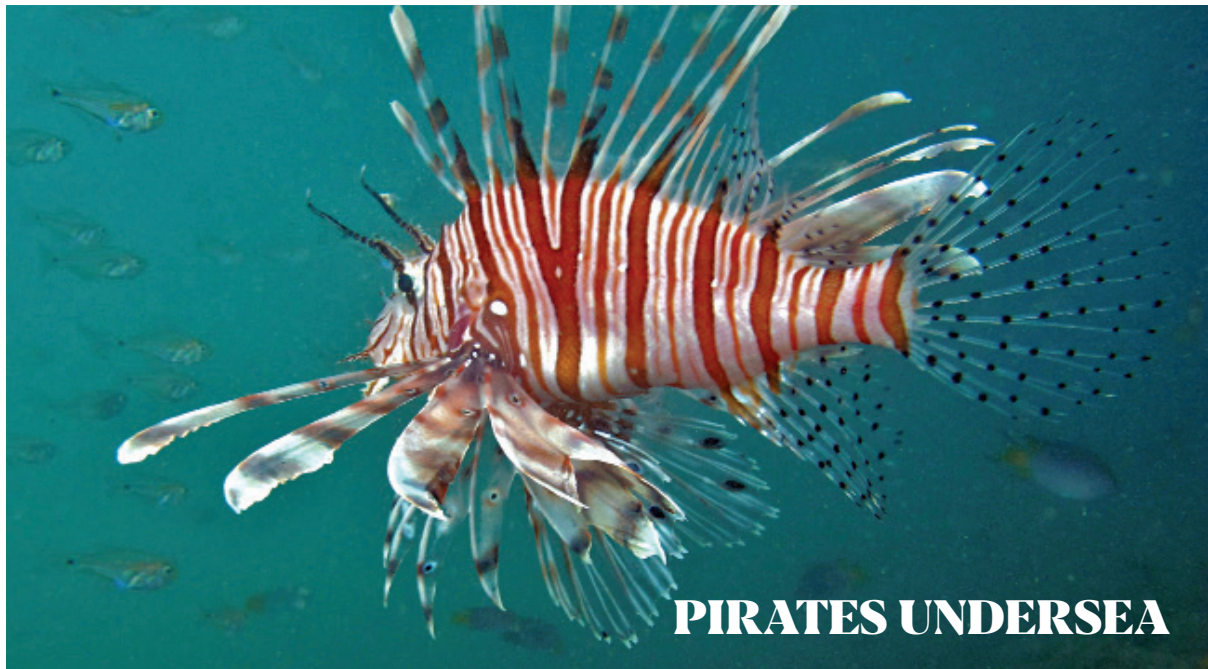


The long hunt for extraterrestrials just got a big boost. Scientists have discovered that phosphorus, a key building block of life, lies in the ocean beneath the icy surface of Saturn's moon Enceladus.

The finding was based on a review of data collected by Nasa's Cassini probe, and was published Wednesday in the prestigious journal Nature. Cassini started exploring Saturn and its rings and moons in 2004, before burning up in the gas giant's atmosphere when its mission ended in 2017.

"This is a stunning discovery for astrobiology," said Christopher Glein of the Southwest Research Institute, one of the paper's co-authors, adding:

SEE PAGE 6 COL 1



PIRATES UNDERSEA

PHOTO: STAR

A red lionfish spotted in the Bay of Bengal in Saint Martin's Island. Native to the Indo-pacific region, the fish have made their way across the world, for which they are now considered invasive species. They are popular for their maroon, white or black stripes, intricate fins, and venomous spiky extensions. As they are fascinating to look at, they can be found in aquariums and even people's homes in some places. However, a sting from one of their spikes can land one in the hospital within hours. A slow-moving ambush hunter, red lionfish feed on smaller fish, invertebrates, and molluscs, and have a few natural predators due to the threat of their venomous spikes. Slowly invading seas across the world, the red lionfish is one of the two most popular of all 12 lionfish species.



Rejoinder, our reply

The Project Director Office of the "SASEC Road Connectivity Project-2" has sent a rejoinder to our report headlined "Eid Journey: Those bound for north may face hassle" published on June 14.

The project director's office claimed that the possibility of suffering at 13 points during the upcoming Eid trip mentioned in the report is not appropriate. No traffic jam was witnessed at all these points during the last Eid trip (Eid-ul-Fitr 2023).

And, the PD office wants their comment to be published in the newspaper

SEE PAGE 6 COL 1

WIFE, DAUGHTER MURDER Suspect lied to cops

Claims husband, asks for further probe

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Noakhali

Fazle Azim, whose wife and daughter were killed on Wednesday in Noakhali, said the suspect had lied in his confession.

He sought further investigation. "Some of my neighbours told me that there were three men [entering the house]. I want to know the identities of the other two," he told The Daily Star at Sudharam Model Police Station on Wednesday night.

Nur Nahar Begum, 40, and her daughter Fatema Azim Priyonti, 17, were stabbed to death in their home in Noakhali town.

Neighbours caught Altaf Hossain, 28, and handed him over to police. Altaf

is an expatriate worker who returned from Oman a week before the murders.

Altaf told officers that he killed them because of a dispute over money. Shahidul Islam, superintendent of police in Noakhali told a press conference.

An hour after the press conference on Wednesday, Fazle said: "We wanted to speak at the press conference. But police did not allow us."

He added that there was more to the case than the statement of the accused.

Contacted, Anwarul Islam, officer-in-charge of Sudharam Model Police Station, said, "Police disclosed the statement made by the accused. Police are investigating whether the accused told the truth. The findings will be known after the investigation."

গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার

সড়ক পরিবহন ও সেতু মন্ত্রণালয়

সড়ক পরিবহন ও মহাসড়ক বিভাগ

ঢাকা পরিবহন সমন্বয় কর্তৃপক্ষ (ডিটিসিএ)

ডিটিসিএ ভবন, তেজগাঁও শিল্প এলাকা, ঢাকা-১২০৮

ওয়েব সাইট: www.dtca.gov.bd

স্মারক নং-৩৫/০২.০০০০.০১২.৩২.০০৫.২২-৫৭

তারিখ: ১৪/০৬/২০২৩

"ট্রাফিক সার্কুলেশন সেবা"-বিষয়ক গণশুনানীতে অংশগ্রহণের বিজ্ঞপ্তি

ঢাকা পরিবহন সমন্বয় কর্তৃপক্ষ আইন, ২০১২ এর আওতায় ডিটিসিএ অধিভুক্ত এলাকায় পরিবহন ব্যবস্থাকে সুষ্ঠু, পরিকল্পিত, সমন্বিত ও আধুনিকীকরণ করার লক্ষ্যে ঢাকা, নারায়নগঞ্জ, মুন্সীগঞ্জ, মানিকগঞ্জ, গাজীপুর এবং নরসিংদী জেলাকে অন্তর্ভুক্ত করে 'ঢাকা পরিবহন সমন্বয় কর্তৃপক্ষ (ডিটিসিএ)' প্রতিষ্ঠা করা হয়। ঢাকা পরিবহন সমন্বয় কর্তৃপক্ষ আইন-২০১২ এর ধারা (৯) এর উপধারা (চ) অনুসারে - কোন ব্যক্তি বা প্রতিষ্ঠান কর্তৃক ঢাকা পরিবহন সমন্বয় কর্তৃপক্ষ (ডিটিসিএ) এর অধিভুক্ত এলাকায় বহতল ভবন নির্মাণ ও আবাসিক প্রকল্প গ্রহণের পূর্বে ডিটিসিএ হতে যানবাহন প্রবেশ-নির্গমন ও চলাচল (Traffic Circulation) সংক্রান্ত নকশা অনুমোদন ও ছাড়পত্র গ্রহণের বাধ্যবাধকতা রয়েছে।

বর্তমানে অনলাইনে ট্রাফিক সার্কুলেশন ছাড়পত্রের জন্যে ডিটিসিএ'র ওয়েবসাইট (www.dtca.gov.bd) এর "সেবাসমূহ" বক্স হতে সরাসরি আবেদন করা যায় এবং অনলাইনে আবেদনের প্রক্রিয়া সম্পর্কে বিস্তারিত ব্যবহার নির্দেশিকা ও ট্রাফিক সার্কুলেশন ছাড়পত্র প্রদানের গাইডলাইন উক্ত ওয়েবসাইটে পাওয়া যায়।

ঢাকা পরিবহন সমন্বয় কর্তৃপক্ষের আওতাধীন এলাকায় বহতল ভবন ও আবাসন প্রকল্পের ট্রাফিক সার্কুলেশন ছাড়পত্র প্রদানের গাইডলাইন এবং অনলাইনে ট্রাফিক সার্কুলেশন সেবা প্রদানের প্রক্রিয়া সম্পর্কে আগামী ১৯ জুন, ২০২৩ তারিখ সকাল ১১.০০ ঘটিকায় ডিটিসিএ সভাকক্ষে গণশুনানির আয়োজন করা হয়েছে। উক্ত গণশুনানিতে অনলাইনে অংশগ্রহণ করা যাবে (Zoom meeting ID: 84086922235, Pass code: 2023)।

(সাবিহা পারভীন)
নির্বাহী পরিচালক
ঢাকা পরিবহন সমন্বয় কর্তৃপক্ষ

ঢাকা পরিবহন সমন্বয় কর্তৃপক্ষ