



"I don't think we've seen the final act."

US Secretary of State Antony Blinken on Wagner Group's revolt against Russian authorities

The Daily Star

YOUR RIGHT TO KNOW

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Graft in public hospitals costs Tk 459cr in 5yrs

Finds a CAG audit

REJAUL KARIM BYRON and MOUDUD AHMED SUJAN

The government has suffered losses amounting to Tk 459 crore thanks to irregularities at different public healthcare institutions, found four different compliance audit reports.

The losses were largely caused by irregularities in budget spending at the Central Medicine Store Depot (CMSD), according to the report of the Comptroller and Auditor General of Bangladesh prepared for fiscals 2014-15 to 2018-19. The CAG report was placed at the parliament on Sunday.

The disputed amount during the period was 11.6 percent of the total allocation of Tk 3,952 crore: Tk 458.8 crore.

"During each fiscal year, such anomalies by the CMSD were consistently discovered during the audit," the CAG report said, while calling for ensuring proper utilisation of public funds when allocating CMSD's budget.

For instance, in fiscal 2016-17, the government incurred a loss of Tk 15.08 crore due to the CMSD supplying medical equipment to four medical colleges and hospitals without following proper protocols.

In fact, these supplies remained unused and were rendered useless, leading to significant financial loss, according to the report.

Among the institutions audited, Chattogram Medical College and Hospital, Rajshahi Medical College Hospital, and the National Institute of Cardiovascular Disease and Hospital responded by stating that they were in contact with the CMSD and the suppliers. They expressed their expectation that the machinery in question would be installed soon.

Meanwhile, Khulna Medical College Hospital, Suhrawardy Medical

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A CT scanner at DMCH broke down and it was repaired by a third party for Tk 1.16 crore even though the machine was under warranty.



Workers loading a truck with sacks of paddy at BOC Ghat in Brahmanbaria's Ashuganj, one of the largest paddy trading hub of the country. Paddy grown in different districts are brought to the bank of the Meghna by more than 100 boats every day and sent to rice mills. Currently, the bulk of the supply is of BR-29 variety, which is being sold for Tk 1,200 per maund. The photo was taken on Saturday.

PHOTO: MASUK HRIDOY

Labour leader beaten to death in Gazipur

Thugs attacked him right after he tried to get workers of a factory their arrears

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Gazipur

A labour leader, who had been negotiating to get workers of a factory their arrears, was beaten to death right after he left a meeting at the factory in Gazipur on Sunday night.

Goons waylaid Shahidul Islam Shahid, 50, the president of the Gazipur unit of Bangladesh Garments and Industrial Workers Federation (BGIWIF), outside Prince Jacquard Sweater Ltd in Tongi Satish area.

They beat up Shahid and two other labour leaders. Shahid was rushed to a hospital where he was declared dead around 11:30pm.

The factory workers, who had not been paid since April, were demanding their arrears and Eid bonuses.

The factory management had told workers that their payments would be cleared by Sunday. The workers waited at the factory gate since the morning, but the officials did not show up.

The workers started protesting around 6:30pm and called in Shahid, a labour leader for 15 years, to talk to the plant authorities.



Shahidul Islam

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4 out of 5 factories yet to pay workers their salaries

One in four did not give Eid bonuses

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

At least 2,501 garment, textile, and jute product factories out of 3,164 across the country have not paid their workers 15 days' wages for the month of June even though the government had asked them to do so before Eid.

Only 663 factories paid the wages as of 7:30pm yesterday, according to data from the Industrial Police.

However, 2,436 factories did pay the workers their Eid bonuses, the Industrial Police data shows. This means 728 factories are yet to pay their workers Eid bonuses.

Of the factories that are yet to pay half month's salaries, 55 percent are members of Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA), 20 percent are of Bangladesh Knitwear Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BKMEA), and 10 percent are

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JOURNEY HOME

Traffic growing heavier, no major gridlock yet

STAR REPORT

With Eid two days away, people have started leaving the capital for their village homes to celebrate the festival with near and dear ones.

The highways witnessed heavy traffic but no major gridlocks were reported till yesterday evening.

The officials concerned, however, said there could be congestions today.

Almost all trains departed the capital on time yesterday. Launch operators have doubled the number of trips from Sadarghat terminal.

The major ferry routes also saw a rush of home-going people. In Sirajganj, movement of vehicles heading for northern districts was almost normal on Bangabandhu Bridge west zone highway.

Vehicles were moving slowly for around four hours from 6:00am due to heavy traffic but traffic became normal with the day progressing, said Rawshan Eazdani, officer-in-charge of Bangabandhu Bridge West Zone Police Station.

Over 650 law enforcers have been deployed on the highway to ensure hassle-free journey. Police remain alert so that no three-wheelers run on the highway, he added.

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POLLS-TIME GOVT

BNP to come up with outline after discussion

Fakhrul says they'll sit with all stakeholders

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir has said the party will come up with an outline for an election-time neutral government after consultation with all stakeholders.

"We are discussing the neutral caretaker government system," he told journalists at the BNP chairperson's Gulshan office yesterday.

Fakhrul, however, did not clarify when the outline will be unveiled.

The caretaker government system was annulled following a court verdict in 2011. The court declared illegal a constitutional provision that mandates an elected government to transfer

SEE PAGE 2 COL 2

Rejoinder, our reply

Biman Bangladesh Airlines has sent a rejoinder to our report titled "Lopsided deal to cost Biman over Tk 1,000 cr", published on June 19, 2023. Because we are unable to accommodate the entirety of the three-page rejoinder, The Daily Star is publishing a concise version of it.

Biman alleges that the report by the Office of the Comptroller and Auditor General of Bangladesh (CAG) that this newspaper article is based on, are primary observations which can be discounted depending on Biman's response. The CAG office has asked Biman to form a technical team and respond which Biman is doing, said the rejoinder. The organisation, however, declines to share their response with the public because the contract between Biman and Sabre Gbl Inc is protected by a non-disclosure agreement.

Biman said that the shortlisting of the bidders was inked by a 13-member team, where the director-general of the Central

SEE PAGE 6 COL 1



Home Rush ... People throng the Sadarghat terminal to board launches to go to southern districts to celebrate Eid-ul-Azha with their loved ones. A good number of holidaymakers left the capital yesterday as it was the last working day before Eid holidays begin today. The photo was taken around 5:30pm yesterday.

PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN

748MW more to come from Adani plant

2nd unit in Jharkhand goes into operation

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh can import 748MW more electricity from the Adani Power Plant in India's Jharkhand as its second unit has started commercial operation.

The development was confirmed by officials of Bangladesh Power Development Board (PDB) and Adani sources.

Adani Power yesterday issued a statement to the Mumbai stock exchange, saying that they have started commercial operation at the second unit at 12:00am (Bangladesh time) yesterday following successful completion of reliability tests.

The plant is located about 100km from the Bangladesh border.

An official of Power Grid Company of Bangladesh, wishing anonymity, told The Daily Star that Adani Power has completed the uninterrupted power supply test for 14 days and the 72 hours' reliability test on Sunday.

The reliability test was conducted in presence of a PDB technical committee.

Power Secretary Habibur Rahman told this paper that it would take one week more to get 1,496MW from the plant as the transmission line on the Bangladesh side will be ready by then.

Adani Power (Jharkhand) Ltd has two units, each with a capacity of 748MW. On April 7, the first unit started commercial operation.

PDB is obliged to take 34 percent of the power generated by the plant every year over the 25-year contracted period.

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OCCUPIED WEST BANK Israel approves thousands of building permits

REUTERS, Jerusalem

Israel's nationalist-religious government yesterday approved the construction of 5,700 additional housing units for Jewish settlers in the occupied West Bank, despite US pressure to halt settlement expansion that Washington sees as an obstacle to peace with Palestinians.

The plans for approval of the housing units in various areas of the West Bank were approved by Israel's Supreme Planning Council. Jewish settler leadership praised the decision.

"I thank the Israeli government for the continued development of Israeli settlement," the head of the West Bank Gush Etzion Regional Council and chairman of the Yeshu Council Shlomo Ne'man said. "Especially in these difficult days, this is the most appropriate Zionist answer to all those who seek our help."

Most countries deem the settlements, built on land captured by Israel in the 1967 Middle East war, as illegal. Their presence is one of the fundamental issues in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Palestinians seek to establish an independent state in the West Bank and Gaza Strip with East Jerusalem as their capital. Israeli settlers cite Jewish historic connections to the land. Peace talks that had been brokered by the United States have been frozen since 2014.

Since entering office in January, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's coalition has approved the promotion of more than 7,000 new housing units, most deep in the West Bank.

"The Israeli government is pushing us at an unprecedented pace towards the full annexation of the West Bank," the settlement watchdog Peace Now said in a statement.

Meanwhile, the Israeli military said a rocket was launched from the occupied West Bank city of Jenin yesterday, causing no reported injuries. It said it landed in Palestinian territory.

"The rocket did not pose a threat to communities in the area," a statement from the military said.

The Israeli military said this is the second such incident, when "the first indication of a launch happened on May 25th this year," the military told Reuters.

A spokesperson from the military said the first launch in May was from a makeshift rocket with a head made from cardboard which exploded about three meters into the sky and posed no danger to those around it.



PHOTO: AFP

Muslim pilgrims arrive in Mina, near Islam's holy city of Makkah yesterday, for the annual Hajj pilgrimage. Story on page 12.

Ukraine forces retake new settlement in South

Putin appears in first video address since aborted mutiny; Prigozhin says mutiny sought to save Wagner, not overthrow govt

AGENCIES

Ukrainian forces have recaptured another formerly Russian-held settlement on the southern front between the two armies, deputy defence minister Ganna Malyar said yesterday.

"Defence forces returned Rivnopol under our control. Let's push on," the minister posted on her Telegram account, referring to a rural community in the Donetsk region.

This month Ukraine launched a counteroffensive against the Russian troops occupying around a fifth of its territory in the south and east of the country.

President Volodymyr Zelensky has admitted that the advance has not gone as fast as had been hoped, despite Ukraine starting to deploy more Western-supplied weapons and tanks.

But there has been a breakthrough in the Mokri Yaly river valley, south of Velika Novosilka in the Donetsk, and the recapture of Rivnopol would be a continuation of this advance.

Russian forces had confirmed that there was fighting for Rivnopol on June 16, two weeks after the official launch of Ukraine's

summer counteroffensive, reports AFP.

Earlier, in a summary of last week's fighting, Malyar said another 17 square kilometres (6.5 square miles) had been liberated, bringing the total to 130 square kilometres. The biggest pocket of reclaimed territory is south of Vugledar, including Rivnopol.

**Wagner mutiny shows
invasion was 'strategic
mistake': Nato chief**

Russian President Vladimir Putin yesterday appeared in a Kremlin video address, speaking for the first time since the aborted mutiny of Wagner mercenary chief this weekend, reports Reuters.

Putin addressed a youth forum dubbed the "Engineers of the future" where he praised companies for ensuring "the stable operation" of the country's industry "in the face of severe external challenges".

Meanwhile, Wagner leader Yevgeny Prigozhin said yesterday, in his first public comments since ending a one-day mutiny by his force, that it had been intended to register a protest at the ineffectual

conduct of the war in Ukraine, not to overthrow the government in Moscow.

Prigozhin spoke in an 11-minute audio message released on the Telegram messaging app.

Russia's defence minister was shown yesterday discussing the war in Ukraine with troops - sending a message of business.

The armed mutiny over the weekend by the powerful Wagner Group and its abrupt ending with no apparent penalties for the perpetrators or their leader were followed yesterday by other official moves to return the country to normal.

The extraordinary events left governments, both friendly and hostile to Russia, groping for answers to what could happen next in the country with the world's largest nuclear arsenal.

Nato head Jens Stoltenberg said the weekend mutiny showed that Putin's invasion of Ukraine was a "mistake".

"We are monitoring the situation in Russia. The events over the weekend are an internal Russian matter, and yet another demonstration of the big strategic mistake that President Putin made with his illegal annexation of Crimea and the war against Ukraine," Stoltenberg told reporters.

Labour leader

FROM PAGE 1

Shahid and labour leaders Mustafa Kamal and Ahmed Sharif reached the spot, but Shahid entered the factory alone, said Kalpana Akter, executive director of the Bangladesh Centre for Workers' Solidarity, and general secretary of the BGIWF.

"A man called Hanif was inside the factory. He is a henchman of a goon named Kamrul, who claims to be in charge of the factory even though he is not an employee of the factory," she claimed.

Sources said Kamrul is the owner of the land on which the factory has been built.

"When Shahid came out of the factory, some local goons were waiting for him. They attacked him and the two other labour leaders," Kalpana said.

Mustafa and Sharif escaped with injuries, but Shahid was unconscious at the scene, she said.

A doctor at Tayrunnesa Medical College and Hospital declared Shahid dead after he was taken there.

After Shahid's death, workers gathered in front of the Gazipur deputy commissioner's office demanding justice.

Kalpana filed a murder case with Tongi West Police Station against Hanif, Mazharul, 35, Akash, 38, Russell, 32, Ripon, 27, and Sohail, 26.

Police arrested Mazharul yesterday. Prince Jacquard Sweater Ltd employs around 750 workers who last got paid in April half their wages.

The workers were supposed to get their arrears on Tuesday morning but they returned from the factory empty-handed.

On Wednesday morning, they found the factory locked. They later blocked the Dhaka-Mymensingh highway demanding their arrears.

Highway police drove them away firing two sound grenades. This paper reached out to Jahangir Hossain, director of Prince Jacquard Sweater Ltd, but he refused to comment saying that he was too sick to talk.

BNP to come up with outline after discussion

FROM PAGE 1

power to an unelected non-partisan caretaker administration to oversee a parliamentary election on completion of its term.

The BNP has long been demanding national election under a caretaker government, but the ruling Awami League said there is no scope for holding polls under an unelected caretaker government.

Demanding the government step down, Fakhru yesterday said they hope that good sense would prevail in the ruling party and it would hold talks with other political parties to introduce a neutral election-time government system.

"If the government stays in office, the election will not be free and fair. That's why our statement is very clear. The government must

quit and an arrangement must be made to introduce an election-time caretaker government through holding talks with all political parties."

Enquired about local and international pressure for holding a free and fair election, Fakhru said it seemed to him that there was no government in the country.

"The situation has become so bad that not only the people of the country but also the international community has become compelled to say that there is no human rights and democracy in the country.

"You [media] listen more to what they [international community] are saying. This is what we have been saying for the last 12 years. Our 600 people have become victims of enforced disappearances. Recently,

Graft in public hospitals costs

FROM PAGE 1

College Hospital, and Rangpur Medical College Hospital said the CMSD supplied those products unduly and without their consent.

"Those products were pushed into the hospitals by the CMSD," the report said, while calling for further investigation to identify the responsible parties for such wastage.

That year, eight medical colleges, one civil surgeon's office, one district hospital and two institutes and hospitals had acquired medical and surgical supplies at prices that were up to 18 times more than those offered by the Public Health Institute and the Essential Drug Company for similar products.

Subsequently, the government incurred a loss of Tk 1.63 crore.

When quizzed about the irregularities by the CAG auditors, the authorities of the accused institutions said they had procured the products through a tender process because the Public Health Institute and the Essential Drug Company were unable to meet their product specifications. The auditors did not accept this

explanation.

Another instance of irregularity involves a CT Scan machine that was installed on June 2, 2011 at the Dhaka Medical College Hospital.

The machine had a warranty period of five years but it became dysfunctional before the expiration of the warranty period.

Instead of invoking the warranty, the DMCH authorities decided to engage another company to repair the machine, which cost Tk 1.16 crore.

The audit report labelled the decision to assign a different company as a "serious financial irregularity" and stated that the public funds were embzzled this way.

The report recommended conducting a thorough investigation to identify the individuals responsible for this misconduct.

In fiscal 2018-19, the government incurred a loss of approximately Tk 266 crore thanks to irregularities at 44 public health institutions, including hospitals and civil surgeon offices.

The irregularities include wastage of public funds, disruption in

17 party men were shot dead. But you don't give importance to that. That's the problem."

The BNP secretary general said that the media also cannot write everything due to the Digital Security Act and other "repressive" acts. "How can a democratic state function like this?"

Fakhru said that the announcement on the one-point movement to oust the government would be made shortly after Eid.

Criticising the government's "repressive" activities, he said, "How do you expect that an inclusive election will be held amid such a situation? We can say for sure that the government will be compelled to accept the demand for a caretaker government in the face of a mass upsurge."

healthcare delivery due to unused purchased machinery and the procurement of medical and surgical requisites at prices higher than the prevailing market rates.

That year, the government suffered a loss of about Tk 25.53 crore due to the CMSD supplying additional medical equipment to five medical college hospitals and three general hospitals without any corresponding demand from those institutions.

"Equipment were supplied despite having no necessity, demand letter [from the hospitals], human resources and infrastructure," the report said.

Many of the items were already there at the hospitals.

The auditors sought an explanation from the hospitals, which includes DMCH.

The DMCH authorities said the experts of the cardiac surgery department suspected the efficacy of the 17 ventilators supplied after installing six of them and stopped using those.

The CMSD has been accused of pushing the equipment to these hospitals in this audit report too.

Traffic growing heavier

FROM PAGE 1

On June 24, a newly constructed flyover was opened in Kodda area to smoothen vehicular movement.

"I did not face any traffic jam on the way to my village home," said Rukunul Hasan, who travelled to Pabna from Dhaka.

On the Dhaka-Tangail highway, traffic was almost usual all the daylong.

"The traffic flow is increasing. But break downs on the highway may cause trouble," said Jahid Hasan, in-charge of Alenga highway police outpost in Tangail.

"We will face very heavy traffic tomorrow [Tuesday] as garment factories will be closed. We are cautious so that there are no gridlocks on the highway," said Delwar Hossain, traffic police inspector in Tangail.

Meanwhile, there was a traffic jam on Bangabandhu Bridge from Sunday night to yesterday morning. But the traffic was normal all day yesterday.

Vehicles ran slow at Chandra intersection of Gazipur and its adjacent area yesterday evening, said Azizul Haque, OC of Savar highway police station.

On the Dhaka-Mawa Expressway, traffic flow was normal despite the rise in vehicle numbers, said Bazlur Rahman, traffic police inspector in Munshiganj.

Movement of vehicles was slow in Bhaberchar and Gomoti bridge areas on the Dhaka-Chattogram highway.

Local buses are the main reason for gridlocks as they randomly pick up and drop off passengers stopping on the highway, said Safiul Islam, sub-inspector of Bhaberchar highway police station.

A total of 53 trains, including 41 intercity ones, left Kamalapur Railway Station yesterday. Of them, only Rangpur Express was around 40 minutes, said Shah Alam Kiron Shishir, divisional commercial

Rohingya man beaten to death in Ukhiya camp

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Cox's Bazar

Police yesterday recovered the body of a Rohingya man with his hands and feet tied from a refugee camp in Ukhiya upazila, Cox's Bazar.

The body was recovered from Block H/59 of Balukhali Camp 18 in Palongkhali union at 7:00am, said Sheikh Mohammad Ali, officer-in-charge of Ukhiya Police Station.

The deceased was identified as Ashiq Elahi, 23, of Block C/7 of Balukhali Camp 11.

Quoting the family members, the OC said unidentified miscreants picked up Ashiq on Sunday evening and beat him to death over previous enmity.

The body was sent to Cox's Bazar General Hospital for autopsy, he said.

Child staffer beaten to death by eatery employee

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Moulvibazar

A child staffer of a local restaurant was beaten to death allegedly by another senior employee of the same eatery following an argument in Kusumbagh area of Moulvibazar town.

Tanim, 13, son of Muhit Mia of Sreemangal upazila, had been working at the "Khandani Restaurant" for three months.

Tanim's father Muhit said "On Saturday, my son had an argument with Jalal Mia and the people who were with him. Later, they beat Tanim to death."

He died while undergoing treatment at Sylhet MAG Osmani Medical College Hospital on Sunday afternoon.

Moulvibazar Model Police Station OC (Investigation) Moshir Rahman said the boy's body was sent to the hospital morgue for autopsy.

Jalal Mia, 55, another employee of the same restaurant, was arrested over the incident.

Woman jailed for husband's murder

UNB, Joypurhat

Four people, including the victim's wife, were sentenced to life in prison yesterday by a Joypurhat court for the 2001 murder of a man, which was motivated by an extramarital affair.

The convicts are -- Dolly Begum, Suren Urau, Mostafizur Rahman, and Kafa. The victim's wife Dolly was tried in absentia.

According to the prosecution, Abul and Dolly fought ever since they got married, and eventually, Dolly developed an extramarital affair with Mostafizur.

At one stage, Abul came to know about the affair, which led Dolly and Mostafiz to plan to kill him.

On September 28, 2001, Abul was called to his in-laws' house, where he was strangled to death by the convicts.

Police recovered his body the following day, after which a case was filed with Panchbibbi Police Station.

Tk 7,61,785cr budget passed in parliament

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Parliament yesterday passed Tk 7,61,785 crore national budget for the 2023-24 fiscal, aiming at 7.5 percent GDP growth rate with an expectation of keeping annual inflation at around 6.0 percent.

Finance Minister AHM Mustafa Kamal placed the Appropriations Bill, 2023 seeking a budgetary allocation of Tk 11,01,840.76 crore, which was passed by voice vote.

Earlier on Monday, Parliament passed the Finance Bill 2023 with some changes.

Following the proposal mooted in the House by the finance minister for the parliamentary approval of appropriation of fund for meeting necessary development and non-development expenditures of the government, the ministers concerned placed justifications for the expenditures by their respective ministries through 59 demands for grant.

Earlier, the parliament rejected by voice vote a total of only 503 cut-motions that stood in the name of opposition members on 59 demands for grants for different ministries.

A total of eight Jatiya Party MPs, one each MP from Gonoforum and independent submitted their cut-motions on the budget.

Opposition and independent lawmakers were present at the House when the Appropriation Bill was passed at the Parliament and they did not raise any voice against passing of the bill.

Kamal on June 1 placed a Tk 7,61,785 crore budget,

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An over-loaded van plies the busy Dhaka-Mawa expressway among speeding vehicles, defying traffic rules. To add to the risk, two people are sitting on top of the sacks. Such risky way of travelling not only poses danger for them but also puts other commuters in jeopardy. This photo was taken in Postogola area yesterday.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

Sholakia to host largest Eid congregation

UNB, Dhaka

The largest Eid congregation of the country will be held at Sholakia Eidgah Maidan in Kishoreganj district at 9:00am on the day of Eid-ul-Azha.

Three-tier security measures have been taken in and around the Eidgah to ensure foolproof security, said Deputy Commissioner of Kishoreganj Mohammad Abul Kalam Azad yesterday after inspecting the maidan.

Maulana Farid Uddin Masud will lead the main Eid congregation at 9:00am, he added.

People will not be allowed to carry mobile phone sets and umbrellas on security grounds.

Law enforcers along with plainclothes police will be deployed. Apart from CCTV cameras, four watchtowers will be set up to keep an eye on the ground.

Six ambulances and

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371 more get hospitalised with dengue

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

At least 371 dengue patients were hospitalised across the country in the last 24 hours till yesterday morning.

With the new ones, the total number of dengue cases this year rose to 7,609, according to the Directorate General of Health Services.

Some 1,385 dengue patients are still under treatment, 363 of whom are from outside Dhaka.

Meanwhile, 6,178 dengue patients were released from hospitals, 1,381 of whom are from outside Dhaka.

A total of 45 people died of dengue so far this year. The infection claimed 281 lives last year while the number of cases stood at 62,382.

PRAYER TIMING		JUNE 27			
Fazr	Zohr	Asr	Maghrib	Esha	
AZAN 4-05		12-45	5-00	6-54	8-17
JAMAAT 4-40		1-15	5-15	6-57	8-45
SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION					

The prison meet that led to Jama'atul Ansar

MOHAMMAD JAMIL KHAN

A top leader of the militant outfit Harkat-ul-Jihad-al-Islam (Huji) instructed Shamin Mahfuj to establish and initiate the formation of a new militant faction, which later became known as Jama'atul Ansar Fil Hindal Sharqiya.

The Huji leader, Abu Sayeed, also known as Abu Jafar, who is an accused in the grenade attack on an Awami League rally on August 21, 2004, provided the directives during a meeting held inside the prison.

This meeting took place in 2017 and included the presence of two others, Mainul Islam alias Mahin alias Roxy and Jony.

During the meeting, Jafar assured Shamin that they would receive financial support and members from Huji, and he instructed them to establish a training camp in the hilly regions. Subsequently, in 2018, Mahin was granted bail, followed by Shamin's release in 2019.

Under the leadership of Mahin as the initial ameer of the newly-formed platform, Shamin began the process of recruiting members and securing funding for the outfit.

Shamin also started communicating with different groups in the hill areas and eventually obtained support from Nathan Bom, his university friend and the chief of the Kuki-Chin National Front (KNF), an armed group operating in the Chattogram Hill Tracts.

Officials from the Counter Terrorism and Transnational Crime (CTTC) unit revealed these findings while speaking with The Daily Star recently.

Shamin and his wife, Naznin Sultan, were arrested on Friday night in Demra.

Currently, the CTTC is interrogating the couple during their respective four-day and three-day police remands.

Jafar has been in jail since 2007 following his arrest.

According to investigators, Shamin was arrested by the police's

Counterterrorism officials believe that Huji leader Jafar orchestrated and directed the formation of this new platform to gain support for the outfit within prisons.

detective branch in 2014 for his involvement in militancy. Mahin and Jony, on the other hand, were apprehended by the Rapid Action Battalion in 2015.

After Mahin's arrest in July 2015, the Rab stated that he served as the chief coordinator of Al-Qaeda in the Indian Subcontinent (AQIS). Both Mahin and Shamin had affiliations with the militant outfit Ansar Al Islam.

Inspired by Ansar Al Islam's strategy, young individuals started

joining Shamin to undergo training in the hilly regions, entering into an agreement with the KNF.

Sources indicate that Shamin initially paid Tk 24 lakh to the KNF for training and shelter at their camp. At the end of 2020, Shamin held a meeting with Ansar Al Islam leaders and started working together, they said.

Since then, Ansar Al Islam has provided financial support to Shamin. While staying at the KNF camp, the leadership of the emerging militant outfit decided to name it Jama'atul Ansar Fil Hindal Sharqiya in early 2022.

Counterterrorism officials believe that Huji leader Jafar orchestrated and directed the formation of this new platform to gain support for the outfit within jails.

Md Asaduzzaman, chief of the CTTC unit, said, "We are currently receiving various types of information. We are now verifying it."

DARK WEB, USE OF FOREIGN NUMBERS

Counterterrorism officials said they have discovered the use of the messaging app Imo by the leaders of Sharqiya for the first time in recent history.

"We have never encountered these types of communications before. The outfit leaders acquire foreign numbers from the dark web and then register Imo accounts with them," said a high-ranking

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'Fake notes worth Tk 5cr circulated in 2 months' Say police after arresting 9 persons

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A fake currency-making gang has circulated over Tk 5 crore counterfeit notes in the country in the last two months.

Detectives have arrested nine members of the gang, who told police that they had a target of circulating an additional Tk 3 crore in the market before Eid-ul-Azha.

Harun-Or Rashid, chief of the Detective Branch (DB) of DMP, said this yesterday after a team of detectives of Lalbagh Division arrested them from the Kashmiri Lane area in Lalbagh yesterday.

They also seized fake notes worth Tk 82 lakh.

The arrestees are Babul Mia, the kingpin of the gang; his wife Mirana Khatun; chief fake note producer Saiful Islam; his wife Mili Khatun, and staffers -- Alpona Akter, Ibrahim, Afazul alias Rasel, Habibullah and Dulal Hossain.

While briefing reporters at the DMP media centre, Harun said a team of DB first arrested -- Ibrahim, Rasel, Habibullah and Dulal -- along with Tk 25

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BY-POLLS

It's Arafat vs Hero Alom in Dhaka-17

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The main battle for ballots in Dhaka-17 by-polls will take place between Awami League candidate Muhammad A Arafat and independent Ashrafal Hossain alias Hero Alom.

Hero Alom appears to be the strongest opponent of the AL nominee as major opposition parties such as the BNP remain absent, said local public representatives.

The election campaigning commenced yesterday after the Election Commission allocated symbols to nine aspirants running for office.

Hero Alom received the "Ektara" symbol while six other candidates, backed by political parties, received symbols of their respective organisations.

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DEATH OF TEENAGER

6 doctors of Labaid hospital sued

STAR REPORT

A murder case was filed yesterday against seven people, including six doctors of Labaid Specialized Hospital in Dhanmondi, over the death of HSC candidate Tahsin Hossain, allegedly "due to wrong treatment".

Tahsin's father Monir Hossain filed the case with the court of Metropolitan Magistrate Farah Diba Chandar, reports UNB.

The accused are Dr Md Saifullah, assistant professor of Labaid Specialized Hospital, assistant surgeon Dr Maksud, Dr Sabbir Ahmed, Dr Mosharaf Hossain, Dr Kanak, hospital Managing Director Dr AM Shamim and Branch Manager

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4



Live fish from various hatcheries enter Dhaka in small makeshift water tanks on pick-up vans. These fresh fish are sold at various markets for a comparatively higher price for customers who prefer the finest pick. Inset, a trader proudly shows off the catch of the day. The photos were taken near Jatrabari fish market recently.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

PRICE SENSITIVE INFORMATION

This is for information of all concerned that Credit Rating Agency of Bangladesh (CRAB) rated Bank Asia Limited AA1 for long term and ST-1 for short term based on the financials of 2022 on June 14, 2023. The rating will remain valid upto June 30, 2024.

The information will also be available on the website of the Bank at www.bankasia-bd.com

We ensure **STABLE BANKING through maintaining very strong repayment capacity and very low credit risk**

Ratings	2022	2023
Long Term	AA ₁	AA ₁
Short Term	ST-1	ST-1

Rated by CRAB on June 14, 2023 & valid up to June 30, 2024
Based on Financials December 31, 2022

Dated: June 26, 2023
Dhaka

AREEF BILLAH ADIL CHOWDHURY
PRESIDENT & MANAGING DIRECTOR

Appeal for help

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Sheikh Mohammad Abdur Razzak, a 55-year-old resident of Pabna, has been battling kidney disease for several months.



He lives in Nagarbari Ghat area in Pabna. He has undergone treatment at various hospitals following his physical condition. However, his health has recently deteriorated, leading doctors to recommend regular kidney dialysis. But his family is unable to afford the expenses due to their poor economic conditions.

So, they have sought financial support from the well-off of the society.

Aid can be sent to Sheikh Mohammad Abdur Razzak, bKash No: 01974088071. Sheikh Sadman Souhardyo, Dutch Bangla Bank, Agent Banking - Account No: 7017335660609.

NHRC officers association launched

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The National Human Rights Commission Officers Association launched its journey yesterday, appointing Kazi Arfan Ashik as president and M Rabiul Islam as secretary general.

Officials formed the 11-member committee following a meeting held at the NHRC office on June 18.

DSCC launches service centres

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka South City Corporation yesterday inaugurated an Emergency Operations Centre at Nagar Bhaban in the capital.

According to DSCC sources, the centre was established under the Urban Resilience Project, funded by the World Bank.

Similar centres were also set up at Dhaka north and Sylhet city corporations.

Four other wings – city control room, city data centre, security and network operation centre, and intensive surveillance centre – will be operating under the centre. The sub-hubs will coordinate their daily field operations based on the information provided by the centre to effectively handle and respond to disasters.

The city's central control room will operate 24/7. Individuals can call the control room at +880-222-3386014 for complaints and information.

The City Data Center will serve as the central repository for DSCC's data, while activities related to information and communication technology, network management, and security will be carried out at the Security and Network Management Center.

Additionally, the Intensive Monitoring Centre will closely monitor all city corporation establishments, including city buildings, through CCTV cameras.

"The center would offer real-time updates and forecast on natural disasters like earthquakes, floods, and cyclones. The management centre will be in charge of a number of tasks, such as field operations, open areas, water flow, and the sacrificial waste disposal. We are also looking to offer smart citizen services through the digital centre," said DSCC Mayor Sheikh Fazle Noor Taposh at the launching event.

It's Arafat vs Hero Alom in Dhaka-17

FROM PAGE 3

Al candidate Arafat received the "boat" symbol, and JP candidate Sikder Anisur Rahman received "plough" symbol.

The Dhaka-17 Constituency encompasses Gulshan, Banani, Cantonment, and some areas of Bhashantek.

In addition to the "elite" population in the constituency, there are several large slums, including Karail slum.

Local representatives believe these slum dwellers will significantly

influence the outcome of the upcoming by-polls. However, the majority of them are not directly involved in any political activities, making it challenging for any candidate to secure votes.

In ward-15, there are Bhasantek, Dhamalkot, Matikata Basti, Barantek, Baizertek, and Sagarika slums, while in ward-18, there are Kalachandpur, Shahajadpur, Jhilpar, Nardda Sarkarbari, and Dulal slums. The ward-19 includes Karail, Railway

Line, Godown, and T&T slums, and ward-20 consists of Ershadnagar, Sattala, and Bhanga Deval slums.

The total number of voters in the Dhaka-17 constituency is 325,018.

Ward-19 councillor Mofizur Rahman said, "Karail Slum alone has around 25,000 voters, while the Railway Line and Godown slums have 5,000-7,000 voters. These voters hold significant influence in the polling field."

Zakir Hossain, councillor of ward-18, said, "Our area

includes slums, such as Kalachandpur and Jhilpar. I was able to be elected as a councillor because these voters supported me in the last election."

The slum dwellers have sympathy towards Hero Alom, so if he can maintain communication with them, he may secure their votes, he added.

Arafat is a prominent AL candidate, which may lead BNP activists to vote for Hero Alam in an attempt to defeat him. The by-polls will be held on July 17.

Inamul Aziz passes away

DU CORRESPONDENT

Inamul Aziz Chowdhury, son of former Vice-Chancellor of Dhaka University Prof Fazlul Halim Chowdhury, died due to cardiac arrest while undergoing treatment at a city hospital on June 22.

He was 60. Inamul, a banker by profession, left behind his two daughters, mother and three sisters including Prof Sadaka Halim, chairperson of DU sociology department and also former dean of social sciences faculty.

He will be buried today at Banani graveyard after a namaz-e-janaza at the Baitul Aman Jame Masjid, Dhanmondi-7, after Zuhr prayers.

Tk 7,61,785cr

FROM PAGE 3 which is 15.2 percent of the GDP, for the next fiscal 2023-24 with a philosophy of building a hunger and poverty-free, knowledge-based and developed "Smart Bangladesh" by 2041.

The allocation for operating and other sectors is Tk 4,36,247 crore while Tk 2,63,000 crore to the Annual Development Programme.

The total revenue is estimated at Tk 5 lakh crore. Out of this, Tk 4,30,000 crore will be collected by the National Board of Revenue and Tk 70,000 crore from other sources.

The overall deficit in the proposed budget will stand at Tk 2,61,785 crore, which is 5.2 percent of GDP.

Out of the total deficit, Tk 1,55,395 crore will be financed from domestic sources and Tk 1,02,490 crore from external sources.

Land Purchase @ Gulshan/Baridhara

Wants to buy minimum 8 katha upto 20 katha (more/less) at any prime location of Gulshan/ Baridhara diplomatic zone by EXPATRIATE BANGLADESHI. Any commission or service charge is not required from the seller. Only genuine owners are requested to contact. **01711-521084**

Chittagong University of Engineering & Technology
Chattogram-4349

Memo No. CUET/PROC/REV/230/2022-2023 Date: 26/06/2023

e-Tender Notice

Tender ID No.	Package No.	Package name	Tender closing date	Tender notice publication date
851079	CUETPG-56	Procurement of Chemicals for Investigation of Energy Storage Capacity of Li-Ion battery using 2D emerging materials MXenes Research Project DRE CUET.	13/07/2023 12:00 Hr.	27/06/2023
851088	CUETPG-57	Procurement of Chemicals for Fabrication and Characterization of Natural Fiber Based Shef-healing Composite Materials DRE Research Project CUET	13/07/2023 12:30 Hr.	
851092	CUETPG-58	Procurement of Chemical and Glassware for Synthesis of Biodegradable Metal Adsorbent by Graft Polymerization onto Cotton for the Removal of Heavy Metal from Industrial Effluent M.Phil Research Project CUET.	13/07/2023 13:00 Hr.	
851098	CUETPG-59	Procurement of 52 Seated Diesel Bus	18/07/2023 12:00 Hr.	
851103	CUETPG-60	Procurement of 16 Seated Micro Bus.	18/07/2023 12:30 Hr.	

This is an online tender, where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP Portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-Tender, registration in the National e-GP System Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) is required. The fees for last selling/downloading the e-Tender documents from the National e-GP System Portal have to be deposited online through any registered banks branches up to date & time (12-Jul-2023 16:00Hr. (CUETPG-56, 57 & 58) and 17-Jul-2023 16:00Hr. (CUETPG-59 & 60). Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System Portal and from e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd).

=Signed=
Registrar (Add. Charge)
Chittagong University of Engineering & Technology
Chattogram-4349

GD-1061

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Local Government Engineering Department
Office of the Upazila Engineer
Trishal, Mymensingh

Memo No. 46.02.6194.000.00.001.23-572 Date: 22-06-2023

e-Tender Notice: 11/2022-23
e-Tender is invited in the National e-GP System Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) for the Procurement of work related Tender ID given following.

Tender ID	Name	Tender last selling	Tender closing & opening
848717	Construction of Boundary Wall including Gate of i) Bagan Nurjahan GPS & ii) Dhanikhola Uttar Vatipara GPS (3rd Call)	09-July-2023 11:00:00	09-July-2023 13:00:00
848718	Construction of Boundary Wall including Gate of i) Dhola Nama Para GPS & ii) Kaitorbari GPS (3rd Call)	09-July-2023 11:00:00	09-July-2023 13:00:00

This is an online tender, where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP Portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-Tender, registration in the National e-GP System Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) is required. The fees downloading the e-Tender documents from the National e-GP System Portal have to be deposited online through any registered banks branches up to 09-July-2022 12:00:00.

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

Md. Munirujjaman
Upazila Engineer
LGED, Trishal, Mymensingh.
E-mail: ue.trishal@lged.gov.bd

GD-1062

Family of

FROM PAGE 5

disputes, claimed Ujjal. "My wife and child were beaten up and my house was completely destroyed. They attacked us with sharp weapons and sticks," he added.

Contacted, Bashar Khan said, "No one from my family is involved in this attack."

Following the incident, a case was filed with Bauphal Police Station, accusing Bashar, Mehedi and two others, said Arichul Haque, officer-in-charge of the station.

Of a 'missing'

FROM PAGE 5

struggle, noting the numerous requests made by residents over the years. Despite assurances given at various times, the long-awaited bridge has yet to become a reality, he said. Rabiul Islam Rabi, a trader at Trimohani Bazar, said the construction of a mere half-kilometre bridge would alleviate the burdensome additional distance of 20 kilometers that people currently have to travel using alternative routes.

Rabi also draws attention to the hazardous state of the dilapidated bridge wall.

"Its deteriorating condition poses a constant threat of collapse, further endangering the lives of those who rely on it for daily travel," he says.

THE AUTHORITIES' TAKE Contacted, Keshabpur Upazila Engineer Saiful Islam said he has informed higher authorities regarding the pressing need for a bridge construction at the Kapotaksha river.

Meanwhile, the Upazila Nirbahi Officer, MM Arafat Hossain, said he has unaware of any bamboo bridge over the river, and assured that he would inform the Upazila Engineer and higher authorities to construct a permanent bridge.

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Chattogram City Corporation
Tigerpass, Chattogram
www.ccc.gov.bd

Memo No. 46.11.1600.002.14.23.0056

e-Tender Notice-DRIIDARP/2022-23/09
e-Tender is invited in the National e-GP System Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) for the procurement of following works:

Package/Lot No.	Tender ID	Identification of lot	Tender closing last selling date and time	Tender closing opening date and time
DRIIDAR/2022-23/CCC/W7/L1	834326	Development of Lalkhanbazar to Bahaddarhat road (CDA Avenue Bahaddarhat to Forest Gate) (Lot-1) of 8 No. Ward	25-July-2023 16.00	26-July-2023 14.00
DRIIDAR/2022-23/CCC/W15/L1 /D	834327	Development of Mohammadpur Gopalbag R/A and Ismail Colony Mohammadpur Road Mirza Abu Road, Roufabad Starship Factory to rail line to Roufabad Major Road at 7 No. Ward	25-July-2023 16.00	26-July-2023 14.00
DRIIDAR/2022-23/CCC/W15/L2 /D	834328	Development of Muradpur 1 No. rail gate to Asia Factory Road, Shyamoli R/A, Greenview R/A, Hazi Chan Mia School adjacent Rajgonj R/A Road at 7 No. Ward	25-July-2023 16.00	26-July-2023 14.00
DRIIDAR/2022-23/CCC/W16/L1 /A	834329	Development of Sheikh Farid Chasma Complex Road, Hathazari Road bylane, Khulsi Colony Road & bylane, Nasirabad Girls School adjacent road & Tulatoli rail line adjacent road at 8 No. Ward.	25-July-2023 16.00	26-July-2023 14.00
DRIIDAR/2022-23/CCC/W16/L1 /E	834330	Development of Cosmopolitan Road and bylane, Protyasha R/A Road at 8 No. Sulokbahar Ward	25-July-2023 16.00	26-July-2023 14.00
DRIIDAR/2022-23/CCC/W16/L3 /C	834331	Development of Ruby Gate Industrial Road, Nasirabad Girls' High School adjacent road, Aziz Ullah H/S Road at 8 No. Sulokbahar Ward	25-July-2023 16.00	26-July-2023 14.00
DRIIDAR/2022-23/CCC/W16/L3 /A	834336	Development of Zakir Hossain road, Pilkhana road & bylane, Wapda Road & Jannatul Mawa Graveyard Road, B.T Police Goli bylane, Abdul Jalil Primary School Road and Ledu Secretary Road at 8 No. Ward	25-July-2023 16.00	26-July-2023 14.00
DRIIDAR/2022-23/CCC/W49/L2 /E	850816	Development of Bolomar, Mongol Chad Sheel Bari Road, Hindu Bari Road & drain, Najirpara Road, Dail Para Abu Sarang Bari Road, Amir Uddin Sukani Bari Kacha Road and drain, Box Mia Jomidar Bari Road & drain, Akbor Colony Masjid Road and drain, Chowdhury Para Main Road with retaining wall, Faruk Master Bari to south side up to culvert drain slab work at 41 No. Ward.	25-July-2023 16.00	26-July-2023 14.00
DRIIDAR/2022-23/CCC/W19/L1 /C	850820	Development of Basonti School road and lane at 11 No. Ward	25-July-2023 16.00	26-July-2023 14.00
DRIIDAR/2022-23/CCC/W10/L2 /C	850949	Development & Construction of Wahed Ali Road, Bajal Chairman Bari Road, Noya Bazar Road with Guide Wall, Cantonment School Road, Tea Board to Freedom Fighter Jahangir Road (From Tea Board to Dreamland R/A Road) at 2 No. Jalalabad Ward	25-July-2023 16.00	26-July-2023 14.00
DRIIDAR/2022-23/CCC/W5	845765	Construction of (09) Nos. Roundabout at (1) Cement crossing, (2) Alonkar Mor, (3) A.K Khan Mor (4) 2 No. Gate, (5) Saltgola, (6) Bohoddarhat, (7) Chawkbazar, (8) Oxygen Mor (9) Katghar Mor at Chittagong City Corporation area.	25-July-2023 16.00	26-July-2023 14.00

The procuring entity reserves the right to accept or reject all tenders.

This is an online tender, where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP Portal and offline hard copies will not be accepted. To submit e-Tender, registration in the National e-GP System Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) is required. The fees for downloading the e-Tender documents from the National e-GP System Portal have to be deposited online through any registered bank branches up to particular date and time specified on the tender notice.

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

Md. Jashim Uddin
Deputy Project Director
"Different Roads and Important
Infrastructural Development including
Airport Road under
Chattogram City Corporation"



CCC/PRD-202/22-23
Size: 10"x4 col
GD-1063

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নিলাম বিজ্ঞপ্তি নং-২৭.২৮.৮৮৭৮.০০১.০৭.০০১.২১.৩৬০

তারিখঃ ২৬/০৬/২৩ ইং

নিলাম বিক্রয় বিজ্ঞপ্তি

১। মন্ত্রণালয়/বিভাগ	ঃ বিদ্যুৎ, জ্বালানি ও খনিজ সম্পদ মন্ত্রণালয়, বিদ্যুৎ বিভাগ।
২। নিলাম আস্থানকারী দপ্তরের নাম	ঃ প্রধান প্রকৌশলীর দপ্তর, সিরাজগঞ্জ বিদ্যুৎ কেন্দ্র, সয়দাবাদ, সিরাজগঞ্জ, নর্থ-ওয়েস্ট পাওয়ার জেনারেশন কোম্পানি লিমিটেড, ঢাকা।
৩। নিলামের সংক্ষিপ্ত বিবরণ	ঃ নর্থ-ওয়েস্ট পাওয়ার জেনারেশন কোম্পানি লিমিটেড-এর আওতাধীন সিরাজগঞ্জ বিদ্যুৎ কেন্দ্রের কাজের ব্যবহারের বিভিন্ন অকেজো মালামালসমূহ “যেখানে যে অবস্থায় আছে” ভিত্তিতে নিলামে বিক্রয়।
৪। নিলামের প্রকৃতি	ঃ খোলা দরপত্র।
৫। নিলামের সূত্র নং ও তারিখ	ঃ ২৭.২৮.৮৮৭৮.০০১.০৭.০০১.২১.৩৬০; তারিখঃ ২৬/০৬/২৩ ইং
৬। দরদাতার যোগ্যতা	ঃ বাংলাদেশের ব্যবসায়ী প্রতিষ্ঠান। হালনাগাদ ট্রেড লাইসেন্স, ব্যাট রেজিস্ট্রেশন ও টিআইএন এর অনুলিপি থাকতে হবে এবং প্রয়োজনে মূল কপি দেখাতে হবে।
৭। দরপত্র দলিল প্রাপ্তি স্থান	ঃ প্রধান প্রকৌশলীর দপ্তর, সিরাজগঞ্জ বিদ্যুৎ কেন্দ্র, সয়দাবাদ, সিরাজগঞ্জ, নর্থ-ওয়েস্ট পাওয়ার জেনারেশন কোম্পানি লিমিটেড।
৮। দরপত্র বিক্রয়ের সময়	ঃ ০৩/০৭/২০২৩ ইং তারিখ সকাল ১১:০০ টা হতে (প্রতি কর্ম দিবসের সকাল ১০:০০ টা হতে বিকাল ০৩:০০ টা পর্যন্ত) প্রশাসনিক ভবন, সিরাজগঞ্জ বিদ্যুৎ কেন্দ্র।
৯। দরপ্রস্তাব দাখিলের স্থান	ঃ মেইন গেটে রক্ষিত বক্সে, সিরাজগঞ্জ বিদ্যুৎ কেন্দ্র।
১০। দরপত্র দলিল বিক্রয়ের শেষ তারিখ ও সময়	ঃ ৩১/০৭/২০২৩ ইং (অফিস চলাকালীন সময় পর্যন্ত)।
১১। দরপ্রস্তাব জমাদানের শেষ তারিখ ও সময়	ঃ ০১/০৮/২০২৩ ইং দুপুর ১২:০০ ঘটিকা।
১২। দরপত্র দলিল খোলার তারিখ ও সময়	ঃ ০১/০৮/২০২৩ ইং দুপুর ১২:৩০ ঘটিকা।
১৩। জামানতের পরিমাণ (পে-অর্ডার আকারে)	ঃ উদ্ধৃত মূল্যের ২০% (শতকরা বিশ) অর্থ।
১৪। কার্য সম্পাদনের সময়সীমা	ঃ চুক্তি সম্পাদনের তারিখ হতে ৬০ (ষাট) দিন পর্যন্ত।
১৫। প্রতিটি দরপত্র দলিলের মূল্য (পে-অর্ডার আকারে)	ঃ ৫,০০০.০০ (পাঁচ হাজার) টাকা মাত্র (অফেরতযোগ্য)।
১৬। প্রতিটি দরপত্র দলিলের মূল্য ও জামানত পে-অর্ডার আকারে	ঃ নর্থ-ওয়েস্ট পাওয়ার জেনারেশন কোম্পানি লিমিটেড এর অনুকূলে দাখিল করতে হবে। জামানত ব্যতীত কোন দরপত্র দাখিল করলে তা বাতিল বলে গণ্য করা হবে।
১৭। Notification of Award (NoA) ইস্যু করার ১৫ (পনের) কর্মদিবসের মধ্যে প্রদেয় আয়কর ও ভ্যাটসহ সমুদয় অর্থ ঠিকাদার কর্তৃক পে-অর্ডারের মাধ্যমে জমা প্রদান করতে হবে ও চুক্তি স্বাক্ষর করতে হবে। চুক্তি স্বাক্ষরের তারিখ হতে ৬০ (ষাট) দিনের মধ্যে নিলামকৃত সকল মালামাল গ্রহণযোগ্য সর্বোচ্চ দরদাতা (Technically Responsive Highest Bidder)/কৃতকার্য দরদাতাকে নিজ জিম্মায় “যেখানে যে অবস্থায় আছে” গ্রহণ করতে হবে।	
১৮। নিলাম সংক্রান্ত যাবতীয় শর্তাবলী শিডিউলে বিস্তারিত বর্ণিত আছে।	



(শফিকুজ্জামান ইসলাম)
(প্রধান প্রকৌশলী)
সিরাজগঞ্জ বিদ্যুৎ কেন্দ্র
নওপাজেকে লাগ, ঢাকা।

26/06/2023

GD-1064

NAYEEM on a hunt for perfection



PHOTO: SHEIKH MEHEDI MORSHED

“I tried to observe Sunny bhai very closely to understand his personality, and how he sees the world. Luckily, he was satisfied with my work.”

SHARMIN JOYA

ASP Mahid faces a great challenge in his career, as multiple murders leave the country in terror. A missing case leads him towards one of his biggest missions ever.

The intriguing storyline of the Hoichoi web series “Mission HuntDown” will unfold many mysteries on June 28.

FS Nayeem, fresh off a career rejuvenation through OTT, shares his expectation about this project with The Daily Star.

It is being said that the audience will find a “new Nayeem” in this project. Why?

People’s expectations have skyrocketed after watching the trailer, as they have never seen me in a true action flick before. In my long career, I have always been concerned about being overused or misused. I have never appeared in repetitive roles on-screen. Ashfaque in *Karagar* had one kind of persona, while Mahboob in Chorki’s *Overtrump* was completely different, and this is going to be another 180 degrees, and I am sure the audience will get it, once they watch the show.

How did you prepare for the role?

ASP Mahid is literally Sunny Sanwar himself. It is extremely difficult to portray a living person, that too when he is the director.

Also, there were benefits of watching him closely and taking tips about action scenes from him, as it would be more real.

I tried to observe Sunny bhai very closely to understand his personality, and how he sees the world. Luckily, he was satisfied with my work.

Give us some insight about ASP Mahid. Mahid’s motto is to free his country from terrorists. Through his journey, he has to pay a lot. Moreover, you will see the human inside a cop, and not just the police who runs everywhere holding a gun!

He is a family person; he loves his colleagues and his country. To be honest, we need at least one Mahid in each sector in our country.

This is where Mahid is different and I have given my best efforts to bring him on the screen.

How do you do your homework to become a character?

I always try to act in a lean way. When I take up any project, my entire time is spent on it. I spend a lot of time with the crew, even before we start shootings or rehearsals. This is just to get the vibe of the story and especially the director’s vision.

Nayeem, in real life, is a very positive personality. What is the secret behind this?

Since childhood, I had faced a lot of comparisons, and encountered many competitions. Since my grandfather was a language activist, a politician and my father was a freedom fighter—being compared to such great personalities was challenging for me. Since I have dedicated my life to acting, I have never tried to become a conventional actor, but create my personality in a way that leaves a mark in one’s heart. I believe a positive smile can bring a remarkable change.

Bubly, Nirab starrer ‘Casino’ receives censor clearance



Excitement is brewing as the Shobnom Bubly and Nirab starrer, *Casino*, directed by Saikat Nasir, obtained an uncensored certificate from the Bangladesh Film Censor Board, on Sunday.

Director Saikat Nasir expressed his gratitude, stating, “I submitted the film to the Censor Board a few days ago, and on Sunday they passed it without any issues. I hope to receive the certificate today. Some members of the board called me over the phone to share the good news and express their appreciation for the film.”

Casino revolves around the operations targeting illegal casinos and money laundering in Bangladesh in 2019. So far, 16 theatres, including Cineplex and Blockbuster, have been finalised for the film’s release, with the possibility of more being added to the list.



‘The Kerala Story’ struggles to find OTT deal

Sudipto Sen’s directorial venture, *The Kerala Story*, has emerged as one of the biggest hits of 2023. However, the film has faced its fair share of controversy and bans due to its sensitive portrayal of religious conversions, ISIS, and love jihad. Initially banned in West Bengal and rejected by many theatres in Tamil Nadu, the film’s makers are now grappling with finding a suitable OTT platform to showcase their film.

Since its release on May 5, *The Kerala Story* has ignited discussions and polarised opinions with its exploration of religious conversions and ISIS involvement. Despite its success at the box office, the film’s producers have been unable to secure a favourable offer from any major OTT platform.

NEWS

High prices keep buyers away

FROM PAGE 12

“I came to Gabtoli cattle market with four big bulls on Thursday, the prices of which are between Tk 9 lakh and Tk 11 lakh each, but I have not received a single offer from a single customer in the last four days, which is very frustrating,” said Zoyan Abedin, proprietor of Tanha Dairy Farm in Chaudhagram, Cumilla.

“People are blaming traders for the high prices, but we had to buy bulls from the local markets about a week ago spending 20 to 30 percent more for each bull than last year,” said Md Tejj Ali, a trader from Meherpur, who arrived at the Kamalapur cattle market with 16 bulls.

Eight of his bulls were raised at his farm, which cost him a lot of money.

“Some customers told us that their salaries did not increase and that’s why they are not offering higher prices this

year than last year. If we do not sell our bulls without making any profit, it would be a big blow to us,” he said.

Kabirul Sheikh, a trader from Kustia, brought 11 bulls to the Dholaihal cattle market on Friday. He said he sold two of them without profit. “I still have nine more and will try to make a profit from their sale, but there is still a risk if I do not get the desired customers in the last few days,” he added.

Meanwhile, sales at cattle markets in Pabna and Moulvibazar were also slow yesterday.

Cattle prices are high in those two districts as well despite a sufficient supply.

On June 14, Fisheries and Livestock Minister SM Rezaul Karim stated that the number of sacrificial animals this year is around 1.25 crore, which is 4.1 lakh more than last year.

4 out of 5 factories yet to pay workers

FROM PAGE 1

of Bangladesh Textile Mills Association (BTMA).

The rest of the export-oriented factories that are yet to clear half month’s salaries are in Export Processing Zones and the jute mills.

Talking to The Daily Star, BGMEA President Faruque Hassan said, “Most of the factories have already paid Eid bonuses and it is expected that they will also complete the payment of the 15 days’ salary of June by tomorrow [Tuesday].”

The BGMEA has been monitoring the payment schedule, Hassan also said.

Earlier, the government asked the factory owners to pay half month’s salary of June and bonus to workers before Eid.

I have no problem

FROM PAGE 12

cycle of inflation. The government should take steps to overcome this.

“There are syndicates. There is no doubt about it. These syndicates are powerful. But are they stronger than the government? ... If there is a syndicate within the government, it must be identified.”

He said, “He [Munshi] is a successful businessman. I believe that if he is given the freedom to act, he can definitely control it.”

Another JP MP Rowshan Ara Mannan said, “The Ministry of Commerce is not monitoring the market properly... Why can’t he control the market?”

Pir Fazlur Rahman, a JP lawmaker, said the state minister for industries said people cry when they go to the market and the only reason for their tears is the syndicate.

“People understand this. The Russia-Ukraine war alone should not be blamed for the rise in commodity prices. The syndicate has looted thousands of crores of taka from the egg market. Eggs don’t come from Ukraine.”

He said the commerce minister blames some traders for taking advantage. “He [Munshi] himself is a businessman. He knows which businesspeople are doing it. So, are these businesspeople close to him? Is this why he can’t catch them?”

He demanded that the commerce minister says in public why he is not able to catch them.

Munshi in his response said, “We are discussing the syndicate. It is correct that large companies are doing lots of businesses together. We need to think ... We can put them behind bars and we can fine them. That might be possible. But it will be difficult for us to bear the sudden crisis caused by it. That’s why we try to remain within the rules and [tackle the situation] through discussions,” he said.

He said, “One thing that comes up time and again is that I am a businessman and the businesspeople take advantage of me. But I have been in politics for 56 years and I have been in business for 40 to 42 years.

“Someone here asked me to resign. I will tell the prime minister that if he [Mokabbir] takes the responsibility, she can relieve me of my duties ... I have no problem.”

Petition filed with SC

FROM PAGE 12

Jamaat leaders including its Ameer Dr Shafiqur Rahman for holding public meetings as a political party despite its appeal has been awaiting the apex court disposal.

They also filed the contempt of court petition against three government high officials for allowing Jamaat to hold the programmes in Dhaka.

The other four Jamaat leaders are its Secretary General Dr Golam Parowar, Central Nayab-e-Ameer Dr Abdullah Mohammad Taher, Metropolitan South Jamaat-E-Islami Ameer Nurul Islam Bulbul and Nayeb-E-Ameer Ameer, Dhaka,

Advocate Helal Uddin.

Home Ministry’s Senior Secretary (department of public safety) Md Mostafizur Rahman; Inspector General of Bangladesh Police Chowdhury Abdullah Al-Mamun, and Commissioner of Dhaka Metropolitan Police Khandker Golam Faruq have also been made respondents in the contempt of court petition.

Chamber judge of the Appellate Division Justice Md Abu Zafar Siddique yesterday admitted the application and petition and sent those to its full bench for their hearing on July 31, petitioners’ lawyer Barrister Tanya Amir told The Daily Star.

Claims of sexual abuse

FROM PAGE 12

with 6,582 peacekeepers, including more than 400 women, deployed in nine peacekeeping missions in eight countries, according to data of the Armed Forces Division.

Lacroix said they encourage member states to renew their commitment to the uniform gender parity targets.

He said the nature of conflict and the geopolitical context have evolved to such a state that peace operations are confronted with far more complex political and operational environment today. The tactics and weapons utilised by conflict parties require UN peace operations to have far more specialised capabilities.

“But capabilities go beyond the equipment we have. The mindset and composition of our workforce must also be strengthened to meet the new challenges we face. And this includes ensuring we deploy a diverse and gender-balanced workforce that reflects the diversity of the communities we serve,” the UN official said.

The principal staff officer of the Armed Forces Division, Lt Gen Waker-Uz-Zaman, said the women troops in Bangladesh are being trained in a way so that they can reach the leadership level.

He said there are rare occurrences of sexual violence in Bangladesh military, and prompt actions are taken if any such incident happens. Waker-Uz-Zaman said the

ministerial meeting in Ghana should discuss ways of addressing security threats against the UN peacekeepers.

Muhammad A Muhith, Bangladesh’s permanent representative to the UN in New York, said accountability should be ensured for crimes committed against peacekeepers.

UN Under-Secretary-General for Management Strategy, Policy and Compliance Catherine Pollard, Bangladesh Police Additional Inspector General Kamrul Ahsan, Global Affairs Canada’s Director General of the Peace and Stabilisation Operations Ulric Shannon and Uruguay foreign ministry Director General for Political Affairs Luis Bermudez also spoke at the event.

Lacroix is scheduled to leave Dhaka today after wrapping up his three-day visit to Bangladesh.

Huge crowds swarm

FROM PAGE 12

Shortly after midday, pilgrims packed most of the tents, which contain two to three beds and are fitted with water and food.

Many were overcome by the experience as they fulfil a lifelong dream at the sites where Islam began.

Saudi officials say this year’s hajj – one of the five pillars of Islam – could be the biggest in history. After 2.5 million attended in 2019, numbers were capped in 2020, 2021 and 2022 because of the Covid pandemic.

Rejoinder, our reply

FROM PAGE 1

Procurement Technical Unit, additional secretary of the Ministry of Civil Aviation and Tourism (MoCAT), and a board member of Biman’s board were present. A litigator vetted the deal, said the rejoinder.

Biman discounted CAG’s allegation that having less than three bidders is a violation, saying that exceptions are allowed under the public procurement rules.

Biman also said that no information was kept hidden during the bidding process, and that since Biman’s board was involved in the whole process and there is no scope for duping the board.

It said that paying passenger service system (PSS) providers per passenger is internationally practiced and it is normal for those costs to inflate when passenger numbers go up. The bidders acquired the forecasted passenger numbers from Biman before making their financial offer, so there is no scope for the bidder to gain any extra payments.

Biman said that the GDS bid was judged separately by a team comprising of members from the ICT ministry and Buet, led by a joint secretary of MoCAT, and there is no chance of the bidder hiding

information.

It also mentioned that any fees paid to Sabre following their cutover date is what is owed to them.

Our Reply

The Daily Star has in hand all documents relevant in the process and verified the CAG’s report findings with the primary documents including the financial offer and the financial evaluation report submitted to the board.

This newspaper only reproduced the statistics from the CAG report that we independently verified from the primary documents, and the comparison shows that information was hidden in the financial evaluation report, or included in the contract without being presented in the financial evaluation report.

While fees following the cutover date is a normal phenomenon, The Daily Star’s report mentions delay penalties which come up to the exorbitant amount of \$40,000 for five days, without deciding who was at fault.

The Daily Star thanks Biman for listing in detail the senior officials present during the bid selections and maintains that the seniority of an official does not assure that oversights will not happen, as

documented by the CAG report.

While it is true that the PPR allows for three bidders under special circumstances, it sets very specific clauses including requiring the committee to reexamine and justify whether it is absolutely necessary to go ahead with the bid.

The Daily Star is in possession of the meeting minutes of the meetings held by the different committees pertaining to this matter and did not observe a reexamination being documented – if Biman furnishes this paper with documents proving so, we commit to standing corrected.

While it is heartening to know that Biman had provided the forecasted number of passengers to the bidder – as is obvious from bidder’s financial offer – it is also noticeable from the CAG’s calculation that the total price stated by Sabre only consists of a percentage of the forecasted.

We welcome Biman’s decision to form a committee to respond to the audit and hope that Biman shares the report with this paper too.

Since The Daily Star has reviewed the original documents used by the CAG for its audit observations, we stand by our report.

SUDAN CONFLICT
14 civilians killed in battle for Khartoum police HQ

AFP, Khartoum

At least 14 civilians have been killed in war-torn Sudan's capital as rival forces are locked in a key battle over control of the Khartoum police headquarters, activists said yesterday.

The paramilitary Rapid Support Forces (RSF), which since mid-April has been fighting Sudan's regular army, announced late Sunday a "victory in the battle for the police HQ".

"The headquarters is under our complete control... and we have seized a large number of vehicles, arms and munitions," the RSF said in a statement, noting the capture of pick-up trucks, armoured vehicles and tanks.

If the RSF, led by Mohamed Hamdan Daglo, maintain their hold on the strategic site, it "would have a major impact on the battle of Khartoum", a former army officer told AFP, requesting anonymity.

Nearly 2,800 people have been killed across Sudan since a power struggle between army chief Abdel Fattah al-Burhan and his former deputy Daglo spilled into war more than two months ago, according to the Armed Conflict Location and Event Data Project.



The actual death toll is expected to be much higher, with both forces failing to report casualties and many bodies left lying in the streets of Khartoum and in the western region of Darfur, where most of the violence has occurred.

The Khartoum police headquarters, on the southern edge of the city, gives the RSF "control of the southern entrance to the capital", the former officer said.

The presence of the paramilitaries there can also pose "a serious threat to the armoured corps headquarters" nearby, one of the army's most important strongholds in south Khartoum.

While army forces loyal to Burhan vow to recapture the police headquarters, video footage released by the RSF shows the paramilitaries have already seized vast amounts of arms and munitions.

An army source said RSF has lost "more than 400 men" in the battle for police headquarters. The paramilitaries have not provided any casualty figures. On Sunday, "14 civilians including two children were killed" in that area, according to a network of activists evacuating the wounded to the few hospitals still operating.



People attend a mass rally denouncing the US in Pyongyang, North Korea on Sunday in this photo released by North Korea's Korean Central News Agency (KCNA) yesterday. North Korea held mass rallies in Pyongyang where people shouted slogans vowing a "war of revenge" to destroy the US, as it marked the 73rd anniversary of the outbreak of the Korean War, state media reported yesterday.

PHOTO: REUTERS

TREATMENT OF MUSLIMS
Indian finance minister scoffs at Obama comment

REUTERS, New Delhi

India's finance minister has derided comments by former US President Barack Obama that Prime Minister Narendra Modi's government should protect the rights of minority Muslims, accusing Obama of being hypocritical.

During Modi's state visit to the US last week, Obama told CNN that the issue of the "protection of the Muslim minority in a majority-Hindu India" would be worth raising in Modi's meeting with US President Joe Biden.

Obama said that without such protection there was "a strong possibility that India at some point starts pulling apart".

Indian Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman said she was shocked that Obama has made such remarks when Modi was visiting the United States aiming to deepen relations.

"He was commenting on Indian Muslims ... having bombed Muslim-majority countries from Syria to Yemen ... during his presidency," Sitharaman told a press conference on Sunday.

"Why would anyone listen to all allegations from such people?"

The US State Department has raised concerns over treatment of Muslims and other religious minorities in India under Modi's party. The Indian government says it treats all citizens equally. Biden said he discussed human rights and other democratic values with Modi during their talks in the White House.

Working as normal despite mutiny

Says Wagner HQ; Lavrov says Russia is checking if Western spy agencies were involved in mutiny

AGENCIES

The headquarters of Russia's Wagner mercenary group, whose leader Yevgeny Prigozhin led a mutiny over the weekend that rattled President Vladimir Putin's rule, said yesterday it was working in "normal mode."

The statement from the office came as the fate of Wagner was uncertain after the rebellion and as Russia appeared to take a business-as-usual approach.

"Despite events that have taken place, the centre continues to work in normal mode in accordance to the law of the Russian Federation," the office, based in Russia's second city of Saint Petersburg, said.

It said Wagner has "worked for the future of Russia" and thanked its supporters, reports AFP.

Wagner's chief Prigozhin has not been seen since Saturday, but the Kremlin said he will be sent to neighbouring Belarus after a Minsk-brokered deal to halt his rebellion.

Russia's intelligence services are investigating whether Western spy agencies played a role in the aborted mutiny by armed Wagner mercenary fighters on Saturday, the TASS news agency quoted Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov as saying yesterday.



The group will continue operations in Mali and the Central African Republic, Lavrov said.

Wagner members "are working there as instructors. This work, of course, will continue," Lavrov said in an interview with RT, adding that the revolt would not affect Russia's ties with "partners and friends".

Lavrov said Europe and France in particular had "a b a n d o n e d" the two African countries, which had in turn asked Russia and Wagner to provide military instructors and "to ensure the security of their leaders".

Western powers believe the Wagner group is used to promote Russia's influence abroad and have accused the group of torture and exploiting natural resources.

Wagner, whose very existence Moscow denied until its Ukraine offensive, said it had "created opportunities for the (self) realisation of talented people from all over the country".

It said that on top of developing "domestic drones", it had also worked on "preparing information fighters and countering the information war".

Prigozhin is known to have led an infamous troll farm in Saint Petersburg.

Despite Putin calling the Wagner mutiny "treason" and warning of civil war,

some of the group's offices around Russia were still recruiting fighters, Russian media reported.

The TASS state news agency said Wagner recruitment reopened in Siberia's Novosibirsk and Tyumen.

"Recruitment is ongoing," TASS quoted a Wagner worker in Novosibirsk as saying.

In the Duma -- Russia's lower house of parliament -- however, lawmakers said the group could no longer recruit convicts.

Prigozhin had recruited thousands of Russian prisoners to fight in Ukraine, promising an amnesty upon their return if they survive.

"There was a time when (Wagner) could take those who were convicted and sign a contract with them," senior lawmaker Pavel Krashenninikov said, according to the Interfax news agency.

"Now the law says there is a different procedure, under which contracts can only be signed with the defence ministry," Mikhail Mishustin, who leads Putin's cabinet as his appointed prime minister, acknowledged yesterday that Russia had faced "a challenge to its stability", and called for public loyalty, reports Reuters.

"We need to act together, as one team, and maintain the unity of all forces, rallying around the president," he told a televised government meeting.

Russia's national Anti-Terrorism Committee said the situation in the country was stable. Moscow Mayor Sergei Sobyanin, who had told residents to stay indoors on Saturday as the mutinous fighters raced to within a few hundred kilometres of the capital, said he was cancelling a counter-terrorism security regime.

Chained Indians rescued from debt slavery: rights body

AFP, NEW DELHI

About a dozen shackled workers in India were rescued from "torture" in a chain gang digging wells for 12 hours a day without wages, a government rights body said yesterday. The case has shone new light on the long-outlawed practice of bonded labour, dubbed "debt slavery" by rights campaigners, in which debtors are forced to work to pay back borrowed cash. The reports of the 11 labourers from Maharashtra state emerged after one slipped his chains, told Maharashtra police about the use of "torture" and brought them to free the others on June 17, the NHRC said.

Montreal has worst air of any major city

AFP, Montreal

Forest fires in Canada left Montreal blanketed with smog on Sunday, giving it the worst air quality of any major city in the world, according to a pollution monitor. Quebec province's most populous city had 'unhealthy' air quality according to IQAir, as hundreds of wildfires burned across the country. Environment Canada issued smog warnings in several Quebec regions due to the fires, saying, "high concentrations of fine particulate matter are causing poor air quality and reduced visibilities," with conditions to persist until yesterday morning.

Russian air strikes kill 13 in Syria

AFP, Jisr Al Shughur

Russian air strikes killed at least 13 people in rebel-held northwest Syria on Sunday, the deadliest attack on the country this year, a war monitor said. At least nine civilians, including two children, were among the dead, with most killed at a fruit and vegetable market in Jisr al Shugur in the Idlib region. "These Russian strikes are the deadliest in Syria this year and amount to a massacre," said Rami Abdel Rahman, who heads the Britain-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights. Russian forces which back President Bashar al-Assad's regime were responding to rebel drone strikes over the past week that killed four civilians including two children, according to the Observatory. Saad Fato, 35, a labourer told AFP he helped efforts to try to rescue the wounded.

Energy sector CO2 emissions hit record in 2022

AFP, London

Global energy sector carbon dioxide emissions hit a record peak last year counter to Paris commitments, a key study warned yesterday, and highlighted the "worst ever" impacts of climate change. UK-based Energy Institute laid out the main findings of its Statistical Review of World Energy, conducted with consultancies Kearney and KPMG. "Carbon dioxide emissions from energy use, industrial processes, flaring and methane... continued to rise to a new high growing 0.8 percent in 2022," read the study.



Students look at a pile of seized illegal drugs during a destruction ceremony to mark the "International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking" in Yangon, Myanmar yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

Synthetic drugs boom fuels illicit markets: UN

AFP, Vienna

The cheap, easy, and fast production of synthetic drugs has radically transformed illicit drug markets around the world, with "lethal results", the United Nations warned Sunday.

While more people are battling drug addiction, criminals continue to exploit conflicts and global crises to expand drug production, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) said in its annual report.

"Fentanyl has drastically altered the opioid market in North America," the UNODC said in a statement accompanying the report.

In 2021 alone, the majority of about 90,000 opioid related overdose deaths in North America involved the synthetic opioid drug.

Moreover, "there are signs" that the war in Ukraine "could trigger an expansion of the manufacture and trafficking of synthetic drugs, given the existing know-how and the large markets... developing in the region", it said.

An urban asset going to waste

Spaces under Dhaka flyovers can be utilised so much better

In a city perennially struggling for space, it is totally unacceptable that huge chunks of area lie unutilised or wasted underneath its flyovers. According to a new study conducted by Brac University's Centre for Inclusive Architecture and Urbanism, the spaces beneath Dhaka's flyovers have been used improperly since they were opened to traffic due to a lack of planning, resulting in public health, environmental and socio-economic losses. The study examined 10 flyovers which have a total length of 105.22 kilometres and a total area of 207 acres beneath them. And a large portion of that area has been either grabbed or misused or simply discarded, despite its potential to be an urban asset with proper policy.

For example, underneath the Hanif and Moghbazar flyovers, you can see parking space, mosque, police box, temporary kitchen market, waste dumping area, and small shops. In some places, street children and homeless people are seen to be taking refuge, while some places are also used for the sale and consumption of illegal narcotics. Taking various factors into consideration, Brac researchers estimate the public health, environmental and socio-economic losses from such usage of space at Tk 21,000 crore annually. This is too big a number to be taken lightly. Other countries around the world – countries that don't even have the kind of land shortage issues that we do – are making much better use of such spaces. For example, in developed countries, these have been converted for community-oriented usage such as through playgrounds, urban agriculture, forestation, cycle lanes, swimming pools, gymnasiums, walkways, etc.

Flyovers are perceived as symbols of modernity that are aimed at easing traffic congestion and endorsing development. But it seems that our city planners are failing to take into consideration the contextual needs of the city's inhabitants, all the while claiming to promote a futuristic vision. With the population of Dhaka growing and the space shortage problem worsening, these areas could be used, among other civic purposes, for the upliftment of the weaker sections of society. Like France, we could be using them to properly house the homeless.

Dhaka's planners need to realise the huge opportunity they are wasting through their lack of vision and poor planning. They need to urgently draw up a plan that can best utilise these areas, particularly in a way that benefits local communities and the environment.

What's happening at Holy Family Hospital?

Ensure good governance to improve the services of this once-famous hospital

We are shocked to learn of the recent findings of the Transparency International Bangladesh (TIB) about the Holy Family Red Crescent Medical College Hospital in Dhaka. According to the corruption watchdog, the hospital has been plagued by corruption, irregularities and autocratic practices, due to which the quality of its services has significantly deteriorated. The TIB has particularly mentioned the name of the chairman of the Bangladesh Red Crescent Society (BDRCS) for such degradation, which is alarming.

Reportedly, this non-profit healthcare institution under BDRCS has been unable to admit patients as per its beds. Out of its 528 beds, only 300 on average remain occupied by patients. This means that the hospital's income has also declined significantly. What is most surprising is that it has employed three times more staffers than necessary, which has resulted in about 208 of them having no work to do. The TIB has found that these appointments were made based on political considerations. Irregularities have also been found in procurement and promotional practices. Overall, a serious lack of good governance in all aspects of its operations has brought the hospital to its current state.

Over the past few years, we have come to know of many public and private hospitals that have been operating without any kind of accountability and transparency. The most recent example of this is Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University (BSMMU), which reportedly recruited doctors and staff by bending the rules of the institution, while encouraging corruption. The services of many of these hospitals have also been questionable – the recent deaths of a mother and her newborn in a city hospital is a case in point. Unfortunately, although such anomalies are often reported in the media, we hardly see any action from the authorities.

To improve the quality of services at the Holy Family Hospital, the authorities concerned must check the corruption and irregularities plaguing it. They must ensure it has a structured workforce, is transparent in its operations, and runs without political interference. The interests of patients must be prioritised.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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Our healthcare system needs an overhaul

Some recent incidents in private hospitals in Bangladesh have raised questions about our doctors' competency. Are our doctors playing the role that they are supposed to? The tragic deaths of Mahbuba Akter Akhi and her newborn at the Central Hospital in Dhaka has shaken the nation to the core. If a healthy pregnant woman has to die at a renowned city hospital during childbirth, what can we expect from other hospitals at the district and upazila levels? These deaths are a reminder that our health sector needs a complete overhaul.

A reader
Dhaka

Attaining zero target on border killing



ON THE SHORES OF (IN)JUSTICE

Dr CR Abrar
is an academic with an interest
in human rights issues.

CR ABRAR

Killing of civilians along the Bangladesh-India border by India's Border Security Force (BSF) has plagued the bilateral relations between the two countries for decades. Thus far, the occasional reiteration of the Indian commitment to bring the casualty figure to zero has yielded a marginal result. Needless to say, periodic media reports on border killings and the Indian authorities' reticence about instituting credible investigation into the incidents and actions against the perpetrators have caused frustration among a large section of Bangladeshis.

Last week, the director-general (DG)-level border coordination conference between the BSF and Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB) was concluded in New Delhi. The principal thrust of this conference was to expedite and give more momentum to developmental and infrastructure activities to boost trade and bilateral relations between the two countries. The two forces agreed to curb border crimes effectively through more simultaneous coordinated night patrols in vulnerable regions and real-time sharing of information.

On the issue of "violent incidents" (euphemism for killing) along the border and to ensure that the number of such incidents was curbed, both sides agreed "to work jointly and engage professionally, enhance joint patrolling, and vigilance, especially during late hours of the night to early morning, intensify public awareness programmes, share real-time information and (make) all-out efforts to bring these criminals to justice."

Speaking on the killing incidents at the border, the BSF DG said his force "does not discriminate amongst criminals. So, when these kinds of incidents happen, usually it is taken as a last resort when the life of a BSF personnel on duty is threatened." He asserted that BSF assiduously followed the mandatory policy of resorting to non-lethal weapons. He, however, acknowledged that "in a couple of incidents, the use of force by the BSF personnel was probably more than it was necessary. So, these individuals were identified and the proceedings as per (the) BSF Act are going on." In his statement, the BSF commander stated that the DGs agreed that sometimes there are misunderstandings or misinformation among ground level forces. He hoped by working together the "killing incidents in the bordering area will be reduced."

At the outset of the conference, the BGB DG made it clear that the issue of border killing would be his top priority.



The BSF chief's claim that shoot-outs at the Bangladesh-India border take place for self-defence is simply self-serving.

FILE PHOTO: ARUPPARIA/WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

However, from the above narrative on the outcome of the conference, it is clear that his Indian counterpart essentially hung on to the business-as-usual approach pursued by his predecessors. No one can underestimate the value of cooperation and collaboration between the border forces of neighbouring countries, and the need for simultaneous coordinated night patrols in vulnerable regions and real-time sharing of information, intensified public awareness programmes and sharing of real-time information. However a close reading of the BSF statement brings to fore several important elements of the Indian approach.

Firstly, the formulation presents the victims of BSF shoot-outs as "criminals." It begs the question whether the BSF as an institution can be the plaintiff, judge, jury and executioner of those deemed by the agency as criminals. Should the determination of criminals not be left to the judicial authorities of the country concerned, following due procedure?

Secondly, BSF's claim that it does not discriminate (on grounds of nationality) in shooting down criminals at the border triggers the need for securing the number of Indian nationals who fell victims to such killings over the past 12 years against more than 1,200 Bangladeshis who lost their lives.

Thirdly, the BSF justifies the killing of suspected smugglers by claiming that they try to evade arrest. Suspicion of a crime or evasion of arrest cannot alone justify the use of lethal force.

resort when the life of a BSF personnel on duty is threatened." The hollowness of this argument is well-established. In all 100 cases covered by the HRW and Odhikar study, "the alleged criminals were either unarmed or armed with only sickles, sticks, and knives, which suggest that in shooting victims, the border guards are likely to have used excessive force... In others, injuries indicate the person was shot at close range, with witnesses often alleging that the person was tortured and killed in BSF custody." The report further adds that in none of the cases "did the BSF show it had recovered lethal weapons or explosives that could pose an imminent threat of death or serious injury that might justify killings (in self-defence)." Therefore, the claim that shoot-outs take place for self-defence is simply self-serving.

Fourthly, the BSF DG's statement that "on a couple of incidents, the use of force by the BSF personnel was probably more than it was necessary" is a welcome acknowledgement of the reality. However, in contrast to the "couple of incidents" he cited, Odhikar documentation reveals that as many as 1,276 Bangladeshi lives were lost and 1,183 more were injured by BSF firing along the Bangladesh-India border between 2010 and March 2023.

Fifthly, while the onus of border killing squarely rests on the BSF for its failure to attain zero target set more than a decade ago, the narrative churned out by the agency appears to hold both Bangladesh and India

responsible for "misunderstandings and misinformation" that cause "such violence." In the future rounds of the border conference, there is a strong case for Bangladesh to remind the Indian authorities of the zero target that the country has committed to achieve. Also, there is little scope for complacency at the mere "reduction" in the number of killings.

Finally, the DG's assurance that procedures are in place in India for errant BSF personnel to be held to account for their misdeeds fails to gain traction among border scholars and rights activists. The charade conducted in the name of administrative proceedings by the force and the blatant impunity that was accorded to the killers of Bangladeshi teenager Felani leaves little room to trust such a process.

It is worthwhile to juxtapose the experiences of the Indian authorities' border policy along the Bangladesh-India border with those along the India-Pakistan and India-Nepal borders. Unlike the experiences of the other two borders where BSF shoot-outs are rare, if not non-existent, Bangladeshis succumbing to BSF bullets is almost a regular phenomenon. In March 2017, the killing of a Nepalese citizen over a local dispute in a rare shooting at the border prompted a series of anti-India protests in Nepal. The scale of the protest led to India's national security adviser calling up the Nepal prime minister to condole the victim's death and extend assurance that the Indian authorities had initiated a probe into the killing. This leads to the questions why, as a neighbour, we have been taken for granted and being subjected to such brutality and ignominy for decades by India, and why as a nation we have failed to raise our collective voice when our fellow citizens are extrajudicially killed and the perpetrators are not held to account.

Is the age limit of 30 years a rational policy?



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SHAHIDA PERVIN

Young people in Bangladesh have been demanding the revision of a few public recruitment policies for some time now. Their demand for revising the quota policy was met, and they are currently striving to raise the eligibility age ceiling from 30 to 35 years. But, it is unfortunate that revising a policy requires chaos rather than research.

About 90 percent of Bangladesh's employment is in the informal sector, which provides almost no stable earnings and economic security. In the remaining 10 percent, which consists of the formal private and public sectors, a large segment of private sector jobs does not provide decent working conditions, earnings, and social security. Public sector jobs ensure basic benefits, which makes individuals want them more. Preferences for public sector jobs intensified in recent times, particularly after the pay scale was doubled in 2015.

The public sector covers less than five percent of total employment in Bangladesh and is unable to absorb a large pool of interested candidates.

Instead, it may affect human capital development by diverting investment, prolonging unemployment by keeping candidates engaged in the preparation process, and crowd out private sectors in getting efficient human resources. To minimise these harmful effects, the government applies an age ceiling for recruitment, which was revised from 27 to 30 years in 1991.

Beyond the eligible age, obtaining jobs in other sectors would not be easy if the public sector job preparation could not be utilised for other sectors. Human capital or brain gain may result from the preparation for public service exams if said preparation is useful in obtaining a non-government job as well. This is supported by some literature on international migration that indicates that migrant-sending countries enjoy brain gain rather than brain drain, because investment takes place on human resources in the hope of migration, but not all of those who prepare can emigrate, and some are left in their home countries with higher

capabilities.

A survey indicates some gains from public sector preparation: about 32 percent of 105 respondents who were preparing or had prepared for government jobs at the time of the survey found the preparation "very" or "extremely" useful for other jobs, while the rest of the respondents found it somewhat useful (40 percent) or not useful at all (28 percent).

My review of the preparation materials for public service in Bangladesh does not indicate much value addition. Candidates generally study Bangla and English language and literature, general knowledge of Bangladesh and global affairs, and general science for government job preparation. Even if studying these materials generates some human capital gain, the gain appears to be trivial compared to the high cost of preparation.

With the goal of getting attractive government jobs, jobseekers are likely to delay searching for and taking up other opportunities, repeatedly try for public sector jobs until they become indelible, and incur substantial direct and indirect costs related to the preparation. In the survey, the median number of exam attempts was 13 for a candidate, and the median number of hours spent was 1,116. The time spent on preparation is equivalent to 28 work weeks if we consider full-time work as 40 hours in a week. The median of total monetary costs is close to that of the monthly income for those who had studied for

government jobs in the past and about four times the median monthly income for those who were currently preparing.

The survey findings reinforce the notion that the lure of government employment leads people to prepare for jobs they may not get. The demand side of the labour market gets affected by this since job preparation keeps people from proactively taking on entrepreneurial roles and generating employment.

When I spoke to people at different professional forums, some of them were surprised to learn that such an age restriction policy exists. Some of them asked me about what happens when a woman's eligibility expires due to giving birth or when someone is sick. These serious issues are not considered in our public sector recruitment process.

To avoid the negative consequences of seeking government jobs, in the short run, a restriction on the number of times a candidate can apply would be preferable to the age ceiling, considering other factors such as the variation of the number of years for university graduation, discrimination against older candidates, and special conditions such as sickness and pregnancy. In the long run, achieving optimum wages and other benefits for the entire labour market, keeping no public vs private segmentation, would be a more sustainable and efficient approach to create a vibrant economy and ensure the quality of work and life for all.



ILLUSTRATION: BIPLOB CHAKROBORTY

When political humour lands in troubled waters



Ramisa Rob is a journalist at The Daily Star.

RAMISA ROB

Political humour, in the form of satires and parody, in writing, cartoons and network shows, has existed since politics itself but has also historically received a lot of pushback. The craft of using humour, exaggerations and irony to lampoon and criticise cultural mores, public figures, governance, etc functions as a fabled bellwether for positive change. It has always been a tricky form of journalism and activism for obvious reasons: it pokes the powerful. The “job” of the craft is to discomfit the powers that be, but it has landed in troubled waters – in legal cases all over the world – when it has done the job and rubbed the powerful the wrong way. But every time political humour comes under attack, so does the framework of freedom of speech and the distinct sensitivities of who can mock what.

The US is a good case study to understand the legal rights of humour in public discourse. A landmark decision 60 years ago set the precedent to protect satires and parodies as free speech. The Supreme Court of the United States passed a landmark ruling in 1964, *New York Times* vs Sullivan, which deterred the powerful from using defamation lawsuits to intimidate and silence public discourse. The ruling essentially upheld that the First Amendment – freedom of speech – is more important than replenishing the reputation of public figures, and that “debate on public issues should be inhibited, robust, and wide-open.”

In 1988, another landmark case, *Hustler Magazine* vs Falwell, the court evoked the Sullivan decision and sided with the magazine that published a parody advertisement portraying a nationally known minister. The court upheld that parodies of public figures, even those intending to cause emotional distress, are protected by the First Amendment.

Recently, the Sullivan decision received numerous bids for overruling as bids for silencing non-Republican commentary rose in the US. Former President Donald Trump – who did not attend his goodbye dinner where media elites and comedians roast the president and is yet to admit he lost a fair election – publicly attacked the Sullivan decision and sued CNN for defamation seeking \$475 million. As recent as February 2023, Florida state legislator Alex Andrade filed a bill to effectively overturn Sullivan. The Republican politicians who have been against the legal protection of political jokes are, unsurprisingly, ones who have supported various conservative decisions in the US. Logically, more often than not,

it is corrupt governments and authoritarian nations who have issues with political humour, because they don't want to be called out; they want to dictate without some wisecrack nudging their official authority. The relationship between authoritarianism and political satirists and comedians have a lengthy history of incompatibility.

Take Vladimir Putin, for example, who banned the makers of South Park figurines, Lego characters and teddy bears which were the centre of the toys-only, humour-driven anti-Putin protest in Siberia. After that, Putin imposed a ban on toy protests. And even in 2021, Idrak Mirzalizade,

In the 1940s, underground humour inspired resistance movements in Nazi-occupied territories. In today's age, there's a reason why there's a well-researched phenomena called the “Daily Show effect.” People, particularly young people, take more interest in politics when it comes with a punch, rather than straight-faced journalism. And that is why political jokes pose the most formidable threat to those who don't want their power shaken, their public duties questioned.

a Moscow-based Azerbaijani comedian, was sent to prison for 10 days and banned from Russia for life after pro-government media outlets distorted the harmless joke he made about discrimination against non-Russians – during his appearance on popular TV show *Razgony* – to one that incites hatred.

Another recent and popular example is Hasan Minhaj's Saudi Arabia episode on his show *Patriot Act* in 2019, where he mocked Prince Mohammed bin Salman's effort to cast himself as a moderniser, and called him out for the murder of the columnist Jamal Khashoggi and the Saudi bombing campaign in Yemen. Saudi Arabia, where comedians and journalists face pervasive censorship, invoked a vague cybercrime law to request Netflix to take the episode down.

(And Netflix did, in a scrutinised market decision, that legitimised Saudi's censorship.)

The point is, of course, Saudi Arabia had a problem with Minhaj's episode. Comedy is no laughing matter for repressive regimes. Arab countries have laws that criminalise offences to heads of state, the army, public institutions, for disavowing national and religious values. In these nations, journalists and entertainers, when taking a jab at the powerful, have historically been punished for broad crimes like tarnishing the country's reputation, offending public morals, inciting unrest or shaking the foundations of national security. In Egypt, widely popular comedian Bassem Youssef – inspired by Jon Stewart – was harassed, taken to court for mocking the Islamist President Mohamed Morsi, and is now in exile.

More examples are being painted now, with authoritarian governments on the rise; journalists and comedians in Turkey, India and so on have recently faced lawsuits. Even Rahul Gandhi, the vocal opposition leader in India, was hit with a harsh sentence in a defamation case for a joke he made years ago. Yet, the whole point of political humour is to prick where it hits, to make us laugh at our own foibles and weaknesses. In journalistic practices, when directed at individuals in power, satire's purpose constitutes the very yardstick of journalism: to make the afflicted comfortable and the comfortable afflicted.

And historically, humour as a political tool has worked to electrify anti-state public sentiments, which perhaps is all the more reason for authoritarian governments to attack it. In Syria, during the civil war that has taken 70,000 lives, satirical graffiti mocking President Bashar Assad exhilarated street protests. Even in the 1940s, underground humour inspired resistance movements in Nazi-occupied territories. In today's age, there's a reason why there's a well-researched phenomena called the “Daily Show effect.” People, particularly young people, take more interest in politics when it comes with a punch, rather than straight-faced journalism. And that is why political jokes pose the most formidable threat to those who don't want their power shaken, their public duties questioned.

But humour is necessary for the political arena itself. It builds resilience through absurdity; it takes a sense of security and comfort in our skin to accept reality checks ensconced in leg pull without taking offence. We don't always like it when people make fun of what we do or how we are. And that's fair and human. But as public figures, and even as journalists, when you do your work for the public, you sign up for public criticism, for a quip and a roast now and then. When we can endure the targeted humour – even the pettiest of jokes – it signals a more ethereal power, reverberating the hush of dignity and establishing our thick skin as individuals and as a society.

Steps the government should take for Eid travellers



Mozammel Hoque Chowdhury is secretary general at Bangladesh Jatri Kalyan Samity.

MOZAMMEL HOQUE CHOWDHURY

The upcoming national election means that the travelling woes for homeward bound people this Eid-ul-Azha will be tied to the government's image issue. Therefore, the government is expected to take the necessary steps to reduce the passengers' sufferings and the fare-related anarchy that is usually rampant in our transport sector during Eid rush.

According to a survey by the Bangladesh Jatri Kalyan Samity (BJKS), more than 11 million people from Dhaka, Narayanganj, Munshiganj, Gazipur and the nearby districts will travel to different parts of the country this Eid. In addition, almost four million people are expected to travel between different districts. Even though Eid travels started from June 22, the main travelling flow is expected to begin on June 26, after salaries and bonuses are disbursed to jobholders. On June 26-27, it's expected that 3-3.5 million people on average will leave the capital every day. The government's decision of close garments and other factories for the holidays in stages was easier to

pressure from public transport, it will increase the risk of road accidents and loss of lives.

People in the northern regions of the country may suffer the most during Eid travels this year. People travelling along the road between Dhaka airport and Gazipur, up to the other side of the Bangabandhu Bridge, may have to suffer quite a lot due to cattle-carrying trucks and roadside cattle markets, which will lead to terrible traffic at various exit points and leave the travellers to wait hours on end trying to leave the capital. It is imperative that all the pavements and roads in the capital be cleared of hawkers, illegal parking and cattle markets. Smaller vehicles such as rickshaws, battery-run rickshaws, and easy bikes should be barred from highways.

Having observed the trends in Eid travelling over the last few years, we have seen different wings of the police work tirelessly to keep the roads and highways flowing smoothly. But some dishonest members of the law enforcement agencies and extortion

vehicles being deployed with a fresh coat of paint to make them look new. Unfit water vehicles are repaired in the dockyards. Some dishonest transport owners find a way to cheat the system and run these vehicles during Eid travels to carry both passengers and cargo. When these vehicles get into accidents, investigation shows that they do not have any fitness clearances, the drivers don't have licences, or there are no route permits.

Even on the waterways, it is a common sight that vehicles without enough buoys, lamps, and other life-saving equipment are handed over to unskilled boatmen with the responsibility of transporting thousands of passengers. There has been a lack of skilled drivers on the roads as well. As a result, during the Eid seasons, drivers are often required to undertake shifts of 10, 15 or even 20 hours non-stop. Unskilled drivers driving unfit vehicles results in the deaths of hundreds of passengers during Eid every year. According to observations made by the BJKS, during Eid-ul-Azha in 2022, 398 people died and 774 were injured in 319 road accidents.

Online train tickets have resulted in railway passengers being placed in a bit of a hassle this Eid. As in the past, initiatives to help people may be hindered by black marketers and syndicates of dishonest railway employees. Due to 100 percent of the tickets being available online, a large section of marginalised people will remain deprived of railway services.



More than 11 million people from Dhaka, Narayanganj, Munshiganj, Gazipur and nearby districts will travel to different parts of the country this Eid. PHOTO: ABU BAKAR SIDDIQUE

implement during Eid-ul-Fitr than it will be for Eid-ul-Azha.

Our public transportation system has the capacity to carry 800,000 to a million passengers by road and waterways, and another 120,000 via railway. However, if more passengers are loaded than the available capacity, it results in terrible suffering for the general public. In certain routes, there are 8-10 times more passengers than the capacity for public transportation that is available. These routes are mired by traffic and human congestion.

The major challenges in this year's Eid travels are going to be traffic jams, road accidents, slow pace of toll collection, low velocity of cattle-carrying vehicles, and cattle markets and pop-up markets on the roadside. Hence, if the smooth flow of public transportation is hindered, then we might see hellish conditions on the roads this Eid.

Our public transportation sector has been going through a terrible crisis for many years. Like Eid-ul-Fitr, 800,000 to a million bikers may carry almost 1.6 million passengers by motorcycle to their destinations this Eid. While this may alleviate some

by a few transport leaders often rub the sheen off the hard work of many. Besides, the practice of analogue toll collection in today's “Digital Bangladesh” creates choke points at toll collection booths, creating horrific tailbacks, which often get as long as 10-20 kilometres. These are easily fixable problems that merely require the relevant authorities to be willing to find solutions.

There are some dishonest transport owners and drivers who leverage the excessive pressure of passengers and transportation crisis to make extra profits. The weakness of government regulatory agencies, with the “endorsement” of some law enforcement members, allows for this to happen. Some symbolic measures are taken against them in the form of mobile courts, but that does not do much in preventing the collection of excessive fares. Thus, in many cases, there may be attempts to charge double of triple the amount of regular fare from passengers during Eid. To establish the rule of law and to help the general public, tough measures need to be taken to stop the collection of extra fares during Eid travels.

Every year during Eid, we see unfit

Taking this matter into consideration, it is important that necessary measures are eventually taken to include marginalised people into the public transport services provided by the state.

Every year during Eid, we see travel agencies hoard tickets for internal flight routes and sell them to passengers at hiked prices. The same has been happening this year. During Eid, between 100,000 and 200,000 passengers travel by air. For the benefit of these passengers, the director of the national consumer rights protection and district administrations should be conducting mobile court drives.

With the rising prices of commodities and an unemployment crisis, Eid travellers this year will be massively affected by hijackers and commen. These incidents are enough to ruin Eid celebrations for anyone. Thus, it is important for law enforcement members to be on alert at bus and train stations and river ports. Steps should be taken to stop robberies and theft on the highways as well.

Translated from Bangla by Azmin Azran.

CROSSWORD BY THOMAS JOSEPH

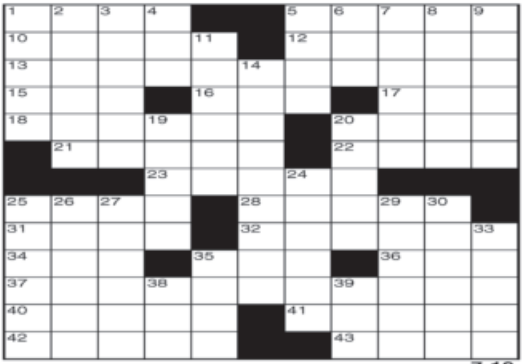
ACROSS

- 1 Canceled
- 5 Honolulu hello
- 10 Eat away
- 12 Trig functions
- 13 Mill powerers
- 15 Seriesending abbr.
- 16 Singer Charles
- 17 Tiny
- 18 Prepare, as leftovers
- 20 Gasp for air
- 21 “Divine Comedy” writer
- 22 Looks over
- 23 Was bold
- 25 Dorothy's dog
- 28 Pop
- 31 “There ought to be —”
- 32 Steamy

- 34 Passport, license, etc.
- 35 Commotion
- 36 Greek vowel
- 37 Diving and kayaking, e.g.
- 40 Deal maker
- 41 Red as —
- 42 Bookish group
- 43 Ticked off

- 9 Useful skills
- 11 Book goofs
- 14 Slosly sleep spots
- 19 Supply with funds
- 20 Director Almodovar
- 24 Moon of Jupiter
- 25 Asian island
- 26 Geriatrics topic
- 27 Winery worker
- 29 Sound system
- 30 Affected laugh
- 33 Social group
- 35 Fine study
- 38 Close
- 39 Dict. label on an old word

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SUNDAY'S ANSWERS



What to pack when commuting on a bicycle to class

Starting off, the one thing you should always keep, regardless of wherever you go with your bicycle, is a helmet. Considering how reckless some drivers are on the road, and the sheer chaos that ensues during rush hour, the helmet is an absolute must for all cyclists.

AZNEEF CHOWDHURY

Commuting with a bicycle to classes has become a viable alternative for many students. Travelling with a bicycle, however, is not as simple as getting on and pedalling. To ensure you get the best possible experience, and to make cycling a convenient means of travelling to your class, you should pack a few things before heading out with your bicycle.

Starting off, the one thing you should always keep, regardless of wherever you go with your bicycle, is a helmet. Considering how reckless some drivers are on the road, and the sheer chaos that ensues during rush hour, the helmet is an absolute must for all cyclists. You can buy one from your nearest bicycle store or order online. They usually go for around BDT 700 and around BDT 1,000 for higher quality ones.

The next thing that you should always keep with you is a water bottle. Most of the time, classes are scheduled

during the morning or the afternoon. Hence, the bulk of our travelling is likely to be around that time. Heatstroke is a very real problem that we risk facing when going outside, especially when doing something that requires physical effort like cycling. Consider fitting a water bottle holder on your bicycle's chassis as well, which makes carrying a heavy bottle less of a nuisance.

If your school or university is further away from urban centres, you should also carry a tube repair kit with you. Bangladeshi roads are often riddled with debris and sharp objects, and having your tube punctured away from the city may mean that there is no handy bicycle repair shop nearby to fix it, which can be problematic if you're short

on time or haven't travelled far enough to complete the journey on foot. With a tube repair kit, you can fix a leaked tube

on the spot and continue with your commute to the campus. The kit, which can be used multiple times, costs around BDT 150.

The final thing that you should get is a bicycle mirror, which sits on your handlebar and is an incredibly helpful tool to have when switching lanes or

crossing a road. Smaller-sized ones go for around BDT 140 a pair. If you're travelling at night, you should also get reflective stickers, or alternatively, a rear light to alert incoming drivers that there's a cyclist on the road.

There are some other optional extras which you may look into for the sake of convenience, such as a top tube bag, which provides you extra storage to keep things right on your chassis, as well as an LED headlight, which can be convenient to have if you're travelling at night on roads that have no streetlights.

If you're looking to commute to your classes with a bicycle, you should definitely carry the aforementioned things with you. That way, you'll save yourself a lot of time and frustration, and have a good and safe cycling experience.

Azneef keeps switching from one incomplete task to another. Remind him to finish his work at itsazneefchowdhury@gmail.com



Rural Road Safety Awareness Campaign

Practice changes among students in using roads

The campaign focuses on school students along with teachers, parents, members of school management committees, and local dignitaries.

MD. KAMRUL ISLAM

Rural Connectivity Improvement Project (RCIP) of Local Government Engineering Department (LGED) has undertaken a campaign to make students aware of using roads to reduce road fatalities.

Education on road safety is crucial for all as road accidents have become severe in Bangladesh. Bangladesh is one of the most accident-prone countries in the world where 60 percent of road accidents victims are pedestrians. Lack of awareness from the pedestrians' side in using roads is one of the major causes of accidents.

The 5E's are vital for road safety – Engineering, Enforcement, Education, Encouragement and Evaluation. Moreover, safe roads for commuters, safe vehicles, and safe speed management are also addressed as major aspects for ensuring public safety. Under the purview of Local



Upazila of Madaripur district. More than 1,000 students, teachers, parents, and members of school management committees attended the road safety awareness campaign.

"We learned traffic rules that will help to stay safe while walking on roads. We learned to look right then left and right again and if there is no vehicle near, we can cross the road quickly," said Habiba Khatun, a student of class nine at Aghore Maloncha High School, Kahaloo upazila, Bogura.

Monami Akther, a student of class five of Satirpara GPS, Bijoyagar upazila, Brahmanbaria district said, "I was not aware of traffic rules; now, I'm quite knowledgeable."

"Following the campaign, I witnessed changes among students to follow traffic rules while walking on roads," said Habibur Rahman Bhuyan, Head Teacher of Satirpara Government Primary School.

The campaign started in October 2022 and will continue till June 2024. LGED has prioritised road safety issues to incorporate engineering measures in road design and simultaneously implementing rural road safety awareness

campaign to raise awareness among road users. It is supported by the Government of Bangladesh and Asian Development Bank.

After the campaign, 90 percent of students were able to recall messages successfully.

Around 18 key messages were disseminated during the campaign, including following traffic signs, rules of walking on the roads, walking in line, not playing on the roads, using helmets while riding bicycle, rules of crossing roads, different traffic signs, not racing on the roads, not running suddenly on roads, wearing bright dress while walking on roads in night and not using the phone while walking on roads.

The messages were developed in a simple manner with illustrations for better communication and circulating through festoons, flyers, and video shows. At the end of the campaign, participants took an oath to comply with road safety rules.

The writer is Project Director, Rural Connectivity Improvement Project (RCIP) of the Local Government Engineering Department (LGED).

Why daycares are important for working parents

NUZHAT HAYAT KHAN

For working parents, especially in nuclear families, every morning is a hustle. Juggling through the responsibilities of a job and their children can be extremely challenging.

According to a survey report by the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS), female participation in Bangladesh's labour force has increased to 42.68 percent in 2022, up from 36.3 percent five years ago. As more mothers are entering the workforce, the number of two-parent households where both parents work full-time is increasing as well. Under such circumstances, many parents have begun leveraging the convenience of daycare centres to maintain a work-life balance.

Daycare centres are facilities that provide a safe and secure environment for young children while their parents are at work. With the help of trained staff members, these facilities offer a range of activities that promote the development of cognitive, social, emotional, and physical skills in children.

Daycare centres can also be an excellent opportunity for parents to work on early child development with extra help. For instance, these centres provide children with socialisation opportunities, which is essential for their overall development. Children learn how to interact with other children and adults, which helps them develop their communication and social skills.

Simultaneously, the centres provide early childhood education, which is crucial for their overall development. Children learn to read, write, and develop other cognitive skills while getting prepared for primary school. Moreover, daycare centres provide a nurturing and supportive environment for children. The staff at daycare centres are trained to provide care and education for children in a way that promotes their overall well-being. Besides, they provide emotional support for children, which is vital for their mental health and development.

Despite the growing need, the number of quality daycare centres is still relatively low in the country.



As per section 94 (12) of Bangladesh Labor Law 2006, every establishment having more than 40 female workers or more must provide and maintain a suitable room for the use of children under the age of six years. Although the law exists, daycare centres or children-friendly rooms at workplaces and educational institutions are very low. Now more than ever, the need for good quality daycare centres with the required facilities has become necessary.

In recent years, several new daycare centres have emerged in the country. These centres feature modern facilities such as air-conditioned rooms, age-appropriate learning tools, digital and smart audio-visual equipment, and an array of interactive indoor and outdoor activities, including access to libraries, computer labs, and Montessori labs. DPS STS School Dhaka is one example of such a school offering daycare facilities, that also offer counselling sessions for new parents, transport services, a comprehensive curriculum, and other meaningful activities, thereby redefining childcare in Bangladesh.

Needless to say, daycare centres play a crucial role in providing safe and reliable care for young children while their parents work. By providing childcare facilities in daycare centres, we can ensure that children receive proper care and education, which would contribute to their overall well-being and development. Most importantly, through good quality daycare centres, parents will definitely be able to manage their household, workplace, and life in general with more ease.

Nuzhat Hayat Khan is a Communications Professional.



Government Engineering Department's (LGED) mandate, 2 E's, i.e. engineering and education, are largely related to road safety.

The campaign focuses on school students along with teachers, parents, members of school management committees, and local dignitaries. By this time, the campaign has been implemented in 4 schools located at Kahaloo Upazila of Bogura, Bijoyagar Upazila of Brahmanbaria, Chandanaish Upazila of Chattogram, and Sadar



Morsalin ‘here to stay’

SPORTS REPORTER FROM BENGALURU

Bangladesh's attacking midfielder Sheikh Morsalin is having the time of his life after getting his maiden international goal in a 3-1 triumph over the Maldives in the ongoing SAFF Championship in India on Monday.

The 17-year-old's goal wrapped up a win for his side and, after achieving his dream of making it to the national team, the teenager said he would establish himself as a mainstay after many drew parallels between his abilities and a long forgotten prospect, Hemanta Vincent Biswas.

"I have come here to stay. I am not getting lost. If you all pray for me. I will stay here," Morsalin told The Daily Star after the match.

Morsalin came on as a substitute for Javier Cabrera's side and found the net with flair in stoppage time to mark an uplifting victory for Bangladesh after a brave resistance against Lebanon in their opening fixture came to a suicidal end.

The attacking midfielder came off the right flank and faked a shot before cutting the ball back onto his weaker left foot and dispatching a low finish to the near post.

It was a refreshing scene to witness such masterful trickery from a 17-year-old playing in only his third international match. His impressive displays are of more interest since he was not even initially included in Cabrera's 35 member



Bangladesh players were back in training yesterday at the Bhaichung Bhutia Football Stadium, a day after beating Maldives in their crucial SAFF Championship fixture. The men in red and green will take on Bhutan in the last group fixture tomorrow.

PHOTO: BFF

Tariq likely to miss Bhutan match

SPORTS REPORTER FROM BENGALURU

Tariq Kazi was the centre of celebration of Bangladesh football team as the hotel staff, most of them from West Bengal, prepared a cake to celebrate Bangladesh's win over Maldives in SAFF Championship on Sunday night.

Tariq, who sustained an injury on left shin after giving Bangladesh a 2-1 lead, cut the cake amid huge cheer, but the centre-back had to spend most of the following day on bed and walked on a pair of crutches.

Though Rakib Hossain, who had also left the pitch with a cramp, attended the recovery session with the team at the Hindustan Aeronautical Ltd Sports Club ground, Tariq missed training and is likely to miss the team's last group match against Bhutan.

"We did not find any fracture on his shin and there is no pain, just a bit of swelling. He can't walk and the physio gave him a two day rest. He will go through a test tomorrow [Tuesday]. I think he is likely to miss the match against Bhutan even though he wants to play," informed team manager Amer Khan.



"I don't know what's happening on social media as I don't follow social media. I have nothing to say about it."

Attacking midfielder
SHEIKH MORSALIN

preliminary squad for the SAFF Championship. He only found a place after striker Matin Mia was ruled out with injury.

Morsalin, who made his Bangladesh Premier League debut in June 2022, drew national attention when he netted a long range strike against his parent club Bashundhara Kings while on loan with Mohammedan.

Since then, he has built a reputation when it comes to taking shots from outside the box, a trait that he said comes to him naturally.

"I have developed this skill since childhood and have kept honing it every day in training. I also tried it today [Sunday] from outside the box, but unfortunately I drove it straight to the goalkeeper," he said after the match.

After an impressive loan spell at Mohammedan in the 2021-22 season which saw him become a starter for the Black and Whites at the age of 16, Morsalin came back to his parent club the following season and made seven appearances for the league champions.

He netted his first goal for Kings in a 6-4 win over Sheikh Russel, following it up with two assists in the next match against Mohammedan to cap off an impressive season. He believed that the impressive displays in those two contests helped catapult him into the limelight and get his national call up.

"I think I was picked after my performances in the last two-three matches, which I think was the plus point for me because I performed really well in those matches," Morsalin said. "I think I could not fully satisfy my coach [Oscar Bruzon] during the place-deciding Federation Cup match against Sheikh Russel, but the coach gave me another chance in the league against the same opponents and I availed the opportunity," Morsalin revealed to The Daily Star earlier this month.

‘Freedom to move’ SPARKS transformation

ANISUR RAHMAN FROM BENGALURU

Bangladesh had faced harsh criticism after poor performances in twin friendlies against an amateur-heavy Seychelles team in March and that negativity continued following a dismal performance against Cambodia in a friendly in June.

Interestingly, the criticism came despite the men in red and green posting two victories. They defeated Seychelles 1-0 before losing by the same scoreline and then beat Cambodia 1-0. But even in victory, Javier Cabrera's team could hardly hold on to the ball, making erratic passes or taking loose touches to cede possession.

Playing a possession-based game appeared a pipe dream given the showings, despite the fact that Cabrera's charges had shown signs of improvement and their fighting character in the AFC Asian Cup Qualifiers in Malaysia last year.

That attitude had gone missing for Bangladesh's next five matches until the team started showing those characteristics afresh in the ongoing SAFF Championship.

Speaking about what made the transformation possible, captain Jamal Bhuiyan said: "We worked on those areas (build-up, attack, maintaining possession) and fine-tuned those things. The players also discussed

which style would be suitable for us before sharing it with the coach. We believe the players will get tired if we always play on the counter-attack," said Jamal, who is playing in his fifth SAFF Championship.

"The coach also wants possession and a build-up game, but he prefers counter-attacking football. But we expressed our desire to the coach, believing we would get more chances if we play a possession-based game. And we are doing that now," Jamal continued.

"If you compare our recent performance to the matches against Seychelles, we are more flexible than we were in those games because we had been static in our own positions then. We could not move from our position as per the directives. But this time around, we were given more freedom to move to other places. That's why Bishwanath Ghosh went up front to help Sheikh Morsalin score the third goal."

Goalkeeper Anisur Rahman Zico echoed Jamal's sentiments about the team's transformation from a gritty defensive team to a build-up-focused unit.

"We have been together for a long time and the coach has been trying to play a build-up game. We tried it against Lebanon but could not do well because of their press. So we were forced to play

long balls even though we planned to attack by building up from behind," Zico said, opining that they could not perform well against Seychelles and Cambodia because both teams pressed till the last minute.

Assistant coach Hasan Al Mamun, who has been with Cabrera since the start of the last year, said the Spaniard's plan, methodology and execution had helped Bangladesh put up good performances against Lebanon and Maldives.

"Since Cabrera took over, he was planning to form a squad with a mix of experienced and young players. He placed a lot of emphasis on scouting players over the past 15 months," Hasan said, adding that younger players also had an impact on performance.

"You know there are a lot of young players in the squad such as Isa Faysal, Rafiqul Islam and Morsalin. They are playing their first international tournament while Md Ridoy, Mojibur Rahman Jonny and Mohammad Sohel Rana are also fresh players. If you look at the profile of these players, they have less experience in international matches. It was not easy to come back against Maldives with a team that features players with that sort of profile," Hasan, who was Bangladesh's stand-in captain during the 2003 SAFF Championship triumph, concluded.



Sean Williams was unstoppable on Monday, smashing a career-best 101-ball 174 to power Zimbabwe to a 304-run win over the USA -- the biggest margin win for Zimbabwe and the second-largest win overall in terms of runs in ODI history -- in the ICC Cricket World Cup qualifiers in Harare. Hosts Zimbabwe made 408 for six, their highest ODI total, before bundling out the USA for just 104 to stay perfect in Group A with four successive wins. Zimbabwe narrowly missed out on breaking the record for the biggest margin victory in ODIs, held by India for their 317-run win over Sri Lanka at the start of the year in Thiruvananthapuram. But the in-form African side became the seventh country to breach the 400-run barrier in ODIs and have already made it to the Super Sixes of the qualifiers, in which they will have an added advantage as they will be carrying two points from their win over West Indies on Saturday.

PHOTO: ZIMBABWE CRICKET



Australia, world champions in both white-ball formats in women's cricket, also proved just too good with the red ball as they sealed an 89-run victory against England in the one-off Ashes Test on Monday. In chase of a women's Test record 268, England were all out for 178 with Ashleigh Gardner taking all five wickets to fall on the final day at Trent Bridge. Gardner returned career-best figures of eight for 66 in the second innings.

PHOTO: REUTERS

Fitness key in Jahanara's exclusion

SPORTS REPORTER

Veterans Jahanara Alam and Rumana Ahmed were excluded from Bangladesh's 20-member preliminary squad for the upcoming series against India at home, announced the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB).

The India series is a big challenge given the ODI leg of the tour, being part of the 2022-2025 ICC Women's Championship, will determine qualification to the 2025 ODI World Cup.

However, more than just results, the team management is focusing on the bigger picture -- by bringing up younger stars to build a more competitive unit for the 2024 T20 World Cup next year in Bangladesh.

The team management are of the belief that the team could have performed better in last few assignments.

Unlike Rumana, however, veteran Salma Khatun returned after being dropped from the last series. Meanwhile, pacer Marufa Akter returned to the squad after sitting out the Lankan series due to academic involvement.

The main reason for the changes, according to sources, were the calamity in fielding. It all came down to fitness issues in the end.

"Most of our defeats have come due to fielding, so we are emphasising



PHOTO: BCB

more on our fitness. If you see our progress from last year, we could have won some series but that didn't happen. It's high time we pick some young players. We have the 2024 World Cup at home," a member of the team management told The Daily Star on conditions of anonymity.

The presence of younger stars such as Rabeya Khan, Shorna Akter and Sanjida Akter Meghla certainly gives indications of current requirements.

Asked why Salma had been included, a source informed that off-spinning options were required due to the presence of left-handers in the India lineup. Salma was the highest wicket-taker in the recently concluded Women's DPL with 17 scalps.

Along with Marufa and Salma, Shathi Rani and Dilara Akter also returned to the squad for the

upcoming series.

The Tigresses had been undergoing training camp on an individual basis and following the Eid-ul-Adha vacations, they will report back for the camp on June 30 before their first training session commences on June 1.

India are set to arrive in the country on July 6 to play three T20Is and as many ODIs against the hosts, scheduled to take place in Mirpur from July 9 to 22.

The tour is the first to be hosted by Bangladesh that falls under the 2022-2025 FTP cycle. After failing to win the preceding two series against New Zealand and Sri Lanka -- part of ICC's Women's Championship 2022-2025 -- Bangladesh occupy eighth spot with four points in six matches.

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I have no problem stepping down

Commerce minister tells JS as MPs blast him for failure to dismantle market syndicates

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Coming under fire from Jatiya Party and Gonoforum MPs for failing to control prices of essentials, Commerce Minister Tipu Munshi yesterday said he would quit if the prime minister gave the job to an opposition MP.

While castigating the minister in parliament, the opposition lawmakers even questioned if Munshi, a businessman, was involved in the syndicate manipulating the market.

Taking the floor on a cut motion, Gonoforum MP Mokabbir Khan called upon the commerce minister to quit. Of all the ministries, the Ministry of Commerce is performing the worst, he said.

“When you go to the market, you hear ... people call it a syndicate-friendly ministry.”

He said that many people say that the commerce minister is involved. “Why don’t you resign after all this?”

When the minister says that the price of a product will decrease, it increases the next day, Mokabbir claimed.

JP MP Shameem Haider Patwari then said prices of goods have decreased in the international market over the last few months but it is not reflected in the country.

“Inflation in Bangladesh was six percent and now it seems to be 10 percent. It is growing. Inflation is eating away the people’s income,” he said, adding that food and cosmetics are becoming smaller in portion because of this.

“The economy of Bangladesh is trapped in a vicious

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PHOTO: HABIBUR RAHMAN

The flow of the Bhadra has slowed considerably and it has become narrower in Chuknagar Bazar area of Khulna’s Dumuria upazila due to encroachment. Waste from homes and shops have turned the water filthy and stinky. The photo was taken on Saturday.

Claims of sexual abuse must be taken seriously

Visting UN under-secy-gen says about peacekeeping missions

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

UN Under-Secretary-General for Peace Operations Jean-Pierre Lacroix has called for ending sexual harassment and discrimination in the peacekeeping operations, and taking steps to recruit more female peacekeepers.

“We must all take claims of sexual harassment, discrimination and abuse very seriously,” he said at the closing ceremony of the two-day UN Peacekeeping Ministerial preparatory meeting yesterday.

Bangladesh, Canada and Uruguay jointly organised the event ahead of the UN Peacekeeping Ministerial to be held in Ghana on December 5-6.

“We must create safe, enabling and responsive work environments,” Lacroix said, adding that leaders should play a very important role in shaping organisational culture and building a cohort of gender responsive leaders.

The UN official said it is important to ensure that women are deployed at all levels of the UN peacekeeping operations and there is a fair recruitment system and respectful environment.

A total of 1,63,887 Bangladeshi peacekeepers have so far participated in UN missions in 40 countries. Currently, Bangladesh is one of the leading troop contributors,

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Jean-Pierre Lacroix

CATTLE MARKETS

High prices keep buyers away

Traders blame soaring fodder prices, higher transport cost for the hike

HELEMUL ALAM and SHAHEEN MOLLAH

With the Eid-ul-Azha just day after tomorrow, the sale of sacrificial animals was poor at the capital’s cattle markets until yesterday evening mainly due to high prices.

Sellers cited increased costs of raising livestock and transportation as the main reasons for the high prices.

Yesterday, the cattle markets didn’t see enough buyers despite having sufficient supply of sacrificial animals.

Traders, however, hoped that a large number of customers would visit the markets from today – the first day of the four-day Eid holiday.

“There are 28 flats in our building. The residents had bought 16 bulls around this time last year. But this year, the number is only two,” said Mohammad Ripon, caretaker of a building in the city’s Dhupkhola.

The majority of the building’s residents were waiting for the price

to fall and had decided to visit the markets on the day before Eid, he said.

Saidul Islam Shovon, a resident of Merul Badda, who went to Gabtoli cattle market yesterday after visiting three other markets in the last two days, said the price of bulls has gone up by 30 to 35 percent this year compared to last year.

“I want to buy a bull for a maximum Tk 1 lakh. I will visit more markets till the day before Eid if I don’t find one within my budget,” Shovon said.

Golam Mostafa, a trader from Nagarkanda in Pabna, said he brought nine bulls to the Gabtoli cattle market three days ago with their prices ranging from Tk 1.20 lakh to Tk 5 lakh, but none of them were sold yet.

“Even the customers are not asking for their prices.”

Although there was a demand for small and medium-sized bulls, Mostafa said there was hardly any demand for the large ones.

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Petition filed with SC for restrictions on Jamaat

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A petition was filed yesterday with the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court seeking its order of injunction restraining Jamaat-e-Islami from carrying out any political activities including meetings, public rallies and processions using its name or banner.

Rezaul Haque Chandpuri, secretary general of Bangladesh Tariqat Federation, and two other petitioners also requested the court to issue an injunction on Jamaat barring it from asserting itself as a legitimate political party until disposal of its (Jamaat) leave to appeal petition against a High Court verdict that on August 1, 2013 scrapped its registration with the Election Commission.

At the same time, the petitioners submitted a contempt of court petition with the SC against five

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Laser scanning helps find remains of ancient Mayan city

INDEPENDENT.CO.UK



Archaeologists have uncovered the remains of a previously unknown ancient Mayan city in the jungles of southern Mexico using aerial laser scanning technology.

The ancient city, which was found to include pyramid-like structures, stone columns, and several large buildings, was likely an important center over a thousand years ago, researchers from Mexico’s anthropology institute INAH said.

The city, named Ocomtun – meaning “stone column” in the Yucatec Maya language – may have been an important center of the Central Lowlands between 250 and 1000 AD.

A number of cylindrical columns found at the site were likely part of entrances to the upper rooms of buildings, researchers suspect.

The discovery was made partly thanks to airborne laser scanning by the University of Houston in the US.

The aerial scanning helped locate the site in the jungle in an area spanning about 1160 sqm of the jungle, scientists say.

Archaeologists could recognise numerous concentrations of pre-Hispanic structures from the LiDAR data.

ATTACKS BY IMRAN’S FOLLOWERS

Pakistan army sacks three senior officers

REUTERS, Islamabad

Pakistan’s army has sacked three senior officers, including a lieutenant general, for failing to avert last month’s violent attacks on military assets by former prime minister Imran Khan’s supporters to protest his arrest, the army’s spokesperson said yesterday.

It was a rare announcement as the army usually doesn’t make public announcements on internal inquiries and their findings.

At least 102 people are currently being tried in military courts in relation to the violence, Major General Ahmad Sharif Chaudhry told a press conference in the garrison city of Rawalpindi.

He gave no details regarding how many of them were civilians or military officials. He also declined to name the senior officers who had been fired.

Human rights groups have raised concerns over the military trials of civilians, which they say can’t ensure a fair defence. They have also been challenged in Pakistan’s Supreme Court.

In May, thousands of Khan’s supporters rampaged through military installations across the country and vandalised them, including an air base, several military garrisons, the house of a general and the army’s headquarters.



A locomotive coming out of Chattogram Port and a bus almost collide at Saltgola level crossing on Sunday. The level crossing has no gates to stop vehicles but it has gates for trains instead. Three people were killed at the level crossing on April 6 after a lorry collided with a train transporting oil.

PHOTO: RAJIB RATHAN

Huge crowds swarm from Makkah for hajj climax

AFP, Mina

Hundreds of thousands of Muslim pilgrims yesterday walked or rode buses to a giant tented city near Makkah for the climax of the annual hajj that Saudi officials say could break attendance records.

After performing the ritual circumambulation of the Kaaba, the giant black cube at Makkah’s Grand Mosque that Muslims pray towards each day, worshippers set off for Mina.

Pilgrims in robes and sandals, many carrying umbrellas against the beating sun, undertook the journey on foot or crowded onto hundreds of air-conditioned buses provided by Saudi authorities.

They will spend the night in white tents in Mina, which every year hosts the world’s largest encampment, before the hajj’s high-point today: prayers at Mount Arafat, where the Prophet Mohammed (PBUH) is said to have delivered his final sermon.

“My dream has come true,” said Jamila Hammoudi, a 62-year-old Moroccan school teacher. “I will pray for everyone,” she told AFP after arriving in the tented city.

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