



DHAKA WEDNESDAY JULY 5, 2023

REGD. No. DA 781

VOL. XXXIII No. 164

ASHAR 21, 1430 BS

www.thedailystar.net

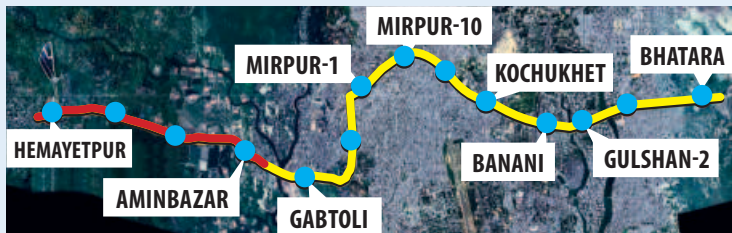
ZILHAJ 16, 1444 HURI

16 PAGES : Tk 15.00

METRO LINE ON DHAKA-ARICHA ROUTE

RHD fears it'll create chaos on highway

MRT authorities ignore RHD warning, go ahead with its plan



MRT LINE-5 (NORTHERN ROUTE)

- From Hemayetpur (Savar) to Bhatara in Dhaka city
- Total length 20km (14 stations)
- 5.6km Hemayetpur to Aminbazar section in dispute

TUHIN SHUBHRA ADHIKARY

The Dhaka-Aricha Highway may face long tailbacks and see a rise in road crashes if a metro rail line is built on the highway as proposed by the metro rail authorities, according to engineers of the Roads and Highways Department.

Construction of the metro rail line, known as Mass Rapid Transit (MRT) Line-5 (Northern Route), will scupper an expansion plan of the highway conceived by the RHD, they said. It may also make one of the country's most important highways "a death-trap", they added.

Although serious reservations have been raised about the proposed metro rail route between Hemayetpur and Aminbazar long ago, the metro rail authorities did not pay any heed to the concerns and prepared a detailed design instead, they said.

The MRT Line-5 project, which is expected to start later this month or early next month, is being implemented by Dhaka Mass Transit Company Ltd (DMTCL). Both the RHD and the DMTCL are under the same division (Road Transport and Highways Division) of the Ministry of Road Transport and Bridges.

Rejecting the fears expressed by the RHD engineers, the metro

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1



Bangladesh Railway is laying three new dual-gauge lines from the capital's Kamalapur to Gendaria under the Padma Bridge Rail Link Project. The lines will be used for the Dhaka-Narayanganj and Dhaka-Jashore rail operations. With the work for laying one of the lines already completed, rail services on Dhaka-Narayanganj route are expected to resume soon. The photo was taken in the capital's Titipara area recently.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

European countries to be closer for Biman flyers

Carrier to ink codeshare deal with Gulf Air; agreement with JAL to make hops to US easier

RASHIDUL HASAN

Biman is going for codeshare and interline agreements with Gulf Air and Japan Airlines and this will allow its passengers to go to destinations the two carriers serve.

This is the first time Biman is going for such agreements, said MD and CEO Shafiul Azim, adding that through the codeshare agreement with Gulf Air, the national flag carrier of Bahrain, Biman plans to expand

its reach into Europe where Gulf Air has extensive access.

The interline agreement with Japan Airlines will allow Biman passengers to travel to the US via Tokyo, sources in Biman said.

Biman is scheduled to start direct flights to Narita (Tokyo) on September 1.

Biman expects both deals will be signed before September.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 5

“This is a unique moment for the aviation sector in Bangladesh as this is the first time any carrier of Bangladesh is signing a codeshare agreement with a foreign carrier.”

Aviation expert ATM Nazrul Islam

SEE PAGE 6 COL 3



PHOTO: SHEIKH NASIR

Three women of a family move from their home in Dabor area of Sunamganj's Shantiganj upazila to a relative's house yesterday as a huge chunk of their village has gone under water due to heavy rain.

India retain SAFF title

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

India retained the title of the SAFF Championship with a 5-4 win over Kuwait in tiebreaker after regulation and extra time yielded a 1-1 draw at the Sree Kanteerava Stadium in Bengaluru yesterday.

India goalkeeper Gurpreet Singh Sandhu saved the decisive fifth spot-kick from Khaled Ibrahim Hajiah to send more than 25,000 spectators into wild celebration as the hosts hoisted a record-extending ninth title of the regional competition.

Earlier, Shabaib Al Khaldi had broken the deadlock in the 15th minute of the game, only for Lallianzuala Chhangte to equalise for the hosts in the 38th minute.



NORTHERN DISTRICTS Major rivers seeing rise in water level

Heavy rains may cause Teesta, Dharla, Dudhkumar to swell; Surma, Someshwari flowing above danger mark

STAR REPORT

As flood waters recede in the northeast districts, major rivers are swelling in the northern districts.

Levels of the water in the Teesta, the Dharla and the Dudhkumar rivers will rise rapidly if it rains upstream, said a bulletin of the Flood Forecasting and Warning Centre (FFWC) yesterday.

"The Brahmaputra-Jamuna and the Ganges Padma rivers are in a rising trend, which may continue in the next 48 hours," said the bulletin released at 9:00am.

As water levels in major rivers fall in the north-eastern region, flood waters are receding in Sunamganj and Netrokona districts, it added.

In Lalmonirhat, the Teesta inundated the low-lying areas yesterday morning

and continued to flood new areas.

People were seen commuting on boats as roads went under water.

"My village has been inundated. My Aman seedbeds are now under water," said Nazar Ali, 60, a farmer of Khuniyagach area of Lalmonirhat.

However, the levels of water in the Teesta and the Dharla are still within safe limits and a long-term flood seems unlikely, said Shunil Kumar, executive engineer of Bangladesh Water Development Board.

In Bogura, the Jamuna has been swelling rapidly since Monday, and if it keeps this rate, some areas may get inundated, said BWDB Executive Engineer Nazmul Haque, adding that a major flood in the next 15 days was unlikely.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 5

Growing Together with Excellence

On this momentous occasion of our 28th Anniversary, we reiterate our sincere appreciation for your unwavering support, which has paved the path to our resounding success!

As we embark on the next phase of our journey together, we will continue to accomplish great milestones to reinforce our everlasting bonds.



116474

16885678016474
For 24/7 Customer Care Call
www.dhakabank.com

DHAKABANK
LIMITED

Nurse ‘tortures’ her 11-yr-old house help for over a year

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Sylhet*

A nurse of Sylhet MAG Osmani Medical College Hospital (SOMCH) has been accused of torturing her 11-year-old house help for over a year in the city's Nabab Road area.

The victim is currently undergoing treatment at the Sylhet MAG Osmani Medical College Hospital's One Stop Crisis Centre.

On Monday, a case was filed in this connection with Sylhet's Kotwali Police Station.

The girl's father, a day labourer from Sylhet's Gowainghat upazila, said nurse Shahnaj was also from his village.

He said, “My daughter studied until the fifth grade. Considering my financial constraints and Shahnaj's request, I sent her to work as a domestic help around a year and a half ago.

“My daughter has been abused by the nurse since she went to work for her. The nurse intimidated her into hiding the scars from us, but we finally saw them when she came home for Eid.”

The victim said, “She [Shahnaj] would often beat me with a hot spatula. She would hit me if she couldn't find her money or if she thought I had eaten too much food. I would scream in pain, but no one in the neighbourhood could hear me. I was also afraid to tell my parents about the abuse because I was scared of what she would do to me.”

Despite multiple attempts, this correspondent failed to reach Shahnaj on her phone. Her number was found switched off.

Contacted, SOMCH Director Brig Gen Mahbubur Rahman Bhuiyan said, “I've not been officially informed of the matter, but it has come to my attention. The hospital authority will soon seek an official explanation from the accused nurse and take necessary steps accordingly.”

Woman raped in Dhanmondi restaurant

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A woman was raped by an unidentified youth in the capital's Dhanmondi area Monday evening.

The father of the 21-year-old victim filed a rape case with Dhanmondi Police Station yesterday afternoon against an unnamed accused.

Parvez Islam, officer-in-charge of Dhanmondi Police Station, said that a 20- to 24-year-old youth, tactfully took the victim to a closed restaurant on the sixth floor of a building on Sat Masjid Road and raped her on the restaurant's balcony.

The victim is currently undergoing treatment at the One Stop Crisis Centre (OCC) at Dhaka Medical College Hospital.

The OC added that efforts are on to apprehend the suspect.

Our densely populated city has an interesting phenomenon. Many choose to live in the outskirts of Dhaka in places like Gazipur, Narayanganj, and Keraniganj, to name a few, and commute to the metropolis every day either for study, work, or other purposes.



PHOTO: SAAD ABDULLAH

FEDA AL HOSSAIN

Dhaka's high cost of living prevents these people from moving to Dhaka permanently, especially with their families. Be it living in a shared house or getting a small apartment, the cost of living in the city is significantly higher than living in Gazipur, for instance. Even if it means travelling to the city every day for work.

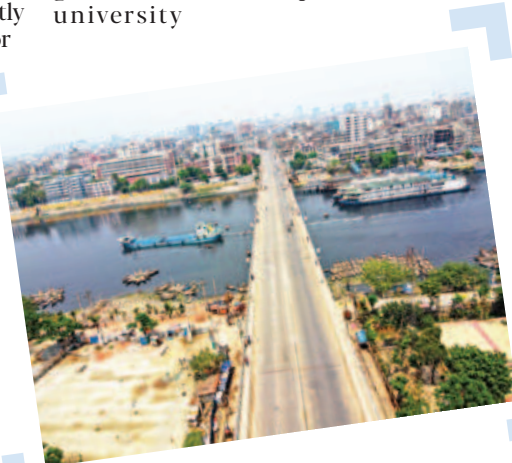
Rizwan Ahmed, a travel agent with an office in Motijheel, makes his daily commute from Gazipur.

“I actually lived in Dhaka with my family in a rented home for some time, but it was far from my office; the traffic jam made matters worse and the higher cost of living was not giving me any respite. So, I moved back to my home in Gazipur town and while the bus journey every day is anything but smooth the monthly expenditure is significantly less,” he said.

Another important reason why people opt to make the commute instead of living in Dhaka is their preference to live in their locality surrounded by family and friends. It

can be incredibly difficult to come and live in a new place and miss the sense of belonging and attachment that one feels with their hometown.

Sahana Parvin, a resident of Narayanganj, completed her graduation from a private university



in Dhanmondi. She said, “Coming from Narayanganj, I have spent a lot of time on the road. Often the long hours on buses took its toll on me but as soon as I went back home and was surrounded by my friends and family, I felt like all

the fatigue went away in an instant”.

In the local context, covering the distance between let's say Dhaka and Narayanganj of around 30km sounds like a daunting task. In most developed countries, however, this is not much of an issue as highly developed infrastructures make it convenient to commute even longer distances.

With the recent inauguration of the Metro Rail and projects like the expressways, people can also harbour a hope of living a life where they do not necessarily have to live in the same place for accommodation and work.

“My hometown is in Munshiganj and I like the quaint setting of the place. I have this dream of coming to work every day from there in my car and then going back the same day. I have seen how the roads have been developed in the last few years so who knows maybe this will happen sooner than I think!” remarked Hashem Ali, a lecturer at a private university.

However, until that is happening a large number of people will have to undertake the “great commute” and continue to endure a lot of problems.

RHD fears it'll create chaos on highway

FROM PAGE 1

rail authorities said that they had prepared the detailed design of the proposed line considering all technical aspects and the RHD's future plans about the highway.

“Asking us to change the route now basically means cancelling the construction of the metro rail which will start soon,” Md Aftab Hossain Khan, project director of MRT-5 (northern route), told The Daily Star.

The fears and frustrations shared by the RHD engineers regarding the issue are reflected in different documents they have shared with their higher authorities, including the Road Transport and Highways Division.

The 20km rail line with 14 stations will connect Hemayetpur and Bhatara via Gabtoli, Mirpur, and Gulshan. The 5.6km section, from Hemayetpur to Aminbazar, will be elevated while a 13.5km section from Gabtoli to Natunbazar will be underground. The remaining 0.9km will be elevated, too.

Physical work on the Tk 41,239 crore project will start with the development of a depot at Hemayetput. The metro rail authorities have already hired a contractor for the work and Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina is expected to inaugurate the project later this month or early next month, said Aftab Hossain.

The Dhaka-Aricha highway links the capital with the north and some districts in the south. The RHD is spending Tk 696 crore to build dedicated service lanes and bus bays at major bus stops and market areas between Gabtoli and Paturia Ferry Terminal.

Moreover, the RHD in 2021 completed a feasibility study to turn the Gabtoli to Nabinagar section of the highway into an expressway.

The tussle between two agencies under the same ministry reflects

the lack of a comprehensive plan for the infrastructural development projects centring Dhaka and its adjacent areas, said transport expert Prof Hadiuzzaman.

If the metro line, along with the stations, is built on the highway, it will obstruct future expansion of the highway, he added.

“This is a major highway. The highway should have been given priority considering its importance,” he told The Daily Star on Monday.

As the RHD has raised the issue at the stage of drawing the design, the DMTCL should have considered it, he pointed out.

THE DISPUTE

After the RHD raised its reservations about the proposed metro rail route, a meeting was held on March 23, 2021, where officials of both the RHD and the DMTCL were present.

At the meeting, RHD officials said blocking the highway corridor with metro rail structures would not be sustainable. Therefore, they requested for the Hemayetpur to Aminbazar section of the metro line to be either moved south or taken underground.

But MRT-5 Project Director Aftab Hossain Khan told the meeting that the line was planned on RHD land in accordance with the Strategic Transport Plan (STP) or revised STP. Due to technical difficulties and the heavy flow of traffic on the highway, the line cannot be moved south, he added.

The meeting also decided to sit again and finalise a paper that would be sent to the ministry concerned for a decision. But the issue was not resolved. In the meantime, the DMTCL has completed 90% of the line's design following the proposed route.

Another meeting between the RHD and DMTCL officials was held on March 23 this year.

According to the meeting

minutes, Sabuj Uddin Khan, RHD's additional chief engineer for Dhaka zone, requested the DMTCL to shift the Hemayetpur and Baliapur stations to the north.

Mohammad Ahad Ullah, RHD's executive engineer for Dhaka Division, said the metro line should not be built on the median of the highway. He also said the highway might witness severe traffic congestion during the construction period, just like the Dhaka-Mymensingh highway due to the construction of the BRT line.

The Tongi Gazipur section of Dhaka-Mymensingh highway is witnessing traffic congestion on a regular basis for years due to the construction of the BRT Line-3, a dedicated bus line from the Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport in Dhaka to Gazipur.

According to the meeting minutes, Abdullah Al Mamun, additional chief engineer (technical services wing) of RHD, said the future expansion of the highway would be obstructed if the line was built following the proposed route.

There is enough land on the south side of the highway and “it's still possible to review the design of the metro rail without using RHD land,” reads the minutes.

RHD sources said Road Transport and Highways Division Secretary ABM Amin Ullah Nuri visited the project site on June 16 and gave the go-ahead for the DMTCL plan, ignoring the concerns raised by the RHD.

The secretary could not be contacted as he was abroad.

After that, RHD's Dhaka Division Office on June 22 sent a letter to its higher authority –Dhaka Circle Office – expressing its concern and requesting it to take necessary steps so that the metro rail route could be changed, said sources.

According to the letter, the

construction of a station and a depot at Hemayetpur will obstruct their plan to build a major interchange – a meeting point for roads which allows vehicles to move from one road to another without obstructing the flow of traffic – in the area for the proposed Gabtoli-Nabinagar expressway and the planned Dhaka outer circular road. It would also create a permanent bottleneck there.

Most of the metro rail line structure will be constructed on the highway, which will obstruct drivers' visibility and thus will create more risk of road crashes, reducing traffic speed at the same time, the letter noted.

Besides, the MRT lines are usually being built inside the city where speed limit of vehicles remains low but high-speed inter-district vehicles will be operated on the highway, and thus will increase the risk of road crashes, it added.

Contacted, RHD's Sabuj Uddin Khan said the authorities were trying to resolve the issue. He, however, indicated that the metro rail was going to be built on the proposed route.

Replying to a question, he said, “We will shift the route of the expressway as it would take more time to start. Both the projects are important to the government.”

Contacted, PD Aftab Hossain Khan, who is a retired additional chief engineer of RHD, said RHD's argument lacked technical assessment and was based on emotion.

He said they would close two lanes on the northern side of the highway at the Hemayetpur point during the construction period. To keep the traffic flow unhindered, he said, they would build two lanes on the southern side before blocking the two lanes.

There will be no problem in the other parts of the route, he added.

European countries

FROM PAGE 1

The national flag carrier is also planning to make a code-sharing agreement with Air Canada to have further reach into North America.

For years, Biman has been trying to sign codeshare agreements with several airlines. Both carriers will share the profits earned from routes under the codeshare agreement, said the Biman MD.

“Code sharing is a kind of indirect fleet expansion,” he said.

Aviation expert ATM Nazrul Islam lauded Biman's move and said this is a unique moment for the aviation sector in Bangladesh as this is the first time any carrier of Bangladesh is signing a codeshare agreement with a foreign carrier.

WHAT IS CODE SHARING

Code-sharing is a partnership between two airlines. It allows a flight to be operated by one carrier and marketed by another.

Put simply, code-sharing allows airlines to sell tickets to destinations they do not fly to but their partners do. These agreements allow airlines to offer numerous flights without additional equipment, resources, and costs.

Code sharing also provides passengers with a wide choice of flights. It also makes booking, checking in, luggage handling, and travelling more convenient. The coordinated schedules make sure there is enough time for connecting flights.

Airlines throughout the world

Major rivers seeing rise in water

FROM PAGE 1

In Gaibandha, the Brahmaputra has been rising fast, said BWDB officials.

In Sunamganj town, the Surma was still flowing 7cm above the danger level and 130cm above in Chhatakat at 9:00am yesterday.

Several thousand people were still marooned as flood water inundated low-lying areas in the district.

In Netrokona, the Someshwari was

10 injured as drug gangs clash

Bystander shot, 14 held

UNB, *Narayanganj*

Two rival drug gangs clashed in Narayanganj's Chanpara early yesterday, leaving at least 10 people injured, including a bystander who was shot.

Following the incident, 14 people were detained and the situation was brought under control.

Police said there was a longstanding dispute between the Joynal group and the Shamser group over establishing supremacy and controlling the drug trade at Chanpara Rehabilitation Centre.

The two groups equipped with arms locked into clashes on Monday night and early yesterday.

Abir Hossain, senior assistant superintendent of district police, said a bystander named Hridoy sustained bullet injuries on his way home from his workplace when the two groups were exchanging gunfire.

“He is now undergoing treatment at Dhaka Medical College Hospital. The other injured were also admitted to several hospitals in the district.”

Police were conducting drives to arrest the others and trying to recover the arms used in the violence.

Ex-Jubo League leader accused of rape, extortion

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Moulvibazar*

A former Jubo League leader and his two associates were sued yesterday in a case filed over the rape of a woman in Kulaura upazila of Moulvibazar.

The accused are Shalik Baksh, 40, former general secretary of Hajipur union unit Jubo League, and his associates Hasanul Bari Sani, 35, and Saifur Rahman, 32.

The trio was also accused of extorting Tk 50,000 from the woman after threatening to blackmail her with photos and videos of the incident.

According to the case, on Eid day, the woman visited a relative's house in a village in the upazila. At one point, her relative went to his shop in the market, leaving the woman at home.

Finding the woman home alone, Shalik and his two associates broke into the house and raped the woman.

Kulaura Police Station OC Abdus Salek said, “Police are trying to arrest the accused, and the woman was taken to Moulvibazar Sadar Hospital.”

Two young men drown

UNB, *Kishoreganj*

Two young men died after drowning in a local haor yesterday while they were visiting a friend for his wedding in Kishoreganj's Karimganj upazila.

The deceased, Sharfuddin Rafu, 24, and Limon Islam, 23, were residents of Nakhhalpara area of Dhaka's Tejgaon.

Karimganj Police Station OC Shamsul Alam Siddique said Rafu and Limon had just attended the wedding ceremony of their friend Taukir Ahmed.

Following the wedding, Taukir and his friends played a game of football.

After the game, the three friends went to take a bath in the Gunodhar Haor around noon and drowned.

Locals rescued them and took them to Kishoreganj Syed Nazrul Islam Medical College Hospital where doctors declared Rafu and Limon dead.

Tauqir was admitted to Kishoreganj Sadar Modern Hospital.

LARGEST ONLINE BRANCH NETWORK

Sharia'h based Islamic Banking
through 501 Branches & 162 Sub Branches

ESTABLISHED IN 1959

LARGEST PRIVATE COMMERCIAL BANK

**পূবালী ব্যাংক লিমিটেড**
PUBALI BANK LIMITED

64 YEARS IN BANKING

FIRST BANGALEE BANK

Take your remittance
Smile with your gift

Excellence in Remittance Service

‘Govt working to flourish culture’
PM unveils foundation stones of six projects

BSS, Dhaka

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday said her government will take measures to establish the culture of Bangladesh in the global arena.

It will also pursue a move to enhance the culture in accordance with thoughts of the new generations so that they never forget the uniqueness of Bangladeshi culture, she said.

“As we are heading towards socio-economic advancement, we also have to march ahead culturally. We will take required measures as our culture can put a strong footing on the world stage,” Hasina said while laying the foundation stones of six development projects and inaugurating another.

She joined the event, organised by the cultural affairs ministry at the Bangladesh National Museum at Shahbagh, from the Gono Bhaban through a video conference.

The PM said her government has been working to incorporate technology for further improvement of the culture.

“The thoughts and beliefs of our children are ever-changing at the advent of newer technology. We have to improve our culture in accordance with their thoughts so they never forget the culture of Bangladesh,” she said.



Naim, a fifth grader from the capital's Mirpur area, bravely fights dengue at the Suhrawardy Medical College and Hospital. He was admitted to the hospital last Wednesday, a day after he showed symptoms of the viral infection. When this photojournalist asked how he was, Naim said he was feeling much better. He now wishes to go back to school and play with his friends. Yesterday, the country witnessed highest dengue deaths so far this year, with the infections claiming five lives.

Drive on to make Dhaka a mugging-free city
Says DMP chief

UNB, Dhaka

The anti-mugging drive will continue until Dhaka is free from mugging, said Dhaka Metropolitan Police Commissioner Khandker Golam Faruque yesterday.

“Police will do whatever is needed to free the capital from muggers, no matter how much work is needed,” he said, while talking to reporters after visiting Rakibul Hasan, an injured journalist of a private Television, at Pangu hospital in Dhaka.

A number of mugging incidents occurred during the Eid vacation in the capital and police are now on highest alert to arrest muggers, he added.

The law enforcers managed to arrest all the muggers involved in the police constable killing in Farmgate and they were sent to jail, said DMP chief.

Besides, two accused in a case filed for mugging Rakibul were also arrested, he said.

France seeks to boost naval ties with Bangladesh

PORIMOL PALMA, back from Chattogram

The French Navy, renowned for its size and formidable naval capabilities, has expressed a keen interest in collaborating with the Bangladesh Navy to uphold international law and ensure maritime security.

Rear Admiral Emmanuel Slaars, the chief of French joint forces in the Indian Ocean, conveyed this during an interview held aboard the French stealth Fregate Surcouf.

The ship, which embarked on its journey from France two months ago, made a stop at the Patenga Container Terminal in Chattogram after seven years.



We strongly believe that international law is very important and we are also ready to fight illegal trafficking of narcotics, weapons etc.

REAR ADMIRAL EMMANUEL SLAARS
Chief of French joint forces in Indian Ocean

During its visit from July 2 to July 6, the vessel will engage in a joint exercise with the Bangladesh Navy on Thursday. A delegation comprising 170 officers and sailors is taking part in this goodwill visit, with Rear Admiral Slaars and French Ambassador Marie Masdupuy paying a courtesy call on Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina on Sunday.

During their visit, the officers and sailors of the French Navy ship had the opportunity to explore various naval installations and engage with officials in Bangladesh.

French Ambassador Marie Masdupuy emphasised that the ship's visit signifies France's political commitment to supporting Bangladesh and recognises the country's importance in the Indian Ocean region.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 2



A man tries to jump over a puddle filled with sewerage water in Jurain's Kodomtoli area yesterday. Due to poor drainage system and a lack of cleaning activities, people of the area continue to suffer.

PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN

Dengue taking a dangerous turn

14 deaths recorded in first four days of July

HELEMUL ALAM

The dengue outbreak in Bangladesh has taken a worrisome turn as the number of cases and fatalities continue to rise, signaling an alarming trend this year. Yesterday, the country witnessed the highest number of dengue deaths this year, with five fatalities.

The total number of deaths in the first four days of July has already reached 14 whereas nine deaths were recorded in entire July last year.

The Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS) reports 61 individuals have lost their lives to dengue so far this year. The surge in cases is evident as 678 new dengue patients were hospitalised within the last 24 hours, bringing the total number of cases to 9,871, with 2,787 cases originating from outside Dhaka.

The recent deaths of Bulet, a 38-year-old sweeper from Rangpur, and Ilma Jahan, an eleventh grader from Vigarunnisa School and College, have further highlighted the devastating impact of dengue.

In response, experts are urgently calling on the authorities to conduct extensive drives to identify and control the hotspots of Aedes mosquitoes, the carriers of the dengue virus.

MORE FEMALE DEATHS

The latest analysis conducted by the DGHS sheds light on the demographics of dengue-

related deaths in Bangladesh this year. Among the 50 deaths analysed, 62 percent were female. The age group most affected, accounting for 60.80 percent of the fatalities, was between 19 and 50 years old.

Besides, 80 percent of the deaths occurred within three days after the patients were admitted to the hospital.

HM Nazmul Ahsan, an associate professor at Shaheed Suhrawardy Medical College Hospital, emphasised the importance of seeking medical attention promptly upon experiencing warning signs of dengue.

SYMPTOMS

The warning signs include severe stomach pain, vomiting, breathing difficulties, bleeding from the nose, gums, vomit, or stools, weakness, significant reduction in urine output, and a notable decrease in platelet counts.

Dr Ahsan stressed the need for immediate hospitalisation as dengue patients can rapidly progress to critical stages within 24-48 hours of displaying these symptoms.

He further advised that special attention should be given to pregnant women, infants, elderly individuals, and patients with underlying health conditions such as cancer, heart, kidney, or liver complications.

Additionally, Prof Dr Tahmina Shirin,

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

The survey revealed that 20.04 percent of houses under the Dhaka North City Corporation and 15.47 percent of houses under the Dhaka South City Corporation were found to have Aedes mosquito larvae.

Private helipads, heliports get govt approval

Helicopters can land on rooftops; move to benefit medical evacuation

RASHIDUL HASAN

In a bid to regulate helicopter services for corporate use and medical evacuation, as well as enhance air connectivity within the country, the government has made the decision to permit private operators to build heliports and helipads.

Private entities will now have the opportunity to construct these facilities and land helicopters there, subject to meeting specific conditions set by the government.



This policy allows for the establishment of heliports, which are similar to airports and cater to multiple helicopters for takeoff and landing. Additionally, elevated heliports or helipads, designated for the use of one helicopter at a time, may be situated on the roofs of tall buildings or other high structures.

The civil aviation ministry recently issued a gazette notification titled “Heliport and Elevated Heliport Establishment and Operation Policy, 2023,” which became effective on Monday.

This policy allows for the establishment of heliports, which are similar to airports and cater to multiple helicopters for takeoff and landing. Additionally, elevated heliports or helipads, designated for the use of one helicopter at a time, may be situated on the roofs of tall buildings or other high structures.

Presently, helicopters traveling outside Dhaka can only land at airports, stadiums, school grounds, or any open space that has obtained clearance from the Civil Aviation Authority and local administration. However, private operators will now have the opportunity to land helicopters on the rooftops of private premises equipped with helipads, or at their own designated heliports, following the necessary approvals and compliance with facility requirements.

A similar proposal was previously under consideration in 2019, but it faced obstacles due to concerns expressed by the home ministry at that time.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 2

Tk 5 lakh fine for copyright breach

Bill placed at JS; Public Service (Amendment) Bill passed

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Copyright Bill 2023 was placed in parliament yesterday giving a penalty of Tk 5 lakh for publishing, serving or performing any work of others without being the owner of the copyright.

For the violation of copyright for film, the punishment is maximum five years of imprisonment and Tk 10 lakh as fine.

State Minister for Cultural Affairs KM Khalid placed the bill which was sent to the parliamentary standing committee on the cultural affairs ministry for further examination. The committee was given 30 days for submitting its report.

The proposed law will replace the Copyright Act 2000.

In the context of time, several definitions have been added and removed in the draft law.

Anonymous or pseudonymous work owner, database, public domain, monogram, producer, person, folk song, folk culture, editor, property rights – all these new definitions have been added.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

Ansar Ali's death anniv

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Today is the 28th death anniversary of Justice Muhammad Ansar Ali.



Ali passed away while he was on duty at the Supreme Court on this day in 1995.

Qurankhwani and doa mahfil will be held at his home in Naogaon and at Banani graveyard in Dhaka to mark the occasion.

Govt working

FROM PAGE 3
She reiterated her government's commitment to do whatever is necessary, as they did in the past, to improve and develop the culture of Bangladesh. At the event, the premier unveiled the foundation plaques of Rose Garden in old Dhaka, Kabi Nazrul Institute Bhaban in Dhaka, President Md Abdul Hamid Shilpakala Academy and Regional Cultural Centre at Mithamoin in Kishoreganj, Muktagacha Cultural Centre in Mymensingh, and Children's Library at the National Museum.

Hasina also opened the newly constructed Copyright Bhaban in Dhaka.

Papia shifted

FROM PAGE 5
notices in connection with the incident. The three are jailer Farhana Akter, deputy jailer Jannatul Taiba and matron habildar Fatema.

Karim in his complaint said he learnt that Runa had Tk 7,700 on her which was found during a search.

In order to take the money from her, Papia, along with habildars Fatema Begum and Nasima Akhtar, and inmates Sonali, Anandika, Abantika and Najma took her sister to a place where there is no CCTV coverage and tortured her. Papia and her husband are accused of laundering Tk 3.23 crore. The couple was arrested at the Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport in September 2020 while trying to leave the country.

Private helipads, heliports get govt approval

FROM PAGE 3
The home ministry was apprehensive about the potential for drug trafficking and public safety risks in the event of accidents associated with rooftop helipads.

In response to queries regarding what has changed in the past five years, sources within the civil aviation ministry have stated that there are stringent criteria that must be fulfilled before obtaining approvals for heliports and helipads. Therefore, the likelihood of misuse is minimal.

Furthermore, with the implementation of the new policy, private helicopter operations will be brought under a regulatory framework, ensuring effective oversight and compliance, according to ministry officials.

THE BENEFITS
The previous protocol required critical patients to

be airlifted to Dhaka Airport before being transported to hospitals by road, causing delays and potentially risking lives. However, under the new policy, helicopters will now be allowed to land directly on hospital helipads, enabling quicker and more efficient transfers, potentially saving both time and money. This change will significantly benefit patients in need of immediate medical attention by reducing transportation time and bypassing the congested Dhaka traffic, aviation industry insiders said.

The demand for helicopters has grown increasingly essential for urgent evacuation of critically ill patients from remote regions, emergency services, prompt response to accidents and natural disasters, as well as facilitating efficient business communication. Private commercial

helicopter services were introduced in Bangladesh in 1999, and currently, 10 business entities hold the civil aviation authority's air operator certificate (AOC).

Sources at the Ministry of Civil Aviation have revealed that at least three corporate groups, including Square Air, Meghna Aviation, BRB Air, Partex Aviation, R&R Aviation, ATL Aviation, BCL Aviation, Bangla International Airlines, and South Asian Aviation, collectively operating a fleet of 38 helicopters, a significant increase from just two in 2000.

CLEARANCE REQUIRED
Under the policies, helipads and heliport can be established only after getting clearance from at least 10 government organisations including the CAAB, Fire Service & Civil Defenses, Defense Ministry, Home Ministry, Environment Ministry, respective local government organisations including city corporation and union parishad, Directorate General of Forces Intelligence, and National Security Intelligence.

Contacted, Mofizur Rahman, secretary general of AOAB and managing director of Novoar, welcomed the government's move

But he also expressed skepticism on whether the policy is feasible as an organisation will have to take clearances from at least 12/13 government organisations before getting approval.

"Meeting so many conditions will actually make it mission impossible," he said.

Tanker lacked safety equipment

FROM PAGE 5

Surgery in Dhaka, while the remaining 11 were admitted to hospitals in Barishal and Jhalakathi.

The extent of the damage became clear when this correspondent visited the burnt Sagar Nandini-2, finding that the entire deck of the tanker had been blown away.

Only some iron pieces remained, and the Coast Guard was working to prevent further oil spillage into the river.

Before the explosion, the oil tanker carried 4,05,562 litres of petrol. The exact amount of oil that spilt into the river is still unknown, but the Coast Guard, Padma Oil Company, and Department of Environment reported that only a small amount had spilt, with most of the remaining oil burnt.

PROBE COMMITTEES
Khairuzzaman told reporters that an inter-ministerial investigation committee headed by the joint secretary of the Ministry of Power, Energy and Mineral Resources has been formed to investigate the accident.

Apart from this, the Bangladesh Petroleum Corporation, district administration, and fire service have formed three separate committees to probe the incident.

WHAT AUTHORITIES SAY
Hossain Ahmed, supervisor of Jhalakathi Padma Oil Depot, said some oil had spilt into the river.

The Coast Guard has extracted over 20,000 litres of oil from the river and established preventive measures, deploying five units to guard oil spillage stretching 20km up to the Bishkhali River, said Lt Col Shafiul Kinjal, media officer of Coast Guard

(south zone). The DoE is collecting water samples from the Sugandha to assess dissolved oxygen and oil levels, said HM Rashed, deputy director of the DoE.

PANIC AMONG LOCALS
Locals in the Kheyaghat area expressed panic as the oil tanker burned throughout the night, fearing that the fire might spread to the nearby Meghna oil depot. The spot of the incident has witnessed similar accidents in the past, including the December 2021 Dhaka-Barguna passenger launch fire that claimed 50 lives, the November 2021 explosion of another Sagar Nandini-3 vessel resulting in at least six casualties, and the sinking of Sagar Nandini-2 in the Meghna in Bhola with 1.1 million litres of oil on December 2022.

France seeks to boost

FROM PAGE 3

The visit comes at a time when competition among major powers in the Indo-Pacific region is intensifying, while challenges such as climate change, illegal trafficking of narcotics and weapons, environmental pollution, and overexploitation of marine resources loom large.

France, as an Indo-Pacific nation, is actively involved in the region to safeguard its territories and uphold international law.

"We strongly believe that international law is very important and we are also ready to fight illegal trafficking of narcotics, weapons etc.," said Slaars.

The French Navy has demonstrated its commitment by intercepting a significant quantity of narcotics during its deployment in the Arabian Sea.

Additionally, the French Navy shares concerns about the preservation of aquatic resources and the problem of illegal fishing, which often involves violations of international laws.

Slaars encouraged regional countries to collaborate in their efforts to address trafficking of narcotics and weapons.

He highlighted the existing partnership between the French and Bangladeshi navies, citing the presence of a Bangladeshi Navy ship involved in UN operations in Lebanon and regular Bangladeshi naval deployments to the Arabian Gulf.

He expressed France's willingness to consider specific proposals from Bangladesh for the modernisation of its Navy. In the past, the French Navy assisted the Bangladesh Navy in developing its hydrographic capabilities, and now the Bangladesh Navy has its own capacity, a source of pride for the French Navy.

Captain Jerome Dubois of the ship said joint exercises help the navies build confidence and exchange of knowledge and tactics help each other in joint operations. "That's how you build capacity and efficacy to work together."

PRAYER
TIMING
JULY 5

Fazr

Zohr

Asr

Maghrib

Esha

AZAN 4-10

12-45

5-00

6-55

8-17

JAMAAT 4-45

1-15

5-15

7-00

8-45

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

Tk 5 lakh fine

FROM PAGE 3

If there is any intellectual property issue for the visually impaired, it is mentioned in the law to ensure it.

Penalty system has been put in place to prevent piracy. Digital i.e. computer-based activities have been brought under the law, which was not the case earlier.

Meanwhile, the Public Service (Amendment)

Bill, 2023 was passed in parliament yesterday seeking to make mandatory for the autonomous, legislative and local government bodies to take clearance from the Finance Division over financial expenditures.

State Minister for Public Administration Farhad Hossain placed the bill which was passed by voice vote.

Dengue taking

FROM PAGE 3

director of the Institute of Epidemiology, Disease Control and Research, highlighted the importance of consulting a doctor and receiving appropriate medication if diagnosed with fever.

Adequate fluid intake is crucial for dengue patients, and Dr Shirin recommended coconut water, saline, homemade fruit juices, and sorbets to maintain hydration and provide essential vitamins and minerals for a faster recovery process.

PRE-MONSOON SURVEY
The findings of a pre-monsoon survey were announced yesterday during a press briefing held at the DGHS office.

The survey, conducted between June 18 and 27, covered 3,150 households across 98 wards in the two city corporations of Dhaka.

The survey revealed that 20.04 percent of houses under DNCC and 15.47

percent of houses under DSCC were found to have Aedes mosquito larvae.

Apartment buildings constituted over 43 percent, houses accounted for 21.41 percent, and construction sites made up 18.21 percent of the affected properties. The survey also identified various types of wet containers within the houses that were positive for mosquito breeding.

Meanwhile, DNCC will conduct a survey to find out breeding sources of Aedes mosquitoes through drones from today.

TENDER NOTICE

Sealed tenders hereby invited by Prime Bank Limited from reputed companies in the relevant field for providing below item:

Name of Item	Period of Sale		Date of Submission & Opening
	From	To	
PBL AML Solution	06.07.2023	23.07.2023	23.07.2023

Details are given on the Prime Bank website.
<https://www.primebank.com.bd/tenders>

Vice President & Head
Facility Management Division



গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার

ওয়েব আর্নিস কল্যাণ বোর্ড

প্রবাসী কল্যাণ ভবন, ইস্কাটন গার্ডেন

৭১-৭২, পুরাতন এলিফ্যান্ট রোড, ঢাকা।

www.wewb.gov.bd

নম্বর-৪৯.০৪.০০০০.০০৪.০৭.০০১.২৩.১৭১

তারিখ: ০৪ জুলাই ২০২৩

তালিকাভুক্তিকরণ বিজ্ঞপ্তি

২০২৩-২৪ অর্থ বছরে ওয়েব আর্নিস কল্যাণ বোর্ডের দাপ্তরিক কাজে ব্যবহারের জন্য প্রয়োজনীয় স্টেশনারী, কম্পিউটার সামগ্রী, স্যানিটারী, ইলেকট্রিক, মুদ্রণ সামগ্রী ও অন্যান্য মালামাল সরবরাহের নিমিত্ত প্রতিষ্ঠান তালিকাভুক্তির উদ্দেশ্যে সংশ্লিষ্ট ব্যবসায়ীদের নিকট হতে প্রতিষ্ঠানসমূহের নিজস্ব প্যাডে দরখাস্ত আহবান করা যাচ্ছে। তালিকাভুক্তির সিডিউল পরিচালক (প্রশাসন ও উন্নয়ন), ওয়েব আর্নিস কল্যাণ বোর্ড, প্রবাসী কল্যাণ ভবন, ৭১-৭২ পুরাতন এলিফ্যান্ট রোড, ইস্কাটন গার্ডেন, রমনা ঢাকা-১০০০ হতে টাঃ ৫০০/- (পাঁচশত টাকা) (অফেরতযোগ্য) মূল্যে "ওয়েব আর্নিস কল্যাণ তহবিল" শিরোনামে পে-অর্ডার/একাউন্টপেয়ী চেকের মাধ্যমে আগামী ১৮ জুলাই ২০২৩ তারিখ পর্যন্ত অফিস চলাকালীন সময়ে সংগ্রহ করা যাবে। পরিচালক (প্রশাসন ও উন্নয়ন), ওয়েব আর্নিস কল্যাণ বোর্ড বরাবর ১৯ জুলাই ২০২৩ বেলা ১২.০০ ঘটিকার মধ্যে সিডিউল জমা দিতে হবে।

কাজের ধরণ:

১। স্টেশনারী, কম্পিউটার সামগ্রী, স্যানিটারী, ইলেকট্রিক, মুদ্রণ সামগ্রী ও অন্যান্য মালামাল সরবরাহের জন্য প্রতিষ্ঠান তালিকাভুক্তিকরণ।

(শোয়াইব আহমাদ খান)
মুখ্যসচিব

পরিচালক (প্রশাসন ও উন্নয়ন)

ফোন: ০২-২২২২২৩৪৭

ই-মেইল: d.ad@wewb.gov.bd

বিঃ দ্রঃ- কর্তৃপক্ষ কোন প্রকার কারণ দর্শানো ব্যতিরেকেই যে কোন সিডিউল/তালিকাভুক্তিকরণ/আংশিক/সম্পূর্ণ গ্রহণ/ বাতিলের ক্ষমতা সংরক্ষণ করেন।

GD- 1071

Office of the Executive Engineer

Zone-2 (Mirpur)

Dhaka North City Corporation

3, Zoo Road, Mirpur, Dhaka

Memo No. 46.10.0000.077.14.021.2023

Date: 04/07/2023

e-Tender Notice

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

SL No.	Tender ID & Ref No.	Name of work	Method of procurement	Tender closing date & time
1	851828, 46.10.0000.077.14.79.22, Date: 20-09-22	Development of road including construction of Pipe line, sewers and footpath from Salek Matbar's house in Alubdi Village, Mirpur Section-12 to MP Checkpost, from H.A. Tower to MP Checkpost through Cantonment Bypass-Road Temple and from Ali Molla's house to Eastern Housing Canal under Ward No. 6.	NCT OTM	06-August-2023 15:00

This is an online tender, where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP System Portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted. To submit an 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's branches up to date. Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System Portal and e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd).

(Signature)

Md. Kamrul Hasan

Executive Engineer (Addl. Charge)

Zone-2 (Mirpur)

Dhaka North City Corporation, Dhaka

GD-1073

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

Office of the Executive Engineer,

PWD Division, Rangpur

Tel: 02589962357

e-mail: ee_rngpr@pwd.gov.bd

Memo No: ২৫১৯

Date: ০৩/০৭/২০২৩

INVITATION FOR e-GP TENDER

SL NO	e-GP Tender ID & Reference No	Name of work	Tender Proposal Closing Date and time
1	851416, 25.36.8500.009.14.174.22/1697(5)	Supply and installation of Planetarium Dome (Inner & Outer Dome) under the project named Establishment of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman Novotheatre, Rangpur. (Civil Sanitary and Electrical works)	03-Aug-2023 12:30

This is an online tender where only e-Tenders will be accepted in e-GP portal and no offline and hard copy will be accepted. To submit e-tender please register on in the National e-GP system Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) is required.

Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>)

(Signature)

(মোঃ আরিফুর রহমান মন্ডল)

নির্বাহী প্রকৌশলী

গণপূর্ত বিভাগ, রংপুর।

GD- 1072

Don't isolate
VVIPs from
people

President tells PGR

UNB, Dhaka

President Mohammed Shahabuddin yesterday urged members of the President Guard Regiment (PGR) to ensure maximum security to VVIPs without isolating them from the general people.

The president said this while addressing the PGR's 48th founding anniversary programme at its headquarters in Dhaka Cantonment.

"Your main responsibility is to ensure comprehensive, integrated and flawless security for VVIPs. But along with security, the public relations of VVIPs is also very important," he said.

He also said the responsibility entrusted on PGR is glorious on the one hand and on the other hand, it is very crucial and sensitive.

Chief of Army Staff General SM Shafiuddin Ahmed, PGR commander, secretaries concerned to the president and senior civil and military officials, among others, were also present.

Government
to buy more
fighter jets

Law minister tells JS

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Law Minister Anisul Huq told parliament yesterday that the government has a plan to purchase more advanced technology fighter jets in light of Forces Goal-2030 to modernise the Air Force.

Anisul, who is in charge of the Ministry of Defence in Parliamentary Affairs, was replying to a tabled question of ruling Awami League MP Anwar Hossain Khan from Laxmipur-1.

The minister said there are currently eight squadrons fighter jets in Bangladesh Air Force.

He said navy currently has more than 65 warships, two helicopters and four maritime aircraft -- including two submarines.

Meanwhile, Liberation War Affairs Minister AKM Mozammel Haque told the parliament that there are no brave freedom fighters working in government services at present.

Minister of Environment, Forests and Climate Change, Shahab Uddin informed the House that the global biodiversity is facing a serious threat due to human activities.

Two die of
diarrhoea in
Bandarban

OUR CORRESPONDENT,
Bandarban

Two diarrhoea patients, a man and a girl, died due to not being able to access medication and treatment in Bandarban's Thanchi.

Rumathi Tripura, 14, of Raymond Para area in the upazila's Tindu union, died on Saturday, while the disease claimed Chandra Tripura's life the next day. Chandra was a 68-year-old farmer. Health officials were informed of the deaths yesterday, informed Wahiduzzaman Murad, the health officer.

"We dispatched medical supplies and staff a week before Eid after the disease broke out. However, they had to come back mid-way as law enforcers barred them from entering the area due to security reasons," he added.

Jomarung Tripua, a member (reserve seat) of Tindu Union Parishad, the disease has resulted from limited access to clean drinking water.



The current state of the oil tanker Sagar Nandini-2 following a second explosion and fire on Monday evening. The fire was doused yesterday morning after 11 hours of effort.

PHOTO: TITU DAS

Under water for five
months a year

Mymensingh's waterlogging woes



PHOTO: STAR

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Mymensingh

For the past two decades, residents of Balashpur Madhyapara area in Mymensingh city have been enduring the challenging ordeal of wading through ankle to knee-length water for approximately five months each year, from May to September.

Despite the persistent waterlogging issue, aggravated during the monsoon season, the local authorities have been accused of making minimal efforts to address and resolve this long-standing problem, according to residents.

The situation has worsened in the past five years, said Md Abul Hossain, a retired railway employee. After heavy or moderate

rainfall, the entire area becomes submerged in ankle or knee deep water for several days, causing immense hardship for low-income residents like Farida Parvin, who revealed that even their bathrooms, toilets, and kitchens get flooded.

The gravity of the situation worsens if the showers persist for more than a day, leading to courtyards of most houses being inundated, she added.

Locals alleged that the construction of Balashpur Madhyapara road in 2013 without proper planning has exacerbated the problem. Initially, the water would flow into the Brahmaputra river through a drain connected to the nearby Kewatkhal area's Railway Power House Colony.

However, due to blockages over the years, the drain remains clogged, and no efforts have been made to clear the passage for rainwater, they said.

As a result, over 2,000 families and over 10,000 local residents are confined to their houses.

Traveling on banana rafts to reach rickshaws on the main road has become a necessity, causing immense inconvenience, said Ashraf Alam Jewel, an expatriate.

In addition to the waterlogging issue, residents in the locality expressed concern over the absence of dustbins, leading to the disposal of garbage in the rainwater during flooding, further worsening the situation.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 6

'TORTURING INMATE'
Papia shifted
to Cumilla jail

OUR CORRESPONDENT,
Gazipur

Shamima Noor Papia, former leader of Jubo Mahila League, has been transferred to Cumilla Central Jail from Kashimpur Jail in Gazipur following allegations of torturing an inmate.

Jail Superintendent Obaidur Rahman said Papia was transferred around 5:00pm on Monday based on a complaint filed by a relative of the inmate and the orders of higher authorities.

Runa Laila, the victim of the alleged torture and beating, is still receiving treatment at Shaheed Tajuddin Ahmad Medical College Hospital.

Her brother Abdul Karim had filed a complaint with Gazipur deputy commissioner on June 25.

The DC later assigned an additional district magistrate to investigate the incident.

Karim told The Daily Star that he heard the news that Papia was sent to Cumilla jail around 9:00pm on Monday. "This is not good news for our family. This is a good news for the inmates of Kashimpur jail."

Karim said, "I have asked the DC [Gazipur] to take actions against Papia. I didn't get justice. Papia has ruined my sister's life."

Three people have been served show-cause

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1

Tanker lacked
safety equipment,
trained staff

Says fire service director; blaze
doused after 11 hours, probe
committees formed

SUSHANTA GHOSH and MD ABBAS

The massive fire that broke out in the Sagar Nandini-2 oil tanker in Jhalakathi's Sugandha river on Monday evening was doused yesterday morning after an 11-hour-long frantic effort.

At least 13 people, including nine law enforcers, were injured after the fire erupted following an explosion in the tanker, which was carrying four lakh litres of petrol.

Twelve units of fire service from Barishal, Jhalakathi, and Khulna extinguished the fire at 5:25am yesterday, said Lt Col Tajul Islam Chowdhury, director (operations and maintenance) of fire service.

Besides, the oil tanker did not have a proper fire safety plan and lacked adequate safety equipment. In addition, the staff of the oil tanker was not properly trained, he said.

He also said the fire may have occurred due to accumulated gas from petrol or short circuit.

Senior officials, including energy secretary Khairuzzaman Majumdar and Barishal divisional commissioner Amin Ul Ahasan, visited the site at 1:30pm.

Two critically injured individuals, policeman Shawkat Jamil and oil tanker driver Sharif, were transferred to Sheikh Hasina National Institute of Burn and Plastic

SEE PAGE 4 COL 6

Trapped for 2
days without
food, water

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Cox's Bazar

An elephant calf, separated from its herd, has been trapped in Shah Parir Dwip of Cox's Bazar's Teknaf for the last two days without food or fresh water.

Meanwhile, forest department officials are conducting drives rescue the animal.

According to Abul Kalam Sarkar, ranger officer of Teknaf Coastal Forest Division, they were informed of a lost calf loitering around the area on Monday. The animal got lost while crossing the Naf river from Myanmar to Bangladesh and took shelter in the coastal forests.

"The calf, aged around six to seven months, is weak and exhausted. To add to its anxiety, people are continuously chasing it, making the rescue operations more difficult," he said.

Once rescued, the calf will be taken to protected forest lands or a safari park upon orders from authorities. Meanwhile, precautions are being taken to ensure that the animal is not harmed in any way, he added.



PHOTO: COLLECTED

Locals unite to save
century-old pond

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Bagerhat

The century-old Rayenda Bazar pond, one of the few existing fresh water bodies in Bagerhat's Sharankhola upazila, is in danger as the Zilla Parishad has decided to put it up for lease for the construction of a market.

According to locals, there is an acute shortage of freshwater sources in the area, and the construction of a market will further lead to the pond's extinction, making it more difficult for them to access water for their daily chores.

To protest this decision, various students and residents of the upazila formed a human chain on June 22.

According to the protesters, the Zilla Parishad had significantly narrowed the eastern side of the pond to construct a market with 8-10 shops, distorting the pond's shape. They are now looking to lease out the southern portion, which will lead to inevitable damages.

"Most people in this area are dependent on this pond for fresh water. Instead of excavating it, the Zilla Parishad is building shops on its sides. We have to walk for miles to access freshwater. I don't know why the authorities are ignoring our struggles," said Jahid Shaikh, a local.

Students from various institutions also use this pond to suffice their daily needs, informed Amrendu Halder, headteacher of Rayenda Government Pilot High School.

A pond sand filter (PSF) was constructed on the north side of the pond in the last financial year, spending Tk 7 lakh. The construction of new shops will deplete the pond's water and also destroy the PSF, leading to more

SEE PAGE 4 COL 6



School students protest the building of a market on the southern wing of the century-old Rayenda Bazar pond in Bagerhat's Sharankhola upazila amid drizzles. While the authorities are planning to lease the pond, locals worry that this initiative will destroy their only source of fresh-water supply in the area. Inset, the eastern side of the pond was narrowed earlier under a similar project.

PHOTO: STAR



“Although getting the grant from the government was a huge support, the film’s budget was a lot more than the amount we have received.”

SHAH ALAM SHAZU
For the first time in her long career, Apu Biswas made her debut as a producer with “Lal Shari”. Directed by Bandhan Biswas, the government-granted project has been released this Eid, under the banner of Apu Joy productions. Speaking to The Daily Star, Apu Biswas shared her emotions about her debut as a producer, her career plans and much more.

How have the audience responded to ‘Lal Shari’? The response is quite good. I have personally visited a number of halls and seeing the audience’s response amazed me. What was more fascinating to me, was the fact that girls and women are coming to watch the film while wearing red saree. What does ‘Lal Shari’ mean to you? Is it just another film? Lal Shari is a dream to me. This is the first film I have produced, which also received a government-grant. My director, Bandhan,

worked really hard for this film. The entire crew gave their best effort to bring this project in front of the audience. I believe viewers will enjoy this film. Is it true that you went over budget while filming this project? Yes, it is true. Although getting the grant from the government was a huge support, the film’s budget was a lot more than the amount we have received. When I was facing budget issues, Shakib Khan helped me to finish the project.

Recently, on social media, you expressed that after your parents, Shakib Khan has the most contribution behind your success. Could you elaborate? It is true. After my parents, Shakib played a huge role in establishing my career. We have presented numerous hit films together. The audience showered their love upon both of us, when we shared the screen together. It feels really great when the audience reminds me of those films and shares their love with me.

Shah Rukh Khan breaks nose after on-set accident



Bollywood’s king Shah Rukh Khan has met with an on-set accident during the shoot of an upcoming project in the US. The actor apparently sustained an injury to his nose, causing it to bleed, as reported by ET. He was then rushed to the hospital for a minor surgery and is currently in recovery. A source mentioned, “SRK was shooting for a project in Los Angeles and he ended up hurting his nose. He began bleeding and was immediately rushed to the hospital”. They also added, “His team was informed by the doctor that there was nothing to worry and King Khan would need to undergo a minor surgery to stop the bleeding. Post the operation, SRK was spotted with a bandage on his nose.”

PRITOM HASAN’S ‘Oboshorprapto Shontrashi’ released on YouTube



Pritom Hasan’s latest project, *Oboshorprapto Shontrashi* has finally been released on YouTube. Directed by Mabru Rashid Bannah, this marks their first collaboration together. Both artistes seemed super excited about their joint project, praising each other in the comment sections of their respective posts. Bannah posted on his Facebook page on Monday, revealing the official poster of the drama. In the caption of the poster, Bannah hinted at the drama’s theme and rated the experience of collaborating with Pritom, a ten out of ten. Viewers can enjoy the drama on Progati Entertainment’s YouTube channel.

NEWS

No free, fair polls possible

FROM PAGE 12
general election and the party’s thoughts on the current political situation in Bangladesh. Replying to a query, Fakhrul said, “European Union has always said that it wants a free, fair, inclusive and acceptable election. A team will be here to assess the election atmosphere.” He said they discussed the agenda of the BNP’s meeting with the European Union expert team. Asked whether there is any scope for talks as both the ruling Awami League and the BNP are firm on their stance, Fakhrul said, “I cannot

say anything in this regard. Because no such discussion was held today [yesterday]... They [EU team] wanted to know if an election was possible under the incumbent government.” The BNP secretary general said the AL has created such a situation and also proved through holding the last two parliamentary polls that a free and fair election is not possible without a neutral polls-time government. BNP Human Rights Affairs Secretary Asaduzzaman Asad and two other EU officials also attended yesterday’s meeting.

Nur denies meeting Safadi

FROM PAGE 12
7 this year, Safadi wrote: “In recent years, Shipan has used my name to take money from businessmen and politicians, things that I did not know about and was not involved in, made many promises that I did not know about.... “I hope that I will be able to do an activity [sic] with the right people in order to obtain the rights of the Bangladeshi people, and be able to bring about the change.” Safadi Center for International Diplomacy, Research and Public Relations, where Safadi is the director, prepared a report about the Holey Artisan attack in Dhaka. The title of the article is: The siege of Holey Artisan café and its impact on the country’s future counter terrorism effort. Israeli newspaper Israel Hayom says Safadi is also a lecturer on Islamic affairs, terrorism, and the Middle East. Previously, he was chief of staff in the Office of the Deputy Minister for Development of the Negev and Galilee and Regional Cooperation, and served as a liaison between Israeli and Syrian officials and the Syrian opposition. In an article titled “Why Likud voters should support minority candidates” published on January 23, 2019, it was written that Safadi, who is an inhabitant of Israel occupied Golan Heights, is not a Jew but a Druze. The Druze religion complies with the aspects of Hindu and Greek philosophy incorporated into the tenets of Islam. Safadi is a member of Israel’s ruling party Likud and a supporter of Benjamin Netanyahu. He was the chief of staff of Ayoob Kara. Kara became a member of the Knesset (Israeli parliament) in

1999. Kara worked as deputy speaker and chairman of foreign workers’ committee. In 2009, after briefly leaving the Knesset, he was elected back into office under the platform of unifying the Druze and Jewish people. From 2009 to 2013, Kara served as Israel’s Deputy Minister for the Development of the Negev and the Galilee and from 2015-17 as deputy minister for regional cooperation. In May 2017, he was appointed as the communications minister. The same article said Safadi has extensive political experience and he founded the Safadi Center for International Diplomacy, Research, Public Relations and Human Rights, where he works to enhance Israel’s public image in the greater Islamic world. Safadi’s activism is not limited to Syria and Kurdistan, he has been fighting to promote democracy, human rights and minority rights in Bangladesh. Due to his international public diplomacy work, he travels frequently to India, Azerbaijan, Europe and the US, it added. On July 12, 2015, quoting Al-Akhbar, a newspaper serving as Hezbollah’s mouthpiece in Lebanon, The Times of Israel reported that a computer hack revealed the identity of Syrians in contact with Israel, mentioning correspondence of Safadi with members of the Syrian opposition around the world. The article alleged that Safadi, working on behalf of the Israeli government, tried to recruit Israeli agents in Syria and Lebanon, smuggle weapons into the hands of Islamist rebel groups in Syria, and locate targets within Syria to be bombed by coalition forces.

Russian reporter badly beaten in Chechnya: NGO

AFP, Moscow
An award-winning Russian investigative journalist is in hospital after being badly beaten by armed assailants during a trip to Chechnya, the Memorial human rights group said yesterday. “Elena Milashina’s fingers have been broken and she is sometimes losing consciousness. She has bruises

all over her body,” the group said on social media. The incident happened early yesterday as Milashina and Alexander Nemov, a lawyer, were travelling from the airport. “They were savagely kicked, including in the face, received death threats and were threatened with a gun to the head. Their equipment was taken away and smashed,” Memorial

said. The Committee Against Torture, a human rights group, published photos of Milashina in hospital with her head shaved and covered in a green-coloured dye used on cuts and her hands bandaged. The media rights group Reporters Without Borders said it was “horrified by the savage attack” on Milashina.

Dress rehearsal for Asia Cup

FROM PAGE 12
which the Tigers won 2-1 at home last year. “They probably have one of the best bowling attacks in the world. I don’t expect anything less from what happened in the last series. We have to fight really hard. We can’t expect to walk in and win the game. It is a good thing that we are playing against them at least four times before the World Cup. I think it’s a good thing for both teams. They will also understand our strengths and weaknesses,” Tamim said at the press conference on Tuesday. Those strengths and weakness often vary for both teams due to the absence of stars, but this time

Alghanistan have a full-strength bowling attack. Alongside their world-class spin options such as Rashid Khan and Mujeeb-Ur-Rahman, they also have pace mettle with the likes of Azmatullah Omarzai and Fazalhaq Farooqi. Tamim said that doing well against such a bowling attack leading up to the World Cup would give his side ‘the best possible confidence.’ The big news from the Afghanistan camp was that spin wizard Rashid was doing well following recovery from back pain. “He [Rashid] is good, he feels better and is available for the games.” Skipper Hashmatullah Shahidi said at the press conference.

There was some grass on the track which could provide a testing spell or two for batters early in the innings. “It looks like a batting (wicket). Still, you have to play good cricket,” Shahidi dictated. Chattogram produces lots of runs and while a dark cloud hovers on Tamim’s fitness, the Tigers will be hoping that their batters fare better than their counterparts in order to gain a mental edge for the key tournaments. “The good thing is you will know the players more than now when we play these three games,” the Afghan skipper said, providing the punchline on the focus for the series.

Bill passed in JS amid protest by opposition

FROM PAGE 1
Currently, the EC can postpone an election at any stage if it thinks that it will not be able to hold a lawful election due to irregularities or malpractices. The amended RPO stipulates that the EC can suspend polls only on the polling day. Also, the commission cannot suspend or cancel the entire results of an election after the declaration of results by the returning officer. The EC can suspend the results of only those (one or more) polling stations where irregularities have been reported. It can cancel the results and hold new elections at those centres concerned following

investigations. Another provision of the amended RPO allows candidates to settle small loans and pay due telephone, gas, electricity, water, and other government service bills until the day before the submission of their nomination papers. Currently, these loans and bills can be settled seven days before filing of nomination forms. Taking part in the discussion on the bill, Gonoforum MP Mokabbir Khan said the EC is subservient to the government and laws are enacted in the country for the benefit of some individuals, groups and the government. He alleged that the electoral

system has been destroyed during the tenure of the incumbent government to such an extent that people are not interested in voting. Mokabbir said people are deeply concerned about the next national election and the concern has spread outside the country. This is because all elections held under party governments are questionable, he said. “People don’t want to see this kind of elections anymore. People want an election acceptable to all under a neutral government.” Jatiya Party lawmaker Fakhrul Imam questioned how the incumbent EC would conduct an impartial election if it is not given the power to

Ctg landowner

FROM PAGE 12
was learnt that the land owner Abdul Mannan and Nurul Kabir were carrying out the lifting operations at the site,” said the first information report of the case filed the following day. This incident did not deter them. Five months later, Bandar Police arrested six people from the site while they were lifting and transporting the MBM. Mannan fled the scene. Those arrested said the sacks were being excavated on Mannan’s instructions, according to the FIR. Mannan took interim bail for six weeks from the High Court on May 19 in connection with the first case, said Kishur Majumder, sub-inspector of Bandar Police Station, who is investigating both cases. Despite the raids and cases, Mannan is still involved in smuggling the prohibited MBM from the dumping station late at night, taking advantage of the unprotected facility, according to customs sources. “It was beyond our imagination that anyone would dig up the goods and sell these products in the market,” Chattogram Custom Commissioner Mohammad Fyzur Rahman told The Daily Star. He said that they have requested the port authority to install an incinerator to destroy the goods properly. Besides, CCH wrote to the Chattogram District Commissioner seeking a dedicated space for destroying perishable and prohibited goods, he added.

suspend polls. “A big difference has been made by replacing the word ‘election’ with ‘polling’ in the bill. Loan defaulters have been invited to run in elections ...,” he added. Responding to the criticism from the opposition MPs, the law minister said each constituency usually has 100-150 polling stations. The EC’s power of suspending polling in all centres is not democratic if violence or irregularities are reported in only 3-4 centres. “It is against the people’s right to vote. Because no violence or irregularities were reported in the rest of the polling centres,” Anisul said.

Prepare for the effects of El Nino

UN warns world as temperatures seen surging

AFP, Geneva;
The United Nations yesterday warned the world to prepare for the effects of El Nino, saying the weather phenomenon which triggers higher global temperatures is set to persist throughout 2023.
El Nino is a naturally occurring climate pattern typically associated with increased heat worldwide, as well as drought in some parts of the world and heavy rains elsewhere.
The phenomenon occurs on average every two to seven years, and episodes typically last nine to 12 months.
The UN's World Meteorological Organization declared El Nino was already under way and said there was a 90-percent chance that it would continue during the second half of 2023.
"The onset of El Nino will greatly increase the

likelihood of breaking temperature records and triggering more extreme heat in many parts of the world and in the ocean," warned WMO secretary-general Petteri Taalas.
"The declaration of an El Nino by WMO is the signal to governments around the world to mobilise



preparations to limit the impacts on our health, our ecosystems and our economies," said Taalas.
"Early warnings and anticipatory action of extreme weather events associated with this major climate phenomenon are vital to save lives and

livelihoods."
The US National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, which feeds into the WMO, announced on June 8 that El Nino had arrived.
"It is expected to be at least of moderate strength," the WMO said.
It noted that El Nino's warming effect on global temperatures is felt most strongly within a year of its onset -- in this case in 2024.
El Nino is the large-scale warming of surface temperatures in the central and eastern equatorial Pacific Ocean.
Conditions oscillate between El Nino and its generally cooling opposite La Nina, with neutral conditions in between.
El Nino events are typically associated with increased rainfall in parts of southern South America, southern US, Horn of Africa and central Asia.



A Palestinian man throws stones during clashes over an Israeli military operation in Jenin in the Israeli-occupied West Bank yesterday. UN aid agencies yesterday voiced alarm at the scale of the ongoing Israeli military operation in Jenin, where 10 Palestinians have been killed, saying there were restrictions on medical access.

PHOTO: REUTERS

SPAT OVER SPEAKER

Thai alliance unites on House leadership

REUTERS, Bangkok

Lawmakers in Thailand yesterday endorsed a veteran politician and leader of a small party as the new speaker of the lower house, signalling a detente in a row between the two biggest players as they seek to form a new coalition government.
The nomination of Wan Muhamad Noor Matha, 79, was widely seen as a compromise between alliance partners Move Forward and Pheu Thai, which have sparred for weeks over the speakership, a post crucial to the passage of bills and the timing of key legislative votes.
Wan Noor represents the Prachachart Party, a junior member of an eight-party alliance dominated by Move Forward and Pheu Thai, which together won the lion's share of the seats in the May 14 election, thrashing conservative parties allied with the royalist military.
A southerner and ethnic Malay Muslim in predominantly Buddhist Thailand, Wan Noor has served previously as house speaker and has close ties with Pheu Thai's leadership.
He was the only nomination and his selection is pending royal approval.
"I will conduct duties fairly ... with transparency in considering draft laws and petitions to improve the lives of all Thais," Wan Noor told the house.
Among his first tasks will be to table a joint vote of the 750-member bicameral parliament on a prime minister to form the next government.

VIRTUAL SCO SUMMIT Xi urges Shanghai ALLIANCE SOLIDARITY Putin thanks the bloc for support during failed rebellion; Modi urges SCO to fight terrorism, help Afghanistan

AGENCIES

China's Xi Jinping yesterday urged the leaders of Russia, Iran and other Shanghai alliance states to boost ties and resist sanctions, as Vladimir Putin thanked the bloc for support during a failed rebellion.
Xi "called for efforts to safeguard regional peace and ensure common security", state news agency Xinhua said, adding that he urged member states of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation to "enhance their solidarity".
Putin thanked the Beijing-headquartered SCO, joining his first summit since a short-lived mutiny last month after the head of the Wagner mercenary group, Yevgeny Prigozhin, led a failed rebellion against the Kremlin.
"Russia is confidently resisting and will continue to resist external pressure, sanctions and provocations," Putin told the bloc.
"I would like to thank my colleagues from the SCO countries who expressed support for the actions of the Russian leadership to protect the constitutional order and the life and security of citizens," Putin added.
China and Russia have in recent years ramped up economic cooperation and diplomatic contacts, with their strategic

partnership having only grown closer since Moscow's invasion of Ukraine.
While China says it is a neutral party to the Ukraine conflict, it has been criticised by Western nations for refusing to condemn Moscow's offensive, reports AFP.
The SCO summit -- which yesterday welcomed Iran as its ninth member -- also saw an apparent dig by India's Prime Minister Narendra Modi at arch-rival but fellow SCO member Pakistan.
"Some countries use cross border terrorism as an instrument in their policies, (they) give shelter to terrorists," said Modi, the host of the virtual meeting, without naming specific nations.
He said China, India, Iran, Pakistan, Russia and central Asian countries should jointly fight terrorism, help Afghanistan and tackle global challenges such as food, fuel and fertiliser shortages, reports Reuters.
India regularly accuses Pakistan of helping rebel groups, and the history of the two nuclear-armed neighbours has been mired in violence and bloodshed.
Pakistan also took part in the summit, with Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif condemning the "hydra-headed monster of terrorism and extremism", while warning that "any temptation to use it as

a cudgel for diplomatic point scoring must be eschewed".
Both India and Pakistan said Afghanistan remained a key concern, with Modi warning of the risk it was a base to "spread instability", while Sharif called for an "urgent reset" in international engagement with its Taliban rulers.
Created in 2001 to discuss security and economic matters, other SCO members are Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan.
Iran also joined as a full member of the grouping, with Tehran having intensified its diplomacy with friends and foes alike in recent months, seeking to reduce its isolation, improve its project strength.
Russian ally Belarus, which holds observer status, was also told it would become a full member at the next SCO summit.
Encompassing a vast stretch of the globe from Moscow to Beijing, the bloc makes up around half the world's population -- when including both member states as well as observer and "dialogue partner" nations.
India, which also hosts the G20 summit in September, is walking a diplomatic tightrope.
Uniquely, it is a member of both the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation and the Quad, set up with the United States, Japan and Australia to counter Beijing's growing assertiveness.
Modi was last month hosted in Washington with the full pomp of a state visit, where US President Joe Biden spoke of "two great friends and two great powers".



A youth walks past a closed beauty salon with images of women defaced at Shahr-e Naw area in Kabul, Afghanistan yesterday. Afghanistan's Taliban authorities have ordered beauty parlours across the country to shut within a month, the vice ministry confirmed yesterday, the latest curb to further squeeze women out of public life.

PHOTO: AFP

FUKUSHIMA PLANT Japan gets IAEA approval for water release

REUTERS, Tokyo

Japan yesterday won approval from the UN's nuclear watchdog for its plan to release treated radioactive water from the tsunami-wrecked Fukushima plant into the ocean, despite fierce resistance from Beijing and some local residents.
After a two-year review, the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) said Japan's plans were consistent with global safety standards and that they would have a "negligible radiological impact to people and the environment".
"This is a very special night," IAEA chief Rafael Grossi told Prime Minister Fumio Kishida before handing him a blue folder containing the final report.
Grossi later told reporters at the Japan National Press Club, where he was met by a small group of protesters, that he would seek to allay lingering concerns and would station IAEA staff at the Fukushima plant to monitor the release.

RUSSIAN SHELLING 9 children among 31 hurt in Ukraine

REUTERS, Kyiv

Russian shelling wounded at least 31 people, including nine children, in the small town of Pervomaiskyi in Ukraine's northeastern Kharkiv region yesterday, officials said. Oleh Synehubov, the Kharkiv region's governor, said on the Telegram messaging app that the shelling took place at 13:35 Kyiv time and several cars were on fire. He said the windows of eight multi-story building were smashed. Meanwhile, Russia said yesterday there was no basis to extend the accord that allows Ukraine to export grain through the Black Sea, criticising what Moscow says are obstacles to its export of agricultural products.

BJP appoints new chiefs in many states

NDTV ONLINE

Gearing up for the big 2024 elections in India, and crucial state polls this year, the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) yesterday announced new chiefs in many states. G Kishan Reddy, MP and union minister, will now lead the party in Telangana. BJP MLA Etela Rajender has been appointed chairman of the BJP's state election management committee for the upcoming Telangana assembly polls. Daggubati Purandeswari, daughter of former Andhra Pradesh CM NT Rama Rao, has been appointed Andhra Pradesh BJP president.

MASS SHOOTINGS 10 people killed across US

REUTERS

Mass shootings in Philadelphia, Baltimore and Fort Worth claimed the lives of 10 people ahead of the Fourth of July holiday, officials said, a grim illustration of the United States' decades-long failure to curb gun-fueled violence. In Fort Worth, Texas, three people were killed and eight wounded in a mass shooting following a local festival, police said yesterday. In a separate shooting incident in Philadelphia on Monday evening, five people were killed and two were injured when a suspect in a bullet-proof vest opened fire on apparent strangers. The Monday night shootings came a day after two people were shot dead and 28 others injured, about half of them children, in a hail of gunfire at an outdoor party in Baltimore.

IMRAN KHAN PROBE Pakistan grants extra powers to graft body

REUTERS, Karachi

Pakistan has issued a presidential ordinance granting extra detention powers to the country's anti-graft body, which is currently investigating a case involving former prime minister Imran Khan, media reported yesterday. Imran, the country's main opposition leader who has faced a string of cases since being ousted from power, was arrested in the case in May, which led to violent protests across the country. He was later released on bail.

Finally, some good news for economy

Exports growth shows the resilience of our businesses

That Bangladesh's merchandise export earnings have crossed the milestone of \$50 billion for the second consecutive year is a notable achievement indeed. In FY2022-23, exports fetched a record \$55.6 billion, which could provide the economy with some much-needed breathing space. Amid challenging conditions at both home and abroad, it is one of the few bright spots for our economy.

The receipts amount to an increase of 6.67 percent from a year earlier, thanks in part to a strong showing in June which saw \$5.03 billion come into the country, according to the Export Promotion Bureau. Even though the total amount fell short of the \$58 billion export target set for the fiscal year, it is a good sign at a time when international markets are going through extreme turbulence. As Bangladesh's major export destinations are grappling with a slowdown and high inflation, the increase managed to surpass many economists' expectations. Moreover, during this time, exporters had to deal with a number of production-related challenges, including low gas pressure and frequent load shedding.

The lion's share of the export burden was carried, predictably, by the garments sector which, despite the slowdown in Western markets, managed to diversify some of its products to other emerging markets. Since garments sectors of other countries struggled during the same period, this also shows the resilience of our own garments sector – although, admittedly, the depreciation of the taka against the dollar did play a big part in making ours more competitive.

Despite this additional advantage, however, other sectors failed to increase their export amounts. For example, important sectors like leather, jute, home textiles, and agricultural products registered negative growths in FY23. A major reason why leather products did badly was the issue of non-compliance at the Savar tannery estate. Despite spending more than Tk 500 crore and waiting for nearly a decade, Bangladesh is yet to reap the full benefit of the central effluent treatment plant (CETP) at the estate. Without a fully functional CETP, Bangladeshi companies will not be able to obtain the Leather Working Group certification, which is essential to attract international retailers and brands.

It is unacceptable that such hindrances should continue to slow down promising sectors of our economy. The government should identify what issues export sectors other than garments are facing, and address them promptly so that Bangladesh's exports can continue to grow.

Can we triumph over dengue this year?

Authorities must ramp up efforts to control it

At the beginning of May, experts had predicted that Bangladesh might see an even worse dengue outbreak this year than before. Unfortunately, all numbers point to this becoming a reality. While the number of dengue cases in June last year was 737, this June saw a staggering 5,956 cases, easily dwarfing the corresponding figure from 2019 – the worst year yet in terms of dengue infection in the country. In all likelihood, warnings about a surge in the breeding of Aedes mosquitoes post-Eid may come true. Adding fuel to the fire, a yet-to-be released survey conducted by DGHS in the two city corporations of Dhaka has detected Aedes larvae in 20 percent of houses under DNCC and 15 percent of houses under DSCC.

For a country dealing with dengue outbreaks for over two decades, Bangladesh still seems to be taking a novice's approach to the problem. This has reflected in the dengue situation getting worse with each passing year. In 2022, the highest number of people died of dengue – 281. The question is, why are the authorities still faltering in their efforts? One area of failure is their delayed drive to detect Aedes larvae. The survey of houses to find Aedes larvae should have been conducted at the beginning of the year (before the first monsoon rain). Why did the health directorate wait until June to carry it out, despite news of rising infections in the early months? What measures are being taken to prevent water stagnation in areas with a drainage problem? Once identified, are the breeding grounds of Aedes larvae being destroyed?

The authorities must be able to address these and other concerns regarding our dengue preparedness. The DGHS survey should provide useful information in identifying dengue hotspots and taking targeted measures in Dhaka, but other major cities should also be included. The coming three-four months are going to be crucial, so the authorities must dedicate all efforts to raising awareness, undertaking preventive drives, and keeping dengue numbers in check. The DGHS and all city corporations must not fail us this time.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

letters@thedailystar.net

Poor road condition in Dhanikhola union

The country has made great leaps in development in all major sectors. But some rural areas are still lagging behind. There are some mud roads in Dhanikhola union in Trishal upazila, Mymensingh that badly need the authorities' attention. Because of the poor road condition, schoolchildren here struggle to go to school, especially during monsoon. The locals here mostly depend on agriculture and fisheries. But they struggle to transport their commodities to the local marketplace due to the dilapidated roads. These roads need to be paved urgently so that the people of Dhanikhola and also Trishal can have an easy life and livelihood.

Md Shafiqur Rahman, PhD
Dhanikhola, Mymensingh

When green chillies become too hot to handle



Kamal Ahmed is an independent journalist. His Twitter handle is @ahmedkai

KAMAL AHMED

What a week has passed, with everyone feeling the heat of green chillies – many without even consuming it. If the term skyrocketing needs to be explained, the price of green chillies should be included in textbooks, as we saw it shoot up from Tk 400 per kg to Tk 1,000 within three days during this Eid-ul Azha. Netizens were quickly comparing its price with a kg of beef, which was selling around Tk 750.

Green chillies proved so hot to handle for the government that at one stage the commerce minister attempted to redirect the media to the agriculture minister for an explanation about the crisis. Though the crisis did not lead to any disorderly situation, the home minister, too, stepped in, and tried to placate consumers by saying the prices would come down soon.

Some apologists have tried to blame weather extremes, saying prolonged heatwaves have burnt chilli plants and crops in the northern parts of

Past experiences tell us that the government has consistently failed to anticipate the ensuing crises, be it due to genuine shortage or artificial supply disruptions by scrupulous trade syndicates. These recurrences have happened despite the fact that the commerce ministry has established a Price Review and Forecasting Cell.

the country, and few others have said recent excessive rainfall is the reason for further damage. It may very well be true that this particular crop has suffered significant damage owing to weather adversity, but where was the government's appropriate and timely response? Weather extremes are nothing new in Bangladesh as heatwaves and floods are occurring

more frequently, like the rest of the world, as a result of climate change, so some sort of a back-up plan and preparation ought to have been in place.

By the time the government decided to allow importing green chillies and tomatoes in bulk quantities, market volatility had reached the boiling point. Interestingly, we haven't heard anything about the demand and prices of tomatoes at retail or wholesale level, but green chillies have made their place in the headlines. It shows the difference between an essential condiment and a non-essential one. The Bangalee menu can be okay without any tomato, but not without chillies, most preferably the green ones. More importantly, it's essential with soaked rice, a staple food for the poor.

The green chilli fiasco is not the first such failure to manage the market – in other words, ensuring a balance between demand and supply and not allowing price volatility that could cause consumers' backlash and social unrest. The list of other essentials that have caused such an unreasonable price spike is too long, and includes rice, salt, sugar, onion, ginger and edible oil.

Unfortunately, past experiences

tell us that the government has consistently failed to anticipate the ensuing crises, be it due to genuine shortage or artificial supply disruptions by scrupulous trade syndicates. These recurrences have happened despite the fact that the commerce ministry has established a Price Review and Forecasting Cell. According to the ministry's website, the cell was set up

"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."



ILLUSTRATION: REHNUMA PROSHOON

on November 24, 2014, and "reviews various data including production, demand, import volume, storage and collection situation, distribution system and comparative analysis of domestic and international market prices of daily necessities." Describing its role further, the website says, "As a part of doing this business, this cell collects information from different (organisations) regarding production, stock, demand, supply, local and international market price, information on (opening LCs) and settlement of these essential goods and further works as a helping hand of the Government to keep the market essential (commodities) stable."

The past crises of essentials clearly show that this institutional mechanism hasn't been working since its inception. The government has also established a competition commission and a consumer rights directorate. But none of them has brought relief to the consumers. It's either due to their incompetence, or they have not been allowed to act independently from political interference.

The riddle about the market disorder, perhaps, is best explained by Commerce Minister Tipu Munshi's admission in parliament when he said,

This statement alone is good enough to prove the failure of governance, and poor consumers are being forced to pay the ransom to the alleged syndicates. It is therefore hard to discard the widely held perception of a nexus between the political authorities and the business syndicates. After all, businesspeople now dominate politics, and they will also have to fund their political friends and their parties' election campaigns.

As I write this article, the BBC has reported that the Competition and Markets Authority of the UK has just concluded its investigation into the fuel market and found that competition is not working, and retailers are overcharging motorists at the pumps. Responding to the finding, the UK government has announced a plan to introduce a new legislation to make retailers follow a price transparency scheme, so that consumers can easily find out the cheapest pump. It is aimed to restore effective competition among retailers and benefit the consumers. The UK example may not be comparable in Bangladesh, but at least it shows that free market doesn't mean reckless profiteering and monopolisation by the powerful businesses – individually or through syndication.

Looking back at London Climate Action Week 2023

POLITICS OF CLIMATE CHANGE

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

SALEEMUL HUQ

Sadiq Khan, the mayor of London, has been holding an annual weeklong London Climate Action Week (LCAW) in summer every year since he was elected mayor five years ago. The week consists of a series of different events held all over London by different groups focusing on actions to tackle climate change. This initiative has been an extremely successful way to raise awareness about the issues in London and, more importantly, to galvanise actions by different stakeholders in the city.

One of the characteristics of London is that it is not only the capital of the United Kingdom, but it is also an extremely international city with people from every country in the world living there, including a large number of people of Bangladeshi origin.

I have had the privilege of being invited to speak at a number of events during LCAW every year. At this year's event, my first observation was that there had been a major shift in the understanding of what tackling climate change means. In the previous years, almost all the events held during the week would focus on mitigation or reducing emissions of greenhouse gases (GHGs) through campaigns such



REPRESENTATIONAL PHOTO: REUTERS

as net zero, etc. However, this year I was very pleased to see a significant number of events focusing on adaptation and even loss and damage from human-induced climate change, as the UK and Europe suffered from heatwaves over the last few weeks.

One of such events that I was invited to speak at was a gathering of high-level

representatives from the insurance and reinsurance industry, for which London is a global hub, who have started to recognise the importance of dealing with losses and damages from human-induced climate change. This is indeed a welcome shift in awareness of this important sector, which has significant resources in terms of both

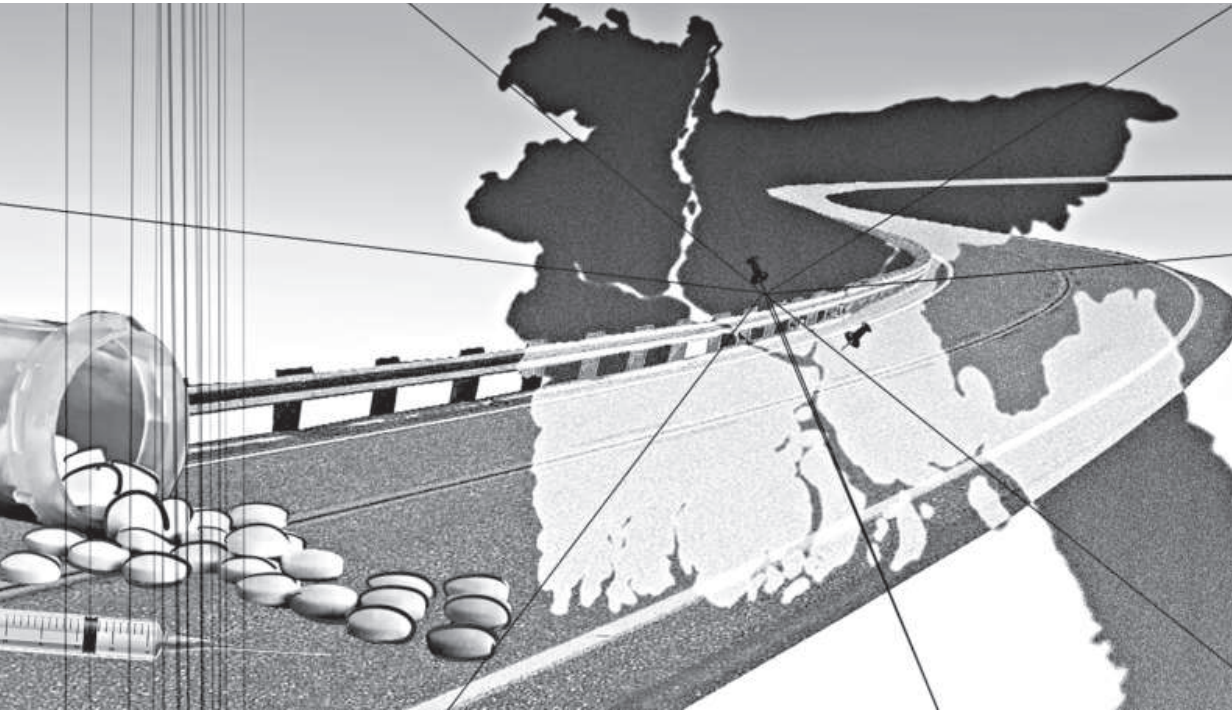
and migration, including with the London office of the International Organization of Migration (IOM), which brought together a significant number of policymakers and practitioners working on the issue.

One such event focused on the role that the Bangladeshi diaspora in London can play in tackling climate change in the UK, as well as connecting with their families and relatives in Bangladesh. There is a tremendous scope for collaboration between the Bangladeshi diaspora in the UK and Bangladesh on tackling the global climate crisis together.

The International Centre for Climate Change and Development (ICCCAD) also co-organised a major event on tackling loss and damage with the International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED), under the ALL ACT initiative we launched in Dhaka in March. This initiative now has many new partners in Least Developed Countries and Small Island Developing Countries, in which we will be carrying out research and capacity-building efforts to address loss and damage.

So, overall, LCAW 2023 has seen a breakthrough in the issue of supporting adaptation, building resilience, and addressing loss and damage.

Going forward, this may be an inspiration for the Dhaka city mayors to organise a similar climate action week in our capital city, and perhaps invite the mayor of London, so Dhaka and London can join forces to become global leaders in tackling climate change.



VISUAL: REHNUMA PROSHOON

Bangladesh tops the wrong ranking, again

Insufficient law enforcement, money laundering opportunities make the country an easy target for drug trafficking rings



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

TASNEEM TAYEB

Bangladesh turning into a hotbed for drug trafficking comes as no surprise given the country's geographic positioning that puts it at the centre of three major Asian drug trafficking routes: the Golden Wedge, the Golden Triangle, and the Golden Crescent. Add to that the incompetence of its authorities to bust well-connected and strategically-networked transnational trafficking rings as well as money laundering mechanisms that allow easy flow of illicit money abroad. The result: more than Tk 5,000 crore is laundered annually through drug trade out of the country, putting it at the top of the list of drug money laundering nations in Asia. Globally, Bangladesh ranks fifth, according to a report by the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD). The UNCTAD estimates account for trafficking of drugs including methamphetamine tablets (yaba), heroin, buprenorphine, and phensedyl.

The staggering increase in the seizure of yaba alone – from 800,000 pills in 2010 to 45 million pills in 2022 – is an alarming manifestation of the incredible growth of illicit drug trade in the country over the past decade. Little has been done to really dismantle the system that allows this business to thrive. If we focus on yaba alone, in a country where more than seven million pills are sold every day (a 2021 estimate by police), worth a whopping Tk 210 crore, the 45 million pills seized in 2022 account for only six and a half days of trade.

Not that the authorities are doing nothing: they set up checkpoints, conduct regular drives, catch small shipments and recover drugs, catch drug peddlers, and ever since the launch of the War on Drugs, alleged drug dealers are also frequently “killed” in “gunfights” with law enforcement members. However, in terms of results, law enforcers have only so much to show.

The problem perhaps lies in our approach to the issue, which on the surface seems to target the consignments, users and dealers. Where we fail is in going deeper to the roots and dismantling the system at the core. The system we are talking about is one that allows rampant corruption, nepotism, favouritism and self-interest to permeate every level of the state, from policymaking to enforcement.

There are many reasons why drug lords are going about with their business scot-free. For one, the Narcotics Control Act seems to be a major obstacle in apprehending the drug lords as it stipulates that to

bring a drug dealer or addict to book, drugs have to be confiscated in their possession. Practically speaking, it is always difficult to catch drug lords in possession of drugs; as a result, it is the dealers and peddlers who get caught during the drives.

In addition to this, we cannot rule out the possibility that due to the political affiliation and muscle of the big players, they are often deliberately left out of the drives. Take the case of the drug traffickers in Narayanganj – a transit point for drugs entering Dhaka and other nearby cities – who, despite being known and identified as drug bosses, are roaming out in the open. A *Prothom Alo* report details the identities of some of the 500-plus drug traders in Dhaka, many of

The staggering increase in the seizure of yaba alone – from 800,000 pills in 2010 to 45 million pills in 2022 – is an alarming manifestation of the incredible growth of illicit drug trade in the country over the past decade. Little has been done to really dismantle the system that allows this business to thrive.

whom are allegedly connected and affiliated with ruling party associate bodies such as Jubo League, Chhatra League and Swechchhasebak League, as well as the Awami League itself, along with Jubo Dal and Jatiya Party.

For instance, the report states that while Mir Hossain, general secretary of Swechchhasebak League's Kutubpur unit, tops the police list of narcotic traders in Fatullah, Narayanganj, and has been implicated in nine cases under various laws including the Narcotics Control Act, he has not been arrested as he has been holding a party post for a long time and also maintains his own force to manage drug trade.

And then there are known drug traders who have not even been named on the police list. Shakhawat Islam, former general secretary of Swechchhasebak League's Narayanganj city unit, for example, is a known drug trader, but he was not named on the list. Similarly, Jahangir Alam and his wife, known drug dealers facing lawsuits, have not been identified in the police list, apparently due to his good relations

with the law enforcers.

Unfortunately, the Narayanganj landscape is pretty much a reflection of the overall drug trading scenario in Bangladesh. Even the ones killed across the country in drug-related “gunfights,” “encounters,” and “infighting” are not above controversy as instances of extrajudicial killings and suppression of political opposition.

Then there is the problem of the long-pending narcotic cases. Although the Department of Narcotics Control appointed 68 prosecutors across the country in 2019 to expedite disposal of long-pending cases and improve the conviction rate, and the parliament passed the Narcotics Control (Amendment) Bill, 2020, empowering any court with appropriate jurisdiction to try narcotic cases, a report by this daily last year found 73,312 cases still pending with the court. Conviction rates in narcotics cases have witnessed a constant fall since 2014, when it was 64 percent, to 40 percent in 2021, according to DNC's Annual Drug Report 2021.

At this point in time, it is important to take a closer look at our intention, appetite and approach regarding this issue. While the government has launched a war on drugs, does it really have the political will to catch the drug lords, kingpins and mafia bosses who are pulling the strings and running the business behind the scenes?

Drug lords are finding innovative ways – including manipulating the desperate Rohingya refugees – and new routes to bring drugs into the country. Without a well-planned strategy and comprehensive measures in collaboration with all relevant authorities, intelligence bodies and law enforcers, this well-oiled machine cannot be stopped. We need a holistic approach to bring down drug trafficking rings, despite their identities and affiliations. The deadly combination of a land offering ripe opportunities for drug trafficking and a lax system that provides enough loopholes for easy money laundering makes Bangladesh an easy target for international drug trafficking rings. It is high time we aimed at dismantling the system that enables criminals to line up their pockets at the cost of the nation, rather than focusing on small players.

On June 18, the High Court asked the DNC to submit within a month the names of top drug dealers, while directing the Anti-Corruption Commission, Bangladesh Financial Intelligence Unit and Criminal Investigation Department to investigate within two months the allegations of drug money being laundered abroad. Previously in 2021, as many as 14 government bodies flouted a similar High Court directive asking to submit names of persons and entities who stash money in foreign banks. Are the authorities concerned going to adhere to the High Court directive this time?

The power of renewables



Madiha Athar Khan
is a tech product manager and art enthusiast.

MADIHA ATHAR KHAN

Everyone is worried about the future. Whether it's personal, political, social, technological or environmental, there is a point where it all becomes quite blurred. However, the sense of dread surrounding the future of the planet has only increased, effectively resulting in a feeling of suffocation not unlike what Dhaka city's overcrowdedness can induce. There are some initiatives that have already been taken by the government and people of Bangladesh to address the climate crisis, and to meet the Sustainable Development Goal 7 (SDG 7) – Affordable and Clean Energy. There is also immense potential in Bangladesh yet to be explored, such as virtual power plants.

Bangladesh has access to one invaluable natural resource in abundance: sunlight. But are we doing enough to harness its power? Across Dhaka city, one sees most buildings having solar panels installed on their rooftops. This is mainly due to a building code that requires a small percentage of electricity generated by renewable resources in order to attain a gas connection. Unfortunately, in most cases, the solar panels are only used as far as to power security lights. Were they instead connected to

solar panels could lead to generating as much as the electricity required to power 10-12 ACs daily. As a result, electricity bills as well as the load on the national grid would be reduced.

In the industrial sector, many RMG factories are turning to solar power as their main source of electricity. Under the net-metering policy, these factories with solar rooftop projects installed are not only able to meet most of their electricity needs through solar power, but they are also able to feed surplus solar energy into the national grid. This would result in the company's utility bill to be reduced by the amount being fed to the national grid. The government requires that up to 70 percent of the sanctioned load be powered by solar.

Theoretically, this could be implemented in residential homes as well, where there are solar panels already installed on the rooftops. It would have to be ensured that these homes are constructed in a three-phase power supply system with a rating of 440 volts. Additionally, regulatory permission would be needed to adopt net metering at a residence.

As far as renewable energy is concerned, Bangladesh has another vast area of opportunity in the nearly 2.5 million three-

other power station. A whitepaper published by SOLshare proposes that there is around 30 percent of the battery's charge remaining when the vehicles return after completing the day's trips. Provided the government's provision is obtained, the power from these batteries could be sold to the national grid during hours of peak demand, easing the grid's strain. Later into the night, with the help of cloud technology, the batteries would automatically charge from the grid at a lower tariff rate (low demand). The benefits of renewable technology can also increase if solar panels are installed on the rooftops of the garages.

It has just been announced that Bangladesh is going to start producing its own lithium ion batteries. An ambitious project, Bangladesh Lithium Battery Ltd, with an investment of Tk 600 crore, has already built its factory to produce these batteries and aims to be operational by 2024. Terming this a milestone development, the Dhaka Electric Supply Company Ltd (Desco) Managing Director Md Kausar Ameer Ali recently said three to four million three-wheeler electric vehicles in the country, which currently run on lead acid batteries, could soon be running on lithium ion batteries. He also expressed interest in constructing accessible charging stations for electric vehicles across the nation. This is emblematic of the kind of government support needed to further the cause of developing sustainable environmental solutions. Moreover, this takes us a step closer to making VPPs a reality.

In the Western developed nations, electric vehicles have become yet



Bangladesh has access to one natural resource in abundance, which is sunlight, and we need to do more to harness its power.
FILE PHOTO: REUTERS

the house circuit, there could be significant benefits to the residents.

Dr Sebastian Groh, CEO of SOLshare (a climate tech start-up) and lecturer at Brac University, says, “Let us say you have 20kWp (kilowatt peak) on your roof, which will require a space of 150sq-m and it will, on a yearly average, produce roughly 80kWh (kilowatt hour) per day, or 2.30MWh (megawatt hour) per month. For comparison, a 1.5-tonne AC consumes, depending on its level of energy efficiency, approximately between 2.0kW and 2.5kW. Hence, if you run your AC for three hours a day, this comes to 6.0kWh to 7.5kWh.” This means that proper utilisation of the available

wheeler electric vehicles used in the transport of goods and passengers nationwide. These are powered by lead acid batteries, which are energy-hungry and have maintenance and operational challenges. Increased adoption of lithium ion batteries would show improvements in performance and income abilities of the drivers.

These batteries would also play a key role in the implementation of a virtual power plant (VPP), the market for which is growing globally. VPPs make use of distributed assets – such as solar panels and batteries of electric vehicles – and aggregates the available energy to serve the wider population, just like any

another symbol of wealth and elevated class. It is aspirational to be able to afford and drive EVs. In a way, this is preventing us from building a sustainable future by keeping innovative solutions restricted within a minority. But the case is completely the opposite for a country like Bangladesh. The use of EVs here is a means to meet the needs of the drivers and garage owners from low- and middle-income backgrounds. Ultimately, this is exactly what makes lithium ion batteries, virtual power plants and renewable energy such a rich opportunity to pave the way towards a future that takes into account the needs of the masses.

CROSSWORD BY THOMAS JOSEPH

ACROSS

1 Rooted

6 Barnraising

11 Digression

12 Game with a drawing

13 Fork features

14 Hawke of Hollywood

15 Fashion

17 Tick off

18 Historic time

19 Stinging insects

22 Silent assent

23 Some sweaters

24 Dianne of “The Birdcage”

25 Grove fruit

27 Knight’s

address

30 San Diego player

31 French article

32 Objective

33 Arises

35 Brain parts

38 Debate topic

39 Island south of Sicily

40 Reunion attendee

41 Golf’s Sam

42 Airport areas

DOWN

1 Robin’s partner

2 Crumbly Italian cheese

3 Did wrong

4 Unspoiled spot

5 Worthy

6 Pub order

7 Word, in Paris

8 Opinion opener

9 Sets off

10 Gaggles output

16 Misplays at cards

20 Leaving high and dry

21 Play division

24 Combat

25 Buckeye

26 Wander aimlessly

27 Western sight

28 Bring about

29 Views anew

30 Soothes

34 China setting

36 LAX guess

37 Down

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

7-23

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11						12			
13						14			
15					16			17	
18					19	20	21		
22					23				
	24	25	26						
30							27	28	29
32					33		34		
35			36	37		38			
39						40			
41						42			

YESTERDAY’S ANSWERS

B	A	N	A	L	B	A	B	E	S
A	B	O	V	E	A	L	E	R	T
G	E	T	O	N	R	A	T	I	O
S	L	I	D	W	A	K	E		
N	U	N	D	E	P	A	R	T	S
A	R	G	U	E	S	N	O	R	E
P	E	T	N	A	M	E	F	I	T
H	A	L	E	P	O	N	D		
A	R	O	M	A	O	C	E	A	N
L	I	S	P	S	P	L	A	T	O
O	D	E	T	S	S	E	D	A	N



Over the past seven years, at least eight lives have been claimed, while countless others suffered injuries, after falling into these unprotected drains and canals that haunt the port city's streets.

PHOTO: RAJIB RAIHAN

Chattogram's death traps

Open drains continue to pose fatal threat

Take the case of the drains on both sides of the road from Muradpur to Bahaddarhat for example, one of the main thoroughfares of the port city. The huge drains by the side of footpaths have been left open and unprotected.

ARUN BIKASH DEY

"I thank God for letting me see my son's body for the last time," Ali Kawsar, the father of a 12-year old boy, told reporters with tear-stained eyes, soon after the body of his son Kamal was recovered from Mirza Khal in Chattogram's Muradpur area in December 2021, around 68 hours after he fell into a drain on December 7. And he had reasons to thank the Almighty, as he could at least find the body of his baby boy, or whatever that remained of him.

The family of vegetable vendor Saleh Ahmed was not so lucky, as he is still "missing" even after almost two years of falling into the same drain, located near Sholashahar Railway Station of the port city on August 25 of the same year.

Similarly, a university student named Sehrin Mahbub Sadia was also swept away by an open drain in September of the same year.

A three-year-old baby, Ojaila was killed after falling down into an unprotected drain in



With the ongoing monsoon threatening to exacerbate waterlogging, the residents harbour a collective fear that such tragedies may proliferate once more.

Sadarghat Nalapara area on April 9 this year.

Over the past seven years, at least eight lives have been claimed, while countless others suffered injuries, after falling into these unprotected drains and canals that haunt the city's streets.

The open drains have set up a perfect death trap for the people living in the port city. As the commercial capital of the country sinks even after minimal rain, it gets nearly impossible for its residents to identify these roadside sewers.

With the ongoing monsoon threatening to exacerbate waterlogging, the inhabitants of Chattogram harbour a collective fear that such tragedies may proliferate once more, as the disconcerting state of the open drains persists largely unchanged.

Take the case of the drains on both sides of the road from Muradpur to Bahaddarhat for example, one of the main thoroughfares of the port city. The huge drains by the side of footpaths have been left open and unprotected.

During a recent visit, it was noticed that pedestrians were walking on the footpaths with a high risk of falling into the drains. The risk of accidents increases manifold at nighttime and during waterlogging.

"Waterlogging is a common phenomenon

in this area during monsoon; as the road goes under water, pedestrians fail to differentiate the road from these drains, which causes accidents," said MA Gani, a resident of Bahaddarhat area.

The same situation prevailed in the drains beside the road from Muradpur to Sholashahar. There is a wide drain on one side of the road and a canal (Chashma Khal) on the other side. Although a number of accidents and casualties occurred in this canal including the tragedies mentioned above, the canal still lies unprotected.

"We are in a constant state of panic while crossing the road during waterlogging," said local resident Samir Jaladas.

According to city corporation officials, there are a total of 57 (161km) canals and 765km drains in the city. Chattogram City Corporation conducted a survey of risky spots in drains, canals and footpaths in 2021. After the survey, a total of 5,527 risky spots were identified, the total length of which was 19km. But the works on safeguarding the risky spots have allegedly been going on at a snail's pace, said sources in CCC.

Contacted, CCC Chief Engineer Rafiqul Islam said they have already installed slabs on 30,000 square feet of drains, while retaining walls have been built beside 18,000 square feet of risky canals.

About unprotected drains and canal in Muradpur to Sholashahar Gate-2, he said the Chattogram Development Authority has been working in these areas under a mega project for addressing waterlogging, so it is the responsibility of CDA to protect the canal and drains of these places.

Contacted, Lt Col Shah Ali, project director of CDA, said CDA was just working to install walls by the Chashma canal, but the drains on the other side of the road don't fall under their jurisdiction.

"We have built a protection wall in some portions of the canal and the remaining works will be resumed in the next dry season," he said.



Holding a photo of his son Kamal, a distraught Ali Kawsar looks for the 12-year-old who fell into an open drain while playing in Sholashahar Railway Station area on December 7, 2021. Kamal's body was recovered after 68 hours.

FILE PHOTO



Gone are the cinemas

ARUN BIKASH DEY

There was a time when movie theatres used to multiply Eid joys for most "Chatgaiya" families.

The port city residents would often set off to dive into a cinematic experience with friends or loved ones to relish a moment for themselves after a tiring day of festivities and responsibilities.

"On the first or second eve of Eid, we would set off in crowds to cheer Ajim-Sujata, Rahman-Shabnam and Razzak-Kabori as they appeared on the silver screen," recalled Abdul Hamid, a 60-year-old resident of Panchlaish area.

Over 30 movie theatres were running in full swing in the city during the late 1900s.

"The halls used to compete over good movies while we had to fight our way up the queue to get tickets. To further draw movie-buffs, the theatres would be beautifully decorated with coloured lights and posters during Eid, especially the Gulzar Cinema Hall. Sometimes, tickets even had to be bought in black," said Asad Haider of Bibirhat area.



A shopping mall replaced Gulzar Cinema Hall in 2005, said Abdul Aziz of Katalganj.

Most of the halls have been demolished to build multi-story buildings and malls. The city currently has just two operational movie theatres -- Cinema Palace and Sugandha (earlier known as Jhumur Cinema Hall), said Abul Hossain, president of Chattogram Cinema Hall Owners' Association and the owner of the halls.

"The demolition started in the late 1990s when vulgarity engulfed the film industry. With time, the audience turned away from the cinema halls, and our business started to collapse. The introduction of private television channels and internet facilities further added to their demise," he added.

A hall used to employ around 30 staff, all of whom received respect, enough salaries, and bonuses. However, with decreasing audience turn-outs, the owners are now struggling to even pay salaries regularly.

Following the first fall, other theatres -- Banani Complex, Jalsa, Nupur, Melody, Uzala, Lion, Khurshid Mahal, Rangam, Almas, Diner, Sanai, Upahar, Rhythm, Sagarika, Alankar, Akash, Chandni, Karnaphuli, Rupali, Purabi, and Garrison -- were demolished gradually to build shopping malls.

According to movie experts and hall owners, the audience now prefers multiplexes over single screens as they offer better sound and screen quality and more comfortable sitting arrangements.

Around 1,200 cinema halls have been shut down in the last 20 years in the country, while 200 are still struggling to cope with modern trends, mentioned Aolad Hossain Uzzwal, general secretary of Bangladesh Motion Picture Exhibitors' Association.

Where tigers roamed free

ARUN BIKASH DEY

"I grew up listening to my grandfather's stories of how tigers ascended down these hills. He even saw one himself while one of his friends even tried to hunt one once using a trap, but failed. It was their reality, but for us and our following generations, it's only a myth," said 80-year-old Saleh Ahmed sipping tea at a small stall in the port city's Tiger Pass area.

Chattogram city used to be a small settlement, stretching only 16 square km during the 1950s, with tigers roaming around the hills and hunting. Humans had to put up a tough fight to survive as they often preyed on their cattle, said Prof Abdul Mannan, former chairman of University Grants Commission and ex-vice chancellor of Chittagong University.

"I started schooling in this town in 1953 and have grown up listening to stories that sing of the 'glorious' tiger hunters," he added.

Once a wildlife sanctuary guarded by hills and hillocks, Tiger Pass, located in the central town, is now a busy intersection, connecting four roads. These roads were established at the cost of these wild animals to develop the city's connectivity.

Many other such city areas, like Leopard Pass and Baagh Ghona (Tigers' Haven), were named after the tigers that ruled over these areas.

Abdul Haque Chowdhury, in his book "Bandar Shahar Chattogram", mentioned of the tigers and how they were hunted down by humans using traps and guns, said Prof Anupam Sen, vice chancellor of Premier University Chittagong.



This is how the Tiger Pass intersection look now, devoid of hills and greenery.

"This place was named after the tigers as they would make frequent visits while crossing between the two big hills in the area that glided towards the sea, even during the 1900s," said Prof Sen who has spent his childhood in the city.

The roars could even be heard during the day time, said the social scientist, referring to Arthur Lloyd Clay's book "Leaves from a Diary in Lower Bengal".

"The government used to reward tiger hunters back then. In fact, two tigers were brought in for rewards within a week of Clay's posting in the district in 1862. These books carry evidence of the silent war between humans and the tigers, and how the four-legged legends had to bow before the guns before leaving this place for good," he added.



The area was named after tigers as they would make frequent visits while crossing between the two big hills in the area even during the 1900s. Now all that remains is a statue of a tiger.

Confident Afghans ready to dare Tigers

SPORTS REPORTER from Chattogram

A lack of experience in the longest format of the game and the absence of some of their regular cricketers saw Afghanistan succumb to a massive 546-run defeat against Bangladesh in the lone Test in Mirpur last month. But as the format shifts to white-ball cricket and players like superstar Rashid Khan and the experienced Mohammad Nabi return to the side after missing the Test match, the visitors have emerged as a strong unit for the three-match ODI series starting today in Chattogram. Although Bangladesh have been consistent in the 50-over format and could be labelled favourites after beating Afghanistan in four of their last five ODIs, Hashmatullah Shahidi's side are capable of testing the hosts. When asked if he thought Bangladesh were favourites, the 31-year-old replied: "Afghanistan are also here to play cricket and win". He certainly meant what he said, reflecting the confidence gained from winning twelve of their 18 games over the past two years. He added: "It's not about them. Yes, of course, they have played good cricket but we are also here to play good cricket. We have also done well over the past two years." The obvious threat remains the world-class Rashid, who has proven to be a game-changer against the Tigers



in their den by picking up twelve wickets in six games at an economy of 3.87. Nabi also brings loads of experience both with bat and ball and is another cricketer in the Afghan camp who could turn things around. He also bagged twelve wickets in 10 games in Bangladesh at a miserly economy of 3.70 while his batting credentials will surely attract a lot of attention. On the other hand, mystery spinner Mujeeb Ur Rahman has been quite toothless against the Tigers, managing to scalp just one wicket from the three games he has played against Bangladesh so far. The Afghans included five new faces, including young uncapped leg-spinner Izharulhaq Naveed, who has already made his mark in franchise cricket leagues. Uncapped left-arm spinner Zia Akbar can prove to another surprise element for the visitors. While Bangladesh are aware of the spin threat, Shahidi did not forget to remind what he has in his pace arsenal, led by left-arm seamer Fazalhaq Farooqi and Azmatullah Omarzai alongside a bunch of uncapped pacers raring to make an impact. "The good thing is we had good spinners. But now we have good seamers like Fazal and Azmat, who are doing well. We also brought the new guy Wafadar Momand who has good pace and also Saleem Safi. He also has good pace and it definitely gives us an advantage. Alongside good spinners, we also have good pacers as well," he said. Batting-wise, Rahmanullah Gurbaz can be devastating on his day while the likes of Rahmat Shah, Nabi, Shahidi and Najibullah Zadran have the ability to spoil the Tigers' party.

Federer wows Wimbledon crowd

AFP, London

Wimbledon paid tribute to Roger Federer on Tuesday as the eight-time champion returned to the scene of his some of his greatest triumphs. The Centre Court crowd gave the Swiss great a prolonged standing ovation interspersed with cheers as he entered the royal box. Federer, fresh from appearing on stage with Coldplay in Zurich at the weekend, was visibly moved before taking his seat next to Catherine, the Princess of Wales. The 41-year-old has mostly stayed away from tennis since bowing out in emotional scenes at the Laver Cup in London in September but was similarly honoured at the grass-court event in Halle, Germany, last month. Federer, who ended his career with 20 Grand Slam titles, won his first Wimbledon title in 2003 and a record eighth men's crown in 2017. He played his final match at the All England club in 2021, losing in the quarter-finals to Poland's Hubert Hurkacz. Novak Djokovic is the hot favourite to equal Federer's Wimbledon mark this year and secure his 24th Grand Slam title.



Having missed the lone Test against Afghanistan last month due to a finger injury picked up during the Ireland tour in May, star all-rounder Shakib Al Hasan is set to return to action in the white-ball series against the Afghans, starting with the first of the three-match ODI series in Chattogram today.

PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

Cautious of 'risk', Tigers gear up for Afghanistan

ABDULLAH AL MEHDI from Chattogram

The Bangladesh team appeared to have put in the hard yards over the past two days and thus had a rather light training session in Chattogram yesterday on the eve of the first ODI against Afghanistan today. The majority of the work went on behind closed-door sessions, with only Shakib Al Hasan, making a return following an injury, doing specific work in the nets with head coach Chandika Hathurusingha. The pacers had a day off the day on Monday and, bar Shakib, the rest of the batters, including skipper Tamim Iqbal and the likes of Afif Hossain, Mohammad Naim and Najmul Hossain, had net sessions. Mushfiqur Rahim and Towhid Hridoy were a common denominator between the training session on both days, giving it the feel of a fragmented routine with separate days to focus on bowlers and batters. Allan Donald worked in the morning with all five pacers in Taskin Ahmed, Ebadot Hossain, Shoriful Islam, Hasan Mahmud and Mustafizur Rahman. They went about their rhythm routine while bowling near the centre wickets before partaking in a fielding exercise, namely high catches with Shane McDermott. With all five pacers fit, Tamim opined that 'in these three games, you will see different combinations of pacers.' Mushfiqur and Towhid did not need much guidance and Hathurusingha could put his attention to Shakib's elbow position after the all-rounder brought it to his attention. The head coach also spent some time with Liton, going for a look at the centre wickets along with the batter, perhaps preparing him for a role that may befall him if Tamim's injury worsens. The Tigers' ODI skipper has been struggling with back pain recently and informed during the press conference yesterday that he was available for the game today despite not being at a hundred per cent. "After the game tomorrow I will be able to understand what the situation is. But till now, [the decision is] I am



You might see some changes in the pace bowling department. Everyone here is doing well and we might play different combinations according to our plans in each game. But it will depend on how the pitch plays tomorrow. But I can confirm that you are going to witness different combinations in the three games.

Tamim Iqbal
Bangladesh ODI captain

playing tomorrow," the skipper said. Indeed, there was a risk attached to playing with a problematic back. "Right now I feel that I am ready for tomorrow but during the game if I feel that I am not ready and it can be too risky then I, along with the medical department, will take a decision," Tamim said. Although Tamim's eagerness to play has a risk, his selection is obvious. "If the captain is available, there isn't a matter of selection. So it will mean he is playing," a team management source said. Tamim's injury problem is a headache for the team management but in Shakib and Liton, they will now look to find an adequate response in case a leadership vacuum arises this series.



Top seed Carlos Alcaraz opened his Wimbledon campaign yesterday in ruthless fashion as he routed French veteran Jeremy Chardy with a dominating 6-0, 6-2, 7-5 first round victory, underlining his status as the main challenger to reigning champion Novak Djokovic.

PHOTO: AFP

Zim miss out on World Cup

AFP, Harare

Michael Leask helped Scotland to a stunning 31-run victory over Zimbabwe on Tuesday to set up a winner-takes-all clash with the Netherlands for a place at the World Cup. The defeat for the hosts also meant that the African nation will not be playing in the World Cup for the second time in a row. Sri Lanka became the first of the top two teams in the Super Six table to have qualified for the October-November World Cup in India when they beat Zimbabwe on Sunday. The hosts could have clinched the second spot with victory over Scotland in Bulawayo, but it was not to be after a poor batting display by their top order. Leask top scored with a 34-ball 48 as Scotland racked up 234 runs for eight wickets off their allotted 50 overs. Coming in at number eight, he combined with Mark Watt (21 not out) for an invaluable eighth-wicket partnership of 46 after the Scots had been left reeling at 170-7. Three other batters -- Matthew Cross (38), Brandon McMullen (34) and George Munsey (31) -- all got into the 30s, but failed to build on their



PHOTO: ICC

time at the crease. Sean Williams grabbed 3-41 off his 10 overs, but failed to shine with the bat as Zimbabwe were quickly reduced to 37/4 in the run chase, under intense pressure from Scottish quick Chris Sole (3-33). Wessly Madhevere hit 40 and the dangerous Sikandar Raza 34 as Zimbabwe fought back. Ryan Burl gave the host nation most hope, however, hitting 83 off 84 balls. But Burl crucially fell to the offbreak of Leask, who also had a smart catch off his own bowling to dismiss Richard Ngarava.

Choton back in coaching

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh women's football team's former head coach Golam Rabbani Choton took over Bangladesh Army's women's football team for two months. The successful coach of the women's team stepped down from Bangladesh Football Federation's duties late in May, with the BFF acknowledging his resignation today, extending its best wishes to its former coach. The coach took charge of the new team from July 2 for two months, but told media that he would be willing to coach any team -- men or women -- in future. Meanwhile, the national women's team is currently undergoing training under assistant coach Mahbubur Rahman Litu for two FIFA friendlies against Nepal later this month. BFF's technical director Paul Smalley is scheduled to return to the country today, and BFF sources said, decision about a new head coach will be taken after consultation with Smalley.





No free, fair polls possible without a neutral govt

Fakhrul tells EU envoy
STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir has told European Union Ambassador to Bangladesh Charles Whiteley that a free and fair election cannot be held without a non-party neutral government.

He made the remark while talking to journalists after holding a closed-door meeting with Whiteley at the BNP chairperson's political office in the capital's Gulshan yesterday.

"You [journalists] must know that an expert team of the European Union will visit Bangladesh next week. That team will hold talks with different political parties and civil society members. We have discussed that issue today."

The BNP leader said they discussed the next

SEE PAGE 6 COL 1



Palestinian people flee the Jenin refugee camp in the occupied West Bank during an ongoing Israeli military operation yesterday. PHOTO: AFP

Jenin raid close to completion

Says Israel; Palestinian death toll rises to 10; thousands flee homes

REUTERS, Jenin

Israel is close to completing its Jenin operation, a senior aide to Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said yesterday after the fiercest fighting in the flashpoint West Bank town in more than two decades killed 10 Palestinians and forced thousands to flee.

Launched early on Monday, the raid involving hundreds of commandos and air strikes prompted the internationally backed Palestinian administration to say it was suspending contacts with Israel.

Codenaming the operation in Jenin's tenement-like refugee camp "Home and Garden", Israel says the objective is to uproot Iranian-backed Palestinian factions behind a surge in gun and bomb attacks.

A Palestinian wounded during the house-to-house clashes died overnight and another body was found in the morning, bringing the death toll to 10, with around 100 wounded, the Palestinian health ministry said.

The operation "is close to completing the achievement of the goals set," Israeli National Security Adviser Tzachi Hanegbi told Kan radio after a relative lull in the clashes overnight.

The Palestinian Red Crescent said it had evacuated 500 families, or around 3,000 people, from the camp, where some 14,000 people live in less than half a square kilometre and which has been one of the focal points of a wave of violence that has swept the West Bank for more than a year.

Ctg landowner selling banned fish feed

Substance was 'destroyed' by Ctg customs

MOHAMMAD SUMAN

A landowner has been extracting and selling banned meat and bone meal (MBM) from a dumping station in port city, posing a serious health risk to humans.

On September 24 last year, Chattogram Customs House (CCH) discarded about 9,770 tonnes of seized MBM imported under false declaration between 2019 to 2021 at a rented dumping station in the port city's Anandabazar area.

The MBM was buried as intact sacks, and the CCH withdrew the Ansar guards from the facility a week after dumping the hazardous good, The Daily Star has learnt from people informed on the proceedings.

Soon after the guards were removed, Abdul Mannan, who rented the land to CCH, began digging out the buried MBM to sell to fish feed traders in Cumilla, Feni, Netrokona, Lakshmipur, Noakhali and Chattogram districts, according to police and customs.

MBM is a processed by-product of cattle, poultry and swine slaughterhouse leftovers such as bone, meat, organs, tissues and fat. It is used as animal feed including fish.

Commerce ministry banned the import and sale of MBM on December 26, 2018 following a Bangladesh Food Safety Authority report that found it harmful and carcinogenic.

On November 8 last year, Bandar Police seized 12 dump trucks loaded with MBM and six excavators from the dumping station.

"From speaking with the drivers and helpers present, it

SEE PAGE 6 COL 6

Nur denies meeting Safadi

STAR REPORT

Gono Odhikar Parishad Member Secretary Nurul Haque Nur yesterday refuted reports of meeting Israeli citizen Mendi N Safadi.

He told this to The Daily Star a day after Prothom Alo reported that Safadi in a text message sent on June 26 had confirmed meeting Nur.

Nur said Safadi had met several ruling Awami League leaders, and photos of those meetings were doing the rounds on social media.

"This means he is serving the interest of the ruling party. Since we are doing anti-government politics, the government can make Safadi come up with such a claim. Had any such meeting taken place, they [the ruling AL] would have evidence like video footage. They would have presented that," he said.

When The Daily Star approached Safadi through a phone number mentioned on the Facebook page of Safadi Center for International Diplomacy, Safadi said, "I am not

interested in giving any press interview for now."

A rift within the Gono Odhikar Parishad has made headlines recently after its convenor Reza Kibria alleged that Nur had secretly met Safadi abroad.

Nur maintains that no such meeting ever took place.

Many have asked who Safadi is, the level of his influence, and what he has to do with Bangladesh.

Safadi's name first came to the fore in Bangladesh in May 2016 when Aslam Chowdhury, a BNP leader, reportedly met him at an event in India. Aslam was jailed for an "anti-state plot" centring the meeting.

WHO IS SAFADI?

Safadi's name first came to the fore in Bangladesh in May 2016 when Aslam Chowdhury, a BNP leader, reportedly met him at an event in India. Aslam was jailed for an "anti-state plot" centring the meeting.

A man named Shipan Kumar Basu had arranged the meeting.

Shipan is the founding president of World Hindu Struggle of which Safadi was an adviser.

In a Facebook post of Safadi Center for International Diplomacy on April

SEE PAGE 6 COL 1

Dress rehearsal for Asia Cup, WC starts today

SPORTS REPORTER

When it comes to playing ODIs, Bangladesh have held sway over their Asian rivals Afghanistan by winning a majority of the games. However, Afghanistan have also been able to spring some surprises of their own and, ahead of the first ODI at Zahur Ahmed Chowdhury Stadium today, the series is shaping up to be a dress rehearsal for the upcoming ties between the two sides in two key tournaments: the Asia Cup and the World Cup.

The Tigers have won seven games and lost four against Afghanistan in the ODI format. They have also triumphed in both the ODI World Cup games that they played against Afghanistan. Bangladesh will also be playing their opening World Cup fixture in India against Afghanistan and ODI skipper Tamim Iqbal opined the series would be just as hard as the last one,

SEE PAGE 6 COL 3

Android robot takes podium as orchestra conductor

CNN ONLINE

An android robot, Eve R 6, took the conductor's podium in Seoul on Friday evening to lead a performance by South Korea's national orchestra, marking the first such attempt in the country.

The two-armed robot, designed by the Korea Institute of Industrial Technology, made its debut at the National Theater of Korea, leading musicians in the country's national orchestra.

The robot, with a humanoid face, first bowed to the audience and started waving its arms to control the tempo of the live show.

"Movements by a conductor are very detailed," Choi Soo-yeoul, who led Friday's performance alongside the robot, said. "The robot was able to present such detailed moves much better than I had imagined."

But Eve R 6's "critical weakness," Choi said, is that it cannot listen.

Lee Young-ju, an audience member who studies traditional Korean music, said the robot's moves, though impeccable in keeping the rhythm, lacked "breath" — or the ability to keep the orchestra ready to engage collectively and instantly — which he said was essential in performance.



Approval must for arresting govt officials

JS passes bill

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Permission has to be taken from the government or the appointing authorities concerned for arresting the officers of autonomous, state-owned and local government bodies before a court accepts the charge sheets in criminal cases filed over carrying out their duties.

The parliament yesterday passed the Public Service (Amendment) Bill-2023 keeping this provision.

The bill was passed by voice vote.

Clearance from the Finance Division was made mandatory for the autonomous, legislative and local government bodies for financial expenditures.

Participating in the discussion on the bill, Gonoforum MP Mokabbir Khan said several provisions of the bill contradicted the constitution and laws of the land.

He said it has been seen that the secretary, additional secretary or joint secretary of some ministries do not work properly.

Jatiya Party MP Pir Fazlur Rahman said any citizen can be arrested prior to pressing of charges in a criminal case. No permission is needed for this, he added.

But prior permission would be needed for arresting government officials, which is contrary to the principle that all citizens have equal rights, Fazlur said.



Although vehicles are not supposed to stop on this flyover, opened to traffic last month, buses often drop off passengers near Tongi College Gate area. People then jaywalk to their destinations, disrupting traffic flow and putting themselves at risk. The photo was taken yesterday. PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

ROHINGYA GENOCIDE CASE

Make efforts to finish it as soon as possible

Momen to ICC prosecutor

UNB, Dhaka

Foreign Minister AK Abdul Momen has sought efforts from the International Criminal Court (ICC) to finish the case related to the Rohingyas as soon as possible — to ensure that genocide never happens again anywhere in the world.

"You should put in efforts to finish the case as fast as possible. Justice delayed, justice denied," he said to ICC Prosecutor Karim AA Khan QC yesterday.

In November 2019, the International Criminal Court judges granted a request to open a full investigation into alleged atrocities committed against the Rohingyas within the jurisdiction of the court.

This authorisation to open an investigation is seen as a "significant development" for the pursuit of justice and the establishment of the truth, in particular for the victims of alleged crimes in this situation.

Investigators from the Office of the Prosecutor are now carefully and thoroughly seeking to uncover the truth regarding what happened to the Rohingya people in Myanmar which forced them to flee to Bangladesh.

Foreign Minister Momen said those involved in Rohingya genocide should be held accountable. "We say genocide never again."