



The BNP, left, and the ruling Awami League, right, held massive rallies in the capital's Nayapaltan and Baitul Mukarram national mosque areas yesterday. From the rallies, the BNP formally announced its one-point movement demanding parliamentary polls under a non-party interim government, while the AL reiterated that there will be no election unless under Sheikh Hasina. PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN, RASHED SHUMON

Rohingyas for stronger US role in repatriation

Urge visiting US under secy to increase aid
MOKAMMEL SHUVO and PORIMOL PALMA

Rohingyas have urged a stronger US role for their safe and sustainable repatriation to Myanmar when Uzra Zeya, under secretary for civilian security, democracy and human rights, visited the camps in Cox's Bazar yesterday.

They expressed gratitude to the Bangladesh government and the people for sheltering more than a million Rohingyas who fled a brutal military campaign in the Rakhine State of

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PHOTO ON PAGE 12

Quit, pave way for free, fair election

BNP asks govt at a rally in city, announces one-point movement for non-partisan admin

SAJJAD HOSSAIN

Announcing a one-point movement for polls under a non-party interim government, the BNP yesterday asked the government to step down right away and pave the way for conducting the election freely and fairly.

The party declared it will hold marches in all city and district headquarters on July 18 and July 19 in the first programme as part of the one-point movement.

Apart from the BNP, 36 like-minded political parties also announced a one-point movement to press home the same demand.

"There is no more demand. The only demand is resignation of the government, dissolution of parliament, and an election under a non-party interim administration..." said Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir, secretary general of BNP.

He was addressing a massive rally, organised by

the BNP's Dhaka north and south units, in front of the party's Nayapaltan central office.

"I am announcing the programme, on behalf of BNP acting chairman Tarique Rahman, to free the nation [from misrule]. It's a historic moment as other political parties who are with us in the movement are also making similar announcements."

Fakhrul said the BNP and like-minded parties, who are carrying out an anti-government movement, have unanimously decided to make a joint declaration on a simultaneous one-point movement from their respective positions.

He called upon all other democratic political parties to come forward so they, together with the people, can wage an irresistible movement to establish a government of the people by unseating the "fascist and autocratic" government.

RELATED STORY, PHOTOS ON PAGE 2 SEE PAGE 2 COL 4

- March from Dhaka's Gabtoli to Jatrabari on July 18
- From Abdullahpur to Bahadur Shah Park on July 19
- In metropolitan cities and district headquarters on July 18

No polls unless under Hasina

AL declares at a rally in capital

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The ruling Awami League has said there will be no election unless it is held under Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina.

The announcement came from a huge "peace" rally near Baitul Mukarram mosque yesterday. At another rally only a kilometre away, the BNP vowed to unseat the government through a one-point movement.

Speaking at the "peace" rally, AL General Secretary Obaidul Quader said, "We, too, have a one-point demand. Our one-point demand is election under Sheikh Hasina."

"The game is on until the election... Take to the streets whenever you are asked," he told the rally organised by Dhaka city (north and south) units of the AL apparently to counter the BNP rally in Nayapaltan.

The archrival parties held the rallies at a time when delegations from the USA and the European Union are here to assess the environment ahead of the national election, slated for January next year.

Quader, also the road, transport and bridges minister, said, "BNP leaders hate Sheikh Hasina because they know they will lose if they participate in the election."

Referring to the foreign delegates, he said, "You want free and fair elections. We want that too. Anyone trying to obstruct free and fair elections will be resisted."

The ruling AL will continue to hold programmes until the polls, he said, asking the party's associated organisations to organise rallies regularly.

Thousands of supporters started to throng the venue before the event started around 2:30pm. Activists came in droves from Savar, Dhamrai,

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EU team explores election laws

Also enquires about media practices

STAR REPORT

The EU Election Exploratory Mission sought to know about Bangladesh's electoral laws and procedures at a meeting with Law Secretary Md Golam Sarwar yesterday.

Speaking to The Daily Star after the meeting, Golam Sarwar said, "I told them that a free and fair election is possible under the present Election Commission as the legal structure to this effect is sufficiently strong."

He also told the mission how the chief election commissioner and other election commissioners were "appointed under the country's law in a very transparent manner" – selected by a committee led by a judge of the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court.

He further said there was no such EC recruitment law in other countries in the subcontinent.

"I informed them that the judicial magistrates work under the Election Commission's supervision during the polls period and that the commission's power to stop voting has been enhanced after the amendment to the Representation of the People Order. They [the mission] were satisfied," the law secretary added.

"I told them that a probe committee is formed under a joint district judge for every constituency once the election schedule is announced. The committee will perform duties till the election result gazette is issued,

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

বিমনিপ্লাহিবি রাহ্মানিবি রাহীম

আপনার উদারতা ছিল আকাশ সমান ও প্রচেষ্টা ছিল নির্ভিক
সৈনিকের মত; কঠোর পরিশ্রম ও দক্ষতার জন্যই আপনি
নিজেকে ছাড়িয়ে আলোকিত করেছেন সমগ্র জাতিকে

বীর মুক্তিযোদ্ধা ও কিংবদন্তি শিল্পোদ্যোক্তা
মো: নূরুল ইসলাম
(মে ৩, ১৯৪৬ - জুলাই ১৩, ২০২০)

তৃতীয় মৃত্যুবার্ষিকীতে আমাদের

বিনম্র শ্রদ্ধা

‘যতদিন বেঁচে আছেন বা থাকি
আসুন সবাই মিলে এই দেশের জন্য কিছু করি’
— নূরুল ইসলাম

JAMUNA GROUP



People walk to their destinations as huge tailbacks were caused due to vehicle searches by police at Amin Bazaar on the Dhaka-Aricha Highway. The security measures were taken ahead of the Awami League and BNP rallies yesterday. *Right top*, around 20 people scrambling to board a single pick-up, as no other transport was available. *Right bottom*, people waiting for buses in the capital's Shyamoli. Afraid of violence, many public transport owners took their buses off the city streets.



PHOTOS: PALASH KHAN AND PRABIR DAS

ENTRY POINTS TO CAPITAL

Checkposts lead to long tailbacks

Many allege excesses by law enforcers ahead of AL, BNP rallies; people suffer for lack of transport inside city

STAR REPORT

Travellers faced immense sufferings yesterday due to a gridlock at a point of entry to the city and a shortage of public transport centring rallies of Awami League and BNP.

Dhaka-bound people on the Dhaka-Aricha highway suffered the worst as a long tailback was created after police set up a checkpoint in Savar's Amin Bazar area.

Cops were seen searching vehicles, passengers and pedestrians. They even checked some peoples' mobile phones.

Many travellers said they were stuck in traffic for hours, while some others resorted to walking to their destinations.

"I have been in Salehpur bridge area for around two hours. My sister, who lives in Mirpur, is severely ill. I have to go to her as fast as possible. I started walking as I have no other way to get there," said Abdur Rahim, a bus passenger, around 12:30pm.

Kamal Hossain, 45, a private organisation employee, said when

the bus he was on reached Amin Bazar, police halted the vehicle and the passengers were asked to get down.

"I had no choice but to walk," he told The Daily Star.

Deepak Chandra Saha, officer-in-charge of Savar Model Police Station, said, "This is part of our regular search. It was intensified to prevent any untoward incident in the capital ahead of the rallies."

The BNP alleged that police in the morning halted 40 minibuses hired by the party activists to join the rally, but police denied the allegation.

Three youths, two of whom were siblings, on their way to the capital to catch a flight, were held by cops during the search, alleged their families.

But OC Deepak refuted the claim.

The BNP also alleged that police picked up 40 of its activists at Birulia and Amin Bazar checkpoints. Police dismissed this allegation as well.

In Narayanganj, checkpoints were set up at Signboard, Mouchak, Kanchpur and Madanpur points

-- gateways to the capital through the Dhaka-Chattogram and Dhaka-Sylhet highways.

Aminul Islam, who was travelling from Cumilla's Daudkandi to Dhaka, said, "Police halted our bus at three points -- Kanchpur, Chittagong Road and Signboard."

In Gazipur, police set up checkpoints at Chandra and Joydebpur intersections, Kapasia bridge and Haldoba points.

Congestion was created at Kaliakoir Bazar as AL activists held a rally blocking road, said witnesses.

In Munshiganj, bus owners suspended services to Dhaka.

Meanwhile, a lack of public transport caused trouble for commuters in the city.

Around 10:30am at Shyamoli bus stand, Fatema Tuz Zohra had been waiting for a bus over one and a half hours to go to Jatrabari.

"There is no bus. I have never seen such light traffic. I'm worried about returning home," said Fatema, who took her one-year-old daughter

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IMPORT OF FOOD GRAIN

Govt shortens window to submit tender

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government has cut down the tender submission time by nearly two-thirds to 15 days for speedy import of 11 lakh tonnes of food grains even though there is ample stock in the silos.

According to the government's procurement rules, a bidder has to submit a tender to import food grains within 42 days of publishing an advertisement in a newspaper.

That window has now been shortened to 15 days at yesterday's meeting of the cabinet committee on economic affairs chaired by Finance Minister AHM Mustafa Kamal.

The facility was sought so that food grains can be imported speedily in future, said a food ministry official.

At present, there is sufficient stock of food grains in the government silos. As of Tuesday, the government had 18.96 lakh tonnes of food grains in its warehouses.

Also at yesterday's meeting, the committee approved the import of 11 lakh tonnes of food grains: five lakh tonnes of rice and six lakh tonnes of wheat.

Of the five lakh tonnes of rice, three lakh tonnes will be imported by the directorate general of food under a government-to-government (G-2-G) arrangement and the remaining two lakh tonnes through an international tender process.

Of the six lakh tonnes of wheat, 4.5 lakh tonnes will be brought under a G-2-G arrangement and 1.5 lakh tonnes through an international tender process.

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Bangladesh to import LNG from Malaysia

UNB, Dhaka

Bangladesh is going to import liquefied natural gas (LNG) from Malaysia as the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs approved in principle a proposal of the state-owned Petrobangla in this regard.

"Malaysian company Perintis Akal Sdn Bhd will supply the LNG on a long term basis and Petrobangla will buy it under the Speedy Supply of Power and Energy (Special) Act 2010," said Sayed Mahbub Khan, additional secretary of the Cabinet Division, while briefing on the outcomes of the meeting.

Finance Minister AHM Mustafa Kamal presided over the meeting held virtually, also attended by State Minister for Power, Energy and Mineral Resources Nasrul Hamid.

However, no detail was disclosed about the proposal. It will be placed in the meeting of the Cabinet Committee on Government Purchase for a final approval, sources said.

If approved, Malaysia will be the third country, after Qatar and Oman, from which Bangladesh will import LNG from on a long term basis.

Man dies from electrocution

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A man died from electrocution after a live wire fell on him in old Dhaka's Chawkbazar area early today.

The deceased, identified as 19-year-old Biplab, was a helper of a truck.

The incident took place around 2:00am while unloading a truck in the Urdu Road area, said Shuvonkar Roy, a sub-inspector of Chawkbazar Police Station.

Biplab was standing beside the vehicle when an overhead wire fell on Biplab, leaving him unconscious, he added.

He was taken to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital where doctors declared him dead around 2:45am, the SI said.

The body was sent hospital morgue for autopsy.

JOURNO NADIM MURDER CASE

One more accused arrested

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Jamalpur

Police have arrested another accused in a case filed over the murder of journalist Golam Rabbani Nadim in Jamalpur.

Aslam Miah, 35, of Jamalpur's Bakshiganj upazila, was arrested from Kurigram's Roumari upazila yesterday, reports our local correspondent quoting Sohel Rana, officer-in-charge (OC) of Bakshiganj Police Station.

With his arrest, 17 people have so far been arrested in the case, said police.

Aslam was a close aide of the now expelled chairman of Sadhupara Union Parishad and the prime accused of the case Mahmudul Alam Babu.

Aslam directly took part in the killing, said OC Sohel Rana.

Nadim was the Jamalpur district correspondent of Banglanews24.com and also the Bakshiganj upazila correspondent of Ekattor TV.

He died on June 15, a day after being attacked by supporters of Mahmudul Alam Babu.

No polls unless under Hasina

FROM PAGE 1

Dohar, Nawabganj, Keraniganj, and Gazipur.

Some of the senior party leaders were irked by too many banners and festoons in front of the stage. They repeatedly asked the activists to put the banners down, and at one point, said those carrying banners would be expelled.

Local leaders hoping to be MPs and members of different committees mostly brought the banners as part of their self-promotion activities. They even scuffled next to the stage.

At the beginning of his speech, AL Office Secretary Biplab Barua said, "You have covered the stage with banners, please take these down."

After a while, AL Organising Secretary Mirza Azam took the microphone and said he would teach the unruly banner holders "a lesson in politics" by expelling them.

SM Mannan Kachi, general secretary of Dhaka city (north) AL, said he was not even sure whether the people holding the banners were party activists or someone hired them.

But the warnings didn't seem to work.

Addressing the rally, Information Minister and AL Joint General Secretary Hasan Mahmud said the BNP had announced a one-point demand before the 2014 election too, but that yielded nothing.

Mahbubul Alam Hanif, another

joint general secretary, urged the BNP to take part in the election to test its popularity.

Dhaka South City Corporation Mayor Sheikh Fazle Noor Taposh said the capital will be under AL's control till the election.

"In January, we will show what a proper election is," he said.

AL presidium members Begum Matia Chowdhury, Abdur Razzaque, Mofazzal Hossain Chowdhury Maya, Qamrul Islam, Dr Mustafa Jalal Mohiuddin, Jahangir Kabir Nanak and Abdur Rahman, AL Joint General Secretary AFM Bahauddin Nasim, and organising secretaries Ahmad Hossain, BM Mozammel Haque, among others, addressed the rally.

Rohingyas for stronger US role in repatriation

FROM PAGE 1

Myanmar six years back, but said they were now leading a miserable life in camps.

Despite repeated efforts, repatriation has not been possible yet, with the Rohingyas saying the situation in Rakhine was not safe and they had no guarantee of citizenship.

Myanmar faces a genocide case at the International Court of Justice, while the US determined atrocities against Rohingyas as genocide.

The delegation, which flew to Cox's Bazar yesterday morning, reached the Rohingya camps in Ukhia around 10:50am.

The delegation members, who also include Donald Lu, assistant secretary of state for South and Central Asia, visited a Rohingya registration centre, a food distribution centre and then held meetings with Rohingya men and women at a community centre for an hour.

"The Rohingyas expressed their desire to return to Myanmar as soon as possible, describing the camp life as like life in prison," said Md Yusuf, a Rohingya leader.

The Rohingyas also urged the US to put pressure on Myanmar for speedy

repatriation. The delegation also talked to the Rohingyas about their education system, food and security in the camps.

Mohammad Ismail, another Rohingya who joined the meeting, said they informed the delegation that the education system in the camp is limited and there is no opportunity for higher education.

They also shared their concerns over security, saying that the measures for security are not enough, he added.

Another Rohingya Mohammad Idris said they expressed their dissatisfaction over cutting the food ration and demanded that the amount be increased to the previous level.

Food ration per Rohingya a month was cut to \$8 in May this year from \$12.

During the delegation's visit, a group of Rohingyas led by Mohammad Zubair, chairman of Arakan Rohingya Society for Peace and Human Right, submitted an application to Zeya, demanding speedy repatriation of the Rohingyas to Myanmar.

The application said Rohingyas lived in Myanmar for centuries, but their ethnicity was not recognised by the Myanmar junta.

"Yet, the world is silently watching those games without making a noise... So, we Rohingyas hope that the US will continuously stand by us and work for the Rohingyas," it said.

The US delegation also met Mohammad Mizanur Rahman, the refugee, relief and repatriation commissioner, at his office in Cox's Bazar in the afternoon before flying to Dhaka.

Mizanur later told journalists that the delegation discussed the cuts in food ration and assured of continuing humanitarian assistance.

He added that they also talked about dignified and voluntary repatriation and improving law and order as well as checking Rohingya trafficking.

The delegation flew to Dhaka in the evening.

Today, Zeya is scheduled to hold meetings with Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, her Private Sector Industry and Investment Adviser Salman F Rahman, Law Minister Anisul Huq, Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan and Foreign Secretary Masud Bin Momen, and civil society groups to discuss democracy, human rights, labour rights and freedom of expression.

Quit, pave way for free, fair election

FROM PAGE 1

Urging the government to step down immediately, he warned that if it didn't do so, it would not manage to have any escape route.

The BNP leader said they announced the initial programme of their one-point movement and that they will come up with fresh programmes in line with people's expectations if the government does not quit.

"We will topple this fascist and illegitimate government and establish one of people through an election under a non-party government. We must be victorious."

Fakhrul urged the law enforcers and the government employees to discharge their duties neutrally upholding their oath of office. "Otherwise, you will be accused of breaching oaths."

He alleged that the government has been indulging in unbridled corruption and misdeeds as it has no accountability to the people.

The government tried to obstruct party leaders and activists from joining the rally by creating obstacles in different areas, he added.

The BNP secretary general remembered those leaders and activists who have been "disappeared forcefully" and killed during the anti-government movement.

Standing committee member Mirza Abbas slammed the Awami League for holding a "counter rally" in the capital in the name of a "peace rally".

"Their programme did not draw public support as they are holding the 'peace rally' keeping the country's people unhappy..." he said.

BNP leaders and activists from different parts of Dhaka and adjacent districts started pouring into the rally venue with processions since 8:00am. They carried banners, festoons, placards, and portraits of the top party leaders.

A stage was set up on several trucks parked side by side. More than

100 loudspeakers were used at the rally which began around 2:00pm. Some CCTV cameras were installed near the stage.

Senior BNP leaders also spoke at the meeting, conducted by Dhaka north city BNP Member Secretary Aminul Huq and acting president of Dhaka south city BNP Tanvir Ahmed Robin.

Amanullah Aman, convener of Dhaka north city BNP, led the party men take an oath that they would not return home without ousting the government.

Mobile internet services (3G and 4G) were snapped in the rally venue area during the meeting.

A large number of law enforcers were deployed at Nayapaltan to maintain law and order.

A fewer number of public transport plied the city streets throughout the day yesterday.

PASSENGERS SUFFER

Dhaka-bound passengers endured immense sufferings on the Dhaka-Aricha highway in Savar's Aminbazar area yesterday as police set up checkpoints there.

Police searched a large number of vehicles and frisked passengers and pedestrians at the checkpoints which were operated from 8:00am to 3:00pm. Law enforcers were also seen checking mobile phones of many.

Shahidul Islam, additional superintendent of police (Savar circle), however, denied the allegation of checking mobile phones.

Meanwhile, Savar police in the morning intercepted 40 minibuses in Jahangirnagar Society Gate area. The vehicles were rented for carrying local BNP leaders and activists to the rally venue in the capital.

Khorshed Alam, former joint secretary of Dhaka district BNP, said they hired 70 minibuses to transport party men to the capital. A team of Savar police, led by Inspector (investigation) Abdur Rashid, intercepted 40 of those around 10:00am, he alleged.

OC Depok Chandra Saha of Savar Police Station claimed that they didn't detain anyone or intercept any vehicle bound for the BNP's rally.

The BNP announced a 10-point demand from its rally in the capital on December 10 last year. The party and its allies launched a simultaneous movement from December 24 to press home the 10-point demand.

After observing different programmes for seven months, the party yesterday announced the one-point movement.

Our Savar correspondent also contributed to this report.

N Korea fires long-range ballistic missile

AFP, Seoul

North Korea has fired a long-range ballistic missile, the South Korean military said yesterday, days after Pyongyang threatened to down US spy planes that violated its airspace.

Relations between the two Koreas are at one of their lowest points ever, with diplomacy stalled and North Korean leader Kim Jong Un calling for increased weapons development, including tactical nukes.

In response, Seoul and Washington have ramped up security cooperation, vowing that Pyongyang would face a nuclear response and the "end" of its current government were it to ever use its nuclear weapons against the allies.

South Korea's military said it had detected the launch of a long-range ballistic missile fired from the Pyongyang area around 10 am (0100 GMT). "The ballistic missile was fired on a lofted trajectory and flew 1,000 km (620 miles) before splashing down in the East Sea," the Joint Chiefs of Staff said, referring to the body of water also known as the Sea of Japan.

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A milestone in sewage treatment

PM to inaugurate South Asia's largest single STP today

STAR REPORT

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina is set to inaugurate the recently completed modern and environment-friendly Dasherbandi Sewage Treatment Plant (STP) in Dhaka today, the largest of its kind in South Asia.

The Dasherbandi Sewage Treatment Plant is the first modern STP and also the first modern sludge drying-incinerator in Bangladesh as well as the largest single sewage treatment plant in South Asia.

Having the capacity to treat 500 million litres of sewage, the modern plant will play an enormous role in preventing environment pollution and improving the water quality of Balu and Shitalakshya rivers, Rampura canal and other water bodies.

The plant was constructed on the east of Aftabnagar area, reports UNB.

In the plant, some 45 tonnes of fly ash will be generated from sewage sludge a day, which can be used as raw materials in cement factories.

The Dasherbandi STP will treat sewage coming from a number of the city's areas, including Tejgaon, Niketan, Badda, Banani, Gulshan (part), Banani, Ramna, Eskaton, Nayatola, Moghbazar, Wireless, Mouchak, Outer Circular Road, Mohanagar Housing, Hatirjheel, Kalabagan and Dhanmondi (part).

The plant will be able to treat 20-25 percent of the 2,000 million litre sewage generated in Dhaka.

The plant was constructed as part of a master plan taken up by Wasa to construct five STPs to treat 100

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Having the capacity to treat 500 million litres of sewage, the Dasherbandi Sewage Treatment Plant will play an enormous role in preventing environment pollution and improving the water quality of Rampura canal, Balu River, Shitalakshya River and other water bodies.

PHOTO: ANISIUR RAHMAN

Strengthening armed forces for protection, not war: PM



UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday said her government has taken adequate steps for the overall development of the armed forces to safeguard the country's independence and sovereignty, but it has no intention to lock into war with anyone.

The prime minister said this while commissioning naval base BNS Sher-e-Bangla and eight ships, including four Landing Craft Utility, at Kolapara in Patuakhali.

She joined the

SEE PAGE 4 COL 6

Ex-Gulshan OC, wife jailed in graft case

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday sentenced Firoz Kabir, a former officer-in-charge (OC) of Gulshan Police Station, to six years' imprisonment in a case filed over amassing Tk 87 lakh illegally.

His wife Sabrina Ahmed Eva was also jailed for four years for assisting her husband to acquire the illegal wealth.

Judge Sheikh Hafizur Rahman of the Special Judge's Court-9 of Dhaka handed down the sentence in presence of the couple, now on bail, at the courtroom.

The judge also fined Firoz Kabir Tk 1,74,34,638 and directed the convict to pay it to the state treasury within 60 days, in default of which the government can confiscate the fined money.

Soon after the verdict, the judge cancelled their bail and sent them to Dhaka Central Jail in Keraniganj with a conviction warrant.

Besides, the judge directed the authorities concerned to confiscate Tk 87,17,194 from Firoz Kabir, which was earned illegally, in favour of the state.

Earlier, the prosecution and the defence completed their arguments and the court recorded statements of 12 prosecution witnesses, including the case's complainant.

According to the case statement, Firoz Kabir earned Tk 87,17,194 through corruption and bribery from January 2012 to May 2016 and deposited it in his current accounts of AB, Dutch-Bangla, NRB, Islami and Brac Bank Ltd.

He also deposited Tk 30.97 lakh at an account of his wife at Gulshan's Dutch-Bangla Bank Limited branch.

During an investigation, the ACC interrogated the couple about their wealth but they did not give any satisfactory answer.

SAIDPUR RAILWAY WORKSHOP

A much-needed initiative in the works

BR to revamp 153-year-old establishment

TUHIN SHUBHRA ADHIKARY

While the Bangladesh Railway has taken and implemented dozens of projects to expand its rail lines and acquire new locomotives and carriages, its workshops remained neglected for years.

A decade has passed since the last workshop (where locomotives, carriages and wagons get repaired and maintained) modernisation project in 2009, leaving these vital facilities to wither away while production sharply declined.

Take the case of Saidpur Railway Workshop – the largest workshop in BR. At least 665 of 787 (84.5 percent) of its plants and machinery are over two decades old, and many of them are out of order now, BR sources said.

In 2020, BR initiated efforts to modernise the workshop by preparing a proposal for a feasibility study. However, the project remained in limbo without further advancement.

After over three years, BR has revived the plan; and a project evaluation committee led by the secretaries of the ministry is going to hold a meeting on the project proposal today.

The meeting will decide whether

Workers repairing train carriages at the Saidpur railway workshop in Niphamari.

FILE PHOTO

the project should be sent to the Planning Ministry for approval, Partha Sarkar, additional director general (rolling stock) of BR, told The Daily Star yesterday.

The proposal contains a feasibility study, detailed design preparations, and bid document development, at an estimated cost of Tk 16.02 crore.

The project, if approved, aims to be completed by December 2024.

However, even if approved, the actual modernisation of the workshop will be a time-consuming process, as BR would need to initiate a separate project

based on the study's outcome to carry out the repair and renovation works.

BR has a total of six workshops – four for repair and maintenance of the locomotives while two for carriages and wagons. BR took two projects to modernise Pahartali and Saidpur workshops in 2007 and 2009 respectively.

After these projects, no new project was taken for modernisation of the workshops, a BR official, having knowledge about the matter, told this correspondent.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 2



Workers repairing train carriages at the Saidpur railway workshop in Niphamari.

FILE PHOTO

Record 101 hajj pilgrims die this year

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A record 101 Bangladeshi hajj pilgrims died so far in Saudi Arabia this year.

Of the deceased, 24 are female and 77 are male, according to the Ministry of Religious Affairs.

The ministry's hajj bulletin released on July 11 revealed that 85 hajj pilgrims died in Makkah, five in Medina, seven in Mina, two in Arafat, and one each in Jeddah and Muzdalifah.

This year's hajj has been observed amid intense heat. Thirty-two hajj pilgrims died within a week since July 3. On June 29, seven hajj pilgrims died due to heat stroke, according to media reports.

This is the highest number of Bangladeshis who died in Saudi Arabia during the hajj, according to the Hajj Agencies Association of Bangladesh.

Hajj pilgrims who die in Saudi Arabia are usually buried in Saudi Arabia, HAAB President M Shahadat Hossain Taslim told The Daily Star.

This year the hajj was observed on July 27.

Around 1,22,884 people went to Saudi Arabia to perform Hajj this year.

Release Khadija immediately

Demand citizens' platforms

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Khadijatul Kubra, the Jagannath University political science student who is incarcerated under the Digital Security Act, must be released immediately, demanded different citizens' platforms yesterday.

Shujan sent a statement expressing deep concern over the fact that Khadija's bail order has been stayed for four months by the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court.

"We have noticed that ever since she was arrested on September 17, 2022, her bail has been repeatedly denied by the court. It is a major violation of human rights to keep a student in jail simply because she had allegedly made remarks that criticises the government," said the statement.

"This raises questions about the judiciary's independence," it observed.

"Getting bail is the right of a citizen – it is not dependent on the kindness of the judiciary," it added.

They also questioned the silence of the university administration. "It is inconceivable that a student will be wrongfully incarcerated month after month, and the university administration will remain quiet," they said.

The Digital Security Act Victims' Network also sent a statement decrying the judiciary's decision to stay Khadija's bail order.

"Since we are a democracy, it cannot be a crime to criticise the government on social media," they said.

They pointed out that Khadija was a minor at the time of the filing of the case, but she was arrested as an adult. Both demanded that the DSA be repealed.

Getting bail is the right of a citizen -- it is not dependent on the kindness of the judiciary.

NSU holds 24th convocation

STAR REPORT

Over 7,000 students were awarded graduation degrees at the 24th convocation of North South University (NSU) held yesterday at the Bangabandhu Bangladesh-China Friendship Exhibition Centre, Purbachal, said a press release.

Education Minister Dipu Moni presided over the ceremony on behalf of President Mohammed Shahabuddin.

The convocation speaker was Montek S Ahluwalia, former deputy chairman of the Planning Commission of India and a fellow of the Centre for Social and Economic Progress.

Javed Muneer Ahmad, chairman of the Board of Trustees, NSU; Dr Junaid Kamal Ahmad, member

SEE PAGE 4 COL 6

Join hands to combat epidemics

Speakers tell conference on health diplomacy

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The International Conference on Public Health and Diplomacy ended yesterday with a call for strong cooperation among countries.

Organised jointly by the foreign affairs and health ministries, and World Health Organization, Bangladesh, the two-day event was inaugurated by the prime minister in a city hotel on Tuesday.

The conference explored the scope of collaborative research and development initiatives to combat epidemics, including dengue, malaria, and other communicable diseases.

Discussions on health diplomacy were difficult earlier as most people were unaware of its seriousness. However, following Covid-19, this topic has become very important," said Ambassador Masud Bin Momen, senior secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, while delivering the concluding remarks.

Combating public health threats like tuberculosis, malaria, antimicrobial resistance, and noncommunicable diseases is challenging


SEE PAGE 4 COL 2



Education Minister Dipu Moni awarding a student at the 24th convocation of North South University at Bangabandhu Bangladesh-China Friendship Exhibition Centre in Dhaka yesterday.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

PRAYER
TIMING



JULY 13

Fazr	Zohr	Asr	Maghrib	Esha
AZAN 4-10	12-45	5-00	6-55	8-17
JAMAAAT 4-45	1-15	5-15	7-00	8-45

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

A lingering

FROM PAGE 5

If the patients' attendants can't move easily, it's difficult for them to get the tests done in due time, he added.

"We often have to struggle to take patients to the institute on time," said Sultan Ahmed, an attendant from Jamalpur's Madarganj upazila.

Due to illegal parking in front of the hospital and its adjoining areas, movement of people is being obstructed for years, but there is no initiative to curb this menace, said Shakil Ahemd, a local medicine trader.

Nurul Amin Kalam, secretary of Mymensingh Nagorik Andolon, said they have been continuing their movement on different issues including illegal parking and traffic jam. "Sometimes hospital authorities initiate drives against illegal parking in the adjacent areas... but things go back to business as usual again," he added.

Syed Mabubur Rahman, traffic inspector in Mymensingh, said they conduct drives regularly in this regard but due to lack of parking facilities in the city, the problem persists.

Dr Jakiul Islam, deputy director of MMCH, said, "We always urge the traffic officials to make sure that no vehicles are parked here illegally. We are trying to initiate a drive in this regard."

A much-needed initiative

FROM PAGE 3

BR, however, has taken a project for carrying out study for establishing a new carriage maintenance workshop in Rajbari.

But, between 2008-09 and 2022-23 fiscal year, the government allocated Tk 107,645 crore to BR under the annual development programme (ADP).

BR, however, could spend Tk 71,113 crore -- 66.06 percent of total allocation -- till October last year, show documents.

Partha Sarkar said, "Our fleet has increased sharply in the last few years. So, we have to modernise the workshops, otherwise we will face problems."

Replying to a question,

he said, "In many cases, implementation of a project depends on the donor agency."

SAIDPUR WORKSHOP Saidpur workshop was established in 1890 on 110 acres. Since its inception, a project has been undertaken in limited scale for its modernisation between March 2009 and June 2016 at a cost of Tk 157 crore, shows BR document.

Before the modernisation, the average daily production of the workshop was 1.96 units, meaning the workshop could repair or maintain 1.96 bogies or wagons daily, which rose to 2.85 to 3.29 units after the works, it shows.

But, the annual

maintenance capacity of the workshop is 427 (both broad and meter gauges) carriages and 427 wagons, even though the west zone of BR holds a total 7,111 carriages and 1,160 wagons.

It means, the backlog per year is 284 carriages and 733 wagons, it said.

Besides, the number of modern, high speed AC coaches are increasing and as per the railway masterplan (2016-2045), 5,143 new coaches would be added to the BR fleet.

But, only 122 plants and machinery in the workshop are below 20 years old, while 448 are between 20-to-50-year-olds and 214 are over 50 years old, it reads.

Join hands to combat epidemics

FROM PAGE 3

without effective cooperation among governments, UN agencies, and other relevant stakeholders, he added.

The foreign secretary also highlighted the country's efforts to address climate and environmental impacts on physical and mental health and autism.

Anwar Hossain Hawlader, secretary of the Health Services Division at the health ministry, said, "Diseases have no

boundaries, so corporations should not have them either. South-east Asian countries face similar challenges when it comes to ensuring public health. They should collaboratively fight the challenges."

Experts from India, Nepal, Myanmar, Sri Lanka, and Indonesia, and WHO representatives participated in three panel discussions.

During the first discussion on antimicrobial resistance, Prof MA Faiz, former director general of the health directorate and the key-note speaker of the session, highlighted the challenges of AMR in Bangladesh and beyond.

The discussants also

pointed out the absence of testing facilities to determine the right antibiotics for the patients before issuing prescriptions.

Rinku Sharma, joint director at National Vector Borne Disease Control Program, spoke of having similar challenges in India.

AMR is causing one death in every 40 seconds globally, there is no data on it in Bangladesh, said speakers. They also stressed the importance of ensuring judicious use of antibiotics.

The participants also urged the stakeholders to invest in medicinal research to prevent the misuse of antibiotics and develop better vaccines.

Mostafa Feeroz new JU pro-VC

JU CORRESPONDENT

Prof Mohammed Mostafa Feeroz of the zoology department of Jahangirnagar University has been appointed the pro vice-chancellor (Education) of the university.

A notification undersigned by Rokhsana Begum, deputy secretary of ministry of education, confirmed the appointment yesterday. According to Section 13 (I) of Jahangirnagar University Act 1973, President Mohammed Shahabuddin, also chancellor of the university, appointed Feeroz for the next four years, stated the notification.

He completed his BSc and MSc degree from JU zoology department. He obtained his PhD degree from University of Cambridge. Feeroz is the founder of the Wildlife Rescue Centre.

A milestone

FROM PAGE 3

percent of the sewage generated in Dhaka, in a modern and environment-friendly way, said Dhaka WASA Managing Director Tasqem A Khan on Tuesday.

"The plant is modern and environment-friendly. The quality of water treated in the plant is good enough," he said.

Tasqem said four other modern sewage treatment plants will be constructed in Pagla, Rayerbazar, Uttara and Mirpur aiming to gain the capacity to treat 100 percent sewage of Dhaka by 2030, reports BSS.

He said the prime minister will also lay the foundation stone of Pagla sewage treatment plant by renovating the existing one.

When the Pagla sewage treatment plant is completed, some 40 percent of sewage generated in Dhaka can be treated, he added.

The Dasherbandi STP was implemented on 62 acres of land at the cost of Tk 3,482 crore. Of the cost, Tk 1,064.42 crore came from the government's fund, while Tk 10 crore from Dhaka Wasa, and Tk 2,366 crore from EXIM Bank of China.

The work of the China-funded project started on July 1, 2018.

The operation and management of the plant will be run by its contractor, HydroChina Corporation, for one year.

According to the project, a waste lifting station on the western side of Rampura bridge, a five-kilometre trunk sewer line from Rampura to Altabnagar and Dasherbandi plant and the main treatment plant at Dasherbandi were constructed.

বাংলাদেশ কর্মসূচি ব্যাংক লিমিটেড গ্রী অনলাইন ব্যাংকিং, গ্রয়োজনীয় সকল সুবিধা সমন্বিত অ্যাপস ভিত্তিক অনলাইন ব্যাংকিং, ইন্সটারনেট ব্যাংকিং, ডেবিট ও ক্রেডিট কার্ড সেবায় আপনার বিশ্বস্ত সহযোগী।
বিসিবি

NSU holds 24th convocation

FROM PAGE 3

of the Board of Trustees; and Prof Atiqul Islam, vice-chancellor of NSU, spoke among others.

Besides, Yasmin Kamal and Shahrir Kamal, members of the Board of Trustees; and Prof M Ismail Hossain, NSU pro-VC, were present.

Marshall Shaila Joarder, associate professor, Department of Architecture, delivered welcome speech.

Prof Dr Helal Ahammad, dean of the School of Business and Economics; Prof Abdur Rob Khan, dean of School of Humanities and Social Sciences; Prof Dr Javed Bari, dean of the

School of Engineering and Physical Sciences; and Prof Hasan Mahmud Reza, dean of the School of Health and Life Sciences, also attended the programme.

Chancellor's Gold Medals and Vice Chancellor's Gold Medals were awarded to 20 students at the ceremony.

Strengthening armed forces

FROM PAGE 3

programme virtually from Gono Bhaban.

The ships were built at Khulna Shipyard.

She said the government has taken steps to develop the armed forces including the navy so they attain international level skills.

The PM said in the last 14 and a half years, the Awami

League government has modernised and increased the capabilities of the navy in addition to adding aviation and submarines to the fleet as per Forces Goal-2030.

She said Bangladesh Navy has turned from "Buyer Navy" to "Builder Navy".

She said the newly commissioned BNS Sher-e-Bangla and 8 navy ships, in

addition to their respective operational activities, will ensure the security of Payra seaport, the safe movement of domestic and foreign ships in the sea, the provision of security in coastal areas.

Chief of Naval Staff Admiral M Shaheen Iqbal also spoke at the programme.

NOTICE INVITING TENDER

State Bank of India, Chattogram Branch, invites sealed tenders from the reputed lessors/commercial building owners forleasing out premises to SBI, Chattogram Branch (Area approx 3000-3500 SFT) and space for ATM at ground floor (Area approx 100 SFT)


Requisite Documents:
1. Contractor's profile and credentials 2. Valid Trade license3. ETIN 4.Quotations.
For detailed RFP requirements please visit **bd.statebank**
Sealed Tender may be submitted between 16.07.2023 (10:00 AM) & 23.07.2023 (5:00 PM) at following Address:

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
State Bank of India, Chattogram Branch, Hoo Plaza, 263/1, Jubilee Road, Chattogram.
Contact person: Bipul Ghosh, Cell: 01815682582
Pre-Bid meeting Date: **17.07.2023(11:00 AM)** at above mentioned address.

Indian Visa Application Centre (IVAC), Bangladesh operations (managed by State Bank of India, Bangladesh Operations) invites sealed tenders from the reputed lessors/commercial building owners forleasing out premises to IVAC Chittagong.




Requisite Documents:
1. Contractor's profile and credentials 2. Valid Trade license3. ETIN 4.Quotations.
For detailed RFP requirements please visit **www.ivacbd.com**.
Sealed Tender may be submitted between 16.07.2023 (9:00 AM) & 23.07.2023 (5:00 PM) at following Address:

Indian Visa Application Centre
Level-1, South Block, Jamuna Future Park, Pragati Sarani, Dhaka.
Pre-Bid meeting Date: **17.07.2023(5:00 PM)** at above mentioned address.



Letter of Invitation for Study on climate change impacts and priority adaptation measures for selected urban areas in Bangladesh

Project name	Climate Bridge Fund
Source of Funds	CBF
RFP no.	BPD/2023/RFP-525
Tender Process	Please submit your offer including VAT and TAX through the eTender portal (tender.brac.net).Any offer via email or hard copy is treated as nonresponsiveness. You need to sign up via tender.brac.net and then register Consultant/Consultancy firm name and submit. For approval of your account during the supplier registration process, and for any other clarification, please contact MD. Reazul Amin (Deputy Manager,01740284030 & reazul.amin@brac.net)
Pre bid meeting	Pre bid meeting will be held on 3 PM to 5 PM 19 th July 2023 at Gulshan Bhaban, 5 th floor (Opposite of BRAC Centre). Please contact here if any confusion: Reazul Amin (01740284030)
Last date of Submission	13-08-2023 02:30 PM (Dhaka Local Time)



Land Purchase @ Gulshan/Baridhara

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

Obituary

Mrs. Husna Ara Khanam, wife of Colonel (Retd) Md. Anwar Ullah (Late), resident of House No. 15, Road No. 3, Sector No. 3, Uttara, Dhaka-1230, passed away at CMH Dhaka Cantonment on Monday July 10, 2023. She is survived by two sons Rizwan Ahmed Majumder and Imran Ahmed Majumder. She will be buried beside her husband and deceased son Rehan Ahmed Majumder (Late), in her husband's paternal home in Doulatpur, Maher Kul, Cumilla South Sadar.



PALLI KARMA-SAHAYAK FOUNDATION (PKSF)

PKSF Bhaban, E-4/B, Agargaon Administrative Area, Sher-e-Bangla Nagar, Dhaka-1207
Phone: 88-02222218331-33, 02222218335-39, Website: <http://www.pksf.org.bd>

Ref. No: 53.23.0000.001.03.076.23-5716

Date: 13 July 2023

Request for Application (RFA)

(Selection of Individual Consultant: National)

A. Basic Information (Procuring Entity, Assignment, Procurement Method, Source of Fund, etc) for the Consultant:		
1	Name of the Organization	Palli Karma-Sahayak Foundation (PKSF)
2	Procuring Entity Name & Designation	AQM Golam Mawla, Deputy Managing Director
3	Applications for Selection of	An Institutional Capacity Building Expert to Support the Direct Access Entities (DAEs) for Accreditation (Accreditation Gap Assessment)
4	Ref No	53.23.0000.001.03.076.23-5716
5	Package No.	PKSF/RSMP/SD-01
6	RFA Publishing Date	13 July 2023
7	Procurement Method	Individual Consultant Selection (ICS)
8	Source of Fund	Readiness Project-2
9	Development Partner	Green Climate Fund (GCF)
10	Project Name	Increasing the Capacity of Bangladesh's NDA and Direct Access Accredited Entities to Access GCF Resources (Readiness Project-2).
11	Applications submission closing date, time, and place	Date: 30 July 2023; Time: 2:00 PM; PKSF Bhaban, E-4/B, Agargaon Administrative Area, Sher-e-Bangla Nagar, Dhaka-1207
B. Key Information for the Consultant:		
12	Brief description of the assignment	The detailed Request for Application (RFA) document including Terms of Reference (ToR) is obtainable from the office of the undersigned during office hours: 9:30 am to 3:30 pm at free of cost. It will be also available at PKSF website https://pksf.org.bd/tender/ . Interested eligible applicants are requested to submit their applications along with all necessary documents in sealed envelope to the office of the undersigned directly or by courier/mail.
13	Other Details	
C. Procurement Entity Details :		
14	Name of the Official	AQM Golam Mawla
15	Designation of Official	Deputy Managing Director
16	Address of the Official	Palli Karma-Sahayak Foundation (PKSF) PKSF Bhaban, E-4/B, Agargaon Administrative Area, Sher-e-Bangla Nagar, Dhaka-1207.
17	Contact Details of Official	Telephone: 880-02222218331-33, 02222218335-39; Fax: 880-02222218341, 02222218343 e-mail: mawlapksf@gmail.com
The Procurement Entity reserves all the rights to accept or reject all applications.		
(AQM Golam Mawla) Deputy Managing Director & PE		

গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার

নির্বাহী প্রকৌশলীর কার্যালয়, সওজ
সিলেট সড়ক বিভাগ, সিলেট
ফোন নং-০৮২১-৭১৬৩৩৯
eesyl@rhd.gov.bd

তারিখঃ ১২/০৭/২০২৩

সীমিত দরপত্র পদ্ধতিতে (LTM) ঠিকাদার তালিকাভুক্তি/নবায়ন বিজ্ঞপ্তি (সংশোধিত)

এতদ্বারা সংশ্লিষ্ট সকলের অবগতির জন্য জানানো যাচ্ছে যে, সড়ক বিভাগ, সিলেট কর্তৃক পাবলিক প্রকিউরমেন্ট বিধিমালা-২০০৮ এর আলোকে সড়ক ও জনপথ অধিদপ্তরের পরিচালন (রাজস্ব) বাজেটের আওতায় সীমিত দরপত্র পদ্ধতির আওতায় সীমিত দরপত্র পদ্ধতিতে (LTM) প্রতিক্ষেত্রে ৫০.০০ (পঞ্চাশ) লক্ষ টাকা পর্যন্ত প্রাক্কলিত মূল্যের অভ্যন্তরীণ কার্য (NCT-Works) সম্পাদনের লক্ষ্যে ২০২৩-২০২৪ অর্থ বৎসরের জন্য ঠিকাদার তালিকাভুক্ত করা হবে। সিপিটিইউ কর্তৃক নির্ধারিত আবেদন ফর্ম অত্র দপ্তর হতে অফিস চলাকালীন সময়ে সরবরাহ করা হবে। ১০০০.০০ (এক হাজার) টাকার ক্ষেত্রেতথ্যোগ পে-অর্ডার/ব্যাংক ড্রাফট নির্বাহী প্রকৌশলী, সওজ, সড়ক বিভাগ, সিলেট এর অনুকূলে জমা প্রদান করে অথবা মানি রিসিট এর মাধ্যমে ১০০০.০০ (এক হাজার) টাকা পরিশোধ করে আত্মীয় ব্যক্তি/প্রতিষ্ঠান নির্ধারিত আবেদনপত্র (ডকুমেন্ট) সজ্ঞাহ করতে পারবেন। নির্ধারিত আবেদনপত্র (ডকুমেন্ট) সঠিকভাবে পূরণপূর্বক প্রয়োজনীয় কাগজপত্রসহ আগামী ০৭/০৮/২০২৩খ্রিঃ বিকাল ৫.০০ ঘটিকার মধ্যে অত্র দপ্তরে জমা প্রদান করার জন্য অনুরোধ করা হলো।

সীমিত দরপত্র পদ্ধতি প্রয়োগের ক্ষেত্রে পাবলিক প্রকিউরমেন্ট বিধিমালা-২০০৮ এর বিধি ৬৩ অনুসরণযোগ্য এবং এ তাপিকাভুক্তিকরণ দরপত্র আহ্বান/কাজ প্রদানের নিশ্চয়তা বিধান করে না।

উল্লেখ্য যে, ইতিপূর্বে অত্র দপ্তরে তালিকাভুক্ত ঠিকাদার/ঠিকাদারী প্রতিষ্ঠানকে ২০২৩-২০২৪ অর্থ বছরে লাইসেন্স নবায়ন কি বাবদ টাকা ২০০০/- (টকা দুই হাজার মাত্র)+১৫% ভ্যাটসহ বিনা জরিমানার আগামী ৩১/০৭/২০২৩ তারিখের মধ্যে অত্র সড়ক বিভাগের হিসাব শাখায় মানি রিসিট এর মাধ্যমে জমাপূর্বক লাইসেন্স নবায়ন করার জন্য অনুরোধ করা হলো।

মোঃ মোস্তাফিজুর রহমান
পরিচিতি নং-৬০২১৫৮
নির্বাহী প্রকৌশলী, সওজ
সিলেট সড়ক বিভাগ, সিলেট

জিডি-১১০৮

Amend the law to protect workers’ rights

Demand speakers at meeting

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Terming the Export Processing Zones (EPZ) Labour Act 2019 discriminatory, speakers have called upon the government to amend the law in consultation with all stakeholders including labour unions to protect workers' rights.

While pointing out how the workers are being deprived of their rights under the EPZ Labour Act, they said there was no discussion with trade unions and their recommendations were not accepted during its enactment.

They said this at a stakeholders' meeting on "Workers' Rights in the EPZ – The Reality" organised by Solidarity Center Bangladesh at a hotel in Dhaka yesterday.

In his keynote presentation, Solidarity Center Bangladesh Program Officer Mohammad Nazrul Islam said workers welfare association is prohibited to establish any connection not only with the NGOs but also with the trade unions and federations outside the EPZ area.

"Therefore, the ability of workers welfare associations (WWA) to seek redress for non-implementation of labour rights or industrial relations regulation gets limited," he said.

“There is a lot of work to do on labour rights, collective bargaining and freedom of association. Discussions have been taking place on these matters for a long time but there is no progress.”

TUOMO POUTIAINEN
Director of ILO

As per the minimum wage announced in 2018, half of the total workers get a 10 percent raise on their basic salary per annum; the rest get a 5 percent increment.

There are instances where the rules are not maintained. "Only 10 percent of workers get a 10-percent raise and the rest are given a five percent," said Mansur Molla, president of WWA of an EPZ.

Nazrul Islam said the BEPZA has curtailed the benefits of workers in the EPZ Labour Rules. According to the EPZ Labour Act, a worker will get 45 days' wage as compensation during retirement, but it was curtailed to 30 days in the rules.

Tuomo Poutiainen, director, International Labour Organization, said there is a lot of work to do on labour rights, collective bargaining and freedom of association. Discussions have been taking place on these matters for a long time but there is no progress.



A fisherman sets up a fish trap, locally known as “chai” in a waterbody in Barishal city’s Roypasha Karapur area. Such traps are usually used during low-tides in the morning and collected in the evening after they are filled with small varieties of local fish. The fish are then sold at local bazaars.

PHOTO: TITU DAS

ILLEGAL PARKING IN MYMENSINGH

A lingering menace

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Mymensingh

Illegal parking of vehicles on both sides of an important road on Mymensingh Medical College Hospital premises is obstructing entrance to the hospital.

The vehicles, mainly cars, CNG-run auto-rickshaws and minibuses of hospital staffers and different pharmaceutical companies, occupy this busy road for several hours during office time, said hospital sources.

This practice has been going on for years, they added.

The road leads to the hospital store and Institute of Nuclear Medicine and Allied Sciences (INMAS). On the suggestion of doctors, hundreds of patients from different areas of Mymensingh visit



INMAS for better test results at a comparatively less cost, said the sources.

"This the only institute in Mymensingh and so the patients from the city, Jamalpur, Sherpur, Tangail, Netrakona and Kishoreganj are referred here for

quality tests and reports," said Dr Motiur Rahman Bhuiyan, president of Bangladesh Medical Association, Mymensingh unit.

Tests, including, blood and hormone test, ultra-sonogram, and ECG are conducted at the institute.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1

Five lives lost in road accidents

STAR REPORT

At least five people were killed in road accidents in three districts yesterday, report our local correspondent and a news agency.

In Narayanganj, two cousins were killed as a covered-van hit their motorcycle on Dhaka-Chittagong highway in Bandar upazila. The incident happened around 3:00pm in Keodhala area, said police.

Aman Ullah, 35, from Keodhala and Shishir Mia, 28, from Jangal in the upazila died on the spot.

Kanchpur Highway Police said the covered-van was seized but its driver fled.

In Kusthia, two people were killed in a three-way collision among car, a motorcycle and three wheeler in Kumakhali upazila, reports UNB.

The accident took place on Kusthia-Rajbari highway at Kalumor around 11:30am.

Shahin Mia, 42, the biker, from Chuadanga, died instantly while Ikramul, 22, from Darshana was declared dead at Kusthia Sadar Hospital.

In Khulna, a youth was killed after his motorbike hit another bike at Lobonchara.

Sujan Bepari, 23, a vendor, was from Horintana.

Lobonchara Police Station OC Md Enamul Haque said Sujan died at Khulna Medical College and Hospital.

Hindu temple vandalised in Lalmonirhat

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Lalmonirhat

Unidentified miscreants vandalised a Hindu temple in Lalmonihat Sadar upazila early yesterday.

They also looted the gold ornaments the Kali idol was adorned with and cash from the donation box, said Lalmonirhat Sadar Police Station Officer-in-Charge Omar Farooq quoting locals.

The incident took place at Ratipur Paschimpara Central Cremation Temple at Gokunda Union.

The miscreants broke into the temple by cutting the iron grill. People who came in the morning to worship found that the temple was vandalised, said Promodh Chandra Roy, the president of the temple.

"We are preparing to file a case in this regard," he said.

Lalmonirhat Superintendent of Police Shaiful Islam visited the spot.

Police are trying to arrest the vandals, OC Omar Farooq said.

Cars, CNG-run auto-rickshaws and minibuses of hospital staffers and pharmaceutical companies, occupy this busy road during office hours.

রেজিস্ট্রার দপ্তর

যশোর বিজ্ঞান ও প্রযুক্তি বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়

যশোর-৭৪০৮, বাংলাদেশ

স্মারক নং- যবিপ্রবি/রেজিঃ/সংস্থাপন/১০০২(৭)/রাজস্ব জনবল/২০২২-২৬৮৬

Office of the Registrar

Jashore University of Science and Technology

Jashore-7408, Bangladesh

তারিখঃ ১১/০৭/২০২২খ্রিঃ

নিয়োগ বিজ্ঞপ্তি

যশোর বিজ্ঞান ও প্রযুক্তি বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের নিম্নোক্ত পদগুলো পূরণের নিমিত্তে বর্ণিত শর্তসাপেক্ষে বাংলাদেশের স্থায়ী নাগরিকদের নিকট হতে দরখাস্ত আহ্বান করা যাচ্ছে।

ক্রম নং	পদের নাম, পদসংখ্যা ও ফোল	সর্বোচ্চ বয়স	শর্তাবলী
০১	অধ্যাপক অনুজীব বিজ্ঞান বিভাগ, ০১টি স্থায়ী পদ বেতন ফোলঃ ৫৬৫০০-৭৪৪০০/- (৩য় গ্রেড)	---	আবেদনকারীকে career.just.edu.bd ওয়েবসাইটে গিয়ে প্রয়োজনীয় সকল কাগজপত্রের Scanned copy, আবেদন ফিসহ আগামী ১০/০৮/২০২২খ্রিঃ তারিখ বিকাল ৪.০০ ঘটিকার মধ্যে অনলাইনে আবেদন করতে হবে। অনলাইনে আবেদন করা ও ফি প্রদানের বিস্তারিত নিয়মাবলী https://career.just.edu.bd/docs/how-to-apply.pdf এই লিংক-এ পাওয়া যাবে। বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের ওয়েবসাইটে www.just.edu.bd হতে যোগ্যতার বিস্তারিত বিবরণ সজ্ঞাহ করা যাবে। প্রার্থীকে আবেদনের সাথে নিম্নলিখিত কাগজপত্রের Scanned copy সংযুক্ত করতে হবে- (ক) শিক্ষাগত যোগ্যতা, অভিজ্ঞতা (যদি থাকে), প্রশিক্ষণ সনাক্তকৃত ও অন্যান্য সকল প্রকার মূল্যসামগ্রিক সনদপত্র ও নথ্যপত্র (খ) সন্য তোলা ৩০০x৩০০ পিরেল ও অনূর্ধ্ব ২০০ কিলোবাইট সাইজের ছবি (গ) জাতীয় পরিচরপত্র (ঘ) নিজ নিজ এলাকার ইউনিয়ন পরিষদের চেয়ারম্যান/পৌর মেয়র/ওয়ার্ড কাউন্সিলর প্রদত্ত নাগরিকত্ব সনদপত্র। চাকুরীতে নিয়োজিত প্রার্থীদের যথাযথ কর্তৃপক্ষের মাধ্যমে আবেদন করতে হবে। ক্রটিপূর্ণ/অসম্পূর্ণ এবং বিলম্বে প্রাপ্ত আবেদন (নির্ধারিত সময়ের পর) গ্রহণ করা হবে না। অনলাইনে আবেদন করার সময় আবেদন ফি বাবদ ক্রমিক নং ০১ এর জন্য ১১০০/- টাকা ও ক্রমিক নং ০২ এর জন্য ৯০০/- টাকা ইন্টারনেট ব্যাংকিং/মোবাইল ব্যাংকিং এর মাধ্যমে পরিশোধ করতে হবে।
০২	প্রভাষক কম্পিউটার বিজ্ঞান ও প্রকৌশল বিভাগ, ০৩টি পদ (০১টি স্থায়ী এবং ০২টি শিক্ষা ছুটির বিপরীতে অস্থায়ী) বেতন ফোলঃ ২২০০০-৫৩০৬০/- (৯ম গ্রেড)	৩০ বছর	

স্বা/

প্রকৌশলী মোঃ আহসান হাবীব

রেজিস্ট্রার

যশোর বিজ্ঞান ও প্রযুক্তি বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়

জিডি-১১০৩

বঙ্গবন্ধু শেখ মুজিবুর রহমান অ্যাভিয়েশন অ্যান্ড অ্যারোস্পেস বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়

অস্থায়ী কার্যালয় ৬ পুরাতন বিমান বন্দর, তেজগাঁও, ঢাকা-১২১৫।

একচেঞ্জ ৫৫০৬০০০০ সশ্রু ৫০৭৮ মোবাইল নং-০১৭৬৯৯৯৫০৬১

www.bsmraau.edu.bd, registrar@bsmraau.edu.bd

স্মারক নং: বিএসএমআরএইউ/রেজিস্ট্রার-১৮০/২০২৩/

তারিখঃ ২৮ আষাঢ় ১৪৩০

১২ জুলাই ২০২৩

সরবরাহকারী তালিকাভুক্তিকরন/নবায়নের বিজ্ঞপ্তি

১। বঙ্গবন্ধু শেখ মুজিবুর রহমান অ্যাভিয়েশন অ্যান্ড অ্যারোস্পেস বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় (বিএসএমআরএইউ) এ নিম্নলিখিত ক্যাটাগরির মালামাল সরবরাহের নিমিত্তে ২০২৩-২০২৪ অর্থ বছর এবং পরবর্তী প্রতি বছর নবায়নযোগ্য সরবরাহকারী হিসেবে শ্রেণীভিত্তিক তালিকাভুক্তির জন্য প্রকৃত মালামাল সরবরাহকারী/উৎপাদনকারী/ব্যবসায়ী প্রতিষ্ঠান হতে দরখাস্ত আহ্বান করা যাচ্ছে।

ক্রমিক নং	ক্যাটাগরি	ক্রমিক নং	ক্যাটাগরি
০১	মোটরপাড়ির যন্ত্রাংশ সরবরাহ ও মেরামত	০৭	ফার্নিচার সরবরাহ ও মেরামত
০২	কম্পিউটার, কম্পিউটার সরঞ্জামাদি সরবরাহ ও মেরামত	০৮	অফিস স্টেশনারি, ক্রোকারিজ ও কার্টলারিজ সরবরাহ
০৩	বৈদ্যুতিক সরঞ্জামাদি সরবরাহ ও মেরামত	০৯	অফিন ভবন মেরামত ও সংরক্ষণ/রক্ষনাবেক্ষণ
০৪	ইন্টারনেট সেবা/টেলিফোন/ফ্যাক্স	১০	সাধারণ ও অন্যান্য
০৫	অফিস সরঞ্জামাদি সরবরাহ ও মেরামত	১১	মেডিকেল ইকুইপমেন্ট ও মেডিসিন সরবরাহ
০৬	বই সরবরাহ, মুদ্রণ, বাধাই, আইডি কার্ড তৈরিকরণ	১২	ল্যাব সামগ্রী সরবরাহ ও মেরামত

২। অগ্রাহী সরবরাহকারী/উৎপাদনকারী/ব্যবসায়ী প্রতিষ্ঠান কে বিএসএমআরএইউ এর প্রকিউরমেন্ট সেকশনে ৫০০.০০ টাকার (পাঁচশত) পে-অর্ডার/ব্যাংক ড্রাফট (অফেরতযোগ্য) প্রদান পূর্বক শ্রেণীভিত্তিক তালিকাভুক্তি আবেদন ফরম সংগ্রহ করে তা যথাযথভাবে পূরণ পূর্বক সকল প্রয়োজনীয় দলিলাদি সংযুক্ত করতঃ পূর্ণকৃত আবেদন ফরম একই অফিসে ১২ আগষ্ট ২০২৩ এর মধ্যে অফিস চলাকালীন সময়ে জমা দিতে হবে। আবেদনের শর্তাবলী বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের ওয়েবসাইট (www.bsmraau.edu.bd) ও প্রকিউরমেন্ট সেকশন হতে সংগ্রহ করা যাবে।

রেজিস্ট্রার

বঙ্গবন্ধু শেখ মুজিবুর রহমান অ্যাভিয়েশন অ্যান্ড অ্যারোস্পেস বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়

GD-1105

গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার

তত্ত্বাবধায়কের কার্যালয়,

২৫০ শয্যা বিশিষ্ট জেনারেল হাসপাতাল, যশোর।

jessore@hospi.dghs.gov.bd

স্মারক নং ২৫০শয্যাবিঃরেঃহাস/যশোর/শা-০৫/২০২৩-২৪/এম এস আর/২০১

তারিঃ ১২/০৭/২০২৩ ইং।

“এম এস আর মালামাল সরবরাহের দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি”

“দি পাবলিক প্রকিউরমেন্ট রেগুলেশন পিপিএ ২০০৬, পিপিআর ২০০৮ সহ সর্বশেষ সংশোধনী অনুযায়ী ২৫০ শয্যা বিশিষ্ট জেনারেল হাসপাতাল, ও করোনাবী কোয়ার ইউনিট যশোর এর ২০২৩-২৪ অর্থ বছরের জন্য এম এস আর মালামাল সরবরাহের নিমিত্তে প্রকৃত অভিজ্ঞতা সম্পন্ন ঠিকাদারী প্রতিষ্ঠান/সরবরাহকারীগণের নিকট ইইতে গ্রপ ভিত্তিক পৃথক পৃথক ভাবে সীল গালা যুক্ত খামে দরপত্র আহবান করা যাইতেহবে।

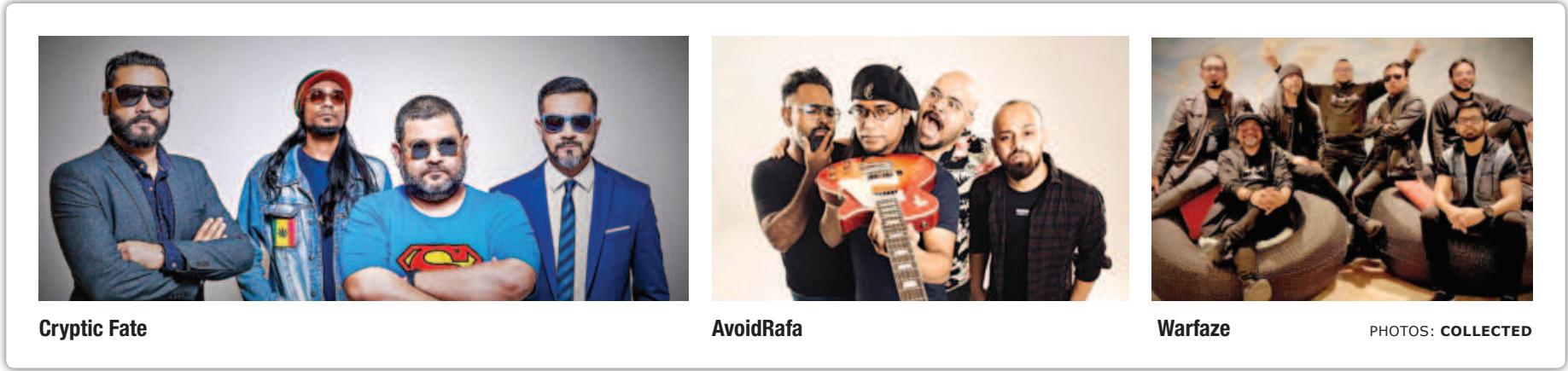
১	কার্জের নাম	২৫০ শয্যা বিশিষ্ট জেনারেল হাসপাতাল, ও করোনাবী কোয়ার ইউনিট যশোর ২০২৩-২৪ অর্থ বছরের জন্য এম এস আর মালামাল সরবরাহ।
২	মহানালয়/অধিদপ্তর	স্বাস্থ্য ও পরিবার কল্যাণ মহানালয়/স্বাস্থ্য অধিদপ্তর, মহাশালা, ঢাকা-১২১২।
৩	বরাদ্দের উৎস	স্বাস্থ্য ও পরিবার কল্যাণ মহানালয়/স্বাস্থ্য অধিদপ্তর, মহাশালা, ঢাকা কর্তৃক নিয়মিত বরাদ্দ, খোক বরাদ্দ, অতিরিক্ত বরাদ্দ, বিশেষ বরাদ্দ, উন্নয়ন খাতের বরাদ্দ (হেসপিটাল সার্ভিসেস ম্যানেজমেন্ট)।
৪	সমগ্র্যাহক সত্ত্বার নাম	তত্ত্বাবধায়ক, ২৫০ শয্যা বিশিষ্ট জেনারেল হাসপাতাল, যশোর
৫	যে স্থানে মালামাল সরবরাহ করা হইবে	২৫০ শয্যা বিশিষ্ট জেনারেল হাসপাতাল, ও করোনাবী কোয়ার ইউনিট যশোর।
৬	মোট গ্রুপ ১-	০৬ (ছয়) টি, গ্রুপ নং “ক” ইন্ডিস্ট্রিয়াল বর্জিত্ত উৎখ (শট-১) গ্রুপ নং “খ” গজ, ব্যাডেজ, তুলা (শট-২), গ্রুপ নং “গ” লিনেন সামগ্রী (শট-৩), গ্রুপ নং “ঘ” সার্জিকেল যন্ত্রপাতি (শট-৪), গ্রুপ নং “ঙ” কেমিকেল রি-এজেন্ট (শট-৫), গ্রুপ নং “চ” আসবাবপত্র ও কিনেন সামগ্রী (শট-৬)
৭	দরপত্র জামানতের পরিমান (উল্লেখিত টাকা পে-অর্ডার/ব্যাংক ড্রাফট দরপত্রের জামানত হিসাবে দরপত্রের সহিত দাখিল করিতে হইবে)	গ্রুপ নং “ক” ইন্ডিস্ট্রিয়াল বর্জিত্ত উৎখ = ৫,৬০,০০০/- টাকা। গ্রুপ নং “খ” গজ, ব্যাডেজ, তুলা = ১,৭০,০০০/- টাকা। গ্রুপ নং “গ” লিনেন সামগ্রী = ১,৭০,০০০/- টাকা। গ্রুপ নং “ঘ” সার্জিকেল যন্ত্রপাতি = ৪,১৮,০০০/- টাকা। গ্রুপ নং “ঙ” কেমিকেল রি-এজেন্ট = ১,০৪,০০০/- টাকা। গ্রুপ নং “চ” আসবাবপত্র ও কিনেন সামগ্রী = ৬৯,০০০/- টাকা।
৮	শর্ত সম্বলিত দরপত্র সিডিউলের মূল্য	গ্রুপ নং “ক” ইন্ডিস্ট্রিয়াল বর্জিত্ত উৎখ = ১,৫০০/- টাকা, গ্রুপ নং “খ” গজ, ব্যাডেজ, তুলা = ১০০০/- টাকা গ্রুপ নং “গ” লিনেন সামগ্রী = ১০০০/- টাকা, গ্রুপ নং “ঘ” সার্জিকেল যন্ত্রপাতি = ১,৫০০/- টাকা, গ্রুপ নং “ঙ” কেমিকেল রি-এজেন্ট = ১০০০/- টাকা, গ্রুপ নং “চ” আসবাবপত্র ও কিনেন সামগ্রী=১০০০/-যাহা মোনালী ব্যাংক যশোর কর্পোরেট শাখায় ১/২৭১১/০০০০/২৩৬৬ কোডে জমা দিয়া ঢালানের মূল কপি অত্র অফিসে জমা দিয়া দরপত্র সিডিউল ত্রা করা যাইবে।
৯	দরপত্রের ধরন	উন্মুক্ত দরপত্র (OTM)
১০	দরপত্র সিডিউল বিরতের স্থান	২৫০ শয্যা বিশিষ্ট জেনারেল হাসপাতাল, যশোর এর হিসাব শাখায়।
১১	দরপত্র দাখিলের স্থান	তত্ত্বাবধায়ক, ২৫০ শয্যা বিশিষ্ট জেনারেল হাসপাতাল, যশোর ও পুলিশ সুপারের কার্যালয়, যশোর।
১২	দরপত্র সিডিউল বিরতের শেষ তারিখ	প্রক্রিয়াজ্ঞা প্রকাশের তারিখ ১৩/০৭/২০২৩ হইতে ০৯/০৮/২০২৩ ইং অফিস চলাকালীন সময় পর্যন্ত (সকাল ৮.০০ ঘটিকা হইতে দুপুর ২.৩০ ঘটিকা পর্যন্ত)
১৩	দরপত্র দাখিলের তারিখ ও নিয়মাবলী	প্রক্রিয়া দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি প্রকাশের তারিখ ১৩/০৭/২০২৩ হইতে ০৯/০৮/২০২৩ ইং পর্যন্ত অফিস চলাকালীন সময়ে সকাল ৮.০০ ঘটিকা হইতে দুপুর ২.৩০ ঘটিকা পর্যন্ত অত্র দপ্তরে রক্ষিত দরপত্র বাস্তবে (সরকারী ছুটির দিন ব্যতিত) এবং ইং ১০/০৮/২০২৩ তারিখ বেলা ৯.০০ ঘটিকা হইতে বেলা ১১.০০ ঘটিকা পর্যন্ত অত্র দপ্তর ও পুলিশ সুপারের কার্যালয়ে রক্ষিত দরপত্র বাস্তবে জমা দেওয়া যাইবে। তাহা ছাড়াও সাধারণ ডাকযোগে, এক্সপ্রেস ডাকযোগে বা কুরিয়ার ডাকযোগে দরপত্র গ্রহন করা হইবে সে ক্ষেত্রে ইং ১৩/০৭/২০২৩ হইতে ১০/০৮/২০২৩ তারিখ বেলা ১১.০০ ঘটিকার মধ্যে অত্র দপ্তরে পৌছাইতে হইবে। নির্ধারিত তারিখ ও সময়ের পরে প্রাপ্ত দরপত্র গ্রহন যোগ্য নহে।
১৪	দরপত্র বাস্তব খোলার তারিখ	১০/০৮/২০২৩ ইং বেলা ১১.০০ ঘটিকায়।
১৫	দরপত্র বাস্তব খোলার সময় উপস্থিতি	বোর্ডের সদস্যগণ এবং ঠিকাদার গণ (যদি কেহ উপস্থিত থাকে)
১৬	বিশেষ নির্দেশনা	১। পিপিএ/২০০৬ ও বিধিমালা -২০০৮ এর প্রবিধান সমূহের শর্তাবলীসহ সংগ্রাহক সত্ত্বা কর্তৃক আরোপিত সকল শর্ত শর্তাবলী হিসাবে গণ্য হইবে। ২। দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি ও দরপত্রের শর্তাবলী হিসাবে গণ্য হইবে। ৩। (ক) দরপত্রের অন্যান্য শর্তাবলী সম্বলিত দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি নিম্নাধিকারকারীর কার্যালয়ে অফিস চলাকালীন সময়ে পাওয়া যাইবে। (খ) কর্তৃপক্ষ সর্বমুখ্য দরপত্র গ্রহনে বাধ্য নহে এবং কোন কারণ দর্শানো ব্যতিরেকেই যে কোন দরপত্র গ্রহন/ব্যক্তি, সংশোধন বা একদসংক্রান্ত সরকারী নির্দেশনা অনুযায়ী যে কোন সিদ্ধান্ত গ্রহনের ক্ষমতা সংরক্ষণ করেন। কোন কারণে দরপত্র গ্রহন ও খোলার দিন অফিস বন্ধ থাকিলে পরবর্তী কার্যদিনসে একই সময় ও স্থানে দরপত্র গ্রহন ও খোলা হইবে, যাহা শুধুমাত্র নোটিশ বোর্ডের মাধ্যমে অবহিত করানো হইবে, এজন্য পৃথকভাবে বিজ্ঞপ্তি প্রকাশ করা হইবে না। (গ) সকল ক্ষেত্রে কর্তৃপক্ষের সিদ্ধান্ত চূড়ান্ত বলিয়া বিবেচিত হইবে। (ঘ) সংগ্রাহক কর্তৃক আরোপিত শর্ত অত্র দপ্তরের হিসাব শাখায় পাওয়া যাইবে।

তারিঃ ১২/০৭/২০২৩ ইং

তত্ত্বাবধায়ক

২৫০ শয্যা বিশিষ্ট জেনারেল হাসপাতাল
যশোর।

GD-1106



30 bands will play in unique pop-culture expo

Dhaka Summer Con 2023 kicks off today

Organised by MediaQuest Bangladesh, the festival will consecutively run for three days from today (July 13) to July 15, at International Convention City Bashundhara (ICCB).

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT DESK

One of Bangladesh's biggest pop culture festivals, *Dhaka Summer Con 2023*, will start today in the capital.

Organised by MediaQuest Bangladesh, the festival will consecutively run for three days from today (July 13) to July 15, at International Convention City Bashundhara (ICCB).

Over the course of the three-day event, a total of 30 bands, will take center-stage at Dhaka Summer Con 2023. The first day, July 13, will feature performances from eight exclusive bands, including Old Dhaka Diaries,



Artcell



Owned

Naive, Encore, Subconscious, Aftermath, Shonar Bangla Circus, Ashes, Brahmaputra, Cryptic Fate, and Artcell. Additionally, a thrilling rap battle will ensue during the programme.

The final day of the festival, July 15, will showcase performances by AK Rahul, Apelkhik, Mechanix, Karnival, Black, Arbovirus, Avoid Rafa, and Warfaze. Attendees can also look forward to mind-blowing hip-hop performances by Black Zang and Shafayat.

The festival boasts an assortment of captivating events, such as the highly anticipated cosplay competition, engaging comic book exhibitions, immersive experience zones, dedicated kids' zones, exceptional performances from hip hop and K-pop artists, thrilling gaming activities, tantalizing food zones, and thought-provoking panel

discussions.

Tariqul Sumon, the initiator of Summer Con 2023 and co-founder of MediaQuest Bangladesh, told The Daily Star, "A lot of people have asked, why have such a huge-scale concert alongside a convention? First and foremost, we wanted Bangla music to have a platform, shared with the country's biggest Comicon. We wanted to adhere to international standards while organising such a huge festival."

The programme released its official theme song, titled *Escape*. Heavy metal band Mechanix collaborated with stars like Shishir Ahmed, Raef Al Hasan Rafa, and Black Zang to create the memorable pop culture anthem.

Tickets for the second and third day of the festival are available on the website of Get Set Rock.



Salman Khan gives a shoutout to SRK's 'Jawan'

Salman Khan and Shah Rukh Khan have proven they are the best of friends. They broke box office records when Salman made a cameo appearance at SRK's spy thriller *Pathaan*, which became blockbuster worldwide.

While Salman didn't appear in Atlee's *Jawan*, he made sure to post a special shout-out to his dear buddy and longtime co-star SRK on his Facebook post.

"Absolutely loved *Jawan* prevue. Our *Pathaan* has become *Jawan*. Now this is the kind of a movie we should see in theatres only. I will for sure watch the first day screening of the movie. It was superb Shah Rukh Khan," read his post.

Nuhash's 'Foreigners only' captures double at festival



Nuhash Humayun's post-colonial horror film, *Foreigners Only* has managed to captivate audiences of all ages since its release. Recently, the short film managed to capture two awards at the Neuchâtel International Fantastic Film Festival. The first is the Audience Award for 'Best Short Film' and the second being the Youth Award for 'Best Short Film'.

Joyful at the achievement, Nuhash took to social media to share the news with his fans, writing, "Our post colonial horror film *Foreigners Only* just won Two awards at the same time! The Audience Award for Best Short Film and also The Youth Award for Best Short Film at the Neuchâtel International Fantastic Film Festival. Thank you so much! *Foreigners Only* is historically the first Bangladeshi film commissioned by a US streaming platform."

NEWS

EU team explores elections laws

FROM PAGE 1

and will prepare reports if polls irregularities take place. It will send those to the Election Commission, which will take necessary steps accordingly."

He added that he told them the judicial officials (lower court judges) will be under the EC's jurisdiction during the polls period as per the SC's advice.

The meeting was held in the conference room of the law ministry at the Secretariat.

MEETING WITH INFO MINISTER

At a separate meeting with Information Minister Hasan Mahmud yesterday, the mission enquired about the role of his ministry with regard to the functioning of the media in general.

"We said our media is mainly private. Apart from Bangladesh Television, the 35 television channels in operation are private. All the 1,250 daily newspapers, a few thousand online [news portals], FMs and community radio, apart from Bangladesh Betar - all are private," he told reporters at a briefing at the Secretariat.

The minster made the comments after meeting the visiting EU mission members Riccardo Chelleri, Dimitra Ioannou and Christina Dos Ramos Alves, according to a ministry statement.

The EU mission, which arrived in Bangladesh last Saturday, has so

far met foreign diplomats; officials of the ministries of foreign affairs and Chattogram Hill Tracts affairs, police, Human Rights Commission, Election Commission and the Attorney General, on Sunday and Monday.

The mission, which is on a two-week-long visit, will be assessing the election environment, along with rules and regulations. Based on their assessment report, the EU will decide if it would send election observers for the national polls slated to be held in December this year or January next.

Hasan Mahmud also discussed with them the challenges of rumours spread on social media platforms, which also sometimes incite violence.

"Earlier this year, the European Union amended laws to ensure all social media platforms are registered. We asked Facebook, Youtube, Twitter and other platforms to register as per our law, but they are yet to do so."

He added that he told the EU mission that upcoming election will be held under the incumbent government, like it is in European countries.

"I told them the government doesn't have any power other than doing routine work, and that the institutions related to the polls work under the Election Commission [and

not the government]."

The minister also said there was no discussion regarding a caretaker government with the mission as it is not their mandate.

"It [establishing a caretaker government] is only BNP's headache. The EU mission came here to assess if they would send election observers, not to bring the opposition to the election. However, I told them we want all political parties, including the BNP, to participate in the polls."

Checkposts lead to long tailbacks

FROM PAGE 2

to Dhaka Shishu Hospital in the morning.

Activists and supporters of the AL and the BNP took to the streets, slowing down vehicular movement at Kakrail, Bijoy Nagar, Gulistan, Shanti Nagar, Malibagh, Khilgaon, Kamalapur, Arambagh, Dhonia and Demra.

Md Farid, a bus driver of Ajmeri Glory Transport, told this newspaper that it took three hours to reach Kakrail from Mahakhali.

The BNP held the rally at Nayapaltan and the ruling AL near the South Gate of Baitul Mukarram. (Our correspondents from respective districts contributed to this report.)

Literary giant Milan Kundera no more

FROM PAGE 12

of ideas.

Czech Prime Minister Petr Fiala said his works "reached whole generations of readers across all continents" while President Petr Pavel called him a "world-class writer".

"With his fate in life, he symbolised the eventful history of our country in the 20th century," Pavel said. "Kundera's legacy will live on in his works."

French Prime Minister Elisabeth Borne said Kundera was "a writer and a voice that we will miss".

"Milan Kundera's work is at the same time a deep, human, intimate and distant exploration," she said.

Kundera was born in Brno in 1929 but emigrated to France in 1975 after being ostracised for criticising the 1968 Soviet invasion of Communist Czechoslovakia that crushed the Prague Spring liberal reform movement.

He rarely gave interviews, believing writers should speak through their work, and lived out of the public eye.

Fellow Czech writer Karel Hvizdala told Czech Television he saw his friend last November and he was already in poor health.

"I remember that on his hospital

bed, which he had at home, he only had one book - 'The Plague' by Albert Camus," he said.

Kundera's first novel, "The Joke", was published in 1967 and offered a scathing portrayal of the Czechoslovak Communist regime and the ruling party of which he was still a member.

He ultimately abandoned hopes that the party could be reformed in a democratic direction, and moved to France. Four years later, he was stripped of his Czechoslovak citizenship.

He told the French daily Le Monde in 1976 that to call his works political was to oversimplify, and therefore obscure their true significance, but his books often took a political tone.

"The Book of Laughter and Forgetting" (1979) was a story written in seven parts that showed the power of totalitarian regimes to erase parts of history and create an alternative past - a work that the New York Times called "genius" in its review.

His best known book, "The Unbearable Lightness of Being" (1984), focused on the Prague Spring and its turbulent demise with Czechs despairing of totalitarianism's grip retreating into obscure private lives

or emigrating to the West.

It was made into a film starring Daniel Day-Lewis and Juliette Binoche and directed by Philip Kaufman in 1988, earning two Academy Award nominations.

Oxford University professor Timothy Garton Ash, author and historian focused on central Europe, said Kundera "did so much to implant the idea and culture of Central Europe into the imagination of the world".

Kundera once told an interviewer he considered himself French rather than an emigre. He wrote later novels in French.

Le Monde called him a "tireless defender of the novel" in reporting his death.

"Undoubtedly the most European of writers, he impersonated the subtle contrasts of our world," Paris Mayor Anne Hidalgo said.

After the 1989 Velvet Revolution that peacefully overthrew Czechoslovakia's Communist regime and ushered in pro-Western democracy, Kundera only rarely made public visits home but would quietly visit friends and family.

He regained Czech citizenship in 2019.

Govt shortens window to submit tender

FROM PAGE 2

Also at yesterday's meeting, the proposal to import LNG from Malaysian company Perintis Akal Sdn Bhd under a long-term deal was approved.

Meanwhile, the cabinet committee on government purchase at a meeting yesterday approved the import of two LNG cargo from the spot market.

One cargo of 33.6 lakh Metric Million British Thermal Units (MMBtu) of LNG will be bought from American Excelerate Energy for \$13.35 per MMBtu.

The other cargo will be procured from Singapore-based Vitol for \$12.7 per MMBtu.

The committee also approved the purchase of 15.85 lakh tonnes of

petroleum products through open tender from two Singapore-based companies - Vitol Asia and Unipac - at the price of Tk 12,277 crore.

The government will also import 60,000 tonnes of urea fertiliser from state-owned Qatari company Muntajat.

Of the urea, 30,000 tonnes will be purchased for \$268.33 per tonne while the rest will be purchased at \$298 per tonne.

The government will also purchase another 60,000 tonnes of urea from Karnaphuli Fertiliser Company: 30,000 tonnes will be purchased at \$296 per tonne and the other 30,000 tonnes for \$298.25 per tonne.

Moreover, the government

purchase committee approved a proposal to import 1,00,000 tonnes of Muriate of Potash (MOP) from Canadian Commercial Corporation for \$342 per tonne.

Another 30,000 tonnes of MOP will be imported from Russian company JSC Foreign Economic Corporation "Prodintorg" for \$342 per tonne.

Besides, the government will import 40,000 tonnes of DAP fertiliser from Saudi Arabia for \$442.75 per tonne.

Also, the government purchase committee yesterday approved the purchase of four oil tankers from China National Machinery Import and Export Corporation at a cost of Tk 2,486.31 crore.

Exim Bank chairman, 27 others disqualified

FROM PAGE 12

website on Tuesday.

Mazumder, also the chairman of Nassa Group, was nominated by the Association Group, one of the two panels taking part in the country's apex trade body's polls scheduled to take place on July 31.

As many as 27 nominated directors were disqualified for being either tax or loan defaulters or both.

Md Shafiqul Islam Vorosha and Md Abul Hossain from Association Group and Mohammed Riyadh Ali, Mohammad Fayazur Rahman Bhuiyan and Mohammad Nizam Uddin from Chamber Group were disqualified for being both tax and loan defaulters.

Mohammed Khorshed Alam, Khandaker Ruhul Amin and KM Akhtaruzzaman from Association Group and Md Ali Hossain (Shishir) from Chamber Group were disqualified for being loan

defaulters.

Syed Sadat Almas Kabir, Mohammed Monsur, Shahab Uddin Khan, Nizamuddin Rajesh, Md Abdul Hashem, Serajul Islam, Md Rakibul Alam, Salma Hossain Ash, Md Jakir Hossain, Taher Ahmed Siddiqui, Mohammed Abul Basher, Khondaker Enayet Ullah, Md Habib Ullah Dawn, Md Shah Jalal, Mohabbat Ullah, Samiul Haque Safa and Sujib Ranjan Dash were disqualified for being tax defaulters.

Fazlee Shamim Ehsan's nomination was not accepted as his signature did not match his specimen signature in the voter form.

Mousumi Islam's nomination was not accepted as her voter number in the nomination form was penned through. Mohammad Anwar Hossain's nomination was turned down as the name and voter number of the proposer in the nomination

form were penned through.

Decisions on the nominations of Abdul Haque and Enayet Ullah Siddiqui are pending as further clarification is needed from the National Board of Revenue on their tax payment status.

The suspended candidates can petition the appeal board, said A Matin Chowdhury, chairman of the election board. After the appeal board takes its call, the final list of candidates will be published on July 19 as per the schedule of the election.

As per the FBCCI charter, 46 directors (23 from each panel) will be elected and 34 (17 from each panel) will be nominated.

The 80 directors will then elect one president, one senior vice-president and six vice-presidents. There are 2,500 voters this year, according to Chowdhury, a former president of the Bangladesh Textile Mills Association.

Sudan's warring sides must face 'accountability'

Says UN official; UK sanctions firms linked to military groups

AFP, Brussels

Sudan's warring sides must face "accountability" for the "crimes" committed in their conflict, which risks spiralling into a regional crisis, the head of UN mission in the country said yesterday.

The fighting, which has gone on for three months, "risks morphing into an ethnicised, tribalised and ideologised conflict which is much closer to being a full-blown civil war," the official, Volker Perthes, told reporters in Brussels.

Already the multiple human rights violations carried out, including "murder, rape and looting," are fuelling a desire among ordinary Sudanese to see the back of the warring generals, he said.

"The interpretation of what I hear is that a majority of the Sudanese don't want these generals to continue in any way in the country," Perthes said.

While he was not directly calling for the International Criminal Court (ICC) to bring the generals to justice, he said: "The ICC of course is watching – it's not up to me to ask the ICC to take action, but I



think they are on it."

Meanwhile, the UK government yesterday announced sanctions on businesses that it said were associated with the Sudanese military groups.

The Foreign Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) said it was imposing the sanctions on firms "which are fuelling the devastating conflict in Sudan by providing funding and arms to the warring militias".

The measures target three businesses associated with the regular army, the Sudanese Armed Forces, and three linked to its rival, the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces, the FCDO said in a statement.

The sanctions "will limit their financial freedom by preventing UK citizens, companies and banks from dealing with them and put pressure on the parties to engage in the peace process".

Foreign Secretary James Cleverly said the sanctions "are directly targeting those whose actions have destroyed the lives of millions".

More than 3 million people have now fled their homes due to the unrest in Sudan, the UN said yesterday.



US President Joe Biden speaks at an event with G7 leaders, European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen, President of the European Council Charles Michel and Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelensky to announce a Joint Declaration of Support to Ukraine, as the Nato summit is held in Vilnius, Lithuania yesterday.

PHOTO: REUTERS

World hunger stops rising but remains elevated: UN

AFP, Paris

World hunger stopped rising in 2022 after growing for seven years but remains above pre-pandemic levels and far off track to be eradicated by 2030, UN agencies said yesterday.

Between 691 million and 783 million people faced hunger last year, with a midrange of 735 million, the five agencies said in a report.

The proportion of people facing chronic hunger rose from 7.9 percent of the world population in 2019 – before the pandemic – to 9.2 percent in 2022.

The annual rise "has stalled", however, with the total falling by about 3.8 million people between 2021 and 2022, according to the State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World report.

"There is no room for complacency though, as hunger is still on the rise throughout Africa, Western Asia and the Caribbean," they warned.

The report is "a snapshot of the world still recovering from a global pandemic and now grappling with the consequences of the war in Ukraine, which has further rattled food and energy markets."



A teargas canister, lobbed by riot police officers to disperse protesters, explodes as a supporter of Kenya's opposition leader Raila Odinga of the Azimio La Umoja (Declaration of Unity) One Kenya Alliance participate in anti-government protests against the imposition of tax hikes by the government in Kibera settlement of Nairobi, Kenya yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

Manipur orders removal of bunkers, people say no

NDTV ONLINE

A prevailing sense of mistrust and talk of "war" - two months after violence first broke out in Manipur, and amid a lull in violent incidents, the situation in the state is still far from normal.

Exemplifying the mistrust are the numerous bunkers, built by the Meitei and Kuki communities, that dot districts along the borders of the hills and valleys. Members of both communities insist on holding on to the bunkers despite the government announcing their demolition on July 3.

Visuals of two bunkers, one in the valley in Imphal West district and

another in the foothills in Kangpokpi district a few kilometres away, show men on alert with rifles pointed out, using binoculars to scan the surrounding area for danger. While people from both communities claim their only motive is self-defence, police say many from both sides have died in the other's "territory".

"This bunker is only for protection. Militants had fired again, so everyone in our village... are worried about war. Hence, we built this bunker again to protect civilians," said Arun Kumar Singh, a village defence volunteer in Imphal West.

Double blow for Thailand's PM-hopeful

Legal cases mount against Pita on eve of PM vote; pro-democracy groups call for protests

REUTERS, Bangkok

Thai prime ministerial hopeful Pita Limjaroenrat was dealt a major setback yesterday when two separate complaints against him gained momentum, threatening to derail his leadership bid on the eve of a crucial vote on the premiership.

Pita's supporters, many of them younger voters opposed to the royalist military's involvement in politics, called for protests later yesterday, raising the possibility of another round of turmoil in two decades of fractious Thai politics.

The Constitutional Court said it had accepted a complaint filed by a lawyer against Pita and his election-winning Move Forward Party's that said its plan to reform a law prohibiting royal insults amounted to an attempt "to overthrow the democratic regime of government with the king as a head of state".

It came just hours after the election commission recommended that the same court disqualify Pita as a lawmaker, saying it found merit in a complaint alleging he was unqualified to run in the May 14 general election, because of his ownership of shares in a media company in violation of electoral rules.



There was no immediate indication either development would prevent Pita, 42, from contesting today's vote, where he faces a challenge to win the required backing of more than half of the legislature.

To gather enough support in parliament to become prime minister it looks as if Pita must win over conservative members of a Senate opposed to his party's anti-establishment agenda, its most contentious element being amending article 112 of the criminal code, which punishes insults of the crown by up to 15 years in jail.

Pita said the electoral commission's

recommendation that he be disqualified was unfair and he questioned the timing.

"This is a bit rushed, one day before the PM vote, it shouldn't have happened," he told reporters.

In a television interview as the court announced the new case, Pita stressed that his party's proposal to amend article 112 was not an attempt to undermine the monarchy.

Buoyed by massive support from young voters for its bold reform plans, Move Forward and another opposition party thumped rivals allied with the royalist army in the May election in what was widely seen as an overwhelming public rejection of nine years of government led or backed by the military.

Move Forward beat the populist Pheu Thai party, that had been expected to win, by 10 seats and the two parties together hope to form a coalition government after today's vote.

The court cases are the latest twist in a turbulent, two-decade battle for power in Thailand that broadly pits conservatives allied with the royalist military and influential old money families against parties elected on populist or progressive platforms.

Asean chair urges political solution to Myanmar crisis

Thai FM confirms meeting with Suu Kyi

AFP, Jakarta

Asean chair Indonesia yesterday urged a political solution to the Myanmar crisis at regional talks where Thailand's envoy announced he met the country's deposed democratic leader Aung San Suu Kyi last week. Myanmar has been ravaged by deadly violence since a military coup ousted Suu Kyi's government more than two years ago, unleashing a bloody crackdown on dissent.

The 10-member Association of Southeast Asian Nations has long been decried as a toothless talking shop, and it remains split over diplomatic attempts to resolve the crisis as it tries to form a united position on the junta-run country. "Only a political solution will lead to a durable peace," Indonesian Foreign Minister Retno Marsudi told Asean counterparts in her opening remarks on the second day of talks in Jakarta. The meeting was dealt a surprise when Thailand's foreign minister disclosed he met with Myanmar's ousted democracy leader Suu Kyi on his own on Sunday in the country's capital Naypyidaw and said she was in "good health". In the meeting Suu Kyi "encouraged dialogue", Don Pramudwinai told reporters on the sidelines of the meeting. Philippines' foreign minister said Don briefed Asean ministers on his meeting with Suu Kyi, but he reiterated any independent effort to restart the peace process should be in line with a five-point Asean plan agreed with Myanmar's junta.

Modi heads to France today

More submarines, jets for Indian navy on cards


REUTERS, New Delhi

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi heads to France today to deepen ties with New Delhi's oldest strategic partner in the West, with a slew of high-profile defence deals expected and a new joint plan to ensure stability in the Indo-Pacific.


Modi has been invited as the guest of honour at the Bastille Day celebrations by French President Emmanuel Macron. Units from India's army, navy and air force will also participate in parade, including two of the 36 Rafale fighter jets India bought in 2015 for nearly \$9 billion.

The visit will "provide an opportunity to chart the course of the partnership for the future across diverse sectors such as strategic, cultural, scientific, academic and economic cooperation," the Indian government said yesterday.

This year marks 25th anniversary of partnership between the two countries, and announcement of new deals will burnish defence ties between the two nations.




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August 16, 2023

Admission Test

August 18, 2023 (Friday) at 10:00 AM (Written) and 11:30 AM (Viva-Voce).

Admission Test Syllabus

MCO: Mathematics and English.
Descriptive: Translation, Comprehension, and Paragraph Writing.



Contact for more information

MPF Program Office (Room 4005), 3rd Floor, MBA Building, Faculty of Business Studies, University of Dhaka;
Phone: 9661900-73, Ext: 8011; Mobile: +8801850536992, +8801914379230; Email: mpf@du.ac.bd

Kicking a football is no crime

Why are children still subjected to random violence and abuse?

We're shocked to learn of a tragic incident in Noakhali's Chatkhil upazila where a 15-year-old schoolboy was killed allegedly for kicking a football – a chilling reminder of the cruelty and violence that children continue to face in many parts of the country. According to a report, Osman Gani, a seventh grader, died from injuries sustained after being beaten by a neighbour for kicking his son's ball, which accidentally landed on the roof of a nearby building. Osman was initially taken to the Noakhali Sadar Hospital, and later to a hospital in Dhaka, where he died on Tuesday. His family claimed that the neighbour, a mason, held a grudge against them because of a past incident.

Whatever the motive, it is preposterous that a young life would be cut short over something as innocuous as kicking a ball. A game meant to bring joy and camaraderie instead led to a tragedy that will forever haunt the memories of those who knew Osman. But our response to this incident must go beyond expressing condolences and seeking justice, which we hope will be delivered following proper investigations. We must dig deeper, and examine the broader societal context that continues to allow such acts to occur.

It is perhaps reasonable to suggest that as a society we're growing increasingly intolerant, and it is the weaker members of society like children who are most vulnerable in this climate. The risks facing them are legion, as various media reports will show, and the circumstances surrounding Osman's death highlight the disturbing ease with which a risk may materialise. According to a 2020 survey, nine out of 10 children in the country experience some form of violent disciplining by their caregivers. Besides physical or psychological aggression, the two most critical challenges they face are child labour and marriage, both seriously damaging their life potential. The Unicef says that nearly 7 percent of children aged between 5 and 17 years are involved in some form of labour, while 51 percent of women aged between 22 and 24 were married off before their 18th birthday.

Evidently, we have failed to create a safe and nurturing environment for our children where they will be protected from abuse, cruelty, or exploitation, and where their fundamental rights will be respected. It is deeply alarming. We must think critically about this issue and try to rectify it.

A good initiative worth scaling up

Moulvibazar municipality's plastic booth raises hope in the fight against pollution

We welcome the initiative of Moulvibazar municipality to set up a plastic trading booth where people are encouraged to deposit and sell their used plastic bottles and polythene. According to a report, anyone can sell plastic waste at Tk 50 per kilo. The inclusion of a monetary incentive is noteworthy as this is what prompted a huge response from the locals. What would have otherwise been discarded as waste has now been turned into an income-generating resource for them. In fact, one local described how he, after hearing about the initiative, collected four sacks of waste from the streets.

The Moulvibazar municipality is partially modelling an internationally known method called a deposit-return system, where people pay a surcharge on a product when it is purchased and get a rebate when it is returned. This is a well-established practice that is known to promote recycling among citizens at large. The response received by the Moulvibazar municipality is a case in point.

Plastics have been silently piling up in our environment even after Bangladesh banned single-use plastic bags in 2002. That policy has so far remained only in papers, while the country kept sinking deeper and deeper in plastic waste. Reportedly, 69 percent of disposable plastic products in the country are left uncollected, and only 31 percent are recycled. According to a World Bank report, Bangladesh's annual per capita plastic consumption in urban areas tripled to 9kgs in 2020 from 3kgs in 2005. Unfortunately, recycling plants or initiatives did not grow in proportion to that. As a result, the country ranks among the worst in the world in terms of mismanaged plastic waste.

Recycling plants are a great way to address this growing menace. Small-scale recycling initiatives in the northern districts have proven successful, as have the initiatives to produce yarns from plastic waste. We urge the government to scale up such initiatives, and incentivise those involved in recycling through proper policy and financial support. The Moulvibazar example should inspire other districts and municipalities to follow suit.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

letters@thedailystar.net

Excess fee collection for HSC exams

Candidates of this year's HSC examination and their parents are alleging that their educational institutions have been charging extra for the exam form fill-up and submission fees. The fee per student is fixed by the government, but some government and private educational institutions are collecting additional fees. Given the ongoing cost-of-living crisis, having to pay this extra money is putting pressure on middle class and lower-middle class families. When asked to explain why they are charging the excess fees, the heads of some institutions even threatened to not accept the candidates' forms. This is unacceptable. The government must look into this, find which institutions are doing this, and take proper action against them.

Md Maruf Hassan Bhuiyan
Feni

Is the proposed pension scheme really universal?



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

KALLOL MUSTAFA

The government is set to launch the Universal Pension Scheme nationwide in the current fiscal year. Under the proposed scheme, beneficiaries can enjoy pension benefits subject to the payment of subscription up to the age of 60 years if they enrol at the age of 18-50 years, whereas those who enrol at above 50 years will have to pay a subscription for a minimum of 10 years.

As the proposed pension scheme requires monthly contributions even from the lower income groups, here we would like to briefly evaluate this scheme against the principles of International Labour Organization (ILO) to see if the pension system is really universal or not by design. Since its foundation in 1919, the ILO has played a key role in the global development of social security systems, including pensions. A majority of pension systems around the world have been designed with technical assistance provided by the ILO.

The main objective of the public pension system is to ensure income security for the elderly, preventing poverty and reducing inequality. The ILO has elaborated a core set of principles to design pension systems, which can be grouped into three overarching objectives of pension systems: coverage, adequacy, and sustainability.

A comprehensive pension system should guarantee income security to everyone of old age. This principle of universality is embedded in various human rights instruments, including the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. There are two important dimensions to the adequacy of pension systems: horizontal and vertical. Considering the horizontal dimension, a pension system should guarantee a minimum level of adequacy for everyone when they reach old age, regardless of their work histories. The vertical dimension considers that a pension system should provide benefits that are adequate relative to previous lifetime earnings. Pension systems also need to be built in a way that is socially and financially sustainable, i.e. it can achieve coverage and adequacy in the future in a way that is financially sustainable.

To meet these diverse objectives, ILO recommends establishing a multi-tier or multi-pillar pension system. The core rationale for multiple tiers is that pension systems serve different people in a diverse range of circumstances at

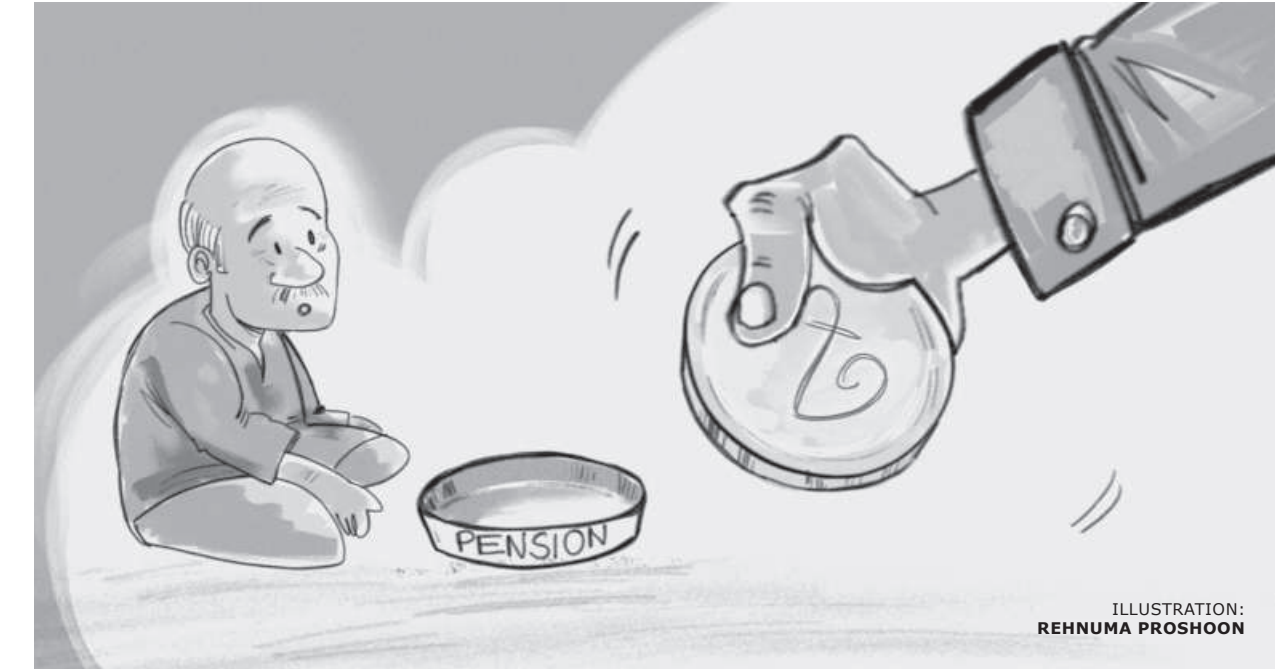


ILLUSTRATION: REHNUMA PROSHOON

different moments of their lives. A multi-tier pension system consists, in most cases, of a flat, tax-funded base pension (Tier 0); a mandatory, earnings-related contributory pension (Tier 1); and supplementary pension plans (Tier 2). Tier 0 is a non-contributory pension scheme, financed by the government general budget, under which a flat amount is provided to everyone who has reached the age of eligibility, or to those who have reached the age of eligibility but does not receive other kinds of pension. It should guarantee a minimum level of income, with adequate levels of benefits, for a life in decency and dignity. Tier 1 is based on an earnings-related contributory scheme. The ILO recommends that Tier 1 scheme be a defined benefit scheme financed on a pay-as-you-go or partial funding basis. Tier 2 consists of mostly a voluntary, supplementary contribution pension component to allow individuals to achieve even higher levels of benefits.

According to the ILO, tax-funded, non-contributory Tier 0 pensions are the only way to cover many of those who are in informal employment and do not have the capacity to contribute during their working lives. The other tiers will not be able to cover the majority of the population in the foreseeable future, due to the large informal economy.

Now, if we compare the proposed pension scheme in Bangladesh, we

from the informal sector will range from a minimum of Tk 500 to a maximum of Tk 5,000 per month. The monthly contribution for private sector employees is likely to be set from a minimum of Tk 1,000 to a maximum of Tk 5,000. The government will contribute 50 percent to the monthly deposits of the insolvent individuals and will have no contribution towards the rest. Pension scheme holders will receive interest from the government against their contributions. This means that the proposed pension scheme is probably a contributory Tier 2 system with very low government contribution.

The question is, will the low-income groups be able to contribute their part in the proposed pension scheme? Is it fair to take contributions from the low-income groups while civil servants get pensions without any such contribution? The experiences of Thailand can be a lesson for Bangladesh. Until 2009, Thailand's pension system included several contributory schemes for government officials, private sector employees and informal economy workers. However, coverage of the latter group was very limited. Overall, only 20 percent of older persons had access to some level of protection. Only after introducing a non-contributory old-age pension in 2009 did Thailand reach universal coverage.

In order to meet the similar

pensions (Tier 2) and other private savings (Tier 3) play an important role in this system for providing income replacement to those with relatively higher earnings. In Sweden, the core component of the pension system is an earnings-related, pay-as-you-go, notional defined-contribution scheme (Tier 1). But those with no or low pension income are eligible for the Guaranteed Pension (Tier 0), which tapers away for those with higher pension income. In Portugal, the pension system is oriented towards a mandatory defined-benefit scheme (Tier 1). The social pension (Tier 0) is provided to older people who are not covered by any contributory social insurance scheme.

It is noteworthy that all these pension systems may have different mechanisms, but one component is common: all have a non-contributing Tier 0 scheme to guarantee minimum income security to all older persons, thus achieving the horizontal dimension of pension coverage. This is particularly important in Bangladesh, where large informal employment and poverty mean that significant portions of the working population are not in the position to join a contributory scheme. So, in order to make the proposed pension scheme truly universal, a Tier 0 non-contributory part must be included.

Why our insurance sector needs reshaping



Dr. Md. Main Uddin is professor and former chairman of the Department of Banking and Insurance at the University of Dhaka. He can be reached at mainuddin@du.ac.bd

MD MAIN UDDIN

The contribution of the insurance sector to the GDP is measured by a ratio popularly known as penetration ratio – a ratio of premium to GDP. The penetration ratio in Bangladesh, currently at only 0.46 percent, is very low compared to the global standards. Lack of awareness about insurance is often stated as the reason behind the meagre penetration ratio, but there are many other addressable issues in the sector.

Bangladesh has 81 insurance companies, of which 35 companies deal with life insurance and 46 with non-life insurance. The question about whether our economy needs so many insurance companies is moot. The answer is a no, and it's a no-brainer. India, for example, has only 57 insurance companies, and Malaysia has only 25. Allowing such a large number of insurance companies to operate in Bangladesh was completely unjustified. A good number of companies were given licences based on political considerations; they were permitted not because they were needed for the economy, but because they were beneficial to some influential people. If an economy has more insurance companies than it needs,

companies are bound to perform poorly and resort to anomalies due to undue competition.

The progress of a country's insurance sector can be understood by looking at its claim settlement ratio. This ratio refers to the percentage of claims that the insurance company settles in a year compared to the total number of claims received. If the ratio is high, it means more claims have been settled. So, what are the claim settlement ratios of the insurance companies in Bangladesh?

Historical data show that it was about 54 percent in 1973-1990, which rose to nearly 73 percent during 1991-08, and to 78 percent during 2009-2019. However, this rate dropped dramatically to 68 percent in 2021 from 88 percent in 2020. In contrast, the global claim settlement ratio is 98 percent on average. Even in India, the average claim settlement ratio is 98 percent. One could argue that the recent deterioration of this ratio in Bangladesh may be due to the pandemic. But what about the historical low settlement ratios?

Many factors can be attributed to such low claim settlement ratios. There are allegations that insurers delay the settlement of claims when

some policies mature. In some cases, if clients are not influential, their claims are not settled properly. A large number of insurance companies have to compete for the same number of clients with almost similar products and services. Some companies fail to invest their funds appropriately to generate the required return, while other companies face investment losses. Besides, corruption, financial irregularities and embezzlement in some companies resulted in a serious liquidity crisis. The regulatory authority has repeatedly failed to ensure the accountability of such companies; lack of monitoring and supervision allows them to continue operating with many anomalies.

Furthermore, the lack of professionalism of agents has created a negative mindset towards the entire sector. Incomplete information is often provided by agents to policyholders. In many cases, policyholders do not look at the terms and conditions of policies; rather they depend on what the agents say. In such cases, the agents can exaggerate the benefits of policies. When the policies mature, the policyholders find a huge gap between the promise and the reality.

On the other hand, the rising income inequality has kept a large proportion of the population outside insurance coverage. A paradoxical situation has emerged in the country: the rich have the ability to manage risks personally and have insurance policies. But the poor who face many risks do not have insurance policies that can be attributed not only to the lack of awareness, but also to the economic factors creating their inability to buy the policies.

There is also a mismatch between the demand for and supply of the products and services. Before launching any product, there should be a survey on prospective customers so that the supplier can understand its latent demand and design it accordingly. But in our country, most of the time, products and services are launched without serious market investigation.

The negligence to the overall sector is evident from the setting up of the Insurance Development and Regulatory Authority (IDRA) only in 2010, although this sector has been operating in the country in parallel with the banking sector since independence. The IDRA does not have an adequate workforce to regulate the insurance sector properly. In addition, there is also doubt about its autonomy in taking corrective measures against the insurance companies involved in various irregularities and financial scams.

But the insurance market is crucial for sustaining the country's economic growth. To utilise this opportunity, the lack of trust and irregularities in this sector has to be mitigated. Timely claim settlements are a must-do to create trust. It is also crucial to design diversified products and services according to the customers' demand. The liquidity constraint has to be minimised by prudent use of funds. The regulatory authority needs to monitor the insurance companies rigorously and punish companies that break the law. Such actions will also create a ripple effect, and pressurise other companies to work within the regulatory framework.

REFLECTIONS

Home is where MY BOOKS ARE



With each year, as we grew up, our choices of books started adding variety to the shelf. We discovered Akhtaruzzaman Elias and Shahidul Zahir. After stepping out of the comfort zone of the mother tongue at the school library with volumes of Harry Potter, there came Jhumpa Lahiri, Arundhati Roy, Harper Lee, Marquez, and Marlon James.

NAHALY NAFISA KHAN

How do you pack 25 years of your life in two suitcases?

This was the first thing I asked myself when I booked my tickets to another country, where I will spend the next two years pursuing graduate studies. The airline has strict instructions regarding the weight limit each passenger is allowed to carry, a precise amount of 46 kilos. How easy do they think it is to carry everything and set up a new life, a new home, in a whole new land?

Home has always been a fleeting idea, never a particular structure. It was not a room of my own, but rather a meal cooked by my mother, the music my sister plays for us on Friday afternoons, and the countless books we have collected over the years.

Satyajit Ray was a staple in this home while growing up. Hiding the huge hardbound cover of *Golpo 101* or a *Feluda Shomogra* under the textbooks while in classes was an extreme sport and one of my fondest memories from school. To this day, the stories smell like winter vacation to me, when I could curl up underneath a blanket and devour stories so rich in imagery. Then came *Golpo Guchchha* by Tagore, a collection of Russian stories in Bangla, and another translated anthology of European fairy tales. The impressive collection of Bangla fiction that my parents had in store

for us allowed us to grow beyond our years, as we ploughed through the thick volumes of Sunil's Time trilogy—*Shei Shomoy*, *Prothom Alo* and *Purba Pashchim*. Every page of Muhammad Zafar Iqbal's books on our shelf not only has in it his stories but also ours, the ones we created when we read them before bed, in stealth, to keep the lights on just for a few more minutes.

With each year, as we grew up, our choices of books started adding variety to the shelf. We discovered Akhtaruzzaman Elias and Shahidul Zahir. After stepping out of the comfort zone of the mother tongue at the school library with volumes of Harry Potter, there came Jhumpa Lahiri, Arundhati Roy, Harper Lee, Marquez, and Marlon James. They gave me the most powerful weapon to exist to date—words. Once I realised this, they never eluded me, not even for a split second.

I opened the window for love and some light, and poetry found its way in. Meanwhile, in my younger years, my father would try to instill in me the habit of reading nonfiction. He started small, from newspaper or magazine columns, eventually venturing into relevant, simple, and age appropriate materials published by Bishwo Shahitto Kendro. But I would rebel, in my never ending quest for stories. With new friends in university, I found newfound access to more genres of literature and a need to understand and reason with the realities of

life. On a quest to seek joy in the mundane, nonfiction finally found its way to our shared shelf (I hope you're proud, Papa!).

Now that I look back, these books, mostly works of fiction, have defined the concept of home for me as I grew up. Our bookshelf contains many things, but most of all, a lot of love with which we curated them. It contains memories of my father, who took us to the Boi Mela every February and wrote our names on the first pages of the books with his effortlessly beautiful Bangla lettering. It contains his wisdom and understanding of the world which he wished to pass on to us. It contains the love for Bangla novels shared by my mother and my sister. It contains memories of our friends, both old and new, the ones that are here and the ones that we lost, who knew us well enough to know that the books they gave us as presents would remain in our hearts rent-free, along with the notes of endearment that came with them. What I read and what I am and how I see the world and its people—all of it has been shaped by these contrasting yet passionate adventures of read within my family.

But the question remains. How do you pack 25 years' worth of memories in two suitcases to make a home in a new country? How do you pack the absolute essentials?

You don't. When it came to picking the books that I wanted to fit into one suitcase, I could not decide on a number of works of fiction, each carrying a core piece of my entire being. It has been an emotionally draining task.

And so, surprisingly for a devourer of stories such as myself, most of the books that I picked to take with me are works of nonfiction. In my new home in a new country, Bertolt Brecht's *On Art and Politics* and Romila Thapar's *Voices of Dissent* will work as constant reminders of what I'm doing and why I'm doing it. *One Hundred Years of Solitude* will keep me company during days of isolation, and Shakti Chattopadhyay's collection of poems will satiate my eternal craving for Bangla.

Why am I leaving my beloved stories behind, you ask?

Well, I figured I knew the answer all along. If it was the stories that worked as my home, they should also stay where they belong—in my home, that is this rogue city. When I come back, they will welcome me with open arms, and will help me settle back in instantly. I will come back, after all.

Till then, home needs to remain home and some things need to remain unchanged.

Nahaly Nafisa Khan is a writer and journalist. She is working as a sub-editor at The Daily Star's City Desk.

FICTION REVIEW

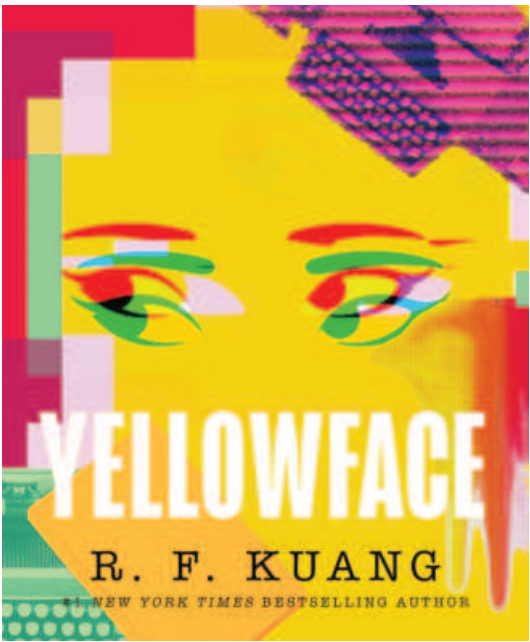
Where does a story end, and a lie begin? 'Yellowface' by RF Kuang (The Borough Press, 2023)

YAAMEEN AL-MUTTAQI

I have long held the opinion that gossip and internet drama are like popcorn for the soul: it's tasty, addictive even, but gives you no nutrition. Of course, I too read gossip from the sidelines: who doesn't love watching someone high and mighty fall from grace, especially when you have no stake in their affairs? But to transmute the vapid airs of gossip into a surgical knife and use it to peel back the worst aspects of people and society requires a special kind of skill. It is here where you see the genius of RF Kuang, in her debut literary fiction novel, *Yellowface* (HarperCollins, 2023).

Yellowface follows June Hayward, literary nobody, and best friend of Athena Liu, publishing's Next Big Thing. When Athena dies in an accident, June finds herself pocketing a draft of Athena's next project and working on it as an homage to her friend. Thus begins the web of lies that June cocoons around herself to justify her actions—a Shakespearean tale of ambition, hubris, and self deceit set amidst the backdrop of the modern publishing industry and its obsessed internet followers. Through its 300 pages, Kuang exposes the performative nature of anti-racism in publishing: showcasing the boxes that people of colour get put in and how difficult it is for them to be heard.

I compare *Yellowface* to gossip because it very much follows internet gossip. Significant portions of the narrative are set within online spaces—



DESIGN: AMREETA LETHE

Twitter mobs and blog posts—and the prose itself is chatty. This is a feature, not a bug, and it makes the book infinitely more readable and accessible. Underneath all that gossip, however, is a discussion about racism, ownership, cultural appropriation, and cancel culture. Our cultural backgrounds are so deeply connected with the stories we tell and how we tell them; Kuang's deep understanding of this elevates the book from a preachy, dense discussion into a well illustrated, nuanced thought experiment. All the while, Kuang makes *Yellowface* a joy to read, and proves that you do not need a likeable protagonist to make a compelling story, for June is such a terrible character that one keeps reading out of the sheer schadenfreude of watching her dig her hole deeper.

But June's awfulness does not make her unrelatable. Too often, we think that societal evils such as racism come in the form of Big Evil People—Hitlers and Trumps—and we forget that even the most well meaning of us can, in our day to day life, hurt others just as much. We all know a June, or, in our worst moments, are June. The way Kuang writes about the white establishment of publishing and its players is terrifying, for it is bland and banal. Racism isn't just the unequal incarceration of Black people, it is also June insisting that she isn't racist because she voted for Obama and Biden, immediately before scoffing at Chinese food, and ridiculing a Chinese funeral.

Many critics have commented that Kuang's messaging is too on the nose. It was criticism also levied against her previous novel, *Babel* (HarperCollins, 2022), which explores the racism and politics of translation by looking at Britain's colonial history through the lens of fantasy. Kuang's body of work thus reads to me like a conversation on how racism has both evolved and stayed the same across time. While *Babel* critiqued the far reaching legacy of imperialism, and was more blatant in its depictions of racial violence, *Yellowface*, while never reaching the highs of *Babel*, is still a gripping book that evolves with the times it depicts to critique racism via microaggressions. It unpacks the way we perpetuate systems that remain today to benefit the white (wo)man. Through the guise of fantasy and literary fiction, Kuang seems to be inviting readers who shy away from nonfiction into difficult conversations and uncomfortable self reflections on race and privilege. In my experience, having lived in majority white cities for a large portion of my life, people with privilege will go to extreme lengths to deny its subtle upward push within their daily lives. When confronted, defences go up, and only clever conversation can break through their denial. If Kuang's intention is for readers to confront their biases, then “too on the nose” may still not be direct enough.

Yaameen Al-Muttaqi works with robots and writes stories of dragons, magic, friendship, and hope. Send him a raven at yaameen3112@gmail.com.

NONFICTION REVIEW

From breezy musings to GUSTY CONVICTIONS

‘Blowing in the Wind’ by Shamsad Mortuza (ULAB Press, 2023)

TASNIM ODRIKA

While browsing my social media one fine evening last year, I came across an article titled, “If you pay peanuts, you get monkeys”. I found the title intriguing and began to read. *The Daily Star* opinion piece, authored by academic and writer Shamsad Mortuza, presented the argument that pay affects the quality of teaching. Professor Mortuza explains how a black-and-white increase in pay would not improve the quality of our current stock of teachers. “If teaching is really poorly paid in relative terms, then one would expect that only the less able would end up in the job,” he writes. Therefore, while offering higher salaries can surely attract better quality teachers in the future, “it would take 30-40 years to complete the cycle to replace the existing stock with better recruits”.

I ruminated over this argument and from then on, whenever I encounter an article by Shamsad Mortuza, I instinctively proceed to read it.

I willingly obliged to review it when I recently found out that Shamsad Mortuza has compiled the articles published under “Blowing in the wind”, his *The Daily Star* Opinion page column, into a book with the same title. Unsurprisingly, I discovered that I had already read several articles in the compilation. Did that dampen the experience? Not at all.

This is because of the way the book is structured. It is the evidence from the collection that, alongside serving as a Professor of English, a Fulbright-winning educator, and his administrative roles as the Pro-VC and now a Special Advisor to the Board at ULAB, Shamsad Mortuza's career as a



DESIGN: MAISHA SYEDA

columnist has adeptly covered a diverse range of subjects, while also bearing an extensive focus on education. He has published over 180 articles thus far in his time as a columnist, and the book is quite uniquely curated, segmented according to the significance of the issues addressed. Derived from the title, *Blowing in the Wind*, the compilation is divided into seven sections, with each section bearing the name of a specific type of wind, covering articles that differ according to the force with which the author approaches the issues. “Sometimes the wind is mild like zephyr”, he points out, “at other times it is gusty like a gale”.

Blowing in the Wind thus starts with a segment titled ‘Zephyr’, which can be defined as a light breeze. The very first article here, titled “On Being ‘Silly’”, tackles some heavy topics, such as the negligence of our medical practitioners and the mismanagement of our

healthcare system. He interweaves his personal narratives along with external anecdotes to shed light on the dehumanising aspects within our present-day medical system. In one instance he relates the tale of his own father and his battle with cancer. During a gallbladder operation, the surgeon had seen the growing tumour but chose to ignore it, as it did not fall within the “treatment package”. The article then goes on to relate the story of a grieving father who arrives at the Supreme Court with his newborn twins after three hospitals refuse them treatment. Professor Mortuza does not delve too deep into these topics with facts and figures in this section, instead choosing to breeze through them with heartrending examples.

As you go through the book, you face heavier winds. In the section titled ‘Gale’, Professor Mortuza explores the history of the establishment of our education

system, the contentious nature of the semester system at our universities, the issue of campus ragging, corruption within our educational institutions, and various other compelling topics. In this section, he faces the topics head on. In the article titled “University education: one size fits all”, Mortuza argues that the current university system is designed for a narrow range of students and that it fails to accommodate the diverse needs and aspirations of individual students.

While I had read some of these articles previously in the newspaper, finding them organised thematically in a book allowed me to gain a deeper understanding of the perspectives Professor Mortuza has tried to share. One of the most admirable aspects of his writing, and what drove me to read his articles initially, is his ability to tackle complex issues with clarity and insight, as well as his decision to incorporate pop culture into his arguments. He has a gift for combining personal experience with broader social and political analysis, creating a rich tapestry of ideas while forming a connection with readers.

The writer's attachment to pop culture is also evident in the naming of his book and the column itself, if you haven't already guessed. Both are named after the Bob Dylan song of the same name. Just as the song suggests that finding answers to life's biggest questions is like trying to catch something blowing in the wind, Shamsad Mortuza's compilation of articles tries to ask questions, the answers for which are ever evasive.

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Tigers in need of ‘collective approach’

SPORTS REPORTER

Following a lot of drama both on and off the field since Tamim Iqbal's retirement saga, Bangladesh's seven-wicket victory in the final ODI against Afghanistan came as a relief to the Tigers' camp, especially considering how the Tigers conceded the three-match series with successive losses in the first two matches in Chattogram.

However, the Tigers will now be hoping to move forward, with a change in mindset and in leadership – Shakib Al Hasan leading the T20I side – as the Bangladesh team reached Sylhet for the two-match T20I series against the Afghans yesterday.

The chemistry between Shakib and head coach Chandika Hathurusingha is now the highlighting factor, especially after the hosts managed to beat Afghanistan in the third ODI as the two were seen discussing their plans for the T20I series.

In fact, both Shakib and Hathurusingha went straight to the ground to inspect the pitch right after the team reached Sylhet on Wednesday ahead of the first T20I scheduled for tomorrow.

It is expected to be an even tougher challenge for Bangladesh when they take on Afghanistan in the T20I format given the Tigers managed to win just three games in their nine meetings with the Afghans so far.

For Bangladesh, the main test will be



In absence of a number of key players, Bangladesh will rely on the likes of Sanjida Akter and Krishna Rani Sarkar when they host Nepal in the first of two friendlies in Dhaka today. (Bottom) Nepal's prolific striker Sabitra Bhandari, meanwhile, will grab most of the attention for the visitors.

PHOTO: BFF



to take on the challenge of negotiating world-class T20 players Rashid Khan and Muejeb Ur Rahman, and also pacer Fazalhaq Farooqi. It will also be a huge challenge for Shakib to regroup the team after the sudden shock that they went through following Tamim's retirement incident.

The Tigers, however, can take heart from the last home series against England earlier this year in which the Tigers, despite losing the preceding three-match ODI series 2-1, the hosts went on to whitewash the world champions in the three-match T20I series.

According to prominent coach Nazmul Abedeen Fahim, it will be crucial for Bangladesh players to forget about the external pressure and bank on their strength to overcome the ODI series defeat and focus on the T20I series.

"Sometimes, we forget who we are as external pressure influences us, rendering us unable to express ourselves. Also, we tend to look at opposition's strength rather than focus on what we possess. If we doubt our strength and feel they are better, that is when problem arises," Fahim told The Daily Star yesterday.

Bangladesh have garnered a reputation of being a solid ODI unit over the years but the same can not be said of the Tigers' approach in the shortest format of the game. And according to the mentor of Shakib, the Tigers can play better if they come up with a collective approach.

"Look, we do have some suitable players in team who can pressurise opponents throughout 20 overs. We are a good fielding unit and I think our strength will be to play collective cricket as a unit."

SAFF title a distant reality as Bangladesh host Nepal

SPORTS REPORTER

The mood that gripped the Bangladesh women's football team the last time they played an international football match is a far cry from the one that currently pervades in the team.

A confident Bangladesh team, having beaten South Asian powerhouse India in group stages, had taken on Nepal in the final of the SAFF Championship on September 19 in Kathmandu. The charges of Golam Rabbani Choton had then romped their way to the first title in the region with a comprehensive 3-1 win, setting off a nation-wide celebration.

Close to 10 months from that day, Bangladesh will meet Nepal again today – first of two matches of a FIFA friendly series in Dhaka, but there is hardly any excitement within the team, instead there is palpable sadness in the team as well as fear.

The team that led Bangladesh to their historic first SAFF title has been decimated by the departure of two key players – striker Sirat Jahan Swapna and centre-back Akhi Khatun as a consequence of the Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) failing to arrange a single international match for them and failing to meet their demands for a franchise league and salary raise.

Anuching Mogini, another defender, was also earlier dispelled from the camp over poor performance while Shamsunnahar Jr and Sajeda Akter – two other members of that squad – are out of reckoning due to sickness.

The biggest drawback for the team, though, is that they will be playing

without their long-time head coach Golam Rabbani Choton who recently resigned from the BFF job. In his absence and with technical director Paul Smalley not involving himself over 'negotiation of contract', the team is morally down and face a real challenge against the team from the Himalayas, whom they had beaten only that one time in nine



matches, six times and drawing on two other occasions.

Understandably, yesterday's pre-match press conference over the two FIFA friendly matches – the first off which will kick off at 5:30pm today at the Birshreshtha Shaheed Mostafa Kamal Stadium in Kamalapur – concentrated more on the team environment and its weaknesses rather than its strengths.

Mahbubur Rahman Litu, a long-term understudy of Choton, has been handed the responsibility to guide the team as the BFF looks for a new foreign coach.

"Every family goes through troubled times. We have also gone through a crisis, but I wanted to stitch the whole team together. Myself and the players have all been hungry for this match," Litu said, trying to put a positive spin on things.

"The team at SAFF Championship was a complete one, but we will try to do our best despite the absentees," Litu added.

Captain Sabina Khatun said they will accept the reality that Choton, whom she said was like a family member, is no longer with them.

However, she felt the long gap in match practice might have an impact on performance.

"There is an obvious difference between being in training and playing matches. We would probably see some difference in performance after the first match," Sabina said.

While Bangladesh team lamenting over the absentees, the Nepal team, which played four competitive matches since the SAFF Championship, will have two of their best players – Sabitra Bhandari and Preeti Rai, both of whom missed the SAFF final through injury and sickness.

One positive for the home team is that they will be staying at a five-star hotel in Dhaka for the first time, in an attempt from the federation to cheer them up. The BFF has also made entry for spectators into the stadium free to make sure the home team receive maximum support.



Ons Jabeur is ecstatic as she ousted defending champions Elena Rybakina yesterday and exacted revenge for her defeat in last year's final. The Tunisian surged back from a set down to beat third-seeded Rybakina 6-7(5), 6-4, 6-1 to set a Wimbledon semi-finals clash with Aryna Sabalenka.

PHOTO: REUTERS

‘Can’t wait to play my second semifinal’

AGENCIES

World number two Aryna Sabalenka roared into the Wimbledon semi-finals with a 6-2, 6-4 win over American Madison Keys on Wednesday.

The Belarusian, who has a tiger tattoo on her left arm, powered to victory on Court One and will face Ons Jabeur in the last four.

"I can't wait to play my second semifinal at Wimbledon and hopefully I can do better than last time. It was a really tough match, really great player and super happy I was able to win the second set, (and the) game," Sabalenka said on court.

"Thank you so much for the atmosphere, even though you support her more!," she added with a smile, which drew applause from the crowd.

Along with all Russian and Belarusian players, Sabalenka was banned from the 2022 tournament following the invasion of Ukraine.

Belarus is a key ally of Moscow.

She was defeated in three sets by Karolina Pliskova in the last four in 2021. "When I was a little girl I dreamed of winning Wimbledon. It's something special here," she said.

Sprinters skip heat to aid Imranur's cause

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh sprinters skipped the heat of the 4x100m relay event at the 25th Asian Athletics Championships in Bangkok, Thailand, yesterday to help Imranur Rahman's cause in today's 100m event.

"After reaching Bangkok, Imranur also suggested that participating in the relay, a day before his 100m sprint, would not be better for him," the Bangladesh Athletics Federation (BAF) executive, Abu Talha, told The Daily Star.

He further informed that the 100m was "our main focus" in the prestigious quadrennial event, hence the relay team – comprising Mohammad Ismail, Jahir Raihan, Rakibul Hasan, and Imranur – "decided to skip event" so that the latter gets to perform at his best.

Imranur, who won a 60-meter gold medal at the Asian Indoor Athletics Championship this year, will compete in Asian Championships for the first time since the London-based sprinter made international debut for Bangladesh in early 2021.

Apart from Imranur, Ismail will take part in long jump while Jahir and Rakibul will compete in 200m sprint today.

‘Ready and eager for new challenge’

AGENCIES



Lionel Messi has no regrets about his decision to join Inter Miami and said he is eager to face a new challenge.

The 36-year-old arrived in the United States on Tuesday ahead of his presentation as an Inter Miami player at a special event on Sunday.

"I'm happy with the decision we made. I'm ready and eager to face the new challenge," Messi said in an interview with Argentinian TV on Tuesday.

"My mentality and my head are not going to change and I will try, wherever I am, to give the maximum for myself and for the club, to continue to perform at the highest level."

The club is preparing a to hold a special event for the seven-time Ballon d'Or winner's presentation at the DRV PNK Stadium in Fort Lauderdale.

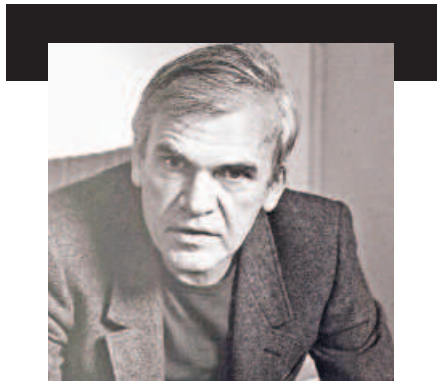
"Fans will be able to enjoy an exciting night of entertainment, on-the-pitch speeches and more," the club said in a statement, adding tickets would be free of charge for season ticket holders.

The World Cup winner will be reunited with former Barcelona team mate Sergio Busquets at Inter Miami as well as former Argentina coach Gerardo Martino.

Messi is expected to make his debut for the club on July 21 in a Leagues Cup clash against Mexican side Cruz Azul.

Messi is the biggest name to ever move to MLS and the greatest player to head to the United States since Brazilian great Pele signed for the New York Cosmos in 1975.

MLS hope that Messi will massively increase the profile of the league and boost subscriptions to their streaming broadcast deal with Apple TV. Ticket prices for games likely to involve Messi have already sky rocketed. Messi's arrival will also add to the momentum around the sport ahead of the 2026 World Cup, which will be hosted by the United States along with Canada and Mexico.



Literary giant Milan Kundera no more

REUTERS, Prague

Milan Kundera, author of the novel "The Unbearable Lightness of Being" who lived nearly five decades in Paris after emigrating in disillusionment from his Communist-ruled homeland, has died at the age of 94.

The Moravian Library (MZK) in the Czech city of Brno, which houses Kundera's personal collection, said he died in his Paris apartment on Tuesday after a long illness.

Kundera won global accolades for the way he depicted themes and characters that floated between the mundane reality of everyday life and the lofty world

SEE PAGE 6 COL 4



People being treated at Shaheed Suhrawardy Medical College and Hospital's dengue ward, which was recently opened up to tackle the surge of patients. Along with giving each bed its own mosquito net, the hospital authorities are trying their best to provide adequate facilities in the face of the ever-increasing number of dengue patients.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

DENGUE INFECTIONS Over 1,200 hospitalised in a day

Test fee halved to Tk 50 at public hospitals

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A record 1,246 people were hospitalised across the country yesterday – the highest in a single day so far this year.

Meanwhile, five more patients died during the same period.

With these, the total number of dengue patients recorded since January 1 rose to 16,143, of which 5,124 are from outside Dhaka, while the number of deaths rose to 88, according to the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS).

Experts have urged the authorities concerned to take necessary and urgent measures to control the Aedes mosquito breeding.

According to a pre-monsoon survey by the DGHS, conducted on 3,150 houses in 98 wards of the two city corporations between June 18 and 27, at least 20.4 percent of the houses under Dhaka North City Corporation have

The dengue test fee has been slashed to Tk 50 from Tk 100 in all public hospitals. This will remain effective for the next one month.

presence of Aedes mosquito larvae, while it is 15.14 percent in Dhaka South City Corporation.

Aedes larvae were found in 549 of all the houses surveyed. Of them, over 43 percent are multi-storied apartment buildings and 21.41 percent are independent houses.

Meanwhile, the dengue tests fee has been slashed to Tk 50 from Tk 100 in all public hospitals. This will remain effective for the next one month, the DGHS said in a statement yesterday.

Sheikh Daud Adnan, director of hospitals and clinics at the DGHS, told The Daily Star, "As per the health minister's instructions, we have reduced the fee so that dengue tests can be accessible to all."

However, the fee at private hospitals and diagnostic centres will remain unchanged at Tk 300, he said.

DGHS has further urged all to ensure their surrounding environments are kept clean.

In a separate circular, the directorate has instructed all public hospitals to activate separate dengue corners and directed hospital authorities to ensure treatment as per the updated treatment guideline available on www.dghs.gov.bd.

It also asked them to ensure adequate human resources in the dengue units; adequate supply of NSI kit used for dengue testing; and mosquito nets for all patients.

Meanwhile, the DSCC yesterday fined 12 building owners Tk 1.25 lakh for Aedes mosquito larvae in their structures.

The fines were imposed after eight DSCC mobile courts conducted anti-mosquito drives at different city area, including Pirbagh, Shahbagh, Uttar Mugda, Dakkhin Mugda, Jhigatola, Babubazar, Dakkhin Jatrabari, Purba Nandipara, Purba Sheikhdi and Kutubkhali.

Special combing operations against Aedes mosquitoes are also being conducted in educational institutions in DSCC areas, under which, after cleaning the premises and applying bleaching power, the authorities will use larvicide and adulticide, said DSCC public relations officer Md Abu Nasher.

FBCCI POLLS Exim Bank chairman, 27 others disqualified

Nomination denied for defaulting on loan or tax

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Nazrul Islam Mazumder, chairman of the Bangladesh Association of Banks and Exim Bank, was disqualified as a nominated director at the biennial election of the Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FBCCI) because of tax default.

The development comes after the FBCCI election board for 2023-25 scrutinised the tax, bank and police clearance certificates of aspiring candidates on Monday.

"As per the report of NBR, he is tax defaulter. As such his nomination was not accepted," read the notice by the election board on the qualified and disqualified director candidates on the FBCCI

SEE PAGE 6 COL 4

G7 unveils long-term support for Ukraine

Zelensky hails the new pledge a 'significant security victory' for Kyiv

REUTERS, Vilnius

The United States and global allies unveiled new security assurances for Ukraine at a Nato summit yesterday, designed to bolster the country's defences against Russia over the long haul while Kyiv strives for membership of the alliance.

The prospect of long-term protection from members of the world's most powerful military bloc comes a day after President Volodymyr Zelensky decried as "absurd" a refusal to offer an invite or timetable for Ukraine's entry into Nato.

Ukraine has been pushing for rapid membership while fighting a Russian invasion unleashed in February 2022 that has killed tens of thousands and displaced millions.

Instead, a declaration by the G7 grouping of the world's most industrialised countries launched a framework for bilateral negotiations to provide military and financial support, intelligence sharing and a promise of immediate steps if Russia should attack again.

"Our support will last long into the

future. It's a powerful statement of our commitment to Ukraine," President Joe Biden said alongside Zelensky and leaders of the G7. "We're going to be there as long as that takes."

Swallowing his disappointment over the lack of a membership timetable, Zelensky called the outcome a "meaningful success" and followed a flurry of announcements of military aid for Kyiv.

"Today there are security guarantees for Ukraine on the way to Nato," he said. "The Ukraine delegation is bringing home a significant security victory for Ukraine."

At a bilateral meeting, Biden promised Zelensky the United States was doing everything it could to meet Ukraine's needs and acknowledged Zelensky's "frustration" about the scale and speed at which he was receiving support. "I look forward to the day when we're having the meeting celebrating your official, official membership in Nato."

"The bad news for you is, we're not going anywhere. You're stuck with us," Biden joked, prompting laughter from Zelensky.

Russia calls the G7 move "potentially very dangerous" for West.



Uzra Zeya, front middle, US under secretary for civilian security, democracy, and human rights, visited Balukhali Rohingya camp in Cox's Bazar's Ukhiya upazila yesterday. Zeya is now in Bangladesh on a four-day visit.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

Road crashes claimed 516 lives in June

Says Road Safety Foundation report

UNB, Dhaka

As many as 516 people were killed and 812 others injured in 559 road crashes across the country in June, says a report of Road Safety Foundation (RSF).

The deceased include 78 women and 114 children.

The report released yesterday said 169 people were killed in 207 motorcycle accidents, which is 33.75 percent of the total deaths.

RSF collected the data from reports of nine national dailies, seven online news portals and electronic media.

At least 99 pedestrians were killed in road accidents, which is 19.18 percent of the total deaths. Seventy-six drivers and their assistants died, which is 14.72 percent of the deaths.

According to the RSF report, the highest 247 (44.18 percent) of the accidents occurred on regional roads, 182 (32.55 percent) on national highways, 59 (10.55 percent) on rural roads, and three (0.53 percent) on urban roads.

Meanwhile, nine people died and seven others went missing in nine river accidents while at least 18 people were killed and 11 others injured in 21 rail accidents in June.

France to pay bonus for shoe, clothes repairs to cut waste

AFP, Paris

From October, France will pay a bonus to encourage people to have their clothes and shoes repaired rather than throwing them away, the government said.

The move aims to cut down on the 700,000 tonnes of clothes thrown away by French people each year, two-thirds of which ends up in landfills.

From October, consumers will be able to be supported in the repair of their clothes and shoes," secretary of state for ecology Berangere Couillard said Tuesday during a visit to the Paris premises of La Caserne, a hub for responsible fashion. She invited "all sewing workshops and shoemakers to join the system", to be labelled by eco-organisation Refashion.

Under the scheme, customers will be able to claim seven euros (\$7.7) for mending a heel and 10-25 euros for clothing repairs from a 154 million euro fund set up to cover 2023-2028.

In France, 3.3 billion pieces of clothing, shoes and household linen were put on the market in 2022, according to Refashion, which has been instructed by the government to support a more sustainable industry.

"The goal is to support those who do the repairs," Couillard said, referring to sewing workshops but also those brands which offer repair services.



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Passports not needed to apply for Indian visa

IVAC comes up with new rules for Bangladeshis

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Indian Visa Application Center (IVAC), Bangladesh has introduced new rules for the Bangladeshi citizens whereby they would not need to leave their passports with the IVAC for the entire period when visa application is under process.

The applicants, who wish to get back their passports for other purposes while their visa application is under process by the high commission, will now have the option of getting back their passports at the time of submitting their visa application to the IVAC.

The applicants, however, will have to submit the passport seven days before the date of delivery that is written in the visa token, according to an IVAC notice on Monday.