



Sit together to end crisis

CEC urges political parties

MOHIUDDIN ALAMGIR

The current political crises cannot be resolved on the streets and it has to be done through dialogues between the parties, Chief Election Commissioner Kazi Habibul Awal said yesterday.

"The Election Commission believes that political parties should sit together at a table and have tea," Awal told reporters at his office in the capital's Agargaon after meeting US Ambassador Peter Haas.

"They [the US] also believe that dialogue between the political parties is needed," he said.

The Election Commission has made it clear that a conducive environment is needed for election, he said.

"The crises are political. If they are resolved politically, it will be much easier for the Election Commission to conduct the election.

"We hope that many of the issues in the political arena will be resolved at any cost. May political stability return."

With the next parliamentary election only months away, the Awami League and the BNP are sticking to their guns on a key issue.

The BNP says no acceptable election is possible under the AL government while the latter insists that a free and fair election is possible only under the leadership of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina.

In recent days, both parties held programmes in the capital and elsewhere showing off their popularity.

Clashes between BNP supporters and law enforcers assisted by ruling party activists turned entries to Dhaka city into battlegrounds on Saturday.

Asked for his take on the CEC's comments, BNP leader



"The crises are political. If they are resolved politically, it will be much easier for the Election Commission to conduct the election."

Kazi Habibul Awal
Chief Election Commissioner



A train heading towards Narayanganj from Kamalapur Railway Station yesterday. The Dhaka-Narayanganj rail link, which is part of the Padma Rail Link project, was reopened yesterday after being closed for nine months for development work. The photo was taken in Gendaria area.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

US to send pre-polls observers in October

Peter Haas tells CEC

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The United States will send a pre-election monitoring team in early October to assess the situation ahead of Bangladesh's next parliamentary elections.

US Ambassador Peter Haas said this at a meeting with Chief

Rohingyas may be taken back to own villages

Chinese special envoy hints at meeting with Momen, say sources

MOHAMMAD AL-MASUM MOLLA and PORIMOL PALMA

Myanmar may take back the Rohingyas living in the Cox's Bazar camps to their own villages in North Maungdaw and nearby places instead of any camps or model villages.

Such an indication was communicated to Bangladesh by the Chinese Special Envoy for Asian Affairs Deng Xijun during his meetings with Foreign Minister AK Abdul Momen and

Foreign Secretary Masud Bin Momen on Monday, said sources in the know.

The special envoy discussed different aspects of bilateral relations between Bangladesh and China, but the main agenda was Rohingya repatriation.

Before coming to Dhaka on Sunday, Xijun went to Myanmar and discussed ways of implementing the repatriation of the Rohingyas with U Ko Ko Hlaing, Myanmar's

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Hasina, AL never run away: PM



UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday came down heavily on BNP leaders for saying that Awami League won't get a way to flee the country.

"Sheikh Hasina or Awami League never runs away," she said at a blood donation programme in Dhaka.

"We hear from our opposition party -- though they can't be called an opposition party as they are not in parliament -- that we [Awami League] won't get a way to flee. I would like to remind the leader, who made this remark, that Sheikh Hasina or Awami League never runs away and never did," she said.

The premier was addressing a voluntary blood donation programme and discussion at the auditorium of Krishibid Institution Bangladesh in the city's Farmgate area.

Bangladesh Krishak League arranged the blood donation programme, discussion and Doa Mahfil ahead of the National Mourning Day to be observed on August 15.

Hasina, the President of Bangladesh Awami League, said their [BNP's] master, Ziaur Rahman, had made efforts to annihilate the Awami League, but failed. Then Ershad and Khaleda Zia tried without any success.

She said during her rule Khaleda carried out massacre like the genocide committed

SEE PAGE 2 COL 4

POLITICAL VIOLENCE UN special rapporteur urges restraint

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

UN Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Association and Peaceful Assembly Clement Voule urged all parties in Bangladesh to exercise restraint amid escalating violence and arrests during the ongoing protests.

"I remind the authorities of their duty to guarantee the right to assembly and refrain from using excess force. Respecting dissenting voices is key for fair and free elections," Voule said in a tweet.

He also said this call follows earlier calls and communications to the government of Bangladesh following similar reports of excessive use of violence by law enforcers, including lethal violence, and undue arrests of peaceful protesters.

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Remittance continues to underwhelm

Inflows down 5.86pc to \$1.97b in July

MEHEDI HASAN

Migrant workers sent home \$1.97 billion in July, down 5.86 percent from a year earlier, in yet another bad tidings for the country's strained foreign exchange reserves.

Remittance inflows along with export receipts are the main sources of dollar for Bangladesh, and a surge in inflows is expected in line with the growing manpower exports, which would have eased some pressure on the foreign currency reserves.

That has not been the case so far this year.

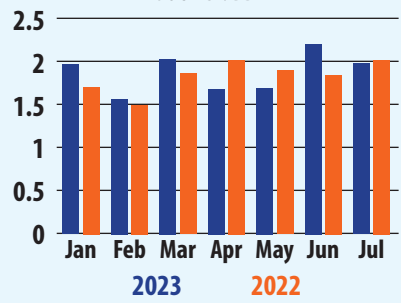
"The minimum remittance inflow should be at \$2 billion each month because of growing manpower export," said Zahid Hussain, a former lead economist of the World Bank's Dhaka office.

The inflows so far this year were less than \$2 billion every month save for March and June, according to data from the Bangladesh Bank.

In fiscal 2022-23, Bangladesh sent 11,44,993 workers abroad, up 15.8

HOW REMITTANCE FARED THIS YEAR (\$B)

SOURCE: BB



percent from a year earlier, according to data from the Bureau of Manpower Employment and Training.

The inflows did not increase due to the exchange rate premium between the formal and informal markets, Hussain said. The difference in the exchange rate between the formal and informal markets is called the premium.

A World Bank study found

SEE PAGE 7 COL 4



Nurses tend to a dengue patient at Shaheed Suhrawardy Medical College and Hospital. The patient, who has been suffering from the viral fever for five days, was admitted to the hospital yesterday upon doctors' recommendation.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

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POST-COUP MYANMAR Junta cuts six yrs of Suu Kyi's 33-yr jail term

AFP, Yangon

Myanmar reduced ousted civilian leader Aung San Suu Kyi's 33-year prison sentence by six years in a partial pardon yesterday, as the junta struggles to quell bloody resistance to its rule.

The country has been ravaged by violence in the two years since Suu Kyi was deposed in a coup and hit with 19 criminal cases ranging from corruption to breaching Covid-19 rules.

There have been concerns for the 78-year-old Nobel laureate's health and the junta moved her from prison to a government building last week.

"Six years imprisonment will be reduced," junta spokesman Zaw Min Tun told reporters after it was announced she had been pardoned in five cases.

Suu Kyi still faces 14 cases despite the pardon. Rights groups have condemned the legal battle against her as a sham designed to remove a popular democratic leader from the public eye.

Former Myanmar president Win Myint, who was also removed in the 2021 coup, was granted a four-year reduction in relation to two cases, the junta spokesman said.

Yesterday's announcement was part of an amnesty of more than 7,000 prisoners to mark Buddhist Lent, including 125 foreigners who are to be released and pardoned.

An unspecified number of prisoners facing the death penalty also had their sentences commuted to life imprisonment, the announcement said.

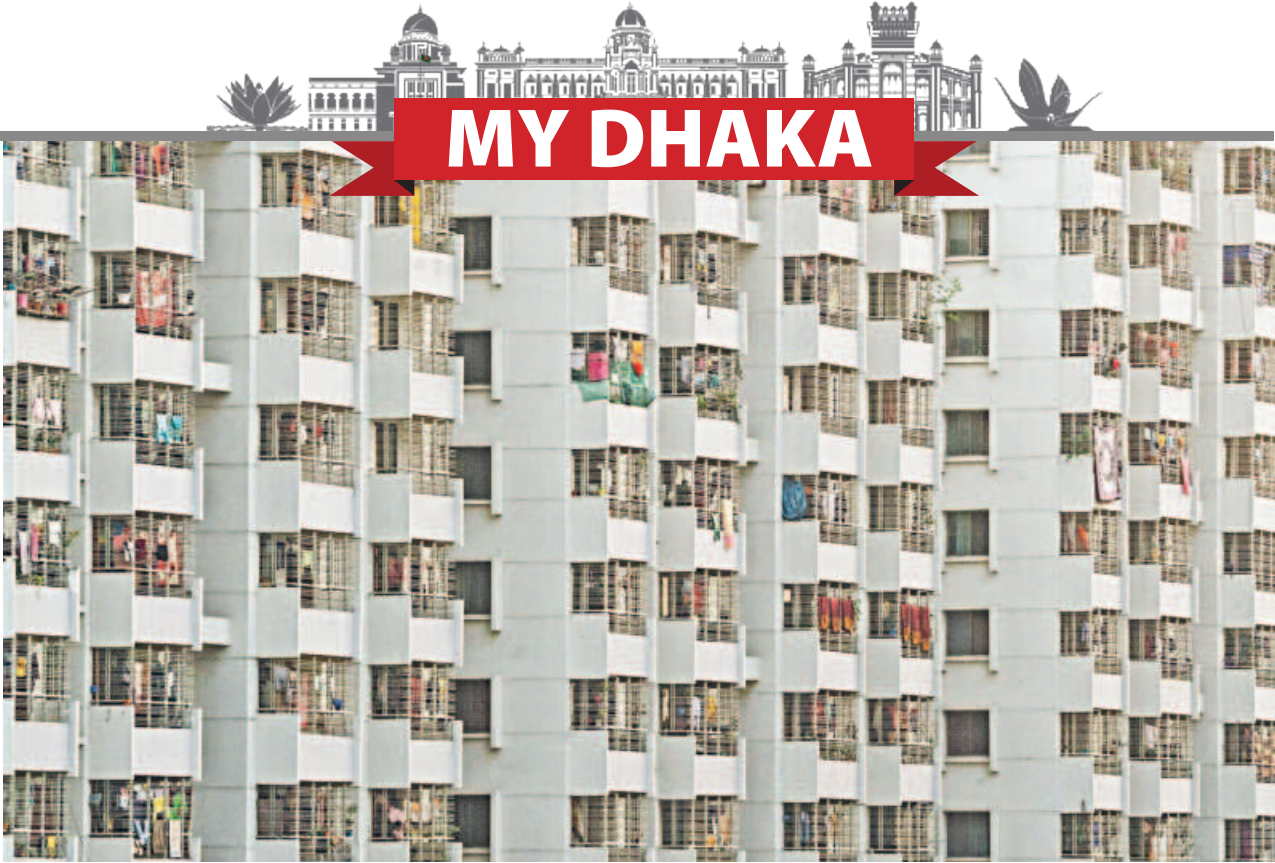
David Mathieson, an independent analyst on Myanmar, said the partial pardon was a "cynical ploy to tell the world that there might be some kind of political resolution coming. When we know that there is not".

"I think they are just playing cruel games with a political prisoner," Mathieson told AFP. "All the charges against her are absurd and shaving six years off 33 isn't mercy."

Human Rights Watch's Asia division deputy director Phil Robertson said the junta aimed "to create the impression of moderation and dialogue when in fact there really is none on offer".



There are many reasons for such apathy. The biggest reason is probably the fact that Dhaka is so busy that people just cannot afford the time to socialise with each other. While this is true and an accepted practice in most big cities, it is not a pleasant thought from a sociological perspective. There are countless instances where people have lived in apartments side by side for years and they did not even know each other's name.



Know your neighbour?

ASHIF AHMED RUDRO

Dhaka is full of opportunities and possibilities but they come at a price. In a city as busy as this one, sacrificing social bonds has become the norm. While in villages or even smaller cities, people form strong or at least decent bonds with their neighbours, it is not so frequent in this metropolis.

There are many reasons for such apathy. The biggest reason is probably the fact that Dhaka is so busy that people just cannot afford the time to socialise with each other. While this is true and an accepted practice in most big cities, it is not a pleasant thought from a sociological perspective. There are countless instances where people have lived in apartments side by side for years and they did not even know each other's name.

Shahed Rahman is in his forties and works at a private institution. He owns a flat in Mirpur and has been living there for a few years now. He does not interact much with his neighbours.

"I know it sounds bad but it's not that simple. Even if I want to interact with my neighbour, maybe he doesn't

feel the same way. If my neighbourly interest is not shared then it becomes difficult to maintain that relationship," said Rahman.

"If you try to approach someone to speak, they often do not take it as an innocent neighbourly approach. They begin to wonder about your motives for being friendly," said Mushfiq Fuad Mitul, a new father who lives in Khilgaon with his small family.

Most of Dhaka practices this individualistic approach when it comes to neighbours and holds the belief that it is better to keep yourself to yourself. But the keyword is "most". There are parts of Dhaka where neighbours interact regularly with each other. Old Dhaka is a prime example of this.

Sagar Kar, a young businessman who presently lives in Tongi, has lived in Uttara and Old Dhaka over the years. With the entirety of his childhood spent in old Dhaka, Sagar holds the experience of living there for more than 20 years.

"First there is the fact that the entire area of Old Dhaka itself is a cultural hub that has its own traditions, norms, and festivals. This alone makes Old

Dhaka different from the rest of the city and this is a big factor in how neighbours interact with each other," said Sagar citing the examples of Eid, Puja, and Shakrain and how everyone in Old Dhaka participates in those celebrations spontaneously.

"Another factor is how the buildings are designed. The city has many individual flats that are designed to keep everyone separate, you can live in one of these flats and not have to interact with anyone else and it will not matter. But the buildings in Old Dhaka are not designed that way. So, you run into each other and for one reason or another, have to interact with each other. This builds a bond. Besides, Old Dhaka still has that classic norms where people don't have that individualistic ego. While the rest of the city might not take your friendliness quite as easily, Old Dhaka does not mind," added Sagar.

Being too friendly to a neighbour can indeed make things complicated but reaching out and introducing yourself to your neighbour is not the worst idea. That way, at least you can feel less awkward in the elevators.

US to send pre-polls observers in October

FROM PAGE 1

Election Commissioner Kazi Habibul Awal at the Election Commission office yesterday.

"The United States's only interest in the election is that it would be free, fair and peaceful. And that the people of Bangladesh have the ability to choose who governs them," Peter Haas told reporters after the meeting.

"I informed him [the CEC] that the US will send a pre-election monitoring team in early October."

It will include experts from the National Democratic Institute, International Republican Institute, and people with vast experience in election monitoring and preparations.

Haas, however, said he could not yet provide the detailed schedule of the team's visit.

The US ambassador said he and the CEC discussed a number of issues, including the recent changes to the Representation of the People Order (RPO), the approval process for new political parties, election assessment and monitoring teams.

Speaking to reporters after the meeting, CEC Kazi Habibul Awal said the US ambassador heard about the EC's power being curtailed as a result of the recent amendments to the RPO.

"We explained to him how the EC's power was rather enhanced [through the amendment]."

He added Haas also learned that the commission has taken steps to

provide registration opportunities to parties that are less active in politics.

"We told him we are strictly following the criteria of registering a political party. Two such parties have fulfilled the criteria and are getting registered.

Habibul also told Haas that the role of the media and observers is important for transparency in elections.

"He [Peter Haas] wanted to know whether the journalists on motorcycles would be allowed to do their jobs on election day. We told him we were considering it," the CEC said.

The US shared its decision to send the pre-polls monitoring team nine days after the EU's Election Exploratory Mission wrapped up its July 9-23 visit to Bangladesh.

The mission, led by Riccardo Chelleri, will prepare a report on the outcome of the visit, based on which the EU will determine whether it would send an election observing team during the parliamentary polls, slated for late December or early January.

VIENNA CONVENTION

Meanwhile, Peter Haas yesterday told reporters, "In the US, when other countries raise issues with us about our domestic political affairs, we listen to them and see what we can learn from them. We don't feel it a violation of the Vienna Convention."

Haas said this when asked about State Minister for Foreign Affairs Shahriar Alam's comment saying

the joint statement by 13 foreign missions, condemning the attack on Dhaka-17 by-polls' candidate Hero Alam, was a violation of the Vienna Convention.

The Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations of 1961 is an international treaty that defines a framework for diplomatic relations between independent countries.

On July 26, Alam termed the joint statement condemning the attack a "violation of diplomatic norms" and urged the missions to refrain from "non-diplomatic behaviour" in the future.

He said the convention's article 41(1) states that without prejudice to their privileges and immunities, it is the duty of all persons enjoying such privileges and immunities to respect the laws and regulations of the receiving State. They also have a duty not to interfere in the internal affairs of that State.

While, he added, article 41(2) says all official business with the receiving State entrusted to the mission by the sending State shall be conducted with or through the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of the receiving State or such other ministry as may be agreed.

The 13 missions – the US, UK, Canada, Denmark, France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Norway, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, and the EU – in the statement called upon the government to conduct a full investigation into the attack and take legal steps against the perpetrators.

UN special rapporteur

FROM PAGE 1

Meanwhile, Farhan Haq, deputy spokesman for UN secretary general, told a press briefing at the UN Headquarters in New York yesterday that the UN encourages peaceful, credible, and inclusive elections in Bangladesh.

He made the comment in response to a query from a journalist on UN's position regarding Bangladesh's promise to hold fair elections.

The journalist also asked the spokesman's comment on Bangladesh's present government's unique example of humanity through sheltering more than a million displaced Rohingyas from Myanmar but criticism from the rights groups and some US Congress members.

Fourteen US Congress members recently wrote to Linda Thomas-Greenfield, the US ambassador to the UN, demanding the expulsion

of Bangladesh from the UN Human Rights Commission and the parliamentary elections be held under the supervision of the UN.

Farhan said it was not for him to comment on membership in the Human Rights Council, which is a decision taken by member states.

He, however, appreciated the generosity shown by Bangladesh towards the Rohingya refugees and hoped that it continues.

Sit together to end crisis

FROM PAGE 1

Amir Khasru Mahmud Chowdhury said, "People who should not be at the Election Commission have gained the positions. It is the outcome of a political crisis.

"We are talking about dialogue. But what will be the basis of the dialogue? It has become clear to locals and foreigners that a free, fair election is not possible under the current government."

The BNP standing committee member added that an impartial government is needed for a proper election. "And for that, a dialogue can be held."

Contacted over phone, AL Joint General Secretary Mahbubul Alam Hanif said that there was no political crisis in the country.

"The BNP is conspiring against the government to spoil the election. They do not want to take part in the election because they don't have a chance to assume power with the people's vote because of their misdeeds."

BNP's demands are unconstitutional, undemocratic and illogical, he said, "The decision of dialogue can be made based on the situation. The door is open for dialogue for any party that speaks in line with the constitutions."

Shushashoner Jonno Nagorik

(Shujan) Secretary Badiul Alam Majumdar told The Daily Star that there was no alternative to dialogue. "It is not possible to resolve the crisis through force..." he said.

Violence can turn Bangladesh into a conflict zone, and it can invite the UN peacekeeping forces to the country during the elections, he said.

"The government should take the initiative to hold dialogues."

Last week, 14 US congressmen in a letter to the US ambassador to the UN, urged the UN to make arrangements for the presence of peacekeeping forces in Bangladesh during elections "to prevent intimidation, harassment or assault of voters".

At yesterday's meeting between the ambassador and the CEC, the former said the US will send a pre-election monitoring team in early October to assess the pre-polls situation.

In May, US Secretary of State Antony Blinken announced that the US would impose visa restrictions on individuals and their immediate family members "if they are responsible for, or complicit in, undermining the democratic election process in Bangladesh."

An European election exploratory mission visited Bangladesh from July 9-23 to determine whether the EU would send a team to observe the country's next parliamentary polls.

obstructions from the then caretaker government.

"How come they can make such big remarks under the supervision of a convicted fugitive?" she said.

Hasina said her government believes in democracy and is showing tolerance.

Referring to the arson violence carried out in 2013, 2014 and 2015 and the repression unleashed by BNP on AL leaders and activists, she said, "If we took one percent revenge [of these misdeeds], now your whereabouts can't be found. We don't believe in revenge."

At the beginning, one-minute

Man sent to jail in DSA case for making FB post against PM

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinaipur

A Rangpur court sent a man to jail yesterday after an Awami League leader filed a case against him under the Digital Security Act for making remarks against Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina on Facebook.

Police arrested Habib Bin Mizan, 28, of Gandhabpur village in Pirganj upazila, on Monday afternoon.

According to police, Mizan made a Facebook post against Hasina over power crisis on Monday afternoon.

A police team then arrested him at his home. Rabiul Islam, chairman of Kabilpur Union Parishad and also vice-president of Pirganj upazila AL, lodged the case under the DSA act at night.

He told local journalists that Mizan made the remarks to deteriorate law and order in the upazila ahead of PM's visit to Rangpur.

Jamaat seeks DMP permission for rally on Friday

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Denied permission from the DMP to hold a rally in Dhaka yesterday, Jamaat-e-Islami announced that it will hold the event on Friday.

Nurul Islam Bulbul, ameer of Jamaat's Dhaka city (south) unit, told a press conference in the capital yesterday.

The party did not disclose the rally venue to "avoid police harassment", a central leader told The Daily Star.

On July 24, Jamaat announced that it would hold a rally yesterday at the north gate of Baitul Mukarram to press home its three-point demand, including holding the next national election under a caretaker government.

But Dhaka Metropolitan Police on Monday night said Jamaat would not be given permission for the rally as they have intelligence report that subversive activities might be carried out centring the rally.

Jamaat yesterday sought permission from the DMP for the Friday's rally.

Two university students drown in Gopalganj

OUR CORRESPONDENT, FARIDPUR

Two female students of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman Science and Technology University in Gopalganj drowned in the university lake yesterday.

Tasfia Jahan Ritu, 20, and Tania Hiya, 20, were second-year students of environment and disaster management department.

Md Kamruzzaman, the university proctor, said, "It was raining heavily around 12:30pm. Ritu and Tania were getting drenched at the edge of the lake. At one stage, Tania slipped into the lake. Ritu went in to save her. But both drowned."

Some students found them and took them to Gopalganj 250-bed General Hospital where on-duty doctors declared them dead, the proctor added.

Two-day holiday in Iran over severe heat

AFP, Tehran

Iran yesterday declared a two-day holiday for government workers and banks nationwide as searing temperatures sweep across the country, state media reported.

The decision came after the meteorological office forecast temperatures exceeding 40 degrees Celsius (104 Fahrenheit) in many cities, and nearly 50 degrees Celsius (122 Fahrenheit) in the southwest.

"The cabinet agreed to the health ministry proposal to declare Wednesday and Thursday public holidays all over the country to protect public health," the official IRNA news agency quoted government spokesman Ali Bahadori Jahromi as saying.

It said the decision was taken because of "unprecedented heat" sweeping the country.

The ministry has also warned of the risks of heatstroke from over-exposure to the sun, and urged people to stay indoors between 10:00 am and 4:00 pm.

Health ministry spokesman Pedram Pakain described the number of heat-related illnesses in recent days as "alarming".

silence was observed to pay tribute to Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, his family members and others who were martyred on August 15, 1975.

Bangladesh Awami League's presidium members Engr Mosharraf Hossain, Begum Matia Chowdhury and Muhammad Abdur Razzaque, its joint general secretaries Mahbubul Alam Hanif and AFM Bahauddin Nasim also spoke at the discussion.

Krishak League president Samir Chanda presided over the event moderated by its general secretary Umme Kulsum Smriti.

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BANGABANDHU
KILLINGLaw in motion
to identify
conspirators

Says law minister

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Law Minister Anisul Huq yesterday said the government has already prepared the draft law for constituting a commission to identify the conspirators who were behind the murder of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and his family members on August 15, 1975.

A bill on the law will be placed before the parliament if the prime minister approves it and then the commission will be formed, he said.

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EC REGISTRATION

47 Jamaat
supporters
want to

argue at SC

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Forty-seven supporters of Jamaat-e-Islami have sought permission from the Supreme Court to place arguments before it in favour of the party's long pending appeal against a High Court verdict that scrapped its registration with the Election Commission.

They submitted an application to the Appellate Division of the SC yesterday.

The 47 applicants include Jamaat's former lawmakers -- Dr Syed Abdullah Md Taher, Hamidur Rahman Azad and Hafeja Asma Khatun, Manarat University's Vice

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4



Following assurance from government hi-ups, secondary school teachers, who have been protesting in front of Jayita Press Club for the last 22 days for nationalisation of their educational institutions, withdrew their strike yesterday night.

PHOTO: STAR

Teachers withdraw strike,
will go back to classes

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

After 22 days of continuous sit-in, secondary school teachers called off their programme yesterday night following a meeting with former cabinet secretary Kabir Bin Anwar and Deputy Minister for Education Mohibul Hasan Chowdhury.

Sheikh Kawsar Ahmed, general secretary of Bangladesh Teachers' Association, told journalists last night they will be included in the two committees that would be formed regarding nationalisation of their educational institutions.

The prime minister will take the final decision regarding their salaries and eliminating the discriminations they face, he added.

"So, we have decided to withdraw our agitation. Now we will go back to class," he added.

Earlier in the day, the teachers started a fast unto death programme in front of

the Jatiya Press Club in Dhaka, demanding nationalisation of their educational institutions.

Hundreds of teachers started the strike around 10:00am.

Earlier, they had earlier threatened hunger strike if they were not allowed to meet Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina by July 31.

While visiting the spot, this correspondent saw teachers shouting slogans wearing shrouds (a white cloth in which a body is wrapped for burial) around their bodies to press home their demands.

Attending the movement, Dilip Adhikary, 45, a teacher from Kotalipara, Gopalganj, expressed his concerns about the challenges faced by teachers due to their low salaries.

"We can't sustain our daily expenses with such a small salary at the end of the month. While we do receive respect in our society, respect alone cannot fulfil our needs," he told this newspaper.

"In these times of soaring prices of essentials, we need the nationalisation of our institutions to safeguard the dignity of teachers and support our families," he added.

Another teacher, Md Morad of Bogura, said, "We are frustrated at the government's silence on teachers' demands."

"The Directorate Of Secondary & Higher Education failed us, even the education minister did the same. Now, we want to meet the PM to hear our demands," he added. "Then we want to go back to classrooms as soon as possible," Morad said.

Sheikh Kawsar Ahmed, general secretary of Bangladesh Teachers' Association, said, "We want to have at least a five-minute meeting with the PM. Until then, we will continue the hunger strike, even if it leads to death," he added.

Teachers have been on a sit-in protest since July 11 in front

of the press club. They have already had two meetings -- one with the DSHE and another with Education Minister Dipu Moni -- to resolve the matter.

Dipu Moni, in a meeting with the teachers, said nationalising private educational institutions before the upcoming parliamentary elections would not be possible. She, however, declared the formation of two committees to look into the issue.

But the teachers termed the meetings "unfruitful" and continued their agitation demanding to meet the PM.

They said entry-level teachers in private schools receive a basic salary of Tk 12,500 with an additional Tk 1,000 as rent, Tk 500 as medical allowance, and 25 percent of their basic salary as festival bonuses.

Meanwhile, teachers at government schools get Tk 16,000 as basic, 45 percent of this as house rent and a medical allowance of Tk 1,500 per month.

STUDENT'S DEATH IN BLAST

HC issues rule
on govt for
compensation

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday issued a rule asking the government to explain why it should not be directed to give Tk 12 crore as compensation to the family of university student Mehedi Hasan Shaon, who died after sustaining burn injuries in a gas pipeline explosion in capital's Dhupkhola in May.

The court also ordered the deputy commissioner of Dhaka to conduct an enquiry through an official not below the rank of additional deputy commissioner into whether there is any negligence in preventing the incident of gas explosion and death of Mehedi Hassan, an honours third-year student of Jagannath University.

The DC has been ordered to complete the probe and submit its report to the HC in 60 days.

The HC bench of Justice JBM Hassan and Justice Razik Al Jalil issued the rule and order following a petition filed by Mehedi's father.

Mehedi, who suffered burns in a gas pipeline explosion on May 1, died at Sheikh Hasina National Institute of Burn and Plastic Surgery on May 6.

TARIQUE, ZUBAIDA

Verdict on graft
case today

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court is supposed to deliver today the judgement in a graft case filed by the Anti-Corruption Commission in 2007 against BNP acting chairman Tarique Rahman and his wife Zubaida Rahman.

Judge Md Asaduzzaman of Dhaka Metropolitan Senior Special Judge's Court will pronounce the judgment in their absence at around 1:00pm, said Dhaka Metropolitan Additional Public Prosecutor Tapash Kumar Pal.

The couple has been shown as fugitives in the charge sheet.

On July 27, the judge set the date for delivery of judgment after closing arguments from the prosecution in the case.

The court recorded statements of 42 prosecution witnesses, including complainant of the case. On April 13, the same court framed

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4



Fire fighters working to rescue passengers of a car and rickshaw after a Krishnachura tree fell on them while the vehicles were crossing the Central Shaheed Minar on the Dhaka University campus around 4:00pm yesterday. The accident left five people injured, including the car's driver and rickshaw-puller.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

AL to get 70pc
votes if polls fair

Quader tells journalists

STAR REPORT

Seventy percent of people will vote for Awami League if a free and peaceful election takes place, said Road, Transport and Bridges Minister Obaidul Quader yesterday.

The minister said this while talking to journalists at Rangpur Zilla School, where the PM will be speaking today.

This will be her first visit to Rangpur in four and a half years.

"People will vote for development," said Quader.

He said that there has been a lot of development during the 15-year tenure of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina. No matter how much propaganda is spread,

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AL knows nothing
about etiquetteSays Fakhrul on photos of
Gayeshwar having lunch

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir yesterday accused Awami League of political bankruptcy following an incident involving the release of photos and videos showing standing committee member Gayeshwar Chandra Roy having lunch at the office of Detective Branch in Dhaka.

"The government did it to divert people's attention from

the ongoing movement of the opposition," he said during a human chain held by BNP's Keraniganj south unit at the Nayapaltan party office.

"Awami League knows nothing about etiquette," he added.

Fakhrul also criticised AL's history of violence by saying during its 73-day strike in 1996, they killed people with arson. "And now, they have turned

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China for
strengthening
military tiesDIPLOMATIC
CORRESPONDENT

China hopes that its military will strengthen cooperation and deepen friendship with Bangladesh armed forces for maintaining world peace.

"Guided by the consensus reached by top leaders of China and Bangladesh, both militaries will continually strengthen solidarity and cooperation on the basis of the already fruitful results," said a Chinese embassy statement marking the 96th founding anniversary of People's Liberation Army of China.

The Chinese embassy in Dhaka held a programme on Monday to celebrate the anniversary. Lt Gen Waker-Uz-Zaman, principal staff officer of Bangladesh Armed Forces Division, was present as chief guest.

Over 200 dignitaries from the Bangladeshi armed forces, government, police, foreign missions, and defence attaches in Dhaka, and the local Chinese community attended the event.

Senior Colonel Du Xinsheng, defence attaché of the Chinese embassy in Dhaka, said since its birth in 1927, PLA has embarked on an extraordinary journey to achieve China's independence and liberation, safeguard the country's sovereignty, security, and development, as well as advance peace and progress in the world.

Over the past decades,

SEE PAGE 4 COL 8

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Save Sundarbans from plastic pollution

Speakers tell workshop

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Khulna*

The use of non-biodegradable plastic has severely damaged the environment and biodiversity of the Sundarbans, said speakers at a programme yesterday.

They made the remarks at a workshop on Sundarbans Reserved Forest Ecotourism Master Plan organised by the Forest Department and USAID Ecotourism Activity at Sundarbans West Forest office.

Terming the present situation a major concern, speakers directed the authorities to ensure a ban on the use of single-use plastics. They also urged the authorities to stop the dumping of such plastics in rivers and coastal belts to save the flora and fauna of the areas from plastic pollution.

Calling upon the authorities concerned to find alternatives to plastic bottles and plates for tourists visiting the area, the speakers also vowed to monitor water bodies through which plastic floats into the forest reserves.

Divisional Forest Officer Abu Naser Mohsin Hossain said, "The biodiversity of the place will be preserved if the forest is brought under eco-tourism. Tourism will flourish as more people will visit the place, while the forest's biodiversity will also be preserved."

"We have to free the place from

plastic pollution if we want to save the Sundarbans. We all need to work together to protect the forest," he added.

Four operators in the area are now more aware of preserving the forest's wildlife, mentioned Nazmul Azam David, general secretary of Sundarban Tour Operators.



PHOTO: COLLECTED

"There is no substitute for skilled and trained guides in tourism development. Coordination between different stakeholders is key to developing tourism while also preserving the place," he added.

Mihir Kumar Doe, forest conservator (Khulna circle), and Wasiul Islam, deputy chief of party, USAID Ecotourism Activity, were present and spoke at the workshop, among others.



Kuddus Sheikh throws nets in the Rupsha to catch various local fish, including shrimp. He said he usually keeps a portion of the catch for his family and sells the rest in local bazars, making around Tk 500-600 from every catch. The photo was taken on Monday in Jabusa area of Khulna's Rupsha upazila.

PHOTO: HABIBUR RAHMAN

CLASH WITH COPS

BNP leader Nipun gets HC bail

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday granted anticipatory bail to BNP leader Nipun Roy Chowdhury for eight weeks in a case filed in connection with BNP-police clash at Dholaikhal area on July 29.

The HC asked Nipun, a member of BNP's central executive committee, to surrender before the lower court concerned in eight weeks.

The bench of Justice Mustafa Zaman Islam and Justice Md Aminul Islam passed the order following a bail petition filed by Nipun.

Earlier in the day, Nipun appeared before the HC bench for bail.

Deputy Attorney General Sarwar Hossain Bappi told The Daily Star that police filed the case with Sutrapur Police Station against Nipun and several others for vandalising, attacking and preventing law enforcers from discharging duties during BNP's political programme.

GRAFT CASE

Prosecution seeks highest punishment for Chisty

COURT CORRESPONDENT

The prosecution yesterday completed arguments and sought highest punishment (14 years imprisonment) for four accused, including Farmers Bank's former audit committee chairman Mahbubul Haque Chisty alias Babul Chisty, in a case filed over laundering Tk 160 crore from the bank.

During the closing arguments, ACC Public Prosecutor Mosharrar Hossain Kajol told the court that they were able to prove the charges brought against all the four accused undoubtedly and they should be given highest punishment for committing such offences.

The three other accused are Babul Chisty's wife Ruzi Chisty, son Rashedul Haque Chisty, and Farmers Bank's former first vice-president Masudur Rahman Khan.

Of them, Babul and Rashedul are now in jail while Masudur and Ruzi are on bail in the case.

After that, Judge Syed Arifat Hossain of the Special Judge's Court-4 of Dhaka fixed August 28 for arguments from the defence.

On April 10 of 2018, the ACC filed the case against six people, including Babul Chisty, with Gulshan Police Station over laundering Tk 160 crore.

KHULNA'S BASTUHARA AREA

Locals suffer for delay in drainage work

DIPANKAR ROY, *Khulna*

"Every day for the last couple of weeks, my son has to cross extensive mud patches to go to school. He is tired and does not want to go to school anymore," said Rumana Akhtar, a resident of road-11 of Bastuhara area in Khulna city.

Rumana repeatedly requested contractors to finish the work, but they did not pay any heed to her plea.

"The mud piles on the lane adjacent to my house would be around 10 feet high," she added.

To establish a proper drainage system around the area, Khulna City Corporation has been digging up various roads and alleys in Bastuhara for a couple of weeks.

Alongside confining locals within their homes, construction workers have also disconnected water pipes set up by Khulna Wasa.

The area is home to a number of marginalised families, mostly earning their daily bread as traders and hawkers.

Even before the work started, they were facing various problems in the area such as waterlogging and narrow roads. Now, this delay in the drainage work has doubled their sufferings, they added.

Locals have been critical of the authorities' decision to take up this project during monsoon instead of dry seasons and many have called them "insensitive", as they are yet to take any action in this regard.



"The contractors did not take necessary precautions before working on such a small road. They damaged

Wasa pipes, and now water keeps leaking from it, inundating homesteads," said Anwar Hossain, a local.

The local ward councillor was informed of the matter, but he is yet to take any steps to solve the problem, he alleged.

Visiting the area recently, this correspondent saw very few people stepping outside due to the dilapidated condition of the roads. While some houses were almost covered under mud piles, many used makeshift brick, bamboo and wood structures to protect their walls, which could collapse at any minute.

According to KCC, the 450-metre

drain is being constructed under Development of Drainage System to Eliminate Waterlogging in Khulna City, spending Tk 1.12 crore.

The project was scheduled to be completed by June 15. Sonia Enterprise secured the construction tender for this project.

The construction firm could not finish the work on time due to various reasons. It has already applied for an extension and hopes to finish the work soon, informed Zakir Hossain, the firm's owner.

"The area's soil is of poor quality. Its loose texture leads to frequent collapses, and that is what is making the work difficult. The expenses are also higher than quoted in the contract," he added.

The delayed work has caused around 70 local families to suffer for over a week, informed Mafuzur Rahman Liton, local ward councillor.

"I have asked contractors to speed up the work," he added.



Dipankar Biswas and Nirmal Das are busy crafting baskets from bamboo strands, which they intend to sell at local bazars on Mondays and Fridays. Each of them makes around 5-6 baskets every day, which are sold for Tk 100 each. They said they make Tk 1,200-1,400 on the haat days by selling these baskets. The photo was taken in Shantipur Rishipara of Jashore's Abhaynagar upazila yesterday. The area is home to at least 25 other families engaged in this profession.

PHOTO: HABIBUR RAHMAN

OATH TAKING OF 290 AL MPS

SC dismisses petition challenging legality

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Appellate Division of the Supreme Court yesterday dismissed a four-year-old petition challenging the legality of oath taking by 290 Awami League alliance lawmakers of 11th parliament.

A seven-member bench headed by Chief Justice Hasan Foez Siddique passed the order.

Details of the apex court order could not be known as its full text was not released yet.

Additional Attorney General Mohammad Mehedi Hassan Chowdhury told The Daily Star that the

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

SIRAJGANJ UNIT

Govt staffer new Swechchhashebak League secretary

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Pabna*

A government employee has been included in the partially-formed committee of Sirajganj district unit of Swechchhashebak League, sparking criticism.

Sumon Rahman, a class IV employee at Mesra Union Land Office, has been selected as secretary of the committee, office sources said.

Besides, Jakirul Islam Limon was selected as president while Md Shahidul Islam Ripon as vice president, and Md Saiful Islam and AKM Abdulla Al Maruf as joint secretaries.

Gazi Mejbaul Hossain Sachchu, president; and Afzalur Rahman Babu, secretary of the central committee of Swechchhashebak League, a wing of the ruling Awami League, approved the partial committee on July 31.

SM Rakibul Hasan, AC (land) in Sadar upazila, said there is no option to hold political post while being in government service. "I have come to know about the new committee but I am not sure whether Sumon is an employee of the land office... We are looking into the matter."

Sumon Rahman was not available over phone.

Jakirul Islam Limon, president of the newly-formed committee, said Sumon was a Chhatra League leader. Later, he started a government job, he added.

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh Department of Public Health Engineering Office of the Superintending Engineer Sylhet Circle, Topkhana, Sylhet.



Invitation for Enlistment & Renewal of Enlistment (2023-2024)

Memo no: 46.03.9100.013.07.41.15-64

Date: 01/08/2023

GOVERNMENT OF THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF BANGLADESH			
1.	Ministry/Division	Ministry of Local Govt. Rural Development & Co-operatives, Local Govt. Division	
2.	Agency	Department of Public Health Engineering (DPHE)	
3.	Procuring Entity Name	Superintending Engineer, Sylhet Circle.	
4.	Procuring Entity District	Sylhet	
5.	Invitation for	Enlistment & Renewal of Enlistment	
6.	Invitation Ref No	CE, DPHE Office memo no. 46.03.0000.001.35.001.13-426 (1)	
7.	Date	24/07/2023	
KEY INFORMATION			
8.	Procurement Method	Limited Tendering Method	
PARTICULAR INFORMATION			
		Date	Time
9.	Application Closing Date and Time	24/08/2023	4:00 pm
10.	Name & Address of the Office(s)		
	- Application Form Availability	Office of the Executive Engineers, DPHE, Sylhet, Sunamganj, Habiganj and Moulvibazar.	
	- Receiving Application Form	Office of the Superintending Engineer, DPHE, Sylhet Circle, Topkhana, Sylhet.	
INFORMATION FOR APPLICANT			
11.	Eligibility of Applicant	a. Must have valid Trade License b. Must have TIN, Must have Vat Registration Certificate. c. Must have Bank Solvency Certificate. d. Others document as Mentioned in Application Form.	
12.	Price of Application Form (Tk)	500.00 (Non-refundable)	
13.	Enlistment / Renewal Fee (Tk)	New Enlistment Fee 5000.00+15% VAT and Renewal Fee 2000.00 + 15% VAT. Must be submitted in the form of Pay Order/ Demand Draft in favour of Executive Engineer, DPHE, Sylhet Division. Two separate POs/DDs to be submitted-one for Enlistment/Renewal Fee and another for 15% VAT of Tk. 750.00/300.00 respectively. If application is not accepted, the PO/DD will be refunded.	
PROCURING ENTITY DETAILS			
14.	Name of Official Inviting Application	M. Shaikh Sadi Rahmatullah	
15.	Designation of Official Inviting Application	Superintending Engineer, DPHE, Sylhet Circle, Sylhet	
16.	Address of Official Inviting Application	DPHE, Topkhana, Sylhet	
17.	Contact details of Official Inviting Application	02996635443	se.sylhet@dphe.gov.bd
18.	The Procuring Entity reserves the right to reject all Applications		

GD-1185

28/7/23
(M. Shaikh Sadi Rahmatullah)
SE, DPHE, Sylhet Circle

AFP, Malé

The US Department of Treasury said Abdulla Ali Manik -- currently in custody over the unsuccessful 2021 attack -- had several links to terror plots in the tourist hotspot.

Ameen is known to have sent dozens of Malaysians to fight in Syria and was the main suspect in a 2007 bomb attack at a public park that wounded 12 Chinese tourists. The US statement said 29 companies, many linked to the lucrative tourism industry, were also sanctioned over their links to IS operatives.

AFP, Niamey

President Mohamed Bazoum was overthrown on July 26 by his own guard, in the region's third putsch in as many years following takeovers in neighbouring Mali and Burkina Faso.

"In the face of a deteriorating security situation in Niamey and taking advantage of the relative calm in Niamey, an operation of evacuation by air is being prepared," the embassy said.

There are an estimated 600 French nationals in Niger. The Italian government said it was putting on a “special flight for those (Italians) who want to leave the country,” adding that this was “not an evacuation.”



Rescue workers in a boat go through a flooded street in a neighbourhood where days of heavy rain from remnants of Typhoon Doksuri cause heavy damage in Beijing, China yesterday. At least 20 people were killed and 19 were missing after heavy rains lashed Beijing and surrounding provinces, state media said yesterday, in downpours that have submerged roads and deluged neighbourhoods with mud. PHOTO: REUTERS

PHOTO: REUTERS

Office block in Russian capital's main business district hit; Kremlin slams Ukrainian 'terrorist attack'

AGENCIES

"Two Ukrainian (unmanned aerial vehicles) were destroyed by air defence systems over the territory of the Odintsovo and Naro-Fominsk districts of Moscow region," the Russian defence ministry said.

On Sunday, Russian defences downed drones in that same district, with debris damaging two office towers, blowing out several windows and scattering documents on the pavement below.

He added that emergency services had gone to the scene and that there was no information on any casualties.

Other residents were more shaken by the renewed explosion in their neighbourhood.

The same airport, to the southwest of Moscow, was briefly closed after Sunday's attack and earlier this month, a volley of drone attacks disrupted air traffic at Vnukovo.

“During the night, Ukrainian armed forces tried without success to attack with three drones the ‘Sergei



The three drones were trained on the ships, navigating in waters 340 kilometres (210 miles) southwest of Sevastopol, the base of Russia's Black Sea fleet on the annexed Crimea peninsula.

On Monday, a missile strike on a residential building killed six and wounded dozens in Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky's hometown of Kryvyi Rig.

Ukraine began its long-awaited counteroffensive in June but has made modest advances in the face of stiff resistance from Russian forces on the frontline.

"Today at 11:10 (0810 GMT), the enemy launched another attack on the peaceful residents of our community," military administration head

Regional governor Oleksandr Prokudin said four medical workers had been wounded in addition to a badly wounded nurse whose injuries were reported earlier.

Medical charity Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) said it had been working at the hospital supplying medical equipment and providing mental health consultations to people displaced by the destruction of the Kakhovka Dam.

AFP, Washington

The American delegation also expressed “deep concern” regarding humanitarian crisis and need to continue supporting aid organizations and UN bodies delivering assistance, a statement said.

The US statement did not, however, identify the Afghan representatives — describing them only as “senior” and as “technocratic professionals.”

It noted human rights were discussed and said the meeting underscored discussions between the sides on ending banking restrictions and sanctions.

Women's rights have been a sticking point in negotiations over aid and recognition since the Taliban swept back to power in August 2021.

AFP, The Hague

ICC judge Tomoko Akane issued an arrest warrant for Putin in March for the war crime of allegedly unlawfully deporting Ukrainian children, as well as for Russia's presidential commissioner for children's rights Maria Lvova-Belova over similar charges.

The Russian notice seen by AFP describes the judge as a woman born June 28, 1956 in Japan, and says she is wanted for violating the Russian Criminal Code, without specifically listing the nature of the offence.

The warrant against Putin and Lvova-Belova accuse the pair of committing war crimes for having “illegally deported” thousands of Ukrainian children since invading the country in February 2022.

REUTERS, BEIJING

Chinese President Xi Jinping, also the military's commander-in-chief, on Monday appointed a new head of the armed force overseeing the nation's conventional and nuclear missiles, one day before the anniversary of the People's Liberation Army. Wang Houbin, former deputy commander of the navy, was named the new head of the PLA Rocket Force, and Xu Xisheng, its new political commissar, with both men acquiring the top rank of general, according to state media. Until his move to the PLA Rocket Force, Wang had been deputy commander of the navy since 2020. He was previously also the deputy chief of staff at the Navy. Xu was formerly the deputy political commissar of the Southern Theatre Command, one of the PLA's five theatre commands. State media did not say where the PLA Rocket Force's previous chief, Li Yuchao, was reassigned or state his whereabouts.

AFP, Kirkwall

the drone deliveries will bring them to staff on Graemsay and Hoy for postal workers to carry out their usual delivery routes. "Anything that helps to maintain the universal service, especially in areas of the isles which are more difficult to reach, is something that we should give a chance to support," Alistair Carmichael, the MP for Orkney and Shetland, said in a statement. "Royal Mail remains a critical part of keeping the isles connected — and local knowledge and care are vital to that network." Royal Mail said the drone service was expected to significantly improve service levels and delivery times to Graemsay and Hoy, where weather and geography can cause disruptions to delivery services.



বাংলাদেশ মুক্তিযোদ্ধা কল্যাণ ট্রাস্ট

(মুক্তিযুদ্ধ বিষয়ক মন্ত্রণালয়)

শিখ ও বালিকা
খানিকান ভবন
৮৮, মতিবিল রো/৫, ঢাকা-১০০০

চট্রামের আধাবাসস্থ “টাপহার-৭১” ও “জয়বালা বাণিজ্যিক ভবন”-এর ফ্লোর/স্পেস ভাড়ার বিজ্ঞপ্তি

তারিখঃ ০১/০৮/২০২৩

নম্বরঃ স্বাক নম্বর-৪৮/০১.০০০০.২০১.১.৭.০০১.২২.১২১

বাংলাদেশ মুক্তিযোদ্ধা কল্যাণ ট্রাস্ট-এর মতিবিল গ্রন্থন (ট্রাস্টের প্রধান কার্যালয়) “টাপহার-৭১” ও ওড়িশা প্রান্তের “জয়বালা বাণিজ্যিক ভবন”-এর ফ্লোর/স্পেস-এর বাস্তু/খিলা/অফিস/ছাত্রের ওয়াশ/বাণিজ্যিক প্রতিষ্ঠান হিসেবে ভাড়া গ্রহণের লক্ষ্যে প্রতিযোগিতামূলক সর্বোচ্চ মূল্য বাকী/অভিভাবনে সিকিট হতে নির্দিষ্ট নির্দিষ্টকাল বরাদ্দ রাখার কথা রয়েছে। (নির্দিষ্টকাল বরাদ্দ, শর্তাবলি এবং খেলার তারিখ ও সময় বিশিষ্ট ট্রাস্টের ব্যক্তিগত ওয়েবসাইটে প্রকাশ করা হবে।)

ক্র.সং.	নির্দিষ্টকাল বরাদ্দের শেষ তারিখ	নগর বাসিন্দার শেষ তারিখ	মহানগর বাসিন্দার শেষ তারিখ	মন্তব্য
১ম দফা	২৮/০৮/২০২৩ সমগ্রই অফিস চলাকালীন	৩০/০৮/২০২৩ সমগ্রই বেলা ০২.০০ ঘটিকা	৩০/০৮/২০২৩ সমগ্রই বেলা ০২.৩০ ঘটিকা	
২য় দফা	২৮/০৮/২০২৩ সমগ্রই অফিস চলাকালীন	২৮/০৮/২০২৩ সমগ্রই বেলা ০২.০০ ঘটিকা	২৮/০৮/২০২৩ সমগ্রই বেলা ০২.৩০ ঘটিকা	১ম নম্বর নম্বর সরকারি পাতার না গেলে প্রকাশ হবে।
৩য় দফা	৩০/১০/২০২৩ সমগ্রই অফিস চলাকালীন	৩০/১০/২০২৩ সমগ্রই বেলা ০২.০০ ঘটিকা	৩০/১০/২০২৩ সমগ্রই বেলা ০২.৩০ ঘটিকা	২য় নম্বর নম্বর সরকারি পাতার না গেলে প্রকাশ হবে।

এ সংক্রান্ত বিজ্ঞপ্তির শর্ত সর্মভিন্ন ট্রাস্টের নির্দিষ্ট ১,০০০/- (এক হাজার) টাকা মূল্য (ক) স্বর্ণ বিত্তা, বাংলাদেশ মুক্তিযোদ্ধা কল্যাণ ট্রাস্ট, ৮৮, মতিবিল, ঢাকা এবং (খ) প্রতিষ্ঠান প্রধান (ট্রাস্টের প্রধান কার্যালয়) বাণিজ্যিক ভবন (৩য় কল), ৩৯, অরুণাশ্রম, ট্রাস্টের প্রধান কার্যালয়। নগর বাসিন্দার নিম্ন (ক) শিখ ও বালিকা বিলাস, ৮৮, মতিবিল বাণিজ্যিক ওয়াশ, ওড়িশা এবং (খ) প্রতিষ্ঠান প্রধান (ট্রাস্টের প্রধান কার্যালয়) বাণিজ্যিক ভবন (৩য় কল), ৩৯, অরুণাশ্রম, ট্রাস্টের প্রধান কার্যালয়। মহানগর বাসিন্দার নিম্ন (ক) শিখ ও বালিকা বিলাস, ৮৮, মতিবিল বাণিজ্যিক ওয়াশ, ওড়িশা এবং (খ) প্রতিষ্ঠান প্রধান (ট্রাস্টের প্রধান কার্যালয়) বাণিজ্যিক ভবন (৩য় কল), ৩৯, অরুণাশ্রম, ট্রাস্টের প্রধান কার্যালয়।

জাভিদ আহমেদ
উপ-সচিব/প্রশাসনিক (শিখর)

AFP, Beirut

“Five regime forces and two drivers have been killed in the armed attack by IS militants” in the east of Hama province, the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights said.

They have used such hideouts to ambush civilians, Syrian government troops and pro-Iran fighters. Syria's war broke out after President Bashar al-Assad's repression of anti-government demonstrations in 2011 escalated into a conflict that pulled in foreign powers and global jihadists.

 <h2 style="text-align: center;">আখাউড়া পৌরসভা কার্যালয়</h2> <p style="text-align: center;">আখাউড়া, মেলা: ব্রাহ্মণবাড়িয়া</p> <p>ফোনঃ ০২৩৪৪৩২৭৫১ (অফিস), ই-মেইলঃ akhapoura@gmail.com</p> <p>ওয়েবসাইটঃ www.pourashava.akhaura.brahmanbaria.gov.bd</p>		 <p style="text-align: center;">শেখ হাসিনার জন্মদিবস ১৫ই আগস্ট ১৯৮০</p> <p>শেখ হাসিনার জন্মদিবস ১৫ই আগস্ট ১৯৮০</p>
Memo No. akha./poura./engr./2023/787		Date: 01/08/2023
e-Tender Notice-01 (OTM)		
1	Ministry/Division	Local Government Division
2	Implementing agency	Department of Public Health Engineering
3	Project/program name	Bangladesh Municipal Water Supply and Sanitation Project (30 Pourashavas)
4	e-Tender ID and Package No.	856328 and Package No. BMWSSP/WD-16
5	Description of works	Construction of Poura Bhaban Main Gate, Front Side Boundary Wall and RCC floor in front of Poura Bhaban under Akhaura Pourashava.
6	Name, designation & address of official inviting tender	Nikash Chandra Mitra, Executive Engineer, Office of the Mayor, Akhaura Pourashava, District: Brahmanbaria Tel. No. 334432751
7	Information	This is online tender, where only e-Tenders will be accepted in the National e-GP Portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted. Interested persons/firms can see details in the website: www.eprocure.gov.bd
		 Nikash Chandra Mitra Executive Engineer Akhaura Pourashava

MANIPUR STATE

India’s SC lashes out at govt over violence

TOL, New Delhi

India’s Supreme Court yesterday came down heavily on the Manipur government as well as the police over the “complete break down of constitutional machinery” in the strife-torn state from May till July.

It also summoned the Manipur DGP to explain why “tardy probe” was carried out by the state police in cases of violence.

“The state police appears to be incapable of investigating the cases. There is no law and order left (in the state). If law and order machinery cannot protect people, where will they go for protection,” a bench headed by CJI D Y Chandrachud said.

The bench was hearing a batch of petitions concerning the violence in Manipur.



Relatives gather around a bus carrying prisoners being released outside the Insein prison in Yangon, Myanmar yesterday. The pardons, announced on state media yesterday, were part of an amnesty granted to more than 7,000 prisoners to mark Buddhist Lent.

PHOTO: AFP

Rohingyas may be taken

FROM PAGE 1

union minister for international cooperation, and Lieutenant General Yar Pyae, member of the State Administration Council Union and chairman of the National Solidarity and Peacemaking Negotiation Committee, on July 28.

Earlier, Xijun visited Dhaka on April 6 this year and had a meeting with Momen on Rohingya repatriation.

China, which has been advocating a bilateral solution to the Rohingya crisis, instead of internationalising it since the largest influx in 2017, is mediating the Rohingya repatriation between Bangladesh and Myanmar.

A competent source told The Daily Star that the Chinese special envoy told the Bangladesh authorities that Myanmar signaled that the repatriated Rohingyas will not be taken to any camps or model villages that the Myanmar authorities had earlier planned.

In May this year, a group of Rohingyas for the first time visited Rakhine State. After returning to the Rohingyas camps in Cox’s Bazar, some of them said they were not willing to

return. They demanded that they be settled back in their original villages with safety and citizenship guaranteed. Some of them, however, had agreed to return.

Based on the demands of the Rohingyas, Bangladesh government raised certain issues with the Chinese authorities. For example, the Rohingyas should be taken to the villages and all of a family be repatriated together.

Also, there should be arrangements ensuring their livelihood, education and freedom of mobility.

“We have long been discussing these with the Chinese authorities. This time too, we raised the issues with the Chinese special envoy,” Foreign Minister AK Abdul Momen told The Daily Star last night.

He, however, would not say for sure if the Chinese envoy made it clear that the Myanmar authorities will take the Rohingyas to their own villages.

“We said that not all Rohingya villages have been destroyed. Many are still there. So, they should be taken there,” Momen said.

A source, however,

told The Daily Star that the Chinese special envoy at the meeting said the Myanmar authorities will bear the expenditures of the repatriated Rohingyas for the first three months.

Moreover, fishing and agricultural implements will be provided to the Rohingyas as their livelihood options after repatriation, said the sources.

At the meeting, Deng Xijun and Foreign Minister Momen discussed a plan to repatriate 7,000 Rohingyas by December, which may start after the monsoon, meeting sources said.

Momen, however, said there was no timeline set yet.

The Bangladesh authorities conveyed to the Chinese special envoy that it is difficult to start the repatriation during the monsoon, but meantime they will complete the preparations for the repatriation.

“Rohingya repatriation should start at the soonest. They are suffering here. Sadly, many are opposing their repatriation,” Momen said.

There is a huge shortage of funding for the Rohingyas because of other

Remittance continues to underwhelm

FROM PAGE 1

remittance inflows through the formal channels decrease by 3.5 percent if the premium offered by the informal market exchange rate increases by 1 percent, he said.

On Monday, the Association of Bankers, Bangladesh (ABB) and the Bangladesh Foreign Exchange Dealers Association (BAFEDA) increased the exchange rate of the US dollar by Tk 0.5 to Tk 109 for remitters.

Until July 31, banks were officially offering Tk 108.5 for a US dollar.

But remitters can get more through unofficial channels, according to bankers.

“Some Bangladeshi expatriates are still sending remittance through the illegal channels because of a higher dollar rate than the bank rate,” said Mirza Elias Uddin Ahmed, managing director of Jamuna Bank, which ran campaigns in recent months to boost its remittance inflows.

In the absence of adequate remittance inflows, banks are turning to the BB for dollar support to settle their import bills.

The BB sold nearly \$14 billion to banks in fiscal 2022-23 fiscal year. In July, it sold \$1 billion, as per the central bank officials.

Ahmed hopes that the exchange rate gap between the formal and informal markets will narrow further in the coming months and ramp up the remittance inflows through the official channels.

Syed Mahbubur Rahman, the MD of Mutual Trust Bank, is hopeful that the inflows will increase in the coming months as the ABB and BAFEDA are continually adjusting the dollar rate.

The remittance inflow will not increase until the exchange rate is made flexible, according to Hussain.

“The exchange rate should be market-based for remittance inflow because now there is no negotiation system for transactions in the formal market,” he said.

For instance, the banking regulator sent six inspection teams last week after complaints that some banks were offering as much as Tk 115 for a dollar to remitters, Tk 6.5 more than the central bank fixed rate.

Md Sarwar Hossain, assistant spokesperson of the central bank, is hopeful that the inflows will increase further in the upcoming months.

As of July 26, foreign exchange reserves stood at \$23.31 billion, an import cover of little over three months.

“Moscow is rapidly getting used to a full-fledged war, which, in turn, will soon finally move to the territory of the “authors of the war” to collect all their debts ... More unidentified drones, more collapse, more civil conflicts, more #war...”



Ukrainian presidential adviser, **Mykhailo Podolyak**, warns of more attacks on Russian soil.

PANAMA’S DARIEN GAP

Migration hits all-time high

Data shows 248,901 people walked through jungle area between January and July

REUTERS, Panama City



The number of people crossing the treacherous Darien Gap linking Panama and Colombia hit an all-time high in the first seven months of the year, figures released on Monday showed, with July seeing a sharp jump despite recent efforts to curb the trend.

Official data showed 248,901 people walked through the jungle area between January and July, already surpassing the record of 248,284 recorded for the whole of 2022, with most aiming to reach the United States, according to data from Panama’s Security Ministry.

Entries to Panama from Colombia through the jungle region have continued to rise despite a two-month program launched in April by the United States, Panama and Colombia to tackle undocumented immigration.

July recorded the most crossings, with 52,530 people taking part in the dangerous journey, up 77% from June, mostly from Venezuela, Haiti and Ecuador, according to the data.

The flow of migrants has skyrocketed from previous years, despite the start of the rainy season, Panama’s Security Minister Juan Pino said earlier this month.

Some 20% of the people who have crossed the jungle this year are minors, 51% of whom are under five years old, migration official Maria Saravia said at a press conference where the new figures were presented.

The United Nations forecast in April the total number of crossings would surpass 400,000 this year, with the organization warning that migrants crossing through the jungle are exposed to disease, violence, sexual abuse and human trafficking.

In recent years, parts of this jungle have become the site of humanitarian catastrophe. Hundreds of thousands of migrants from across the world, including as far as Afghanistan, and parts of Africa, cross the perilous terrain en route to the US border.

Blocked by visa restrictions from entering countries closer to the United States, a quarter of a million people traversed the lawless region last year.

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

Office of the Executive Engineer
Education Engineering Department
Narail
www.eed.narail.gov.bd

e-Tender Notice No. 1057-34/2023-2024, Date: 01/08/2023

e-Tender is invited in the National e-GP System Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) for the procurement of the following works under EED, Narail District as mentioned below.

SL No.	Tender ID No.	Package No.	Identification of package	Procurement method	Tender document last selling/ downloading date & time	Tender closing date & time
01	857832	NARAIL/597/4/MOE/2019-20/WD-08	Construction of Boundary Wall at Boramara Secondary School, Sadar, Narail.	LTM	21/08/2023 (16:00)	22/08/2023 (14:00)
02	857841	NARAIL/597/4/MOE/2021-22/WD-09	Construction of Boundary Wall at Panchopolli High School, Kalia, Narail.	LTM	21/08/2023 (16:00)	22/08/2023 (14:00)
03	857848	NARAIL/597/4/MOE/2021-22/WD-10	Construction of Boundary Wall at Jogania D N High School, Kalia, Narail.	LTM	21/08/2023 (16:00)	22/08/2023 (14:00)

This is an online tender where only e-Tender will be acceptable in the National e-GP System Portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-Tender A1 & A2 renewed up to FY 2022-23 enlistment Category Contractor of Education Engineering Department under Narail District who are registered in the National e-GP System Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) will be eligible. The fees for downloading the e-Tender document from the National e-GP System Portal have to be deposited online through any registered bank's branches up to 13:00 on 22/08/2023. Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System Portal and from e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd). The procuring entity reserves the right to accept or reject any or all tender(s) without assigning any reason whatsoever.

Arunava Roy

Executive Engineer
Education Engineering Department
Narail
E-mail: ee_nara@eedmoe.gov.bd

GD-1183

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

Divisional Passport & Visa Office

E-7 Agargaon, Dhaka-1207

www.dip.gov.bd

Invitation for Enlistment

Sl No.	Description	Detail
1.	Ministry/Division	Ministry of Home Affairs (MOHA), Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
2.	Agency	Department of Immigration & Passports (DIP)
3.	Procuring Entity Name	Divisional Passport & Visa Office, Agargaon, Dhaka.
4.	Procuring Entity Code	N/A
5.	Procuring Entity District	Dhaka, Bangladesh
6.	Invitation for	Enlistment of Firm for the supply of Furniture, Electronics, stationary items & goods, Stamp & Seals and related service.
7.	Invitation Ref No.	58.01.00000.601.74.001.20-1207
8.	Date	01/08/2023
KEY INFORMATION		
9.	Procurement Method	Limited Tendering Method/ Request For Quotation.
FUNDING INFORMATION		
10.	Budget and Source of Funds	Government of Bangladesh (GOB)
11.	Development Partners	None
PARTICULAR INFORMATION		
12.	Office Code	N/A
13.	Office Name	Divisional Passport & Visa Office, Agargaon, Dhaka.
14.	Application Closing Date and Time	17/08/2023 at 01:00 pm (BST)
15.	Name & Address	
	Application Form Availability	MD. AZMOL KABIR, Deputy Director, Divisional Passport & Visa Office, Agargaon, Dhaka. Room No-603. Telephone No- 02-58156425
	Receiving Application Form	MD. SHAHINUR RAHMAN, Assistant Director, Room No-303, Divisional Passport & Visa Office, Agargaon, Dhaka. Telephone No- 02-58156425
INFORMATION FOR APPLICATION		
16.	Eligibility of Application	a) Vat Registration and TIN Certificate of the Suppliers. b) Up-to-date Trade License of Local Agent from City Corporation. c) Proprietorship/Partnership/Limited Company ie. Concerned Commercial Documents (Photocopy) of the Tenders. d) Money Receipt of purchase of Tender Documents. e) Proof of Solvency. f) Must confirm that has legal Capacity to enter into a contract under the authority with valid Power of Attorney. g) At least 3 years' experience certificate for the Supply of similar goods and related service.
17.	Brief Description of Goods or Works	a) Supply of Stationary items, b) Supply of office furniture. c) Supply of AC (Air Conditioner)/ Electronics goods and miscellaneous items.
18.	Brief Description of Related or Physical Services	N/A
19.	Price of Application Form	2000.00 BDT
PROCURING ENTITY DETAILS		
20.	Name of Official Inviting Application	Director
21.	Designation of Official Inviting Application	Director
22.	Address of Official Inviting Application	Director, Divisional Passport & Visa Office, Agargaon, Dhaka.
23.	Contact details of Official Inviting Application	Telephone No- 02-58156425,
The procuring entity reserves the right to reject any or all the Tenders without assigning any reason.		

26.8.23

(Md. Azmol Kabir)
Deputy Director
For Director

GD-1180

Why such apathy for medical research?

We need to inculcate a culture of learning to better serve patients

We are shocked to learn that around 47 percent of doctors in four major hospitals do not have the required skills to do research. Skills include knowing how to conduct statistical analyses, writing papers worthy of foreign publications and writing manuscripts. The fact that such a high proportion of doctors lack such basic skills is truly alarming for a discipline that demands continuous study of various aspects of medicine.

The study, conducted by the Department of Public Health and Informatics at BSMU, also found that only 25 percent of the surveyed doctors authored research, while 29 percent were co-authors of research published in different journals. In a country where public health is constantly challenged by waves of diseases, the present dengue epidemic being a prime example, it is unthinkable that medical research is so grossly neglected.

So why are doctors so disinclined to conduct research? The study has found that six out of 10 physicians do research only to get promoted, which means they are not doing this for self-development or to gain more insight into their specialised field. Other reasons given for research included the desire to pursue a career abroad for higher studies, with 41 percent conducting research in order to be “praised”.

This lack of enthusiasm is largely affected by the generally unfriendly environment for such study. Most respondents pointed to professional pressure and lack of research-related knowledge as impediments; others pointed to having no prior knowledge of research and the dearth of grants. The lack of professional benefit, non-cooperation of colleagues and the idea that private practice was more profitable were also cited as reasons.

Research should be considered a mandatory part of medical studies and must be encouraged in all medical institutes. Senior physicians have a huge role to play in being mentors and facilitators of research by their juniors. As experts have said, it is essential that local universities and medical institutions collaborate to foster this research culture. In addition, existing funds available for research must be judiciously utilised, while allocations for research must be increased and monitored in all medical institutions.

It goes without saying that without continuous research, doctors cannot gain insight into what new medicines, procedures and tools can be developed to provide better treatments for patients. Without research, they will be significantly ill-equipped to tackle the formidable challenges of controlling outbreaks of deadly diseases.

Take action against big loan defaulters

Appellate Division’s observation on defaulted loans is right on the mark

Our apex court’s frustration at the present state of defaulted loans in Bangladesh is a sentiment shared by many people. According to a report in this daily, an Appellate Division bench, headed by the chief justice, remarked on Monday that those with loans worth hundreds of crores of taka were getting away with not paying their debts off, while farmers with small loans were being harassed for failing to make regular payments. We completely agree with the court’s observation and believe that, given the financial crisis that the country is going through, it is high time some tough actions were taken to redress this persistent problem.

Non-performing loans (NPLs) have been a thorn in our side for decades, but now it is turning into blight for our economy. And we have gotten into this situation because of the leeway that has periodically been provided to habitual loan defaulters. The result: Bangladesh now holds the second position in South Asia in terms of bad loan ratio, according to a World Bank report. We are behind Sri Lanka only, but that should not provide any comfort considering the collapse of Sri Lanka’s economy last year. The amount of defaulted loans in Bangladesh, which stood at Tk 120,656 crore at the end of December 2022, jumped by Tk 11,000 crore in just three months, rising to Tk 131,620 crore at the end of March 2023, according to the Bangladesh Bank. Experts have been raising concern over the upsurge in defaulted loans for years, pointing out the severe implications for both the banking sector and the economy overall.

We all know what the solution is: stop being lenient to big loan defaulters. The extraordinary lenience that the government has shown big borrowers through debt rescheduling and relaxation of rules has gotten our banking sector in a quagmire that it is struggling to pull itself out of. High volume of NPLs is one of the three major domestic risks that our economy faces, according to the International Monetary Fund (IMF) – something that our own economic experts have been flagging for years. An overall reform in our financial sector is needed to instil good governance and strict regulations to check bad lending practices, but as immediate remedies, the government should put specific measures in place to stop lending irregularities in our banks, and make all big loan defaulters pay their debt off without exception. It is not fair that our banks keep getting bailouts from the government, using taxpayers’ money, due to defaulted loans and bad lending practices.

Violence cannot be the only language of politics



Zillur Rahman
is the executive director of the Centre for Governance Studies (CGS) and a television talk show host. His Twitter handle is @zillur

ZILLUR RAHMAN

The political deadlock we find ourselves in has been festering in the background for a very long time. The ruling party’s expected opposition for BNP’s demand for an election-time nonpartisan interim government is escalating the situation to the brink of chaos. And yet, we see no visible attempts at dialogue or de-escalation from either side.

In fact, it may be fair to say that there doesn’t seem to be much thought or tact behind the ruling party’s actions at all. Whether it be an acute case of groupthink or a desperate attempt to maintain party control, the current AL rhetoric seems almost entirely aimed at their dedicated supporter base. They seem to be ignoring the fact that a large segment of voters will not be loyal to any one party, instead opting to vote strategically depending on current circumstances and future predictions. In political science, these voters are called “swing voters.” We are a two-party state for all practical purposes, and so who the winner will be almost always comes down to who can turn the most swing votes on Election Day. Needless to say, expecting to turn swing votes based on voters’ sense of gratitude for past development work is not a savvy political strategy to build a campaign on.

The true fuel behind BNP’s current momentum is the wide-scale public disapproval of the government’s handling of rampant corruption, misuse of law, and general disregard for human rights. However, instead of trying to win back the trust of those who have become disillusioned, the incumbents seem to only be responding with force projection. The turnouts at the opposition’s rallies clearly indicate a large voter base who disapprove of the current regime’s policies and actions. But is the current regime even listening to them? The time is now ripe for targeted policy reforms and proactive public statements that address the main concerns of all people of Bangladesh. Instead of doing any of that, AL has allowed the opposition party to dictate the narrative. The AL response to the BNP rhetoric (of restoring voting rights to the common people) has been to try and paint the BNP as a party of



PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN

The political deadlock we find ourselves in has been festering in the background for a very long time.

“terrorists” who are apparently only concerned with the destruction of Bangladesh. This, of course, is a total political non sequitur, which does not resonate with the demands of the common people at all. Labelling the other side as “evil” is undoubtedly a worrisome course of action for the future of a democratic nation.

Awami League has to bite the bullet and admit that there are serious concerns in people’s minds about whether a free and fair election is impossible under any one political party. Historical precedent is not on their side. However, it must be stated firmly that this is not the issue of any particular political party in Bangladesh. It is an issue for every single political party in Bangladesh. Despite the hollow claims made by our ministers during meetings with foreign diplomats, the truth of the matter is that, for the last decade, democracy has not been an option on the ballot table. Right now, as the system stands, the people of the Republic of Bangladesh have no real choice regarding who gets

that their political party could remain in power at the time. Therefore, even if BNP manages to get elected in the next term, if this issue remains unresolved, they too will face this roadblock and the people of Bangladesh will suffer.

For there to be actual change, there needs to be a drastic overhaul of the system. And the change must start with the way elections are held. History has shown that technocrats and intellectuals alone cannot restore democracy in our nation. The will to restore democracy must be political, and it must stem from the people. For democracy to exist, the people need to demand it without fear, and politicians must be held accountable for whatever promises they make. And if politicians fail, they must account for their failure in the halls of our democratic institutions. Violence, rebellion, and uprisings cannot be the ways to take back power.

Unfortunately, our history so far shows that major political shifts have only occurred as a result of violent uprisings on the streets. How can this be

for greater roles in the UN mechanism, as well as on the world stage. With multiple high-level visits from the US, an EU election exploratory mission, and election-related observations from all our biggest Western investors and development partners, these matters did not take shape in a vacuum. The world is keeping an eye on Bangladesh.

The Awami League has a real opportunity to set Bangladesh on the right track. Changes to the term limit and the introduction of a bicameral parliament can easily be preemptively executed by the ruling party, which would not only deflate a significant portion of the momentum behind the BNP’s demands, but would also send a message that they are listening to the people. Compromise can be a crucial first step in the dialogue process and can bring about positive change. However, this cannot take place if politics devolves into primitive stick fights on the streets. It is high time for politicians to put down the sticks and start talking compromise, for all our sake.

Enter ‘global boiling’



POLITICS OF CLIMATE CHANGE

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

SALEEMUL HUQ

July was the hottest month ever recorded on our planet. It marks a clear turning point from the previous era of talking about global warming as something that will happen in the future to recognising that it is happening already. This is evident all over the globe; from heat waves in North America and southern Europe, to floods in China and India, to wildfires in Greece (which caused thousands of tourists to be evacuated).

The Secretary-General of the United Nations, Antonio Guterres, recently declared, “The era of global warming has ended; the era of global boiling has arrived.” This is likely an allusion to the proverbial frogs swimming in a pot of water that is being heated so that the frogs are boiled and die without ever realising what is happening. But we humans are not frogs and can indeed tell when the temperature of our surroundings has gone up too high. In response, we need to take emergency actions.

Firstly, the leaders of countries need to recognise the emergency and take necessary measures to tackle the problem by pivoting to a business-unusual approach nationally and collectively.

This means taking immediate actions to help global citizens who are suffering from the adverse impacts of severe weather events around the world



A firefighter tries to extinguish a wildfire burning at the industrial zone of the city of Volos, in central Greece on July 26, 2023.

PHOTO: REUTERS

and from slow onset events such as sea-level rise. While each government is primarily responsible for assisting its own citizens first, there is also a collective responsibility to help victims in the poorest countries through international solidarity-based funding, as agreed in COP27 in Egypt last year. The proposed Loss and Damage Fund must be made functional at COP28 in December. This must be the first

developing countries. This will allow the adverse impacts to be minimised and reduce the inevitable losses and damages from climate change.

The third action would be to phase out the use of fossil fuels such as coal, petroleum, and natural gas and replace them with renewable energy sources such as solar and wind. Though this transition to cleaner energy is already happening, steps must be taken to accelerate the pace of the switch. In this

regard, there needs to be a moratorium on exploring for new fossil fuel reserves, as we cannot even afford to extract and burn the existing reserves. In my view, any new exploration for fossil reserves should be declared a crime against humanity. In fact, I would argue that it is a crime against our own children as they will be the ones to suffer from the consequences of this action.

The next item in the agenda would be to ban the development of any new coal mines, given that coal is the most polluting of the three aforementioned fossil fuels. This phasing out is also happening, but again not fast enough. Petroleum, which is mostly used in the transport sector, could be replaced by switching to increased usage of electric vehicles. The final fossil fuel is natural gas, which may still be a viable transition fuel for a few more years as it is the least polluting of the three.

The most important action that can catalyse our transition from fossil fuel-based economies to renewable energy-based economies is to discover new financial investment incentives, so that trillions of dollars can be shifted to investing in clean energy. This means getting rid of the most egregious subsidies that are still being given by governments to fossil fuel companies.

Finally, I would recommend for the UN secretary-general himself to appoint a special envoy for loss and damage to liaise between the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, and national governments to ensure that we no longer impose the adverse impacts of human-induced climate change on the poorest and most vulnerable citizens. This should be the moral imperative of every thinking citizen of the planet.



The trainee doctors claimed that they had to call the strike as a last resort, after campaigning for more than six months and having reached out to various relevant bodies.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

The plight of young medical professionals over paltry pay



A CLOSER LOOK

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

TASNEEM TAYEB

The decision by postgraduate trainee doctors to resume their work from July 22 came as a relief for patients. The indefinite strike by the Postgraduate Private Trainee Doctors Association was called from July 8, 2023. However, the ceasefire between the association and the authorities seems like a temporary adjustment, since many of the pressing issues facing the trainee doctors are likely to resurface.

For context, the postgraduate trainee doctors' group consists of around 10,000 trainee doctors who serve in some 30 government healthcare facilities across Bangladesh, and are pursuing their higher studies under Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University (BSMMU) and Bangladesh College of Physicians and Surgeons (BCPS). Their demands included an allowance hike to a minimum of Tk 50,000 (up from the current Tk 20,000), regular payment of allowance, and uninterrupted private practice, among others. The trainee doctors claimed that they had to call the strike as a last resort, after campaigning for more than six months and having reached out to various relevant bodies such as the BCPS, BSMMU, Bangladesh Medical Association (BMA), and Swadhinata Chikitsak Parishad (Swachip).

According to the president of the Postgraduate Private Trainee Doctors Association, Dr Jabir Hossain, Bangladesh pays the lowest such allowance in Asia: in India it is Rs 1,50,000; in Pakistan around Rs 75,000. Dr Hossain also said that trainee doctors in Singapore get an equivalent of Tk 2,50,000 as allowance. Of course, in comparison, the Tk 20,000 that Bangladeshi trainee doctors get is meagre.

Unfortunately, the allowance is also paltry when looked at from an economic perspective. A medical student can only apply to be a postgraduate trainee doctor after completing their MBBS, which in itself is a six-year programme, including a one year internship. By the time doctors can apply for this, they are in their mid-20s. This often means they feel obligated to not only become self-reliant, but also contribute to household expenses. In a country plagued by a high inflation rate of nearly 10 percent, how can it be expected of postgraduate trainee doctors to live a dignified life on an allowance of only Tk 20,000 per month? And that, too, is not paid to them regularly.

The dire financial condition of young medical professionals also came to light earlier this year, when

a local daily reported that around 1,500 non-resident diploma doctors of BSMMU had not been paid their monthly allowance for more than nine months since June 2022. In these situations, doctors have to eat into their savings or borrow money to pay for their education, according to the report.

The BSMMU vice-chancellor wrote to the health ministry on November 11, 2022 requesting a budget of Tk 36 crore to pay the allowance of non-resident doctors. On December 20, 2022 – nearly a month and a half later – the ministry responded by saying that Tk 34 crore has been entered into the

While the ceasefire is holding for now, authorities should revisit the allowance structure for these doctors and pay them an amount that would enable them to lead dignified lives. Given the current economic reality, making do with Tk 25,000 (for living and education expenses) is far from feasible. It could only be a matter of time before the doctors have to resort to demonstrating again. And to avoid this, their allowance structure should be upgraded. How can we expect our doctors to provide world-class, flawless medical services to the patients if they are forced to remain mentally occupied by their own financial worries?

Integrated Budget and Accounting System (iBAS) for allowance payment of resident doctors for FY 2022-23. By March, according to the VC, they had not received the allowance as requested. In fact, the ministry queried why BSMMU was asking for additional funds for the same purpose. The arrears for non-resident doctors were finally paid on June 21. The question then arises: are health ministry officials not aware of the difference between resident and non-resident doctors? Then again, in a ministry that provides ample opportunities for lining one's pockets through easier means, can one really expect

officials to notice the non-payment of student doctors' allowances? The deeply entrenched corruption in the health sector has been amply revealed in many recent evidence-based reports. Interestingly, the High Court also directed both the health ministry and the BSMMU to clear the dues within 60 days. But this happened in early July, against a public interest litigation writ petition filed by Supreme Court lawyer Md Monir Uddin back in June.

Trainee doctors in Bangladesh's healthcare institutions are expected to shoulder significant workloads, put in long hours, and efficiently provide healthcare services to patients. This is in addition to their academic duties of studying, sitting for exams, working on research and so on. On top of all this, if the doctors have to also worry about their sustenance, how can they be expected to serve people well or do justice to their profession and education?

Ideally, since authorities are unable to pay doctors adequate allowances, they should be allowed to practise outside working hours. And this is something that authorities recently presented as a mitigation measure in the face of the strike. But the point remains: why did it take a strike for authorities to grant this to trainee doctors?

Moreover, the authorities have raised the allowance from Tk 20,000 to Tk 25,000. For comparison, a management trainee at any reputable organisation in the private sector makes at least Tk 40,000, or as high as Tk 80,000-90,000, given the nature and salary structure of specific organisations. But it is as if the trainee doctors are being punished for choosing the medical profession, given the meagre pay they are being offered even after striking. Also, is there a guarantee that the doctors will be paid their allowance on a regular basis from now on?

The lives of postgraduate trainee doctors and young medical professionals in general are riddled with struggles. While some people and authorities put the blame on them for calling a strike or staging a protest for their rights, no one acknowledges the circumstances that push them to the brink.

While the ceasefire is holding for now, authorities should revisit the allowance structure for these doctors and pay them an amount that would enable them to lead dignified lives. Given the current economic reality, making do with Tk 25,000 (for living and education expenses) is far from feasible. It could only be a matter of time before the doctors have to resort to demonstrating again. And to avoid this, their allowance structure should be upgraded. How can we expect our doctors to provide world-class, flawless medical services to the patients if they are forced to remain mentally occupied by their own financial worries?

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Send us your letters to letters@thedailystar.net

WORLD BREASTFEEDING WEEK

We need more breastfeeding corners

World Breastfeeding Week is observed annually, from August 1 to 7, in more than 120 countries. In 2021, Bangladesh ranked first out of 98 countries in supporting lactating women, according to a report by the World Breastfeeding Trends Initiative. But despite at least 42.68 percent of women in Bangladesh being in the workforce, not all workplaces and public places have breastfeeding facilities.

According to Section 94(7) of the Bangladesh Labour Act, 2006, "Such rooms shall be adequately furnished and equipped and in particular there shall be one suitable cot or cradle with necessary bedding for each child, at least one chair or equivalent seating accommodation for the use of each mother while she is feeding or attending to her child and a sufficient supply of suitable toys for the older children."

In October 2019, lawyer and mother Israt Hasan filed a writ petition with the High Court seeking the establishment of breastfeeding corners in public spaces. As a result, the HC in April this year directed the government to take necessary steps to set

up breastfeeding corners at all workplaces, shopping malls, airports, bus stops, and railway stations across the country.

Breastfeeding laws exist in the United States and the United Kingdom. Both countries feature designated diaper-changing areas as well as breastfeeding corners with accompanying bathrooms. It is also entirely legal for mothers to breastfeed in public spaces anywhere in the UK and US. The matter is also under consideration in neighbouring India. Back in 2017, nursing rooms were established at 100 railway stations across the country in India.

In Bangladesh, many public places feature dedicated smoking zones. But there are hardly any breastfeeding and baby care corners. This is quite discriminatory.

Moreover, although more and more women are entering the workforce and contributing to the country's economy, we are lagging behind in taking steps to improve their working conditions. This includes the lack of breastfeeding corners in workplaces, which can also impact the growth and overall

health of the babies of working mothers.

Working women spend lengthy periods of time outside with their children. Due to a lack of dedicated breastfeeding corners, mothers are forced to delay feeding their babies, resulting in a variety of physical and mental issues for the children. Regular breastfeeding boosts a child's immune system, aids the mother in overcoming postpartum exhaustion, and even reduces the risk of various diseases such as uterine cancer and breast cancer. Above all, there is no substitute for a mother's milk when it comes to the complete development of a baby.

Despite existing laws, there is very little state or institutional initiative in terms of establishing breastfeeding and childcare spaces in both public and private establishments of our country. This needs to change. Breastfeeding corners are necessary to not only keep women in the workforce but also to provide for the nutritional needs of the next generation.

Sabrina Pervin Shanta
Student, North South University



FILE PHOTO: REUTERS

Regular breastfeeding boosts a child's immune system, aids the mother in overcoming postpartum exhaustion, and even reduces the risk of various diseases such as uterine cancer and breast cancer.



বাংলাদেশ কৃষি গবেষণা ইনস্টিটিউট
Bangladesh Agricultural Research Institute
সংগ্রহ ও ভান্ডার শাখা
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Memo no: 12.21.0000.007.03.685.23.458Date : 27 July 2023

e-GP: Tender Notice No.02(2022-2023)

e-Tender is invited in the e-GP system Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) for the procurement of the following goods. Details are given below:

Sl No	Package no.	Tender ID & Ref No	Description of goods	Tender Documents Last selling (Date & Time)	Tender Closing date & Time	Tender Opening date & Time
1.	PN: GD-01	857196 & IRN : 685	Video Documentary 01 (One) Item.	13.08.2023 16:00	14.08.2023 12:00	14.08.2023 12:00

The interested persons/firm may visit the website www.eprocure.gov.bd to get the details of the tender.

This is an online tender, where only e-Tender will be accepted in the national e-GP portal and no offline/hard copy will be accepted. To submit e-Tender, Registration in the National e-GP system portal is required.

Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP system portal and e-GP Help Desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd).

Project Name : Farm Machinery Technology Development for Profitable Crop Production.



(Md. Youns Ali)
(BARI0663)
Deputy Director (In-Charge)
On behalf of Director General

GD- 1179



LIGHTS, CAMERA, SATIRE

Masking serious messages in the veil of humour

MAHIYA TABASSUM

In the world of film, satire and humour have long been utilised as powerful tools for not solely entertaining but also delivering meaningful societal commentary. A well-crafted joke or satirical scene can disarm audiences, prompting them to reflect on societal norms and question their own beliefs. By cloaking serious messages in the veil of humour, filmmakers can effectively challenge the status quo and address pertinent issues without being overtly didactic.

Bengali cinema, with its rich storytelling tradition, has been no stranger to the art of using humour and satire to convey thought-provoking messages while entertaining its audiences. This article aims to explore how the use of humour and satire in movies allows filmmakers across the world to convey thought-provoking messages while entertaining their audiences.

The power of satire

Satire, as an artistic expression, serves as a mirror for society, holding up a distorted reflection of our collective values and behaviours. Through humour, filmmakers can draw attention to the absurdities and hypocrisies that often go unnoticed. Satire becomes a means to unmask the faults

and flaws that plague society, encouraging audiences to engage in critical thinking and introspection.

A classic example of using satire to comment on societal norms can be found in Stanley Kubrick's *Dr. Strangelove or: How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Love the Bomb*, which was released in 1964. The film was originally envisioned as a dramatic look at the Cold War, loosely based on the novel *Red Alert* by Peter George, but Kubrick felt it would be more effective as satire. This British dark comedy parodies the Cold War tensions and the nuclear arms race, using humour to underscore the absurdity of political brinkmanship and the dangers of unchecked power.

The landscape of Bengali cinema is no different when it comes to using satire to critique prevailing social and political issues. Satyajit Ray, a legendary filmmaker in Bengali cinema, used satire effectively in his film *Hirak Rajar Deshe* (*The Land of the Diamond King*), released in 1980. This sequel to *Goopy Gynne Bagha Byne* (1969) humorously criticised totalitarian regimes and the abuse of power. The heart of the narrative lies within a mesmerising fantasy realm governed by an unrelenting and self-absorbed ruler portrayed brilliantly by Utpal

Dutt. Delving deeper, the film artfully unfolds as a thought-provoking political allegory, drawing parallels to the historical period of Emergency under Indira Gandhi's reign. Furthermore, Ray skillfully weaves a broader exploration of totalitarianism, leaving audiences with an insightful reflection on this



PHOTOS: COLLECTED

governing ideology. Through the character of the tyrannical King, Ray provided a sharp commentary on the dangers of unchecked authority and the suppression of dissenting voices.

Using humour to address social issues

Humour has a unique ability to address uncomfortable or sensitive social issues without alienating audiences. Comedy can create a safe space to discuss topics that

may otherwise be met with resistance or defensiveness.

The political satire film *Mad e in Bangladesh*, directed by Mostofa Sarwar Farooki, was released in 2007 after being delayed by a year because of opposition from the Bangladesh Film Censor Board over the contents of the film. *Mad e in Bangladesh* ensembles a stellar cast starring Zahid Hasan, Shahiduzzaman Selim, Tariq Anam Khan, Fazlur Rahman Babu, and Hasan Masood, among others. The story revolves around an apparently passive young man, Khorshed, played brilliantly by Zahid Hasan, who comes to Dhaka from a rural area looking for a job and a better life. Farooki delivered an entertaining drama that is rooted in truth, well-fitted to our socio-political context, and scathing in its criticism of power-politics and the flaws within our system. The film remains as controversial yet as relevant as the year of its release.

Directed by Shiboprosad Mukherjee and Nandita Roy, the Tollywood film *Belasheshe* (2015) humorously delves into the complexities of family dynamics and the changing societal roles of women. Through the character of a middle-aged woman who seeks divorce after decades of marriage, the film challenges societal expectations and highlights the importance of individual agency and happiness.

Subverting stereotypes through comedy

By playfully subverting established norms, filmmakers can encourage empathy and understanding while celebrating individuality. Bengali cinema has been at the forefront of breaking stereotypes and challenging societal norms through comedy.

Bhooter Bhabishyat (2012), directed by Anik Dutta, blends comedy with supernatural elements to deliver a satirical commentary on the urbanisation and gentrification of Kolkata. The movie humorously portrays ghosts from different eras of Kolkata's history, symbolising the lost essence of the city in the face of rapid modernisation.

Humour and satire are potent weapons in a filmmaker's arsenal, enabling them to address serious social issues while keeping audiences engaged and entertained. By skillfully using humour and satire, filmmakers can spark conversations, challenge societal norms, and encourage introspection among viewers. Through the lens of comedy, these movies shed light on the human condition, making us laugh while subtly prodding us to contemplate the state of the world we live in. As we continue to enjoy these films, let us also recognise their deeper messages and the powerful role humour plays in shaping our perception of society.

NEWS

Raising voice

FROM PAGE 12

Rajan planned the killing after he came to know that Saiful would go abroad, Moin said.

The attackers were led by Rajan who used to run a local rickshaw garage and was involved in drug dealing, robbery, and theft.

There are at least five cases against him for possession of firearms, drugs, and explosives.

The other arrestees include Zane Alam, Sumon Liton Hossain, Dipu, Sarwar Akand, and Sajeeb.

Rab recovered an iron rod, a broken cricket bat, and a truncheon used to hit the victim, Moin said.

"Saiful used to protest against criminal activities and drug trade in his neighbourhood. He took various steps to build a society free of drugs and crime. He also assisted law enforcement by providing information about drug dealers," he added.

Earlier, suspects Zane Alam, Sumon and his mother were arrested, and they also thought Saiful was behind the arrests.

Rab said Alam and Sumon are accused in four criminal cases. The other arrestees are also involved in drug dealing and criminal activities, Moin added.

They've been framed

FROM PAGE 12

According to police, the tour was led by Afif Anwar, a fourth-year student of Buet, who is also a leader of Shirbir's Buet unit.

The Daily Star could not independently verify the claim.

In the case statement, police said that the arrestees admitted they gathered there to commit terrorist activities to disrupt public safety, damage public property, carry out anti-state activities, and create political unrest.

According to the seizure list, police seized Bangladesh Islami Chhatra Shibir's booklets, forms, leaflets, syllabus, books, and cell phones used by the arrestees.

But Junayed, brother of Ali Ammar Moaz, said, "Having failed to find anything on their mobile phones, police collected those [leaflets, booklets, etc.] from different sources, including the internet."

The guardians also met with the Buet authorities yesterday, who assured them of justice.

Sunamganj Superintendent of Police (SP) and two Additional SPs did not respond to our calls for comments.

Cardiac stents to become

FROM PAGE 12

Of those, the base price of Resolute Integrity -- one of the most-used stents in Bangladesh -- will be reduced to \$500 from \$880.

Similarly, Resolute Onyx's base price for stent has been lowered to \$900 from \$1,150, while that of Resolute Trucor's -- which is not yet supplied to Bangladesh -- will be \$450.

Local representatives of different stent manufacturers from the European Union, Japan, and other countries have also agreed to bring down the base prices of their products.

All European-origin stents, authorised by the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA), will have base prices ranging from \$450 to \$500.

Meanwhile, the base prices of the EU-origin stents without FDA approval will range from \$400 to \$450. The same will be applicable to stents produced in Japan.

Prices of stents manufactured in other countries will range from \$300 to \$350.

On June 25, Abbott Laboratories and Boston Scientific -- two world-leading stent producers and suppliers -- agreed to the price reduction of eight kinds of stents, which are largely used, in another meeting at the DGDA. This reduction will be effective from September 1.

At the moment, as there is no local producer, Bangladesh remains fully dependent on foreign suppliers to meet the demand for around 45,000 cardiac stents per year.

The DGDA did not have any role in the price setting of cardiac stents before a markup formula was imposed on April 19, 2017.

In a joint effort, the DGDA and stent suppliers consulted a technical

committee of cardiologists, formed by the directorate itself.

They reached a unanimous decision to set a 1.42 percent markup for cardiac stents.

Since then, the stent prices have remained unchanged until October last year.

But, to the dismay of patients, the prices went up as the DGDA made adjustments to align those with the depreciation of taka against the dollar.

The technical committee argued that the prices can be reduced if the DGDA bargains with the main companies and sets a price cap like it was done in India, where the prices range from Rs 9,842 to Rs 35,835.

Against this backdrop, the DGDA and the committee held a series of meetings with the representatives of major stent-producing companies.

Prof Afzalur Rahman, one of the members of the technical committee who attended yesterday's meeting, told The Daily Star, "This will have a positive impact on the country's cardiac care."

Following the June 25 meeting, Maj Gen Mohammad said they have decided to revise the markup by reducing the retailer commission to five percent from 11.5 and proposing that National Board of Revenue reduce the duties and taxes.

"We already sent a proposal to the NBR for this, but they have yet to agree."

Humayun Kabir, secretary of the Consumers Association of Bangladesh, told The Daily Star, "The government-imposed duties and taxes on stents should not be over five percent. We demand the reduction to relieve cardiac patients and their families from financial burdens."

Tight security

FROM PAGE 12

police commissioner (crime) of Rangpur Metropolitan.

Bangladesh Railway will ply eight special trains from six districts to ferry the people to Rangpur today.

"It will be a historical rally -- the party is expecting around 1 million people," said Jahangir Kabir Nanak, an AL presidium member.

During her visit, the PM would also be inaugurating 27 projects involving

Tk 1,240 crore.

The projects include Sheikh Russel Media Centre, Sheikh Russell Indoor Stadium, Sheikh Russell Swimming Pool, Divisional Women Sports Complex, Palichora Stadium and five 10-bed hospitals.

She would also be laying the foundation plaques of five projects, including the Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman Novo Theatre in Rangpur.

Dengue patients keep pouring into DMCH

FROM PAGE 12

Meanwhile, 2,584 more patients were hospitalised, according to the Directorate General of Health Services.

So far, 54,416 dengue cases and 44,891 recoveries have been recorded this year.

SALINE CRISIS IN CTG

Dextrose saline, an essential fluid used to treat dengue, has remained largely unavailable in Chattogram for at least the past two weeks owing to an unwavering demand due to a rise in the number of patients.

As a result, hospitals in the port city have been struggling to treat dengue patients. Because of the supply crisis, they must purchase saline at two to three times the normal cost from the market -- with patients having to bear the additional cost.

Speaking to drug store owners, our Chattogram correspondent learned that only five companies produced and supplied dextrose normal saline (DNS) solution in the port city.

However, none of them has been supplying sufficient quantities to the market over the last month, citing a production shortage.

Dr Rezaul Karim, managing director of Parkview Hospital Ltd, said "We collect saline from four to five companies, but none of them can meet our demand nowadays. They can supply us with 10 to 12 litres of saline after we order 100 litres.

"As a result, we are facing difficulties while treating dengue patients -- even one without complications requires one litre per day. Critical patients may require up to three litres per hour."

Our correspondent found DNS solutions to be out of stock at pharmacies in Jamal Khan Road, Anderkilla, Chawkbazar, Bakalia, Panchlaish, Askar Dighir Par and Kazir Dewri areas.

Meanwhile, there were allegations that unscrupulous traders were stockpiling and selling saline at higher prices.

In this regard, the district administration and the Directorate General of Drug Administration (DGDA) conducted a joint drive at Hajari Goli, the largest wholesale market of medicines in Chattogram, on Tuesday.

Most traders fled the scene, closing their shops after being tipped off about the drive, during which 150 litres of DNS solution were seized from Bengal Pharmacy and Chattala Pharmacy. The seized saline was sold to hospitals at MRP.

"The saline was stocked with the intention of selling at a higher price," said Executive Magistrate Protik Dutta, who lead the mobile court.

Meanwhile, Samir Kumar Sikder, president of the Bangladesh Chemists and Druggists' Association in Chattogram district, denied the allegation of stockpiling.

"The drug stores couldn't stockpile saline solutions as they are not receiving supplies as per demand."

However, there was no shortage of DNS solutions in government hospitals.

Brig Gen Shamim Ahsan, director of Chattogram Medical College Hospital, said, "Government hospitals procure saline, like other necessary medications, through a tendering process, which obligate suppliers to provide larger stocks at once in order to avoid such crises."

Five dead in clashes

FROM PAGE 12

meant to move from one place to another but clashes broke out between two groups on the way, which resulted in the death of four people," Krishan Kumar, spokesperson of Nuh police, told Reuters.

He said two of the dead were members of the home guard, a voluntary force that helps police control civil disturbances. Another 60 people, including 10 police personnel, were injured in the clashes, local government officials said.

Allowance for buying vehicles

FROM PAGE 12

circular that was issued on Monday.

A maximum of Tk 1.45 crore could be shelled out for the 2,700cc sports utility vehicles that are provided to grade 1 and 2 officials. This includes the VAT and tax. The previous limit was Tk 94 lakh.

Grade 3 officials are also allowed SUVs of 2,000cc but their allowance is Tk 65 lakh, including registration fee, VAT and tax. Their previous allowance was Tk 57 lakh.

A maximum of Tk 52 lakh can be spent to acquire a microbus of 2,700cc, including registration fee,

VAT and tax, up from Tk 44 lakh before.

The allowance for ambulance was raised by Tk 10 lakh to Tk 54 lakh.

Similarly, the allowance for pickups, minibus and bus were also raised by Tk 6 to 10 lakh.

Motorcycles are largely manufactured locally and hence their allowance remained unchanged at Tk 1.4 lakh.

The government allocated Tk 6,551 crore this fiscal year for vehicle purchases.

Last fiscal year, Tk 8,880 crore was allocated for this end but was later

reduced to Tk 4,718 crore as part of the government's austerity measures.

On July 3, 2022, all government, semi-government and autonomous institutions were barred from purchasing vehicles, including ships and aircraft.

Although the order is still valid, vehicles older than 10 years can be replaced with prior permission from the finance ministry.

The increase in allowance is consistent with the existing market prices of the vehicle, said Md Shafiqul Islam, head of operations at HNS Automobiles.

No handshake, no problem for Svitolina

AFP, Washington

Ukraine's Elina Svitolina grabbed a second straight victory over Victoria Azarenka of Belarus at the WTA Tour DC Open in Washington on Monday, weeks after the duo's Wimbledon clash was marred by a handshake controversy. Azarenka was booed off court at Wimbledon earlier this month after her defeat to Svitolina, with fans apparently perceiving she had snubbed her Ukrainian opponent by not advancing to the net for a handshake. In fact, Svitolina did not offer a handshake – something she has declined to do with players from Russia and Belarus ever since the invasion of her homeland. Belarus is a key military ally of Moscow. On Monday, tournament organizers in Washington aimed to pre-empt any possible repeat of the controversy by informing fans before the match there would be no handshakes. "At the conclusion of the match there will be no handshake between the players," a message on an arena screen said beforehand. With that issue settled, it was left to the two rivals to serve up a hard-fought if error-strewn battle that saw no fewer than 17 breaks of serve before Svitolina finally prevailed 7-6 (7/2), 6-4. Svitolina clinched victory by breaking Azarenka's serve in the 10th game of the second set. A wild Azarenka backhand presented Svitolina with a match point which she duly converted on the first attempt after bludgeoning a forehand winner into the corner. Azarenka saluted Svitolina's victory with a fleeting thumbs up before heading off the court.

Cricket won as clashing ideologies scripted an Ashes epic

ASRAR CHOWDHURY

From the first ball, with Zak Crawley striking a boundary off Pat Cummins, till the last ball on July 31 when Stuart Broad took the wicket of Alex Carey, the cricket world experienced 45 days of edge-of-the-seat cinematic action that could not have been scripted by mortals. The 2023 Ashes has been like no other Test series in living memory. It pitted two styles of cricket against each other: England's fearless Bazball versus a far more orthodox, coupled with characteristic resilience of Australia.

"It's been an incredible six weeks... I think both sides have stayed true to their styles and that's what makes a great heavyweight fight."

England coach **Brendon McCullum.**

The heavens, like all good scripts, had to intervene with ever-pulsating drama. Eventually, over the set of matches all worthy of five-star reviews, a 2-2 appeared a fair result even though it could have gone either way. The Aussies geared up to the Ashes with the fire in their belly, having defeated India in the WTC Final. The next target for Cummins' side was to be the first Australian side to win an Ashes in England since 2001. England also targeted to win the Ashes with Bazball, a style that has seemingly taken draws out of the equation in Tests. This has made Tests interesting at a time when the red-ball format has been under



constant threat from the sport's shortest format, aided by lucrative franchise leagues. In the series opener, Stokes' surprise declaration at the end of day one to get an early wicket didn't work. England's sloppy fielding was worse than that declaration. Dropped catches and missed stumpings gave a champion side in Australia the chance to breathe. And with their historical resilience, Cummins and Lyon pulled off an improbable victory at Edgbaston. The following Test at Lord's was played off the field as well. The 'spirit of the game' was challenged by Carey's stumping of Bairstow. And then, Stokes went on a rampage to emulate Headingley, 2019. The crowd joined in as did the members of the Long Room at Lord's. On-field controversy even induced an exchange of words between the Prime Ministers of the participants. In the end, Australia had a 2-0 cushion, but at the cost of losing their talismanic spinner, Nathan Lyon, for the rest of the series. Backs against the wall, England had to tweak Bazball to get results. With their Two Ws in Woakes and Wood, England

were unstoppable from then on and emerged victorious at Headingley. Old Trafford was where England could have levelled the series, but then the heavens had a different say. Rain has always been a 'player' in an English summer. England had the upper hand in Manchester, but the Test being washed out meant Australia had retained the Ashes. However, the two teams went to the final Test at The Oval with plenty at stake. The Oval had all the elements of theatre. Stuart Broad touched the stumps and got a wicket, the next ball two times. England had luck in a ball change. Rain breaks helped England this time. Australia uncharacteristically collapsed. Broad – who surprisingly announced his retirement on the third evening – scripted a fairytale farewell. His last bat was a six, and his last ball won an Ashes Test and levelled the series. Moeen Ali, too, had called it quits once the series drew its curtain with a fitting climactic end. Overall, it was hard to deem one superior than the other. If England won a session, Australia crawled back in the next or within the same session. Each result was close. Australia won two Tests by 2 wickets and 43 runs. England won two Tests by 3 wickets and 49 runs. The difference, however, was in the attitude. England's new-school Bazball to score runs quickly and forcefully and get twenty wickets was challenged by Australia's old-school resilience of patience, grit, and biding time. In the end, Test cricket won. The red-ball game brought new-school and old-school generations together. The young of today are bound to remember the latest Ashes edition for a long time.

England, Denmark book last-16 spot

AGENCIES

European champions England swept past shell-shocked China 6-1 yesterday and into a Women's World Cup last-16 clash with Nigeria. It equalled England's biggest-ever World Cup victory and booked them top spot in Group D, while China's tournament ended at the group stage for the first time and in humbling fashion. "Again, another day of what dreams are made of," said England forward Lauren James who struck two on the night at the Hindmarsh Stadium in Australia. Elsewhere, Denmark – playing at their first World Cup since 2007 – beat Haiti 2-0 in the other group game to finish second and line up a knockout-round meeting with co-hosts Australia. Along with former champions Japan – one of Bangladesh's oppositions in upcoming Asian Games in China – England are the only team to win all three group games so far, reaffirming their status as among the favourites to win the World Cup.



The Netherlands produced a statement victory yesterday with a 7-0 crushing of Vietnam – one of Bangladesh's opponents in upcoming Asian Games in China. The Dutch registered the biggest margin of victory of the ongoing Women's World Cup to top Group E ahead of defending champions USA, who survived a scare from Portugal following a goalless draw yesterday.

PHOTO: REUTERS

New challenge for Titu

SPORTS REPORTER

Experienced coach Saiful Bari Titu said he wants to continue the work done by Golam Rabbani Choton and Paul Smalley while trying to improve on certain areas after taking over as the interim coach of the Bangladesh women's football team. The former national team footballer, who has coached men's senior and age-group teams previously amidst his club coaching stints, has been entrusted with leading the women's team in September's Asian Games. Bangladesh will have Japan and Vietnam – both currently playing in Women's World Cup – in the group alongside South Asian rivals Nepal. He will also be preparing the women's under-17 team, which will be playing in September's Women's U-17 Asian Cup Qualifiers, Round - 2 against Australia, Vietnam and Philippines. While there is still uncertainty over Titu's presence at the Asian Games as his accreditation is yet to be approved by the games organising committee, the veteran coach is keen on preparing the team for the event, which he feels will be a great learning experience for the side. "We will be facing two big teams including Japan in the Asian Games. So I would try to make them understand



PHOTO: STAR

that it's a big learning ground for them and testing ourselves because we only get to play high-level teams like these during the Asian Games or the World Cup Qualifiers," Titu told The Daily Star over the phone after conducting his first training sessions with the two teams at the Sheikh Jamal Dhanmondi Club ground yesterday. Ranked 11th in the world, former

World Cup winners Japan have already progressed through the group stages of this year's showpiece event while Vietnam, ranked 32nd, are making their debut appearance in the 32-team event. Bangladesh, ranked 140th, will be making their debut Asian Games appearance against these two powerhouses alongside Nepal, ranked 101st in the world.

Titu said he is analysing the World Cup matches and gathering information from his predecessors regarding his own team. "I'm trying to gather information regarding the process that Smalley and Choton followed for the women's team. I have assistant coaches who will help me here," Titu said. "I'm also following Women's World Cup and analysing the matches. Since we will be playing against two of those teams, I will try to give my inputs in that regard." The senior team featured 18 players in first day's training, with skipper Sabina Khatun and defender Anai Mogini still on vacation while midfielder Sanjida Akter is suffering from fever. Titu, who left his job with top-tier side Chittagong Abahani in the middle of last season, said he is glad to have this opportunity to guide the women's team. "The principles of coaching are the same for both men and women," the 50-year-old observed. "In a sense, this is challenging since women's team is always in the limelight due to their success." "There is already a training structure in place for women's team. Since that structure is doing well, I'm not keen on bringing any change to that. I will work on the areas that need a bit more improvement," Titu concluded.

Captaincy issue still at large?

SPORTS REPORTER

While the national team players are undergoing a few medical tests to assess their conditions ahead of the Asia Cup camp, the meeting between Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) president Nazmul Hassan and the three national team selectors at the BCB president's office became a focal point for media at Mirpur's Sher-e-Bangla National Cricket Stadium yesterday. It appears that with the Asia Cup just around the corner, the BCB president was keen to get up from the current limbo that had been set since the onset of Tamim's retirement saga. Tamim returned to the country on Monday following his medical treatment in England. The matter of Tamim's return to the team, however, still remains very much at large. Following his return, it was learned that the left-hander would have little time to assess during the camp on whether the pain reappears again. While talking to The Daily Star, the BCB president Nazmul informed that they needed Tamim's opinion regarding his own return before anything else. "We have to know what he [Tamim] thinks regarding the Asia Cup and whether he will play. If he plays, we will definitely ask for his opinion. Even if he communicates that he won't be able to play, we have to think of alternatives and also ask for his opinion. We are hoping he will sit with us in the next one or two days," the BCB president said yesterday. "We need to know details of what doctor has prescribed. We need to know when he can join practice or what rehab plans from doctors are and when he can play with full strength. Maybe we can think about upcoming steps in one or two days." Coach Chandika Hathurusingha is set to return on August 8 before Asia Cup squad is finalised. Nazmul mentioned that captaincy is not an issue as the vice-captain, in this case Liton, would take over responsibility. While BCB president suggested captaincy is not an issue, it was learned that both Liton and all-rounder Shakib Al Hasan have an aversion to taking on the role until the current situation finds clarity.



'It was written in the stars'

AGENCIES

England Test captain Ben Stokes said it was "written in the stars" after retiring paceman Stuart Broad took the last two wickets as England won the fifth and final Ashes Test against Australia on Monday. "I have played with Broady for a long, long time," England captain Stokes told Sky Sports. "He has been an unbelievable performer for England and to watch him come in and bowl the way he did – it was written in the stars." "It was absolutely wonderful," Broad told Sky Sports at the close. "The crowd were unbelievable. It was so loud and we just jumped on the back of that. To contribute to the team with two wickets is very special. When you make that decision, you wonder what your last ball will be so to take a wicket to win an Ashes Test match is pretty cool."

REGISTRATION

7th convocation of Eastern University will be held on **19 September 2023**. Students who completed all requirements of graduation from **Fall 2019 to Spring 2023**, are eligible for the Convocation.

Last Date of Registration: **30 August**.

Registration for Spring 2023 students begins on **16 August**.

Venue: **Noboratri, International Convention City Bashundhara (ICCB)**
Kuril Bishwa Road, Next to 300 ft, Purbachal Express Highway, Dhaka

For online registration and details, please visit **www.easternuni.edu.bd**

For further information, please contact the Registrar's office.
Room 207, Road 6, Block B, Ashulia Model Town Savar, Dhaka.
E-mail: ro@easternuni.edu.bd

Registration helpline:
01819701501, 01751141129, 09602666651 Ext. 209

Registrar



Cardiac stents to be more affordable

DGDA decides up to 43pc cut in base prices; CAB urges govt to reduce the tax

MOUDUD AHMMED SUJAN

The DGDA has decided to reduce the base price of all kinds of stents by up to 43 percent, effective from October 15, much to the relief of cardiac patients in need of stenting.

They will now be able to save up to Tk 40,600 per stent (under the current exchange rate).

Consumer rights organisations have praised this decision by the Directorate General of Drug Administration (DGDA).

They, however, said the price could be even lower if the government reduced the tax on cardiac stents.

The decision was made at a DGDA meeting with representatives of cardiac stent manufacturers and a technical committee on stent price fixation at the directorate yesterday.

Speaking to The Daily Star after the meeting, Maj Gen Mohammad Yousuf, director general of the DGDA, said, “These price adjustments were made to make this life-saving medical equipment more accessible to patients in need of cardiac care. After a series of discussions over the past several months, we have been able to do it.”

Representatives from Medtronic, USA, agreed at the meeting to reduce the base price of the three kinds of stents manufactured by them.

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PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

People wait at the Jurain overpass ramp on the Dhaka-Mawa expressway yesterday to catch a bus. Although picking up and dropping off passengers at overpass and flyover ramps are forbidden, buses hardly ever follow the rule, which creates jams and raises accident risks.

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MURDER OF KERANIGANJ YOUTH

Raising voice against crime cost him his life

Says Rab after arresting 7 suspects

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A cloth trader's firm stance against local criminals and drug dealing in Keraniganj had cost him his life, Rab said yesterday.

Saiful Islam was beaten to death late Sunday night by a gang of 10 to 12 men on Khejurbagh School Road in Dhaka's Dakkhin Keraniganj, Khandaker Al Moin, director of Rab's legal and media wing, told a briefing yesterday.

One of the suspects, Rajan Hossain, is a local criminal who was arrested in late June. He walked out of jail recently, Moin added.

Rajan thought that he was arrested because of information provided to law enforcers by Saiful, he said.

Saiful was returning home from his shop around 11:30pm when Rajan and the other suspects ambushed him and beat him up with cricket bats, sticks, and iron rods.

As the victim fell to the ground, Rajan gouged out the victim's eyes.

Locals rushed to the spot hearing Saiful's screams for help and the suspects fled.

People of the area then took him to a hospital where doctors pronounced him dead.

Rab arrested Rajan and six suspects in the capital's Shahbagh area on Monday.

“The arrestees admitted their involvement in the murder,” Moin said.

SEE PAGE 10 COL 1

Dengue patients keep pouring into DMCH

Saline crisis makes matter worse in Chattogram city

HELEMUL ALAM and ARUN BIKASH DEY

After 19-year-old Mohammad Masud was diagnosed with dengue a few days ago, he returned to his Pirojpur home to stay with his parents.

When his health deteriorated, he had to be taken back to Dhaka and get admitted to DMCH as the local and district-level hospitals were unable to provide him with the necessary treatment.

“We couldn't continue his treatment at the district-level hospitals for long. He has now been admitted to Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH),” said Masud's father, Abdur Razzak Hawladar.

Masud contracted dengue at his Rayerbag residence in the capital.

Meanwhile, 15-year-old Siyam Khan, a resident of Matuail, has been undergoing treatment at DMCH since Saturday.

His father, Iqbal Hossain, said many locals had already contracted dengue

and that the anti-mosquito drive in the area was insufficient.

Like them, many dengue patients are pouring into DMCH every day from in and out of the capital.

A doctor at the DMCH's medicine ward, wishing anonymity, said some 200 patients were being admitted to the two medicine wards every day, 70 percent of whom were dengue patients.

“We are currently only admitting patients in critical condition. Those who are in relatively better shape are being discharged after primary treatment.”

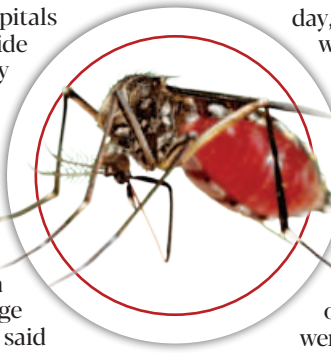
Since the beginning of the outbreak, there were 2,590 dengue patients admitted to the DMCH, with 384 currently receiving treatment

there.

10 MORE DIE

Ten more dengue deaths were reported in 24 hours till yesterday morning, raising the number of fatalities from the mosquito-borne disease in the country to 261 this year.

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Tight security ahead of PM's Rangpur rally

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

Rangpur has heightened security measures to host Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, who would be calling in today after four and a half years to grace the Awami League's divisional grand rally ahead of the 12th general election.

A large number of law enforcement officials, including police and Rab members, have been deployed and 1,000 CC cameras have been installed all over the city as part of the security measures.

The entry and exit points of Rangpur city have also been put on restriction. Several roads leading to Rangpur Zilla School, where the rally would be held at 3 pm today, have been made one way.

The law enforcement members have selected 21 points across Rangpur city to accommodate the incoming vehicles from different districts, said Maruf Hossain deputy

SEE PAGE 10 COL 2

CLIMATE CRISIS

Giant space ‘umbrella’ can protect Earth

INDEPENDENT.CO.UK



Scientists have theorised a new approach involving a giant space “umbrella” to use as a solar shield to protect the Earth from excess sunlight and thus help reduce its impact on global heating.

István Szapudi, an astronomer at the University of Hawai'i

Institute for Astronomy, said a

solar shield tethered to a captured asteroid as a counterweight can be developed into a workable design to mitigate the climate crisis within decades.

With the Earth rapidly warming, scientists across the world are developing a number of new ways to reduce the effects of climate change.

One of the approaches previously proposed to reduce global temperature is to shade the Earth from a fraction of the Sun's light using a solar “umbrella”.

However, the large amount of weight needed to make such a shield massive enough to balance gravitational forces and prevent solar radiation pressure from blowing it away makes even the lightest materials prohibitively expensive.

COMMUNAL VIOLENCE

Five dead in clashes near India's capital

AGENCIES

At least five people, including two police personnel, were killed in communal clashes that erupted on Monday around 50km south of the Indian capital New Delhi, police officials told Reuters yesterday.

The violence erupted after a religious procession passed through Nuh region, in Haryana state, the officials said. By evening, the violence had spilled over into neighbouring Gurugram, where a religious centre was torched, killing a person and injuring another.

Officials from the local administration in Nuh said they were investigating the cause of the standoff. Local government officials from Nuh and Gurugram met with representatives of the local communities yesterday to appeal for calm.

“The procession was

SEE PAGE 10 COL 4



Travellers crossing Kalurghat bridge in Chattogram on foot as the authorities closed the bridge for vehicular movement for renovation yesterday. It was done before opening ferry service as an alternative to cross the Karnaphuli. The bridge is being refurbished as part of the construction work of rail line between Dhaka and Cox's Bazar.

PHOTO: RAJIB RAIHAN

They've been framed

Say parents of Buet students arrested in Sylhet

DU CORRESPONDENT

Guardians of some Buet students who were arrested on Monday in Sunamganj on charges of “conspiring” against the government yesterday said their sons are innocents.

On Sunday, Tahirpur police intercepted a tourist boat near Takerhat area and detained 34 people – 31 former and current Buet students, two school students and a male domestic help – when they were going to Tanguar Haor of Sunamganj from Dhaka.

They were shown arrested 24 hours after their detention in a case filed under Anti-Terrorism Act 2009.

Md Rashedul Kabir, sub-inspector of Tahirpur Police Station, filed the case.

They were produced before a Sunamganj Judicial Magistrate court yesterday and the court sent them to jail. Of them, two were sent to a juvenile prison as they were minors.

Also yesterday, at least 10 guardians of the students held a press conference in front of the university's Shaheed Minar, saying they have been framed in a baseless case.

They said the students are not involved with any anti-state activities, nor do they have any political affiliation.

“We do not believe the claim police brought against them,” said Ali Ahsan Junayed, brother of Ali Ammar Moaz, one of the Buet students.

Guardians also raised questions as to why the students were shown arrested 24 hours after their detention.

Police say all of them are leaders and activists of Bangladesh Islami Chhatra Shibir.

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