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RAILWAY E-TICKETING 17yrs gone, only 18pc stations covered

Finance ministry makes fresh push for cashless ticket service



TUHIN SHUBHRA ADHIKARY

The online ticketing system of Bangladesh Railway covers only 85 of its 483 stations, forcing travellers to buy tickets from the counters at the stations or from scalpers at significantly higher prices.

Even though Bangladesh Railway launched the online ticketing system way back in 2007, only the tickets for the 106 intercity trains are sold online.

Tickets for more than 100 mail, commuter, and local trains, and even trains to India are not available online. The Indian Railway sells all train tickets and platform tickets online.

Tickets for more than 100 mail, commuter, and local trains, and even trains to India are not available online. The Indian Railway sells all train tickets and platform tickets online, a BR official said.

"We lack vision and planning," the official said, wishing anonymity.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 5



Hawkers and parked three-wheelers occupy significant space of the Jatrabari intersection yesterday. Such mindless occupation of the road all too often creates traffic jams at one of the key entrances to the capital. The photo was taken from the Mayor Hanif Flyover.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

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CYBER SECURITY ACT Most suggestions go unheeded Cabinet okays final draft

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Cabinet yesterday approved the final draft of the Cyber Security Act (CSA), which is to replace the Digital Security Act.

However, the approved bill is a spitting image of the very law it means to improve on.

Other than minor changes, the newly approved draft of the CSA remains the

same as the one first presented to the Cabinet earlier this month.

Briefing reporters after the meeting, Cabinet Secretary Md Mahbub Hossain said, "In the draft law, the offences under four sections are non-bailable, while those under the other sections are bailable."

The four are sections 17, 19, 27 and 33, he said, adding that these sections

SEE PAGE 7 COL 1

'JUDICIAL HARASSMENT OF YUNUS' 104 Nobel laureates, 79 global figures voice concern

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A total of 104 Nobel Laureates and 79 other global figures in an open letter to Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday expressed concern about the safety and freedom of Nobel Laureate Prof Muhammad Yunus.

"We write to you as Nobel Prize laureates, elected officials, and business and civil society leaders, and as friends of Bangladesh. We admire how your nation

18 NEW CASES FILED—PAGE 12



SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

**BRACE FOR THE ASIAN BATTLE**

Don't forget to collect the four-page special pull-out, free with today's newspaper, featuring analysis, interviews, fixtures, statistics, and a lot more ahead of the continental cricket battle.

৭ কোটি মানুষের হাতে বিকাশ সাথে বিকাশ

বাংলাদেশের ৭ কোটি মানুষ
এখন যুক্ত আছে এক অপরের
সাথে এগিয়ে যাচ্ছে একসাথে,
প্রতিদিন, প্রতিমুহূর্তে কারণ, সবার হাতে আছে
বিকাশ, সাথে আছে বিকাশ। আর
সমগ্র বাংলাদেশ যখন বিকাশ করে, তখন
আমাদের বিকাশ ঠেকায় কে!

ডিভিড মের্কেট
QR কোড কঠন

বিকাশ

CU engineer assaulted by BCL leader

Univ staffers sever utilities lines on campus

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

A Chhatra League leader assaulted the chief engineer and harassed the security officer of Chittagong University yesterday.

Protesting the incident, the engineering department cut off the water, gas, and electricity lines campus wide for several hours and staged a protest in front of the administration building, demanding the immediate arrest of the BCL leader.

They accuse Raju Munsi, CU BCL's joint general secretary and a follower of CU BCL's General Secretary Iqbal Hossain Tipu, of leading the attack.

Raju is a former student of the accounting department. Though he is no longer a student, he lives in BCL-dominated Shah Jalal dormitory.

Chief Engineer (acting) Sayed Jahangir Fazal was beaten at Kata Pahar Road around 11:00am.

Security officer Sheikh Abdur Razzak was also harassed by Raju

A few minutes later, security officer Sheikh Abdur Razzak was harassed by Raju, they alleged.

Following the incident, the employees of the engineering department gathered in front of CU VC's office and demanded immediate arrest of the attackers.

Chief Engineer (acting) Sayed Jahangir Fazal told the university correspondent that he went to Kata Pahar Road on official duty.

Suddenly, BCL leader Raju Munsi appeared and started scolding him. At one point, the BCL men started punching him, he said.

Campus sources said Raju Munsi stopped the construction work of the second Fine Art Faculty building on campus demanding toll.

In the evening, the demonstrating staffers withdrew their programme and restored the utility connections following assurances of justice from the university administration.

Proctor Nurul Azim Shikhdar said the incident would be investigated and a case would be lodged in this connection.

Contacted, CU BCL unit general secretary Tipu told The Daily Star, "I'm not sure what happened. We heard the allegations. We will look into the matter."

104 Nobel laureates, 79 global figures

FROM PAGE 1

has made laudable progress since its independence in 1971," reads the letter.

"However, we are deeply concerned by the threats to democracy and human rights that we have observed in Bangladesh recently... One of the threats to human rights that concerns us in the present context is the case of Nobel Peace Prize laureate Prof Muhammad Yunus. We are alarmed that he has recently been targeted by what we believe to be continuous judicial harassment," it says.

"We respectfully ask that you immediately suspend the current judicial proceedings against Prof Yunus, followed by a review of the charges by a panel of impartial judges drawn from within your nation with some role for internationally recognised legal experts. We are confident that any thorough review of the anti-corruption and labour law cases against him will result in his acquittal."

Eighth Secretary-General of the United Nations Ban Ki-moon, former US Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton, Virgin Group Founder Sir Richard Branson, and former presidents, prime ministers and ministers and business leaders are among the signatories.

The letter, published on the website of US based Cision PR Newswire, attempts to build upon an earlier appeal to PM Hasina by 40 global leaders in March.

The new letter reads, "As you know, Prof Yunus' work, which has been inspirational to all of us, focuses on how social business can be a force for international progress resulting in zero poverty, zero unemployment, and zero net carbon emissions. He is a leading example of how Bangladesh and Bangladeshis have contributed to global progress in recent decades. We sincerely wish that he be able to continue his path-breaking work free of persecution or



Rescuers work at the site of vegetable oil factory destroyed by Russian missile strike, amid Russia's attack on Ukraine, in Poltava region, Ukraine yesterday.

PHOTO: REUTERS

Ukraine recaptures key village in south

Eyes breakthrough in grinding offensive against Russian positions; 4 killed in Russian attacks in Ukraine

AFP, Kyiv

Ukraine announced yesterday it had recaptured a village on the southern frontline, where its forces are hoping for a breakthrough in their grinding offensive against entrenched Russian positions.

Kyiv launched its pushback in June after stockpiling Western-supplied weapons, building up assault battalions and attacking Russian positions.

But officials in Kyiv have acknowledged that progress has been slow and Moscow says Ukrainian forces are running out of resources.

"Robotyne has been liberated. Our forces are advancing southeast of Robotyne and south of Mala Tokmachka," Deputy Defence Minister Ganna Malyar said on television.

Both settlements are in the southern region of Zaporizhzhia, one of four that the Kremlin claimed to have annexed last year despite not having military control over any of them.

Ukraine's limited advances on the southern front have spurred a political debate in Western capitals over political and military support for Kyiv.

Compared to previous offensives in the Kherson and Kharkiv regions, Ukrainian forces are crashing into Russian defensive lines of trenches and minefields that are kilometres deep.

But experts say that the capture of Robotyne is evidence Ukrainian forces can puncture Russian lines as they move towards the Black Sea.

Experts say that capture of Robotyne is evidence Ukrainian force can puncture Russian lines.

Meanwhile, three people were killed in an overnight Russian missile strike on Ukraine, and a fourth was killed in shelling yesterday morning, Ukrainian officials said.

Interior Minister Ihor Klymenko said the three people killed overnight were workers at an industrial facility that was hit in the central Poltava region. Five others were wounded and another person was unaccounted for, he said.

Presidential chief of staff Andriy Yermak described the facility as a vegetable oil

factory in the Myrhorod district of Poltava region, and posted photos showing the plant in flames. Klymenko said the fire had later been extinguished.

"The people were working the night shift," Yermak said on the Telegram messaging app.

Oleksandr Prokudin, governor of the Kherson region, said a 63-year-old woman had been killed in shelling of the village of Sadove at around 10:40 am yesterday.

The Ukrainian military said Russia had launched four missiles from the Black Sea overnight, two of which were shot down.

The military also said the Kryvyi Rih region in central Ukraine had been struck in a missile attack. Local authorities said several private houses had been damaged, but reported no casualties.

Russia, which sent tens of thousands of troops into Ukraine 18 months ago, did not immediately comment on the reports.

Turkish President Tayyip Erdogan will visit Russia soon to discuss the collapsed United Nations deal that had allowed Black Sea exports of Ukrainian grain, a spokesperson for Turkey's ruling AK Party said yesterday.

for Citizen Empowerment and Transformation, an organisation that empowers citizen action, in a press release said, the Nobel laureates and the global figures wrote the open letter to Hasina responding to a mid-August review from an international law firm.

In its review, the law firm said, "Professor Yunus is facing six months in prison for a crime that he not only did not commit, but that legally does not exist... Events are moving quickly in Bangladesh driven by a forthcoming election and a presumed desire to imprison Prof Yunus prior to that election.... Not only are the allegations entirely without merit, but the legal process is wrong in law.... A miscarriage of justice is happening in Bangladesh and the state must not be allowed to carry it to its conclusion."

Following are the Nobel Laureates who are the signatories of the letter:

PEACE

Barack H. Obama, 2009; José Ramos-Horta, 1996; Mairead Corrigan Maguire, 1976; Shirin Ebadi, 2003; Leymah Roberta Gbowee, 2011; Albert Arnold Gore Jr., 2007; Tawakkol Karman, 2011; Denis Mukwege, 2018; Nadia Murad, 2018; Maria Ressa, 2021; Oscar Arias Sanchez, 1987; Juan Manuel Santos, 2016; Rigoberta Menchu Tum, 1992; and Jody Williams, 1997.

CHEMISTRY

Peter Agre, 2003; Thomas R. Cech, 1989; Martin Chalfie, 2008; Emmanuelle Charpentier, 2020; Aaron Ciechanover, 2004; Johann Deisenhofer, 1988; Jacques Dubochet, 2017; Joachim Frank, 2017; Walter Gilbert, 1980; Alan Heeger, 2000; Richard Henderson, 2017; Dudley R. Herschbach, 1986; Avram Hershko, 2004; Roald Hoffmann, 1981; Robert Huber, 1988; Martin Karplus, 2013; Brian K. Kobilka, 2012; Yuan T. Lee, 1986; Robert J. Lefkowitz, 2012; Jean-Marie Lehn, 1987; Michael Levitt, 2013; Tomas Lindahl, 2015; Paul L.

Modrich, 2015; John C. Polanyi, 1986; Jean-Pierre Sauvage, 2016; Sir John E. Walker, 1997; Arieh Warshel, 2013; and Sir Gregory P. Winter, 2018.

ECONOMICS

Oliver Hart, 2016; Finn E. Kydland, 2004; Paul R. Milgrom, 2020; Edmund Phelps, 2006; Alvin E. Roth, 2012; Vernon L. Smith, 2002; and Joseph E. Stiglitz, 2001.

LITERATURE

J. M. Coetzee, 2003; Herta Müller, 2009; Orhan Pamuk, 2006; and Wole Soyinka, 1986.

MEDICINE

Harvey J. Alter, 2020; David Baltimore, 1975; Françoise Barré-Sinoussi, 2008; J. Michael Bishop, 1989; Elizabeth H. Blackburn, 2009; William C. Campbell, 2015; Peter C. Doherty, 1996; Jeffrey Connor Hall, 2017; Leland H. Hartwell, 2001; Jules A. Hoffmann, 2011; Tasuku Honjo, 2018; H. Robert Horvitz, 2002; Sir Michael Houghton, 2020; Craig C. Mello, 2006; Edvard Moser, 2014; May-Britt Moser, 2014; Sir Paul M. Nurse, 2001; Ardem Patapoutian, 2021; Sir Peter J. Ratcliffe, 2019; Charles M. Rice, 2020; Sir Richard J. Roberts, 1993; Michael Rosbash, 2017; Gregg L. Semenza, 2019; Hamilton O. Smith, 1978; Jack W. Szostak, 2009; Harold E. Varmus, 1989; Eric F. Wieschaus, 1995; Torsten N. Wiesel, 1981; and Michael W. Young, 2017.

PHYSICS

Barry Clark Barish, 2017; Steven Chu, 1997; Andre Geim, 2010; Sheldon Glashow, 1979; David J. Gross, 2004; John L. Hall, 2005; Takaaki Kajita, 2015; Anthony J. Leggett, 2003; John C. Mather, 2006; Michel Mayor, 2019; Arthur B. McDonald, 2015; Konstantin Novoselov, 2010; Giorgio Parisi, 2021; James Peebles, 2019; Roger Penrose, 2020; William D. Phillips, 1997; H. David Politzer, 2004; Brian P. Schmidt, 2011; Horst L. Stormer, 1998; Daniel C. Tsui, 1998; Carl E. Wieman, 2001; and David J. Wineland, 2012.

E-TICKETING NATIONWIDE?

The finance ministry yesterday suggested that all stations be brought under the online ticketing system to reduce people's suffering and ensure transparency in ticket sales.

Officials of the finance division at an inter-ministerial meeting at the Rail Bhaban yesterday presented a concept paper on how online ticketing systems work globally and how the BR can adopt it, meeting

PM to brief media today on BRICS Summit

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina will hold press conferences at the Gono Bhaban today around 4:00pm.

The PM will brief the media on the outcome of her recent visit to South Africa, according to the press wing of the Prime Minister's Office.

She attended the 15th BRICS summit in Johannesburg on August 22-24 at the invitation of South African President Cyril Ramaphosa.

Hasina left Dhaka for Johannesburg on August 22 and returned Sunday.

15 JMB men charged in 2020 bomb blast case

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

A Chattogram court yesterday framed charges against 15 operatives of "Neo JMB", including an expatriate, in connection with a case filed over the bomb blast at a traffic police box in the city's Sholoshahar Gate 2 area on February 28, 2020, which left five men, including two cops, injured.

Chattogram Anti-Terrorism Tribunal judge Abdul Halim framed the charges after hearing the sides of the defence and prosecution in presence of 13 JMB men, said court sources.

The accused are Md Saifullah, 24, Md Emran, 24, Md Alaudin, 23, Mohidul Alam, 25, Md Jahir Uddin, 28, Md Moinuddin, 23, Md Rahmat Ullah, 24, Md Shahed Hossen, 24, Md Selim, 33, Abdullah Al Noman, 25, Abdul Khaiyum, 24, Kaisar Uddin, 24, Md Morshedul Alam, 25, and UAE expatriate Md Shahjahan, 28.

According to the charge sheet, Noman was the military commander of the group.

A juvenile accused in the case would be tried in the juvenile court, said the court sources.

Advocate Rubel Pal, public prosecutor (PP) of the tribunal, said "The court framed charges implicating the 15 JMB men. Among the 15 accused, 13 were present. Two accused are out on bail in the case from High Court."

Biker killed in collision with microbus

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Thakurgaon

A biker was killed after his vehicle collided head-on with a microbus on the Thakurgaon-Panchagarh highway in Panchagarh's Boda upazila Sunday night.

The deceased, Farhan Labib, 22, was the son of Mokhlesur Rahman of Islambag village in the Panchagarh municipality area.

Boda Highway Police Station Officer-in-Charge Shariful Islam said Farhan was headed towards Panchagarh town from Boda upazila.

His vehicle collided with an oncoming microbus at Dhonipara village as it changed lanes erratically to enter a filling station, leaving the biker severely injured.

He died from his injuries on the way to Rangpur Medical College Hospital on the same night after he was transferred from Panchagarh Sadar Hospital.

Police seized the microbus, but its driver managed to escape.

participants said.

People buying tickets online can only travel to and from 41 stations in BR's east zone and 44 in west zone, according to the presentation given by Muhammad Anisur Rahman, a deputy secretary of the finance division.

The presentation, which this correspondent obtained a copy of, reads that Agrani Bank collects the money from stations selling tickets manually one to three days later. But how many tickets were sold and how much money was received are not be verified, it said.

It is not possible to get real-time information on revenue as the money is being collected online and in cash.

It said BR got 61.17 percent of its earnings from online ticket sales in May and June this year.

Citing online ticketing systems of the Netherlands, India, and the USA, it suggested bringing all stations under e-ticketing system.

Deputy Secretary Anisur said with an online ticketing system, people will be able to buy tickets for all trains from the comfort of their homes.

It would give railway high-ups real-time information on the number of tickets sold, and ensure accountability and transparency and there would be no cash transactions.

When contacted, Anisur, on behalf of his division, said they placed the concept paper before the railway authorities. "It will depend on them [rail authorities] whether they will take initiatives in this regard," he told The Daily Star yesterday.

Responding to a question, he said it is mandatory that government revenue is deposited within 24 hours of income, but it is not possible without the online ticketing system.

BR Director General Quamul Ahsan yesterday told this paper that online ticketing facilities are available for stations where intercity trains usually stop. "We will bring all important stations under the online ticketing system gradually."

Asked about the finance division's suggestion, "We will go for cent percent online ticketing system in phases."

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Dhaka-Delhi hold defence dialogue

STAR REPORT

Bangladesh and India yesterday held the 5th Annual Defence Dialogue in Dhaka.

Lt Gen Waker Uz Zaman, principal staff officer, Armed Forces Division, co-chaired the meeting with his Indian counterpart Giridhar Aramane, Indian defence secretary, who is on a two day visit to Bangladesh.

"During the meeting, the ongoing defence cooperation activities between the two countries were reviewed and both sides expressed satisfaction at the increasing defence cooperation engagements," the Indian Defence Ministry said in a statement.

The talks covered the existing bilateral exercises and both sides agreed to increase the complexity of these exercises, it added.

Both sides also highlighted the significance in chartering the future course of the relations between the two nations' armed forces.

Chief justice calls on president

UNB, Dhaka

Chief Justice Hasan Foez Siddique yesterday paid a courtesy call on President Mohammed Shahabuddin at Bangabhaban.

President's press secretary Joynal Abedin briefed the reporters after the meeting.

During the meeting, the chief justice briefed the president on the overall activities of the Supreme Court.

President Shahabuddin expressed satisfaction with the Supreme Court's proceedings and expressed hope that the Judiciary will continue its relentless efforts to ensure that the people get justice within a short period of time.

PRAYER TIMING
AUGUST 29
Fazr Zohr Asr Magrib Esha
AZAN 4:30 12:45 4:45 6:33 8:00
JAMAT 5:05 1:15 5:00 6:36 8:30
SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION



Robert Maersk Uggla, chief executive officer of Maersk Group, paid a courtesy call on Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at her office in Dhaka yesterday.

PHOTO: PID

MRI TESTS IN DMCH Patients suffer as services on hold for 8 months

MD ABBAS

Akhter Hossain, a patient at Dhaka Medical College Hospital's neurology department, had to seek Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) test services from a private facility for Tk 10,500.

"A MRI test at DMCH would cost Tk 3,000-3,500, but we had to pay almost three times the price. We also had to hire an ambulance to transport my father which added to the expenses. While we are already struggling to make ends meet, such expenses only add to our burdens," said Akhter's elder son Sattar Bhuiyan.

MRI services at DMCH has been on hold for the past eight months, leading to the sufferings of patients, especially from lower- and middle-income groups.

The services were suspended as its two MRI machines, purchased in 2016 with five-year warranties, went out of order -- one in 2020, another in February, this year.

Hundreds from different districts come to the capital every day to receive treatment at this top-rated hospital. However, the

suspension of MRI services is adding to their distress as they have to go to other facilities which charge them more, according to several hospital officials.

Malika Akhter, who came to the hospital from Barishal with her ailing brother Mahmudul Hasan with hopes of affordable treatment, shared an experience similar to Akhter's.

I took my brother to Ibn Sina which cost around Tk 9,500. The costs would have been much less if MRI services were available at DMCH.

MALIKA AKHTER
A patient's sister

"I managed to take my brother to Ibn Sina Diagnostic Centre in Lalbagh with the help of 5-6 people. The overall cost was around Tk 9,500. The costs and hassle would have been much less if the facilities were available at the hospital," said Malika.

Like Mahmudul and Akhter, hundreds of patients have to go

outside the hospital every day for MRI tests, and they have to pay three times more to get the MRI outside.

According to the hospital's director Brig Gen Md Nazmul Haque, the service remains on hold as the company responsible for repairing the machines is unwilling to do so, following the expiration of warranties.

"The government prepared a gazette for repairing the machines, but the supplier company does not want to comply with the gazette, as it is not in accordance with the contract terms," said the director.

Also, the gazette was prepared after the machines were supplied. Due to this discrepancy, the supplier company are unwilling to repair them as of now, he added.

He said that he met with the health minister at least five times and wrote several letters requesting that the machines be repaired.

"I also submitted a proposal to the ministry, asking permission to repair the machines on our own, but to no avail. We are working to resume the services as soon as possible," Nazmul said.

Two missing children found dead in Shitalakkhya

OUR CORRESPONDENT,
Narayanganj

Two children who went missing in the Shitalakkhya river in Narayanganj on Sunday were found dead yesterday.

Their bodies were recovered from the Mymensingh Patti area next to Bandar Kheyaghat around 7:00am, said river police.

The deceased are Md Ismail, 8, son of Abul Alauddin Mia, and Billal Hossain, 7, son of Abul Mia. They were residents of Wilson Road in Bandar upazila.

The children drowned when they went for a bath in the river Sunday morning, said river police.

Locals informed police when a child's body was found floating in the river. Later, fire service divers recovered both bodies.

The bodies were handed over to their families without autopsy, Shahidul added.

TORTURE IN IRAQ PBI arrests 8 cohorts of abductors

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Moslem Molla, 30, of Dhaka's Nawabganj area, went to Iraq for work in 2016, hoping to make himself a fortune. While living there, he met another Bangladeshi called Selim Mia in 2021. Selim enticed Moslem with dreams of a better job, but then handed him over to a gang of kidnappers.

The gang locked Moslem in a room, snatched away US\$ 2,000 and an iPhone from him. They then tortured him, captured videos of the torture and sent it to Moslem's family, demanding Tk 7 lakh as ransom from his mother Khateja Begum.

Initially, Khateja transferred Tk 6 lakh using MFS to the family members of the kidnappers who were in Bangladesh.

However, they did not release Moslem and instead demanded Tk 3 lakh more. At that point, Khateja filed a case with Nawabganj Police Station.

While investigating the case, the Police Bureau of Investigation (PBI) arrested eight cohorts of the kidnappers from Barishal, Gazipur, Munshiganj, Narayanganj, Magura and Khulna districts, at various times between September 2021 and August 2023.

The arrestees are -- Ali Hossain, 49, Md. Shamim, 25, Shirin Sultana, 35, Mohammad Gharami, 51, Rabiu Gharami, 24, Shahida Begum, 52, Shahnaz Akhtar Lipi, 38 and Md Akbar Sardar 55.

Speaking at a press briefing at PBI Headquarters in Dhaka, Superintendent of Police, Qudrat-e-

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

DNCC now to reimport BTI from valid sources

DIPAN NANDY

The Dhaka North City Corporation plans to reimport Bacillus Thuringiensis Israensis (BTI) -- a pesticide -- to combat the dengue situation, but this time from sources mentioned in the agreement with Marshal Agrovet.

The decision came despite two tests validating the efficacy of BTI imported from China by the company.

According to DNCC sources, the tender process for reimporting the chemical will begin very soon.

Earlier, the corporation assigned two government-run organisations -- Plant Protection Wing (PPW) of Department of Agriculture Extension, and Institute of Epidemiology, Disease Control and Research -- to test the BTI imported from China.

Confirming the pesticide's effectiveness, both organisations sent their reports to DNCC on Sunday.

PPW conducted the tests at the pathology department of the capital's Sher-e-Bangla Agricultural University. The results confirmed the presence of the bacteria that kill mosquito larvae in the samples.

Meanwhile, IEDCR conducted the tests in its medical entomology division laboratory. The chemicals were tested on larvae collected from the capital's Mohakhali. During the tests, 92 percent of the larvae died after 24 hours of application in all three experiments, while the larvicide rate was 88 percent in the fourth test.

DNCC is now planning to import BTI from the US, EU countries, Singapore, India, and Malaysia, as stated in

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4



Following regular office hours, a long tailback on Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue in the capital exacerbated commuters' sufferings. The narrowing of the road near the Farmgate police box further added to the traffic menace. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

They got arms for sabotage
DB on arrested JCD leaders

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The seven arrested Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal leaders collected at least 11 firearms to carry out sabotage ahead of the national elections, the Detective Branch of Police claimed yesterday.

"We have recovered four of the firearms. We will recover the others and bring those involved under the law," DB Chief Harun Or Rashid told reporters at his office.

Harun told media that the arrested Chhatra Dal leaders contacted arms dealers through Facebook and the DB have evidence of the conversations.

They also had a plan to take control of AF Rahman Hall of Dhaka University, said the DB official.

Asked, he rejected the allegation that the arrests were politically motivated.

Harun said that they

SEE PAGE 4 COL 3

5 skeleton thieves held

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

Locals apprehended five individuals attempting a grave robbery at a cemetery in Birganj upazila of Dinajpur on Sunday. The suspects were later handed over to the police and various tools used for grave robbing were recovered from them.

The arrested individuals include Md Lalchan, 30, from Tangail Para in Sherpur district; Md Abdul Sobhan alias Safu, 28, from the same village; Md Farid alias Sheikh Farid, 24; Md Serajul Islam alias Sirajul Islam, 27, from Alinagar village in Mymensingh district and Md Delowar Hossain Babu, 25, from Ashtodhur village of Mymensingh.

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* প্রাক-প্রাথমিক: অক্টোবর (৫-৮ বছর), কিশলায় (৮-৫ বছর), মাঝেরী (৫-৬ বছর)

প্রাথম শ্রেণি: (৬-৭ বছর), দ্বিতীয় থেকে নবম: শ্রেণি অনুযায়ী বয়স

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ছায়ানন্ত সংস্থান-ভৱন, বাড়ি ৭২, সড়ক ১৫এ, ধানমন্ডি আ/এ, ঢাকা।

CAREER OPPORTUNITY

Astra (Bangladesh) Supply Chain Service Limited is looking for a suitable dynamic candidate who can fill the following position of **Digi Hub Manager**.

Job Description: Managing a full spectrum of functions including merchandising, strategic vendor management, technical product development, production planning & monitoring for the customer.

Educational Requirements: Post Graduate Diploma (PGD) in any discipline.

Experience Requirements: Candidate should have minimum 8 to 10 years of experience in the garment sector.

Salary: BDT 6,00,000 to BDT 6,50,000 (Approximate)

Compensation & other benefits: Mobile bill, Performance bonus, Weekly 2 holidays, Insurance, Yearly Salary Review, 1 Festival Bonus (Yearly), Transportation & convenience.

Interested candidates are requested to apply with complete CV within 15th September 2023, from the date of publication of this advertisement to the following address.

Astra (Bangladesh) Supply Chain Service Limited

Level-7, Update Tower, 1 Shahjal Avenue Sector No # 6, Plot / House No # 1, Uttara Model Town, Dhaka-1230, Bangladesh

Email: recruitment.bd@astrasc.com



NORTH SOUTH UNIVERSITY
Center of Excellence in Higher Education

RE-TENDER NOTICE

Re-Tender No. NSU/23-24-T-02

Cleaning and Pest Control Services

North South University is inviting sealed offers from bona fide/ reputed organisations/ business partners/ agents for Cleaning and pest Control Services at the NSU Campus.

Interested bidders may collect a schedule of tender from **Southeast Bank Ltd.** Bashundhara Branch, Dhaka-1229, from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. on all working days till **Sunday, September 24, 2023**, by paying the non-refundable amount of Taka 2,000.00 (Two Thousand) in cash for each schedule. The bidder has to bid for all works mentioned in the Tender schedule.

The bidders must submit **earnest money @ 2.5%** of the quoted price for one month in the form of a Pay Order issued from any scheduled bank drawn in favor of North South University along with their offer. The sealed offer must be submitted on **Monday, September 25, 2023, by 2.15 p.m.** at the office of the undersigned. The offers will be opened at 2:30 p.m. on the same day. Representatives of the participating bidders may remain present at the time of opening the bids. NSU authority reserves the right to accept or reject any or all the tenders without showing any reason.

Director, Internal Affairs
NORTH SOUTH UNIVERSITY
Bashundhara, Dhaka-1229
Phone: +88-02-55668200, Ext. 1204,
Fax: +88-02-55668202
www.northsouth.edu

CAREER OPPORTUNITY

NORTH SOUTH UNIVERSITY

Center of Excellence in Higher Education

North South University (NSU), the first private university in Bangladesh, seeks applications from candidates with required qualifications and experiences for the following position:

Please read the full job description carefully to see if you have the skills, knowledge and experience that NSU are looking for. Only eligible candidates will be contacted by NSU for written examination and interview.

Assistant Officer, Office of Admission : 1 (one) position

Job Description:

- Checking student applications and supporting documents.
- Collecting required documents and information from students.
- Preparing necessary documents, filling out forms, and maintaining files and records.
- Contributing to the semester-wise admissions service plan, supporting colleagues as required, and ensuring an overall effective and efficient admissions service.
- Managing admissions database and processing admissions data and information from various sources, tracking and reporting applicants' progress.
- Communicating with students (in person and over the phone or email).
- Improving workflow and coordination of each task.
- Any other tasks assigned by the NSU Authority.

Academic Qualification:

- Master's degree, preferably MBA along with B.Sc. in Computer Science with at least 2nd class/ CGPA 3 out of 4.

Experience:

- Experience with PHP, C++, Java, JavaScript, and Excel automation. Candidates should have at least 2 to 3 years of practical work experience in any large organization/educational institution.

Age: Ideally 25-30 years.

Pay Scale: Tk. 15,999 - 1,600 - 39,998 (as per NSU policy).

Other Terms and Conditions:

- Excellent verbal and written communication skills, supervisory experience and well conversant in computer applications.
- Willingness to work on holidays and after office-hours, if necessary.
- Third division/ class/ equivalent CGPA of the candidates in any educational level will not be accepted.

NSU reserves the right not to appoint anyone if suitable candidates are not found.

Any prior communication or persuasion to the position will be considered as a disqualification. Interested candidates are requested to apply through jobs.northsouth.edu by 27th September, 2023.

Department of Administration
NORTH SOUTH UNIVERSITY
Plot# 15, Block# B, Bashundhara, Dhaka - 1229
NSU Job Portal: jobs.northsouth.edu

Kazi Jahan Ara Begum's 17th death anniv today

STAR REPORT

The 17th death anniversary of Mrs Kazi Jahan Ara Begum, mother of Kazi Sazzad Zahir, presidium member of Communist Party of Bangladesh, will be observed today, said a press release.

On the occasion, a milad mehfil will be held at the Chan Community Centre at Chankherpool in Dhaka after Maghrib prayers.

Friends, relatives, and well-wishers have been requested to attend the mehfil.



PBI arrests 8 cohorts

FROM PAGE 3

Khuda said that after Moslem's abduction, the criminals used the IMO app to show the scene of Moslem's suffering to his mother. She transferred a total of Tk 6 lakh, over 26 transactions, to 12 BKash numbers as specified by the kidnappers.

"Those whose families paid money, were tortured relatively less," he said.

Moslem said that one day he managed to escape by opening the shackles while in captivity. Then he returned to Bangladesh.

The PBI official said that Shahnewaz is the ringleader of the kidnapping gang and that there are multiple cases pending against some of the accused.

Among the eight arrestees, six of them gave confessional statements under section 164, admitting their involvement in the incident.

Maersk bid under

FROM PAGE 3

vision to establish smart Bangladesh will be reflected in Chattogram sea port, according to the press secretary.

The Maersk CEO mentioned that Hennes and Mauritz (H&M), Marks and Spencer (M&S), Walmart and other big companies are interested to import more RMG products from Bangladesh.

The six JCD leaders were shown arrested with three firearms.

Later, on August 24, the DB arrested Abul Hasan Chowdhury, vice-president of JCD central committee, from the capital's Hatinpool. He was arrested with a pistol, two bullets, and three crude bombs.

BNP secretary general Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir, however, earlier said that the DB's statements are completely fabricated.

In this regard, DNCC Mayor Atiquil Islam said, "The performance of BTI in the lab tests of two government agencies is satisfactory... We are thinking about reimporting the pesticide from authentic sources."

DNCC had imported five tonnes of BTI through Marshal Agrovet Chemical Industries Ltd. However, the company was blacklisted after the corporation breached the contract by importing the chemicals from China instead of Singaporean company Best Chemical Co (S) Pte Ltd.

Following the incident, DNCC sued the company and also formed a five-member committee to probe the issue.

Chattogram Customs also filed a case on Saturday, accusing five Marshal Agrovet officials of importing BTI pesticide for DNCC by forging

conference, said, "They locked me within a room in a house. There were three other victims besides me in that room. All of them were shackled and tortured.

"Those whose families paid money, were tortured relatively less," he said.

Moslem said that one day he managed to escape by opening the shackles while in captivity. Then he returned to Bangladesh.

The PBI official said that Shahnewaz is the ringleader of the kidnapping gang and that there are multiple cases pending against some of the accused.

Among the eight arrestees, six of them gave confessional statements under section 164, admitting their involvement in the incident.

New bean variety

FROM PAGE 5

Sikribi-1 variety of beans for the first time. The yield has been very good. I can be harvested after 80-85 days. We are supporting the farmers by providing fertilisers, seeds and necessary advice.

Farmers of Dengar Ban village are selling about 600 kg of beans every day. Beans worth around Tk 20-25 lakh have been sold last month. Another Tk 35-40 lakhs of beans are likely to be sold, said Sreemangal Upazila Agriculture Officer Md Mohiuddin, adding that beans worth around Tk 80 lakh can be sold using just three hectares of land.

MD Musharraf Hussain Khan, additional director of the Department of Agriculture Extension in Sylhet, said the variety has been introduced itself as a trading service provider for online investment in foreign exchange, commodities, stocks, stock indexes, and other products and promised unusually high returns to potential investors on their investments in a short span of time.

Encouraged by the results, the agriculture department has taken the initiative to collect the seeds of this exceptional bean variety and distribute them to farmers all over the country. This will boost overall agricultural productivity and economic growth, he added.

Arrest warrant

FROM PAGE 5

Following the directive of the OC of DB police, inspector Suzon Kanti Barua investigated the case and submitted a report against the journalists on June 15. After this, the court summoned Pintu and Tuhin to appear before the court on August 27.

Sharifuzzaman Pintu said they are yet to receive any summons order from the court. "We are respectful to the court. We would have appeared before the court had we received the summon order," he said.

Case filed

FROM PAGE 5

It introduced itself as a trading service provider for online investment in foreign exchange, commodities, stocks, stock indexes, and other products and promised unusually high returns to potential investors on their investments in a short span of time.

Most of the victims are from Dhaka, Barishal, Rajshahi, Cumilla, Naogaon, Kushtia, Brahmanbaria, and Satkhira, CID said following the primary investigation.

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP)



International Labour Organization (ILO) Dhaka invites proposals from interested firm/organization for leadership training and management system support 2023-2024. The bidding documents can be downloaded from the ILO Dhaka website under **Procurement Notices** at https://www.ilo.org/dhaka/WCMS_367536/lang--en/index.htm

The deadline for submission of proposal is **Sunday, September 17, 2023, by 04:30 PM (BST time)**.

DESCO
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Dhaka Electric Supply Company Ltd. (DESCO)

House # 22B, Faruque Sarani, Nikunja # 2, Dhaka-1229, Bangladesh

Tel: +88 02 8900110-11, 8900820-23, Fax No. +88 02 8900100

E-mail: pit@desco.gov.bd Web: www.desco.gov.bd

Corrigendum-01

Due to unavoidable circumstances, the tender notice for International competitive tender for Supply, Installation, Testing and Commissioning of Station Based Fully Automatic Meter Testing Bench against Tender No.: ICT-30/2023, vide memo no. 27.24.0000.021.07.030.23.784, dated: 09/07/2023 is hereby revised as follows:

Tender Selling Date, Closing & Opening Date and Time	Last Selling
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MTFE SCAM

Case filed in Dhaka 9 named, few unnamed accused for embezzling Tk 12.74 lakh

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A man has filed a case against nine named and three to four unnamed individuals for allegedly scamming him through the cyber ponzi scheme Metaverse Foreign Exchange (MTFE).

In a case filed with New Market Police Station on Sunday under the Digital Security Act, 2018 and the Foreign Exchange Regulation Act, 1947, complainant Abul Kashem accuses them of embezzling Tk 12.74 lakh which he invested on the company's app between December last year and August 2, 2023.

He is a resident of Dhaka's Bhashantek area.

The named accused are Masud Al Islam, Md Saiful Islam Khan, Saidul Islam Bhuiyan, Moshabirul Ibad, Sirajum Munir, Tofail Ahmed, Habibur Rahman, and Rashedul Islam.

Police suspect that Masud, a Bangladeshi expatriate in Dubai, used to oversee MTFE's Asia region, said Sub-Inspector Abdur Rouf of New Market Police Station.

"We will gather more information about the accused following an investigation," he added.

The Criminal Investigation Department of police estimates that around five lakh people might have been scammed by the cyber ponzi scheme MTFE, losing several thousand crores of taka. MTFE is a 'so called' Dubai based trading company, just vanished into thin air and stopped paying investors.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 8

GAS LEAK

Man dies, wife burnt in Ctg

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A man died and his wife suffered burn injuries in an explosion caused by a gas pipe leak at a house in Chattogram early yesterday.

The deceased was identified as Abdul Khalek, 65. His wife, Anwara Begum, 60, was admitted to Chattogram Medical College Hospital.

The incident took place in Dhuppul area around 2:00 am, said CMCH police outpost In Charge Sub-Inspector Nur Alam Asheq.

Their son rushed both of them to CMCH, where Abdul Khalek died of his injuries, he added.

Sanjay Kumar Sinha, officer-in-charge of Bandar Police Station, told The Daily Star that fire service personnel visited the spot and said they found a leak in the gas pipeline.

New bean variety brings smiles to farmers in Sreemangal

MINTU DESHWARA, Moulvibazar

Traditionally, beans are cultivated during the winter. However, the SAU Bean-1 (Sikribi-1) variety, which has been developed by Sylhet Agricultural University, exhibits remarkable adaptability, allowing it to thrive even during the summer in Moulvibazar.

Now, farmers in the Dengar Ban village of Ashidron Union in the upazila are experiencing substantial benefits from cultivating this winter vegetable during the monsoon season, achieving impressive yields.

As a result of its success, the agriculture department is now eyeing to spread the Sikribi-1 seeds all over the country.

In Dengar Ban village, around 50 farmers are cultivating this variety of bean. While the Sikribi-1 variety takes some time and care to yield a good harvest, farmers may earn up to three



times the profit from cultivating this, said Masukur Rahman, Deputy Assistant Agriculture Officer of Ashidron Union.

He said the farmers who cultivated Sikribi-1 are happy with the bumper yield and good

day, more and more farmers are taking up the cultivation of this variety, he added.

Ahsan Habib, a bean grower of Dengar Ban village, said after receiving 12 seeds of the Sikribi-1 variety from the agriculture department, they cultivated it experimentally for the first time.

"We had bumper yields in the first year. So, I collected the seeds and supplied them to several interested farmers in the area for Tk 5,000."

"This year, I myself cultivated the variety in three bighas of land. Around Tk 36,000 taka has been spent on fertiliser, irrigation, pesticides, bamboo mats, and care during the cultivation phase. So far, I have sold beans worth Tk 1 lakh. I hope the total sale will hit Tk 2.5 lakh. But if the market is good, it can go even higher."

Another farmer, Akbar Ali said, "This year, I have cultivated

SEE PAGE 4 COL 6

DEFAMATION CASE

Arrest warrant issued against two journos

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A Cox's Bazar court has issued arrest warrants against two journalists for failing to appear before the court in relation to a defamation case.

Kaushik Ahmed Khandakar, senior judicial magistrate of Cox's Bazar Sadar court, issued the warrant on Sunday.

The court on July 6 had summoned Dainik Bangla's former editor (in charge) Sharifuzzaman Pintu and its reporter Arifuzzaman Tuhin to appear before it on August 27.

The two journalists were summoned by the court after Shafulullah Shafi, former correspondent for Jugantor and Boishakhi TV, filed a defamation case of Tk 100 crore against Pintu and Tuhin. The case was in relation to a report published by Dainik Bangla on January 6 titled "None of Bodhi's relatives in list of 255", where Shafi's name was mentioned.

Shafi filed the defamation cause on January 10. Taking the case into its cognisance, the court ordered the officer in charge (OC) of Cox's Bazar Detective Branch (DB) to investigate the case and submit a report.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 8

Youth beaten to death in Cumilla

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Cumilla

A youth was beaten to death on suspicion of stealing a mobile phone in Cumilla Sadar upazila on Sunday.

The deceased was identified as Mohammad Babu Alam, 20, of Annanagar in Chandina upazila.

Confirming the death, Additional Superintendent of Police (Cumilla Sadar Circle) Kamran Hossain said there were injury marks on the hands, back, head, and other parts of the body.

"We are trying to arrest the people responsible for the incident," the police official said.

Quoting locals, police said a guard named Nahid along with some other persons caught Babu and beat him arbitrarily when he was fleeing after stealing a mobile set from the labour shed of an under construction building.

When his condition deteriorated, they took him to Cumilla Medical College Hospital, where doctors declared him dead, police said.

Shafiqul, a staff of CMCH's emergency department, said a man brought the body to the hospital around 11:30 am.

"But he was leaving the hospital without giving any details. Then, I caught him and handed him over to the police camp at the hospital," he said.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 5



Election Commission Secretariat

Identification System for Enhance Access to Services (IDEA) Project (2nd Phase)
Nirbachan Commission Bhaban (8th Floor)
Agargaon, Dhaka

Invitation for Tender (Re-Tender)

1. Ministry/Division	Bangladesh Election Commission.
2. Agency	Election Commission Secretariat.
3. Procuring entity name	Project Director, Identification System for Enhance Access to Services (IDEA) Project (2nd Phase).
4. Procuring entity district	Dhaka.
5. Invitation for	NCS-3, "Office/Support Services (Data Entry Operators under Dhaka and Faridpur Region) for the Project Office Operations".
6. Invitation for tenders Ref. & date	17.14.0000.240.07.136.2023/2633, Dated: 28 August 2023.

KEY INFORMATION

7. Procurement method	Open Tender Method (OTM).
8. Budget & source of fund	GoB (Development).

PARTICULAR INFORMATION

9. Project/program code	224331200.
10. Project name	Identification System for Enhance Access to Services (IDEA) Project (2nd Phase).
11. Tender package No.	NCS-3.
12. Tender package name	Office/Support Services (Data Entry Operators under Dhaka and Faridpur Region) for the Project Office Operations.
Date	Time

13. Tender publication date	29 August 2023
14. Tender selling last date	13 September 2023
15. Tender pre-bid meeting date	07 September 2023
16. Tender closing date & time	14 September 2023
17. Tender opening date & time	14 September 2023
18. Name of address of the office	Assistant Director (Finance), Room No. 818, Nirbachan Bhaban (8th Floor), Agargaon, Dhaka-1207.
19. Selling tender documents (principal)	

No condition apply for sale, purchase or distribution of tender documents.

20. Receiving tender documents	Identification System for Enhance Access to Services (IDEA) Project (2nd Phase).
21. Opening tender documents	Election Commission Secretariat, Nirbachan Bhaban (8th Floor), Room No. 721, Agargaon, Dhaka-1207.
22. Pre-tender documents	

INFORMATION FOR PRE-TENDERER

23. Eligibility of tenderer	1. Tenderers shall have the legal capacity to enter into the contract under the applicable law. 2. Tenderers shall enroll in the relevant professional or trade organisations registered in Bangladesh. 3. Tenderers shall have to fulfill its obligation/obligations to pay taxes under the provision of laws and regulations of Bangladesh. 4. Detail information has been provided in the tender document.
24. Brief description of services	Office/Support Services (Data Entry Operators under Dhaka and Faridpur Region) for the Project Office Operations.
25. Price of tender document (BDT)	BDT. 2,500.00 (Two thousand five hundred only) non-refundable.
26. Package No.	Identification of package

NCS-3	Office/Support Services (Data Entry Operators under Dhaka and Faridpur Region) for the Project Office Operations.
	BDT. 19,00,000.00 (Nineteen lac only)

27. Name of official inviting tender	Brigadier General Abul Hasnat Mohammad Sayem.
28. Designation of official inviting tender	Project Director, IDEA Project (2nd Phase), Election Commission Secretariat, Nirbachan Bhaban (8th Floor), Agargaon, Dhaka-1207.
29. Address of inviting tender	
30. Contact details of official inviting	Phone: +880-55007494, E-mail: pd.idea2bd@gmail.com
31. The procuring entity reserves the right to reject all tenders or annul the tender proceedings.	

Brigadier General Abul Hasnat Mohammad Sayem
Project Director
IDEA Project (2nd Phase)
Election Commission Secretariat, Dhaka-1207

GD-1308



BANGLADESH ELECTION COMMISSION

Identification System for Enhancing Access to Services (IDEA) Project (2nd Phase)
Nirbachan Bhaban (Floor-8)
Agargaon, Dhaka-1207.

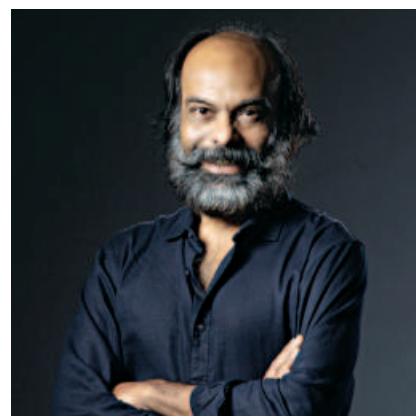
Invitation for Re-Tenders

GOVERNMENT OF THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF BANGLADESH

1. Ministry/Division	Bangladesh Election Commission
2. Agency	Election Commission Secretariat
3. Procuring Entity Name	Bangladesh Election Commission represented by Project Director, Identification System for Enhancing Access to Services (IDEA) Project (2nd Phase)
4. Procuring Entity District	Dhaka
5. Invitation for	Office/Support Services (Data Entry Operator under Comilla and Chattogram region) for the Project Office Operations.
6. Invitation Ref. No. & Date	17.14.0000.240.07.134.2023-2629

Dated: 28 August 2023

KEY INFORMATION



Nasir Uddin Khan



Shajal Noor



Shamol Mawla



Afran Nisho

Shweta Sharda
crowned Miss Diva
Universe 2023

The spotlight shone on Shweta Sharda as she seized the coveted Miss Diva Universe 2023 title during a glamorous event in Mumbai on August 27. Amidst a star-studded affair, Shweta received her regal tiara from the reigning Miss Diva Universe 2022, Divita Rai.

Meanwhile, Sonal Kukreja from Delhi was crowned Miss Diva Supranational 2023 and Trisha Shetty from Karnataka secured the Miss Diva 2023 Runner-up crown.

Shweta Sharda's victory secures her a golden opportunity to represent India on the global stage as she sets her sights on the 72nd Miss Universe pageant.

The beauty queen, hailing from Chandigarh, has appeared in several reality shows like "DID", "Dance Deewane", and "Dance...". Her prowess extends to choreography as she contributed to "Jhalak Dikhlaja".

Asaduzzaman Noor
leads stellar cast in
Hasan Azizul Haque's
memoir adaptation

Diving deep into the reminiscences of the Liberation War, celebrated fiction writer Hasan Azizul Haque penned an article titled "Ekattor: Koro tole Chinnomatha". Now, this moving narrative is set to leap from the pages to the silver screen in a film adaptation with the same title.

The veteran actor Asaduzzaman Noor leads the cast, stepping into the role of 82-year-old teacher Nazmul Haque. Through his portrayal, the story will delve into the memories of the Liberation War, weaving a narrative that captures the spirit and essence of that momentous period.

Directed by Rafiqul Anowar Russell, the film secured government funding for the fiscal year 2021-22.

Rise of antagonists on OTT

With the emergence of OTT platforms, the local audience is now more inclined towards antagonists, forsaking the traditional scenario where chivalrous protagonists used to rule over the screens. Multiple actors have started to explore different grey shades through the formation of devious yet charming dark characters. Here are five celebrated actors who have meticulously portrayed negative roles in OTT releases, enthraling the audience with their impeccable performances.

While darker plots, revolving around themes like thrillers and mysteries continue to please OTT streamers, relentless efforts by stars to match up to such challenging characters keep the audience waiting for more.



Tama Mirza

AKHLAKUR RAHMAN

Afran Nisho

When it comes to embracing villainous roles, Nisho is one name that cannot be ignored.

Forsaking his nag for conventional lead roles, his turn towards darker characters in the production *Morichika*, where he beautifully donned the persona of Salam Sharif Babu -- a political mafia, was lauded by audience and critics alike.

Be it the charming yet gruesome chef Ralsan Haque in *Punorjonna*, or the seemingly cold-hearted and calculative lawyer Reza in his new Hoichoi release *Sharey Showlo*, the actor has aced it all!

Nasir Uddin Khan

Nasir's portrayal as Allen Swapan in *Syndicate* not just outshined the performance of his costars but set a new graph for himself.

His excellent portrayal of the character encouraged the production's director Shihab

Shaheen to craft *Myself Allen Swapan*, a spin-off solely featuring the 'next door' drug lord hiding under the simple grey uniform of a peon.

Shamol Mawla

Shamol was showered with praises for his portrayal of the dynamic Afnan Chowdhury, the egoistic son of a power lord with no remorse for running over an innocent city dweller, in *Mohanagar*.

His incredible depiction of Sharifar, a criminal mastermind who robs Tk 108 crore from a bank, in Tanim Noor's *Money Honey* also gained much attention from spectators, pushing his career to new heights.

Tama Mirza

Tama's stunning performance in *Friday*, a web-film directed by Raihan Rafi, was a delight for mystery buffs.

Her portrayal of Muna, a homemaker who eventually

murders her entire family, was relatable and commendable.

The actress beautifully projected Muna's transition from an abused woman to a brutal murderer, leaving behind a soft spot for her audience who could relate to the character's psychological trauma.

Shajal Noor

Shajal's dashing and enigmatic portrayal of the 'devil' in Vicky Zahed's *The Silence* was one of the most power-packed OTT debuts in recent times.

The actor, showcasing a unique combination of grace and ruthlessness, left an enduring mark in the hearts of the fans who are now eagerly waiting for his next venture.

While darker plots, revolving around themes like thrillers and mysteries continue to please OTT streamers, relentless efforts by stars to match up to such challenging characters keep the audience waiting for more.

NEWS

Around 30,000 still stranded

FROM PAGE 12 houses were inundated by floodwater in Bidyananda and Ghorialdanga unions of the upazila, reports UNB.

Many roads went underwater, snapping communication between two unions.

Two government primary schools and a bazaar in Bidyananda are at risk of damage from the imminent erosion.

Md Minhajul, a member of Ghorialdanga union parishad, said around 200 houses and other establishments were inundated.

Abul Kashem, of Kisamat Nakonda area, told UNB that 45 out of 75 houses in his village were flooded.

In the meantime, the flood situation improved in five upazilas of Lalmonirhat as the Teesta was flowing 19cm below the danger level at Dalia Point, said Shunil Kumar, executive engineer of the district WDB.

Despite the Teesta receding, apprehension of a fresh flood still persisted among the affected in nine unions of Nilphamari's Dimla and Jaldhaka upazilas, as an onrush of water from upstream and sudden heavy rainfall are frequent in monsoon.

Many affected people are still living on Teesta embankments and are unwilling to leave as the recurrence of floods has traumatised them.

Ekhlas Ali, 60, of Dimla upazila's Khalisha Chapani union, said, "I'll stay on the embankment until it's safe to return home. We have been badly struck by this unpredicted flood."

With the recession of flood water, erosion took a severe turn in Kisamat Satnai char as five houses were washed away by strong river currents on Sunday night, leaving 30 more homes at risk.

Dimla Upazila Nirbahi Officer Noor-e-Alam said he visited the affected areas yesterday and distributed relief materials.

[Our correspondents from Lalmonirhat and Nilphamari contributed to this report.]

Over 56pc deaths

FROM PAGE 12

who go to hospitals after suffering from decompensated shock, he told The Daily Star.

He said death rate is also high among the high-risk group of patients who are obese and elderly, pregnant, infant, and have comorbidity.

Nazmul said severe stomach aches, breathing difficulties, severe weakness, bleeding from gums or nose, and vomiting are the symptoms for which patients need to be hospitalised immediately.

"If a patient showing warning signs is not hospitalised within 48 hours, s/he may suffer from shock syndrome."

If a patient is hospitalised immediately after suffering from compensated shock, s/he is not likely to suffer from decompensated shock, he said.

The doctor said the chance of recovery for patients suffering from decompensated shock is only 50 percent.

"A patient's blood pressure may remain normal after suffering from compensated shock and that's why he may not realise it. Some of the signs of compensated shock are drop in body temperature, increased heart rate, and rapid breathing," Nazmul added.

There are four dengue strains -- Den-1, Den-2, Den-3, and Den-4. Of them, Den-2 is mostly active this year and the severity of this strain is high. This is another reason for so many deaths this year, he said.

The physician said early consultation with doctors and proper medication are essential for dengue patients.

Pakistan court

FROM PAGE 12

about the ruling on sedition case, which was among dozens of cases brought against Khan after he lost a parliamentary confidence vote in April 2022.

Khan lost power after falling out with Pakistan's influential military, and his attempts to rally popular support have stirred political turmoil in a country already struggling through one of its worst economic crises.

A general election was expected in November, though it is likely to be delayed until at least early next year.

Khan cannot run and has been barred from holding political office for five years.

Amnesty

FROM PAGE 12

at university instead of languishing in prison waiting for her fate under the draconian DSA, the statement said.

Her continued arbitrary imprisonment comes as dissenting voices face a shrinking space in Bangladesh, and sets a chilling precedent for anyone whose views differ from the authorities, Amnesty warned.

Although the government decided to repeal the much-criticised DSA, officials continue invoking it to stifle dissent and persecute critics, the statement noted.

Despite the government's decision to repeal the DSA, authorities continue to use the legislation to undermine human rights and persecute critics and activists.

"Authorities should immediately and unconditionally release Khadijatul and all those who are arbitrarily detained in Bangladesh solely for peacefully exercising their human rights, including freedom of expression," said Nadia Rahman, Amnesty International's deputy regional director for South Asia.

18 new cases

FROM PAGE 12

the cases with the Third Labour Court of Dhaka under section 213 of the Bangladesh Labour Act, 2006, said court sources.

The court set October 16 for hearing nine cases and October 18 for hearing the remaining cases.

According to the statements of the cases, 5 percent of the company's dividends was supposed to be paid to the plaintiffs during their service period, which was not paid.

Apart from the 18 cases, 36 more cases with similar complaints are now pending with the Third Labour Court, said Khaja.

According to court sources, the 54 cases are all civil complaints.

The trial of another case filed against Prof Yunus and Grameen Telecom top officials -- Ashraf Hassan, Nurjahan Begum and M Shahjahan -- is now pending with the Third Labour Court.

On September 9, 2021, SM Arifuzzaman, a labour inspector (general) of the Department of Inspection for Factories and Establishments, filed this case.

Pro-BNP, AL lawyers

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and they could not shout in the courtroom.

At one stage, the judges left the courtroom around 10:55am, saying that the order has already been passed and if anybody becomes aggrieved by the order, he or she can move to the Appellate Division.

Pro-BNP lawyers stayed in the courtroom till 1:15pm. AL-backed lawyers left before them.

At 2:35pm, the judges sat in the courtroom and conducted regular judicial functions.

Senior lawyer and former food minister Md Qamrul Islam and lawyer Sanjida Khanam appeared for the petitioner, deputy attorney general Bepul Bagmar and Kamrul Haque represented the state, while pro-BNP lawyers, including AM Mahbub Uddin Khokon, Md Bodruddoza Badal, Md Ruhul Quddus Kazal, Kayer Kamal and Gazi Kamrul Islam Sajal, stood for Tarique during yesterday's hearing.

Kazi Shahid

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the country's newspaper industry in 1991. It stopped printing in 2007 due to a financial crisis.

Shahid left behind his wife Meenah Ahmed, a singer, and three sons. His elder son Kazi Nabil Ahmed is a ruling Awami League lawmaker and youngest son Kazi Inam Ahmed is a director of Bangladesh Cricket Board.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina expressed deep shock at the death of Shahid.

His first namaz-e-janaza will be held at Dhanmondi Road-7 mosque after Zohr prayers today, which will be followed by a second one at Gushan Azad Mosque after Asr prayers.

Later, he will be buried at Banani graveyard.

A graduate in engineering, Shahid was one of the founding platoon commanders of Bangladesh Military Academy.

He was the president of the board of trustees of University of Liberal Arts Bangladesh and founder of Kazi Shahid Foundation.

He authored several books including "Amar Lekha", "Ghore Agun Legechhe", "Bhoirob", "Jiboner Shilalipi" and "Pasha".

INTERNATIONAL

Putin discusses ties, BRICS with Modi in phone call

Says foreign minister to attend G20 in Delhi

AGENCIES

Russian President Vladimir Putin discussed bilateral ties including trade, energy and space cooperation with Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi by phone, the Kremlin said yesterday.

The two leaders also discussed the planned expansion of the BRICS group of emerging economies - comprising India, Russia, China, Brazil and South Africa - as well as a summit of the G20 club of major economies that New Delhi will host next month, reports Reuters.

Russia has sought to further strengthen already warm ties with India after its invasion of Ukraine in February 2022 triggered sweeping Western sanctions on Moscow. India is a major buyer of Russian oil.

"Topical issues of Russian-Indian relations, which are progressively developing in the spirit of a particularly privileged strategic partnership, were considered (in the call)," the Kremlin said in a statement.

The positive dynamics of trade and



economic cooperation was affirmed," it added.

Last week Modi and Putin both took part in the BRICS summit in South Africa, though the Russian leader attended only via video link because of an International Criminal Court (ICC) arrest warrant for him over alleged war crimes in Ukraine.

The Kremlin, which strongly denies the ICC allegations, has said Putin will also not attend the G20 gathering in India.

Putin will send Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov in his place, a statement from the Indian Prime Minister's Office (PMO) said.

Earlier yesterday, as speculation mounted, Russian envoy to India, Denis Alipov, said a decision on who would represent his country at G20 Summit would be made shortly.

"This is not my prerogative... I would suggest we wait for the official announcement. As regards his (Putin's) participation in the G20 and what format it will be (and) who is going to represent Russia at the summit... I think such an announcement will be made shortly," he was quoted by news agency PTI.

Most suggestions go unheeded

FROM PAGE 1
deal with illegal entry into critical information infrastructure, damage to computers and computer systems, including collection or removal of data, cyberterrorism and hacking.

Mahbub further said the cases already filed under the DSA will remain under it, as a provision was incorporated in the proposed law in this regard.

The Cabinet meeting that approved the final draft was chaired by Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at the Prime Minister's Office.

Ministry sources said the new bill, once passed into a law, will have safeguards against the filing of cases and arrest without a court order for all but the four cognisable sections.

On August 9, the CSA draft was published on the website of the Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Department, seeking the views of stakeholders, the deadline of which was August 22.

Abu Sayed Md Kamruzzaman, director general of the Digital Security Agency, told this newspaper that around 900 recommendations were submitted to the ICT ministry, and the new draft was placed before the Cabinet six days after the deadline.

Asked how many of the recommendations were considered while making the changes, he mentioned the four sections that were made bailable.

However, rights organisations had made many recommendations for major changes in the draft law regarding the nature of the offences themselves.

Experts had pointed out that the draft retained all but one offence from the DSA.

Amnesty International in a letter to the ICT ministry had said, "The only changes the CSA makes are related to sentencing, which can be summarised as follows: lowering the maximum applicable prison sentence for eight offences, removing a sentence of imprisonment for two offences, increasing the maximum applicable fine for three offences and removing the higher applicable penalty for all repeat offences."

Multiple organisations had

proposed decriminalisation of defamation, which the August 7 draft still retained.

Meanwhile, section 42 of the CSA is identical to section 43 of the DSA and continues to allow any law enforcement officer to search premises, seize computers and similar hardware, search the body of a person and arrest a person present in that place without a warrant, said Amnesty.

"The police officers must believe that a crime under the act has occurred, is occurring or is likely to occur or that any evidence is likely to be lost, destroyed, deleted or altered or made unavailable in any way. They are simply required to record the reasons for such belief."

The human rights organisation called the act overly-permissive and suggested that powers of the police be clearly and narrowly defined.

A civil rights platform called Nagorik pointed out that 14 days is a very limited period for providing any feedback on the draft law.

They recommended the introduction of a legislative measure such as a bill to repeal the DSA, and to safeguard cyber space and internet freedom.

Likewise, another platform -- Forum for Freedom of Expression Bangladesh -- had stated that 11 sections of the proposed act are inconsistent with the constitution, fundamental human rights and the rule of law.

It further said that section 42, which provides for arrest without a warrant, was not much different from section 43 of the DSA. This leaves room for the act to become harassing and restrictive, creating opportunities to undermine internationally recognised human rights.

Furthermore, no stakeholders were invited to preview the final draft before approval at the Cabinet yesterday.

A group of civil society members met Law Minister Anisul Huq on March 30, and submitted a recommendation pointing out that the law is being misused, and that the only solution would be to repeal it and draft a new one.

This group, however, was never called for a follow-up meeting again.

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Trump election trial to start March 4, 2024 US judge rules

REUTERS, Washington



Donald Trump will stand trial on March 4, 2024 in federal court in Washington for trying to overturn his 2020 election defeat, a federal judge ruled yesterday, setting up a crowded schedule for the former president next year as he campaigns to recapture the White House.

The ruling by US Judge Tanya Chutkan means that Trump will likely have to stand trial in at least three separate criminal cases during the thick of the Republican presidential nominating contest.

A trial date in a fourth criminal case has not yet been set.

Trump's lawyers had pressed for an April 2026 trial date, well past the November 2024 presidential election, arguing that they needed time to go through the 12.8 million pages of evidence the government had amassed.

But Chutkan said they did not need that long. "The defense's proposed date of April 2026 is far beyond what is necessary," she said.

Trump's trial is due to start one day before "Super Tuesday," when more than a dozen US states will hold their presidential nominating contests.



Palestinian schoolgirls ride a cart to a UN school as classes resume in Rafah in the southern Gaza Strip yesterday. But it is unclear if they will be able to complete the year uninterrupted due to a funding crisis at the United Nations' Palestinian refugee agency.

PHOTO: AFP

Deadly Greek wildfire still 'out of control'

Nearly 500 firefighters backed by 100 vehicles, seven planes trying to douse the flames

AFP, Athens



A monster forest fire that has raged for nine days in the Dadia National Park in northeast Greece, a major European sanctuary for birds of prey, is still spreading, firefighters said yesterday.

"The fire is still out of control," a spokesman for the fire service told AFP, adding that "nearly 500 firefighters backed by 100 vehicles, seven planes and three helicopters are fighting the flames."

The fire is burning across a nearly 10 kilometre (six-mile) front, according to firefighters.

The blaze, which erupted on August 19, is devastating the Evros region near the port city of Alexandroupoli and the border with Turkey, forcing the evictions of some villages.

Twenty people, 18 of them migrants, have perished in the

acres) with 120 active hot spots".

The Dadia forest is part of a Unesco World Heritage national park, with vegetation so dense that water from hoses often fails to reach flames at ground level, experts say.

Another dangerous fire is also raging on Mount Parnitha near Athens for the sixth straight day, with 270 firefighters on the scene.

"The risks are still high and the fire service remains on a high state of alert," said government spokesman Pavlos Marinakis yesterday.

Greece has been ravaged by numerous fires this summer which the government attributes to climate change.

"It has been the most difficult summer we have faced in terms of climatic conditions, which makes the work of the authorities much more difficult," Marinakis added.

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

Office of the Upazila Health & Family Planning Officer

Biswanath, Sylhet

Email: biswanath@uhfpo.dghs.gov.bd

Date: 28-08-2023

e-Tender Notice

This is an online tender, where only e-Tenders will be accepted in e-GP Portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-Tender, please register on e-GP System Portal (<https://www.eprocure.gov.bd>).

For more details, please contact support desk contact numbers. e-Tender are invited in e-GP System Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) by Dr. Md. Deluar Hossain, UH&FPO, Upazila Health Complex, Biswanath, Sylhet for the Procurement of:

Tender ID	Name of goods	Tender/proposal last selling date & time	Tender/proposal closing/opening date & time
808563	Procurement of Medicine for the FY 2023-2024 at Biswanath Upazila Health Complex, Sylhet.	12-September-2023 16:00	14-September-2023 16:00
809504	Procurement of Medicine Equipment for the FY 2023-2024 at Biswanath Upazila Health Complex, Sylhet.	12-September-2023 16:00	14-September-2023 16:00
809505	Procurement of Gauge, Bandage, Cotton etc. for the FY 2023-2024 at Biswanath Upazila Health Complex, Sylhet.	12-September-2023 16:00	14-September-2023 16:00
808609	Procurement of Linen for the FY 2023-2024 at Biswanath Upazila Health Complex, Sylhet.	12-September-2023 16:00	14-September-2023 16:00
809506	Procurement of Chemical Reagents for the FY 2023-2024 at Biswanath Upazila Health Complex, Sylhet.	12-September-2023 16:00	14-September-2023 16:00
809507	Procurement of Furniture for the FY 2023-2024 at Biswanath Upazila Health Complex, Sylhet.	12-September-2023 16:00	14-September-2023 16:00

e-Tender details can be downloaded on e-GP System Portal (<https://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) for pursuer. e-Tender will be accepted only as stated in above list; accepted tenders will be opened online immediate as stated in above list.

Dr. Md. Deluar Hossain
Upazila Health & Family Planning Officer
Biswanath, Sylhet

Bring my son back to me'

FROM PAGE 1
by fire service divers within an hour. However, they halted the operation at 11:00pm and resumed it yesterday morning.

Abdur Razzak, deputy assistant director of Chattogram's Fire Service and Civil Defence, said Yeasin's body was found around 9:10am by Chattogram City Corporation workers while they were cleaning a drain around 10ft from the one he fell into.

Nasreen, 20, and Saddam are still to grasp the truth -- their only child is no longer alive.

The devastated mother was found wailing, repeatedly asking whoever was near her to return her child to her arms.

"How could this happen to me? Where will I find my son? Please bring my son back to me," she repeated over and over.

Visiting the grief-stricken family, this correspondent saw the child's body was kept in their one-bedroom home, where neighbours were trying to console Nasreen.

"All my dreams revolved around my son, but all of them have been shattered with one accident," said Saddam.

They had returned from Brahmanbaria two weeks ago from Nasreen's paternal home as Saddam

claimed "It was an accident", adding the CCC will set up fences around the open drains in the area to avoid such incidents in the future.

Deaths by falling into open drains and unprotected canals in the port city have been reported repeatedly since at least 2017, when a retired government officer, Shilbrata Barua, fell into an open drain.

A year later, on June 9, a child named Al Amin fell into one. On June 30, 2021, three people went missing after an auto-rickshaw fell into an unprotected canal in Sholashahar. Only two bodies were recovered.

In August of the same year, a 50-year-old man slipped and drowned to death in another unprotected canal in the Muradpur intersection. A month later, Sheherin Mahmud, 19, died after falling into an open drain in Agrababu intersection.

Then, on December 7, 2021, a 10-year-old boy's body was recovered three days after he fell into the unprotected canal in Sholashahar.

On April 15 last year, fire service divers rescued a woman from the Osmania canal in the Kalurhat area.

Speaking to The Daily Star on Sunday, CCC Mayor Rezaul Karim Chowdhury said they were trying to cover all the open drains in the city, but "it is a time-consuming task".

Speaking to The Daily Star, Duke

GD-1306

A recurring calamity in Chattogram

City authorities must prevent waterlogging and associated risks

Once again, residents of Chattogram find themselves grappling with an old foe: waterlogging. This is hardly news anymore, though; by now it has become business – or suffering – as usual, a recurring calamity that simply refuses to go away, monsoon or no monsoon. On Sunday, waterlogging caused by overnight downpour reportedly disrupted the lives of residents across the city, and even forced the delaying of HSC exams by an hour, with students seen wading through knee deep water to reach their exam centres. The fact that such adjustments have become routine over the years hints at the normalisation of waterlogging in the city's narrative – a narrative that must shift from enduring to eradicating.

Sunday also witnessed what has emerged as the most disturbing consequence of waterlogging of late: death by falling into uncovered drains. Reportedly, an 18-month-old toddler went missing after he fell into a drain at the Halishahar thana before his dead body was recovered 17 hours later, on Monday morning. We have often talked about the danger of drains and canals getting clogged because of indiscriminate dumping of waste and lack of clearing, leading to the overflowing of drains which make them indistinguishable from flooded roads. Earlier this month, a college student also died after falling into an open drain. This Friday marked the two years of the death of a vegetable vendor who similarly fell to his death.

The question is, why do such tragedies keep occurring? Why are so many drains, and connected canals, still uncovered and dangerously exposed? Getting swept away into one of them, especially when it rains and the roads get invariably waterlogged, is a real possibility. Chattogram reportedly has 56 canals as well as 765 km of drains. A 2021 survey by the Chattogram City Corporation (CCC) identified a total of 5,527 dangerous spots connected to these canals and drains. Evidently, the authorities know about them but preventive actions have been few and far between. Instead, responsible officials, including the mayor, seemed more interested in blaming residents for waterlogging and associated risks.

The fact is, this is no longer just a civic issue; it is a matter of life and death. Any negligence leading to the sustenance of this problem should be considered criminal. We urge the CCC and the Chattogram Development Authority (CDA) to work collaboratively to eradicate waterlogging urgently, including by clearing and covering all drains.

Address the plight of stone crushers

Authorities must consider their demand for fair wages

We are concerned to learn about the dire straits of stone crushers in Lalmonirhat, who work exceedingly hard to advance our economy only to remain deprived of its benefits, including a fair wage. According to a report by this daily, there are about 40,000 labourers at the region's two land ports involved in stone crushing, loading and unloading, who earn about Tk 400 a day. This is a physically demanding job that involves quite a few risks, including the exposure to silica dust which puts them at constant risk of "silicosis" – a debilitating lung disease. But the wages they earn are far from sufficient considering the costs of treatment as well as the high prices of practically everything in today's market. On days when there is no work, there are no wages for them, meaning their families either have to starve or borrow from others to survive. The situation is extremely disheartening.

Against this backdrop, it is only fair that their demand for a daily wage of Tk 700 is given a serious consideration. It is also vital that those who are putting their lives at jeopardy for the nation's development have access to humane work conditions. In 2015, around 65 workers reportedly died from silicosis at the Burimari port. It is no secret that on top of low wages, workers in our informal sector also suffer from another layer of vulnerability: minimal job security and non-existent social benefits – such as healthcare packages and compensation schemes – which can be expected from the formal sector.

The result of the disturbing current status quo is a miserable living standard for the majority of the employed population, approximately 85.1 percent of whom work in the informal sector. Unfortunately, these workers are not even recognised as "workers" under the Bangladesh Labour Act, 2006. Needless to say, to achieve holistic economic growth in the country, minimal protection must be provided to workers in the informal sector. We urge the authorities to properly recognise them, including stone crushers, and undertake measures to improve their living and working conditions.

New Message

Have things to say? Want your thoughts about current events to be published in The Daily Star? Send us a letter (100 - 300 words) with your name and area!

Write to us: letters@thedadlystar.net

EDITORIAL

Should the BRICS exclusion disappoint Bangladesh?



MACRO MIRROR

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non-resident senior fellow of the
Atlantic Council.

FAHMIDA KATUN

The recently concluded 15th BRICS Summit has generated a lot of discussion in Bangladesh, as the country had expected to be a member of this bloc. The foreign minister, too, had said in June that Bangladesh was likely to become a member in August. However, it turned out that the country was not to join the bloc at the summit held in Johannesburg, South Africa during August 22-24. The leaders of the BRICS countries accepted only six new countries this time around: Iran, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, Argentina, Egypt and Ethiopia. Their membership will be effective from January 1, 2024.

Inclusion of new members in BRICS is considered to be a win-win situation in the current geopolitical and geo-economic circumstances. Initially, the formation of BRICS was seen as a balancing force in the geo-economic landscape, which is dominated by the Western economies. Emerging economies require trade, investment, finance, and technology to continue their growth momentum and fight challenges. As multilateral financial institutions such as the World Bank and International Monetary Fund failed to respond to the needs of countries in the Global South and reform their governance, BRICS member countries established the New Development Bank (NDB) with a contribution of \$50 billion by each BRICS member. Later, Bangladesh, the UAE, Egypt, and Uruguay were invited to be members of the NDB. Recently, BRICS members have also been exploring the possibility of new international currency arrangements for trading among themselves and reducing the dominance of the US dollar.

Indeed, the multilateral system has become ineffective to a large extent due to the rigid position of powerful Western countries. The multilateral trading system, multilateral development banks, and climate negotiations are some instances where the richer Northern countries have played a leading role in shaping the global agenda. In light of this, the focus of this year's BRICS summit was "BRICS and Africa: Partnership for Mutually Accelerated Growth, Sustainable Development and Inclusive Multilateralism." Member countries expressed concern over unilateral coercive measures used by certain countries and highlighted their commitment to inclusive multilateralism. They want to see improved global governance through a more efficient, representative,



The influence of BRICS in global governance is still limited.

democratic, and accountable multilateral system. The members are also for a reform of the UN Security Council to have higher representation of developing countries.

At the summit, BRICS members called for a constructive role of multilateral financial institutions and international organisations in designing economic policies to regain the momentum of the global economy. As such, they committed to employment generation, including gender-responsive employment and social protection policies for sustainable development. In terms of climate actions, BRICS members highlighted the need for developing countries to access low-emission technologies and solutions to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and enhance climate adaptation actions. BRICS countries feel that meeting the development goals of countries and reconstructing post-conflict countries require support from the international community.

However, the influence of BRICS in global governance is still limited. Its motivation behind expanding its membership is to gain more strength and challenge the existing geo-economic and geopolitical order. Though the geopolitical aspect was not a declared objective, the BRICS is gradually evolving into a geopolitical group. Though Brazil and India were

not enthusiastic about expanding the bloc, China wants the group's voice to gain more strength in the global platform. However, this may not be easy as BRICS is composed of countries with diverse political and economic backgrounds. There are large developing democracies and also a one-party autocracy in the BRICS.

Though BRICS members were

have given the it some moral strength to demonstrate that it is not alone and that it has friends who have a voice in global affairs. The original five members of BRICS are also members of the G20, which is a platform of 19 developed and developing countries and the European Union.

Though BRICS has made limited progress so far on the economic front,

PHOTO: REUTERS

it has potential to dominate the global economy if it moves strategically. The group, with its original five members, already accounts for about 24 percent of global GDP in nominal terms, and about 31.6 percent in purchasing power parity (PPP) terms. This is higher than the G7 countries (France, United States, United Kingdom, Germany, Japan, Italy, and Canada), whose GDP in PPP terms is about 30.3 percent. The BRICS also occupies 16 percent of global trade and includes 41 percent of the world's population. Hence, the new members will only enhance the bloc's strength.

Even though it is hardly a homogeneous group, BRICS member countries can gain from each other's strength on common issues such as economic progress. If the economic agenda gains momentum, Bangladesh could also benefit by joining the grouping of the Global South. However, the ambit of economic cooperation has to expand beyond financial cooperation. Bangladesh's participation in such blocs can be meaningful if it can improve its trade balance with its trading partners, particularly with China and India. Bangladesh also needs more foreign direct investment, technology, and capacity development. Bangladesh stand to benefit substantially through the bloc only if these issues are on the BRICS agenda.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Send us your letters to letters@thedadlystar.net

Do we have a vision for Dhaka?

Cities are not merely places to make money. They help create memories, retain heritage, build culture, civility and trust, and ensure social cohesion – all of which require the right spaces and communities.

But marginal communities in Dhaka are increasingly struggling to align their aspirations with the ever-changing capital. And the changes are a surprising intrusion into city life – intrusive enough that they are seemingly killing the city's soul. We don't understand what the master plans mean, but one thing is for sure, ordinary people need social and spatial facilities to thrive, not fancy ideas concocted by using up millions of taxpayers' money.

Dhaka has become a place for economic transactions amid the mayhem. But the city can use some retrofitting to keep up with the standards that everyday life requires; all that is needed are some well-thought-out plans and good intentions.

Chaotic movement in the roads and alleys leads to frustrated people and environmental damage. Last



What are we heading towards? City expansion or high density?

month, I visited Dhaka and noticed random vehicles using emergency lights to wedge through tailgated traffic, ignoring the rights of others to be on the street. Using unauthorised sirens doesn't indicate a crisis – other than the crisis of mobility! What's

more, the city's many flyovers actually draw in more cars (proven by many cities worldwide).

What are we heading towards? City expansion or high density? Even though neither of them are trustworthy solutions, planners and

government officials don't even confront this fundamental question.

Of my 60 years, half were spent in Dhaka, and I've been witnessing how the city has gradually compromised on essential living standards. The effects of experimental plans, coupled with urban agonies, are seemingly invisible to professional and civil authorities. Dhaka is now a black hole: a city consuming millions of residents but has no sense of quality life.

In this mission to save the city, Dhaka needs relevant professionals and stakeholders to unfold and repair the damages development inflicted on it. Besides, new talents and experts on specific issues must be welcomed to generate a workable and pragmatic vision.

If nothing is done, the new generation will slowly be devoured by the concrete. So, let's work together to get Dhaka out of this development trap.

Dr Quazi Mahtab Zaman
Robert Gordon University
Scotland



VISUAL: TEENI AND TUNI

CSA vs cybersecurity laws in other countries



Saifur Rahman
is a senior IT specialist and certified professional at Australian Computer Society.

SAIFUR RAHMAN

Cybersecurity laws include rules and frameworks designed to safeguard digital systems, networks, data, and information from online threats. Countries like the US, UK, and those in the EU adopted these laws early and are continuously improving them. Meanwhile, in Bangladesh, the forthcoming Cyber Security Act (CSA) is poised to become the primary legislation concerning cybercrime. Comparing this law with those in other countries can help us determine how well the proposed CSA aligns with international standards.

As cyber threats have evolved, numerous laws and rules emerged focusing on three key aspects: 1) Protecting private, sensitive, and financial data; 2) Preventing computer-based fraud and unauthorised access; and 3) Creating guidelines to ensure strong security measures for data, computer systems, and networks across different institutions and infrastructures.

In the US, several laws are in place to safeguard specific types of data. For health data, there's the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA). For children's data, there's the Children's Online Privacy Protection Act, while the Gramm-Leach-Bliley Act deals with financial information. In Europe and in the UK, similar purposes are served by the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the Data Protection Act, respectively. In the US, computer-related frauds are addressed by the Computer Fraud and Abuse Act, while in the UK, the Computer Misuse Act criminalises unauthorised access, computer-related frauds, and similar cyber offences.

Much like its predecessor, the Digital Security Act (DSA), 2018, the proposed Cyber Security Act (CSA) also contains sections aimed at safeguarding computer systems, networks, and data. It establishes penalties for activities such as unauthorised access, disruptions, and the improper utilisation of IT systems. It also has penalties for actions like unauthorised access, disruptions, and the misuse of IT systems.

However, in contrast to similar laws in other parts of the world, the CSA includes clauses that do not directly relate to cybersecurity. These provisions include prosecuting defamation, limiting

freedom of speech, and levying charges against the promotion of religious intolerance and offences related to the Official Secrets Act (OSA), 1923. The DSA gained infamy for its tendency to suppress opposing viewpoints rather than effectively addressing cyber threats, and there is no noticeable shift in this aspect within the newly suggested legislation.

To meet accepted standards, a law must have unambiguous provisions. Section 25 of the DSA has faced criticism due to lacking specificity and clarity, which could result in varying interpretations and possibly

In contrast to similar laws in other parts of the world, the CSA includes clauses that do not directly relate to cybersecurity. These provisions include prosecuting defamation, limiting freedom of speech, and levying charges against the promotion of religious intolerance and offences related to the Official Secrets Act (OSA), 1923.

the unjust criminalisation of legitimate criticism and opinions. Such a vague clause raises questions about whether the DSA's objective was to safeguard against cyberattacks or if it was to curtail freedom of speech. To prevent misconceptions, any new cybersecurity legislation must have comprehensive and transparent descriptions of offences, aiming to eliminate uncertainties. Regrettably, the proposed CSA does not meet this standard.

In the US, the Federal Information Security Modernization Act (FISMA) guides federal agencies on securing their computer systems. In the EU, the newest version of the Network and Information Security (NIS2) Directive mandates essential service providers (such as from energy, transportation, banking, and healthcare sectors) to employ proper security measures. Despite Bangladesh's DSA incorporating regulations for protecting critical information infrastructure (under

Section 16), recent incidents like the NID data breach and, in the past, cyber theft from Bangladesh Bank's account, reveal the ineffectiveness of DSA and its predecessor. The new CSA could have effectively addressed this concern by incorporating stricter provisions akin to those in FISMA. Regrettably, no such additions have been made, leaving room for unsavoury events to recur in the future.

Section 43 of the DSA, for instance, lets police arrest people without a warrant. In the US, the Computer Fraud and Abuse Act (CFAA) also allows warrantless arrests in specific cases. But it's important to note that the Fourth Amendment to the US Constitution imposes strict conditions on such actions by law enforcement. In Bangladesh, the absence of similar safeguards has led to the widespread misuse of Section 43 of the DSA, creating an environment of panic. It was prudent to either altogether remove the provision that allows warrantless arrests and searches by junior police officers or, if kept, to add more checks and balances (such as involving an executive magistrate during search and seizure operations). But the CSA has not been changed to that effect.

The UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights has suggested removing two Sections (21 and 28) from the DSA and changing eight others. Many of these sections primarily relate to freedom of expression and journalism, deviating from the principles outlined in the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. But Sections 21 and 28 remain largely untouched in the proposed law. The OSA, which mostly deals with unauthorised entry to prohibited places, stealing information from there and spying (that is, offences not directly related to cybercrime) has been retained in the proposed CSA. Adding these offences to the CSA makes it more draconian than the original OSA, wherein a junior police officer could not carry out an arrest without a warrant.

The extent of the DSA's abuse can be gauged from the fact that, in the last five years, there have been at least 7,000 cases filed under this law, but only a few saw the accused being convicted. In the proposed CSA, it was necessary to eliminate the provision of allowing multiple cases to be filed against an individual for a single offence across various jurisdictions, and to also introduce rules that would severely penalise anyone, including law enforcement members, for intentionally making false allegations against innocent people. Regrettably, we see no such amendments in the proposed CSA.

When public servants get punished for doing their job



Faiz Ahmad Taiyeb
is a Bangladeshi columnist and writer living in the Netherlands.

FAIZ AHMAD TAIYEB

After an official report exposing major weaknesses in the power sector drew much attention, the government suspended former director general of the Implementation Monitoring and Evaluation Division (IMED) SM Hamidul Haque, who was an adviser to the report, and former IMED director Mohammad Mahidur Rahman last month for "misconduct." Hamidul and Mahidur were made officers on special duty through separate orders on July 16 and 17, respectively. The following day, Mahidur was suspended, and Hamidul was suspended two days later on July 20.

The decision came at lightning speed. Authorities formed a three-member probe body, and within a week, made the two OSDs before suspending them. The officials did not get an opportunity to defend themselves, which is a clear violation of labour rights.

The report, uploaded on the IMED website on May 25, called the practice of paying capacity charges to power plants a "model of robbery." After the "Research Report on Implementation Progress of Projects in Power Sector" was widely covered by the media, the Planning Division quietly revised it, altogether deleting the section critical of the power sector's business model.

Firstly, the Planning Division

and authority to work without fear of reprisal or punishment.

The original research findings stated that the power sector is draining Bangladesh's foreign currency reserves because it has been developed on a "model of looting."

The report claimed that the financial crisis the sector faces will not go away unless inappropriate incentives to private power investors – such as capacity charges, tax-free imports, high power prices, easy bank loans, and cheap fuel supply – are cancelled.

Furthermore, some corrupt managers, who lack experience and technical knowledge, have turned Bangladesh's power sector into a "rehabilitation centre" for ineligible suppliers, mainly from China and India, via wrong and unwise power purchase agreements or contracts.

Expanding Bangladesh's power generation capacity without securing primary energy is another flaw. Some of these insights are not new at all and have already been published in national dailies.

The researchers' original report stated that the current model of capacity charges is not sustainable. Only two conditions are enough to attract investors: offering the facility of mandating the sale of electricity at a higher price of 25 to 50 percent, depending on the location; and the government guaranteeing

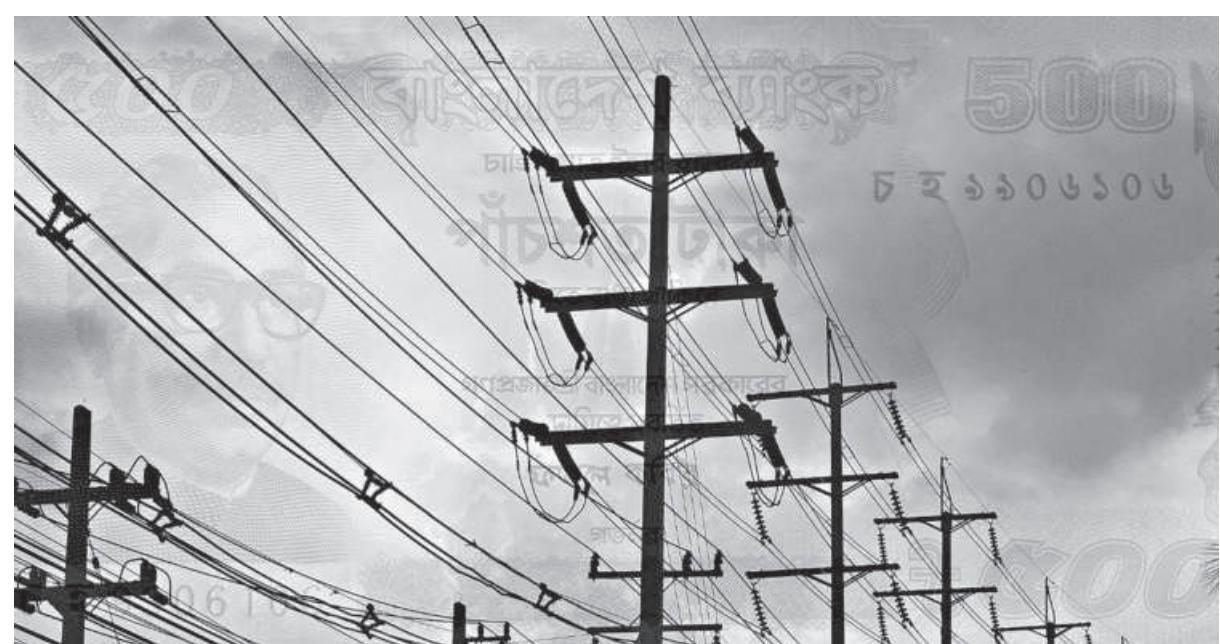
resolved unless the "budget draining" payment process is stopped.

Highlighting the sector's inefficiency, the report said that the energy efficiency of dozens of power plants is less than 30 percent. That is, they are producing very little electricity by burning too much fuel. Another problem is that thousands of captive power plants (expired and extremely energy-inefficient plants imported from abroad under false declarations and forged certificates of origin) are now a big burden on the sector. As loadshedding increases in the country and more captive power plants run, more energy will go to waste.

The IMED report also identified the lack of coordination between power generation and transmission. Rampal and Payra power stations have been constructed in remote locations where installing transmission lines is very expensive. The Matarbari deep sea port will not be useful anytime soon. Rooppur is also far from the load centres. As a result, a lot of investment will go into transmission lines.

In the absence of proper planning, the return on huge investments in the power sector will remain negligible. It is necessary to implement a smart, future-oriented, and transparent plan.

A clear example of such weaknesses is the Rampal power plant. It shut down seven times in seven months. The centre was closed for almost half of July due to mechanical problems. There is also a coal crisis due to the dollar shortage. As such, none of the allegations of improper planning of primary fuel and of sub-standard equipment use are false. Due to these reasons, long-



VISUAL: STAR

should not be a political office; rather, it should objectively analyse and assess the country's resources and development prospects, being free from any political narratives. It is through such analysis that the government can make informed decisions and formulate policies that best serve the interests of the nation and its people.

Punishing two officials for fulfilling their duty is deeply concerning. The report provided an accurate picture of the energy and electricity sector, which apparently goes against the views of the current regime. It is indicative of a lack of freedom in intellectual work within bureaucracy and raises questions about the environment in which public servants presently operate.

Far from such actions, there should be a mechanism to safeguard the rights and responsibilities of public servants, allowing them the freedom

uninterrupted purchase of one-fourth or half of the electricity, together with provision of bank loans on easy terms. Instead of capacity charges, overhauling charges should be the standard capacity payment method in the power sector, a charge for the time the power plant cannot be in production for maintenance (up to 20 percent) so that the investment is protected. But paying capacity charges to power plants which are unable to produce anything for months is truly a "budget and dollar reserve draining malpractice."

Payment in dollars is a major problem, according to the initial report. Private power plants are domestic, so it is unreasonable to pay them in dollars. In this case, the report recommended paying private plants in Indian rupees. Apart from this, IMED researchers initially commented that the funding crisis of the power sector cannot be

CROSSWORD BY THOMAS JOSEPH

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YESTERDAY'S ANSWERS



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UNADDRESSED STRUGGLES

of freshmen at public universities

AHMED NUZHA OISHEE

The first year of university can be a crucial time as it often sets a precedent for a student's upcoming years. The resources offered by a student's university can help catalyse new habits they forge and strategies they adopt to keep up with the changing tides of life. Insufficient amenities and a lack of a vibrant campus environment can stifle the transformative experience that freshman year is meant to provide for students.



ILLUSTRATION: FAISAL BIN IQBAL

Durdana Chowdhury, 19, an undergraduate student at the University of Dhaka, made a deliberate choice to not stay at Rokeya Hall. She laments about the miserable state of her allotted hall, "Students don't get their own seat at the dorm until their final year. First year students are required to share a single bed or live in crowded 'gonorooms', which are poorly maintained and lack hygiene. Meals at halls are subpar and seniority is strongly exercised."

Besides infrastructural shortcomings, there are complications like students staying in their residence halls even after their academic affiliation with the institution is over, as well as unfair seat allotments. Amidst dwindling

amenities controlled by various groups misusing power, freshers end up getting the shortest end of the stick.

Amir Alam*, a student at University of Chittagong, elaborates that first-year students are not allotted accommodation at dormitories without political patronisation, "Seniors belonging to political student bodies persuade freshmen to join their groups in exchange for residential facilities. This helps increase the number of political participants from each hall. In return, juniors are expected to attend weekly meetings, partake in rallies, provide help during conflicts, and openly endorse political ideologies of the ruling political party."

Students moving into halls must show fealty to seniors and their rules. As Amir mentioned, resident freshmen are mandated to attend their seniors' personal events or run errands for them whenever they are asked, unless they want to endanger their residency and risk punishments.

Living off-campus can be a way out of such dilemmas but it still comes with strings attached.

Durdana shares, "I co-rent a flat near my university with female roommates. I have to be cautious about my safety and spend a lot on basic necessities. We encountered difficulties in finding an apartment as landlords were hesitant to lease to unmarried females. Our landlord charges us more rent than our neighbours simply because we are female tenants."

The culture of revering senior students has become so uncompromising that freshmen are now forced to tiptoe around a maze of regulations imposed by senior students on campus grounds and dorms. Most rules are touted as important measures to demarcate appropriate boundaries.

Faiza Alim*, a second-year undergraduate student at the Military Institute of Science and Technology, reflects on dealing with seniority on campus, "During our first year, we had meetings where we were told to memorise the names of our seniors. We then had to narrate them perfectly from memory. In certain departments, freshers were compelled to stand under the scorching sun during break time. Moreover, there were strict prohibitions against taking photographs at specific locations on campus. Any unnecessary

interaction with seniors, such as using the elevator with them or even accidentally brushing past them, was deemed an offence."

"If a student violated any rule or failed to greet a senior, the entire class got summoned for meetings to be admonished. At times, we got held up at these meetings, arrived late for class and faced punishment from teachers. But we couldn't disclose anything to our faculty, as it would only put senior students in trouble and we would bear the brunt of it," Faiza adds.

Although experiences may vary across institutions, interviewed students attest to a common pattern in the way seniority is imposed. It usually begins with being forced to add seniors on social media. Students are then coerced into getting themselves acquainted with their seniors. All students are provided with a set of rules to abide by. These regulations range from seemingly trivial to more stringent measures, such as designating specific areas on campus grounds as off-limits to freshmen and barring them from food stalls and/or shops around campus, putting restrictions on attire and grooming habits. Juniors have to prioritise helping seniors with their assignments when asked or avoid friendly interactions with them altogether.

In a similar vein, Md. Pritom*, a freshman at Khulna University of Engineering Technology, shares, "Male freshers are mandated to have short hair and be clean-shaven on campus. We can't wear round-neck T-shirts. There are rules in the common room and cafeteria that specifically prevent freshers from availing certain facilities."

On the other hand, some students become subjects of hazing, more commonly known as ragging, which is a practice of humiliating newcomers.

Saima Tamjid*, a first-year student of Jagannath University, recalls, "On our first day of classes, our seniors made us sing, dance, recite poems or perform ridiculous acts under the pretext of an introductory ceremony. Our physical traits were made fun of. One of the girls was told to propose to a senior. In recent months, I have had to fend off uncomfortable advances from senior students. Even sitting down on the university transport was forbidden in the presence of seniors."

According to accounts of a first-year student from Chittagong University of Engineering Technology, seniors often summon freshers to guest rooms where ensuing interactions can be dubbed almost ritualistic. Students get intimidated into delivering self-introductions maintaining a strict pre-instructed script. They are interrogated or told to perform absurd acts in an attempt to prove their obedience. If a student has offended their senior or violated their instructions in any way, they might face verbal harassment.

Alarming cases of physical harassment at universities that make headlines fester from subtle bullying that incidentally turns ugly.

Pritom says, "Most seniors are very helpful and disapprove of mistreating juniors. But there is a chain of command to be followed. Seniors instruct their immediate junior batch to control their subsequent juniors. Rules are stricter for hall residents. If you're careful enough, it's possible to avoid following rules every day. But if a senior notices disobedience, juniors can get called to dormitories to answer for their actions."

Showing respect based on age and maintaining basic decorum should be a two-way street. But when these become oppressive demands that encroach on an individual's well-being, it is crucial to admit the notoriety of hierarchical power dynamics.

"Although we were never physically harmed, such behaviour was very distressing. Our seniors told us to dismiss what they did as a way to break the ice," recounts Saima*.

When these issues go unaddressed and unresolved by authorities that wield the power to make reforms and implement a course of action, helpless students learn to brush off unfair treatment as a rite of passage into university. At a certain point, this creates a cycle of abuse and freshmen who enter these reputed institutions with dreams and demands of their rightful provisions, continue to get denied and disappointed.

*Names have been changed upon request

Find Nuzha at nuzhaoishee1256504@gmail.com

Making a study playlist that works for you

People's opinions vary significantly on the effectiveness of listening to music while studying. While some find themselves unable to focus without listening to some sort of music, others might consider it to be a distraction. There is no hard and fast rule regarding study methods. Every method is valid if it works for you. If you are someone who finds music to be an appropriate supplement to your daily study routine, creating your own study playlist can be a fun and effective way to boost your focus and productivity while studying.

BIPRA PRASUN DAS

Here's a step-by-step guide to help you make your personalised study playlist.

Identify what works best for you

Consider what type of music helps you concentrate best. Some people prefer instrumental music, while others find ambient sounds or specific genres like classical, lo-fi, or acoustic tracks more helpful. You can gather information from existing study playlists on platforms like Spotify, YouTube, or Apple Music. Take note of the songs that resonate with you and add them to a list of potential tracks

for your playlist.

Choose songs wisely

Make sure the songs you select have a calm and non-distracting vibe. Avoid tracks with explicit lyrics or sudden changes in volume as they may interrupt your focus.

Check the tempo of the songs you choose. Songs with a tempo of 60-70 beats per minute (BPM) are often considered the most conducive to focus and relaxation. You can use online tools like getsongbpm.com or other apps to check the tempo of your songs. You might also find that variety is key to keeping your mind engaged. Mix up different artists and genres to maintain



ILLUSTRATION: FAISAL BIN IQBAL

interest throughout your study session. Organise the playlist and consider the length.

Arrange the tracks in a way that helps you maintain a steady flow of concentration. For instance, you might begin with slower-paced, softer songs and gradually build up to more energising ones or vice versa.

In addition, determine the ideal length of your playlist; it can be as short as 30 minutes or as long as a few hours, depending on the typical duration of your study sessions.

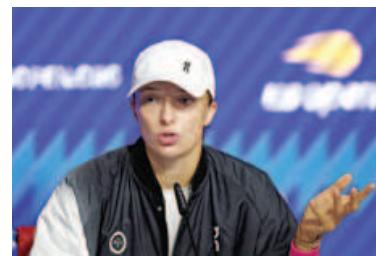
Customise for different subjects and experiment

If you study multiple subjects, you can create multiple playlists to cater to each subject's specific requirements. For example, you might consider more soothing music for reading and writing tasks, while faster beats could help during maths or problem-solving sessions.

Add new songs, remove the ones that don't quite fit. It is okay to modify your playlist as you discover what works and what doesn't. Keep changing and modifying till you find your perfect combination of melodies.

"I get more positive vibes, for sure than before last year's tournament. But being the defending champion is not easy, so I'm kind of taking it easy, trying to do everything step by step."

Defending US Open champion Iga Swiatek



Soma, Mou return to 'controversial' national TT squad

SPORTS REPORTER

Sonam Sultana Soma and Sadia Rahman Mou are set to represent Bangladesh again in international competitions after serving one year of a two-year ban, but there was more controversy surrounding the eight-player Bangladesh table tennis contingent for the upcoming Asian championships.

The paddlers are slated to fly for South Korea on September 1 with the hope of producing better results than the last edition, with the 26th Asian Table Tennis Championship scheduled to be held in Pyeongchang from September 3 to 10.

The Bangladesh Table Tennis Federation (BTTF) formed the men's and women's teams picking top three players each from national men's and women's rankings while including one male and one female player from the Bangladesh Youth Championships, ignoring the fourth-seeded player from the national rankings.

The 2017 national champion Javed Ahmed, fourth-ranked player after Manosh Chowdhury retired from the national team, alleged that BTTF vice-president Khandokar Hasan Munir excluded him from national team intentionally due to his good relation with Manosh, who has a rift with Munir.

Denying the allegation, Munir said, "I have good relation with Javed, whom I took to the Commonwealth Games squad in 2014. I still say that he is one of the talented players of the country."

"It was not my decision, rather the BTTF executive committee's decision to include a youth player, depending



Bangladesh players Najmul Hossain Shanto, Afif Hossain, Nasum Ahmed, Hasan Mahmud, and Mehedi Hasan Miraz pose for a photograph during an official photo session in Kandy on Monday ahead of the 16th edition of the Asia Cup, starting on August 30. [Bottom] Earlier in the day, Mushfiqur Rahim and Miraz enjoyed the scenic view of the city.

PHOTO: BCB/FACEBOOK



on the availability of sponsors. As Nafis Iqbal and Khoi Khoi Marma are both BKSP students, BKSP is bearing most of the expenditure for these two players," explained the BTTF official, adding that there was another such instance in 1991.

The BTTF had, in the last edition of the championships, picked four players each in men's and women's section based on their rankings.

Meanwhile, Soma and Mou were handed a two-year suspension for breach of discipline during the Birmingham Commonwealth Games last year when they visited relatives in London, skipping their scheduled matches. But the BTTF, earlier this month, lifted their suspension following an apology letter and considering their performance in last month's national championships.

Soma and Mou, who missed two international tournaments in last one year, still have six months' domestic suspension to serve.

"Asian championships are very challenging for us but we want to see where we stand. We will try our best to produce good results," said Soma.

"Good results mean winning medals but it is not an easy task to win a medal in Asian Championships. If we can improve our ranking playing against China, Japan and other superior teams and can play well against the South Asian nations, it will be a big achievement for us," said Mou, who is supposed to pair up with Soma in women's doubles event apart from playing in singles event.

Munir informed that the Asian championships will also work as qualifiers of the Commonwealth Games. He further stated that they are targeting qualification for the Commonwealth Games and improving their position compared to the 20th-place finish from the last edition.

Tigers enjoy rest day as wait for Liton continues

SPORTS REPORTER

Newly appointed skipper Shakib Al Hasan hurried to the official photoshoot for the Asia Cup in Kandy, Sri Lanka, yesterday, arriving at the event after the other team members.

It was a rest day for the Tigers, with no official training session scheduled. The players had gym sessions amidst the official photoshoot responsibilities while Mushfiqur Rahim was seen enjoying the scenic view of the city, revealed by a picture he shared on his social media page.

The Bangladesh team reached Kandy yesterday and the team management is still waiting on opener Liton Das. The opener was suffering from a fever and could not leave with the team.

Although Liton's fever has subsided, the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) opted to wait till the player feels well enough to travel. According to sources, he remains "unlikely" for the Tigers' Asia Cup opener against Sri Lanka on August 31 as the opener would need time to be match-ready even after recuperating from fever.

While talking to the media yesterday afternoon, the team manager Nafees Iqbal also stated that Liton would fly once he recovers.

Meanwhile, Tanzim Sakib, the new inclusion who replaced the

injured Ebadot Hossain, departed for Sri Lanka yesterday and was expected to join the team by yesterday evening.

The Tigers will partake in their first practice session on Tuesday since moving to Sri Lanka.

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Pro-BNP, AL lawyers cause ruckus at HC

Two judges walk out during hearing on Tarique's statements

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Judges of a High Court bench left the courtroom amid chaos following heated conversations between pro-BNP and Awami League-backed lawyers yesterday over the court's order to remove statements of BNP acting chairman Tarique Rahman from social media.

A lawyer allegedly even threw a book, containing the HC's cause list, towards the judges -- Justice Md Khasruzzaman and Justice Md Khairul Alam.

Additional police personnel were deployed outside the courtroom on the first floor of the HC's annex building to avoid any further untoward incident.

The incident took place when the HC bench was hearing a rule over publishing Tarique's statements.

The rule was issued after a writ petition was filed eight years ago questioning whether it was legal to publish his statements in print, electronic and social media.

Earlier in the day, HC bench directed the Bangladesh Telecommunication Regulatory Commission (BTRC) to immediately remove Tarique's statements from social media, including YouTube and Facebook.

It also dropped the petition, including the rule, from

SEE PAGE 6 COL 5



Part of this house has been blown up in an explosion caused by gas leak in Chattogram city's South Halishahar yesterday. The blast left one dead and another injured. Story on page 5.

PHOTO: RAJIB RAIHAN



Kazi Shahid Ahmed passes away

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Kazi Shahid Ahmed, a leading businessperson, author, publisher and sports organiser, died at a city hospital yesterday evening. He was 82.

He died of old age complications, said a source at the English daily Dhaka Tribune. His son Kazi Anis Ahmed is the publisher of the daily.

Born in 1940 in Jashore, Shahid was the founding chairman of the Gemcon Group. He was also the founder of the country's first-ever organic tea estate.

He was the publisher of the now defunct Bangla daily Ajker Kagoj and weekly Khobor Kagoj.

The Ajker Kagoj introduced a new era in

SEE PAGE 6 COL 6

FLOOD IN KURIGRAM

Around 30,000 still stranded

Situation unchanged; Teesta washes away half of 60-metre flood protection dam in Rajarhat

STAR REPORT

At least 30,000 people of Kurigram are currently marooned as the flood situation in the district's Rajarhat, Ulipur and Chilmari upazilas remains largely unchanged, according to the district relief and rehabilitation office.

The Teesta was still flowing above the danger level in the northern district, despite less rainfall and reduced flow of water from upstream India.

As of noon yesterday, the river was 9cm above the danger level at Kaumia Point of the Teesta Barrage, down from 30cm Sunday morning.

However, it was flowing up to 12cm above the danger level at several other points, according to the Flood Forecasting and Warning Centre (FFWC).

The Teesta crossed the danger mark on Friday.

In Rajarhat's Burirhat area, half of a 60-metre WDB flood control dyke collapsed Sunday night.

The remaining half is also at risk of getting washed away in the strong currents.

WDB officials have been trying to protect it by dumping geo bags.

Thousands of families living near the embankment are now at risk of facing inundation and subsequent erosion.

Abdullah Al Mamun, executive engineer of Kurigram WDB, told The Daily Star, "We have already informed the matter to higher authorities. The new dyke will be constructed once the necessary allocation is available."

Majibur Rahman, 68, a farmer in Burirhat, said, "The dyke was built in 1999. We never thought it would collapse."

Besides, 50 houses went into the river and 500

SEE PAGE 6 COL 1

Don't hatch conspiracy
Quader tells BNP leaders visiting Singapore

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Awami League General Secretary Obaidul Quader yesterday warned the BNP of stern action if the latter hatches any plot or does excesses in the name of politics.

"The conspirators are active and so are we. If they do excesses, we will not spare them," he said while addressing a rally at the auditorium of Institution of Engineers, Bangladesh, marking the National Mourning Day.

AI's science and technology affairs sub-committee organised the event titled "rally for development and peace".

About some BNP leaders' visit to Singapore, Quader said, "They have gone to Singapore together and I heard that a Jatiya Party leader also joined them. Talks are going on politics both at home and abroad. Talks are good. Do politics, but don't get involved in criminal activities, don't hatch conspiracy."

No movement ever becomes successful

SEE PAGE 6 COL 5

DENGUE CASES FROM AUG 20 TO 26

Over 56pc deaths due to shock syndrome

Shows DGHS data; 8 more die from the virus

HELEMUL ALAM

Around 56.79 percent of the 71 dengue patients, who passed away between August 20 and August 26, died of shock syndrome while 10.4 percent died of expanded dengue syndrome, according to data of the Directorate General of Health Services.

Some 3.4 percent of the deceased had comorbidity while 2.3 percent died from dengue hemorrhagic fever, shows the DGHS data released on Sunday.

The health directorate found 44 percent of the 71 patients died within a day after hospitalisation while 35 percent passed away within two to three days, 8 percent within four to five days, 10 percent between six and 10 days, and 3 percent after more than 10 days.

The World Health Organisation in 2012 had coined the term "expanded dengue syndrome" to describe patients that do not fit into either DHF (dengue hemorrhagic fever) or DSS (dengue shock syndrome) but show atypical symptoms in vital organ systems such as the cardiovascular system, neurological system, kidneys, gut, and hematological system.

Meanwhile, eight more dengue patients died in 24 hours preceding yesterday morning, taking this year's total dengue fatalities to 556, said a DGHS release.

At least 2,331 dengue cases were reported in the 24-hour period, raising

SEE PAGE 6 COL 2

GRAMEEN TELECOM
18 new cases filed against its chairman, two others
They're accused of violating labour law

COURT CORRESPONDENT

Eighteen fresh cases have been filed against Grameen Telecom chairman and two others for violating labour laws.

The statements of the cases did not mention any names of the accused, only their designations.

Grameen Telecom chairman is Nobel Laureate Prof Muhammad Yunus, said one of his lawyers Khaja Tanvir Ahmed. The company's managing director and chairman of the Trustee Board for the participation fund and welfare fund have also been sued.

On August 27, seventeen former employees and one incumbent employee of the company lodged

SEE PAGE 6 COL 4

Pakistan court drops Imran Khan's seditious case
Ruling on graft appeal due today

REUTERS, Islamabad



A Pakistani court yesterday quashed a sedition case against former prime minister Imran Khan, a relief for the embattled leader whose appeal against conviction in a separate corruption case will be decided on by a high court today.

The 70-year-old former cricket hero had filed an appeal in the Islamabad High Court, seeking to suspend his three-year sentence on corruption charges handed to him earlier this month, saying he was convicted without being given a right to defence.

"Judgement is reserved," his lawyer Naeem Panjwana said in a post on messaging platform X, formerly known as Twitter about the graft case, adding that the court will announce the ruling today.

SEE PAGE 6 COL 2

DSA CASE
Amnesty calls for Khadija's immediate release



STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Amnesty International called on Bangladeshi authorities to immediately and unconditionally release Khadijatul Kubra, who has been jailed for a year under the Digital Security Act (DSA) for hosting a webinar.

In a statement yesterday, Amnesty said Khadijatul's year-long detention and repeated denial of bail are a "travesty and flagrant violation of the right to freedom of expression in Bangladesh."

Khadijatul Kubra should be studying for her degree

SEE PAGE 6 COL 4



Lamia, a dengue patient, is on an IV drip at the Dhaka Shishu Hospital and her father is taking her to a lab for a blood test yesterday. The five-year-old from the capital's Shewrapara got admitted to the hospital on Sunday.

PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

Neolithic village found in France after 150yrs of research



AFP, Val Des Marais

Archaeologists working a vast Neolithic site in northeast France have uncovered what they say is the last piece of the puzzle -- traces of a permanent settlement.

The settlement was unearthed at the vast Neolithic site of Marais de Saint-Gond, giving rare insights into its social organisation 150 years after the first flints were discovered.

"This is the last piece of the jigsaw we were missing," said Remi Martineau, a researcher at France's national centre for scientific research (CNRS), who located the village with his team this summer.

In Marais de Saint-Gond in northeastern France, 15 large flint mines have already been identified on 450 hectares, as well as 135 hypogea -- constructed underground chambers.



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PERFORMANCE AFTER 2018 ASIA CUP					
Team	Matches	Won	Lost	Tied	No Result
India	84	52	28	1	3
Bangladesh	66	39	25	0	2
Pakistan	57	30	24	1	2
Sri Lanka	71	31	37	0	3
Afghanistan	44	18	24	0	2

A grand platform ahead of **THE WORLD CUP**

BISHWAJIT ROY

The 16th edition of the Asia Cup is set to provide a solid platform for the South Asian nations to fine-tune themselves for the ICC World Cup, which will also be hosted in the region beginning Oct 5.

The event itself, however, has turned into a significant fixture on the international cricket calendar, and the fans always show tremendous fervour for it. The competition has grown to the point that the rivalry between India and Pakistan no longer encapsulates it. Instead, the evolution of Bangladesh in the ODI format, the influx of new

players in Sri Lanka, and the ascent of Afghanistan give the tournament a genuine gravitas to savour.

Who is the favourite to win the trophy on September 17 at the R Premadasa Stadium in Colombo? "I think there is no basis to ask this question," former Bangladesh captain Habibul Bashar said, refusing to even entertain the subject.

Bashar even only partially agreed with former India captain Sourav Ganguly, who said picking a favourite will be very difficult as anyone can win the title.

Bashar and senior coach Nazmul Abedeen Fahim both agree that "this

Asia Cup will be wide open." Only a win by Nepal, who qualified for the first time, could cause a shock among the six teams.

As long as history goes, India are the most successful team in the competition, having won it seven times. Sri Lanka are second, having won five times, and Pakistan have also won the Asia Cup twice. Bangladesh can consider themselves unlucky for having tasted defeat in the finals on three occasions.

Afghanistan cannot be discounted either, with Pakistan captain Babar Azam recently saying, "The

Afghanistan team is on the rise, and

they have some good bowlers."

Fahim reckons India have an advantage for a specific reason, that being their mix of seasoned and emerging talents as well as the ability to regularly play strong cricket in big events.

Can Pakistan win the Asia Cup after an 11-year wait? "Pakistan appears to be a very sound and happy team under the leadership of Babar, which I believe is their main strength. However, I want to see if they can deliver under pressure," Fahim opined.

"Sri Lanka have the quality to play all-out cricket, and as a unit they can beat any team," Bashar remarked,

while Fahim feels the Lankans can repeat their success from the T20 Asia Cup last year.

And Bangladesh, according to Fahim, are "no longer a team that wins a match on a particular day. In ODI cricket, you cannot dismiss Bangladesh's chances. But it's a big issue to have a good and sound atmosphere before any competition. I'm not convinced about this because what recently happened involving the squad is pathetic."

Bashar thinks Bangladesh have a balanced squad except for the opening batter's position due to the absence of Tamim Iqbal.

Both Bashar and Fahim, however, opined that the impact of T20 cricket over the previous four years, since the 50-over Asia Cup in 2018, changed the complexion of ODI cricket. "I believe that the ability to score 300-plus runs will determine the fate of this year's Asia Cup," Bashar stated.

The stage is well set to put one's mettle to the test. As a worthy forerunner to the World Cup, this continental cricket spectacle will undoubtedly continue bestowing unforgettable moments of sublime brilliance -- apart from befittingly setting the tone for the global tournament.

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SHAKIB'S CAPTAINCY TO DEFINE how deafening is the Tigers' roar

From the start of 2021 till August 2022 before Shakib took over -- the highest strike-rate for an individual batter who had played at least 16 games for Bangladesh was 117.46, attained by Afif Hossain in his 33 innings. 340 fours and 113 sixes came from the bat of Bangladesh batters in 35 games during that period. The average strike-rate of batters during that period was 110.5.

ABDULLAH AL MEHDI

It was a curious innings from Shakib Al Hasan in March last year against South Africa that led Bangladesh to a momentous win in the first ODI of the bilateral series at Centurion. During a 64-ball 77, Shakib tactically outmanoeuvred South Africa, starting his hitting way earlier than expected. In fact, he did it in the middle overs. The innings, apart from contributing to a win that day, and an ensuing series win later, was a precursor to a much-needed change of approach. Shakib, perhaps, was showing how to go against the grain of what the usual approach was and turn what looked like a 280-score at first into a 300-plus one.

What are the factors that can facilitate a change of style so that Bangladesh are able to add more runs to the scoreboard?

To be more attacking means players being able to express themselves. On one hand, the leadership has a key role in communicating how and when the batters can be aggressive. On the other hand, a congenial dressing room environment also has a part to play in players being able to express themselves.

Effecting that change in style is an important discourse in Bangladesh cricket because of the way the Bangladesh ODI side have been trying to transform themselves over the last one-and-a-half years. But the Tigers now have a new captain in Shakib after Tamim Iqbal stepped down following his retirement saga after a fairly successful stint.

Merely a 24-year-old when he captained in the 2011 World Cup, Shakib now has become a much more mature player and a veteran in the side. His impact as a captain may have to be judged

from recent years rather than the chaotic times of 2011.

Will Shakib go aggressively in driving the team towards that playing style which may have an important effect on the team's World Cup ambitions? Only time can tell but the T20I side's recent changes under Shakib might shed some light on whether a change in approach has been seen in the shortest format.

From the start of 2021 till August 2022 -- before Shakib took over -- the highest strike-rate for an individual batter who had played at least 16 games for Bangladesh was 117.46, attained by Afif Hossain in his 33 innings. 340 fours and 113 sixes came from the bat of Bangladesh batters in 35 games during that period. The average strike-rate of batters during that period was 110.5.

In 21 matches since Shakib was made captain, the average strike-rate of batters went up to 126.

279 fours and 83 sixes have also come in these 21 games. Individual strike-rates soared, with Liton Das attaining a strike-rate of 141.6 in 19 matches during this period. Average boundaries hit per match went from 12.9 up to 17.2 following Shakib's captaincy.

These statistics speak of a significant increase in run-scoring tempo of the batters. Anyone familiar with Bangladesh's T20 fortunes knows that this recent change in tempo might have been a difficult one to effect.

England have now successfully been able to implement a 'Bazball' philosophy, especially by giving freedom to their batters.

"We want to create an environment where everyone has the freedom to try things without fear. I know it hasn't always been that way, even though we've always had the ability. We want our guys



to feel that clarity and confidence from us: We picked you because you're the best in the country at what you do. Hold nothing back. Express yourself. Show us what you can really do," England's Test captain Ben Stokes wrote in a Players' Tribune column in June this year.

Freedom has been a difficult concept to grasp in Bangladesh cricket. If freedom is what one wants to imbue, who better than Shakib to do it? During the aforesaid period of his captaincy, Shakib led by example

the betterment of the team," Nazmul Abedeen Fahim, cricket analyst and mentor to many national team stars, opined.

"A captain's playing philosophy has to make an impression on the team and it will come. The players we have right now, Shakib's thought-process goes very well with them. Look at Tanzid Tamim, [Nazmul Hossain] Shanto, Tawhid Hridoy, or Shakib himself or how Mushfiqur [Rahim] is playing at the moment, Shamim Hossain or even Afif [Hossain]; they play a similar type of cricket. Even Ebadot [Hossain], Hasan [Mahmud] or Taskin [Ahmed] have it," Fahim explained.

"When everyone develops a sense of responsibility, they own the team and take responsibility to prepare themselves too. They become thinking cricketers, a kind of thinking

that only a captain or a coach used to do. The players start thinking and become more educated. They do something because they know what they are doing. When someone knows what they are doing, the effect is much bigger," Fahim said, regarding creating a sense of responsibility throughout the team.

The pace unit, with recent performances, has earned its freedom in particular. The way Mushfiqur has flourished in a new role is commendable too.

The skill is there in the side. The experience of playing ODIs would come in handy. But following the Afghanistan series, the template now must be set from the Asia Cup. A big hurdle but also an opportunity for Shakib to make that impression.



A chance for pacers to show what they are made of

NABID YEASIN

Rubel Hossain's yorker going through the bat and pads of James Anderson at the Adelaide Oval in the 2015 World Cup will forever remain one of the most iconic moments in Bangladesh cricket. That moment helped Bangladesh make it to the quarterfinal of the World Cup for the first time at the expense of mighty England.

The 2015 World Cup in Australia and New Zealand saw the Bangladesh pacers -- skipper Mashrafe Bin Mortaza, Rubel, and Taskin Ahmed -- scalp a total of 24 wickets, the major force behind propelling the Tigers to their best ever showing in a mega event.

A young Taskin, part of that pace bowling trio, has now transformed into a much more potent and mature campaigner and spearheads the current unit of quicks who are hailed as arguably the best group of pacers Bangladesh has ever had.

Taskin is joined by the likes of Mustafizur Rahman, Hasan Mahmud, Shoriful Islam, and an uncapped 20-year-old Tanzim Hasan, who replaced an injured Ebadot Hossain in the squad. Losing Ebadot, who took wickets in 11 of the 12 ODIs he has played so far, to a knee injury sustained in the Afghanistan series at home in July, is sure to hurt the Tigers and will only intensify the challenge they are to face in the Asia Cup in Pakistan and Sri Lanka.

The current crop of pacers has had successes in recent times. Shoriful's spirited bowling to get his career-best four for 21 against



Afghanistan to help the Tigers shrug off the sudden announcement of Tamim Iqbal stepping down from captaincy by getting a consolation win in the final ODI last month could spring to mind when thought of the rare instances that Bangladesh pacers dominated proceedings in the format.

Besides that, the historic Test win in New Zealand in 2022 and the maiden ODI series win over South Africa in their own backyard in March the same year were all orchestrated by feisty performances from the likes of Taskin and Ebadot.

However, our pacers have still not been tested in big tournaments like this [the Asia Cup]. So, this is going to be a big challenge for this group of pacers," Imran told The Daily Star.

According to Imran, sporadic successes do not put the Tigers' pace bowling unit up there among the best, especially when compared to the likes of Pakistan's Haris Rauf, Naseem Shah, Shaheen Shah Afridi or India's Jasprit Bumrah, Mohammad Shami and Mohammad Siraj.

"We bowled well to win a Test in New Zealand, and then we won an ODI series in South Africa. Surely, our pacers have improved a lot. But that does not necessarily mean that our pacers are the best. These few instances of success cannot be used to judge the pace bowling unit.

"Even though they have been doing well, these types of tournaments that are overseen by the ICC [International Cricket Council] or the ACC [Asian Cricket Council] are often played on batting-friendly wickets. So, doing well here

in these tournaments where batters usually get advantage... this will show how well rounded we are as a pace bowling unit," Imran added.

One aspect where the Bangladesh pacers might suffer in the upcoming tournaments is in bringing in variations needed to adjust to demanding situations. While Taskin can be relied on to fire in a barrage of quick 145 kmph-plus deliveries, those might not be enough to contain runs once the batters settle on surfaces that are expected to aid them.

Also, Mustafizur is no longer a mystery like he used to be to batters around the globe while Shoriful's inconsistency is something the young pacer is yet to overcome. With all these factors in that Ebadot, known for his effective yorkers in the death and rising bouncers that startle the batters, is no longer in the scene, this Asia Cup will surely be a litmus test for the Tigers' pace-bowling unit.

"Our pacers do have variations in store. But then again, how our pacers react when batters get in the groove and start hitting boundaries is what will make the difference. Maybe this Asia Cup will show our pacers' ability to hold their nerves, how well they can bowl in pressure situations and in the slog overs, or how well they can bring in the variations and bowl those yorkers, and slowers and basically adjust to the way the situation demands," said Imran, cautioning the pace unit of what challenges might lie ahead for them this Asia Cup, overcoming which might lead to another notable moment like that of Rubel's in 2015.





PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

'Time to bring the trophy'

Nigar Sultana Joty, the Bangladesh women's ODI and T20I skipper, was part of the pack when the Tigresses won a momentous Asia Cup, beating India in the final in 2018. Here, she talks about Bangladesh men's team's possibilities in the upcoming Asia Cup, her favourite players, her assessment of the recently-appointed skipper Shakib Al Hasan and much more during an interview with The Daily Star's Abdullah Al Mehdi.

The Daily Star (DS): You have won the Asia Cup. How did it feel?

Nigar Sultana Joty (NSJ): Since it's the biggest achievement in Bangladesh's women's cricket, that was the most special moment for us. I would say that that tournament changed the whole image of women's cricket in Bangladesh.

DS: India would be a big opponent for the men's team. The women's team defeated India in that final. What was the intensity like in that game?

NSJ: When we played the Asia Cup final, it did not evoke a different kind of feeling regarding playing India. It didn't come to our minds that they are a very good team and that they are the defending champions.

Our main focus was to play good cricket. As we already had made the final, for us, there was nothing to lose. But we thought if we won, we would have much to gain. Our captain Salma [Khatun] apu told us one thing before we took the field which I still remember vividly. She said, "We don't have anything to lose but a lot to achieve."

DS: How do you evaluate the men's team not winning a tournament of this stature yet?

NSJ: First, of course, it hurts. The guys and girls all play for Bangladesh. And not only as players but as fans, we expect a lot from the men's team. That's why we want them to win. When both men's and women's teams progress similarly step by step, then we can say our cricket is developing. We have a lot of potential and I won't want to linger on the past. In this format, we have been playing really good cricket recently. The team is in a good flow, so, obviously, Bangladesh will have a lot of chances to do well.

DS: What do you think are the reasons for having a great chance?

NSJ: If you look at the players' recent form and the way the batters are doing at the moment, well-supported by the bowlers, there is a great chance. Previously, we were very much spin-dependent.

You would see that the opposite is happening now and pacers are dominating a lot more in terms of performance. Both batting and bowling departments are balanced, and there is energy on the field. I would say things are looking really good.

DS: What would you say about the fielding department of the Tigers, an area where they were below par previously?

NSJ: I think there is a lot more energy now and everyone has improved immensely. Previously, there used to be some negativity but the percentage has decreased a lot. It's not like mistakes don't happen anymore, but far fewer now.

My personal opinion is that when a team's fielding unit is very good, the potential for winning matches is high.

DS: How would you evaluate the new stars alongside the seniors in the squad, and who do you feel will shine?

NSJ: Everyone has potential. [Najmul Hossain] Shanto bhaiya has been there for a while and he's doing really well. Tawhid Hridoy is very consistent and the one thing I like the most about his batting is that it is eye-catching. Obviously, Shakib bhai is just Shakib bhai and he contributes a lot to the team. Mushfiqur [Rahim] bhai is Mr. Dependable and a lot of things will depend on him. If we get a strong start from Liton [Das] bhai, which I dearly want as I am a big fan of his batting, it will be great. Actually, I liked his playing style from a long time back. He plays flawlessly and can play all around and has all the shots. That's why his cricket feels really attractive.

If he plays well, then the ones coming after him like Hridoy, Shanto, or Shakib bhai and Mushfiqur bhaiya would make our batting lineup really strong. As finishers, Shamim Patwari has been doing immensely and Afif [Hossain] is also there. Our batting unit will have to play a big role. When you have to put on a big score or when you are chasing one, it will depend on them.

DS: Since we know now that you are a Liton fan, which of his shots are your favourite?

NSJ: It's the pull shot. I would say he also plays the square drive well but the pull shot is too good. When he pulled Jofra Archer in the England series, a bowler that is impressively fast and bowling at 145-146 km/h, how he was playing the pull flawlessly without effort was just incredible.

DS: You are a skipper yourself. How do you see Shakib as a captain?

NSJ: He's one of the best and that's how it always is. I think that he makes decisions about the team's requirements according to the scenario in a very short time. His captaincy is extraordinary. A naturally talented captain, he binds the team together which is the most important thing. He always focuses on the game and thinks hard about how the whole team can perform.

DS: How do you see the other sides in the Asia Cup?

NSJ: The Asia Cup did not appear to be as important to India four-five years ago as it seems right now. They used to send their second-tier teams. But now they are going full-strength. Sri

Lanka are in very good shape and as they are the defending champions, they would look to keep the title. Since the conditions [at the World Cup] would more or less be the same, every team would field their best eleven as it's a huge opportunity.

DS: How do you evaluate the India-Pakistan rivalry?

NSJ: It's a high-voltage fixture enjoyed by everyone. However, when I used to ask players about how the fixture felt in women's cricket, they would say that they didn't feel much but believed that people created the vibe to be entertained. From a different angle, though, when India-Pakistan men's game happens, the fans feel that rivalry and the quality the teams possess make for a really competitive fixture. It's quite enjoyable.

DS: Who would you be looking forward to in the Asia Cup apart from the Bangladesh players?

NSJ: I enjoy Babar Azam's batting and follow his matches. So I'll be watching what he does.

DS: How do you see the demands put on Bangladesh in terms of frequent travelling during the Asia Cup?

NSJ: Not everyone would face the same but as professional cricketers, you have to follow the tournament rules. So our players have to stay fit as it's our job.

DS: What would be the effect of not having a leg-spinner in the side?

NSJ: See, thinking about what's not there will only bring negativity. So it's better to think of what's there. Even without a wrist-spinner, our spin attack is not bad. Teams from other countries play leg-spin well too since they play leg-spinners as part of preparation. I don't know if it would affect the side. Our women's side have a lot of leg-spinners, which makes us feel lucky.

DS: What would be your message for the Bangladesh team in the Asia Cup?

Joty: It's time to bring the trophy. That's my message to them.

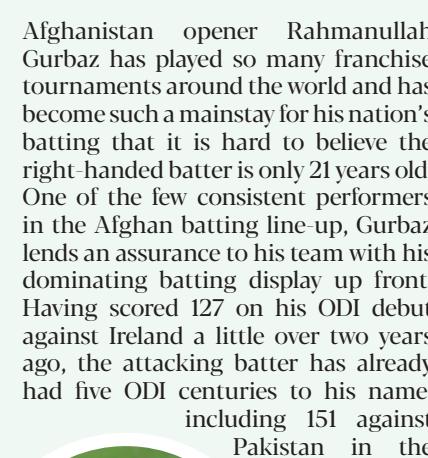
PLAYERS TO WATCH

Towhid Hridoy (Bangladesh)



While many have come with a lot of promise and yet withered away too quickly, Towhid Hridoy has already garnered praise from all and sundry, who believe that the 2020 U-19 World Cup-winning star is here to stay. Still, very early in his international career, the 22-year-old has forged the reputation of being a cool head with a fearless heart. Just when Bangladesh's vaunted middle-order was struggling for runs, Hridoy eased into the side and assuaged the team management's headache with his consistent performances at No. 5, scoring 338 runs in nine ODIs at a staggering average of 48.28 and a healthy strike rate of 97.68 – including a 92 on debut against Ireland in Sylhet. Hridoy's reputation only increased when he played a starring role in Jaffna Kings' Lanka Premier League campaign in the T20 format, earning plaudits from the franchise owners as well as fans – something rare for a young Bangladeshi cricketer. The Bangladesh team management will be banking on Hridoy to continue to lend solidity to the middle order in the Asia Cup.

Rahmanullah Gurbaz (Afghanistan)



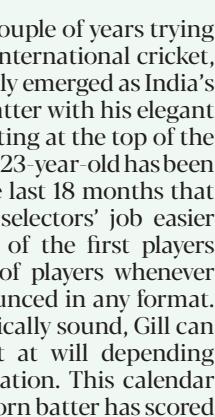
Afghanistan opener Rahmanullah Gurbaz has played so many franchise tournaments around the world and has become such a mainstay for his nation's batting that it is hard to believe the right-handed batter is only 21 years old. One of the few consistent performers in the Afghan batting line-up, Gurbaz lends an assurance to his team with his dominating batting display up front. Having scored 127 on his ODI debut against Ireland a little over two years ago, the attacking batter has already had five ODI centuries to his name, including 151 against Pakistan in the second match of their recent bilateral series in Sri Lanka. Boasting a high average of 41.43 and a healthy strike rate of 85.93, Gurbaz is the perfect foil for the likes of Ibrahim Zadran and Rahmat Shah, who like to start a little slow in an effort to anchor the innings. Gurbaz's familiarity with Sri Lankan and Pakistani conditions means he will hardly need time to acclimatise with the nature of the wickets.

Naseem Shah (Pakistan)



Often going under the radar because of the all-encompassing presence of Shaheen Shah Afridi, Naseem Shah has quietly carved out a reputation as Pakistan's gamechanger in his fledgling shorter format career. The 20-year-old mixes express pace with swing to cause havoc to opposition batters, his prowess in the 50-over game quite evident from his highly impressive statistics. In 10 matches so far, the pacer from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province has bagged 25 wickets, including two five-wicket hauls against the Netherlands and New Zealand. He is yet to go wicketless in his ODI career, boasting an astounding average of 16.12 and a meagre strike rate of 4.63. What makes Naseem a coach's dream, though, is his ability to handle pressure and contribute important runs with the bat at the death – his latest cameo against Afghanistan saw him hit Fazalhaq Farooqi for a boundary for the winning runs in the penultimate ball in Hambantota in the second ODI on Thursday, harkening back memories of his two sixes against the same bowler in an Asia Cup T20 fixture in Sharjah last year.

Shubman Gill (India)

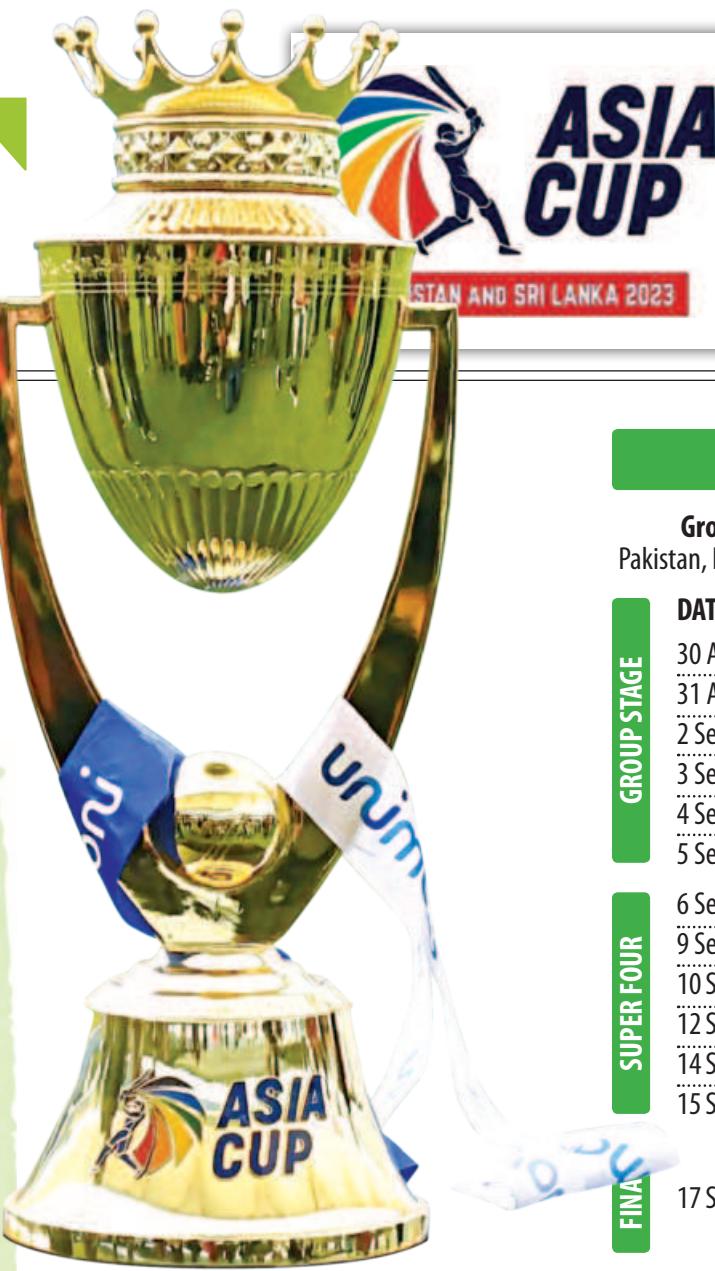


After spending a couple of years trying to find his feet in international cricket, Shubman Gill finally emerged as India's latest all-format batter with his elegant and aggressive batting at the top of the order last year. The 23-year-old has been so prolific over the last 18 months that he has made the selectors' job easier by becoming one of the first players to be on the list of players whenever the squad is announced in any format. Elegant and technically sound, Gill can shift gears almost at will depending on the match situation. This calendar year, the Punjab-born batter has scored 750 runs in 12 innings, including two centuries and a double century. The youngster has an incredible ODI career average of 62.47 in 27 matches with a strike rate of 104.06, something which has helped India get a kickstart to their innings even as Rohit Sharma or KL Rahul continue to struggle for consistency. This will be the first major tournament for Gill and an ideal platform to prove his worth.

Maheesh Theekshana (Sri Lanka)



The latest in line of Sri Lanka's long list of mystery spinners, Maheesh Theekshana seems to have finally found his groove and is emerging from the shadows of his more illustrious spin partners, Wanindu Hasaranga. After having burst into the scene with a four-wicket haul on his debut against South Africa in 2021, Theekshana found it hard to assert himself as the go-to man for the Lankans in international cricket for a year-and-a-half. But the Colombo native seems to have turned a corner this year, playing a key role as the island nation navigated a tricky qualifying phase for the upcoming World Cup. Theekshana took 21 wickets in eight matches in that event, with the last five outings fetching him 18 wickets while staying miserly. He took three consecutive four-fors in the last three matches, against Zimbabwe, West Indies and the Netherlands. With a crucial Asia Cup coming up, Theekshana, together with Hasaranga, could likely form the best spin duo of the tournament.



BRACE FOR THE ASIAN BATTLE

'Champion teams have to have bouncebackability'

Former Bangladesh captain Mominul Haque was part of the team when the Asia Cup was last played in the ODI format in 2018 where the Tigers reached the final. With another Asia Cup around the corner, the 31-year-old thinks the Tigers have a good opportunity to do something special this time. The cricketer from Cox's Bazar spoke to The Daily Star's Mazhar Uddin in an exclusive interview, sharing his views regarding which aspects the Tigers can bank on to lift their maiden continental title. The excerpts of the interview are given below:



DS: You were part of the team when Bangladesh reached the final of the Asia Cup in 2018. How do you see Bangladesh's chances this time around?

Mominul Haque (MH): We were in good shape at that time, however, unfortunately, we have been unable to become champions till now. I still remember the defeat to Pakistan in the final of 2012. I think this time is a big opportunity for us. From past experience, we know what are the hurdles we need to overcome to become champions. We have a few senior players who played in the past finals as well.

DS: Do you feel Bangladesh need to win a title as a team to move forward, and what are the barriers that are stopping us?

MH: We have been playing international cricket for over 20 years now and we have quite a few players who have played over 200 matches. So from that perspective, I feel we really need to win a title. We are a very good ODI side and our record speaks for itself.

DS: Who can be the key players for Bangladesh this time around?

MH: I don't know whether you will agree with me or not, but both times we reached the final of the Asia Cup, we had good bowling attacks. I think our bowling unit has improved a lot and a lot will depend on them. If we score around 240-250, our bowling unit can defend that. Our pace bowlers are doing well and we also have two world-class spinners in Shakib Al Hasan and Mehedi Hasan Miraz.

DS: When compared with teams like India or



DS: We always talk about the importance of momentum. In brief tournaments like the Asia Cup, where does Bangladesh need to start from?

MH: There are many big teams who lose the first two matches of a tournament but go on to play in the final. Champion teams are those that are able to absorb the most pressure. Momentum doesn't matter for those who can handle pressure. If you want to become champion you may lose one game but you have to have the ability to bounce back.

DS: How important is it for all the players to know their specific roles and contribute towards the team's victory?

MH: If you look at the history of World Cups, you will notice at least five players from champion teams have contributed in a game. Shakib [Al Hasan] bhai played really well in the last World Cup but if two or three more players had performed regularly, then we would have had a chance to win the World Cup. It has to be a collective approach from the team to get the results in big tournaments.

ROLL OF HONOUR

YEAR	HOST	CHAMPIONS	RUNNERS-UP	FORMAT
1984	UAE	India	Sri Lanka	ODI
1986	Sri Lanka	Sri Lanka	Pakistan	ODI
1988	Bangladesh	India (2)	Sri Lanka	ODI
1991-92	India	India (3)	Sri Lanka	ODI
1995	UAE	India (4)	Sri Lanka	ODI
1997	Sri Lanka	Sri Lanka (2)	India	ODI
2000	Bangladesh	Pakistan	Sri Lanka	ODI
2004	Sri Lanka	Sri Lanka (3)	India	ODI
2008	Pakistan	Sri Lanka (4)	India	ODI
2010	Sri Lanka	India (5)	Sri Lanka	ODI
2012	Bangladesh	Pakistan (2)	Bangladesh	ODI
2014	Bangladesh	Sri Lanka (5)	Pakistan	ODI
2016	Bangladesh	India (6)	Bangladesh	T20I
2018	UAE	India (7)	Bangladesh	ODI
2022	UAE	Sri Lanka (6)	Pakistan	T20I
2023	Pakistan & Sri Lanka	?	?	ODI

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20,001 to 40,000	1,000	80,001 to 100,000	4,000
40,001 to 60,000	2,000	More than 100,000	5,000

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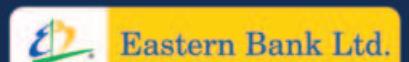


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MOST RUNS IN ASIA CUP FOR BANGLADESH (ODI, TOP THREE)

PLAYER	MAT	RUNS	AVG	SR	100	50	HS
Mushfiqur Rahim	21	699	36.78	84.52	2	2	144
Tamim Iqbal	13	519	43.25	81.34	0	6	70
Shakib Al Hasan	13	402	33.50	103.07	0	3	68

MOST WICKETS IN ASIA CUP FOR BANGLADESH (ODI, TOP THREE)

PLAYER	MAT	WKTS	AVG	ECON	BEST
Abdur Razzak	18	22	36.18	4.67	3/17
Shakib Al Hasan	13	19	32.73	4.87	4/42
Mashrafe Mortaza	19	18	48.22	5.69	2/25