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### Morocco quake kills over 1,300

Rescue teams comb for survivors; 1,832 injured; no Bangladeshis reported harmed

STAR REPORT

The deadliest earthquake in Morocco since 1960 has killed more than 1,300 people, as troops and emergency services scrambled to reach remote mountain villages where casualties are still feared trapped, authorities said yesterday.

The 6.8-magnitude quake struck late Friday in a mountainous area 72 kilometres (45 miles) southwest of tourist hotspot Marrakesh, the US Geological Survey

With strong tremors also felt in the coastal cities of Rabat, Casablanca and Essaouira, the quake caused widespread damage and sent terrified residents and tourists scrambling to safety in the middle of the night. However, no Bangladeshis was injured, said the

Bangladesh embassy in Rabat. "All Bangladesȟi expatriates are safe," Ummul Husnaeen, chargé d'affaires at embassy, told The Daily

It was the strongest-ever quake to hit the North African kingdom, and is the region's "biggest in more than 120 years."

> **Bill McGuire,** professor emeritus at Britain's University College London

Star in a WhatsApp message around 6:48pm yesterday. She said they have been in constant touch with the Bangladeshis present in the country and remained alert to provide any support given the current situation.

There are about 50 Bangladeshis enlisted with the mission

who live in different parts of Morocco, the official said. A few of them are business people while several others are in blue-collar jobs, she added.

In the mountain village of Moulay Brahim near the quake's epicentre, rescue teams searched for survivours in the rubble of collapsed houses while residents began

digging graves for the dead on a nearby hill, reports AFP. It was the strongest-ever quake to hit the North African kingdom, and is the region's "biggest in more than 120

> SEE PAGE 2 COL 3 EVERYTHING WAS SHAKING VIOLENTLY -- PAGE 2



A woman standing in front of her earthquake-damaged house in the old city in Marrakesh yesterday. A powerful earthquake shook Morocco late Friday.

#### Macron due in town today

PORIMOL PALMA



French President Emmanuel Macron arriving in Dhaka today on a two-day visit, in a testament to the growing importance of Bangladesh SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

### Delhi declaration adopted amid divides over war

Ukraine says statement 'nothing to be proud of' as it makes no mention of 'Russian aggression'

OUR CORRESPONDENT, New Delhi

The G20 summit in New Delhi under India's presidency yesterday reached a consensus on the leaders' joint declaration after India changed the text on the deeply **G20 SUMMIT** divisive issue of the Ukraine war.

The announcement about the consensus on the declaration and its subsequent adoption came hours after India circulated a new text to the G20 countries to describe the Ukraine conflict.

There have been several rounds of

negotiation without any consensus on the text on Ukraine before India yesterday shared a new narrative on the Ukraine crisis for the joint declaration.

The new draft emphatically said the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons is "inadmissible," which diplomats

aggression in Ukraine.

saw as an indirect message to Russia. There was, however, no direct mention of Russian

SEE PAGE 7 COL 4 US, INDIA, SAUDI, EU UNVEIL RAIL, PORTS DEAL – PAGE 7

### Respond to global crises unitedly PM urges G20

STAR REPORT

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina vesterday stressed the need for strengthening global solidarity adopting and coordinated response address crises.



"Here G20 and international financial institutions have crucial roles to play, and Bangladesh is ready to support their efforts for tailoring actionable recommendations to tackle the crises," she said while putting forward four recommendations concerning the existence of mankind and the Earth.

Hasina was addressing the "One Earth" session of the G20 summit in New Delhi, report BSS and UNB.

The premier was attending the summit at the Bharat Mandapam convention centre at the invitation of her Indian counterpart Narendra Modi.

In her second recommendation, Hasina said bold, concrete and concerted actions must be taken at the global level for ensuring global peace and stability for the greater benefit of humanity.

In her third recommendation, the premier urged all to operationalise Loss and Damage Fund as early as possible for creating additional financing mechanisms to address climate induced migration.

Hasina in her fourth recommendation said that all humans should have equal

"The global community must not forget ensuring of the return of the forcibly displaced Myanmar nationals to Myanmar and it must continue its humanitarian support," she said.

The PM made the recommendations as one of the champions of the UN secretary-

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#### Hasina, Biden have candid conversation Momen says

PORIMOL PALMA

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and her daughter Saima Wazed had a candid conversation with US President Joe Biden in New Delhi yesterday

Foreign Minister AK Abdul Momen told The Daily Star how they came across Biden.

"We were going out of the main exhibition hall. I found Secretary of State Antony Blinken walking slowly and Biden talking to a leader," Momen said, adding that he then approached Blinken and told him that Hasina would like to speak to Biden. "Antony said, 'why not?"

"The prime minister told Biden that the people of Bangladesh are her only thoughts. She would like to do everything for the welfare of the people," Momen said.

In response, Biden told her that he knows that she was working very well and made significant socio-economic

"Our prime minister invited Biden to visit Bangladesh. Biden then asked 'what is the good time?'. She said December, January and February are our winter, which is like spring in the US. Biden then said he would find time for visiting Bangladesh."

### Fake experts driving praises of govt achievements

AFP, Dhaka

of articles praising Bangladeshi government policies apparently by independent experts have appeared in national and international media but the authors have questionable credentials, fake photos, and may not even exist, an AFP investigation has found.

Commentators say it is evidence of a sustained campaign of disinformation by unknown actors ahead of elections due by the end of January but appears to be intended to benefit the government of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina.

Such articles have been published by Chinese state news agency Xinhua, leading media across Asia, and quoted by the South Asia Brief of the Washington-based Foreign Policy magazine.

Rights groups and foreign powers, including the United States, have long raised concerns over efforts by Hasina's government to silence criticism and stamp out political dissent

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US President Joe Biden takes a selfie with Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and her daughter Saima Wazed, chairperson of the National Advisory Committee on Autism and Neurodevelopmental Disorders, on the sidelines of the G20 Summit at Bharat Mandapam Convention Centre in New Delhi yesterday morning. PHOTO: PID

# **Everything was shaking violently**

Says Bangladeshi tourist in Morocco

JAMIL MAHMUD

Nasir Uddin Badal was having dinner at a restaurant in Marrakesh city of Morocco when the devastating earthquake struck the African country on Friday night (local time).

52-year-old Bangladeshi businessman first noticed the plate and cutlery on his table shaking at the eatery near the popular tourist spot Jemaa el-Fnaa

"Then it felt like the floor and everything else were shaking violently," he said, adding that he immediately ran to an open space close to the square.

Within moments, thousands of people, many of whom are tourists from across the world, gathered at the square. A team of police arrived minutes later and asked people to calm down and not leave the square, said Nasir, a resident of Moghbazar in Dhaka.

He arrived in Morocco on August 30 as a tourist, and was scheduled to leave the country today.

"My hotel is a five- or six-minute walk from the Jemaa el-Fnaa square. But the police would not allow anyone to leave. And

they kept asking people to remain outdoors. "After the tremor stopped, sirens from ambulances and fire trucks ripped  $\,$  crossed the 1,000-mark.

through the midnight air. I tried getting my belongings from the hotel around 12:45am, over one and a half hours after the quake. But the hotel employees requested me to

"While walking to the hotel, I saw the broken minaret of a mosque. There were large cracks on buildings. I spent the whole night out in the open. The hotel staffers let me in at the break of day."

Nasir boarded a train around 6:50am and left for Casablanca.

The Bangladesh Embassy in Morocco said Bangladeshis in Morocco were unharmed.

"To our great relief, we found all Bangladeshi expatriates safe," Ummul Husnaeen, chargé d'affaires at the Bangladesh Embassy in Rabat, said in a WhatsApp message to this correspondent.

She added that the embassy was in touch with the Bangladeshis.

Around 50 Bangladeshis living in Morocco are enlisted with the embassy. Two of them are businessmen, one is a computer engineer and several others have blue-collar

According to the official, the capital city of Rabat is several hundred kilometres away from the epicentre.

The death toll from

#### 86pc DSA cases pending disposal: law minister

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A total of 7,001 cases have been filed under the Digital Security Act so far, and 5,995 or 86 percent of those cases are still awaiting disposal, said Law Minister Anisul Huq at a conference in the capital yesterday

"When we observed that the law was being abused, we sat down to discuss how it could be amended," the minister said while speaking at the fourth broadcast conference of the Broadcast Journalist Centre at the Bangla Academy Auditorium.

His comments come at a time when there are serious criticisms and reservations about the government's decision to enact a new law Cyber Security Act -- replacing the controversial Digital Security Act.

The law minister defended keeping a provision for the police to conduct arrests without a warrant in the new bill.

Section 42 of the bill allows law enforcers to raid, search premises, or arrest persons based on a suspicion that a crime is being committed or about to be committed, or evidence will be destroyed. This provision is a replication of Section 43 of the Digital Security Act

said

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### Patient dies falling from hospital building

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

An 80-year-old female patient died after falling from the fourth floor of M Abdur Rahim Medical College Hospital in Dinajpur early yesterday, said

Amena Khatun, 80, was wife of the late Afsar Ali. She was from Shalandar (Noyapara) village under Parbatipur upazila.

Farid Hossain, officer-in-charge of Dinajpur Kotwali Police Station, said the woman was admitted to the female medicine ward on the fourth floor of the hospital for old age complications on September 5.

Mosreba Khatun, her daughter-in-law, was her attendant at the hospital.

Talking to the reporters, she said she woke up at around 3:00am and saw that her mother-in-law was not in her bed.

Later, after frantically searching for her, she was found on the slab of a drain on the ground. She was taken to the hospital's emergency room, but the duty doctor pronounced her dead.

The woman either accidentally fell or jumped, according to the police.

Police sent her body to the hospital morgue for autopsy, said the OC.

#### 7 arrested for severing youth's wrist

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Rapid Action Battalion yesterday arrested seven people for severing the wrist of a young man in the capital's Mohammadpur.

The arrestees are -- Ahmed Khan, 22, Hasan alias Guti Hasan, 24, Hanif Hossain Joy, 24, Ramzan, 23, Raju, 19, Rafidul Islam Rana alias Rafat, 23, and Tusher Hawlader, 23.

The criminals filmed themselves publicly severing the wrist of a young man and uploaded it online, said Rab Legal and Media Wing Director Commander Khandaker Al Moin.

They were identified from CCTV footage, tracked down, and picked up from different areas of Dhaka and Bagerhat, the official added.

#### Jubo League man stabbed to death

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

A Jubo League activist was hacked to death at a family arbitration that was called to settle a land dispute in Rangpur Sadar upazila on Friday night.

Rezaul Karim, 28, a resident of Lahirihat village, was an activist of Chandanpat union unit Jubo League. He was also the former Chhatra League president of the same unit.

According to locals, Rezaul and his relatives sat at a family arbitration to settle an ongoing land dispute amongst themselves on Friday afternoon. There, Rezaul and his cousin Rabbi got into a heated argument. At one point, Rabbi took out a sharp object and hit Rezaul on the head in front of all the members of the arbitration.

He was rushed to Rangpur Medical College Hospital, where he died undergoing treatment at

around 7:30pm. The poli

for an autopsy.

both in economic and strategic terms to the European nation.

president in 33 years Macron would be flying in the

The visit is the first by a French

evening from New Delhi, where he is attending the G20 summit. Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, who will be returning from New Delhi in the afternoon, will receive him at the Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport. She will host an official dinner

in honour of Macron at a city hotel tonight. Tomorrow morning, he will pay homage to the memory of Bangabandhu at Dhanmondi 32 and visit the Bangabandhu Memorial Museum.

The two premiers will then hold a bilateral meeting at the Prime Minister's Office.

Why is the visit important? Over the last few years, the relations between France Bangladesh have improved

significantly. Bangladesh's first-ever satellite, Bangabandhu-1, was made by the French company Thales. During Macron's visit, the two countries may sign a deal for the second satellite.

Thales manufactured Bangabandhu-1 satellite, but it was launched into space by Elon Musk's

SpaceX. "However, this time, Thales will both manufacture and launch the satellite. So far this has been the discussion," a foreign ministry official told The Daily

Star yesterday. Foreign Minister AK Abdul Momen said Bangladesh agreed to buy 10 planes, including two cargoes, from Airbus, a European multinational in

which France has a major stake. Bangladesh also welcomes the French proposal of setting up a satellite manufacturing unit in Bangladesh.

"These are big deals," the foreign ministry official said, adding that France has also been working on some important projects including airport radar systems in Bangladesh.

Dhaka, bilateral trade has gone from Euro 210 million in 1990 to Euro 4.9 billion today.

According to the French embassy in

France is Bangladesh's fifth-largest export destination. French companies

are now involved in various sectors including engineering, aerospace and water.

Until now, France has approved 1.57 billion Euros as loans to Bangladesh and 31 million Euros as grants to support a total of 15 projects in key sectors including water and sanitation, according to the French embassy.

"We are thrilled to see a growing interest from both sides to enhance business, in particular, to build on French technology and know-how to support the move from Digital Bangladesh to Smart Bangladesh. The upcoming visit of Emmanuel Macron will be the occasion to concretise some projects and boost further economic relations." it said.

Macron will continue to implement France's strategy in the Indo-Pacific

"It will also be an opportunity to deepen our bilateral relationship with a country that is undergoing rapid economic growth, with France's support and seeking to diversify its partnerships," the embassy said on its official Facebook page.

Momen said France has taken

the Loss and Damage initiative to support the climate-affected countries. Bangladesh, being at the forefront of climate victims, seeks the Loss and Damage initiative to be operationalised.

We need a lot of funding for adaptation activities but the developed countries are yet to make functional the initiative. We would request the French president to take the initiative, Momen said.

France, a leader in the EU and a permanent member of the UN Security Council, has great weight in the international forums.

"We would seek their support for a sustainable solution to the Rohingya crisis," Momen told reporters last week.

A foreign policy analyst said despite France being a powerful country both at the UN and EU, it has an independent foreign policy, which is not lecturing or pressuring other countries.

"France has a moderate way of talking about human rights and democracy. This is something that Bangladesh would like at a time when the US is pressuring Bangladesh for these issues," he said, asking not to be named.

## Macron due in town today Morocco quake kills over 1,300

years," said Bill McGuire, professor emeritus at Britain's University College London.

"Where destructive earthquakes are rare, buildings are simply not constructed robustly enough... so many collapse, resulting in high casualties," Bill added. Updated interior ministry figures yesterday showed the quake killed at

least 1,305 people, the vast majority in Al-Haouz, the epicentre, and Taroudant provinces. Another 1,832 people were injured,

including 1,220 in a critical condition, the ministry said. Civil défence Colonel Hicham

Choukri who is heading relief operations told state television the earthquake have created "an

parts of a minaret collapsed on Jemaa el-Fna square in the historic city. AFP correspondent saw hundreds of people flocking to the square to spend the night for fear of

aftershocks, some with blankets while

others slept on the ground. Houda Outassaf, a local resident, said she was "still in shock" after feeling the earth shake beneath her

feet -- and losing relatives. "I have at least 10 members of my family who died... I can hardly believe it, as I was with them no more than two days ago," she said.

ministry interior

#### that the epicentre and strength of authorities have "mobilised all the necessary resources to intervene and exceptional emergency situation". help the affected areas" The regional blood transfusion Footage on social media showed

centre in Marrakesh called on residents to donate blood for those injured. Foreign leaders expressed their condolences and many offered

assistance, including Israel with which

Morocco normalised relations in Neighbour and regional rival Algeria announced it was suspending a two-year-old ban on all Moroccan flights through its airspace to enable

aid deliveries and medical evacuations. US President Joe Biden said he was 'deeply saddened by the loss of life and

devastation".

Chinese leader Xi Jinping expressed "deep grief for the victims" and hope that "the Moroccan government and people will be able to overcome the impact of this disaster".

Pope Francis expressed "his profound solidarity with those who are touched in the flesh and heart by this tragedy". In 2004, at least 628 people were

killed and 926 injured when a quake hit Al Hoceima in northeastern Morocco, and in 1960 a magnitude 6.7 quake in Agadir killed more than 12,000.

The 7.3-magnitude El Asnam earthquake in Algeria killed 2,500 people and left at least 300,000 homeless in 1980.

### Respond to global crises

FROM PAGE 1 general's Global Crisis Response Group, constituted in 2022.

Hasina called for a global order

which should pave solutions to poverty alleviation, mitigating climate change effects, preventing conflicts, and financing technological transfer for a knowledge-based society. The PM said this summit is taking

place at a time when the Earth is impacted by multiple crises of climate change, Covid-19 pandemic, and challenges of sanctions and countersanctions. "These challenges make it imperative

for all to embrace the vision of one community with shared future for mankind, for peace and development." Bangladesh, despite making a negligible contribution to global climate change, has suffered the most as a

victim of its consequences, she said. "Therefore, our development endeavours are focused on green and sustainable development. Now, we are also taking circular economy approaches," she said. She mentioned that Bangladesh

movement, launched by Prime Minister Modi, to promote environmentally conscious practices. According to the World Bank's Groundswell Report 2021, impacts of

endorses the campaign of LIFESTYLE

climate change may drive 13.3 million people from their usual habitats by 2050.

"Though Bangladesh has little scope for mitigation, we have undertaken many transformative measures to tackle perilous impacts of climate change consistent with implementing the Paris Agreement, and achieving the SDGs," Hasina said.

The PM said she had launched the Ashrayan project in 1997, under which nearly 840,000 landless and homeless families have been rehabilitated with houses and land free of cost till August

"Our target is to have Bangladesh free of homeless and landless people." Hasina appreciated Indian premier Modi's initiative for Conference on Disaster Resilient Infrastructure. Bangladesh joined the platform in July

Earlier, the Bangladesh premier was formally welcomed by G20 Chairman Modi at the opening session of the G20 summit.

#### GLOBAL BIOFUELS ALLIANCE LAUNCHED

Yesterday, Hasina joined the leaders of seven other countries, including US President Joe Biden and Indian PM Modi, in launching the Global Biofuels Alliance (GBA) to help cut down on the world's dependence on fossil fuel that

drives global warming.

Modi urged G20 countries to join the GBA initiative with a plea to take ethanol blending with petrol globally to 20 percent, reports our New Delhi correspondent.

The GBA is aimed at facilitating

cooperation and intensifying the use of sustainable biofuels across sectors, including transportation. Brazilian President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva, and Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni were present, among

other global leaders, at the launch of

the GBA on the sidelines of the G20 ummit Besides India, the initiating GBA members include Argentina, Bangladesh, Brazil, Italy, Mauritius, South Africa, the UAE and the US, while Canada and Singapore are observer

#### countries HASINA JOINS 'ONE FAMILY'

**SESSION** Speaking at the G20 summit on the theme of "One Family", Hasina yesterday asked the G20 to continue providing duty-free, quota-free market access and extending the unilateral tariff preferences for countries graduating from LDCs to developing nations.

She also called for the extension of TRIPS (Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights)

waivers for a significant period after the graduation to ensure smooth and sustainable transition, reports our New Delhi correspondent

#### PM MEETS THREE PRESIDENTS

On the sidelines of the G20 summit, Hasina yesterday held bilateral talks with the presidents of the UAE, South Korea and Argentina, according to the Bangladesh foreign ministry. UAE President Sheikh Mohamed

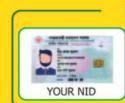
bin Zayed Al Nahyan lauded Hasina for ensuring Bangladesh's remarkable development and assured her of more investment in Bangladesh from UAE. In her meeting with South

Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol, the PM appreciated South Korea for contributing to Bangladesh's economy through investment. Both the leaders agreed to further

deepen cooperation in culture, trade and commerce and people-to-people contact. Argentine President Alberto

Fernandez said Bangladeshi people have won the heart of the Argentine people through their support for Argentine football. Hasina thanked the Argentine

president for opening an embassy in Dhaka and expressed her willingness to strengthen bilateral cooperation in different sectors including sports, trade, agriculture and agro-processing.



REQUIREMENTS







ঘরে বসেই



**DENGUE OUTBREAK** 

### Of lost loved ones and incomplete goodbyes

10 more die, 2,748 infected

MOUDUD AHMMED SUJAN

Asrafullah Jamal, a dengue patient being treated at the capital's Kurmitola General Hospital, had a difficult time bidding farewell to his son, Kazem Ashraf.

The 15-year-old, who was also battling the mosquitoborne disease in the same hospital, passed away yesterday morning, within 24 hours of being admitted. Asrafullah had to be shifted to the Intensive Care

Unit as his health condition sharply deteriorated following his son's burial in their ancestral graveyard in Bhola's Lalmohon upazila. On Thursday afternoon, Kazem was discharged from

a private hospital in Dhaka's Badda, after receiving dengue treatment for four days. However, his condition deteriorated rapidly, with diarrhoea and convulsions beginning that night. "Perhaps, Kazem would have a better chance at

survival if he had stayed at the hospital for a few more days," said his cousin Zubaer Khan.

According to Zubaer, Kazem was refused treatment at two other private hospitals in the capital before he was admitted to Kurmitola.

Both Kazem and his father were diagnosed with dengue infection on Monday -- around five days after the onset of fever.

"The only family member that could attend Kazem's burial was his brother-in-law, who took the body to Bhola via a launch. My aunt, Kazem's mother, is too

A mother tries to feed her child, who is suffering from dengue, at Mugda Medical College & Hospital in the capital yesterday. At a time when the country is already grappling with a record outbreak of dengue fever, the current active monsoon conditions may contribute to the further spread of the mosquito-borne disease this month, say experts. PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

#### **FAKE VISA** Three held for swindling Tk 1.35 crore

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A gang of frauds has long been luring fortune seekers with employment prospects in and scamming them by providing fake documents

They would open Facebook pages using fake IDs to attract those aspiring for overseas employment by promising them visa and handsome salary. If someone agrees, they would provide the fortune seekers with fake visas and documents in exchange for hefty fees, before going into hiding.

scammers not The only used to shatter their dreams, but also used to take their hard-earned money.

The Detective Branch (DB) of police arrested three members of such a gang from Bandarban's Naikhongchhari Vatara areas Dhaka's on Friday, Additional Commissioner of Police (DB) Mohammad Harun

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#### **MURDER OF TEEN** Site engineer led the brutal killing: Rab

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The brutal killing of a teenager in Mohammadpur was led by the site engineer of an under-construction building, where he was beaten to death by the construction workers, Rab said.

Rapid Action The Battalion arrested three including persons, engineer, in different areas of the capital on Friday, Khandaker Al director of the legal and media wing of Rab, told a press briefing at the Rab Media Centre yesterday.

The arrestees are — Mir

Moazzem Hossain Pranto, 25, Firoz, 18, and Mostafizur Rahman, 35.

Akash Mia, 14, a seventhgrader at a local school, along with several friends, went into an underconstruction building near Barab Government Primary School on Wednesday night.

Akash was trapped while his friends managed to escape when construction site workers chased them. They later tortured him

to death. The Rab official said that

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### What will BNP do now?

#### Asks Obaidul Quader at AL rally referring to Biden's selfie with PM

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

SEE PAGE 4 COL 3

The ruling Awami League's General Secretary Obaidul Quader yesterday said BNP's ongoing movement has no public support, and even the US has turned its back on them.

Quader said the BNP leaders got "a terrible shock" yesterday seeing US President Joe Biden himself taking a selfie with Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and her daughter autism expert Saima Wazed Putul while exchanging pleasantries on the G20 Summit sidelines in New Delhi.

"But what is seen today? Biden himself took a selfie with Sheikh Hasina... in Delhi."

"What will happen to BNP after seeing this scene? What form of movement will you wage now?" he asked while addressing a "peace rally" organised by Dhaka city (south) unit AL protesting the "terror and anarchy" of the BNP in front of the AL

headquarters in the capital's Gulistan. Claiming that the BNP's road-march programme failed to gather

a crowd, Quader said, "I don't think people will join their rally again. There was no people's engagement [in their movement] and [after today] their activists will no longer look up to America.' In response to the BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam

Alamgir's remark that Bangladesh is becoming a playground of big powers, Quader said Bangladesh is following "friendship towards all, malice towards none," dictated by the father of the nation.

"There is no enmity here.... Sheikh Hasina has maintained this policy, it will be proved in the coming days." Quader said that their peace rally will continue till the next

He also claimed that the BNP is secretly preparing for the

People's govt

### after ousting AL Says Mirza Fakhrul at BNP

rally in Nayapaltan

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir yesterday said a "people's government" will be established in the country after the Awami League government is ousted by a united front of political parties and mass people.

He again urged AL to resign saying "People don't want the Awami League government to stay in power even for Mirza Fakhrul made these remarks

at a rally jointly organised by BNP South and North units in front of the party's central office in the capital's Nayapaltan.

The opposition rally, which came after a two-week break, started around 4:30pm as part of their onepoint demand for the resignation of the AL government and holding the

next national polls under a non-party caretaker government. Yesterday, the party leaders and activists took out two mass processions in the capital as part of their movement. Dhaka south city unit of BNP brought out the procession from near Kamalapur Railway Station at 2:30pm while the north city unit BNP started from Rampura at the same time.

Around two hours later, causing immense suffering to city dwellers, both the processions ended in front of the party headquarters at Nayapaltan.

Fakhrul, addressing the rally as the chief guest, lauded the huge crowd. He also demanded the government's resignation before the announcement of the election schedule and urged AL to form a

neutral and non-party government. He said people will only participate in the election if it is held under a new election commission, formed by a new government.

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### **Road accidents** down by 21pc in **August: RSF** STAR REPORT

Road accidents decreased by 21.13 percent and fatalities by 34.03 percent in August, compared to July this year.

Road Safety Foundation, an organisation working on road accidents, released these statistics yesterday.

In a press release sent to the media yesterday afternoon, the foundation said 403 road accidents were reported in the country in August. As many as 378 people were killed and 794 injured. In July

573 people were killed in 511 road accidents.
Of the 378 people killed in August, 44 were women and 51 were children. A total of 146 were killed in 142 motorcycle accidents, which is 38.62 percent of the total deaths.

At least 93 pedestrians were killed in road accidents, which is 24.6 percent of the total deaths. Some 57 drivers and their helpers were killed, which is 15.07 percent of the total deaths.

The accident statistics have been prepared on the basis of information from nine national dailies, seven online news portals and electronic media.

The Road Safety Foundation also said 17 people were killed in 11 boat accidents during this period and nine people were injured and six were missing. Meanwhile, 37 people were killed and 19 injured in 28 accidents on the railway tracks.

According to the analysis of road accident data, 169 accidents took place on national highways, 148 on regional roads, 45 on rural roads, 37 on city roads and four in other places.

Dhaka division recorded the highest number of accidents and fatalities; 126 people were killed in 143accidents. Sylhet division had the lowest number of accidents with 19, which claimed 16 lives. Gazipur has the highest number of accidents as a single district with 29 people killed in 31 accidents.

#### 'Don't harass Dr Yunus'

Speakers say at a discussion

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a programme yesterday urged government harassing Nobel Peace Prize Laureate Muhammad

They made the demand while speaking at a discussion organised by the Bangladesh Projonmo Academy, a pro-BNP platform, at the Dhaka Reporters Unity in the

capital.
"He[Yunus] is beyond the law. But there is a perception everywhere in the country and abroad that he is being harassed. How are we benefiting from this? Rather, if we had made him a travelling

SEE PAGE 4 COL 5



SEE PAGE 4 COL 1



(Left) Awami League activists, protesting the "terror and anarchy" of BNP, gather for a "peace rally" in front of their central office at Bangabandhu Avenue in the capital; (right) BNP activists gather for a rally in front of their Nayapaltan party office to press home their one-point demand. PHOTO: PALASH KHAN, AMRAN HOSSAIN



### **'Bangladesh Youth COP** 2023' held in Dhaka

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

To empower youth to address the climate crisis and advocate for climate justice on national and global platforms, ActionAid Bangladesh and Brighters Youth Society organised "Bangladesh Youth COP 2023".

This three-day event was held from September 6 to 8 in the capital, to gear up the potential of youths in tackling the

On first day of the programme highlighted the role of youth-led initiatives and the pivotal Green Manifesto. It also underscored the urgency of prioritising renewable energy, establishing a loss and damage fund, said a press release.

It said, around 100 young individuals attended the programme, who raised concerns about issues such as access to safe drinking water, coastal and wetland crises, challenges in drought and floodprone areas, and many more.

During the opening ceremony, Farah Kabir, country director of ActionAid Bangladesh, emphasised the critical connection between climate justice and sustainable development, urging that the voices and concerns of young advocates must reverberate at COP 28.

Md Al Amin, a youth climate activist, said, "Salinity is increasing day by day, which is creating a crisis for agriculture and safe water. We see a cry for clean water in coastal areas like Barguna, and Satkhira. Women

research study area.

Articles attributed to

 $Yamada\,range\,from\,praising$ 

Hasina's "vital counsel"

to blasting Washington's

"double standards towards

democracy

human rights of others by

incessantly interfering in

Gerard McCarthy,

"entirely fabricated" quotes

attributed to him were used

in an article condemning

"Western duplicity" towards

Myanmar, written under

the byline Prithwi Raj

Newspaper editors said

they printed articles in

good faith, after reading

their academic background

and seeing them published

credentials," said Mubin

S Khan, feature editor of

Dhaka's Business Standard.

Age editor Nurul Kabir said

he had been sent a slew

of op-ed pitches in early

2023, "mostly on topics like

Bangladesh's relations with

Bangladesh's Daily New

their internal affairs".

experts.

Chaturvedi.

elsewhere.

and children are facing many problems. So, it's the time to take appropriate steps to prevent the climate crisis.'

On the second day, participants from disaster-prone regions delved into their vulnerabilities and proposed sustainable solutions to attain climate justice.

The three-day event also organised discussions on the critical issue of loss and damage, particularly in the coastal areas, as well as on adaptation and resilience policies, the perspectives of young people in transition, and the impact of damage on children from the grassroots.

The three-day event also organised discussions on the critical issue of loss and damage, particularly in the coastal areas, as well as on adaptation and resilience policies.

At the conclusion, the Bangladesh Youth COP 2023 committed to advocating for the Green Manifesto crafted during the event. The ultimate goal is to influence political party manifestos in upcoming elections, paving the way for a sustainable, green, and climate-friendly future.

Mattia Ventura from the Italian Embassy, Gwyn Lewis from UN Resident Coordinator's Office, Saleemul Haq, director of ICCCAD, and Farah Kabir, country director of ActionAid Bangladesh, attended the closing ceremony.

### Trainer shortage dogs Fake experts driving praises of govt

27 and 20 trainees respectively. The centre also offers training in dairy farm management which is not accredited, but kept within the guidelines of the BTEB under the centre's own management and has 22 trainees.

Of the 15 posts at the centre, 11 have been vacant for a long time. The vacant posts are of assistant general manager, computer operator (braille), assistant engineer, computer operator, four instructors different subjects, accountant cum office superintendent, storekeeper and nurse. The four staffers employed presently are general manager, hostel supervisor, a trainer and a caretaker. However, the GM is on deputation at the Moulvibazar District Social Services office as deputy director while the hostel

Meanwhile, workshop, machinery automobile, electrical and electronics equipment centre have remained unused since its inception due to a lack of trainers. Also, only two out of six computers and two out of five sewing machines at analysts. the centre are operational, making it difficult to provide training properly.

Shamimur Rahman, the only trainer at the centre, said academic and administrative activities at the centre are gravely disrupted due to manpower shortage.

Contacted, Habibur Rahman, general manager of the centre who is on deputation, confirmed the issues to The Daily Star.

"I have discussed about the issue in the departmental (Sylhet) coordination meeting several times, but to supervisor at Sylhet Shishu no avail so far," he said.

#### What will BNP do now?

national

upcoming

election. "They are preparing to

give candidates in every constituency.... How will Tarique Rahman [BNP acting chairperson] do nomination trading if they do not participate in the election? They have lost the game of movement, and they will lose in the final game of election as well,"

Tuition wanted

AL Joint General Secretary Mahbubul Alam Hanif said, "Failing in the street movement, BNP relied on foreign forces. But they

"The cloud of conspiracy is disappearing.... All the conspiracies of the BNP have failed," he added. Among others, AL

members presidium Quamrul Islam, Matia Chowdhury, Dr Mostafa Jalal Mohiuddin spoke at the programme.

have failed there too."

Quader added. Addressing the event,

A reputed real estate Economics teacher ompany needs investors or Curriculum: IB, Cambridge project- wise basis. The Edexcel Experience of is a member of providing tutoring Rehab & RAJUK enlisted .for Details masumbght@gmail.com Cell: +8801841606428

#### Notice for Closure of Liaison Office in Bangladesh

Shinhan Apparel Co. Ltd Liaison office House # 22, Road #12, Block F. (2nd Floor) Niketon, Gulshan-1, Dhaka-1212 had been closed on 31 July 2023 in Bangladesh. However, if anyone has any type of claims please contact to the authorized representative Md. Yasin Miah FCA House # 22, Road #12, Block F, (2nd Floor) Niketon, Gulshan-Dhaka-1212. Cell: 01711957242

#### NOTICE

IN THE SUPREME COURT OF BANGLADESH HIGH COURT DIVISION (ORIGINAL JURISDICTIOIN) COMPANY MATTER No. 338 of 2023

IN THE MATTER OF:-Anisur Rahman Khan

Thianis Apparels Limited and others. .RESPONDENTS

This is to notify public at large that an application under Section 85(3) of Companies Act 1994 has been filed before the Hon'bl Company Court of the Supreme Court of Bangladesh for passing special resolution in an extraordinary general meeting and the application was accepted by the presiding Justice His Lordship M Justice Syed Refaat Ahmed and was fixed for hearing or 09.11.2023. Anyone concerned with the aforesaid companies having any objection or alternative plea, may participate in the hearing of

Copy of the application can be obtained by paying necessary fee

from the office of the undersigned. Yours faithfully (Shamsuddin Babul) Senior Advocate Supreme Court of Bangladesh Law Advisory Bureau 62-63, Motijheel C/A, Amin Court (8th floor), Dhaka.

AFP found that names forming a network of socalled experts are producing regular op-ed pieces, some posing as academics from leading global universities, some using stolen headshot photos, and others making up quotes from real

"İt's a coordinated influence operation," said A Al Mamun, a journalism professor at Bangladesh's University of Rajshahi. "These articles primarily promote narratives that are favourable to the current Bangladesh government."

A surge of articles appeared online around September 2022, when Bangladesh's foreign ministry issued a call "good columnists" counter negative "propaganda".

requests for comment to top officials at Bangladesh's ministry and information ministry but received no reply. Foreign Minister A.K.

sent multiple

Abdul Momen told AFP he did "not have enough time" to comment. NO RECORDS

AFP analysed more than 700 articles published in at least 60 domestic and international news sites with bylines attributed to 35 names, all of which appeared for the first time online last year. articles The

overwhelmingly endorse narratives pushed by Dhaka, with some posted on Bangladesh government websites.

Many are staunchly pro-Beijing and fiercely critical of Washington -- which has issued Dhaka stiff warnings of the need for free and fair

While it was not possible to prove if the 35 names investigated by AFP are real, no online presence apart from their articles could be found, none has a visible social media profile, and none has published research papers in academic journals.

At least 17 of the 35 claimed links to major Western and Asian universities but AFP's digital verification reporters found no records for them.

Eight major universities

confirmed that they had never heard of nine of the writers purportedly working for them, including the University of Delaware in the United States, Canada's University of Toronto, Switzerland's University of Lucerne, and the National University of Singapore. 'We checked our school

records and do not find his name on our rolls," India's Jawaharlal Nehru University said about one purported writer claiming ties.

Headshot photographs of eight of the reported columnists belong to other people, including a popular fashion influencer on Indian social media.

AFP also found examples where the same article was published using different names in English and in

Among the names is Studies" is not a specific Chowdhury, a Doreen seemingly industrious columnist who has written at least 60 articles praising Dhaka's government, supporting growing ties

> United States is a "threat to human rights". Chowdhury's photograph is taken from an Indian actor, while the University of Groningen in the Netherlands -- where Chowdhury is reportedly

> a doctoral researcher in

with China, and warning

that gun violence in the

politics -- said it has no record of her. AFP received a response from the email address listed beneath the articles that said Chowdhury was an "alias to avoid security concerns", but the email's author declined to provide a real identity or explain the use of a false photograph.

ENTIRELY FABRICATED Fumiko Yamada, who has had articles published in outlets including the Bangkok Post and a blog by the London School of Economics, is portrayed as a specialist in Bangladesh Studies at Australia's University of Melbourne.

However, AFP found that there are no records of her there and that "Bangladesh India, China and USA".

### Three held for swindling

Or Rashid told reporters

yesterday. detectives also The recovered 40 passports, nine fake visas, photocopies of fake BMET cards, along with mobile phones and SIMs used in the fraudulent activities from their possessions.

The arrestees are Shariful Islam, 42, Abrar Other articles include fake quotes from real Jawar Tanmoy alias Rezaul Karim Reza alias Hridi Mahajabin, 26, and Ahian professor at the International Shishir alias Kamruzzaman Institute of Social Studies in the Netherlands, said

The DB chief said the fraud ring took up an office called Al Safar International at Dhaka's Gulshan-1 and the office to run their fraudulent activities.

If someone wants to go abroad, they got into an agreement with the fraudsters. Later they visa copies of various Arabic, using which they would make fake Kuwait visas by attaching the name, passport number and other information of the person who wants to go abroad while keeping the

The aspirants would then get certificates after completing three days of training from different technical training centres. Later, with the fake visas, passports and training certificates, the job aspirants would go to the Bureau of Manpower, Employment and Training (BMET) offices to give finger prints.

visa number unchanged.

check the visa numbers on the official website of Kuwait to find and would find the applications' status approved. So, they

accept the fingerprints, the

DB official claimed. The swindlers would then print a coloured copy of the BMET clearance card by writing the names and addresses of the persons. After showing them the air tickets, they would receive the full fees as per contract with the applicants. Later they would switch off their mobile phones and go into

Shahidur Rahman, an additional deputy commissioner of DB (Wari), said that the gang has cheated more than 50 people and stole around Tk 1.35 crore from them in

A victim filed a case with Gulshan Police Station in would collect real Kuwait this connection on August 7.

total.

The DB official said that individuals written in there are already four other cases against Shariful and one case against Tanmoy over money embezzlement filed with different police

The detectives also said that Tanmoy and Shishir are both transgender persons. They used to take different guises of both male and female persons to deceive the victims.

Their true identities were revealed after a thorough investigation by the DB, the official said.

AHM Anwar Pasha, an additional director general of BMET, said they first identified the scam and informed the law enforcers The BMET offices would in this regard.

#### Of lost loved ones Investor Wanted

shocked to cry, and

everyone in Dhaka is now worried about my uncle's condition. It's a terrible situation for us," added Zubaer. Kazem's death

highlights the severity the ongoing dengue outbreak in the country. At least 10 dengue patients died around the

country in the last 24 hours till 8:00am yesterday, according to Directorate General of Health Services. Meanwhile, 2,748 others hospitalised with dengue infections during this period.

With this, the total number of dengue deaths this year rose to 716 and the total cases to 1,45,335.

Last week, experts urged quick action, predicting that dengue cases may not decrease throughout September.

#### SALINE IMPORT FROM **INDIA**

Health Minister Zahid Maleque, on the other hand, attributed the increasing number of dengue cases to a rise in the mosquito population.

"Many other countries have implemented effective mosquito control programmes and reduced their population. The number of dengue patients and related deaths is lower in those countries," said the minister while addressing an event at Colonel Maleaue Medical College Hospital Manikganj yesterday.

He also said that the number of dengue cases and related deaths will not decrease until the mosquito population decreases.

He urged the municipal authorities and the city corporations to implement an effective mosquito control programme. Zahid Maleque also

said that the government has approved the import of seven lakh bags of injectable saline to tackle the current shortage. According to

minister, around lakh bags of saline were expected to arrive in the country yesterday. "The remaining portion is expected to arrive shortly," site engineer overseeing he added. the school's construction,

### Don't harass Dr Yunus

ambassador, he could have taken Bangladesh by utilising his global reputation and connections across the globe," said Badiul Alam Majumdar, secretary of Sushasoner Jonno Nagorik

"I expect that we will come to our senses. What is being done is suicidal. No one will benefit from it. I am urging everyone to stop

harassing him," he added. Speaking Finance programme. Affairs Secretary Projonmo Academy Abu Haydar Mohammad Siddique said, "No one will dare to work for people if he is tortured in this manner."

Kalam Foyezi, president of the Projonmo Academy, also alleged that the government is intentionally harassing Dr Yunus.

### Site engineer

FROM PAGE 3

Akash was unable to escape and was subsequently taken to the workers' quarters.

"It was there, at Moazzem's command, Akash was falsely accused of stealing an iron rod, subjected to medievalstyle torture, suspended from a bamboo structure, and beaten with sticks, iron rods, and stumps throughout the night," said the Rab official.

When Akash's condition deteriorated significantly around 6:00am the following day, the arrestees informed his brother-in-Akash's cousin rushed

to the scene, rescued him with severe injuries, and brought him home. He succumbed to his injuries around 8:00am. Rab said Moazzem, the

not only orchestrated the torture but also recorded the entire incident on his mobile phone.

Firoz, a labourer, and Mostafizur, employed as a foreman at the construction site, actively participated in the torture of the victim. Mohammadpur police

have already arrested two

people in connection with

the incident. Akash used to live with her aunt Dipa, as he lost his mother when he was nine months old, and his father remarried and abandoned

his two children. Dipa filed a murder case with Mohammadpur Police Station in this regard.

Jewel Mollah, brother in-law of the deceased, thanked law enforcers for their quick action and demanded arrest of the rest people involved in the

### People's govt after

Mirza Fakhrul said, "It's

people's demand. Though all rights of people, they (the government) have no power to stop the people's voice from the streets."

Presiding over the programme, BNP's Dhaka North unit President Aman Ullah Aman demanded the immediate release of party chairperson Khaleda Zia for better treatment abroad.

BNP and its affiliated organisation leaders Abbas, Mirza Abdus Salam, Selima Rahman,

Gayeshwar Chandra Roy, Ruhul Kabir Rizvi, Sultan Salahuddin Tuku, Rajib the government curtails Ahsan and Rashed Iqbal, among others, spoke at the event.

> Its like-minded political parties, who have been waging a simultaneous anti-government movement, will also separately hold similar programmes. Ganatantra Mancha held a mass procession in front of Jatiya Press Club, 12-partyalliance held a similar programme in Bijoynagar

### Thousands suffer

FROM PAGE 5

upazila engineer (LGED) in Sakhipur, said they are aware of the situation and public suffering.

He mentioned, "We have learned that the contractor his illness. However, he has

recently recovered." He continued, executive engineer of LGED

in Tangail has already spoken with the contractor, and the contractor has assured us that he will resume the work and complete it as soon as possible."

Abdul Based concluded stopped the work due to by saying, "We have also director for an extension of

submitted a request to the office of the project the deadline.

#### 12 VILLAGES IN TANGAIL

### Thousands suffer due to bridge construction delay

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Tangail

The residents of at least 12 villages in Tangail's Sakhipur upazila have been suffering immensely due to a significant delay in the construction of a crucial

Only a quarter of the work has been completed so far, even though more than a year has passed since the project's completion date.

In response to the long-time demand of locals, the government decided to construct the bridge on Kalidas-GC-Bohuria UP Road at Kakrar Jora area to improve road communication there, according to the office of the Upazila Engineer in Sakhipur.

The Local Government and Engineering Department (LGED) took on the task as part of its strengthening and widening upazila-union roads project.

A Dhaka-based construction firm was awarded the contract for the construction of the 25-metre bridge with a budget of Tk 2.28 crore.

The construction began on February 16, 2021, with the deadline for completion set for February 17, 2022.

However, the contractor firm stopped the work after a few months for reasons unknown, causing immense suffering for the nearby villagers who commuted

During a recent visit, this correspondent found that only a few pillars of the bridge have been installed so far, and locals were facing difficulties passing through the construction site on the road, which is in a deteriorated condition.

Rafiqul Islam from Kakrar Jora village mentioned that vehicular movement, except for motorcycles, remains suspended at that location, forcing locals to take alternative routes that add 15-20 extra kilometres to their journey, incurring additional time and expenses.

Teachers at local educational institutions stated that students are having difficulty reaching classes on time due to disruptions in road communication

caused by the incomplete bridge. Saiful Islam and Hafizur Rahman, traders at local Karutiapara and Kalidas markets, expressed their inability to transport goods as goods-laden vehicles cannot use the road until the bridge is completed.

Sarkar Nure Alam, chairman of Bohuria Union Parishad, urged the authorities concerned to take prompt measures to complete the construction work as soon as possible, considering the people's suffering.

When contacted, Abdul Based, the SEE PAGE 4 COL 7



Locals struggle to pass through the deteriorated road near the incomplete bridge, with only a few pillars in place. The photo was taken recently.

#### TRAINING CENTRE FOR ORPHANS, DISABLED

### Trainer shortage dogs operations **Equipment decaying**

**OUR CORRESPONDENT,** Moulvibazar

A vocational training centre for orphans and girls with special needs in Moulvibazar is barely operational amid an acute shortage of trainers and with poorly functioning

The institution, which started its activities in 2013 in Matarkapan area of Chandnighat union in Sadar upazila, currently has 11 of its 15 posts lying vacant for long while two staff members are serving elsewhere on deputation, leaving only two staffers to run academic and administrative activities at the centre amid severe operational challenges.



The centre aims to provide training and lodging to orphans and girls with special needs, who are either meritorious or come from poor families, at absolutely no cost. The entry requirement for trainees is to be within the age of 15 to 25 and having at least passed eighth grade.

Only two subjects at the centre are currently being taught. Since the center's inception, the equipment has deteriorated due to the absence of trainers, and there is a scarcity of sewing machines and computers.

The centre has six training subjects approved by the Bangladesh Technical Education Board (BTEB): computer office applications, housekeeping and laundry, dress making and tailoring, block batik and printing embroidery, driving and auto mechanics, and certificate in beautification. Each subject has 30 seats for trainees to enrol. However, only computer office applications, and dress making and tailoring courses are currently operational under tutelage of contractual trainers, with

#### VIOLENCE IN CU AFTER SHUTTLE ACCIDENT

# Preplanned vandalism or outburst of anger?

Chaos raise questions about motives amidst long-standing student grievances

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Chattogram

The recent incident of protests and vandalism following the shuttle train accident at Chittagong University's campus has raised questions about whether it was a preplanned act or an outburst of long-standing anger towards university authorities.

Law enforcement officials have characterised the rampage and vandalism at the Vice-Chancellor's residence and the vehicle depot as premeditated actions carried out by masked individuals with sharp weapons. They suggest that the extent of the vandalism indicates a possible act of vengeance against the Vice-Chancellor.

On the other hand, some students, who chose to remain anonymous due to fear of repercussions, assert that the chaos was not driven by a desire for revenge but rather by their administration's failure to address their demands. These demands included better transportation options, such as more shuttle trains, to ease commuting to and from the university.

Senior teachers at Chittagong University have also weighed in, stating that the incident was a result of the administration's failure to address students' long-standing requests for improved transportation services. They criticise the university of the situation, suggesting that CU campus on Friday.

the Proctor's failure to direct local police exacerbated the mayhem.

At least 16 people, mostly students of the university, were injured after being hit by tree branches while traveling on the roof of a Chittagong University shuttle train on Thursday night.

Of them, three, two from CU, are currently fighting for their life at the ICU of Chittagong Medical College Hospital (CMCH).

#### The running administration failed to address students' longtime demand for shuttle trains.

After the news of the accident broke, the angered students gathered at the Zero Point area of CU and locked down the main gate of the university, before holding the frustration with the university CU Proctorial body hostage and vandalising the police box, teachers' club, VC's residence, and nearly 35 buses of CU at the transport office, according to witnesses.

A group of Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) activists, mostly juniors, also took part in the demonstration, they added.

CU Proctor Nurul Azim Sikdar did not respond despite several attempts to contact him over phone. WHAT DO POLICE SAY

After the chaos, senior police officials including the Superintendent of administration for its handling Police (SP) of Chattogram visited the

"We have visited the campus and talked to the witnesses and started an investigation. We have started collecting the CCTV footage to identify the miscreants," Additional Superintendent of Police (DB) Sudipta Sarkar of Chattogram told The Daily Star yesterday.

"In the CCTV footage, we found that the miscreants who vandalised the bus depot and VC's residence were wearing masks. It is clear that they knew the locations of CCTV cameras so that they covered their faces with masks to hide their identity," a top police official said, seeking anonymity.

"We are also digging into the political identity of the attackers," he added.

Additional SP Sudipta Sarkar said filing of three cases in this connection was underway with Hathazari Police Station.

**CUTA STANDS WITH STUDENTS** Meanwhile, Association (CUTA) claimed that the incident took place due to the failure of the university administration. "The running administration failed to address students' longtime demand for shuttle trains," reads a statement issued by CUTA.

The Proctor failed to direct local police to deal with the situation, resulting in the mayhem, said a senior teacher of the Social Science Faculty wishing anonymity.

Interestingly, CUTA in its written statement did not mention anything about the vandalism at VC's residence, but mentioned about the bus depot.

### Two die as truck hits bike in Keraniganj

Two youths died and another sustained injuries as a truck crashed into the motorbike carrying them on Abdullahpur flyover in Keraniganj of Dhaka

The identities of the deceased could not be known yet.

Sirajdikhan Highway Police Station's subinspector Asifuzzaman Asif said the accident occurred around 12:00am on the flyover on Dhaka-Mawa Road, leaving two bikers dead on the spot and another injured.

The injured youth is undergoing treatment at Dhaka Medical College Hospital.

He said they were trying to know the identities of the deceased aged between 25 and 30, and the bodies were sent to the DMCH morgue for autopsy.

Md Bachhu Mia, in-charge of the DMCH police  $outpost, quoting \, physicians \, said \, that \, the \, condition$ of the injured youth is stated to be critical.

An unnatural death case was filed with Dakkhin Keraniganj Police Station in this regard.

### Three held with 1.10 lakh yaba pills

UNB, Cox's Bazar

Members of Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB) detained three drug peddlers along with 1.10 lakh Yaba pills from the Teknaf border area in Cox's Bazar district on Friday night.

The detainees were Tajul islam, 53, son of Mohammad Hossain, Syed Hossain, 35, son of Sona Ali and Abul Kashem, 45, son of Zakum Bahar of Teknaf upazila.

On information that a big consignment of drugs will be smuggled into the country from Myanmar, a team of BGB-2 conducted a drive in the area and challenged five people who were trying to cross the border through the zero point, said a press release of BGB vesterday.

They tried to flee the scene but BGB members managed to detain three people at 10:30pm, it added. The detainees were handed over to Teknaf

#### 4.4 magnitude earthquake jolts Sylhet

STAR REPORT

4.4-magnitude earthquake jolted Sylhet and its adjoining areas yesterday afternoon.

The earthquake was felt at 4:18pm, Farzana Sultana, assistant meteorologist of Bangladesh Meteorological Department, told The Daily

The earthquake's epicentre was in Assam, India, 263km away from the Dhaka Seismic Centre, she added.

There was no immediate report of casualties or







Fifteen female footballers were injured on their way to a match after a shallow engine-run three-wheeler carrying them overturned and fell into a crop field in Joypurhat's Akkelpur upazila yesterday. The injured, who are currently schooling with Tilakpur Adarsha Girls High School, are currently undergoing treatment at the upazila health complex.

# Yaba leading female youths to suicide

#### Says Ahsania Mission report

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

School, college and university students are consuming yaba more due to its accessibility, leading them towards depression and suicide, according to an Ahsania Mission report.

The study, conducted on 322 female patients of Ahsania Mission from January 2021 to August 2023, was revealed at a press conference organised by the organisation at the capital's Shyamoli yesterday, ahead of World Suicide Prevention Day.

This year, the day will be celebrated with the theme "Creating hope through action".

According to the report, 98 of the patients had attempted suicide while 177 of them had suicidal-provoking thoughts. Five of them ended up committing suicide despite receiving treatment.

Of the 177 respondents, 163 belonged to the 15-29 age group, and 74 of them had at least one psychological illness. Besides, depression was commonly found in 90 of the patients with suicidal tendencies.

The study found that female drug addicts are more psychologically affected than male drug addicts, making them more vulnerable to suicide.

According to the World Health Organization, Bangladesh ranks 10th worldwide in terms of suicide rates.

The leading cause of suicide is drug addiction and dysfunctional family, said Dr Md Rahanul Islam, a psychiatrist at the Central Drug Addiction Treatment Centre.

"However, opinion sharing among family members, mutual respect for loved ones and a positive attitude are key to reducing drug addiction among the youths," he added.

Rakhi Ganguly, senior psychologist (health sector), at Dhaka Ahsania Mission, said, "Suicide is never a personal decision, it involves many pre-existing factors. Social media should play a prominent role in suicide prevention through extensive campaigns on this issue."

Iqbal Masud, director (health and WASH) of the organisation, urged urgent steps to address the issue.

# ARTS & ENTERTAINMEN



**Chanchal Chowdhury** 



**Mehazabien Chowdhury** 



**Bidya Sinha Mim** 



**Pritom Hasan** 

#### MERIL-PROTHOM ALO AWARDS

# Honouring stellar performers of 2022

**Afran Nisho** 

**Apart** from the performances, the audience also enjoyed the company of hosts Siam **Ahmed and Pritom who** made sure that the evening was enjoyable to

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT DESK

The highly anticipated Meril-Prothom Alo Awards 2022 took to the centre stage on Friday evening at the Bangabandhu International Conference Center's Hall of Fame in the capital's Sher-e-Bangla Nagar.

This star-studded event brought together luminaries from the entertainment world, making the occasion an unforgettable one.

The event commenced with a welcome address from Prothom Alo Associate Editor Anisul Hoque, Following his remarks, Prothom Alo Editor Matiur Rahman and Square Group Managing Director Anjan Chowdhury took to the stage, setting the tone for an evening of glitz and glamour.

Eminent singer Syed Abdul Hadi was honoured with the Lifetime Achievement award at the event which was presented to him by noted singer Runa Laila.

"I have always longed for love and respect, and this award gave me both," said Hadi, the five-time National Film Award winner.

He was handed over a cheque worth Tk 2lacs, which he donated to Prothom Alo trust.

Prominent faces of the industry, including Jayanta Chattopadhyay, Tariq Anam Khan, Nima Rahman, Chanchal Chowdhury, Runa Khan, Azmeri Haque Badhan, Bidya Sinha Mim, Mehazabien Chowdhury, Sabila Nur, Puja Chery, Pritom Hasan, and Xefer, among many

other popular names, graced the event. In the popular choice category, Bidya



From left, Runa Laila, Syed Abdul Hadi and **Anjan Chowdhury** 

Sinha Mim won the Best Film Actress Award for her outstanding portrayal of Ananya in **Poran**, while Chanchal Chowdhury bagged the Best Film Actor Award for his exceptional performance in *Hawa*. Rodela Tapur, the young talent, received the Best Debutante Award for her performance in the film *Deshantor*.

In the category -- Television Drama, Limited Feature Film, Digital Medium, TV Series, and Web Series -- Mehazabien and Afran Nisho were awarded Best Actress and Best Actor (popular) for Punorjonmo 3, respectively.

Meanwhile, Nazia Haque Orsha received Best Actress (critics) for *Galiber Prem O Boshonter Kabbo* and Pritom received Best Actor (critics) for **Araal**.

Coming to the Critics' segment, Mejbaur



From left, Nusrat Imrose Tisha, Nazifa Tushi and Mostofa Sarwar Farooki

Award for his directorial debut Hawa, while Nazifa Tushi earned the Best Film Actress Award for playing Gulti in the film. The Best Actor title was claimed by Chanchal for his stellar performance in Dui Diner Duniya.

Shaaticup claimed the Best Web Series Award while the Best Director (web series) was awarded to Nuhash Humayun for Pett Kata Shaw.

Alongside the award distribution, many prominent faces took to the stage, presenting dance and musical performances.

Apart from these entertaining segments, the audience also enjoyed the company of hosts Siam Ahmed and Pritom who made sure that the evening was enjoyable to all.

The glamorous night concluded with a Rahman Sumon bagged The Best Film Director promise to a grander show in the following year.

### Mithila to appear next in spy thriller

After donning the dynamic role of a modern lady Macbeth in Raajhorshee De's *Mayaa*, Rafiath Rashid Mithila is now gearing up for Dulal Dey's upcoming spy-thriller project

Aranyer Prachin Probad. According to media reports, Mithila will be paired with Indian actor Jeetu Kamal in

Director Dulal Dey spoke about his project, saying, "My story has many shades. The hero becomes a detective unexpectedly when he gets

entangled in a mystery. He also has a love for Bengali literature."

addition to Mithila and Jeetu, Aranyer Prachin Probad features Suhotra Mukhopadhyay, Silajit Majumder, Loknath Dey,

### 25 poets to act in 'Street Philosopher'

The realms of poetry and philosophy are set to intertwine in a cinematic experience as director Masud Pathik begins his latest project, Street Philosopher.

The film will bring together a remarkable ensemble of 25 poets from Bangladesh, including Nirmalendu Goon, Ashim Saha, Kachi Khandkar, Dr Tapan Bagchi and Aslam Sani amongst many others, in the movie that delves into the philosophical musings of French and German thinkers Michel Foucault and Bertolt Brecht,

The poster of the movie was unveiled recently and the shooting of the project will begin from October 15.



The Daily Star

### ISPAHANI

### Let us have a look at the nominations for Best Director this year

Ispahani Tea Limited and The Daily Star have collaborated to recognise the best of OTT and Digital Media once again.

Nominations for Blender's Choice- The Daily Star OTT & Digital Content Awards 2022 have been announced, and this is your opportunity to vote for your favourite artistes and content makers for their performances in 2022 on OTT and digital platforms.

**Best Director (Series)** 

To vote, visit: ottdcawards.thedailystar.net



The Daily Star 8 DIGITAL CONTENT AWARDS 2022



Syed Ahmed Shawki

The director is nominated for the much-hyped production of 2022, Karagar, creating a benchmark in the OTT industry.



Shihab Shaheen

Known for romantic projects, the director wowed the audience with his web-series Syndicate, featuring Afran Nisho, Tasnia Farin, and Nazifa Tushi in the leading



**Nuhash Humayun** 

The young director stunned everyone by introducing the horror genre to the web platform with his debut series Pett Kata Shaw.



Tanim Noor

Kaiser was one of the most-loved productions of 2022. The director brilliantly executed the entire series, which earned him a nomina-



Mohammad Tougir Islam

The director surprised the audience with his debut production Shaaticup. The crime-drama explores a new narrative of the localities of Rajshahi in their own language





Robiul Alam Robi

Robi's Cafe Desire explores human relationships, which connects the plot in a hyper-linked narrative. His excellent direction earned him the nomination.



Vicky Zahed

Vicky's first web film, Redrum, explores the old-school traits of a 'whodunit' through characters that are realistic and relatable.



**Anam Biswas** 

Dui Diner Duniya is the mystery thriller that tells how life's simplest philosophy of retribution has the strangest ways of manifesting itself. Anam Biswas masterfully brought the story to the screen.



Raihan Rafi

The director is known for introducing twists in each of his works. Taan is no different. Raihan Rafi surely deserves a nomination for this film.



Sanjoy Somadder

The director managed to highlight the emotional journey of a mother and a child, facing many social turbulences in his web film Daag.

# INTERNATIONAL

# 5 KEY TAKEAWAYS

The African Union has been inducted as the new permanent member of G20, pushing forward a new world order and offering developing nations a greater say in global decision-making.

Comprehensive rail and shipping connectivity network announced linking US, India, Saudi Arabia and Gulf and Arab states and European Union.

Delhi Declaration was adopted with China and Russia in agreement to it. It called on nations to uphold international law, including territorial integrity and sovereignty, international humanitarian law and the multilateral system that safeguards peace and stability. It is being offered as an alternative to China's Belt and Road project, which has left a host of developing countries in deep debt such as Pakistan, Kenya, Zambia, Laos and Mongolia.

the launch of Global Biofuel Alliance to boost the use of cleaner fuels. It was affirmed that this alliance will accelerate global efforts to meet net zero emission targets by facilitating trade in biofuels derived from various sources, including plant and animal waste.

PM Modi announced

Trust deficit that has risen in recent years has to overcome by greater cooperation between member countries of G20.



shake hands next to Narendra Modi

#### **G20 SIDELINES**

### US, India, Saudi, EU unveil rail, ports deal

REUTERS, New Delhi

Global leaders announced a multinational rail and ports deal linking the Middle East and South Asia yesterday on the sidelines of the G20 summit in New Delhi.

The pact comes at a critical time as US President Joe Biden announcing the pact that seeks to counter China's Belt it would unlock "endless and Road push on global infrastructure by pitching energy, clean electricity, Washington as an alternative and laying cable to connect and investor

developing countries at the 320 grouping.

Biden said it was a "real big deal" that would bridge ports across two continents and lead to a "more stable, more prosperous and integrated Middle East."

opportunities" for clean

Prime Minister Narendra Modi of summit host India said: "Today, as we embark upon such a big connectivity initiative, we are sowing the seeds for future generations to dream bigger.'

The deal will benefit low He said at an event and middle-income countries in the region, and enable a critical role for the Middle East in global commerce, Jon Finer, the US deputy national security adviser, told reporters



### G20 expands as African Union joins bloc

REUTERS, New Delhi

The African Union was made a permanent member of the G20, comprising the world's richest and most powerful countries, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi said at the bloc's summit in New Delhi yesterday.

The African Union, a continental body of 55 member states, now has the same status as the European Union - the only regional bloc with a full membership. Its previous designation was "invited international organisation".

Modi, in his opening remarks at the summit, invited the AU, represented by Chairperson Azali Assoumani, to take a seat at the table of G20 leaders as a permanent member.

"Honoured to welcome the African Union as a permanent member of the G20 Family. This will strengthen the G20 and also strengthen the voice of the Global South," said a message on Modi's official account on social media platform X, formerly known as Twitter. The move was proposed by Modi in

The G20 previously comprised 19 countries and the European Union.

Delhi declaration adopted

#### **SOUTH AFRICA'S ZULU HAWK** Mangosuthu Buthelezi dies aged 95

AFP, Johannesburg

Mangosuthu Buthelezi, the once-feared Zulu nationalist and historic leader of Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP) which presided

over South Africa's deadliest violence ahead of the first all-race elections, died yesterday aged 95, President Cyril Ramaphosa announced.

"I am deeply saddened to announce the passing of Prince Mangosuthu Buthelezi ... Traditional Prime Minister to the

Zulu Monarch and Nation, and the

Founder and President Emeritus of the Inkatha Freedom Party," Ramaphosa said in a statement. Born of royal blood on August 27, 1928,

Mangosuthu Gatsha Buthelezi was to some the embodiment of the Zulu spirit: proud and feisty. To others, he bordered on a warlord.

### Celebrating the legacy

of Bengali art and culture. It is important to preserve the

Shah Alam Sarwar, managing director and chief executive officer of IFIC Bank, and Manjar Chowdhury Sweet, general secretary of Ganasangeet Samannay

Parishad, were present as special guests.

In his speech, Sarwar said, "Folk music is an amalgamation of thousands of years of cultural practices of a demographic. Burman, with his individualistic style and musical gift, went forward and contributed outstandingly to foster and develop the music of this subcontinent."

Presided over by the Banhishikha's President Ghulam Quddus, its secretary Abida Rahman Setu delivered the

Following the inauguration ceremony, prominent artistes from Bangladesh and India's West Bengal, Assam, and Tripura paid tribute to the maestro, celebrating the richness of his compositions in musical presentations and dance recitals over the weekend.

The cultural part commenced with a rendition of the popular tracks "Dur Kon Porobashe Tumi" and "Tere Mere Milan Ki Yeh Raina", performed by Banhishikha artistes. Bangladeshi dance troupe Spandan and Assam's

Saumitra Shankar Dance Group staged group recitals, choreographed to the songs of SD Burman. Chandana Majumdar mesmerised the visitors with

evergreen melodies – "Ke Jash Re", "Rangeela Re", and "O Jani Bhromora". Meanwhile, Mamum Jahid Khan beautifully presented "Tumi Aar Nei Se Tumi", "Kandibona Phagun Geley", and "Barne Gandhe Chhande".

Sandipan presented "Jhilmil Jhilmil Jhiler Jole" and "Shone Ga Pakkin Lawa" while Sotu performed "Fi Chaiti

'Shono Ĝo Dakhin Hawa" while Setu performed "Ei Chaiti Sandhya Jay Britha" and "O Kalo Megh Boltey Paro". Tanuja Dev Burman, great-granddaughter of the

legend also performed at the event. "It is wonderful to see how Bangladesh celebrates SD

Burman. We, along with other musicians, come to this festival every year and meet enthusiasts who encourage us to take his legacy further," she said.

Indian singers Shirshendu Roy and Arina Mukherjee also performed at the event, which concluded yesterday.

### Lavrov gives 'rationale' for Ukraine war

the repression on them continued. On the other hand, Zelensky was working to become a NATO member. So, we had no alternatives to intervening," Rahman said quoting

Russia is open to discussion to end the war, but the Western countries do not want that, Lavrov also said. "They want to defeat Russia," the

Soviet diplomat said. The 73-year-old also accused the US of creating global problems by imposing sanctions. For example, he told the SAAB

members that Russia is helping build the Rooppur nuclear power plant but Bangladesh had to ban 69 Russian ships because of US sanctions, according to Rahman.

Lavrov highlighted the history of

Russia and Ukraine's relationship and distinguished fellow at the CPD, FROM PAGE 1 the origin of the war, said Muztafizur Rahman, distinguished fellow at the Centre for Policy Dialogue. Rahman did his Masters from Kharkov State University and PhD from Moscow State University.

"He said it was because of NATO and Ukrainian authority's policies that Russia had to start a campaign in Ukraine." CPD's Rahman said.

Lavrov also recalled the Soviet Union's role in Bangladesh's Liberation War and that Russia is eager to expand relations with Bangladesh, make investments and promote people-to-people contact. Russia currently provides

scholarships to 40 Bangladeshis a year and wants to increase it to 80. Bhattacharya, Debapriya a

who earned his MSc and PhD in economics at Moscow's Plekhanov Institute of the National Economy, and Taqsem A Khan, managing director of WASA, who did his Masters in mechanical engineering at the Peoples' Friendship University of Russia, were present among

During the trip, which was the first by a Russian foreign minister, Lavrov met with Foreign Minister AK Abdul Momen and then held a joint press conference.

On Friday, Lavrov called on Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina. Both Hasina and Momen urged Lavrov to end the war in Russia and solve the crisis through peaceful negotiations, apart from other bilateral issues

"Friends, we have just got good news. With the hard work of our teams, and with the cooperation of you all, there is consensus on the New Delhi G20 Summit Leaders Declaration," Modi said in a brief televised statement during the second session of the summit, speaking in Hindi.

Ukraine, meanwhile, criticised the

G20 leaders' statement. "Ukraine is grateful to the partners who tried to include strong wording in the text. At the same time, in terms of Russia's aggression against Ukraine, the Group of 20 has nothing to be proud of," said Oleg Nikolenko, a spokesman at the Ukrainian foreign affairs ministry, according to AFP.

Nikolenko posted a photo of a part of the statement edited in red, changing "the war in Ukraine" to "the war against Ukraine" and adding references to Russia.

The document had said that "all states" should "refrain from the threat or use of force to seek territorial acquisition against the territorial integrity and sovereignty or political independence of any state".

There was no explicit reference to Russia, unlike in a G20 statement in Bali last year that cited a UN resolution condemning "in the strongest terms the aggression by the Russian Federation against Ukraine"

"It's obvious that the Ukraine's participation (in the meeting) would allow the participants to better understand the situation," Nikolenko

Doing a delicate balancing act, the or threat of use of nuclear weapons Indian text on Ukraine said G20 is not a platform to resolve geopolitical and security issues, in an indirect reference to the ongoing conflict but conceded that the war has led to human suffering and impacted global supply chains.

Reconciling divergent views on the Ukraine issue, the declaration says the G20 is the premier forum for international economic cooperation "and recognises that while the G20 is not the platform to resolve geopolitical and security issues, we acknowledge that these issues can have significant consequences for the global economy.'

While the West and the EU had earlier wanted a reference to the Ukraine conflict, Russia had firmly opposed naming it in the G20 declaration.

As shared by the Indian Ministry of External Affairs, the adopted New Delhi declaration says on Ukraine: "Concerning the war in Ukraine, while recalling the discussion in Bali (during the previous G20 summit last year), we reiterated our national positions and resolutions adopted at the UN Security Council and the UN General Assembly and underscored that all states must act in a manner consistent with the purposes and principles of the UN Charter in its

"In line with the UN Charter, all states must refrain from the threat or use of force to seek territorial acquisition against the territorial integrity and sovereignty or political independence of any state. The use is inadmissible," it said.

The declaration read. highlighted the human suffering and negative added impacts of the war in Ukraine with regard to global food and energy security, supply chains, macro-financial stability, inflation and growth, which has complicated the policy environment for countries, especially developing and least developed countries which are still recovering from the Covid-19 pandemic and the economic disruption which has derailed progress towards the SDGs. There were different views and assessments of the situation."

"We call on all states to uphold the principles of international law including territorial integrity sovereignty, international humanitarian law and the multilateral system that safeguards peace and stability. The peaceful resolution of conflicts and efforts to address crises as well as diplomacy and dialogue are critical. We will unite in our endeavour to address the adverse impact of the war on the global economy and welcome all relevant and constructive initiatives that support a comprehensive, just, and durable peace in Ukraine that will uphold all the purposes and principles of the UN Charter for the promotion of peaceful, friendly, and good neighbourly relations among nations in the spirit of 'One Earth One Family, One Future'," according to the declaration.

"Today's era must not be of war," a resolution of the declaration read.

#### Most students didn't get help to cope Private tuition and distribution on Bangla, English and mathematics

needed to spend Tk 2,400 to Tk. 95,000 on private tuition.

"This is a substantial burden for families, since the majority of them had a monthly income of under Tk 15,000," it added. Parents reported spending an

average of Tk 669 at the primary level and Tk 2,065 at the secondary level to buy commercial note-books during that same nine-month At the programme, Education Watch Chairperson and Economist

Qazi Khaliquzzaman said the mentality that one has to get good results needs to be changed to get rid of private tuition culture. He blamed a group of teachers for having so many students rely on note-books. Prof Nehal said it is true many

students are taking private tuition

and relying on note-books, but he

doesn't think the number would be high. In Bangladesh, the share of urban households paying for private tuition increased from 48 percent in 2000 to 67 percent in 2010, while the corresponding share of rural households doubled from 27 percent to 54 percent, according to the UNESCO 2021/2 Global Education Monitoring Report.

of note-books are going on though a government order had forbidden teachers from giving private lessons to students of their institutions, while the Note-Books (Prohibition) Act 1980 prohibits the publication, distribution and sale of notebooks for students up to class eight.

Speaking to The Daily Star, Mostafizur Rahman, deputy director of CAMPE and study team member, said this staggering number of students dependent on private tuition and note-books is alarming.

"They [students] are doing so [relying on those] as many teachers are not interested in imparting committed, arrest those involved lessons properly in classrooms and would rather do it at private tuition

Tariq Ahsan, a professor at the Institute of Education and Research of Dhaka University, said there is a dependency on private tuition and note-books as the country's assessment system is based on rote

"So, many students and parents look for a shortcut to getting better

results in exams." Meanwhile, as part of the study, researchers held an assessment of Digital Security Act was not meant to 2,670 class-eight and -nine students be used to target journalists.

to evaluate the extent of learning losses. According to the results, around 29 percent of class-eight students and 26 percent of class nine failed in the exams.

### 86pc DSA cases pending disposal

FROM PAGE 2

Rights activists and journalists say the proposed law still does not address many of these concerns.

the law enforcers' job is to intervene if

"We need this provision because

there is a possibility of a crime being with the crime, and collect evidence," said the minister. The minister continued, "If

justice must be ensured, then some immediate evidence is required, and it is the duty of the law enforcers to collect that."

"If we bind the hands of the law enforcers, then they will not be able to do their duty," said Huq. He added that this provision is

only for situations where immediate

intervention is needed. The law minister reiterated that the

### Batting lets Tigers down again

28 runs in nine overs.

Miraz scored 28 runs before falling softly to the medium pace of Dasun Shanaka – the first of three wickets for the Sri Lanka skipper. Shanaka soon relieved Naim off his miseries after a 46-ball 21, which featured 33

Matheesha Pathirana then got into the act by removing skipper Shakib Al Hasan for three while Liton Das soon followed suit, getting caught behind off the bowling of left-arm spinner Dunith Wellalage for 15 as

Bangladesh found themselves 83 for four inside 19 overs.

Hridoy and Mushfiqur then added 72 runs in the fifth-wicket stand before the latter threw his wicket away after scoring 29 runs, effectively ending Bangladesh's realistic chances of a victory.

Earlier, Bangladesh bowlers did a decent job to restrict the hosts to 257 for nine after Shakib had elected to field.

The three Bangladesh pacers, despite being on the expensive side, shared eight wickets, with Taskin

Ahmed and Hasan Mahmud bagging three wickets each and Shoriful Islam picking up a couple.

The spinners, meanwhile, kept the Lankan batters in check. Shakib and Nasum Ahmed, who replaced Afif Hossain in the playing XI, conceded 43 and 31 runs, respectively.

Sadeera Samarawickrama was the stand-out batter eventually for Sri Lanka. The right-handed batter's 72ball 93, which featured eight fours and two sixes, enabled the hosts add 51 runs in the last six overs of the

# **EDITORIAL**

# The Baily Star

FOUNDER EDITOR: LATE S. M. ALI

### Hasina-Modi meeting bodes well for stronger ties

We hope unresolved issues will be addressed soon

The meetings between prime ministers Sheikh Hasina and Narendra Modi just before the G20 Summit has further consolidated the bilateral relations between Bangladesh and India. The Indian premier's expression of gratitude for the Bangladesh government's role in ensuring peace in India's northeast region is a fact for which the Hasina government deserves full credit. The invitation extended to our prime minister to attend the G20 Summit was indeed a most welcome gesture. It is a further testimony to the personal dynamics between the two heads of states that have developed over the vears and deepened the strategic ties between the two countries. Although it is not expected that major bilateral issues will be solved on the sidelines of such a summit, it is encouraging to note that both sides expressed the commitment to collaborate and cooperate on ensuring political and economic stability.

At the same time, we must note that although three MoUs have already been signed at the meeting, they did not apparently address some of the issues brought forward by our prime minister. One was to request India to ensure uninterrupted supplies of essential goods to Bangladesh, which is crucial for food security as well as to maintain price stability of essentials - a critical factor in an election year. Bangladesh-India trade is about \$14 billion, and essential commodities comprise a major part of it. The other important issue was Hasina's request to Modi to extend cooperation for quick repatriation of the Rohingya to Myanmar. As we know, Bangladesh and Myanmar are working on repatriating 3,000 Rohingya initially, with mediation by China. We hope that the "constructive and positive approach" expressed by the Indian prime minister in safe and sustainable repatriation will have a significant impact in the near future.

The meeting with the Indian prime minister holds special significance for Bangladesh's prime minister because it is taking place only a few months before our national election. Speculations continue regarding India's neutral stance regarding the Bangladesh election, which is quite different from that of the Western nations, who have been reiterating their wish to see free and fair polls here. But it is quite evident that the Modi government would prefer a continuation of the deep ties that have been developed over the years with Bangladesh, thanks to Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina.

Bangladesh is one of the most important strategic partners of India, and India is Bangladesh's most important neighbour as the latter shares almost the whole of its border with the former (except for the small stretch with Myanmar). Therefore, it is in the interests of both countries to smooth out whatever unresolved issues there are between them. For Bangladesh, it is important that India takes decisive measures to resolve the long-standing water-sharing issues (especially that concerning the Teesta River), the significant trade deficit with India, and the border killings which still continue. We hope that the warmth and bonhomie shared by the two prime ministers will lead to greater economic and strategic ties that will be mutually beneficial.

### Fix our dismal literacy rate

#### Why is one in four people still illiterate in the country?

We are utterly disappointed at the slow progress made over the last three decades to eradicate the scourge of illiteracy from the country. Reportedly, one in four individuals is still illiterate in Bangladesh, despite the fact that projects worth at least Tk 4.232 crore have been undertaken by successive governments since 1991 to wipe out illiteracy. According to the Bangladesh Sample Vital Statistics 2022 of the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS), at present, 76.8 percent of Bangladeshis aged seven and above are literate, while the rate is 74.4 percent among those aged 15 and above. While this may be considered significant progress if we compare it with the literacy rate in 1991 – only 35.3 percent among people aged 15 and above – we are still lagging far behind our goal of reaching 100 percent literacy by 2030.

Reportedly, the Bureau of Non-Formal Education (BNFE), the authority of non-formal education in the country, implemented nine projects over the last 30 years, while one project is still in progress. But educationists have pointed out that these schemes have not been able to get us the desired results due to a lack of proper approach towards the issue. According to them, the projects that the authorities undertook were narrow-focused, instead of being holistic. Experts say literacy can be attained in two ways: through formal education and through adult literacy projects. Our focus, however, has always been on formal education, with adult literacy getting less priority. And the projects aimed at providing non-formal education to primary school dropouts and children who never went to school were not very successful either, as those were mostly based on theoretical knowledge. Reportedly, the beneficiaries of these projects soon forgot what they had learnt and could hardly sustain their literacy skills.

Now, the question is, how should the authorities proceed to reach the target of 100 percent literacy by 2030? Experts suggest that taking a comprehensive approach - giving non-formal adult education more importance – is the key. While the authorities must increase their monitoring of the ongoing project, they should also make sure that future projects are more streamlined with effective measures, and there is better coordination among these projects. Checking the allegations of irregularities in the projects is also crucial. And since poverty still remains the biggest barrier to our literacy attainment – which was made worse by the Covid-19 pandemic - authorities should consider providing financial and other incentives to poverty-ridden families, particularly in vulnerable communities, to encourage them to participate in literacy projects.

# Banking sector reform can no longer be delayed

and exacerbates income inequality.

lack of governance and, in particular,

the inability to enforce banking

regulations, which breeds corruption

and moral hazard. Consequently,

decisions on credit intermediation tend

to be driven by political connections

or outright bribing of bank executives,

without any serious consideration of a

borrower's debt repayment capacity.

More generally, when the legal

system in an economy is not strong,

and policymakers routinely amend

regulations to serve the purposes of

powerful groups with vested interests,

it is only inevitable that unethical

borrowers will default without fear of

adverse consequences. Demonstrating

strict punishment is the only way to

change the deeply entrenched mindset

that a large borrower can get away

has long shied away from any serious

overhaul of financial regulations. Such

an overhaul would entail increasing the

accountability of bank management

and strengthening the bankruptcy system so that lenders have sufficient

ability and incentive to identify and penalise wilful defaulters. Policymakers

elements of the bankruptcy process,

including disputes related to legal

settlements, and appoint insolvency

professionals who can help banks

recover as much of defaulted loans as

If first-order problems such as

and

resolution can be strengthened, the

second step is to tighten up the banks'

risk management practices. Before

bankruptcy

Unfortunately, the government

without repayment.

enforceability

bank stress tests.

expressed in this article are the author's own.

**SHARJIL HAQUE** 

effectiveness of loan covenants is highly dependent on the enforceability of loan agreements.

My conversations with experienced bankers in Bangladesh suggest that, while some foreign commercial banks use covenants regularly, most of the domestic commercial banks do not, thus leaving themselves open higher likelihood of borrowers

that BB's current stress tests take concentration risk quite seriously and estimates the effect on NPLs if the top three borrowers default, understanding the full extent of corporate default risk requires generating default probability for each borrower. When estimating the probability of default at the borrower level, researchers must directly incorporate the borrower's



Reforming our banking sector is long overdue.

FILE PHOTO: STAR

disbursing a loan, a bank must carefully screen creditworthy borrowers based on their financial statements, collateral quality, and projected ability to repay debt. After a loan is disbursed, banks must continue to monitor borrowers.

One of the most mechanisms to monitor a borrower is to use loan covenants, which are restrictions on the actions a borrower can take after a loan is disbursed; they are typically written into the initial loan agreement. For example, one of the most common loan covenants used by banks globally is the minimum earnings-to-interest-expense ratio (or the "interest coverage ratio") that a firm must maintain. In the US, many banks require borrowers to have an ICR of at least 1.5 or more. This means that the borrower's cash flow or earning must always be greater than its required interest payment by at least a factor of 1.5. Every quarter, a borrower must report their financial statements to the lender in order for the lender to verify compliance with loan covenants. If a bankruptcy courts that administer the the bank gets the contractual right to demand immediate repayment of the loan, raise interest rates on the loan, lower loan maturity, or demand additional collateral. The expectation of this type of punishment ensures that the borrower has sufficient incentive to generate adequate cash flow to always avoid defaulting on a loan. At the same time, a covenant violation gives the lender an early signal that a borrower

might be in financial distress. But the

defaulting on their obligations.

Regulators and economists at the Bangladesh Bank must consider using more granular data when they conduct their periodic stress tests of bank loan portfolios. The idea behind stress tests is to see how resilient the banking system is to an unexpected economic or financial crisis, and how well it can support an economy during a recession. How should stress tests be designed to truly assess banking sector vulnerabilities? And are the stress tests conducted by the central bank effectively capturing emerging risks? In my professional view, corporate default probability needs greater attention in this regard.

The non-performing loan (NPL)  $numbers we hear of are what \, economists \,$ call an equilibrium outcome, meaning that it is the result of choices made by two parties: the lender who supplied credit and the borrower who demanded credit. Therefore, simply looking at bank-level data (such as the sensitivity of capital to risk-weighted assets to need to consider setting up new borrower violates this requirement, various recessionary scenarios) is not requiring borrowers and lenders to enough. When there is an aggregate negative shock (for example, a pandemic), it will hurt everyone in an economy simultaneously. Examining one party in a loan agreement, without considering the financial condition of the other, overlooks the full picture.

As a first step, BB's stress tests should be able to predict default probability at the borrower level to get a clearer picture of underlying hits the economy and ordinary people credit risk. While it is commendable

outstanding debt, their existing stock of cash, historical cost of borrowing, historical tendency to default, access to alternate sources of capital, and the amount of assets that can be sold in the event of serious liquidity problems.

The best way to better understand corporate default risks is to generate more data and produce greater information. Such data encompasses detailed financial statements of all companies that borrow from domestic foreign commercial banks operating in Bangladesh. For example, the Federal Reserve System requires the largest banks in the US to report their entire portfolio of corporate and retail loan holdings every quarter (above a certain loan size threshold). These reports include details on each individual loan disbursed by a given bank, along with the detailed income statement and balance sheet information of the borrower. This allows regulators and researchers to dig deep into corporate debt capacity and default probability. Furthermore, produce more granular information will generate transparency for all stakeholders in the banking system.

At the heart of it all, policymakers must be willing to adopt change and accept the fact that playing by a business-as-usual attitude will no longer work. Reforming the banking sector is long overdue, and regulators must act now before a full-blown crisis end up paying the price again.

# How Macron's visit can strengthen Bangladesh-France ties



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MD SHARIFUL ISLAM

French President Emmanuel Macron is visiting Bangladesh today, which is a milestone for Bangladesh-France bilateral relations. Previously, French President Francois Mitterrand visited the country in February 1990, and Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina went to France multiple times, including in 1999, 2017 and 2021, to strengthen Dhaka-Paris ties. In 2021, the two countries signed a letter of intent on defence cooperation, and according to a statement issued by the French president's office, both nations agreed to strengthen dialogue and continue their cooperation.

This upcoming visit is significant for several reasons. Primarily, it will provide a great opportunity to steer relations into a new direction, as the impacts of better ties matter to millions of people of the two countries. To achieve this, both countries can map out new areas of cooperation, with one possible priority area being the blue economy. Bangladesh collaborated with the

European Union in a technical project titled EU-BGD Joint Collaboration on Blue Economy, which ran from August 2016 to July 2018. It is argued that the blue economy cannot be developed, even partially, without cooperation, collaboration and mutual trust among neighbours (Sakhuja and Banerjee, 2020, Pg 127). Therefore, the visit can be utilised to promote cooperation in this area.

According to a press release of the French embassy in Dhaka, Bangladesh is seen as an important partner of France in addressing global issues such as climate change. For instance, Bangladesh played a leading role in the Paris Climate Accords. The Dhaka-Paris cooperation on climate change issues needs to be boosted for the millions of climate-vulnerable people in the world, including the people in Bangladesh.

The press release adds, "In Bangladesh, the President of the French Republic will continue to implement France's strategy in the Indo-Pacific

are focusing on the region due to its growing relevance, and Bangladesh has become a key player. The upcoming visit can be an opportunity to promote cooperation in the Indo-Pacific region focusing on maritime security issues, deep sea fishing, tackling illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing, and addressing dead zones in the Bay of Bengal.

Apart from all this, the visit can help improve bilateral trade and commerce. The history of trading and commercial ties between the two countries dates back to the 17th century, when the French maintained good economic relations with Bengal, the latter being the hub of regional trade and commerce. The volume of bilateral trade in 2021 amounted to \$3.3 billion, with a massive trade surplus in favour of Bangladesh. France is the fifth largest importer of Bangladeshi goods worldwide, and third within the EU. However, there are scopes for further

promoting the economic ties. Another important area of interest is cooperation in migration. According to the International Organization of Migration (IOM), 12,878 Bangladeshi migrants - 6,296 men and 6,582 women - were recorded in France in 2021. This number can go even higher. According to a report in *The New York* Times, nearly 400,000 jobs are vacant construction, transportation, nursing and agriculture sectors in

region..." We know that major powers France. Thus, exporting manpower to France can be an area of discussion during Macron's visit.

While in discussion, Bangladesh can even ask France's help to resolve the Rohingya crisis. The former has been hosting more than a million Rohingya refugees, and prolonging the repatriation process will complicate the crisis further.

We also need to consider people to-people contact for promoting Bangladesh-France relations. Under the leadership of renowned French thinker and philosopher André Malraux, the people of France came forward to mobilise international opinion in favour of Bangladesh during the Liberation War in 1971. Taking historical ties into account, we need to boost the flow of knowledge and culture. For instance, the volume of scholarship for Bangladeshi students at French universities needs to increase.

Finally, both Bangladesh and France share similar values at the global forum. Therefore, both can strengthen their global partnership to promote the greater cause of humanity. Due to the impacts of the Russian-Ukraine war and Covid-19, people around the world are suffering. Against such a backdrop, a humane world order based on the well-being of people needs to be promoted, and to do this, both Bangladesh and France can play a leading role by joining hands.

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# The terror of Dhaka University's guest room culture



Saleh Uddin Sifat is a student of Dhaka University and the director of Students Against Torture

#### SALEH UDDIN SIFAT

a dream-come-true for many, but those dreams are usually shattered harsh reality of this institution. Generally, new students cannot get accommodation in the dormitories financial means to arrange offcampus accommodation, residential vacancy. Taking advantage of this situation, leaders of the student *gono* (common) rooms.

Take the case of Zahid, who enrolled at DU in 2018, for example. Attached to Surja Sen Hall, he was denied a room when he sought accommodation from the hall administration. Left with no alternative, Zahid appealed to a political leader and was ultimately allotted a space in one of the hall's are three types of guest rooms: gono rooms. This is a common story for almost all freshers at DU.

Every hall has at least one *gono* room. And the term lives up to its name. While a *gono* room is meant usually crammed with almost 20 akin to prisons, and during summer these rooms become hell on earth.

with gono room placements, more Most of the severe levels of torture atmosphere, it will surely find ways sinister events follow soon after. At happen in the mini and single to ensure the rights and dignity of night, Chhatra League's second-

Getting into Dhaka University is year partymen summon first-year students and direct the latter to the hall's guest room, supposedly when students encounter the a place of hospitality. Far from a warm welcome, what the freshers experience there is nothing but hostility, alongside mental and or residential halls. For those who physical torture. The guest room do not have relatives nearby or the is synonymous with ragging or hazing: it is a place where the notion of senior students being supportive halls are their only option. However, mentors quickly crumbles. A firstthe hall administrations ignore the vear student is taught "etiquette students' plight by citing a lack of and manners," such as greeting seniors in a specific way, attending political programmes of Chhatra wing of the ruling political party League, staying on call at all times, place these unfortunate students in and not criticising the government. Those who fail to comply face brutal punishment, and even expulsion,

Although all halls have actual guest rooms, the term has lost its literal meaning and is now used to categorise the manner of abuse that occurs in any of the hall's rooms. Informally, there general, mini, and single. In the general ones, all freshers stand amid their seniors every day and bear a flurry of profanities for their so-called misconduct; the to house only four students, it is profanities sometimes turn into physical violence. Mini rooms are people. The freshers do not have more brutal than their general proper beds, lack basic hygiene counterparts. There, a selective facilities, and there is no space for number of freshers with "severe even a study table. The rooms are faults" are abused. In the single guest rooms, only one victim is targeted and abused both verbally While the nightmare begins and physically within the four walls.

DU students were tortured, mentally and/or physically, in 2022. However, we are aware that the actual number could be quite higher. Most incidents of torture go unreported as the victims are forced to stay silent. They are intimidated to such an extent that they sometimes withdraw complaints or do not even dare to complain to the authorities, thinking that the administration will not ensure justice. This shows a lack of trust in authority, which is sometimes tacitly responsible for perpetuating this guest room culture. In August last year, Chhatra League leaders confined a student over a message criticising their political programmes. Later on, after checking the victim's smartphone and accusing him of militancy, the hall provost handed him over to the police. The police, finding no prima facie evidence against the student,

Our recent study found that 27

Due to such incidents, victims prefer seeking solace and justice by publicising their suffering, talking about their condition through social channels, hoping for societal redress and resistance.

The hall administrations, even after being fully aware that Chhatra League assigns seats in the halls, turn a blind eye to this matter. The administrations' tacit compliance is deeply concerning. The provosts and house tutors sweep aside their role in monitoring abuse while political leaders rule the halls.

Instead of turning a blind eye, it is incumbent upon the hall administrations to take action against all illegal residents, prioritise the welfare of freshers, and prevent guest room torture. As the campus is buzzing with the arrival of freshers, this is a call for transforming Dhaka University into a nurturing academic institution, driven by goodwill and structural changes. If the administration truly values the ideals of an academic every student on campus.

for idiots The make-believe world of advertising and selling Dr Sayeed Ahmed is a consulting engineer and the CEO

**SAYEED AHMED** 

consulting organisation.

of Bayside Analytix, a technology-

focused strategy and management

added vitamins give any health benefits? Well, a consumer-product manufacturer claims just that.

Increasingly, making false claims and presenting distorted facts have become a trend to increase sales. Another such company brags that you can have all the nutritional benefits of an egg without eating one because their shampoos and conditioners are combined with all the good eggy things. A detergent company smirks because it sells soap bars in huge numbers by stating that these have "the cleaning power of blue and orange!" (What on earth could that mean?) Perhaps the epitome of a bizarre commercial is one advertising a "halal soap." It became so successful in misleading consumers - that Professor Philip Kotler mentioned it in his book *Principles of Marketing*. But wait, there is another, even more bizarre (and outrageous) example I

am coming to in a while.

Can a hand-washing liquid with must rely on visual inspection, your experience with that seller, and market opinion.

Dear marketing gurus,

don't take consumers

But fruit sellers or sweets traders are petty operators compared to the corporations selling unnecessary things by creating a false sense of need with sleek advertising campaigns. When I complained about TV channels showing too many commercials, a friend reminded me of the Greek philosopher Socrates. His well-off disciples took him to a marketplace to show him all the luxurious things, while the more loyal ones were uneasy about how the master might react. But he only said, "How many things I can do without!" Then, my friend added what he had to say: the TV channels are doing their job of informing the public of its needs, which people wouldn't otherwise know of.

Of course, advertising is not only a consumer society thing. Politics, international affairs, warfare, mainstream news, social media and

that much of it was a lie.

Duterte heavily manipulated public opinion in the Philippines before the 2016 presidential election using fake Facebook feeds. But don't make him the only one responsible. In 2013, Facebook, in a bid to increase its user base, started subsidising internet access to the platform on mobile devices in countries where cellular data was not affordable for many despite having smartphones. With 100 million people, the Philippines was the perfect ground for testing this out. Facebook offered them "free Facebook" without caring about how it might be abused by Duterte's campaign managers (marketing experts). He won, which everyone saw. But few realised that the bigger winner was Facebook. It has since been used worldwide to spread disinformation, one instance of which likely contributed to the 2017 Rohingya genocide in Myanmar. Amnesty International stated, "In the months and years leading up to the atrocities, Facebook's algorithms were intensifying a storm of hatred against the Rohingya, which contributed to real world violence."

In a sleek marketing campaign, again, the current Russia-Ukraine war is presented as a direct outcome of Putin's invasion. But the root cause of the conflict remains unaddressed. which Joseph S Nye, Jr, a professor at Harvard University and a former US assistant secretary of defence, makes adequately clear in his op-ed "What



Increasingly, making false claims and presenting distorted facts about products have become a trend to increase sales.

world claims about their products. When I buy a piece of papaya, pineapple or a kilogram of oranges, the seller almost invariably endorses it as extremely sweet (kora mishti in Bangla). "Don't pay now; take it home and enjoy, and pay me only if it's sweet," they add without a wink. Of course, you will not do that, but instead pay for it in good faith. Depending on your luck, the fruit can be sweet or sour, but that has nothing to do with the seller's pitch.

Point to any item in a sweets shop and ask, "When did this come in?" The answer is always, "Just a while ago." Never will any seller say that the sweets were made the previous day or earlier. Before buying, you The US administration later admitted adequate to wash your hands.

selling things by making out-of-this- everything else use marketing to Caused the Ukraine War?" Most news attract attention, manipulate public opinion, distort facts, and spread misinformation and disinformation. In 1997-98, when then US President Clinton was deep in the Monica Lewinsky mess, he tried to absolve himself by using a strongly worded, dramatically phrased, meticulously scripted sentence, "I did not have sexual relations with that woman."

> President George W Bush and Prime Minister Tony Blair jointly launched a massive misinformation campaign on Saddam's imaginary stockpile of weapons of mass destruction to justify their 2003 military assault on millions of Iraqis.

outlets manipulate public opinion by putting the West on a high moral ground, making Moscow the sole villain.

The ultimate winner, however, is whitening creams. All consumer product makers sell it with the promise of lightening one's skin tone despite the product's high health risks. But the sellers portray it as a beauty enhancer, thus creating an otherwise non-existent need. This is the ultimate in marketing that is downright disgraceful, humiliating, racial, discriminatory, and devoid of morality or ethics.

Finally, you don't need a fancy hand wash at home. A simple soap is

#### CROSSWORD BY THOMAS JOSEPH

**ACROSS** 1 Yard tool 5 Terre Haute's 11 Farm team 12 Broad street 13 Pub orders 14 Dock worker 15 Pledge of Allegiance noun 17 Cruise setting 18 Steer clear of 22 Prepared 24 Derisive look 25 Caribou's kin 26 Quarterback Manning 27 Vote in 30 Thicket 32 Surgery tool 33 Pound sound

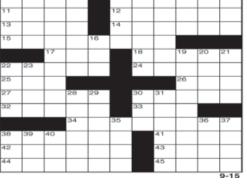
34 Knot-tying

38 Red Cross location 41 Gumbo base 42 Penitent person 43 Floral rings 44 Clash 45 Spot **DOWN** 

1 Stadium sound 2 Auto bar 3 Mementos 4 Followed as a result 5 Mural spot 6 Steers clear of 7 Sailing signal 8 Plus 9 Take to court 10 That woman

19 Counterfeit videos 20 Salon supplies 21 Buffalo's lake 22 Lively folk dance 23 Singer Fitzgerald 28 Sidewalk stuff 29 See the world 30 Compact, e.g. 31 Meadowlark's cousin 35 Quite uncommon 36 Hold tightly 37 Relaxed 38 Yak it up 39 Pilot's guess: Abbr. 40 Word of

denial



#### YESTERDAY'S ANSWERS

Р	Α	S	Т		F	-	D	G	E	Т	
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#### LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Send us your letters to letters@thedailystar.net

### Is AI a concern for chartered accountants?

Imagine spending your blood, sweat, and tears on passing 10-15 exams to get the title of CA, only to hear that you could be replaced by a man-made, emotionless robot someday. This should come as no surprise to you because the use of AI has taken over every industry and might not leave accountants untouched.

To explore this question, we must delve into how these changes in technology can be viewed from a finance perspective. AI might be perceived as an opportunity if it automates repetitive tasks and frees up time for professional accountants to focus on more challenging, value-adding work. On the other hand, it might be seen as a threat when it replaces many traditional roles and activities, resulting in job losses.

In general, we can group "data collection" and "data processing" as activities that are at a risk of being automated, while "applying expertise," "stakeholder interactions," and "managing others" are activities which require human skills and personalisation to be able to create value for the organisation.

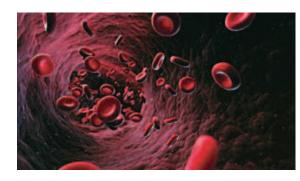
Hence, it is safe to say that AI-driven technologies can be a helping hand for accountants but can never eliminate their necessity. We must embrace these innovations for the opportunities they bring and find ways to mitigate their threats.

**Nujhat Nowrin** North South University

WRITE FOR US. SEND US YOUR OPINION PIECES TO

16 Howl at the

# starhealth@thedailystar.net HEAIT



### Anaemia rates among adolescent women on the rise: urgent action needed

STAR HEALTH REPORT

A recent study published in PLOS Global Public Health sheds light on the alarming increase in anaemia among adolescent women in India from 2015 to 2021. Anaemia, a condition characterised by a lack of healthy red blood cells, can have severe health consequences, and it

disproportionately affects women in India. Almost 6 in 10 female adolescents in India are anaemic, with 21 of 28 states reporting increased prevalence since 2015, per national surveys.

The study data analysed from the fourth and fifth rounds the National Family Health Survey, covering over 100,000 adolescent women aged 15 to 19. Shockingly, the prevalence of anaemia surged from 54.2% to 58.9% during this period.

The study also found various factors associated with anaemia, including having more than one child, lacking education, belonging to Scheduled Tribes, being in the lowest wealth quintile, and being underweight.

This rise in anaemia rates is a cause for concern, highlighting the need for targeted interventions to address this public health issue. Anaemia can lead to fatigue, weakness, and a range of health complications, especially during pregnancy. As such, it is essential that efforts are made to improve the overall health and well-being of adolescent women and reduce the burden of anaemia they face.

### Raising awareness and taking action: International Overdose **Awareness Day 2023**

STAR HEALTH DESK

August 31 is International Overdose Awareness Day. In 2019, around 600,000 deaths were attributed to drug use, with 25% related to opioids. Opioids have analgesic and sedative effects and are commonly used for the management of pain.

Opioids are a class of compounds that include natural, semi-synthetic, and synthetic substances with properties that interact with opioid receptors in the brain. They are known for their analgesic and sedative effects and are commonly used for pain management. Opioid medications like morphine, codeine, and fentanyl are widely used for this purpose, while methadone and buprenorphine are used for treating opioid dependence. However, the misuse of opioids for non-medical reasons can lead to dependence and various health issues.

Globally, approximately 5.8% of the population aged 15-64 used drugs in 2021, with around 60 million people using opioids. Drug use disorders affected about 39.5 million individuals that year, and the proportion of those using prescription opioids is increasing.

Opioid use can result in fatal opioid overdoses due to their impact on the brain's respiratory regulation center. Signs of opioid overdose include pinpoint pupils, unconsciousness, and breathing difficulties. In 2019, approximately 600,000 drug-related deaths occurred worldwide, with opioids contributing to nearly 80% of these deaths and around 25% of

125,000 fatalities. The number of opioid overdoses has been on the rise, partly due to the increased availability of prescription opioids for chronic pain management and the presence of potent opioids in the illicit drug market. In the United States, opioid

opioid-related deaths attributed to

overdose, causing approximately



overdose deaths surged, particularly involving synthetic opioids, from 2013 to 2019.

Fentanyl, a potent synthetic opioid, is about 50–100 times more potent than morphine. While it is included on the World Health Organisation's (WHO) model list of essential medicines for its painrelieving properties, it has also contributed to a spike in opioid overdose deaths. Drug dealers often mix fentanyl with other substances, including heroin, increasing its potency and making it challenging for users to detect.

Several risk factors increase the likelihood of opioid overdose, including opioid use disorder, injection drug use, resumption of opioid use after abstinence, unsupervised use of prescription opioids, high prescribed opioid dosages, combined use with other substances, and underlying medical conditions.

Efforts to prevent opioid overdose include increasing access to opioid dependence treatment, rationalising opioid prescribing practices, monitoring opioid dispensing, and restricting over-the-counter sales of opioids. However, there is a significant gap between recommended actions and their actual implementation.

Naloxone, an opioid antidote, can reverse opioid overdose effects if administered promptly. It is currently limited to health professionals in many places, but some countries have made it available without a prescription. Programmes providing naloxone to individuals likely to witness an opioid overdose, along with training on its use and resuscitation, have been successful in reducing overdose deaths.

Prevention strategies involve improving access to opioid dependence treatment, reducing inappropriate opioid prescribing, and monitoring opioid use trends and related harm. WHO recommends a range of treatment options for opioid dependence, including opioid agonist maintenance treatment (e.g., methadone and buprenorphine), psychosocial support, pharmacological treatment with opioid antagonists (e.g., naltrexone).

In conclusion, opioids have medical significant benefits but also pose risks, particularly regarding dependence and overdose. Addressing these challenges requires a multi-pronged approach, including prevention, harm reduction, and access to appropriate treatment and overdose response measures. If you suspect someone is having an overdose, contact an emergency healthcare provider immediately.

Source: World Health Organisation

### **HAVE A NICE DAY** How much is too much? -Part III

DR RUBAIUL MURSHED

Many factors affect how much money you need to live comfortably, such as location, lifestyle, age, and health. It also varies from culture to culture and between Western and Eastern philosophies. That is why the definition of happiness varies from culture

Health is one of the most crucial things in life that money can not buy. And 'health' does not always come from medicine; it may come from peace of mind and soul. It comes from kindness and gratitude. Even wealthy people can never trade their money for this 'health'. But unfortunately, there are many real-life cases where

people sacrifice their health to pursue wealth.

Studies show that money-centric mindsets have developed to focus too much on financial issues. This focus can be so great that they neglect human, intellectual, and social assets in their families. It means that making more does little for their happiness. It does not take a wise scholar to see how misguided this mindset is! It has also been seen that too much wealth creates toxic relationships that can negatively drain someone's energy and impact his or her mental and physical health. The more time someone spends with them, the more euphoric and fantasy world one will live in.

Today, money-driven people generate so much waste because of our consumptionbased economy and lifestyle; as a result, an unimaginable number of people suffer. 'Too much money' has become a dreadful master and an evil servant.

E-mail: rubaiulmurshed@shomman.org



WORLD PHYSIOTHERAPY DAY 2023

### Prevention and management of **OSTEOARTHRITIS**

DR M SAIDUR RAHMAN

September 8 is observed as the World Physiotherapy Day. The day marks the worldwide physiotherapy community's unity and solidarity. It is an opportunity to appreciate the work physiotherapists do for their patients and society. The focus of this year's World Physiotherapy Day was the prevention and management of osteoarthritis.

Arthritis is a disease that affects your joints. Arthritis usually involves inflammation or degeneration (breakdown) of your joints. These changes can cause pain when you use the joint. Arthritis is most common in the following areas of the body: feet, hands, hips, knees, and lower

back. Experts have identified some genes that might c a u s e arthritis, including arthritis the knee. They predict that there are more genes not

yet discovered. You could have a gene linked to arthritis without knowing it, and a virus or injury could trigger arthritis of the knee. Though the cause is

unknown, some risk factors increase the possibility of arthritis of the knee. Risk factors for osteoarthritis, specifically, include:

Age: Osteoarthritis happens to older adults more often than younger adults and children.

Bone anomalies: You are at a higher risk for osteoarthritis if your bones or joints are naturally crooked.

Gout: Gout, also a type of inflammatory arthritis, might lead to osteoarthritis.

Injuries: Knee injuries can Dhaka.

cause arthritis of the knee.

Stress: A lot of stress on your knees from jogging, playing sports, or working an active job can lead to osteoarthritis of the

Weight: Extra weight puts more pressure on your knees.

There are many signs and symptoms of arthritis of the knee: creaking, clicking, grinding, or snapping noises (crepitus); difficulty walking; joint pain that changes (gets better or worse) depending on the weather; joint stiffness; knee buckling; knee joint pain that progresses slowly or pain that happens suddenly; skin redness or swelling. Healthcare providers cannot

cure knee arthritis. But they have some tips that might

reduce severity of your symptoms and possibly stop arthritis from getting worse, including maintaining a

healthy weight and

exercising using lowimpact activities (swimming, cycling) instead of high-impact activities (jogging, tennis). Aim for about 150 minutes of exercise per week; wear shockabsorbing inserts in your shoes; apply heat or ice to the area; wear a knee sleeve or brace; do physical therapy exercises that help with flexibility, strength, and motion; use a cane; receive acupuncture and platelet-rich plasma.

Check with your healthcare provider before you try any of these tips.

The writer is the Chief Consultant Physiotherapy Centre, Tejgaon,



#### Sugar substitute scrutiny: aspartame's carcinogenic concerns

The International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) and the World Health Organisation (WHO) have jointly released assessments on the health impacts of the artificial sweetener aspartame. These assessments come amid concerns about the potential carcinogenicity of aspartame and its widespread use in various food and beverage products since the 1980s.

IARC has classified aspartame as "possibly carcinogenic to humans" (Group 2B), citing limited evidence for its carcinogenicity, specifically in relation to hepatocellular carcinoma, a form of liver cancer. This classification is based on limited evidence in both humans and experimental animals and limited understanding of the mechanisms that may lead to cancer.

On the other hand, the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) Joint Expert Committee on Food Additives (JECFA) reaffirmed the acceptable daily intake (ADI) of aspartame at 40 mg/kg body weight. JECFA concluded that the available data did not provide sufficient reason to change this established limit, indicating that aspartame consumption within this range is safe.

Both assessments noted limitations in the available evidence for cancer and other health effects associated with aspartame consumption. Notably, JECFA factored in IARC's classifications but found the evidence on cancer risk in humans not convincing.

Both IARC and WHO stressed the need for more research to refine our understanding of whether aspartame poses a carcinogenic hazard. They will continue monitoring new evidence and encourage independent research groups to conduct further studies on the potential health effects of aspartame exposure.

The assessments aim to provide clarity on aspartame's safety and its potential implications for consumer health, particularly regarding



#### Usage of PET-CT scans:

- More accurate way to stage cancer than other imaging tests, such as CT scans or MRIs
- Detect cancer earlier than other imaging tests
- Help doctors to determine the best course of treatment for cancer
- Help doctors to monitor the effectiveness of treatment











**T SPORTS** Live from 4:00 pm **SONY SPORTS AND 5** Pakistan vs India **European Qualifiers** Kazakhstan vs Northern Live from 3:30 pm **SONY SPORTS 1** Ireland **England vs New Zealand** Live from 7:00 pm Finland vs Denmark

Live from 10:00 pm Ireland vs Netherlands Live from 12:45 am (Monday) **SONY SPORTS 2 AND 3** US Open men's final Djokovic vs Medvedev Live from 2:00 am (Monday)



Australia opener David Warner leaps into the air to celebrate his 46th international century during the second ODI against South Africa in Bloemfontein yesterday. With his second-fastest hundred, which came from 85 balls, the left-hander became the first Australian opening batter to reach 20 ODI centuries. Courtesy of Warner's 109 and Marnus Labuschagne's 124, the Aussies posted their third-highest total, 392 for eight, in the format. PHOTO: REUTERS

# Shakib rues lack of runs at the top

SPORTS REPORTER

While skipper Shakib Al Hasan pointed to the inability of putting on a big opening stand as one of the reasons behind his team's 21run defeat against Sri Lanka in their crucial Super Four encounter, the performance in yesterday's match practically summed up Bangladesh's inconsistent batting performance throughout the Asia Cup.

Poor shot-selection and lack of responsibility shown by the batters was the highlight of the Bangladesh innings once again as the Tigers brought their own downfall despite Mehedi Hasan Miraz and Naim Sheikh getting the team off to a decent start with a 55-run opening stand in chase of 258.

"Chasing 260 (258) runs on that wicket, we needed partnership at the start. Though we got to fifty, we needed an 80-or-100-run partnership. Then we could have chased such a target because there was help for the bowlers, especially the spinners and seamers as well. Our top four didn't get enough runs and we didn't bowl well at the start," Shakib said at the postmatch presentation ceremony.



Bangladesh lost four wickets for 28 runs in nine overs to go from 55 for none to 83 for four before Hridov and Mushfiqur Rahim steadied the ship for a while.

But once again the experienced hopes of a victory virtually rested Mushfiqur threw his wicket away after scoring 29 runs off 48 balls fifth-wicket stand, Bangladesh's

on the shoulders of Hridoy.

The young man then fought a and ending a promising 72-run lone battle before being dismissed for 82 off 97 balls, striking seven fours and a six but it always proved to be a tough ask with a fragile tail.

"He (Towhid Hridoy) batted really well; he played in the LPL (Lanka Premier League) here and he had a good tournament and I think that gave him the confidence. If he could stay there a bit longer... but you know that happens. There are lot of ifs and buts we can talk about. I thought Sri Lanka played better than us and that's why they are the winners," Shakib said.

Bangladesh had done a decent job after electing to bowl first, with the three pacers picking up eight wickets. But according to Shakib, right-hander Sadeera Samarawickrama's blistering 72-balls 93 took the game away from the Tigers.

"I thought it was a good toss to win. At the start we didn't bowl particularly well. I thought there were lot of help for the bowlers but we couldn't get the wicket. Credit should go to Sri Lanka for the way they handled the new ball. But from there on, we came back really strong but the way Sadeera (Samarawickrama) played, he took the game away from us," opined

# India, Pakistan rekindle rivalry

AFP, Colombo

Pakistan skipper Babar Azam said Saturday his side will have an edge over India in their Asia Cup Super-Four clash, with a bowling line-up ready to win matches and tournaments.

The arch-rivals meet again in Colombo on Sunday after their group match was abandoned due to rain, which has played havoc with the 50-over tournament that

>> India have the edge over Pakistan after 14 Asia Cup fixtures played in the 50-over format, having won seven times with two matches yielding no result.

>> Overall ODI head-to-head outcomes, however, paints a different picture as Pakistan boast a win percentage of 54 against their archrivals following 133 encounters.

>> The outcome of the first-ever clash between the two sides, played in a 40over contest in 1978, went in India's favour by a mere four-run margin.

>> After three matches in Colombo, India are yet to defeat Pakistan who won the 2004 encounter. Both the first fixture in 1997 and the latest one in the ongoing Asia Cup's group stage did not produce an outcome.

>> The only time India won against Pakistan in Sri Lanka happened in Dambulla in 2010, a last-ball thriller where Harbhaian Singh arrived as the unlikely hero with the bat.





An India-Pakistan clash remains one of the most hotly anticipated matches in world cricket because the two South Asian neighbours only play each other in multi-nation tournaments due to political tensions.

Pakistan won their opening match of the Super Four stage against Bangladesh and a second win will further enhance their chances of making the final on September 17.

But rain in the Sri Lankan capital is expected to play spoilsport again in the match, for which a reserve day has been kept aside.

"You can say we have the edge, as we have played back-to-back cricket here (in Sri Lanka) and in Pakistan," Azam told

"It has been two-and-a-half months in Sri Lanka including the Test series, Lanka

is a precursor to the ODI World Cup in Premier League, Afghanistan series and playing Pakistan regularly made it tough now the Asia Cup. So, you can say it will to gauge the opposition. be advantage (for us)."

> Afridi, Naseem Shah and Haris Rauf have against such attacks often it makes a bit stood out, with 23 wickets between them so far.

Shaheen, a left-arm quick who leads the bowling, rattled India with his opening burst in the group match, taking the key wickets of skipper Rohit Sharma and Virat Kohli.

Azam said the team believes their bowlers can win them titles.

"Proud to have the fast bowlers that we have. One of the best (in the world)," said

"Fast bowlers win you tournaments and matches and I have total belief (in) them. The line-up that we have including Naseem and Faheem (Ashraf) is the best lot that we have."

India opener Shubman Gill said not

"We all know that their bowling attack Pakistan's pace trio of Shaheen Shah is quite good and when you don't play of difference in main tournaments," said

> Gill, who was bowled by Rauf for 10 in Pallekele last week, and the Indian batsmen have been facing a left-arm specialist in their training to counter Shaheen. He said the variation "helps".

India managed to post 266 all out after they slipped to 66-4 against Pakistan last week and Gill said the team has taken confidence from the fightback.

"Openers need to make a good start and need to dominate them from the beginning," he said.

"In the league match, our top order did not click much, still we made a competitive total...so, it was a good sign."



The coaches and captains of Bangladesh and India pose with the SAFF U-16 Championship trophy at the Changlimthang Stadium in Thimphu yesterday. Bangladesh, who began their campaign with a 1-0 defeat against India, will square off against the same opposition in today's



Lamine Yamal became Spain's youngest international and goalscorer aged 16 years and 57 days when he scored the seventh goal for his team during a 7-1 thrashing of Georgia in a Euro 2024 qualifier on Friday. The winger broke the previous record of Barca teammate Gavi, who was 17 years and 62 days when he made his debut in 2021. Yamal is also now the youngest player to score in Euro qualifying, taking the record from Wales legend Gareth Bale (17 years and 83 days).



### Medvedev determined to deny Djokovic's 24th

REUTERS

Daniil Medvedev expects Novak Djokovic to be in top form at Sunday's US Open final, but the third-seeded Russian adds that he will try to produce his "best-ever version" to beat the record-23-time Grand Slam champion.

Medvedev prevailed 7-6(3), 6-1, 3-6, 6-3 in a fascinating encounter that ended top seed

Carlos Alcaraz's reign as Flushing Meadows champion, with the 27-year-old setting up a rematch of his triumphant 2021 finale against Djokovic.

Djokovic, hunting a fourth U.S. Open title that would see him equal Margaret

Court's record haul of 24 Grand Slams and a good measure of revenge on Medvedev.

"He (Djokovic) is always better than the previous time he plays. For example, I beat him in the U.S. Open final, he beat me in Bercy (Paris Masters) in a great match. Carlos beat him in Wimbledon, he beat him in Cincinnati," Medvedev told reporters.

"Novak is going to be his best version on Sunday, and I have to be the best-ever

version of myself if I want to try to beat him. "Novak, when he loses, he's never the same after... It's just a different mentality...

So, I have to use it knowing that he's going to be 10 times better than he was that day. And I have to be, if I want to still beat him, 10 times better than I was that day."

Djokovic battled past American Ben Shelton in straight sets on Friday to set up a rematch with Russia's Medvedev, who denied him a rare calendar Grand Slam two years ago.

The memory of that bitter defeat was still fresh in his mind, as Djokovic told reporters he was trying not to focus on the significance of a 24th major title that

would match Margaret Court's all-time singles record. "(I don't) think about the history too much in this sense, you know, because when I did that in the past,

underperformed," said Djokovic. "So. I don't want this to happen again, and I'll try to, you know, just focus on what needs to be done and tactically prepare

like, '21 finals here I was maybe overwhelmed

with the occasion and the opportunity and I

myself for that match." Djokovic won the Australian Open and hoisted the trophy at Roland Garros already this year. He had a chance to collect his 24th major title in Wimbledon but was denied in the finale by Spain's Carlos Alcaraz.





### Batting lets Tigers down again

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Batting failure once again led to the downfall of Bangladesh in their 21run defeat against Sri Lanka in a crucial Super Four encounter in the Asia Cup at the R Premadasa Stadium in Colombo yesterday.

Chasing a victory target of 258, Bangladesh were bowled out for 236 runs with eleven balls remaining, with Towhid Hridoy's 82 the only notable batting performance for the

With consecutive defeats in the Super Four stage, Bangladesh's hopes of reaching the final are left hanging by a thread, with only one game for them remaining, that against seven-time champions India on September 15.

Bangladesh's top-order batting once again failed to complement the spirit shown by the bowlers on a tricky Premadasa surface, and despite a 55run opening stand between Naim Sheikh and Mehedi Hasan Miraz, the Tigers found themselves in all sorts of trouble after losing four wickets for

SEE PAGE 7 COL 4



Sri Lanka wicketkeeper Kusal Mendis successfully catches the ball to dismiss Bangladesh batter Litton Das during their Asia Cup Super Four fixture at the R Premadasa Stadium yesterday. After restricting Sri Lanka to 257, Bangladesh were bowled out for 236 to lose the match by 21 runs.

### Lavrov gives 'rationale' for **Ukraine** war

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov explained why Russia "had to" start military intervention in Ukraine during his interaction with the Soviet Alumni Association, Bangladesh (SAAB) in Dhaka on Friday.

Lavrov, who was in Dhaka on a 20-hour visit on September 7

before attending the G20 summit in New Delhi, spoke to the members of SAAB, an association of Russian those who studied in Russia, at the Russian embassy before wrapping up his visit to Bangladesh.

The Russian minister explained that after the breakup of the Soviet Union, the US in 1990 committed to not expand NATO eastwards, said Mizanur Rahman, director of the Bangladesh Institute of Law and International Affairs, quoting Lavrov

Rahman did his LLM and PhD in International Law from the Peoples' Friendship University of Russia.

However, in violation of that commitment, NATO expanded to more East European countries, Rahman told the correspondent yesterday, quoting Lavrov.

"Since 2014, there has been ethnic cleansing of the Russians living in Ukraine. They wanted to be independent, but we said you could have autonomy. Thus, SEE PAGE 7 COL 1

### 1,000-year-old mummy found in Peru

REUTERS, Lima

Archaeologists in Peru have unearthed a 1,000-year-old mummy in the latest discovery at an archaeological site located in a residential neighborhood of the country's capital, Lima.

The remains were found alongside ceramic vessels. textiles and other objects in the Huaca

Pucllana site in the middle of Lima's affluent Miraflores district, the head of the team of archaeologists, Mirella Ganoza, told Reuters on Wednesday.

This is an adult individual in a sitting position with bent legs," the expert said, noting that the mummy had long hair and a jaw that was nearly completely intact.

The uncovered mummy lived possibly as long as a millennium ago, at the beginning of the Ychsma culture that developed on the central coast of modern Peru during a period of social reorganization prior to the arrival of the Incas to the area, Ganoza said.

Mummies and ancient offerings have already been found in the Huaca Pucllana site, and experts see the site as a Pandora's Box with much more to

While best known for the mountain-top Inca royal retreat of Machu Picchu, Peru was home to various pre-Hispanic cultures that thrived in the centuries before the Inca empire rose to power, mainly along the country's central coast and in the

#### **COVID-19 LEARNING LOSSES**

# Most students didn't get help to cope

Shows Education Watch Study-2022 on primary, secondary levels

MOHIUDDIN ALAMGIR JEWEL

Almost three quarters of all primary and secondary school students did not receive any special assistance for their studies when schools reopened after the Covid-19 pandemic.

According to an Education Watch study report titled "Post Pandemic Education: Recovery and Renewal of School Education, around 85 percent students of classes eight and nine had to take private tuition classes to recover from the education losses caused by the pandemic.

Prepared by the Campaign for Popular Education (CAMPE), the report was unveiled at a programme in its office in the capital.

Education Watch is an alliance of civil society members and researchers and is coordinated by CAMPE. It shows 79 percent of primary

and 82.5 percent of secondary level students followed commercially produced note-books to prepare for their lessons and exams in 2022.

Note-books are study aids containing specific summarised from textbooks. notes

Around 97 percent of teachers

#### **COVID-19 FALLOUT**

**97%** teachers said Covid-19 caused learning loss

**75%** secondary, **71%** primary students got no assistance

**85%** class eight and nine students took private tuition

**79%** primary, **82%** secondary rely on note-books

said there were some learning losses due to pandemic-induced school closure. Schools across Bangladesh remained closed for 543 days at a stretch from March 17, 2020 to September 11, 2021.

Syed Shahadat professor of applied statistics at Dhaka University and a member of the team that conducted the study for the report, said around 71 percent primary students and 75 percent secondary students did not get any extra classes or online study materials to compensate for the losses during the pandemic.

Majority of the parents indicated

that private tutoring was arranged for their children to recover from learning losses, he added, quoting the study.

At the programme, CAMPE Executive Director Rasheda K Choudhury emphasised on coordinated efforts to help students recover from learning losses.

Contacted, Professor Nehal Ahmed, director general of Directorate of Secondary and Higher Education, said he cannot comment on the matter without seeing the report.

'We all know there were learning losses and we're taking various steps for recovery. We asked all the schools to hold extra classes, which some might not be able to do due to a shortage of teachers.'

The Education Study-2022 was conducted between January and October last year with 5,692 respondents, including 3,821 students, 562 teachers, and 584 parents from eight districts.

Government officials, school management committee and NGO officials were also on the list of respondents.

The study said that from January to September in 2022, parents SEE PAGE 7 COL 1

### 361 students died by suicide in 8 months **Says Aachol Foundation**

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

At least 361 students died by suicide in the first eight months of the year, according to Aachol Foundation.

The students were from schools, colleges, universities, and madrasas across the country, said the organisation for mental health, referring to media reports.

Of those who died by suicide, 169 were in schools, 96 in colleges, 66 in universities, and 30 in madrasas; of the total, 214 are girls and 147 are

"Students dying

by suicide is just a

number to us, but

for the families,

they meant the

President of Aachol

world."

TANSEN ROSE

Over 8 percent of them were aged 12 years or younger, 67 percent were between 13 and 19, 21.6 percent between 20 and 25, the rest were over

The highest 31.30 percent were from Dhaka division, 14.10 percent from Chattogram, and

the rest were from other divisions.

"Students dying by suicide is just a number to us, but for the families, they meant the world," Tansen Rose, president of the foundation, told a virtual press conference on the eve of the World Suicide Prevention Day.

Good parenting can be a safeguard for future generations, he said, adding that misunderstanding can lead to self-harming behaviour.

Helal Uddin Ahmed, associate professor at the National Institute of Mental Health; Farida Yeasmin, additional deputy inspector general of Cumilla-Sylhet region; Shahidul Islam, programme manager at health directorate, also spoke at the event.

In 2022, at least 532 students died by suicide, according to the foundation.

### No such thing as ghost case

Says IGP

**OUR CORRESPONDENT,** Bogura

Chowdhury Abdullah Al-Mamun, the inspector general of police, has said there is no such thing as a "ghost case".

"If someone has a specific complaint about a case, you should let us know, and we will investigate," the IGP told reporters in Bogura yesterday.

Lawsuits containing false charges against people, mainly opposition activists, are popularly known as ghost cases.

Asked about the allegation that 30 ghost cases were filed recently in Jamalpur and whether such cases would be filed in other districts, he said, "I don't know if there is any such thing as a ghost

The IGP visited the district to inaugurate Bogura Police Plaza.

Asked whether 20 lakh rubber bullets were procured by police to suppress dissent, the police chief said, "That is not the case. We buy these regularly. This is a normal process that happens

Referring to political programmes, he said, "We have nothing to say about political events. But if law and order deteriorate and people's lives and properties are at risk, we will take legal action."



A Bailey bridge in Tangail's Delduar upazila collapses early yesterday when a sand-laden truck was crossing it. This severed direct road communication between Delduar upazila and Tangail town.

# Celebrating the legacy of SD Burman

Sachin Dev Burman Sangeet Utsav concludes at BSA

DOWEL BISWAS

Thanks timeless melodies like "Ke Jash Re", and "Tumi Aar Nei Se Tumi", the name Sachin Dev



Burman needs no introduction to Bangla song lovers.

To pay homage to the legendary lyricist and composer, cultural organisation Banhishikha organised a two-day musical festival titled "Sachin Dev Burman Sangeet Utsav" at the National Theatre Hall of Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy in the capital, starting on Friday.

Minister for Cultural Affairs KM Khalid, who was also the chief guest. In his keynote speech, he said

It was inaugurated by State

"Deliberate expositions are required on SD Burman for the development

SEE PAGE 7 COL 6