

WALTON
Smart Fridge
বিশ্বের প্রথম 8-IN-1
কনভার্টিবল
সাইড বাই সাইড রেফ্রিজারেটর
waltonbd.com

KSRM
শেকড় থেকে শিখরে

DHAKA SATURDAY SEPTEMBER 16, 2023

REGD. No. DA 781

VOL. XXXIII No. 236

ASHWIN 1, 1430 BS

www.thedailystar.net

SAFAR 30, 1445 HJRI

16 PAGES : Tk 15.00



WR1
Totalail Beel in peril



P5
Mymensingh: No respite from gridlocks



P7
Furry Celebs



P8
No country for women and girls

Govt move to check prices falls flat

City markets react stubbornly, a day after gov't fixed prices of eggs, onions, potatoes

SHAHEEN MOLLAH and ARAFAT RAHAMAN

The commerce ministry's price cap on onions, potatoes, and eggs barely made an impact on the runaway prices as shopkeepers in the capital have not complied with the order.

Grocery store owners in different kitchen markets said they were aware of the government order, but they would have to count losses if they lowered the prices right away.

They added that they bought the goods from the suppliers at prices higher than the cap set by the government.

Shopkeepers at kitchen markets in Kawran Bazar, Shewrapara, Kazipara, Mohammadpur, Sukrabad and Rajabazar said similar things yesterday.

The government on Thursday set the price of onions at Tk 64 to Tk 65 a kg. But the price of the spice ranged from



An elderly woman collects a handful of partially burnt rice from the debris of the capital's Mohammadpur Krishi Market, a large part of which was burnt to the ground by a devastating fire early Thursday. Several other women from low-income families were seen scavenging for rice or anything edible in the ruins yesterday.

PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

KRISHI MARKET BLAZE

Victims seek immediate support from government

SHAHEEN MOLLAH and MUNTAKIM SAAD

Traders and salesmen whose shops were gutted in the huge fire in the capital's Mohammadpur Krishi Market are yet to receive any aid.

Having lost their merchandise and other goods, the victims demanded the government immediately provide them support and make makeshift arrangements to resume their business.

They also demanded a thorough investigation into why different markets catch fire in the middle of the night.

The huge blaze broke out at the Mohammadpur Krishi Market around 3:40am Thursday. It took 17 firefighting units nearly six hours to bring

SEE PAGE 2 COL 2

বিস্তারিত	এক কিলোগ্রামের মূল্য
২৬" ডাল	৫৫
২৬" ডাল	৫৫
২৬" ডাল	৫৫
২৬" ডাল	৫৫
২৬" ডাল	৫৫
২৬" ডাল	৫৫
২৬" ডাল	৫৫
২৬" ডাল	৫৫
২৬" ডাল	৫৫

A price chart hung by a grocer at a kitchen market in the capital's Kazipara yesterday.

Tk 70-Tk 95 a kg in the markets. People had to pay Tk 45-Tk 50 for a kg of potatoes while the cap was set at Tk 35-Tk 36. Only a few shops were selling an egg for Tk 12 in compliance with the order while most were demanding Tk 13.50. Delwar Hossain, a shopkeeper in the Purba Rajabazar area, said, "Our suppliers had not lowered the prices. We cannot sell onions at Tk 65 after procuring them for Tk 80." At a kitchen market in Sukrabad, a middle-aged shopper named Azizul Islam was seen arguing with a shopkeeper over the prices of potatoes. "Why are you asking for Tk 50 a kg when the government fixed it at Tk 36?" Azizul asked. The shopkeeper replied that he procured potatoes for Tk 42 a kg, and selling them for less was not an option for him. Shahidul Haque, a grocery store owner in Kazipara, said, "If I am forced to comply with the order, I will have to quit this business."

SEE PAGE 2 COL 5

Liquidity stress at Islamic banks shows no sign of abating

Says Moody's Investors Service

REJAUL KARIM BYRON

Liquidity in Shariah-based banks in Bangladesh remains tight due to a dip in deposit collection and the banks' inability to make the most of the central bank support to overcome the situation, Moody's Investors Service said in a report.

The report, published by the US-based global ratings agency on Thursday, said the latest data from Bangladesh Bank shows that liquidity stress for the sector is persisting.

"The liquidity shortfalls are credit negative as many Islamic banks could face difficulty meeting short-term obligations."

On Tuesday, Fitch Ratings also highlighted the liquidity challenges facing the Islamic banking segment.

The system-wide investment (loan)-to-deposit ratio of Islamic banks stood at 101 percent in June this year, up from 94 percent a year earlier, according to the central bank data.

"Such a high ratio means that liquidity continues to be tight after shrinking substantially," reads the Moody's report.

The liquidity situation at the Shariah-compliant banks worsened in recent times after enjoying a sound liquidity base year after year. At the end of 2022, all 10 full-fledged Islamic banks met regulatory liquidity requirements, but six months later four of them did not have sufficient liquidity to meet the minimum cash reserve and statutory liquidity ratios.

While the other six remained in compliance as of the end of June 2023, their excess liquidity levels were modest, said the Moody's report.

SEE PAGE 6 COL 2

Foreigners get 'false' reports from some civil society members

Abdur Razzaque tells AL 'peace rally' in city

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Some civil society members misled foreigners by providing them with "false" reports, Agriculture Minister Abdur Razzaque alleged while speaking at a rally in the capital yesterday.

"Some representatives of the civil society and some lobbyists give false reports by taking money from the BNP-Jamaat. Adilur Rahman [rights body Odhikar secretary] misleads foreigners through false reports in exchange for money," he told a "peace rally" in front of the Awami League central office on Bangabandhu Avenue.

Dhaka city (south) unit AL organised the rally protesting the "terror and anarchy" by activists of the BNP and Jamaat-e-Islami.

Calling on the European Union to send a delegation to Bangladesh, Razzaque, also an AL presidium member, said, "They [EU] have passed another resolution echoing the language of the BNP... You said the human rights of minorities in

SEE PAGE 2 COL 5

Govt oblivious

Mirza Fakhrul says about the state of democracy

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The BNP has said though the world says democracy in Bangladesh is on its deathbed, the government remains oblivious.

"The New York Times said that Bangladesh's democracy is heading towards a silent death. The Times of India in an article said that Bangladesh's democracy is on life support. Yet, they [government] are oblivious," said BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir.

He was addressing a rally, organised on the occasion of the International Day of Democracy, in front of the party central office in the capital's Nayapalton yesterday.

A large number of leaders and activists of the BNP and its associate bodies joined the rally. The crowd crammed the road from the Nightingale intersection to Paltan Model Police Station.

Speaking at the rally, Fakhrul said that BNP is not alone in the movement for restoring democracy in the country, rather the entire world is with them. He urged people from all walks of life to join the movement.

"On the International Day of Democracy, we pledge that we will not take part in any election under the incumbent government. No election will be held without the non-party interim government system put in place," he said.

The BNP leader demanded the government dissolve parliament and hand over power to a non-party interim government.

Fakhrul said the government knows it very well that the Awami League will not win more than 10 seats if the parliamentary polls are held under a neutral government and that's why it is setting up the administration to their liking.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 5

Tigers win nail-biter against India

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh prevailed in a game of nerves, exiting the Asia Cup with a narrow six-run win in their final Super Four game over tournament finalists India at the R Premadasa Stadium in Colombo yesterday.

After Shubman Gill's 121 off 133, a late 34-ball 42-run cameo from Axar Patel threatened to take the game away but Bangladesh bowlers managed to stay composed, bundling out India for 259 in 49.5 overs while defending a 266-run target.

Bowling a crucial penultimate over, Mustafizur Rahman, one of the five changes made in the Bangladesh eleven for the game, turned up with the goods for the Tigers. Needing 17 off the last two overs and Patel well-set at one end, India looked to be in the driver's seat.

However, with his trademark cutter, Mustafizur got rid of Shardul Thakur in the very

SEE PAGE 6 COL 4



Skipper Shakib Al Hasan congratulates Mustafizur Rahman, who picked up two crucial wickets in the penultimate over to help Bangladesh prevail in an Asia Cup Super Four thriller against India in Colombo yesterday. Earlier, Shakib's 80-run knock had laid the foundation for the Tigers' competitive total of 265 for eight en route to their six-run victory.

PHOTO: AFP

Free Adilur, Elan at once

48 eminent citizens urge government

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Forty-eight eminent citizens demanded the immediate release of Odhikar Secretary Adilur Rahman Khan and Director ASM Nasiruddin Elan, who were sentenced to two years in prison on Thursday.

In a joint statement issued yesterday, they expressed deep concerns over the verdict in a case filed in 2013.

The two key figures of the human rights organisation have been collecting data, investigating and publishing national and international reports on rights violations for years, it said.

Adilur and Elan were sentenced under the controversial section 57 of the ICT act for allegedly propagating "false and fabricated information", said the statement.

"We think that this incident will create immense obstacles in ensuring human rights and discourage other

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

Study finds high level of microplastics in salt

Experts say it may pose threat to public health

MOSTAFA YOUSUF

A recent study has found a surge in harmful microplastics in sea salt produced over the last couple of years in the country.

Researchers from Noakhali Science and Technology University (NSTU) have detected 560 to 1,253 plastic particles per kilogram of raw salt collected from 12 salt-producing sites in Cox's Bazar and Chattogram.

The study, published in the acclaimed Amsterdam-based Regional Studies on Marine Science journal in June this year, has found 9,640 microplastic particles from 12 kgs of raw salt. It has also revealed that offshore salt pans are more contaminated with microplastics than those onshore.

The study was conducted by a group of researchers from the oceanography department and the environmental science department of NSTU.

The presence of microplastics in the recent study was much higher than that of another study conducted in 2021 when researchers found 78 to 137 particles per kg of raw salt.

The previous study was jointly conducted by Bangladesh Oceanographic Research Institute (BORI) and the fisheries

➔ Researchers from Noakhali Science and Technology University have found 560 to 1,253 microplastics per kg of raw salt in samples from Cox's Bazar and Chattogram

➔ The contamination in raw salt is caused mostly by toiletries products like soap, facewash, cleanser, and different kinds of packaging and single-use plastics

➔ Experts say gradual intake of microplastics may harm the human body at multiple stages

and marine science department of NSTU. Titled "Microplastics pollution in salt pans from the Maheshkhali Channel, Bangladesh", it was published in the peer-reviewed, multidisciplinary Nature Journal in November 2021.

Salt, composed of sodium chloride, is produced in the south-eastern coastal belt

SEE PAGE 2 COL 2

SAINT MARTIN'S ISLAND Govt mulls seaplanes, cruise ships for tourists

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Cox's Bazar

Operation of seaplanes and cruise ships will be introduced for tourists to access St Martin's Island round the year, said Chairman of Cox's Bazar Development Authority (CDA) Commodore Mohammad Nurul Abshar yesterday.



However, the launching date has yet to be finalised.

Works have started to implement the new master plan to develop Cox's Bazar as an eco-friendly tourism hub, he said. There will be restrictions on the construction of commercial buildings here and there on the island. At the same time, the arrival of tourists to the island will be controlled from this year, he added.

Experts fear that serious damage has already been done to the environment in Saint Martin's Island, the chairman said, adding that this island should be protected.

"Development plan of Saint Martin's Island has been taken up based on the model of various tourist centers in Maldives, Thailand and Vietnam. If necessary, the opinion of the tourism experts of those countries will be taken," he said.

CDA chairman also said plans have already been made to introduce a cable car from Cox's Bazar to Moheshkhali island and Cox's Bazar to Teknaf.

A huge under-sea aquarium at Sabrang Tourism Park, Circular Bus Terminal, Marina Bay Resort, Khuruskul Smart City, Theme Park, Eco Resort, Riverrain Tourism at Chowfaldandi and plying of sea-plane from Cox's Bazar to St Martin's have been undertaken, he added.



Fish breeders are taking large pots full of hatchlings from their farm in Khulna to Bagerhat. Depending on the variety and species, each kg sells for up to Tk 12,000. The photo was taken yesterday in the Arrang Ghata area of Khulna. PHOTO: HABIBUR RAHMAN

Ukraine troops retake village near Bakhmut

Kyiv orders civilian evacuation in Kherson region regularly hit by Russian shelling

REUTERS, Kyiv

Ukraine said yesterday it had recaptured the devastated eastern village of Andriivka, setting the stage for further advances on the southern flank of Bakhmut, the city that fell into Russian hands in May after months of heavy fighting.

Kyiv's troops were securing their foothold in the area, while Russian forces suffered significant casualties and lost equipment, the Ukrainian General Staff said in a morning report. There was no immediate comment from Russia.

The village of Andriivka lies south of Bakhmut, the site of the fiercest and longest battle since the invasion by Russia in February last year. The General Staff reported "partial success" near Klishchiivka, a village also south of Bakhmut.

"Capturing and holding Andriivka is our path to a breakthrough on the right flank of Bakhmut and the key to the success of the entire further offensive," said the Third Assault Brigade, which took part in the push.

In a separate development, Ukrainian officials ordered the evacuation of civilians from the southern Kherson region, partly controlled by Russian forces and regularly hit by shelling.

"The Regional Defence Counsel of Kherson decided to compulsorily evacuate families with children from areas subject to constant enemy fire," governor Oleksandr Prokudin said on Telegram.

Russian troops control areas in the Kherson region south of the Dniepr river, following their withdrawal last year from the city of Kherson, the regional capital,

which they regularly shell.

Meanwhile, a ship has left port in Ukraine's Odesa, lawmaker Oleksiy Honcharenko said yesterday, posting photographs on the Telegram messaging app of the vessel in the water.

"A few minutes ago, the Cayman Islands-flagged Puma vessel left the port of Odesa into the Black Sea," Honcharenko said on Telegram.

LSEG interactive map data showed the Puma had departed Odesa and was about 25 km from shore and underway just before 10:00 am.

If the Puma successfully leaves Odesa, it would be the fifth to do so since Moscow withdrew from the UN-brokered Black Sea grain export deal in July and threatened to treat all vessels as potential military targets.

Free Adilur, Elan at once

FROM PAGE 1
human rights activists from doing their jobs," said the statement.

"We demand the immediate release of Adilur Rahman Khan and ASM Nasiruddin Elan. We also demand full protection and an end to the harassment of human rights defenders."

A Dhaka court convicted them of spreading "a distorted report and doctored images" about the May 5-6, 2013, police action on a Hefajat-e-Islam rally in Motijheel.

The signatories to the statement include Hossain Zillur Rahman, Dr Hameeda Hossain, Ali Imam Majumder, Dr Ittefakuruzaman, Dr Debapriya Bhattacharya, Dr Badiul Alam Majumdar, Professor Anu Muhammad, Professor CR Abrar, Shahdeen Malik, Shahidul Alam, Dr Asif Nazrul, Sara Hossain, Syeda Rizwana Hasan, Sanjeeb Drong, Jyotirmoy Barua, and Dr Mohammad Tanzimuddin Khan.

In another statement, 39 Bangladeshi academicians and professionals working abroad condemned the prison sentence to Adilur and Elan.

The statement also expressed concerns over "continuous harassment" of rights activists, Nobel Laureate Dr Muhammad Yunus, civil society members, and opposition party leaders and activists through the judiciary.

The statement said, "We demand that the government refrain from instrumentalising the judiciary to silence its critics and that the judiciary remain impartial, as the Constitution demands it to be."

The signatories to the statement include Sultan Mohammad Zakaria, former country specialist of Pakistan and Bangladesh at Amnesty International; Dr Hasan Mahmud, assistant professor, Northwestern University in Qatar; Dr Mohammad Al-Amin, postdoctoral fellow, University of Colorado, Denver, USA; Dr Jamal Uddin, lecturer at Cornell University, Ithaca, New York.

Meanwhile, the National Committee against Fascism and Imperialism demanded unconditional and immediate release of Adilur and Elan in an official statement.

The statement said there are sufficient reasons to believe that this verdict has been issued to create barriers to their activism and to intimidate other human rights organisations of this country.

The committee, in its statement, also demanded cancellation of the recently passed Cyber Security Act.

Study finds high level of microplastics in salt

FROM PAGE 1
of the country. It is an essential part of our diet and an inevitable mineral for the human body.

Experts believe the increased presence of microplastics in salt may pose threats to public health.

The contamination in raw salt is caused mostly by toiletries products like soap, facewash, cleanser, and different kinds of packaging and single-use plastics, according to researchers.

Sultan Al Nahain, scientific officer of BORI and a part of the research team that conducted the 2021 study, told The Daily Star that the findings of the recent study suggested an alarming development.

"As the recent study has found more microplastics in salt than ours, I find it alarming that our sea is now more polluted given its exposure to transboundary and domestic plastic waste. We should take urgent action to rein in the microplastic pollution," he said.

The 2023 study has found the highest concentration of microplastics in Kutubdia, an offshore island. For each kg salt, the pan in South Kutubdia had 1,253 particles while North Kutubdia had 1,026 particles, reads the study.

24 percent of the particles were black followed by 17 percent transparent and 15 percent yellow. Dominance of black perhaps is explained by black threads and ropes used by the fishermen and also by black plastic cover, which farmers use to preserve salt, according to the study.

The size of the plastic particles ranges from 0.3 to 1.5 micrometres, most of which are fibres and foams, the researchers have found.

The 12 sites that were chosen for collecting samples for the study were

Napitkhali, Maheshkhali, Badarkhali, Chanua, Ilishia, Darbeskhata, South Kutubdia, North Kutubdia, Rajakhali, Puichari, and Gurakhali from Cox's Bazar; and the only salt pan from Chattogram district was selected from Dulahazara.

Concentration of microplastics in salt pans varies from one place to another depending on the level of pollution of sea waters.

The average of microplastics found in Bangladesh is 803 per kg of salt while it is 1,690 in Sri Lanka, 1,500 in China, 1,200 in Korea, 900 in Vietnam, and 700 in Thailand, says the study.

In India, the average of microplastics is 35 to 575 per kg of sea salt, according to a study jointly conducted by the Centre for Environmental Science and Engineering and the Indian Institute of Technology.

Mohammad Abdul Momin Siddique, assistant professor of the department of oceanography at NSTU, told The Daily Star that their study suggests surface seawater in the south-eastern coast of Bangladesh is highly contaminated by microplastics.

He said the study demonstrates that the coastal waters of Bangladesh have been polluted with plastic particles, and that the sites which are located offshore have higher concentration of microplastics.

"Filtering out seawater at the mouth of the dyke, through which the seawater flows into the salt pans, can reduce the presence of plastic particles including microplastics," he said.

A study done by the department of environmental sciences at Jahangirnagar University (JU) last year confirmed the presence of microplastics in commercial salt. They collected several packets of salt manufactured/produced by

about Tk 40 lakh.

"All my hard work went up in smoke," he said, standing before piles of ashes.

He said different government authorities and market committees have been enlisting names of victims, but there have been no immediate aid and relief.

Mizanur Rahman, owner of Asia Garments, had been doing business in the market since its opening in 1997. He said his losses amounted to around Tk 30 lakh.

"How will we manage the capital now?" he said.

Visiting the fire-ravaged market yesterday, Agriculture Minister Abdur Razzaque said the prime

Govt move to check prices falls flat

FROM PAGE 1
Faisal Hossain, manager of the Shevrapara outlet of supermarket chain Swapno, said his company was selling eggs at the government-set price, and the prices of onions and potatoes may be lowered in the future.

Many have said they knew that the price cap would not make life any easier for those struggling to make ends meet.

Abid Reza, a shopper in Mohammadpur, said, "Setting the prices and not monitoring the kitchen market is farcical."

However, Commerce Minister Tipu Munshi told reporters at an event in Rangpur yesterday that officials were actively monitoring the

markets. "We are collectively striving to regulate the market. There may be some challenges in achieving the objectives set by the commerce ministry. Efforts are on to address these issues," he said.

He then blamed "unethical traders" for the rising prices.

The government last month set the retail price of 12kg LPG gas at Tk 1,140. Earlier in July, the government fixed the price of edible oil at Tk 179 a litre, and in May, the price of packaged sugar was fixed at Tk 125.

According to media reports, consumers can rarely manage to purchase these essentials at government set prices.

Govt oblivious

FROM PAGE 1
Referring to Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's recent statement that all elections held under the AL government were transparent and peaceful, Fakhrul said, "This is the best joke of the year."

Senior BNP leaders also addressed the rally, with Dhaka South City BNP Convener Abdus Salam in the chair.

Earlier in the morning, Fakhrul at a press briefing at the party office demanded immediate release of rights body Odhikar Secretary Adilur Rahman Khan and Director Nasiruddin Elan.

"He [Adilur] had been vocal about enforced disappearances and extrajudicial killings in Bangladesh. He raised these issues internationally.

That's why he has been jailed," he said.

The BNP leader also condemned the Cyber Tribunal's verdict sentencing the two.

"The new law [Cyber Security Act] is worse than the Digital Security Act. Under this law, police will be able to arrest anyone without any warrant, interrogate anyone and file cases."

Fakhrul said journalists would suffer more than the politicians due to the enactment of the new law.

On Thursday, Adilur and Elan were sentenced by the tribunal to two years in prison in a case filed for running "a distorted report and doctored images" about the May 5-6, 2013, police action on a Hefajat-e-Islam rally in Motijheel.

Foreigners get 'false' reports

FROM PAGE 1
Bangladesh are under threat and they have no right to speak.

"You speak to them. If one or two percent of them say that the Awami League has not ensured their security ... then we will not stay in power."

He also asked the AL activists to be ready to foil conspiracies by BNP-Jamaat.

Addressing the event, AL Joint General Secretary Mahbub ul Alam Hanif said a plot is being hatched over the sentencing of Adilur.

He mentioned that Odhikar had said 61 people died in a police action on the Hefajat rally in Motijheel on May 5-6, 2013. A case was filed for this misinformation, he added.

"Why is Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir [BNP secretary general] said

over the sentencing of Adilur? These anti-liberation people want to team up and topple the government. I will ask our foreign friends to refrain from hatching conspiracies against the people," Hanif said.

"I would like to tell those that this government cannot be overthrown through plotting. Foreigners who talk about democracy and humanity should not be with these conspirators," he added.

AL Organising Secretary Mirza Azam said, "It was reported in the media that the Odhikar report was based on false information. Still, domestic and foreign conspiracies are going on."

Its presidium member Mostafa Jalal Mohiuddin and Jubo League Chairman Sheikh Fazle Shams Parash, among others, also spoke at the event.

20-year-old stabbed to death in Ctg

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

A 20-year-old man was stabbed to death in Chattogram city's Khulshi yesterday.

Police have taken one person into custody for interrogation in this connection but did not disclose his name.

The victim, Abdur Rahman Sujon, of Senbagh area of Noakhali, used to live in Segunbagan area of the port city, said Sub-Inspector Nurul Alam, in charge of Chattogram Medical College Hospital police outpost.

When his friends brought him to CMCH from Khulshi with stab wounds, duty doctors declared him dead around 7:00pm, said the police official.

Quoting locals, Rubel Hawlader, officer-in-charge of Khulshi Police Station, said the attackers and the victim knew each other. Around 6:30pm, they stabbed Sujon in the stomach during an altercation in Segunbagan area.

Md Moklesur Rahman, additional police commissioner of Chattogram Metropolitan Police (CMP), told The Daily Star, "Primarily, we suspect that he was killed over a personal enmity. However, the real motive will be clear after investigation."

Man killed as truck hits bike

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Jamalpur

A man was killed after a truck hit a motorcycle on Dewanganj-Jamalpur road in Jamalpur's Melandah upazila yesterday.

The victim is Abdullah, 27, of Majhipara in the upazila, police said.

Quoting locals, Delawar Hossain, officer-in-charge of Melandah Police Station, said when Abdullah was going to Dewanganj from Jamalpur, a goods-laden truck hit his bike near Shyampur market in the afternoon, leaving him critically injured.

Locals took him to Melandah Upazila Health Complex where doctors declared him dead, said the OC.

The body was handed over to family members without an autopsy as no complaint was filed, he said. The truck was seized but its driver managed to flee, the OC added.

4 militant suspects arrested

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

Four members of the banned militant organisation Ansar al-Islam have been arrested by Rab from Dinajpur and Thakurgaon.

The arrestees were Ansar al-Islam's northern region Da'wahti branch chief Muntasir Billah and his accomplices Yasin, Abdul Malek and Sabbir, Rab Spokesperson Khandaker Al-Moin told a press conference at Rab-13 battalion office in Rangpur yesterday.



Only ashes and charred remnants remain in place of at least 200 shops after a catastrophic blaze gutted Mohammadpur Krishi Market early Thursday. The scene raises questions about the relevant authorities role to avoid such recurrent disasters. Goods worth crores were reduced to ruins after the fire.

PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

No scope for arrest without cognisable offences

Says law minister on CSA

STAR REPORT

Law, Justice, and Parliamentary Affairs Minister Anisul Huq yesterday said that there is no scope for law enforcing agencies to arrest any accused without warrant under the Cyber Security Act, if offences aren't cognisable.



According to The Code of Criminal Procedure, 1898, "cognisable offence" means an offence for which a police officer, may, in accordance with the second schedule or under any law for the time being in force, arrest without warrant.

"The Cyber Security Act has only four sections of cognisable offences. All the questions which are being raised about this law are just misinterpretations," he said.

The minister made this comment in response to queries from local journalists while attending a special extended meeting organised by Akhaura South union unit of Awami League under the upazila of Brahmanbaria around 11:30am, reports our local correspondent.

Anisul said, "The Cyber Security Act provides a 14 year jail sentence for technical crimes, hacking, and tampering with computers."

"But the provisions of the Digital Security Act, which were opposed by journalists, have been radically changed," he said.

Akhaura upazila Awami League President Mohammad Ali Chowdhury, General Secretary and Akhaura Municipality Mayor Takzil Khalifa Kajal, among others, were present at the extended meeting along with upazila and union unit Awami League leaders.



Stay vigilant to protect spirit of Liberation War: PM

UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday urged the people to remain vigilant so that no one can distort the spirit of the Liberation War anymore in the future.

"The spirit of the great liberation war is very important for us. The people should be awakened with the spirit and the country should be developed following the ideals of the Liberation War. I would like to make a call to stay vigilant so that none can distort it (the spirit), which had been earned through the victory of this liberation war, anymore in the future," she said.

The premier was addressing the inauguration of a special arts exhibition titled "A Retrospective 1973-2023" with the selected paintings of Independence Award-winning and internationally acclaimed

SEE PAGE 4 COL 3

NINE RISKY DNCC MARKETS

'ABANDONED' but still in use

After another fire tragedy, experts question govt bodies' role, fear more may follow

DIPAN NANDY

The fire that gutted Mohammadpur Krishi Market early Thursday was categorised as a risky establishment by the fire service department.

The fire department said they repeatedly sent notices to around 200 shopkeepers in the market to enhance their fire safety measures.

But Thursday's fire showed that nothing had changed. The shop owners didn't comply with the notices and the fire department did nothing to avert risks.

Urban planners have questioned the purpose of such notices if they are not complied with.

Contacted, Lt Col Md Tajul Islam, Director (Operation) of the Fire Service & Civil Defence, said, "We gave them (shopkeepers) several notices to take fire safety measures, but they didn't comply."

A probe body has been formed to find out the cause of the fire. It will be known after the probe report comes out, he said.

The fire service official, however, couldn't rule out more fire incidents like that of the Krishi market in the future.

"Not only this market, but most of the markets in Dhaka city are at risk of fire," he added.

Interestingly, the Krishi Market was not among the nine risky kitchen markets in a list published by Dhaka North City Corporation in 2020.

When asked, a DNCC source requesting anonymity said that the DNCC list was about whether the market buildings' structures were vulnerable, not about fire threats.

"It's the Fire Service that lists and monitors potential fire accidents," he explained.

Despite three years since the list was made, the nine risky kitchen market buildings remain unchanged, still vulnerable and awaiting a disaster.

Urban planners said the incident at Krishi Market underscores the pressing need for improved oversight and disaster prevention measures by both the DNCC and the Fire Service.

With disasters in Bangabazar and New Super Market earlier this year, they have questioned the effectiveness of these agencies in safeguarding such public places.

Buildings Identified, Yet Neglected The Local Government Division formed a committee on 13 May 2013, to make a list of DNCC resources which are either lying useless or in a dilapidated state.

In a 2018 meeting, the committee proposed DNCC to declare nine of its kitchen market buildings 'abandoned' citing potential accident risks as they were in a dilapidated state.

Then in 2020, Mohammadpur Town Hall Pucca Market, Mohammadpur Kitchen Market, Gulshan North Kitchen Market, Gulshan South Pucca Market and Rayerbazar Market, Kawran Bazar Kitchen Market, Kawran Bazar Number-1 Bhaban Market, Kawran Bazar Number-2 Bhaban Market and Kawran Bazar Wholesale Godown Market were declared abandoned.

Most of the markets are far from 'abandoned' and currently operational with thousands frequent those daily, raising questions about DNCC's relocation and monitoring efforts.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 6



Discussion on Abul Mansur Ahmad today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A discussion will be held today to honour the milestone of 100 years since eminent litterateur, journalist, and politician Abul Mansur Ahmad's initiation into journalism.

The discussion titled "Relevance of Abul Mansur Ahmad's Journalism in 100 years" will be held at the Muzaffar Ahmed Chowdhury Auditorium (Faculty of Social Sciences) on the Dhaka University campus at 4:00pm.

The event will be presided over by Dhaka University Emeritus Professor Serajul Islam Choudhury.

Speakers at the programme include journalist and litterateur Abul Momen, New Age Editor Nurul Kabir, Chittagong University teacher Khandaker Ali AR Raji, researcher and journalist Kajal Rashid Shaheen, and Planning Editor of Daily Samakal Faruk Wasif, among others.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 6

PRAYER TIMING					
SEPTEMBER 16					
Fajr	Zohr	Asr	Maghrib	Esha	
4:35	12:45	4:30	6:09	7:45	
JAMAAT 5-10 1-15 4-45 6-12 8-15					
SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION					

Dhaka-Guangzhou Biman flight resumes

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Biman Bangladesh Airlines resumed direct flights on the Dhaka-Guangzhou-Dhaka route from Thursday night, six months after it was suspended on March 16.

Carrying 146 passengers on board, the Biman flight BG-366 departed Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport in Dhaka at 10:20 pm on Thursday and arrived in Guangzhou of China at 4:00 am (local time) on Friday, said Md Siddiqur Rahman, director (admin) of Biman.

There will be six round-trip flights weekly on this popular route from now on, with a capacity over 900 passengers, he added.

Biman flights will depart from Dhaka every Sunday, Tuesday and Thursday at 10:20 pm for Guangzhou and take off every Monday, Wednesday

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1

10 DU students get Sitara Parvin Award

DU CORRESPONDENT

The Department of Mass Communication and Journalism of Dhaka University awarded 10 students of the department with the "Professor Sitara Parvin Award" for their outstanding results in BSS (Hons) final examination held in 2021.

DU Vice-Chancellor Prof Md Akhtaruzzaman conferred the awards among the recipients as chief guest at a programme at the Prof Muzaffar Ahmed Chowdhury Auditorium on the DU campus on Thursday.

The recipients of the award are: Md Nasimul Huda, SM Shams Rahman, Sumaia Sanjana Nimmi, Nawshin Bithy, Aurthy Noboneeta, Maria Anis Chowdhury, Md Mahfuzul Islam, Neeti Chakma, Sujan Sen Gupta, and Syed Mohammad Rahatul Islam.

Speaking at the programme, DU VC paid

SEE PAGE 4 COL 6

Govt failed to control commodity prices

Says GM Quader

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

Jatiya Party Chairman GM Quader yesterday said the Ministry of Commerce has failed to control commodity prices in the country.

Quader, also a former commerce minister, made this comment in Rangpur while talking to local journalists.

The JP chairman said, "When I was the commerce minister, if the prices of daily necessities increased, people knew why it happened and would accept it. At that time, people had a faith."

SEE PAGE 4 COL 6



(Left) Leaders and activists of Awami League participate in a 'peace rally' in front of its Bangabandhu Avenue party office in Dhaka yesterday. (Right) BNP stages a rally in front of its Naya Palta headquarters to press home their one-point demand of the government's resignation and election under a caretaker government.



PHOTOS: STAR



Construction work renders a portion of the road and most of the footpath unusable, causing problems for vehicles and pedestrians. Such a scene is common throughout the city almost all year round, with roads and footpaths being blocked off from public use. The photo was taken from the capital's Kakrail yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

A leader of all

FROM PAGE 5
all oppressed communities," said PCJSS member Dipayan Khisha. Fardous Ahmed Uzzal, former president of the Bangladesh Chhatra Union, stressed that we should continue to discuss MN Larma, as his ideology can inspire us to work and build a discrimination-free state. Shulav Chakma, former president of Bangladesh Adivasi Chhatra Sangram Parishad, presented the

keynote speech, on the life and works of MN Larma. Rumen Chakma, vice president of Parbatya Chhatragram Pahari Chhatra Parishad, Riya Chakma, general secretary of Dhaka city Hill Womens' Federation, Atulan Dash, president of Bangladesh Chhatra Maitri, and Harendranath Shingh, chhatra and youth affairs secretary of Bangladesh Adivasi Forum, spoke at the event, among others.

UNHCR, NGOs seek

FROM PAGE 5
were how UNHCR, NGOs, and community-based organisations can cooperate with and support member states to promote inclusion in national systems. "Empowering refugee-led organisations is essential. These organisations possess an intimate understanding of the communities they represent and can serve as valuable intermediaries, bridging communication gaps, and facilitating community-driven solutions," said Najeba Wazefadost, APNOR

Executive Director. "Promoting gender balance is imperative. Member states should actively work to ensure equitable representation of women in decision-making processes at all levels, both within refugee communities and in engagements with government bodies," she added. Throughout the consultations, participants also acknowledged the important role that refugee-led organisations and civil society play in the refugee response.

Dhaka-Guangzhou

FROM PAGE 3
and Friday from Guangzhou to Dhaka at 05:30 am (local time), shared Tahera Khondoker, general manager (public relations) of Biman. The airline has also offered a 15 percent discount on base fare on resuming flights on the route, which

can be availed using promo-code HAPPYCAN23, from Biman's mobile app and website (www.biman-airlines.com). Additionally, passengers can also purchase tickets from any Biman sales centre, Biman call centre (01990997997) and Biman authorised travel agencies.

Cholera vaccination to begin

FROM PAGE 5
eight developing countries, including Bangladesh. The prevalence of cholera in Bandar area of Chattogram is notably high. To prevent this ancient but life-threatening disease, the OCV campaign will be carried out among 135,000 residents of Bandartila and South Halishahar areas through

45 centres. The first dose of the OCV will be given from tomorrow 8:00am and 4:00pm. Details, including the locations of the vaccination centres, will be announced through loudspeaker in the respective areas. The second dose of the vaccine is planned to be scheduled in the second week of October, with

details to be declared later. This vaccine should be administered at least 14 days apart and has been prequalified by the World Health Organization. The initiative is supported by Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance. Residents in the area are strongly encouraged to take the vaccine to safeguard both themselves and their families from the outbreak.

Stay vigilant to protect spirit

FROM PAGE 3
artist Shahabuddin Ahmed at Bangladesh National Museum in the city's Shahbagh area. Some 140 selected artworks of Shahabuddin are being displayed in the month-long solo art exhibition at Nalini Kanta Bhattasali Gallery of the National Museum.

through political ways and finally took steps to build the country in line with the spirit of the Liberation War," she said. The prime minister said now the spirit of the Liberation war started returning to the young generation of the country, which is a big achievement.

Wishing the month-long exhibition a success, she said the exhibition of Shahabuddin Ahmed's paintings is very important as his artworks reflect the nature of Bangladesh, the condition of the country's people, and the spirit of the Liberation War. The premier expressed gratitude to Shahabuddin Ahmed as he has brightened the image of Bangladesh in the international arena through his paintings. B a n g a l a d e s h ' s youngest daughter Sheikh Rehana was present in the inaugural ceremony presided over by State Minister for Cultural Affairs KM Khalid.

President of the Board of Trustees of Bangladesh National Museum Prof AAMS Arefin Siddique, Painter Shahabuddin Ahmed, French Ambassador to Bangladesh Marie Masdupuy, Cultural Affairs Secretary Khalil Ahmed and Director General of Bangladesh National Museum Md Kamruzzaman spoke on the occasion.

'Abandoned', but still Riverbed

FROM PAGE 3
In a bid to relocate the Karwan Bazar kitchen market, 300 wholesalers have agreed to relocate their shops to the proposed Amin Bazar and Jatrabari wholesale markets after extensive discussions with a DNCC body.

However, the retailers are still reluctant to do so. Some traders have claimed that the newly constructed markets at Jatrabari and Amin Bazar wouldn't be business-friendly and expressed concerns over the size of their shops.

A similar situation was also observed at the

Rayerbazar Market. Contacted, Selim Reza, chief executive officer of the DNCC, said, "We are trying our best to demolish the risky markets. But we face a lot of resistance from the traders in this regard."

Adil Mohammed Khan, an urban planner and professor of Urban and Regional Planning at Jahangirnagar University, said, "Once the city corporation labels a building as risky, it should be evacuated and demolished immediately. If they don't, we'll have more market accidents in the future."

Discussion on Abul

FROM PAGE 3
Apart from the discussion, there will be a prize distribution ceremony for the winners of essay competitions based on Abul Mansur Ahmad.

Abul Mansur Ahmad

(September 3, 1898-March 18, 1979) commenced his tenure at a prize ceremony based on Abul Mansur Ahmad.

Later, he served as the editor of Nabajug, Krishak, and Ittehad newspapers.

Govt failed to control commodity

FROM PAGE 3
"Now, prices are being controlled by various means," he said, adding that prices of essentials in the country are much higher than anywhere else in the world.

The JP chief also said Sri Lanka and Pakistan, which were considered as failed states, have now recovered well in terms of

controlling the prices of their daily necessities. In comparison to Sri Lanka and Pakistan, the price of daily necessities is much higher in Bangladesh, he said.

Regarding the upcoming national parliamentary elections, GM Quader said that the political situation is still uncertain.

"The government wants to hold a kind of election, while the opposition wants it to be held differently. People are worried about whether the election will be held at the right time. That's why JP does not want to make any decisions right now. The party will take action based on the situation in future," he added.

10 DU students get

FROM PAGE 3
glowing tribute to the memory of Prof Dr Sitara Parvin saying she was an honest, sincere and devoted teacher and researcher of the university.

"The scholarship will inspire the students to study and be knowledgeable, and develop moral and humanitarian values," he said.

He called upon the students to play pivotal roles in building a non-communal and inclusive society following the ideals and values of the late professor.

Prof Sitara Parvin, daughter of former president Justice Shahabuddin Ahmed and



wife of retired Prof Dr Ahaduzzaman Mohammad Ali, died in a tragic road accident on June 23, 2005 in the USA.

Presided over by Chairman of the department Prof Abul Mansur Ahmed, the function was addressed by Dean of the Faculty of Social Sciences Prof Zia Rahman, former president

of Dhaka Reporters' Unity M Shafiqul Karim, late Prof Sitara Parvin's classmate Nasima Haider, and Associate Professor of the department Md Saiful Alam Chowdhury. Prof Ahaduzzaman Mohammad Ali gave note of thanks while Associate Professor Shaonti Haider conducted the programme.



VACANCY NOTICE

World Health Organization (WHO) invites applications from the interested and eligible candidates for the following position under following contractual modality:

- Surveillance & Immunization Medical Officer (Roster) / SSA

For further details on submission of applications including detailed post description please visit our websites:

<https://www.who.int/bangladesh/about-us/employment>
<https://careers.who.int/careersection/ex/jobsearch.ftl>

Qualified female candidates are highly encouraged to apply.

WHO has a smoke-free environment and does not recruit smokers or other tobacco users.

FOR SALE

১০ কাকা উত্তরা সোনারগাঁ জনপথ মেইন রোডে, চার তলা বিল্ডিংসহ ৬.৫ কাকা কর্মশালায় প্রুট বিক্রয় হইবে।
১০ কাকা মৌচাক মৌলবাগ মেইন রোড সংলগ্ন ১০ তলা ভবনের ৫ তলা থেকে ১০ তলা পৃথকভাবে অথবা একসাথে বিক্রয় করা হবে। প্রতি সন্ধ্যায় ৩০০০ ক্ষমতার বিদ্যুৎ।
Cont: 01979367255, 01818367255

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

Office of the Rajbari Pourashava
Rajbari.

Memo No.Raj/[pou/prok/658

Dated 14.09.2023

e-Tender Notice No. 02/2023-24

Reference No:
e-Tender is invited in the National e-GP System portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) for the procurement of following scheme noted against tender ID .

Tender ID	Package No.	Name of Work	Tender Last Selling (Date & Time)	Tender Closing (Date & Time)
868653	LGCRPP/Rajbari/2023-24/W-01	Part-1) Rehabilitation of Hospital South Side BC Road Starting from Hospital Main Road to Dr. Lotif House Road (Ch:00m-376m) at Ward No.-05, Part-2) Rehabilitation & Maintenance of BC Road Starting from 3 No Beradanga Road to 2 No Beradanga Road (Ch 00m-225m) at Ward No.-04 & Part-3) Repair of CC Road Starting from Dry-Ice RCC Road to Dorbesh Mondol House (Ch:0.00-412m), at Ward No.-08, Under Rajbari Pourashava, District Rajbari.	01-10-2023 13.00 PM	02-10-23 12.30 PM
868654	LGCRPP/Rajbari/2023-24/W-02	Part-1) Repair & Maintenance of Tetutola BC Road Starting from Tetutola more to Beribadh (Ch:0.00-1180 m), at Ward No.-09, Part- 2) Construction of RCC Road Starting from Jomidar Sorok Link (Ch:0.00-120m) at ward No: 05, under Rajbari Pourashava, District: Rajbari.	01-10-2023 13.00 PM	02-10-23 12.30 PM

This is an online tender, where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP portal and no off line/hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-Tender, registration in the National e-GP System portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) is required. Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System portal and from e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd)

(AHS Md. Ali Khan)
Executive Engineer
Rajbari Pourashava, Rajbari
Email: xen.rjb.pou@gmail.com

বসুন্ধরায় কর্ণার পুটে বাড়ী বিক্রয়
বসুন্ধরা বারিধারা আবাসিক এলাকায় রোড-৫, বাড়ী নং- ৫৫৯, ব্রক-এইচ, ৮০কিট/ ২৫ফিট কর্ণার রাস্তা সংযুক্ত একটা জমির উপর নির্মিত একটি অভ্যুত্থিক ইন্টারিয়ার ডিজাইনসহ ৭তলা বিশিষ্ট ডুপ্লেক্স নতুন বাড়ী বিক্রয় হইবে। যোগাযোগ: ০১৭১১৫৪৬৬৮৭, ই-মেইল: mdfariduddin6687@gmail.com

LAND WANTED
Property for rent in Gulshan and Banani only. Independent House with lawn and parking. Minimum 7.5 katha and 3500 sq ft. building. For semi-commercial use.
Email: rdomio74@gmail.com
Phone: +8801742249488

WANTED
1. Accounts Officer Experienced, capable to work independently.
2. Corporate Officer LLB/CA/MBA familiar with law. Good in English n Bangla.
3. Management Assistant Familiar with business processes with BOI, RJSC, etc.
4. Chemist/chemical engineer Familiar with API production.
5. Civil/structural Engineer Experienced with construction of small structures.
6. Electrician Experienced with installation and maintenance work of small factory.
7. Mechanical maintenance person Experienced with installation and maintenance.
For further info contact: 01818955971.
Please apply with CV: GPO Box 4078 or by e-mail to: delta@agni.com

SAARC Agriculture Centre (SAC)
BARC Campus, New Airport Road
Farmgate, Dhaka - 1215
Bangladesh
Vacancy Announcement
SAARC Agriculture Centre (SAC) is inviting application for the position of Driver [to be recruited from citizens of Bangladesh]. Details of appointment notice, qualification and experience, terms and conditions, salaries/allowances, facilities and benefits etc. shall be available at SAARC Agriculture Centre (SAC), BARC Complex, Farmgate, Dhaka - 1215, Bangladesh and in website: <http://www.sac.org.bd>. All Applications should reach to Director, SAARC Agriculture Centre (SAC) not later than 25th September '2023. Canvassing of any form will disqualify the candidate. All rights reserved by the authority.
Dr. Md. Baktear Hossain
Director, SAC

REFUGEE CRISIS IN ASIA
UNHCR, NGOs
seek lasting
solutions

UNB, Dhaka
UNHCR, together with non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and civil society actors yesterday recommitted to enhanced collaboration to work towards sustainable solutions for the forcibly displaced and stateless in Asia and Pacific region.

In collaboration with the Asia Pacific Refugee Rights Network, International Council of Voluntary Agencies and the Asia Pacific Network of Refugees, UNHCR's two-day Regional NGO Consultations for 2023 ended yesterday in Bangkok.

The in-person and virtual event brought together over 180 participants, representing 161 organisations from 19 countries in Asia and the Pacific to discuss topics around the central theme of "Promoting Inclusion for Sustainable Solutions".

Currently, there are over 7 million refugees or asylum seekers and 5 million conflict-affected internally displaced people in the region, as recorded at the end of 2022.

Most of those displaced live in increasingly protracted situations in countries where they have found refuge.

"Inclusion is a complex subject, often misinterpreted, but when dissected, covers many of the key issues we collectively work on to find local solutions for refugees: education, livelihoods, skills and healthcare," said Indrika Ratwatte, UNHCR Director for Asia and the Pacific.

The consultations provided an opportunity for humanitarian partners in Asia and the Pacific to discuss best practices and approaches on how including displaced populations and stateless people contributes to resilience and long-lasting solutions for the benefit of the whole society.

"Meaningful inclusion requires a shift in thinking that those forcibly displaced are not beneficiaries of support, but assets. They make important contributions to the communities that they are a part of and by extension require supportive policies and protections to really enable their inclusion," said Keya Saha Chaudhury, ICVA Regional Representative for Asia and the Pacific.

Among the specific topics discussed

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1

MYMENSINGH CITY

No respite from
gridlocks for locals

Lack of roads, unregistered vehicles add to the menace

OUR CORRESPONDENT,
Mymensingh

Despite multiple promises from the city corporation authorities to improve the issue, residents of Mymensingh city continue to experience gridlock at crucial crossroads.

With no steps taken to this end, the traffic congestion continues to become unbearable, especially during busy hours, causing much hassle to commuters, said locals.

Unregistered battery-run auto-rickshaws plying the roads are the main reason behind severe gridlocks during office hours, besides slow construction works. Also, hundreds of trucks ply through the city during day time, violating their schedule.

Even on weekly holidays, locals experience severe gridlock at the city's Shambhuganj Bridge area and other important streets.

"It often takes several hours to commute through the five-kilometre road in the city during rush hours," said Md Shahjahan, a local trader.

Office goers and students are the worst sufferers of the situation, said Sharif Khan, a resident of Charpara area.

Over 20,000 battery-run auto-rickshaws and vans, mostly unregistered, ply the city streets. However, no proper action has been taken yet in this regard, alleged locals.

Mymensingh City Corporation sources said the number of licensed auto-rickshaws in the city is around



7,000. But the sources could not say the number of unregistered vehicles.

According to sources, after Mymensingh was upgraded to city corporation in 2018, the city's population doubled by 2021 but no steps were taken to widen the roads.

Confirming the matter, Mymensingh Traffic Inspector Syed Mahbubur Rahman said no major initiative to widen the roads has been taken in last 25 years. Meanwhile, the number of vehicles plying in the city has continued to increase.

With a shortage of traffic police personnel, it is very difficult to control vehicular movement at 18 points in the city, he said. Meanwhile, footpaths across the city have been occupied by vendors and it adds to the traffic congestions, said Shibbir Ahmed Liton,

secretary of Poribesh Rakhha O Unnayan Andolon.

Various ongoing construction works are progressing slowly while keeping construction materials on busy roads in many cases, causing difficulty to movement of vehicles, he alleged.

The residents urged authorities concerned to show zero tolerance against all unregistered vehicles and to recover the occupied footpaths.

The issues have been discussed by joint initiatives of the administration, police and MCC authorities but no proper measures to combat the crisis could be taken yet, said Advocate Nazrul Islam Chhunu, convener of Jonouddyog, a citizens' platform.

He lauded the decision to shift Trishal Bus Stand from

city centre to curb traffic congestion and demanded removal of all illegal vehicle stands from the roads.

Contacted, Md Rafiqul Islam Miah, MCC's executive engineer, said two firms -- Masud Hightech Ltd and Faridpur Jannat Constructions -- are working on installing pipe drains and paving footpaths on the roads at present and the city corporation is monitoring the construction works regularly to make sure those are completed on time.

"Proposals for widening the city roads have been sent to the ministries concerned recently but are yet to be approved. The city authorities are conducting mobile courts to contain the menace of unregistered vehicles plying the roads," said Md Aminul Islam, assistant secretary at MCC.

A leader of all
Say speakers on MN
Larma at memorial event

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

MN Larma was not only a leader of the indigenous people, but also a leader of the working class and the oppressed, said speakers at a programme.

The event was organised to mark the 84th birth anniversary of Manabendra Narayan Larma.

Born on September 15, 1939 at Maorum (Mahapuram) village in Rangamati, MN Larma formed that Parbatya Chattogram Jana Sanghati Samity (PCJSS) in 1972. He would go onto become an MP in 1973, before he was killed by a group in 1983.

Prof Zobaida Nasreen, Anthropology department, Dhaka University said, "As a teacher, MN Larma successfully planted the seeds of a movement among the Jumma people to fight the historical injustice they have faced due to their lack of constitutional recognition."

"He knew the indigenous people could not truly be emancipated without constitutional recognition," she said.

Journalist Nazrul Kabir urged the youth to carry on their movement with the spirit of MN Larma.

"In his short life, Larma was able to become an illustrious political leader. Through his work and ideology, he became an undisputed leader for not only the indigenous people, but also for

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1

16 Jamaat-Shibir
activists held

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

Police detained 16 Jamaat and Shibir leaders and activists in Dinajpur's Birampur upazila yesterday, charging them with disruptive and unlawful activities.

The incident occurred when they brought out a procession following Friday prayers at the Pura Para Jame Mosque in Birampur town.

According to police, after concluding prayers, a group of 80-100 Jamaat Shibir leaders and activists attempted to organise a procession on the Dinajpur-Gobindaganj regional highway.

Upon receiving the information, local police arrived at the scene and arrested 16 individuals regarding the incident.

Subrata Sarkar, Officer in Charge of Birampur police station, said proceedings are underway to file a case against them. The arrested individuals will be produced before a Dinajpur court today for further legal proceedings.

Cholera vaccination
to begin in Ctg
from Sept 17

UNB, Dhaka
The oral cholera vaccination (OCV) programme will begin for residents of ward 38 and 39 (Bandarita and South Halishahar) of the Chattogram City Corporation tomorrow.

The campaign will be led by the Communicable Disease Control (CDC) of the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS), with support from the World Health Organization, icddr, the Civil Surgeon Office of Chattogram, and the CCC.

The two-dose Evuichol-Plus Cholera vaccine, produced by EuBiologics Co Ltd in South Korea, will be given to individuals over one year of age, according to a press release.

Everyone except for pregnant women and those who have received another vaccine in the past 14 days, is eligible for this vaccine.

Cholera is a diarrhoeal disease and a food- and water-borne illness. Outbreaks have ranged from the Ganges delta to Europe and America. Inadequate access to safe water and sanitation systems are key contributors to these outbreaks. The disease causes rapid dehydration and can lead to death if not treated promptly. Every year, approximately 1.3 to 4 million people worldwide contract cholera, with over 100,000 infections occurring in

SEE PAGE 4 COL 3

COASTAL FLOOD
Riverbed deposit
worse than sea
level rise

Says Swedish environmentalist

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Riverbed sedimentation caused by building unplanned embankments poses greater threats of coastal flooding than the predicted sea level rise in the future, said Camelia Dewan, a Bangladeshi-origin Swedish environmental anthropologist.

She was discussing her book "Misreading the Bengal Delta: Climate Change, Development and Livelihoods in Coastal Bangladesh" at an event organised by University Press Limited (UPL) at its office in Dhaka's Farmgate area yesterday.

The event was moderated by Mahrukh Mohiuddin, managing director of UPL.

She stated that building unplanned embankments began in the Indian subcontinent during the British era.

"Wherever the British Raj

built embankments, it killed rivers and increased siltation, which also led to the outbreak of malaria due to waterlogging. They built these embankments ignoring their negative impacts on the environment," she said.

Camelia said that Bangladesh has been deprived of the benefits of monsoon due to construction of flood protection embankments.

"In a natural environment without any artificial infrastructure, the rainwater in monsoon merges with the river water to deposit silt water on floodplains. The silt raises the land level and processes organic decomposition which makes the deltaic land fertile," she said.

Referring to siltation as beneficial to the Aman rice production, the author said it is a problematic idea that all floods must be prevented, and

SEE PAGE 4 COL 8

Wherever the
British Raj built
embankments,
it killed rivers
and increased
siltation which
also led to the
outbreak of
malaria due to
waterlogging.
They built these
embankments
ignoring
their negative
impacts on the
environment.

Park Haven
3-BEDROOM APARTMENTS
at Bashundhara Residential area
Near 300 Feet Avenue

Call: 16687
01713001908
01714039846
01713367486

ASSET DEVELOPMENTS
Asset Developments & Holdings Ltd
91 Gulshan Avenue
www.asset.com.bd

OUR CUSTOMERS SPEAK FOR US

Dear bti,
I have been consistently impressed by your professionalism, dedication, and exceptional workmanship. The design and the high-quality materials reflect your expertise. Your responsiveness to my inquiries further made my experience positive.

Thank you for creating a space that I can now call home.

With warm regards,
Ariful Arafath
Homeowner, Shopnobilash

SPACIOUS LUXURY APARTMENT

FOR SALE

FLOATING FOREST

P#58, R#15/A
Dhanmondi R/A

2117 - 3118 Sq. Ft.

LA MANDARIN

P#30, R#9/A
Dhanmondi R/A

100 % Ready

2078 - 3186 Sq. Ft.

MEHERUNNESSA VILLA

P#56, R#08, B#D
Banani R/A

100 % Ready

1993 Sq. Ft.

ASSURANCE MARZUQ

P#15, Suhrawardy Avenue
Baridhara, Dhaka

100 % Ready

2068 - 2485 Sq. Ft.

*1 Sq. Ft. = 0.0929 Sq. M.

16747
09-606-222-444 (PABX)

f/assurancedevelopments
www.assurance.com.bd

ASSURANCE DEVELOPMENTS

40 YEARS OF EXCELLENCE

INDIA'S MANIPUR 175 killed in four months of ethnic violence

NDTV ONLINE

As many as 175 people have been killed, 1,118 injured, and 33 are still missing since ethnic violence broke out in Manipur on May 3, the state's police has said. Ninety-six unclaimed bodies are lying unclaimed in morgues, it said.

The state government released some key statistics on the impact of violence in the northeastern state, which has continued for over four months despite the state and union government's attempts to restore normalcy.

At least 5,172 cases of arson have been reported, which includes 4,786 houses and 386 religious places (254 churches and 132 temples). Around 5,668 weapons have been looted from the state armoury since the beginning of the violence. Of this, security forces have recovered 1,329. Another 15,050 ammunition and 400 bombs were recovered.

Security forces have destroyed at least 360 illegal bunkers in the state, the data said.

The barricades set up between Phoungkhaoh Ikhai and Kangvai villages -- covering the about one-kilometre stretch along the Imphal-Churachandpur road -- were also removed on Thursday. The barricades served as a boundary of a "buffer zone" between the hills and the valley, manned by security forces, to ensure that people from the warring Meitei and Kuki communities do not cross over and engage in violence.

Meanwhile, the Manipur High Court has now admitted a public interest litigation (PIL) filed by the International Meiteis Forum (IMF) that seeks to "quash" the fact-finding report published by the Editors' Guild of India on the ethnic violence in the state. The PIL also requested for directions barring the use of the said report by any authority or agency looking into the conflict.

Meiteis account for about 53 percent of Manipur's population and live mostly in the Imphal valley, while tribals, including Nagas and Kukis, constitute 40 percent and reside mostly in the hill districts.

A 'Tribal Solidarity March' organised on May 3 in the hill districts to protest against the majority Meitei community's demand for Scheduled Tribe status snowballed into full-blown ethnic conflict, leaving thousands displaced.



Migrants arrive on an Italian Coast Guard vessel after being rescued at sea, on the Sicilian island of Lampedusa, Italy yesterday. Good weather has seen a surge in arrivals across Italy in recent days, with more than 5,000 people landing across the country on Tuesday and almost 3000 the day after, according to updated interior ministry figures.

PHOTO: REUTERS

US stands with Iranians

Says Biden ahead of Mahsa Amini's death anniv; US, UK impose sanctions on Iranian officials, entities

AFP, Washington

President Joe Biden said yesterday that the United States would support Iranians a year after the death of Mahsa Amini sparked mass protests, and announced fresh sanctions against "egregious human rights abusers".

"Iranians alone will determine the fate of their country, but the United States remains committed to standing with them," Biden said in a statement issued by the White House.

The United States is sanctioning more than two dozen individuals and entities connected to Iran's "violent suppression" of protests in the wake of Mahsa Amini's death last year in the custody of Iran's morality police, the US Department of Treasury said yesterday.

The sanctions target 29 people and groups, including 18 key members of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) and Iran's Law Enforcement Forces (LEF), as

well as the head of Iran's Prisons Organizations, the department said. They also target officials linked to Iran's internet blockade as well as several media outlets.

"The United States, alongside the United Kingdom, Canada, Australia, and our other international allies and



partners, will continue to take collective action against those who suppress Iranians' exercise of their human rights," US Under Secretary of the Treasury for Terrorism and Financial Intelligence Brian Nelson said in a statement ahead of the one-year anniversary of Amini's death today.

Britain separately announced its sanctions targeting senior

Iranian decision makers enforcing Tehran's mandatory hijab law, including Iran's minister for culture and Islamic guidance, his deputy, the mayor of Tehran and an Iranian police spokesman.

Amini, an Iranian Kurd, died September 16, 2022 at the age of 22 after being arrested for allegedly flouting the Islamic Republic's mandatory dress code. Her death sparked months of anti-government protests that marked the biggest show of opposition to Iranian authorities in years.

Three state-controlled media groups in Iran, Press TV, Tasnim News and Fars News were also placed on the US blacklist.

The Treasury said they "work in tandem with Iranian security and intelligence services ... extending the regime's oppressive reach."

The sanctions come after the US and Iran reached a deal to release five detained US citizens in exchange for the unfreezing of \$6 billion of Iranian funds.

AI models struggle to identify nonsense

AFP, Paris

The AI models that power chatbots and other applications still have difficulty distinguishing between nonsense and natural language, according to a study released on Thursday.

The researchers at Columbia University said their work revealed limitations of AI models and suggested it was too early to let them loose in legal or medical settings.

They put nine AI models through their paces, firing hundreds of pairs of sentences at them and asking which were likely to be heard in everyday speech.

The research, published in Nature Machine Intelligence journal, then weighed the AI answers against the human answers and found dramatic differences.

CORRUPTION CHARGES

China defence minister under investigation

Say western media

REUTERS, Beijing



Suspicion over the unexplained weeks-long absence of Chinese Defence Minister Li Shangfu deepened yesterday, as leading western newspapers reported he was subject to a probe and a top US diplomat questioned whether he was under house arrest. Li, 65, has missed meetings with

Vietnamese and Singaporean defence leaders in recent weeks, according to sources with direct knowledge of the engagements. He was last seen in Beijing on August 29 delivering a keynote address at a security forum with African nations. Citing US officials, the Washington Post reported Li was under investigation for corruption and will likely be removed from his post. The Wall Street Journal also reported Li was being removed from office. Rahm Emanuel, Washington's ambassador to Japan, wrote in a post on X: "1st: Defense Minister Li Shangfu hasn't been seen or heard from in 3 weeks... because he was placed on house arrest???" China's defence ministry did not immediately respond to requests for comment.

'No agreements' signed during Kim visit: Kremlin

AFP, Moscow

The Kremlin yesterday said no agreements have been signed during North Korean leader Kim Jong Un's ongoing visit to Russia. "No agreements were signed and there was no plan to sign any," Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov told reporters, amid concern in Washington that the two countries could be preparing an arms deal. Kim began his visit to Russia on Tuesday. At a meeting with President Vladimir Putin on Wednesday, the two leaders exchanged gifts of rifles -- a choice seen as symbolic given Western concern. Putin talked up the prospect of greater cooperation with North Korea and said there were "possibilities" for military ties despite international sanctions on Pyongyang. The Kremlin on Thursday said Putin had accepted an invitation from Kim to visit North Korea, without giving a date for the trip. Yesterday, Kim visited military and civil aviation plants in far eastern Komsomolsk-on-Amur, Moscow said in a statement. Kim saw the production of Russia's Sukhoi Su-35 and Su-57 fighter aircraft and watched a Su-35 demonstration flight. "We see the potential for cooperation both in the field of aircraft manufacturing and in other industries," said Russian Deputy PM Denis Manturov after accompanying Kim around the factories. "This is especially important for achieving the tasks facing our countries to achieve technological sovereignty," the trade and industry minister said.

US auto workers strike, posing threat to economy

AFP, Wayne

Workers at the "Big Three" US auto manufacturers went on strike yesterday in a first-ever coordinated action to demand pay raises, testing the resilience of the US economy and threatening President Joe Biden's 2024 re-election momentum.

A dramatic walkout -- observed outside a Detroit-area Ford plant with rowdy honking and cheers at the arrival of the United Auto Workers' leader -- followed a failed last-minute push by General Motors, Ford and Stellantis to produce an agreement before the deadline late Thursday.

This is a limited strike incorporating some 12,700 of the 150,000 workers represented by the UAW. However, the decision by the rival companies' employees to coordinate sent a powerful message in their battle for pay increases of 40 percent.

"Tonight, for the first time in our history, we will strike all three of the Big Three at once," UAW President Shawn Fain said in a webcast shortly before the strike took effect.

Fain said the union would strike at one plant at each company: a GM factory in Wentzville, Missouri; a Stellantis facility in Toledo, Ohio; and a Ford plant in Wayne, Michigan, but only the final assembly and paint operations.

The UAW said the strike could expand if demands are not met.

"They're starting it off right," said Rachel Judd, who joined the post-midnight rally in Wayne, Michigan in solidarity. Judd works at Ford's neighboring facility in Livonia.

"If negotiations don't keep moving forward, more plants will be added," she said.

Biden was to make public remarks on the strike at the White House, his press office said, without announcing a time.

Liquidity stress

FROM PAGE 1

The excess liquidity in the sector was down 66.59 percent year-on-year in June, according to BB data.

Settlements of letters of credit (LCs) for importers and strong demand for credit amid slow deposit growth have strained liquidity at Islamic banks, the report said.

Besides, jumps in expenses due to high inflation have reduced households' capacity to save, leading to a slowdown in inflows of deposits, the main source of funding for banks.

Bangladesh's inflation rate rose to 9.7 percent in June 2023 from 7.6 percent a year earlier.

Inflation also shows no sign of cooling as it surged 23 basis points to a 12-year high of 9.92 percent in August, according to the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics.

This means the banks' efforts aimed at recovering from the liquidity crisis by reversing the trend of deposits may not yield the expected outcome in the coming days since savers' capacity to park funds has continued to be under strain.

Besides, a near double-digit inflation rate has kept the weighted average deposit rate, which stands at less than 5 percent, in the negative territory, making parking funds in the entire banking sector unattractive for many savers.

The deposit growth in the Islamic banking segment plummeted to nearly 2 percent in June this year from 11 percent in the same month last year, BB data shows.

A number of loan scams at some Islamic banks recently also resulted in a sizeable outflow of customer deposits from the sector.

The investment (loan) growth for the Shariah-compliant lenders stood at about 15 percent in June last year but it fell to less than 10 percent in June this year.

In order to help Shariah-based banks overcome the fund crisis, the BB introduced two liquidity facilities for them in December 2022 and February 2023.

The programmes -- the Islamic Banks Liquidity Facility (IBLF) and the Mudarabah Liquidity Support (MLS) -- are meant to provide Islamic banks with alternative sources of funding and help them plug their short-term liquidity shortfalls.

"However, the central bank measures will not significantly alleviate liquidity stress for Islamic banks because they have small amounts of assets they can collateralise to use the facilities," said the Moody's report.

Bangladesh had the eighth-largest Islamic banking market globally in 2022, with a total asset of Tk 497,000 crore, ahead of Indonesia, Bahrain, Pakistan, Egypt, Jordan and Oman, according to Fitch Ratings.

India's opposition

FROM PAGE 12

Leaders of at least two parties in the opposition alliance, who did not wish to be quoted, voiced disagreement with the move and maintained they were not consulted.

The News Broadcasters & Digital Association (NBDA) expressed concern over the opposition alliance's decision, saying it sets "a dangerous precedent. The boycott goes against the ethos of democracy".

The National Union of Journalists took strong exception to the opposition parties' boycott of some journalists and condemned the same, alleging that the opposition parties have politicised the media.

Ras Bihari, president of the National Union of Journalists linked to the International Federation of Journalists, said in a statement that this decision of the opposition parties is a "black chapter" of repression on the media in India's democratic history.

Elderly woman

FROM PAGE 12

those involved and their exemplary punishment," he said.

Ahsan Ullah, officer-in-charge of Bhuhanapur Police Station, said they already started investigation and that the culprits will be brought to justice.



Palestinians react during a protest against Israeli settlements near Nablus in the Israeli-occupied West Bank yesterday.

PHOTO: REUTERS

Tigers win nail-biter

FROM PAGE 1

The first delivery of the 49th over. The left-arm pacer was hit for a boundary by Patel but went on to dismiss the batter in the very next delivery when he mistimed another one of Mustafizur's cutters and was caught by a running fielder at long-off.

The finishing touches were provided by debutant Tanzid Hasan Sakib, who also initiated proceedings with two crucial breakthroughs to jolt India early in their chase. Sakib bowled three dots on the trot in the final over, ratcheting up the pressure on the tailenders who then needed 12 from three.

Shami managed to hit Sakib for a boundary the following delivery but the young pacer had the last laugh as Shami, forced to run a double to keep the match alive, was made run out in the penultimate delivery as

Bangladesh recorded their first ever victory in Colombo.

Before all the drama unfolded in the last few overs, off-spinner Mahedi Hasan impacted with the crucial wicket of Gill in the 44th over.

It was a promising display of cricket by the Tigers, who only had an 89-run win over Afghanistan in the group stage to show for before yesterday's dead rubber.

Skipper Shakib Al Hasan stepped up and led from the front as he stitched together a 101-run fifth-wicket stand with Towhid Hridoy to provide stability in the middle after a rocky beginning with the bat.

Shakib, who has not been able to play to his full potential throughout the Asia Cup -- played as a prelude to the ODI World Cup in India next month -- looked to have found his

rhythm with the willow. With six fours and three maximums, Shakib scored 80 off 85 deliveries before falling short of his 10th ODI hundred when he played a Shardul delivery onto his stumps in the 34th over.

With Shakib back in the hut, it seemed the Tigers' innings would fizzle out soon, especially after in-form Hridoy holed one out to square leg after a 54-run knock to leave Bangladesh at 193 for seven.

However, Nasum Ahmed came as a surprise package down the order, smashing his career-best 44 off 45, laced with six boundaries and one maximum. His knock was well complemented by unbeaten knocks of 29 and 14 from Mahedi Hasan and debutant Tanzim Hasan Sakib as Bangladesh reached a competitive total of 265 for eight.



FURRY CELEBS

How do our adorable four-legged casts operate?

In one of the most iconic Hollywood films, a cat with an orange coat was the beloved companion of Holly Golightly, an American socialite. I am, of course, talking about 'Breakfast at Tiffany's' and the cat, who was described in the films—to have no name—was a star in his own right. Orangey, the adorable ginger cat, an adored co-star of Audrey Hepburn, was one of the most famous feline actors of Hollywood.

MALIHA MASHIAT

Be it a beloved companion or a fearsome predator of the wild, animals have long been part of the silver screen, since we began using it as a mode of storytelling. The IMDb listings of animal actors have grown much longer since then.

The Daily Star sat down for a conversation with our very own local animal actors and (human) directors, about their experiences and insights.

While watching an animal actor on-screen, the first thing that naturally pops into anyone's head is—"How did directors give them instructions?"

Well, the secret ingredient of working with an animal actor seems to lie in understanding and empathy, according to, National Award-winning director Dipankar Dipon. He spoke exclusively about Toto, a Speagle-Husky mix, who had apparently starred in his yet to be released film, *Antarjal*.

"Usually, in other industries, the more difficult shots are achieved using CGI, but that's not what we did here (*Antarjal*). Since Toto is my companion, I had prior knowledge regarding his movements," replied Dipon, who also emphasised the need for understanding the furry actor, which helps connect the filmmaker and them—achieved usually via an animal handler.

"There is a gap in the industry for such handlers. Thus, it can prove difficult to navigate when one might require an animal

actor. For instance, Toto actually came into my life when I featured him in a drama of mine. I could not find an actor then. So, I thought, I'll buy one. However, after I was done shooting, he became family instead".

While speaking about Toto's film ventures, Dipon also praised Siam Ahmed's efforts in connecting with his co-star. Apparently, in *Antarjal*, Toto plays the role of Siam's trusted companion, and has quite a few scenes where he gets to show off his acting chops. Even before filming commenced, Siam had spent time with Toto in an effort to get closer, and form a bond.

"There were scenes where Toto had to look sad, thinking Siam abandoned him. Being connected to your animal actor helps achieve those takes easily, as you know how to convey the commands, how they'll react", said Dipon, which is also agreed upon by Raka Noshin Nower.

Apart from being one of the upcoming filmmakers in Mostofa Sarwar Farooki's *Ministry of Love*, Raka is also the founder of Studio Yellow Something, and has lent her magic to crafting a multitude of adverts and campaigns. Her recent project with Gramenphone has gained her immense love from Bangladeshi audiences for the campaign's exceptional message and execution.

For its *Bondhu Bojhe Amake* campaign, the telecom company featured an animal welfare organisation, PAW Foundation, and its founder, Rakibul Haq Emil. The 2-minute long advert was posted with the hashtag,



Accept The Friendrequest, and gathered around 350 thousand likes on social media. The video features Emil being approached by a dog, marking the beginning of a friendship which takes the audience around different areas of the city, acquainting us with many furry friends.

Raka, who is a human companion of a beautiful cat, believes that the relationship

helped her work with her animal crew. It is one thing to work with domesticated animals, but how did she approach the strays, who are usually skittish and distrusting?

Describing her filming experience, Raka mentioned that she consciously chose a small, animal-loving team for her project. "If my team doesn't love animals, they won't feel connected to the vision. For example, there was a chase scene that we had to execute but proved difficult because the strays were already our friends", laughed Raka. "So we had to entice the dog with food on the other side, which honestly didn't feel more difficult than human actors," Raka added jokingly.

A common commotion associated with filming—how do animals react when directors shout 'Lights, camera, action!?' Or when they see a large contraption floating towards their face?

"I used the smallest camera possible and communicated as softly as I could," answered Raka. "These (stray dogs and cats) aren't trained professionals and we kept that in mind. There was no chaos on set".

While directing Toto, Dipon too made sure that the canine was focused on his human companion, who was on the other side of the camera. Even in scenes with Siam, when Toto was on screen, it was Dipon he was looking at with adorable expressions.

While it's not entirely possible to speak with an animal actor, we did get a hold of Poly Karmakar, who is the human companion of Lucifer, also known as Aduri from the

acclaimed serie *Karagar*. In the series, the Turkish Angora cat shared the screen with stars like Chanchal Chowdhury and Jayanta Chattopadhyay. Both of them adored their feline co-star, despite Chanchal Chowdhury's limited interactions with cats before.

Much like Dipankar Dipon, Poly also commented on the lack of proper accommodations for animal handlers in the Bangladeshi film industry. "Lucifer was introduced to *Karagar* via my friend, who informed me that they needed an animal actor in the series. Despite the team being very helpful, the shooting experience wasn't very joyful for her," said Poly, "She fell sick and got fleas. So, that wasn't very pleasant for us".

Lucifer has been Poly's companion for almost two years now, and is also famous on Instagram. Her account @lucifer.morningstar2022 has many followers, and after her acting debut in *Karagar*, it has received love from fellow influencers as well.

Despite the reign of CGI over our film industry nowadays, the call for recognition of furry actors still remains paramount. Even recently, there have been talks of introducing a new Academy Award category to recognise the best animal actors in films, who've braved their reluctance and relied on their trust of their humans, to provide entertainment for us all. Similarly, Dhallywood's progression in providing an inclusive space should include both bi-pedal and quadruped artists.

Maliha Mashiat is a freelance writer for Arts & Entertainment and Showbiz

TRENDY STREAMS

<p>Netflix El Conde/The Count</p>	<p>Amazon Prime Wilderness</p>	<p>Hoichoi Kumudini Bhavan</p>	<p>Hulu The Other Black Girl</p>	<p>Disney+ Hotstar Arthdal Chronicles</p>
--	---	---	---	--

OUT AND ABOUT IN DHAKA

A Thousand Tales, part: 5
September 15- 18 | 5.30 – 8.30 pm
Safuiddin Shilpalay

STYLE STATEMENT

Nazifa Tushi

The scintillating serpent from *Hawa*, Nazifa Tushi, cast a magical spell at the red carpet of Meril Prothom Alo Awards which took place on September 8. She bewitched her fans with her winged eyeliner while her long luscious hair was tightly bound in an everlasting braid. Her eyes shined brighter than the burning strokes of fire. The gorgeous actress draped herself in a black saree and a sleeveless blouse, which only added more layers to her enchanting smile.

WHAT'S PLAYING

Amay Dhore Rakho

How many of you have returned to the original version of *Amay Dhore Rakho* after listening to the latest Coke Studio Bangla production *Dilaram*?

Amay Dhore Rakho, written back in 2009 as the first song of Arnob & Friends, is a mesmerising track that effortlessly captures the essence of love and longing. Arnob's soulful voice and his acoustic guitar create a soothing and enchanting atmosphere that immediately draws you in.

One of the standout features of the track is its simplicity. Arnob relies on minimalistic instrumentation, allowing his voice to take centre stage. The singer's heartfelt rendition of the lyrics adds a layer of authenticity to the track, making it incredibly relatable to anyone who has experienced the pangs of love and separation.

Amay Dhore Rakho is a timeless gem that deserves a place in any music lover's collection.

Tribute to Niloy Das
September 22 | 6 pm
Alliance Francaise de Dhaka

Ontore Bahire Chitragada
September 23- 24 | 7 pm
Neelima Ibrahim Auditorium, Bangladesh Mohila Samity

The Daily Star

FOUNDER EDITOR: LATE S. M. ALI

When kitchen markets are ticking time bombs

The Krishi Market fire won't be the last if we don't take urgent action

In a devastating incident that unfolded in the early hours of Thursday, a fire engulfed Mohammadpur Krishi Market and reduced over 200 shops to ashes, causing colossal financial losses to the shop owners and staff. It has become painfully clear that our kitchen markets remain, despite repeated warnings, hotbeds of fire hazards. Following closely on the heels of the fires at Bangabazar and New Super Market, yet another kitchen market fire underscores the urgent need for concerted action to address the glaring risks posed by these structures before another catastrophe strikes.

The Mohammadpur Krishi Market, a one-storey structure with a corrugated iron roof, was already on the list of risky kitchen markets in Dhaka, according to firefighters. The shop owners had apparently been notified multiple times about the impending danger, but those warnings went unheeded. The fire, suspected to have been triggered by either a faulty electric wire or a mosquito coil, spread with alarming speed, in the absence of necessary fire safety equipment on the premises. The market's narrow alleys, blocked by piles of goods, prevented easy access for first responders.

With no nearby water body to tap into, firefighters had to rely partially on water provided by external sources, which delayed the process. Yet the authorities seem least concerned about the alarming speed at which the much-needed water bodies in the city are being occupied and filled up in our greed for development.

Over the past year, similar massive fires have struck numerous markets and commercial areas in Dhaka. It is an alarming pattern that calls for immediate intervention and reform. It is obvious that simply "warning" the shopkeepers is not enough. We need proactive and constructive measures from the authorities to ensure that our kitchen markets have the necessary fire safety infrastructure, and that shop owners as well as city authorities are educated and held accountable for maintaining fire safety standards. The city corporations, in particular, must take decisive action to prevent future tragedies.

Public awareness campaigns should also be intensified to educate citizens about fire safety and the importance of adhering to safety regulations. It is imperative that we create safer city amenities for our citizens and protect their livelihoods from the devastating impact of fires like the one witnessed at Krishi Market.

Rangpur Medical in perpetual crisis

Health ministry must take action against syndicates

The Rangpur Medical College Hospital is in a crisis, with the authorities seemingly nonplussed about the dysfunctional state of the hospital. A recent report from a major national daily has revealed that 537 medical devices, including both of the two CT scan machines, the only angiogram machine, 46 cardiac monitors, and pulse oximeters, are all out of order at the hospital. According to another report, three of the 10 ICU beds are frequently out of service, and the ICU department lacks essential facilities such as echocardiogram, ultrasonography, portable X-ray machine, and artificial blood gas analysis.

The problems at Rangpur Medical run deep and have been persistent for years, exacerbated by corruption, syndicates, and a severe shortage of medical facilities and manpower. Reports suggest that many of the hospital's heavy equipment was purchased from a single vendor, Lexicon Merchandise, in FY2011-12 and FY2012-13 for more than Tk 100 crore. Most of the equipment became dysfunctional within a year. Currently, another syndicate known as "char khalifa" is reportedly controlling most of the requisition deals. Allegedly, the hospital management does not want to fix the existing equipment, but prefers to buy new equipment instead. There are even allegations that some syndicates deliberately break machines in order to force patients to go to private hospitals, which are much more expensive.

Rangpur Medical serves an average of 2,000 patients every day and is the central medical support system for more than 20 million inhabitants of the northernmost division of the country. But mismanagement and greed are costing people their hard-earned money and, in the worst case scenario, their lives. Moreover, many service-seekers have reported being extorted by the medical staff at every step of the process. The health minister has acknowledged the problem, and the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) has taken action against some of the perpetrators. Still, the problems at the hospital persist.

We don't want to believe that the syndicates at Rangpur Medical are so powerful that even the higher authorities can't intervene and improve its condition. We urge the health ministry to thoroughly investigate the systemic crisis at this crucial healthcare facility, take immediate steps to resolve the issues, and alleviate the suffering of the patients.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

letters@thedailystar.net

Control unruly bus drivers to improve Dhaka traffic

Dhaka's traffic is already notoriously bad, and unruly bus drivers make it worse. They stop anywhere to pick up passengers. They also crisscross the roads to block other vehicles and buses from passing to get the passengers waiting at the next stop.

Traffic police often seem to overlook these violations. This results in traffic jams that can last for hours, causing immense inconvenience to commuters.

The authorities need to take serious action against these unruly bus drivers. They should strictly enforce traffic rules and regulations, and punish drivers who violate them.

Shouvik Islam
Dhaka

No country for women and girls



Dr Nazia Manzoor is assistant professor at the Department of English and Modern Languages in North South University (NSU).

NAZIA MANZOOR

It was a small news item on *The Daily Star's* September 7 issue: a 19-year-old tourist was gang-raped at a tourist cottage in Cox's Bazar. One suspect is already in police custody, and law enforcers are trying to arrest the others. According to another report on the same incident, two girls went from Dhaka to Cox's Bazar to participate in a dance programme. Rajan Cottage, where the assault took place, was the site for similar violent sexual assaults in December 2021. On its face, the incident does not warrant a comprehensive analysis, for it does not seem "exceptional," mostly because of how normalised such violence has become in our daily lives. At least two similar incidents, both in Cox's Bazar, gripped the nation's attention at the end of the year 2021. The first was when a gang of young men kidnapped a couple and their child and eventually raped the young woman repeatedly. The other incident was when a college student was picked up, raped, and kept hostage for three days. In response, the Cox's Bazar deputy commissioner decided to create a 600-foot safety zone for women and girls, only to go back on the decision within 10 hours amid furious reactions from the citizenry.

All three incidents and the since-abandoned "safety zone" plan help build a complex narrative of women's mobility rights, the conceptual slippage between women's safety and protection, and the culture of impunity that encircles sexual assault against women and girls.

The Bangladesh Constitution ensures its citizens' mobility rights and freedom of movement as a fundamental right. According to Act 36 of the 1972 constitution, "Subject to any reasonable restrictions imposed by law in the public interest, every citizen shall have the right to move freely throughout Bangladesh, to reside and settle in any place therein and to leave and re-enter Bangladesh." At its core, citizenship is a marker of one's identity; it confirms an individual's membership in a political community. In theory, citizenship entitles all citizens equal rights and such rights ought to be equally distributed; in practice, however, citizenship rights are often awarded and carried out in a gradational scale where the poor, the marginalised, the women, and the minority often experience difficulty

accessing them. Citizenship, thus, is also a category of differentiation – it operates on the principles of both inclusion and exclusion.

The repeated nature of the incidents compels us to rethink the construct of citizenship along gendered lines. In her essay for the *Economic and Political Weekly*, Anurekha Chari argues, "Women's oppression is exemplified in the way women experience citizenship rights." Gendered citizenship as a concept must negotiate the binaries between private and public, cultural and political, and individual and



VISUAL: SALMAN SAKIB SHAHRYAR

collective. In other words, when the constant threat of violence acts as a barrier to women's economic, social and developmental rights, such threat to violence delimits women's exercise of citizenship.

Take, for instance, the Narsingdi railway station incident from 2022, and the High Court bench's placement of blame on the victim. The bench asking "whether anyone wearing such a dress can go to the railway station in a civilised country" makes explicit the link between mobility and restriction – in this case both for clothes as well as movement. The ruling implied that

the woman was wrong on at least two accounts: that she wore such an "uncivilised" outfit and that she went to the railway station wearing such an outfit. Such rulings made at such a high level of our legal system reaffirms the notion that staying immobile, not leaving homes, and not travelling will ensure women's safety.

But what indeed is safety? When thousands of women face assault and violence in their own homes, what codes of safety and protection can ensure women's right to, well, exist? Hence, in recent times, the call for feminist action across the globe – and here, too – has largely been about protesting the restrictions put on women's freedom of movement. The focus now is on their right to exist in spaces and places that historically and culturally have restricted their entry into them.

The latest incident in Cox's Bazar, had it produced a strong response in the newswire (it likely did not because we have become desensitised to the trauma of such events), would have had

"Protecting" women and girls and not ensuring their freedom disables them from being full and equal members of society. The country's leading higher education institutions, for instance, especially public universities with student halls, tend to impose disproportionately high restrictions on female students' movements. Students living in girls' hostels or all-female apartments face similar constraints. Simply put, adopting only preventative mechanisms ensures that women and girls remain bound by their gender.

Freedom of movement is not merely limited to movement for the sake of leisurely purposes – even though that, too, is an important need a woman may have – but that freedom extends to women's participation in economics, education, and indeed social development. Consider, for example, the number of cases we know of where women did not leave their home for higher studies, did not accept a job relocation or could not expand their business in

two conflicting narrative responses. The narrative steadfastly committed to blaming the victim of sexual violence would question why the women travelled alone, what clothes they were wearing, what being a "dancer" says about their "character," etc. The other narrative would be intent on placing even greater restrictions on women in order to ensure their safety.

But here's the truth that many still feel uncomfortable to acknowledge or accept: in the name of ensuring safety, women's freedom to move – one of their fundamental rights as a citizen of this country – is being curtailed.

a different region of the country. From infrastructure to housing to livelihood, restricting women's right to movement fundamentally impedes their citizenship rights.

Ultimately, sexual violence against women and girls cannot go on unchecked, nor can we attempt to "protect" women in the name of safety and keep them confined to "safe spaces." We must, without fail, take into consideration the nexus between violence as a barrier for women's emancipatory participation in public life and the exercise of their rights as the citizens of the state.

From lead poisoning to cardiac deaths



Dr Mahfuzar Rahman is country director of Pure Earth, Bangladesh. He can be reached at mahfuzar@pureearth.org.

MAHFUZAR RAHMAN

Lead pollution is a pervasive global problem impacting millions of people worldwide. According to a recent joint report of *The Lancet*, World Bank and Center for Global Development (CGD), individuals in 208 countries and territories are currently exposed to the risks of lead pollution. This exposure has far-reaching consequences, affecting people's health, economic well-being, and access to education. Unfortunately, this threat disproportionately affects the marginalised populations of low- and middle-income countries (LMIC) in Asia and Africa.

The report, published in *The Lancet*, presents a striking statistic: out of the 5.5 million global cardiovascular deaths attributed to lead exposure, a staggering 90 percent occur among LMIC populations in Asia and Africa. This death toll surpasses those caused by unsafe drinking water, inadequate sanitation and hand washing (waterborne diseases), and even the impacts of climate change. Remarkably, it exceeds the mortality rates associated with cholesterol-related coronary heart disease and air pollution (both outdoor PM 2.5 and

indoor air pollution). These findings are a resounding call to action, emphasising that lead poisoning cannot be disregarded any longer as a major public health issue. Mitigating this risk is paramount to achieving Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Given that lead pollution detrimentally affects health and education, both of which are intricately linked to poverty, these sectors must work collaboratively in a well-coordinated manner to address this crisis. The report underscores the variability in how lead affects individuals, but it is crucial to note that the damage caused to organ systems is irreversible and lifelong. To combat this crisis effectively, all countries worldwide, particularly LMICs, must address the "3Ws": i) who is exposed to lead; ii) why individuals have elevated blood lead levels; and iii) what solutions are available to prevent and manage lead poisoning. Establishing effective programmes to tackle these issues is imperative.

Cardiovascular diseases and related deaths are increasingly pressing public health concerns in Bangladesh.

Estimates suggest that lead poisoning contributes to approximately 60,000 annual cardiac deaths, a number that could potentially reach as high as 138,054. This equates to an alarming rate of approximately 85 deaths per 100,000 people due to lead exposure in Bangladesh, costing us \$17,736 million – 5.86 percent of the country's GDP.

If left unaddressed, lead poisoning will substantially strain Bangladesh's already challenged healthcare system, which is grappling with a significant burden of cardiovascular diseases. As such, cardiovascular health should remain a top priority in healthcare policy and practice.

There is no known safe blood lead concentration. Globally, approximately 600 million children under the age of five have blood lead levels exceeding five micrograms per deciliter. Shockingly, in Bangladesh, 60 percent of all children, or 35.5 million, have levels exceeding this amount, ranking the country as the fourth worst affected globally. As lead poisoning is responsible for one in four cardiac deaths in Bangladesh, clinical cardiac practitioners should consider routine lead screening alongside lipid profiles and other risk factors. A simple blood test can assess lead concentration with a minor finger prick or a small blood sample.

The rapid economic development in Bangladesh has led to a surge in the use of battery-powered vehicles, particularly in urban areas. Most of these vehicles rely on lead-acid

batteries, which require frequent replacement – every six to twelve months. Consequently, this has given rise to a significant informal recycling industry across cities like Dhaka, Chattogram and Rajshahi. The process of breaking down these batteries releases toxic lead particles into the environment, and young children are often employed to pick apart these batteries. Additionally, household aluminium cookware frequently contains high levels of lead as it is often manufactured using recycled car batteries or ship parts.

Effectively combating this situation demands further research into identifying and addressing pollution sources. Furthermore, we need to implement appropriate regulations and ensure rigorous enforcement, and raise community awareness. These measures represent cost-effective and impactful solutions to mitigate lead poisoning.

Given the substantial number of deaths attributed to lead poisoning, there must be a heightened global focus on reducing morbidity and mortality. This environmental crisis warrants comprehensive attention from both the public and the scientific community worldwide. Governments and stakeholders should collaborate to develop viable technologies to create lead-free environments. Funded research is essential to identify ways to reduce lead usage and environmental exposure. The establishment of lead-free environments is an urgent priority to preserve and promote global health.



VISUAL: STAR

Catch me if you can



BLOWIN' IN THE WIND

Dr Shamsad Mortuza
is professor of English at
Dhaka University.

SHAMSAD MORTUZA

A pre-teen has been making news for boarding a Kuwait bound flight from the Dhaka airport without any documentation. He slipped through a number of security checks to board a flight that was completely booked. He was only discovered to be an unaccompanied extra passenger during the final headcount, forcing him to be ejected from the aircraft.

The civil aviation authority has suspended 10 employees as a result of the security breach that occurred on Tuesday, just hours after the French president left the airport. I saw the CCTV footage of the kid sneaking into the airport and confidently and deftly navigating through different barriers while blending in with the neighbouring travelling groups to pass for one of them. He showed a family who were passing through a security check in front of him when he first arrived via the departure terminal gate. Then he hid himself behind several pilgrims to get through at least three layers of immigration screening. Finally, he stayed close to a family with young children to enter the boarding bay. He kept waiting for the right opportunity and learnt to improvise by watching his surroundings.

A local news station interviewed the 12-year-old, who had fled his hometown in Gopalganj around five days earlier and travelled to Dhaka to see a relative in Bashundhara. He admitted that it was only after coming to the airport that he had the sudden impulse to take a ride in one of the aircraft. "It was fun, but it would've been more fun if I could've flown," he confessed. "Flown where?" the interviewer asked. "I don't know," said the boy in a yellow T-shirt with a bicycle on it.

He has the typical characteristics of a boy his age, including big, expressive eyes that sparkle with curiosity, a set of jutting front teeth that seem to have their own growth cycle, and a face that conceals his

inner struggles and ambitions with an air of inscrutability. You wouldn't know from the way he acted that his parents were estranged and that they even turned down taking him back from the police after the airport incident. His uncle enrolled him in a madrasa, and by this point, the young boy had proven his propensity for getting into mischief of all kinds. Yet, he always made it back home. His family did not inform the police even though he was missing for days.

I've been thinking about several things unrelated to the official probe into airport security. They spring from the image of a runaway child looking for a new life. It brought to mind all the heroic adventures we encounter in fiction. Why do we admire and approve the adventures of Sarat Chandra's Srikanta, the fictional flight of a young boy in Tagore who wants to be one with a palm tree's leaves, Oliver Twist's escape from a London workhouse and transformation into a stowaway on a ship in Charles Dickens' novel, or Holden Caulfield's escape from boarding school in Pennsylvania in JD Salinger's *The Catcher in the Rye*? We endorse these imaginative flights and hail them as heroes. Why do we forbid this child from undertaking such a flight, then? Does his attempt to overcome the obstacles not resonate with us?

The psychology of orphans or children in terrible situations who try to elude shelters and go on adventures or dangerous excursions is complex and varies from person to person. With the exception of what I have read or seen in the media, I am unaware of this kid's predicament. But there are some psychological explanations for his behaviour.

He escaped from a madrasa, a place well-known for its strict rules and where students have limited freedom. Running away and going on adventures can help people reclaim their sense of independence

and control, because doing so allow them to make decisions for themselves, even if those decisions are risky. We cannot rule out the possibility that a child is subjected to trauma and abuse while attending school or living in a shelter. The journey might provide solace from their emotional suffering.

The quest for identification and belonging is frequently the driving force behind adventure writing. Many orphaned or abandoned youngsters have a strong desire to fit in and discover their identity. A person may try to run away in an effort to learn more about who they are, where they are from, or to find a sense of belonging.

The child got on a bus and travelled to the airport. Did he have any unrealistic ideas about the outer world? Did he experience any peer pressure for taking this risk? Perhaps the aeroplane represents a journey from his hard life to somewhere more thrilling, gratifying, or safe. Children are naturally hopeful, in contrast to adults like us who lack motivation. Some people believe that fleeing will lead to a better life or fresh chances. They are able to act in this way because they are unaware of the perils connected to their purported bravery. Or was he just trying to find out?

The child can be a case study. He has demonstrated extreme tenacity and resourcefulness. His ability to manoeuvre through difficult circumstances and outwit authorities might elicit admiration and sympathy. His background as a member of a disadvantaged group appeals to our sense of fairness and causes us to support the underdog. For people who feel constrained by conventional rules, he becomes a relatable figure. His experience serves as a testament to the belief that everyone can overcome challenges and follow their instincts.

While the civil aviation authority will enhance its security measures, I believe we need to give this incredibly smart and resourceful youngster extra care. Who knows, with the correct training and guidance, he may someday become our asset abroad! You only need to watch con man Frank Abagnale in *Catch Me If You Can*, who later became a secret service agent, to interpret my hint.

EDUCATING EDUCATION

School choice: Celebrating, not eliminating, variety



Rubaiya Murshed
is a PhD researcher at the Faculty of
Education, University of Cambridge.
She is also a lecturer (on study leave)
at the Department of Economics,
University of Dhaka.

RUBAIYA MURSHED

Both studying for our PhDs, my husband and I have adjacent study tables. One glance at our tables would tell you how different our studying styles are. His table is more organised than mine. My notes are more organised than his. His foundation (or "basics") for the subject in which we were trained is stronger than mine. These differences are a reflection of our different journeys up to this point. Although we've ended up in the same country pursuing our doctoral degrees, our educational backgrounds – and the related experiences while growing up – could not have been more different. You see, I studied under the Bangla-medium stream in Dhaka, and he

so in the belief that this will lead to better quality of education. This is, unfortunately, an unverified notion. Above everything, it overlooks the question: who are we to eliminate the separate existence of an entire education stream when there is public demand for it?

We rarely think about the fact that individuals studying under different education streams may have different perceptions of what being educated means and may have different educational goals and aspirations. Instead of focusing on improving the basic standard of education provided across the streams and appreciating the variation in schooling options, it is perhaps easier to eliminate what

creative. Instead of standardising education by eliminating variety in school choices, we need to standardise the enablement of education, regardless of streams, all across. We can no longer overlook the important questions we need to answer to better understand the states of education in our different educational streams.

I try to unearth some of these answers through my PhD, where I focus on the differences in outcomes later in life across individuals who studied in different educational streams. One message that is shining through strongly already is that any comparison between streams should be made with the acknowledgement that there may be differences at the root, which, in turn, drive the differences in the purpose for gaining an education. These differences should be respected because there are histories behind these roots – histories tied to the purpose of each educational stream. It's important for us to understand these trajectories.

Consider, for example, the birth of English-medium schools in



Without much criticality or evidence, we often talk about eliminating certain school streams or combining non-mainstream routes with mainstream education.

FILE PHOTO: STAR

studied under the madrasa stream in Chattogram. Our educational journeys intersected at Dhaka University, but the journeys leading up to that point differed. It's one of the reasons why I became interested in the differences among schooling streams in Bangladesh.

Basically, at the brink of starting education, a parent in Bangladesh can send their children – depending on the availability of educational institutions, of course – to a Bangla-medium school (often with Bangla and English versions of the same curriculum to choose between), an Alia madrasa, a Qawmi madrasa, or an English-medium school. This madrasa categorisation is mainly based on the magnitude of prioritisation of Quranic studies (higher in madrasas) and the main language of learning (either English or Bangla). Without going into the differences in ownership – that is, public and private schools – there are, in general, several ways of thinking about differences across these educational streams. In my own work, I particularly focus on two. Firstly, what leads to choosing one of these educational streams? Secondly, are there differences in the outcomes later in life between individuals who study in the different educational streams? Additionally, there is a need to investigate how the educational streams differ in terms of textbooks, curricula, exam question patterns, pedagogy, and students' learning outcomes.

Worryingly, without much criticality or evidence, we often talk about eliminating certain school streams or combining non-mainstream routes with mainstream education. The intention behind this is perhaps somewhat misplaced. In most cases, someone supporting the elimination of separate educational streams – and the consequent integration of the different streams into one – does

some think is redundant as a stream. Instead of trying to bridge the gaps in access – in terms of information as well as availability of educational institutions – to different schooling

Bangladesh. While madrasas have a history stemming from the reign of Muslims in our subcontinent, it may be argued that English-medium schools stem from a more colonial

We rarely think about the fact that individuals studying under different education streams may have different perceptions of what being educated means and may have different educational goals and aspirations. Instead of trying to bridge the gaps in access to different schooling streams, we let the narratives framed by the more elite construe our better judgement and reign strongly over us. We forget to think critically, and this is sadly common across all the educational streams in Bangladesh.

streams, we let the narratives framed by the more elite construe our better judgement and reign strongly over us. We forget to think critically, and this is sadly common across all the educational streams in Bangladesh. Another reality, as Dr Niaz Asadullah – a living legend in educational research in Bangladesh – says, is that the quality of education remains low across all educational streams.

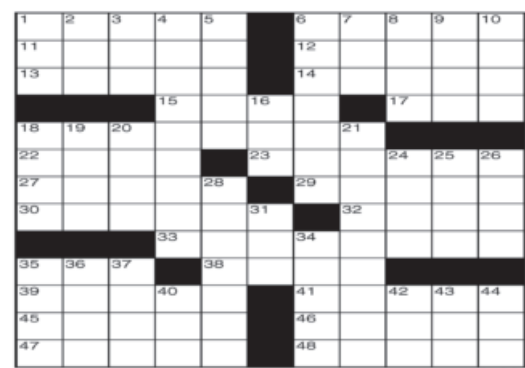
Our national debates and discussions on schooling options is stuck at the point of integration of the different educational streams – to integrate or not to integrate. We need to shift focus from this to more important issues: the need for proper educational resources in all schools regardless of them being madrasas or general schools; teachers being trained to not just educate but also to care about students' well-being; and all educational streams equipping students with a coherent basic standard education that enables them to think critically and be

past. It's not that we do not need competency in a universal language like English. We do. However, it's also important that we clarify our priorities as a nation and pass on a strong sense of culture – of which language and history are pivotal parts – to the next generations because, otherwise, any identity crisis that they experience is partly our fault, too.

Deeply entrenched narratives not backed by research or critical reflection have tremendous potential to cause harm, and this is already evident in the untold stories around us in our society today. Those of us who have a unique educational background on our CVs – that is, something not mainstream – are often stripped of the opportunities that our counterparts are given, despite having the same, or often better, talents and capabilities. What does this mean for our rhetoric, our initiatives, and for inclusive development? Isn't inclusion, and the absence of bias, a prerequisite for such development?

CROSSWORD BY THOMAS JOSEPH

- ACROSS**
- 1 Bends out of shape
 - 6 To any extent
 - 11 Sneezes sound
 - 12 Irritated state
 - 13 Depicted
 - 14 Music's Abdul
 - 15 The Emerald Isle
 - 17 Swiss peak
 - 18 Grilling need
 - 22 Flock member
 - 23 Misdeeds
 - 27 Group of top players
 - 29 Used four-letter words
 - 30 Confines
 - 32 Pennsylvania port
 - 33 Freeway feature
 - 35 Go for a run
- DOWN**
- 1 Used to be
 - 2 German cry
 - 3 Pi follower
 - 4 Politician's loyal supporters
 - 5 Boom type
 - 6 Seems
 - 7 Aunt, in Acapulco
 - 8 Blue hue
 - 9 Break in the action
 - 10 Spring
 - 16 Join the crew
 - 18 Applaud
 - 19 Loathe
 - 20 Hymn ender
 - 21 Like most of these letters
 - 24 Director
 - 25 Bleak
 - 26 Ooze
 - 28 Befuddles
 - 31 Veto
 - 34 Choir member
 - 35 Pokes roughly
 - 36 Spoken
 - 37 Heredity unit
 - 40 Consumed
 - 42 Football's Marino
 - 43 Mamie's husband
 - 44 Uncooked



YESTERDAY'S ANSWERS



Star SPORT

DHAKA SATURDAY SEPTEMBER 16, 2023, ASHWIN 1, 1430 BS

What to WATCH

STAR SPORTS SELECT HD1
English Premier League
Wolves vs Liverpool
Live from 5:30 pm

Manchester United vs Brighton
Live from 8:00 pm
STAR SPORTS SELECT HD2

English Premier League
West Ham vs Manchester City
Live from 8:00 pm
Newcastle vs Brentford

'I believed that I would bowl the perfect yorker'

SPORTS REPORTER

Despite not being in the running for the final, Bangladesh ended their Asia Cup on a high by beating India in a tight Super Four game in Colombo's R Premadasa Stadium yesterday. After Shakib Al Hasan's 80 rebuilt the innings, the Tigers needed to overcome a compact Shubman Gill ton as some pride was restored. Youngster Tanzim Hasan Sakib, making his debut, got the new ball talking in a way which should keep selectors on their toes while his cool effort in the final over ensured a six-run win - Tigers' second in the Asia Cup history against India.

Earlier, skipper Shakib and Tawhid Hridoy's 101-run fifth-wicket stand, turned things around after early collapse. Nasum Ahmed and Sheikh Mahedi made important contributions with the bat in the lower middle-order as the score climbed to 265.

On his debut, the 20-year-old Sakib, removed Rohit Sharma in just the second delivery of the innings. Even the confident and in-form Gill had to persevere during Sakib's spell. In his next over, Sakib took the top of Tilak Varma's off-stump with one that moved in after pitching, with the batter leaving the delivery alone only to find himself



Bangladesh pacer Tanzim Hasan Sakib made a promising ODI debut, providing the Tigers two early breakthroughs in their final Asia Cup Super Four game against India in Colombo yesterday. With India already through to the final and Bangladesh out of the competition, the game was a dead rubber but Sakib's exuberant bowling display eventually helped Bangladesh to a six-run victory. [Bottom] Earlier, skipper Shakib Al Hasan scored an 85-ball 80 as Bangladesh posted 265 for eight.

PHOTO: AFP

SCORES IN BRIEF

Bangladesh: 265 for eight in 50 overs (Shakib 80, Hridoy 54, Nasum 44; Thakur 3-65, Shami 2-32)

India: 259 all out in 49.5 overs (Gill 121, Patel 43; Mustafizur 3-50, Tanzim 2-32, Mahedi 2-50)

Result: Bangladesh won by six runs
Player-of-the-match: Shakib Al Hasan

castled. The youngster bowled six overs on the trot with the new ball, giving away just 15 runs.

"Rohit bhai was my dream wicket, my debut wicket. I just concentrated on line and length and maintained it and that's how I got the early success. I am always prepared for bowling longer spells when my team needs me. I am always ready to bowl," he said at the post-match ceremony.

Despite being taken for 12 runs in the 39th over by Gill, Sakib was entrusted to bowl the last over with India requiring 12. He mixed his deliveries and then bowled a yorker in the penultimate delivery where a run-out secured the win.

"That ball, I was once again thinking of the bowlers but it was very tight with two balls and eight runs. So I went for the yorker. I believed that I would bowl the perfect yorker and that's what happened," Sakib added on his death over bowling performance.

It was not just Sakib but also Mustafizur Rahman's death bowling that came to the Tigers' rescue. The left-arm paceman saw the back of dangerous Ravindra Jadeja and Axar Patel, bagging three for 50 in eight overs.

Yet, with just two pacers in the armoury, the Tigers' spin attack had to do the bulk of the bowling. Shakib himself was economical and effective, also bagging Suryakumar Yadav's scalp while Mahedi and Mehedi Hasan Miraz took crucial wickets.

"After the last couple of games here, we thought spinners will do well," Shakib said after the match.

Mahedi had given the important breakthrough earlier with KL Rahul's wicket before his death over efforts kept things tight while also removing Gill after a 133-ball 122 that really put the pressure on India. With the World Cup to come, the win should serve as a morale-boosting one.

"A lot of players are injured and some going in and out, that didn't help us. I think we will be a dangerous side in the World Cup," Shakib said.

Shakib shows avenue for better batting plan

SPORTS REPORTER

When Shakib Al Hasan came to the crease yesterday in the fourth over, the top-order was once again struggling; this time at 15 for two. Shakib may not have found the hundred he would have been desperate to get, but during a crucial 101-run stand with Tawhid Hridoy, he batted to a plan to bring much-needed respite for Bangladesh in their Asia Cup Super Four fixture against India in Colombo.

After missing out on a single, the stump mic caught him telling Hridoy, "You know how much further we have to go?" It was a reminder of the task ahead. And as the only veteran in the playing eleven, it was much needed.

Judging from his remarks before the game, he was acutely asking his players to take up their end of the bargain. He demonstrated how he does his bit. "Here experience or inexperience or new and old doesn't come into the equation," he had said. It was the scenario the Tigers' veterans and youngsters have to play if the team are to find rhythm at the upcoming World Cup.

With Anamul Haque Bijoy once again failing to impress and Mehedi Miraz departing soon after, the Tigers' batting recovery hinged on Shakib and Hridoy's partnership.

Shakib, was comfortable in shot-making from the onset but impatience was showing as well. He had to gradually settle down with wickets falling around him. It had been 36 innings since his last ODI ton; in fact, he has not reached three figures in any format since his blistering 124 not out against the Windies at the 2019 World Cup.

But as he has shown many times, he often does not worry about the numbers as long as he is contributing. He has scored fifty 11 times, crossing 90 twice since that ton against Windies. The unbeaten 96 against Zimbabwe was the closest he got to a hundred since then.

When he came on, it felt like he needed some luck

on his side to play a bigger innings. He had got going against Pakistan in this Asia Cup too, but did not make enough to really make an impact. This time against India, despite it being a dead rubber, Shakib needed some confidence to carry to the World Cup. It is after all, his individual responsibility to shine with the bat at the World Cup.

That rub of the green came in the 19th over, when off-spinner Tilak Varma troubled him and got the outside edge but only for KL Rahul to drop a difficult chance behind the stumps.

Shakib would then get the wake-up call. With the spinners introduced, he found negotiating Varma difficult. But when India wanted to squeeze the run-rate, Shakib had finally found his preferred matchups in Axar Patel and Ravindra Jadeja.

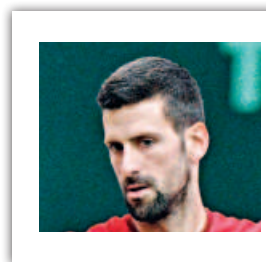
While risks could not assure favourable results with a lot of rebuilding to do, Shakib and Hridoy were calculative. Thus, Hridoy went after Varma, the right-arm off-spinner, hitting two sixes in the 23rd over. Shakib picked the cue for acceleration and hit Patel for two through mid-wicket.

As spinners were trying to go through their overs fast, Shakib faced 20 deliveries from Patel, hitting 27 runs and picking 22 from the 17 deliveries he faced against Jadeja. Hridoy had taken Varma for 15 off the nine he faced against his favourite matchup. When it looked assured that Shakib would convert the 80 to a ton, he fell to a careless shot, at a time the team needed a bigger contribution from him. Hridoy's fifty would ensure at least 200 on the board before Nasum Ahmed and Mahedi Hasan finished well.

Despite the lacklustre state of the batting department, some nuance shown by the skipper and others after yet another top-order struggle should set the Tigers on a better plan for their batting department.



Djokovic looking forward to Paris Olympics



REUTERS, Valencia

Chasing an elusive Olympic gold medal will be one of Novak Djokovic's main goals for next season even though the 24-times Grand Slam champion knows he will have to be physically and mentally

ready to cope with a crammed schedule.

Djokovic won bronze in Beijing 2008 and fell short in London 2012, Rio 2016 and Tokyo two years ago, but the Serbian who will turn 37 before the next Games begin is still fighting to be fit after claiming three Grand Slam titles in 2023.

The world number one also made the Wimbledon final earlier this year, where he was beaten in five sets by Carlos Alcaraz, and he is in no mood to slow down.

"My plan for now is to play the Olympic Games, so I'm hoping that I will be able to play, that I will be ready physically and mentally," Djokovic told reporters in Valencia, where he turned up to play in the Davis Cup just days after his U.S. Open triumph.

"It's going to be a very congested and challenging schedule next year, with Roland Garros on clay, Wimbledon on grass, the Olympics on clay and then the U.S. Open and the tournaments before that on hardcourts.

"It's going to be challenging for players, but my plan is to play the Olympics, because it's one of the most important events in the history of the sport. That's where you also represent the country and the feeling of being part of it is a huge honour."

Djokovic missed Serbia's 3-0 victory over South Korea in the Finals group stage this week as he was travelling, but is likely to feature against a Spain side missing Alcaraz on Friday.



South Africa's Heinrich Klaasen leaps into the air after reaching 100 off just 57 deliveries during their fourth ODI against Australia in Centurion yesterday. The wicketkeeper-batter did not stop there as he went on to smash an 83-ball 174 during a whirlwind of an innings that saw 13 fours and as many maximums and helped South Africa post 416 for five -- their third highest in ODIs. His 94-ball 222-run fifth-wicket stand with David Miller, who remained unbeaten on 82 off just 45 deliveries, is now the fastest double-century stand in the format.

PHOTO: AFP

Zampa's day to forget

STAR SPORTS DESK

Adam Zampa became part of an unwelcome record yesterday as the Australia leg-spinner equalled the most expensive figures bowled in ODI cricket history.

At the SuperSport Park in Centurion, after being pummelled by South Africa's middle-order batters Heinrich Klaasen and David Miller, Zampa conceded 113 runs from his 10 overs - equalling the figures of compatriot Michael Llewellyn Lewis, who was taken apart by the same opponents in 2008.

Zampa became one of 16 bowlers to concede more than 100 runs in an ODI as the Proteas amassed a mammoth 416 for five. Australia, in reply, were bowled out for 252 in 34.5 overs.

Verstappen hits back at Mercedes boss

REUTERS, Singapore

Max Verstappen hit back at Mercedes Formula One team boss Toto Wolff on Thursday after the Austrian said the Red Bull driver's record run of 10 wins in a row was irrelevant and just for Wikipedia.

Wolff made his comments after this month's Italian Grand Prix, where Mercedes were beaten by both Ferraris as well as the two Red Bulls.

Asked at the Singapore Grand Prix for his reaction, Verstappen said he was not disappointed. "They had a pretty shit race, so probably he was still pissed off with their performance," the 25-year-old Dutch driver told a news conference ahead of a race that could bring his team a 16th successive victory.

"He almost sounds like he's an employee of our team sometimes, but luckily not."

Verstappen, who is 145 points clear of team mate Sergio Perez in the championship and set for a third title well before the end of the season, suggested Wolff should focus on his own team.

"That's what we did in the past as well, when we were behind them and when they were dominating," he said.

"I think you should be able to appreciate when a team is doing really well. Which I think we've done in the past, because it worked also as a kind of inspiration. To see someone that dominant, it was very impressive at the time."

"I'd always dreamt of being with Ferrari. I always loved Ferrari, it was my dream since I was a kid."

Ferrari's Formula 1 rider
Charles Leclerc



PSG give Lee green light for Asian Games

REUTERS

Paris St Germain (PSG) have agreed to let midfielder Lee Kang-in join up with South Korea's Asian Games squad during the group stage, the country's football association (KFA) said on Friday.

The KFA said they reached an agreement with the Ligue 1 side late on Thursday and that Lee would be released after PSG's Champions League opener at home to Borussia Dortmund on Tuesday.

Teams are under no obligation to release players for the Asian Games as the tournament falls outside FIFA's official window.

The men's soccer tournament begins on Sept. 19, with South Korea kicking off their campaign against Kuwait as they bid for a third straight gold medal. They will also face Thailand on Sept. 21 and Bahrain three days later in Group E.

Lee, 22, joined PSG from Real Mallorca in July and started their opening two league games but has been sidelined with a muscle injury since Aug. 22.



After bagging two goals and two assists in the first four matches, Mohamed Salah would want to continue his and Liverpool's good start to the season with a victory away to Wolverhampton Wanderers in today's match. Meanwhile, Manchester United would want a reversal to fortunes when they host Brighton and Hove Albion.

PHOTO: TWITTER

Booters not confident of repeating 2018 feat



SPORTS REPORTER

Despite making it to the Round of 16 of the Asian Games for the first time in 2018, Bangladesh team are seemingly not enough confident to repeat the feat in the football event of the Hangzhou Asian Games. The football event will kick off on September 19.

Bangladesh pipped Qatar and Thailand to get out of the group stage in 2018 before being beaten 4-1 by North Korea in the knock-out match.

This time Bangladesh have been pitted against hosts China, India and Myanmar with top two teams slated to advance to the Round of 16.

"I was a member of the 2018 squad, where most of the players had national team experience. This time there are many inexperienced players, who have played in age-group matches but did not get play at top level competitions. However, they are eager to prove themselves to get into the senior team, so we are looking forward to playing match by match and hope to get good results," captain Rahmat Mia said at a press conference ahead of their scheduled departure in the early hours of Saturday.

Head coach Jaiver Cabrera echoed the same sentiment and said they would take each match at a time.

"We don't want to set a target before the start of the Games but we have prepared well, we have a lot of confidence in this group. The players have been together for a long time and our main objective is to make sure we play well against Myanmar in the first match. If we get points from the first match, we will have a good opportunity to advance to the next round," said Cabrera.

AFC cancels commercial deal

REUTERS, Hong Kong

The Asian Football Confederation terminated its commercial relationship with Football Marketing Asia "with immediate effect" on Friday, less than three years into an exclusive eight-year deal with the Hong Kong-based company.

The contract, signed in 2018 and due to run from 2021 until the end of 2028, had been worth a reported \$2.4 billion and was agreed when FMA was known as DDMC Fortis.

"The AFC's decision takes into careful consideration the new challenges and opportunities presented by the rapidly evolving post-pandemic commercial environment," the confederation said in a statement.

"The end of the exclusive partnership with FMA enables the AFC to explore opportunities and collaborations that are better aligned with the current conditions, while securing its financial future for the long-term success of Asian football."

Spain women continue nat'l squad boycott

AFP, Madrid

Spain's Women's World Cup-winning squad will continue to reject national team call-ups unless there are more changes at the Spanish football federation following the scandal over Luis Rubiales' unsolicited kiss, a source close to the federation said Friday.

"They are not coming," the source told AFP just hours before new coach Montse Tome was set to announce her squad on Friday for the Nations League matches against Sweden and Switzerland on September 22 and 26.

Spanish football has been in turmoil since Rubiales forcibly kissed midfielder Jenni Hermoso on the lips in front of the world's media after Spain defeated England in the Women's World Cup final on August 20 in Australia.

A letter signed by 81 Spain players, including the 23 world champions, was released last month stating they would not play for the national team without significant changes at the head of the federation.

Since then Rubiales has resigned and the football federation sacked their controversial coach Jorge Vilda, named Tome in his stead and pledged further internal reforms. Tome was Vilda's former assistant manager.

Spanish media said the players would later on Friday release a statement outlining the changes that they still expect to see before they return to the pitch.

Manchester United, Chelsea seek reset

AFP, Manchester

Manchester United and Chelsea are under pressure to get back on track as the Premier League returns from an international break, while Manchester City aim to maintain their perfect start to the season.

Tottenham, Liverpool and Arsenal are also in impressive form with 10 points from a possible 12 - each with the chance to climb to the top of the table if champions City stumble against in-form West Ham at the London Stadium.

Here are three talking points ahead of this weekend's action:

Brighton to deepen Man Utd crisis?

Defeats to Tottenham and Arsenal have already left Manchester United six points off the top of the table, dampening hopes of a first Premier League title challenge since 2013.

Brighton won at Old Trafford for the first time in their history last season but it would not be a shock should the Seagulls emerge victorious again.

United struggled in home victories over Wolves and Nottingham Forest last month and face a step up in class against Roberto De Zerbi's men.

Brighton have shrugged off the sale of some of their prized assets to win three of their first four games and have scored more Premier League goals than any other club.

Erik ten Hag will be hoping new signings Sofyan Amrabat and Rasmus Hojlund can give United a much-needed lift.



Hojlund impressed as a substitute on his debut at Arsenal before the international break, while Amrabat is yet to feature after signing on loan from Fiorentina on deadline day.

Money can't buy Chelsea goals

Despite leading the Premier League again when it came to money spent in the transfer window, Chelsea have won just one of Mauricio Pochettino's first four league games in charge.

The Blues have splashed out more than £1 billion (\$1.25 billion) on new players in three windows under the ownership of a consortium fronted by Todd Boehly.

Yet they still suffered from a familiar lack of cutting edge in their 1-0 defeat at home to Forest two weeks ago.

Chastened by their worst Premier League season for decades in 2022/23, Chelsea insist they are playing the long game, with huge fees bet on promising

youngsters becoming stars of the future.

But failure to beat a Bournemouth side yet to taste victory in the league under Andoni Iraola on Sunday will have alarm bells ringing at Stamford Bridge.

Newcastle suffer slow start

Newcastle will return to the Champions League for the first time in 20 years next week, but after a rapid rise fuelled by Saudi cash, the Magpies are suffering something of a reality check.

Eddie Howe's men have lost three of their opening four games, seriously undermining any title aspirations.

Howe can point to a tough run of fixtures as mitigation for the slow start.

But after consecutive defeats to City, Liverpool and Brighton, he needs a return to winning ways against Brentford this weekend to restore a sense of calm before jetting off to face AC Milan in the Champions League on Tuesday.

Derby day puts Milan giants in spotlight

AFP, Milan

Italy's Milan giants face off in Saturday's local derby which pits Serie A's form teams against one another in a match which will give an early indication of their title credentials.

The San Siro will host a rematch of last season's Champions League semi-final, a fixture that promises similar fireworks to the two blockbuster clashes in May which went Inter Milan's way.

Inter and AC Milan are locked on nine points at the top of the table after perfect starts from both in which summer signings have made an immediate impact.

Simone Inzaghi's Inter have scored eight times without conceding in their opening three matches thanks to a strike partnership between Lautaro Martinez and new arrival Marcus Thuram which has brought seven goals.

Milan meanwhile have a trio of new signings thrilling fans alongside their established stars, with Tijjani Reijnders and Chelsea old boys Ruben Loftus-Cheek and Cristian Pulisic hitting the ground running.

Stefano Pioli has Milan playing an entertaining, fluid style of football boosted by Pulisic's presence on the right wing, which has freed up star man Rafael Leao and given increased service to four-goal Olivier Giroud who should start despite picking up an ankle knock on international duty.

"We've started really well and I know that we'll do all we can," USA forward Pulisic told the Gazzetta Dello Sport.

"We're hopeful for the Scudetto, we've got good players and a great mix of talent. We can win."



Inter have, Thuram aside, a similar starting XI to the one which lost to Manchester City in Istanbul in June but have quality back up in the likes of Juan Cuadrado and Davide Frattesi.

Midfielder Frattesi hasn't started since

arriving from Sassuolo but impressed for Italy with a brace against Ukraine on Tuesday night, putting pressure on Inzaghi to pick the 22-year-old.

Juventus, two points behind the Milan duo, kick off the weekend's action at home to Lazio rocked by Paul Pogba's provisional suspension for a doping violation.

France star Pogba has a potential four-year ban hanging over his head for elevated levels of testosterone after being tested following a match in which he didn't even play.

On Thursday a source told AFP that midfielder Pogba has requested examination of the 'B' sample taken during the doping test, and a positive result would reportedly put the 30-year-old at risk of having his contract terminated by Juve.

It is yet another destabilising scandal for Juve, who were docked 10 points last season for alleged illicit transfer activity and await a potential, related criminal trial for fraud.

A tough week for Juve, who are not accused of any wrongdoing in Pogba's doping violation, got worse with reports that next week's board meeting will confirm a 115 million-euro loss for last season.

Juve are also being sued by Italy defender Leonardo Bonucci who confirmed on Thursday legal action over how he was frozen out by Juve, in a manner he considers "humiliating" and against professional football's collective bargaining agreement.



PHOTO: TWITTER

After a historic debut with the Spanish national team last week, 16-year-old Lamine Yamal was back in training for Barcelona as the action shifts to club football. The youngster would like to make an impact as Barcelona, sitting third on the points table behind Real Madrid and Girona, host Real Betis tonight.



Foster enabling environment for civil society

EU calls on Bangladesh, expresses concern over deregistration of Odhikar

UNB, Dhaka

The European Union has called on the Bangladesh government to foster an enabling environment for the civil society to carry out their work without fear of reprisals.

"Freedom of expression, freedom of association, and a vibrant civil society are essential in a democratic society," Nabila Massrali, EU spokesperson for foreign affairs and security policy, said in a statement yesterday.

The Cyber Tribunal sentenced Adilur Rahman Khan, secretary of NGO Odhikar, and ASM Nasiruddin Elan, director of the organisation, to two years of imprisonment in a case filed under the Information and Communications Technology Act 2006.

They were subsequently detained in custody, said the spokesperson.

The EU has followed the Odhikar case closely and has repeatedly raised with the Bangladeshi authorities the need for due process for Odhikar's leadership, according to the statement.

The EU has also expressed concern about the deregistration of Odhikar, which has made it excessively difficult for the organisation to function.



A Bangladesh Railway train testing the speed limit on the newly constructed Mawa-Bhanga rail line yesterday. The train went back and forth between Mawa Railway Station in Munshiganj and Bhanga Railway Station in Faridpur through the Padma Bridge at different speeds.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

Journos worried over new cyber security law

DRU demands omission of 'repressive provisions'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka Reporters Unity (DRU) yesterday expressed concern over the recently passed Cyber Security Bill for incorporating repressive provisions like those of the Digital Security Act (DSA).

The Jatiya Sangsad passed the bill on Wednesday. In a statement, DRU said the government formulated DSA although journalist community showed their concern regarding the law.

Later, the government decided to formulate the Cyber Security Act replacing DSA in face of concerns over DSA from different quarters including journalists, it said.

DRU said since the drafting stage of the new law, they have been demanding omission of some provisions because of their repressive nature.

During a meeting of the relevant parliamentary committee regarding the proposed CSA, journalists made recommendations to make changes in some of the provisions, read the statement.

However, journalists' recommendations were not reflected in the newly passed bill, it said.

DRU said in provision 42 of the bill, police have been given power to conduct search and arrest people without warrant. "Such repressive provision is an obstacle to freedom of speech," it said.

DRU expressed concern that the new law leaves room for misuse against objective journalism and demanded provisions which are threat to journalism should be removed.

Also yesterday, "DSA Victims Network" expressed concern over the law, saying it is repressive in nature like the Digital Security Act. In a statement, the network said elements from DSA have been incorporated in the new bill overlooking expectations and opinion of people.

Elderly woman murdered at her house

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Tangail

Police recovered the silt-throat body of an elderly woman, mother of a journalist, from her house in Tangail's Bhuapur upazila early yesterday.



The victim is Sultana Suraiya, 65, wife of freedom fighter late Abdur Rahim Akand of West Bhuapur area. She is also mother of Abu Sayem Akand, a news editor of the English daily The Business Standard.

According to locals, Sultana Suraiya lived alone at the house. On Thursday evening, the neighbours went to the house and saw her body lying on the floor.

On information, a police team went to the spot and sent her to the Tangail General Hospital morgue for an autopsy.

Sayem, the victim's son, told The Daily Star that his mother, lived alone at home, had no enmity with anyone.

"I demand proper investigation of the incident and identification of

SEE PAGE 6 COL 3

LIBYA FLOOD

Rescuers search for thousands still missing

Red Crescent puts death toll at more than 11,000; UN launches \$71m urgent appeal for victims

AFP, Derna

Rescuers sifted through mud and rubble yesterday in their search for people missing from the tsunami-sized flash flood that swept the Libyan port city of Derna.

The Red Crescent put the death toll at more than 11,000 people, with nearly 20,000 still missing, the highest estimate yet from an official source. It said almost 2,000 bodies were swept into the sea by the floods.

The enormous surge of water burst two upstream dams late Sunday and reduced Derna to an apocalyptic wasteland where entire city blocks and untold numbers of people were washed into the Mediterranean.

Calling the situation "catastrophic", the United Nations launched an appeal for more than \$71 million to respond to the "most urgent needs of 250,000 people targeted out of the 884,000 people estimated to be in need".

The International Organization for Migration mission in Libya said over 38,640 were displaced in the most affected areas in northeastern

Libya due to storm Daniel.

An AFP journalist in Derna said central neighbourhoods on either side of the river, which normally dries up at this time of year, looked as if a steam roller had passed through, uprooting trees and buildings and hurling vehicles onto

The International Organization for Migration mission in Libya said over 38,640 were displaced in the most affected areas in northeastern Libya due to storm Daniel.

the port's breakwaters.

"Within seconds the water level suddenly rose," recounted one injured survivor who said he was swept away with his mother in the late-night ordeal before they

both managed to scramble into an empty building downstream.

"The water was rising with us until we got to the fourth floor, the water was up to the second floor," the unidentified man said from his hospital bed, in testimony published by the Benghazi Medical Center.

"We could hear screams. From the window, I saw cars and bodies being carried away by the water. It lasted an hour or an hour and a half -- but for us, it felt like a year."

Hundreds of body bags now line Derna's mud-caked streets, awaiting mass burials, as traumatised and grieving residents search mangled buildings for missing loved ones and bulldozers clear streets of debris and mountains of sand.

In one shattered home, a rescue team pumped out the water to reveal a woman's lifeless arms still clutching her dead child, the AFP journalist reported.

"This disaster was violent and brutal," said Yann Fridez, the head of the Libya delegation of the International Committee of the Red Cross, which had a team in Derna when the floodwaters hit.

Cave art dating back 24,000yrs found in Spain



INDEPENDENT.CO.UK

Archaeologists from a UK university have discovered a major palaeolithic cave art site on the east coast of Spain, featuring depictions of horses, deer and wild bulls.

More than 100 ancient paintings and engravings thought to be at least 24,000 years old were found in the 1,600ft (500m) deep cave Cova Dones, or Cueva Dones, in Millares, near Valencia.

Although the site was well known by locals and hikers, the paintings remained undiscovered until the find by the researchers from the universities of Zaragoza and Alicante, who are affiliated to the University of Southampton.

Dr Aitor Ruiz-Redondo, senior lecturer of prehistory at Zaragoza and Southampton, said: "When we saw the first painted auroch (extinct wild bull), we immediately acknowledged it was important."

"Although Spain is the country with largest number of palaeolithic cave art sites, most of them are concentrated in northern Spain. Eastern Iberia is an area where few of these sites have been documented so far."

HATE NEWS DEBATES

India's opposition bloc boycotts 14 TV news anchors

OUR CORRESPONDENT, New Delhi

India's opposition alliance has blacklisted 14 TV news anchors, accusing them of spreading "hate-filled" news debates.

The parties in the alliance, which are in power in 11 states, said they will not send representatives on shows featuring the 14 anchors on different news channels.

The media committee of the bloc took the decision to boycott the programmes of these journalists and not send their representatives to debates hosted by them.

"Pursuant to the decision taken by INDIA Coordination Committee in its meeting on September 13, 2023, the INDIA parties will not send their representatives on the shows and events of the following anchors," a statement from the media committee of the opposition bloc comprising 24 parties said while naming the TV journalists.

While the opposition has routinely accused the mainstream Indian media of "biased" coverage, this was the first time that the country saw the list of accused journalists.

Justifying the action, Congress spokesperson Pawan Khera, who is a part of the committee of opposition parties that took the decision in their virtual meeting, said some channels have put up a "nafrat ka bazaar" (marketing of hatred) for the last nine years.

SEE PAGE 6 COL 3



People walk amidst the wreckage, in the aftermath of the floods in Derna, Libya yesterday. The floods were caused by hurricane-strength Storm Daniel, compounded by the poor infrastructure in Libya, which was plunged into turmoil after a Nato-backed uprising toppled and killed longtime dictator Moamer Gaddafi in 2011.

PHOTO: REUTERS



The Totalil Beel in the Taranagar union of Keraniganj. The housing project of Millennium City is seen on the left with its landfilling instruments.

Totalil Beel in peril

Illegal activities of a real estate developer, authorities' inaction threaten the ecologically important last surviving wetland in Keraniganj

SAJJAD HOSSAIN

Just a decade ago, Totalil Beel, surrounded by unspoiled and pristine nature, could be reached from the Buriganga river.

Today, rampant illegal activities linked to a housing project are causing the last wetland in the Taranagar union of Keraniganj to shrink rapidly.

Locals fear that if encroachment and landfilling continue at the present rate, the wetland might turn into a concrete jungle soon.

Keraniganj, which lies along the Buriganga, used to have many canals and water bodies only a decade and a half ago.

But things began to change rapidly when, in 2009, Shaheed Buddhijibi Basila Bridge over the river was inaugurated. Besides improving communication between Keraniganj and Dhaka, this bridge has led to an infrastructure boom.

Since then, real estate companies have filled up many wetlands across Keraniganj to construct new housing projects, choking the water bodies and degrading the environment.

The Totalil Beel, the sole surviving wetland in the area, is now facing an invasion by such a real estate developer.

This reporter has made several visits to the Totalil Beel in the last few months and witnessed the wetland being filled up gradually by Millennium City, the real estate developer.

body in Rajuk's Detailed Area Plan (DAP), officials confirmed.

The lucrative land of the beel, adjacent to the capital's Mohammadpur-Keraniganj road, seems too lucrative to the company to ignore all the cautions and laws.

Locals say inaction by government authorities such as the Rajuk, DoE and local administration is allowing the unlawful activities to continue.

According to locals, the Totalil Beel has been an integral part of the

wetland.

The Natural Water Reservoir Conservation Act 2000 forbids the filling of any government-recognised reservoir under any circumstances. Also, any individual or organisation cannot stop or change or attempt to change the direction of the flow of water by constructing structure or developing land or extracting sand or mud in any water bodies, without the permission of competent authority, as per Bangladesh Water Act 2013.

upazila, which are not designated as beel, are also being used by housing projects, reducing cropland rapidly.

In 2000, there were 10,540 hectares of agricultural land in the upazila. Now, there are only 8,350 hectares, according to the local agriculture office.

And the trend is not limited to Keraniganj either.

In a recent study conducted by the Bangladesh Institute of Planners, published in June 2023, it was revealed

activity under their noses?" said an outraged Abdul Hossain, another local.

"We have complained repeatedly but no action has been taken so far," he added.

AUTHORITIES' BLAME GAME

However, Masud Hassan Patwary, Director (Monitoring & Enforcement) of DoE, said he is not aware of Totalil Beel sand filling.

"I did not receive any written complaint regarding sand filling," he said.

He said, protecting wetlands, the local administration's role is important.

Contacted, Ashrafur Islam, a town planner of Rajuk, said that Millennium City has no registration to run the company.

"The local administration has already been informed and requested to take action against illegally run real estate companies," he added.

Interestingly, the local administration said they weren't informed by Rajuk and DoE in this regard.

Talking to The Daily Star, Faisal Bin Karim, Upazila Nirbahi Officer of Keraniganj, said, "Rajuk and DoE have never contacted us and asked us to take action against these real estate companies and their illegal landfilling activities."

He even denied receiving any complaints from the locals too.

"We have not received any complaints from the locals regarding illegal activities like wetland filling in the Totalil Beel," he said.

The Daily Star has obtained copies of three complaints that locals filed with the relevant authorities, which were received by the concerned officials.

Contacted, the developer company admitted to the accusation of landfilling with sand saying they had filled up a "minor portion" of Totalil Beel.

"We have filled up a minor portion of the beel, which is agricultural land, not a wetland," Taju Sarker, an owner of Millennium City, told The Daily Star.

"I am operating in a very small area," he said admitting his company didn't take any permission from Rajuk and DoE.

Sharif Jamal, former general secretary of Bangladesh Poribesh Andolon (BAPA), said wetland like Totalil Beel plays a key role in flood mitigation.

Their natural water storage capacity allows them to absorb excess water during heavy rainfall or storms, reducing the risk of flooding in nearby areas.

"Mindsets need to change. I demand immediate action against the illegal operations devastating this essential wetland."



Analysis of Google satellite imagery shows the area of the wetland was 6.56 acres in 2020, which shrank to 5.54 acres in 2023 due to landfilling, suggesting that around one acre of it has been illegally grabbed by the company.



The housing project of Millennium City.

PHOTOS: RASHED SHUMON

region's landscape, serving as both a source of livelihood and a natural buffer against flooding by flashing out excessive water into the river.

Farmers have traditionally used the wetland's water for irrigation, and during the monsoon season, it served as a crucial fish stock. Additionally, it played a vital role in draining storm water, benefiting not only the local agricultural community but also safeguarding nearby areas from waterlogging.

Locals say, for generations, they have been producing rice and seasonal vegetables on the fertile land of the beel during the dry season.

Moreover, farmers in the nearby lands rely on the water from the wetland for irrigation.

However, the encroachment of the wetland has led to a drastic reduction in water levels within the wetland making it increasingly challenging for farmers to cultivate their crops. It has also resulted in the loss of fish, significantly impacting the local community's economic well-being.

Experts have repeatedly expressed concern about the government authorities' failure to protect the

AUTHORITIES TURN BLIND EYE However, nothing deterred the real estate company from its course.

Despite repeated written complaints by locals, relevant authorities including the upazila administration, Dhaka district administration, and the Department of Environment have not responded to their pleas, let alone taken actions to protect the wetland.

As a result, sand filling of the beel continued for over one year, unabated, locals and environment activists said. During this correspondent's visits in August and September to the wetland in Keraniganj's Shyamalapur village, half a dozen dredgers were seen dumping sand into the wetland at night.

The wetland, which is 450 meters from the Buriganga, was seen partially filled up with sand by the illegal real estate company.

Analysis of Google satellite imagery shows the area of the wetland was 6.56 acres in 2020, which shrank to 5.54 acres in 2023 due to landfilling, suggesting that around one acre of it has been illegally grabbed by the company.

However, other lowlands in the

that the rate of wetland filling has increased significantly over the past eight years in Dhaka region.

DEPLETING FISH POPULATION

The locals said the destruction of Totalil Beel is having a profound impact on their lives.

Didar Hossain, a farmer, said, "The company has already filled up the beel's connecting part with the river. We used to catch various fish before. Now the beel is dying slowly."

Gias Uddin, a fisherman, said, "This is not only a wetland to us. We fishermen depend on it for our livelihood. They are killing it before our eyes."

They urged the government to take immediate action to protect their lifeline.

"Totalil Beel used to absorb excess water during monsoons, reducing flooding in our locality. But with its area shrinking due to illegal filling, we feel our villages are now more prone to waterlogging," said Abdul Goni, a teacher of the village.

"I have heard that many government departments are there to protect these wetlands. What are they doing? How could people do this kind of illegal



The company has turned deaf to the calls of locals and environmentalists and is continuing its encroachment of the beel in Shyamalapur village.

Shockingly, the real estate company is operating without a mandatory license from Rajdhani Unnayan Kartipakkha (Rajuk) and does not have clearance from the Department of Environment (DoE).

The wetland is designated as a water

FICTION

THE WRITER

Translation of Bibhutibhushan Bandyopadhyay's 'Lekhok'

"I knew a little of the younger writers, but I had no idea who Ramchandra Sarkar was. But the boy seemed so enthusiastic that I didn't want to hurt him. It was obvious that he had not come across an audience in a while."

SOHANA MANZOOR

It was a Sunday. I had just had my lunch and was getting ready for a nap when someone called from outside. "Is Sitanathbabu at home?"

Now who could come at this time of a Sunday afternoon?

I asked my son to bring the visitor in as I was reluctant in getting up. A little later, a lean young fellow with glasses followed my son to my bedroom. He greeted me respectfully and asked, "And you must be Sitanathbabu?"

"Yes, and where are you from?"

"I've come to see you. You were seated at that doctor's chamber this morning when my elder brother and I were going for a bath. My brother said that you're a writer. I was soaked in oil and hence did not greet you. But I heard that you came here for the weekend only and would live later in the day. And hence, I've come to meet you now."

become a writer. I've brought some of my writing with me; would you like to take a look?"

I agreed and he drew out a workbook and handed it to me gingerly. "I wrote these when I was still a college student. There are a few short stories, a few poems and songs here."

He looked at me earnestly and I said, "Not bad. The songs are quite good." The young man bent forward in excitement and eagerness. "You like them? What about the stories? Do you see any promise there?"

Refusing to comment directly, I said, "The premises are good. You're still young; you'll learn."

He was carried away in joy. "I've always wanted to be a writer, you know. Everybody at home scolds me because I chose Bengali at college. My cousins hold good positions, and they know English well. They wrote to my brother asking me to forget Bengali while there is still time. Nobody at home is

past one year."

He tried to convince me that he was not like everybody else. He was well-versed in Tagore, Saratchandra, Ibsen, Shaw, Tolstoy, the up-and-coming writers, and Vaishnav poetry.

"Among the young writers, what's your opinion of Ramchandra Sarkar?" he asked.

I knew a little of the younger writers, but I had no idea who Ramchandra Sarkar was. But the boy seemed so enthusiastic that I didn't want to hurt him. It was obvious that he had not come across such an audience in a while.

So, I tried to pacify him by giving an imaginary account of Ramchandra Sarkar. He listened to me with deference and said, "You are just right. Do you know what I think? According to Ibsen..." and he went on talking about Ibsen, Maeterlinck, Tagore and many others. He quoted them frequently and tried to present some

brothers eat separately."

He continued, "I have had this dream since childhood that my writing will be published in newspapers. When I saw the books of famous writers, I dreamt of publishing such books myself. I had a class-friend called Kanti Basu. I met him in Kolkata this past winter. He showed that one of his short stories had been published in *Bharatbarsha*. And I thought, how come they are writing and publishing? So many people will get to hear about them!"

He stared out of the window and looked at the sky wistfully. Then he went sad as he said, "But nothing came out of me."

I was impressed with his earnestness and eagerness. He was a different kind, and probably eccentric too. As he went on talking, I kept on noticing the different emotions playing on his face—eagerness, apprehension, reverence, hopefulness, and sadness.

"Kanti Basu is my friend and of my age. He has already made a name for himself. How long does it take to become famous? And what does it take?"

I realised that my afternoon nap had gone through the window. Well, what could be done? I had envisioned that I would be able to get rid of this fellow with a few words. But this one kept on talking and now he was thinking of fame. However, I felt pity for him, and I continued to answer his questions. "There's no hard and fast rule to that", I said. "After you've written some good pieces, you start to make a name for yourself. If the readers are happy with your writing, fame comes easily."

He kept quiet for some time. Then he said cheerfully, "I'd been wanting to talk to a writer for a long time. I once went to meet Debabrata Mukherjee in Kolkata when his *Aparinata* made quite a stir. I stayed awake through the night and finished the book. I loved it so much that I thought I would write a novel like that one. I even wrote about eight to 10 chapters. I showed it to Kanti who said that it read like Debabrata Mukherjee's novel. That's a problem I have—whenever I like a book, I take up the style and plot. Anyway, Debabrata Mukherjee was very busy that day and hence I couldn't meet him."

To encourage him, I read through one of his songs again. He stared at me with a big smile on his face. He listened to my praises about the song, and it seemed that for the first time in his life he was getting some appreciation for his writing. As we were talking, he glanced around the room and said, "I've never sat so close to a writer. And nobody ever spoke to me for such a long time."

After another 20 minutes, he wrapped up rather unwillingly. Perhaps he thought that I would be irritated if he stayed too long.

On his way out, he returned again and asked falteringly, "I don't know how to say this. I don't know what you'll think. If I give you 10 taka per month, will you teach me how to write?"

I felt sorry for the poor fellow. He was ready to give me 10 taka from his monthly salary of 29! His wish to become a writer was so ardent that he was willing to run his family with only 19 taka.

I said that he would not have to pay me anything. He could visit me when I came on holidays. If I could be of service, I would do it gladly. He prostrated before me in respect and left with his workbook in high spirits. Then he turned around to look at me through the window and asked again, "So, you think I can do it?"

"I'm sure it will happen", I assured him. "But you have to keep on practising."

May the Almighty forgive me for this falsehood. How could I tell him on his face that I could not find anything in his writing, or that his story and poetry were really bad? There was nothing worth saving in his writing either. But if prevarication makes people happy, so be it. What is the point of throwing such awful truth on one's face?

Sohana Manzoor teaches English at the University of Liberal Arts Bangladesh.



ILLUSTRATION: MAISHA SYEDA

I was not too happy to hear the reason behind his visit. He meant to ask for a write-up, I was sure. As far as I knew, there was no newspaper in that rural area. Were they planning to bring out something?

The lad appeared to be very humble and slowly took a seat. But I noticed that he did not take his eyes off my face even once. He kept on staring at me through his glasses. At length he said, "I have something to ask of you, if you don't mind."

I urged him to say what he wanted. "Will you teach me how to write? I passed B.A. in Bengali this year and I teach at the local school. My brother is the sub-registrar here. It's my wish to

happy about my literary endeavours. I am the youngest in my family. My brothers want to see my writing, but they say that all of it is a waste of time."

I could not find fault with them for thinking this way.

The young man continued with his tale: "I got the job here right on the day my results were published. I roam around by myself throughout the day. There's not a single person here with whom I can hold a decent conversation. Nobody knows anything about literature. Such a backward place! When I heard of you, I thought you might advise me on writing. That's why I came. I've been so frustrated that I've not written anything in the

arguments of his own. It seemed that he was really pleased with himself, and he was trying to understand what I thought of his capacity for argument, knowledge, and intellect.

I asked, "How much do you get paid here?"

"29 taka. It's okay for now as I live with my elder brother. But if he relocates, it will become a problem. I have to contribute to the family."

"But your other brothers are there, right?"

"They are not my real brothers, but cousins on my father's side. My father is blind, and I have a younger sister who is yet to be married. We all live in the same house, but my cousin

He was not like all the other people I meet in everyday life. Those faces are carved in stones, showing very little emotion. I tried to encourage him, "I'm sure you will write better in the future. You've already shown promise. You're still young and your entire life lies ahead of you. I believe that someday you'll become an excellent writer and we'll derive a lot of pleasure from your work."

He looked up at me shyly with a smile. Then he said, "What are you saying? You'll derive pleasure from my work?... Do you really think that something will come out of me?"

"Why not? If you keep on trying, I'm sure you'll do great."

POETRY

Love, when you're an adrenaline junky

FARAH MASUD

To know that when this is all over
When they're no longer by your side
You will be walking down Kemal Ataturk avenue, Dhanmondi lakeside,
Mirpur 5—alone,
Your hands tucked inside your pockets, clenched into fists
to emulate that comforting warmth of being held
That you will treat yourself to strawberry jam donuts, daal puri with jilapi,
KFD dumplings—not out of preference, but nostalgia
That you will pick a Pathao for your commutes,
just to cling onto memories of rushing back home, risking life and limbs after
Saturdays
That you will work from that cafe by the lake, look out the window and gaze
at the building on the other side
where someone used to stay back after work just to indulge in some roadside
fuchka with you
Or to solve Crossword Tuesdays—racking their brain to outwit you at any cost
Sometimes, they would take a detour with you to walk through the park
where you spent endless hours making up stories about the stray cats and
dogs
And somehow 2000s R&B and "Jalebi Baby" will sneak into your playlist
labeled as—songs to listen to while pooping
That everytime you bite on a chicken cartilage—the sacred ritual of your
people you will search for a scowl through the corner of your eye

Feel a tug in your chest
When you see an airplane in the sky
The smell of winter
will sometimes make you cry
And in spite of knowing this
In spite of the absurdity of it all
You let yourself fall
Touchdown confirmed
You are not safe here
The 'p' value of this test
is much lower than your worst fear
And no amount of manipulation will skew the results in your favor
You look around and recognise
the blaring signs
Oh no no no!
This is the all-too-familiar ground
of heartbreaks and tears
You don't know if you'll be okay
You are most definitely not going to be okay
But when was playing safe ever your forté?

This poem was originally performed by the poet in SHOUTxDS Books Slam Poetry Nights.

Farah Masud can be reached at masudfarah9@gmail.com.



DESIGN: AMREETA LETHE

Shaping Bangladesh's future leaders

Career map and advice for the youth from a trailblazer

Unquestionably, Bangladesh's large pool of young talent is a blessing for the nation and its future development. The RMG sector and skilled migrants are Bangladesh's two economic pillars. Currently, it is estimated that ten million Bangladeshis are employed overseas, which is boosting the GDP of the nation. Most of these migrants are young people, and they work their way up from the bottom in various industries across many nations.

MEHNAZ IRITKA

Steve Poré is the Regional Marketing Director - Asia Pacific, Middle East & Africa (APMEA) at BAT. He is a distinguished figure with an illustrious career that has taken him from the captivating landscapes of New Zealand to bustling metropolises worldwide. However, this isn't just a standard corporate tale; it's a story of a global maestro unravelling the immense potential of Bangladesh and its youth. In a sit-down conversation with him, we explored Steve's exceptional career, international exposure, insights into Bangladesh's potential and the rising prowess of its youth.

As this is your first visit to Bangladesh, how have you found Bangladesh so far?

It's everything I envisioned. I am overwhelmed by their warmth and welcoming nature, their local cuisine and their handicrafts, which are so delicate and lovely. These delicacies enriched the legacy of Bangladesh's culture. Hearing about this heritage for quite long, I always wanted to visit Bangladesh at least for a while, and happily, my current position gave me the chance to do so. The energy and traffic were chaotic and buzzing, and it was obvious that Bangladesh was on a faster development track.

Given the impressive growth and resilience of Bangladesh's economy over the years, what do you think of its journey toward a developed country?

The economy of Bangladesh has shown remarkable resilience, a testament to the nation's commitment to good governance and strategic policies. Investments in critical infrastructure, such as electricity, have played a vital role in driving productivity and contributing to the country's growth. The ready-made garments industry has been a cornerstone of Bangladesh's economic success, thriving despite global economic pressures. This growth trajectory has positioned Bangladesh on the cusp of accelerated progress, akin to other dynamic economies like the BRIC or MINT countries of the past.

You've had an illustrious career for over many years. Can you tell us more about your journey?

I've been with the company for 28 years and 11 months, although it only seems like yesterday. And I began as a graduate in my home country, New Zealand. After spending one and a half years in my home country, I got the opportunity to go abroad, which was quite rare

at the time, to be the Head of Trade Marketing in Myanmar, and I spent two years there. Far from family and leaving them behind in New Zealand, I went to a totally different place. My experience there was challenging due to the stark cultural and environmental differences between Myanmar and New Zealand. I initially learned about Asian culture and people here.

Then I spent four and a half years in Malaysia doing a lot of my brand development work. After that, my journey took a break from Asia, and I went to Australia and spent two and a half years there on skills development

When I moved to Indonesia where I was the Marketing Director first and then the Area Director of the total business for Indonesia. Then in London again as Regional Marketing Director, America & Sub-Saharan Africa (AmSSA). Now I'm back in Singapore with a much wider remit as the Regional Marketing Director for Asia Pacific, Middle East and Africa (APMEA) and covered.

This is a brief summary of my career. As you can see, I quickly advanced through a variety of positions in several nations, moving from territory management to regional management at this point. This journey took me to

Understanding others' perspectives allows me to adjust my approach to giving direction and feedback, creating a conducive working environment.

Bangladesh has been blessed with one of the world's largest pools of young population. What is your opinion on converting those youth into a critical asset for the economy of Bangladesh?

Unquestionably, Bangladesh's large pool of young talent is a blessing for the nation and its future development. The RMG sector and skilled migrants are Bangladesh's two economic pillars. Currently, it is estimated that ten million Bangladeshis are employed overseas, which is boosting the GDP of the nation. Most of these migrants are young people, and they work their way up from the bottom in various industries across many nations. The government of Bangladesh is doing excellent work for skill development for the people and gender equality by empowering women. The government can convert this youth population into demographic dividends by encouraging STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) education.

I have close connections with many top talents from BAT Bangladesh operating in other markets of BAT. They demonstrate a strong work ethic, creativity, and a willingness to embrace new ideas and technologies. Currently, 50+ Bangladeshi talents are working globally in mid- or senior-level positions. They are making significant contributions and gaining experience outside and interacting with different perspectives will only strengthen their potential to contribute to the economy.

What advice would you give to those getting ready to get into the job market, and how can they build a career in BAT?

Young people should focus on continuous education, learning, and gaining practical experiences through programs like Battle of Minds. At BAT, we believe that any company can gain a competitive edge by attracting the largest number of bright and talented individuals in the country. Our objective is to develop the most capable leaders possible for the next generation through Battle of Minds, attract fit-for-future talent through a captivating EVP, and provide cutting-edge talent acquisition tools for aspiring youths to further strengthen their repertoire. Since 2004, we have been offering chances to hone leadership abilities through the Battle of Minds. This talent-grooming programme, initiated by BAT Bangladesh, is currently presented all

across the BAT universe.

This year, the Battle of Minds celebrates 20 years of legacy, where thousands of young talents participate each year to showcase their skills in innovation and strategy. For that reason, Battle of Minds has emerged as one of the most prestigious talent platforms in the country. Participants in this program have received intensive grooming throughout the seasons, found employment, and excelled in the corporate and development sectors, including prominent FMCG businesses, banks, and telecoms, among others. BAT Bangladesh is proud to employ more than 150 talents who have come up through Battle of Minds. Being a part of initiatives like this can help mould concepts, broaden networks, and lay out a development roadmap.

The tech industry is now at its peak, and today's marketing world is more focused on artificial intelligence (AI) than in the past. According to you, are there any particular skills that might be critical for success in this ever-evolving world of marketing, especially consumer marketing?

Data and analytics skills are becoming crucial in a data-centric organisation. Understanding consumer behaviour, consumer experience, and how consumers adopt products will be essential in marketing decisions. Additionally, having a consumer mindset and understanding human behaviour will be valuable in marketing roles. Technology is enabling a lot of things at the same time because we need to reach consumers in a variety of ways so they can get the information and direction they need to make those decisions, not only from a consumer perspective but also from a trade perspective. 3 to 4 years ago, I put myself through a programme on top of the job with Kellogg's in the USA, North-western University, to look at digital marketing, AI, automation, and analytics, just to understand how things have changed and what the implications could be for our business.

Do you have any concluding advice to provide to the nation's promising talent who wants to develop a career in marketing, especially in BAT?

My advice to young individuals will be to prioritise personal growth and remain dedicated to learning. At BAT, we promote personal growth and encourage employees to take ownership of their careers. Communicating your desires is essential to develop a plan harmonising personal and professional aspirations over time.



for marketing. Then I took another big step and went over and worked in Nigeria for four and a half years doing brand trade strategy roles. There I got the opportunity to work and learn about the people of Africa and their rich and diverse culture, as well as their norms.

Afterwards, I went to London, where I led brand development initiatives for a global brand and only a year later, I moved to Russia, where I was the Head of Brands for Russia for three years. In 2014, I came back again to Nigeria and managed 23 countries across West Africa and spent more than 2 years as Area Marketing Director.

Myanmar, Malaysia, Australia, Nigeria, Indonesia, England, Russia, and now Singapore, overseeing a vast region.

With your international exposure, what critical standpoints have you learned from operating in so many countries?

Marketing is all about empathy for consumers and understanding their needs, regardless of the culture or country. Consumers are consumers, but the impact of culture is significant, and it's crucial to understand the local culture deeply. I've ingrained myself in the local cultures wherever I worked, spending time with locals to understand consumers and people better.

How to craft your personal brand in the contemporary job market

In today's fluid job market, the concept of personal branding has ascended from a marketing buzzword to a career imperative. The current economic landscape, defined by rapid technological advancements and ever-shifting industry demands, calls for individuals to position themselves as marketable commodities. Your personal brand isn't just a lofty abstract; it's a concrete strategy that could well determine your career trajectory. Here's how you can lay its foundations.

Self-reflection: the cornerstone of personal branding

Building a personal brand starts with introspection. Take time to assess your strengths, values, and unique selling points. A coherent understanding of what you bring to the table not only guides your professional decisions but also helps you articulate your value proposition to prospective employers or clients.

Online presence: more than a digital footprint

In a world where recruiters spend an average of six seconds skimming a CV, LinkedIn and other social media platforms can serve as your extended CV. A well-crafted profile can not only showcase your expertise but also make you discoverable to industry insiders. But remember, it's not just about visibility; it's about resonance. Share valuable content, engage with your audience, and consistently demonstrate your expertise.

Consistency: the unsung hero

Consistency in messaging and online engagement builds credibility. Regular updates, insightful articles, and timely interactions with your network can elevate your profile from being merely visible to being influential.

Networking: it's all about the human connection

While digital platforms provide a convenient medium for professional connectivity, never underestimate the power of traditional networking. Industry events, webinars, and seminars offer fertile ground to sow the seeds of meaningful professional relationships. Your next job offer could well be a

handshake away.

Authenticity: the currency of trust

Being authentic doesn't mean airing all your personal quirks in a professional setting. Rather, it means being genuine in your communications and transparent in your intentions. Authenticity creates a relatable personal brand and fosters trust—a priceless commodity in any professional interaction.

Skills development: the evergreen imperative

The job market is not static, and neither should be your skill set. Continuous learning not only makes you adaptable but also adds layers to your

curated space to showcase your expertise, share insights, and even exhibit your portfolio. It offers a more nuanced narrative of who you are as a professional, beyond the constraints of a LinkedIn profile or CV.

Dress the part: your wardrobe as a brand statement

The adage 'dress for the job you want, not the job you have' still holds weight. Your attire can be a visual extension of your personal brand, conveying professionalism and ambition.

Feedback: the loop that keeps you in tune

Your personal brand is a dynamic entity



Working Woman Bangladesh hosts inaugural career workshop

Founded in 2022 by entrepreneur Farhia Hoque, Working Women Bangladesh (WWB) held its first career development workshop on Saturday, 9th September. The event marks a significant milestone for the organisation that originated as a Facebook community, offering a safe space for women to discuss the distinct challenges they face in a predominantly male work environment.

WWB emerged as a response to the frustrations Farhia Hoque experienced in the male-dominated startup landscape. By 2023, the Facebook community had grown exponentially, inspiring Hoque to transition the virtual community into a real-world resource. The group offers women a platform to voice their concerns, lend mutual support, and work toward tangible solutions. The recent workshop serves as the first in a series of events aimed to elevate the advantages of this virtual community to a more impactful, offline sphere.

Participants in the workshop represented various career stages and sectors but shared a striking similarity: most were the only women or among a few women in their respective teams. The women spoke candidly about having to work doubly hard to achieve the same recognition as their male colleagues. Data from an internal Hewlett-Packard (HP) report substantiates these accounts. According to the report, men apply for jobs even if they meet only 60% of the qualifications listed in the job description, whereas women tend to apply only if they satisfy 100% of the criteria.

Samiha Tahsin, co-founder and CEO of Bonton Connect Ltd., was a guest speaker and organiser. She emphasised the importance of overcoming limiting beliefs and seizing

opportunities even when one doesn't feel fully qualified. Tahsin recommended the judicious use of internships and extra-curricular activities to gain experience and insights into desired career paths.

Numaya Shahriar, Senior Manager at the MD's office, foodpanda, who also initiated the workshop, highlighted the importance of networking, applying, and interviewing as the three key components of job hunting. The workshop underscored the potential of LinkedIn as more than just a digital CV. Participants were encouraged to utilise the platform for direct engagement with potential employers and industry professionals. Top recruiters recommend limiting resumes to two pages, focusing on action words, and prioritising the most recent experiences. Preparation is key for interviews. Candidates were advised to thoroughly research companies and prepare articulate answers to common interview questions.

The organising team, including Luana Nasir, Farhat Anan, and Ishrat Jahan Prachy, concluded the workshop with an interactive networking session. Farhia Hoque shared WWB's ambitious plans to become the largest resource network for women. "When you pool together talented individuals from different walks of life, something beautiful is bound to come out of it," said Hoque.

For those interested in joining this transformative community, WWB is accessible through its Facebook group. The workshop was not just a one-off event but a bold step in the ongoing struggle for workplace equality. It represents a proactive approach to dismantling gender barriers, one workshop at a time.



personal brand. Whether it's through certifications, workshops, or further education, staying updated is staying relevant.

Testimonials and recommendations: word-of-mouth in the digital age

Endorsements from colleagues, mentors, or industry experts can add a stamp of credibility to your personal brand. These testimonials can be particularly impactful when featured prominently on your LinkedIn profile or personal website.

Personal website or blog: your digital portfolio

A personal website or blog serves as

and should evolve with the changing tides of the job market. Regular feedback from peers and mentors can offer valuable perspectives that help refine your branding strategy.

The journey ahead

Remember, personal branding is not a one-off exercise but a continual process. As the job market evolves, so should your brand. The key to a successful personal brand is the synergy of self-awareness, online engagement, continuous learning, and authentic interactions. In a world that's in a constant state of flux, your personal brand is your anchor. Navigate wisely.

New iPhone comes with more features, but nothing that makes you actually attractive

NUTBOLTU, Tech & Straight-Up Facts Dept

The radical iPhone 15 launched a week ago with features that boggled the mind of smartphone users a decade ago. Apple adopted the USB-C charger that was first seen in 2014 when China's Le smartphone launched it. No one remembers because the powerpoint presentations were not as polished back then.

Apple took their time waiting for people to forget USB-C existed. And then, wham! Now people are reminded through fancy-schmancy presentations with poignant pauses. Imagine if you are told that you are currently breathing air. It would make you pause with astonishment and probably pass out. Or the fact that you had free speech, sort of.

Apple also showcased their Dynamic Island feature which was available on the last device. It is the little black spot on top that shows notifications. Sure, other phones also have notification bars and such but a name like Dynamic Island makes you feel like Elon Musk after having bought Twitter: rich, powerful, all controlling. It's all in the name. Except perhaps X. That is just a letter. How do we even say that as a verb?

The new iPhone also comes with more megapixels and more zoom to match the numbers of competitors. But what it refuses to do is make the buyers look as attractive as they think they do when posing with a new iPhone. Buyers are often under the impression that if they do a mirror pose showing the device carefully, they will automatically appear five times more attractive. Or five times richer. Apple has acknowledged this information and incorporated the number into their 5x zoom. "It is guaranteed to show how your neighbor two buildings away is also as unattractive as



An iPhone 15 user waiting for filters to become innovative.

you are," said Smartein Phantz, who is the outsourced product development head in charge of making the device screws more aesthetic.

"I think the real seller is the subscription service that comes with every new device. We get unlimited 40 minutes of sitting time in any coffee shop in Dhaka and Chattogram without making any food purchases," said Tanzeel Jutas, writer and instagrammer. "I can take any number of aesthetic photos of coffee mugs in SouthEnd without spending a single

taka, which I do not have anymore because I buy expensive gadgets."

The free coffee shop unlimited 40-minute subscription might just be the ticket to making people look a bit more rich and attractive. If not, Apple has stated their next device will definitely make users look more attractive because it will come out in an all new colours. The new iPhone comes out in 5 new colours: pink, blue, green, yellow and black. So, only green and pink then.

Apple took their time waiting for people to forget USB-C existed. And then, wham! Now people are reminded through fancy-schmancy presentations with poignant pauses. Imagine if you are told that you are currently breathing air. It would make you pause with astonishment and probably pass out. Or the fact that you had free speech, sort of.

Additional brutality commissioner reprimanded for beating the wrong kind of people

NAZIFA RAIDAH

The six-time-heavy-baton champion Additional Brutality Commissioner (ABC) Marum-Ek-Ghushi struck again (quite literally) and this time the blow unfortunately fell upon Chapasthan Young Men (CYM) members. The consequences were dire.

Previously, ABC Marum informed this correspondent that he believed he beats to protect justice, he beats to protect the law. He also mentioned that his seasoned taste for violence comes from his own father.

This time however, he laid his finger on the wrong well-connected people. He is being shipped off to Colourpara to reflect on his actions.

"My hands don't discriminate. I don't care if you're a CYM member, if

you're on the wrong side of the line, you will get the taste of my baton," said Marum-Ek-Ghushi, proud with ambition.

"Previously when I beat up the communist students, no one batted an eye. However, I think I underestimated the social media clout CYM members have," he added.

Meanwhile, upon visiting the hospital, this correspondent met with one of the injured CYM members. At the scene, he was seen throwing a tantrum about the air conditioner.

"I didn't get admitted to a private hospital for a faulty AC, somebody FIX this," he said, but seeing this correspondent he suddenly started groaning in pain.

After coughing aggressively, he said, "I'm sick, he's made me sick."

Previously, ABC Marum informed this correspondent that he believed he beats to protect justice, he beats to protect the law. He also mentioned that his seasoned taste for violence comes from his own father.

When asked if there was any evidence captured where the ABC was beating him up, the CYM member said, "I had a 2-minute clip recorded. But when the ABC came up to me, threw my phone to the ground and growled, 'I hate

android.phones!"

"I don't know what hurt me more, the beating or the insult. Why did he have to say that?! I was saving up for an iPhone from contributions from rickshaw pullers," the CYM member sobbed profusely.

Meanwhile, ABC Marum didn't seem too happy about his posting either.

"Who am I going to beat up now? Farmers? Everything's so quiet in the country. Who am I without making a guy beg for mercy at my feet? How will I get people to respect me if I don't use my baton ... WHO WILL I BE?" exclaimed Marum.

This correspondent slipped away from Marum-Ek-Ghushi's office, before he further slipped into existential crisis and decided to beat her up.



You can't see Marum in this picture because he is in front of the bike, in the process of doing law and order.

PHOTO: ARSENY TOGULEV

Bangladeshi toddler named in Shorbes 3 under 3

JEAN PAUL SATIRE

Azlazin Zafriath, a two-year-old from Dhaka, has been named in the prestigious Shorbes 3 under 3 2023 list.

Every year, Shorbes releases a list of 3 toddlers under the age of 3 who have made significant contributions to the fields of business, social change, and digital marketing. Baby Azlazin, who is as cute as cute can be, has been recognised in the digital marketing category.

Azlazin's journey began two years ago, when she was born. Her parents are both working professionals, holding senior level marketing positions at different multinational corporations.

When asked about what led to this unprecedented achievement, and what it means to her, Azlazin stared deeply back into the eyes of the reporter, smacked him in the face in the most adorable but surprisingly painful fashion, and ran away with her tiny cute legs.

The baby's father, SEO Chowdhury, explained that this has been the fruit of baby Azuzu's lifelong hard work.

"You might be wondering what a two-year-old could have done to deserve such an accolade in one of the most technically complex intellectual fields of thought in the 21st century - Digital Marketing, but my kid really is a genius."

"The moment she was born, a little fleshy bundle of smiles and bubbly laughter, we realised her potential. Every time she smiles, all the stress and anxiety seems to leave the room. Friends, family members, and strangers alike love her unconditionally, and will do anything for her. My wife and I realised that our baby would be a social media star, and we would do everything in our power to make it happen," he said.

We also spoke to Azuzu's mother, Analytica Niharika, who did not waste any time giving her baby all the credit she deserves.

"You might be wondering what a two-year-old could have done to deserve such an accolade in one of the most technically complex intellectual fields of thought in the 21st century - Digital Marketing, but my kid really is a genius. We only provide her the basics like naps, burpees, and fashion consultancy, and she does the rest. She has started many of the social media hype cycles and fads that are now common among the toddler community, such as wearing oversized shades while crawling on the floor, putting on a huge pink bow on a bald head, and not recognising her dad whenever he shaves his beard," she said.

Azlazin had much to say about what her future holds, but she insisted on playing peekaboo with this reporter around her dad's shoulder instead. Her mother answered for her, however, saying, "We are worried she's growing up too fast. Once she reaches the age of four and stops being automatically the cutest person in the room, we will have to shift strategies. We are already looking at the possibility of becoming toy reviewers on YouTube, which would be an excellent platform from which to launch the career of a teenage influencer."

On this topic, Azuzu finally opened her mouth, and blew raspberries.



PHOTO: TANAPHONG TOOCHINDA

Azuzu starting off her Instagram page titled 'fkjahkjadci.dghdskkasvcsknk*6' Also, she cannot spell.

DISCLAIMER

This is a satirical page and should be considered as such. Any resemblance between the published contents here and actual events or individuals, etc. is purely coincidental. The articles and photos published on this page or the views expressed here are the author's own and do not reflect the editorial policy or view of The Daily Star.