



BARIND FARMERS At mercy of 'water lords'

ANWAR ALI

On April 9, Mukul Soren, a Santal farmer in Rajshahi, drank pesticide in a suicide attempt over not getting irrigation water from the same deep tubewell that allegedly led to the suicide of two farmers, also Santals, last year.

All three were fed up with the exploitative system of irrigation water distribution in parts of the Barind region.

The Barind region, known as the rice bowl of Bangladesh, faces a great catastrophe with its groundwater levels depleting fast. In this water-stressed region, irrigation tubewells have now become a tool for the people with political clout to exploit farmers.

A significant number of these farmers belong to ethnic minority communities and is therefore more vulnerable to exploitation.

Last year, Abhinath Mardi, 36, and his cousin Robi Mardi, 27, died by suicide in Godagari of Rajshahi allegedly after the local tubewell operator refused them the irrigation water they were entitled to,

according to family members and case documents.

After public outcries, police arrested and pressed charges against Shakhawat Hossain, the tubewell operator.

The Barind Multipurpose Development Authority (BMDA), the government agency responsible for overseeing irrigation in the region, replaced Shakhawat with a new operator, Hashem Ali Babu. But there seems to be no respite from the exploitation by the operators, appointed by the BMDA.

It was the same tubewell in Rajshahi's Issoripur village that drove Mukul, 35, to make an attempt on his own life. Unlike the Mardi cousins, Mukul survived as he was swiftly taken to a hospital.

"Water scarcity pushed me to the brink after I could not irrigate my land for eight days during peak irrigation season," Mukul told The Daily Star recently.

"The tubewell operator then called me one dawn, promising me irrigation water. I went there around 5:00am. But he kept me waiting till afternoon and

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1



EXPLOITATION BY TUBEWELL OPERATORS

- Capitalize on water crisis in much of Barind region
Deprive small farmers of water regularly
Those who pay extra money receive irrigation water on time

HOW SMALL FARMERS STRUGGLE

- Face trouble to irrigate their land
Endure deliberate delays by tubewell operators
Many forced to sell or lease out land
Lax monitoring by authorities

INFLUENCE OF MONEY AND POLITICS

BMDA, responsible for overseeing the operation of thousands of deep tubewells in Rajshahi and Rangpur divisions, earns substantial revenue in irrigation charges from farmers every year. Yet the way it appoints and monitors the operators raises questions.



A file photo, top, shows a lowland in Uchadanga in Rajshahi's Tanore upazila. Farmland in many areas develop such cracks in dry season. The deep tubewell, left, over which two Santal farmers died by suicide while another attempted to take his life.

PHOTO: STAR

Now Fitch has negative outlook on Bangladesh

Stops short of rating downgrade

REJAUL KARIM BYRON

Bangladesh's credit rating came under further threat yesterday as Fitch put the country on a "negative" outlook while giving a damning verdict on the central bank's policy response to the fast-depleting foreign currency reserves.

The American rating agency maintained Bangladesh's BB- rating but warned that the outlook was now negative rather than stable, mirroring the action taken in July by its peer Standard and Poor's.

By the end of 2023, Fitch estimates the foreign currency reserves will be sufficient to meet three months' import bill, which is lower than the 'BB' median of 4.4 months. And in the next fiscal year, the import cover will come down to about 2.6 months.

Fitch estimates that gross reserves fell by 19 percent in the first nine months of the year.

As of September 20, foreign currency reserves stand at about \$21.5 billion, enough to meet four months' import bill at best, as per the latest published data by the Bangladesh Bank.

"We forecast foreign exchange reserves to stay under pressure, driven by rising imports and foreign currency intervention by the central bank," Fitch said.

The negative outlook reflects a deterioration in external buffers, which has increased vulnerability to shocks.

"It also reflects our view that the country's incremental policy response, including exchange rate system changes, and continued support from external official creditors, has been insufficient to stem the fall in foreign reserves and resolve domestic US dollar liquidity strains," it added.

Earlier in May, Moody's downgraded Bangladesh's long-held credit rating on the same concerns over the country's external position after monitoring the situation for about six months.

The foreign exchange reserve outlook is challenging, amid a still managed exchange rate, elevated oil prices and a further relaxation of import restrictions, which will widen the current account deficit through to 2025, Fitch said.

"It remains uncertain whether the shift to a single SEE PAGE 6 COL 4

BEHIND THE CRISIS: Excessive groundwater extraction for decades, Annual extraction of water in this region amounts to 137,100 crore litres, enough to meet Dhaka city's water demand for 548 days, 70pc annual groundwater extraction attributed to unregulated private deep tubewells

THE TUBE-WELL TROUBLE: BMDA introduced deep tube-wells in 1990s, BMDA stopped setting up of fresh tubewells in 2012, Yet unregulated private tubewells continue to thrive, 16,000 govt-run, 56,000 private tubewells in operation in Barind region

Bhuban dies a week after being hit by stray bullet

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bhuban Chandra Shil, who was hit in the head by a stray bullet during an attack on a "top criminal" a week ago, died at a city hospital around noon yesterday.

Bhuban, 55, was passing through Tejgaon Industrial Area on a motorcycle on September 18 night when criminals attacked a suspect in the film actor Sohel Chowdhury murder case.

Since then, he had been on life support at the intensive care unit of

SEE PAGE 2 COL 5

Who is to blame for Bhuban's death?

AASHA MEHREEN AMIN

It was an unlikely death for 55-year-old Bhuban Chandra Shil, a lawyer who lived in Dhaka city for work while his family stayed in Maizdi, Noakhali.

He just happened to be passing the Tejgaon industrial area on his motorbike when a stray bullet hit his head.

He was an innocent bystander caught in what seems to be a revenge attack by a criminal gang. It was Tariq Sayeed Mamun, a suspect in film actor Sohel Chowdhury's murder case, who was the actual target.

After serving 26 years in prison, Mamun had been out on bail and was going home in his car when he was intercepted by a gang of criminals on motorbikes who started shooting at him.

Mamun tried to escape the vehicle, but the criminals chased him down and stabbed him in the neck and back.

Miraculously, Mamun, after treatment at the

SEE PAGE 2 COL 5

Cops, AL activists 'vandalise' rally stage

Alleges BNP, defers Savar rally to Sept 28

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP was forced to defer yesterday's Aminbazar rally in Savar as the stage set up at the venue was vandalised allegedly by police personnel and ruling Awami League activists.

However, the party's other rally in Old Dhaka's Dholaikhal was held peacefully.

The meeting at Aminbazar was scheduled to begin at 3:00pm as part of BNP's 15-day programme to press home its one-point demand - resignation of the government and general elections under a non-party interim government.

The rally has been

SEE PAGE 6 COL 1



BNP leaders and activists at a rally in the capital's Dholaikhal yesterday. The party's Dhaka south city unit organised the meeting as part of its one-point movement demanding resignation of the government and general election under a non-party interim government.

PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN

IFIC advertisement with text: বন্ড ফ্রেজা ও বন্ড ইস্যুর-এর মধ্যে IFIC স্থাপন করেছে এক অনন্য মেলবন্ধন. নিরাপদ বিনিয়োগে সেরা মুনাফা. মেয়াদপূর্তিতে প্রকৃত মুনাফা বার্ষিক ১২%.

US VISA POLICY Image of police won't be affected

Says IGP

UNB, Dhaka

Inspector General of Police (IGP) Chowdhury Abdulla Al-Mamun



yesterday said the US visa policy won't affect the image of the force.

He said this while talking to reporters after attending a seminar at Tourist Police headquarters in the capital's Paltan area.

On Friday, the US State Department said it was taking steps to impose visa restrictions on Bangladeshi individuals responsible for, or complicit in, undermining the democratic election process in Bangladesh.

These individuals include members of law enforcement agencies, the ruling party, and the political opposition.

Speaking about drives against illegal arms, the police chief said such drives will be conducted in due time. "However, we won't reveal our strategy at this moment."

Replying to a question about their role during the election, the IGP said the Election Commission (EC) will organise the election and the police will carry out their responsibility as entrusted by the EC during the election.

Responding to a question over the death of a lawyer, Bhuban Chandra Sheel, who was shot by stray bullets in the city's Tejgaon area, the IGP said, "The law and order situation is under control, and the law enforcers are taking steps through investigation after the incident. I want to assure you [people] that no one will be spared, no matter if he/she is a member of the law enforcement agencies. Legal action will be taken against the criminals."



Refugees load their cars as they leave the Red Cross registration center, in Goris, Armenia yesterday. The first group of Nagorno-Karabakh refugees since Azerbaijan's lightning assault against the separatist region entered Armenia on Sunday, an AFP team at the border said.

PHOTO: AFP

AZERBAIJAN'S VICTORY OVER KARABAKH Thousands of ethnic Armenians flee enclave

REUTERS, Stepanakert Khankendi

Thousands of ethnic Armenians fled the breakaway region of Nagorno-Karabakh yesterday, queuing up for fuel and jamming the road to Armenia after their decades-old separatist state was defeated by Azerbaijan in a lightning military operation.

The leadership of the 120,000 Armenians who call Karabakh home told Reuters on Sunday that they did not want to live as part of Azerbaijan and that they would leave for Armenia because they feared persecution and ethnic cleansing.

In the Karabakh capital, known as Stepanakert by Armenia and Khankendi by Azerbaijan, crowds of people were loading belongings into buses and trucks as they left for Armenia.

Refugees who reached Armenia told Reuters they believed the history of their breakaway state was finished. "No one is going back - that's it," Anna Agopyan, who reached Goris, a border town in Armenia, told Reuters. "The topic of Karabakh is over now for good I think."

Srbuhi, a mother of three who reached Armenia, shed tears as she held her young daughter. "I left everything there," she said.

The Armenian government, making preparations for thousands of refugees, said that as of 1300 GMT yesterday, at least 6,650 people from Nagorno-Karabakh had crossed into Armenia.

The ethnic Armenian leadership said it would remain in place until all those who wanted to leave what they call Artsakh were able to go.

The Armenians of Karabakh, a territory

internationally recognised as part of Azerbaijan, were forced into a ceasefire last week after a 24-hour military operation by the much-larger Azerbaijani military.

The Azerbaijani victory alters the delicate balance of power in the South Caucasus region, a patchwork of ethnicities crisscrossed with oil and gas pipelines where Russia, the United States, Turkey and Iran are jostling for influence. Since the breakup of the Soviet Union, Armenia had relied on a security partnership with Russia, while Azerbaijan grew close to Turkey, with which it shares linguistic and cultural ties.

The US has said it was deeply concerned by Azerbaijan's military operation, which Baku launched on September 19 after what it said were terrorist attacks on its civilians by Karabakh fighters.

At mercy of 'water lords'

FROM PAGE 1

then asked me to call him later, just like the prior days. Devastated and furious, I collected insecticide and drank it that afternoon," he recalled.

A DOUBLE-EDGED SWORD

In the mid-1980s, the Barind region's groundwater level was just eight meters below the surface, and farmers relied on surface and rainwater for irrigation, according to a recent study by Water Resources Planning Organisation (WARPO), a government agency.

Things started changing in the 1990s when the Barind Multipurpose Development Authority (BMDA) introduced deep tubewells, enabling farmers to cultivate three crops annually and transforming the northwest into a thriving grain-producing hub.

Following the BMDA's lead, private individuals, including affluent farmers and businesspeople, began installing their own deep tubewells, contributing to the region's agricultural and industrial water supplies.

Although the BMDA stopped installation of any new deep tubewells in 2012 and shifted its focus to surface water sources, unregulated private tubewell operators continued to thrive, exerting a significant impact on the Barind's already dipping water levels.

The irony is while the Barind contributes to the nation's food security through bountiful rice harvests, it is the very success of these crops that exposes the region to a grave water crisis.

In 2021, the average depth of groundwater level was 18 metres in much of Rajshahi, Naogaon and Chapainawabganj, the three districts that are among the most affected by depleting groundwater levels, WARPO data show.

A recent estimate by BMDA shows around 70 percent of the Barind region's annual groundwater extraction, totaling 137,100 crore litres, is attributed to the private deep tubewells. At an estimated rate of 250 crore litre per day, this water could meet Dhaka city's water demand for one and a half years (548 days).

These private tubewell operators along with the ones appointed by BMDA have developed a system that is designed to exploit poor farmers using their influence and political link.

"It's the same vicious cycle no matter which party is in power. During the BNP-Jamaat regime, the operators were from the two parties. After the changeover in 2009, Awami League men and their associates now run the show," said Bimol Rajoar, president of Rajshahi chapter of Jatiya Adivasi Parishad.

BMDA Executive Director Abdur Rashid acknowledges this.

"Upon receiving complaints from farmers, we have terminated some operators. However, the problem seems to persist as they have political connections. We are looking into it," he said in a video interview.

EXPLOITING A GOOD INITIATIVE

Given the region's water shortages, Barind farmers have been receiving irrigation water under BMDA management since its inception in 1992. For this, they have to pay a nominal charge, which is now Tk 85-125 per hour of irrigation.

In 2005, the Barind authorities introduced pre-paid metre system replacing the paper coupon system to save water and stop financial exploitation of farmers by private tubewell operators, according to BMDA website.

Currently, there are 16,000 government-run and 56,000 private-run irrigation deep tubewells covering 16 districts of Rajshahi and Rangpur divisions. More than half of the tubewells are in Rajshahi, Naogaon and Chapainawabganj, according to BMDA sources.

For the operations of the deep tubewells within a certain area,

farmers and ask them to enter into direct contracts with them at rates that are 6-28 times higher than the government-fixed rates. When farmers fail to pay, the water supply is delayed or even stopped, farmers said.

"When we go to ask for irrigation water against our prepaid cards, the operator delay our turn by hours, sometimes supplying the water late into the nights. We have to remain awake at night to get water," said Gopal Soren from Borsapara village.

Under BMDA's Irrigation Policy of 2008, cash transactions are prohibited, and it can lead to cancellation of dealership.

"Those who can pay more, get more. That's their entire business model," said Abu Bakar, a farmer of Bijaynagar village.

At least 40 farmers from Shankarpur and Mohor villages in Rajshahi's Tanore upazila told The Daily Star that to avoid harassment, they agreed to pay the operators Tk 1,500-3,500 per bigha so they get irrigation water on time.

"Farmers' groups never work as the group members are chosen by the operators," said Alamgir Hossain, a

of the operators who supplies water at a fixed rate that he himself has set. He is general secretary of Talondo union unit of Bangabandhu Sainik League.

BMDA executive director said they removed one operator last month for demanding Tk 3,000 from farmers for irrigation water.

"But sometimes our interventions do not make much difference due to political links of the operators," he said.

Last year, one operator took the matter all the way to the agriculture ministry after his termination, although the ministry later backed the BMDA's decision, he added.

AKIN TO 'FEUDALISM'

The deepening water crisis in the region, exacerbated by climate change and excessive groundwater extraction, compounds the challenges faced by farmers.

In FY 2022-23 alone, the groundwater level fell by at least two feet, which is double the usual annual drop, said Prof Chowdhury Sarwar Jahan of Rajshahi University's geology and mining department.

Among the most affected areas are Nachol and Gomostapur upazilas in Chapainawabganj, Tanore and Godagari in Rajshahi, and Porsha, Sapahar, and Niamatpur upazilas in Naogaon.

"Even after five decades of independence, the water crisis connected to the operations of deep tubewells continue to facilitate the rise of feudalism in the Barind region, empowering the politically connected and perpetuating a system of inequality," said Prof Chowdhury.

Arif Ether, a programme coordinator of Centre for Capacity Building of Voluntary Organisation, a Rajshahi-based NGO, blamed lax monitoring by the authorities for parts of the crisis.

"The ethnic minority farmers suffer more because they are more vulnerable," he said.

Shamsul Wadud, additional director of the Department of Agricultural Extension in Rajshahi, said timely and adequate irrigation of paddy fields from March to early May is very crucial for good yield, and denying farmers water in these crucial months may spell disasters both for the yield and the growers.

A slogan on the back of the farmers' irrigation smart cards best captures the vitality of water in Barind region. The slogan reads: Barind is the land where life is written in water.

Santal farmers Abhinath Mardi and Robi Mardi have proven this with their lives, while Mukul Soren has had the lesson of his life.

"The irrigation tubewells are oil mines for the operators. But farmers like us who desperately need water suffer," said Mazed Ali, a farmer from Jogpur village.

Who is to blame for Bhuban's death?

FROM PAGE 1

Dhaka Medical College Hospital, survived and was released after treatment. Bhuban, however, after being on life support at a city hospital for about a week, lost the fight for life.

From the news reports, we have come to know that just before leaving office that very night, Bhuban had made a video call to his wife and wanted to chat with his daughter.

But she had already fallen asleep. Who would have thought that this would be his last call to his family?

We can feel the tragedy of Bhuban's death when we see the grief-stricken faces of his wife, daughter, and other relatives who had gone through a week of agonising wait, hoping and praying that somehow he would survive.

We can commiserate with them because it could have been any one of us in that intensive care unit with a fatal bullet wound. It could be any one of us outside the ICU consumed by the paralyzing fear of getting the bad news.

But why must our lives be so precarious? Why should we be at risk of getting shot or stabbed just because we stepped out on the

streets? Where were the police when criminals decided to carry out an assassination in such an important area of the city? Who is ultimately responsible for such deaths?

Perhaps it is our absurd level of compromising with the injustice that has resulted in yet another "unnatural death" as Bhuban's would be officially labelled.

Perhaps it is because our cries for help when we are attacked on the streets fall on deaf ears, sometimes even when law enforcers are nearby.

Our state is obligated to protect our right to life, as guaranteed by our constitution. And it is mainly through its law enforcement agencies that this obligation can be carried out.

While we expect them to identify the killers and bring them to justice, we also await a stronger presence of law enforcers on the streets during the night, especially in areas that have been identified as crime hotspots.

The authorities must take all measures to ensure minimal security for all city dwellers. We cannot accept any more such "unnatural deaths" as Bhuban's.

Bhuban dies a week after being hit by stray bullet

FROM PAGE 1

Popular Medical College Hospital. Doctors declared him dead around noon yesterday, hospital sources said.

Bhuban's daughter Bhumika Chandra Shil cannot believe her father is no more. Tears rolled down her cheeks as she wailed and clung to her mother in the hospital.

Bhumika lived in Noakhali's Maizdi with her mother while Bhuban stayed in Dhaka for work.

On September 18, Bhuban made a video call to his wife before leaving home for office. He wanted to see Bhumika, but she was asleep.

"Why did he get killed in such a way?... We want justice," Jayshree Rani, a sister-in-law of Bhuban, said.

She said the family spent around Tk 7.5 lakh for Bhuban's treatment.

A day after the attack, Bhuban's wife filed a case with Tejgaon Industrial Police Station accusing 7-8 unidentified people.

Yesterday, police picked up a

suspect, Masum Billah alias Himel, 36, from Old Dhaka, said OC Mazharul Islam of the police station.

Police said seven to eight criminals on four motorcycles attacked Tariq Sayeed Mamun, 54, an accused in the Sohel Chowdhury murder case, near the BG Press area. They stabbed him in the neck and back. Bhuban happened to be there.

Mamun got out of jail on bail about three months ago. He had been behind bars for 26 years.

According to police and detectives, the attackers are loyal to top-listed criminal Sanjiddul Hassan Emon, who is now serving a 17-year jail sentence and is also an accused in the Sohel Chowdhury murder case.

Mamun was once Emon's partner in crime and they had a fall out after Mamun walked out of jail, said law enforcers.

Both Mamun and Bhuban were rushed to Dhaka Medical College Hospital. Mamun survived the attack.

Thai police arrest 7 'Bangladeshis' for illegal entry

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Thailand police have reportedly arrested seven Bangladeshi men for entering the country illegally.

They posed themselves as Buddhist monks to evade immigration's radar and were nabbed in the southern province of Songkhla, reports The Pattaya News. Their ultimate destination was Malaysia, it added.

Songkhla immigration police, in collaboration with Hat Yai tourist police, arrested them on Saturday based on a tip-off.

They were charged with illegally entering the country, according to the report.

A 46-year-old man identified as Rupadh admitted to being the leader of the group.

Investigators determined that all seven men had entered Thailand illegally through a natural route from Myanmar after having started their journey from Bangladesh, according to The Pattaya News.

They were intending to travel to Narathiwat and subsequently planned to continue on to Malaysia. During the search of their belongings, it was discovered that the men were in possession of all regular clothing and lacked any monk identification documents.

They were transferred to Hat Yai Police Station, where they will remain until they are deported to Bangladesh, the report says.

Man gets death penalty for rape, murder

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Narayanngani

A Narayanngani court yesterday sentenced a man to death in a case filed over the rape and murder of a 6-year-old girl in Araihaazur upazila two years ago.

Judge Nazmul Haque Shyamal of the Women and Children Repression Prevention Tribunal announced the verdict in presence of the convict, Naimur Rahman alias Nayeem, 35, of Barguna's Latabaria area.

The convict was awarded an additional five years in jail for hiding the girl's body after the murder, said Public Prosecutor Rakibuddin Ahmed.

The convict was also fined Tk 20,000, he added.

According to the case statement, on September 23, 2021, Nayeem, who lived in a rented house next to the victim, abducted the girl and raped her in his place, before murdering her and hiding her body.

A day later, a case was filed with Araihaazur Police Station when her body was recovered wrapped in a quilt under the bed of the convict in his house.

**HIGHEST EVER INVESTMENT
IN DATABASE INFRASTRUCTURE**



**পুবালী ব্যাংক লিমিটেড
PUBALI BANK LIMITED**

The migration will take place during
28-30 September 2023.
Banking operations will remain
suspended on those days.

LALBAGH FIRE Six fall ill from smoke inhalation

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Six persons, including five of a family, fell ill after inhaling smoke from a fire that broke out at a plastic shop in Dhaka's Lalbagh area yesterday. They were taken to National Institute of Burn and Plastic Surgery.

They are: house owner Jakir Hossain, 65, his wife Taslima Hossain, 62, their son Md Rafi, 39, daughter-in-law Tahsin Karim Anika, 30, grandchild Zyna Hossain Afrin, 13 and house help Maksuda Begum, 60.

Fire service officials said the family lived on the second floor of a three-storey building, which housed the plastic shop on the ground floor.

They were at home when the fire originated at the shop around 1:30pm. As black smoke engulfed the building, they took shelter on the roof. Locals rescued them using a ladder from the nearby building, Md Badsha, a neighbour, said.



A halo of multicoloured mist floated over the clouds in Dhaka sky yesterday afternoon. This phenomenon is called "cloud iridescence". Also known as "fire rainbow" or "rainbow cloud", this occurs when sunlight diffracts off water droplets in the atmosphere, according to National Geographic. This photo was taken in Hazaribagh.

PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

85pc house helps receive salaries through MFS

Says MJF report

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Mobile Financial Services are encouraging female domestic workers towards economic empowerment through savings and self-sufficiency, according to a report.

The findings of the report titled "Economic Empowerment of Domestic Workers Through Digital Financial Services- Project Shuchona" were revealed by Manusher Jonno Foundation at an event held at its office in the capital's Mirpur.

Around 698 respondents from Mohammadpur, SEE PAGE 4 COL 6



Speakers at the event yesterday.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

DEATH OF PATIENT AT NICVD Family 'assaulted' by Ansar members

Probe body formed; 1 Ansar member suspended

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Family members of a critical patient at the National Institute of Cardiovascular Diseases (NICVD) were allegedly beaten by Ansar security personnel on Sunday night.

They were trying to enter the hospital's coronary care unit with a bag of blood to save one Tanjina Akter, 40. The family claims they had already paid Ansar members for access to the facility earlier that day, but were asked for money again. A dispute ensued, leading to an altercation, and by the time they reached the CCU unit with the much required blood, Tanjina had already passed away.

She died at the hospital around 11:55pm, according to her death certificate.

Selim Reza, husband of the deceased, said Tanjina was admitted to the hospital on Saturday after she felt unwell. After she had a heart attack on Sunday, she was shifted to the CCU.

"The doctor told us to arrange blood. My younger son Tanzil Akter Nayan first entered the CCU to see his mother, after paying money to Ansar members. After some time, when I tried to enter the CCU with the blood, the Ansar members obstructed me and

demanded money again," he said.

"Then my son came back to the spot and protested. So the Ansars started slapping him," Selim claimed. He alleged that at least 20 Ansar members and staffers of the hospital beat up six of his family members.

He said the incident was captured on the hospital's CCTV footage. He said they wanted to file a case, but Sher-e-Bangla Nagar Police asked for names of the Ansar members instead. Later they lodged a written complaint.

Meanwhile, a hospital staffer said as the patient's family members tried to enter the CCU by force, the Ansar members obstructed them, and one family member hit Ansar member Rabiul on his head, which resulted in a clash.

NICVD authorities formed a five-member body to investigate the incident and asked it to submit a report within five working days. They also suspended an Ansar member, Rabiul Islam, over "misbehaviour".

NICVD Director Dr Mir Jamal Uddin did not respond to phone calls for his comment in this regard.

Contacted, Utpal Barua, officer-in-charge of the police station, said, "If the family comes to file a case, we will register it."

POSTS OF ADDITIONAL IG, DIG

Police seek more promotion ahead of polls

SHARIFUL ISLAM

The home ministry has requested the public administration ministry to approve more in-situ posts of additional inspector general and deputy inspector general of police.

In-situ post means police personnel who hold the same position and perform the same duties after their promotions.

The move came amid commotion among BCS police cadre officers after public administration ministry approved only 52 posts against the home ministry's proposal of 189 posts of Addl IGP and DIG.

The posts approved by the public administration ministry are two posts of Addl IGP (Grade 2) and 50 posts of DIG; along with 140 posts of Addl DIG and 150 posts of SP. It sent the proposal to the finance ministry on September 19 for approval.

After scrutinising a Police Headquarters proposal, the home ministry in July forwarded a proposal

to create 15 Grade 1 posts of Addl IGP, 34 Grade 2 posts of Addl IGP, 140 posts of DIG, 150 posts of Addl DIG and 190 posts of SPs for one year.

Police officers said after the public administration ministry approved few posts for Addl IGP and DIG, they got disheartened. They also said in

Number of promotions in higher posts is very few in police cadre. So, there has long been frustration among police officials.

MD ASADUZZAMAN
GS of Police Service Association

administration cadre, officers are getting in-situ promotions at top levels.

They also said the proposal to create the posts was for removing frustration of police cadre officers who cannot get promoted due to a lack of vacant posts at senior levels. Sources at the PHQ said

promotion in the posts of Addl DIG and SP ranks may come soon as there are no review requests for the posts. Many said the government is sincere to ensure the promotion ahead of national election and remove frustration among police officers including SPs who play a pivotal role in the elections.

Meanwhile, in a letter to the senior secretary of the public administration ministry on September 19, the home ministry's deputy secretary Noor E-Mahabuba Joya requested approval of more additional IGP and DIG posts.

The letter highlighted the critical role of Bangladesh police in maintaining internal and public security and stressed the need for sufficient skilled manpower in leadership positions to address new challenges effectively.

PHQ officials said the government would require an additional Tk 1.5 crore per month had it created 529

SEE PAGE 4 COL 5

ROHINGYA REPATRIATION

Dhaka waiting for Naypyidaw to engage int'l volunteers

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka is waiting for Naypyidaw to engage international volunteers in the process of Rohingya repatriation and humanitarian assistance before taking the next steps, said foreign ministry officials.

During the official-level meeting between Myanmar and Bangladesh on September 4, Myanmar officials agreed to involve international volunteers, including those from the UN and ASEAN countries, in the repatriation process.

In the meeting, the two countries also agreed that a Myanmar delegation would visit the Rohingya camps in Cox's Bazar as part of confidence building measures so that they are convinced to return to Myanmar. Also, a Bangladesh delegation would visit Rakhine of Myanmar before starting the repatriation by October.

Two attempts of repatriation – one in 2018 and the other in 2019 – failed as Myanmar could not meet the Rohingyas' demands for guarantee of safety, citizenship, and ethnicity recognition.

"The schedule of the Myanmar delegation is yet to be finalised. Initially, we thought of arranging the visit by September, but we are waiting to see how Myanmar is engaging the international volunteers," a foreign ministry official told this correspondent on September 24.

The schedule of the Myanmar delegation is yet to be finalised. Initially, we thought of arranging the visit by September, but we are waiting to see how Myanmar is engaging the international volunteers.

A FOREIGN MINISTRY OFFICIAL

According to the officials, Rohingyas demand to return to their original residences in Rakhine State, not to the camps. Myanmar officials also agreed to this.

Chinese Special Envoy for Asian Affairs Deng Xijun, who visited Dhaka on August 1 this year, also confirmed this matter.

Under Chinese mediation, Bangladesh and Myanmar have been working to implement a pilot project of repatriating at least 3,000 Rohingyas to Myanmar. Initially, the repatriation was supposed to start before monsoon this year, but that did not happen. Now, they want to start the repatriation by October. Engagement of the UN, ASEAN or other international aid agencies in the repatriation process and humanitarian assistance is among some of the basic conditions that need to be met, officials said.

"We know that there is a tripartite memorandum of understanding among the Myanmar government, UN Refugee Agency and UNDP. The MoU expired in March this year and is yet to be renewed," an official said.

"Renewal of the MoU would be a sign showing Myanmar's willingness to engage the international volunteers," he added.



A speeding bus rear-ends another as they try to get on the Bangla Motor-Moghbaraz flyover yesterday morning. Luckily, no casualty was reported. The photo was taken on Rashed Khan Menon Road in Eskaton.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

US assistant secretary due this week

UNB, Dhaka

US Assistant Secretary of State for Consular Affairs Rena Bitter is scheduled to travel to Islamabad, Karachi, and Dhaka from September 25 to October 2.

Bitter will meet with embassy and consulate staff. She will also meet with government officials to discuss consular issues.

"Her trip underscores our deep and sustained commitment to the protection of US citizens overseas and the facilitation of legitimate travel and immigration to the US," said the spokesperson at the US State Department.

DNCC DRIVE 200 illegal shops evicted in Banani

UNB, Dhaka

Over 200 illegal shops were evicted during a drive conducted by DNCC in Banani area yesterday.

Shops were evicted from both sides of the roads under ward-19. A total of Tk 2.25 lakh was collected in five cases for illegally occupying footpaths, according to a press release.

Executive magistrates Md Zulkar Nayan and Rakhi Ahmed conducted the drive.



PHOTO: STAR

A decade-long waterlogging woe

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Mymensingh

Waterlogging has continued to make life miserable for around 2,000 families living in Mymensingh city's Balashpur Madhyapara for at least a decade.

While the Mymensingh City Corporation authority repeatedly made claims of undertaking construction works of new drains, no visible development has yet to be seen, said locals.

The area stays submerged for five months a year during monsoon, from May till September.

This year, the situation has become unbearable. Even after moderate rains, the area becomes flooded and remains waterlogged for the next 15-20 days, said Farida Parven, a resident.

"We cannot attend classes regularly during monsoon as we are forced to stay indoors," said Fahim Hasan Rafim, a fourth grader.

Farhad Islam Riad, a student at Govt Ananda Mohan College, and Alif, a madrasa student, echoed the same.

"The area stays submerged in knee-deep water for days following rains, with water entering homes," said Kulsum

Bewa, who has been living in the area for the last 35 years.

According to locals, the situation became severe following drainage works on Balashpur Madhyapara road in 2013.



Earlier, the water used to recede into a drain that was connected to another drain of Railway Power House Colony in neighbouring Kewatkhali area, but the former got clogged later.

Furthermore, the area has no trash bins, which lead to clogging the drains, adding to this menace.

Contacted, Md Rafiqul Islam Miah, chief engineer of MCC, said, "Drainage works in the area will begin soon under a Tk 8 crore project. We also look to set up trash bins and start cleaning up operations soon."

Humayun Kabir no more

BSS, Dhaka

Humayun Kabir Chowdhury, a senior former teacher of cadet colleges, passed away at the Combined Military Hospital in Dhaka yesterday. He was 90.

He left behind his wife, two sons, and a daughter. Kabir was buried at the family graveyard at Banchharampur of Brahmanbaria yesterday.

Kabir started as a teacher of Bangla at Faujdarhat Cadet College in Chatogram in early 1960s and later served as a senior teacher of Cumilla Cadet College. He retired in 1991.



85pc house helps

FROM PAGE 3

Khilgaon, Kamrangirchar, Keraniganj, including female domestic workers and women employers, participated in this study conducted by Associates for Innovative Research and Development.

The study was undertaken to evaluate the impact of Project Shuchona, a 25-month-long initiative supported by Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, which empowers domestic workers with knowledge and access to digital financial services to improve their financial autonomy.

According to the study, 84.5 percent of female domestic workers have control over their finances as they receive their salaries through MFS. Before, the figure was only 19 percent.

Also, about 97 percent of domestic workers use MFS on their personal phones while 3.40 percent avail the services through common or familial phones.

"To achieve smart Bangladesh by 2041, we

need to develop smart citizens, economy, society, and governance. Thus, it is necessary to include our domestic workers in the smart financial system," said Ayesha Siddiqui, deputy director of the Directorate of Women Affairs.

"A policy is in place to help domestic workers, but there is no law to ensure their rights. A law needs to be in place," said Mujibur Haque, former state minister for labour and employment.

Md Moynul Haque Bhuiyan, deputy secretary of ICT Division, called for development of an application to monitor the working hours of domestic helpers to ensure their rightful payment.

Shaheen Anam, executive director of MJE, said economic empowerment of domestic workers will help elevate their social status. This project will encourage other workers and employers to opt for MFS, creating awareness in this regard.

DHAKA EXPRESSWAY

Toll collection tops Tk 5cr in three weeks

UNB, Dhaka

Authorities of Dhaka Elevated Expressway have collected more than Tk 5 crore in tolls in the three weeks since opening of the expressway.

Till 6:00am on September 24, a total of 6,21,152 vehicles, mostly private cars, used the expressway and the total revenue collection amounted to over Tk 5.03 crore, said AHMS Akhtar, project director of the Dhaka Elevated Expressway.

The prime minister on September 2 inaugurated the Airport-Farmgate segment of Dhaka Elevated Expressway. Authorities opened the section for vehicular movement the next day. It takes 10-12 minutes to reach Farmgate from the airport via the expressway.

Police seek

FROM PAGE 3

posts and give in-situ promotion to officers.

Contacted, Md Asaduzzaman, general secretary of Police Service Association, said number of promotion in higher posts is very few in police cadre. "So, there has long been frustration among police officials," he said.

The PHQ sent a proposal considering the situation, which the home ministry forwarded to the public administration ministry after scrutiny. "But its decision left police officers dejected," he said.

PRAYER TIMING

SEPTEMBER 26

Fazr	Zohr	Asr	Maghrib	Esha
AZAN 4-35	12-45	4-15	6-00	7-30
JAMAAT 5-10	1-15	4-30	6-05	8-00

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

Save the Children Date: September 26 2023

Save the Children is the world's leading, independent organisation for children

Invitation for Tender

Save the Children International (SCI) is hereby inviting the tender from interested, experienced, and bona fide suppliers for supplying ICT Hardware (Laptop, Desktop, TAB, and Smartphone) for Save the Children in Bangladesh.

For details please see the IFT schedules, which are available at <http://procurement.scibd.info/> under tender notification. A downloaded copy is acceptable for tender participation.

Description, submission time & date:				
SL	Name of IFT	Reference No.	Pre-Tender Meeting Schedule and Place	Last date of Tender Submission
1	Framework Agreement for supplying ICT Hardware (Laptop, Desktop, TAB and Smart Phone)	IFT/SCI/BDCO/F Y-23/ (Manual)0011	At Save the Children, Country Office, House CWN (A) 35, Road 43, Gulshan 2, Dhaka 1212, Bangladesh	By October 19, 2023, at 03.00 PM

Special Instruction: (a) All activities in connection with the said procurement of Goods/Services will be guided as per the SCI's Procurement Policies. **(b)** If it is not possible to receive & open the tender on the scheduled date for any unavoidable circumstances, the same will be received and opened on the following working date at the same time and same place.

Head of Supply Chain

USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

Position Vacancy Announcement

Position: **Travel Assistant, FSN – 08**

The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) in Bangladesh is seeking applications from qualified Bangladeshi nationals for the position of **Travel Assistant, FSN – 08** in the Executive Office (EXO).

Location: USAID/Bangladesh, Deadline for application submission: October 10, 2023

For a complete job description, required qualifications and detailed information on how to apply please visit USAID/Bangladesh website:
<http://www.usaid.gov/bangladesh/work-with-us/careers> and www.bdjobs.com

D-124

STATUTORY NOTICE
IN THE SUPREME COURT OF BANGLADESH,
HIGH COURT DIVISION
(STATUTORY ORIGINAL JURISDICTION),
COMPANY MATTER NO. 445 OF 2023

IN THE MATTER OF: An application under Sections 81(2) and 85(3) read with section 396 of the Companies Act, 1994.

AND

Gactano De Stasio, Shareholder & Chairman, Director of GDS INTERNATIONAL LTD, having its Office: House No-26, Road No-01, Block No-A, Bashundara R/A, Dhaka-1229 -Petitioner

VERSUS

The Registrar of Joint Stock Companies and Firms, 1, Kawran Bazar, 6th Floor, TCB Bhaban, Dhaka - Respondent.

Notice is hereby given in the effect that an application under Sections 81(2) read with Section 85(3) of the Companies Act, 1994, was moved in the High Court Division of the Supreme Court of Bangladesh by the petitioner for condone the delay of holding the Annual General Meeting of the company name and style as "of GDS INTERNATIONAL LTD." The Hon'ble company Judge, Mr. Justice Md. Riaz Uddin Khan has admitted the said application on 12.09.2023 and fixed for compliance on 17/10/2023 days Any person interested in the said application may appear before the Hon'ble court. A copy of the said application may be obtained from the undersigned on payment of charges. (Ripon Chandra Biswas) Advocate, Membership No. 6059, Hall Room No. 1, Supreme Court Bar Association Bhaban, Shahbag, Dhaka-1000. Mobile: 01712052513.

CAREER OPPORTUNITY

NORTH SOUTH UNIVERSITY
Center of Excellence in Higher Education

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

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

Research Associate for Department of Public Health: 2 (Two) positions

Job Description:

- Work with supervisor for writing research proposals, grant applications, and manuscript writing.
- Understand research proposal, data collection techniques, project scope, target groups, study site, etc.
- Quality assurance of data and feedback to the supervisor on filed activities timely.
- Analyze data using the specific data analysis software.
- Writing inception and final project reports.
- Any other tasks assigned by the NSU Authority.

Academic Qualification:

- MPH/MSc in related discipline from a recognized university in Bangladesh/abroad

Experience:

- Must have knowledge of Epidemiology and Biostatistics.
- Previous experience in public health research.
- Efficient in data management and analysis.
- Should have a good command over a few statistical software, such as Stata, R, SPSS, etc.
- Should have 2/3 years working experience on real research projects and know how to write research proposals and grant applications.

Age: Not exceeding 32 years.

Pay Scale: Tk. 25,383 - 2,538-63,456 (as per NSU policy).

Other Terms and Conditions:

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

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

Any prior communication or persuasion to the position will be considered as a disqualification. Interested candidates are requested to apply through jobs.northsouth.edu by October 25, 2023.

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

EASTERN BANK PLC.
HEAD OFFICE, 100 GULSHAN AVENUE, DHAKA-1212

TENDER NOTICE

Eastern Bank PLC. (EBL) invites sealed bids from bona fide/eligible suppliers for the following services/items:

Lot 1: Servers, OS and VMware Licenses
Lot 2: Existing storage capacity up-gradation
Lot 3: Laptop & Desktop Computers
Lot 4: Privilege Access Management (PAM) Solution

Interested bidders are requested to collect the RFP document electronically by sending an email from their official email address to bidit@ebi-bd.com mentioning lot & item names, name of the company and the authorized contact person, mailing address, telephone & mobile phone numbers on or before **Tuesday, 3 October 2023**. Queries to be mailed by **Monday, 9 October 2023**.

Bids prepared in accordance with the instructions contained in the RFP document must be submitted in two separate envelopes, clearly marking 'Technical' and 'Financial' offers on the envelopes to the Office of the Chairman, Purchase Committee, Head Office, Eastern Bank PLC., 100 Gulshan Avenue, Dhaka-1212 on or before **Tuesday, 17 October 2023**.

Tenderers are allowed to bid for all lots or any lot separately. Any bid not submitted separately against each lot will be rejected. However, common documents need not to be submitted for multiple lots, submission with one lot is enough.

EDCL এসেনসিয়াল ড্রাগস কোম্পানী লিমিটেড
৩৯৫-৩৯৭, তেজগাঁও শিল্প এলাকা
ঢাকা-১২০৮।

দরপত্র বিক্রয়

ইডিসিএল নিম্নোক্ত আইটেমগুলি প্রকৃত প্রস্তুতকারী/সরবরাহকারীদের (সংশ্লিষ্ট ব্যবসার সহিত জড়িত) নিকট হতে সীলমোহরকৃত খামে দরপত্র আহ্বান করছেঃ-

ক্রমিক নং	দরপত্র নং ও তারিখ	বিবরণ	পরিমাণ
০১।	ইডিসিএল/ক্রয়/লোকাল/সেপ্টেম্বর/২০২৩/৩৫৮ তারিখঃ ২৫/০৯/২০২৩ইং	Dress & Accessories for Sift incharge & security Guard (সিডিউল মোতাবেক)	১৩ প্রকার
সিকিউরিটি/আনেষ্ট মানি	দরপত্র সিডিউলের মূল্য (অফেরতযোগ্য)	দরপত্র গ্রহণের শেষ তারিখ ও সময়	দরপত্র খোলার তারিখ ও সময়
২.৫%	টাকা ৭৫০.০০ প্রতি সেট	১২/১০/২০২৩ইং বেলা ১২-০০ ঘটিকা	১২/১০/২০২৩ইং বেলা ১২-১৫ ঘটিকা

সকল কার্যদিবসে অফিস চলাকালীন সময়ে উপরোক্ত কার্যালয় হইতে শর্ত ও নিয়মাবলীসহ দরপত্র সিডিউল ক্রয় করা যাইবে। উল্লেখ্য যে, যাহাদের ভাট রেজিস্ট্রেশন নাই তাহাদের দরপত্রে অংশগ্রহণ করার প্রয়োজন নাই।

দরপত্র খোলার দিনে কোন দরপত্র সিডিউল বিক্রয় করা হইবে না।

মহা-ব্যবস্থাপক, প্রকিউরমেন্ট
পক্ষেঃ ব্যবস্থাপনা পরিচালক।

(5"x4Column)



Roads, houses, schools, offices and croplands in Dinajpur Sadar remain under water following incessant rains since Saturday. The photos were taken from different areas of the upazila yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

FLASHFLOOD AFTER RAINFALL IN DINAJPUR

Over 1,000 families marooned

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

Following downpour in the last two days, swelled up rivers have inundated the low-lying areas in Dinajpur Sadar upazila and the vicinity of the district town, leaving over 1,000 families marooned amid flash flood.

The affected people took shelter on the highlands on both sides of the Punarbhaba river, which flows through Dinajpur town.

Officials of Water Development Board in Dinajpur said the water levels of Punarbhaba, along with other rivers in Dinajpur, started to rise after the torrential rain that started from Saturday.

The Met office in Dinajpur recorded

around 370mm rainfall since Saturday.

WDB officials said Punarbhaba was flowing 9 cm above the danger level till yesterday afternoon, while water levels of other rivers including Atrai and Tangor were also rising.

Visiting different places in Dinajpur town yesterday, this correspondent found a large number of people marooned in Hathatpara, Golapbagh, Lalbagh, Santinagar, Mazadanga, Ramnagar, Chawkhawka, areas surrounding Dinajpur Central Bus Terminal, and Maljhar village under Biral upazila as the areas were flooded after the Punarbhaba swelled.

Mozibar Rahman of Shantinagar area said water started flooding the area on Sunday afternoon and got into the houses

within midnight.

Around 250 families in the area were marooned. Many of them took shelter on a nearby road which is on higher ground, Mozibar added.

"We have been starving with our family as most earning members could not work in the last three days," said Mamunur Rashid of Golapbagh area.

"We are yet to get any relief support," he added.

Situation was found worst at Hathatpara village, where around 500 families were marooned as the area went under chest deep water. The villagers took shelter on higher grounds in the vicinity with their family members and domestic animals.

Shakil Ahmed, deputy commissioner

of Dinajpur, yesterday visited Hathatpara village, among other areas, and distributed 500 bags of relief materials among the affected villagers.

"We are trying to give all out support to the affected people," said the DC.

Vast areas of cropland, especially paddy fields, vegetable plantations and banana orchards have gone under water in the district.

"I will suffer loss if the water remains stagnant in my two-acre paddy field for long," said Habibur Rahman, a farmer of Chawkhawka village.

Md Rakibul Hasan, WDB executive engineer in Dinajpur, said the water level of the Punarbhaba will start to recede from tomorrow (today) afternoon if there is no more rainfall.

Delay hilsa ban by a month

Demand traders in Barishal

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barishal

Hilsa traders in Barishal yesterday demanded that the government implement restrictions on catching hilsa from November 12 instead of the existing planned date of October 12.

The Barishal Divisional Fisheries Officers also demanded a deadline extension, but it was not granted, they said.

They demanded this at a press conference held by the Sadar Thana unit of "Barishal Matsya Malik Samitee" at the "Elish Bhaban" office of the city's Port Road wholesale Hilsa market.

Secretary of Barisal Sadar Thana Matso Arotadar Association, Nirob Hossen Tutul, said in a statement that various natural factors, including climate change, have negatively affected hilsa production, leading to a lower supply this year than in the previous ten years.

Chinese man gets bail in rape case

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Chinese national has secured bail from a Dhaka court, 20 days after he landed in jail over raping an 11th-grader in August.

Judge (in charge) Mohammad Morshed Alam of the Additional Metropolitan Sessions Judge's Court 8 of Dhaka on September 18 granted bail to Ji Chen, 58.

On August 27, the victim filed the case with Uttara Paschim Police Station, accusing Chen and his local female accomplice, Hira Chakma.

The next day, the two were sent to jail after police arrested them in Uttara. On August 29, a Dhaka court rejected his bail petition.

According to case documents, Hira promised to send the victim to China and took her to Ji Chen's house in Uttara on August 25 night. Chen on August 26 raped the victim while Hira assisted him.

Journo gets 'death threat'

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Jamalpur

A journalist in Jamalpur yesterday filed a police complaint against a local Jubo League leader who allegedly threatened to kill him.

MA Salam, Bakshiganj upazila correspondent of Dainik Desher Kantho, filed the complaint with Bakshiganj Police Station against Farhad Hossain Palash, a member of Bakshiganj upazila unit Jubo League.

"Bakshiganj Jubo League recently held a political programme

without taking permission from president and general secretary of the upazila union Awami League. I uploaded a Facebook post on this issue on Sunday," said Salam.


"This angered Palash. He called me over the phone on Sunday afternoon. But I could not receive the phone. When I called back, he started hurling abusive words to me and said he will beat me to death," alleged Salam.

Palash denied the allegation. "I talked to him (Salam) over the phone. I requested him to write the


facts instead of disseminating false information. But I did not threaten him. He is like my friend."

OC Sohel Rana of Bakshiganj Police Station said they were looking into the incident.

On June 16, Golam Rabbani Nadim, 42, Jamalpur district correspondent of Banglanews24.com and Bakshiganj upazila correspondent of Ekattor TV, died after he was attacked and injured allegedly by some supporters of the then UP chairman.



Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh					
Directorate General of Food Ministry of Food 16, Abdul Gani Road, Dhaka Website: www.dgfood.gov.bd					
No. 13.01.0000.093.46.004.23.323	Date: 25/09/2023				
International Tender Notice to Import Milling Wheat (Package-03)					
International tenders in sealed cover are invited from bonafide traders to supply 50,000 (Fifty thousand) (+5%) Metric Ton of Milling Wheat. The particulars and terms & conditions are given below:					
Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh					
1	Ministry/Division : Ministry of Food				
2	Agency : Not applicable				
3	Procuring entity name : Director Procurement				
4	Procuring entity code : Not applicable				
5	Procuring entity district : Dhaka				
6	Invitation for : Procurement of 50,000 MT (+5%) Milling Wheat				
7	Invitation Ref. No. and date : 13.01.0000.093.46.004.23-323; Date: 25/09/2023				
KEY INFORMATION					
8	Procuring method : International Open Tender Method				
FUNDING INFORMATION					
9	Budget and source of fund : GoB				
10	Development partners : Not applicable				
PARTICULAR INFORMATION					
11	Project/programme code : Not applicable				
12	Project/programme name : Not applicable				
13	Package No. : Package-03				
14	Package name : Procurement of 50,000 MT (+5%) Milling Wheat				
15	Notice publication date : 26/09/2023				
16	Document selling date : 26/09/2023 to 10/10/2023 Time 3.30pm (BST)				
17	Closing date and time of submission of tender : 11/10/2023, Up to 1-00pm (BST)				
18	Tender opening date and time : 11/10/2023, Time: 2-30pm (BST)				
19	Name and address of the office(s):				
	Selling tender documents : Office of the Director, (Procurement), Room No. 501, Directorate General of Food, 16 Abdul Gani Road, Dhaka.				
	Receiving place of tender : 1) Office of the Director, (Procurement), Room No. 501, Directorate General of Food, 16 Abdul Gani Road, Dhaka. 2) Office of the Joint Secretary, Room No. 114 (1st floor), Building No. 04, Ministry of Food, Bangladesh Secretariat, Dhaka.				
	Opening place of tender : Office of the Director, (Procurement), Room No. 501, Directorate General of Food, 16 Abdul Gani Road, Dhaka.				
20	Place/date/time of pre-tender meeting (optional) : Not applicable				
INFORMATION FOR TENDERER					
21	Eligibility of tenderer : Necessary papers to be submitted complying the condition mentioned in the tender document.				
22	Brief description of goods or works : 50,000 (+5%) (Fifty thousand) MT. of Milling Wheat at Chattogram (60%) and Mongla (40%) port on CIF Liner Out term. Cost of the Cargo, Insurance and Freight Including Stevedoring, Overside Handling and Lightering are on seller's account. Single price per MT is to be quoted in US\$.				
23	Brief description of related services : Not applicable				
24	(i) Price of tender document (Tk.) : Tk 5,000 (five thousand) or USD 100 (One hundred) non-refundable by Pay Order/Bank Draft drawn in favour of Director General, Directorate General of Food. (ii) Mode of payment : Through Letter of Credit (L/C). (iii) Crop year : 2023 or latest (iv) Tender validity : Up to BST 16.00pm, 25/10/2023				
25	Quality & specification:				
A)					
	Quality Parameters	Specification	Rejection		
i)	Test Weight (minimum)	76 Kg/hl	below 76 Kg/hl		
ii)	Damaged kernels (maximum)	3%	above 3%		
iii)	Foreign material (maximum)	0.7%	above 0.7%		
iv)	Shrunken & broken kernels (maximum)	4%	above 4%		
v)	Wheat of other classes	4% (including maximum 2% contrasting classes)	above 4% (including maximum 2% contrasting classes)		
vi)	Protein content (minimum)	11.5% (at Dry Matter Basis)	below 11.5% (At Dry Matter Basis)		
vii)	Moisture content (maximum)	13.5%	above 13.5%		
viii)	Dockage (maximum)	1% (All dockage shall be deductible from the value)	above 1%		
ix)	Radioactivity (maximum)	50 Bq/Kg of 137 Cs (Relaxable for the crop of SAARC & South-East Asian Countries.)	above 50 Bq/Kg of 137 Cs (Relaxable for the crop of SAARC & South-East Asian Countries.)		
B)	Organoleptic properties: Bright, clear appearance, natural smell and color.				
Pack No.	Identification of shipment	Country of origin	Location	tender security amount (9US\$)	Shipment period
Pack-03	50,000 MT (+5%) Milling Wheat on CIF Liner out term	Any country of the world except Israel	Chattogram Port - 60% and Mongla port-40%	US\$ 3,00,000 in favour of Director General of Food for 50,000 MT Milling Wheat (+5%) in the form of a Bank Draft/Pay-Order. (No Bank Guarantee is allowed)	40 (forty) days from the date of opening of the L/C.
PROCURING ENTITY DETAILS					
26	Name of official inviting tender	Md. Moniruzzaman			
27	Designation of official inviting tender	Director (Procurement)			
28	Address of official inviting tender	Office of the Director (Procurement), Room No. 501, Directorate General of Food, 16, Abdul Gani Road, Dhaka.			
29	Contact details of official inviting tender	Phone: +88-02-41050178 E-mail: dproc@dgfood.gov.bd			
30	(i) Incomplete, conditional tender and alternate offer shall not be considered. The procuring entity reserves the right to accept or reject all tenders partly or wholly without assigning any reason. (ii) Tenderer who has been awarded two NOAs (Notification of Award) awaiting signing the contract or has signed two contracts but shipment under any of the contracts has not yet set sailed for destination, shall not be eligible to participate in the tender. (iii) Tenderer who had been awarded NOAs (notification of Award) earlier but could not execute contract by submitting PG (Performance Guarantee) on time, shall not be eligible to participate in the next two tenders; (iv) Tenderer whose bid-bonds had been forfeited twice for not submitting PG or signing contract on time, shall not be eligible to participate in the tender for the rest period of the current financial year, whether the money accruing from the bid-bonds so forfeited is deposited to the Government treasury or not. (v) Tenderer whose whole PG (Performance Guarantee) had been forfeited for non-supply of the contracted quantity, shall not be eligible to participate in the tender for the rest period of the current financial year, whether the money accruing from PG so forfeited is deposited to the Government treasury or not.				
 Md. Moniruzzaman Director Procurement Division Directorate General of Food Phone: +88-02-41050178 Email: dproc@dgfood.gov.bd					
GD-1477					

ON THE NOTE OF
KEEPING PROMISES



CELESTIAL HEIGHTS
AT GULSHAN
HANDED OVER
ON TIME

BEATING OUR OWN SCORES

'MRITTIKA MOHEY' The homebound call of a travelling artist

The beautiful landscapes and natural beauty of Bangladesh have served as the muse for travelling artist Karu Titas. In his tireless pursuit of capturing the country's natural and cultural heritage, he frequently embarks on journeys across the country to seek inspiration for his artistic creations.

DOWEL BISWAS

The artist's fifth solo exhibition, titled *Mrittika Mohey (The Allure of The Earth)*, is currently on display at the Shilpangan Gallery in the capital's Dhanmondi 27. This exhibition is a continuation of his artistic exploration of connecting with the essence of Bangladesh, deeply rooted in every layer of its earth.

The title of the exhibit, "Mrittika Mohey", signifies a homebound call of one's root and the mystifying allure of it. It suggests that the destination is merely an illusion of completion, while the true significance lies in the journey itself.

Landscapist Karu Titas possesses a unique talent for portraying simple yet scenically captivating characters and objects in a way that presents more questions rather than answers, more contention than beauty.

Much like his influence, S M Sultan, he too employs indistinct and hazy brush strokes to depict the bold characters of marginalised, often underestimated people.

This technique consistently prompts viewers to contemplate their own subliminal modernity and civilised inclinations.

"I have known Karu Titas for many years, and he expresses his thoughts through paintings.

The nostalgia, beauty, and life of *mophoswol* rurality bring a breath of fresh air in the absurd urbanity

we are living in," said Dr Syed Manzoorul Islam, an eminent art critic, in his introductory note of the exhibition.

Karu Titas himself articulates his creative process, stating, "I take elements from nature, and to do that, I often get off of a train and roam around all over Bangladesh. Sometimes, these spontaneous explorations lead me to mountains, rivers, encounters

kilometres. It is truly fascinating, and an artist doesn't need to look far as Bangladesh offers a distinctive colour palette," the master landscapist said.

To some keen-eyed viewers, Karu Titas—who loves to draw stations without trains, streets without mechanical vehicles, and rivers without engine boats—might seem like he is trying to escape modernity and civilised

Bangladesh, spent days living with them, engaged in conversations. When I returned to my studio, I couldn't resist painting them, for they have such great influence on me," the enchanted artist said.

"Whenever I stay at train stations, or boats, and share meals with these people, I feel more grateful to be a part of their world with each experience. This is what I strive to capture in my paintings, and it remains my greatest muse of inspiration," he continued.

Karu Titas humbly refrains from describing himself as just an artist. "I don't like to label myself as an artist because artistry is vast, and no one can truly confine themselves to it. If any of my paintings stand the test of time, I will be forever grateful as a painter."

While Karu Titas's subject matter may resonate with the legendary artist S M Sultan, his representation diverges from Sultan's bold emphasis on human strength to focus on the innate beauty of his subjects.

Responding to this comparison, Karu Titas replies with a contented smile, "As a family, we were actually close to SM Sultan. We hosted him in the city numerous times, and we visited Narail, where I watched him create his masterpieces. It was enchanting."

The exhibition showcases Karu Titas's paintings, mostly created between 2019 and 2023. Art lovers will find beautiful paintings, namely *Mrittika Mohey, Mohananday Neel, Prantic Nayokera, Janalar Drighoshwash, Kon Bhangoner Pothe Eley, Nodir Morichika, Aj Haatbar, Tolo Paal Sagorer Phool, Chandboniker Nouka* and others in this exhibition, which will run until September 30.



Karu Titas.



PHOTOS: MIZAN RAHMAN

with people I have yet to meet. They are the sources of my artistic inspiration."

"I have never returned empty-handed from these journeys. From porters, day labourers to those who live at train stations—they give me inspiration for both life and my artistry. They are my idols," he continued with a warm smile to explain his friendship with the subjects of his paintings.

Karu emphasises the uniqueness of Bangladesh. "Bangladesh is a land of wonder. You see...in my experience as a travelling artist, I found that our language, culture, dialects, and accents change in every 50

industrialisation.

In response, the painter said, "Of course! There's no doubt about it. It's high time we turn inward and reconnect with our villages and natural resources to remind ourselves of who we were and who we can be!"

Another recurring element in his painting is the representation of 'ordinary' people, from woodsmen to oarsmen, from farmers to fleeting figures, seamlessly blending with the forestry and earthen lines along the borders of his artworks.

"Take the premises of one of my paintings, namely, *Prantik Manus*. I met these individuals in North



Parineeti Chopra and Raghav Chadha tie the knot

The much-awaited wedding of Parineeti Chopra and Raghav Chadha took place at The Leela Palace in Udaipur on Sunday. The couple have posted the wedding pictures on their official social media accounts.

Parineeti shared the pictures with the caption, "From the very first chat at the breakfast table, our hearts knew. Been waiting for this day for a long time. So blessed to finally be Mr and Mrs! Couldn't have lived without each other. Our forever begins now."

The groom, along with his family members, boarded boats from The Taj Lake Palace to reach the venue for the main wedding ceremony following Mewar tradition.

Striking Hollywood writers reach tentative deal with studios

On Sunday, Hollywood's writers' union announced a preliminary labour agreement with major studios. The deal is anticipated to end one of two strikes that have halted most film and television productions, costing the California economy billions of dollars.

Before it can go into effect, the three-year contract must be approved by the Writers Guild of America (WGA) leadership as well as union members.

The WGA, which represents 11,500 film and television writers, called the agreement "exceptional" and said it provided "meaningful gains and protections for writers." The WGA settlement, while a milestone, will not return Hollywood to work. The SAG-AFTRA actors' union remains on strike.



NEWS

Adilur, Elan move HC

FROM PAGE 12
told The Daily Star they have filed the appeal as the prosecution has completely failed to prove the charges brought against his clients.

The trial court has convicted and sentenced the two on the basis of the statement from the second investigation officer (IO) without sufficient documents and evidence, which is absolutely illegal, he added.

"The second IO has stated that he procured the evidence against them on June 6 this year. But all the laptops and devices of Odhikar office were seized after the case was filed on August 10, 2013."

Ruhul Amin also said a bail petition will be moved before the HC during the hearing on the appeal. The

hearing would be held at a convenient time, he added.

A Dhaka court on September 14 this year delivered the verdict against Adilur and Elan, cancelled their bail and issued an order for them to be sent to jail with conviction warrants.

It also fined each of them Tk 10,000 in default of which they would have to serve one more month in jail.

On June 10, 2013, the Detective Branch of police filed a general diary with Gulshan Police Station in this connection, which was later converted into a case.

Detectives arrested Adilur from Gulshan on August 10, 2013, shortly after filing the GD, which said the rights body on its website ran a false report titled "Assembly of Hefajat-e

Islam Bangladesh and Human Rights Violation".

"The report tarnished the images of the country, the government, and the law enforcement agencies," read the GD.

Odhikar's report claimed that 61 people died in the wee hours of May 6 when the law enforcers flushed several thousand Hefajat activists out of the Shapla Chattar in the capital's Motijheel.

The government put the number of deaths at 13.

On August 11, 2013, police raided Odhikar's Gulshan office and seized three laptops and two desktop computers.

After probing the case, the DB on September 4, 2013, pressed charges against Adilur and Elan.

You have 36 days to quit

FROM PAGE 12
movement for 36 minutes." Speaking at "Peace and Development" rallies in the capital's Jatrabari and Uttara, top AL leaders said they would keep the streets under control until the next general election is held, which is slated for January 2024.

"The streets will remain under the control of the Awami League. We will not allow them to take to the streets. The daydream of BNP leaders to block streets and carry out violent activities will not be fulfilled; they will not be given that scope," Quader, also the road transport and bridges minister,

told the Uttara rally.

Speaking at the Jatrabari rally, organised by Dhaka city (south) unit AL, Matia Chowdhury, party presidium member and deputy leader of the House, asked the party activists to remain united and on the streets until the next polls.

AL Joint General Secretary Mahbulul Alam Hanif said, "I want to tell our leaders and activists to be alert and on the streets. We will be on the streets to fight against the national and international conspiracies that are being hatched to foil the election.

"The BNP has said they would

unseat this government by October; we will be on the streets at that time and foil their anti-government plots," said AL Organising Secretary Mirza Azam.

Quader, at the Uttara rally, said the final "game" will be played in January next year.

Saying the AL is not bothered about the US visa policy, the AL leader alleged that the BNP now becomes dependent on the visa restrictions after failing in its movement.

"But we rely on the people of Bangladesh as they are the base of our power. We will come to power again taking the people with us."

Cops, AL activists 'vandalise' rally stage

FROM PAGE 1
rescheduled for September 28, said Abu Ashfaq, convener of Dhaka district BNP.

"We went to the office of the superintendent of police in the morning. The SP told us that Awami League also wanted to hold a rally at the same venue and that's why they [police] won't let us organise the programme," he told The Daily Star.

Ashfaq claimed that they had secured permission for the rally four days ago, but the stage was vandalised.

"We are yet to decide on the venue for the September 28 rally. Initially, we have selected three possible venues. We will inform everyone about the venue after finalising the decision," he added.

Golam Mostafa, general secretary of Savar Thana BNP, alleged that AL activists and police personnel

vandalised the stage early yesterday.

Some locals, who run shops near the rally venue, told this newspaper that police pulled down the stage with an excavator and took away the materials.

Abdullah Kafu, additional superintendent of police (crime and operation) in Dhaka district, denied the allegation of police vandalising the stage.

He said they didn't grant BNP permission to hold the rally.

'STEP DOWN AT ONCE'
Speaking at the Dholaihal rally as the chief guest, BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir demanded Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina step down immediately.

"Don't make any excuses. The people of this country don't want to see you [Hasina] in power anymore. Just one US visa policy is causing headaches for them [government],"

he said.

The rally, organised by Dhaka city south BNP, began around 2:30pm.

BNP standing committee member Nazrul Islam Khan said ministers, MPs, and government and police officials would face US visa restrictions.

"They are afraid as they won't be able to use their assetsearned through corruption, and even their family members won't be able to enjoy any facilities," he said.

Demanding the government immediately allow BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia to go abroad for treatment, he said, "If proper arrangements are not made for Khaleda Zia's treatment abroad and anything bad happens to her, the government and its officials will not be able to escape."

Our Savar correspondent contributed to this report.

Country seeing rise of oligarchs

FROM PAGE 12
of disadvantaged groups and citizens," said Debapriya, also a distinguished fellow of CPD.

This stemmed from a lack of resources in prioritised sectors and areas, poor implementation of policies and projects, and inconsistency between policy formulation and development planning, he added.

The country is going through a political crisis and it will not go away if it is not resolved politically, said Mamunur Rashid, an actor, director and scriptwriter.

He said they have been trying to make Bangladesh liveable for the last 50 years whereas some people are laundering money out of the country

to make other nations liveable.

Mustafizur Rahman, a core group member of the citizen's platform, said there is macroeconomic development in the country but when the micro-level data is looked into, the progress seems to be average.

He cited the deepening inequality as an example.

"It is not acceptable that I am leading a comfortable life whereas my neighbour's condition is not good. This type of development is risky, not sustainable, and not a matter of comfort politically," said Rahman, also a distinguished fellow of CPD.

Political will is needed to ride out the present crisis, said Sultana Kamal, a human rights activist. "But where does this political will come from?"

This comes from the politicians but I don't see it," she added.

Changes have to be made to the education system or else decent jobs will not be created, said Syed Nasim Manzur, managing director of Apex Footwear.

He emphasised technical and vocational education and called for eradicating the stigma associated with the two.

"There is no dearth of policies in the country. We need to implement policies, eradicate corruption, and ensure governance," said Manzur, also a director of the Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

Average developmental gains would not be helpful, said Mohammad Abdul Matin, a former justice of the appellate division.

Now Fitch has negative

FROM PAGE 1
exchange rate mechanism from multiple rates will stem the decline in reserves due to implementation challenges, while high inflation might prevent greater exchange rate flexibility."

Increased external vulnerability because of a lack of a coherent exchange rate policy or a sustained widening of the current account deficit that leads to further falls in foreign exchange reserves or other liquidity buffers could lead to a rating downgrade.

Higher deficits or financing needs that are driven by a further increase in the interest/revenue ratio or an inability to increase the government's revenue intake could also lead to a negative rating action or downgrade as well.

Bangladesh's gross general government revenue/GDP is far below the 'BB' median, it said.

This fiscal year's budget targets a deficit of 5.2 percent of GDP and a tax-GDP ratio of 10 percent, and Fitch forecasts these to be unmet.

"We expect a deficit of 5.3 percent, given our lower growth forecast of 6.5 percent, against the budget's 7.5 percent, and little revenue reform progress," it added.

Fitch also said major reform progress before the election is low.

"The rating outlook downgrade is reasonable in a sense but optimistic—it is a softer validation of what we have been saying," said Ahsan H Mansur, executive director of the Policy Research Institute of Bangladesh.

However, this would have no significant impact. "Moody's ratings downgrade

has already done this and that was more rational. Fitch is going in the same direction but it is going slow in adjusting the ratings," said Mansur, a former economist of the International Monetary Fund.

Fitch's outlook downgrade will impact confidence, said Zahid Hussain, a former lead economist of the World Bank's Dhaka office.

"A downgrade, be it small or big, does affect confidence and confidence matters."

Both Hussain and Mansur do not foresee the situation improving anytime soon, so a ratings downgrade from Fitch too is not out of the question.

"The government is doing the opposite of what is needed. There was a commitment in the monetary policy of moving towards a market-based rate."

But Sunday's announcement from the central bank of fixing the future exchange rate of the dollar is antithetical to that commitment, Hussain said, adding that confirmation fee for letters of credit will remain high and outside interest in investing in Bangladesh will remain low.

"Going ahead, uncertainty is too high. The political situation can turn bad at any time. And the government does not have the wherewithal or will to improve the situation before the election," said Mansur, a former chairman of Brac Bank.

If the situation stays the same, the exchange rate will depreciate further, reserves will fall and inflation will go up.

"We are in a much more difficult situation than six months ago," Mansur added.

JAB AT CHINA Biden recognises two Pacific nations

AFP, Washington

President Joe Biden said the United States officially recognised the Pacific nations of Cook Islands and Niue yesterday, as he hosted regional leaders in a bid to wrest influence from China.

The announcement came at the start of a summit with the 18-member Pacific Islands Forum, where US officials said the president was announcing a more assertive American stance in the region.

Biden said in statements that Washington recognised the Cook Islands and Niue as "sovereign and independent" states and would establish diplomatic relations with both.



The move would help maintain a "free and open Indo-Pacific region," said Biden.

Biden added that the deals to recognise the two nations would also help curb illegal fishing, deal with climate change in a vulnerable region and boost economic growth.

The Cook Islands and Niue together have fewer than 20,000 inhabitants but constitute a sprawling economic zone in the South Pacific. Both are self-governing nations in "free association" with New Zealand.

After decades of being treated as a relative backwater, South Pacific has become an important arena for competition between the US and China.



Migrants from Venezuela walk through a hole in the razor wire cut by US Border Patrol agents after they crossed the Rio Grande to Eagle Pass, Texas, on Sunday. Dozens of migrants arrived at the US-Mexico border, hoping to be allowed into the United States, with US border forces reporting 1.8 million encounters with migrants in the last 12 months.

PHOTO: AFP

Russian strike damages Odesa port infrastructure

Ukraine says Russian Black Sea fleet commander killed in attack

REUTERS

An overnight Russian air strike on the southern Ukrainian region of Odesa caused "significant damage" to port infrastructure and destroyed some grain storage facilities, Ukrainian officials said yesterday.

No deaths were reported in the attack on Odesa, but at least one person was killed in a separate Russian air strike on the town of Kheron in the southern region of Kherson region, regional governor Oleksandr Prokudin said.

"Another massive attack on Odesa! ... The attack resulted in the destruction of grain storage facilities and significant damage to the seaport," Economy Minister Yulia Svyrydenko, economy minister, said on X.

Oleh Kiper, the Odesa region governor, said the facilities that

were hit had almost 1,000 tonnes of grain in storage.

Russia's defence ministry also reported Ukrainian attacks overnight, saying drones were shot down over the northwestern part of the Black Sea, over Crimea, and over the Russian regions of Kursk and Belgorod regions. It mentioned no deaths.

The Russian attack on Odesa was the latest in a series of missile and drone strikes which Kyiv says are intended to prevent Ukraine, a major grain producer and exporter, shipping its agricultural products to the world.

Ukrainian air defences destroyed 19 Iranian-made Shahed drones and 11 cruise missiles overnight, the vast majority of them were directed at the Odesa region, the military said.

Meanwhile, Ukraine claimed

yesterday it had killed the commander of Russia's Black Sea fleet in an unprecedented missile strike on the naval headquarters in the annexed Crimean peninsula last week.

It marked a major blow for Moscow, which has suffered a string of attacks on the strategically important port of Sevastopol in recent months.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky yesterday said his army had taken delivery of US Abrams battle tanks, boosting Kyiv's forces in their slow-moving counteroffensive against Russian troops.

Ukraine and the United States also signed a memorandum of understanding under which Kyiv will receive up to \$522 for strengthening the resilience of the Ukrainian energy system.



The commission reiterates its deep concern at the scale and gravity of violations and corresponding crimes that have been committed in Ukraine by Russian armed forces.

Erik Mose, chair of the Commission of Inquiry on Ukraine, tells UN Human Rights Council

DISPUTED SHOAL

Philippines removes Chinese barrier

REUTERS, Manila

The Philippines said yesterday it executed a "special operation" to remove a floating barrier installed by China at a prime fishing patch in the South China Sea, a move that could stoke tension after a years-long detente in Asia's most disputed waters.

The Philippines expressed outrage on Sunday and shared images of Chinese coastguard policing a long, ball-buoy barrier near the Scarborough Shoal, a rocky outcrop 200 km (124 miles) from the Philippines and the site of years of intermittent flare-ups over sovereignty and fishing rights. Hours after the

national security adviser had vowed to take action, the Philippine coastguard said it had removed the floating cordon, at the behest of President Ferdinand Marcos Jr and his special task force on the South China Sea. "The barrier posed a hazard to navigation, a clear violation of international law. It also hinders the conduct of fishing and livelihood activities of Filipino fisherfolk," it said in a statement, describing the shoal as "an integral part of the Philippine national territory".

2024 LOK SABHA POLLS

India's AIADMK snaps ties with BJP-led alliance

NDTV ONLINE

Tamil Nadu's AIADMK has snapped ties with the Bharatiya Janata Party and the BJP-led National Democratic Alliance - just months before the national election - amid a row over comments by the latter party's state boss, K Annamalai. The break-up was announced by AIADMK Deputy General Secretary KP Munusamy after a resolution was passed unanimously at a meeting of MPs, MLAs and district heads at the party's head office in Chennai. At a meeting in Delhi on Saturday, the south Indian party stood firm on its demand - that Annamalai either apologise for remarks on the late former Chief Minister CN Annadurai, or be replaced with a "non-controversial leader".

গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার
স্থানীয় সরকার প্রকৌশল অধিদপ্তর
উপজেলা প্রকৌশলীর কার্যালয়, চুনারুঘাট, হবিগঞ্জ
www.lqed.gov.bd
Date: 25.09.2023

Memo No. 46.02.3626.902.14.051.22-৫০৮
e-Tender Notice No. 05/2023-24 (OTM)
e-Tender is hereby invited through National e-GP Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) for the procurement of:

Sl. No.	Tender ID	Package No.	Name of the works	Tender publication date & time	Last date & time of submission & opening
01	873584	e-Tender/PEDP4/HAB/CHU/2023-2023/W-14-02254	Construction of Boundary wall & Gate Basulla, Chandpur Bostl Adarsha, Ghoshajampur & Haptapar haor GPS under Chunarughat, Habiganj.	26-09-2023 11:00am	08-10-2023 1:30pm
02	875405	e-Tender/PEDP4/HAB/CHU/2023-24/W-14-02999	Construction of Boundary Wall & Gate of Ubahata Government Primary School Chunarughat, Habiganj.	26-09-2023 11:00am	11-10-2023 1:30pm
03	875403	e-Tender/PEDP4/HBG/CHU/2022-23/W-15.0838	Construction of Head Teacher's Room with attached toilet of Chunarughat Govt. Primary School under PEDP4 Chunarughat Habiganj.	26-09-2023 11:00am	11-10-2023 1:30pm

This is an online tender, where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP Portal and no offline/hard copies are allowed. To submit e-Tender, registration in the National e-GP Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) is required. Any other conditions for this tender is stated in TDS. Interested tenderers may communicate with the undersigned during office hours.

Dipak Kumar Das
Upazila Engineer
Chunarughat, Habiganj
Phone: 01706-161662
ue.chunarughat@lqed.gov.bd

GD-1482

Pak ex-PM Imran moved to a prison with better facilities

REUTERS, ISLAMABAD

Pakistani authorities were preparing to move former prime minister Imran Khan to a prison with better facilities near the national capital Islamabad after a court order, his party said yesterday.

His legal team and party had been pleading with several courts to issue orders for Khan to be shifted to Adyala Jail in garrison city of Rawalpindi, which they argued was more appropriate for a former premier.

"Arrangements are taking place," Khan's close aide Zulfiqar Bukhari said in a message to journalists, referring to preparations to move the former premier after Khan's lawyer, Naeem Panjutha, said a high court in the capital had ordered the move.

Panjutha later wrote on social media platform X that Khan had been moved to the new prison but then deleted that post.

Khan has been detained in a low-key, colonial era prison in the northwestern Attock district that lacked facilities like attached bathroom and television and made it harder for family and friends to visit or send newspapers, books or food.

INDIA-CANADA ROW

Punjab's Sikhs fear backlash from diplomatic spat

REUTERS, Bharsinghpura

A bitter row between India and Canada over the murder of a Sikh separatist is being felt in Punjab, where some Sikhs fear both a backlash from India's Hindu-nationalist government and a threat to their prospects for a better life in North America.

Hardeep Singh Nijjar, a plumber who left the north Indian state a quarter-century ago and became a Canadian citizen, was shot dead in June outside a temple in a Vancouver suburb where he was a separatist leader among the many Sikhs living there.

Canadian PM Justin Trudeau said last week Ottawa had "credible allegations" that Indian government agents may be linked to the killing.

In the village of Bharsinghpura, Hardeep's uncle, Himmat Singh Nijjar, 79, said locals "think it was very brave of Trudeau" to accuse Prime Minister Narendra Modi's government of potential involvement in the killing. The elder Nijjar said he is worried about deteriorating relations with Canada and declining economic prospects in Punjab.

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Ministry of Cultural Affairs
Aitihashik Rose Garden-er Pratnatattik Samsker-Samrakhan
Ebm Dhaka Mahanagar Jadughar Sthapan
Bangladesh National Museum
Shahbag, Dhaka-1000
Memo No. 43.22.0000.034.02.021.22.1228
Date: 25/09/2023

e-Tender Notice
e-Tender is invited in the National e-GP Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) for procuring of the following works:

Sl. No.	Tender ID No.	Name of work	Tender opening & closing date & time
01	875796	Supply of A.C equipments and accessories for Dhaka Metropolitan Museum.	11-Oct-2023 15:00:00
02	879291	Supply Furniture for Dhaka Metropolitan Museum.	11-Oct-2023 15:00:00
03	879749	Supply Fire-extinguishing equipment for Dhaka Metropolitan Museum.	11-Oct-2023 15:00:00
04	879764	Display & Interior works for Dhaka Metropolitan Museum.	11-Oct-2023 16:00:00

This is an online tender, where only e-Tender will be accepted in National e-GP Portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-Tender, please register on e-GP System on <http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>. All information & guidelines are available in the National e-GP Portal and e-GP helpdesk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd) and for more details please contact support desk contact numbers.

Dr. Bijoy Krishna Banik
Keeper (A.M.M.) & Deputy Project Director
Aitihashik Rose Garden-er Pratnatattik
Samsker-Samrakhan Ebm Dhaka
Mahanagar Jadughar Sthapan
Ahsan Manzil Museum
Phone: 02-57391122

GD-1481

Bangladesh Development Bank Ltd
Head Office, BDBL Bhaban
8, Rajuk Avenue, Dhaka-1000
IT Operation Department
Invitation for Tender

Reference: 11.2/319/ Date: 24/09/2023
Tender is invited for Purchase of outsourcing service to provide Data Center and other support (365 days 24/7) for 3 (three) years. Necessary informations are given below:

01.	Procuring entity	IT Operation Department, Bangladesh Development Bank Limited (BDBL), Head Office, BDBL Bhaban (Level-06), 8, Rajuk Avenue, Dhaka-1000.
02.	Procurement method	Through Open Tendering Method (OTM) of Public Procurement Rules, 2008 and The Public Procurement Act, 2006 (Corrected up to 2019)
03.	Invitation for Tender No.	BDBL/ITOD/OTM/01
04.	Source of funds	BDBL own fund.
05.	Brief description of the goods and services	Tender is invited for Purchase of outsourcing service to provide Data Center and other support (365 days 24/7) for 3 (three) years.
06.	Work description	- On-site 1st level operation of the facilities items like Precision Air Conditioner (PAC), Comfort Air Conditioner (CAC), VESDA System, Fire Detection, Auto Fire Suppression, Online UPS, AVR, Power Monitoring, Environment Monitoring and specially Data Center and other Services. - Hourly or schedule-wise equipment log collection. - Reporting to the authorized personnel of Bank. - Other documentation maintaining works. - Other Hardware and software related services as per requirement.
07.	Name & address of receiving tender document	IT Operation Department, Bangladesh Development Bank Limited (BDBL), Head Office, BDL Bhaban (Level-06), 8, Rajuk Avenue, Dhaka-1000.
08.	Last date and time for selling tender schedule	12/10/2023 up to office hour.
09.	Last date and time for submission	15/10/2023 up to 03.00pm.
10.	Date, time and place for tender opening	All Tenders will be opened at IT Operation Department, Head Office, Dhaka on 15/10/2023 at 03.30pm (Intending tenderers or their authorized representatives are allowed to attend at the time of opening of tender).
11.	Eligibility of tenderer	Qualifications - Educational qualification: Minimum Diploma Engineer (Computer Science/Technology, Electrical/Electronics or equivalent) from any Government Polytechnic Institute. But a minimum of one person must have a diploma in Computer Science. - Serviced Engineer should be an expert in the above-described services. - Attested copies of all certificates must be given. - Resume of each service Engineer must be given. Other requirements ● Bidder must submit company profile with all certification. ● Up-to-date income tax paying certificate; ● Up-to-date VAT certificate. ● Bidder must have at least 03 (three) years' experience in providing outsourcing service to Data Center and other related support. ● A declaration that the bidder has not been blacklisted/debarred by any government agency must be submitted. ● Up-to-date trade licences certificate. ● Attested copy of all educational certificate of Service Engineer.
12.	Tender security	Tk. 1,00,000.00 (one lac). Tender security money only will be required in the form of Pay Order (refundable) in favor of Bangladesh Development Bank Limited, Head Office, Dhaka.
13.	Price of tender schedule	Tk. 1,000 (Taka one thousand) will be required in the form of Pay Order (non-refundable)

BDBL reserves the right to accept or reject any or all tender either in part or full without assigning any reason whatsoever. If occur any government holiday then the tender opening date will be shifted to next working day.

Saifuddin Ahmad
Deputy General Manager
IT Operation Department
☎: 02-57160451

GD-1478

Stop this charade of price control

Why expect different outcomes with the same flawed policy?

With prices of essential goods long having spiralled out of the reach of ordinary people, we are frustrated that the government's approach to stabilise the market continues to be short-sighted and ineffective. On September 15, the government fixed the prices of eggs, onions and potatoes as part of a bid to contain the runaway food inflation (which hit a 12-year high in August). But according to our report, none of these items are being sold at the set prices. This comes as no surprise to us – and it shouldn't to the authorities either – as the government's past attempts at price control have repeatedly fallen short of expectations, providing financial windfalls to market syndicates instead.

For instance, every year, the government fixes rawhide prices ahead of Eid-ul-Azha, and every year without exception, traders violate that cap, citing various reasons. In the agriculture sector, too, farmers inevitably end up paying more than government-set fertilizer prices. Meanwhile, LPG cylinders, fixed at Tk 1,284, are currently selling at Tk 1,600. Whether it's the transportation fares, dollar rates, or prices of soybean oil, sugar or IV saline, the story is much the same, with the only ones to have benefitted in the process being the traders.

Why must the government insist on this charade year after year instead of addressing the root causes of escalating prices? Who is it really making a mockery of – its own institutions, whose failure to monitor the market is markedly clear, or the people, whose suffering has increased manifold over the past one and a half years?

Echoing the advice of economists, we have written countless times over the past year(s) advocating a different approach – to take stern action against the syndicates that are monopolising the market and manipulating prices. Yet, for reasons best known to the authorities, they have refused to monitor and regulate the major players who dominate supply chains and engage in monopolistic practices. Over and over, big players, with friends in powerful positions, have won over ordinary people, who have no one to look out for them.

Ahead of the upcoming general elections, the government must take a hard look at its present policies and consistent failure to bring down food prices, and ease people's sufferings. If it insists on setting prices, then it must do the bare minimum of ensuring compliance. But beyond, it is painfully obvious that it needs to ensure a transparent and competitive marketplace to pave the way for efficient market performance.

BCL is totally out of control

Their unchecked criminality is hurting public universities

Over the last 14 years or so, Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) has always been in the news for their objectionable conduct across public universities. From harassing and torturing general students and political rivals to engaging in criminal activities, such as extorting and mugging, to intimidating teachers and journalists – there seems to be no end to their criminality. And over time, they have become more emboldened as university administrations hardly take any action against them. And the ruling party seems hardly ever bothered about it so long as the BCL maintains control over campuses on its behalf.

The daily *Prothom Alo* published a number of reports yesterday detailing how BCL leaders and activists are enjoying a free rein in public universities. At Chittagong University, for instance, they frequently clash with each other, often with sharp weapons. They are publicly extorting the contractors implementing development projects at the university, illegally occupying hall rooms, beating administrative officials, sexually harassing female students, vandalising university properties and even threatening the teachers. Even journalists are not spared. Reportedly, on Sunday, some BCL activists severely beat up the CU correspondent of *Prothom Alo*, Mosharraf Shah, for reporting on clashes between two factions of the pro-Awami League student body, which is disturbing, to say the least.

The situation is equally worrying at Jahangirnagar University and Rajshahi University. At JU, BCL leaders and activists recently held the vice-chancellor hostage at his office for about two hours for not appointing a certain BCL leader as teacher. Also recently, a BCL leader from RU suggested, live on Facebook, that it was wrong for the prime minister to appoint that university's VC, pro-VC and others if they did not stand by the BCL's side.

Such audacious comments and activities of the BCL at these prominent public universities – as well as at Dhaka University, where the group has been equally active – are totally unacceptable. Left unaddressed, these activities create fear among ordinary students and disrupt the learning environment. We urge the administrations of public universities and the ruling party to take sterner measures to control the unruly members of the BCL in the greater interest of our country.

New Message

TO:

FROM:

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

Write to us: letters@thedailystar.net

Why Bangladesh failed to contain inflation while others succeeded



MACRO MIRROR

Dr Fahmida Khatun is the executive director at the Centre for Policy Dialogue and non-resident senior fellow of the Atlantic Council. Views expressed in this article are the author's own.

FAHMIDA KHATUN

We have been battling – and failing to contain – high inflation for a while now. We saw the fiscal year 2022-2023 end with high inflation, with the monthly average inflation being 9.02 percent in June. In FY 2023-2024, there is still no sign of the inflation rate declining. Rather, in August, general point-to-point inflation was at 9.92 percent, with food inflation being 12.54 percent – the highest in the last 12 years in Bangladesh.

During this time, several countries (even ones in the subcontinent) have managed to rein in their inflation. Sri Lanka is a case in point and has been much discussed for its success in putting its economy onto a positive trend over about one-and-a-half years. The island country managed to bring its inflation rate down to four percent in August 2023, from as high as 73 percent in September 2022. India, too, has contained its inflation using appropriate policy measures.

While many other countries have managed to reduce inflationary pressure by adopting monetary policy tools, Bangladeshi policymakers have shied away from doing the same. The fundamental priority in times of high inflationary pressure should be controlling the money supply. By raising interest rates, the central bank discourages people from taking loans because this could increase money circulation. This is a contractionary policy with the key objective of controlling people's spending.

Of course, high lending rates pose some challenges. A high cost of borrowing increases cost of production and reduces profitability, which may dampen private investment. Ordinary citizens who want to take out loans may also face challenges, and the amount of their loan repayment instalments may be higher. In such a situation, the economy will stabilise at a lower level, and growth will be affected. But this is a temporary struggle. In times of high inflation, economic growth cannot be the objective of policymakers. Once inflation is controlled, the central bank can gradually reduce interest rates.

Unfortunately, this theoretical scenario did not play out in Bangladesh. Starting in April 2020, Bangladesh Bank imposed caps on both lending and deposit rates, which were fixed at nine percent and six percent respectively. Economists advocated withdrawing the interest rate caps and leaving the rates to the market. But there has always been pressure from the powerful business

lobby, who have vehemently opposed higher lending rates, arguing that high lending rates would reduce private investment and affect economic growth. But, strangely, even with a nine percent interest rate cap, private investment did not increase. Indeed, private investment has been hovering around 23 percent for many years. In the revised budget for FY 2022-2023, private investment was estimated to be 21.8 percent. This can be explained by the fact that private investment is not only influenced by interest



In times of high inflation, economic growth cannot be the objective of policymakers.

FILE PHOTO: RAJIB RAIHAN

rates, it also depends on several other factors such as good infrastructure, technology, human resource skills, absence of bureaucratic tangles, policy continuity, political stability, and good governance. The trend of private investment in Bangladesh clearly corroborates this theory. In the recent past, the lending rate was lower than the inflation rate, implying that the real interest rate was negative and money was cheap. But cheap money did not boost private investment. Rather, it increased money supply in the economy.

The other source of money supply

Besides, there is also a large sum of money in circulation, which is easy money. This is money that has not been earned by individuals or known sources such as employees or businesses. Brokers, middlemen, and rent seekers in various sectors of the economy have accumulated a lot of money without being involved in any productive activities. Corruption and wilful loan default are also contributing to increased costs of living. Loan defaulters are not interested in investment in industries or any productive ventures which can create jobs. A portion of their

high inflation and low fiscal space. In the run up to the national election, public expenditure may increase. Hence, the success of the monetary policy is uncertain. There should be coordination between monetary and fiscal policies. Instead of spending on things that don't demand urgency, the government should enhance support for poor and low-income households and strengthen social protection to ease inflationary pressure on them. If high inflation persists for a longer period, the inequality in Bangladesh will escalate further from its already high state.

Legal amendments will help universities thrive



Dr Abu NM Waheeduzzaman is a professor of Marketing and International Business at Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi.

ABU WAHEEDUZZAMAN

Last month, news came that the government is considering a bill to amend the Private University Act, 2010 to fit the needs of the academic environment, to combat corruption, financial irregularities, and profiteering, and to improve governance. Notably, the bill proposes having a third of the trustee members be from academia, which would be a welcome change. While the bill is in discussion, let's look into some key areas that may benefit from amendments.

To make the whole system more effective, faculty members from within the university should be included in the trustee board to ensure a fairer share of governance. In Western countries, the board comprises the faculty senate representing the core faculty, and the university administration, which is not part of the senate. This ensures academic freedom. We should incorporate this concept into the new bill now or in the

future.

A university's core faculty is the heart of the institution's community. These teachers define the identity of the institution and provide vision and leadership, and their work also contributes to meritocracy and branding. For example, Cambridge and Oxford are famous for their liberal arts core; Harvard is known for the business, medical, and law faculties; Chicago and UPenn brag about their business schools; and Yale and Johns Hopkins excel in medicine and social science. Also, core faculties are links to the alumni – a long-term thread that binds the university with society.

In Western countries, both in public and private universities, job security through a tenure system has favoured the development, growth, and sustenance of core faculties. The system has been able to establish a unique "creative culture" where conflicting ideologies are able to flourish under the same umbrella,

facilitating the development of quality academic programmes.

Public universities in Bangladesh carry a legacy of the Western education system. They have been very fortunate to have developed a core faculty that enjoys tenure. Comparatively, the private universities, as newcomers, did not have such faculties to start their programmes. They relied heavily on a large pool of part-time faculty members, some of whom were with public universities. National and foreign teachers have filled the gap in between. The faculty attrition rate at private universities is very high.

Despite the negatives, some of the private institutions have been able to develop a good faculty pool that has served for over six years, the typical time required for tenure in US universities. Perhaps, it is time that private universities consider offering tenure to bring stability in their academic system. The new or future bills should incorporate specific amendments and guidelines that would encourage the tenure system.

Developing a core faculty starts with a faculty pool. This is where we have fallen behind. There is a nationwide shortage of qualified faculty members in both public and private universities. Lately, universities have not been able to attract meritorious students to join academia. The price mechanism or economics is not in their favour. Higher

paid jobs in other sectors (business) and job security (BCS or military) have been able to take away a big portion of the meritorious pool. Such a big issue needs a comprehensive approach.

Lately, the demand for starting PhD programmes at private universities has been raised. This is a timely and laudable idea. The doctoral programmes would fulfil the need for quality faculty. To launch such programmes, we should take a long-term approach. First, develop a core faculty in respective fields and then allow them to develop the programmes. Job security or tenure is paramount for that. Short-lived floating faculty may not be able to offer quality doctoral programmes.

The role of the core faculty should be taken cautiously. It is possible that, in the name of building a core, academia would build a self-serving exclusive circle. Such groups are likely to reject contrarian viewpoints. A classic example is the group that rejected Karl Marx's radical ideas. This defeats the very purpose of a university.

What is desirable is a core faculty that would engage in a "creative reinvigoration," facilitating learning in the process. The university administration can ensure this by being open and flexible. Hopefully, the new bill and future amendments would be able to bring such changes.

Who is winning the tech war?

Perhaps there is no winner between Beijing and Washington



Dr Sayeed Ahmed is a consulting engineer and the CEO of Bayside Analytix, a technology-focused strategy and management consulting organisation.

SAYEED AHMED

Huawei, China's electronics giant, went from being the world's second-largest smartphone maker to "essentially dead," stated the BBC, quoting a Chinese policy research analyst in January this year.

Just seven months later, in August, the company released its Mate 60 Pro flagship phone, which is powered by the 7-nanometre Kirin 9000S chip manufactured by China's Semiconductor Manufacturing International Corporation (SMIC). Before this, the most advanced chip SMIC was known to be capable of making had a 14-nanometre design. It was a stunning show of defiance of the Washington-led sanctions against Beijing.

To put the nanometre metric in perspective, a strand of human hair is about 50,000 to 100,000 nanometres wide. And the most advanced chip makers, such as Taiwan's TSMC, can make 2 nanometre chips. The thinner the chip, the faster it is. These advanced chips run sophisticated artificial intelligence (AI) algorithms in cutting-edge products such as fighter jets, missiles, satellites, and supercomputers. One crucial aim of the Washington-led tech war is preventing Beijing from making advanced chips by blocking technology from the West, for instance, the Extreme Ultraviolet (EUV) lithography machine from the Netherlands' ASML. But as SMIC moved to the 7-nanometre domain, sanctions don't seem to be working.

However, jumping to the conclusion that China is fast catching up in chip and other critical technologies will be an oversimplification of a complex phenomenon. The Australian Strategic Policy Institute tracks 44 critical technologies foundational for economies, societies, national security, energy production, health, and climate security. Its research reveals that China has built the foundations to become the world's leading science and technology superpower through high-impact research across several critical and emerging technology domains.

Beijing is striding ahead, no doubt. Its AI strategy came out in 2017, while the US adopted an AI document in 2021. Then, blindingly everyone, China tested a new orbital bombardment system in 2021 that could potentially evade Washington's missile defence system.

But then there are other sides of the story. Beijing is pumping billions of dollars to become the global AI leader by 2030. Its scientists are publishing more AI-related scientific papers than anyone else. Still, it was the US' Google, Microsoft, and OpenAI consortium

that has made an AI chatbot while the Chinese counterparts are playing catch up. This simple example illustrates the case that technological advancement entails a combination of many related things, including basic research, a conducive ecosystem for innovation and business, talent, and a solid motivational drive.

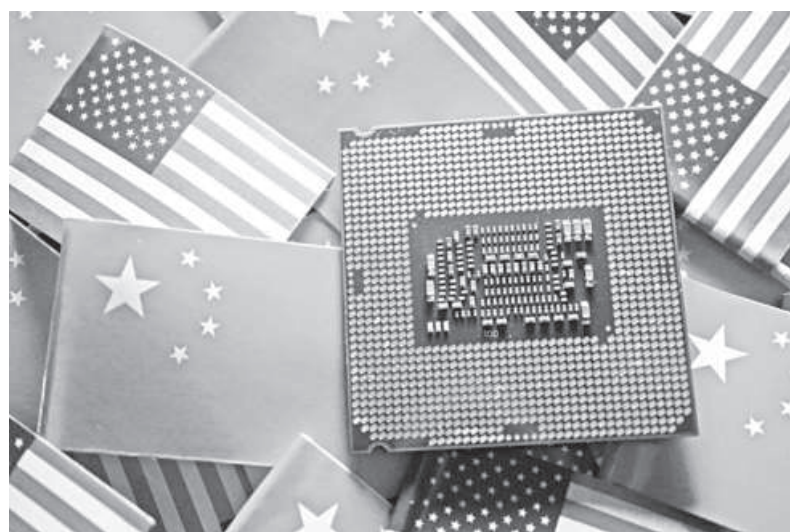
The West has a foundational advantage. Its vibrant and liberal democracies often supercharge innovation and productivity by facilitating decentralisation, experimentation, failure, and iteration. The number of scientific papers or the first landing on the dark side of the moon (China made history by doing so in 2016) is not as significant as a combined metric of many related phenomena for measuring technological progress.

That's not to say that China lacks innovativeness, as the Shenzhen case may explain. Until the 1980s, just over the border from Hong Kong, it was a sleepy fishing village with fewer than 100,000 inhabitants. Today, it's

related to the People's Liberation Army. But even with a centralised governance structure and a command economy, China can blindsides the US in this epic battle for tech supremacy, as it has done on so many occasions. In the long term, its leading research position may put China in a dominant role not just in current technological development but in future technologies that don't yet exist.

Then there are Chinese characteristics, as the Berlin-based Mercator Institute for China Studies points out. Beijing's leadership has adopted technology as the strategic high ground in Sino-US competition and the "biggest geopolitical challenge of the 21st century" in bilateral relations. Historically, it has a far-sighted vision and is adept at playing long games, which it has demonstrated on several occasions, such as gaining membership at the United Nations Security Council in 1971, securing a foothold in Afghanistan after the messy departure of the British, Russians, and Americans, and dealing with human rights issues at the world stage. As an ascending superpower, it can afford the time to keep playing such a game in the current tech rivalry.

But is there any winner at all? Or, even more importantly, who will be the greatest loser? As it turns out, the entire world, everyone, is a casualty of this superpower rivalry that is fragmenting the world. A recent IMF blog says: "A fragmented world is likely



Jumping to the conclusion that China is fast catching up in chip and other critical technologies will be an oversimplification of a complex phenomenon.

ILLUSTRATION PICTURE: REUTERS

a sprawling metropolis of high-rises, and home to 12.5 million residents where many tech titans are conducting research on and making almost everything related to AI, robotics, 5G, 6G, surveillance technology, and much more, effectively becoming China's answer to Silicon Valley. Anything that costs several thousand dollars elsewhere is on offer for a few hundred in Shenzhen, that too within arm's reach. Critical research programmes are, of course, the domain of state-owned universities and institutes

to be a poorer one." Two percent of global GDP will disappear, mainly from emerging markets and developing economies.

Closing each other's markets will send companies to bankruptcy, erasing millions of jobs. This phenomenon will spread worldwide like a chain reaction, making everything costlier and everyone poorer. In a world where an innovation economy is crucial to progress and shared prosperity, fragmentation will only increase misery.



PHOTO: MD ATA ISLAM KHAN MOJLISH

What's Real, really?



KNOT SO TRUE
Dr Rubana Huq is vice chancellor of Asian University for Women.

RUBANA HUQ

"it is the reflection of a profound reality; it masks and denatures a profound reality; it masks the absence of a profound reality; it has no relation to any reality whatsoever; it is its own pure simulacrum."

— Jean Baudrillard, in *Simulacra and Simulation*

Here's a confession to start with. I made gigantic paper flowers the other day, faking the real in size and texture, and hosted a dinner for close friends — making it a point to establish that in spite of all the fakes in the world, bonds of friendship were real.

I also tried downloading Zao, the Chinese app that helps the user create deep-fakes, and I failed. Zao can only be downloaded on a Chinese phone. So I tried the app Face Swap instead, superimposing my grandson's eyebrows and lips on my face and ended up being embarrassed by my poor faking skills.

Indeed, I am deeply intrigued by fakes. We have fake products, fake visuals, fake statistics, fake writings, fake lists, and even fake relationships that make this world go around...

It was July 2023. I spotted a Van Gogh in my hotel room. I had difficulty believing that the hotel would have an original Van Gogh. So, I took the painting off the wall, looked at the certificate at the back along with extensive scribbles in German and took pictures. It was only today, right before I started this piece, that I reached out to a friend who helped me with translation. Much to my utter surprise, it was real and a high-end reproduction of the Van Gogh museum with an acknowledgment at the back thanking a Mr Pajes for sending it. That was the closest call that I have had with not-really-fakes thus far.

Think about the stunning deep-fake of Audrey Hepburn in a commercial for Galaxy chocolate twenty years after her death. Thanks to the advancement of computer-generated imagery that made her look real. The unreal Audrey sits in a bus, then descends while taking the hat off the bus driver's head, puts it on the handsome young man's hair and slips into the backseat of the car and has her chocolate. Throughout the ad, one gets happy watching "it," the resurrected Audrey, and not "her."

As for politics, post-Brexit and during the time when the US elected Trump as president, the real was having a hard time. Had it not been for the infamous "£350 million a week for the NHS" advertisement on a bus prompting a Leave vote during the UK Brexit campaign, the UK would possibly still be in the EU. Had it not been for the fake news stories receiving 8.7 million engagements while "true" mainstream media stories only received 7.3 million hits, Trump probably would have had a tough time coming to power.

With our own election fever settling in and rattling our senses, one is subjected to endless YouTube suggestions, which also include really badly edited and failed fakes, with a few opinion gurus (dis)gracing the videos. In most of them, some propagate victory way before it's won; some cry foul way ahead of time. What should one actually side with or believe?

In this case, if one were to believe philosophers, then one would have to resort to Baudrillard, who believed and wrote *The Gulf War Did Not Take Place* in 1991. Did the US actually masquerade a war that caused minimum casualties and Iraq had little or no deaths to report? For Baudrillard, the French philosopher, it wasn't a war; it was a series of misrepresented copies of what never existed; it was a simulacra. Going by him, one would have to believe that the real was replaced by mere images. There is truth in there. Look at all the fictional superheroes that have popped up in the last 50 years. Starting from Superman, Batman, down to

Lassie, we have had generations of followers being inspired by them. In the absence of real heroes in society, what else can humanity do other than learn from the imaginary? Think about Disneyland and its hyperreality, a magnification of the non-existent, where all the characters have a bigger claim over the real, than what our perception of reality leads us to believe.

Maybe true heroes are truly rare to come by and maybe the era of the real is close to being over. Ahead of our elections, in all the doctored videos that flood our social media trails from all the political parties in and out of power, one can't really blame when voices are imitated, faces faked and constructed to match those of real people, with scandals getting millions of hits. Who do we blame, really? Would there have been any curiosity, any story if the content weren't partly true?

While we blame the scandal-mongers for fake news, in reality, power and media have been walking hand-in-hand forever. Fakes have been an integral part of many governments. For example, way back in 1944-45, the Nazis produced a film that made the concentration camps look like paradise. The Jewish inmates themselves were actors and film directors, while a Prague newsreel company, Aktualita, filmed the whole set-up. Luckily, there's no copy of the film today, but there is substantial evidence to indicate that it was a scheme of a massive governmental deception.

Maybe true heroes are truly rare to come by and maybe the era of the real is close to being over. Ahead of our elections, in all the doctored videos that flood our social media trails from all the political parties in and out of power, one can't really blame when voices are imitated, faces faked and constructed to match those of real people, with scandals getting millions of hits. Who do we blame, really? Would there have been any curiosity, any story if the content weren't partly true? While we blame the scandal-mongers for fake news, in reality, power and media have been walking hand-in-hand forever. Fakes have been an integral part of many governments.

On the other hand, in today's day and age, in spite of desperate governments like North Korea banning and censoring content, most North Koreans watch foreign content on DVDs. Instead of watching "Dear Leader," most of them continue watching Titanic, James Bond movies, and even US wrestling matches.

However, it also remains absolutely necessary for a society to escape the viral waves of invasive information, containing aggressive advertising or simply fake news, that's manufactured to dominate the power discourse in order to gain control.

But while we watch all that we watch on social media, let us also remember that, in spite of the Real remaining intensely vulnerable to propaganda and the power of the state, a Lie will never replace the Truth. In fact, the sheer transitory nature of power is shallow and lacks the resilience of the Real. So, every time we generously press the "like" button on social media platforms, let us be conscious of the warnings of Arendt, the political theorist: "Persuasion and violence can destroy truth, but they cannot replace it."

I am watching a family of five on the next table. It's a lazy weekend brunch. At least, that's the spirit. Every family member has a phone in their hand. All are screen-struck, intensely absorbed in some artificial prompt, rhetoric, or a sales pitch of eternal bliss. Point is, can we really afford a simulated dystopia? That's another question for another column, another day.

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Local Government Engineering Department
Office of the Upazila Engineer
Upazila: Shariatpur Sadar, District: Shariatpur.
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Memo No: 46.02.8669.000.14.117-23-607 Date: 25-09-2023.

e-Tender Notice-02/2023-2024 (OTM)

This is to notify for all concern that e-Tender is invited in the National e-GP System portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) for procurement of below works. Interested persons/firms can see details by visiting the web site www.eprocure.gov.bd.

Sl No.	Tender ID No.	Name & Package No.	Tender last Selling (Date & Time)	Tender Closing (Date & Time)	Tender Opening (Date & Time)
01	875584	Supplying Computers (Desktop), Printers & Projects to Various Educational Institutions Under Shariatpur Sadar Upazila, Dist: Shariatpur. (INF-2021-22-308669-01)	09-10-2023 17:00 PM	10-10-2023 15:00 PM	10-10-2023 15:00 PM
02	875586	Construction of RCC Drain for Chikandi Bazar Seage, & Construction of Market Shed of Shoupara Bazar, Under Shariatpur Sadar Upazila, Dist: Shariatpur (INF-2021-22-308669-02)	09-10-2023 17:00 PM	10-10-2023 15:00 PM	10-10-2023 15:00 PM
03	875587	Construction of RCC U-Type Channel for Remidal of Log Watering at Dhalikandi Bill in Rudrakar Village in Rudrakar Union Under Sadar Upazila, Dist: Shariatpur. (INF-2021-22-308669-03)	09-10-2023 17:00 PM	10-10-2023 15:00 PM	10-10-2023 15:00 PM

There 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. The fees for downloading the e-Tender documents from the e-GP system portal have to be deposited online through any registered Bank Branches within above mentioned date & time. Further information and guidelines are available in the national e-GP system portal and from e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd) and also e-mail: ue.rajoir@lged.gov.bd

(Engr. Md. Abdus Sattar)
Upazila Engineer
LGED, Shariatpur Sadar, Shariatpur
Tel-0601-61549
e-mail: ue.shariatpur-s@lged.gov.bd



PHOTO: AUTHOR

PPECCC Dhaka 2023 explores climate change as an opportunity for investment and employment

The Chief Guest, Saber Hossain Chowdhury, made a virtual appearance. In his video message, he emphasised the urgency of preserving our planet. "When we talk about preserving climate earth, we are talking about the only home that we have."

USRAAT FAHMIDAH

On September 23, the Preserve Planet Earth Climate Change Conference (PPECCC) took place, signifying the inaugural event in a planned series of conferences that will take place in major cities worldwide.

Hosted at the Independent University, Bangladesh's auditorium, this event brought together prominent scientists, researchers, policymakers, activists, and environmental enthusiasts from various parts of the world.

The central theme of the conference was "Climate Change is now an opportunity for investment and employment" and was spearheaded by the Rotary Clubs of Bangladesh. Highlighting the significance of utilising climate change challenges as opportunities, the convener, Quaiyum Khan, shared the Rotary Club's longstanding commitment to preserving the planet. He pointed out that the "Preserve Planet Earth" initiative was introduced globally by Rotary in 1990-91, which was five years before the establishment of the first

global environmental conference under the UN, known as COP, and two years before the establishment of United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).

The event featured a distinguished lineup of speakers, including Saber Hossain Chowdhury, MP, who serves as Bangladesh Prime Minister's Special Envoy for Climate Change; Waseqa Ayesha Khan, MP, who holds the position of Vice Chairperson at Climate Parliament Bangladesh; Prof. Dr. Saleemul Huq, OBE, a prominent global climate scientist and Director at the International Centre for Climate Change and Development (ICCCAD) of IUB; Dr. Sebastian Groh, Founder CEO of SOLSHARE LTD.; Wahidul Hasan, the recipient of the prestigious NASA EPSCoR grant; and Prof. Saifur Rahman, who serves as President and CEO of the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE).

The event officially began with the convener launching the conference in a similar style of a Rotary meeting.

"To address climate issues, it requires a blend of scientific insights, indigenous knowledge,

and international collaborations focused on mitigation and adaptation strategies," shared IUB VC Tanweer Hasan during his speech.

The Chief Guest, Saber Hossain Chowdhury, made a virtual appearance. In his video message, he emphasised the urgency of preserving our planet. "When we talk about preserving climate earth, we are talking about the only home that we have," he added.

The following five sessions adopted a Ted Talk-style format, with each session lasting 20 minutes.

Prof. Saleemul started the first session titled "Planet Under Pressure: Climate Change & the Problems in Hastens," where he pointed out that along with mitigation, we have to create adaptation strategies to deal with the inevitable losses and damages caused by climate change. He stressed that investing in climate solutions has the potential to be profitable.

The second session was led by Professor Saifur Rahman who delved into technological climate solutions. His presentation, titled "Climate Change & Net Zero Transition: A Roadmap for Industrializing Nations",

centred on strategies for transitioning to cleaner technologies.

Delivering her remarks through a video message, Waseqa shared, "Policies should highlight the needs of the new future and outline a strategy to fulfil the energy needs of Bangladesh." She further highlighted the impressive advancements that Bangladesh has achieved in the power and energy sector.

Next, Dr. Groh took the floor for his session titled "Global Surge in Climate Investment: Funds Flow to Address Planetary Crisis".

During his presentation, Dr. Groh highlighted the immense untapped market potential in Bangladesh for technological climate solutions, emphasising that this presents a multi-billion dollar opportunity for foreign investments. He conveyed, "A liveable climate is the best investment." Adding to his claims, he provided data illustrating the growing investments in climate change initiatives over the years and emphasised, "Where there is investment, there is employability."

Continuing the conversation, Wahidul joined the conference live from the USA, to highlight the

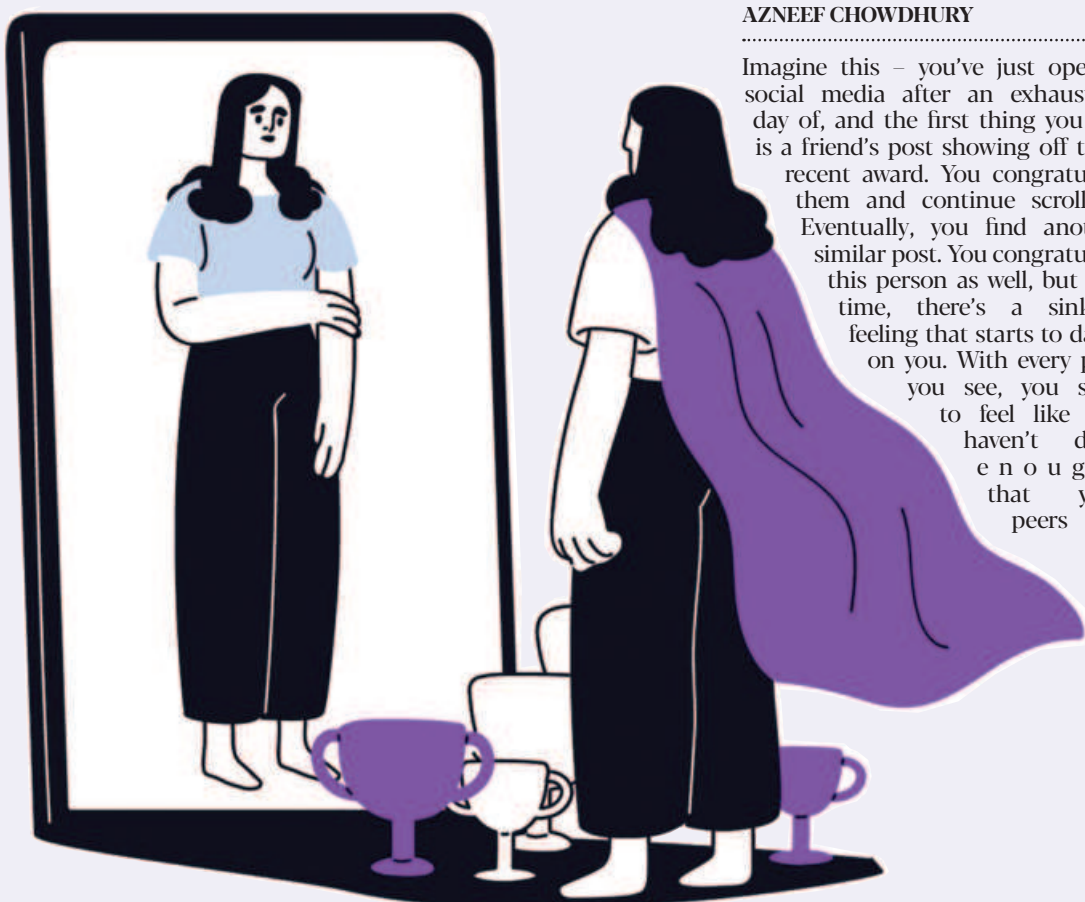
potential for employment within this field. He is currently pursuing his PhD at the South Dakota School of Mines and Technology. During his virtual presentation, he discussed the emerging opportunities that this industry presents to young individuals.

The conference featured sessions that delved into how climate change presents a distinctive opportunity in Bangladesh, allowing us to transform challenges into advantages.

One of the notable attendees at the conference was Professor Mubarak Ahmad Khan, a renowned jute scientist internationally acclaimed for developing biodegradable jute bags or "Sonali Bag". He was invited to the stage, where he showcased the development of the jute-based biodegradable "Sonali Bag" as a prime example of how we can harness our potential.

In his concluding statements, Ambassador (Retd.) Tariq Ahmed Karim, Director of the Centre for Bay of Bengal Studies, emphasised the importance of taking initiative at the local level, and stated, "We have to form local coalitions, local partnerships, local startups and start things first."

Dealing with impostor syndrome



AZNEEF CHOWDHURY

Imagine this – you've just opened social media after an exhausting day of, and the first thing you see is a friend's post showing off their recent award. You congratulate them and continue scrolling. Eventually, you find another similar post. You congratulate this person as well, but this time, there's a sinking feeling that starts to dawn on you. With every post you see, you start to feel like you haven't done enough, that your peers are

lightyears ahead, and ultimately, you start feeling out of place – an "impostor" amongst your friends.

If you're someone who relates to this, then there's a high chance you're suffering from impostor syndrome – and you're not alone. Around a third of young people face this, and it can sometimes lead to depression, anxiety, and lack of motivation. Luckily, impostor syndrome is preventable and fixable.

As with a lot of things, mindful social media use has a part to play in this. What we often see on social media is only the cherry-picked, perfect side of the coin. It's important to remind yourself that behind every success you see, there is usually a stack of failures hidden behind it. Our peers have also had their fair share of highs and lows. Learning to pick the right role models – people who are accessible, uplifting, and realistic – can also play a big role in preventing that sense of emptiness.

Appreciating smaller wins is also helpful in curbing impostor syndrome. Given how it's the smaller successes that lead to a large one, it can be helpful to celebrate them.

Taking a break from the endless grind can also be a great way to prevent impostor syndrome. Decluttering

our minds from the stress we endure regularly can reenergise us. For a lot of people, a short break can change their entire perspective, whilst for others, it can provide insight on how to improve their skills for the future.

The best method, in my opinion, however, is simply venting it out. More often than not, we're blinded by tunnel vision and find it easier to shift blame towards ourselves for our alleged failures. Talking to a friend, a mentor, or even someone who is feeling the same feelings as us can offer a different perspective to our problems and help us view if we really are the "fraud" we think we are.

In conclusion, the key to uprooting impostor syndrome from our mental chemistry is to be optimistic and open. Having patience, consistency and converting our frustrations to useful actions is the key to preventing that feeling of lostness to come knocking at us. As humans, the trust we put in ourselves is key to changing the tides of our lives, and dealing with impostor syndrome follows the same philosophy.

Reference:

Harvard Business Review (January 03, 2022) *You're Not an Impostor. You're Actually Pretty Amazing.*



Prof. Dr Md Zahid Hussain Sharif appointed as UCTC VC

Prof. Dr Md Zahid Hussain Sharif has been appointed as Vice-Chancellor of University of Creative Technology, Chittagong (UCTC) by Mohammed Shahabuddin, the President of Bangladesh. Prof. Dr Md Zahid Hossain Sharif is a public health specialist and a veteran freedom fighter. He is credited with two books and 48 scientific papers in local and international scientific journals.



“When we came into the series, it was always a goal to win every match you play and we certainly hope to. We know how tough it is to play here like we had seen in the last two series having lost here emphasises that. As a group, we would like to take the opportunity to do that tomorrow. We had a tough time before and the focus for us, regardless of whether we are winning or losing a series is the way we want to go about things. It doesn't change considering whoever the team is, it's about everyone knowing what their role is. It's an exciting opportunity for the group to have an opportunity to win a series here.”

New Zealand wicketkeeper BATTER HENRY NICHOLLS



Veteran Mahmudullah Riyad, who played a 49-run knock in the previous game, will hope to play a commanding knock to help Bangladesh win their third and final ODI against New Zealand and level the series in Mirpur today The Kiwis, meanwhile, were all jolly during practice yesterday as they look to clinch their first bilateral series win on Bangladesh soil in 15 years.

PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

Salahuddin backs Riyad for WC inclusion

SPORTS REPORTER

A lot of confusion persisted for days but Bangladesh selectors are finally set to announce the World Cup squad today when the Tigers take on New Zealand in the third and final ODI in Mirpur.

According to prominent coach and former Bangladesh fielding coach Mohammad Salahuddin, the entire selection process ahead of such a big event has been messy.

“Maybe if you had asked me six months ago, I would have said that we were in a position to do something special in the World Cup. But with what happened in the last six months, are we really in a position to do something special? That is my question as the team is yet to get settled and we don't have much time. And I think the entire process regarding the World Cup team has been a mess, Salahuddin said when asked about the Tigers' chances in the World Cup during a multimedia show by The Daily Star yesterday.

Even though top-order batter Najmul Hossain Shanto said in a press conference yesterday that the players are well aware of the roles they need to play in the World Cup, Salahuddin suggested otherwise.

“I think there are still a few players who are not sure in which position they are going to play. So, there are doubts among the players and when

‘Better to return home with something than nothing’

SPORTS REPORTER from Hangzhou

Since the inclusion of cricket in Asian Games, Bangladesh cricket teams never returned home empty-handed, and the women's team have helped retain the tradition by winning a bronze medal in the 19th Asian Games Hangzhou yesterday.

The Tigresses handed a five-wicket defeat to former gold medallists Pakistan, thanks to an all-round display by Shorna Akter, who took three wickets to restrict Pakistan to 64 for nine in 20 overs and then scored an unbeaten 14 to steer Bangladesh to the victory target with five wickets in hand and 10 balls spare.

Though Bangladesh's target was to improve on their two silver medals in the two editions that cricket had been staged previously – in 2010 and 2014 – the third-place finish will come as a consolation as the country's first medals in this edition.

“Every team comes with an aim to win the highest honour. But it is pleasing for us to come back again and rectify the mistakes we made on Sunday (against India). It is better to return home with something than nothing. The whole team is proud and happy,” captain Nigar Sultana Joty said after the victory.

Asked whether the team had regrets for not being able to play in third successive final, the Bangladesh captain said, “Of course there is regret because people think of gold after winning silver, but we slipped to the bronze medal match. But more importantly we are not returning home empty-handed and at the back of mind, we feel good that we have won the bronze medal.”



SHANTO

a portrait of assuredness

ABDULLAH AL MEHDI

Bangladesh cricket team had big dreams and expectations surrounding the upcoming ODI World Cup in India.

“Hopefully, this time our goal will be to win the 2023 World Cup,” former ODI captain Tamim Iqbal had said back in 2021.

The experienced stars' performances and youngsters coming through the ranks had prompted many of the national team players speak positively about Bangladesh's World Cup possibilities.

Some of that expectation had been curbed by the performances in the recent Asia Cup. Following the multi-nation event, coach Chandika Hathurusingha had said in an interview that those who are dreaming of winning the World Cup should wake up from their sleep.

It was an unprecedented remark, considering it came from the head coach and that too very close to the World Cup. Tamim, who recently stepped down from captaincy, was surprised by the comment and asked how a dream can be fulfilled if it is not there?

Yesterday, Najmul Hossain Shanto came to the press conference as the 16th ODI captain of Bangladesh, with Liton Das rested for the third ODI against New Zealand. Shanto projected the kind of assuredness that puts his struggle with trolling and finding a foothold in international cricket in context.

Despite the dent in Tigers' aspirations, Shanto seemed vibrant. Just like he is getting used to scoring runs in international cricket, Shanto was responding

to the questions without a seed of doubt.

When asked to comment on Hathurusingha's remarks, Shanto responded with an emphatically positive tone.

“No, actually we are still seeing the same dream which we were seeing before. The players wanted to finish within the top four when we started the World Cup qualification [ODI Super League] and we finished in top three. Since then we dreamt of getting good results in the World Cup, something we didn't do before but we have the ability. We still have the same dream,” Shanto said nonchalantly.

Shanto's assuredness at this moment is encapsulated by the very struggles he faced when he did not perform as a player. His responsibility would be big too. The number three batting position is key to settling the batting side for big things. His role would be a pivotal one to avoid a batting slump like those that have been seen in recent games.

“After getting a good start, our work is to build big partnerships. That would be the goal and that's what everyone is working on. Those of us who are batting in the top-order would try to ensure that whoever gets set, would look to see how big an innings we can play. Hoping it [top-order slump] would be rectified soon,” the left-handed batter said.

Enjoying his journey in international cricket, Shanto wore the burden of being made the captain for one match like an emblem, showing mental toughness that would be necessary to reinstate the broken momentum ahead of the World Cup.



you have doubts, you can't focus on your game. So, it's really very difficult. We were a good side in ODIs, so, naturally, the expectations from the fans are high. It's important to settle things soon,” Salahuddin added.

According to sources, chances are high that Mahmudullah Riyad will make it into the squad following his 49-run knock in the second ODI against New Zealand.

Salahuddin also backed Mahmudullah and informed that having experience in the side will help the team do well in pressure situations.

“As I said, we have fifty thousand runs in the team between the four experienced players and if you cut down that to two then it will come down to 15 thousand or less, meaning you would be going with less experience in the World Cup.

“Experience does matter and it's very important, especially the players who play in the middle or down the order need to be able to perform under pressure. The role of the batters down the order is such that his knock of 20 could win or even lose you a game. So, it's important that the batter uses his head to navigate the innings,” he said.

According to the most successful coach in the domestic competition, the seniors must make sure their individual performance helps the team win a major competition.

ECB vows to ‘change’ cricket

AFP, London

English cricket chiefs have vowed to “change” the game after a damning report revealed racism, sexism, classism and elitism in the sport.

The Independent Commission for Equity in Cricket (ICEC) published its report in June revealing “widespread” discrimination in the game.

The commission, set up by the England and Wales Cricket Board, made 44 recommendations, including a call for an “unqualified public apology” from the board for its failings, which the ECB made immediately.

The ECB published its response on Monday, saying it would be “taking forward most of the ICEC's recommendations”. “The ICEC report was a massive moment for the sport and a responsibility we take extremely seriously, to bring about the changes we all want to see,” said ECB chief executive Richard Gould.

‘Scoreline does not reflect girls’ real performance’

SPORTS REPORTER from Hangzhou

Bangladesh women's football team suffered a second successive defeat in the Asian Games, losing 6-1 against Vietnam at the Wenzhou Olympic Sports Center Stadium on Monday.

Following an 8-0 drubbing at the hands of Japan, the women in red and green came into the match with hopes of putting on a better show against Vietnam, who beat Nepal 2-0 in their first match.

The charges of Saiful Bari Titu did put on a better performance than they did against Japan but still could not stop Vietnam from raking up the goals. Vietnam, who played the latest FIFA Women's World Cup, went 2-0 up in the first half before adding four more in the second half.

“The scoreline does not justify the performance put in by the girls,” said head coach Saiful Bari Titu. “We conceded the first goal after a silly mistake while the second was struck from a long ball.

“From the start of the second half, we pressed high and that forced Vietnam to defend deep. We had also better ball passion, passing, and throwing, and even we created a few chances though we could not convert any.

“What we could not do against Japan, we did it against Vietnam, even Nepal could not do

what we did against Vietnam. But the scoreline does not reflect the real performance of the girls,” Titu added.

CAREER-BEST SCORE FOR SHOOTER ARNAB

Despite having little to no hopes from the men's 10m Air Rifle individual and team events, Bangladesh shooter Sharar Arnab ended up scoring his career-best of 626.2 points to finish 18th among 54 shooters in the Asian Games yesterday. Shooters Tamjid Bin Alam and Robiul Islam finished 22nd and 28th, respectively, by scoring 625.5 and 623.9. Bangladesh finished seventh among 14 teams, scoring a total of 1875.6 points.

SWIMMER RAFI FINISHES LAST IN HEAT

Swimmer Samiul Islam Rafi, who on Sunday improved his 100m backstroke timing, finished 22nd among 32 swimmers in the 50m backstroke event by clocking 27.20 seconds in Heat-3, finishing last among eight participants.

BOXER ABU TALHA IN 2ND ROUND

BOXER Abu Talha was given a bye in his first round of the 51kg weight category, like New York-based boxer Zinnat Ferdous. Talha will now compete in the pre-quarterfinal against winner of the match between Dayanch Annaseyidov of Turkmenistan and Khalid Abdul Aziz of Saudi Arabia on September 28.



Two towering headers from Alvaro Morata, who was left unmarked on both occasions, early in each half saw hosts Atletico Madrid outclass their city rivals Real Madrid in a 3-1 win at the Metropolitano stadium in LaLiga on Sunday. Real Madrid, who entered the weekend as leaders, are now third on 15 points, one behind Barcelona and Girona.

PHOTO: AFP



ঢাকার ধমনীতে নতুন গতি
 প্রথম ঢাকা এলিভেটেড এক্সপ্রেসওয়ের শুভসূচনা
 সিমেন্ট ও রেডিমিক্স কংক্রিট
 অন্যতম নির্মাণ সহযোগী
শাহ ডিমেট

'You have 36 days to quit ill politics'

Quader to BNP

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Awami League General Secretary Obaidul Quader yesterday issued a 36-day ultimatum to the BNP to abandon its "ill politics, terrorism, and anarchy".



He warned that if the BNP does not correct itself within this period, then the party would face dire consequences.

Quader made the comments while addressing a "Peace and Development" rally organised by Dhaka (north) city AL unit at Azampur in the capital's Uttara.

The current parliament expires on January 29 and the national election must be held during the final 90 days of the parliament's tenure. The 90-day countdown begins on November 1, which is 36 days away.

Quader said, "If the BNP comes with weapons, its hands will be broken and if it comes with fire, its hands will be burnt."

"How could BNP leaders and activists issue a 36-hour ultimatum demanding the release of [BNP Chairperson] Khaleda Zia? They could not even wage a

SEE PAGE 6 COL 1



Bangladesh pacer Marufa Akter celebrates with teammates after the dismissal of Pakistan's Sidra Ameen during their bronze-medal match of the Asian Games in Hangzhou, China yesterday. The pacer's effort and an all-round show from Shorna Akter helped the Tigresses win the match by five wickets to earn Bangladesh their first medal from the continental multi-sport event. Story on Page 11.

PHOTO: AFP

KHALEDA'S TREATMENT ABROAD

Law minister talks of legal complexities

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Law Minister Anisul Huq said the government cannot do anything about the issue of sending BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia abroad for better medical treatment as she is obligated to stay in the country as per the nature of her conditional release.



Her existing conditional release must therefore be revoked before the terms of her release can be changed and new considerations can be made, the minister told journalists in response to their queries at the Secretariat yesterday.

On Sunday, BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir urged the government to arrange Khaleda's treatment abroad within 48 hours, warning that it would be held responsible if anything happened to her.

In this regard, Anisul said, "The application for suspending Khaleda's jail sentence has to be sent to the home ministry. The home ministry will then send the application to the law ministry for legal opinion."

SEE PAGE 6 COL 6

Dengue spreading fast to districts around capital

MOHIUDDIN ALAMGIR and DIPAN NANDY

The dengue situation in Narayanganj, Gazipur and Manikganj has been deteriorating in the absence of adequate measures taken by the authorities concerned.

According to the Directorate General of Health Services, Manikganj saw a 155 percent rise in dengue cases from August 31 to yesterday, while Narayanganj and Gazipur saw an 80 percent and a 60 percent rise respectively.

During the same period, the number of cases throughout the country saw a 56.13 percent rise.

The rising number of patients has been straining the hospitals in Narayanganj and Gazipur cities, along with Manikganj district, which currently has the second highest number of dengue cases after Dhaka.

GM Saifur Rahman, entomologist at the National University, said the unplanned urbanisation has been playing a significant role in the spread of dengue in districts adjacent to the capital, as Aedes mosquitoes are getting suitable breeding grounds there.

"Many people come to Dhaka for work every day, and when they return, they might be carrying dengue virus back home."

Meanwhile, there are hardly any effective anti-aedes or awareness programmes outside the capital, he added.

Though hospitals in the capital are already facing a deluge of patients, those from outside Dhaka, even in critical condition, are constantly coming in, according to health officials.

Kazi AKM Russel, resident medical officer of the 250-bed Manikganj General Hospital, said they currently have 145 dengue patients, though they have only 100 beds dedicated for them.

DGHS data shows that in Manikganj there were 1,944 dengue cases until August 31, while the number stood at 3,009 as of yesterday.

Meanwhile in Narayanganj, there were 640 cases recorded till August 31, which rose to 1,152 yesterday.

In Gazipur, it was 2,023 till August 31, and increased to 3,389 yesterday.

Though a DGHS study found Aedes larvae in at least 14.28 percent of homes in Gazipur and 13.47 percent in Narayanganj, government measures to curb the infection have been lacking in those areas.

The study was conducted between July 23 and 28 in 41 wards of Gazipur city, and between July 30 and August 3 in 27 wards in Narayanganj city.

Narayanganj Civil Surgeon AFM Musiur Rahman expressed concern over the daily spike in dengue patients.

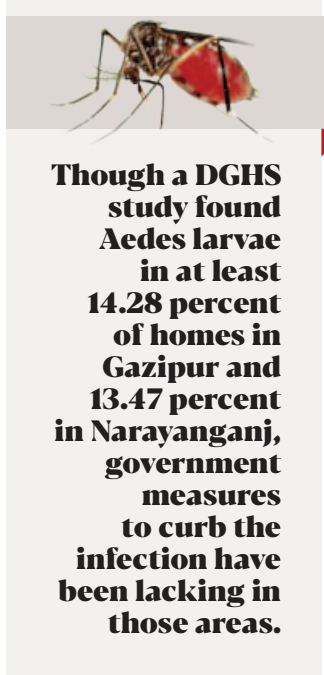
"If dengue transmission is not controlled, the situation may worsen."

Abdul Aziz, acting chief executive officer of Narayanganj City Corporation, said the areas identified to have mosquito breeding grounds are regularly being treated with larvicide and adulticide and regular fogging is being conducted.

Madan Chandra Das, inspector of waste management for the Gazipur City Corporation, said they have ward councilors in charge of mosquito control. "We are unable to take further measures due to a shortage of manpower."

Ramzan Ali, mayor of Manikganj municipality, said they are conducting regular fumigation activities and awareness programmes.

(Our Narayanganj, Gazipur and Manikganj correspondents contributed to this report.)



Though a DGHS study found Aedes larvae in at least 14.28 percent of homes in Gazipur and 13.47 percent in Narayanganj, government measures to curb the infection have been lacking in those areas.

ELECTION DAY EC to allow journos to use bikes

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Election Commission has decided to change its guideline to allow journalists to use motorcycles on the election day.



Election Commissioner Anisur Rahman yesterday said the commission would issue a notification in this regard today.

In April, the EC in its new policy banned journalists from using motorbikes on the polling day.

Since the guideline was made public, journalists have been protesting the EC decision, saying it is a move to curb the freedom of the press.

On August 25, Chief Election Commissioner Kazi Habibur Awal had hinted that the commission might change its decision on banning journalists from using motorbikes.

He made the comments after a meeting with British High Commissioner Sarah Cooke at the Nirbachan Bhaban.

At the meeting, the UK envoy wanted to know whether media personnel needed permission to enter a polling centre, the CEC told journalists after the meeting.

Country seeing rise of oligarchs like never before

Says Debapriya at Citizen's Platform for SDGs event

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh has seen the emergence of oligarchs over the last 10 to 15 years, said Debapriya Bhattacharya, the convener of the Citizen's Platform for SDGs Bangladesh.

"Oligarchs are the wealthy people and politically powerful. And we did not see such groups in Bangladesh in the past the way we are witnessing now," he said yesterday while making a presentation on a book styled "Bangladesh's Development Narrative and the Parallel Realities: Perspectives of the Disadvantaged Communities" at the Krishibid Institution Bangladesh.

The book is the result of the discussions the platform held in various parts of the country in 2022 and has been prepared in partnership with the Canada Fund for Local Initiatives, the Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD), Manusher Jonno Foundation, Transparency International Bangladesh and WaterAid Bangladesh.

While Debapriya did not name anyone, he said the oligarchs are easily identifiable.

The scale at which Bangladeshis have

accumulated wealth in recent times, as depicted by the rise in millionaire bank accounts and the newspaper reports on people holding much larger resources not just here but all over the world, is a departure from the vision of Bangabandhu, who wanted to build a just and equitable society, said Rehman Sobhan, chairman of CPD.

The distribution of public resources, the resources going into the safety net system and the proportion going to a narrow segment of the elite in the form of capacity payments and written-off loans should be the campaign issues for civil societies.

Putting a great deal of emphasis on infrastructures in any development process is important, he said. "Otherwise, growth will not take place and there will not be job opportunities and poverty reductions."

However, not all infrastructure projects are equally beneficial and not all deserve equal priorities, Sobhan added.

"A lack of overall democratic accountability and good governance led to the failure of public institutions and protecting the rights

SEE PAGE 6 COL 4

"A lack of overall democratic accountability and good governance led to the failure of public institutions and protecting the rights of disadvantaged groups and citizens."

Debapriya Bhattacharya convener of the Citizen's Platform for SDGs Bangladesh

Not worried about US visa policy

Says outgoing CJ

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Outgoing Chief Justice Hasan Foez Siddique yesterday said he is not worried



about the US visa policy as he will never go to the country.

"Our country has become independent in exchange for blood, not because of anybody's mercy. Those, who had opposed the independence of Bangladesh, are still opposing this country."

"I never went to the United States and will not go there in future," he said while talking to reporters at the Supreme Court on his last day in office.

Replying to a query, he said he worked tirelessly for the interest of the judiciary while he was discharging his duties as the chief justice.

"I motivated and encouraged the judges to reduce the backlog of pending cases."

Adilur, Elan move HC, challenge conviction

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Odhikar's Secretary Adilur Rahman Khan and its Director ASM Nasiruddin Elan filed an appeal with the High Court yesterday challenging the trial court verdict that sentenced them to two years imprisonment in a case filed under the ICT Act.

The two were sued for running "a distorted report and doctored images" on the police action at a Hefajat-e-Islam rally on May 5-6, 2013, in the capital's Motijheel.

Adilur and Elan submitted the appeal through their lawyers to the section concerned of the HC.

The appeal seeks scrapping of the lower court verdict and the acquittal of the two.

Md Ruhul Amin Bhuiyan, the principal counsel for Adilur and Elan,

SEE PAGE 6 COL 1



Dengue patients sitting on the floor of Manikganj General Hospital as the number of affected people has been on the rise in several districts outside Dhaka due to inadequate measures taken to curb the viral infection.

PHOTO: ZAHANGIR ALAM BISWAS