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US slaps sanctions on ex-army chief Aziz, family

Cites 'involvement in significant corruption'

ALLEGATIONS

Undermining

Bangladesh's

democratic

institutions

Interfering in public

processes to help

his brother evade

accountability for

crime committed

Working with his

brother to ensure

military contracts

improper awarding of

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The US yesterday imposed sanctions on former Bangladesh army chief General (retd) Aziz Ahmed and his immediate involvement in

significant corruption. "This action [imposing sanctionsl renders Aziz and his immediate family members generally ineligible for entry into the United States," read a press statement of the US

State Department. It said the actions contributed the undermining Bangladesh's democratic institutions and the public's faith in public institutions and processes.

"Aziz Ahmed engaged in significant corruption interfering public processes while helping his brother accountability for criminal activity in Bangladesh.

"Aziz also worked closely with his brother to ensure the improper awarding of military contracts and accepted

bribes in exchange for government appointments for his personal benefit."

US State Department Spokesperson Matthew Miller announced the public designations made under Section 7031(c) of the annual Department of State,

Foreign Operations, and Related Programs Appropriations Act.

A public designation refers to identification and notification regarding individuals complicit in significant family members for what it said was corruption or gross violations of human

rights. The press statement said this designation reaffirms commitment strengthening

democratic institutions and the rule of law in Bangladesh. United "The States supports anticorruption efforts in Bangladesh through assistance to

government services more transparent and affordable, improve the business and regulatory environment, and build capacity in investigating and prosecuting money laundering and other financial crimes.'

The sanctions came just days after the visit of US Assistant Secretary of State for South and Central Asia Donald Lu, who had spoken about supporting Bangladesh in its fight against

Speaking to the media at his home in the capital yesterday, Aziz said, "I am surprised." Refuting the allegations, he said the move could have been made to embarrass SEE PAGE 2 COL 5



structures and bamboo and timber trades, among others, have eaten up long stretches of the waterbody. Various initiatives by the Water Development Board to stop the encroachments have fallen flat. The photo was taken in Narayanganj's Signboard area a few days ago.

Fixed expenses to eat up 40pc of next budget

REJAUL KARIM BYRON

The government has to spend about 40 percent of the next budget on subsidies, interest payments, and salaries and allowances of government employees, which will limit its ability to spend on social safety net, health and education.

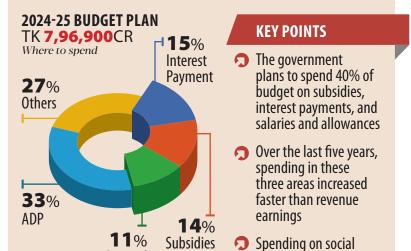
According to a finance ministry plan, the government may allocate Tk 3,14,700 crore for the three sectors from the total budget of Tk 7,96,900 crore in fiscal 2024 Of the allocation, Tk 1,16,000

crore will be spent on interest payments, Tk 1,11,000 crore on subsidies and incentives, and Tk 87,700 crore for paying government employees.

Over the last five years, expenditures on wages, pensions, subsidies, and interest increased faster than the revenue earnings, narrowing the government's fiscal

Ahsan H Mansur, executive director of the Policy Research Institute of Bangladesh, said, "If the non-discretionary expenditures eat up most of the budget allocation, then not much is left."

He said they had predicted a sharp rise in expenditures on wages, subsidies, and interest five to seven years ago.



and

government to fall into this pit, and it would take another 10 years to get

Pay and

However, the country needs to address the problem and for this, a reform initiative is needed, he

He suggested bringing down domestic borrowings, subsidies and other unnecessary expenditures, and increasing revenue.

officials ministry Finance

"It took about 10 years for the said the government was unable to increase allocation for safety programmes, healthcare, and education due to resource constraints though it intended to spend more in those sectors.

protection will be

The government spending on interest payments, both foreign and domestic, has been increasing every

Interest payment rates have risen

in recent years, and the finance SEE PAGE 2 COL 2

Plot thickens over AL MP Azim going missing

RASHIDUL HASAN and MOHAMMAD JAMIL KHAN

Intelligence agencies fear worst for Awami League MP Anwarul Azim Anar

Anwarul Azim

who has gone missing in India, said a source in a local law enforcement agency. "An Indian security

agency has collected the details of four suspects. It also detained one for interrogation," the source told The Daily Star.

Contacted, at the Bangladesh High Commission in New Delhi and the Deputy High Commission in Kolkata yesterday said they were yet to receive any official confirmation from the Indian government about the Jhenaidah-4 lawmaker's status and whereabouts.

Speaking to this newspaper last night, Home Asaduzzaman Minister Khan said, "We are hopeful we will be able to solve the

SEE PAGE 2 COL 5

They needed to sanction someone and picked me Aziz tells Star

SHAHEEN MOLLAH and ARAFAT RAHAMAN

Former army chief Gen (retd) Aziz Ahmed yesterday rejected the allegations the US authorities made while imposing sanctions against him and his immediate family members.

"I am surprised. Why am I being sanctioned almost three years after retirement? I'm not involved in any kind of politics and business," he told The Daily Star in an interview last night, hours after the US state department announced the sanctions.

The US state department in a release said Aziz's actions contributed to the undermining of Bangladesh's democratic institutions and the people's faith in public institutions and processes; he engaged in significant corruption by interfering in public processes to help his brother evade accountability for criminal activity; he worked closely with his brother to ensure the improper awarding of military contracts; and he accepted bribes in exchange for government appointments for his personal benefit.

স্মারক নং-৩৫.০১.০৬৫১.৪০৩.৩১.০২৮.২৩-২০১০

গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার

নির্বাহী প্রকৌশলীর কার্যালয়, সওজ

সড়ক বিভাগ, বরিশাল

ফোনঃ ০৪৩১-৬৪১৮৫, ফ্যাব্রঃ ০৪৩১-৬১৮৪৪

e-mail: eebar@rhd.gov.bd

গণ-বিজ্ঞপ্তি

মোতাবেক বরিশাল সড়ক বিভাগাধীন সড়ক ও জনপথ অধিদপ্তরের ভূমিতে স্থাপিত

রিফুয়েলিং স্টেশনের (প্রবেশপথ সহ) ইজারা এবং ব্যক্তি মালিকানাধীন ভূমিতে স্থাপিত

রিফুয়েলিং ষ্টেশনে যাতায়াতের প্রবেশপথের ভূমির ইজারাকৃত যে সকল ইজারাদার

২০২২-২০২৩ পর্যন্ত ইজারা নবায়ন করেননি তাদেরকে জুন, ২০২৪খ্রিঃ এর মধ্যে সকল

বকেয়া ইজারা মাণ্ডল পরিশোধ করে নবায়নের প্রয়োজনীয় ব্যবস্থা গ্রহণের জন্য অনুরোধ

'Political equations' could be at play

Believe AL leaders ARTHA PRATIM BHATTACHARJEE

A section of top Awami League leaders think there might be some "political equations" behind the US sanctions on former army chief Aziz Ahmed and his immediate family members.

They also expressed that concern similar measures might be on the way for some other incumbent and former

Some leaders believe the latest sanctions indicate that the US stance toward the AL government has not changed much since the

তারিখঃ ২০/০৫/২০২৪খ্রিঃ

মাসুদ মাহমুদ সুমন

পরিচিতি নং-৬০২১৬৫

নিৰ্বাহী প্ৰকৌশলী, সওজ

সড়ক বিভাগ, বরিশাল

SEE PAGE 6 COL 1

SEE PAGE 2 COL 2

GREETINGS

The Daily Star wishes its valued readers, patrons, well-wishers and advertisers on

BUDDHA PURNIMA

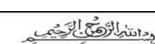
Buddha এতদ্বারা সংশ্লিষ্ট সকলের অবগতির জন্য জানানো যাচ্ছে যে, সড়ক পরিবহন ও সেতু **Purnima** মন্ত্রণালয়, সড়ক পরিবহন ও মহাসড়ক বিভাগ, সম্পত্তি শাখা'র স্মারক today নং-৩৫.০১.০০০০.০২৩.১৮.০০৯.২৪.১১১, তারিখঃ ১৬/০৫/২০২৪খ্রিঃ এর নির্দেশনা

AGENCIES

Buddha Purnima, the biggest religious festival of the Buddhist community, will be celebrated across the country today.

Purnima Buddha the enlightenment and death of Gautama Buddha. On this day in 563 BC, Buddha was born as Siddhartha

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1



1st DEATH ANNIVERSARY

Tribute to Al-Hajj Mohammad Shahjahan Khan, former President of Dhaka Chamber of Commerce & Industry and Bangladesh Thai Chamber of Commerce & Industry and Barishal Zila Samity; former Managing Director of S.S. Shipping & Trading Ltd., S.S. Shipping & Chartering Ltd. and Fatema Real Estate & Developers Ltd.; and former Chairman of S.S. Builders & Developers Ltd. and prominent social worker.



(19.02.1950 - 22.05.2023)

Tribute from **Family Members** and

All the officers and employees of his organisations

GD-536

করা হলো।

Decomposed bodies

Police recovered the decomposed bodies of a woman and two children from the Kakchar area

in Mymensingh's Trishal upazila yesterday.The victims were identified as Amena Begum, 30, wife

of Ali Hossain, and their children Abu Bakkar,

4, and Anas, 2, of Kakchar Nayapara village in

On information, police recovered the bodies

Police suspect they were murdered somewhere

The bodies have been sent to Mymensingh

else a few days ago and the bodies were later

buried at Kakchar, a remote area of Trishal, said

Medical College Hospital morgue for autopsy.

around 3:00pm, said Kamal Hossain, officer-in-

of woman, two

children found

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Mymensingh

The bodies were found buried.

charge of Trishal Police Station.

SANCTIONS AGAINST AZIZ Washington notified Dhaka beforehand

Says foreign minister STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Foreign Minister Hasan Mahmud yesterday said the decision regarding the US sanctions against ex-army chief Gen (retd) Aziz Ahmed was first conveyed to the Bangladesh embassy in Washington.

The sanction was imposed not under the visa policy, but under a different law, the minister said, adding that he did not know whether any sanctions were being imposed on

anyone under the US visa policy. Hasan was speaking at a "Meet the Reporters" event at the Dhaka Reporters Unity.

"If the visa policy is imposed for destroying the democratic process, then I think this policy should be imposed against those who beat police personnel to death, attack hospitals and the residence of a chief justice, and burn people to death," he said.

SEE PAGE 7 COL 3



With no voters in the vicinity, security personnel sit idle at the polling centre at Dashgaon Noagaon High School in Sylhet's Gowainghat upazila during the upazila polls around 9:30am yesterday. PHOTO: SHEIKH NASIR

Police, the Police Bureau of Investigation (PBI)

the OC.

Trishal.

and Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) have started investigating the incident, said Md Rakibul Akter, superintendent of police at PBI Mymensingh.

Police are looking for Ali Hossain for questioning.

The filing of a case is underway, said law enforcers.

Gautama in Kopilabostu at the foothill of the Himalayas.

He attained supreme enlightenment at the age of 35 and finally departed into nirvana at the age of 80 in 483 BC. The day is a public holiday.

On the occasion, President Mohammed Shahabuddin and Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina in separate messages greeted the members of the Buddhist community.

his message, President Shahabuddin said Gautam Buddha always sought welfare for mankind and preached equity and friendship to establish peace and harmony in the

The ideals and philosophy of Buddha can play an important role in establishing peace in society, removing unrest and intolerance from the world, and saving people from moral degradation, he said.

Noting that Bangladesh is a country of communal harmony, the president said, "Ppeople of all religions in this country have been observing their respective religions and rituals with great splendour which is a bright tradition of the people of this country."

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, in her message, said, "In today's world, it is necessary to follow the teachings of Buddha to suppress the brute force maddened by violence, prevent the degradation of values, and build a peaceful society."

She added that the constitution They needed to sanction someone and picked me guarantees equal rights to people of all religions and castes, adding, "We believe religion is for individuals while festivals are for all."

On the day, newspapers will publish articles while Bangladesh Betar, Bangladesh Television (BTV) and private TV channels broadcast special programmes highlighting the significance of the day.

The celebrations usually start with lighting lamps, hoisting the national and religious flags atop the Mohabihar, and the recitation of sacred verses from

Tripitaka. The Buddhist devotees are expected to offer various gift items, including fruits, flowers, and candles, to statues

Buddha Purnima Fixed expenses to eat up 40pc of next budget US slaps sanctions

ministry projects that it may go up even more.

In the current fiscal year, the government allocated Tk 94,376 crore for interest payments, which crossed Tk 1,00,000 crore in the revised budget for the first time.

The finance ministry is going to increase the allocation by 23 percent in the next fiscal year.

Seeking anonymity, a finance ministry official said the increase in the government's treasury bond interest rate and taka's depreciation could drive up the allocation for interest payments when the next year's budget will be revised.

Finance ministry data shows that in July-January of the current fiscal year, interest payments totalled Tk 60,555 crore, a year-on-year increase of 26 percent.

The payment on the domestic front rose 15 percent to Tk 51,213 crore. Interest payment on foreign loans went up threefold.

The cost of funds, mobilised through the sales of treasury bonds, has been on the rise. This has led to an increase in the interest expenditure.

The interest rate of treasury bonds has gone past 12 percent from 8 percent in June 2023, shows Bangladesh Bank data.

Aziz said Al Jazeera in a report titled

All the Prime Minister's Men" had

made similar allegations, and many,

including civil society members,

termed them "baseless, false and

the BGB for four years and as the army

chief for three years. I didn't help any

of my brothers secure contacts during

those years.... If anyone can prove

that corruption took place in buying

spyware [during that period], I would

be ready to face any consequences."

almost the entire process to have

"I served as the director general of

Though the sales of savings subsidy expenditure in the sector FROM PAGE 1 certificates are currently low and the interest rates against them have fallen. many of the schemes have matured. This means the government's expenses in this segment have also gone up.

As of September 30, the government's outstanding debt stock was Tk 16,55,156 crore.

In the current fiscal year, the government's allocation for subsidies and incentives is Tk 1,11,000 crore.

A finance ministry official said that though a final figure was not fixed, it was likely that the next year's allocation would be close to that of the current fiscal year.

In several years before FY19, the government didn't provide subsidy to the power sector.

From FY19 to FY22, the government subsidy in the sector was between Tk 7,000 crore and Tk 11,000 crore. In FY23, it rose to Tk 22.000 crore.

The subsidy in the power sector stands at Tk 35,000 crore in the current fiscal year. The government is likely to keep the amount of subsidy the same in the next budget.

Though the government hiked the prices of electricity, gas and fuel several times over the last two years,

instruments such as national savings is yet to come down due to huge arrears, said the official.

The government, however, is planning to reduce subsidy in power sector gradually. For this, it could hike electricity price on four to five times a year, the official added.

In the current fiscal year, allocation for government employees' salaries and allowance is Tk 80,463 crore. Officials said the allocation would

increase by 9 percent in the next fiscal

However, if pension and gratuity are included, the expenditure in the sector will surpass Tk 1,00,000 crore.

Though the government's expenditures in several priority sectors increased over the years, it could not make allocations for the health and education sectors in line with the Eighth Five-Year-Plan.

Due to resource constraint, the government cannot raise allocation for social safety net significantly.

In the case of old age allowance, elderly people get only Tk 600 a month.

Though the social welfare ministry asked for an increase in the monthly allowances under several safety net schemes, the finance ministry did not raise the allocation due to resource constraint.

him or to discredit the government as he had held an important position during the tenure of the Awami League government. Aziz was the chief of army staff

between June 2018 and June 2021. He led Border Guard Bangladesh between 2012 and 2016. Yesterday, he said he was ready to

accept any consequences if anyone could prove that he gave contracts to his brothers or relatives when he was the army chief and the director general of the BGB.

Aziz is the eldest of five brothers. His brothers Tofail Ahmed, also known as Joseph; Haris Ahmed and Anis Ahmed hogged headlines during the 1990s and the 2000s for murder, extortion, and posession of illegal firearms.

Joseph alone was accused in 10 cases filed in connection with extortion and possession of illegal firearms.

Joseph was sentenced to death and Haris and Anis to life imprisonment in a murder case in 2004. Aziz got media attention after

Joseph got clemency in the murder case in 2018 and Haris and Anis in

Al-Jazeera on February 1, 2021, aired documentary titled "All the Prime Minister's Men" in which it claimed that Aziz exerted influence to help his three convicted brothers get various contracts.

Media spotlight was back on him

again. He was the army chief then. The army headquarters and the foreign ministry refuted the allegations made by the Al-Jazeera, labelling it

"false" and "slanderous" TALE OF JOSEPH, HARIS, ANIS

Joseph was a Chhatra League leader of Mohammadpur. He entered the political arena under the guidance of his elder brother Haris. He later joined Subrata Bain's gang known as the "Seven Star", infamous for carrying out murders, abductions, extortion, illegal occupation of land and establishments,

and tender manipulation. Joseph and Haris became "toplisted criminals" in the 90s, according to media reports.

On May 7, 1996, Freedom Party leader Mostafizur Rahman Mostafa was shot dead in broad daylight in Mohammadpur. The following day. Mostafa's wife Rashida Parvin filed a murder case.

Haris and Anis had then fled the country, according to media reports, and they had been on the run in the visas.

eyes of the law for decades. Joseph was arrested and a Dhaka

court on April 25, 2004, sentenced him to death in the murder case while Haris and Anis were sentenced in absentia to life imprisonment.

The High Court in September 2007 upheld the death sentence of Joseph, but the Supreme Court on December 9, 2015, commuted his sentence to life imprisonment. After serving 20 years, Joseph

vas freed on May 27, 2018, following a presidential clemency with about one and a half years of his sentence remaining. A month later, Aziz became the army chief.

Jail sources at that time said the process of Joseph's release began on March 31, 2018, and the procedure for getting the president's clemency was initiated on June 7, 2016, by his mother.

Haris and Anis, who had been fugitives, in the murder case got clemency from the government under Section 401 of the Code of Criminal Procedure in March 2019.

Interpol issued a red notice for Haris on October 25, 2005, and withdrew it in 2019 following a Dhaka Metropolitan Police commissioner's request, according to a letter of National Central Bureau of Bangladesh Police, dated April 7, 2021.

Haris's name was on the list of the 'wanted persons" on the Bangladesh Police's website for several years. His name was removed after he on March 23, 2021, wrote to the home ministry and said the government had pardoned him and his brother Anis. He claimed himself to be a well-established businessman since the 90s and a "shining star" in the Awami League since the 80s.

The home ministry approved his request and forwarded the letter to the inspector general of police the same month, according to media reports.

The three brothers are now believed

to be abroad. OTHER SANCTIONS

The US on December 10, 2021 imposed sanctions on Rab and seven then incumbent and former top officials of the force for alleged violations of human rights, including extrajudicial killings and enforced disappearances.

In May last year, a few months ahead of the January 7 elections, Washington announced a visa policy, saying those undermining the democratic elections in Bangladesh would be denied US

of Lord Buddha on the day. military hardware was completed Second phase too marked by low turnout

spreading propaganda and falsehood about the elections so that people lose interest in polls, he told journalists at the AL president's Dhanmondi office after the voting ended.

If the CEC's estimate is proven to be correct, this would be the lowest turnout in upazila polls since 2009, said EC sources.

The turnout was 36 percent in the first phase of upazila elections held on May 8.

The figure was 70.57 percent in the 2009 upazila polls, which dropped to 61.23 percent in 2014. On average, it stood at 40 percent in the 2019 upazila polls conducted in five phases. In the January 7 national election,

the voter turnout was 42 percent. The BNP and many other political parties are staying off the upazila polls, like they did during the January

7 national election saying that the EC is "not capable of holding the elections in a free and fair manner". POLLS VIOLENCE In Cox's Bazar, Saifur Alam, 38, of

chairman candidate Abu Taleb, was stabbed to death by rivals in Eidgaon upazila yesterday evening. Speaking to The Daily Star, Taleb, president of the upazila unit AL, alleged that activists of his rival candidate Samsul Alam, who

contested the polls with "motorbike"

symbol, carried out the attack in

Mammora village, a supporter of

Mammora village.

fabricated".

Delwar, a supporter of Taleb, said, "A group of activists of the chairman aspirant who contested the polls with 'motorbike' symbol tried to abduct me. When Saifur came to my rescue, they stabbed him to death on the

Samsul could not be contacted over the phone for comments.

Rafiqul Islam, additional superintendent of Cox's Bazar police, said Saifur was killed in a clash between the supporters of two chairman candidates and it took place far away from the polling station.

Police were investigating the incident, he said.

In Chattogram, at least 15 people were injured as supporters of two chairman candidates clashed at Jobra Government Primary School polling centre in Hathazari upazila.

In Rajshahi, at least eight people were injured in two clashes between the supporters of two chairman contenders at two polling stations.

At least 12 houses of supporters of a chairman aspirant were set on fire allegedly by rivals in Para Kachua village of Gaibandha's Gobindaganj upazila.

In Jajira upazila of Shariatpur, at least five journalists and a policeman were injured in an attack allegedly by supporters of a chairman candidate.

In Cumilla, another journalist

June 26, 2018. "Coincidently, I took charge as

army chief on June 25. I was not involved in the process. It is quite unrealistic I would be involved in the process just within a day after taking

He, however, said the sanctions against him will not affect him anyway as his son is not studying in the US.

Aziz said he had not been to the US for treatment. He said he visited the North American country five to six The former army chief said that

> "Right now, I don't have any plan to visit the US... Who wants to take of me."

was physically assaulted at Shishpur

Government Primary School polling

centre of Cumilla Sadar South upazila.

In Gazipur, an assistant presiding

officer was injured in an attack by the

supporters of a chairman aspirant in

chairman was detained by law

enforcers for around four hours

over influencing Ramganj upazila

a mobile court directed police to file

a case against six polls officials on

charges of assisting a man in casting

According to unofficial results of

yesterday's polls till 11:45pm, almost

all the relatives of the AL lawmakers,

who took part in the elections defying

Majid Mahmud, younger brother of

Narsingdi-4 MP Nurul Majid Mahmud

Humayun, was elected chairman of

Jamalpur-1 MP Noor Mohammad,

became the winner in the chairman

polls to Bakshiganj Upazila Parishad.

Hasnayen Russel, son of Pabna-3 MP

Mokbul Hossain, became Bhangura

Incumbent Chairman Golam

Jamil Hasan Durjoy, brother

of Gazipur-3 lawmaker and State

Islam,

Incumbent Chairman Nazrul

brother

MPS' RELATIVES DID WELL

the party's directives, have won.

Manahardi upazila.

upazila chairman.

Nazrul

In Noakhali's Sonaimuri upazila,

In Laxmipur, a union parishad

Sreepur upazila.

parishad polls.

fake votes.

between December 29, 2016, and a 26-hour trip to the US unless it's necessary?" He went on to say, "They needed to

> known face. I am that person as they saw me on Al Jazeera. Maybe that's why they have imposed sanctions on "They also might have thought

> slap sanctions on someone who is a

that Aziz Ahmed could be sanctioned as he is a retired person and doesn't have any influence on anyone and the government will not back him." He added, "I don't care about what

they think of me. I only care about what the people of my country think

Sreepur upazila chairman. Ehsanul Hakim Sadhon, cousin of

Sirajul Islam Khan Raju, father of Bogura-3 MP Khan Mohammad Saifullah Al Mehedi, won Adamdighi

Chaudnaga-1 MP Solaiman Haque Joarder, was elected as Chuadanga Sadar upazila chairman.

to Daulatpur Upazila Parishad.

Incumbent Chairman Faizul Haque Rome, uncle-in-law of Narail-2 lawmaker Mashrafe Bin Mortaza, won Lohagara upazila chairman post.

However, incumbent Chairman Golam Sarwar, younger brother of Comilla-10 MP AHM Mustafa Kamal, lost the polls in Cumilla Sadar South upazila.

according to International Bangladesh. Our correspondents

this report.]

Minister for Primary and Mass Education Rumana Ali, was elected as

Rajbari-2 MP and Railways Minister Zillul Hakim, became Baliakandi upazila chairman.

upazila chairman post. Naeem Hasan Joarder, nephew of

Bulbul Ahmed Token, brother of Kushtia-1 MP Rezaul Haque Chowdhury, won the chairman polls

Seventeen chairman aspirants, who are relatives of AL lawmakers,

took part in yesterday's polls, Transparency respective districts contributed to

Plot thickens over AL MP Azim

FROM PAGE 1

mystery within a day or two."

Asked about the unconfirmed information that something very bad might have happened to Azim, the home boss said, "We too have heard the same, but we are yet to get any confirmation."

The MP's personal assistant, Abdur Rouf, had no information about his whereabouts till last night.

"MP's daughter Mumtarin Ferdous Doreen will visit the Indian High Commission in Dhaka tomorrow [today] to seek an Indian visa. She will travel to Kolkata as soon as she is granted the visa," he said.

Earlier in the day, Home Minister Asaduzzaman said, "The MP went to India after crossing the immigrations in Bangladesh and India properly. All government agencies are working on the matter.

National Security Intelligence, and the Special Branch of police are working with the Indian police and intelligence agencies," he told reporters at the Secretariat in the afternoon.

The three-time MP went to India on May 12 on a personal visit to receive treatment. A general diary was filed with Baranagar Police Station in North Kolkata on May 18 regarding his going missing.

According to the GD, Azim, also the president of Kaliganj upazila AL, went to his family friend Gopal Biswas' home in Kolkata around 7:00pm on May 12. At 1:41pm the following day, he left Gopal's home to visit a doctor. He had said he would return in the evening.

He boarded a taxi in front of the Calcutta Public School at Bidhan

In the evening, Azim in a WhatsApp message told Gopal that he was going to Delhi and would call him after reaching there. The lawmaker also mentioned in the message that Gopal need not call him, reads the GD.

On May 15, Azim in another WhatsApp message informed that he reached Delhi and was with VIPs and there was no need to call him. He forwarded the same message to his personal assistant Rouf.

On May 17, Doreen called Gopal saying that she could not contact her father. The MP has been traceless since then, the GD added.

According to the affidavit submitted to the Election Commission by the MP before the January 7 national election, he stood accused in 21 cases between 2000 and 2008. However, he was cleared in all those cases at different times.

Need accurate data on dengue patients: Taposh

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka South City Corporation Mayor Sheikh Fazle Noor Taposh yesterday requested the DGHS to provide accurate data on dengue patients so that they can take proper action.

"If correct and accurate data on dengue patients is provided, we can ensure more effective and efficient services at the field level," he said while addressing a views exchange meeting at Nagar Bhaban.

The mayor said last year they were told there were a lot of patients in the DSCC area, but they found 9,764 patients after verifying DGHS data till October last year.

"Also, we are getting information on those admitted to the hospital. However, those who leave the hospital from outdoors, are not included in the list."

"We don't want to hold any organisation or institute responsible. We want to control the spread of the Aedes mosquitoes with the assistance of everyone," said Taposh.

He asked the Rajuk representative for the list of under-construction buildings. In response, Rajuk assured to provide the list within 10 days.



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at a meeting with visiting Australian Foreign Minister Penny Wong at her official residence Gono Bhaban PHOTO: PID

CLIMATE CHANGE Developed countries fail to deliver on commitments Hasina tells visiting Australian minister

UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has expressed frustration over developed countries' failure to fulfill their commitments on issues relating to climate change.

The premier shared this sentiment with visiting Australian Foreign Minister Penny Wong during a meeting at Gano Bhaban yesterday, said PM's speech writer M Nazrul Islam.

Hasina said Bangladesh is vulnerable to climate change as it is often hit by cyclones and floods.

"We, however, did not sit idle... we have created our own Climate Trust Fund to save our people," Hasina told Wong.

Hasina said Bangladesh is a densely populated country. "So, we have to

SEE PAGE 4 COL 8

Clean energy means a sustainable future **Says Peter Haas**

UNB, Dhaka

US Ambassador Peter Haas emphasised the necessity of collaborative efforts from the government, private sector, and civil society to achieve a just energy transition in Bangladesh.

Speaking at the Indo-Pacific Business Forum held at the EMK Center in Dhaka, Haas highlighted the importance of good policies to incentivise smart investments, cross-border electricity trade, privatisation of underperforming stateassets, adoption of new technologies, and phasing out the most damaging fossil fuel power generation facilities.

Haas noted that this transition would take years but could be expedited through collective effort and shared knowledge.

stressed empowering Bangladesh with clean energy today means securing a brighter, generations to come.

Haas highlighted the importance of harnessing wind, hydrogen energy and reiterated the US government's commitment to supporting Bangladesh's clean energy transition.

Haas also mentioned the need for effective decarbonisation, seamless integration of intermittent resources, development of cleaner fuels like green hydrogen, access to finance for clean energy technologies, and regional energy trading agreements.

PVT HEALTH CENTRES IN SAVAR

91pc operate without environment clearance

AKLAKUR RAHMAN AKASH

At least 91 percent of private generated daily is being treated, hospitals and clinics in Savar are running without clearance from the Department of Environment.

Only 10 of the total 115 private hospitals and clinics in the upazila have necessary environmental to scrutinise and recommend clearance to run their operations, confirmed DoE sources.

Also, eight of the hospitals and clinics in the upazila are running without approval from Directorate General of Health Services, as per health department.

Since environmental clearance was not mandatory for obtaining a licence from DGHS earlier, most health centres in Savar have long been running without it. They merely had to submit a copy of their respective applications to the DoE seeking clearance to get the

However, the DGHS, at a meeting on March 16 last year. decided that it would neither grant nor renew licences to any private hospital, clinic, diagnostic centre, or blood transfusion centre without an environmental clearance.

Environmental experts have welcomed the move.

Mashura Shammi, professor at Department of Environmental Sciences of Jahangirnagar University, said, "Environmental clearance involves several factors that are largely ignored in Bangladesh. Every day, a lot of waste is generated from the hospitals, but no environmental impact assessment for it has been

"Only a small portion of this

huge amount of biomedical, liquid, and hazardous medical waste while the bulk of it is disposed of

completely untreated," she added. Saemul Huda, upazila health and family planning officer in Savar, said, "Earlier, we used

get a licence only after due vetting from the DoE."

Meanwhile, owners of private hospitals and clinics in the upazila expressed concern that they would face a barrage of complications in obtaining and renewing their license due to this decision.

Contacted, Wakilur Rahman,



There are more than 100 private hospitals and clinics in Savar, most of which don't follow the waste management guidelines. The photo was taken at a temporary garbage station of a private hospital. FILE PHOTO

granting licences only if the owner of Lab Zone Hospital in hospitals or clinics submitted copies of their applications for environmental clearance along with other necessary documents. From now on, however, it will most difficult among the necessary not be done without updated licences and approvals. environmental clearance."

required to obtain it. They would added.

Savar and also vice-president of Savar's Private Hospital Owners' Association, said obtaining environmental clearance is the

"However, since it has been Contacted, Zahirul Islam made mandatory, I think it will Talukdar, deputy director of be beneficial for us if the DoE DoE in Dhaka district, said, "We makes it easier for hospitals to issue environmental clearance get clearances. Otherwise, many only if the hospitals or clinics hospitals and clinics may struggle fully comply with the conditions to obtain or renew a licence," he

spades. He removes weeds,

adds soil to the base of

Do not pay anyone for visas, work permits Says Italian envoy

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Italian Ambassador to Bangladesh Antonio Alessandro has advised visa-seekers not pay anyone for emphasising that the embassy only charges small taxes and processing fees.

"We only take small taxes and processing fees, so applicants should not pay anyone for buying working permits or procuring visas. The services are free except these fees," Alessandro said after meeting with State Minister for Expatriates' Welfare and Employment Shofiqur Rahman Choudhury at the ministry.

They discussed ways to improve migration to Italy and addressed both regular and irregular flows of migration.

Alessandro discovery of forged documents, counterfeit working permits, and fraudulent applications, which have slowed down the visa process.

"I want to reassure those who are concerned about the expiration of work permits that they do not need to panic. If they email VFS Global, their working permits will not expire, but it will just take some time before getting a proper appointment.'

He also mentioned that they are currently receiving a limited number of applications due to pending ones.

Form minority commission with judicial power **Demands Nirmul Committee**

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Shahriar Kabir, the outgoing president of Ekattorer Ghatak Dalal Nirmul Committee, yesterday said the government's initiative to protect the rights of minorities does not seem sufficient.

"For a long time, we have been demanding the formation of a minority commission. If the government can't do that, we will form the National Minority Commission ourselves," he said.

He made the remarks at the announcement ceremony of the organisation's new executive committee at Jatiya Press Club.

> India, Canada, and Australia have national minority commissions with judicial powers. Although there is a National Human Rights Commission in Bangladesh, it is not empowered.

> > SHAMSUDDIN CHOWDHURY MANIK

Speaking at the event, Justice Shamsuddin Chowdhury Manik said, "India, Canada, and Australia have national minority commissions with judicial powers. Although there is a National Human Rights Commission in Bangladesh, it is not empowered. We demand a minority commission with judicial powers from the government."

Names of the members of the new 91-member committee have been officially announced after the Eighth National Conference of the

Shyamoli Nasrin Chowdhury is president of the newly elected committee, while Asif Munir Tanmoy is the general secretary.

"The Nirmul Committee will not make any compromise in upholding the spirit of the Liberation War and the 1972 constitution," said the newly-elected president.

Muntassir Mamoon, advisor of the committee, also spoke at the event.

CHITTARANJAN DAS the palm tree planter of Jashore

DIPANKAR ROY

Das can be seen tending to palm trees on his broken bicycle. Neither scorching heat, torrential rains, nor biting cold can deter date palm seeds. His efforts him from his mission.

For 16 years, he has dedicated his life to recognition throughout greening the roadsides of Jashore.

passion for planting trees. Since then, people resting in the shade of palm trees, he has planted at least 2,88,000 palm farmers eating rice, or pedestrians seeking

earned him respect and

When everyone else runs for cover from the trees along 42 roads in the Abhaynagar shelter during sunny days or storms, scorching sun, 67-year-old Chittaranjan and Manirampur upazilas, and Nayapara Chittaranjan told this newspaper recently. Every morning, Chittaranjan municipal area. He has also planted 56,000 leaves the house armed with sticks, water bottles, and



Leak of citizens' data alarming

TIB expresses concern

STAR REPORT

Transparency International Bangladesh yesterday expressed deep concern over the theft and sale of citizens' confidential information online.

They demanded severe punishment for those responsible, reports UNB.

The anti-graft watchdog highlighted the alarming use of law enforcement officials' IDs to steal citizens' sensitive information, including

call data records, national identity card details, and mobile numbers the National from Telecommunication Monitoring Center.

Social movement against corruption This breach violates constitutional commitments to safeguard UNB cited Iftekharuzzaman as saying. personal data, it said.

TIB also urged swift enactment of the Personal Data Protection Act, 2024.

The Daily Star published a report yesterday titled "Personal data up for sale online!" showing how crooked government employees are selling information from national database to 789 groups on social

The report detailed how the NTMC system was exploited using the IDs of two

law enforcement officers to collect and sell confidential information for financial gain.

TIB Executive Director Dr Iftekharuzzaman said, "Previously, Bangladeshi citizens experienced thefts of various confidential documents such as birth certificates and national identity cards at different times. Recent times have seen a surge in such breaches, with personal data being pilfered by law enforcement organisations tasked with safeguarding it."

government's The processandinfrastructure for protecting citizens' information sensitive appear inadequate, raising questions about its

integrity and capability.

The government seems to lack the necessary commitment and investment for robust data protection, making its efforts insufficient and ineffective, he

Legal and institutional initiatives for data protection are superficial and risky. While suspending implicated user IDs is a positive step, identifying all involved in data trafficking is crucial, said Iftekharuzzaman.

MUSEUM IN SREEMANGAL

Showcasing 150 years of tea heritage

MINTU DESHWARA

Tea, the most popular and revered beverage in the world, has an over 150-year long heritage of cultivation and consumption in Bangladesh.

To showcase the heritage, the country's first Tea Museum was opened in Moulvibazar's Sreemangal, the "tea capital" of Bangladesh, on September 16, 2009.

Nestled in a lush green ambience along the scenic Bhanugachh road, about three kilometres from Sreemangal town, the museum, within its inviting walls, treats the visitors with artifacts, such as small tables crafted from aged tea trees.

An array of silver and copper coins, which was once used for paying tea workers, offers a glimpse into their daily lives and contributions, and takes visitors back in time to the early days of tea cultivation in the region.

Visiting the museum recently, this correspondent saw its exhibits arranged in four

In the first room, a portrait of Bangabandhu hangs on the wall with a chair and table placed beside it, which he had used while serving as the first Bangalee chairman of the then Pakistan Tea Board in 1957-58.

The next room displays furniture made using tea trees, alongside tools used during the British rule by tea workers for pruning tea leaves and clearing garden weeds and other utensils.

There are also antique radios used in the manager's bungalow, wall clocks, special tools used for planting tea saplings, different types of

The third room houses old kerosene-powered refrigerators, vintage car chassis, electric fans, plow parts of tractors, bows and arrows used by security guards of tea gardens, direction finders, the museum since many people don't even



A chair and table on display at the museum. Bangabandhu had used them while serving as the first Bangalee chairman of the then Pakistan Tea Board in 1957-58.

money boxes used by bookkeepers, and vintage tables. The room also has the first computer and typewriter owned by the Bangladesh Tea Research Institute.

The fourth room displays furniture used by officials and tea processing apparatus, among

Around 30-40 visitors come to the museum on weekends while the number is fewer on weekdays, said the person at the ticket counter.

Saheda Begum, a visitor, said, "The authorities have to initiate rigorous campaigns by involving students and youths to promote

know that there is a tea museum."

AKM Rafiqul Haque, chief executive officer (additional duty) of Tea Museum and director of Project Development Unit of Bangladesh Tea Board, said they collected the items on display from different tea gardens across the region.

"Some of the items can no longer be found. The museum was opened to exhibit these items from the past to inform the future generations about the history and evolution of our tea industry. We have plans to expand the museum," he added.

Anyone can visit the museum between 10:00am and 4:00pm daily for an entry fee of Tk 20 per person.

PORT CITY Tk 258 crore street lighting project okayed

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

The cabinet committee on economic affairs yesterday approved a project for lighting various roads in the Chattogram City Corporation areas under Indian Line of Credit-3.

The CCC is implementing the project titled "Modernisation of City Street Light System under Chattogram City Corporation".

The committee approved the proposal to purchase the tender packages at a cost of Tk 258.6 crore.

Mumbai-based firm Shapoorji Pallonji & Company Private Limited is the recommended bidder.

Project Direct of CCC Superintendent Engineer Jhulan Kumar Das could not be reached for comments despite repeated attempts. The project was approved at the Executive

Committee of the National Economic Council on July 9 in 2019 but it has not seen any progress yet. The project with a one-year tenure has already been revised several times. If the project is

Abdul Bari, former executive engineer of (electrical) CCC. previously informed The Daily Star that postproject implementation, CCC's electricity bill would be halved, and a smart

management system would replace the manual

He said around 500 switches for lamp control will be replaced by only four central server stations. The LED lamps will be controlled by timers and magnetic control systems.

According to CCC sources, there are lights on a total of 1,043 kilometres of roads in the city.

Among them, sodium lamps cover up a total of 890 kilometres of roads and LED lamps cover up 153

Meanwhile, if the project is implemented, 467 kilometres of roads covered with sodium lamps will be replaced by LED lamps.

According to CCC officials, there are about 51,573 sodium lamps in the city streets. These lamps are switched on and off from 1,534 points in different mosques, temples and social organisation offices.

Death anniv of Golam Rasul Mallick

DU CORRESPONDENT

Today is the 18th death anniversary of Golam Rasul Mallick, a freedom fighter and founding editor of Eastern News Agency (ENA), said a press release.

On the occasion, Qurankhwani and food distribution programme will be held after the Asr prayers at his residence.

During the Liberation War, he launched ENA as a Bangalee journalist.

He was elected chairman of Commonwealth Press Union, Bangladesh wing for three times and was the first member of Press Institute Bangladesh.

Developed FROM PAGE 3

focus creating on $e\ m\ p\ l\ o\ y\ m\ e\ n\ t$ opportunities."

She said the government is setting up 100 economic facilitate industries and create jobs. "Australian entrepreneurs can invest there and profit by availing the investmentfriendly facilities."

Hasina also Australian assistance in sharing its advanced agricultural technologies.

The PM added that currently some 90,000 people of Bangladesh origin were living in Australia and contributing to the country's economy.

She requested the Australian foreign minister take steps to allow more Bangladeshi students in their country.

কোটবাড়ী, কুমিল্লা-৩৫০৬

Invitation for Tendered (Goods)

Tender	Description of works	Tender Publication	Tender closing &	
ID No.		(Date & Time)	Opening (date & time)	
989339	Supply and Installation of Computers, UPS, AC, Computer Tables and Chairs, Curtains, Carpets, Necessary Electrical Equipments and Sign Boards for establishing a full computer lab for Faculty of Social Sciences of Comilla University.	555 45 20 20 20	04-Jun-2024 15:30:00	

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 National e-GP system portal have to be deposited online through any registered Banks branches within the mentioned time in tender notice. Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System portal and from e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd).

Signed/-(Mohammad Nasir Uddin) Senior Programmer

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh Ministry of Commerce Bangladesh Regional Connectivity Project-1 Level-12 (West side), Probashi Kollayan Bhaban,

Eskaton Garden Road, Dhaka-1000.

Memo No: 26.00.0000.066.11.008.21(2)-169

GD-838

Date: 21/05/2024

Request for Expressions of Interest for Individual Consultant (National)

The Ministry of Commerce is implementing the Technical Assistance Part of IDA financed Bangladesh Regional Connectivity Project-1 (BRCP-1). The BRCP-1, MoC intends to apply a part of the IDA Credit for procuring services of individual consultants for following positions.

Bangladesh Regional Connectivity Project-1 (BRCP-1), Ministry of Commerce now invites eligible Individual to indicate their interest in providing the services. Interested Individual must provide information demonstrating that they have the required qualifications and relevant experience to perform the Services.

Position	Education	Experiences	Major
BRCP1/MOC/SD06-C (Financial management Expert) (FME) (20 months or till the project period)	Bachelor's degree or equivalent in Accounting, Finance, Commerce, or Business Administration. Candidates with higher degrees	 At least five (05) years of progressively responsible experience in financial management in any donor funded project/ multinational organization; Experience in large contract payments, GOB budget and planning procedures, Development Project Proposal fundamentals, rules and regulations of the Government for budgeting, fund release, accounting, financial reporting and auditing and authorization for use of donors' funds. Experience in or exposure to World Bank's fund operating conditions and reporting requirements will be an advantage. Having hands on experience in application software and also in Computerized Accounting Systems with ability to assist in implementation and customization. 	Details- mentioned in the TOR.

The attention of interested Consultants is drawn to the Section 1, Para 3.14,3.16, and 3.17 of the World Bank's "Procurement Regulations for IPF Borrowers, July 2016 and updated in November 2020," setting forth the World Bank's policy on conflict of interest.

An Individual will be selected in accordance with the Individual Consultants Selection (ICS) method set out in the Procurement Regulations and evaluation shall be based on the above qualification and experiences of the Individual Consultant. Terms of Reference (TOR) will be available in the office of the undersigned and also at www.mincom.gov.bd and http://brcp-1.gov.bd/ . Further information can be obtained at the address below during office hours (i.e. 09.00 to 16.00 hours). Expressions of interest must be delivered in a written form to the address below (in person or by email) by 3.00 PM on 11/06/2024. Necessary documents in support of educational qualifications and experience & skills shall have to be submitted for Individual Consultants.

The authority reserves the right to accept or reject any or all EOIs without assigning any reason, whatsoever.

(Shaila Yasmin) Project Director (Additional Charge) Bangladesh Regional Connectivity Project-1 and Joint Secretary (Planning), Ministry of Commerce Phone: +8802-55138022 E-mail: pdbrcp1moc@gmail.com

Chittaranjan Das

encourages villagers to protect the palm trees.

Road renovations, local damage, and waterlogging have all resulted in the destruction of numerous trees. Some vendors even trim the leaves of small trees to make hand fans. But Chittaranjan does not give up. "When I see different species of birds, especially Babui, nesting in the trees, I cannot hold back my tears," exclaimed a passionate Chittaranjan.

"I enjoy watching the villagers pick ripe palm fruit or eat unripe palm."

Chittaranjan's voyage commenced on a rainy day in 2008, He saw a man reading a newspaper, which featured an image of a palm tree, while seated in a tea shop. Even though he could not read, the man with the newspaper explained that an American scientist had said palm trees weaken lightning. This gave Chittaranjan the idea to plant palm trees in the surrounding villages to shield them from lightning strikes.

After collecting thousands of seeds, he planted them along the Dhopadi-Mashiahati road. He planted roughly 2,500 seeds in his first year. His activities now encompass other districts in addition to Jashore. He planted 10,000 palm seeds in Kasba, Brahmanbaria, and Kaukhali in Pirojpur, just last year.

In expatriates from Kasba

in Brahmanbaria and Kawkhali in Pirojpur, showed their appreciation for his work by donating a total of Tk 40,000 and Tk 20,000 each through the local upazila administration.

Chittaranian overjoyed to receive this award, as it was his first. He used half of the prize money and Tk 30,000 of his own money to purchase Tk 50,000 worth of palm tree fruits and leaves. He is planning to buy another Tk 20,000 worth of seeds this

As farming is not enough to support his family of five, Chittaranjan sometimes sells trees to add to his income.

Sundali Union Parishad Chairman Bikash Roy Kapil said,"A noble-minded person like him is rare in this day and age."

"He planted numerous palm trees that are now standing tall. It would be beneficial if he received government sponsorship," he added.

Chittaranjan's passion continues to burn and he remains focused on his mission. "I can't sit idle at home. I will keep working for as long as I live," he says.



AZAN 4-05 12-45 5-00 6-40 8-00 JAMAAT 4-40 1-15 5-15 6-45 8-30 SOURCE: **ISLAMIC FOUNDATION**

Space for Sale/Rent Commercial space for Sale & Rent (4000-18000sft) @ Gulshan Avenue

& Kamal Ataturk Avenue. Only Buyers call please. Cell: +88 01711 386482

TO LET North Khulshi R/A, Road #1, House # 5, Equity Sylvestra, Chattogram. 4 Bed, 1 Study Room, Drawing and Dining, Kitchen, 3 Bath Room, 1 Servant Room, 2 Wall Cabinet with Master Bed, one Car Parking. Priority for foreigners. +880 1743-277739

Land for sale @ Gazipur 160 bigha land for sale in Gazipur. Adjacent

to the road, Nearby Shitalakhya river and Railway Station. Mobile: 01703-004866, 01911-360990

কোটবাড়ী, কুমিল্লা-৩৫০৬

Re-Tender Notice: 04/2023-24

No- CoU/P&D/50(Ka)/Lab Equip. P(Rev.)/Part-2 /2023-24/2030 ; D: 20-05-2024 This is to notify all concern that the following Tender ID-984084 has been published through e-GP Portal. The interested persons/firms may visit the website www.eprocure.gov.bd.

> -sd-(Md.Delowar Hossain) Director(P&D) Office of P&D

KHULNA SHIPYARD LIMITED BANGLADESH NAVY, KHULNA

implemented,

467 kilometres of

roads covered with

sodium lamps will

be replaced by LED

CORRIGENDUM

Ref. Tender No: BABE (F)-36/2023-2024

Hereby, this is to notify that Khulna Shipyard Ltd has decided to change clause no: 02, 07, 13(j), 16(i) and 20 at Ref. tender for 2500 MTon MS Plate will be following:

DUE FOR OPENING ON: 26 MAY 2024
 TERMS OF SUPPLY: CFR Mongla Sea Port.
 (j). Indenting Agent should also submit along with the tender valid registration certificate issued by the CCI & E and Bangladesh Bank permission. In absence of original certificate attested photostat copy by first class officer

may serve.

16 (i). LC for full purchase amount will be opened in fovour of the principal supplier under the following payment terms:

20. INSURANCE: Insurance of the consignment after shipment to destination port/place (up to buyers premises) will be arranged by buyer. Quotation should, therefore, be exclusive of the insurance charges.

2. DUE FOR OPENING ON: 10 June 2024 & for that schdule last selling

7. TERMS OF SUPPLY

b. The supplier will arrange transportation of all supplied items from Chittagong/ Mongla Sea Port to the buyer's premises Khulna Shipyard Ltd, Khulna (by sea/road). This transportation cost will be added with sea freight (mentioned at BL) that define as total freight charge c. Khulna Shipyard will process all customs formalities with related duties and taxes.

13 (j). Indenting Agent should also submit along with the tender valid registration certificate issued by the Bangladesh Indenting Agent Association (BIAA). In absence of original certificate attested photostat copy by first class 16 (i). LC for full purchase amount will be opened by Khulna Shipyard Limited

in fovour of the principal supplier under the following payment terms where the LC commission including VAT & marine insurance will be borne by foreign principal/local agent (supplier) at C opening.

20. INSURANCE: Insurance of the consignment will be arranged by buyer

after shipment to the destination up to buyers premises (Khulna Shipyard Ltd.) but all charge including VAT will be paid by foreign principal/local agent (supplier) at LC opening. Quotation should, therefore, be included with the N.B: Clause no: 11, 13(f), 18, 27 & 30 will be corrected accordingly.

All other terms and conditions will be remain unchanged.

০১ ইজারা কোটেশন নং

DGM (Purchase)

গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার নির্বাহী প্রকৌশলীর কার্যালয়

সড়ক বিভাগ, পিরোজপুর

ই-মেইলঃ pirdivisionrhd@gmail.com

ঃ ০৩-পিআরডি/২০২৩-২০২৪

তারিখঃ ২০/০৫/২০২৪ইং

ফেরীঘাট ইজারা কোটেশন বিজ্ঞপ্তি (৯ম আহবান)

02	ইজারার বিবরণ		২০২৩-২০২৪ইং অর্থবছরে পিরোজপুর সড়ক বিভাগাধীন পড়িয়ারপার- বানারীপাড়া-শর্মিনা-স্বরূপকাঠী-কাউখালী-নৈকাঠী (জেড-৮০৩৩) জেলা মহাসড়কের ৪০তম (অং) কিঃমিঃ এ অবস্থিত "আমড়াঝুড়ি ফেরীঘাট" এর ৩ (তিন) বছর মেয়াদে ইজারা প্রদান	
00	ইজারা চুক্তির মেয়াদ	3.	৩ (তিন) বছর (১০৯৫ দিন)	
08	ইজারা কোটেশনের সিডিউল মূল্য	1	টাঃ ৫০০০.০০ (পাঁচ হাজার টাকা মাত্র)	
00	বায়নার টাকার পরিমাণ	1	মোট উদ্ধৃত মূল্যের ১০% (শতকরা দশ ভাগ) ব্যাংক ড্রাফট/পে-অর্ডার আকারে নির্বাহী প্রকৌশলী, সওজ, সড়ক বিভাগ, পিরোজপুর এর পক্ষে	
06	ইজারা কোটেশন বিক্রয়ের শেষ তারিখ ও সময়		০৯/০৬/২০২৪ইং তারিখ বিকাল ৪:০০ ঘটিকা পর্যন্ত	
०१	মুখবন্ধ অবস্থায় ইজারা কোটেশন গ্রহণের শেষ তারিথ ও সময়	I	১০/০৬/২০২৪ইং তারিখ দুপুর ১২:৩০ ঘটিকা পর্যন্ত	
ob	ইজারা কোটেশন খোলার তারিখ : ১০/০৬/২০২৪ইং তারিখ বিকাল ৩:৩০ ঘটিকা পর্যস্ত		১০/০৬/২০২৪ইং তারিখ বিকাল ৩:৩০ ঘটিকা পর্যস্ত	
ф	ইজারা ডাকে অংশগ্রহণের যোগ্যতা		ভ্যাট ও আয়কর সন্দধারী প্রতিষ্ঠান/নাগরিক, সরকারী বেসরকারী/ স্বায়ন্ত্রশাসিত সকল প্রতিষ্ঠানের ঠিকাদার	
20	যে সকল কার্যালয়ে ইজারা কোটেশন ক্রয়ের জন্য পাওয়া যাবে		বিভাগীয় কমিশনার, বরিশাল। জেলা প্রশাসক, পিরোজপুর/নির্বাহী প্রকৌশলী, সড়ক বিভাগ, পিরোজপুর/ঝালকাঠী/বরিশাল/ভোলা/প্র্যানিং ভিভিশন-১, সড়ক তবন, তেজগাঁও, ঢাকা/তিপঃবিঃপ্রঃ, সড়ক উপ-বিভাগ পিরোজপুর/কাউখালী	
22	যে সকল কার্যালয়ে ইজারা কোটেশন মুখবন্ধ অবস্থায় গ্রহণ করা হবে		(ক) জেলা প্রশাসক, পিরোজপুর (ঝ) তন্ত্রাবধায়ক প্রকৌশলী, সওজ, সড়ক সার্কেল, বরিশাল (গ) নির্বাহী প্রকৌশলী, সড়ক বিভাগ, পিরোজপুর	
33	ইজারা কোটেশন খোলার স্থান		মির্বাহী প্রকৌশলীর কার্যালয়, সভক ও জনপথ অধিদর্শর, সভক বিভাগ, পিরোজপর	

(ক) ইজারা আহ্বানকারী যে কোন সময় যে কোন কোটেশন/ সকল কোটেশন বাতিলের ক্ষমতা সংরক্ষণ করেন

(ঘ) এই ইজারা কোটেশন বিজ্ঞপ্তিটি RHD ওয়েবসাইট www.rhd.gov.bd-এর মাধ্যমে দেখা যেতে পারে

(খ) যদি কোনো অনিবার্য পরিস্থিতিতে নির্দিষ্ট তারিখে ইজারা কোটেশন গ্রহণ/খোল না যায়, তাহলে পরবর্তী কার্যদিবসে একই

2010/2028 তানভীর আহমেদ পরিচিতি নং-৬০২৩০৮

সময়ে এবং একই স্থানে তা গ্রহণ/খোলা হবে

(গ) ইজারা কোটেশনদাতা কথায় ও অংকে দর উদ্ধৃত করবেন

নিৰ্বাহী প্ৰকৌশলী (চঃদাঃ), সওজ সভৃক বিভাগ, পিরোজপুর

GD-840

GD-835

GD-834

APU MURDER Verdict on June 4

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Supreme Court will deliver a verdict on June 4 regarding appeals in A-level student Ashikur Rahman Khan Apu murder case.

Apu was shot dead and his two brothers Arifur Rahman Khan Setu and Atikur Rahman Khan Bappy were injured in a gun attack in front of their house at Wari on May 23, 2008.

Yesterday, a fourmember bench of the Appellate Division headed by Chief Justice Obaidul Hassan fixed the date after concluding a hearing on the appeals.

At a stage of the hearing, the chief justice commented that the crime control system should be developed as the nature of crimes in society has been changed. A total of four appeals have been filed with the Appellate Division in connection with the case.

21 more dengue patients hospitalised

UNB, Dhaka

Twenty-one more people were hospitalised with dengue in 24 hours till yesterday.

Of the new patients, six were admitted to hospitals in Dhaka, according to the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS).

Currently, 134 patients are receiving treatment at several hospitals across the

So far, 2,676 dengue cases have been reported since January 1, 2024, said

করা হচ্ছে। দরপত্র সমূহ:

Ref. No.: UGC/ICSETEP/Advertisement/2024/35

১. কম্পিউটার সামগ্রী ক্রয় (Package No.: PMU/G-2)

২. অফিস সরঞ্জাম ক্রয় (Package No.: PMU/G-3A)

তারিখ ও সময়: ০২ জুন ২০২৪ বেলা ৩:৩০ ঘটিকা।

৩. 4 Wheel Drive (4WD) গাড়ি ভাড়া (Package No.: PMU/NCS-1)

2 years on, water plant still not functional

Habiganj residents grapple with water crisis amid heatwave

MINTU DESHWARA

A groundwater treatment and supply project costing nearly Tk 10 crore in Habiganj has been nonoperational for two years since completion, while residents of the municipality grapple with an acute water crisis amid the ongoing hot spell.

The municipality can only supply half the water needed by the townspeople, and many tube wells are now dry due to low groundwater levels. The newly constructed plant could have been a godsend for locals if it was operational.

Lack of power connection and equipment theft are behind the

> **Customers complained** that around 25 percent of them do not get water supply to their houses through the existing pipeline.

delay, according to municipal

The Department of Public Health Engineering constructed the plant at a cost of Tk 9,29,19,000 between June 15, 2015 and June 30, 2022 in Shmashana Ghat area of Habiganj municipality, to supply water to 37 areas in the town.

However, the Power Development Board was reluctant to provide connections without pre-paid meters while the municipal authorities demanded post-paid

After a year-long tug of war with numerous letters being exchanged to this end, the municipal authorities finally agreed on pre-paid meters. However, things stalled further as the plant's motor, cables and other equipment worth around Tk 20-22 lakh was stolen.

Meanwhile, LGRD Minister Tazul

গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার

ইমপ্রভিং কম্পিউটার এন্ড সফটওয়্যার ইঞ্জিনিয়ারিং টারশিয়ারি এডুকেশন প্রজেক্ট (ICSETEP) প্রজেক্ট ম্যানেজমেন্ট ইউনিট (পিএমইউ)

বাংলাদেশ বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় মঞ্জুরী কমিশন

আগারগাঁও প্রশাসনিক এলাকা, শের-ই-বাংলানগর, ঢাকা-১২০৭।

দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি

শিক্ষা মন্ত্রণালয়ের মাধ্যমিক ও উচ্চশিক্ষা বিভাগের অধীনে বাংলাদেশ বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় মঞ্জুরী কমিশন কর্তৃক বাস্তবায়নাধীন ইম্পুভিং

কম্পিউটার অ্যান্ড সফটওয়্যার ইঞ্জিনিয়ারিং টারশিয়ারি এডুকেশন প্রকল্প (ICSETEP)-এর অধীনে ৩ টি প্যাকেজের দরপত্র আহ্বান

দরপত্র সিডিউল প্রকল্প পরিচালকের দপ্তর (কক্ষ নং ৬১৩, ইউজিসি ভবন) থেকে সংগ্রহ করা যাবে। উক্ত দরপত্র জমা দানের শেষ



Islam inaugurated the plant on November 11 last year ahead of the 12th national polls.

However, the Department of Public Health Engineering is yet to hand over the plant to the municipality authorities.

At present, the municipality supplies 1.94 lakh gallons of water daily to 2,300 residential and commercial establishments in the town through a 56-km pipeline from its two operational water treatment plants in Kalibari and Babystand areas.

This only meets around 50 percent of the total demand for water in the municipality.

If the new plant was operational, it would have enabled the municipality to meet 80 percent of the water demand, municipal officials said.

Customers complained that around 25 percent of them do not get water supply to their houses through the existing pipeline.

"We have been paying the bills monthly despite not getting any water. We fear that the supply line will get disconnected, which will add to more hassles. However, the water crisis amid this heat wave has been unbearable," said Sadek Mia, a resident of Habiganj town.

Date: 21-05-2024

প্রফেসর ড. মোঃ আমিনুল হক আকন্দ

প্রকল্প পরিচালক, ICSETEP

Mifta Mia, another resident, said, "Many people are largely dependent on tube wells to collect water as the town water supply is unavailable in many areas. However, the tube wells often cannot fetch water as the groundwater has depleted."

Kaddus Contacted, Abdul Shamim, assistant engineer at Water Supply Department of Habiganj municipality, said they are still unsure when the plant will become operational.

Tahmina Tanvin, executive engineer of the Department of Public Health and Engineering in Habiganj, said, "We have asked the contractor to install electricity connections and meters immediately.'

"We will also check whether there is any damage to the pipelines due to the ongoing development works of various roads and drains in the municipality. If everything works fine, we will hand over the plant to the municipality."

Manjur Murshed, executive engineer of BPDB's Habiganj office, said, "The plant's power connections will be installed soon."

Ataur Rahman, mayor of Habiganj municipality, expressed hope that the plant will come into operation soon.

No shortage of rice in country

Says agri minister BSS, Dhaka

Agriculture Minister M Abdus Shahid has said the country has no shortage of rice as its entire rice demand is now being met by internal production.

"The rice production has increased more than fourfold in the last 50 years," said Shahid while addressing a ministerial session titled, "Paddies for the Planet and People", at the ongoing 10th World Water Forum held in Bali, Indonesia on Monday.

GD-839

Constable sued for amassing illegal wealth

STAFF CORRESPONDENT,

Anti-Corruption The Commission of Rajshahi yesterday sued a police constable for amassing illegal wealth worth over Tk 62 lakh.

Md Mehedi Hasan, 36, is attached to the office of Natore district's superintendent police.

ACC Assistant Md Amir Director Hossain filed the case with its coordinated office in Rajshahi.

Mehedi was found to have amassed wealth worth Tk 96,84,094 between 2004 and 2023, of which he earned Tk 62,09,030 through illegal means, ACC investigation finds.

Moreover, when asked by ACC, he submitted his wealth statements and documents using 48 non-judicial stamps, which were found counterfeited.

In those documents, he stated that he received Tk 18 lakh by mortgaging his land properties to eight people and taking loans of Tk 33 lakh from eight other individuals, according to ACC.

Police foil Ganosamhati's bid to besiege central bank

UNB, Dhaka

Police foiled the attempt of the leaders and activists of Ganosamhati Andolon to besiege Bangladesh Bank in Dhaka's Motijheel area vesterdav.

As part of their scheduled programme, the leaders and activists of the party led by its chief coordinator Zonayed Saki, marched towards Bangladesh Bank around 11:00am yesterday to lay siege to it, demanding the government to publish the list of loan defaulters and money launderers.

When they reached the Shapla Chattar area, a police team obstructed them, said Golam Rahman, assistant commissioner (Motijheel Zone) of Dhaka Metropolitan Police.

Being obstructed, they later held a brief rally in front of Shapla Chattar's foot overbridge and then left the place.



Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh Local Government Engineering Department Office of the Executive Engineer District: Bagerhat www.lged.gov.bd

শেখ হাসিনার মূলনীতি গ্রাম শহরের উন্নতি

e-Tender Notice (OTM): 119/2023-2024

Memo No: 46.02.0100.000.07.002.24-2387 Date: 21-05-2024. e-Tender is invited in the National e-GP System Portal (http://www.eprocure.gov.bd) for the procurement of stated below:

Tender IDs Package Description & No.		Last Date & Tin of Depositing Document fees		
986505	(a) Improvement of Mongla - Chatterhat GC Road at Tatibunia - Burburia School Road By BC from Ch: 00m - 1500m [Road ID: 201584017] [Salvage Cost: 39,73,242 tk.] (b) Improvement of Mongla - Chatterhat GCCR Road at Tatibunia - Mithakhali Bazar Road By BC from Ch: 1000m - 2000m [Road ID: 201584019] [Salvage Cost: 10,22,315 tk.] [Mongla] [Bagerhat] [2nd Call] & Bag/VR-73/FY 2023-24.			
986510				
988494	(a) Improvement of Sattala Bazar Chatakpur High School Road at Ch. 00m - 1570m. [Road ID: 201344019] [Salvage Cost: 13,19,960.00 Tk.] (b) Improvement of Khatakhali to Jaria Madrasha Uttarpara Road at Ch. 00m - 1200m. [Road ID: 201345056] [Salvage Cost: 9,72,162.00 Tk.] [Fakirhat] [Bagerhat] & Bag/VR-10/FY-2023-24.	19.06.2024 Time : 5:00 PM		

This is an online Tender, where only e-Tender shall be accepted in the National e-GP portal and no offline/hard copies shall be accepted.

To submit e-Tender, registration in the National e-GP Portal (http://www.eprocure.gov.bd) is required.

The fees for downloading the e-Tender Documents from the National e-GP System Portal have to be deposited online through any registered Banks branches.

Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System Portal and from e-GP help desk (http://www.eprocure.gov.bd).



GD-837

e-mail: xen.bagerhat@lged.gov.bd

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh Office of the Executive Engineer Manikganj PWD Division Manikganj. www.pwd.gov.bd

Memo No-1360-

GD-842

Date: 21/05/2024

e-Tender Notice e-Gp Tender (OTM)

e-Tender is invited in the e-GP System Portal http://www.eprocure.gov.bd

SL.	Tender ID &	Name of Work	Last Selling	Opening
No,	Reference No		Date & Time	Date
				& Time
01.	989303	Painting outside the office building under	04-June-2024	04-June-2024
	Office of the SE- memo no-1649 date: 16-05-2024	Manikganj Public Works Division, laying tiles in the toilet of the Divisional Accountant including making cabinets in the kitchen of the inspection bunglow with special repairs during the year 2023-24	14:00	15:00
02.	989320 Office of the SE- memo no-1648 date: 16-05-2024	Repair and renewal work with replacement of old tiles including damaged wooden windows and doors, plaster, paint, various types of fittings and fixers of Manikganjn Civil Surgeon Office building during the year 2023- 24	04-June-2024 14:00	04-June-2024 15:00

This is an online Tender. Where will be accepted in the national e-GP Portal and no offline/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 national e-GP System portal have to be deposited online through any e-GP registered bank's branches within due time.

Further information and guideline are available in the Nationale-GP System portal and from e-GP help desk(helpdesk @ eprocure gov.bd) or (email: ee manik@pwd.gov.bd) and call to 02-996610401) Interested person can be communicated with the undersigned during office hours.

> (Sharmin Aktar) **Executive Engineer** Manikganj PWD Division Manikganj.

গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার

নির্বাহী প্রকৌশলী, সওজ এর কার্যালয় সড়ক বিভাগ, চাঁপাইনবাবগঞ্জ। 高のかなみか-チッの202 E-mail - cenaw@rhd.gov.bd

স্মারক নং-৩৫.০১,৭০০০,৪৫৪,৩২/২,০০১,২৪-১৪৭৭(৩০)

তারিখঃ ২১/০৫/২০২৪ খ্রিঃ

''সেতুর ইন্ধারা কোটেশন আহবান বিজ্ঞপ্তি (৫ম আহ্বান)''

160	ইজারা কোটেশন নং	:	০৩- এন,জে, আর, ডি/ ২০২৩ - ২০২৪ খ্রিঃ	
०३।	ইজারার বিবরণ		সওন্ধ, চাঁপাইনবাৰণঞ্জ সড়ক বিভাগাধীন রহনপুর - ভোলাহাট - বিভিআর ক্যাম্প সড়কের ৩য় কিমিতে অবস্থিত "সৈয়দ সুলতান সেতুর (মকরমপুর সেতুর)" উপর দিয়ে পারাপারকারী যানবাহন হতে টোল্ আদায়ের নিমিত্তে ইন্ধারা প্রদানের বন্দোবন্ত।	
०७।	ইজারা চুক্তির মেয়াদ	1	ত (তিন) অর্থ বংসর (০১/০৭/২০২৪ হতে ৩০/০৬/২০২৭ খ্রিঃ পর্যন্ত (১০৯৫ দিন)।	
081	ইন্ধারা কোটেশনের সিভিউল মূল্য	1	টাঃ ৫০০০,০০ (পীচ হাজার টাকা মাত্র)।	
001	বায়নার টাকার পরিমাণ	1	উদ্ভ মূল্যের ১০% (শতকরা দশ ভাগ) ব্যাংক ড্রাফট/ পে-অর্ডার আকারে	
०७।	ইন্ধারা কোটেশন বিক্রয়ের শেষ তারিখ ও সময়	•	০২/০৬/২০২৪ খ্রিঃ তারিখ বিকাল ৪.০০ পর্যন্ত।	
91	মুখবৰ অবস্থায় ইন্ধারা কোটেশন গ্রহণের শেষ তারিখ ও সময়	:	০৩/০৬/২০২৪ খ্রিঃ তারিখ দুপুর ১২.৩০ পর্যন্ত	
01-1	ইন্ধারা ডাকে অংশ গ্রহণের যোগ্যতা	:	ভ্যাট ও আয়কর সনদধারী প্রতিষ্ঠান/নাগরিক, সরকারী /বেসরকারী/ স্বায়ব্রশাসিত সকল প্রতিষ্ঠানের ঠিকাদার।	
021	যে সকল কার্যালয়ে ইজারা কোটেশন ক্রয়ের জন্য পাওয়া যাবে কোটেশন	:	জেলা প্রশাসক , চীপাইনবাবগঞ্জ/ নির্বাহী প্রকৌশলী, সওজ, সড়ক বিভাগ, চীপাইনবাবগঞ্জ/ রাজশাহী/ নওগী/পরিকল্পনা বিভাগ-১/সেডু ডিজাইন বিভাগ-১,পূর্বাঞ্চল, সড়ক ভবন, তেজগীও, ঢাকা/ উপ-বিভাগীয় প্রকৌশলী, সওজ, সড়ক উপ-বিভাগ, চীপাইনবাবগঞ্জ/ শিবগঞ্জ/ বিভাগীয় কমিশনার, রাজশাহী	
201	যে সকল কার্যালয়ে ইন্ধারা মুখবন্ধ অবস্থায় গ্রহণ করা হবে	1	 (ক) নির্বাহী প্রকৌশলী,সওজ, সড়ক বিভাগ, চীপাইনবাবগঞ্জ। (খ) বিভাগীয় কমিশনার, রাজশাহী (গ) জেলা প্রশাসক, চীপাইনবাবগঞ্জ। 	
	ইজারা কোটেশন খোলার স্থান, তারিষ ও সময়	1	স্থানঃ নির্বাহী প্রকৌশলীর কার্যালয়, সড়ক ও জনপথ অধিদপ্তর, সড়ক বিভাগ, চীপাইনবাবগঞ্জ।	
			ভারিখঃ ০৩/০৬/২০২৪ খ্রিঃ। সময়ঃ বিকাল ৩,০০ ঘটিকা।	
251	ইজারা আপ্নানকারী যে কোন সময় যে কোন কোটেশন / সকল কোটেশন বাতিলের ক্ষমতা সংরক্ষণ করেন।			

নিবহি প্রকৌশলী (চঃ দাঃ),সওজ, সড়ক বিভাগ, চাঁপাইনবাবগঞ্জ

GD-841

Nasir Uddin Yousuff mentioned that although he would love to make more films, probably three or four more in his lifetime, his sole concentration and love will always be with theatre. The director plans to produce a play on Selim Al Deen's text this upcoming August, commemorating Selim's 75th birth anniversary, through Dhaka The-

DOWEL BISWAS

There are only a few cultural personalities as prolific as Nasir Uddin Yousuff Bachchu, our eternal pride, and a valiant freedom fighter who solidified his name as a cultural icon, theatre activist, filmmaker and bold cultural voice since the independence in 1971.

The Guerilla-famed director recently took an exemplary initiative by successfully arranging the inaugural two-day International Disability Art Festival 2024 (April 26-27) through his founding theatre troupe, Dhaka Theatre and the British Council.

In an exclusive interview with The Daily Star, the eminent artiste talked about his Liberation War days, our independence, theatre activism, his upcoming film projects, and more.

Inspired by Bangabandhu's ideals, as just a student, Nasir Uddin Yousuff threw himself into the Liberation War to free the country in 1971. Risking his life on the battlefield, he returned with an invaluable gift for the country — a much cherished, eternal independence.

"I was about to turn 21 when the war began, reaching the age of rebellion through it. The student movements of the 1960s were crucial. During that time, two major movements were happening in Bangladesh: a cultural movement and the nationalist movement," said Nasir Uddin, reminiscing his earliest days of political and cultural activism.

"The song *Amar Bhaiyer Rokte Rangano* Ekushey February deeply influenced youths like us. It kind of sparked the nationalist movement and started a revolution to seek a sovereign state and unique cultural identity,"

"By banning Rabindranath's songs, Ayub Khan merged culture and politics and as very cultural beings, we couldn't let it happen. Leaders like Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur

Rahman and Maulana Abdul Hamid Khan Bhashani made it a primary issue, beginning the Bengali nation's journey of its own identity as a nation. We grew up with slogans and songs shaping our upbringing. Therefore, it was obvious that we would revolt against the oppressors," said the war hero, who was also a member of the valiant Crack Platoon in the Liberation War of 1971.

"As intriguing as it is, both Bangabandhu and Maulana Bhashani used to recite poetry during political speeches. Our cultural aspirations drove us toward nationalism. Bangabandhu's six-point movement and the mass uprising of 1969 saw millions demanding independence and democracy, inspiring us," the artiste

The state should remain in the spirit of the Liberation War, embodying consciousness and humanity. It should be for all people, not just Bengalis or Muslims. This was the essence of our struggle," he stated.

"After our independence, in 1972, Mamunur Rashid and Kabir Anwar formed Parapar Natya Goshthi, along with Bohubachan and Aranyak, pioneering an extraordinary theatre movement through their politically correct productions," the artiste expressed.

"I used to sell tickets and set up lights for their plays, which ignited my desire to pursue theatre. In 1973, we moved to Dhaka Theatre, aiming to produce Bangladeshi plays. Influenced by Jean-Paul Sartre, Albert Camus, Ionesco, and Rimbaud, we created original works," Nasir Uddin Yousuff, stated regarding his sudden inclination towards theatre.
"I was most intrigued by Selim Al Deen and

Hasibul Hasan's plays, and those were the first at Dhaka Theatre. We performed at the Dhaka Sports Association auditorium, a modest venue with tin roofs. Tickets sold out in advance, and prominent poets and professors attended our

shows. Bichitra magazine featured our theatre group in 1973. You can say that kind of made ne a theatre practitioner by heart.

The thespian, who directed legendary plays like Kitton Khola (1981), Keramot Mongol (1985), Hat Hadai (1989), Joiboti Kannyar **Mon** (1995), and **Bono Pangshul** (1998), is occupied with numerous theatre and film projects up his sleeve. "I plan to direct at least one play and one cinema per year," he said with a polite grin as he feels that he is too busy with social activism nowadays.

"The concentration of my cinema, theatre, drama and no matter what kind of projects I take on, will always be centred on either our Language Movement or the Liberation War. This is not just because I am a freedom fighter and I love my country and people, rather it is because we have to remember, highlight and showcase our struggles as a nation to inspire the younger generation. We have to make them understand where we came from, only then true cultural development is possible," said the cultural icon

Nasir Uddin Yousuff mentioned that although he would love to make more films, probably three or four more in his lifetime, his sole concentration and love will always be with theatre. The director plans to produce a play on Selim Al Deen's text this upcoming August, commemorating Selim's 75th birth anniversary, through Dhaka Theatre.

Planning to patronise the Group Theatre Movement in the villages of Bangladesh, the artiste concluded that he wants to make a film based on the Language Movement of 1952 and his favourite discourse, the Liberation War, stating, "You see, the war was a dream for us, a dream of an independent, sovereign country. We have to imbue the spirit of the Liberation War within our younger generation, and I will keep doing just that in my lifetime.'

'Pushpa 2' to hit Bangladeshi screens in Hindi



In recent years, South Indian cinema has gained significant global traction. In 2021, director Sukumar's all-India film Pushpa: The Rise debuted, captivating audiences worldwide.

The sequel, Pushpa: The Rule - Part 2, slated for a global release on August 15, boasts a larger budget and more elaborate production than its predecessor.

Meanwhile, Anonno Mamun, head of Action Cut Entertainment, has finalised talks with the Indian distributor to bring Pushpa 2 to Bangladeshi theatres.

The movie will be released here in Hindi, not Bengali, due to an existing policy against screening of foreign films dubbed in Bengali.

Mamun cited limited interest in Bengalidubbed films and widespread understanding of Hindi, amongst audience, as additional reasons.

Raindance Film Festival to screen a Bangladeshi film



Raindance Film Festival renowned for independent will cinema. Bangladeshi short film Death and Landscape in its 32nd edition.

Directed by Fuaduzzaman Fuad, this film will make its international premiere in London on June 27. The film, co-produced

Mahfuz Mapel, features creative consultancy from film critic

and journalist Sadia Khalid Reeti.

The lead role is played by Suzana Payel Sushmita, with Manjurul Islam Akash as executive producer and cinematography by Zarif Ahmed and Asif Uddin.

NEWS

Bangladesh categorised as country 'in crisis' Where horror abounds

Bangladesh's freedom of expression has been considered to be in a state of crisis since 2014 by this ranking, said Sheikh Manjur-e-Alam, regional director of Article-19 South Asia, while presenting the findings at a press briefing at Hotel Lakeshore Heights in the capital.

"In 2000, Bangladesh was considered to be a country whose freedom of expression is 'less restricted'. Then in 2006, it first dropped in ranking to become 'highly restricted'. Since then it has been on a downwards trend."

The report takes into account 25 indicators related to freedom of expression, digital rights, personal and political independence, political participation, civic participation, and media freedom.

When comparing Bangladesh's scores for different indicators, one of the areas it has performed worst in over the years is freedom from government social media monitoring and

government social media censorship. Other indicators that affected the country's scores include arrests for

political content, lack of freedom of ranking country is North peaceful assembly, and lack of freedom dreams ... Freedom of expression is FROM PAGE 12 to use it without the content of th of academic exchange and expression.

Also faring poorly were the scores in media self-censorship and government censorship of journalists.

"Since 2007, Bangladesh's scores in keeping journalists free from harassment has been negative," said

The country has shown improvement in reducing political killings and in freedom of religion.

To rank different countries, the index asks questions like whether the government represses civil society organisations, whether it blocks access to certain websites, or censors social media, and whether it has institutions to monitor online content.

The index also assesses how comprehensive the surveillance of political content in social media by the government is.

Speaking at the press briefing, executive director of Transparency International Bangladesh Iftekharuzzaman said Bangladesh got independence only because of the freedom of expression.

"The current situation was never

now a hostage of power politics. There is surveillance in social media posts, ban on political programmes, political

Bangladesh at the bottom of the list." Prothom Alo Joint Editor Sohrab Hasan said if good terms exist between a government and the people, there is

killings have not stopped yet, and [there

is] self-censorship. [All these] brings

no need for acts like CSA or DSA. "Whenever the government starts fearing the people, they try to control them with various rules and regulations... Until the culture of fear is removed, freedom of expression will be at stake.

Rizwana Hasan, chief Syeda of the Bangladesh executive Environmental Lawyers Association, said, "The published report did not surprise me. To overcome the situation. the government must heed the voices of civil society. To improve our image, we must engage in dialogue and work with everyone rather than distancing ourselves. For speaking the truth, there should be no punishment; instead, we should consider it and find ways to make corrections."

France, Belgium

FROM PAGE 12

air bombardments, residents said, while Israeli air strikes killed at least five people in the southern city of Rafah.

Simultaneous Israeli assaults on the northern and southern edges of the Gaza Strip this month have caused a new exodus of hundreds of thousands of people fleeing their homes, and sharply restricted the flow of aid, raising the risk of famine.

The UN agency for Palestinian refugees (UNRWA) said yesterday that food distribution in Rafah were currently suspended due to lack of supplies and insecurity.

At least 35,647 Palestinians have been killed in Israel's offensive in Gaza, according to the enclave's health ministry yesterday. The toll includes 85 deaths over the past 24 hours, a ministry statement said. At least 10,000 others are missing and believed to be trapped under destroyed buildings, it said.

In Jabalia, a sprawling refugee camp built for displaced civilians 75 years ago, the Israeli army used bulldozers to clear shops and property near the local market, residents said, in a military operation that began almost two weeks ago.

thout an operator present.

Only patients using trolleys and wheelchairs along with three other people, including the liftman, can use the lift at a time.

Several accidents took place in the past years, and a female patient died while being stuck in the lift on March

"I work while constantly scared that I might die," Shipon said.

Fazlul Haq, a food staffer at Mitford, said a tragic accident that resulted in the death of a colleague has left him traumatised.

"On June 3, 2021, my colleague Sumon and I were going from floor to floor to distribute food to the patients. We had gotten on the lift to go to the second floor. In the absence of the operator, Sumon pressed a button. The moment he touched it, he got electrocuted and died on the spot.

"I haven't been able to use the lift since then.'

Not only at Mitford, but lifts at many government hospitals in the capital have become risky to use as incidents like patients and attendants getting stuck inside are rampant. Many of the lifts are overused and carry more than their capacity.

The Daily Star visited 13 major staterun hospitals in the capital and found that complaints of lifts malfunctioning are common. Some of them make loud noises at times, some get stuck or have doors that malfunction, remaining either permanently open or failing to reopen once closed.

The issue of lifts in dilapidated conditions came to the fore after a heart patient died while being stuck in a lift at Shaheed Tajuddin Medical College in Gazipur on May 12.

prompted the The incident Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS) to issue a five-point directive, which includes ensuring uninterrupted power supply in all healthcare facilities, checking the presence of lift operators and reassessing their qualification, inspecting lift's safety system, and sending a letter to the Power Board of Bangladesh to inspect all lifts of all healthcare facilities.

However, the scenario at the city hospitals remains unsatisfactory.

The National Institute of Cancer Research & Hospital in Mohakhali has eight lifts in its two buildings. All of them malfunction frequently.

"The lift condition is so bad that anyone can easily open the door using their hands, which poses a risk of

He described the lift failures as a daily occurrence due to overheating caused by overuse. The authorities keep three lifts of

seven-storey building closed from 2:00pm for what they claimed was a lack of users, further limiting accessibility for patients and staffers. A tragic incident on September 17, 2022, underscored the dangers posed

by these lifts, as a 60-year-old cancer patient fell to her death from the ninth floor through a lift shaft. Meanwhile in Dhaka Medical College

Hospital, at least seven lifts remain consistently overloaded with patients and their relatives, posing serious risks to the safety of those relying on them to move around the hospital. Shakil Mahmud, a lift operator at

DMCH, said each lift operates under high pressure from the sheer number

Sometimes, it gets so crowded that we have to force people to get off. But most of the time people stay back, ignoring the risks.'

Due to the heavy usage, the hospital authorities close the operation of each lift for four hours by rotation.

Samad Azad, deputy assistant engineer of PWD at DMCH, said the lifts are malfunctioning frequently due to

overload.

During a recent night-time visit to the National Institute of Traumatology Orthopaedic Rehabilitation (NITOR), and Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University (BSMMU), this correspondent found no liftman. As a result, many of the patients were using lifts without knowing how to.

"I don't know how to use the lift, which makes it very difficult for me..." said a patient at NITOR, who spoke on the condition of anonymity.

Another patient named Alal Uddin expressed his fear of using the lift without an operator.

"I am very afraid to enter the lift as there are no operators here. This is the first time I am using it, which makes it scarier for me."

Nurjahan Begum, a staffer at BSMMU's block-C, told The Daily Star, "I was never afraid to use lifts. But ten vears ago, an accident prompted me to be more cautious while using it.

"Ten years ago, a nurse was going from the ground floor to an upper floor. Suddenly, the lift malfunctioned and stopped. The nurse was frightened. The lift then rapidly descended to the ground floor, causing the people inside

accidents," said Aminul Islam, a lift to panic. When hit the ground floor, the nurse's leg was severely injured she said, adding that the accident could have been more severe.

> "Since then, I have been afraid to use the lift. I only use it when absolutely necessary, like when I am accompanying a patient."

The situation at other major hospitals, including Bangladesh Shishu Hospital and Institute, National Institute of Mental Health, National Institute of Cardiovascular Diseases, Shaheed Suhrawardy Medical College and Hospital, and the National Institute of Neuro Sciences & Hospital, mirrors this grim reality.

Frequent lift problems and the absence of operators after evening hours force patients to operate these dangerous lifts on their own. On March 31. Health Minister

Dr Samanta Lal Sen got stuck in an elevator at the National Institute of Neurosciences & Hospital. The investigation committee

yesterday found negligence in elevator maintenance and a lack of operator training related to the incident. Speaking to The Daily Star, Moinul

Ahsan, director of hospitals at DGHS, said that 24-hour lift usage in some hospitals sometimes leads to problems. "The lift is meant for patients only,

but unnecessary use by others can lead to such accidents. Sometimes the lift gets overloaded due to too many people. This should be avoided."

He said that DGHS took the decision to issue the directives at an emergency meeting, with the participation of the heads of all government healthcare institutions across the country, regarding the overall management of the hospital, including emergency services, lifts and service management.

Tigers start USA tour

FROM PAGE 12

for Bangladesh with two wickets but he went for 41 off his four overs, including 32 off the last two. Earlier, Towhid Hridoy (58 off 47)

cored his second half-century in the format to drive the visitors to 153 for six after being asked to bat first. Mahmudullah Riyad scored a 22-ball

31 but the top-order failed yet again with Liton Das (14), Soumya Sarkar (20) and skipper Najmul Hossain Shanto (3) failing to make much of an impact in an underwhelming batting effort.

The two sides will meet again tomorrow and on Saturday in the two remaining matches of the series.

'Political equations' could be at play run-up to the January 7 national

They think along that line despite US Assistant Secretary of State for South and Central Asia Donald Lu's recent remarks that Washington was keen to rebuild trust in its relations with Dhaka.

Some leaders at the meeting said the sanctions on the former army chief are "embarrassing" for the government, while others see Aziz as a "closed chapter".

The matter came up at an unscheduled discussion at the party president's Dhanmondi office vesterday as well as within interpersonal communications, said party sources. Meanwhile, another topic at

yesterday's discussion was the poor voter turnout in the second phase of the upazila polls, with AL leaders wondering why it was so low. Chief Election Commissioner Kazi

Habibul Awal estimated that over 30

percent of the votes were cast in the second phase of the upazila parishad elections in 156 upazilas.

The first phase of upazila polls, held on May 8, saw a 36 percent turnout, the lowest since 2009, when it was 70.57 percent.

The AL leaders said 30 percent turnout is unacceptable given that the party believes it has 40 percent of the vote bank. Citing some examples, they said

turnout at some polling stations was only one to two percent, raising concerns about what AL units and affiliated bodies are doing in those areas. AL leaders, however, expressed

their satisfaction over a peaceful

election.

Awami League General Secretary Obaidul Quader, at a post-polls briefing at the party's Dhanmondi office, said the second phase of the upazila polls was held peacefully and the voter turnout was also quite satisfactory.

INTERNATIONAL

US undermined aviation safety with sanctions

Says Russia after Raisi helicopter crash

REUTERS, Moscow

Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov, commenting on the helicopter crash that killed Iranian president Ebrahim Raisi, said yesterday that US sanctions had worsened aviation safety.

Iranian media reported that images from the site showed the US-made Bell 212 helicopter on which Raisi was travelling slammed into a mountain peak, although there was no official word on the cause of the crash.

Iran was a major buyer of Bell helicopters under the Shah before the 1979 Islamic revolution, though the exact origin of the aircraft that crashed was not clear. Decades of sanctions have made it hard for Iran to obtain parts or upgrade its aircraft.

"The Americans disown this, but the truth is that other countries against which the United States announced sanctions do not receive spare parts for American equipment, including aviation," Lavrov said about the crash.

"We are talking about deliberately causing damage to ordinary citizens who use these vehicles, and when spare parts are not supplied, this is directly related to a decrease in the level of safety.

Raisi's death has introduced "great uncertainty" in the succession, analysts said, stirring rivalries in the hardliners' camp over who will succeed Khamenei as the country's ultimate authority.



Doctors and staff of Kamal Adwan Hospital evacuate Palestinian patients following an Israeli strike in Beit Lahia in the northern Gaza Strip yesterday. Residents and medical officials said Israeli tanks were besieging the Al-Awda Hospital in Jabalia for the third day, and opened fire against Kamal Adwan Hospital in nearby Beit Lahia town.

UN COURT

Small island states win key climate case

AFP, Berlin

The UN maritime court yesterday ruled in favour of nine small island states who brought a case to seek increased protection of world's oceans from catastrophic climate change.

Finding that carbon emissions considered a sea pollutant, the court said countries have an obligation to take measures to mitigate their effects on oceans.

'Anthropogenic GHG emissions into the atmosphere constitute pollution of the marine environment" the international treaty UNCLOS, the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea (ITLOS) ruled in an expert opinion.

The case was brought September small countries disproportionately affected by climate change, including Antigua and Barbuda and Vanuatu.

PRO-GAZA PROTEST

Students stage walkout from Yale graduation

REUTERS, New Haven

Scores of graduating students staged a walkout from Yale University's commencement exercises on Monday, protesting the Israeli offensive in Gaza, Yale's financial ties to weapons makers and its response to pro-Palestinian demonstrations on the Ivy League campus.

The walkout began as Yale President Peter Salovey started to announce the college-bytraditional college presentation of candidates for degrees on the grounds of Yale's Old Campus, filled with thousands of graduates in their caps and gowns.

At least 150 students seated near the front of the audience stood together, turned their backs to the stage and paraded out of the ceremony through Phelps Gate, retracing their steps during the processional into the yard.

Many of the protesters carried small banners with such slogans as "Books not bombs" and "Divest from war." Some wore redcoloured gloves symbolizing bloodied hands.

Other signs read: "Drop the charges" and "Protect free speech" in reference to 45 people arrested in a police crackdown last month on demonstrations in and around the New Connecticut, Haven,

Aid for Palestinians piles up in Egypt

Rafah crossing closed due to threat posed to aid work by Israel's military operation; US pier delivery falters

REUTERS, United Nations

Food and medicine for up in Egypt because the Rafah crossing remains closed and there has been no aid delivered to a UN warehouse from a US-built pier for two days, UN officials warned on

Senior UN aid official Edem Wosornu said there were insufficient supplies and fuel to provide any meaningful level of support to the people of Gaza as they endure Israel's military onslaught against Hamas.

"We are running out of words to describe what is happening in Gaza. We have described it as a catastrophe, a nightmare, as hell on earth. It is all of these, and worse," she said.

She told the UN Security Council that the closure of Rafah crossing from Egypt had stopped the delivery of at least

900,000 forced to flee Rafah since the start of Israeli offensive: UN

82,000 metric tonnes of supplies, while access at Israel's Kerem Shalom crossing was limited due to "hostilities, challenging logistical conditions, and complex coordination procedures."

Egypt said on Monday that the crossing is closed due to the threat posed to aid work by Israel's military operation.

Aid access into southern Gaza has been disrupted since Israel stepped up military operations in Rafah, a move that the UN says has quantities of aid, but now areas in forced 900,000 people to flee.

Israel's UN Ambassador Gilad Palestinians in Gaza are piling Erdan told the Security Council that Israel had no other choice but to go after Hamas in Rafah Israel comes under growing global and that the removal of civilians from an active war zone should be

the vicinity of this crossing are also under evacuation orders" by Israel.

Aid deliveries began arriving at a US-built pier on Friday as pressure to allow more supplies into the besieged coastal enclave. The



supported and not condemned. "They have moved to a

designated humanitarian zone that is being filled with aid. And our hope is for many more civilians to leave Rafah and move out of harm's way," he said. "Temporary evacuation is reversible, but the loss of life is not."

However, Wosornu described the situation for Palestinians at the new sites as horrendous.

In northern Gaza, where the UN warns a famine is imminent, Wosornu said the Erez crossing had been closed since May 9 and the newly-opened Erez West crossing "is now being used for limited

UN agreed to assist in coordinating aid distribution from the floating pier, but has remained adamant that deliveries by land are the best way to combat the crisis.

The UN said that 10 truckloads of food aid - transported from the pier site by UN contractors - were received on Friday at a World Food Programme warehouse in Deir El Balah in Gaza.

But on Saturday, only five truckloads made it to the warehouse after 11 others were cleaned out by Palestinians during the journey through an area that a UN official said has been hard to access with humanitarian aid.

India EC bars BJP candidate from campaign

HINDUSTAN TIMES ONLINE

The Election Commission (EC) of India has "strongly censured" retired Calcutta High Court judge and Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) Lok Sabha candidate from West Bengal's Tamluk constituency, Gangopadhyay, Abhijit and barred him from all campaigning for 24 hours after his crass remarks about chief minister Mamata Banerjee.

The 24-hour bar on his campaigning began at 5:00pm yesterday.

"[T]he Commission painfully notes the fact that such abominable words have from someone of Shri Abhijit Gangopadhyay's educational professional background and hence does not deserve remotely benefit of doubt. And whereas, by Shri Abhijit Gangopadhyay's words, he has brought damage and disrepute to the state of West Bengal that has a distinguished tradition of respect for women," the polls body noted in its order.

Gangopadhyay, at a public meeting in Haldia, had said in Bengali, "'Mamata Banerjee, how much are you being sold for? Your rate is 10 lakhs, why? Because you're getting your make up done by Keya Seth? Mamata Banerjee, is she even a woman? I keep wondering sometimes."

40 killed in Nigeria gunmen attack

AFP, Jos

Gunmen on motorbikes stormed a mining community in central Nigeria, killing up to 40 people and torching homes, residents said, in the latest violence to hit a region troubled by resource disputes and intercommunal strife.

The attack late on Monday took place in Plateau state, where in December nearly 200 people were killed in raids on mostly Christian villages.

Armed men invaded Zurak mining community in Wase district in the evening, shooting sporadically at residents and torching houses, Plateau state commissioner for information Musa Ibrahim Ashoms told AFP by telephone.

He initially gave an estimate of around 40 killed, but later said only nine had so far been confirmed dead after speaking to local officials as the situation was still unclear.

1 dead, 30 hurt as S'pore flight hits turbulence

AFP, Bangkok

One person died and 30 were injured yesterday when a Singapore Airlines flight from London hit severe turbulence and was forced to make an emergency landing in Bangkok.

Flight tracking data suggested the plane dropped more than 1,800 metres (6,000 feet) in just five minutes over the Andaman Sea, west of Thailand, causing multiple head injuries to those on board.

It is the latest drama involving a Boeing plane, after a fuselage panel blew out of an Alaska Airlines 737 MAX in January as well as two fatal crashes in 2018 and

Singapore Airlines said flight SQ321 took off from London's Heathrow airport and "encountered severe turbulence en route".

Dhaka, Canberra

their coastguard to Bangladesh to talk to the head of Bangladesh Coastguard in order to bring about a fruitful cooperation.

The home minister told journalists at the secretariat that Wong emphasised on enhancing the sharing of intelligence for the development of both the countries. Wong said, "We share a region, an

ocean and a future. We are determined

to do all we can with you and other partners in the region to ensure a region that is peaceful, stable and prosperous." About big power competition in the Indo-pacific region, she said Australia is a middle power, not super power, and

believes in partnership, collaboration

and engagement. "So, we will collaborate with the countries in the Indian ocean through IORA [Indian Ocean Rim Association], work with partners of the ASEAN, with which it has strategic partnership, and we have a growing relationship with

Bangladesh. the issues [democracy, human rights, governance and gender equality] you spoke about. We want to do what we can to facilitate development, [so] that the people are safe, prosperous and the conditions for peace are there."

About the Rohingya crisis, Wong said Australia will continue to work with Bangladesh on addressing it.

"This is a critically important issue to our region. Sustainable repatriation of the Rohingyas is the solution," she said, adding that it is important to hold accountable the perpetrators who committed the crimes against the ethnic minority.

She also said Australia will provide additional funding to Bangladesh for technical education and additional economic assistance for economic reforms to support the LDC graduation.

Wong added that Australia and Bangladesh are also working on practical solutions to climate change, including transforming economy to

clean energy economy. Foreign Minister Hasan Mahmud said the bilateral trade between the two countries saw a significant rise, currently at \$4 billion, and Australia will continue to provide duty-free access of Bangladeshi products to the Australian

market even after the LDC graduation. "We sought Australian investments "We are a democracy and care about to our IT sector and special economic zones.'

"We also spoke about skilled migration and a joint programme Bangladeshi and Australian universities," he said, adding that more than 100,000 Bangladeshis are already in Australia and are making significant contribution its society.

Washington

FROM PAGE 2

The minister said Bangladesh has adopted a "zero tolerance" policy against corruption and it will continue to work with the United States on this issue.

Hasan said the two countries are working together on combating terrorism and human trafficking, among other issues.

The US state department yesterday announced the public designation of Gen (retd) Aziz due to what it says was his involvement in "significant corruption".

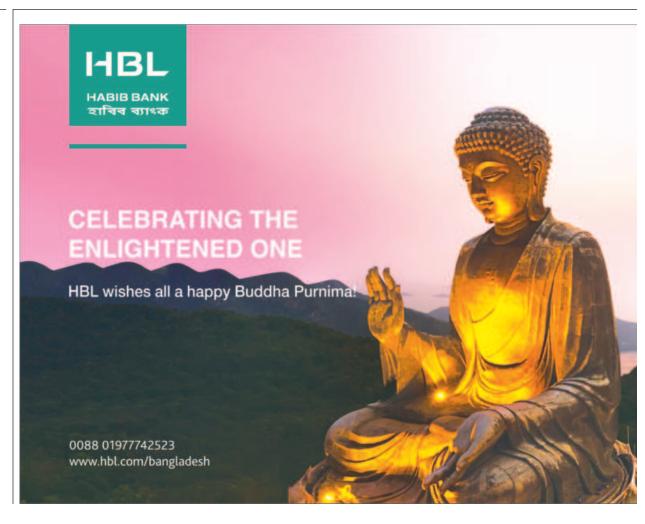
This action rendersAziz and his immediate family members generally ineligible for entering the US. Aziz served as Bangladesh's chief

of army staff from June 2018 to June

Meanwhile, Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan declined to comment on the US sanctions against

the former army chief. Speaking to reporters after a cabinet meeting at the Secretariat yesterday, the minister said, "I have no comment on this. I don't know why this ban has been imposed."

The US in May last year announced a new visa policy stating that it would impose visa restrictions on Bangladeshis, who undermine the democratic election process, and their immediate family members.



EDITORIAL

The Paily Star

FOUNDER EDITOR: LATE S. M. ALI

An alarming lapse in data security protocols

NTMC's revelation about illicit sale of private data raises concerns

The National Telecommunication Monitoring Centre's (NTMC) recent revelation about the illicit sale of citizens' NID card and phone call details comes as yet another reminder of how susceptible government-stored data is to breaches and exploitations. The fact that government employees themselves have exploited their access to the data-selling it through various social media groups and messaging apps—adds another dimension to this story. For one, it exposes an alarming lapse in the data security protocols. It also means that nothing short of an overhaul of the whole data security infrastructure will be enough to contain this multifaceted threat.

The NTMC server keeps data relating to citizens' NID cards, passports, driving licenses, and call detail records. Nearly 500 officials of 42 organisations can log in to its National Intelligent Platform (NIP) using their IDs, and access the data for verification and investigation purposes. The latest breach, as per a letter by the NTMC to the home ministry, was traced to unusually high numbers of logins to the NIP by IDs belonging to two high officials from the Anti-Terrorism Unit (ATU) and Rab-6 between March 25 and April 25. Both of them are now under investigation for unauthorised data transfers. Previously, two data entry operators of the IDEA 2 project were arrested for similar offenses.

Although we don't know how many people were affected by the latest breaches, the NTMC in its letter said that personal data was being sold through 21 WhatsApp, 48 Telegram, and 720 Facebook groups and pages, which collectively have 32 lakh members and followers. Such widespread dissemination of sensitive information poses a severe risk to the security and privacy of individuals concerned. Personal data including NID details can be abused to commit various crimes. We have seen how such data was used to open fake bank accounts and obtain loans, leading to financial and identity theft, or to illegally access government grants. Victims, it goes without saying, have to pay the price even years after the commission of such crimes in their names.

The latest revelation should serve as a wake-up call for the government. It has waited too long for the data security system to fix itself, without undertaking any robust measure, but this was a fool's dream. What the government needs to do is act decisively to not just ensure that our data is unbreachable for hackers but also implement stringent security and accountability measures for officials and organisations having access to the data. The NTMC has made a number of recommendations in this regard, which the government should carefully evaluate and impleme

Waste of a rescue app for women

Govt should properly utilise tools meant to prevent gender violence

In a country where sexual harassment and violence against women are rampant despite having various legal and administrative safeguards, the failure of one app meant to help women in trouble to reach its intended users is perhaps not a big surprise. But it indeed feels like a wasted opportunity, especially given the widespread use of mobile phone and internet among women in Bangladesh. The "Joy" appthrough which women facing violence can send rescue pleas to law enforcers, family and friends—was seen as a laudable step when it was launched in 2018. However, over the last six years, only six requests were sent through the app, which is quite disconcerting.

For context, over the last four years, more than 6,000 women were raped and more than 300 were murdered after rape. Had the app worked properly or had girls and women known about it, could some of those victims be rescued? You can no longer find the app on Google Play, and no link to the app is even visible on the landing page of the website of the Ministry of Women and Children Affairs (MoWCA) or other relevant ministries. The app is apparently under reconstruction currently, and Google might have restricted some of its features in Android 12. But this is no excuse for its serial underperformance in all the years that it has existed.

We have seen a similar usage pattern with the MoWCA's 109 helpline, which is not being used for the purpose it was intended to serve. Moreover, since 2013, an estimated 600 plus apps have been developed by the government, but like Joy, most of these disappeared from Google Play. Joy was built with a budget of Tk 45 lakh. If similar amounts were spent to develop the other apps, imagine how much of taxpayers' money went to waste. It is clear that government officials and organisations behind these initiatives put little effort into properly utilising them, making a mockery of the whole investment. But rescue tools like an app or helpline can save many potential victims of violence, if properly used and promoted. We urge the authorities to take immediate steps to revive these important tools.

THIS DAY IN HISTORY



Pact of Friendship and Alliance between Germany and Italy

On May 22, 1939, Adolf Hitler of Germany and Benito Mussolini of Italy signed the Pact of Steel, formally known as the Pact of Friendship and Alliance between Germany and Italy, a full military and political alliance between their countries.

Why is it taking so long to stabilise the economy?



Bangladesh's showed economy remarkable signs of swift recovery from the adverse effects of Covid-19, but this progress was cut short by the advent of serious macroeconomic imbalances in April 2022. These imbalances are reflected in high inflation, depleting foreign exchange reserves, pressure on the exchange rate, shrinking capital inflows, and pressure on the budget. To address the stabilisation issues, the government entered a four-year programme with the International Monetary Fund (IMF). Implementation of the second year of the programme is currently underway.

While the government's intentions to address the macroeconomic stabilisation challenges are laudable, the results so far fall short of what is necessary. Inflation remains high, the availability of foreign exchange is severely constrained, GDP growth is on a downward trend, investment rates are down, and export growth is much below the long-term trend. Shortage of foreign exchange and the associated import cutbacks are constraining the recovery of GDP growth, private investment, and exports.

My research, documented in a new book titled Bangladesh Stabilizing The Macroeconomy, suggests that the reason for the slow progress in macroeconomic stabilisation is inadequate implementation of required reforms. At the initial stage, the main policy response was to manage the balance of payments with import controls and use of forex reserves, and to control domestic inflation through budgetary subsidies on oil, gas, electricity, and fertiliser. An effort was also made to protect GDP growth and investments through a strong control over interest rates, by increasing fiscal deficits, and through liberal use of Bangladesh Bank financing of fiscal deficits.

These policies, instead of helping the stabilisation agenda, further worsened the imbalances. There was an unsustainable run-on forex reserve

fiscal deficits. To stem the slide of the exchange rate, the government further tightened imports, which declined by 27 percent from the FY2022 level, adversely affecting GDP growth, investment, and exports.

wrong? What went macroeconomic imbalances have emerged from three sources: inflationary pressure; the balance of payments pressure; and fiscal pressure.

will produce and export only if the profitability from exports exceeds the profitability from domestic production. Two key determinants of export profitability are the exchange rate and trade protection. An overvalued real exchange rate hurts exports and encourages production for the domestic market. Similarly, the higher the trade protection, the higher the incentives for domestic

investments, hurt exports, and lower

GDP growth. The only sustainable way

to manage the balance of payments

pressure is to focus on the supply

side to increase exports and to use

demand-side instruments to lower

A critical determinant of exports is

the incentive policy regime. Investors

demand for imports.



VISUAL: SHAIKH SULTANA JAHAN BADHON

Addressing these issues requires the use of at least three policy instruments that best relate to each of these areas: monetary policy to ease the inflationary pressure; exchange rate policy to ease the balance of payments pressure; and tax or expenditure policy measures to ease the budgetary pressure. Their combined use as a coordinated set of policy actions can help avoid the bluntness of any single instrument and reinforce the effectiveness of each of the policy reforms.

Regarding balance of payments management, excessive reliance on that put pressure on the exchange import controls is inconsistent with rate, foreign capital flows fell, and the GDP growth acceleration. While inflation rate accelerated approaching selective import controls can play a social services and put pressure on serious supply disruptions, discourage that lowers trade protection and the pricing reforms of SOEs is obvious.

Concerning the exchange rate management, fundamental problem is that the exchange rate has been highly overvalued for an extended period of time, as reflected in the appreciation of the real effective exchange rate (REER) by an overwhelming 57 percent between FY2011 and FY2022. By failing to correct this overvaluation on a timely basis, Bangladesh exposed its currency to substantial depreciation between April 2022 and September 2023. Even so, the taka today is still appreciated by 40 percent in real terms over 2011.

More generally, a sustainable way of managing the balance of payments would be to let the exchange rate be nearly 10 percent. Growing budgetary short-term emergency adjustment role, market-determined. This should be were only about 0.6 percent of GDP. subsidies lowered spending on core resorting to import controls can cause complemented by trade policy reforms The case for corporate governance and

domestic and foreign private anti-export bias of trade policy. A flexible exchange rate along with lower trade protection will boost exports and remittances, thereby increasing forex supply. On the demand side, reduction in private spending through increase in interest rate combined with higher taxes and lower fiscal deficit will help reduce the demand for imports and avoid the exchange rate from overshooting.

Regarding inflation management, research shows that globally as well as in Bangladesh the main source of inflationary pressure is excess liquidity in the system resulting from the pandemic-time stimulus packages. In Bangladesh, these were further intensified by the persistence of interest controls through the "6/9" interest rate policy, rising fiscal deficit, and liberal Bangladesh Bank financing of fiscal deficit. Thankfully, since September 2023, the 6/9 interest rate policy has been abandoned and the Bangladesh Bank has stopped financing the budget deficit. This is a welcome reform, which has already lowered the pressure on the exchange rate. Inflation reduction will take time and may require further increases in the interest rates. Most importantly, the budget deficit must be reduced to lower inflation. This has not yet happened owing to the inadequacy of

Concerning fiscal policy, the required policy approach is to cut the fiscal deficit by increasing revenues through meaningful tax reforms and by reforming the state-owned enterprises (SoEs). Every year, the government sets ambitious tax targets that are not met. As a result, the tax-GDP ratio is not only extremely low at less than eight percent of GDP, but also declining or stagnant. Meaningful tax reforms require addressing the substantial institutional constraints to help establish a modern tax system in the country. This would be much more effective than setting ambitious tax revenue targets through ad-hoc tax measures. Regarding SoE reforms, the government must recognise that it has invested heavily in these enterprises but the financial rate of return on this investment is exceptionally low due to corporate governance and pricing constraints. For example, the book value of total assets of non-financial SoEs was estimated at around 17 percent of GDP in FY2021. A 10-12 percent return on these assets should yield profits of 1.8-2 percent of GDP. In sharp contrast to this, actual profits

We are not taking care of our young generation



Abu Afsarul Haider is an entrepreneur. He can be reached at afsarulhaider@gmail.com

ABU AFSARUL HAIDER

Recently, the Bangladesh Youth causes. Leadership Centre (BYLC) and Brac University's Centre for Peace and Justice conducted a joint survey involving 5,609 young individuals aged 16-35 from various parts of the country to gauge their perspectives on education, health, livelihoods, justice, climate change, migration, democracy and governance. The findings indicate that 55.3 percent perceive Bangladesh to lack peace, 71.5 percent feel uncomfortable expressing their views publicly, and 68.6 percent feel that the current education system fails to adequately prepare them for employment or entrepreneurship. Moreover, nearly 89 percent cited corruption, along with unemployment (67 percent), inflation (51 percent), and climate change (73 percent), as adversely impacting their well-being. Similarly, a 2020 World Economic Forum study uncovered that 82 percent of individuals aged 15-29 expressed a desire to migrate from Bangladesh due to socioeconomic concerns.

These reports raise the question as to why our youth struggle with such feelings of frustration, insecurity, detachment, apathy, and disillusionment, especially when they belong to a generation known for its potential to drive change. Several factors contribute to these sentiments and shed light on the underlying affecting citizens' lives.

One significant factor behind young people's feeling of disillusionment is the pervasive corruption committed by businessmen, politicians, government officials, and influential figures, among others. When politicians engage in activities like electionrigging, nepotism or bribery, when prominent business leaders evade taxes or commit loan fraud, and when influential individuals manipulate public tenders or get involved in illicit activities like drug trafficking or extortion, the repercussions are felt throughout society.

Often, these corrupt individuals go unpunished, eroding trust in the system, which is particularly disheartening for the youth who dream of a brighter future and a more equitable society, and perceive these incidents as a betrayal of their aspirations for good governance. Moreover, today's political landscape lacks fundamental principles like reconciliation, tolerance, honesty, and respect for human dignity and differing beliefs. Instead of addressing crucial issues like economic development, health and education, politicians resort to criticising and verbally attacking each other with flimsy arguments and offensive language, lacking healthy debates or discussions on matters directly

exploiting the youth for their own gains. Student politics was once a domain for the brightest and socially conscious students to engage in and contribute to national affairs. Now it has been hijacked by non-student actors, who manipulate young people as pawns to advance their political agendas. Student politics, once a beacon of idealism, has become tainted by partisan interests, power struggles, and greed for wealth. Consequently, the younger generation is increasingly feeling disinterested and apathetic towards the country's politics and politicians. Recent events, such as the resistance to partisan student politics at Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (Buet) is a case in point.

The economic growth and development that we take pride in regrettably bypassed the majority of the population, benefiting mainly higher-income groups. The Household Income and Expenditure Survey (HIES) 2022, conducted by the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS), reveals a widening rich-poor gap in income distribution within the country. Shockingly, the report indicates that 30.04 percent of Bangladesh's income is concentrated within the top five percent of households. Moreover, this economic growth has not only exacerbated income inequality, it failed to generate sufficient employment opportunities for the millions of young Bangladeshis entering the workforce annually. According to the 2022 Bangladesh Sample Vital Statistics report, approximately 41 percent of the nation's youth are inactive, meaning they are not studying, working or receiving any job training. While many are trying for

Furthermore, political parties are are not getting the necessary support from the system, as approximately 87 percent of them are engaged in informal employment.

What's even more alarming is that, as a society, we have inadvertently set the wrong standards for the generations following ours. Our society that once used to value morals and ethics has now become superficial and lost its moral compass. Values such as honesty, trust, integrity, respect and tolerance of others' opinions no longer play an important role in our daily lives. The concept of value has shifted, and it is now determined by price rather than the intrinsic quality of things. Morality, a term that traditionally conveys a sense of virtue, seems to be more applicable to those who are perceived as weak and fragile within the community. Sadly, our definition of "success" has evolved; today, it's predominantly equated with monetary wealth, irrespective of its legality. As a result, many young individuals find themselves struggling with the fundamental question of discerning "right" from "wrong." Besides, many talented young people opt to leave the country at the earliest opportunity, which could seriously hurt the nation's long-term growth and prosperity.

The total population of Bangladesh stands at 169.8 million, of which 27.96 percent are between the age of 15 and 29 years. These young people represent the future of our nation. Social scientists emphasise that a nation that does not take care of its youth is a doomed nation. Therefore, the government and the entire society should focus on harnessing and utilising the energy, passion, and spirit of the youth through positive means to engage them fully in the economic and social sectors to build the leaders of tomorrow.

employment, experts argue that they

Biden-Netanyahu standoff complicates the Gaza conflict

is a former Indian ambassador to



Amid the extraordinary carnage in Gaza, the international community is witnessing with surprise and bemusement the spectacle of the US president standing eyeball to eyeball with the Israeli prime minister, with neither of them signalling any desire to give way. This spectacle is particularly astonishing since Joe Biden has consistently prided himself on being Israel's best friend and, during the Gaza war, has proffered almost unstinting support to Israel's war efforts.

Ties between the US and Israel, two of the world's closest allies, have generally been described with words such as "tightly knit," "unwavering support," and "ironclad." What, then, has gone wrong? It now appears that the large-scale killing of Palestinians in Gaza and the widespread pro-Palestine agitations in the US and several European cities have finally awakened the US president's conscience, or iust rudely reminded him that he is losing support in the presidential race.

After seven months of wanton death and destruction, Biden started counselling restraint just as Benjamin Netanyahu was preparing to order a fresh assault on

Rafah, in southern Gaza, where nearly two million displaced Gaza residents have found temporary, albeit squalid, refuge.

All through March, the US president repeatedly conveyed to Netanyahu the need for a ceasefire and increased humanitarian supplies to the beleaguered enclave. Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer described Netanyahu personally as a liability for Israel. Finally, in an unprecedented move, the US declined to veto a UN Security Council resolution that called for a cessation of hostilities and increased flow of humanitarian aid in Gaza.

Living up to his reputation as a master political manipulator, Netanyahu then adroitly shifted attention from Gaza to Iran by attacking the Iranian consulate in Damascus, Syria, killing seven senior Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) officers, Iranian retaliation pushed the US immediately



Smoke rises after an Israeli strike as Israeli forces launch a ground and air operation in the eastern part of Rafah, in the southern Gaza Strip on May 7, 2024. FILE PHOTO: REUTERS



In the standoff between Joe Biden and Benjamin Netanyahu, it is Biden who seems to have the weaker hand.

FILE PHOTO: AFP

America exists, you will never ever have to (defend yourself). We will always be there by your side." Fortunately for regional security, April's tit-for-tat exchanges between Iran and Israel were largely mere demonstrations of technology and capacity, with both sides deciding not to escalate matters further.

This brought Gaza back to the US's attention, amid widespread demonstrations on numerous university campuses expressing support for Palestinian aspirations, referring to Biden as "Genocide Joe" and calling for an immediate end to the conflict. On May 6, Biden advised Netanyahu not to invade Rafah. The Israeli prime minister immediately ordered aircraft to hit targets in southern Gaza, while a brigade seized the Rafah border crossing with Egypt. Another brigade moved to the border with eastern Rafah.

Two days later, in an interview on CNN, Biden publicly set out his red line, saying, "If they (Israelis) go into Rafah, I'm not supplying the weapons that have been used to deal with the cities." He also ordered a pause in the delivery of 3,500 bombs to Israel. Netanyahu remained unfazed. He categorically stated, "If we must, we shall fight with our fingernails."

Israel has not yet conducted a full-scale assault on Rafah, but it continues to launch regular attacks on targets there and intense bombing at the Rafah-Egypt border. Several dozen Palestinians have been killed. Israel has also dropped leaflets warning civilians that and possible imprisonment. Hence, he has they will face "extreme force" if they remain every reason to continue the conflict in Gaza,

Blinken, meanwhile, gushed, "... as long as in the area. Last week, Israel hit a UN vehicle at least until Hamas' military commander, carrying emergency medical supplies to Rafah, while intensifying attacks in northern Gaza. Blinken has warned helplessly that the Rafah attack will inflict "terrible harm" on the population.

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The stakes for Netanyahu are very high. A ceasefire, without Hamas having been "annihilated," would diminish the prime minister's standing among his right-wing support base and could even lead the extreme right to topple his government. As soon as he ceases to be prime minister, Netanyahu will face the revival of criminal cases against him

Yahya Sinwar, has been apprehended or killed and he can proclaim victory.

Netanyahu is on solid ground at home. He faces little domestic opposition to the conduct of the war, except from the families of the hostages. No influential group is calling for halting the Rafah attack or for an increase in humanitarian assistance.

The Israeli prime minister believes he can face off with Biden. He has already taken on a Democratic president, Barack Obama, on his home turf, when in March 2015 he attacked the nuclear agreement with Iran at a joint session of Congress. Now, he again enjoys the full backing of the Republicans who are criticising Biden for betraying Israel's interests by halting military supplies.

In this standoff, it is Biden who seems to have the weaker hand. In the presidential campaign, polls are still placing him neck and neck with Donald Trump, with the latter even marginally ahead in the swing states. The pause in supply of munitions is hardly likely to make much difference, given that Israel already has enough weaponry for the Rafah assault and billions of dollars of US supplies are ready for delivery.

A Biden climbdown is very likely. As an observer has noted cynically, "US red lines with Israel have been known to turn pink."

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Who was Raisi and what does his death mean?

is a member of the editorial team at The Daily Star.

ALIZA RAHMAN

The death of Iran's President Ebrahim Raisi adds to the growing tensions the country is undergoing at present. From sanctions in 2018 causing further deterioration in the Iranian economy, to Iran's recent historic drone strikes against Israel, Raisi's death comes amid a situation where Iran is already tackling multiple difficult situations, on both the international and domestic fronts.

Raisi, who died in the crash of a helicopter he was riding on his return from a visit to Azerbaijan, held several important positions in Iran. From a town prosecutor, he saw himself promoted to the position of a provincial prosecutor, eventually becoming the chief prosecutor of Tehran. In the 1980s, Raisi was appointed by Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, founder of the Islamic Republic of Iran, to the committee that was responsible for the executions of thousands of political dissidents.

Raisi was an ultraconservative hardliner, who served as judiciary chief in 2019, then became president in 2021 in an election that had low voter turnout and the widespread disqualification of other candidates who were deemed more moderate and reformist. His policies have been condemned both internationally and domestically.

Within Iran, Raisi has long been associated with repressive tactics. A conservative cleric, Raisi ensured stricter enforcement of the "hijab and chastity law" in 2022, a year after his election to the position of president. Soon, in a matter of weeks, the decision led to the death of 22-vear-old Mahsa Amini, sparking the "Jin Jiyan Azadi" movement in Iran. What occurred after is the severe repression of the ensuing protests, with 582 people executed in 2022, and 834 people executed in 2023. As is now well-known, violent crackdowns of the protests followed.



RAISI HAS HELD SEVERAL **IMPOPTANT POSTS**

In 2017, he lost the elections to be president, with Hassan Rouhani winning

In 2019, he was appointed head of the Iranian judiciary by Khamenei

In 2021, he became president in an election that saw low voter turnout the widespread disqualification of other candidates who were reformist and more moderate

He was a long time member of the Assembly of Experts, a group that decides who will replace the leader should the Supreme Leader pass away

VISUAL **STAR**

interest of Western powers. However, it is difficult and far-fetched as of now to make any clear statement from the speculations. For one, the helicopter carrying the late president was the Bell 212 helicopter. With international sanctions on Iran, acquiring necessary parts for its maintenance has been a challenge. Moreover, a major part of Iran's air fleet comes from even before the Islamic Revolution in 1979, i.e. from over 45 years ago. According to aviation expert Paul Beaver, heavy fog, clouds and cold temperatures are very likely to have caused the crash of the aircraft.

It is believed by some that Raisi's death may not lead to lasting changes in its relations with other entities and nations. Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei Gaza following Hamas's October 7 attack. death of Raisi seem like it is in the strategic is the primary decision-maker, with but also the wider region.

those loyal to him being amply rewarded with power and positions. Raisi's interim successor, Mohammad Mokhber, is also believed to be a Khamenei lovalist.

The main challenge, however, arises from the fact that Raisi was seen as a potential successor to the current supreme leader. According to the Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Iran, which was amended in 1989, articles 60, 113, and 114-142 situate the president as the person with the most power after the supreme leader. It is imperative to remember, though, that under Iran's current system, it is still the supreme leader who holds the most sway in every aspect of governance. This power has been compared to that of the Muslim Caliphs in the Middle Ages.

While previous presidents of Iran all had disagreements with the supreme leader, Raisi was seen as having what has been called an "unequivocal allegiance to the supreme leader" by Shahram Kholdi, a professor of Middle East politics at the University of Waterloo in Canada. With Raisi's demise, as per Article 131 of the constitution, the first vice-president will become the president and a new presidential election must be held within the coming 50 days.

Raisi's death undoubtedly changes who will succeed Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, who is 85 years old and known to be ill, though the Western press is accused of having exaggerated the extent of Khamenei's illness. It complicates the inner politics of Iran itself; it is believed that the son of Ali Khamenei, Mojtaba Khamenei, intentionally helped him to become president and trapped him in the position, to showcase his incompetence. It is unclear how Iran's political dynamic will play out in the coming days, in a regime where the Iranian people are largely frustrated with the economy and social and political repression. Given the turbulent state of the Middle East at the moment, the repercussions of Raisi's death could have effects in not only Iran

not new. A leaked 2016 audio tape positions Raisi as being involved in the executions of thousands of Iranian dissenters, despite his later denial of his role. In 1988, 5,000 people were executed, according to various human rights groups such as Amnesty International. The victims are said to be in unmarked mass graves and the event has

On the international stage, Iran's interests align with powerful nations such as Russia, China, Türkiye and the UAE, with political authorities in these states expressing condolences in the aftermath of Raisi's death. A staunch critic of the West, Raisi used incendiary rhetoric against Israel in light of the latter's attack on

been deemed an ongoing crime against

humanity.

Speaking of enacting revenge against Israel for its actions in Gaza, Raisi was supportive of Iran's drone attacks on Israel.

With Israel attacking Gaza for over half a year, speculations have risen among some in the general public of a possible involvement by Israel in Raisi's death. Considering Raisi's anti-West sentiments and Iran's general stance against Israel, it is not surprising that these speculations have come about. The death of Iranian General Qasem Suleimani in 2020 also makes such

The informal coalition led by Iran called the Axis of Resistance situates the country as an even greater threat to US interests. The backing of Houthis, Hezbollah and Hamas, the latter of which has claimed it is in "full solidarity" with Iran, makes the

a possibility appear more credible.



The loss of lives and civic hardships continue despite a Tk 8,626.62 crore mega project by the Chattogram Development Authority, which is currently underway, aimed solely at addressing waterlogging. This photo was taken recently in Ambagan Shaheed Lane area.



People cross this makeshift pathway, set up as part of ongoing works, in Chawkbazar Phooltala area. This temporary pathway not only makes it difficult for vehicles to cross, but also poses a risk to people as they can fall into the canal at anytime.

TK 14,389CR PROJECTS TO MITIGATE WATERLOGGING

Deadline extends, cost goes up but suffering lingers on

"We cannot move across the makeshift path on vehicles. We have to leave vehicles on one end, walk the pathway on foot, then take another vehicle on the other end."

> TAPOS NANDI, a resident of Phooltala area

ARUN BIKASH DEY, Chattogram

year, Chattogram sinks following rain, which washes away the tall claims of monsoon preparedness by the city corporation Chattogram Development

It was no different last year. The port city witnessed hours of waterlogging throughout the monsoon, resulting in low-lying areas, including but not limited to Chawkbazar, Bahaddarhat, Muradpur, Sholashahar Gate No-2, Badurtola, Bakalia DC Road, KB Aman Ali Road, Agrabad, Halishahar, Chandgaon, Katalganj, Shulakbahar, and Dewan Bazar, being submerged under knee-to-waist deep water.

Ironically, the mayor's residence, "Mayor Bhaban", in the Bahaddarhat area, was not spared.

The ordeal is often not limited to "mere" suffering, it also takes lives.

Nipa Palit, 22, a second-year BBS crossing it. student at Hathazari Government College, died after drowning in waterlogged streets while going to college last year.

Also, falling into open drains and either vanishing permanently or being discovered as a deceased body after some time (if fortunate) remains a recurring concern in the port city, with the previous year being no

And the loss of lives and civic hardships continue amid a Tk 8,626.62 crore mega project by Chattogram Development canal while excavation materials were

on the other side has not yet begun. Also, excavation materials and equipment were seen kept on the canal's bank.

With monsoon almost knocking at the door, the CDA's workers have just started working on this canal, which they should have done just after last monsoon, said Fazlur Rahman, a resident of Badurtala Jangi Shah Majar Lane area.

"Also, they are still working on constructing the retaining walls. We don't understand why they are not beginning the excavation work yet," he added.

As part of the ongoing work, the culvert over Chaktai Khal in Chawkbazar Phooltala area has been dismantled to build a new one. A makeshift pathway has been made over the canal, making it difficult and risky for people and vehicles

Tapos Nandi, a resident of move across the makeshift path on vehicles. We have to leave vehicles on one end, walk the pathway on foot, then take another vehicle on the other end."

A similar situation exists in the case of Mirza Khal. Workers have been observed constructing retaining walls on both sides of the canal, but excavation work has yet to start in many sections.

Earth was seen piled up in the



Chaktai khal in Badurtala area.

been made in different canals to build retaining walls. Locals are concerned that the dams will only obstruct the free flow of rainwater and add more waterlogging woes.

DEADLINE EXTENDED TWICE

The project, initially worth Tk 5,617 crore -- started in 2018. Although works were scheduled to be completed by June 2020, the project was later re-evaluated twice, with the deadline extended till June 2026.

The project aims to remove a total of 9.50 lakh cubic metres of mud and silt from 36 canals in the port city and construct 85.68 km of roads, 48 PC girder bridges, six culverts, six tidal regulators, and 42 silt traps on the important canals. It will also expand side drains to 15.50 km and construct 10.77 km of new drains and 200 cross-drain culverts.

According to project officials, 65 percent of the project has so far been completed.

Dr Muhammad Rashidul Hasan, professor of Department of Urban and Regional Planning at Chittagong University of Engineering and Technology, said, "It is true that land acquisition for such a mega project is a very complicated task in our country. However, the project officials should have considered an alternative strategy to lessen the sufferings of people in the coming monsoon."

Contacted, CDA chief engineer Hasan Bin Shams, however, claimed that the extent to which the project has progressed so far would considerably curtail waterlogging.

"Of the six newly constructed regulators on different canals, five will be opened before monsoon to regulate tidal water. Also, if the excavation works of the six major canals in the city could be completed before monsoon begins, the waterlogging problem will be solved to a great extent during the coming monsoon," he said.

According to sources, dams have the mega project, said the excavation well as Chaktai and Razakhali canals, works of Chaktai, Mirza, Mahesh, Birza, Bakalia, and Hizra canals were houses would be installed to regulate supposed to be completed by mid-April but it could not be possible due to various reasons.

"However, we are trying to complete the work before monsoon begins," he

When questioned about the dams in the canals, he clarified that they have been constructed to create retaining walls, ensuring a passage for rainwater flow.

"We aim to free up nearly 95 percent of the dams before the onset of the monsoon," he added.

ONGOING PROJECTS

- >>> CDA Tk **11,406.01** crore (2 projects)
- >>> CCC Tk 1,362 crore (1 project)
- **WDB Tk 1,620.73** crore (1 project)
- >>> Total: Tk **14,388.74** crore

Regarding the culvert on Chaktai Khal in the Phooltala area, he mentioned that its completion would require seven to eight months. Additionally, an alternative route has been established for people to cross the canal.

PROGRESS OF OTHER PROJECTS

Meanwhile, CDA has also been implementing another Tk 2,779.39 crore project since June 2017 -- to construct a 9.5 km road and dam between Kalurgaht Bridge area and Chaktai canal near the bank of Karnaphuli river.

The project, scheduled to be completed by June 2024, has so far seen only 65 percent progress, said project officials.

"Apart from constructing dams

PHOTO: ARUN BIKASH DEY a total of 12 sluice gates and pump

tidal water," said Hasan Bin Shams. "So far, we have installed 10 sluice gates, but are yet to install the pump houses in six canals, which is expected to be completed by May," he

The deadline of the project has also been extended till June 2025, the CDA chief engineer added.

Also, Bangladesh Development Board has been implementing a Tk 1,620.73 crore project since 2019 to set up 13 tidal regulators in Karnaphuli and 10 in Halda rivers.

The regulators will be set up where canals connect to the rivers, with a pump house to regulate the flow of

Only 29.95 percent of the project

has been completed so far. Contacted, Shawkat Ibn-e Saheed, executive engineer of BWDB in Chattogram, said, "Of the 23 tidal regulators, works for four have been completed and works for seven are going on."

"Although initiated in 2019, the project work actually began in August 2021. The deadline would have to be extended from June 2024 to June 2028.'

Moreover, the Chattogram City Corporation has been working on a Tk 1,362 crore project since 2014 to dig a new canal from Bahaddarhat Baroipara to Karnaphuli river.

The project expired in June 2017 before being extended to June 2024.

However, only 50 percent of the project work has been completed so far, including 80 percent of land acquisitions, said Forhadul Alam, director of the project.

'We have got 21 acres of land from Chattogram District Administration out of the 25 acres of land required for the project. Works are ongoing to dig the canal on the acquired lands,'



Heavy rain lasting over an hour on May 6 this year left the entire Prabartak Mor area of Chattogram city PHOTO: RAJIB RAIHAN

Authority, aimed solely at addressing

Visiting Chaktai Khal, a vital Chawkbazar Phooltala and Badurtala Jangi Shah Majar Lane areas, this correspondent recently observed a significant portion of the canal was yet to be excavated, as the portion

was visibly filled up due to siltation. A retaining wall has been built on added.

kept on the bank in the Mirzarpool

"I don't understand why the CDA canal in the city located between has started excavation of the canals just before monsoon," said Abdul Halim, a local of Mirzarpool area.

> "The earth that has piled up in the canal would hinder the flow of water after rains and consequently cause the area to become inundated," he

Lt Col Ferdous Ahmed, director of on the bank of Karnaphuli river as

T SPORTS Federation Cup final Bashundhara Kings vs Mohammedan Live from 3:00 pm

Live from 8:00 pm **SONY SPORTS 2** Europa League final Leverkusen vs Atalanta Live from 1:00 am (Thursday)

Rajasthan vs Bengaluru

Liton's quest to RECOVER COMPOSURE

SPORTS REPORTER

Despite having a high performance ceiling, Liton Das has had to prove his mettle over the last few years to be acknowledged as Bangladesh's top batter across formats. A slump in form eventually jeopardised his position as a guaranteed starter heading in to the T20 World Cup this year, but the wicketkeeperbatter's performance ceiling still weighed heavy enough for the team management in keeping him in the World Cup roster.

Something seems amiss with Liton. The same process that he followed, the level of calmness portrayed in a brilliant matchwinning knock against New Zealand in the historic Mount Maunganui Test in early 2022, has not been exhibited for a while.

When it comes to the

performance ceiling, the knock against India at the T20 World Cup in 2022 serves as a case in batter from the national side would like to have scaled, given the quality of the bowling lineup and Liton now feels that he India had and the destruction might have overlooked Liton conjured with ease.

That innings was, perhaps, also the beginning of improvised shots. It paid off during that knock but has often brought his downfall in the shorter formats.

Even last year, Liton had struck 323 runs in nine T20Is, averaging over 40. Those knocks coincided with Bangladesh's whitewash of England, Afghanistan and Ireland at home in the shortest format, and, despite looking out of sorts, he managed a 41 not out in New Zealand which handed the Tigers still has the trust of head coach, their first T20I win on Kiwi soil.

Liton may not be an automatic starter but Bangladesh's plans could change drastically after point. It is a ceiling that any other just one game at the main event in the USA and West Indies. His return to form would be crucial preparations during a good patch.

"It is important to hold onto your performances in good times, because you are playing well in one match and lot of things maybe be going around your head, like you are doing well and you start having a careless attitude," Liton said in a video posted by BCB yesterday.

Liton says that he will try to do better than he had done in the past two T20 World Cups. He who said: "He is one of our top

batsman; expecting big things from him at the World Cup."

Assistant coach Nic Pothas had earlier remarked that Liton was just one good innings from finding his groove.

The USA series and the two warm-up matches for the World Cup would present Liton with the chance. Liton, however, did not have the best of time in the middle in the T20I opener against the co-hosts vesterday as he departed after scoring a 15-ball 14. He got a couple of reprieves before his dismissal and then failed to capitalise on his good fortunes.

So, to ensure his hard work pays off, Liton needs to return to the basics. When it comes to getting back in his elements, he may just need to revisit what had clicked in his good times.

Ronaldo to play in sixth European Championship

REUTERS

Portugal's 39-year-old forward Cristiano Ronaldo will play in his sixth European Championship and veteran defender Pepe also made the cut as coach Roberto Martinez named his 26-man squad on

Ronaldo, who has scored in every Euros since his first appearance in 2004, has netted 14 goals in the finals. He also scored 10 times in the qualifiers last year.

Ronaldo now plays for Saudi Pro League side Al-Nassr where he has scored 42 goals and provided 13 assists in all competitions.

"Cristiano? It's better to talk about the data. He's a player who's scored 42 goals in 41 games for his club," Martinez said.

"That shows his continuity and physical ability to always be fit, as well as the quality he has in front of goal, which we really like and need."

However, Ronaldo will not be the oldest member of the squad with Martinez also calling up Porto defender Pepe who turned 41 this year.

Pepe was an integral part of Porto's team this year, making 38 appearances as they reached the Champions League last 16 and finished third in the league. They are also in the Cup final.

Kroos to retire after Euros

AFP, Madrid

Real Madrid's German international Toni Kroos announced on Tuesday he will retire from all football after Euro 2024.

"My career as an active footballer will end this summer after the Euro championship," 34-year-old Kroos, who won the 2014 World Cup with Germany, said on Instagram.

Before the European Championship, Kroos has a chance to win the Champions League with Real for a fifth time when they face Borussia Dortmund at Wembley on June 1.

He also won the Champions with League Bayern Munich before joining Spanish giants in 2014. He won four LaLiga title with Los Blancos.

Не announced quitting international football in July 2021 but reversed his decision in February after talks with Germany coach Julian Nagelsmann, who persuaded him to play

on till the Euro 2024 on home soil. Kroos, who has racked up 108 caps and 17 goals for Germany, was one of the key players when they won the World Cup in Brazil in 2014.

"My ambition was always to finish my career at the peak of my performance level," Kroos said on Instagram.

"I am happy and proud that in my mind I found the right timing for my decision and that I could choose it on my

Kings eye rare treble, MSC look for 12th

SPORTS REPORTER

Favourites Bashundhara Kings will look to add a new feather to their burgeoning cap when they take on defending champions Mohammedan in the final of the Federation Cup at the Rafique Uddin Bhuiyan Stadium in Mymensingh today.

The match will get underway at 3:00pm, with T-Sports telecasting the

Even though Kings have almost turned into an unstoppable force since their introduction to country's top-flight football in 2018, they have not been able to win a treble. That feat is held solely by Sheikh Russel KC, who won all three domestic titles in the 2012-13 season.

With the season's Independence Cup and the Bangladesh Premier League titles in the bag, Kings have the chance to do the same, after failing to win three titles in the same season in six previous attempts.

However, Kings must overcome the hurdle of defending champions Mohammedan, who will look to end the season with a trophy and go on top of Federation Cup's overall winners' chart alongside archrivals Abahani with 12.

"We truly believe in ourselves, in the trust in each other, in the technical and tactical automatisms and we will leave everything we have out in that final game," Kings coach Oscar Bruzon told reporters on the eve of the final. "We are eager to achieve all the club goals when they decided we are the main actors to go for it."



Fed Cup titles won MSC 11, Kings 2 Head-to-head this season

Played Kings won MSC won Draw

Head-to-head overall

Played Kings won MSC won Draw

Club's top-scorer this season

Kings: Dorielton Gomes (19) MSC: Souleymane Diabate (15)



previous one due to multiple factors, we will go to tomorrow's final with a but our rivals have been consistent in their game idea throughout the season. They have a packed defence, defend by numbers the central areas, use high wing-backs and mobile and physical players upfront," the Spaniard said, assessing the opposition's playing style.

Statistics put Kings much ahead of Mohammedan as they have won 10 matches, drew twice and lost only three in 15 meetings between the two sides. However, all three defeats against Mohammedan have in the last two years, under the guidance of Alfaz Ahmed.

"We all want to wrap up our campaign "Every game is different from the by winning the season's last trophy and

determination to be champions," the Mohammedan coach told The Daily Star. "Everyone knows Kings are the best team in the country, but we know how to play against them and how to beat them."

Kings will rely on their three Brazilian forwards -- Dorielton Gomes (19 goals), Miguel Ferriera (10 goals), Robson Robinho (9 goals) - as well as local forward Rakib Hossain (10 goals) in bid to win the treble while Mohammedan will be looking up to Souleymane Diabate (15 goals), Muzaffarov (9 goals), Emmanuel Sunday (6 goals) and local forward Jafar Igbal (8 goals) to defend the title.

One down, two to go as Leverkusen face Atalanta in Europa League final

REUTERS

Bayer Leverkusen had won only two major trophies in their 119-year history before this season but on Wednesday the newlycrowned Bundesliga champions have the chance to claim a double when they face Atalanta in the Europa League final in

Leverkusen broke Bayern Munich's 11year monopoly of the title in Germany this term as Xabi Alonso's side became the first team in the Bundesliga's 61-year history to complete the season unbeaten. They have also reached the German Cup

undefeated run in all competitions this term has earned them the nickname Bayer 'Neverlusen' and Serie A side Atalanta will have their work cut out trying to beat a team that have not lost in a European record 51 matches since August

Several sides have come close to handing Leverkusen their first defeat of the season but, with 17 goals scored in or after the 90th minute, they do not give up until the final whistle.

"We have been competitive in every game, whether we were playing well or poorly. We played well for the majority of the games, but we didn't give up in the ones where we didn't play well," Alonso





Leverkusen scored six goals in or after the 90th minute in the Europa League this season. This is the most ever a team has netted that late in a single campaign of a major European competition.

Xabi Alonso's side, unbeaten in 51 games in all competitions (42W 9D), can become the fourth side to lift the Europa League trophy with an unbeaten record after Chelsea (2018-19), Villareal (2020-21), and Eintracht Frankfurt (2021-22).

Atalanta can become the first Italian side to win the Europa League, with previous winners only ever hailing from Spain, Portugal, England or Germany. This is Atalanta's first European final and they are the 11th different Italian side to reach one.

Gian Piero Gasperini has lost four finals as a coach, including three as Atalanata manager, and is yet to win a major trophy. He lost three Coppa Italia finals and a Supercoppa Italiana final.

Atalanta and Leverkusen have previously faced off twice in Europe, with the Italians winning both legs of a Europa League last-16 tie in 2021-22 (1-0 away, 3-2 at home). said in an interview with UEFA.

"That says a lot about the commitment of this team when it comes to preparing for every game. We didn't take any game for granted."

Much like Alonso, coach Gian Piero Gasperini has changed Atalanta's fortunes, making the Bergamo-based outfit an ever-present club in European competition since his arrival in 2016 and will hope to end the season with their first major trophy in 61 years after losing to Juventus in the Coppa Italia final.

Atalanta play an enjoyable attacking style with high intensity and managers like Pep Guardiola and Maurizio Sarri have likened facing Gasperini's teams to "going to the dentist".

"Even if you come out unscathed, you still feel the pain," Sarri once said.

Just like Alonso, the match in Dublin will also be Gasperini's first European final.

"It's a great achievement and source of satisfaction, achieved with a really good season from this whole team," the 66-year-old Italian said.

"Is it the highest point of my career? Yes, in terms of accomplishment and prestige, absolutely. In terms of gratification, fortunately I've had quite a few, although perhaps not on the same level.'

New T20 league on way with NCL teams

SPORTS REPORTER

The need for a change in Bangladesh's T20 fortunes had eventually spurred Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) to make a move, and discussions have gone ahead for Bangladesh's newest T20 league for local players following yesterday's meeting between BCB's Tournament Committee and Technical Committee.

Cricket operations chairman Jalal Yunus, Tournament Committee chairman Sajjadul Alam Bobby and chairman of selection panel Gazi Ashraf Hossain Lipu were among those present in

Not long ago, just ahead of the recent Bangladesh Premier League (BPL), a few players just outside the periphery of the national team were discussing how difficult it was to find T20 rhythm before the BPL.



In franchise cricket there are foreign players so it was important to have a tournament for local players. So we have decided to have a T20 tournament in first week of December with the eight NCL teams.

Minhajul Abedin

BCB chief coordinator of programs

"It would be great if we can have another T20 league apart from BPL. It would really help with T20s and also help players grow," one of the players had said.

What appeared to be quite unlikely at that point, due to a packed domestic schedule, is now becoming a reality.

The new T20 league would take place in December, pending approval of the board. To open a slot for a new T20 tournament, the board had to make changes to tournament structure and schedules in the cricket calendar.

The National Cricket League (NCL) will begin on October 15 but this time the tournament will take place in single league format, meaning each team will play each other once -- unlike the previous

The NCL teams would also be the teams in the new T20 league. "The selection panel will pick the players for the eight sides. Everyone at the meeting agreed and we are awaiting the board's approval," chief coordinator of programs Minhajul Abedin said in a video message yesterday.

"In franchise cricket there are foreign players so it was important to have a tournament for local players. So we have decided to have a T20 tournament in first week of December with the eight NCL teams. Some 128 to 130 cricketers would get the opportunity to play and be able to overcome their deficiencies in this format, helping Bangladesh cricket," Minhajul added.

Also, the Bangladesh Cricket League (BCL), which is played in December during winter, will now be played between April and May to prioritise the preparations of facing hot and humid conditions in longer-version international matches. Longer-version cricket has been on the agenda and Minhajul said that consideration was given so that national team players can play more domestic red-ball cricket.

A fruitful meeting saw some changes in the calendar which can help Bangladesh fulfill shortcomings in the two formats - Tests and T20Is – that they have struggled to develop up to expectations over the years.

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UPAZILA ELECTION

Second phase too marked by low turnout

1 killed in polls violence in Cox's Bazar

STAR REPORT

The second phase of the upazila elections also saw a low turnout yesterday like in the first phase.

The usual election-day fervour was missing as most of the voting centres across 156 upazilas wore a deserted look due to a poor presence of voters. During the polls yesterday, sporadic incidents of

violence left one person dead in Cox's Bazar and at least 20 others injured in other places. After voting ended, Chief Election Commissioner Kazi

Habibul Awal said that over 30 percent votes were cast in the second phase. "It was not encouraging."

He said a major political party boycotted the polls and also discouraged people from voting.

"This might be one of the main reasons for the low turnout. This can happen in democracy," Awal told reporters at the Election Commission office.

'There is no problem with our voting system. The crisis lies in politics. I think the problem of low turnout can be resolved if politics follows a healthy process," the CEC said.

Meanwhile, Awami League General Secretary Obaidul Quader said the turnout was satisfactory and the elections were held peacefully.

BNP, TÎB, and some anti-national intellectuals were SEE PAGE 2 COL 1



People attend a funeral ceremony for the late Iranian president Ebrahim Raisi in Tabriz, East Azerbaijan Province, Iran yesterday.

Iran begins funeral ceremonies for Raisi

AGENCIES

Tens of thousands of Iranians yesterday gathered to mourn the late president Ebrahim Raisi following his death in a helicopter crash, as authorities probe what caused the aircraft to smash into the side of a remote mountainside during foggy weather.

Waving Iranian flags and portraits of the late president, mourners set off from a central square in the northwestern city of Tabriz, where Raisi was headed when his helicopter crashed on Sunday.

They walked behind a lorry carrying the coffins of Raisi and his seven aides.

Their helicopter lost communications it was on its way back to Tabriz after Raisi attended the inauguration of a joint dam project on the Aras river, which forms part of the border with Azerbaijan, in a ceremony with his counterpart Ilham Aliyev.

Food distribution in Rafah suspended due to insecurity

Israel troops kill seven Palestinians in West

Death toll in Gaza rises

Bank raid

to 35,647

INDIAN OCEAN Dhaka, Canberra to collaborate on maritime security Australia FM, Hasan Mahmud hold talks

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

The coastguards of Bangladesh and Australia will cooperate and collaborate as part of maritime security in the Indian Ocean, said Australian Foreign Minister Penny Wong yesterday

"We've had quite a lot of discussion on this today. One of the things we want to do is to have deeper collaboration our coastguards,' after she said Foreign meeting

Minister



Mahmud at the state guesthouse Padma in the capital.

Earlier, she also called on Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan.

Wong, who is the first Australian Foreign Minister visiting Bangladesh in the last 26 years, arrived in Dhaka yesterday morning. Today, she will be visiting the Rohingya camps in Cox's Bazar.

She said she told Asaduzzaman Khan that Australia would bring the head of SEE PAGE 7 COL 1

LIFTS AT PUBLIC HOSPITALS

WHERE HORROR **ABOUNDS**



Lifts in at least 13 state-run hospitals in Dhaka are in poor state

Building-3 of Mitford Hospital has only one lift that malfunctions sometimes

All 8 lifts in two buildings of NICRH malfunction at times

1 At least 7 lifts of DMCH are often overloaded

SHAHEEN MOLLAH with SAJJAD HOSSAIN

Shipon Mia (not his real name) fears for his life throughout the hours he works as a liftman at a building of Sir Salimullah Medical College, commonly known as Mitford hospital, in the

The man, in his late 20s, does not know when the lift was set up. The hospital authorities too could not say

The lift, with a collapsible gate, has five buttons with no floor numberings

on them. Shipon, who joined the hospital a year ago, has to press and hold a button whenever it goes up or comes down.

"Getting stuck is normal here. But what scares me is that the lift gets electrified and someone can get shocked if they touch it at that time. Sometimes the lift stops abruptly and takes at least 10 minutes to restart," he

Notices are displayed inside and outside the lift, cautioning people not SEE PAGE 6 COL 4

FREEDOM OF **EXPRESSION** Bangladesh categorised as country 'in crisis' **Article 19 launches** global report

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh has been categorised as "in crisis" in terms of freedom of expression, according to the Global Expression Report 2024 released yesterday.

The index categorises countries as being "open", "less restricted", "highly restricted" and "in crisis".

"In 2023, the percentage of people living in countries 'in crisis' rose to 53 percent. That is more than four billion people in 39 countries," the report

If any country scores between zero and 19 out of 100, it is categorised as a country in crisis, where the freedom of expression is marked as the worst, the report said.

Bangladesh scored 12. It ranked 128 out of 161 countries, flanked by Democratic Republic of

Congo and Algeria. SEE PAGE 6 COL 1

NETANYAHU, HAMAS LEADERS France, Belgium back ICC bid for arrest warrants

AGENCIES

France, Belgium and Slovenia released statements supporting the world's top war crimes court and its chief prosecutor's request for arrest warrants for leaders of Israel and Hamas, after Israel and the United States both harshly condemned the effort.

The International Criminal Court's chief prosecutor, Karim Khan, accused Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, Defense Minister Yoav Gallant, and

three Hamas leaders Yahya Sinwar, Mohammed Deif and Ismail Haniyeh of war crimes and crimes against humanity in the Gaza Strip and Israel. While Netanyahu and

Gallant do not face imminent arrest, the announcement Monday was a symbolic blow that deepened Israel's isolation over the offensive in Gaza, reports AP. "France supports the International Criminal Court, its

independence and the fight against impunity in all situations", the foreign ministry said in a statement late on Monday.

The Belgian Foreign Minister Hadja Lahbib welcomed the International Criminal Court (ICC) prosecutor's request for arrest warrants against Israeli and Hamas leaders as an "important step".

"Crimes committed in Gaza must be prosecuted at the highest level, regardless of the perpetrators. The fight against impunity wherever

crimes occur is a priority for Belgium," Lahbib said in a statement.

Israeli forces thrust deeper into the Jabalia camp in northern Gaza yesterday, laying waste to residential districts with tank and

Tigers start USA tour with defeat

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh's T20 World Cup preparations got off to the worst possible start as the Tigers suffered a five-wicket defeat against USA in the first-match of a three-match T20I series at Prairie Park Cricket Complex in Texas yesterday.

Chasing a modest target of 154 runs set by Bangladesh, the hosts made a brisk start, then stuttered in the middle before motoring along to the victory, thanks to an unbroken 62-run stand off 28 deliveries.

Former New Zealand international Anderson smashed an unbeaten 34 off 25 deliveries while Harmeet Singh stroked 33 not out off just 13 balls to get the hosts home with three balls to spare in their firstever international match against the Tigers.

Mustafizur Rahman was the most successful bowler SEE PAGE 6 COL 6



U-turns aggravate the congestion there. Pedestrians cannot use the footpath which has been occupied by ticket counters and hawkers. The photo was taken around 2:30pm yesterday.

PHOTO: ANSIUR RAHMAN

IS CTG READY FOR MONSOON?

Every monsoon, Chattogram sinks. **Despite at least four ongoing** projects worth Tk 14,389.36 crore, there seems to be no respite for port city dwellers. Meanwhile, project costs continue to rise with each extended deadline. With monsoon knocking at the door, port city residents are now bracing for similar suffering. In today's Page 10, we look into the current progress of the projects and people's apprehension.



Prabartak Mor area of Chattogram city after an hour's rain on May 6. PHOTO: RAJIB RAIHAN