



Third tranche of IMF loan may come in June

B1



Policy actions can aid their reintegration

P3



Ukraine says nine killed in series of Russian attacks

P7



Maria Manda to miss Chinese Taipei ties

P11

NEW SCHOOL CURRICULUM Implementation limps along

MOHIUDDIN ALAMGIR and ARAFAT RAHAMAN

One and a half years after it was launched, implementation of the new curriculum at schools is still in a shambles as the authorities are yet to finalise a method of evaluating the students.

Due to a lack of training, many teachers are not sure how to deliver lectures and form student groups, said educationists.

Besides, the authorities had to recall two textbooks amid pressure from Islamists.

Manzoor Ahmed, professor emeritus at BRAC University, said the ambitious new curriculum is being implemented in a haphazard manner as the authorities had not taken steps to reduce the classroom size and bring changes to the management of schools before introducing it.

Most importantly, the teachers are not motivated to implement it, he added.

Prof Siddiqur Rahman, former director of Institute of Education and Research at Dhaka University, said, "With inadequate training, the teachers are not prepared to properly implement the new curriculum."

Learning in groups through activities is at the heart of the new curriculum, but that is not happening in reality, he said. "The goals of reducing the students' dependency on private tutors and so-called guidebooks have not been met."

SEE PAGE 2 COL 2



PHOTO: HABIBUR RAHMAN

Maina Begum cuts a forlorn figure as she waits for a boat near Bhadra river to go to a relative's house yesterday, with whatever she could salvage from her now submerged home in Telikhali village of Khulna's Paikgachha upazila. At least 12 villages in the upazila's Deluti union have been under water for the past four days after Remal caused a breach in an embankment there, affecting around 15,000 people. More on page 2.

'Put a stop to arms race' Says PM on UN peacekeepers day



UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday urged the international community to end the arms race and instead spend the money for eradication of poverty and easing the adverse impacts of climate change.

"The money for arms development and competition can be provided to the climate fund for the countries that are

SEE PAGE 2 COL 5

Manpower syndicates beyond Dhaka-KL control Says Malaysian high commissioner

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

The syndicates recruiting Bangladeshi workers in Malaysia are "beyond the control of the two governments", Malaysian High Commissioner to Bangladesh Haznah Md Hashim said yesterday.

governments," she told the media at an interaction session hosted by the Malaysian high commission at a city hotel.

She did not clarify why the syndicates are beyond the governments' control.

Haznah made the remarks when The Daily Star asked about the allegations

"The Malaysian government is committed and very serious about ensuring transparency and the highest ethical standards in the recruitment process,"

Malaysian High Commissioner to Bangladesh HAZNAH MD HASHIM



She, however, assured that both governments are sincerely working together to improve the recruitment system.

"Of course, there are things that are beyond our control. You [this correspondent] just mentioned the syndicates. This is something beyond not only Malaysia, but also Bangladesh ... [it's] beyond the control of the two

of irregularities made by four UN independent experts in a letter to the governments of Bangladesh and Malaysia on March 28.

The letter said criminal networks operate in the recruitment process of Bangladeshi workers, who are deceived, recruited by phantom companies and obliged to pay exorbitant recruitment

SEE PAGE 2 COL 2

CYCLONE REMAL Coastal people reeling from heavy losses

STAR REPORT

Dipali Sardar of Gopi Pagla village in Khulna's Paikgacha upazila used to rear ducks.

Water entered her home on Sunday after Remal damaged a nearby embankment. Around 60 ducks were washed away and the hatching machine also went under water.

"My family members and I went to a nearby road to save our lives. But I have lost my only source of income -- my ducks," said the 47-year-old woman.

Dipali's husband Pradip Sarkar used to work as a labourer at a local shrimp enclosure which has also been washed away. This has left Pradip unemployed.

"We don't know how we will survive," the woman told The Daily Star yesterday.

Like Dipali, hundreds of others of a dozen villages in Paikgacha are passing days in misery as the villages have been waterlogged for the last four days.

Out of the 22 villages under Deluti union, 12 have gone under water. As people cannot cook at homes, their relatives from faraway places are bringing food for them.

Some villagers have moved to their relatives' homes. Many families have taken shelter on embankments with their belongings.

A number of these villages have been without power for the last four days.

SEE PAGE 6 COL 4

EX-ARMY CHIEF AZIZ Petition filed with ACC for probing graft allegations

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A lawyer has filed a petition with the Anti-Corruption Commission seeking an investigation into the alleged corruption of former army chief General (ret'd) Aziz Ahmed.

Salah Uddin Reagan in the petition filed yesterday said, "The US sanctions against Aziz Ahmed on corruption charges and the reports published in the national dailies have undermined the image of Bangladesh Army and Bangladesh nationally and internationally."

"It damaged the reputation of Bangladesh Army worldwide, tarnished Bangladesh Army's image in the United Nations peacekeeping missions and is undermining the trust and confidence the ordinary people of the

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

ACC to seek travel ban on Benazir, family

DIPAN NANDY

The Anti-Corruption Commission has decided to seek a foreign-travel ban on former inspector general of police Benazir Ahmed and his family members.

"We are preparing to ask the court so that Benazir Ahmed and his family members cannot leave the country without the permission of the court," a high official of the ACC told The Daily Star, seeking anonymity.

Benazir and his family members are now facing an investigation by the graft watchdog over allegations of amassing wealth beyond their known sources of income.

The official said since the ACC was probing into the wealth of Benazir and his family, they might leave the country.

The graft watchdog is also trying to find out if Benazir and his family members have any assets abroad. An ACC investigation committee has written to the Bangladesh Financial Intelligence Unit asking it to launch an enquiry, sources in the ACC said.

They said the committee also asked the BFIU to provide any documents it has regarding Benazir and his family having assets in the US, the UK, the UAE, Malaysia, and Canada.

Jahurul Haque, commissioner (investigation) at

SEE PAGE 2 COL 6

Mongla port set to be connected by rail on June 1

BR to launch commuter train but yet to have any container carrier for the broad-gauge line

TUHIN SHUBHRA ADHIKARY

Mongla, the country's second largest sea port, is going to be linked to the railway network on June 1 with the launch of a commuter train on Khulna-Benapole-Mongla route.

Bangladesh Railway is set to launch the train seven months after the inauguration of the Khulna-Mongla rail line. The project was taken up with Indian loans around 13 years ago.

The 64.75km broad gauge line is aimed at boosting internal and transboundary trade, but the BR may not be able to reap the full benefit of the project as it doesn't have any broad gauge container wagons.

The BR has submitted a Development Project Proposal to the railways ministry recently to buy 290 container wagons, meaning it may take three to four years to add such wagons to BR's fleet, officials said.

The state-run transport agency, however, will be able to carry goods in bulk using its wagons. Besides, it will hire Indian container carriers, they said.

The government approved the Tk 1,721-crore Khulna-Mongla Port Rail Line

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1



The authorities have dug up the North South Road in the capital's Bangshal to install underground drainage pipes, significantly narrowing the space for traffic. This has been causing tailbacks in the area for about a month. There are no barriers to prevent vehicles or pedestrians from falling into the trench. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

PLANE PURCHASE 'Airbus's second proposal far better than the first' Outgoing Biman MD tells Star in an interview

RASHIDUL HASAN

Biman's outgoing Managing Director and CEO Shafiul Azim said the Airbus's second proposal to sell its aircraft to the national flag carrier was far better than the first one.

In an interview with The Daily Star in his office on Tuesday, he said, "That's why the technical and financial evaluation committee had given the go-ahead to the second proposal to purchase aircraft from the European plane manufacturer."

"In the first of the two proposals, Airbus proposed selling two freighters along with a passenger aircraft," he said, adding, "We don't think we need cargo planes now as it wouldn't be economically viable."

"In the second one, it proposed selling four passenger aircraft. This was far better than the first."

About reconstituting the evaluation committee after it had said buying Airbus aircraft would not be profitable,

SEE PAGE 2 COL 5



Shafiul Azim

Enjoy Your Golden Years with
SENIOR CITIZEN PUBALI DEPOSIT SCHEME (SCPDS)

- ✓ Any Bangladeshi individual aged 59 years and above can open account under this scheme.
- ✓ Attractive Interest Rate [6 months FDR rate plus 1% p.a.]



পূবালী ব্যাংক পাবলিক লিমিটেড
PUBALI BANK PLC.

Open your
Account
from anywhere



For details visit www.pubalibangla.com or contact nearest branch, sub-branch or Islamic banking window | No charges in Transactions



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina awards an injured peacekeeper at an event held at the Bangabandhu International Conference Centre (BICC) in Dhaka, marking International Day of United Nations Peacekeepers yesterday.

PHOTO: PID

Gender budgeting the way forward

Speakers tell event

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at an event yesterday stressed for a gender sensitive national action plan, proper budget allocation, and a robust monitoring system to improve women's status and empowerment.

They also emphasised the importance of gender budgeting in reducing inequality, and noted that gender-sensitive planning, budgeting guidelines, and monitoring tools are essential for effective implementation.

Bangladesh Nari Pragati Sangha, with support from UN Women Bangladesh, organised the national workshop titled "Gender Responsive Planning and Budgeting (GRP) Guideline and Monitoring Tools" at a hotel in Dhaka.

Presiding over the event, Navanita Sinha, deputy country representative of UN Women in Bangladesh, said, "For the first time in the history of Bangladesh, gender budgeting was started for four ministries in 2009-10 fiscal year. Now, gender budgeting is being formulated for 44 ministries."

Proper gender budgeting is important for reducing discrimination and inequality towards women, she added.

BNPS Executive Director Rokeya Kabir

said, "Despite comprising over 50 percent of the country's population, women still face discrimination and oppression."

"The policymakers must address issues like the quota system for marginalised communities, sexual harassment of women and girls, and women's inheritance rights," Rokeya Kabir, also a freedom fighter, added.

Allocation in the national budget is crucial for equitable resource distribution, and gender budgeting is integral to women's economic, social, and political empowerment.

ROKEYA KABIR
BNPS executive director

She highlighted that allocation in the national budget is crucial for equitable resource distribution, and gender budgeting is integral to women's economic, social, and political empowerment.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 6

Media needs to safeguard interest of the country

Says Arafat

BSS, Dhaka

State Minister for Information and Broadcasting Mohammad Ali Arafat yesterday urged the country's media to work with utmost sincerity, safeguarding the interest of the country and its people.

He also said the government is working to ensure a congenial atmosphere for journalism.

Arafat said this while addressing the Bangladesh Press Council (BPC) Padak 2023 distribution ceremony at Tathya Bhaban auditorium on the city's Circuit House Road.

He said, "We believe that freedom of the press is a part of our Liberation War

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

FEMALE MIGRANT WORKERS

Policy actions can aid their reintegration

Speakers tell event

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at an event yesterday emphasised the importance of having a policy in place to ensure safe migration of women and gender-sensitive reintegration.

"Due to the absence of a framework of services ensuring equity, returnee women migrant workers experience a wide variety of challenges affecting their ability to reintegrate with their families and communities,



women migrants face different challenges, opportunities, and vulnerabilities compared to men.

"Returnee women migrants are particularly vulnerable. Most people have negative attitudes towards migrant women, perceiving that women working abroad are physically abused... Social norms and values often go against them, and in some cases, their husbands, children, and parents do not accept them," she said.

CWCS executive member advocate Farida Yeasmin also partially presented the concept note.

It included eleven recommendations for sustainable social and economic integration, such as doorstep migration

SEE PAGE 4 COL 7

cope with psychosocial trauma, and find sustainable livelihood opportunities," said Prof Ishrat Shamim, president of the Centre for Women and Children Studies (CWCS).

She said this while presenting a concept note titled "Media

Advocacy on Reintegration of Returnee Migrants" at a press briefing held at Jatiya Press Club.

CWCS, in association with Manusher Jonno Foundation (MJF) organised the briefing.

Shamim said migration is not gender-neutral, as

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Service centres
- Separate database
- Adopting rehabilitation policy

PBI plea to scrap bail of Transcom CEO, 3 others rejected

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday rejected a petition filed by the Police Bureau of Investigation seeking cancellation of bail of Transcom Group Chief Executive Officer Simeen Rahman, its Head of Transformation Zeraif Ayat Hossain and two others in separate cases.

Dhaka Metropolitan Magistrate Md Rashidul Alam passed the order, said a sub-inspector at the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's Court.

The magistrate also rejected a 10-day remand prayer filed by the PBI with the court earlier.

The two others are Transcom Group's chief financial officer Kamrul Hasan and executive director (corporate affairs and law) Md Fakhruzzaman Bhuiyan.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 7

REPORTS ON POLLS EXPENSE

EC ignoring its legal obligations

Says TIB

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Even five months after the 12th national election, the Election Commission hasn't fulfilled its legal obligations to provide reports on the expenditures of candidates and political parties, said Transparency International Bangladesh in a statement yesterday.

Claiming the EC is violating the country's electoral laws by maintaining secrecy in this regard, TIB said, "There are no instances of the EC taking any punitive measures against candidates and political parties who have failed to submit their expenditure reports on time, which is not expected from a constitutional body."

TIB Executive Director Iftekharuzzaman said the candidates, parties, and even the EC itself are disregarding the legal obligations related to election expenditures.

Candidates and parties have shown disinterest in submitting expenditure reports within the stipulated time, and the EC has not taken any punitive measures despite the crossing of the deadline, he added.

The 12th national polls took place on January 7, 2024, with February 7, 2024, being the deadline for candidates to submit their reports and April 7, 2024, for political parties.

EC is responsible for ensuring accountability of candidates and political parties that fail to adhere to electoral laws, Iftekharuzzaman said, adding, "The inactivity of EC is further encouraging candidates and parties to break the laws. This is embarrassing for a constitutional body like the Election Commission."

GRAFT ALLEGATIONS AGAINST AZIZ, BENAZIR



It's their personal matter. When it came to light, ACC started investigating. After probe, they'll surely file a case.

OBAIDUL QUADER
AL General Secretary



The government will not give protection to anyone and the law will take its own course.

SALMAN F RAHMAN
Adviser to PM



Not just one Aziz and one Benazir. You have fostered countless persons like them who are plundering public money.

MIRZA FAKHRUL
BNP Secretary General



Who elevated Aziz and Benazir to these positions? They indulged in stealing and looting. Why haven't cases been filed against them?

MAHMUDUR RAHMAN
MANNA
Nagorik Oikya President

Toxic PFAS found

FROM PAGE 3
in a programme organised by ESDO in the capital yesterday.

Particularly alarming was the level of contamination in the Karnatali river, where PFAS concentrations reached 1,152.2 nanograms per litre, more than 300 times the proposed EU limit.

The study further revealed that PFAS levels were also found in Tongi river water and Ashulia lake water, well above the currently proposed EU limit. Another sample from Hatirjheel Lake showed PFAS levels to be 185 times higher than the current Dutch advisory limit.

The presence of PFAS in drinking water is particularly alarming, as three out of four (75 percent) tap water samples from the study contained PFAS, with some exceeding both US and EU regulatory limits.

The water was analysed in laboratories of Brown University and the University of Chemistry and Technology in Prague.

Since there are currently no rules in Bangladesh regarding the use of PFAS, the chemical is widely used without any obstruction, the study said.

However, the textile industry, responsible for about 50 percent of global PFAS usage, is identified as a major contributor to this contamination, it added.

"Bangladesh is an international textile manufacturing hub, and the prevalence of toxic chemical emissions from this sector puts our

residents at higher risk," said Siddika Sultana, ESDO's executive director.

The study claims that PFAS has negative consequences for the environment and human health.

These include negative effects on fertility, fetal development, thyroid hormone function, and increased risks of liver damage and cancer. It can cause high cholesterol and reduce vaccine effectiveness, posing major health risks.

ACTION REQUIRED AGAINST PFAS USAGE
Jitka Straková urged the textile industry to phase out PFAS use and be transparent about the chemicals in their products.

The textile industry is a major user of PFAS, accounting for over half of global consumption. Despite this, safer alternatives to PFAS in textiles exist, making its ongoing usage unnecessary, the study emphasised.

Textile makers in Bangladesh near areas where water was found with high PFAS levels produce products for major global brands. These brand name companies have tremendous market influence and should demand PFAS-free products, the study also said.

Shahriar Hossain, a lead author of the study, said, "PFAS in our waterways, tap water, and clothing pose serious health and environmental threats, yet industries and policymakers have been slow to respond."

"This needs to be controlled urgently," he added.

DEWANDIGHI-PALPUR ROAD IN MOULVIBAZAR

Pothole plight worsens in Rajnagar

MINTU DESHWARA, Moulvibazar

Vehicular movement on Dewandighi Palpur road in Rajnagar upazila of Moulvibazar has become risky due to numerous potholes on the five-kilometre stretch between Tengra and Tarapasha areas.

The road sustained significant damage due to being frequented by heavy trucks transporting sand extracted from Tarapasha Balumahal in the Manu river.

"Around 50-60 sand-laden trucks use the road daily," said Faisal Mia, a truck driver.

As a result, lighter vehicles such as auto-rickshaws carrying commuters find it difficult to use the road and have been doing so amid the risk of accidents.

Hundreds of locals -- including students, women and elderly people -- from Kamarchak union of Rajnagar upazila, Patanushar union of Kamalganj upazila, and Hajipur union of Kulaura upazila, use the road daily.

Visiting the Tengra-Tarapasha section of the road recently, this correspondent found it in a dilapidated state, with numerous potholes at different places on a five-kilometre stretch across Kartal, Salon, Haripasa, Kachari and Tarapasha Bazar areas.

"Auto-rickshaw drivers charge extra fares on the road, causing sufferings to commuters," said Shah Alam, a trader at Tarapasha Bazar.

Sources at Moulvibazar district administration said the government earns Tk 1.46 crore revenue from Tarapasha Balumahal, and it will be leased again this year.

Contacted, Dr Urmi Binte Salam, deputy commissioner of Moulvibazar, said, "The tender process to lease the balumahal is at the final stage. We will take measures to ensure no overloaded trucks ply this road."

Ahmed Abdullah, executive engineer of LGED in Moulvibazar, said, "Tender process to repair the 10.5-km stretch of Tengra-Dewandighi-Tarapasha road at a cost of Tk 12 crore is at final stage."



13th Certificate Course on Genocide and Justice
Center for the Study of Genocide and Justice (CSGJ), Liberation War Museum (LWM), Bangladesh invites interested individuals to apply for the 13th Certificate Course on Genocide and Justice to be held from 28 June to 27 July 2024.

3 of a robber

FROM PAGE 5
carrying Tk 60 lakh in a bag. Around 4:50pm, near the entrance of Naba Narayan Lane in Islampur, a person shoved him, falsely accusing him of causing the collision.

When Mohiuddin apologised and attempted to leave, a group of 7 to 8 people surrounded him, beating him severely and blinding him with a substance before making off with the bag of money.

Following the incident, Akidul Islam, the owner of the jewellery store, filed a robbery case on April 27. Earlier, the DMP's Kotwali police had arrested two other suspects in connection with the case.

"Baiba Khokon, the mastermind, resides in Old Dhaka and has knowledge about local financial transactions. Rezaul Karim, who once operated a business in Old Dhaka, orchestrated the attack by assembling a team of robbers from various districts," said Mashiur.

The arrestees have multiple robbery and theft cases against them and are currently being interrogated under police remand, he added.

Media needs

FROM PAGE 3
spirit. We want to see the media as a supportive force of the government. I want to assure you that if you publish any report based on factual and authentic information identifying the government's mistakes, we will welcome those and recognise with award."

Referring to German broadcaster Deutsche Welle's (DW) recent documentary on Bangladesh's human rights issue, he said, "If you watch the documentary attentively, you will see it was not against any individual or the government, but against the country and its important institution -- Bangladesh Army."

The DW made an ill-motivated, malicious and misleading documentary to tarnish the reputation of Bangladesh Army, which has gained fame for its extraordinary role in the UN peacekeeping missions, the state minister added.

BAF SHAHEEN ENGLISH MEDIUM COLLEGE (SEMC) TEJGAON, DHAKA
ADMISSIONS AVAILABLE in AS and A Level for 2024-2025 Session

জরুরী বিজ্ঞপ্তি
সমানিত গ্রাহক, আমাদের সেবার মান আরও সহজ, স্বচ্ছন্দাময় ও নিরাপন্ন করার লক্ষ্যে ব্যাংকিং ব্যবস্থার উন্নয়ন কার্যক্রম চলছে।

Employment Opportunity
Following position is vacant for immediate appointment in Savar Sweaters Ltd. (100% export-oriented sweater factory), 12P-13P, Kalurghat Heavy I/A, Chattogram, Bangladesh.

Gender

FROM PAGE 3
Prasenjit Chakma, UNDP's assistant country director in Bangladesh, opined that overall development of a country is not possible if half of its population is left behind.

Addressing as chief guest, Prakash Kanti Chowdhury, joint secretary (development) of the Ministry of Women and Children Affairs, shared that recent financial years have seen gender budget allocations across three thematic areas: increasing women's access to government services, empowering women and enhancing their social status, and increasing women's participation in production, labour markets, and income-generating activities.

UN Women's programme manager Tapati Saha, programme officer Noor Ali Shah, and UNDP's Mohammad Raziur Rahman, presented draft guidelines for gender-sensitive planning and budgeting, while gender budget expert Nilufar Ahmed Karim conducted a question-answer session.

PBI plea to scrap bail

FROM PAGE 3
The lawyers who represented the Transcom executives and officials at yesterday's hearing include senior lawyer Kazi Md Nazib Ullah Hiru, Abdur Rahman Howlader, president of Dhaka Bar Association; Mizanur Rahman Mamun, former president of the association; Sheikh Baharul Islam, Mohammad Shaheenoor Islam, Abdullah-Al-Mamun and Mohammad Siddique Ullah Miah.

Yesterday, senior lawyer Ahsanul Karim represented the complainant in the hearing, among others.

On February 22, Simeen's younger sister Shahzreh Huq filed three cases with Gulshan Police Station, accusing Transcom

Group Chairman Shahnaz Rahman, Simeen, Zariaif and six other officials of fraud and breach of trust with regard to the company's shares and properties.

On April 3, the court granted bail to Shahnaz, Simeen and Zariaif until submission of the probe report.

On the same day, the three executives surrendered before the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's Court hours after they returned to the country and sought bail, following the directives of the Supreme Court.

According to their lawyers, Shahnaz, Simeen, and Zariaif were abroad when the cases were filed.

The other accused in the cases are on bail now.

Policy actions can

FROM PAGE 3
service centres, a separate database for registering women returnee migrants, and the immediate approval of the "Draft National Rehabilitation Policy" formulated in 2022 for all returning migrant workers.

Speaking at the event, Mohammad Ikram Hossain, adviser at Alliance for Returnee Women Migrants, emphasised the need for female staff

at the Expatriate Welfare Desk at Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport to address issues faced by female migrants.

"Immigration police used to send data on returnee female migrants to the International Organization for Migration. It can also provide it to the government and NGOs to create a database for smoother services for migrant workers," he added.

বাউরি দীক্ষা: সবার জন্য উন্মুক্ত কর্মসূচী, পদার্থী ও জীবনব্যাপী শিক্ষা
বাংলাদেশ উন্মুক্ত বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় BANGLADESH OPEN UNIVERSITY
বি.এসসি (অনার্স) ইন ফুড সায়েন্স এন্ড নিউট্রিশন প্রোগ্রাম ২০২৪ শিক্ষাবর্ষ (৫য় ব্যাচ)

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
office of the Executive Engineer PWD Division, Barguna.
Memo No-25.36.0400.140-1378 Date: 28.05.2024
e-Tender Notice
e-Tenders are invited in e-GP System Portal (http://www.eprocure.gov.bd) by Executive Engineer, PWD Division, Barguna for the Procurement of:

Livestock Officer
Animal Feed Mill, Savar, Dhaka
Memo No. 33.01.0000.360.07.001.23-453 Date: 29/05/2024
Invitation for Tender
This is online tender, where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP Portal and no hard copies will be accepted.

TENDER NOTICE
The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), Sub-Office in Cox's Bazar hereby announces the launch of the following tenders:
TENDER REFERENCE NUMBER RFP/HCX/2024/008
ITEM DESCRIPTION FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A FRAME AGREEMENT FOR CONSTRUCTION OF DIFFERENT TYPE SHELTER AND FOR THE PROVISION OF ASSORTED CONSTRUCTION WORKS, AND RELATED SERVICES

Hiring Freight Forwarder for Microbiota Directed Food (MDF) Shipment to West Africa
Tender Ref. No. icddr.b/SCM/OTM/2024/05 Date: May 30, 2024
Sealed tenders are invited by icddr.b for Hiring Freight Forwarder for Microbiota Directed Food (MDF) Shipment to West Africa.

5.5 magnitude
quake jolts
Dhaka, Ctg
and Sylhet

STAR REPORT

A magnitude 5.6 earthquake jolted Dhaka, Sylhet, Chattogram and some other parts of the country yesterday evening. The earthquake was felt at 7:13pm, Golam Mostofa, an official of the Bangladesh Meteorological Department, told The Daily Star.

The epicentre of the earthquake was in Myanmar, about 439km east of the capital.

There was no immediate report of casualties or damage.



3 of a robber
gang held

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Detective Branch (DB) of police has arrested three individuals from Chattogram and Khulna, in connection with a Tk 60 lakh robbery that took place in the capital's Bangshal area on April 26.

Tk 9.5 lakh of the robbed money was recovered from them, said DB Deputy Commissioner (Lalbagh Division) Mashur Rahman at a press briefing at the DMP Media Center yesterday.

The arrestees are — Khokon Das alias Baila Khokon, the ringleader of the gang; Rezaul Karim, the main organiser; and Kamal Hossain, who tracked the victim's movements.

On April 26, Mohiuddin, an employee of Ma Bullion and Silver Jewelers, was

SEE PAGE 4 COL 3

PRAYER TIMING
MAY 30

Fazr	Zohr	Asr	Maghrib	Esha
AZAN 4:05	12:45	5:00	6:43	8:05
JAMAAAT 4:40	1:15	5:15	6:47	8:35

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

REMA'S AFTERMATH IN 5 DISTRICTS
**Around 50pc power
connections remain severed**

STAR REPORT

Mahbubur Rahman, a Bangladeshi expatriate in Portugal, could not reach his family members in Bamna upazila of Barguna over phone even three days after Cyclone Remal lashed Bangladesh coast.

He contacted some relatives in Dhaka but they also failed to give him any update.

"I don't even know if my family members are alive or not. I am worried," Mahbubur told The Daily Star yesterday.

Bamna upazila is one of the areas most affected by the cyclone.

While nothing can be certain at this point, it is likely that Mahbubur's family members are passing days without electricity connections and hence could not get their cell phones charged.

Almost half of the total 1.14 lakh electricity connections in four upazilas of Patuakhali and eight upazilas of Barguna still remain severed since the cyclone, according to Rural Electrification Board in the districts.

The electricity demand in those two districts is now below 30MW, compared to the usual 65MW.

"So far, around 50 percent of electric lines have been restored. At

least 18,600 kilometre of electric lines have been damaged. Of the 2,000 electric poles damaged, only 100 have been replaced till yesterday," said Tushar Kanti Mandal, general manager of Patuakhali REB.

Also, 168 transformers were destroyed in the cyclone, and only 20 have been commissioned so far, he added.

"Numerous trees and electric poles in the Sadar union were uprooted in the cyclone. Electric cables were seen scattered on the

roads. Officials and locals were trying to clear the roads, while vehicular movement remained halted. There was no electricity in the area," said Munni Akhter, who returned from Bamna upazila after attending a relative's funeral.

"So far, 80 percent of total 67,000 customers got their connections back after at least 20 electric poles

and cables at 43 spots were damaged in the cyclone," said Faruk Hossain, executive engineer of West Zone Power Distribution Company Ltd.

In Barishal, large areas across Hijla, Muladi and Mehendiganj upazilas are without electricity connections.

"Around 60 percent of total 4.70 lakh connections are restored," said Humayun Kabir, GM of REB-1, Barishal.

A similar situation persists in Manpura of Bhola.

In Bhola, 40,000 of the total 4.28 lakh customers are without electricity since the cyclone.

"Electric wires were torn at 5,000 spots in Pirojpur. At least 352 electric poles and 750 cross arms were damaged. Mathbaria upazila sustained the most damage," said Khairul Islam, assistant general manager (AGM-ENC) of Pirojpur Palli Bidyut Samity.

However, the Ministry of Power, Energy and Mineral Resources yesterday claimed that 2.86 crore (around 93 percent) out of the total 3.07 crore subscribers under REB and WZPDCL got their connections restored by 6:00pm yesterday.

The ministry hoped for 95 percent of the connections to be restored by yesterday night.



A trader dries rice at a market in Barishal after rain and tidal water influenced by Cyclone Remal damaged at least 200 tonnes of rice in the Fariapatti area of Barishal city. PHOTO: TITU DAS

**Remal damages
200 tonnes of
rice in Barishal**

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barishal

Rain and tidal water influenced by Cyclone Remal have damaged at least 200 tonnes of rice of various varieties at a wholesale market in the Fariapatti area of Barishal city.

During a visit to the market yesterday, this correspondent observed traders trying to dry the soaked rice in open spaces, including roadsides.

Each rice wholesaler in the market had one to 10 tonnes of rice damaged in the rains and tidal water during the cyclone, said Swapan Kumar Dutta, owner of Barishal Khadya Bhandar.

Traders said they will try to dry the wet rice and sell it to poultry feed factories to mitigate their losses.

"Usually, rain or tidal water does not rise enough to enter the wholesale market. This time, however, it was different," they added.

Farooq Alam, secretary of the Rice Traders Association in Barishal, said many traders who have taken loans from banks will face significant financial strain due to this loss.

Saidur Rahman Rintu, president of the Barishal Chamber of Commerce and Industries, urged the government to provide traders with low-interest loans to compensate for the damage.

Many traders who have taken loans from banks will face significant financial strain due to this loss.

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Urban Development Directorate
82, Segunbagicha, Dhaka
www.udd.gov.bd

Memo No. 25.45.0000.002.14.025.23.155 Date: 29/05/2024

Request for Expressions of Interest (EOI) for Survey (Socio-Economic and Other Related Survey and Transportation Survey for Roadways and Waterway) under different Packages for "Preparation of Development Plan for 3 Upazilas (Pirojpur Sadar, Nesarabad and Nazirpur Upazila) of Pirojpur District" Project

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh					
1. Ministry/Division	Ministry of Housing and Public Works (MoHPW)				
2. Agency	Urban Development Directorate (UDD)				
3. Name of procuring entity	Project Director (PD), Preparation of Development Plan for 3 Upazilas (Pirojpur Sadar, Nesarabad and Nazirpur Upazila) of Pirojpur District, Urban Development Directorate (UDD).				
4. Procuring entity code	1320401				
5. Procuring entity district	Dhaka				
6. Expression of Interest for Selection of (Survey Work)	Selection of Consulting Firm	Lump Sum Based			
7. EOI Ref. No.	No. 25.45.0000.002.14.025.23.155				
8. Date	29/05/2024				
KEY INFORMATION					
9. Procurement sub-method	Selection under a Fixed Budget (FBS)				
FUNDING INFORMATION					
10. Budget and source of funds	Development Budget	GoB			
11. Development partner (if applicable)	N/A				
PARTICULAR INFORMATION					
12. Project/programme code	222016500				
13. Project/programme name	Preparation of Development Plan for 3 Upazilas (Pirojpur Sadar, Nesarabad and Nazirpur Upazila) of Pirojpur District				
14. EOI closing date and time	25/06/2024 at 12:00pm (SD-8) 25/06/2024 at 02:00pm (SD-9)				
INFORMATION FOR APPLICANT					
15. Brief description of the assignment	UDD is undertaking a project entitled "Preparation Development Plan for 3 Upazilas (Pirojpur Sadar, Nesarabad and Nazirpur Upazila) of Pirojpur District" Project with an area of approximately 147232.80 acre or 595.83 sq.km. UDD has decided to engage Bangladeshi Survey Firm (as mentioned in clause 20) for the project.				
Experience, resources and delivery capacity required					
Package No.	Experience	Resources		Key Professionals	
		Hardware/Software	Other Resources		
16. SD-8	At least 5 years work experience in related field	Computer, Updated Survey Equipment (House hold survey Equipment like Tablet PC etc.), online communication device (tablet) compatible format (apps), Socio-economic Survey Software, and Updated Data processing software, Arc GIS compatible Workstation, & Arc GIS Licensed Software etc.	Office Space, Financial and Managerial Strength, Vehicle and other logistics etc.	Socio Economic Survey Expert, Data Management Expert, GIS Expert.	
SD-9	At least 5 years work experience in related field	Computer, Updated Transport related Survey Equipment for (O-D Survey, Vehicle count survey, vehicle speed survey etc.), Updated Transport data processing Related Software, Arc GIS compatible Workstation, & Arc GIS Licensed Software etc.	Office Space, Financial and Managerial Strength, Vehicle and other logistics etc.	Transport Planning Expert, Transport Survey Expert, Transport Survey Supervisor	
17. Other detail	Interested Consulting Firms are hereby invited to submit EOI containing printed brochures (showing organizational identity and background), Legal Documents, Bank Solvency showing financial and Managerial standing (according to PPA 2006 and PPR 2008), Legal Trade License, VAT Registration Certificate, Valid TIN Certificate & Tax return Slip/Certificate of Last Fiscal year Memorandum of Article (if applicable), Nationality Certificate of Authorized person, NID card of authorized person, staffing with CV with education and experience Certificate, inventory of resources and logistics confirming the firm's capabilities to provide the required services. All documents should be attested by a first Class Gazetted Officer. Consulting firm will submit one (1) original and one (1) true copy of the EOI separately in sealed envelopes marked with the "Title" and "Specific Name of Services" with an electronic copy.				
18. Association with foreign firms is	Not encouraged				
19. Survey firms/association (JVCA) firms	As per PPA 2006 and PPR 2008.				
Package No.	Phasing of Services	Short Description of Services	Location	Indicative Start Date (Month/ Year)	Indicative Completi on Date (Month/ Year)
SD-8	N/A	Survey (Socio economic and other related Surveys): Questionnaire Survey will be undertaken by using online survey and communication device (tablet) with GIS compatible format (apps). Data need to be interfaced with main GIS database prepared by physical feature consulting firm for preparation of planning package	Pirojpur Sadar Upazila, Nesarabad Upazila and Nazirpur Upazila	September, 2024	May, 2025
SD-9	N/A	Survey (Transportation Surveys for Roadways and Waterways): All traffic and transportation related survey data including vehicle registration, traffic volume, O-D survey, critical traffic junction, trip generation, travel behavior, goods movement and mode of shipment etc. collected from field, process collected Transport database processing software which is GIS Compatible, collected data and information (both spatial and attribute) shall be interlinked with that of different other surveys (including physical feature, topographic, land use etc.) conducted by different other survey firms. The survey firm shall also identify the location/ household/ feature surveyed on base map and also locate in spatial database.	Pirojpur Sadar Upazila, Nesarabad Upazila and Nazirpur Upazila	September, 2024	October, 2025
PROCURING ENTITY DETAILS					
21. Name of the official inviting EOI	Uday Sankar Das				
22. Designation of the official inviting EOI	Project Director, "Preparation of Development Plan for 3 Upazilas (Pirojpur Sadar, Nesarabad and Nazirpur Upazila) of Pirojpur District"				
23. Address of the official inviting EOI	Room No-604, 5th Floor, Urban Development Directorate, 82, Segunbagicha, Dhaka-1000.				
24. Contact details of the official inviting EOI	Phone No. +88-02-223351272;				
25. The procuring entity reserves the right to accept or reject all EOIs without assigning any reason.					

Uday Sankar Das
Project Director
"Preparation of Development Plan for 3 Upazilas (Pirojpur Sadar, Nesarabad and Nazirpur Upazila) of Pirojpur District"
Urban Development Directorate

Delhi temp hits highest ever in India

IMD issues red alert health notice

AFP, New Delhi

Temperatures in India's capital soared to a national record-high of 52.3 degrees Celsius yesterday, figures from the government's weather bureau showed, as it warned of dangerous heat levels in the megacity.

The India Meteorological Department (IMD), which reported "severe heat wave conditions", published the temperature automatically on its website after it was recorded by a station in Delhi suburb of Mungeshpur yesterday afternoon.

The recording not only broke the landmark 50C measurement for the first time ever in the city, but smashed the previous national record in the desert of Rajasthan by more than one degree Celsius.

The IMD has issued a red alert health notice for Delhi, which has an estimated population of more than 30 million people.



Policemen carry away a man from a so-called "Protestcamp fuer Palaestina" (protest encampment for Palestine) set up by students and sympathisers on the campus of the TU Wien Vienna University of Technology in Vienna, Austria, yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

S Africa votes with ANC dominance under threat

Final results not expected before weekend

AFP, Soweto

South Africa's ruling ANC was fighting yesterday to defy expectations that it could lose its three-decade-long exclusive grip on power, as voters turned out for a watershed general election.

More than 27 million voters are registered for the most uncertain poll since the African National Congress (ANC) led the nation out of apartheid rule. Full results are not expected before the weekend.

With opposition challenges from both the left and right, unemployment and crime at record levels and a new generation growing up with no memory of the struggle against white-minority rule, the ruling party may be forced to share power.

After voting, President Cyril Ramaphosa, who is seeking re-election, said: "I have no doubt whatsoever in my heart of hearts that the people will once again invest confidence in ANC to continue leading this country. 'The people of SA will give the ANC a firm majority.'"

ISRAEL'S ASSAULT ON RAFAH

Biden's blurred red lines under scrutiny

AFP, Washington

Joe Biden's red lines over Israel's assault on Rafah have kept shifting, but the US president faces growing pressure to take a firmer stance after a deadly strike in the southern Gaza city.

Despite global outrage over the attack in which 45 people were killed, the White House insisted on Tuesday that it did not believe Israel had launched the major operation that Biden has warned against.

John Kirby, the US National Security Council spokesman, said that Biden had been consistent and was not "moving the stick" on what defined an all-out military offensive by key ally Israel.

But Biden faces a difficult balancing act both domestically and internationally over Gaza, especially in a year when the 81-year-old Democrat is locked

US NSC spokesman John Kirby said again there would be no change in policy towards Israel.

in an election battle with Donald Trump.

"Biden wants to appear tough on Rafah, and has really tried to be stern with (Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin) Netanyahu, but in an election year, his red lines are

increasingly blurred," Colin Clarke, director of research at the Soufan Group, told AFP.

"I think he'll continue shifting those lines, ducking and weaving, largely in response to events on the ground."

Facing US campus protests over his support for Israel, Biden said

Sullivan said last week there was "no mathematical formula" and said that "what we're going to be looking at is whether there is a lot of death and destruction."

At the White House on Tuesday, his colleague Kirby faced intense questioning over the Israeli strike, which sparked a fire at a displaced



earlier this month that he would not supply Israel with weapons for a major military operation in Rafah, and he halted a shipment of bombs.

Yet he has since taken no action even as Israel has stepped up air attacks and, as of Tuesday, moved tanks into central Rafah.

Instead, the White House has largely retreated to arguing about what does, and does not, constitute an invasion.

National Security Advisor Jake

persons camp in which dozens of people burned to death.

Kirby said the deaths were "heartbreaking" and "horrific" but again said there would be no change in policy towards Israel. "We have not seen them smash into Rafah," he said.

"We have not seen them go in with large units, large numbers of troops, in columns and formations in some sort of coordinated maneuver against multiple targets on the ground," Kirby added.

UK police arrest 40 people after pro-Gaza rally

AFP, London

UK police yesterday said that 40 people had been arrested and three officers injured after protesters refused to disperse following a demonstration in London over Israel's latest offensive in Gaza.

The British capital's Metropolitan Police Service said the individuals were arrested late on Tuesday for offences including breaching public order conditions, obstructing roads and assaulting emergency workers.

It said two officers sustained minor injuries after being assaulted while a third, who was struck by a bottle thrown from within the crowd, suffered a "serious facial injury".

The Met, as the force is widely known, said an investigation was under way to identify who threw the bottle.

Police had approved plans for the early evening protest - organised by a coalition including the Palestine Solidarity Campaign - outside the gates of Downing Street in central London.

But it imposed conditions including that the rally end by 8:00pm (1900 GMT).

Nine killed in series of missile attacks: Ukraine

AFP, Kyiv

Ukraine yesterday reported nine people had been killed in four regions of the war-battered country, as Russia presses gains on the front line where Kyiv's troops are struggling.

A missile attack on the eastern Sumy region that borders Russia killed two and wounded three, regional authorities said on social media. The governor of the frontline Donetsk region, which the Kremlin claims is part of Russia, said three people had been killed in separate attacks on Tuesday.

Governor Vadym Filashkin said two people had been killed in the town of Toretsk and another person was killed in an attack on the frontline town of Selidove on Tuesday, which is routinely struck by Russian forces.

In the southern Kherson region, which the Kremlin also claimed to have annexed in 2022 even though it is still fighting for control of the Black Sea territory, the governor said Russia had shelled housing and infrastructure facilities.

"One person died as a result of Russian aggression," said Oleksandr Prokudin, Kherson's governor. Last weekend, Russian forces carried out one of the single deadliest attacks in weeks on the northeastern Kharkiv region which borders Russia, hitting a busy hardware store.

Prosecutors said yesterday that the toll from the strike had risen to 19, after a 40-year-old employee of the store who sustained severe burns during the attack died in hospital.

INDIA POLLS UP holding the key to PM Modi's re-election

AGENCIES

All eyes are on the northern Indian state of Uttar Pradesh (UP), as India votes to elect a new government. Spread over an area roughly the size of Britain, the state packs in nearly four times as many people.

With an estimated 257 million people, it is India's most populous state and would be the fifth largest in the world if it was an independent country after India, China, United States and Indonesia and ahead of Pakistan or Brazil.


The state is among just three in India which are voting in all seven phases in the elections which are spread over 44 days. The last phase of voting ends on 1 June and results will be announced on 4 June, reports BBC.

So, it's no surprise that UP - which elects 80 MPs in the 543-member lower house of parliament - is considered key to Prime Minister Narendra Modi's re-election bid as he seeks to return for a third consecutive term.

"It's commonly said that 'the way to Delhi is through UP' and a party that does well in the state generally goes on to rule India," says Sharat Pradhan, senior journalist in the state capital, Lucknow.

"Eight of India's former prime ministers," he adds, "have represented the state and in 2014, when Modi - originally from the western state of Gujarat - made his debut as an MP, he too chose UP." Modi held his seat in the ancient city of Varanasi in 2019 and aims to do so again this year.






Sunamganj Zila Parishad

Sunamganj

www.zpsunamganj.gov.bd



শেখ হাসিনার মূলনীতি
গ্রাম শহরের উন্নতি

Date: 29.05.2024

e-Tender Notice (OTM) Number:06/2023-2024

e-Tender is invited in the National e-GP System Portal(<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) for the procurement of following words details are given below:

SL No	Tender ID No.	Package Number	Tender Last Selling Date	Tender/proposal Closing and opening Date
01	992371	e-gp/ZPS/Local/OTM/W.20	20-June-2024 12:00 PM	20-June-2024 14:00 PM

This is an online tender, where only e-Tender 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 registered bank's branches up to **20.06.2024** Time 14.00pm.

Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP system portal and from e-GP help desk (Helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd)

(Signature)
(Md Golam Mostofa)
Assistant Engineer
Zila Parishad, Sunamganj
☎ : 0871-61359
ae@zpsunamganj@gmail.com

GD- 889

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR
SHEIKH HASINA MEDICAL COLLEGE HOSPITAL, TANGAIL.
Phone: 0299-7714030
Email: shmchtangail@hospi.dghs.gov.bd
Website: <https://www.shmcht.gov.bd>

Memo No: e-GP/tender/outsourcing/notice/3781 Date: 28/05/2024

e-Tender Notice

e-Tenders are invited to the National e-GP System portal (www.eprocure.gov.bd) for the Procurement of the following goods:

Tender ID No	Tender Name	Tender document selling/ Downloading Date & Time	Tender Closing & Opening Date & Time
993225	Procurement of Non-Consulting Services by Outsourcing (Supply Of Manpower)financial year 2023-24	30-may-2024 14:00	19-jun-2024 14:00

- This is an online tender, where only e-Tender 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 (www.eprocure.gov.bd) is Mandatory. The fees for the downloading the e-Tender Documents from the National e-GP System portal have to be deposited online through any registered bank's branches up to particular date and time specified on the tender notice.
- Further Information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System Portal and from e-GP help desk (www.helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd)

(Signature)
(Dr. Md. Abdul Kuddus)
Director
Sheikh Hasina Medical College Hospital,
Tangail

GD-892

The Daily Star

FOUNDER EDITOR: LATE S. M. ALI

What's driving Biman to buy Airbus planes?

Clearly, it's not based on financial viability

Biman's sudden U-turn on whether buying two Airbus A350 planes would be profitable or not seems to be driven by factors other than financial viability. In January, after studying the proposal for six months, the airliner concluded that it would be making massive losses—amounting to an accumulated cash shortfall of up to \$463.08 million over 25 years—if it bought the planes. Strangely enough, on April 22, a new appraisal committee took over the evaluation and, in only three days, decided that it would be a profitable venture. To come to this conclusion, the second committee seems to have invented all sorts of unrealistic scenarios, as per a report in this daily.

For example, the committee based its calculations on Biman filling 92 percent of seats on average (which it has never been able to achieve), showing an increased revenue of 20 percent compared to the evaluation of the previous committee. But even then, the second committee could only show the Airbus planes to be profitable on two routes. One of those routes is Dhaka to JFK Airport in New York, which Bangladesh carriers have not been able to serve since the US Federal Aviation Authority placed the Civil Aviation Authority of Bangladesh (CAAB) in its Category 2, after finding irregularities in its operational activities in 2006. With that being the case, why would the committee even consider taking this route into its calculations? Another reasoning concocted by the committee is that jet fuel cost—which has historically been volatile, and has risen in recent times—would decrease, adding about a quarter of the increased revenue shown.

There are other glaring illogical assumptions at play here. The committee ignored the very costly spare parts that Biman would have to acquire for the Airbuses, the significant rise in expenditure as a result of operating a mixed fleet, as opposed to a Boeing-based fleet, etc. But even the committee had to admit that all this may require a huge overhaul of its current crew and their responsibilities, and that Biman may have to suspend operations in different routes or reduce frequency in different sectors. As such, why is the carrier still trying to push through with the Airbus purchases? Given Biman's coloured past—of defying operation rules and standards, violating procurement rules, scandals and anomalies in staff hiring, etc.—its motive needs to be investigated.

One may recall that on May 5 last year, a joint communique was signed by Lord Dominic Johnson, the UK minister of state in the department for business and trade, and Salman F Rahman, private industry and investment adviser to Bangladesh prime minister, regarding the purchase of eight Airbus A350s and two freighters. But this happened even before Biman carried out a viability study on such a purchase and the first techno-financial committee was formed. So, is Biman's decision being driven by political factors? That must not be the case considering the financial burden it would put on citizens. Biman's Airbus decision must be reevaluated in terms of its economic viability.

Managing dengue hotspots is crucial

Survey finds high density of Aedes larvae in 41 Dhaka wards

After 2023, which turned out to be the deadliest year on record in terms of dengue in Bangladesh, there was a feeling that things couldn't get any worse, that we had hit rock bottom. But barely five months into 2024, that feeling is beginning to evaporate as rock bottom appears to be still some distance away. By May 28, according to the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS), 2,795 dengue patients were hospitalised and 35 died in the country, compared to 13 deaths in the same period last year. This points to a potential repeat—or more likely an exacerbation—of the 2023 outbreak, which had claimed 1,705 lives.

Further fuelling this assumption is a recent survey by the DGHS that revealed a disturbing increase in the presence of Aedes mosquito larvae in Dhaka, where most of the infections and fatalities are usually recorded. According to the survey, a high density of Aedes larvae has been found in 29 wards of Dhaka South City Corporation (DSCC) and 12 wards of Dhaka North City Corporation (DNCC). It means that residents in 41 out of the 99 wards surveyed are at high risk, a number that will rise as the monsoon approaches. And if dengue data is collected from both government and private hospitals this year—as the DGHS said it would—year-end figures would no doubt shoot through the roof.

All this certainly makes for depressing reading. However, the authorities have so far shown no sense of urgency that the situation demands. Early efforts to destroy mosquito breeding grounds have been lacklustre, haphazard, and unmotivated. There has even been a misguided sense of complacency as displayed by the DSCC mayor who, against evidence, claimed "success" in their fight against dengue last year. Moreover, the government is yet to form a comprehensive, scientifically driven response plan befitting a disease that now poses a threat round the year. It is yet to introduce an integrated vector management system to enable proper interventions.

Clearly, we need an urgent course correction. A large part of the fight against dengue is preventing the breeding of Aedes mosquito, and the government must double down on this going forward. Experts have suggested hotspot management across the country, focusing on the addresses of dengue patients. This will require proper collaboration among the relevant agencies including DGHS and city corporations.

THIS DAY IN HISTORY



Joan of Arc burnt at the stake

On this day in 1431, having led the French army in a momentous victory over England at Orléans during the Hundred Years' War, Joan of Arc was charged with heresy and witchcraft and was burnt at the stake.



VISUAL: SHAIKH SULTANA JAHAN BADHON

Citizens must use RTI Act to its full potential

Dr Shamsul Bari and Ruhi Naz are chairman and assistant director (RTI), respectively, of Research Initiatives, Bangladesh (RIB). They can be reached at rib@icitech.bd.com.

SHAMSUL BARI and RUHI NAZ

Bangladesh's adoption of the Right to Information (RTI) Act in 2009 was a transformative move, empowering its citizens to access information available to most public authorities on matters related to their work. It was a significant step towards making public authorities more transparent and accountable to the people. The Information Commission (IC) was constituted in 2009 to ensure the law's effective implementation. The commission is mandated to publish an annual report, giving a detailed account of its work and the performance of the demand side (citizens seeking information) and the

fruits only. Unless we move up to the upper level, the true benefits of the RTI law will not be fully achieved.

RTI experts have identified three different levels of the use of the law. The first level seeks information on public services and personal/neighbourhood needs. The second level seeks information to establish accountability of public officials. The third level seeks information to promote transparency at the national level and bring systemic change in governance. Over the past 14 years since the law came into force in Bangladesh, little progress has been made beyond the first level, though a shift to the second level is visible.

Until we reach the third level, we shall not realise the true benefit of the law. To achieve that end, there is a clear need for more educated and socially aware citizens to use the law. They can focus on more critical issues of governance affecting society and people as a whole. These would include allocation of budgets,

using the correct form, or mistakes in the name, designation of authorities, for not writing the question more clearly and precisely, etc.

Such a matter-of-fact disposal of complaints, often from ordinary citizens, for simple mistakes or errors in the process, will likely discourage them and others from using the law further and thus deprive the government of benefiting from their willingness to use it to promote its objectives. We urge the IC to be more accommodating of the shortcomings in their applications. An Indian court ruled that using a simple postcard without a form is good enough to submit an RTI request. This could be a more empathetic approach towards citizens trying to navigate the complexities of the law.

The statistics provided in the annual reports show that the number of RTI applications has remained stagnant over the years. When the RTI Act came into force, nearly 20,000 applications were made annually in the first few years, but then the numbers dwindled progressively to an average of around 8,000 requests annually. We need to understand why. Is it still because of a lack of awareness about the law, fear of public authorities and their misbehaviour, or a fear of consequences for seeking sensitive information? In the latter regard, we are encouraged by the statements of the new information minister.

It is also essential to know what other mechanisms the IC uses to ensure that more and more people use the law, other than holding various awareness programmes up to the upazila level. If their efforts do not

and interests, seeking mainstream issues of transparency and the rule of law to benefit society.

More than the IC and the government, civil society and citizen groups must take the lead to ensure that RTI requests focus on the decision-making processes and procedures of governance rather than on the information, per se. To illustrate, at the local level, a person may initially want to see a list of those receiving safety net benefits to verify their exclusion (personal benefits/services). However, in the next stage, they may ask about the policy mandate of the concerned institution and gradually proceed to ask whether it is responsive to the public good or interest (i.e. accountability). Further, they may want to see the files in which such decisions were made, the names of the persons responsible, and the criteria by which they were selected (i.e. transparency).

In a nutshell, here are some points to ponder upon:

1. More than 14 years have passed since the RTI Act was adopted in Bangladesh, but the number of RTI applicants has remained stagnant at a comparatively very low level. As it is primarily a people's law, citizens' groups must collectively undertake responsibility to promote its use.

2. Public authorities still resist providing information on sensitive matters, sometimes even innocuous ones. The IC needs to pay particular attention to the matter.

3. While the IC appears to have recognised the problem caused by recalcitrant public officials, there is a scope for it to be more proactive. A clear and consistent display of its

Citizens are now embracing it as a collective duty to promote good governance. This positive development signifies that the true spirit and objective of the RTI law are gradually being realised. However, its use is still limited to what we may call focusing on low-hanging fruits only. Unless we move up to the upper level, the true benefits of the RTI law will not be fully achieved.

supply side (public authorities who supply them).

The recent release of the 2023 Annual Report by the Information Commission has sparked a significant surge in interest, with national dailies, civil society and NGOs all actively discussing its findings. This heightened attention is a promising indication, reflecting a growing recognition of the law's potential benefits. However, it also underscores the crucial role of each stakeholder in fully harnessing this potential. Each of us, as stakeholders, plays a vital part in this journey towards transparency and accountability, and our active engagement is key to its success.

The IC's role in promoting the RTI law is of utmost importance. Its primary duty is to advocate for the widespread adoption and understanding of the law. Additionally, the IC is entrusted with the task of adjudicating disputes between the demand and supply sides. This crucial function is fulfilled through regular hearings to resolve complaint cases. Recently, the commission has been focusing on how government officials handle citizens' RTI requests, a key aspect of the RTI process that ensures the law's effective implementation.

The IC's annual report this year unveils a promising trend. In the past, citizens viewed the use of RTI as an individual right to be exercised as and when necessary. However, a significant shift has been observed in recent years. Citizens are now embracing it as a collective duty to promote good governance. This positive development signifies that the true spirit and objective of the RTI law are gradually being realised. However, its use is still limited to what we may call focusing on low-hanging

information on public funding, spending on government projects, etc. In neighbouring India, for example, activists filed RTI requests that led to the recent unearthing of a public scandal relating to electoral bonds. It is not logical to expect ordinary citizens to understand the intricacies of such critical issues for the nation.

Bangladesh thus needs to create an environment where civil society leaders, activists, and ordinary citizens feel encouraged to use the law. This will be possible when public authorities are prepared to deal with all kinds of RTI applications, including matters they may consider sensitive. That preparedness is still not there.

We appreciate the recent position that the Information Commission took on the role of government officials in applying the law and its decisions to make them respect its provisions. However, some factors remain bothersome. A close look at statistics from recent years on the rejection of complaints by the IC shows that in 2023, among 686 complaints filed with it, the IC accepted 324 for a hearing (47.23 percent). In 2022, from 791 complaints filed, it accepted 360 for a hearing (45.51 percent). In 2021, 463 complaints were filed and 234 accepted for a hearing (50.53 percent). Overall, around 50 percent of complaints are accepted for a hearing.

That means approximately 50 percent of the complaints received are rejected by the IC and disposed of without a hearing, often simply with some advice on corrective measures. The grounds for rejection are often simple errors or omissions in fulfilling the processes of the law, such as not attaching a copy of the original application with the complaint or not

The statistics provided in the annual reports show that the number of RTI applications has remained stagnant over the years. When the RTI Act came into force, nearly 20,000 applications were made annually in the first few years, but then the numbers dwindled progressively to an average of around 8,000 requests annually. We need to understand why. Is it still because of a lack of awareness about the law, fear of public authorities and their misbehaviour, or a fear of consequences for seeking sensitive information?

work, what will happen if NGOs, too, fail to promote the law because of a lack of funds? It should be a matter of concern.

As NGO workers involved in promoting the law, we know that many RTI applications submitted annually to different public offices are made through the efforts of many NGOs in the field. We see its benefits as many applicants have emerged as activists. They have developed a clear understanding of the law and realised that keeping an eye on the affairs of the government through seeking information is more a duty than a right. It is mainly through the efforts of many RTI activists that the process of approaching government officials to pursue redress has been demystified. However, it is imperative to scale this intervention to more groups across Bangladesh to foster a people-friendly culture in all public offices. The RTI law aims to direct efforts beyond individual grievances

resolve that those who disobey the law will be dealt with firmly will help. We see an improvement over the years in the number of Designated Officials (DOs) being sanctioned for non-fulfilment of their duties, but they are still few and far between. Between 2011 and 2023, the IC heard 3,233 complaint cases and penalised only 81 DOs to pay compensation or fine or face department actions, which appears relatively low.

We call upon all relevant stakeholders, including the Information Commission, information ministry and civil society to work together to create an enabling atmosphere for people to use the RTI law to achieve its objectives meaningfully. We must understand that the use of RTI law is not merely to focus on the work of the government, but rather to operationalise good governance and inclusive development in the country through citizen participation.

Why is managing banks' liquidity risks so important?



Dr Md Main Uddin
is professor and former chairman of the Department of Banking and Insurance at the University of Dhaka. He can be reached at mainuddin@du.ac.bd.

MD MAIN UDDIN

Liquidity is the ease with which an asset can be converted into cash without affecting its market price. Liquidity risk is one of the most significant risks that banks need to manage appropriately to avoid failure. It is a sudden surge in liability withdrawals that may leave banks in a position of having to liquidate assets at a very short notice and low prices. Banks collect deposits on short-term bases and lend the money on long-term bases, which create a gap between the terms of deposits and loans. The deposits mature earlier than the loans usually do. As a result, banks have to arrange liquid assets from other sources to meet the liability withdrawals. When they fail to collect such assets, they face liquidity risk.

There are three liquidity management strategies that banks usually employ. The first is asset liquidity management or asset conversion strategy, which calls for piling up liquidity in the form of liquid assets and selling them when needed. Banks generally hold some assets that they can sell when they face such a problem. Although this strategy minimises the liquidity risk, it reduces the profitability as well, because maintaining more liquid assets generate less return.

The second strategy is borrowed liquidity or liability management strategy. This allows banks to borrow from the market to cover all of its liquidity needs. This is a risky strategy because borrowing from the market may be highly expensive during a liquidity crisis. Sometimes, borrowing may also not be possible



VISUAL: BIPOB CHAKROBORTY

due to the unavailability of funds.

The third is a balanced liquidity strategy, which combines the use of liquid asset holdings and borrowed liquidity to meet liquidity needs. Here, a bank not only holds some liquid assets, but also makes contracts with other banks for borrowing at the time they need money. It also takes a standing borrowing facility from peers having excess liquid assets.

Liquidity managers should follow some guidelines to avoid liquidity

problems. Generally, they have to keep track of all fund-using and fund-raising departments; they must know in advance about withdrawals by the biggest credit or deposit customers. Furthermore, priorities and objectives for liquidity management should be clear. A bank, for instance, may try to manage liquidity in a way that it will never face a liquidity crisis.

the bank's net liquid funds by making a comparison between the estimated changes in loans and deposits.

The second approach is the structure of funds approach, where a bank's deposits and other funds are divided into categories such as volatile, vulnerable, and stable funds. The liquidity manager sets aside liquid funds in accordance with some

assets, volatile funds, core deposits and deposit composition of a bank reach the benchmark, the bank is said to have maintained the required liquidity position.

The fourth approach uses signals from the market to assess liquidity needs. Hence, liquidity managers closely monitor the signals such as public confidence, stock price behaviour, risk premiums on borrowings, loss sales of assets, and borrowings from the central bank. The public confidence in a bank will be low if it does not have top-notch liquidity management. A bank that offers high interest rates on borrowing or receives liquidity support from the central bank frequently gives a signal that its liquidity management is not effective, and the risk is high.

When a bank has a liquidity crisis, it tries to borrow from other solvent banks to pay its depositors. If the solvent banks do not extend this support, the bank's liquidity crisis aggravates, resulting in a panic among its customers. The panicked customers hurry to withdraw their deposits, which may push the bank into an acute liquidity crisis. This way, a sound bank can become insolvent, failing to meet the liquidity needs.

Global experience shows that during the 2008 financial crisis, the biggest bank failure in the US history occurred with the closure of Washington Mutual, which had \$307 billion in assets. A run on deposits where its customers withdrew \$16.7 billion in just two weeks was one of the reasons why this bank failed.

Dexia, a Franco-Belgian bank, had high maturity mismatch as it heavily borrowed short-term funding to make long-term loans. It expanded its balance sheet from 258 billion euros in 2000 to 651 billion euros in 2008, before collapsing after a liquidity crisis in October 2008. Then Dexia faced a second liquidity crisis in 2011 from which France, Belgium and Luxembourg rescued it to avoid bankruptcy, costing taxpayers over 18

billion euros.

Merrill Lynch was an investment bank in the US and existed independently until January 2009. Its residential mortgage loans rose to \$100 billion in 2007, from \$58 billion in 2005. The mortgage assets went under pressure and Merrill Lynch was forced to reduce its risk by selling assets at a loss. The bank faced a record loss of \$37.9 billion in 2008, resulting in liquidity shock. Later, it was acquired by the Bank of America in January 2009.

In 2023, the US saw the failure of Citizens Bank in November, Heartland Tri-State Bank in July, First Republic Bank in May, and Signature Bank and Silicon Valley Bank in March. Before collapsing, customers of Silicon Valley Bank had withdrawn \$42 billion in just 48 hours.

Banks in Bangladesh sometimes face liquidity crises from normal operational outcomes. However, several banks have been encountering liquidity problems for a long period of time, mainly because of irregularities arising from a lack of good governance. The irregularities gave birth to huge amounts of non-performing loans (NPLs) where funds remained blocked. BASIC Bank with a default rate of 63 percent, Padma Bank with 46 percent, and Bangladesh Development Bank Ltd with 42 percent found their liquidity risk management simply unrealistic. The Bangladesh Bank had to provide special support to some Islamic banks to help them overcome their liquidity problems, which originated allegedly from unlawful activities.

Without ensuring good governance in the banking sector, liquidity management strategies will not function properly in Bangladesh's banks. A standard setting must be created for suitable liquidity management practices. If not, liquidity risk can make many banks extremely vulnerable, needing them to be rescued at the expense of taxpayers' money.

Time to exploit the potential of local partners and products



Dr Nawshad Ahmed, a former UN official, is an economist and urban planner.

NAWSHAD AHMED

A successful political regime is expected to maintain formal and informal arrangements through which the government, private actors and non-government organisations (NGOs) cooperate to formulate and carry out key policy decisions. In a pluralistic society, power is not supposed to be concentrated on a single development actor, but should be spread between these three major actors so that a developmental balance is maintained and each can judge the performance of the others.

All three development actors have their respective circle of influence and are capable of reaching out to the household level through a variety of goods and services. While the Bangladesh government provides electricity, education and basic health directly to the people, NGOs provide micro-credit, income-generating activities and social awareness, and the private sector supplies consumer goods and services. Often the work of these development actors overlaps—e.g. the government funds micro-credit programmes and builds houses for the poor families; and NGOs are involved in education and health services, and have been running banks and industries. The private sector is also involved in social welfare activities and education sector. In fact, thousands of schools and most of the universities and medical colleges in Bangladesh are in the private sector. While this is the situation, strong cross-sectoral collaboration is warranted. The government, as the lead player, should give the impression that it considers the strength of each of the development players, but it seems people are in doubt about the government's position in this regard.

Though Bangladesh made notable

progress in enhancing its productive capacity and maintained persistent high economic growth rates in the past decades, the growth rate in the current fiscal year has been projected to be below six percent. Over the last two years, high inflation rates have affected the quality of life of the middle class and lower income groups. Economic inequality has risen in the country over the last two decades. The country built up high foreign exchange reserves as a result of positive balance of payment for several years. The forex reserves averaged \$24.91 billion between 2008 and 2024, reaching as high as

When in a crisis situation, people should limit their consumption for foreign goods and help save foreign currency as much as possible. We as a nation should move away from our over-reliance on foreign goods.

\$48.0 billion in August 2021. But the situation has deteriorated in recent years and forex reserves slipped to \$18.61 billion on May 21, 2024, because of higher import payments caused by the rise in prices in the international market, slow growth of foreign remittance and the taka's depreciation against international currencies. Economists made various recommendations to increase the country's foreign currency reserves: diversify export items; increase competitiveness of Bangladeshi products in the international market; use modern

technology; encourage flow of foreign remittance through the official channel; and limit foreign borrowing.

Under the circumstances, it is important to encourage all development players to invest money and energy to maximise their contributions towards the GDP growth. They should all increase investment, build human and physical capitals, use better technology, and boost employment of labour to increase production and create income that would enhance consumer spending. We have a wrong notion that only the big private sector investors invest; in fact, millions of poor households, mainly NGO members, invest a significant amount of money in agriculture, fisheries, livestock, poultry and cottage industries. Therefore, there is a need to highlight the importance of the work of all development players in boosting production to move the country towards a high growth path again.

Controlling imports of non-essential items in order to build forex reserves is a difficult task because the high-income and the upper-middle-class families have a tendency to depend on imported consumer items. In FY2022-23, the total import was \$93.77 billion while total export was \$57.31 billion, which created a negative trade balance of \$36.46 billion. In FY2022-23, the government increased the duty and taxes on 300 non-essential (luxury) items like SUVs, high-end mobile phones and home appliances, and still the import of these items has been rising. When in a crisis situation, people should limit their consumption for foreign goods and help save foreign currency as much as possible. We as a nation should move away from our over-reliance on foreign goods. As a UN official working in other countries, I have seen that most of my international colleagues preferred to use products of their own countries, and they often went an extra mile to get those. This shows their nationalistic attitude, which should be emulated.

Bangladesh now produces quality consumer products that we

should cultivate a taste for and help the country save precious foreign currencies, which should be used only for the import of industrial raw materials, production plants, petroleum, life-saving drugs and essential consumer items. The country is incapable of living on the margins of

vulnerability with a foreign currency reserve of about \$18.61 billion for a long time. For a population of around 17 crore, it translates to about \$109 per person, which came down from \$270 in 2021. India had a foreign currency reserve of \$648 billion on April 12, 2024, which means it

had a reserve of \$450 per person. If Bangladesh exploits the productive capacity of all development players, and people switch from a tendency of buying foreign goods to buying local products, the country can secure high forex reserves again.

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Bangladesh Regional Connectivity Project I:
National Single Window Implementation and Strengthening Customs Modernization
National Board of Revenue (NBR)
IDEB Bhaban (10th Floor), 160/A, Kakrail, Dhaka -1000, Bangladesh.

Memo No. 1(187)/Passive Infrastructure/Hardware/NSW/2024/2064 Date: 29 May 2024

Subject: Addendum to Bidding Document for Supply and installation of Hardware and infrastructure (network, communication, cabling, etc.) and standard software for NSW solution; other network, communication equipment, structure, hardware and cabling: Passive Infrastructure for NSW Server Room & DR, Bangladesh Regional Connectivity Project I. Request for Bids (RFB) No. NBR-GD2A.2.

Addendum No. 4

This is for the information of all Bidders concerned that the following amendments have been made for procurement mentioned in the subject above:

Ref.	Existing entry	Amended entry
ITB 22.1	The deadline for Bid submission is: Date: May 20, 2024; Time: 14.00 hours. Date & time for bid opening May 20, 2024; Time: 14.30 hours.	The deadline for Bid submission is: Date: June 10, 2024, Time: 14.00 hours. Date & time for bid opening June 10, 2024; Time: 14.30 hours.
Addendum-3	The deadline for Bid submission is: Date: May 29, 2024; Time: 14.00 hours. Date & time for bid opening May 29, 2024; Time: 14.30 hours.	

All other terms and conditions of Bidding Document (RFB) No. NBR-GD2A.2 shall remain unchanged. This Addendum No. 4 shall be considered an integral part of the Bidding Document and shall be binding on all Bidders who have obtained or will obtain the Bidding Document from the Purchaser in accordance.

You are requested to acknowledge the receipt of this Addendum.

Faithfully yours.

(Jewel Ahmed)
Deputy Project Director
Bangladesh Regional Connectivity Project-I:
National Single Window Implementation & Strengthening Customs Modernization
Email: pdnsw.nbr@gmail.com

ESSAY

It has to be print



ILLUSTRATION: AMREETA LETHE

It's true that zines and other modes of independent publishing provide an avenue into organising that helps evade technological and institutional challenges we're still learning to navigate, but that is not all they have to offer. Zines have long been used as tools for sociopolitical education—breaking down complex theory and thought into more digestible and accessible material.

AMREETA LETHE

There is something in the tactility of books that even non-readers find themselves admiring, and readers more so. The texture of paper, the act of turning over a book in one's hands and thumbing through its pages, and the promise it offers in its first page or two through notes, dates, signs, and dedications construct memory and bear witness to its history. The inimitability of these experiences and affections only strengthens the case for there to be thriving print publishing scenes, no matter the burgeoning costs of ink and paper, or the dwindling interest in readership in favour of our infinitely more entertaining and doomscrollable news feeds. It is why our shelves continue to fill up and fill out, and why newspapers are still slid beneath our doorsteps before the day begins.

But our publishing scenes are not without their problems. In mainstream media and publishing, the existence of state/commercial interests and corporate lobbying ensures that what appears in the market is often overly sanitised and depoliticised, if not entirely spun together to sway readers and manufacture consent towards whatever is of corpo-political interest at the time. This is hardly surprising, these being institutions built on our existing systems, after all.

Predictably, this has always led to waves of alternative and often underground streams of press and media that are founded on the basis of being anti-establishment, and as reactions to the status quo. Zines, for instance, have long been a popular means of sharing experiences and making information accessible among various communities, by way of their self-published and non-commercial natures. As Janice Radway chronicles in "Zines, Half-Lives, and Afterlives: On the Temporalities of Social and Political Change", the zine scene in the West erupted in the 1980s with punk music fanzines and "punk's defiant response to the commercialism of mainstream society." It has since seen multiple cultural revivals, and zinesters continue to idealise and insist upon the importance of "an outside, alternative, free space uncomplicated by political compromise or capitulation". Zines have also historically been adopted by marginalised communities as a means of disseminating ideas, advice, and knowledge in a way that is ungoverned by

any major institution, and thus not subjected to their policies, practices, and prejudices of censorship.

In the literary world too, rife with its own charges of censorship on account of obscenities sanitisation, and "marketability", there have been alternative means and movements of publishing. Notable among these, and particularly relevant to Bangladesh, is the little magazine movement, which originated in India and has historically opposed the literary establishment for its traditionalist and often bourgeois sentiments. The little mag movement has as such been a similar "outside, alternative, and free" space, a playground for experimental, non-conformist, and often cutting edge literature. The little magazine genre differs from zine subculture, however, due to its adherence to typical printing and distribution methods, as opposed to the more handmade, self-publishable/reproducible, and community-oriented nature of zines.

When we look to the coverage of the ongoing genocide in Palestine now and in the past six months, the continued importance of alternative streams of media and publishing is only reinforced. As mainstream media in the West continues to characterise this genocide as either war or conflict, refuses to name whose bombs kill and maim innocent civilians in Gaza, and spins entirely fabricated accounts in favour of the Israeli-American war machine while disregarding journalists on the ground, it is no surprise that people around the world have turned to alternative channels of reportage.

Within the imperial core, as encampments spring up across university campuses, the role of independent student journalism as among the only reliable sources on the protesters' demands, goals, and tactics has been repeated, with the students' own reportage covering the protests more empathetically and with more nuance than their mainstream counterparts. Multiple videos have emerged of student protesters completely shutting out external media channels due to their instigative natures, and the students' refusal to engage with media representatives is thought to be a part of their centrally enacted media guidelines.

Interestingly still, for those participating in the encampments, zines and physical copies of books have once again emerged as a means of disseminating information while avoiding

the surveillance that comes with the use of social media or technology of any kind. One of my particular favourites is "How to Liberate a Dining Hall" by Abolish the UC, which outlines the roles and responsibilities of various community organisers, essentially working as a how-to guide for students. Explaining the reasoning behind the idea, the zine notes: "Liberating a dining hall is a form of mutual aid that takes university resources (in this case, food) and makes them free for everyone regardless of student status or university affiliation. As such, it is simultaneously an act of community care and a blow to the university's bottom line."

Universities have often justifiably been criticised as ivory towers, fatally incapable of "touching grass", as we're inclined to say these days. The hypocrisy of the academy as an institution reinforcing the status quo (despite producing endless amounts of scholarship on anti-establishment and decolonial thought) has long been established. Consider also, the academy's reluctance in normalising open-source technology and the corporate refusal to make research, knowledge, and information freely available to the public. Perhaps that is a digital world still outside our grasp.

Until then, print media continues to be a crucial and unmatched channel of communication, capable in many ways of circumventing the increasing surveillance and repression internet users are subjected to. An internet-based approach to reach is essential, of course, as it awards important social causes views and engagement ranging in the hundreds of millions, numbers impossible to consistently attain through print. However, so long as this technology is governed as it is by the powers that be, and increasingly susceptible to surveillance and doxing practices, the importance of several alternative channels of communication, particularly in print and in a way that cannot be traced, is imperative for community-based organising.

It's true that zines and other modes of independent publishing provide an avenue into organising that helps evade technological and institutional challenges we're still learning to navigate, but that is not all they have to offer. Zines have long been used as tools for sociopolitical education—breaking down complex theory and thought into more digestible and accessible material. They have also been used as advice columns and how-to guides—a means of circulating knowledge and lived experiences within communities that were otherwise unrepresented or deemed too "unsavoury" for the mainstream; zines like these often discussed inclusive sex education, protest education, and social awareness. Sometimes, zines were simply a way to share one's personal tastes and interests, be it in music, movies, games, or books, with like-minded folks.

The unrestrained potential zines hold, to be whatever one can dream them into being, is what makes them subversive. There is something I find intrinsically magical about the thought and care that pervade the pages of a zine, merely on account of it being penned, painted, and put together with one's own hands—the world's capacity for love and rage, all contained within a few leaflets of printer paper.

Amreeta Lethe is a writer and translator, and a Sub editor at Star Books and Literature. Find them @lethean_ on Instagram.

INTERVIEW

On making zines with Aqai Thami

STAR BOOKS REPORT

Last week, Star Books and Literature sat down with Aqai Thami to discuss zines. Thami is Thangmi woman of the Kiratimma first peoples of the Himalayas. A big believer in social exchanges and developing safe spaces to position art as a medium of healing in community, Thami works on ceremonial interventions, performances, drawings, zine-making, fly posting, and public intervention, brought together by participant involvement. Most of her work is self-funded and realised in collaboration. She is the founder of Sister Library, the first travelling, community owned, and community run feminist library of South Asia.

Katerina Don, curator of HerStory Foundation and host of Sister Library Dhaka was also a part of the conversation.

We would love to know a little bit about how you came to zine-making?

My dad would write a lot about the indigenous resistance and land back movement, print pamphlets, and distribute them. I think that stayed with me when I came to Bombay. But I never thought of my dad or aunt and uncle as zine-makers because of how different it seemed. Our processes were completely different. I have more pace and grace to sit with the work and bring it to life. That never happened with my dad. He used to make these publications so people knew what was happening, what the military was doing, what the government was trying to say. He would even reproduce speeches. He used to write speeches that he made and print it and distribute it amongst people. And there was one uncle who had an offset printer and even through the curfew, my dad would come home with these zines (or pamphlets or publications). He was in his 30s then and now, I'm finally getting the chance to reconnect and look back. So that was my first interaction with publication. And the first work that I started doing as a part of *Bombay Underground* is where we used to make monthly zines called *A4*

where we would invite people to send in entries and put it together and publish it. And you know once you have your writing or drawing in print, and you hold it, something shifts in you. So everyone would send them in and they would be crying. There was so much gratitude. From *A4*, we built up to the contemporary zine movement. Because there were no zine makers before that and so we had to slowly show that this is a possibility. And we got to see Bombay becoming this place where people wanted to print and publish. Hoards of people still continue to write to us with the possibility to publish. And then we have to keep clarifying that it won't be a zine if we publish it. And that they need to do it themselves in order for it to qualify as a zine. And we got lots of questions regarding how to do that. We even published a zine about zine-making titled 'zine kya hain' so that people know what it means to be a part of the zine ecosystem, what it means to be a zine maker, and how your place is so important in the world despite what you are told. After that, the first zine that I seriously made that was entirely my own, was *Bhujji*, about my grandmother. It came to me all at once and I made it one night. The next day I went to the supermarket and printed it and now I think we've sold over 3000 copies of it.

This is an excerpt from the interview.



DESIGN: AMREETA LETHE

HIGHLIGHT

100 feminist zines to shake, inspire, and sooth you

A zine can be dedicated to any subject or topic and challenges the status-quo (which is no monolith thing but a multitude of statuses, notions, ideas, products, systems, and policies to keep power consolidated with the same group of people).

KATERINA DON

This year, to celebrate Sister Library Dhaka turning four, we acquired a collection of 100 zines curated by the library's founder, Aqai Thami. The collection will be available for reading at the Goethe-Institut library from June onwards. With the acquisition of this collection, we are finally connected to the mothership Sister Library in Bombay.

Zines are traditionally low-cost, do-it-yourself publications that are made, reproduced and distributed by an independent maker. A zine can be dedicated to any subject or topic and challenges the status quo (which is no monolith thing but a multitude of statuses, notions, ideas, products, systems, and policies to keep power consolidated with the same group of people). A zine challenges the notion that change is not possible; that things will always be the way they are; that people's actions, thoughts, and words don't shift the needle.

The tools of the zine maker can be as simple as a piece of paper, a marker and a photocopy machine. The space of the zine-maker is anywhere. Aqai, who

has over a decade of experience in this tradition and comes to it through her parents making pamphlets and posters to protest occupation of indigenous lands in Darjeeling, explained that it's not just about zine-making but the whole process of creation, reproduction, distribution and the creation of a zine ecosystem that needs to be considered. Each of the curated 100 zines is living proof of the power of solidarity and community; from how to protest safely, cook wheatpaste, make kombucha to how to be an anarchist parent. A pocketful of adjectives can be used to describe the zine collection—it is subversive and supportive, it is radical and traditional, it is educational.

This collection challenges us, the curators of the Library. It does not fit into our institutional mode of operations. The zines are not permanent. They are not lendable. They are not archivable. They are not to be digitised. You, our dear readers and members, have to come to the library and read them there and then. And interact, react, make your own. For institutions like ours, this forces us to be more open and flexible, which is at once challenging and exciting

(unimaginable, unplanned things can happen!). Some of the suggested ways of working with zines are having reading sit-ins, connecting to rural presses, acting as a distro (distribution centre), collaborative making.

Currently the collection is in English and we hope that in the next months, through workshops, discussions, and reading sit-ins, zines will be made in the other languages of Bangladesh—they will be shared and will multiply. Zine

makers are often anonymous and self-dependent, taking on the role of writer, visualiser, editor, printer, distributor. "When you hold a book you made in your hands, something shifts," Aqai mentions about the process of making a zine. It is a process of embracing self-reliance, independence, and letting go of the need for perfection.

There are some mighty pamphlets in the collection that are no more than photocopied pages of type. Others are elaborate art-works, screen-printed, and



ILLUSTRATION: MAISHA SYEDA

bound. There is a zine that is smaller than the palm of your hand (*Tips on Zine Making*) and states that "You are never too old to make zines".

A zine is like a good embrace, intimate, timely, consensual. And ephemeral. We absorb the information, let go of the paper, create anew. Zines are an escape from a mainstream media that tells us to be, feel, think a certain way. "You Don't Meet Nice Girls In Copy Shops" reads the headline of the listicle for *girls (and others, but mostly girls) who write zines*. They are like songs that break open the bell jar to hold you and inspire you to hold others.

A note of thanks to the Goethe-Institut Bangladesh for investing in this collection and Star Books and Literature for their partnership in activating the collection.

Come over to the Sister Library Pink Shelf on weekdays at the Goethe-Institut Library at Drik Bhavan!

Katerina Don is the curator of HerStory Foundation and together with Shoma Sharmin and Zaima Hamid Zoa hosts Sister Library Dhaka.

BANGABANDHU KABADDI

Hosts make it three in three

SPORTS REPORTER

Hosts Bangladesh made it three wins in three matches in the Bangabandhu Cup International Kabaddi Tournament following a comfortable 59-19 points victory against Indonesia in their Group A match at the Shaheed Suhrawardi Indoor Stadium in Mirpur yesterday.

Bangladesh, who led the first half 36-2, dominated throughout the game. The Men in Red and Green have two matches left in the group stage against Poland and Nepal on Thursday and Friday respectively.

Raider Mizanur Rahman was named the man of the match for the second game in a row after securing 18 points from raids.

"All of our teammates gave their best today for winning the match because we are determined to keep the trophy at home. It was also the outcome of team effort and we are looking forward to winning the trophy without losing any matches," said Mizanur.



School cricket final brought a different charm to 'home of cricket' in Mirpur yesterday as Kadamtala Purbo Basabo School and College from Dhaka clinched the Prime Bank National School Cricket Championship, defeating Government KG Union High School from Pirojpur by 187 runs. Kadamtala's Sifat Shahriar was the difference-maker coming in at number eight, pulling his side out of trouble from 42 for 6 to 288 with a remarkable 148 off 115 deliveries. While Shahriar had to leave the field due to injury, his teammate Mohammad Hossain notched a hat-trick to bundle Kadamtala out for 99.

PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

Maria Manda to miss Chinese Taipei ties

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh's campaign of two FIFA International friendly matches against Chinese Taipei begins on Friday at the Bashundhara Kings Arena in Dhaka, but the women in red and green will be without creative midfielder Maria Manda, who sustained an injury during a Women's Football League fixture on Tuesday.

The injury of Maria, who has been a consistent member of the team for a long time, has opened an opportunity for U-19 team's midfielder Munki Akhter.

Interim coach Peter James Bulter elevated three more U-19 players -- goalkeeper Yearzan Begum, attackers Mosammat Sagorika, and Sauravi Akanda Prity -- to the senior squad for the first time.

"One person is unfortunate but another person gains. It is a great opportunity for the young players to step in and claim their positions. I say complacency is a disease and you need to resume the competitive environment within your group," Bulter said about the newcomers of the senior side during a press briefing at the BFF House yesterday.

Asked about the expectation in two matches, the experienced English coach said, "I watched a lot of videos of good players, very disciplined and organised. I want a creditable performance -- that is my first objective -- and bring some stability and consistency in the group, and the drive to get the results."

Captain Sabina Khatun said, "We previously played against strong teams like Malaysia, Singapore, Nepal and Asian Games matches against Vietnam and Japan, gaining a lot of experience. We are also expecting tough matches against Chinese Taipei.

"It is time to play against the strong opponents, without thinking much of the outcomes because the girls will be able to deliver a good performance and think of how to improve it."

Nat'l hockey players to train in Europe

SPORTS REPORTER

A bunch of national players will get the opportunity to play in different European hockey leagues as Bangladesh Hockey Federation (BHF) is all set to appoint German coach Peter Gerhard Rach as the technical director of the local game's governing body from June 1.

Gerhard previously worked with Bangladesh national hockey team in 2009-10 before working with Mohammedan Sporting Club in 2012 and Dhaka Mariner Youngs Club in 2016. While presenting Gerhard at a media briefing at the BHF Conference room yesterday, BHF general secretary AKM Mominul Haque Sayeed said, "In terms of where we want to see Bangladesh after four to five years, and in which way we can reach the top places in Asia, Gerhard presented his plan which matched ours."

"Some 40 to 50 players of the national team will be in action in Europe for five months as they will play in different leagues in Germany, Poland, and Netherlands, as well as continue their training for the national team,"

Gerhard said, "There Bangladesh players -- Mahabub, Roman and Sabuj -- played very well in Germany and a lot of clubs are asking for them. They are good ambassadors of Bangladesh hockey."

Tigers rely on veterans' experience in 'difficult times'

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh captain Najmul Hossain Shanto said the mix of youth and experience was important to the team and, in particular, he hoped Mahmudullah Riyad and Shakib Al Hasan's experience would guide them during the difficult stages of the upcoming T20 World Cup.

The buildup to the main event has not exactly gone according to the Tigers' wishes, especially after back-to-back defeats to USA saw them lose the T20I series in Houston. The World Cup warm-up fixture against USA on Tuesday was cancelled due to weather conditions, leaving Bangladesh with only a warm-up game against India to get ready for the event proper.

Shanto had been appointed captain across all three formats in February this year and his only experience of leading the side in a World Cup game had come in the ODI World Cup last year, when he took the reins against Sri Lanka in Shakib Al Hasan's absence.

Shanto's captaincy, too, will be in focus this World Cup and he hoped that Shakib and Mahmudullah will guide the side with their experience.

"Having such experienced cricketers on the team is a big plus point, especially for those playing in their first World Cup," Shanto was quoted in a Bangladesh Cricket Board interview published on Tuesday.

"There's a lot to learn from them. They also have leadership experience, and they will help me during difficult times. Whenever I need something, they come forward. Hopefully, the World Cup will not be an exception," he added.



The Tigers have quite a number of stars who may not be considered veterans but have nonetheless been in the national fold for a long time. Players such as Soumya Sarkar, Liton Das, Mustafizur Rahman and Taskin Ahmed have become senior stars themselves, and Towhid Hridoy and skipper Shanto are not far off, while the likes of opener Tanzid Tamim, keeper-batter Jaker Ali Anik, and spinners Rishad Hossain and Tanvir Islam are yet to play in a global event.

In terms of performances, Shanto wanted the players to contribute. His special wish was for Shakib to share his experience.

"If you are talking of something different altogether [in terms of expecting something from a squad member] I would like Shakib bhai to share his experience with everyone. The experiences he gathered over the last few years is something that can help the younger

players and it is something that he has been doing as well," he said.

Shakib, who has led the side in the last two World Cups and is the only player other than India's Rohit Sharma to have featured in all editions of the T20 World Cups, will have a role to play to guide Bangladesh's newest World Cup captain, who said that big dreams, even if they do not divulge them, have to be there.

"When we go to play in a big tournament, we must go with big dreams.

"Our bonding is very good and we understand each other very well. That's very important and the mix of senior and junior players is very good," Shanto added.

Bangladesh's first World Cup game is a hugely crucial one to their chances of making the Super Eight of the tournament. In facing Sri Lanka, tempers will flare, and nerves will be tested, and the two veterans will have a part to play in helping the youngsters.

Mohammedan finish second in three competitions

SPORTS REPORTER

Mohammedan Sporting Club finished runners-up in the Bangladesh Premier League with a 2-1 win against Abahani as the domestic football season came to an end yesterday.

It was the third second-place finish for the Black and Whites in three competitions this season, with Bashundhara Kings winning all those three -- Independence Cup, Federation Cup and Bangladesh Premier League.

This was also the first time since the 2009-10 season that the Motijheel outfit finished second in the league, having previously done so in the first three editions of the professional league.

Mohammedan, who were held to a 2-2 draw by the Sky blues in their first meeting in the league, conceded the lead when Bruno Rocha opened the scoring in the 13th minute of the game at the Sheikh Fazlul Haque Moni Stadium in Gopalganj.

However, midfielder Arif Hossain scored an equaliser 16 minutes later and the same player scored the winning goal in the 90th minute to take Mohammedan to 35 points from 18 matches.

Abahani, the six-time champions, had to settle for a third place with 32 points. However, the Dhanmondi giants can find solace from their fact that their Grenadian striker Cornelius Stewart finished as the top scorer of the league with 19 goals, followed by Mohammedan captain Soleymane Diabate on 17 and Kings striker Dorielton Gomes on 14. Rakib Hossain of Bashundhara Kings finished as the top-scorer among the locals and fourth overall with nine goals.

Champions Kings, meanwhile, finished with 45 points after coming back from a goal down to beat Sheikh Russel KC 3-1 at the Bashundhara Kings Arena.

Vojislav Balabanovic gave Sheikh Russel a 13th minute lead but Kings, who had rested a couple of key players, equalised two minutes after the break through Miguel Ferreira. Local stars Rakib and Sheikh Morsalin then scored two goals as the champions wrapped up the campaign with their 14th win in 18 matches.



Sheikh Russel, on the other hand, finished sixth with 19 points.

Meanwhile, Bangladesh Police finished fourth with a 2-0 win against already-relegated Brothers Union while Fortis FC secured sixth position with a 3-1 win over Chittagong Abahani, who finished seventh.

The eighth position was taken by three-time champions Sheikh Jamal DC, who were beaten 2-0 by Rahmatganj, who finished ninth.



Spain's Carlos Alcaraz pumps his fists after winning a point against the Jesper De Jong of The Netherlands during their second round match of the French Open on Court Philippe-Chatrier at the Roland Garros on Wednesday. The two-time Grand Slam winner won the match 6-3, 6-4, 2-6, 6-2.

PHOTO: AFP

SHORT CORNER

Bellingham voted LaLiga Player of the Season

Real Madrid midfielder Jude Bellingham has been voted LaLiga's Player of the Season after the 20-year-old played a pivotal role in leading the club to their 36th league title. Bellingham edged out team mate Vinicius Jr, Antoine Griezmann (Atletico Madrid), Artem Dovbyk (Girona) and Robert Lewandowski (Barcelona) in votes cast by fans, club captains and a panel of experts.

Laporta gambles on Flick to restore Barcelona's lustre

Barcelona have appointed former Germany and Bayern Munich manager Hansi Flick as head coach on a two-year contract, the LaLiga club said on Wednesday.


Biman and The GolfHouse join hands to promote golf

National flag carrier Biman Bangladesh Airlines signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with The GolfHouse to support the country's golf and golfers. The partnership includes a commitment to give special discounts and allowing golf bags for golfers and The GolfHouse employees. And top local professional golfers will get complimentary air tickets.

*Read full stories on The Daily Star website



**WITH BSRM FASTBUILD
YOUR HOME WILL BE BUILT ON TIME
WITH THE BEST QUALITY RODS**



**COMPLETE
GUIDANCE APP FOR
HOME BUILDING**



DOWNLOAD NOW

THIRD PHASE UZ ELECTION Polls-day fervour hardly seen

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The third phase of upazila elections also saw a low turnout yesterday.

The usual election-day fervour was hardly found in and around the polling centres. Many of them looked deserted. After voting ended, Chief Election Commissioner Kazi Habibul Awal yesterday said elections to 87 upazilas were conducted in a free and fair manner, with a few instances of untoward incidents.

He said that the turnout would be around 35 percent. He added that 30 people were detained for attempting to cast fake votes and two others were sentenced to jail. Six people also were injured in clashes, a presiding officer died of natural causes, and one assistant presiding officer was arrested for ballot box stuffing, he added.

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 and 38 percent in the second phase on May 21.

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 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".

SEE PAGE 6 COL 1



With no voters around, security personnel sit idle at the Araisidha Kamil Madrasa polling centre in Brahmanbaria's Ashuganj during the upazila polls. A total of 87 upazilas went to polls in the third phase of the elections yesterday.

PHOTO: MASUK HRIDOY



Zia's 43rd death anniversary today

STAR REPORT

Today is the 43rd death anniversary of BNP founder and former president Ziaur Rahman.

The party and its associated bodies have drawn up a 15-day programme to observe the death anniversary.

The programmes began on Tuesday through a discussion meeting at Dhaka Reporters' Unity in the capital, reports UNB.

Ziaur Rahman, who founded the BNP in 1978, was assassinated by a group of army officers at the Chittagong Circuit House on May 30, 1981.

SEE PAGE 6 COL 6

CHANDANAISH UZ POLLS Loan defaulter elected chairman

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A listed loan defaulter who owes Tk 118 crore to two banks was unofficially elected chairman of Chandanaish upazila parishad in Chattogram yesterday.

Jasim Uddin, chairman of Jasika Group, took the loans from Padma Bank and Sonali Bank, and owes the former Tk 93.82 crore.

Campaigning with the motorcycle as an election symbol, he bagged 71.3 percent of the votes cast in the election, with 7,310 people voting for him.

Earlier, Padma Bank (previously the scam-ridden Farmer's Bank) had requested the Chattogram district administration to cancel Jasim's candidature for defaulting on loans.

In a letter to the Chattogram deputy commissioner on Monday, the bank sought the DC's intervention in this regard.

It also notified the Election Commission, which refused to cancel the candidature, said the bank's head of law Abdullah Al Harun.

The letter sent to the DC said, "Jasim Uddin, managing director of Jasika Trade International Ltd, is a willful defaulter of Padma Bank's Khatunganj branch. He took Tk 60 crore from Padma Bank on September 6, 2016.

"Because he failed to make regular payments, the loan became non-performing and was classified in March 2024, and this was reported to the Credit Information Bureau. Along with interest, the bank is owed Tk 93.82 crore."

It further said that since the borrower did not come forward to settle his liabilities, two cases were filed

SEE PAGE 6 COL 1

Wasa raises water prices by 10pc

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka Water Supply and Sewerage Authority (Wasa) has decided to raise the price of water by 10 percent from July 1 to "adjust for inflation".

The price of water has been fixed at Tk 16.70 per 1,000 litres for homes and Tk 46.20 per 1,000 litres for commercial use, Wasa said in a notification yesterday.

The previous prices were Tk 15.18 and Tk 42 respectively.

"Dhaka Wasa's respected customers are hereby being informed that the prices will be adjusted due to inflation," the notification read.

Wasa said the decision will also be effective for unmetered holdings, deep tube wells, under-construction buildings, minimum bills, and all types of water and sewage charges.

Wasa last raised the price of water by 5 percent in July 2022.

MP AZIM MURDER Mastermind, hired gun are relatives

MOHAMMAD JAMIL KHAN and RASHIDUL HASAN

Suspects Aktaruzzaman and Amanullah in the lawmaker Anwarul Azim Anar murder case are relatives.

According to detectives, Aktaruzzaman hired Amanullah alias Shimul Bhuiyan to have the Jhenaidah-4 MP killed.

They said Amanullah was a leader of the Purbo Banglar Communist Party (PBCP) and Mizanur Rahman Tutul was a leader higher up in the party's pecking order.

Tutul, also a cousin of Aktaruzzaman, married Amanullah's sister, they added.

Tutul was killed in a "crossfire" with law enforcers in 2008.

Sources said as they were relatives, Aktaruzzaman and Amanullah knew each other for a long time, and it made Aktaruzzaman hiring Amanullah for Tk 5 crore easier.

Aktaruzzaman's brother Shahiduzzaman, mayor of Kotchandpur Municipality, said Tutul was their cousin.

"Due to the relations, Amanullah had communications with us," he said.

Azim went to Kolkata on May 12 and spent the night at his friend's home. He left the home the next day saying he had a doctor's appointment. On May 22, India and Bangladesh police said the MP was murdered



SEE PAGE 6 COL 1

Take united action over Israel's offensive in Gaza

Erdogan calls on 'Islamic world'; Israeli tanks conduct a second day of probing attacks across Rafah

AGENCIES

Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan yesterday hit out at the United Nations and called on the "Islamic world" to take united action following the latest Israeli strikes on Gaza.

"The UN cannot even protect its own staff. What are you waiting for to act? The spirit of the United Nations is dead in Gaza," Erdogan told lawmakers from his AKP party.

Erdogan's comments came as the UN Security Council met to discuss a deadly Israeli attack on a displacement camp west of Rafah on Tuesday that killed 21 people.

The Turkish leader also hit out at fellow Muslim-majority countries for failing to take common action over the Israeli strike, reports AFP.

Meanwhile, Israel sent tanks on raids into Rafah yesterday and said its war on

Hamas in Gaza would likely continue all year, after Washington said the Rafah assault did not amount to a major ground operation that would trigger a change in US policy.

Israeli tanks advanced to the heart of Rafah for the first time on Tuesday after a night of heavy bombardment, defying

an appeal from the International Court of Justice to end its attack on the city, one of the last places of refuge in Gaza.

The United States, Israel's closest ally, reiterated its opposition to a major Israeli ground offensive in Rafah but said on Tuesday it did not believe such an operation was under way.

Unlike tactics used in Israel's ground offensive in the rest of the enclave, Rafah residents said Israeli tanks mounted raids into Tel Al-Sultan in western Rafah and Yibna and near Shaboura in the centre before retreating to positions near the border

SEE PAGE 6 COL 6

- Rafah offensive not a major ground incursion: US
- Hamas confronts Israeli forces with anti-tank rockets
- Death toll in Gaza rises to 36,171

Former UP chairman shot dead in Narsingdi

OUR CORRESPONDENT,
Narsingdi

Criminals shot dead an Awami League leader and former union parishad chairman in Narsingdi early yesterday.

Two of his associates were also injured in the incident that occurred around 12:15am in Meherpara union, said police.

Mahbubul Hasan, 52, former chairman of the union and general secretary of the union AL, was returning home from the party office, said Md Kamruzzaman, officer-in-charge of Madhabdi Police Station.

When Mahbubul and his associates reached Shahi Eidgah, a group of assailants opened fire and stabbed Mahbubul, said the OC, quoting locals.

SEE PAGE 6 COL 6



Palestinian women mourn relatives killed in Israeli bombardment as they sit by their displacement tent in Rafah in the southern Gaza Strip yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

Japanese researchers build world's first wooden satellite

AFP, Tokyo

The world's first wooden satellite has been built by Japanese researchers who said their tiny cuboid craft will be blasted off on a SpaceX rocket in September.

Each side of the experimental satellite developed by scientists at Kyoto University and logging company Sumitomo Forestry measures just 10 centimetres (four inches).

The creators expect the wooden material will burn up completely when the device re-enters the atmosphere — potentially providing a way to avoid the generation of metal particles when a retired satellite returns to Earth.

These metal particles could have a negative impact on the environment and telecommunications, the developers said as they announced the satellite's completion on Tuesday. "Satellites that are not made of metal should become mainstream," Takao Doi, an astronaut and special professor at Kyoto University, told a press conference.

