



## Dhaka, Delhi eye shared prosperity

### Connectivity, defence figure high in Hasina-Modi talks; focus shifts to Teesta project from water sharing

#### STAR REPORT

Away from Teesta water sharing, over which Bangladesh and India have been in a deadlock for years, the latter now focuses on water conservation and management of the river inside Bangladesh.

The development came as Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and her Indian counterpart Narendra Modi held one-on-one and delegation level meetings at the Hyderabad House in New Delhi yesterday.

Briefing reporters after the meetings, Modi said India would send a technical team to Bangladesh to review the protection and management of the Teesta.

Indian Foreign Secretary Vinay Kwatra then said a technical team has been formed to look into how Bangladesh can conserve Teesta water with Indian assistance.

Conservation of the Teesta requires technical management, Kwatra said, adding: "It is less about the water sharing part, but more about management of water flow within the Teesta river."

It is the understanding between the two leaders that a technical team would undertake efforts to make progress on this, he said.

Dhaka and Delhi almost signed a deal on sharing the Teesta water in 2011, but it did not happen due to West Bengal

RELATED STORY ON PAGE 3 SEE PAGE 2 COL 3

## Spectrum of ties widens

SHAHAB ENAM KHAN

The resounding applause in Delhi during Sheikh Hasina's visit to India was a testament to the vision and goals the two nations share.

In a world of increasing geopolitical uncertainty and power tilts, this visit and the bilateral talks underscored the necessity of pragmatic cooperation in the evolving fields of trade, technologies, infrastructure, and connectivity.

Strategically speaking, Delhi has understandably focused on sub-regionalism



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Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina is greeted by her Indian counterpart Narendra Modi as she arrives at Hyderabad House in New Delhi yesterday.

PHOTO: PID

## 75TH ANNIVERSARY It's high time AL went into introspection

PARTHA PRATIM BHATTACHARJEE

The Awami League, one of the oldest and largest political parties in the country, is set to celebrate its 75th founding anniversary today.

It had been at the forefront of almost all democratic movements before and after the birth of Bangladesh. It also led the nation to independence.

On June 23, 1949, East Pakistan Awami Muslim League was founded by the likes of Maulana Abdul Hamid Khan Bhashani, Huseyn Shaheed Suhrawardy, Shamsul Haque and Aatur Rahman Khan. To make it more pluralistic and non-communal, the word "Muslim" was dropped from its name in 1955, and it was renamed Awami League.

The party played key roles in the Language Movement in 1952, Jukta Front election in 1954, anti-Ayub movement, Education Movement in 1962, Six-Point Movement in 1966, and the students' II-point movement



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## Bridge collapse kills nine of a wedding party

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Patuakhali

The journey to a wedding party ended in tragedy yesterday after the microbus carrying the bridal party plunged into a canal after an iron-made bridge collapsed, killing at least nine.

Three others were still missing at the time of going to print, according to the victims' family members.

The deceased are: Farida Begum, 55, her daughter-in-law Raiti, 30; Raiti's mother Rumi Begum, 40; their relative Munni Begum, 40; Munni's two daughters Tasfia, 11, and Tahiya, 7; their relatives Fatema Begum, 40; Zakia

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### ANNOUNCEMENTS

- India will start e-medical visa facility for Bangladeshis
- New assistant high commission of India to be set up in Rangpur
- Train service between Rajshahi and Kolkata
- Bus service between Chattogram and Kolkata
- Commencement of goods train services between Gede-Darshana and Haldibari-Chilahati upto Dalgaon
- Construction of an inland container depot in Sirajganj with grant
- Export of 40MW of power from Nepal to Bangladesh via Indian grid
- Joint technical committee for discussions on renewal of the Ganga water treaty
- Visit of a technical delegation for a project on conservation, management of Teesta

### NEW MoUs SIGNED

- Shared vision for India-Bangladesh digital partnership
- Shared vision for India-Bangladesh green partnership
- Military education on strategy and operations
- Cooperation in shared satellites
- Better railway connectivity between two countries
- Support in research in oceanography
- Cooperation in maritime and blue economy

### MoUs RENEWED

- Cooperation in healthcare and medicine
- Cooperation in disaster management, mitigation, and resilience building
- Cooperation in improving fisheries

## How Lucky got so lucky!

### Wealth, source of income of NBR official Matiur's wife don't add up

JAHIDUL ISLAM JOY and ZYMA ISLAM

Laila Kaniz Lucky is the upazila parishad chairman of Narsingdi's Raipura and a retired teacher of a government college.

It has now emerged that the former Bangla literature teacher has, in her name, a huge amount of properties, which do not match

Daily Star suggest that the highly-connected NBR official and his close and distant family members have great wealth, including significant stakes in various companies.

Matiur did not respond to this newspaper's calls, but denied any wrongdoing while talking to other media outlets.

Lucky's tax files submitted to the Election Commission before this

The much-talked-about, high-walled compound and two-storey bleached white mansion sits beside neighbours who live in small one-storey homes or huts made of corrugated tin sheets.

The Laila Kaniz Lucky Road, named after her, leads to her mansion.

Shamim Iqbal Munna, of Raipura's upazila engineering office,



### A GLIMPSE INTO LUCKY'S WEALTH

- Net wealth: Tk 10.31 cr
- Cash in hand/bank: Tk 3.56 cr
- Loan: Tk 2 cr
- Non-farmland: 7 acres worth Tk 5.16 cr
- Farmland: 1.5 acres (value not shown)
- Two luxury homes in Dhaka Narsingdi, multiple flats

with her known source of income, indicating someone may have used her wallet as a safe place to stash wealth.

Lucky is the wife of Dr Matiur Rahman, a member of the National Board of Revenue, who came under the spotlight after his son posted on social media a photo of a sacrificial goat that he claimed to have bought for Tk 12 lakh.

Matiur is now president of the NBR's Customs, Excise and VAT Appellate Tribunal, a grade-1 job, with a basic monthly salary of Tk 78,000.

Media reports, NBR sources and a number of documents seen by The

year's Narsingdi upazila pollsclaim she is worth Tk 10.31 crore, but a closer look indicates she may have understated her wealth by dozens of times.

According to her wealth statement, she owns more than eight acres of mostly non-agricultural land and five flats in Dhaka, but the combined value of all this was shown at only Tk 5.19 crore.

This innocuous-looking list does not even mention her palace-like home in Raipura upazila's Marjal village — an omission that raises eyebrows due to the opulence of the residence.

said that the 123-metre road was built in 2014 at a cost of Tk 14 lakh.

Multiple teachers at the nearby Md Bashir High School, all requesting anonymity, said the land acquisition for that road was done using the school fund, and not with Lucky's money. They said she used her influence to have the road named after her.

Lucky retired as an associate professor of Bangla at Government Titumir College in the capital four years ago, and according to her tax filings, she gets a pension of only Tk 4.65 lakh per year.

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জয় বাংলা জয় বঙ্গবন্ধু

বাংলাদেশ আওয়ামী লীগের ৭৫ তম প্রতিষ্ঠাবার্ষিকী

মহান মুক্তিযুদ্ধের নেতৃত্বদানকারী বাংলাদেশ আওয়ামী লীগের ঐতিহাসিক পথ পরিক্রমায় জাতির পিতা বঙ্গবন্ধু শেখ মুজিবুর রহমানের আদর্শের উত্তরসূরী মাননীয় প্রধানমন্ত্রী ও বাংলাদেশ আওয়ামী লীগের সভাপতি জননেত্রী শেখ হাসিনার অকুতোভয় ও সুযোগ্য নেতৃত্বে রপকল্প-২০৪৯ বাস্তবায়নের অগ্রপথিক হিসেবে গৌরবোজ্জ্বল ভূমিকার স্বাক্ষর

২৩শে জুন

বাংলাদেশ আওয়ামী লীগের ৭৫ তম প্রতিষ্ঠাবার্ষিকীতে জানাই শুভেচ্ছা ও অভিনন্দন

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# DON'T PANIC refrain from killing Russell's Viper

Environment, health ministries urge people

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Amid growing concerns over the recent sightings of Russell's Viper (Chandrabora) in various parts of the country, the environment and health ministries have urged people to remain calm and refrain from killing snakes.

The environment ministry have also issued a set of guidelines in this regard. **STAY CALM AND INFORMED** Health Minister Dr Samanta Lal Sen yesterday urged all not to panic over the presence of Russell's Viper snakes. At a virtual meeting with health officials, he said timely intervention can fully and quickly cure snakebite victims. He also instructed public hospitals to maintain an adequate stock of anti-venom.

"The most important task is to take snakebite victims to a doctor at the quickest possible time... timely medical intervention can fully cure snakebite victims through proper treatment, said the minister.

**ECOLOGICAL IMPORTANCE**  
The environment ministry advised the public to avoid destroying the habitats of Russell's Viper. According to the ministry, natural predators like mongoose, monitor lizard, forest cat, eagle and crane help control the viper population. The killing of these predators has contributed to an increase in viper numbers.

Russell's Viper is protected under the Wildlife (Conservation and Security) Act, 2012, as it plays a crucial role in controlling rodent population and its venom is used to produce life-saving medicines. Killing these snakes is a punishable offense.

**HABITAT AND BEHAVIOUR**  
Russell's Viper typically inhabits lowland grasslands, thickets, open forests, and agricultural areas, generally avoiding human settlements.

Their earth-coloured bodies make them difficult to spot, increasing the risk of accidental encounters.

These snakes are good swimmers and can spread to different regions through river currents and floods. The public is advised to be cautious, especially in flood-prone areas.

**MISINFORMATION AND MISIDENTIFICATION**

In several districts, fear of Russell's Viper has led to the mistaken killing of other snakes. In Chattogram, locals killed a five-foot-long Burmese python, mistaking it for a viper.

Mahmud Hossain, an officer at Chunati Wildlife Sanctuary, attributed the incident to misinformation on social media.



### SAFETY GUIDELINES TO PREVENT SNAKEBITES

- ➔ Avoid tall grass and bushes
- ➔ Wear protective clothing
- ➔ Carry torch, flashlight at night
- ➔ Maintain clean surroundings
- ➔ Handle fallen debris with care
- ➔ Do not confront snakes
- ➔ If needed, call National Helpline at 333

### STEPS TO TAKE AFTER SNAKEBITE

- ➔ Minimise movement
- ➔ Clean the wound
- ➔ Remove restrictive items
- ➔ Avoid harmful interventions
- ➔ Seek immediate medical help
- ➔ Stay calm, do not panic
- ➔ Antivenom is available at govt hospitals

"There is a lot of misinformation circulating on social media on Russell's Viper, which led people killing the python. Even though no such snakes [viper] are in the area, people are panicked and getting misled by Facebook posts," he added.

Shahriar Caesar Rahman, CEO of Creative Conservation Alliance, emphasised the need for proper research to confirm any increase in viper numbers. "Killing a snake is not a solution, we need to focus more on medical treatment," he added.



The Eid vacation is over. Holidaymakers have started returning to the capital after celebrating Eid-ul-Azha with their families at their hometowns. The photo was taken at Kamalapur train station yesterday. PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN

# Climate budget still not enough

Speakers tell event; propose 5pc pollution tax

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The allocation for the environment ministry has decreased by 2.35 percent in the upcoming budget compared to last year, if inflation is accounted for, said experts at a programme yesterday.

Despite needing 5 percent of GDP for climate issues, only 0.706 percent has been allocated for climate action, down from last year, they added.

"Climate-related funding is declining despite an increase in heatwaves, floods, and cyclones," said M Zakir Hossain Khan, founder and chief executive of Change Initiative.

He pointed out that although the proposed budget for the environment ministry is Tk 52 crore higher than the 2023-2024 fiscal year, the allocation has effectively decreased due to inflation.

At a press conference organised by CHANGE Initiative in the capital yesterday, Zakir presented findings of a research.

He said while Bangladesh aims to achieve 4,114.2 megawatts of renewable

**In the 2023-2024 fiscal year, the operating budget of the environment ministry was 8.61 percent of the total budget. This has decreased to 6.78 percent in the upcoming proposed budget.**

energy by 2030, the proposed 2024-2025 budget allocates only Tk 100 crore, or 3.2 percent, for this goal.

Bangladesh faces a climate financing gap of \$23.4 billion per year, which rises to around \$40 billion per year when considering the economic impact of lost working days due to disasters.

"International funding is significantly insufficient to cover this shortfall," he added.

In the 2023-2024 fiscal year, the

# FLASH FLOOD IN RANGPUR Teesta water recedes but still flowing above danger level

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

While the water level of the Teesta river has receded significantly in the last 24 hours, it is still flowing above the danger level in Rangpur's Kaunia upazila.

As of yesterday, the river was flowing 20 centimetres above the danger level at Kaunia point. It was flowing 52cm above the danger level on Friday, according to the Water Development Board (WDB) in Rangpur.

The water level at the upazila's Dalia point has decreased significantly due to no rain, but it is very close to the danger mark.

Following torrential rains upstream, about



Abul Hossain displays his specialised fishing nets, known locally as "Khepla Jaal," at a haat in Khulna. With 54 years in the trade, his handcrafted nets sell for Tk 1,200-2,000 each, depending on size and quality. The photo was taken in Dumuria upazila yesterday. PHOTO: HABIBUR RAHMAN

# DHAKA, DELHI RAIL TRANSIT Trial run to begin next month

Says Indian Foreign Secretary Vinay Kwatra

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

An Indian goods train will begin its trial run through Bangladesh next month, as the two neighbouring countries have agreed to utilise each other's rail lines under rail transit facilities.

The train will travel from Gede [West Bengal] - Darshana [Bangladesh] to Chilahati [Bangladesh] - Haldibari [West Bengal] cross border interchange point, said Indian Foreign Secretary Vinay Kwatra.

Besides, a new train service would be launched between Rajshahi and Kolkata and a bus service between Chattogram and Kolkata, he said.

He was briefing media after the two countries signed and renewed 10 MoUs during Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's two-day visit to India.

One of these MoUs was signed between Bangladesh and the Indian railways ministry for railway connectivity.

Currently, Indian trains, under the transshipment facility, carry goods and passengers up to the India-Bangladesh border. From there, Bangladesh Railway's locomotives pull the coaches into Bangladesh and drop off passengers or



**Besides, a new train service would be launched between Rajshahi and Kolkata and a bus service between Chattogram and Kolkata, he said.**

unload goods before taking the coaches back to the border.

Once India is allowed rail transit through Bangladesh under the new MoU, its trains will be operated from one part of India to another via Bangladesh.

"We believe that connectivity can transform geographical proximity into new economic opportunities, not just between India and Bangladesh but also for

SEE PAGE 4 COL 7

**Vested quarter trying to create 1/11 situation**  
**Says Quader**

BSS, Dhaka

Urging all to remain alert Awami League Secretary Obaidul Quader yesterday said a vested quarter wants to create an environment like the one-eleven.

He also said AL does politics for the country's people. "The message of the 75th founding anniversary of Awami League is to implement its election manifesto. Politics is for people and Awami League will always remain beside the people," he said.

Quader said this after visiting the venue of the party's public rally to be held today at Suhrawardy Udyan.

He said all leaders and activists of AL from central to root level are ready to celebrate the party's founding anniversary..



**Illegally parked auto-rickshaws, locally known as Leguna, crowd near the busy Farmgate intersection, contributing further to traffic congestion. This haphazard parking creates significant disruptions for commuters, highlighting the need for stricter enforcement of parking regulations.**

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

**Mobile network should be disconnected at night**

**AL MP tells JS citing health issues**

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government should disable mobile networks in rural areas between 10:00pm and 6:00am, said ruling Awami League MP and ENT specialist Pran Gopal Datta yesterday.

The excessive use of mobile phones could lead to disabilities in the younger generation, he told parliament.

He said the government should find ways so that mobile networks are limited to purposes such as freelancing or earning foreign currency during nighttime.

He said most of his patients, including children as young as ten, experience hearing issues due to excessive use of mobile phones.

"People are complaining that they can't listen and can't focus on studying. Something should be done to keep our young generation away from this technology during late hours," he added.

He also criticised the commercialisation of the health sector.

**PRAYER TIMING**  
**JUNE 23**

Fazr	Zohr	Asr	Maghrib	Esha
AZAN 4:05	12:45	5:00	6:52	8:17
JAMAAT 4:40	1:15	5:15	6:55	8:45

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

**REMAI AFTERMATH**  
**People suffer as ferry service suspended since May 27**

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Bagerhat

Ferry service between Rayenda of Bagerhat's Sharankhola upazila and Machhua of Pirojpur's Mathbaria upazila has remained suspended since May 27 due to damages caused to Rayenda ferry terminal by Cyclone Remal.

This ferry route is the only means of communication between Rayenda and Machhua.

The ferry route, which started operations on November 10, 2021, used to serve 20,000-25,000 people and over a thousand vehicles daily.

On-site observations revealed that the cyclone caused significant damages to the pontoon, connecting road, and steel railings of the terminal. The adjacent roads were washed away into the river, while local shops were also damaged.

Although an alternative trawler terminal is operational, the boats are charging a higher fare than usual, alleged locals.

Besides, trawlers cannot



transport vans, pick-ups, and trucks, thereby affecting local businesses adversely.

"Since the ferry service is suspended, we cannot travel even for urgent needs. Using trawlers costs Tk 60-100, and they depart as per their convenience," said Mizan Sheikh, a resident of Rayenda.

Jamal Uddin, a local from Machhua, said, "During Eid, many couldn't visit their relatives. No one from Rayenda could come here."

Fayzul Islam, a regular commuter on the route, echoed him.

Halim, a shopkeeper near

Rayenda terminal, said, "After the ferry service started, I managed to sustain my family with my shop. After the terminal was damaged in the cyclone, the ferry operations remained suspended from May 27. This has adversely affected small businesses like mine, making it hard to make ends meet."

Jalil Sheikh, a cattle trader in Rayenda, said, "We used the ferry to take our cattle to Mathbaria for sale ahead of Eid-ul-Azha. This time, we couldn't transport cattle before Eid."

Md Farid Uddin, executive engineer of Roads and Highways Department in Bagerhat, said, "We have sent a proposal for allocation to the higher authorities for necessary repairs to resume the ferry services."

**30 hurt in AL factional clash in Rajshahi**

UNB, Rajshahi

At least 30 people were injured in a clash between two groups of the Awami League in Bagha upazila of Rajshahi yesterday.

Several hand bombs were detonated during the clash. Police fired 50 rounds of tear gas shells to bring the situation under control.

Among the injured are Bagha municipality mayor Akkas Ali, Bagha upazila AL general secretary Ashraf ul Islam Bablu, Ardan union chairman Rafiqul Islam, and former vice chairman Shafiur Rahman Shafi.

Eyewitnesses said the clash started during a human chain organised by local AL leaders protesting alleged irregularities and nepotism involving Mayor Akkas Ali.

On the other hand, another group of AL brought out a protest procession against extra money collected in the name of Dalil Lekhak Samity of sub-register office.

The two sides clashed when the procession crossed the human chain.

**Man, child die as bus hits bike**  
**5 more killed in 4 districts**

STAR REPORT

A man and his son were killed and his wife was injured as an oncoming bus hit their motorbike on Bagerhat-Khulna highway at Piljanga in Fakirhat of Bagerhat yesterday morning.

Khalilur Rahman Rari, 35, from Garia in Patuakhali; and his one-year-old son died on the spot. The injured, Minu Begum, 30, was taken to Fakirhat Upazila Health Complex for treatment.

Fakirhat Fire Service Station Leader Monirul Islam said the accident happened while Khalilur along with his wife and son was travelling to his in-laws' house in Jashore.

In Munshiganj, two people were killed and three injured when a Nababganj-bound passenger bus and a Dhaka-bound CNG-run auto-rickshaw collided head-on in Sirajdikhan upazila yesterday.

The accident took place on Dhaka-Nababganj road in Kharsur Taltola area, said police.

Sheikh Abdur Rahman, 58, and Shahin Hossain, 26, died on the spot, said Shekhnagar police investigation centre in-charge Jashim Uddin.

He said the CNG-run auto-rickshaw was carrying six people including the two.

Besides, Md Rasul, 40, died as he lost control over his bike on Dhaka-Khulna highway in Rajbari and got hit by an unidentified vehicle yesterday.

In Mymensingh, Raju Ahmed, a construction worker, was killed when a bus hit him on Dhaka-Mymensingh highway yesterday morning.

In Faridpur, a teenager was killed as his motorcycle, a rickshaw-van and another vehicle collided on Dhaka-Bhanga expressway on Friday night. The deceased is Rana Matubbar, 18.



**The mangled motorbike after a bus hit it on Bagerhat-Khulna highway yesterday morning, killing a father and son.**

PHOTO: STAR

**Trial run to begin**

FROM PAGE 3

the entire region," said the Indian foreign secretary.

Replying to a question about railway-related MoU, he said there are six cross-border railway links between India and Bangladesh.

"Another crucial aspect of this railway connectivity is the transit... between different parts of India through the territory of Bangladesh," Vinay said.

And the trial run of the goods train is a part of the issue, he said.

The related point is that Bangladesh would get sub-regional transit to Bhutan and Nepal, part of which already exists but would be further expanded and strengthened, he said.

India has been pursuing

rail transit for the last few years and Indian Railways in 2022 submitted a proposal to the BR for carrying out trial runs of a freight train from West Bengal's Gede to Haldibari via Bangladesh.

BR's Director General Sardar Shahadat Ali told The Daily Star yesterday that a committee will be formed to finalise the modalities, routes, charges and other issues related to the railway transit.

Asked about the Rajshahi-Kolkata train service, he said as BR has shortage of carriages, they have to seek rakes from the Indian Railway to start the service. Besides, some preparatory work is needed before launching the services, he added.

**Teesta water recedes but still**

FROM PAGE 3  
10 villages in the low-lying areas of the upazila went underwater, leaving about 20,000 people stranded for the last two days.

Residents of the flood hit Balapara and Dhepamadhupur unions were compelled to leave

their homes and shift to higher lands with their cattle. However, they are now struggling to access freshwater for drinking.

Meanwhile, rescue and aid remain a far cry for these flood victims, said Aminul Islam, the chairman of the aforementioned unions.

Additionally, 11 shoals on the river have been gravely affected by the flood as houses and arable land remain submerged.

As per Upazila Nirbahi Officer Mahidul Haque, the district commissioner's office allocated about 200 packets of dry food. "We are ready to combat this crisis," he said.

However, the WDB officials said the Teesta, Dudhkumar, and Dharla rivers may swell in the next 24-72 hours as heavy rain is likely in the northern areas of Bangladesh and West Bengal.

A warning was issued in this regard on Friday as the flood situation is expected to worsen in Rangpur, they said.

**Climate budget**

FROM PAGE 3  
operating budget of the environment ministry was 8.61 percent of the total budget. This has decreased to 6.78 percent in the upcoming proposed budget. Similarly, the allocation for climate issues has dropped from 8.61 percent to 6.78 percent during the same period.

Zakir suggested imposing a 5 percent pollution tax on plastic, brick kilns, buildings, polluting industries, and deforestation. This could generate additional revenue of Tk 2,900 crore, he estimated.

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2	999516	Procurement of Diet goods (Cabbage, Radish, Bean etc) for the fiscal year 2024-2025	07-July-2024 14:00	08-July-2024 14:00
3	999520	Procurement of Diet Goods (Dairy Products, Tomato Sauce & Apple etc) for the fiscal year 2024-25	07-July-2024 14:00	08-July-2024 14:00
4	999521	Procurement of Diet goods (Rice - Cini gura, Sugar, Cumin Seeds etc) for the fiscal year 2024-25	07-July-2024 14:00	08-July-2024 14:00
5	999522	Procurement of Washing Dirty linen Items & Ironing for the Fiscal Year 2024-2025	07-July-2024 14:00	08-July-2024 14:00
6	999514	Procurement of Diet goods ( Rice, Onion, Garlic etc ) for the fiscal year 2024-2025	14-July-2024 14:00	15-July-2024 14:00
7	999519	Procurement of Diet Goods (Dressed Fish etc) for the fiscal year 2024-25	14-July-2024 14:00	15-July-2024 14:00
8	999517	Procurement of Diet goods ( Milk, Bread, Egg, Banana etc ) for the fiscal year 2024-2025	21-July-2024 14:00	22-July-2024 14:00
9	999518	Procurement of Diet Goods (Dressed Mutton & Chicken Meat etc) for the fiscal year 2024-2025	21-July-2024 14:00	22-July-2024 14:00

Further Information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System Portal and from e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd).

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## ‘Baaji’ delivers high-stakes drama in cricket’s shadow

SAEED KHAN SHAGOR

In *Baaji*, director Arifur Rahman crafts a narrative that unfolds against the backdrop of intense drama and societal complexities, using the mysterious death of rising cricket star Apu, in Captain Abir’s (Tahsan Khan) local team, as its pivot point.

In one scene, Inspector Topu (Manoj Pramanik) and his subordinate drink in a bar. Topu’s life is murky, struggling to reconcile with the inevitable compromises of personal and family life. The solo of *Teka O Pakhi* plays in the background.

In its lyrics, the song reflects the elusive nature of money and the high cost of chasing it; *Baaji* seems to serve as a solemn reminder of this familiar truth.

Released on the OTT platform Chorki during Eid-ul-Azha, the star-studded web-series has become one of the festive highlights starring the former celebrity couple Tahsan Khan and Rafiath Rashid Mithila. It also features Mim Mantasha, Nazia Haque Orsha, Shahadat Hossain, Partho Sheikh, Tasnuva Tisha, Abrar Athar, Azharul Hoque Adil, and Manoj Pramanik.

Penned jointly by Aditya Sengupta and Hasanat, the plot unfolds with the mysterious death of rising cricket star Apu, who dies under suspicious circumstances after delivering a stellar performance as Man of the Match.

In investigating his brother’s death, Topu begins to unravel a series of puzzles, including rumours linking the country’s biggest cricket star Abir to the incident. Topu’s informal entry into an exclusive cricket practice session, despite being a nobody in the team, serves as a pivotal yet illogical subplot, driving the story. The episodes are aptly titled with cricket-based jargon like Powerplay, Decision Pending, Strategic Timeout, etc.

Scriptwriter Hasanat endeavours to infuse the screenplay with subplots and dialogues that touch on family life, internal police biases, power dynamics, and the influence of “editor’s choice” in journalism.

Though the narrative revolves around betting and its consequences, actual cricket scenes

are minimal. Accordingly, despite its unique framing, the story ultimately culminates in a conventional murder mystery.

However the depiction of betting as a mass-market phenomenon is lacking, instead presenting it as an elite culture. This portrayal, amid the widespread promotion of betting sites, raises questions about the director’s target audience. The subplot of Tahsan and Mithila’s relationship and their professional reunion with the dialogue — “we are professionals” — serves as a brilliant metaphor.

The recurring tropes in our local series productions, like, infertility in Topu and Renu’s marriage and police characters depicted as losers, need reevaluation. However, the script notably gives every character equal space.

The character of Mrs 45, played

fight scenes, nevertheless, lack conviction. His batting scenes are poorly executed with an unconvincing grips and positioning.

Rafiath Rashid Mithila plays a young journalist, Jinia who occasionally loses direction. She is provided hurried efforts to maintain continuity within the storyline. Mithila’s performance is commendable, though her screen time is limited compared to others, despite being a major draw in the trailer and marketing strategy.

Cinematographer Suman Sarker, known for his previously notable Bangladeshi projects, adds his personal touch with beautifully framed indoor shots. However, the series struggles to capture the kinetic energy of cricket matches, using a style ill-suited to broadcast sports.



**Scriptwriter Hasanat endeavours to infuse the screenplay with subplots and dialogues that touch on family life, internal police biases, power dynamics, and the influence of “editor’s choice” in journalism.**

PHOTOS: COURTESY



exceptionally by Nazia Haque Orsha, can single-handedly drive the show. She stands out with her portrayal of a mother, the wife of a disabled man, a family’s cornerstone, and a simultaneous ruthless contract killer.

Marking his OTT debut with *Baaji*, Tahsan Khan comfortably handles his role as Abir, whether creating tension through his performance or navigating the strains of his character. However, his portrayal on the field lacks finesse, as his grip on the bat, positioning, execution, and body movements are not convincing.

Although the story’s predictable outcome somewhat diminishes Topu’s struggles, Manoj Pramanik excels as a brother and performs credibly as an ordinary police officer. His

The editing, including basic tasks like on-screen scoreline updates, is botched. For instance, MH Munna’s over is inaccurately marked, and the score remains unchanged in subsequent overs. In another scene, Officer Mokarram Hossain exits at 11:40, but the clock shows 11:30 in the next shot.

Colourist Chinmoy Roy’s work is exquisite, particularly in scenes like Topu’s mother wearing an abaya indoors. The impact of costumes on colour balance is evident, showcasing how they can greatly influence character portrayal in fiction.

Setting aside technical faults, *Baaji* narrates the story of a societal class crucial to our structure. Their proximity to power may limit audience relatability, yet depicting them in fiction helps viewers understand their real position, marking *Baaji*’s indirect success.

## ‘Toofan’ to hit Indian theatres this Friday



Raihan Rafi’s film *Toofan*, starring Shakib Khan, will make its international debut on June 28 after premiering on Eid Day (June 17) in 129 theatres across Bangladesh. The film has been consistently drawing growing crowds.

After its regional success and with local theaters extending shows due to its immense audience draw, *Toofan* is set to captivate audiences in West Bengal, India.

Last Friday, Raihan

Rafi confirmed that *Toofan* will hit West Bengal theatres on June 28.

The decision to release the film in India comes amid overwhelming demand from audiences. Additionally, the film’s co-producer and distributor, India’s SVF, has played a significant role in this international release.

## Italian Film Festival honours ‘Mayna’

The Bangladeshi film *Mayna* (“I Want to Be a Mother”), produced by Alimullah Khokon and directed by Monjurul Islam Megh, has recently been awarded at the Gulf of Naples Independent Film Festival in Italy.



The 10th edition of the festival ran from June 11 to 14 on Naples’ beaches. In the competition, *Mayna*, produced by Jaz Multimedia, was the sole Asian film selected.

*Mayna* was honoured with a “Special Mention Feature Film Award” by the judging panel from a global pool of submissions including films from countries like the USA, Mexico, Spain, and others.

## NEWS

### Khaleda in Evercare CCU

FROM PAGE 12

He asked for prayers from the public, saying, “I urge everyone to pray for madam’s early recovery. May Allah grant her good health.”

Khaleda’s physician Professor AZM Zahid Hossain said Fakhru visited the hospital and discussed with the medical board members the BNP chairperson’s health condition and treatment.

“Madam is under intensive observation in the CCU. The treatment is ongoing,” he said.

Khaleda Zia was rushed to Evercare Hospital in an ambulance around 3:30am as she suddenly fell ill at her residence, “Firoza” in Gulshan.

She was quickly admitted to the CCU, where medical treatment began under the supervision of the medical board.

The medical board members, led by specialist physician Professor Shahabuddin Talukdar, had several meetings to discuss the former prime minister’s current condition and her treatment.

Khaleda went to Evercare Hospital on May 1 for a health check-up. During that visit, doctors treated her at the CCU for two days.

The former prime minister, aged 79, has long battled various ailments, including liver cirrhosis, arthritis, diabetes, and issues related to the kidney, lung, heart, and eyes.

Since her conditional release from prison in 2020, the BNP chief has been receiving medical care repeatedly at the hospital under the supervision of a medical board headed by cardiologist Prof Shahabuddin Talukdar.

Khaleda’s doctors have been advising sending her abroad since she was diagnosed with liver cirrhosis in November 2021.

On October 26, last year, three US specialist doctors completed a hepatic procedure known as the transjugular intrahepatic portosystemic shunt (TIPS procedure) to stop water accumulation in Khaleda’s stomach and chest, and bleeding in her liver.

### Spectrum of ties widens

FROM PAGE 1

in terms of trade and energy interdependency, which delivers a win-win scenario for both nations. Meanwhile, Dhaka’s economy dictates it sees its future linked with Central and Southeast Asia’s markets, in which the geography and bureaucracy of India will continue to play a role.

It was encouraging that the re-elected Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi extended his government’s hands to build digital and green partnerships for a sustainable future; Bangladesh’s prime minister held forth the necessity of cooperation to make shared waters sustainable.

Noteworthy, Modi reminded his friends of Bangladesh’s contribution to India’s connectivity needs, which have direct effects on the Indian economy by connecting its hinterland with the cardinal economic hubs. Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, as generous as she has been, warmly recognised India’s contribution to the Bangladesh Liberation War of 1971 and, of course, the economic growth that both nations enjoy.

Regionalism was further highlighted during this visit. SAARC and BIMSTEC will continue to be priority institutions in Bangladesh’s approach to the regional commonwealth.

SAARC originates in Dhaka, and BIMSTEC’s headquarters is also in the Bangladeshi capital. At least, the bilateral talks aim to meaningfully revive BIMSTEC, with Modi’s renewed attention to it being a great move.

Not surprisingly, the talks featured defence cooperation — a crucial

aspect in the context of South Asian geopolitics, in the form of defence production to modernise the armed forces.

Bangladesh seeks to diversify and modernise its military capabilities to withstand conventional threats emanating from Myanmar and unconventional threats sweeping in from unmanned sources.

The idea of the practical feasibility of defence cooperation will be put to the test in the coming years as the India-Myanmar-China triad will remain a key boiling point for Dhaka’s defence interests.

Moreover, as always, counterterrorism, combating fundamentalism, and peaceful border management were raised during the talks.

But the people in Dhaka and beyond won’t hesitate to ask for the specificity of these issues when the global community notes Dhaka’s extraordinary capabilities in countering terrorism or extremism.

My best review of this summit-level visit lies in my Machiavellian understanding that foreign relations are not based on charity and that nations will always maximise their national interests.

Teesta basin, for example, is home to around 30 million people, two percent of whom are in Sikkim, 27 in West Bengal, and 71 in northwest Bangladesh. The northwest population is a crucial part of Bangladesh’s LDC graduation in 2026.

The question that would loom large is how fast we can solve the issue through our bilateral ties. The Farakka and the other 50 rivers are still dwindling in the public memory. Geostrategically speaking, for

Bangladesh, India is the future of South Asian stability, depending on its success in managing its neighborhood-first policy and the northeast or religious plurality. Meanwhile, for India, Bangladesh is the future of its regional leadership as Bangladesh continues to significantly contribute to the Indian economy and security.

The visit, hence, deserves to be seen as a stocktaking of the past and future based on mutual capabilities and genuineness in commitments.

In terms of politics, Hasina stands firm in parliament with her absolute majority, making her the prime foreign policymaker in Dhaka, while Modi returned to power with the return of coalition politics.

Bangladesh’s prime minister has expressed her interest in further involving the new leadership in India in Bangladesh’s economy. She has also clearly indicated the need for further talks on a comprehensive economic partnership that should be based on mutual interests by not bypassing its Indo-Pacific partners.

This means the future of bilateral cooperation is astronomically high, but pragmatism and mutual capabilities should be the key determinants if I see Bangladesh’s national interest, be it in terms of water management or the politics of external powers.

Therefore, both nations have promised deep cooperation that should be equal-handed in the coming days.

The writer is a professor in international relations and the executive director of Jahangirnagar University’s Bangladesh Center for Indo-Pacific Affairs.

### Farmers count the losses

FROM PAGE 12

on the sanctuaries so that we can protect the various fish species that have been washed away from local farms and ponds during the flash floods.”

Meanwhile, the divisional agricultural extension department reports that farmers in the region are looking at a significant loss of paddy and vegetables, as over 26,000 hectares of farmland have been submerged.

The flood-affected croplands comprise 17,460 hectares of Aush paddy, 1,123 hectares of Aush seedbed, 167 hectares of Aman seedbed, and 7,656 hectares of vegetables.

Mati Lal Halder, a sub-assistant agriculture officer at the divisional DAE, said, “We have not estimated the financial loss yet because a large amount of paddy and vegetables may survive once the water recedes. We will estimate the financial loss once the floodwaters have receded completely.”

With only a trace of rainfall and occasional sunny skies, the water level of the Surma River was rapidly receding yesterday, improving the flood situation in vast areas.

The river at Sylhet City Point fell below the danger mark yesterday morning, while it flowed slightly above it at other points.

The flood situation in Moulvibazar and Habiganj is also starting to get better as the water levels in the Manu,

Khowai, and Dhalai rivers fell below the danger marks.

However, the Kushiyara River continued to be above the danger level at Fenchuganj point as well as at all other points in Sylhet and Moulvibazar.

Just 2mm of rain fell on Sylhet city in the 24 hours till yesterday morning, while Moheshkhola in Sunamganj recorded the most at 121mm.

The flood situation in the Sylhet region is expected improve in the next 72 hours, according to yesterday morning’s forecast by the Flood Forecasting and Warning Centre and Water Development Board.

A total of 21.08 lakh people have been affected by the flash floods in Sylhet, Sunamganj, and Moulvibazar districts with 53,244 people residing in the shelter centres as of yesterday afternoon.

In the past three weeks, Sylhet city has been inundated five times due to heavy rains, affecting hundreds of areas and causing untold suffering to the dwellers.

Earlier, on May 29, heavy rains and hill torrents from upstream caused flooding in Sylhet. The flood situation began to normalise on June 8.

However, continuous rains starting in the early hours of June 17 led to another flood in the district.

Prior to this, in May, floods were caused by hill torrents and rains from upstream in India.

### Tigers on brink of elimination

FROM PAGE 12

and hope that the Australia-India clash tomorrow in Saint Lucia does not get washed out.

Bangladesh opens Tanzid Tamim (13 off 10) and Liton Das (29 off 31) stitched a 35-run stand — the best showing by the Tigers’ openers so far in the tournament — but the required rate of above nine always looked to be out of reach for the Tigers.

Skipper Shanto tried to up the tempo with a few maximums — two in the same over of Pandya and the other off Ravindra Jadeja — but that never put India under any sort of pressure as they managed to maintain a tight

grip throughout the game.

Shanto was dismissed by Jasprit Bumrah in the 16th over, with the Tigers getting reduced to 109 for five. Always struggling to keep pace with the asking rate, Bangladesh headed towards the inevitable as Rishad’s 10-ball 24-run cameo — including three maximums and a four — only reduced the margin of defeat.

Earlier, Pandya smashed a quickfire unbeaten 27-ball 50 while Virat Kohli (37 off 28), Rishabh Pant (36 off 28), and Shivam Dube (34 off 24) made 30-odd scores at a brisk pace to propel India, who are almost certain to book a semifinal spot.

The Daily Star

FOUNDER EDITOR: LATE S. M. ALI

## A waste of resources and knowledge

### Why are medical, engineering graduates opting for BCS general cadre?

At a time when graduates' fixation with government jobs amid shrinking economic opportunities has emerged as a serious concern, it is perhaps not shocking that a large number of them are from medical and engineering backgrounds, who are forgoing careers in their specialised fields in favour of civil service positions. According to data from the Public Service Commission, approximately 30 percent of general cadre recruits in the last three BCS exams came from medical and engineering backgrounds. The allure of these positions—coupled with perceived discrimination against non-admin cadres in terms of power, perks, and promotions—may make their choice a pragmatic one. But it's one that comes at a substantial cost to the nation.

The government invests heavily in the education of medical and engineering students, much more than it spends on students in general universities. Their migration, after graduation, to administrative roles thus represents a waste of both knowledge and resources. The migration of doctors is particularly troubling given the shortage of doctors in public healthcare. "When medical graduates prefer general cadre positions to practicing medicine, or postings in city hospitals to services in rural health facilities, if recruited as doctors, it is the people that suffer as a result." This raises critical questions about our investment in—and allocation of—human resources in vital sectors.

But why are so many graduates opting out of specialised fields? According to our report, there are 13 categories in both general and specialised BCS. The former includes administration, police, and foreign services, while the latter includes education and health, among others. Those recruited in general cadres enjoy high ranks as well as substantial perks and benefits. They have the chance to be top bureaucrats. By contrast, those in specialised cadres face slower career progression, have fewer benefits, and mostly work under younger admin colleagues. This imbalance not only demoralises them but also undermines the sectors they serve.

Addressing this issue is almost as important as fixing the unhealthy fascination of graduates and would-be graduates with BCS exams in the absence of decent opportunities in the private sector. It is, therefore, imperative that the government reevaluates the incentives and career paths for specialised cadres. Equitable promotion opportunities, better benefits, and recognition of their critical contributions can help retain these professionals in their respective fields. Additionally, there needs to be a cultural shift within the civil service to value and integrate the expertise of doctors and engineers into policy-making and administrative roles that align with their training. We must ensure that our investments in education translate into tangible benefits for society.

## JU needs a new master plan urgently

### The uniqueness of its green campus must be preserved

It is deeply concerning that the Jahangirnagar University (JU) campus has lost nearly 40 percent of its waterbodies over the last three and a half decades. This has been revealed by a new study on JU land use that analysed data from 1988 to 2023. The study also found that the university's vegetation cover shrunk by 26.5 percent during the same period. By contrast, its built-up area went up by 159.3 percent, with around 172.5 acres being converted into built-up land.

In 1988, waterbodies covered an area of 122.4 acres on the campus, which dropped to 73.58 acres last year. At the same time, its vegetation coverage of 388.80 acres shrunk to just 285.88. The study does not mention how such vast areas of waterbodies have been lost—this is something that the JU authorities need to find out. We do, however, know that many trees have been felled in the name of development, and that green spaces have been decreasing at a worrying rate as a result. What is further concerning is that the JU's original master plan, designed by renowned architect Mazharul Islam in 1968, has been repeatedly neglected during the subsequent structural development phases, which is one of the reasons why the campus is losing its originality including its green spaces.

The architecture of the buildings constructed in the last two decades does not harmonise with the surrounding environment either, and does not utilise maximum airflow and natural lighting. Moreover, many abandoned structures remain in place, unnecessarily occupying campus space. The haphazard manner in which the authorities have been developing the campus is also harming its biodiversity and leading to its pristine beauty being lost. Hence, students and teachers have been organising protests demanding a new master plan. Even though the authorities have been claiming that they are in the process of preparing a new master plan for the last two years, nothing substantive has so far materialised. Their apathy and negligence in this regard are unacceptable.

The JU is one of the most beautiful universities in Bangladesh. For its campus to be treated the way it has been over recent decades is a great travesty. It is high time the authorities started taking proper care of the campus—particularly its natural beauty—and prepared a new master plan. They must cease construction or planning of any new building or structure in contravention of its master plan.

### THIS DAY IN HISTORY



## Nasser became president of Egypt

On this day in 1956, 99.95 percent of Egyptians elected Gamal Abdel Nasser as the first president of the Republic of Egypt after he overthrew the Egyptian monarchy in a military coup four years prior.

# Why this intimidating police statement aimed at the media?



Kamal Ahmed is an independent journalist. His X handle is @ahmedkai

KAMAL AHMED

The Bangladesh Police Service Association (BPSA), representing elite officers (BCS cadre) of the law enforcement force, has issued a strong and ominous message to the media. The statement was disturbing, as its tone and tenor appeared to intimidate journalists from reporting on corruption involving any of its members. In an unusually lengthy release (12 paragraphs and over 50 lines), the association did not cite a single report or name to which they objected for being slanderous.

The association's statement seems to place collective blame on the media, claiming, "Partial, motivated, and indiscriminate reports about former and serving members of the Bangladesh police are being published serially in the news media (print and electronic) and on social media."

While the association has every right to protest what it calls a "smear campaign" against its members, it did not name any alleged victims of defamation, making it difficult to justify accusing any media outlet of "publishing offensive and negative news reports" out of "personal vengeance and self-interests, which goes against journalistic ethics." Furthermore, the association issued an advisory to journalists, asking them to exercise caution and maintain journalistic principles when reporting on the police.

In recent weeks, the stories that shocked the nation involved alleged grand corruption and abuse of office by two top officials: former Inspector General Benazir Ahmed and former Commissioner of Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP) Mohammad Asaduzzaman Miah. Apart from these two retired top cops, there have been no major graft allegations against any serving officers in recent days, though this does not imply the force is corruption-free. Many would argue that reporting corruption against any in service official carries too much risks for journalists as individuals and the survival of their organisation.

This raises the question of why the association felt compelled to defend its former members. Has the



VISUAL: STAR

current leadership of the organisation transformed it into a welfare association for retired police officers? Or is this a preemptive attempt by the BPSA to prevent the media from investigating some of its members who may have assisted their top boss in their alleged criminal enterprises, including providing police protection for land grabbing, as alleged by some members of the minority community in Gopalganj?

The BPSA release claimed that the police have always maintained a policy of "zero tolerance" against corruption, stating that if allegations of corruption are proven against any member, both departmental and legal actions are taken. However, had the BPSA leadership reviewed some of the speeches by former IGP Benazir, they might have refrained from using the term "zero tolerance." On June 16, 2022, he warned his force that those seeking to become wealthy

through illegal means had no place in the police force. However, based on the court's seizure order, we now know that by the time Benazir made that speech, his list of real estate properties was extensive.

It's frustrating to hear the tedious argument that the police's departmental disciplinary procedure deals with all kinds of misconduct,

The BPSA's warning to the media is particularly concerning given the overall media environment in the country, which is intimidating and lacks meaningful freedom to hold power to account. On June 1, Mahfuz Anam, president of the Editors Council and editor of this daily, stated at a meeting in Dhaka that, "Benazir's case is a startling example where we, in

including corruption. Who would believe that the force chief can be investigated by his subordinates freely and fearlessly? Numerous human rights groups have made allegations against him for commanding grave violations of human rights, which led to sanctions against him. Has there ever been any investigation into those charges?

Consider the Dhaka Boat Club incident, where actress Porimoni alleged rape attempts by one of the club executives. Subsequent investigations revealed that its founder president was then IGP Benazir Ahmed, and the club was set up on encroached and illegally filled-in portions of the Turag river. This issue was raised in the Jatiya Sangsad on June 16, 2021, by an opposition MP and was not contested by the treasury bench. Neither the Police Headquarters nor the home ministry investigated these allegations.

the media, knew all these things. But we didn't dare to publish them." He noted that as the head of a powerful law enforcement institution, Benazir could have punished a journalist for reporting his corruption, and the government likely wouldn't have protected the media.

It is also worrying that some senior ministers have already deployed deflection tactics, claiming that certain quarters are trying to discredit the government by labelling "all as corrupt". This appears to be a desperate attempt to distance the ruling party from such corruption. Otherwise, why would someone give a clean chit to the former DMP commissioner before any investigation into his alleged conduct in office? We don't know whether the ministers' statements and the BPSA statement are synchronised, but neither is helpful for uncovering the truth through a credible investigation.

# What if we finally recognised women's unpaid care work?



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MOHIN UDDIN MIZAN

In 1929, Virginia Woolf, in her essay *A Room of One's Own*, raised the issues of economic and social barriers faced by women, including their unpaid labour. However, she was not the first to bring this concern to light.

In her 1898 book *Women and Economics*, American sociologist and novelist Charlotte Perkins Gilman argued that women's dependence on men for economic support due to unpaid household labour was detrimental to their status and freedom. Another influential figure, British social reformer and economist Beatrice Webb, worked in the late 19th and early 20th centuries on issues of women's labour and the conditions of the working class. While her focus was not specifically on unpaid household labour, her broader social and economic reforms were relevant to understanding women's roles in the economy.

Canadian economist Margaret Reid conducted the first systematic economic analysis of unpaid household labour in her 1934 book *Economics of Household Production*. Her work laid the foundation for incorporating household labour into economic theory and measurement.

There has been a significant amount of literature on unpaid household and care work over the past three

decades, both from local and global perspectives. Notably, a 2015 study conducted by the Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD) and Manusher Jonno Foundation (MJF), titled "Women's Unaccounted Work and Contribution to the Economy", estimated the value of women's unpaid work in Bangladesh as 76.8 percent of the GDP in the fiscal year 2013-14 (on condition). It found that a female member in a household undertakes 12.1 non-SNA (System of National Accounts) activities in a day—activities not included in the national GDP—compared to only 2.7 activities for a male member.

In 2019, Oxfam and the International Labour Organization (ILO) released reports on the global perspective of unpaid work. Oxfam's study revealed that unpaid work done by women worldwide amounts to a staggering \$10.8 trillion a year. ILO's report "Unpaid Care Work and the Labour Market" found that the value of unpaid care work is approximately \$11 trillion, accounting for around 9 percent of global GDP. Without exception, women carry out 75 percent of unpaid care work, which is 88 percent in Bangladesh.

The issue gained further attention last year when Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina asked the Planning

Commission, through the Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies (BIDS), to determine the actual contribution of women's unpaid household and care work to GDP. BIDS presented its findings (15 percent contribution to GDP) at its last Annual BIDS Conference on Development (ABCD) in December.

As a part of my regular editing job, reading an article in the Bangladesh Development Studies (BDS) journal titled "Economic Valuation of Women's Unpaid Household Service Work in Bangladesh," which detailed the study led by Dr Binayak Sen, sparked my interest in writing on this issue. Using the 2021 time-use survey by the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS) and BIDS survey of 64 villages in 2023, the authors calculated that women's contribution to GDP through unpaid non-market household and care work is about 15 percent. If unpaid work for both women and men were reflected in national accounting, it would add approximately 17.6 percent to Bangladesh's GDP.

Unpaid household and care work are crucial for developing the next generation's skills and knowledge, essential for a productive workforce. It strengthens family and community bonds, fostering social stability and reducing social strife. It also allows other family members to participate in the formal paid workforce, boosting overall economic productivity and ensuring the population's physical and mental well-being.

If unpaid household and care work were replaced by market services, it would significantly increase GDP; preventive and routine care at home reduces the burden on public healthcare systems, and

parental involvement in education can improve outcomes, reducing the need for remedial education. When societal structures support unpaid household work, it enables higher female participation in the labour force, boosting economic growth. The indirect benefits of unpaid work can lead to increased productivity and economic activity in other sectors.

So, unpaid household and care work being the buzzwords, if the UN does agree to include it in the SNA and the world follows accordingly, some questions may arise: will we still not be satisfied with this crucial work they are doing? Will we value the work they do in agriculture, like livestock or poultry rearing?

The BIDS article suggests as policy implication that male contribution to household unpaid care work should be socially encouraged. This will help ensure—the article reads—the spread of care work across genders, ensuring gender equality in unpaid work. I do agree, but did we keep it in mind that people engaged in the formal labour force may end up working a "double shift" of paid and unpaid work, which has serious consequences for their health and well-being?

Wrapping up (leaving the questions) with a quote from Reid and another line from the BIDS article:

"The more we have concentrated on money values, the more we have overlooked that part of our economic system which is not organised on a profit basis."

Unpaid care work is an essential element of social reproduction—a process that supports individuals, families, and society to continue thriving.

89TH BIRTHDAY OF SERAJUL ISLAM CHOUDHURY

Celebrating our premier public intellectual



**Dr Azfar Hussain** is currently summer distinguished professor of English & Humanities at the University of Liberal Arts Bangladesh (ULAB). He is director of the graduate programme in social innovation and a professor of interdisciplinary studies at Grand Valley State University in Michigan, US. He is also the vice president of the US-based Global Center for Advanced Studies (GCAS).

AZFAR HUSSAIN

Today marks the 89th birthday of Serajul Islam Choudhury. At a juncture characterised by the constitutive contradictions and crises of such systems of exploitation and oppression as capitalism and imperialism, Serajul Islam Choudhury's work continues to speak to the emancipatory struggles of the oppressed around the country, and even the world.

Literary and cultural critic, social and political analyst, media commentator, teacher, pedagogue, translator, editor, columnist, activist, and surely an outstanding teacher of English literature—Choudhury continues to be one of the most prolific writers in the Bangla language today. And it is no less significant that, even at 88, he recently led the Palestinian Solidarity rally in Dhaka, attesting to his characteristic activism that variously informs his written work.

Serajul Islam Choudhury is the author of more than a hundred books and numerous essays. He has also written several books in English, including some ground-breaking ones on the revolutionary Bangalee poet Kazi Nazrul Islam—Choudhury's all-time favourite. But, more than anything else, Serajul Islam Choudhury is a major and leading intellectual of our time, committed as he is to nothing short of the total emancipation of humanity in its entirety.

*Sanskriti* (1993) and *Rashtr Malika* (1997), to *Bichinnoty Osomoti* (2014) and *Pa Raakhi Kothay* (2018), to *Vidyasagar o Koyekti Prosongo* (2021), among many others. One would also do well to cite yet another example. Choudhury used to write an immensely popular—if not populist—column called “Somoy Bahiya Jay” with commendable verve and unflagging enthusiasm in a style that is distinctively *Choudhuryian*. He has exemplarily evolved a prose-style that makes his work pleasantly readable and accessible. For him, this very question of style is not only an aesthetic question but also a political one.

Choudhury, consistently critical of individualism and opportunist liberalism, centres the struggles of ordinary people in his work, supports their movements, and writes extensively about them, exemplifying the role of a public intellectual in Bangladesh. Contesting corporations and politicians who invoke “people” to abuse them, Choudhury addresses real material contradictions and issues of class, gender, race, and nationality. His critiques of liberal humanism are evident in his incisive analyses of figures like Raja Ram Mohan Roy and E M Forster, just to provide two quick examples.

And, in opposition to the tradition named above, Choudhury clearly identifies

For him, dialectics—as a science of the general laws of contradiction, motion, and transformation—is not merely a scholarly or academic exercise; it is a radical tool. He sharpens and deploys the weapon of dialectics in his writing. In fact, it enables him not only to zero in on the specific or the particular as such, prompting him to advance a concrete analysis of a concrete situation, but also to discern

no refined and spiritual things could exist. Choudhury's approach demystifies how the class struggle in its concrete historical-becoming is a fight for “the crude and material things” as much as it is a struggle for the “refined and spiritual things,” interconnected as they are. Thus, his approach considers both political economy and culture as the dialectically interconnected sites of life-and-death

comfortable with producing literary and cultural criticism, political commentary, editorial essay, autobiographical narrative, tract and treatise, newspaper column, and so on, in which the linguistic, the literary, the social, the political, the historical, and the cultural interpenetrate and intersect, exemplifying a radical interdisciplinarity.

For instance, Choudhury has written on Tolstoy and on such modernists as



VISUAL: ALIZA RAHMAN

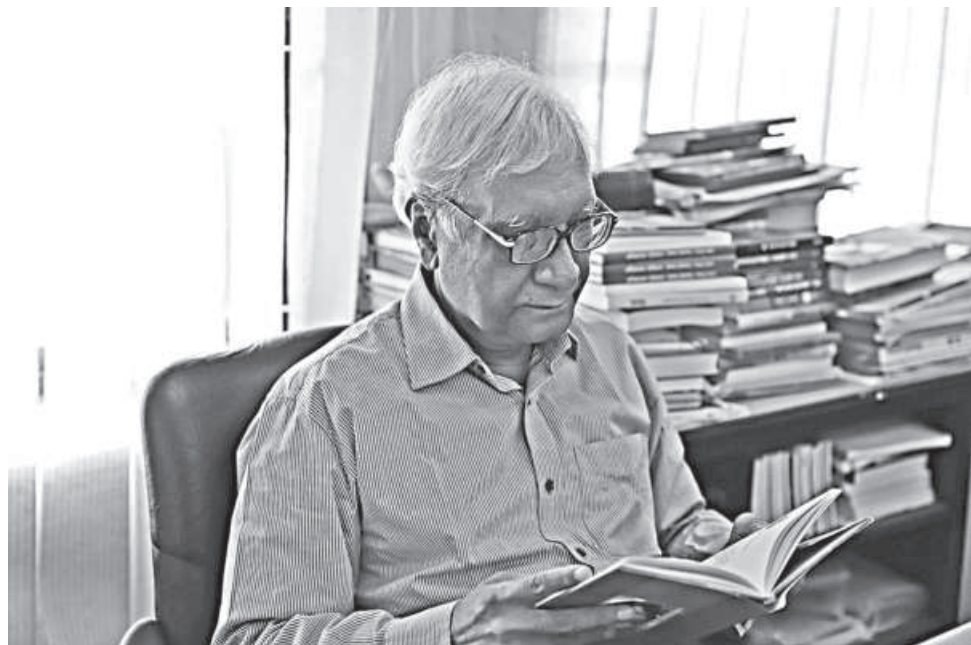


PHOTO: SK ENAMUL HAQ

and demystify both contradictions and connections between the specific and the general, between the particular and the universal, between the abstract and the concrete, between critique and action, between *gnosis* and *praxis*. But only discerning or demystifying contradictions and connections is never enough for Serajul Islam Choudhury. He identifies them in the interest of social transformation and emancipation, broadly speaking.

Further, in the Marxist tradition, Choudhury's approach reckons the class struggle as both the horizon and motor of world history. This approach enables us to see how the development of the productive forces brings into existence different production relations and different forms of class society. And this approach is also nothing short of a revolutionary one that makes us see how the question of the entirety of human emancipation remains connected to the transvaluation of the questions of property relations, the social

struggles of the oppressed.

Serajul Islam Choudhury explores the role of intellectuals in his essay *Buddhijibeeder Kajkormo o Daydayitto*. While intellectuals like Antonio Gramsci, Noam Chomsky, and Edward Said—their different styles and approaches notwithstanding—accentuate the oppositional role of intellectuals committed to radical change, Choudhury supports a similar stance. He believes an intellectual must question oppressive systems and speak truth to power for revolutionary social transformation. Choudhury also stresses the importance of reaching others with these critical ideas, as collective effort is essential for change.

Choudhury's views on the role of intellectuals apply to himself, as he clearly identifies systems of oppression such as capitalism, imperialism, communalism, and patriarchy. He is recognised as Bangladesh's leading anti-capitalist, anti-imperialist, anti-colonial, anti-communal, and anti-patriarchal public intellectual.

Conrad, Forster, Lawrence, Joyce, Yeats, Pound, and Eliot, among others. Of course, Choudhury has written on every major, canonical Bangalee writer—Madhusudan Dutta, Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar, Bankim Chandra Chatterjee, Rabindranath Tagore, Mir Mosharraf Hossain, Sarat Chandra Chattopadhyay, Bibhutibhusan Bandyopadhyay, Manik Bandyopadhyay, Tarasankar Bandyopadhyay, Kazi Nazrul Islam, Jibanananda Das, and Syed Waliullah. The list here is by no means exhaustive. Choudhury has produced a remarkable body of work that traverses a wide range of concerns directly relevant to the contemporary life of the suffering masses in Bangladesh. And it is in this body of work that Choudhury most exemplarily forges organic links among the political, the social, the historical, and the cultural all at once. Moreover, it is in that body of work that Choudhury has consistently advanced and relayed his formulation—one that appears fundamentally Gramscian to me—that there is no alternative to forging links between the intellectuals and the masses, if “the point is to change the world,” to quote Marx's eleventh thesis on Feuerbach.

I have hitherto selectively drawn on Choudhury's range of works to underline a few of his historically significant and still relevant contributions. An outstanding critic and perceptive analyst, Choudhury teaches that producing knowledge is necessary but not sufficient. He emphasises that knowledge must be used for social change and the emancipation of the masses. Firmly committed to the Marxian principle of praxis, Choudhury values knowledge that transcends mere interpretation, aiming to transform people's consciousness.

As his former student and a member of the editorial board of his national weekly *Somoy*, I have learned immensely from Serajul Islam Choudhury. His work taught me that teachers, intellectuals, and educators must fulfil their social and political responsibilities and remain accountable for the knowledge they produce. On his 89th birthday, we owe Choudhury immense gratitude for his contributions to our country and even the world.

**Serajul Islam Choudhury is the author of more than a hundred books and numerous essays. He has also written several books in English, including some ground-breaking ones on the revolutionary Bangalee poet Kazi Nazrul Islam—Choudhury's all-time favourite. But, more than anything else, Serajul Islam Choudhury is a major and leading intellectual of our time, committed as he is to nothing short of the total emancipation of humanity in its entirety.**

division of labour, and the process of social reproduction, and so on—i.e., connected to the total abolition of value (exchange value) itself—“an abolition that can be effected only by a revolution,” as Marx and Engels put it in *The Communist Manifesto*.

As the German Marxist theorist Walter Benjamin points out in his classic work *On the Concept of History*: Class struggle, which for a historian schooled in Marx is always in evidence, is a fight for the crude and material things without which

Beyond opposing these systems, Choudhury advocates for socialism, arguing there are no contradictions between socialism and democracy; rather, to be socialist is to be democratic.

A public intellectual as he is, Choudhury in his work touches upon almost every aspect of the life of the masses in Bangladesh. To the extent that he does it, he is bound to cross—and range across—disciplinary borders and boundaries, as he surely does in his work. This is why Choudhury is equally

I cannot do justice to the entire range of Choudhury's massive work in this short piece. But I intend to touch on the significance of *certain aspects* of his work. To begin with, Choudhury's work remains organically responsive to and thoroughly informed by our own national liberation movement, class struggles, and other forms of struggle in Bangladesh. One who always historicises his own people's conditions of being and becoming, Choudhury continues to make interventions in such broad areas as society, politics, political economy, culture, and history, while making the points that telling without doing is profoundly insufficient and that *gnosis* (knowledge) without *praxis* (practice informed by knowledge) is simply empty.

Indeed, for about six decades now, Choudhury has been making an inventory of the daily acts of people's resistance and modes of forbearance and survival as well as their aspirations and hopes, exemplified in a range of his works from, say, his earlier book *Nirasroy Greehi* (1978) and *Bangalee Kake Boli* (1988), to *Swadhinota Sriha Sammyer Bhoj* (1988) and *Gonotrter Pokkho-Bipokkho* (1991), to *Rashtr o*

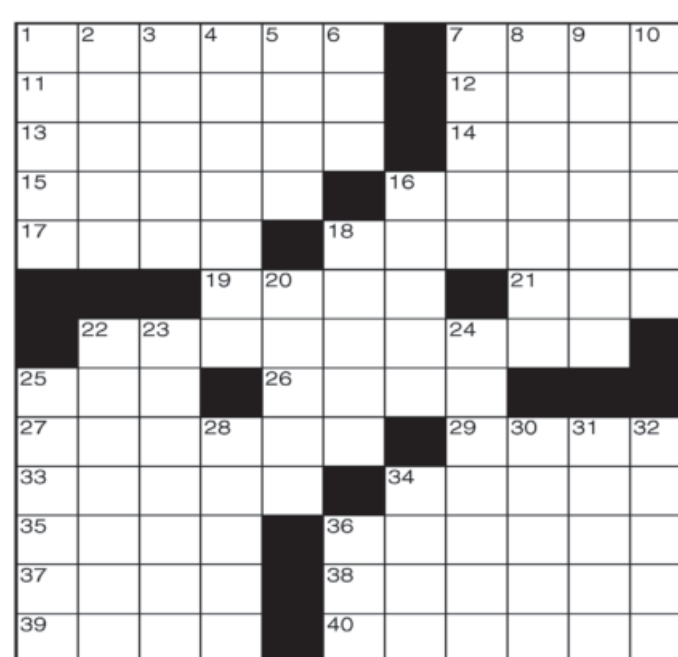
the people for whom he tirelessly writes and fights. The people for him, then, are clearly the majority in the country—the toiling masses—peasants and workers, including women as well as ethnic, religious, and linguistic minorities, ignored and oppressed as they are. And he writes about them from the perspectives of their collective emancipation. To put it bluntly: human emancipation itself constitutes the most fundamental, abiding theme in Choudhury's work. In fact, the question of people's emancipation remains organic and integral to the entire constellation of Choudhury's interrogations and interventions from his early works to one of his major works called *Jatiyotabad, Samprodayikota o Jonogoner Mukti* (2015), which can justly be regarded as his historiographical *tour de force*.

Let me now briefly describe one of the predominant approaches used in Choudhury's work. Indeed, what—among other things—enables his interventions to remain attentive to both connectedness and contradictions as well as to the “specific” in its historical determinateness is dialectics itself. Dialectics is Choudhury's weapon.

CROSSWORD BY THOMAS JOSEPH

- ACROSS**  
1 Holt of NBC News  
7 Reached base, in a way  
11 Statue setting  
12 Big book  
13 Tied fast  
14 Memo letters  
15 Kitchen wear  
16 Muralist Rivera  
17 Spotted  
18 Past and present  
19 Bible pronoun  
21 Wrath  
22 Missouri River port  
25 Outlaw  
26 Bearing  
27 Warring woman

- 29 Spanish hors d'oeuvre  
33 Ancient Mesopotamian region  
34 Shade  
35 Crocus cousin  
36 Old string player  
37 Play group  
38 Lets up  
39 Plops down  
40 Tune
- DOWN**  
1 Eastern monks  
2 Skip the ceremony  
3 Point count  
4 Raptors' home  
5 Tied up  
6 Wine choice  
7 Laundry problem  
8 Wigs out  
9 Mental visions  
10 Oust from power  
16 Wild card, at times  
18 Poison  
20 Comic's forte  
22 Feudal warrior  
23 Bix Beiderbecke standard  
24 All things considered  
25 Rudiments  
28 Lemon rind strips  
30 Justice Samuel  
31 Struck a stance  
32 Pretentious  
34 Hexahedron  
36 Sudden flight



YESTERDAY'S ANSWERS

S	A	G	E	S		D	U	T	C	H	
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Write for us. Send us your opinion pieces to [dsopinion@gmail.com](mailto:dsopinion@gmail.com)



## Gavi to boost access to life-saving human rabies vaccines in over 50 countries

Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance, is providing support for human rabies vaccines for post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP) as part of routine immunisation. Under Gavi's cofinancing policy, eligible countries receive guidance on accessing these vaccines, with the first round of applications due by mid-July 2024. Ninety-five percent of human rabies deaths occur in Africa and Asia, predominantly in marginalised communities lacking access to care.

This initiative aligns with the Zero by 30 campaign, led by United Against Rabies partners including the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), the World Health Organisation (WHO), and the World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH).



The campaign aims to eliminate dog-mediated human rabies by 2030.

In over 150 countries where dog rabies is a major public health issue, human rabies vaccine stocks are often limited, especially in marginalised communities. When PEP is available through private facilities, the cost can be financially catastrophic for families.

Rabies is a viral disease causing severe brain inflammation, transmitted in 99 percent of cases by rabid dogs. Once clinical symptoms appear, rabies is nearly 100% fatal. However, prompt PEP, including thorough wound washing and vaccine administration, can prevent infection.

The COVID-19 pandemic delayed the programme's initial inclusion in Gavi's 2021-25 vaccine strategy, but it resumed in mid-2023. All Gavi-eligible countries can apply for funding to procure vaccines and supplies. We will accept applications from July 15 to September 23, 2024, with subsequent windows opening three times a year.

Source: World Health Organisation

## High rates of low back pain plague Dhaka's ride-sharing motorbike drivers

DR MOHAMMAD ALI

Low back pain is becoming a significant issue for Dhaka's ride-sharing motorbike drivers, a new study reveals. These drivers, who navigate the bustling streets of Bangladesh's capital on a daily basis, are increasingly suffering from this painful condition. This not only affects their health, but also threatens their livelihood and overall quality of life.

### Rising concerns

A recent study published in the ELSEVIER conducted between May and August 2023 sheds light on this growing problem. Researchers surveyed 633 ride-sharing motorbike drivers in Dhaka and found that nearly 59% of them experienced low back pain in the past month. This alarmingly high rate is concerning for a profession that is essential to the city's transportation network.

### Who is at risk?

Several factors contribute to the high rates of low back pain among these drivers, according to the study:

1. **Health issues:** Drivers who have high blood pressure are more likely to suffer from low back pain. This suggests that overall health plays a crucial role in the well-being of these drivers.

2. **Motorcycle condition:** Those using older motorbikes face a higher risk. Older bikes may lack the ergonomic features that newer models have, which can lead to

increased physical strain.

3. **Safety gear:** Drivers who do not wear proper riding gear, such as protective jackets and supports, are more likely to experience pain. This highlights the importance of using appropriate equipment while on the road.

4. **Demographics:** Older drivers and those with higher body weights are at greater risk. Additionally, the longer the distance a driver covers each day, the more likely they are to suffer from low back pain.

5. **Workload:** Drivers who worked for multiple ride-sharing companies at the same time reported higher rates of pain. This could be due to longer working hours and the physical demands of juggling multiple jobs.

### What can we do?

You can implement several practical solutions to address this issue:

- **Encourage exercise:** Regular physical activity can strengthen the muscles that support the back. Simple exercises and stretches can make a significant difference.

- **Promote weight management:** Maintaining a healthy weight can reduce the strain on the lower back. These drivers can benefit from educational campaigns and support for healthy living.

- **Update equipment:** Using newer motorbikes designed with ergonomic features can help reduce physical strain. Ride-sharing companies can help by providing incentives for drivers to upgrade their bikes.

- **Safety gear:** Ensuring that



## Severe health impacts of child marriage

STAR HEALTH DESK

Researchers in Liberia and Sierra Leone have found a close link between child marriage and negative reproductive and maternal health outcomes among young women. Researchers found that more than half of women aged 20-24 in these countries married before turning 18, and more than one in ten married before turning 15.

The study published in the PubMed, conducted with data from the 2019-2020 Liberia and 2019 Sierra Leone Demographic and Health Surveys, highlighted several troubling trends. Women who married before 18 were more likely to experience early and high fertility, meaning they had children at a younger age and often had more children. They also had less control over when and how many children they had.

The situation was particularly severe for those married before 15. These young women faced greater challenges in accessing essential healthcare services. In Liberia's North Central region, those married at 15-17 were less likely to have skilled attendants during childbirth or to give birth in a medical facility. Similarly, in Sierra Leone's North Western region, women married before 15 were less likely to have institutional deliveries or receive adequate prenatal care.

These findings underscore the need for targeted interventions to address child marriage and improve health outcomes for young women. By focusing on education and healthcare access, especially in the most affected regions, it is possible to make significant strides towards better futures for these young women.

This study highlights the urgent need for action to support young women ensuring they have the health care and opportunities they deserve.



## Unlocking the health benefits of Vitamin D

STAR HEALTH DESK

In our daily rush, it is simple to overlook the vital role that vitamin D plays in our health. Often called the sunshine vitamin, it is crucial for building and maintaining strong bones. But what happens when you do not get enough of it?

### Understanding vitamin D deficiency:

Simply put, vitamin D deficiency means your body lacks this essential vitamin. There are several reasons this can occur: not enough sunlight exposure, certain medical conditions affecting absorption, or a diet lacking in vitamin D-rich foods. It is more common than you might think, and it can lead to serious health issues if left untreated.

### Why it matters:

Vitamin D is not just about bones; it is a key player in overall health. It helps your body absorb calcium, keeping bones strong and reducing the risk of osteoporosis. Beyond bones, vitamin D supports your immune system, muscles, and even your mood.

### Symptoms and risks:

Recognising a deficiency is not always easy. In children, it might show as bone deformities or muscle weakness. Adults might feel fatigued, experience bone or joint pain, or notice changes in mood. Research has linked long-term deficiency to increased risks of conditions such as heart disease, diabetes, and even certain cancers.

### Causes of deficiency:

Many factors contribute to low vitamin D levels. Limited sun exposure (especially in colder climates or with excessive sunscreen use), darker skin tones

(which absorb less sunlight), or medical conditions affecting nutrient absorption can all play a role. Additionally, diets lacking in vitamin D-rich foods or certain medications can hinder your body's ability to maintain adequate levels.

### Testing and treatment:

Diagnosing a deficiency involves a simple blood test. Treatment typically includes supplements to boost vitamin D levels back to normal. The amount prescribed depends on the severity of the deficiency and individual risk factors.

### Prevention tips:

Preventing deficiency is possible with a few simple steps:

- **Diet:** Incorporate vitamin D-rich foods like fatty fish (salmon, tuna), fortified dairy products, and eggs into your meals.

### Sun exposure:

Spend 5-30 minutes in the sun each day without sunscreen, if possible, to allow your body to produce vitamin D naturally.

- **Supplements:** If diet and sun are not sufficient, talk to your doctor about supplements tailored to your needs.

### Conclusion

Vitamin D deficiency is a serious health concern that affects many, yet it is often preventable and treatable. By understanding its importance and taking proactive steps to ensure adequate levels, you can safeguard your bone health and overall well-being. Remember, a little sunshine and a balanced diet go a long way towards keeping your body strong and healthy.

In a world where health is wealth, ensuring you have enough vitamin D is a smart investment in yourself.



## Long COVID linked to lasting cognitive issues

A recent study published in the Brain found that people who suffer from long-term COVID may experience significant cognitive issues lasting for over a year. The research, conducted during the first wave of the pandemic, compared COVID-19 patients with ongoing symptoms to those who fully recovered.

Out of the 105 patients studied, 83 reported long-term neurological symptoms such as memory loss and difficulty concentrating. Common complaints included severe fatigue (82%), headaches (72%), anxiety (58%), weakness in the limbs (57%), insomnia (57%), and depression (46%).

Key findings showed that nearly half of those with long COVID had noticeable memory problems, including difficulties with both verbal and visual memory. Around 27% of patients showed significant issues with attention, verbal working memory, processing speed, and verbal fluency compared to healthy individuals and recovered COVID-19 patients. Furthermore, 20% of those affected had severe cognitive impairment.

Brain scans revealed that patients with long-term COVID had noticeable changes in their brain structure, particularly in areas linked to memory and attention. These brain changes were more common in patients who had severe initial COVID-19 infections.

The study highlights the serious and lasting impact of long-term COVID on mental functions, underscoring the importance of recognising and addressing these long-term symptoms. This study emphasises the need for ongoing support and treatment for those affected.

## Consult with Expert VASCULAR SURGEON FROM MANCHESTER, UK at UNITED HOSPITAL

**Prof. Dr. Abul H. A. Quddus (Mahub)**  
NHS Foundation Trust, UK

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# Star DHAKA SUNDAY JUNE 23, 2024, ASHAR 9, 1431 BS

# SPORT

## What to WATCH

**Nagorik TV**  
**T20 World Cup**  
 Australia vs Afghanistan  
 Live from 6:30 am  
 USA vs England  
 Live from 8:30 pm

**T Sports and Sony Sports 5**  
**Euro 2024**  
 Germany vs Switzerland  
 Live from 1:00 am (Monday)  
 Scotland vs Hungary  
 Live from 1:00 am (Monday)

## Another day to forget for Shakib and Tigers

ASHAQ-UL-ALAM

Shakib Al Hasan and the Bangladesh team had another forgettable day at the office yesterday, as the all-rounder once again showed signs of losing his edge with the bat and the ball, and the Tigers meekly surrendered against a superior Indian side in their Super Eights match of the ICC T20 World Cup in Antigua.

Bangladesh were the inferior side on display throughout the match and unsurprisingly suffered a 50 run drubbing.

There were some flashes of positives for Bangladesh in the match, like Tanzim Sakib's fiery spell and a late 10-ball 24 assault from Rishad Hossain, but these efforts were overshadowed by the long list of subpar performances, headed by another rocky showing from Shakib.

For the last four weeks or so, Bangladesh's cricket fans have been watching and slowly coming to terms with the fact that perhaps Shakib Al Hasan, like all who played the game before him, is gradually conceding defeat to the perpetual pendulum of time.

One of the tell-tale signs that a player's career is nearing its end is that the skills that once were second nature to them, which they could execute without even thinking, become difficult.

In Shakib's case, it was his bowling that



Bangladesh could depend on most days without a second thought. But in this edition of the ICC T20 World Cup, he has been used more like a part-time option and at times had to be shielded from the batters.

Yesterday, Shakib became the first and only bowler to claim 50 wickets in T20 World Cups when he took the wicket of Rohit Sharma. But before getting that

wicket, the left-arm spinner was taken for 25 runs off his first nine deliveries, which allowed India to race to 53-1 in the Powerplay.

Shakib ended with 1-37 in three overs, not finishing his quota for the fifth time in this tournament. In Bangladesh's six matches, the left-arm spinner has bowled his full quota only against the Netherlands and was not brought into the attack in the

rain-curtailed match against Australia.

It's not like Shakib has only been struggling on the wicket's column. Till now, he has bowled only 13.2 overs in the tournament and conceded at a rate of more than eight runs an over -- the most expensive of all Bangladeshi bowlers.

Shakib couldn't really make up for his shortcoming with the ball with bat in hand either, making just 11 off seven balls before getting caught at extra-cover.

The dip in Shakib's bowling, something the all-rounder has always said came to him naturally and he admitted to not have paid too much focus on it, projects a dire signal.

Considering Shakib's age, 37, his decline shouldn't be that much of a surprise. But as the all-rounder has expressed his desire to feature for Bangladesh in the next T20 World Cup as well, this dip is a worrying sign.

His batting has been subpar since the issue with his eyes has surfaced. If the all-rounder wishes to continue being an asset for Bangladesh cricket, not a liability, perhaps it is time for him to change his ways and seriously work on his bowling.

As for the Tigers, they still have one match left in the Super Eights against Afghanistan on Tuesday, where they will have a chance to end their campaign on a high.

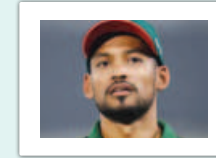
### SCORES IN BRIEF

**India:** 196-5 in 20 overs (Pandya 50 not out, Kohli 37; Sakib 2-32; Rishad 2-43)

**Bangladesh:** 146-8 in 20 overs (Shanto 40, Tanzid 29, Rishad 24; Kuldeep 3-19, Bumrah 2-13, Arshdeep 2-30)

**Result:** India won by 50 runs

**Player of the Match:** Hardik Pandya



**We did not show as much intent as we needed with the bat. When we are chasing 190 (plus score), we needed to show more intent; especially in the first six overs.**  
 Bangladesh captain  
**NAJMUL HOSSAIN**  
 SHANTO



**In T20s, I don't believe we need to get fifties and hundreds, what matters is the pressure you put on the bowlers... and that's how we want to play.**  
 India captain  
**ROHIT SHARMA**

## England's drive for semis, USA's final flourish

STAR SPORTS DESK

As the T20 World Cup heats up, holders England face co-hosts USA in a crucial Super Eights fixture at the Kensington Oval Stadium in Barbados on Sunday.

Both teams have different stakes in this match, with England likely to go all out, aiming for a comprehensive win to boost their net run rate and secure their place in the semi-finals, while USA will be looking to upset the odds and conclude their fairytale World Cup journey.

England enter the match with a mix of urgency and optimism. Their recent game against South Africa saw them fall short by seven runs, but a valiant 78-run partnership for the fifth wicket by Harry Brook and Liam Livingstone was instrumental in keeping England's semifinal hopes alive.

With the West Indies' dominant win over USA, England find themselves third in Group Two, tied with the Men in Maroon on points but way behind on net run rate - 0.412 compared to 1.814. For England to secure a semi-final spot, a win against the USA is crucial, especially if group leaders South Africa -- on four points with a net run rate of 0.625 -- lose to the West Indies.

One of the tournament's surprise packages, USA have showcased their potential on the world stage. Despite a recent nine-wicket loss to the West Indies, they have demonstrated exceptional performances, including victories over Pakistan and Canada.

USA's journey in the T20 World Cup has been a testament to their growth as an Associate nation. Captain Aaron Jones said, "Over the last couple of weeks, starting from winning the series against Bangladesh [prior to the T20 World Cup], it really opened the eyes of everybody."

As both teams take the field, fans can expect an exciting clash that encapsulates the spirit and unpredictability of T20 cricket.

## Proteas-Caribbeans clash in high-stakes affair

AGENCIES

Hosts West Indies and undefeated South Africa will clash in a high-stakes Super Eight match on Monday in Antigua, the outcome of which will have huge implications in the semifinals race from Group 2 in the ongoing ICC T20 World Cup.

After an unbeaten run in the group stage, the men in maroon were rocked in their first Super Eight game when England defeated them by eight wickets. However, they bounced back with a comprehensive nine-wicket win over co-hosts USA on June 21.

Not only did they gain two crucial points, but also improved their net run rate substantially. They are now placed second in the Group 2 table and a strong win in their next game can help seal a semi-final spot.

South Africa sit at the top of the table with four points and a net run rate of +0.625. England and West Indies are at two points each, but the latter are ahead based on a superior net run rate of +1.814 as compared to England's +0.412. USA are fourth with zero points.

This means that irrespective of the result in the England-USA fixture, West Indies can secure a semi-final spot if they manage to



win against South Africa and maintain a superior net run rate over Jos Buttler's men.

For the Proteas, a win will ensure a berth in the final four and a defeat could see them exit the tournament if England beat the USA handsomely and overtake South Africa in net run rate.

Up against the Proteas on Sunday evening, West Indies all-rounder Roston Chase said that despite South Africa's undefeated run, they are not going to budge away from a contest.

"We're going to be coming hard," Chase said. "So, we'll collide, and whoever's the strongest, I think, will win. So, it's just for us, as I say, to just go there and give it your all. As I say, it's a win-win situation."

For South Africa, opener Quinton de Kock has found form

at precisely the right moment, scoring two superb knocks in succession to help South Africa to the top of Group 2.

Their bowlers have been on point throughout the tournament and David Miller has been efficient in the middle-order, bailing them out of tricky situations a number of times.

South Africa, who have managed to eke out victories under pressure on a few different occasions in this T20 World Cup, find themselves in a tough spot once again as a defeat against the Caribbeans could pull the plug out of what has thus far been a promising campaign.

If the Proteas indeed succumb under pressure, their reputation as cricket's ultimate chokers, a moniker they have been trying to get rid of, will grow further.

## 'Calm' Endrick hopes to leave his mark

REUTERS

Brazil's teenage prodigy Endrick will be hoping to make his first appearance for the national team at a major tournament when his country take on Costa Rica in their Copa America opener on Monday.

The 17-year-old striker, who joined Real Madrid from Palmeiras, knows he has a long way to go to break into the Brazilian starting line-up in a squad that includes Raphinha, Vinicius Jr and Rodrygo in attack.

"Only God knows (when I will start). I am very grateful to have Abel (Ferreira) as a coach, he knew when to play me. Everything is up to God and Professor Dorival Jr. He is a spectacular coach. He is doing what is best for the Brazilian team," Endrick told a press conference on Friday.

Endrick, who in March became the youngest player to score in an international match at Wembley when he gave Brazil a 1-0 win over England, made his mark in the other warm-up fixtures ahead of

Copa America with a goal in a 3-2 victory over Mexico, having also scored against Spain.

"I have always been very precocious in my life and since I became a professional I have played against opponents who have always teased me, insulted me, talked about my family, my girlfriend," he said.

"But I got used to it quickly because I was 16. I'm calm and I hope I can help, I think it's right, in football you have to destabilise the other player. It's been like that since I arrived, so I've adapted and I'm very confident that I can help the team."



## 'Rejuvenated Germany can win Euros'

REUTERS, Berlin

German fans welcomed the start of Euro 2024 on home soil more in hope than expectation, but their performances have surprised many and they are now serious contenders to win the title, German World Cup winner Olaf Thon told Reuters.

The 58-year-old, who scored a memorable goal against Denmark in his home town of Gelsenkirchen in the 1988 European Championship, has remained in the game through his punditry work for Sport1, where he provides expert analysis on the Bundesliga and the German national team.

"Last year, I would have predicted that Germany would not make it very far, but based on the group stage games and the performances of other good teams such as Spain and France, I'd say we can definitely keep up with them," Thon said in an interview.

"We have a home advantage, with the fans as 12th player ... and now, I believe that everything is possible for Germany. We can win the title,"

he added. The modest pre-tournament expectations of Thon and many German fans were heavily influenced by a run of bad results in 2023, during which Germany drew two and lost six of their 11



friendlies.

They made a fast start at Euro 2024, however, with a 5-1 thrashing of Scotland and a comfortable 2-0 win over Hungary ensured the Germans were the first team through to the knockout stage, leaving coach Julian Nagelsmann with tough calls to make for their final group game against Switzerland.

"It is the dream of every head coach to send the same starting XI out on to the pitch. However, 'never change a winning team' has its perils," Thon said.

"I expect Nagelsmann to start the same players again, if no one gets injured. However, it is the group stage where you have to manage the workloads and act strategically."


For Thon, who coached for a brief period before pivoting to his media career with Sport1, the current German team is reminiscent of the one that was taken over by Franz Beckenbauer in 1984 and won the World Cup in 1990.

"In 1988 the Euros on home soil, Germany lost against the Netherlands in the semis, who then went on to win the tournament. In 1990, there was revenge - Germany beat the Netherlands and won the title confidently," Thon recalls.

"It is therefore possible that Julian Nagelsmann first starts with this attempt and doesn't win the title right away, but instead builds up something to win in 2026."

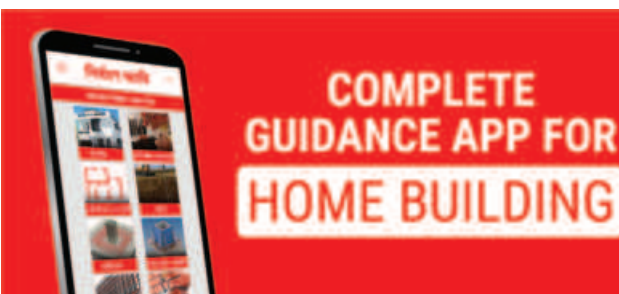


Portugal's Bernardo Silva celebrates scoring their first goal with Joao Cancelo during their 3-0 win against Turkey in a Group F fixture of Euro 2024 at the BVB Stadion in Dortmund yesterday. The result ensured the 2016 champions enter the last 16. PHOTO: REUTERS




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## Tigers on brink of elimination

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh batters were not up to the task of chasing down a 197-run target set by India as the Tigers stumbled to a 50-run defeat in their crucial Super Eight fixture on Saturday, seeing themselves all but out of the ongoing T20 World Cup.

Skipper Najmul Hossain Shanto scored a team-high 40 off 32 deliveries and Rishad Hossain dealt a few lusty blows at the death but those were not nearly enough as Bangladesh were restricted to 146 for eight after an unbeaten Hardik Pandya fifty and a number of quickfire knocks from India batters saw them amass 196 for five.

In order to progress to their maiden semifinal, Bangladesh will now have to hope for a series of unlikely events, starting with banking on Afghanistan to cause an upset against the mighty Aussies in Kingstown today. The Tigers would then have to beat Afghanistan in their final Super Eight game on June 25 by a big enough margin to boost their current net run-rate of -2.489

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India players celebrate after wrist-spinner Kuldeep Yadav dismissed Bangladesh batter Towhid Hridoy in their T20 World Cup Super 8 fixture in Antigua on Saturday. India cruised to a crushing 50-run victory, forcing Bangladesh to the brink of exit in the tournament.

PHOTO: AFP

## FLOODS IN SYLHET Farmers count the losses

DWOHA CHOWDHURY and MINTU DESHWARA

As soon as the second wave of flash floods hit Sylhet in the early hours of June 17, Moklisur Rahman, a fish farmer in Gowainghat upazila, knew he was going to lose all his fish, which he had worked very hard to raise in his three ponds.

"I immediately rushed to the ponds, but it was too late for anything to be done. Within hours, I lost fish worth at least Tk 7 lakh," lamented Moklisur, a resident of the upazila's Nayagram Uttar village.

Like him, thousands of fish farmers in Sylhet, Sunamganj, and Moulvibazar have lost their prized possessions as the flood washed away as many as 13,650 ponds, said the divisional fisheries department.

Abdal Miah of Chanpur village in Sylhet's Fenchuganj upazila said, "Even as my house was flooded to the waist, we stayed back to protect the cattle. But, sadly, we could do nothing about the fish in the pond worth at least Tk 50,000."

Md Arif of Rahimpur village in Moulvibazar's Kamolganj upazila said, "After the dyke of the Dhalai River broke and the flash flood inundated the village, I lost fish worth around Tk 1 lakh. I now have nothing."

Fish farmers in the region have incurred a substantial loss of Tk 133.61 crore, of which Tk 101.18 crore has been lost in the Sylhet district alone, according to the divisional fisheries department.

Md Anwar Hossain, deputy director of the Department of Fisheries in Sylhet, said, "We are now keeping an eye

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## REPORTING ON COPS 'Journos should be more cautious' Says home ministry; BFUJ, DUJ express concern over threat to press freedom

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government wants media outlets to exercise more caution while publishing reports that may potentially tarnish the image of the police force.

The home ministry sent a letter to the information and broadcasting ministry on June 13 regarding this matter, which came to light recently.

The letter, signed by home ministry Deputy Secretary Israt Zahan, requested the information and broadcasting ministry to take necessary measures so that print and electronic media outlets exercise greater caution during the publication of news that could harm the reputation of the police force.

Earlier on Friday, a statement expressing similar concern was sent to the media on behalf of the Bangladesh Police Service Association.

### JOURNOS EXPRESS CONCERN

Bangladesh Federal Union of Journalists (BFUJ) and Dhaka Union of Journalists (DUJ) issued a counter-statement yesterday.

In the joint statement, journalist leaders said the language used by some leaders and organisations in their reactions to certain news reports poses a threat to the freedom of the press.

"These reports are not published with any particular agenda; rather, responsible journalists believe that they are publishing verified information after thoroughly checking the facts and documents available to them."

### GOVT SEEKS NEWS SOURCES

The home ministry's letter to the information ministry also sought information about the sources of the two news reports run by Bangla daily Kaler Kantho on June 9 under

SEE PAGE 6 COL 2

## Israel kills dozens in safe zone bombing

25 killed in shelling near Red Cross office; Lebanon border conflict escalates

AGENCIES

Israeli forces yesterday bombed several areas from air and the ground, killing dozens and forcing many families living in areas described as humanitarian-designated zones to leave northwards.

An Israeli attack on Friday near the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) base at the al-Mawasi camp, designated by Israel as a safe zone, that Palestinian officials say killed at least 25 people and wounded 50 others, involved two strikes, The Associated Press news agency reported.

An Israeli military spokesman did not acknowledge any role in the incident but said it was "under review".

"Firing so dangerously close to humanitarian structures puts the lives of civilians and humanitarians at risk," the ICRC said on X.

Meanwhile, one Israeli strike on houses in Al-Shati, one of the Gaza Strip's eight historic refugee camps, killed 24 people, Ismail Al-Thawabta told Reuters. Another 18 Palestinians were killed in a strike on houses in the Al-Tuffah neighbourhood.

Footage obtained by Reuters showed dozens of Palestinians rushing out to search for victims amid the destroyed houses. The footage showed wrecked homes, blasted walls, and debris and dust filling the street in Shati refugee camp.

At least 42 people were killed in Israeli attacks on districts of Gaza City in the north of the Palestinian enclave yesterday,

the director of the Hamas-run government media office said.

Civil defence agency spokesman Mahmud Basal said five municipal workers died when a garage in the city was bombed.

Fighting continued yesterday morning, with witnesses reporting gun battles between Palestinian and Israeli forces in Gaza City.

- 37,551 people killed in Gaza since Oct 7
- At least 120 killed in Gaza over the past 48 hours
- Israeli strike kills Ayman Ghotmeh, leader of Lebanese Islamist group
- Hezbollah claims attacks on Israeli troops near Lebanon border

And in the city's Zeitun neighbourhood, Israeli helicopters fired at Palestinian fighters, witnesses said.

The health ministry in Hamas-run Gaza said yesterday that at least 37,551 people have been killed in the territory during more than eight months of Israel's

offensive in Gaza.

Elsewhere, Lebanon-based Hamas ally Hezbollah claimed a number of attacks on Israeli troops and positions near the border on Friday, including two using drones.

The Israeli army said it had carried out multiple retaliatory strikes on both days.

Israeli jets on Friday struck a "Hezbollah military structure in the area of Khiam, a Hezbollah military post in the area of Mais al-Jabal," and Hezbollah infrastructure "in the areas of Taybeh and Tallouseh in southern Lebanon", the army said in a statement.

A security source said a leader of the Lebanese Islamist group Jamaa Islamiya, an ally of Hamas, was killed yesterday in an Israeli strike on a vehicle in eastern Lebanon.

"A leader of the al-Fajr Forces of the Jamaa Islamiya, Ayman Ghotmeh, was killed in an Israeli strike in Khiara in the western Bekaa," 10 kilometres from the border with Syria, the source told AFP on condition of anonymity.

The Fajr Forces, Jamaa Islamiya's armed wing, was established in 1982 to fight the Israeli invasion of Lebanon.

Lebanon's state-run ANI news agency reported one person killed when a car was targeted in Khiara, and that the victim was from the nearby village of Lala, without giving further details.

Israel's military said an aircraft carried out a "precise strike in the Beqaa area in Lebanon in order to eliminate" Ayman Ghotmeh, who they said supplied weapons to Hamas and Jamaa Islamiya in Lebanon.

## Khaleda in Evercare CCU

UNB, Dhaka

BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir said yesterday that the party Chairperson Khaleda Zia's health condition was very critical.

Speaking to reporters at Evercare Hospital, he called on the country's people to pray for her speedy recovery.

Fakhrul went to the hospital around 1:30pm and talked to the medical board members about Khaleda's condition.

The BNP chairperson has been receiving treatment at the Critical Care Unit (CCU) since she was admitted to the hospital early yesterday. Entry to the CCU has been restricted, except for medical board doctors and nurses, considering Khaleda's alarming condition.

"I visited Evercare Hospital around 1:30pm to see madam [Khaleda]. She is in the CCU. Her condition is extremely alarming, and doctors are restricting access to her room," Fakhrul said.

The BNP leader said he talked to doctors engaged in Khaleda's treatment to know her physical condition. "What I came to know from physicians is that her condition is very critical."

He said the medical board members will hold another meeting in the evening to determine the next course of her treatment.

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## Chimps help scientists find medicinal plants



INDEPENDENT.CO.UK

Oxford scientists have identified 13 plants that have potent wound-healing and infection-fighting properties in a "thrilling" discovery - with help from some wild chimpanzees.

Researchers observed the great apes in an African forest feeding on bark, dead wood and leaves from plants that were not part of their normal diet after becoming ill or injured.

Watching how chimpanzees - the closest living human relative - seek help from nature when unwell could fast-track the discovery of new drugs to treat chronic diseases and infections, the researchers said.

Dr Elodie Freymann, from the University of Oxford's School of Anthropology and Museum Ethnography, said: "Our study highlights the medicinal knowledge that can be gained from observing other species in the wild and underscores the urgent need to preserve these forest pharmacies for future generations."



Mokbul Sheikh takes his buffaloes to a pasture in Bilpabla area of Khulna's Dumuria upazila yesterday. He makes between Tk 1,200 and Tk 1,400 a day using the animals to plough fields in nearby villages.

PHOTO: HABIBUR RAHMAN

## ACC to sue Benazir after probe ends

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Anti Corruption Commission is making preparations to file a case against former inspector general of police Benazir Ahmed, his wife Jisaan Mirza, and daughters Farheen Rishta and Tahsin Raisa.

An investigation into their wealth is almost complete, and the case will be filed after it is done, officials said.

The ACC asked him to appear at its office in the capital today.

Benazir and his family members reportedly left the country in early May and it is unlikely that he would appear at the ACC office today and meet the investigators.

ACC lawyer Khurshid Alam Khan said if Benazir remains absent, legal steps will be taken.

Benazir and his family members missed ACC appointments on June 6 and 9. The ACC then rescheduled the dates to June 23 and June 24.

The ACC on April 18 launched an inquiry into allegations that Benazir amassed huge wealth when he was the police chief.