



Rain brings fresh dengue concerns

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'French far-right win a lesson for progressives'

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More women in construction sector should be our next goal

P8



Will BCB's WC' discussions' make any difference?

P11

Pension protest brings public univs to halt

Faculty, staff strike over new pension scheme; students hold quota demo

STAR REPORT

Teachers went on an indefinite strike over pension benefits yesterday, paralysing public universities across the country.

Also, students at Dhaka and Jahangirnagar universities took to the streets, demanding quotas for government jobs be abolished.

The teachers' strike began yesterday with the academics demanding abolition of the new Prottoy Universal Pension Scheme.

No classes, exams, or admission-related activities were done, most classrooms and libraries were locked, and barely any university buses left the sheds at the 35 universities where teachers and

and allows encashment of earned leave – provisions that are unclear or missing in the new scheme.

A finance ministry official said pension schemes like these are common across the world, adding that single-handedly paying the pension was a burden for the government.

After the government announced the scheme in May, teachers associations termed it "discriminatory" and called for its abolition.

The teachers have also been demanding a new pay scale and the inclusion of professors in the "super" grade.

There are over 16,000 teachers and 34,382 staff at 50 public universities that



RAINY DAY GAMES! ... Children dabble in a game of football through the puddles that formed in a school playground after rain in Khulna's Dumuria upazila. The photo was taken at Thukra Ramkrishnapur Pashchimpara Government High School yesterday afternoon.

PHOTO: HABIBUR RAHMAN

'PROTTOY' PENSION SCHEME

- Existing employees will not be affected
- Monthly pension, not one-time payment
- Will deduct employees' 10pc basic salary
- The scheme is tax-free

staffers were on strike.

As yesterday was also the first day of a three-day strike by the Inter-University Officers' Federation over pensions, no administrative work was done.

"We will not return to the classrooms until the demands are met," Prof Zeenat Huda, general secretary of Dhaka University Teachers' Association, told a rally on campus.

The protests follow a government decision to implement Prottoy pension scheme for recruits joining on or after July 1 the autonomous, self-governing, nationalised, statutory, or such organisations and their subordinate institutions.

Under the scheme, 10 percent of the monthly basic salary of an employee, up to Tk 5,000, will be deducted and given to their pension fund. The organisation will contribute the same amount to the fund, and interest will be added to it. There will be no one-time gratuity for the retiring employee.

At present, no money is deducted from the salary.

The current system includes a 5 percent annual increment in pension

have nearly 300,000 lakh students.

At Dhaka University, the teacher's association shunned the institution's 103rd founding anniversary celebrations yesterday.

DU teacher Nizamul Hoque, secretary general of the Federation of Bangladesh University Teachers' Association, said the pension scheme robbed them of their sense of jubilation.

Addressing a rally, Prof Chandra Nath Podder said the new scheme was imposed without consulting the teachers.

The situation was similar at BUET, Chittagong, Rajshahi, Jahangirnagar and other universities.

At Rajshahi University, teachers demonstrated in front of the Senate Bhaban and the staff association near the administrative building.

At a rally on an otherwise empty Jagannath University campus, Prof Shaikh Masrick Hasan said there should be no disparity between current and future teachers.

Meanwhile, some DU students marched on campus demonstrating against the reinstatement of quota in

SEE PAGE 2 COL 6

SCHOOL EXAM MARKS 65pc for written part, 35pc for practical

ARAFAT RAHAMAN

The National Curriculum Coordination Committee (NCCC) finalised the evaluation process in summative assessment under the new curriculum at a meeting yesterday.

Summative assessments are used to evaluate a student's learning, skill acquisition, and academic achievement at the conclusion of an academic year.

Sixty-five percent of the evaluation will now be based on the written part and 35 percent on practical activities.

The NCCC, a high-level committee responsible for the curriculum's final approval, made the decision at the meeting with officials from the secondary, madrasa, and technical education boards. Education Minister Mohibul Hassan Chowdhury was in the chair.

Confirming the development, Prof Md Moshuazzaman, acting chairman of the National Curriculum and Textbook Board (NCTB), said, "The evaluation method has been finalised with some minor changes to our initial proposals."

PHASE-WISE IMPLEMENTATION

The phase-wise implementation of the new curriculum started on January 1, 2023. Currently, it is followed in classes one, two, three, six, seven, eight, and nine. It will be adopted in classes four,

SEE PAGE 2 COL 4

GOVT OFFICIALS HC directive sought for disclosure of assets

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

In light of media reports about certain government officials amassing property, a Supreme Court lawyer filed a writ petition with the High Court yesterday, requesting that the government take steps to disclose the movable and immovable properties owned by public servants serving in civil capacities, as well as their family members.

Advocate Subir Nandi Das submitted the petition as a public interest litigation to the HC, also appealing to the court to direct the authorities concerned with the government to adopt guidelines or policies or to enact proper legislation to prevent the accumulation of illegal wealth (movable or immovable) through corruption by the public servants serving in civil capacities and their family members.

RAJBARI-TUNGIPARA A lone train operating on Tk 2,110cr line!

No feasibility study done for the project; 4 stations non-operational



TUHIN SHUBHRA ADHIKARY

Bangladesh Railway had taken up a project in 2010 to bring Tungipara of Gopalganj under the railway network without carrying out any feasibility study.

The project was completed in 2018, more than five years behind schedule, for Tk 2,110 crore. The cost was almost double the initial estimates. But the BR now operates only one passenger train on Gopalganj-Rajbari-Rajshahi route.

The railway authorities also could not make four

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

BUSINESS

Remittance hit about \$24b in FY24

After hovering around the \$21-billion mark for the previous two fiscal years, total remittances sent home by Bangladesh's migrant workers reached nearly \$24 billion in the just concluded fiscal year of 2023-24, providing some breathing space amid the forex crunch.

As per the latest data from the Bangladesh Bank, remittance inflow stood at \$23.91 billion in FY24, rising by 10.66 percent compared to the year prior.

STORY ON B1



The Dhalai river has burst its banks after heavy rains, inundating villages in Telikhal union of Sylhet's Companiganj upazila. In 12 hours from 6:00am yesterday, at least 156 millimeters of rainfall was recorded in the district, and vast swathes of land lining different rivers went under water.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

Sylhet, Sunamganj brace for another spell of flood

STAR REPORT

People of Sylhet and Sunamganj are facing flood for the third time this year due to heavy rainfall in the region and upstream India.

The water of the Surma, Jadukata, Kushiara and Sari rivers are flowing above danger level at different points at the time of filing the report.

Around a hundred villages in the low-lying areas of Sylhet's Kanaighat, Zakiganj and Jaintiapur upazila; and Sunamganj's Tahirpur, Chhatak, Dowarabazar and Sadar upazila are submerged.

In the next 48 hours, heavy to very heavy rainfall is expected in the North, North-eastern and adjoining upstream parts of the country, said a bulletin of Flood Forecasting and Warning Centre yesterday.

"As a result, the water level of the rivers in North and Northeastern regions may rise rapidly in a particular time," said the bulletin released at 9:00am yesterday.

Rain and thundershowers are expected over the next five days, said another bulletin from the Bangladesh Meteorological Department yesterday.

Earlier on Sunday, the Bangladesh Water Development Board (WDB) warned of a short-term flood in Sylhet.

The Surma River was flowing 102 centimetres above the danger level in Kanaighat Upazila at 6:00 pm yesterday, while the Kushiara River was flowing 28cm above at Zakiganj's Amolshid and 88 cm above the danger level at Fenchuganj upazila at the same time, according to the WDB in Sylhet.

Meanwhile, the Sari River in Sylhet's Jaintiapur's

SEE PAGE 6 COL 4

ASHIF AHMED RUDRO

A close-up photograph showing a person's hand pouring water from a white plastic pitcher into a clear glass. The person is wearing a pink shirt. The background is slightly blurred, showing other people and what appears to be a public water station or a market stall.

A street food stall in India, likely in a market or festival setting. The counter is filled with various fried snacks, including samosas, bhajis, and fritters, arranged in rows. A person is visible in the background, and the scene is set outdoors with trees and other people in the distance.

PHOTO: REUTERS

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Total 11,450 Bangladeshis in foreign jails

Hasan Mahmud tells JS

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A total of 11,450 Bangladeshis including migrant workers are in jails in 31 countries, Foreign Minister Hasan Mahmud told parliament yesterday.

The foreign minister who is visiting Saudi Arabia, came up with the statistics while replying to a query from the ruling Awami League MP from reserved seats for women, Farida Yasmin.

In a scripted answer, the foreign minister said, according to information provided by different missions abroad, the highest number of incarcerated Bangladeshis are in Saudi Arabia (5,746). Meanwhile, Portugal, Japan and Belgium have the lowest number of jailed Bangladeshis -- two each.

He said 1,579 Bangladeshis are languishing in Indian jails,

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1



HOMAGE TO HOLEY ARTISAN VICTIMS

Top right, Italian Ambassador Antonio Alessandro (left) pays tribute to the victims of the Holey Artisan café attack on its eighth anniversary. Japanese envoy Iwama Kiminori stands in solemn silence as a mark of profound respect towards the victims. Indian High Commissioner Pranay Verma placing a wreath at the makeshift monument on the occasion. On July 1, 2016, five militants with firearms, machetes, and grenades stormed the bakery and held the diners hostage before killing three Bangladeshis, nine Italians, seven Japanese and one Indian. The photos were taken on the restaurant premises yesterday.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS



Transfer, dismissal, retirement not enough

Says TIB on addressing graft

UNB, Dhaka

Transparency International Bangladesh (TIB) has criticised the government's approach to handling corruption within public service, arguing that measures such as transfer, dismissal, and compulsory retirement are inadequate deterrents and may inadvertently foster a culture of impunity.

Dr Iftekharuzzaman, executive director of TIB, emphasised the necessity of holding corrupt public servants accountable through proper legal proceedings rather than mere administrative actions.

He expressed concern over recent cases where officials accused of corruption within agencies like the National Board of

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

Rain brings fresh dengue concerns

44 dead, 3,651 hospitalised this year; experts say situation to worsen in July

HELEMUL ALAM

So far, the country has already recorded 44 deaths and 3,651 hospitalisations from dengue this year. With ongoing intermittent rains, experts fear the situation could worsen if immediate actions are not taken.

Data from the Directorate General of Health Services reveals a worrying trend: last year, dengue cases skyrocketed from 5,956 in June to 43,854 in July.

"With the monsoon rains, dengue cases will start rising now, typically peaking this month," said Prof Kabirul Bashar, an entomologist from Jahangirnagar University.

He said rain water is accumulating on rooftops and at balconies of many buildings and also on the streets of Dhaka, creating ideal breeding grounds for Aedes mosquitoes.

"We are getting a huge number of Aedes mosquito larvae in and around houses at Goran, Khilgaon, Mugda, Manda, Rasulpur,

Maniknagar, Sayedabad, Jatrabari, Jurain, Donia, and Postagola areas," he added.

Public health expert Mushtaq Hossain stressed the importance of proper solid waste



management nationwide to combat Aedes mosquitoes. "Cleaning water containers alone is not enough. Garbage must be buried to prevent rainwater accumulation, which can

also become mosquito breeding sites," he said.

He emphasised the need for a nationwide cleaning drive to tackle the dengue outbreak and other health issues.

Community engagement is crucial, with the government leading and providing resources, Mushtaq said.

He also called for a reformed healthcare management system to reduce dengue fatalities, proposing a three-tiered approach: primary, secondary, and hospital care.

The primary healthcare approach for dengue patients involves establishing local healthcare facilities in every city wards to provide initial diagnosis and treatment, enabling early detection and reducing the burden on hospitals, he explained.

He also pointed out the lack of manpower, medicines, and diagnostic facilities at village and upazila levels, which hampers early dengue detection and treatment.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

BNP misleading people on Dhaka-Delhi deals: Arafat

UNB, Dhaka

State Minister for Information and Broadcasting, Mohammad Ali Arafat, accused the BNP of spreading misinformation regarding the recent agreement between Bangladesh and India.

"Without understanding all aspects of the agreement with India and without realising it, BNP is spreading misinformation and lies, and by distorting these facts, it is confusing people," he said while addressing reporters at a press briefing yesterday.

The recent agreement between Bangladesh and India is not a new foreign policy for either country but advantageous for both, he said.

Arafat said BNP's claims that the agreement posed a threat to Bangladesh's security due to the transit of Indian trains through the country were unfounded.

He said the agreement explicitly prohibits the transportation of "red traffic", including weapons, explosives, and other hazardous materials.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4



When Narendra Modi came to power, BNP leaders woke up early morning and appeared before the Indian High Commission with sweets and flowers. This is what BNP is.

OBABDUL QUADER
Awami League
general secretary



They [Awami League leaders] have always tried to fool people by resorting to lies. The MoUs mean they will make Bangladesh dependent on India within a short time.

MIRZA FAKHRUL
ISLAM ALAMGIR
BNP secretary general



PRAYER TIMING					
JULY 2					
Fazr	Zohr	Asr	Maghrib	Esha	
AZAN 4-10	12-45	5-00	6-55	8-17	
JAMAAT 4-45	1-15	5-15	7-00	8-45	
SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION					

400 people get free health check-ups

Faraaz Hossain Foundation, SKF Pharmaceuticals hold medical camp in Moulvibazar

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Moulvibazar

More than 400 people with various health complications got a chance to consult specialised doctors free of cost at a health camp in Moulvibazar yesterday.

The daylong health camp was jointly organised by Faaraz Hossain Foundation and SKF Pharmaceuticals Limited at Manumukh PT Bahumukhi High School of Moulvibazar Sadar upazila.

Mother and Child Private Hospital and Diagnostic Center in Moulvibazar has provided support in conducting the medical camp, said organisers.

Since morning, there were long queues of people at the camp where the doctors provided services.

Husain Ahmed, 49, said, "I've been suffering from high blood pressure for a long time... but due to poverty I could not afford



treatment. But today, I could consult a doctor and got medicine from them free of charge.

Feroza Begum, 65, who has been suffering from asthma, echoed the same.

The camp was held commemorating Faraaz Ayaaz Hossain.

Faraaz has become an epitome of supreme sacrifice for the cause

of humanity. His refusal to leave his friends during the militant attack at Gulshan's Holey Artisan Bakery on July 1, 2016 was not only an act of bravery that the world saluted but also set the burning example of what a pristine youthful mind can do when it comes to choosing the right path at the expense of mere mortality.

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দি প্রিমিয়ার ব্যাংক পিএলসি.

New roads put

FROM PAGE 5

kind of permission," said Nesar Uddin Ahmed Monju, a ward councillor in North Kattali area.

Contacted, officials of Department of Agricultural Extension said the use of arable lands for commercial activities is on the rise in the region in absence of a dedicated law to protect agricultural land.

Mohammed Nasir Uddin, additional director of Chattogram regional office of DAE, said, "We do not have any legal power to prevent farmlands from being used for non-agricultural purposes. We just give permission on condition that the establishment cannot be built on cropland."

Nasir Uddin, however, claimed that they did not approve the structures built on croplands on both sides of the Outer Ring Road.

Total 11,450

FROM PAGE 3

508 in Türkiye, 420 in Oman, 415 in Qatar, 414 in Greece, 404 in the UAE, 385 in South Africa, 358 in Myanmar, 219 in Malaysia, 217 in Iraq, 191 in China, 122 in Hong Kong, 100 in Jordan, 81 in Italy, 70 in the Maldives, 66 in Singapore, 49 in Indonesia, 28 in Lebanon, 19 in Spain, 16 in Brunei, nine in Libya, six each in Egypt and Korea, five in Algeria, four in Thailand, and four in Mozambique.

Replying to another query from AL MP HM Badiuzzaman, the foreign minister said, in recent times, no Bangladeshi was arrested and imprisoned for entering the Indian border by mistake.

শিল্প পুট ভাড়া হবে
 ৩০ শোভাগোলা শিল্প এলাকায় ৩০০ KW বিদ্যুৎ লাইন, সাবস্টেশন, গভীর নলকূপ সুবিধা ৪০% সোভাল বিজি সহ ১০ কড়া জায়গার উপর সম্পূর্ণ সেট করা।
01711 544192



Sixty-year-old craftsman Md Khalil Hawalder sits on a sidewalk and repairs broken umbrellas. Incessant rain over the last few days has left his business booming, allowing Khalil to earn around Tk 1,000-1,500 daily. The photo was taken on Fazlul Haque Avenue in Barishal yesterday.

PHOTO: TITU DAS

School waterlogged for six months

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Jamalpur*

Persistent waterlogging is disrupting academic activities of nearly 200 students at Khatua Kumri Government Primary School in Sherpur Sadar upazila.

The school's premises and playground stay inundated for nearly six months every year, almost the entirety of monsoon and every time it rains during summer.

The students cannot participate in sports due to the submerged school ground.

Meanwhile, the stagnant water, overrun by water hyacinths, has become a perfect breeding grounds

for mosquitoes.

During a recent visit, this correspondent observed stagnant water on the compound. Students



were wading through ankle-high water to reach their classes.

"We can't play on our school ground as it remains waterlogged for months," said Shakil, a student.

Guardians have expressed concerns that their children are falling behind in co-curricular activities compared to their peers.

Akteruzzaman, headteacher of the school, said, "We tried to dig a drain to let the water recede, but could not do so due to objections from neighbouring land owners. We made a written request to the upazila primary education officer on June 6 for necessary measures to this end."

Akram Hossain, upazila primary education officer of Sherpur Sadar, said he has received an application from the school's headteacher and necessary steps will be taken soon.

Transfer, dismissal

FROM PAGE 3

Revenue and the police were either transferred or forced into retirement.

"While administrative actions like transfer or retirement might appear promising, they do not sufficiently address the root causes of corruption," Iftekharuzzaman stated.

"In fact, such measures can perpetuate a cycle where corruption goes unchecked due to a lack of rigorous legal consequences," he said. "The widespread acceptance of minimal punishment for corruption allegations sends a damaging message," he alleged. "It suggests that certain individuals are above the law, which undermines public trust and erodes the foundation of ethical governance," he noted.

Addressing the role of political leaders in combating corruption, Dr

Iftekharuzzaman called for a holistic approach that goes beyond rhetoric.

He urged political parties to take responsibility for the systemic issues that enable corruption to flourish, including political patronage and institutional collusion.

"Institutionalised corruption cannot be tackled effectively if political leaders evade accountability," the TIB chief asserted.

"To rebuild public trust and uphold ethical standards, we need concrete actions that demonstrate a genuine commitment to transparency and accountability," he said.

TIB called upon the government to ensure that officials accused of corruption face rigorous investigation and trial, aligning with the standard legal procedures applicable to all citizens.

BNP misleading

FROM PAGE 3

"BNP claims that if Indian trains run through Bangladesh, it will pose a security risk to Bangladesh. This is not correct. Clause 3 of the agreement clearly states that 'red traffic,' including weapons, explosives, and dangerous items, will not be transported. Clause 4 of the agreement also states that the movement of goods and people between Bangladesh and India will be governed by the national laws, regulations, and administrative rules of the respective countries," he

said.

Arafat also criticised BNP's leadership, accusing them of hindering regional connectivity initiatives and neglecting opportunities for economic progress, such as rejecting the submarine cable and obstructing the gas supply from Myanmar through India.

Arafat urged all to discern the facts and cautioned against falling prey to misinformation campaigns, stressing the importance of informed public discourse on matters of national interest.

Rain brings fresh

FROM PAGE 3

Secondary healthcare facilities should cater to at-risk patients, such as pregnant women, the elderly, and children, to reduce the burden on major hospitals and critical care units, he added.

Entomologist GM Saifur Rahman also warned that the current rain patterns

will likely increase Aedes mosquito populations due to the abundance of breeding sites. He stressed the importance of destroying these sites.

Applying insecticides is less effective during inclement weather, so main focus should be on destroying breeding grounds," he explained.

UZ chairman sent to jail in murder case

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Jamalpur*

A Jamalpur court yesterday sent Raihan Rahmatullah Rimu, chairman of Madarganj Upazila Parishad, to prison in the murder case of fertiliser trader Nowsher Ali in the district.

Chief Judicial Magistrate Masud Parvez passed the order.

According to the state lawyer, on the evening of April 25, 2020, fertiliser trader Nowsher Ali was injured in an attack by some miscreants at Balijuri market in Madarganj upazila.

He later died while undergoing treatment at Mymensingh Medical College and Hospital.

When Rimu's name came up in the police investigation report, he secured bail for six weeks from the High Court. Upon the expiry of his bail period, he sought bail again from the Chief Judicial Magistrate's court yesterday.

However, the judge sent him to jail after rejecting his bail plea.

Dhaka for taskforce to stop workers' harassment in KSA

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh has proposed forming a task force to ensure transparency in recruitment and stop harassment of migrant workers by vested quarters in Saudi Arabia.

The proposal was made during the second political consultation between Dhaka and Riyadh in Saudi Arabia yesterday.

Foreign Minister Hasan Mahmud led the Bangladesh side, while his Saudi counterpart Prince Faisal bin Farhan Al Saud led the other side, according to a foreign ministry statement.

Hasan Mahmud requested Saudi authorities to provide special scope for Bangladeshi businessmen to register their businesses there. He also requested special privileges for importing oil from Saudi Arabia.

They discussed strengthening bilateral and political relations and intensifying bilateral and multilateral coordination on issues of common concern, alongside regional and global development.

They stressed the need for the Bangladesh-Saudi Arabia Joint Business Council to step up its activities to strengthen commercial relations between the two countries.

Bangladesh and Saudi Arabia also explored enhanced investment in economic zones and offshore banking.

At the meeting, the Saudi foreign minister assured cooperation regarding Rohingya repatriation, while both sides emphasised united efforts from the Muslim world to stop Israel's brutality in Gaza.

The upcoming visit of the Saudi crown prince to Bangladesh was also discussed at the meeting.

They decided to adopt a joint action plan for the proper celebration of the golden jubilee of Saudi-Bangladesh diplomatic relations next year and to elevate the meeting of Bangladesh-Saudi Arab Joint Commission to a ministerial level.

প্রকল্প পরিচালকের কার্যালয়
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Office of The Project Director
 "Expansion of Infrastructure and Academic Activities of Khulna University of Engineering & Technology"
 Khulna University of Engineering & Technology
 Khulna-9203, Bangladesh.

Planning & Engineering Building (2nd Floor), Khulna-9203, Tel: +88041-769468-75, Ext. 8914; E-mail: pd-eiaa@kuet.ac.bd

Memo No.: KUET/EIAA/2024/07/2021 Date: 01/07/2024

E-Tender Notice

E-Tender will be invited in the National e-Gp System Portal (<https://www.eprocure.gov.bd/>) for procurement of.

Sl. No.	Tender ID No.	Ref./Package No.	Description of Works	Online Tender Notice Publication date	Online Tender Closing date
01	997438	KUET/EIAA/2023-24/DV-51B	Construction of Institute Building-10 Storied at KUET Campus	01-July-2024	16-July-2024

This is an online Tender, where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-Gp Portal and no online/hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-Tender, registration in the National e-Gp system portal (<https://www.eprocure.gov.bd/>) is required.

The fees for last selling/downloading the e-Tender Documents from the National e-Gp system portal have to be deposited online through any registered banks branches. Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-Gp system portal and from e-Gp help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd).

(Signature)
 01.07.2024

(Dr. Md. Jufikar Hossain)
 Project Director
 Expansion of Infrastructure and Academic Activities of KUET
 Khulna University of Engineering & Technology
 Khulna-9203.

GD-1059

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০১	ইজারা কোটেশন নং	:	০১/ইজারা/গোঃসঃবিঃ/২০২৩-২০২৪ (১০ম আহবান)
০২	ইজারার বিবরণ	:	২০২৪-২০২৫ অর্থবছর হতে ২০২৬-২০২৭ অর্থবছর পর্যন্ত (১ জুলাই ২০২৪ হতে ৩০ জুন ২০২৭) মেয়াদে গোপালগঞ্জ সড়ক বিভাগীয় গোপালগঞ্জ জেলার সদর উপজেলার চরতাল-জয়নগর ঘাটে বিভিন্ন প্রকার যানবাহন পারাপারের নিমিত্তে যানবাহনের টোল আদায়ের ইজারা প্রদান।
০৩	ইজারা চুক্তির মেয়াদ	:	১ জুলাই ২০২৪ হতে ৩০ জুন ২০২৭ পর্যন্ত = ৩ (তিন) বছর।
০৪	ইজারা কোটেশনের সিডিউল মূল্য	:	টাকা ৫০০০.০০ (পাঁচ হাজার টাকা) মাত্র।
০৫	জামানতের টাকার পরিমাণ	:	উক্ত মূল্যের ১০% (শতকরা দশ ভাগ) ব্যাংক ড্রাফট/ পে-অর্ডার আকারে।
০৬	ইজারা কোটেশন বিক্রয়ের শেষ তারিখ ও সময়	:	১৫/০৭/২০২৪ তারিখ বিকাল ৫:০০ ঘটিকা পর্যন্ত।
০৭	মুখবন্ধ অবস্থায় ইজারা কোটেশন গ্রহণের শেষ তারিখ ও সময়	:	১৬/০৭/২০২৪ তারিখ বেলা ১২:৩০ ঘটিকা পর্যন্ত।
০৮	ইজারা ডাকে অংশ গ্রহণের যোগ্যতা	:	ডাট্টা ও আয়কর সনদধারী প্রতিষ্ঠান/নারীক, সরকারী / বেসরকারী / স্বায়ব্ধশাসিত সকল প্রতিষ্ঠানের ঠিকাদার।
০৯	যে সকল কার্যালয়ে ইজারা কোটেশন ক্রয়ের জন্য পাওয়া যাবে	:	বিভাগীয় কমিশনার, ঢাকা বিভাগ, সেপুন বাগিচা, ঢাকা / জেলা প্রশাসক, গোপালগঞ্জ / নির্বাহী প্রকৌশলী, সওজ, সড়ক বিভাগ, গোপালগঞ্জ / উপ-বিভাগীয় প্রকৌশলী, সওজ, ভাটিয়াপাড়া সড়ক উপ-বিভাগ, গোপালগঞ্জ।
১০	যে সকল কার্যালয়ে ইজারা কোটেশন মুখবন্ধ অবস্থায় গ্রহণ করা হবে	:	(ক) নির্বাহী প্রকৌশলীর কার্যালয়, সওজ, সড়ক বিভাগ, গোপালগঞ্জ। (খ) জেলা প্রশাসক এর কার্যালয়, গোপালগঞ্জ।
১১	ইজারা কোটেশন খোলার স্থান, তারিখ ও সময়	:	স্থান : নির্বাহী প্রকৌশলীর কার্যালয়, সওজ, সড়ক বিভাগ, গোপালগঞ্জ। তারিখ : ১৬/০৭/২০২৪ সময় : বেলা ২:৩০ ঘটিকা।
১২	ইজারা আদানকারী যে কোন সময় যে কোন কোটেশন / সকল কোটেশন বাতিলের ক্ষমতা সংরক্ষণ করেন।	:	

(Signature)
 ৩০.৬.২৭
 মোঃ আজহারুল ইসলাম
 পরিচিতি নম্বর: ৬০২৩০৬
 নির্বাহী প্রকৌশলী(চ.দা.), সওজ
 সড়ক বিভাগ, গোপালগঞ্জ।

GD-1062

Rajshahi City Corporation
Engineering Department
 Nagar Bhaban, Rajshahi.
rajshahi.portal.gov.bd

সেখ হাসিনার মূলনীতি
 গ্রাম শহরের উন্নতি

Memo No.46.12.0000.006.14.273.2020. 1012 Date: 30.06.2024

e-Tender Notice
(IFT-08/2023-24)

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

S L	Tender ID	Name of Works	Tender Document last selling Time and Date
1	1000638	(A) Construction of Landscaping work at Guljerbag lake Nurur Dhalan pond. (B) Renovation work of Sonadighi Pond.	
2	1000639	Construction of Boundary Wall & Retaining wall of Asphalt Plant City Hat.	
3	1000640	Construction of Rajshahi Medical College Boundary Wall from Kolabagan Masjid to Rajib Chatter (Salvage Tk. 88880.40).	
4	1000641	Construction of Rajshahi Medical College Boundary Wall from Rajib Chatter to Ghora Chatter (Salvage Tk. 133320.60).	
5	1000642	Construction & re-construction of carpeting roads, cement concrete roads, tertiary drains and road dividers in ward no. 6, 7, 17, 18 of Rajshahi City Corporation (Salvage Tk. 656452.86).	
6	1000643	Construction of carpeting road, tertiary drain, footpath, road divider, railing, retaining wall from Kathalbaria More to Hi-Tech Park via Jahanara Zaman Stadium (Salvage Tk. 600986.79).	
7	1000644	Construction of Divider Railing from Talaimary Mour to Katakhalhi City Gate.	
8	1000645	Construction of railing beside the drain from Chodopai to Shampur.	
9	1000646	Construction of footpath near Lalonshah Park and inside Rajshahi Medical College and foundation of rides at Shaheed AHM Kamaruzzaman Central Park and Sheikh Russel Shishu Park.	
10	1000647	Construction of carpeting road, footpath, divider railing from Fulhola mour to Dashmari school mour.	
11	1000648	Construction of carpeting road, footpath, divider railing from Dashmari school mour to Mizaner mour.	
12	1000649	Development work of Shaheed AHM Kamaruzzaman Central Park.	
13	1000651	Construction of CC road and tertiary drain in Ward No. 7 of Rajshahi City Corporation (Salvage Tk. 386799.00).	
14	1000650	Construction of Carpeting road, CC road and tertiary drain in Ward No. 9 of Rajshahi City Corporation (Salvage Tk. 643602.56).	
15	1000652	Construction of CC road and tertiary drain in Ward No. 11 of Rajshahi City Corporation.	
16	1000653	Construction of Carpeting road, CC road and tertiary drain in Ward No. 12 of Rajshahi City Corporation (Salvage Tk. 1061422.43).	
17	1000654	Construction of Carpeting road, CC road and tertiary drain in Ward No. 13 of Rajshahi City Corporation (Salvage Tk. 435471.64).	
18	1000655	Construction of CC road and tertiary drain in Ward No. 20 of Rajshahi City Corporation (Salvage Tk. 607207.36).	
19	1000656	Construction of Carpeting road, CC road and tertiary drain in Ward No. 22 of Rajshahi City Corporation (Part-A) (Salvage Tk. 158291.76).	
20	1000657	Construction of CC road and tertiary drain in Ward No. 22 of Rajshahi City Corporation (Part-B) (Salvage Tk. 50788.80).	
21	1000658	Construction of Carpeting Road, CC road and tertiary drain in Ward No. 23 of Rajshahi City Corporation.	
22	1000659	Construction of CC road and tertiary drain in Ward No. 24 of Rajshahi City Corporation (Salvage Tk. 908548.15).	
23	1000670	Construction of carpeting road, CC road and tertiary drain in Ward No. 25 of Rajshahi City Corporation (Salvage Tk. 554021.16).	
24	1000668	Construction of Tertiary Drain, Carpeting Road, CC Road, Retaining Wall in Ward No. 29 of Rajshahi City Corporation.	
25	1000845	Construction of Carpeting Road, CC Road & Tertiary Drain in Ward No. 30 of Rajshahi City Corporation.	
26	1000671	Construction of CC road & Tertiary Drain in Ward No. 17 & 21 of Rajshahi City Corporation (Salvage Tk. 226623.60).	
27	1000669	Construction of CC road in Ward No. 16 of Rajshahi City Corporation.	
28	1001012	Construction of carpeting road, RCC drain & footpath from Sapura Gorasthan to Sapura wood mill via Miapara Battala mour.	
29	1001504	(a) Construction of Asphalt Carpeting Road from Raipara Bypass Mour Councillor Office to Raipara Primary School Dhalan Mour at Ward no 01. (b) Construction of Asphalt Carpeting Road with RCC Drain from Hojor Mour to Chockpara Sanju Shop at Ward no 26.	
30	1001505	Construction of two storied CDC Cluster (Shimul Cluster) & Market beside UposaharSatellite Town high School at ward no 14.	
31	1000839	Painting Nagar Bhaban Building.	
32	1000840	Renovation work of toilet in Nagar Bhaban Building.	
33	1000843	Development & electrification work of Shaheed AHM Kamaruzzaman Nursing Institute.	
34	1000841	(A) Renovation of parking garage and public toilet at Shalbagan garage. (B) Supply & addition of necessary fittings to internal toilets & gardens of Rani Nagar City Hospital.	

This is an online tender, where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP Portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-Tender, registration in the National e-GP System Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd/>) is required. The fees for downloading the e-Tender documents from the National e-GP System Portal have to be deposited online through any registered banks branches. Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System Portal and from e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd).

(Signature)
 (Md. Noor Islam)
 Chief Engineer & Project Director
 Rajshahi City Corporation
 Tel. 0247812020
 E-mail : nislamtushar@gmail.com

GD-1063

Now govt can appoint administrator for UPs

Local govt amendment bill passed in parliament

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Local Government (Union Parishad) (Amendment) Bill, 2024 was passed in Parliament yesterday, introducing a provision for appointing administrators to union parishads after the elected representatives' five-year tenure expires.

LGRD Minister M Tazul Islam presented the bill, which was passed by voice vote. The new legislation stipulates that the government can appoint administrators for up to 120 days after the end of a Union Parishad's tenure.

With the proposed change, no Union Parishad chairman can remain in office beyond their term on any pretext. The current loophole allowing chairmen to stay in office past their term will be eliminated.

The post of UP secretary has been changed to "UP Administrative Officer" under the new law.

Under the new legislation, a competent officer or person will be appointed as an administrator to perform a Union Parishad's functions until a newly-elected council is formed.

This measure is expected to curb the practice of delaying elections through litigation.

The bill emphasises the Union Parishad's role in managing village courts and maintaining law and order, aiming to expand the effectiveness of village court activities.

475 workplace deaths in last six months

Says Safety, Rights Society data

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

At least 475 workers died in 420 accidents at various workplaces across the country in the first six months of 2024.

Safety and Rights Society released the data yesterday after conducting a survey based on news published in 15 national and 11 local newspapers.

In the same period in 2023, around 389 workers died in 287 accidents.

SRS has found that the highest number of workers were killed in the transport sector.

Of the total number, 250 transport workers died in this period, 74 died in service establishments (such as workshops, gas, electricity supply establishments), 66 in agricultural sector, 52 in construction, and 33 died in factories and other manufacturing institutes.

SRS Executive Director Sekender Ali Mina said Bangladesh's production and employment depend on the informal sector, where labour laws are largely unenforced, making it challenging to control workplace accidents.

Supervision by relevant authorities must be increased to control workplace accidents, he added.



New roads put agriculture at stake

120 hectares of cropland being used for commercial purposes

SIFAYET ULLAH, Ctg

Mohammed Soheli, 37, of Golichipa Para in the North Halishahar area of Chattogram city, is planning to work as a transport worker as the four-acre land he used to cultivate as a sharecropper has been turned into a truck terminal and cold storage depot.

"The land owner rented out the land for the truck terminal and coal storage depot, thereby compelling me to look for an alternative livelihood," he told this correspondent recently.

Soheli is not alone. Over a hundred farmers, whose lives solely depended on agriculture, were forced to change their profession after at least 120 hectares of arable land were turned into transport terminals, cattle farms, and factories.

These lands, located in North Kattali, North Pahartali, South Kattali, Halishahar, and Patenga areas, used to be cultivated to produce different crops, including tomato and watermelon, according to the metropolitan agriculture office in Chattogram.

After the construction of two link roads in the region to enhance connectivity, there has been a boost to business activities in the region, which in turn has made agriculture no longer attractive to landowners.

The 12.5-kilometre Port Link Road connecting Faujdarhat and Halishahar, which opened in 2007, paved the way for this transition.



Later, the 15.5km Outer Ring Road, which opened in 2021, connecting Faujdarhat and Patenga, further boosted connectivity and depleted agricultural land.

This correspondent recently visited several points of the Outer Ring Road and observed that many commercial structures have been built on the east side of the road.

"Earlier, after every seasonal harvest, the markets used to be

flooded with an array of different crop varieties. But those days are no more," said Ataur Rahaman, 55, a vegetable vendor in Foillatoli Bazar under Halishahar area.

Jahangir Alam, a farmer from North Kattali, said, "Before these two roads were constructed, I used to earn my living by growing crops. Now, I am struggling to make ends meet after the agricultural lands were lost to commercial activities."

The six-acre land he used for cultivation now houses a workshop. At least 70 vehicles can be kept at the workshop at a time.

Elias Mistree, owner of the workshop, said, "After the road opened, most Chattogram Port-bound vehicles started using this road, which convinced me to set up the workshop here."

Any structure can be built on agricultural land after getting permission from the local ward councillor of Chattogram City Corporation.

"However, most of those using their arable land for commercial activities do not come to us for any

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1

CHT PEACE ACCORD

Govt not making progress in its implementation

Says PCJSS report

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Since the Chittagong Hill Tracts Peace Accord has not been properly implemented yet, the situation in CHT has worsened and become very sensitive, said Parbatya Chattogram Jana Samhati Samiti (PCJSS) in its half-yearly report yesterday.

Despite being in power for 16 years now, the Awami League government has not paced forward with the accord's implementation process, said the report, adding, "At present, the government has put the implementation process to a total halt."

On December 2, 1997, the then AL government and PCJSS signed the CHT peace accord to solve the CHT crisis through political and peaceful means.

On April 30 this year, in the ninth meeting of CHT Accord Implementation and Monitoring Committee, it came up with evidential proof that the government did not undertake any initiative towards the implementation of the decisions adopted in the earlier meetings, the report also said.

From January to June this year, 107 incidents of rights violations were reported in CHT, while at least 5,448 Jumma people, including 5,000 men and women from the Bawm community, fell prey to human rights violations.

In such a way, the government has been turning the committee into a mere institution of nomenclature, it added.

The report further said the CHT has been experiencing human rights violations in various forms, such as suppression and oppression by administration and security forces, activities of armed terrorists, illegal land occupation, eviction and communal attacks, sexual harassment, violence, rape and killing, and development aggression.

From January to June this year, 107 incidents of rights violations were reported in CHT, while at least 5,448 Jumma people, including 5,000 men and women from the Bawm community, fell prey to human rights violations, it said.

The report said on April 23, a Rangamati court dismissed the case regarding the abduction of Kalpana Chakma.

After 28 years, the dismissal order of Kalpana Chakma's abduction case in the lower court has effectively granted impunity to the administration from its responsibility to uncover her whereabouts and the details of her kidnappers, the report added.

We do not have any legal power to prevent farmlands from being used for non-agricultural purposes. We just give permission on condition that the establishment cannot be built on cropland.

MOHAMMED NASIR UDDIN, Additional director of Ctg DAE

Bangladesh House Building Finance Corporation
Rural and Peri-Urban Housing Finance Project-Second Phase
Foreign Financing and Project Unit, Head Office, Dhaka
Website: www.bhbfc.gov.bd

REQUEST FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST
(CONSULTANCY SERVICE- PROJECT FINANCIAL AUDITING SERVICE)

Country : The People's Republic of Bangladesh

Project : Rural and Peri-Urban Housing Finance Project-Second Phase

Sector : Peri-Urban and Rural Environment and Infrastructure

Consulting Service : Project Financial Auditing Services (Package S-03)

Mode of Financing : Installment Sale Financing and OCR Loan

Financing No : BGD-1087

1. The Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh has applied for financing from the Islamic Development Bank toward the cost of the Rural and Peri-Urban Housing Finance Project-Second Phase, and intends to apply part of the proceeds for consultant services.

2. The services include carrying out audit of the project in accordance with the International Standards on Auditing (ISA) issued by the International Federation of Accountants (IFAC), having regard to relevant financing agreements and IsDB's particular reporting and procurement requirements. The audit covers the financial transactions of the project period from 01.07.2024 to 30.06.2029. The assignment is expected to be commenced in September, 2024. The estimated 20 person-months are expected to be required for this assignment.

The detailed Terms of Reference (TOR) for the assignment *can be found at the following website: www.bhbfc.gov.bd*

3. The Bangladesh House Building Finance Corporation (BHBFC) as Executing Agency now invites eligible consulting firms ("Consultants") to indicate their interest in providing the services. Interested Consultants must provide specific information which demonstrates that they are fully qualified to perform the services (brochures, description of similar assignments, experience in similar conditions, availability of appropriate skills among staff, etc.).

4. The short listing criteria are as below:

- The Consulting Firm should be eligible as per eligibility requirements contained in the IsDB's Guideline for the Procurement of Consultancy Services under IsDB Project Financing, April-2019 version, revised in February-2023;
- Must have a good reputation as a professional body and knowledge on financial management and audit requirements of IsDB and/or Multilateral Development Banks (MDBs) specifically preparation of audit report with at least one project funded by MDBs or any international organizations;
- Must have at least 3 years specific experience on auditing in bank and financial institutions within last 10 years;
- Must have technical and managerial capability of the firm and staff, number of full time professional staffs required as per ToR. However, Key Experts will not be evaluated at the short-listing stage.

5. The attention of interested Consultants is drawn to 1.12.1, and 1.12.2 paragraphs, Part 1, Chapter 1 (pages 15-16) of the IsDB's Guidelines for Procurement of Consultancy Services under Islamic Development Bank Project Financing, April 2019 version, revised in February 2023 (the "Procurement Guidelines"), setting forth IsDB's policy on conflict of interest.

6. Consultants may associate with other firms to enhance their qualifications, but should indicate clearly whether the association is in the form of a joint venture and/or a sub-consultancy. In the case of a joint venture, all the partners in the joint venture shall be jointly and severally liable for the entire contract, if selected.

7. An auditing consultancy firm will be selected from a short list of local/domestic companies based on the Least-Cost selection method set out in the Procurement Guidelines.

8. Interested consultants may obtain further information at the address below during office hours 10:00 AM to 05:00 PM.

9. Expressions of interest (EOIs) must be delivered in a written form to the address below (in person, or by mail) by no later than 02:00 PM **on 18 July, 2024**. Both the hard copy as well as electronic version of EOIs will be acceptable.

(Mohammed Nazrul Islam)
Project Director
Rural and Peri-Urban Housing Finance Project-Second Phase
Bangladesh House Building Finance Corporation
22 Purana Paltan (7th floor), Tel: +88-02-47120610
Website: www.bhbfc.gov.bd, E-mail: bhbfc.project.pmu@gmail.com

GD-1060

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Divisional Passport & Visa Office
E-7 Agargaon, Dhaka-1207
www.dip.gov.bd
Invitation for Enlistment

Sl. No.	Description	Detail
1.	Ministry/Division	Security Service Division, Ministry of Home Affairs (MOHA), Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
2.	Agency	Department of Immigration & Passports (DIP)
3.	Procuring Entity Name	Divisional Passport & Visa Office, Agargaon, Dhaka.
4.	Procuring Entity Code	N/A
5.	Procuring Entity District	Dhaka, Bangladesh
6.	Invitation for	Enlistment of Firm for the supply of Furniture, Electronics, stationary items, goods, Stamp & Seals and related service.
7.	Invitation Ref No.	58.01.00000.601.07.001.24-1153
8.	Date	30/06/2024
KEY INFORMATION		
9.	Procurement Method	Limited Tendering Method.
FUNDING INFORMATION		
10.	Budget and Source of Funds	Government of Bangladesh (GOB)
11.	Development Partners	None
PARTICULAR INFORMATION		
12.	Office Code	N/A
13.	Office Name	Divisional Passport & Visa Office, Agargaon, Dhaka.
14.	Application Closing Date and Time	21/07/2024 at 01:00 pm (BST)
15.	Name & Address	
	Application Form Availability	Salma Akhi, Assistant Director, Divisional Passport & Visa Office, Agargaon, Dhaka. Room No-603. Telephone No- 02-58156425
	Receiving Application Form	Jagadish Chandra Taty, Deputy Assistant Director, Room No-303, Divisional Passport & Visa Office, Agargaon, Dhaka. Telephone No- 02-58156425
INFORMATION FOR APPLICATION		
16.	Eligibility of Application	a) Vat Registration and TIN Certificate of the Suppliers. b) Up-to-date Trade License of Local Agent from City Corporation. c) Proprietorship/Partnership/Limited Company ie. Concerned Commercial Documents (Photocopy) of the Tenders. d) Money Receipt of purchase of Tender Documents. e) Proof of Solvency. f) Must confirm that has legal Capacity to enter into a contract under the authority with valid Power of Attorney. g) At least 3 years' experience certificate for the Supply of similar goods and related service.
		a) Supply of Stationary items, b) Supply of office furniture and fixer. c) Supply of AC, Network items, Electronics goods and miscellaneous items.
Sl. No.	Description	Detail
18.	Brief Description of Related or Physical Services	N/A
19.	Price of Application Form	2000.00 BDT payable with treasury A-Chalan(Code No: 1610501-133252-1422328
PROCURING ENTITY DETAILS		
20.	Name of Official Inviting Application	Director
21.	Designation of Official Inviting Application	Director
22.	Address of Official Inviting Application	Director, Divisional Passport & Visa Office, Agargaon, Dhaka.
23.	Contact details of Official Inviting Application	Telephone No- 02-58156425.
		The procuring entity reserves the right to reject any or all the Tenders without assigning any reason.

(Salma Akhi)
Assistant Director
For Director

GD- 1057

I am thankful for everything: JAYA AHSAN

From her colleagues in showbiz, friends, and fans, the internet boasted with good wishes for Jaya. “I was overwhelmed with all the love that everyone showered upon me. I am thankful for the lovely wishes and prayers, and for everything,” the actress shared.

SHAH ALAM SHAZU

Just a day before her birthday, Jaya Ahsan returned to Dhaka after completing shooting in Kolkata for her upcoming film *Dear Ma*. Yesterday, the National Award-winning actress celebrated the special occasion with her family.

Jaya’s busy schedule rarely allows her the chance to spend time in the country and with her close ones. In conversation with The Daily Star, the actress spoke about her special day, current projects, and more.

“As soon as I returned home, the hour of celebrations began,” she said. “I usually like to stay home on my birthdays, and spend quality time with my family.”

From her colleagues in showbiz, friends, and fans, the internet boasted with good wishes for Jaya. “I was overwhelmed with all the love that everyone showered upon me. I am thankful for the lovely wishes and prayers, and for everything,” the actress shared.

Her mother likes to cook special cuisine for Jaya’s birthday every year. “My mother is always excited about my birthdays,” smiles Jaya, “This year she made Hilsha Polao and it was heavenly! To tell you the truth, I was craving for this for a long time (laughs).”

Marking her birthday, the teaser of another project, titled *OCD* starring Jaya, was revealed. It is directed by Soukarya Ghosal. Jaya earlier worked with the director in *Bhootpori*, which was released in February. “The name of the film says a lot about itself, and for now, I can say that it will reveal many answers.”

Talking about *Dear Maa*, the actress shared, “The plot of *Dear Maa* is emotional and conveys a strong message. It is a very sweet story between a child and mother.”

Directed by Aniruddha Roy Chowdhury, the film also features Chandan Roy Sanyal and Saswata Chatterjee. This film marks the second collaboration of Jaya and Aniruddha after their much-acclaimed Bollywood web-film *Kadak Singh*. “Aniruddha da’s style of filmmaking is quite different and impressive. I have observed that while working with him in the previous project and he has put a lot of effort into this film as well. The audience will be able to witness it on the screen.”

Jaya’s experience of working in this film was great for her co-actors as well. “All of my co-artists are power-packed performers, it was quite challenging to perform with them and enjoyable too.”

The actress further added that she would be happier if the Bangladeshi audience could watch *Dear Maa*. “Whenever my film releases in Kolkata, I always feel if Bangladeshi audience could enjoy this film too, I hope we will be able to make it possible in near future,” concluded the actress.



PHOTO: COLLECTED



Vicky Zahed’s horror-thriller ‘Ekti Khola Janala’ to premiere on Binge

Director Vicky Zahed, renowned for his psycho-thrillers like *Redrum*, *Punorjonmo* series, returns with another similar instalment— this time blending horror into a short film, titled *Ekti Khola Janala*.

The film stars Tasnia Farin and Sallha Khanam Nadia in the lead roles, both portraying the characters of nurses.

Vicky Zahed explains, “This is an international story adapted to the Bangladeshi context. It revolves around two nurses and the strange events they encounter one night. It’s an attempt to create something different.”

Ekti Khola Janala will premiere on the OTT platform Binge in the first week of July.

Actress Bobby faces charges of attempted murder and theft

Renowned actress Eamin Haque Bobby is embroiled in legal controversy after Muhammad Sakib Uddoja, AGM of YN Centre, filed a case against her, accusing her of theft and assault with the intent to murder.

The case was registered at Gulshan Police Station on June 23, confirmed by Gulshan Police Officer-in-Charge Mazharul Islam. He also mentioned that Bobby and the primary accused, Mirza Abul Bashar, have filed a countersuit. The investigation, led by Sub-Inspector Anwar Hossain, is currently underway.

The complaint also noted that the YN Centre suffered damages worth Tk 1,50,000 and thefts amounting to Tk 1,00,000, which are yet to be recovered.



COUNTRYWIDE

AMTALI UPAZILA HEALTH COMPLEX Manpower shortage cripples health service

SOHRAB HOSSAIN, Patuakhali

Patients in Barguna’s Amtali upazila are deprived of proper treatment facilities as the upazila health complex is plagued with various problems including shortage of doctors and other staff.

The upazila health complex serves as the lone government hospital for nearly 2.5 lakh residents of different unions under the upazila.

Only three doctors, including two medical officers, are currently serving at the 50-bed health complex.

At least 28 posts of doctors, out of 31 posts, are lying vacant for a long, hampering health service of thousands of people in the upazila.

Apart from the doctors, about 60 out of 90 posts of Class II staff, including statistician, cashier, store keeper, and 19 out of 33 posts of Class III employees, including ward boy, gardener, cook, security guard and cleaner are lying vacant for nearly three years, disrupting overall activities of the government hospital.

According to the hospital sources, though Dr Faizur Rahman, a resident medical officer joined the hospital on February 29 this year, he has remained absent at his workplace since the next day.

The hospital authorities served him two show-cause notices, asking him to explain the reason behind his absence,

and withheld his salary, but he is yet join the health complex.

Local residents said as the upazila health and family planning officer (UHFPO) remains busy with different administrative works, it is quite difficult to manage so many outdoor, indoor and emergency patients with only two medical officers.

In case of any medical emergency, patients need to be taken to Patuakhali Medical College Hospital, about 35km away, or Barisal Sher-e-Bangla Medical College Hospital, which is about 75 km from Barguna’s Amtali upazila, they added.

During a recent visit to the hospital this correspondent saw Rushia Begum from Haldia village, who came to the hospital with itching problem, was wondering what to do as there was no doctor at the hospital then.

“We are poor people and can’t afford more money to go elsewhere for treatment,” she said.

While talking, Amtali UHFPO Dr Chinmoy Howladar said they have informed their higher authorities on several occasions in this regard, but nothing has been done so far.

Contacted, Barguna Civil Surgeon Dr Pradeep Chandra Mandal said usually, doctors posted from distant areas do not want to stay at the remote upazila health complex for long.



The 50-bed Amtali Upazila Health Complex in Barguna.

PHOTO: STAR

India replaces

FROM PAGE 12

adding that the first case logged under the new law was that of a motorcycle theft in the central city of Gwalior, registered 10 minutes after midnight.

“The laws were debated for three months ... It is not fair to give political colour to this big improvement happening after centuries. I ask the opposition parties to support this legislation,” Shah said.

Opposition Congress party lawmaker P Chidambaram said the previous parliament session did not hold any “worthwhile debate” before passing the laws.

He said that there was only marginal improvement in the new laws, which could have been introduced as amendments to existing laws.

“The initial impact will be to throw the administration of criminal justice into disarray,” he posted on X.

The Indian Express newspaper said in an editorial that criminal justice reform should not be “a one-time solution or one that just takes place in the books”, and called for police reform and addressing gaps in judicial infrastructure.

The Indian Express newspaper said in an editorial that criminal justice reform should not be “a one-time solution or one that just takes place in the books”, and called for police reform and addressing gaps in judicial infrastructure.

Parties rush

FROM PAGE 12

was not greater, it was still a huge setback for Macron who had called the snap election after his ticket was trounced by the RN in the European Parliament election last month.

Whether the anti-immigrant, eurosceptic RN can form a government will depend now on how successfully other parties manage to thwart Le Pen by rallying round the best-placed rival candidates in hundreds of constituencies across France.

The corrupt will face music

FROM PAGE 12

Hasina said people should be reminded about Bangladesh opting out of the Trans-Asian Highway.

Talking about the BNP’s “anti-India stance”, she said it is their double standard.

When the BJP came to power in India, BNP leaders visited the Indian High Commission in Dhaka with sweets and flowers, but they are now talking against India, the PM said.

She said that former premier Khaleda Zia had forgotten to speak about the Teesta water sharing treaty during her visit to India.

Hasina said the BNP came to power in 2001 promising that it would enter a gas deal with India although there was a shortage of gas in the country. “Why are they talking against India now?”

The PM said she will never do anything against the interest of the country.

She also questioned the source of income of BNP acting chairman Tarique Rahman who “leads a lavish life” in London.

Meanwhile, Cabinet Secretary Md Mahbub Hossain said the government will show no sympathy to the corrupt people.

“Are all the officials in an office corrupt? There are only a few of them. But all the staffers feel embarrassed because of those few people,” the cabinet secretary told reporters during a briefing after the cabinet meeting yesterday.

Mahbub said the administration is neither creating any obstacles to taking actions against the corrupt people nor questioning those actions.

“All the mechanisms of the government are

Sylhet, Sunamganj

FROM PAGE 1

Sarighat is 35 cm above the danger level.

In Sunamganj, at 12:00 pm, the Surma River was flowing 36cm above the danger level at Chhatak and 11 cm above in Sunamganj town, while the Jadukata in Tahirpur’s Shaktiarkhola was flowing 70cm above the danger level.

Some 156 mm of rainfall was recorded in Sylhet town in 12 hours from 6:00am yesterday, according to the local Met office.

The Sylhet region faced the first phase of flood on May 30 due to heavy rainfall caused by cyclone Remal.

Before the flood waters could retreat, the region was struck by flash floods on the eve of the Eid-ul-Azha.

The fresh round of flash floods in Sylhet and Sunamganj is coming at a time when more than 20,000 are still taking refuge in shelters and over a million people are reeling from the previous phases of the flood.

Over in Rangpur, Teesta river was flowing 7cm above the danger level at Kaunia point at 12:00pm yesterday, according to WDB.

The rising water levels have inundated lower lands in the Gangachara, Kaunia and Pirgachha upazilas, causing suffering to residents.

Around 300 houses have been affected by flood since Sunday morning, said Abdullah Al Hadi, chairman of Laxmitari Union Parishad in Gangachara upazila.

Local WDB officials have issued a flash flood alert.

Teesta started flowing above the danger mark at Kaunia point from Monday

always cooperating [with the authorities concerned] to take action against the corrupt people,” he added.

The cabinet secretary said the cabinet approved a proposal for the formation of Padma Bridge Operation and Maintenance Company (PLC), reports UNB.

The 100 percent government-owned company will look after the operation and maintenance of the Padma Bridge, he said.

It will have a 14-member board of directors with representatives from different agencies, including Bridges Division and Finance Division.

Currently, Korea Expressway and China’s Major Bridge Engineering Company are responsible for toll collection and maintenance of the bridge.

The two companies were appointed for five years.

due to the rainfall in the Indian upstream, said Rabiul Islam, the executive engineer of WDB in Rangpur.

The situation now depends on the rainfall over the next 24 hours, he added.

Nazrul Islam Hakkani, president of the Teesta Bachao Nadi Bachao Sangram Parishad, emphasised the need for implementing the Teesta Master Plan, including dredging and conservation, as a long term solution to the recurring problem.

The Teesta causes property losses amounting to Tk 100,000 crore every year, he said.

Last week, Teesta was flowing 52cm above the danger mark.

[Our Correspondents from Sylhet and Rangpur contributed to the report]

France

FROM PAGE 12

2022 World Cup runners-up into a last-eight tie in Hamburg on Friday as they remain on course to become European champions for the third time.

“We are so proud to once again be in the quarter-finals. We are expected to get there but we must appreciate it and not think that is something that is just normal,” said France coach Didier Deschamps.

France’s back line was outstanding against Romelu Lukaku and his fellow attackers, and Belgium bow out after what will go down as a disappointing tournament for them.

“It’s a shame,” said captain Kevin De Bruyne. “We had a plan. We knew they were strong. It’s a shame to concede a goal in the way we did.”

The French were widely seen as the favourites to win this tournament before arriving in Germany, but they were below par during the group phase.

The broken nose suffered by Kylian Mbappe in their opening game against Austria did not help, and the uncertain form of Antoine Griezmann has been a problem too.

The Belgians were happy to sit deep and did not test Mike Maignan in the first half other than from an awkward De Bruyne free-kick which the France goalkeeper blocked with his knee.

France had lots of the ball, yet often looked untidy, imprecise and rather flat, with Griezmann appearing lost on the right wing.

The breakthrough almost came for Belgium an hour in as William Saliba lost possession on halfway and De Bruyne released Carrasco, who was about to pull the trigger when Theo Hernandez arrived to make a brilliant saving block.

French far-right win a ‘lesson’ for ‘progressives’

Says UK’s Labour leader Starmer

AFP, London

The far-right victory in the first round of France’s general election is a sign for politicians to better respond to disaffected voters, UK Labour leader Keir Starmer said yesterday.

Starmer’s centre-left party is firm favourite to seize power at the UK general election on Thursday, bucking the trend of a rightwards shift in Europe and elsewhere, and making him prime minister.

“The lesson I take from (the National Rally victory) is that we need to address the everyday concerns of so many people,” he said as the UK election campaign entered its final few days.

“We have to take that head on and we have to show both Thursday in the United Kingdom and across Europe and the world that only progressives have the answers to the challenges that are facing us in this country and across Europe,” he said.

“We have to make that progressive cause but we have to, in making that, understand why it is... that people do feel disaffected with politics,” he added.



A man throws a bucket of water to douse a fire in a building that was heavily damaged during an Israeli army raid on the Nur Shams camp for Palestinian refugees, east of Tulkarm in the occupied West Bank yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

Palestinian prisoners face ‘all kinds of torture’

Says Gaza hospital chief after release from Israeli detention centre

AFP, Deir El Balah

The head of the Gaza Strip’s biggest hospital said yesterday after being freed from more than seven months of detention that he had been “tortured” by Israel.

Al Shifa hospital director Mohammed Abu Salmiya was among more than 50 Palestinians released and returned to Gaza for treatment, according to an Israeli minister and a medical source in the besieged territory.

Salmiya said he was put through “severe torture” during his detention, which left him with a broken thumb.

“Prisoners are subjected to all



kinds of torture,” he told a press conference. “Several inmates died in interrogation centres and were deprived of food and medicine.”

“For two months no prisoner

ate more than a loaf of bread a day,” said Salmiya.

“Detainees were subjected to physical and psychological humiliation.”

The medical chief said no charge had ever been made against him. Israeli forces detained Salmiya during one of a number of raids on Al Shifa.

The hospital has largely been reduced to rubble by successive raids since Israel launched its assault on Gaza.

Salmiya and the other freed detainees crossed back into Gaza from Israel just east of Khan Yunis, a medical source at the Al-Aqsa hospital in Deir al-Balah told AFP.

Spain SC denies amnesty for Catalan separatist

AFP, Madrid

Spain’s top court yesterday refused to grant an amnesty to Catalan separatist leader Carles Puigdemont on a charge of misusing public funds, maintaining arrest warrants over his failed 2017 secession attempt.

Spanish MPs in May passed an amnesty law aimed at drawing a line under years of efforts to prosecute those involved in the botched secession bid.

Blocking the amnesty for Puigdemont could complicate life for Spain’s Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez, who relied on Catalan parties to secure a new term in November.

POST-COUP MYANMAR Japanese official among 11 arrested for price gouging

REUTERS

Myanmar arrested four executives of supermarket chains, including an official of a Japanese joint venture, for selling rice at inflated prices, state media said yesterday, as the war-torn country’s ruling junta struggles to stabilise its economy.

The impoverished Southeast Asian country has been in turmoil since its military deposed an elected civilian government in February 2021, sparking widespread protests that have morphed into a nationwide armed resistance.

Authorities said they arrested 11 people, including rice traders and officials of mills and retailers, accusing them of inflating prices by 31 percent to 70 percent from prescribed levels, the Global New Light of Myanmar newspaper said.

In Tokyo, Japan’s chief cabinet secretary, Yoshimasa Hayashi, said police in Yangon were questioning a Japanese national. “The Japanese government intends to continue taking appropriate steps while urging local authorities for his early release,” he told reporters.

UKRAINE DRONE ATTACKS Russia border regions report power cuts

AFP, Moscow



Officials in Russian regions bordering Ukraine reported power cuts and water supply issues yesterday after deadly drone attacks by Kyiv. The attacks and shelling on the border region of Belgorod over the past day killed a four-year-old girl and wounded seven people, regional governor

Vyacheslav Gladkov said.

Ukraine regularly targets Russian border regions with drones, claiming attacks on energy facilities and ammunition depots.

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Why can't the NBR protect its server?

Its vulnerability to hacking has emerged as a serious security threat

The ease and frequency with which cybercriminals continue to breach the National Board of Revenue (NBR) server is disquieting. According to a report by this daily, a cybercriminal gang attempted to release a container of foreign cigarettes from Chattogram Port after breaching the NBR server with the login credentials of a customs official. Acting on a tip-off, officials seized the container loaded with 50 lakh sticks of cigarettes worth about Tk 5 crore. The breach of the server came to light on Saturday after an investigation into the incident.

Despite the successful intervention, what worries us is that the breach could have led to something far more sinister. It shows once again the vulnerability of the NBR server to hacking which is proving increasingly difficult to address. Reportedly, following previous incidents of server breach, the NBR took some steps like the use of particular login IP and sending OTP to mobile phones of officials with proper authorisations. However, the latest breach has demonstrated that these measures are not enough. Criminals somehow managed to use the login credentials of a deputy commissioner of Chattogram Customs House to register the consignment with the NBR server, and also to access the server from a different IP address, while no OTP was sent to the mobile phone of the official concerned.

Over the last few years, at least 38 imported consignments of goods were released illegally by using the IDs of at least eight revenue officials. Investigators said a cybercriminal gang was involved in those incidents; however, they failed to identify the gang. After a few such incidents in 2022, it was discovered that earlier measures taken by the NBR had been insufficient to prevent its servers from being breached. The institution itself admitted that its technological safeguards could not thwart them. Even though these concerns have been well-known, the fact that the authorities have been unable to address them since is unacceptable. Another major concern is that despite repeated breaches, the probe committees that have been formed failed to identify the perpetrators or answer many critical questions raised by the incidents.

The entire security system of the NBR seems to be way below par, and the danger that it poses to our national security is disturbing. Against this backdrop, the NBR should urgently stamp down on such breaches by strengthening the security of its servers. Customs officials and others should be more vigilant about cybercrimes. And considering the gravity of the threat posed by such crimes, the authorities should consider involving independent experts who can look into what's really happening and suggest solutions.

Protect Tengragiri forest at all costs

We can't afford to lose the 'second Sundarbans' to timber thieves

We are outraged to learn that another reserved forest is being plundered by timber thieves who are felling and stealing trees indiscriminately, with no visible steps to stop them. According to a report by *Prothom Alo*, an organised criminal gang has been stealing trees from the Tengragiri mangrove forest and setting the stumps on fire to destroy evidence, in the process causing damage to the trees that still remain standing. Locals complained that this has been going on for a long time, alleging that these thieves are working in cohort with forest officials.

The Tengragiri forest, situated along the coast of the Bay of Bengal, stretches from Taltali upazila of Barguna to Kuakata in Patuakhali, covering 13,644 acres of area, according to data from the Forest Department. In 1960, it was designated as a reserved forest based on a survey done in 1927. Home to an incredible biodiversity system, Tengragiri is the second largest mangrove forest in Bangladesh, and is thus known as the "second Sundarbans."

Such an invaluable gift of nature—which, much like the Sundarbans, acts as a natural barrier to calamities and protects the locals—already faces a host of threats to its survival, such as the rising sea level and increasing salinity due to global warming, erosion, etc. Its chances of survival are being further jeopardised because of the greed and recklessness of local influentials. A recent visit has revealed that 3,000 trees have been felled and stolen in the forest's Behular Char area. According to the *Prothom Alo* report, in March, a fire broke out there and burned as many as 10,000 trees, damaging a lot of others. What really puzzles us is that after the fire was reported, it took local forest officials 18 hours to reach the scene and bring the fire under control. Another fire incident happened in the Disirkilla area in April, but that was put out quickly enough, so the damage was minimal.

When asked about their failure to prevent tree robbery and frequent fire incidents, forest officials in Tengragiri cited lack of manpower and necessary resources. This seems to be their go-to excuse whenever there are reports of timber theft from reserved forests. We must ask: how difficult is it to ramp up the capacity of the Forest Department so that it can protect at-risk forest areas? Or is the concept of "reserved forest" lost on them? This lackadaisical attitude is totally unacceptable, especially considering Bangladesh's fast-depleting forest coverage. We urge the authorities to ensure that no further damage is done to what's left of our precious forests.

THIS DAY IN HISTORY



Civil Rights Act signed

On this day in 1964, US President Lyndon B Johnson signed the Civil Rights Act, perhaps the most important US law on civil rights since Reconstruction (1865-77) and a hallmark of the American civil rights movement.

More women in construction sector should be our next goal

Dipa Das
is research associate at South Asian Network on Economic Modeling (SANEM).

Eshrat Sharmin
is senior research associate at SANEM.

DIPA DAS and ESHRAT SHARMIN

Bangladesh's economy has witnessed remarkable growth, solidifying it as one of the fastest growing economies worldwide. According to the Bangladesh Economic Review 2023, the construction sector significantly contributes to this growth—approximately 6.41 percent in 2023. Construction's share within the industry sector and growth is on the rise, with the growth rate increasing to 8.71 percent in FY2021-22, compared to 8.08 percent in FY2020-21.

As the construction sector expands, it demands more labour. According to the Labour Force Survey 2022, construction is the fifth largest industry in terms of employment in Bangladesh, with about 5.44 percent of the employed population working in this sector. A study conducted by Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies (BIDS) projects that the construction industry is expected

To increase female participation and to create a more inclusive environment in the construction industry, several essential actions should be taken to overcome the challenges.

to require approximately 90 lakh workers by 2030. But among the top five employment generating industries, the construction sector ranks second to last in terms of female employment. Only 0.4 percent of women are employed in this sector, compared to 8.18 percent of men. With female labour force participation in Bangladesh increasing from 36.3 percent in 2016-17 to 42.7 percent in 2022, the expanding construction sector presents a significant opportunity to accommodate more female workers.

Additionally, with the country's LDC graduation and the anticipated decline in RMG exports, exploring sectors like construction is crucial for accommodating the expected

structural shift in labour dynamics. The rise of automation and Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR) technology highlights the need to focus on technology and skills-based occupations for women.

According to the Labour Force

participation in the labour force, there are no gender-specific policies in the construction sector. The Public Procurement Rule, 2008, and Occupational Health and Safety Policy, 2013 ensure workplace safety but lack gender provisions. The labour

industry stakeholders perceiving women as less productive and costlier due to additional safety and security needs. Barriers related to marriage, pregnancy, and care work, combined with a lack of role models and representation in workers' unions, further limit women's opportunities and perpetuate their marginalisation in the construction sector.

To increase female participation and to create a more inclusive environment in the construction industry, several essential actions should be taken to overcome the challenges. Firstly, establishing a comprehensive workforce database, gradually formalising the sector through structured recruitment, fair wages, standard work hours, proper implementation of well-defined health, safety, and compensation policies, and an institutional body addressing workplace abuse and harassment are crucial.

Secondly, promoting female participation through skills training incentives and creating a gender responsive ecosystem with standard wages, safety measures, maternity benefits, and flexible work hours are also extremely important. Ensuring that training programmes include 30 percent female participation as mandated by the government and declaring minimum wages for entry-level jobs should be considered.

Thirdly, streamlining the labour hiring processes for contractors and subcontractors, maintaining a worker database with national ID numbers to identify wage gaps, and adding specific clauses to labour laws addressing the construction sector-related concerns are vital. The Ministry of Women and Children's Affairs should play a significant role in this regard, with private actors and labour organisations advocating for workers' needs. Finally, state owned insurance companies should offer workers injury packages.

The construction sector has the potential to increase female workforce participation, ensuring gender parity and aligning with three Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs 1, 5, and 8). Occupations in this sector are predominantly male-centric across all tiers, underscoring gender bias and stigma, necessitating considerable attention from the government and policymakers. Implementing the above recommendations can help make the construction sector a leading example of gender parity and inclusivity, driving sustainable development and economic progress in Bangladesh.



FILE PHOTO: ADAM JONES/WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

The construction sector in Bangladesh is highly informal—78.42 percent of female workers here are employed under verbal agreements.

Survey 2016-17, females in the construction sector are primarily concentrated in lower tier jobs: 31.23 percent as civil engineering labourers, 22.15 percent as building construction workers, and 18.27 percent as bricklayers. Studies found that women also work in senior management and administrative roles, accounting for approximately 7.1 percent and 4.3 percent of total female employment in the sector, respectively. Across all occupations, most female workers are either unskilled (53 percent) or semi-skilled (17 percent). According to the findings in the Construction Industry Skills Council (CISC) Employers surveys in 2018 and 2020, female workers are considered less productive than males.

The construction sector is highly informal; 78.42 percent of female workers are employed as per verbal agreements. Only 0.3 percent of female employees have access to toilets and sanitation facilities, and 1.88 percent have maternity leave benefits. This sector is inherently hazardous due to the nature of its work, yet only one percent of female workers have access to safety gear. Additionally, just 0.78 percent receive transportation and food subsidies, and 0.66 percent benefit from daycare facilities.

Despite policies to boost women's

law addresses critical women's issues like hygiene, maternity leave, medical facilities, and working hours, but enforcement is challenging in informal sectors like construction.

Women are largely confined to unskilled jobs like brick-breaking and excavation due to a substantial skills gap and lack of access to training programmes. The sector's high informality—characterised by irregular recruitment, work hours, and payment methods—limits job stability. Additionally, mobility and transportation issues, coupled with inadequate on site infrastructure and security concerns, deter women from long term-roles. The work environment is often abusive, with frequent conduct violations, resistance to female leadership, and harassment. Unsafe conditions and inadequate accommodations, such as the lack of separate bathrooms and resting areas, further exacerbate these difficulties. Gender based violence, including sexual harassment and physical assault, remains a significant barrier, with limited avenues for complaint. Wage exploitation is prevalent, with female workers often paid less than their male counterparts for similar work. Societal norms and gender bias further discourage female participation, with

Celebrating the legacy of Prof Yunus

This is an excerpt of a speech given by Susanna B Afan, president of the Ramon Magsaysay Award Foundation, at the opening ceremony of the 14th Social Business Day on June 27, 2024.

In 1984, forty years ago, a then 44-year-old Muhammad Yunus was elected to receive the Ramon Magsaysay Award for Community Leadership for "his pioneering efforts in enabling rural men and women to become economically self-sufficient through sound group-managed credit. His work challenged misconceptions about the capabilities of the poor to save, collaborate, and effectively utilise loans."

Since its inception, the Grameen Bank has achieved remarkable success. Grameen Bank has grown to provide collateral-free loans to 7.5 million clients, 97 percent of whom are women, in more than 82,000 villages in Bangladesh.

Yunus's model has demonstrated that even the poorest individuals can enhance their lives with dignity and contribute to their country's economic growth.

Muhammad Yunus is globally recognised as "The Father of Microfinance."

In the Philippines, the Center for Agriculture and Rural Development-Mutually Reinforcing Institutions (CARD-MRI) was established in 1986. To date, CARD-MRI has empowered millions of Filipinos. Nine million of them accessed microloans, 30 million are insured through microinsurance, and five million individuals have access to its health programmes. We are honoured to have Dr Aris Alip, the founder of CARD-MRI, in the audience with us today.

In 1994, in Indonesia, Dompot Dhuafa, a humanitarian institution, empowered millions of Indonesians through the principle and power



PHOTO: YUNUS CENTRE

Susanna B Afan, president of Ramon Magsaysay Award Foundation, presents a portrait to Prof Muhammad Yunus to commemorate the 40th anniversary of him receiving the Ramon Magsaysay Award.

of Zakat, a religious offering that is one of the pillars of Islam. Dompot Dhuafa's microloans have benefited 24 million people—more than the entire population of Sri Lanka.

In Pakistan, Muhammad Amjad Saqib founded Akhuwat in 2001. His pioneering interest-free microfinance model is based on Islamic values and compassion, known as *Mawakhat*. Akhuwat has since grown into the world's largest interest-free microfinance organisation. To date, it has disbursed over \$789 million in loans and lifted the lives of over 5.4 million people in Pakistan.

These are the movements inspired directly by the work of Muhammad

Yunus and, as such, they too followed his footsteps.

In 2008, CARD-MRI received the Ramon Magsaysay Award.

In 2016, Dompot Dhuafa received the Magsaysay Prize.

In 2021, Muhammad Amjad Saqib also became a Magsaysay Laureate.

To date, there are countless other microfinance institutions globally that have followed Muhammad Yunus's model.

This is the collective impact that Professor Yunus started that merited him the Magsaysay Award. He has transformed the lives not only of millions of Bangladeshis but also billions of people around the world.

This is what the Ramon Magsaysay

Award stands for—celebrating transformative, courageous leadership, selfless service, and the Greatness of Spirit of ordinary individuals and organisations that bring meaningful, lasting change.

Named after the seventh president of the Philippines, the Ramon Magsaysay Award honours individuals and organisations embodying commitment to the common man, reflecting President Magsaysay's life and leadership. To date, 348 women, men and organisations working across Asia have been conferred with what is now widely regarded as Asia's premier prize and highest honour. We have captured their inspiring stories in our 65th anniversary commemorative book series, simply called *GREATNESS OF SPIRIT: Stories of Love, Courage and Service*.

Forty years since Muhammad Yunus received the Ramon Magsaysay Award, a precursor to many of his other international accolades including the 2006 Nobel Peace Prize, we continue to celebrate the undeniable impact of his work—billions of lives changed through the power of microfinance.

As a token of our appreciation and to commemorate the 40th anniversary of Muhammad Yunus receiving the Ramon Magsaysay Award, the Foundation would like to present Muhammad Yunus, 1984 Ramon Magsaysay Awardee for Community Leadership, with his portrait. This portrait was specially commissioned for our 65th anniversary commemorative book series. This also serves as our birthday gift for his 84th birthday on June 28.

How universal and egalitarian is the ‘universal’ pension scheme?



Dr Ala Uddin
is professor at the Department of Anthropology
in Chittagong University.

ALA UDDIN

Although pension schemes are considered safe and respectable across the world, its process and significance are different in Bangladesh. Millions of government officials and their families depend on pensions to meet the expenses of the family at the end of their lives. But the process of receiving and collecting pension has never been honourable or easy. Recently, the government has taken some steps to improve this situation with its “universal pension scheme.” Although it created much enthusiasm at the beginning, the pension scheme has not proven to be universal and respectable for all. There are plenty of frustration, apprehension and discrimination in the initiative.

Firstly, the word “universal” means this pension scheme should be applicable for all citizens of Bangladesh. The artificial process of creating hierarchy between different professions is by no means universal; it is rather discriminatory. This is why the call to withdraw the notification has come from various levels, including teachers of public universities across the country.

The government has announced the universal pension scheme as an alternative to the existing system of providing post-retirement financial and social security to government employees. Whether it is people-friendly and how reasonable it is considering the financial capacity

of people in this country are important questions, but what has disappointed and appalled everyone is that it is practically not universal. The scheme is not mandatory for some government bodies and sectors, especially bureaucrats. The outline of the new scheme and the notification says that those who will join the employment of self-governed, autonomous, state-owned, statutory or homogeneous organisations from July 2024 will be compulsorily added to the scheme. However, keeping certain professions out of its purview is not an indication of universality. To exclude the people of any profession from the scope of this scheme means either to deprive them, or to place them above all others.

The military, judiciary and bureaucracy have been exempted from this so-called “universal” scheme. While new employees joining the service of self-governed, autonomous and state-owned organisations after July 1 will be compulsorily covered under the “Prottoy” scheme of public pension, benefits—including pensions—will remain unchanged for military personnel, members of the judiciary, and bureaucrats. On the other hand, public university teachers will be deprived of pension benefits in the future if they do not register for public pension.

Questions arise as to why

the authorities of autonomous institutions like universities were not consulted before this decision was made. During the budget proposal for FY2024-25, it was declared that the government officials will be included in a new pension scheme called “Sebak” from July 2025. Nothing has been mentioned about the benefits of this scheme, or its

such discrimination. This disparity has greatly distressed the teaching community. The Federation of Bangladesh University Teachers Association has already demanded that the government reconsider the pension scheme. Various university teachers’ associations have made it clear in their positions that this discriminatory scheme is in no way

teachers today are concerned with their future.

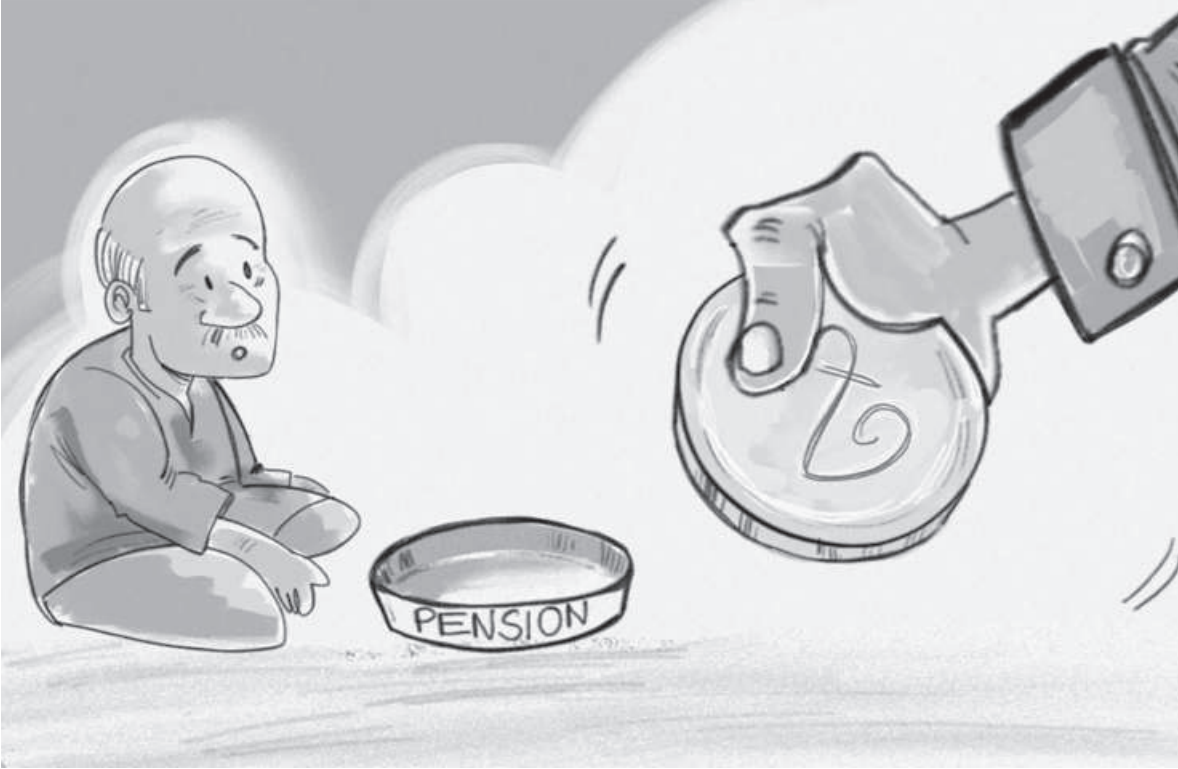
Although there was great enthusiasm in the beginning, the pension scheme has fallen into a state of collapse due to bureaucracy, ambiguity, and discrimination. Where 10 crore people were expected to come under the pension scheme, only a little over 100,000

be mandatory, and that after 8-10 years when people will understand its benefits, everyone will gradually register. What is the rationale for going back on that promise making it mandatory for new employees now?

The bottom line is that any laws and facilities of the country should be made applicable to all. At the same time, these systems cannot be imposed on people, they cannot be made applicable to some and not to others. Giving special importance to one group of people engaged in running the country and giving less importance to other, equally important sectors is not right.

The government has to be proactive in implementing policies according to the needs of the nation. In order to turn public universities into knowledge-based, research-oriented educational institutions, the government should play a leading role in establishing the dignity of university teachers in society. Increasing teachers’ salaries and other benefits is related to this. The government also has to play a necessary role in ensuring that the recruitment of teachers, appointment of vice-chancellors, and promotion of teachers, etc are done in a regular manner as per regulations. At the same time, university teachers, vice-chancellors and their associates should be brought under accountability even within the autonomy.

Likewise, the policy of demeaning and demoting teachers in public universities is totally incompatible with such a noble initiative as a universal pension scheme. We welcome this public welfare initiative of the government. But the initiative should not end up causing public anguish, fear, suspicion or discrimination.



FILE VISUAL: REHNUMA PROSHOON

difference with Prottoy. The work on Sebak has not even started. But in the case of others, Prottoy is planned to be effective from July 1, 2024. Why was this discrepancy allowed? What was the basis of this dual policy?

The scheme has been rejected by public university teachers due to

acceptable. They argue that as a result of this, talented individuals in the future will not feel compelled to become university teachers.

Universities will suffer if this discriminatory, bureaucrat-driven and special-purpose scheme is implemented. In such a situation,

people have registered in the first 10 months. Due to the exclusion of some sectors, it is not only the teaching community but also the public who now have doubts about this pension scheme. Moreover, when this was first presented, it was said that this scheme would not

JULIAN ASSANGE'S RELEASE

Exposing the craven media stable



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BINOY KAMPMARK

The WikiLeaks project was always going to put various noses out of joint in the journalistic profession. Soaked and blighted by sloth, easily bought, perennially envious, a good number of the Fourth Estate have always preferred to remain uncritical of power and sympathetic to its brutal exercise. For those reasons, the views of Thomas Carlyle, quoting the opinion of Edward Burke in his May 1840 lecture that “there were Three Estates in Parliament; but in the Reporters’ Gallery yonder, there sat a Fourth Estate more important far than they all” seem quaintly misplaced, certainly in a modern context.

The media response to the release of WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange from his scandalous captivity after pleading guilty to one count of conspiracy to obtain and disclose national defence information under the US Espionage Act of 1917 provides a fascinating insight into a ghastly, craven and sycophantic tendency all too common among the plodding hacks.

Take, for instance, any number of journalists working for the Australian Broadcasting Corporation, official national broadcaster and devotee of the safe middle line. One, a breakfast news anchor for the network’s meandering twenty-four-hour service, has a rather blotted record of glee regarding the mistreatment of Assange over the years.

Michael Rowland, torturously insipid and ponderously humourless, had expressed his inexpressible joy when the Ecuadorian government cut off Assange’s access to the Internet while confined to the country’s London embassy. “A big gold star to Ecuador,” he chirped on March 28, 2018. Andrew Fowler, another journalist and far more seasoned on the rise of WikiLeaks, reproached Rowland on Twitter, as the X platform was then called. “Why would silencing a fellow journalist be supported?” For Rowland, the matter was as clear as day. “That remains a disputed opinion, Andrew. Publisher and activist yes. But you put yourself in a small camp calling him a journalist.”

These points matter, because they go to the central libelling strategy of the US government’s prosecution so casually embraced by mainstream outlets. In such a generated smokescreen, crimes can be concealed, and the revealers shown to be those of bad faith. Labels can be used to partition truth, if not obscure it altogether: a publisher-activist is to be regarded more dimly than the establishment approved

journalist.

The point was rather well made by Antony Loewenstein, himself an independent journalist keen to ferret out the grainier details of abusive power. When interviewed by none other than Rowland himself, he explained, with



WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange gestures as he arrives in Canberra, Australia, on June 26, 2024.

FILE PHOTO: REUTERS

unflinching patience, the reasons why Assange and Wikileaks are so reviled by the orthodox scribblers of the Fourth Estate. Wikileaks, he stated with salience, had confronted power, not succumbed to it.

Rowland could only reiterate the standard line that Assange had admitted guilt for a “very serious offence”, refusing to examine the reasons for doing so, or the implications of it. Again, the vulgar line that Assange had “put US lives at risk” with the WikiLeaks disclosures was trotted out like an ill-fed nag. Again, Loewenstein had to remind Rowland that there was no evidence that any lives had been exposed to harm, a point made in several studies on the subject from the Pentagon to the Australian Defence Department.

The tendency is pestilential. While more

guarded in his current iteration as a professor of journalism, Peter Greste, formerly a journalist for Al Jazeera, was previously dismissive in the *Sydney Morning Herald* of Assange’s contributions as he was brutally evicted from the Ecuadorian Embassy in London. “To be clear, Julian Assange is no journalist, and WikiLeaks is not a news organisation.” An organisation boasting “the libertarian idea of radical transparency” was “a separate issue altogether from press freedom.”

While approving the publishing activities centred on the release of the Collateral Murder video showing the killing of civilians including two Reuters journalists by Apache helicopters, and the release of the

Greste displays the emetic plumage of someone who has done an about face. “It is worth pausing for a moment to consider all Assange has been through, and to pop a bottle of champagne to celebrate his release,” he writes distastefully, also reflecting on his own carceral experiences in an Egyptian prison cell. He also claims that the role of WikiLeaks, in checking “the awesome power that governments wield”, should be celebrated, while stating, weakly, that he never believed that Assange should “have been charged with espionage.”

In such shifting views, we see wounded egos, cravenness, and the concerns about an estate whose walls had been breached

by a usurping, industrious publisher. By all means use the spoils from Assange and his leakers, even while snorting about how they were obtained. Publish and write about them in the hope of getting a press award. Never, however, admit that Assange is himself a journalist with more journalism awards than many have had hot dinners. In this grotesque reality, we are now saddled with a terrifying precedent: the global application of a US espionage statute endangering journalists and publishers who would dare discuss and run material on Washington’s national security.

This article was originally published on CounterPunch on June 28, 2024.

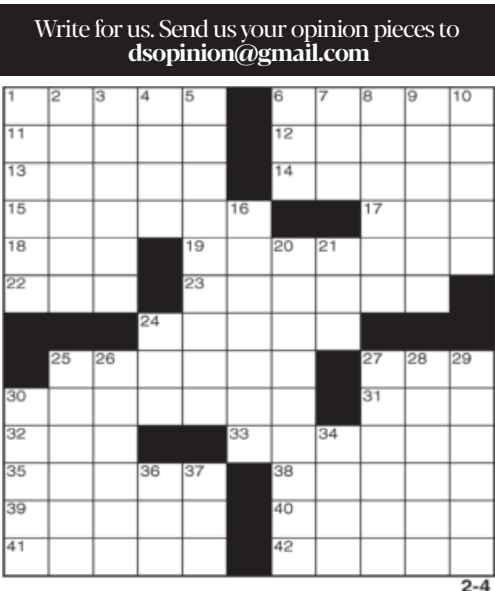
CROSSWORD BY THOMAS JOSEPH

ACROSS

- 1 “Beat it!”
- 6 Stylishly uninhibited
- 11 Eucalyptus eater
- 12 “Hello” singer
- 13 “As You Like It” forest
- 14 Craze
- 15 Sword-making city
- 17 Harris and O’Neill
- 18 Hydrocarbon suffix
- 19 Ex-GI
- 22 Bright beam
- 23 Pageant toppers
- 24 Zodiac dozen
- 25 Senator Sanders
- 27 Gold unit
- 30 City of northern Italy
- 31 Gorilla, for one
- 32 Imitating
- 33 Lenin’s successor
- 35 Missteps
- 38 Key
- 39 Fork features
- 40 Flower girl, often
- 41 Bring to bear
- 42 Like some communities

DOWN

- 1 Axel performer
- 2 Solar halo
- 3 Boo — (“To Kill a Mockingbird” recluse)
- 4 Out of the wind
- 5 Making decrees
- 6 Toast spread
- 7 Writer Tarbell
- 8 Swiss city
- 9 Moves smoothly
- 10 Brewing need
- 16 Starts
- 20 Like some tigers
- 21 Cal. spans
- 24 Hit letters
- 25 Bungle
- 26 Galahad’s mother
- 27 Pavlova’s field
- 28 Individually
- 29 Signed a lease
- 30 Treat, as a turkey
- 34 Seoul setting
- 36 For each
- 37 Retired jet




SUNDAY’S ANSWERS

P	A	C	E	R	S	A	W	U	P
A	L	A	M	O	O	P	E	R	A
T	I	M	I	D	T	O	N	G	S
	E	L	S	A	S	T	E	T	
P	I	T	Y		M	A	T	T	
A	D	O		C	A	R	L	O	A
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A	S	H	C	A	N	S		H	E
	E	T	N	A		F	E	A	T
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A	V	O	I	D		A	R	A	B
N	E	R	V	E		I	G	L	O
G	R	E	E	N		R	E	L	A

Bridging the nutrition gap

Integrating top-down budgeting and local nutrition plans


Joint Action for Nutrition Outcome (JANO) project, implemented by CARE Bangladesh, in association with The Daily Star organized a roundtable, titled “Assessing Public Expenditure in NPAN-2 & 8th FYP” on May 16, 2024. Here we publish a summary of the discussion.



Dr Ikhtiar Uddin Khandaker, Deputy Country Director-Program (Acting) CARE Bangladesh

This study, commissioned by CARE, provides an opportunity to examine how public expenditure is being used for nutrition. The JANO project, a consortium with Plan International and ESDO, funded by the European Union and Austrian Development Cooperation, is implemented directly in Nilphamari and Rangpur districts and indirectly in seven sub-districts. The project focuses on nutrition governance and the rollout of the second National Plan of Action for Nutrition (NPAN-2).

The modifications in the multi-sectoral approach applied through the current structure are some noteworthy changes. For example, the District Nutrition Coordination Committee and the Upazila Nutrition Coordination Committee, established by the government, ensure multi-sectoral engagement by involving different ministries at the district and sub-district levels. These committees follow the second national plan of action, guided by the Bangladesh National Nutrition Council. We aim to identify future directions, including the upcoming third national plan of action and the eighth five-year plan, through this process.



Dr Sayema Haque Bidisha, Professor, Department of Economics, University of Dhaka, and Research Director, SANEM

A group of young researchers at South Asian Network on Economic Modeling (SANEM), along with myself, worked on a report on NPAN-2 and the JANO project. Our study aims to analyse investment patterns, identify financial gaps, and pinpoint challenges in health financing and NPAN-2 implementation, focusing on the project.

The government has tried to address these challenges through planning documents, notably NPAN-2 (National Plan of Action for Nutrition 2016-2025). The JANO project, within the framework of NPAN-2, proposes a different type of planning based on local-level planning involving the Union Development Coordination Committee (UDCC), Upazila Nutrition Coordination Committee (UNCC), and District Nutrition Coordination Committee (DNCC). The aim is to enhance community involvement and supplement central budgeting and planning. The Bangladesh National Nutrition Council (BNNC) plays a crucial role in monitoring, evaluation, and policy guidance for the 3M (multisectoral, multistakeholder, and multi-level) strategy in NPAN-2, requiring competent human resources and consistent budget support. Our study observed that the 3M approach applied in the Nilphamari and Rangpur regions saw an overall improvement in nutrition-related budgets in areas under these core ministries, UNCC, UDCC, and other aspects. Extending the 3M approach to other contexts would lead to better outcomes.

However, the allocated budget is inadequate compared to global standards, likely needing to triple to align with best practices. Data shows that only seven of the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare projects align with NPAN-2, and the nutrition budget allocation is very small. Additionally, the implementation rate is low, with 71 percent of the allocated budget utilised.

Of 21 nutrition-related projects under the Ministry of Food, 12 have been completed, one is ongoing, and eight show no progress. Out of the nine Ministry of Agriculture projects, two are completed, five are ongoing, and two show no progress. Nutritional budgetary allocation for these important ministries is only around 2.2 crore.

The Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development, and Cooperatives has 76 projects, with 31 completed, 29 showing no progress, and 16 ongoing. The Ministry of Women and Children Affairs (MOWCA) and the Ministry of Education also have nutrition-aligned projects, although their allocation is not very high. The Ministry of Fisheries and Livestock has an impressive record, but data shows less than 50 percent utilisation in some ministries, such as the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of LGRD.


Comparing Bangladesh's nutrition profile, financial allocation, budgeting, and socio-economic status with countries like India,



Nepal, Lao PDR, and Indonesia is essential to understand the current situation. Lao PDR spends significantly on nutrition-related activities. India has targeted programmes, such as the malnutrition-free initiative, covering 12 ministries and 4.8 lakh joint activities, while Nepal follows a need-based approach. Stunting is a major problem for Indonesia and Bangladesh, and Indonesia's approach to stunting reduction can be instructive.


The bottom-up approach advocated by NPAN-2 starts with the Community Support Groups (CSGs) and moves upward. However, budget disbursement in Bangladesh follows a top-down approach, limiting local autonomy. In Bangladesh, 98 percent of the budget is allocated to nutrition-sensitive programmes, with only 2 percent for nutrition-specific interventions.

Monitoring the political agenda of local representatives is also important, as political economy plays a key role. The desired partnerships and coordination between NGOs and the government are missing among NGOs and different ministries. There is also a lack of data, consistency, and flexibility in the budgeting process, which needs addressing.




Dr Syed Abdul Hamid, Professor, Institute of Health Economics, University of Dhaka

Bangladesh's nutrition policies, including NPAN and NPAN-2, outline necessary actions and budget allocations. However, implementation suffers from a lack of necessary financing and dedicated human resources. Coordination, overseen by the Deputy Commissioner (DC) at the district level and the union chairman, is hampered by their existing workload and the need for constant reminders. While infrastructure development is prioritised, human and social development—such as nutrition, health, and education—remains underfunded and overlooked. Addressing these issues requires increased offices, human resources, and a focus on the cultural and social importance of education, health, and nutrition.



Dr Shyamal Kumar Roy, Division Chief (Lab.), IPHN

In 1974, Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman emphasised improving nutrition by establishing the “Pushti Parishad Council.” Effective implementation of the 3M approach through increased personnel at district, upazila, and union levels can drive significant progress. DCs cannot manage all tasks alone; dividing responsibilities and scheduling meetings efficiently is crucial. Currently, per capita expenditure in the health sector is low, and it is even lower in the nutrition sector. This needs to change. Adequate human resources and clear role definitions are essential. We need a proper budget to hire and assign people effectively.



Md Abdul Mozid, UP Chairman, Kursha Union Parishad, Kaunia, Rangpur

In Rangpur, traditional dishes like ‘sholka’ and ‘shajne pata bharta’ have gained recognition for their nutritional and medicinal benefits, thanks to JANO's initiatives. However, human resource constraints hinder the realization of our aspirations across all 21 villages under my purview despite our best efforts.

I urge policymakers to expand JANO's initiatives nationwide and consider additional support through dedicated

departments or NGOs to address nutritional deficiencies effectively.



Dr Nusrat Zahan Mithen, Deputy Director, Bangladesh National Nutrition Council (BNNC)

A 2019 study with BNNC reviewed today confirms that recommendations from 2019 to 2024 remain consistent, indicating we are on track. To achieve our objectives efficiently, we must address issues such as data deficiencies and incorrect portals, and accelerate our efforts. In Nilphamari and Rangpur, local income-generating activities related to nutrition have led to self-sufficiency, a model worth replicating nationwide. We must develop NPAN-3 through learning from NPAN-2.

RECOMMENDATIONS

» Nutrition should be a top priority for the government to achieve SDG, FYP, and NPAN-2 goals.

» Budgetary allocations for the nutrition sector should be increased, properly utilized, and aligned with local-level nutrition plans.

» Dedicated human resources should be employed, particularly at the local level, for the effective implementation of nutrition programmes.

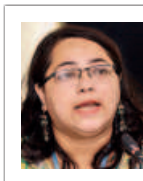
» Engaging community members, from local pharmacists to religious leaders, to raise awareness about nutrition is crucial.

» Conducting nutrition expenditure tracking and promoting transparency among stakeholders are vital.

» Continuous monitoring and reliable data collection are vital for effective planning and resource allocation.

» Decision-making power must be decentralised to understand the needs at the grassroots level.

» New media should be explored to raise awareness.



Masuma Chowdhury, Nutrition & Gender Specialist, FAO

Despite our focus on nutrition, we have not put any emphasis on the health and well-being of farmers, who are the key figures when it comes to ensuring nutrition for the entire country. During my time at FAO, I observed a lack of budget allocation for farmers' well-being. This should have more focus in our planning and discussions. Previously, NGOs like UNICEF funded projects to measure children's well-being, but such funding has dwindled.



Dr Mohammad Mahmudul Hasan, Programme Manager, BRAC

Implementing a digital system that integrates nutrition and agriculture into a telecommunication toll-free hub would enable people to call with any queries related to these topics. Additionally, promoting lifestyle modification through awareness-building campaigns can effectively address nutrition-related issues.




Amit Dey, Manager Food Security, Action Aid Bangladesh

Instead of focusing on importing fertilisers, we should employ more resources to develop local


sources, such as vermicompost. Subsidies primarily benefit fertiliser consumption, favouring wealthier farmers, despite the greater contribution of small farmers to nutrition-related fields.

Ineffective implementation due to capacity limitations within departments and ministries prioritises project completion over quality. Nutrition garden funds disproportionately benefit men despite our women's significant nutritional contributions. Shifting this mindset is crucial for enhancing our nation's nutritional landscape.




Syed Md. Nuruddin, Advisor, CSE – PLAN International Bangladesh

The loss in the nutritional sector in our country is substantial, amounting to almost BDT 2 Billion, according to WFPO. The well-being of individuals in society is more closely related to social dynamics and available resources than to institutional setups. We need to shift our investment towards social mobilisation, an area currently receiving minimal budget allocation. Knowledge dissemination fosters sustainability, and investing in this area now can maximise the benefits of our demographic dividend.



Professor Dr. AQM Shafiul Azam, Director of Planning and Development, Directorate of Secondary & Higher Education (DSHE)

The introduction of “health and well-being” in our curriculum aligns with the issue of nutrition and the prime minister's directive to create smart citizens for the future. It covers the issues of nutrition, health and soft life skills to lead a better life. “Better health, better education,” is the motto we believe in. However, coordination among the nine ministries dedicated to this issue is lacking, leading to sporadic initiatives with incomplete follow-through. Currently, almost half of the budgetary allocation remains unutilised, despite the government's best intentions. We need to figure out a way to coordinate and create a chain effect with our work.




Md Shahidul Alam, ndc, Director General (Additional Secretary), FPMU

People from all walks of life must internalize the notion of good food and good health. On this, people with influence can be the examples of their healthy lifestyles for ordinary people to follow their footsteps besides creating awareness among them.

Our honourable prime minister has emphasised the need to increase investment in the food sector, build food banks, and raise awareness, especially youth engagement, to combat this crisis. The State is already working on ‘Nutritious food for all’.


Quality over quantity in budget allocation is crucial, supplemented by private investments. Despite challenges, we have progressed significantly, ranking 81st in the 2023 hunger index, whereas our neighbouring India and Pakistan stand at 111th and 102nd respectively. Individual awareness of consumption and social event food protocols are essential. The government's food-based dietary guidelines could be a great source of information on consuming nutritious food. Cohesion among bodies and aligned goals, coupled with mindset shifts, are paramount for holistic progress.



Dr Hasan Shahriar Kabir, Former Director General and Deputy Director of Bangladesh National Nutrition Council (BNNC)

Our goal for NPAN-3 is to learn from NPAN-2's shortcomings and enhance those areas. Planning at the local level is crucial. Nutrition should be integrated into lifestyles at the union level, with a gender-sensitive approach to empower women, who are crucial to food security and nutrition. We can get a lot of people to volunteer for this issue owing to our culture of community-dependency.


We aim to implement a real-time tracking system for local budget allocation and spending, improving coordination among NGOs with a bottom-up approach. If we streamline the projects and operations of multiple NGOs with a bottom-up approach, we will get better outcomes. NPAN-3 will be people-oriented, focusing on community needs and past lessons to shape a better future.



Margherita Capalbi, Programme Manager – Agriculture and Rural Development, Food and Nutrition Security, Delegation of the European Union to Bangladesh

Having been in the country for three years, I believe there should be more collaboration among different governmental departments. This increased collaboration can enhance nutrition sensitivity, thanks to the efforts of all stakeholders involved. The Joint Action for Nutrition Outcome (JANO) has made significant contributions in this regard.

The nutrition community in the country is vibrant and growing. Implementing a mandatory reporting system for nutrition budgeting could be beneficial. Such a system would align with the recommendation for a public expenditure review, promoting transparency across departments and organisations.



Aamanur Rahman, Chief of Party, Thrive Activity, CARE Bangladesh

NPAN2 will expire in 2025, and we need to identify the key takeaways from this plan for NPAN3. The Country Investment Plan 3 will also expire in 2025, and we have emphasized the importance of a resilient, nutrition-sensitive food system in that plan as well. There are some key focus areas for NPAN3 and CRP that we can consider. Battling anemia and child obesity are two of the fifteen health indicators where Bangladesh is lagging, so we should prioritize these issues in the next plan. There are inconsistencies in the costing of NPAN2, and we need to address those and determine the costing for NPAN3. Some food and nutrition-related work can be decentralised to the union level, with the central government providing policy-related support. In addition to projects, revenue channels, awareness building, and relevant human resources can be strengthened to achieve better outcomes. The budgetary allocation must reflect local-led demands. Lastly, mobilizing efforts to halve per capita out-of-pocket health expenditure from \$64 to \$30 by 2030 is imperative for goal attainment.



Tanjim Ferdous, In-charge of NGO and Foreign Missions, Business Development Team, The Daily Star

Over the past two decades, media has significantly shaped health communication, notably in preventing diarrhoeal deaths through campaigns promoting oral saline use. We were successful in bringing social behavioural changes and raising awareness through media intervention and campaigns. However, over time, similar initiatives have decreased, necessitating renewed funding to revive them.

Mahbubur Rahman, Research Director (Production & Early Warning) at FPMU; Aniruddha Roy, Assistant Director at WAVE Foundation, Right to Food; Salahuddin A. Bablu, Business Editor at SA TV and Vice President of Economic Reporters' Forum (ERF); Dr. Sharmin Neelopal, Professor at the Department of Pharmacy, BRAC University; Saiqa Siraj, Country Director at Nutrition International; and Sekender Ali Mina, Joint Secretary Democratic at Budget Movement, also spoke at the event.

Will BCB’s World Cup ‘discussions’ make any difference?

ABDULLAH AL MEHDI

Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) is set to sit down for a board meeting today to discuss the just concluded T20 World Cup performances. Such meetings, however, have barely contributed to an improved show in global events.

Apart from World Cup performances, which are routine discussions following ICC or other major events, BCB will also discuss the appointment of an international contractor for a new stadium alongside other matters.

“There is also a standard procedure that after the Bangladesh team returns from playing any major ICC or ACC event, the performances are discussed,” BCB CEO Nizamuddin Chowdhury told reporters yesterday regarding the meeting.

“It’s a routine matter and there are also financial matters to discuss regarding the structure of Game Development and Ground and Facilities. Mainly those are the areas that are to be prioritized,” he added.

The board remains content that the Tigers were able to make it to the second round of the tournament, the Super Eight stage, beating Sri Lanka, Nepal, and the Netherlands to secure their berth from a tough group. However, the Super Eights revealed the gap in quality the team has with the big sides in mega events.

Bangladesh did not show the approach

required to take the attack to the stronger teams at the tournament, failing miserably against Australia and India before falling to Afghanistan in their final game, with the fragile batting sticking out like a sore thumb.

Such performances may be scrutinized and discussed internally. BCB, however, has not been able to ensure those investigations bore fruit. In 2021, after the debacle in the T20 World Cup in Oman and UAE, the BCB formed a fact-finding committee to interview players and officials. Just like that tournament, the 2024 T20 World Cup has also brought into question the state of cricket in the country.

Back then, BCB president Nazmul Hassan had said that the committee found nothing significant. He, in fact, had remarked, “What can you do if the players say there’s nothing wrong with the coach?”

It showed that there is a need to find scapegoats because perhaps the then coach Russell Domingo was not to their liking. Nazmul had then curiously suggested that he would conduct an investigation personally, but no further information regarding findings came out.

The 2023 ODI World Cup debacle will be remembered not only for poor performances but also because another investigation committee was formed, which interviewed many players and officials, but the findings were once again not made public. The result was null.

In fact, BCB directors had also told this newspaper that they have not seen the investigation report.

There is a general notion that BCB may not get to the bottom of the batting debacle, or what caused the charges of coach Chandika Hathurusingha to prematurely give up on semifinals dream during the Afghanistan match for it might ruffle a few feathers of its own.

First and foremost, BCB must initiate some soul-searching to reflect and accept its own wrongdoings in forming a necessary pipeline, as evidence by the dearth of options in the Tigers’ squad – carrying an off-form batter in Afif Hossain as a travelling reserve – in USA and West Indies around the past month.

As another discussion follows on performances, will BCB this time be relieved with having made the second stage, or will they form another probe committee just for the sake of it?

If the matters at hand related to performance are not discussed freely by the directors, ultimately, the seeds of success for the next world event will not be sown.

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The board remains content that the Tigers were able to make it to the second round of the tournament, the Super Eight stage, beating Sri Lanka, Nepal, and the Netherlands to secure their berth from a tough group. However, the Super Eights revealed the gap in quality the team has with the big sides in mega events.

Bangladesh did not show the approach required to take the attack to the stronger teams at the tournament, failing miserably against Australia and India before falling to Afghanistan in their final game, with the fragile batting sticking out like a sore thumb.

Such performances may be scrutinized and discussed internally. BCB, however, has not been able to ensure those investigations bore fruit. In 2021, after the debacle in the T20 World Cup in Oman and UAE, the BCB formed a fact-finding committee to interview players and officials. Just like that tournament, the 2024 T20 World Cup has also brought into question the state of cricket in the country.

Back then, BCB president Nazmul Hassan had said that the committee found nothing significant. He, in fact, had remarked, “What can you do if the players say there’s nothing wrong with the coach?”

It showed that there is a need to find scapegoats because perhaps the then coach Russell Domingo was not to their liking. Nazmul had then curiously suggested that he would conduct an investigation personally, but no further information regarding findings came out.

The 2023 ODI World Cup debacle will be remembered not only for poor performances but also because another investigation committee was formed, which interviewed many players and officials, but the findings were once again not made public. The result was null.

In fact, BCB directors had also told this newspaper that they have not seen the investigation report.

Ecuador braced for ‘another final’ against Argentina

REUTERS

Ecuador are preparing for “another final” at the Copa America after advancing to a quarterfinal match-up against defending champions Argentina, head coach Felix Sanchez said on Sunday.

Ecuador finished level with Mexico on four points after the teams drew 0-0 in Group B but Sanchez’s side secured a place in the knockout stages thanks to their superior goal difference.

Venezuela advanced as group winners while Mexico and Jamaica were eliminated.

Argentina had a solid start to their title defence, with their forwards Lautaro Martinez and Julian Alvarez scoring all five of their goals in the group stage. With skipper Lionel Messi out injured in their final group game against Peru, Argentina faced no problem as Martinez’s brace paved way for smooth sailing and showed the reigning world champions are productive even without their magician Messi.

“We know it is an unmatched opponent, and we know how tough it’s going to be,” Ecuador coach Sanchez was under illusions about the scale of the take they face in the last eight against Group A winners Argentina at the NRG Stadium in Houston, Texas on Friday.

“It is yet another final for us, and we will try to compete against the world’s champion and the world’s best team ... I believe that our team is going to be extremely motivated to play a good match.”

REUTERS

Five-time World Cup champions Brazil and in-form Colombia meet in North California on Tuesday in a highly-anticipated Copa America clash with more than just the Group D lead on the line.

Colombia are arguably the hottest team in the Americas with an impressive streak of 10 consecutive wins and undefeated in their last 25 matches.

Their last defeat was over two years ago, a 1-0 loss to Argentina which effectively ended their 2022 World Cup qualification hopes.

Colombia fired manager Reinaldo Rueda and brought back Nestor Lorenzo, a former Argentine player who worked for several years as Jose Pekerman’s assistant when he was in charge.

Lorenzo injected a new energy to a talented but ageing group, managing to bring out the best version of experienced players like James Rodriguez, Jhon Cordoba, and Johan Mojica who most thought were passed their prime.

The rise of Richard Rios, Jhon Arias, and Jefferson Lerma gave

who am I to give advices to people’s emotions. We are also excited, so let’s enjoy it,” Lorenzo said after his team beat Costa Rica 3-0 on Friday.

Brazil are struggling after a heartbreaking penalty defeat by Croatia in the 2022 World Cup quarterfinals.

Under the guidance of new manager Dorival Junior, Brazil’s Copa America debut was disappointing – a goalless draw against Costa Rica that was their fifth straight competitive game without a win, their worst run in 23 years.

They bounced back with a 4-1 win over Paraguay thanks to a stellar performance by forward Vinicius Jr., who showed why he is a strong contender to win the Ballon d’Or after guiding Real Madrid to a LaLiga-Champions League double.

“Colombia are a stone in our shoe which we’re going to try to get it out of our way in the next game,” Brazil midfielder Bruno Guimaraes told a press conference on Sunday.

“They have a lot of players who can decide things individually, they’re a very physical team, good to play against. This is the Brazilian national team shirt we are talking about.

“It’s going to be a great test for us, a great game that we want to win to finish first (in the group). That’s what is required when you wear Brazil’s shirt.”

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There is a general notion that BCB may not get to the bottom of the batting debacle, or what caused the charges of coach Chandika Hathurusingha to prematurely give up on semifinals dream during the Afghanistan match for it might ruffle a few feathers of its own.

First and foremost, BCB must initiate some soul-searching to reflect and accept its own wrongdoings in forming a necessary pipeline, as evidence by the dearth of options in the Tigers’ squad – carrying an off-form batter in Afif Hossain as a travelling reserve – in USA and West Indies around the past month.

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Brazil await ‘great test’ in Colombia clash



Colombia the balance they needed, their run including wins over Spain, and Germany and a dramatic fightback against Brazil when winger Luis Diaz scored a late brace to secure a shock win days after Colombian guerrillas freed his kidnapped father.

Playing an attractive style of attacking football with a relentless pace and physicality, Colombia started the Copa America by beating Paraguay and Costa Rica and topped the group with a draw against Brazil.

Beating the five-time world champions would send a statement that South America has a new force to be reckoned with.

“I know our fans are excited and

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Imranur to sprint in Paris

SPORTS REPORTER

Sprinter Imranur Rahman has become the country’s third athlete to participate in the upcoming Paris Olympic Games, slated to run from July 26 to August 11.

World Athletics, the international governing body, confirmed Rahman’s participation through a wild card entry to the Bangladesh Olympic Association (BOA) on Monday.

England-born Imranur, the country’s record-holder fastest sprinter, will be embracing the world’s highest competition – the Olympics – for the first time.

The International Olympic Committee (IOC) first provided a wild card to rifle shooter Robiul Islam while recurve archer Sagor Islam secured a direct entry by reaching the semifinals during the Final Olympic Qualification tournament in Turkey.

Bangladesh Swimming Federation has requested a wild card for swimmer Samiul Islam Rafi.

If the IOC confirms the participation of Rafi, Bangladesh will have a four-member athlete team for the Paris Olympic.

U19 coach Naveed looks beyond World Cup success

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) reappointed Naveed Nawaz – the ICC Under-19 World Cup winning coach with Bangladesh – last month for a second stint, hoping to develop new talents and form another successful batch.

In his first stint, Naveed nurtured a team that won the world title in South Africa in 2020 and youngsters like Towhid Hridoy and Shoriful Islam from that side have already made their mark in international cricket.

Given Bangladesh national team’s current difficulty in producing results in ICC events, perhaps following the template that served the U19 team so well could be an option.

Naveed’s U19 team played several matches in foreign conditions leading up to the World Cup and their preparation served them well in the tournament.

Thus, when Naveed, who arrived in Mirpur yesterday to officially take over, was asked whether the U19 template can be followed in the national team, he felt there was a case for it.

“I am sure [template can serve BCB]. All the planning that’s going on, there is room for that,” the Sri Lankan told The Daily Star following his press conference.

However, Naveed sees difficulty in devising a programme just like the U19s due to the ICC FTP calendar and sees value in the team touring abroad and allowing players to play franchise cricket in other countries.

“That’s something [playing abroad or taking part in franchise cricket] that people have improvised with and thought about on what they want to do and which areas they want to develop,” said Naveed, who rejoined the Bangladesh U19 team following his stint as Sri Lanka national team’s assistant coach.

The U19 team’s success in South Africa is arguably Bangladesh’s greatest achievement in cricket. However, Naveed did not want to get buried under expectation.

“Me coming back after having won a World Cup in 2020, of course there is expectation. I think I have to focus on other things rather than something that passed four years ago. Tournaments are not won just because you have won it in the past,” said Naveed at yesterday’s press conference.

But above all, he spoke about the need to nurture talent, using leg-spinner Rishad Hossain as an example who couldn’t make the cut in the U19 World Cup winning squad in 2020 but made a great impression in the recent ICC T20 World Cup.

“You got to work on technical and mental issues, you can’t hold onto them [problems] for long. That’s something BCB will be looking to do at in their HP and age-group programmes.

“Look at him [Rishad] now. It’s important that U19 is running well but it’s also important that we look after the bigger group of our players as well.”



Third seed Carlos Alcaraz endured an early test in his Wimbledon title defence yesterday but the Spaniard quelled the challenge of Estonian qualifier Mark Lajal in straight sets, 7-6 (7/3), 7-5, 6-2, moving into the second round.

PHOTO: AFP



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The corrupt will face music

Says PM; cabinet okays proposal to form company to run Padma Bridge

PARTHA PRATIM BHATTACHARJEE

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has said corrupt people will have to shoulder the responsibilities of their deeds.

The Anti-Corruption Commission is an independent body and it will investigate into allegations of corruptions following its own process, she said.

Speaking to her cabinet colleagues during an unscheduled discussion after a cabinet meeting yesterday, Hasina said action would be taken against the corrupt people regardless of their identities, a cabinet member told The Daily Star quoting the PM.

The meeting was held at the Prime Minister's Office in the capital's Tejgaon.

Hasina directed the cabinet members to bring forward the wrongdoings of the previous BNP-led alliance government.

She said that people have forgotten those wrongdoings, including the 10-truck arms haul, the huge hauls of ammo and explosives in Bogura's Kahalu and Dupchanchia upazilas, and the recovery of arms in Cox's Bazar's Pekua.

The premier said it is time now to bring those incidents before the people.



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Students of Dhaka University under the banner of "Students against Discrimination" stage a demonstration in TSC area yesterday demanding reinstatement of the 2018 government circular that scrapped the quota system in civil service.

PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

Power supply from Adani plant resumes

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Electricity supply from a unit of the Adani power plant in India's Jharkhand resumed yesterday after 60 hours of disruption, according to the Bangladesh Power Development Board (PDB).

Technical glitches halted power supply from the 1,496-megawatt coal-fired Adani plant on Friday morning.

PDB spokesperson Shameem Hasan told The Daily Star that the unit resumed its production around 7:45am.

"Now it is producing more than 500 megawatts of electricity," he said around 11:15am.

Earlier, the PDB officials said the Adani authorities found a leak in a valve of the circulating water pump of the plant, which is why they forcibly shut down the unit of the plant.

Another unit of the plant went into routine maintenance during the Eid holidays, which is supposed to resume this week.

Trump has immunity for official acts

US top court rules

REUTERS, Washington

The US Supreme Court yesterday found that Donald Trump cannot be prosecuted for official actions taken as president, but can for private acts, in a landmark ruling recognising for the first time any form of presidential immunity from prosecution.

The justices, in a 6-3 ruling written by Chief Justice John Roberts, threw out a lower court's decision rejecting Trump's claim of immunity from criminal charges involving his efforts to undo his 2020 election loss to Joe Biden.

The court's six conservative justices were in the majority and its three liberal justices dissented.

"We conclude that under our constitutional structure of separated powers, the nature of presidential power requires that former president have some immunity from criminal prosecution for official acts during his tenure in office," Roberts wrote.

"At least with respect to the president's exercise of his core constitutional powers, this immunity must be absolute. As for his remaining official actions, he is also entitled to immunity," Roberts added.

Roberts said Trump's case will be sent back to the lower courts for further review.



Explain VAT claims against S Alam firms: HC to NBR

AG office says firms don't want to pay VAT

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday questioned the legality of government's demand for unpaid VAT and the consequent fines of over Tk 7,000 crore from S Alam Vegetable Oil Ltd and S Alam Super Edible Oil Ltd.

On June 9, the Customs, VAT & Excise Commissionerate, Chattogram in its adjudication orders asked the two companies to pay Tk 3,538 crore in "evaded VAT", Tk 3,531 crore in fines, and interest on the amounts, to the state coffers within 15 work days. Customs said the value added tax was evaded in fiscal years 2019-20 and 2021-22.

Yesterday, the HC in two rules asked the respondents as to why the VAT determination orders – issued by the commissioner of

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

Hamas ally fires rockets into Israel

Most launches intercepted; Israeli tanks advance in north, south of Gaza

REUTERS, Gaza

The Palestinian Islamic Jihad group fired a barrage of rockets into Israel yesterday, in an apparent show of force as Israeli tanks pressed their advance deeper into Gaza amid fierce fighting, residents and officials said.

The armed wing of Islamic Jihad, an Iranian-backed ally of Hamas, said its fighters fired rockets towards several Israeli settlements near the fence with Gaza in response to "the crimes of the Zionist enemy against our Palestinian people".

The volley of around 20 rockets caused no casualties, according to the Israeli military. Most launches were intercepted. But it showed the group still possess rocket capabilities almost nine months into Israel's offensive it says is aimed at neutralising threats against it.

In some parts of Gaza, Hamas fighters continue to stage attacks on Israeli forces in areas that the army

had left months ago.

Yesterday, Israeli tanks deepened their incursions into the Shejaia suburb in eastern Gaza City for a fifth day, and tanks advanced further in western and central Rafah, in southern Gaza near the border with Egypt, residents said.

The Israeli military said it had killed a number of fighters in combat in Shejaia yesterday and found large amounts of weapons there.

Hamas said that, in Rafah, its fighters lured an Israeli force into a booby-trapped house in the east of the city and then blew it up, causing casualties.

Also in Rafah, the Israeli military said that an airstrike killed a Hamas fighter who fired an anti-tank missile at its troops.

The health ministry in Hamas-run Gaza said yesterday that at least 37,900 people have been killed during nearly nine months of offensive. The toll includes at least 23 deaths over the past 24 hours, a ministry statement said.

» Arab mediators' efforts to secure truce stalled

» Israel conducts operation in Tulkarm in West Bank

FRENCH ELECTION

Parties rush to build anti-far right front

Second round of voting July 7



REUTERS, Paris

France's political parties rushed to build a united front aimed at blocking the path to government of Marine Le Pen's far-right National Rally (RN) yesterday, after it made historic gains to win the first round of a parliamentary election.

The RN and its allies won Sunday's round with 33 percent of the vote, followed by a left-wing bloc with 28 percent and well ahead of President Emmanuel Macron's centrists, who scored just 20 percent, official results from the interior ministry showed.

While financial markets rallied on relief the RN tally

SEE PAGE 6 COL 3

France edge Belgium to move into quarters



AFP, Düsseldorf

Jan Vertonghen's late own goal took France into the quarter-finals of Euro 2024 on Monday as they edged Belgium 1-0 in a tense tie in Dusseldorf.

France had dominated the last-16 clash but their profligate finishing looked set to force extra time until they finally found a way through with five minutes left.

Substitute Randal Kolo Muani collected the ball inside the Belgian penalty area and hit a shot that was going wide until a deflection off the unfortunate Vertonghen took it past goalkeeper Koen Casteels.

The lucky break sent the

SEE PAGE 6 COL 7



Super-sub forward Randal Kolo Muani screams in ecstasy after his strike led to a late own goal to help France scrape past Belgium with a 1-0 win in the teams' Euro 2024 last-16 encounter in Dusseldorf yesterday.

PHOTO: REUTERS

India replaces colonial-era criminal laws

Critics say new laws could create confusion

REUTERS, New Delhi

India replaced colonial-era criminal laws with new legislation yesterday, which Prime Minister Narendra Modi's government said would make the country more just, but the opposition said risked throwing the criminal justice system into disarray.

The new laws were approved by parliament in December in Modi's previous term with the government saying they aim to "give justice, not punishment". It says they were needed as colonial laws had been at the core of the criminal justice system for more than a century.

Among the key changes is replacement of the sedition law frequently used as a tool of suppression, after its enactment under British colonial rule to jail Indian freedom fighters.

Under the new laws – which replace the Indian Penal Code, the Indian Evidence Act, and Code of Criminal Procedure – sedition is replaced with a section on acts seen as "endangering the sovereignty, unity, and integrity of India".

"About 77 years after independence, our criminal justice system is becoming completely indigenous and will run on Indian ethos," India's Home (interior) Minister Amit Shah told reporters. "Instead of punishment, there will now be justice."

Criminal cases registered under the repealed laws before yesterday will continue to follow them, Shah said,

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