



Quota protests on; govt looks to SC for a way out

STAR REPORT

For the second consecutive day, students demonstrating against the quota system for government jobs occupied key city intersections, bringing traffic to a halt for hours.

They also blocked rail lines and major highways at places across the country.

The students' "Bangla Blockade" had a cascading effect on traffic on other streets. Thousands were stuck in gridlocks on city streets and thoroughfares for hours on end since 4:00pm.

The protesters, however, decided not to enforce any blockades today. Instead, they would continue their boycott of classes and exams.

"We will coordinate with students across the country tomorrow [today] to launch a tougher demonstration on Wednesday," said Nahid Islam, a Dhaka University student and an organiser of the movement.

"We have not called off the blockade. Instead, we are preparing for a large-scale blockade," he said.

Students of different public universities and colleges and jobseekers have been demonstrating for the last seven days demanding reinstatement of a 2018 circular that abolished the quota system in government jobs.

The Supreme Court on June 4 upheld a High Court verdict that declared the government circular illegal.

Attorney General AM Amin Uddin said his office would take the next steps after receiving the full text of the HC verdict.

He said the government's petition against the HC verdict was scheduled to come up before the Appellate Division on Thursday.

He said the students should have patience and avoid public demonstrations since the matter was pending with the Supreme Court. "I don't know why they are carrying out the movement," he said.

Meanwhile, three ministers and two state ministers discussed the students' movement in a closed-door meeting yesterday at the Awami League president's political office in Dhanmondi.

- » People suffer on 2nd day of "Bangla Blockade"
- » Protesters will not enforce blockades today
- » Students to continue boycott of classes, exams
- » Students preparing for "large-scale blockade"
- » Ministers meet to discuss anti-quota protests
- » "Govt sympathetic towards demonstrators"

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Students demonstrate blocking the Shahbagh intersection in the capital around 4:30pm yesterday as part of their "Bangla Blockade" programme demanding scrapping of the quota system in government jobs.

PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN

'LOAN FRAUD'

ACC seeks info on 14 firms from BB, Islami Bank

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Anti-Corruption Commission has written to Bangladesh Bank and Islami Bank seeking information on 14 companies, including 11 of Nabil Group, regarding embezzlement of crores of taka from the Shariah-based bank through alleged loan fraud.

The central bank and the Islami Bank Bangladesh Ltd (IBBL) have been asked to provide the information within seven

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QUESTION LEAK

Six PSC officials, 11 others arrested

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

At least 17 people, including six officials of the Bangladesh Public Service Commission, have been arrested by the CID for their alleged involvement in leaking questions of government job exams.

Six PSC officials are deputy directors Abu Jafar and Jahangir Alam, Assistant Director Alamgir Kabir, Office Assistant Sajedul Islam, Auditor Priyonath

Roy, office staff Khalilur Rahman, and former PSC driver Syed Abed Ali, according to the Criminal Investigation Department.

The other arrestees are Abu Solaiman Md Sohel, former Chhatra League leader and trader; Shahadat Hossain, a security guard of the Narayanganj passport office; Niamun Hasan, medical technician of Shaheed Suhrawardy Medical College Hospital, Sakhawati

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Hasina in Beijing on 4-day visit

Will hold talks with Xi Jinping, Li Qiang tomorrow



BSS, Beijing

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina reached Beijing yesterday on a four-day bilateral visit to China at the invitation of her Chinese counterpart Li Qiang.

A special Biman Bangladesh Airlines flight, carrying the prime minister and her entourage members, touched down at Beijing Capital International Airport at 6:00pm (local time).

During her stay in Beijing, Hasina will have a meeting with Chinese President Xi Jinping. She will also hold a delegation-level bilateral meeting with the Chinese prime minister tomorrow.

Bangladesh and China are likely to sign 20 to 22 memorandums of understanding (MoUs) during the premier's visit, said Foreign Minister Hasan Mahmud.

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PHOTO ON PAGE 2

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5 fall from train roof to their deaths

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Narsingdi

Five people, including children, were crushed to death under the wheels of a train after falling off its roof in Narsingdi's Raipura upazila yesterday.

The incident occurred around 6:20am in the Ashrafpur area near Methikanda Railway Station in the upazila.

The deceased could not be identified till the filing of this report at 8:15pm.

However, the victims are presumed to be between the ages of 12 and 20, Shahidul Islam, in-charge of Narsingdi Railway Police Station, told The Daily Star.

"They were travelling on the roof of the Dhaka-bound Chattogram Mail train."

Quoting witnesses, he said they were on the roof of the first compartment. All five were seen jostling and fighting over something. "At one point, all of them fell off and were crushed under the wheels of the train."

The bodies were taken to the Narsingdi Sadar Hospital morgue around 5:00pm.

Shahidul said, "We could not determine the specific ages of the deceased as their bodies have been dismembered. Experts from Dhaka are expected to arrive soon to help us identify them."

Meanwhile, another man was run over by a train in Raipura town around 12:15pm.

Parimal Sutradhar, 70, of the West Kandapara area in Narsingdi town, was run over by the Kalani Express at Sirampur Railgate area.

Dr Mohammad Mahmudul Kabir Bashar, resident medical officer of Narsingdi Sadar Hospital, said, "Six bodies were brought to the hospital by railway personnel around 5:00pm. The bodies were dismembered and could not be identified immediately. Once the post-mortems are complete, we will return the bodies back to the railway police."

Shahidul further said, "If the bodies are not identified by tomorrow, they will be buried at the government cemetery."



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina reaches Beijing Capital International Airport yesterday. Top Chinese officials and the Bangladesh ambassador to China received her at the airport. She is on a four-day official visit to China.

PHOTO: BSS

Russian strikes on Ukraine kill 36

Gut Kyiv children's hospital; UN condemns attack

AFP, Kyiv

Russia struck cities across Ukraine yesterday with a missile barrage that killed 36 people and heavily damaged a Kyiv children's hospital in an assault condemned as a ruthless attack on civilians.

Dozens of volunteers, doctors and rescue workers were digging through debris of a part of Okhmatdyt paediatric hospital in a desperate search for survivors after the rare day-time bombardment.

First responders ran for cover when sirens and a blast sounded hours after the initial strikes that hit as Ukraine struggles to protect itself from Russian aerial attacks.

President Volodymyr Zelensky said Russian forces fired more than 40 missiles at least five major civilian hubs mainly in the south and east of the country, as well as Kyiv.

The attack came as Zelensky visited Warsaw before heading to the Nato summit in Washington, where he was expected to appeal for more military support from the

country's allies.

The UN harshly condemned wave of deadly Russian strikes across Ukraine, including on Kyiv, saying "dozens of people have been killed and injured".

AFP reporters at the scene of the attacks heard air raid sirens and explosions ring out as the missiles crashed into the capital and debris from downed projectiles rained down over the city.

Natalia Svidler, 40, was in the hospital at the time of the strike with her two-year-old son, who was due to have surgery this week, when the air raid sirens sounded.

"The nurses told us to go down to the basement. After a while we heard a loud rumble and then the ceiling in the basement collapsed a little," she said at the scene.

"Everyone got very scared, of course. Everyone started screaming and running," she told AFP.

City officials said the attack had also damaged several residential buildings and an office block in Kyiv where AFP

reporters saw cars on fire and shredded trees in charred courtyards.

Ukrainian energy operator DTEK also said three electrical substations had been destroyed or damaged in the attack, the latest in series of strikes that have halved the country's energy generation capacity in recent months.

Zelensky said that there were an unknown number of people trapped under the rubble of the Okhmatdyt children's hospital and it was not immediately clear how many had been killed.

An AFP reporter saw one body at the scene, covered with an emergency blanket.

Municipal officials said that five people had been pulled from the rubble while at least 10 people had been killed in the barrage that hit Kyiv.

Russian forces have repeatedly targeted the capital with massive barrages since Moscow invaded Ukraine in February 2022, and the last major attack on Kyiv with drones and missiles was last month.

Quota protests on; govt looks to SC for a way out

FROM PAGE 1

AL General Secretary and Road Transport and Bridges Minister Obaidul Quader; Law Minister Anisul Huq; Education Minister Mohibul Hassan Chowdhury; and State Minister for Information Mohammad Ali Arafat; State Minister for Education Shamsun Naher along with AL office Secretary Biplab Barua were at the meeting.

Sources said the participants expected a solution to the issue soon. They said the government was sympathetic towards the demonstrators and that it would act sensibly. They were of the opinion that the protesters should not carry out any programme that causes public suffering.

DEMO IN DHAKA

Like the previous day, the protesters blocked Shahbagh, Science Lab, Nilkhet, Technical, Karwan Bazar, Farmgate, and Zero Point intersections for at least four hours.

Hundreds of students of Dhaka University gathered in front of the Central Library around 3:30pm and headed for Shahbagh in processions.

Holding placards and chanting slogans, they blocked Shahbagh intersection around 4:00pm.

Other groups of mostly Dhaka University students blocked the Chankharpul intersection near Mayor Mohammad Hanif Flyover, and Banglamotor and Sonargaon intersections.

Around the same time, students of Dhaka College and Eden Mahila College blocked the Nilkhet and Science Lab intersections.

"We have been left with no other options other than taking to the streets. We will not stop our movement until our demands are met," Rashed Al Hasan, a student of Dhaka College, told The Daily Star.

Defying police obstruction, students of Jagannath University blocked the Zero Point intersection in Gulistan for three

hours from 4:00pm.

Around 4:15pm, students from Sher-e-Bangla Agricultural University blocked the street near their university in Agargaon.

Some students blocked the Paltan intersection around 5:00pm.

Several hundred students marched towards Farmgate around 5:00pm, halting traffic on Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue.

A huge number of people were seen walking to their destinations.

There, the students ended their blockade for the day around 7:30pm and marched towards Shahbagh.

HIGHWAYS, RAIL LINES

Students blocked rail lines in Dhaka's Karwan Bazar level crossing for nearly an hour from 6:40pm. Besides, rail lines in Mymensingh, Rajshahi, and Chattogram were also blocked for several hours.

They also blocked the Dhaka-Chattogram, Dhaka-Aricha, Chattogram-Khagrachhari, Barishal-Kuakata, and Dinajpur-Dhaka highways.

Cumilla University students blocked the Dhaka-Chattogram highway for four hours from 4:00pm. They staged a sit-in on the highway at Kotbari in Cumilla Sadar.

Students of Chittagong University along with students from various CU-affiliated educational institutions first blocked the road in front of Gate-2 of Sholoshahar and then staged a sit-in in Tigerpass area of Chattogram city.

Hridoy Ahmed Rizvi, a Chhatra League activist at the university, allegedly threatened an organiser of the movement at CU.

Khan Talat Mahmud Rafi, a first-year honours student of Dramatics, alleged that Hridoy called his father in Netrakona on Sunday night and said that there would be dire consequences for Rafi if he did not quit the movement.

Contacted, Hridoy claimed that his phone had been "hacked".

Rail communication between Dhaka and Mymensingh was suspended for two hours from 1:30pm as students of Bangladesh Agricultural University (BAU) blocked the Dhaka-Mymensingh rail line for the third consecutive day.

The students set up barricades at Jabbarer Mor, halting the Jamalpur Express on its tracks. Rail communication resumed at 3:10pm, reports UNB.

Hundreds of students from Rajshahi University blocked the Dhaka-Rajshahi rail line near the campus for nearly five hours from 11:30am.

WHAT MINISTERS SAID

Talking to The Daily Star last night, Law Minister Anisul Huq said the government has no decision about the quota system, as the matter is now pending with the Supreme Court.

He said the protesters can place their arguments before the court through lawyers.

"When the High Court was holding hearings on the case filed for keeping the quota system, those who were demonstrating had no lawyers. They did not present their arguments before the High Court.

"Now the case is before the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court. They can now place arguments before the Appellate Division through lawyers. The Appellate Division will give a fair verdict after hearing their arguments," he said.

Road Transport Minister Obaidul Quader said programmes that cause public sufferings should be avoided.

"The court scrapped the circular that abolished the quota system. The government has appealed against that decision. Creating public suffering by blocking roads should be avoided until the court delivers its verdict," Quader said.

Education Minister Mohibul Hasan Chowdhury said he would not comment on a matter pending with the court.

in Beijing.

On July 10, a delegation level bilateral meeting, led by Hasina and Li Qiang, will be held at the Great Hall of the People.

She will later attend a banquet hosted by the Chinese premier at the same venue.

In the afternoon, Hasina will call on Chinese President Xi Jinping at the Great Hall of the People.

The Bangladesh premier is scheduled to depart from Beijing Capital International Airport at 11:00am (Beijing time) on July 11 by a special Biman flight.

The flight is scheduled to land at the Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport, Dhaka, at 2:00pm (Bangladesh time) the same day.

Six PSC officials, 11 others arrested

FROM PAGE 1

Hossain, a trader; Sayem Hossain, Liton Sarker, Sayed Sohanur Rahman Siam, son of Abed, Jahidul Islam, Mamunur Rashid, and Noman Siddiqui.

Touhidul Islam, special superintendent of CID's cyber investigation and operation, told The Daily Star, "We have arrested them after conducting raids in different areas over the last two days."

"The arrestees were involved in leaking questions of the deputy assistant engineer recruitment test of Bangladesh Railway held on July 5. They were also involved in the leak of questions of multiple non-cadre examinations."

"We are interrogating them at the CID office," he said, adding that a case was filed against the arrestees with Paltan Police Station in connection with leaking question papers.

According to sources, Abed Ali, driver of a former PSC chairman, was involved in the question leak. His son Sohanur, a Chhatra League leader, was also involved.

Abed Ali, of Dasar upazila, owns crores of taka.

His son Sohan studied abroad and then at a private university in the country. It is also learnt that Abed has two multi-storey buildings in Dhaka

and a luxurious house in Madaripur.

Abed also campaigned seeking candidacy for the post of chairman in the last upazila parishad election.

Earlier, Channel 24 aired an investigative report on the question leak. There have been allegations of question paper leak in various PSC examinations, including for cadre and non-cadre posts, said the report.

According to the report, questions of the test for recruiting 516 people in Bangladesh Railway were leaked.

The report said question papers of 30 cadre and non-cadre examinations, including BCS, were leaked and some PSC officials were involved. The racket has amassed a huge amount of money by selling questions, the report added.

Sources in the CID said arrested PSC Office Assistant Sajedul took the railway recruitment exam question paper from Deputy Director Jafar.

The racket made around Tk 2 crore leaking the question papers.

Sajedul earlier leaked questions of PSC exams and driver Abed abetted him, the sources added.

In another development, Dhaka north city Chhatra League yesterday relieved Abed's son Sohanur, relief and disaster management secretary of the unit, for his alleged involved in leaking questions.

ACC seeks info on 14 firms from BB, Islami Bank

FROM PAGE 1

working days after receiving the letters from the graft watchdog.

The letters were sent yesterday.

The Nabil Group companies include Nabil Naba Foods Ltd, Nabil Cold Storage, Nabil Feed Mills Ltd, Nabil Auto Rice Mill, Nabil Auto Flour Mill, Shimul Enterprise, Naba Agro Trade International, Anwara Trade International, Naba Pharma Limited, Nabil Green Crops Limited, and International Product Palace.

The 11 Nabil Group companies maintained accounts with Islami Bank's Gulshan Corporate Branch, New Market branch in Rajshahi and Pabna branch in Pabna.

The ACC also sought information on M/s Murad Enterprise and its affiliates (client of IBBL Chaktai branch in Chattogram), United Super Traders and its affiliates (client of IBBL Jubilee Road branch in Chattogram), and Century Food Products Limited and its affiliates (client of IBBL Khatunganj Corporate branch in Chattogram).

FARIDPUR MOB BEATING

UP chairman, member removed from posts

UNB, Faridpur

Shah Asaduzzaman and Ajit Kumar Biswas, chairman and member of Dumain union parishad under Madhukhali upazila of Faridpur, have been removed from their posts over allegations of their involvement in the fatal beating of two construction workers accused of torching an idol at a local temple on April 18.

The decision was announced on July 7 in a notification, issued by the Local Government Division under the Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development and Co-operatives, signed by Senior Assistant Secretary Purabi Golder.

On April 18, two construction workers were beaten to death by villagers after being suspected of setting fire to an idol at the Panchpalli Sarbojonin Kali Temple in Panchpalli under Dumain union.

According to the notification, Shah Asaduzzaman and Ajit Kumar Biswas were allegedly involved in the incident, and as such, both officials were suspended as per recommendation from the deputy commissioner of Faridpur.

The notification also directed the Madhukhali upazila nirbahi officer to declare the posts vacant and issue a gazette notification in this regard.

Following the mob beating on April 18, video footage of the incident surfaced on social media, which showed Shah Asaduzzaman participating in the assault. Since then, both the chairman and the member have been in hiding.

Hijra tortured by BSF along Tentulia border

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Thakurgaon

A 45-year-old Bangladeshi transperson was tortured allegedly by the Indian Border Security Force (BSF) along the Banglabandha border in Panchagarh's Tentulia upazila early yesterday.

Kiron alias Raju, 45, of Narayanganj Sadar upazila, is currently undergoing treatment at Panchagarh Sadar Hospital.

According to the victim, 11 people from the hijra community reached Banglabandha border area around 1:00am to illegally enter India with the help of a local broker, whom they each paid Tk 10,000.

Ten of them managed to enter India, but Kiron got caught by BSF members.

Kiron was then beaten by BSF men with sticks and rifle butts before being left near Bangladesh territory around 5:00am.

Later, BGB men rescued and admitted Kiron to Tentulia Upazila Health Complex. Kiron was later transferred to Panchagarh Sadar Hospital for better treatment.

Contacted, Lt Col Ziaul Haque, commanding officer of 18 BGB Battalion, said a letter was sent to the BSF to hold a flag meeting over the incident but they were yet to get a response.

Hasina in Beijing on 4-day visit

FROM PAGE 1

Speaking at a press conference at the foreign ministry in Dhaka on Sunday, the minister said inauguration of a number of projects will also be announced during the PM's visit to China.

Chinese President Xi Jinping visited Bangladesh in October 2016 when the relationship between the two countries was elevated to a strategic partnership.

The two countries would celebrate the golden jubilee of the diplomatic relations next year.

The Bangladesh premier's visit to China is taking place within 15 days after her tour of India from June 21 to 22.

Jin Lique, president of Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank, will pay

a courtesy call on Hasina at the meeting room of her place of residence today.

The premier will join a summit on Trade, Business and Investment Opportunities between Bangladesh and China at the China World Summit Wing in Beijing.

In the afternoon, a meeting is scheduled to be held between the prime minister and the president of Consultative Party at the Great Hall of the People, Beijing.

Hasina will also place a wreath at the Monument to the People's Heroes at Tiananmen Square.

In the evening, she will attend a dinner hosted in her honour by the Bangladesh envoy to China at the Bangladesh House

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Court issues travel ban on customs official Enamul

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday issued a travel ban on Mohammed Enamul Haque, commissioner of Customs, Excise and VAT Commissionerate in Sylhet, in a case filed over acquiring wealth worth Tk 9.76 crore illegally.

Judge Mohammed Ash-Shams Joglul Hossain of the Metropolitan Senior Special Judge's Court of Dhaka passed the order after the Anti-Corruption Commission's Deputy Director Farzana Yasmin, also investigation officer of the case, appealed to the court, an official of the anti-graft watchdog told The Daily Star.

On June 4, the court ordered the authorities concerned to confiscate all immovable properties

SEE PAGE 4 COL 8



Hundreds of vehicles remain stuck on the Dhaka Elevated Expressway as anti-quota protestors block the Farmgate ramp. Many had to disembark from their vehicles and start walking. Inset, a mother, weary of walking under the sun, rests on the sidewalk with her child on her lap.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS, RASHED SHUMON

BNP not fueling ongoing protests

Says Fakhrul

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP has no reason to be involved in the current teachers' and students' movements on university campuses, said the party's Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir yesterday.

He said this in response to Awami League's claim that BNP had been patronising these protests.

"A teachers and students are carrying out these movements independently based on their professional perspectives, why would BNP instigate those agitations?" said Fakhrul.

Fakhrul said his party believes the teachers' SEE PAGE 4 COL 1

Quota protest intensifies, so does public suffering

MD ABBAS

From Shahbagh to Farmgate, with Banglamotor in between, major intersections of Dhaka were paralysed for several hours as protests against quota in government jobs swept through the capital yesterday.

The blockades enforced by students also extended to the Government Science Lab intersection, Chankharpool, areas adjacent to Dhaka University and in front of other educational institutions.

The ripple effect of these blockades created severe congestion at key locations such as Tantibazar, Ray Saheb Bazar, Bangshal, Gulistan, Purana Paltan, Shahbagh, Karwan Bazar, Farmgate, Agargaon, Kazipara, Sheorapara, Mirpur-10, New Market, and Science Lab.

By 6:00pm, the congestion spread to Mohakhali, Banani, Uttara, and other areas. There were long lines of private cars, buses, and CNG-run auto-rickshaws.

The students also blocked the railway at Karawan Bazar level crossing for half an hour.

Many inter-district passengers also had to suffer as the protesters blocked major railways and highways, disconnecting Dhaka from

different parts of the country.

The ordeal began at 3:30pm when hundreds of students demanding quota reforms started their "Bangla Blockade" programme from Shahbagh.

They even blocked the Farmgate ramp of the Dhaka Elevated Expressway leaving hundreds of vehicles stuck there.



The sufferings intensified after the office closure as many job holders were forced to walk to their destinations. Some bikers were seen quarrelling with the protesters.

The protesters blocked the railway at Karawan Bazar level crossing around

6:40pm, halting train movements, which they withdrew an hour later.

Vehicular movement resumed in Farmgate, Karawan Bazar and Bangla Motor areas around 7:45pm.

The protesters finally lifted the blockade at Shahbagh around 8:35pm, after almost four hours.

It took Pankaj Malakar, a private job holder, two and a half hours to reach Farmgate from Bailey Road on his bike. "I was stuck multiple times and had to take several detours," he said.

Mushfiq Alam, a private service holder, was seen waiting at Farmgate for public transport. "I have been waiting for 40 minutes but there's no sign of any transport," he said.

Rumana Jannat, a medical technologist, was stuck in a gridlock near Pan Pacific Sonargaon Hotel for over an hour. She eventually left the bus she was on and started walking.

College students Rafi Ahmed, Sujon Maiti, and Ishtiaq Hossain also expressed their dismay as they were stuck in the Bijoy Sarani area for over 40 minutes.

Meanwhile, the students demonstrating SEE PAGE 4 COL 3

COMMUNAL VIOLENCE

45 died in 1,045 incidents

Says Oikya Parishad report from July 2023 to June 2024

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Bangladesh Hindu Buddhist Christian Oikya Parishad has claimed that 45 people were killed in 1,045 incidents of communal violence between July 2023 and June 2024.

The organisation released these findings in its latest report at a press briefing, titled, "Report launching on torture and persecution of religious-ethnic minorities in Bangladesh in the past year," at Jatiya Press Club yesterday.

While reading out the written statement, Advocate Rana Dasgupta, general secretary of the organisation, said from July 2023 to June 2024, ten people were targeted in attempted killings in various incidents of communal violence, 36 people were threatened with death, and 479 people were physically tortured.

There were 102 incidents of attacks, vandalism, looting, and arson on the houses and businesses of minority communities, he said, adding that there were 47 incidents of encroachment on houses and lands.

Additionally, 45 incidents of grabbing houses and lands, attempted evictions, and threats were reported.

There were also 11 cases of threats or attempts to force people to leave the country, 15 cases of grabbing or attempting to grab the properties

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

PROTEST OVER PENSION

Univ teachers vow to continue strike

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Public university teachers yesterday vowed to continue their work abstention movement until their demand to reinstate the previous pension scheme is met.

Teachers and staff members boycotted all classes, examinations, and administrative activities to press home their demands.

At Dhaka University, officials and staff members held a protest rally in front of the administrative building after a campus procession. A separate rally in front of the Arts Building was also held.

Prof Nizamul Hoque Bhuiyan, secretary general of Federation of Bangladesh University Teachers' Association (FBUTA) and president of the Dhaka University Teachers Association, told the media that they have been in contact with the government, but no formal meeting has been scheduled yet.

"Since our demands were not addressed, we started with a half day strike, then escalated to a full-day strike. We have now initiated this full-day work abstention movement. We will not return to classes until our demands are fulfilled," he said.

Teachers at other public universities, including Buet, Jagannath University, Chittagong University, Rajshahi University, Ruet, BSMRSTU, and Comilla University, among others, continued the movement to demand the reinstatement of the previous pension system.

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Flood situation unchanged in the north

Over 1.60 lakh marooned in Kurigram, Lalmonirhat; 400 families stranded in Rangpur

STAR REPORT

The flood in the north remains unchanged. In Kurigram, the Brahmaputra, Dharla, and Dudhkumar rivers continue to flow above the danger level, while the water of Teesta and other rivers are rising.

The flood situation also remains unchanged in three unions along the Dharla river shoal in Lalmonirhat Sadar upazila.

The Kurigram District Relief and Rehabilitation Office reports that all nine upazilas of the district have been affected, impacting 1,35,939 people from 40,000 families.

Only 2,395 people have taken shelter in 404 flood shelters.



Local administration has distributed 397 tonnes of rice, Tk 21.85 lakh in cash, and 21,330 packets of dry food to affected individuals.

An additional 1,079 tonnes of rice and Tk 23.5 lakh in cash are reserved for future needs. In Lalmonirhat, 25,000 people from 7,000 families are affected.

Tk 5 lakh, 100 tonnes of rice, and 500

packets of dry food have been provided as relief.

Water Development Board officials said the Brahmaputra at Chilmari point is flowing 56cm above the danger level, Dudhkumar at Pateshwari 39cm, and Dharla at Bridge Point in Kurigram 32cm above the danger level.

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6,500 hectares of agri land under water

S DILIP ROY, Lalmonirhat

Farmers have suffered significant losses due to the ongoing flood in Kurigram, as around 6,500 hectares of agricultural land – including Aman seedbeds and vegetable fields – have been under water over the past week.

Officials of Department of Agriculture Extension (DAE) said out of the 6,500 hectares, various vegetables were being grown on 2,000 hectares, 500 hectares were used as Aman seedbeds, and 4,000 hectares were used for jute and other crops. While jute cultivation has not suffered much damage yet, there is a concern that prolonged flooding might also impact these crops.

Meanwhile, farmers in the affected areas claimed that the damage was much higher than the DAE estimates.

Surjamal Mia, a farmer of Char Madhya Kadamtala village in Kurigram Sadar, said his three-bigha land where he

was growing pepper and pointed gourd (potol) has gone underwater.

He also feared that the jute he is growing in four bighas of land will also be damaged if the flood gets prolonged.

Farmer Nazrul Islam of Kalatipara village in Ulipur upazila said he cultivated pepper on five bighas of land, planning to sell Tk 4 lakh worth of peppers.

"But now the flood has damaged everything. This year's flood has affected farmers the worst," he said.

Sudhir Chandra Das, 70, a farmer of Jorgach village in Chilmari upazila, said his Aman seedbed on 40 decimals of land was completely damaged.

"I'll have to prepare the seedbeds again once the water recedes, but I don't know when that will happen," he added.

Contacted, Abdullah Al Mamun, deputy director of DAE in Kurigram, said vegetables and Aman seedbeds submerged under the floodwater are completely destroyed.

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BNP not

FROM PAGE 3
protest against the new universal pension scheme and the students' agitation against the reinstatement of the quota system in government jobs are justified.

"We will call a spade a spade and we will talk about what is logical," he said.

The BNP leader also admitted that the united movements of public university teachers and students have inspired the party. "When the people of the country unite in their own interests, it inspires us with great hope," he said.

The BNP leader said even after 50 years of the country's existence, keeping a 56 percent quota in government jobs is entirely illogical because it hinders the development of merit.

6,500 hectares

FROM PAGE 3
DAE staff are still assessing the full extent of the damage at the field level, he added.

However, Rakibul Hasan, executive engineer of WDB in Kurigram, said there is no possibility of flood water receding in the next 3-4 days.



Flood situation

FROM PAGE 3
In Lalmonirhat, the Dharla at Shimulbari point is 16cm above the danger level, while the Teesta is 32cm below the danger level at Teesta Barrage's Dalia point.

Rakibul Hasan, executive engineer of the Water Development Board in Kurigram, said the flood situation is expected to persist due to water rushing in from upstream India.

Meanwhile, many flood victims said they were yet to receive any government assistance.

Lutfar Rahman, 60, of Char Madhya Kadamtala in Kurigram Sadar, said they have been living amid floodwater since last Tuesday and have not received any government or private relief assistance till yesterday.

Kurigram Deputy Commissioner Mohammad Saidul Arif assured that they have enough stock of relief aid and that materials are being distributed through upazila and union parishads.

Meanwhile in Kaunia upazila of Rangpur, villages in Shahidbagh, Tepamadhupur, Balapara, and Haragach unions went under water on Sunday, affecting approximately 400 families, said Ahsan Habib Sarkar, the upazila project implementation officer.

Many residents have moved their children, elderly, and livestock to higher ground.

In Char Dushmara, a government primary school halted classes due to flooding. Additionally, a bamboo bridge over the Manas river, a branch of the Teesta, was washed away by strong current.

According to the Flood Forecasting and Warning Center, Teesta was flowing just 0.19cm below the danger level as of 3:00pm yesterday.

Kaunia Upazila Executive Officer Mahidul Haque stated they are closely monitoring the rising water levels and have taken all necessary precautions.

Quota protest

FROM PAGE 3
Kurigram against quotas in government jobs decided not to hold any blockade programmes today.

However, they would continue to boycott classes and exams, demanding the reinstatement of a 2018 order that abolished quotas.

Nahid Islam, a DU student and one of the organisers of the movement, said, "We will coordinate with students across the country tomorrow (today) to go for a tougher movement on Wednesday."



Deadly Ctg drains get bamboo band-aid

ARUN BIKASH DEY, Ctg

Bamboo fences, that's all the Chattogram City Corporation could come up with as a temporary solution to the problem of unguarded canals this monsoon, as projects worth crores of taka continue to linger on.

At least 11 people have died and many others were injured after falling into the city's drains and canals since 2017.

The city has a total of 57 canals stretching 161 kilometres, of which 36 are now under a mega project by the Chattogram Development Authority to address the city's waterlogging woes.

Besides, there are a total of 765 km of drains in the city.

According to CCC officials, they have nothing much to do

with the canals under the CDA's project.

However, the CCC has recently identified at least 100 vulnerable spots in the remaining 21 canals that are not under the CDA's project.

The list of the spots has



been submitted to the CCC's engineering department, said Farhadul Alam, executive engineer of CCC.

In total, the city has a total of 5,527 risky spots in its drains, canals and footpaths, according

to a 2021 CCC survey.

"Protecting all the open canals and drains with concrete walls is time consuming, so we will mark the risky spots with bamboo sticks to make people stay cautious," said CCC chief engineer (acting) Shahin-ul-Islam Chowdhury.

Unsurprisingly, residents and experts are less than impressed.

"Marking the vulnerable spots with bamboo sticks is not a proper solution to save lives from unprotected canals and drains during waterlogging," said Subhash Barua, vice-president of Planned Chattogram, a forum of town planners.

"CCC authorities must be accountable for their failure to secure the unprotected drains and canals over the years," he added.

Renovation delay

FROM PAGE 5

Mehedi Hasan, an official of Max Infrastructure Limited, claimed that they could not complete the work within the deadline despite having adequate logistical capacity as BR could not pay them money in due time.

Contacted, Zishan Dutta, bridge engineer of the BR (eastern zone), admitted that BR failed to pay the contractor due to a fund crisis.

"However, the renovation work is now progressing fast. About 80 percent of the work has been completed and the bridge is expected to open to the public by July this year," he added.

FERRY SERVICE: FROM CONVENIENCE TO DEATH TRAP

Although the ferry service was launched to mitigate the suffering of people due to the bridge's closure, it has instead turned into a death trap for commuters.

Accidents on the ferry so far have claimed two lives. Besides, lax monitoring, insufficient ferries, and illegal boat movement on the river using the ghat have

heightened the risk.

Ashraf Uddin, a director of Bangladesh Rural Electrification Board, was killed when a boat hit a ferry while crossing the river last week, while Fatema Tuz Johora, a college student, died while getting into an auto-rickshaw at the ferry ghat on April 29.

"The boats recklessly ply the river using the ferry ghat," said Kanak Das, a resident of Boalkhali upazila.

Asked how boats are illegally using RHD's ghat, Moslem Uddin, executive engineer of RHD in Chattogram, said they have already taken measures to stop the illegal boat movement.

Constructed as a metre-gauge single-line rail bridge in 1931, the Kalurghat Bridge was later reconfigured in 1962 to allow vehicular movement too.

However, BR has long been working to replace Kalurghat Bridge.

A proposal to construct a new rail and road bridge has already been approved. The Korean Exim Bank will fund its construction.

45 died in 1,045

FROM PAGE 3

of deities, temples, and churches, seven cases of grabbing or attempting to grab cremation grounds, 94 incidents of attacks, vandalism, looting, and arson, and 40 cases of vandalism and attempted destruction of idols.

There were also 12 cases of kidnapping, disappearance, and forced conversion, while eight people were arrested on fictitious charges of defamation of religion, he added.

In the last year, 32 incidents of communal violence took place during the national elections and five during local government elections, he said, citing the report.

"This statistic is only a mere part of the communal violence," he said, adding that a comparative review of communal violence over the past years shows that the incidents of violence have not changed much even today.

"In such a prevailing

communal situation, it is noticeable that during the election period of 1970, the minority population decreased from 19 percent to 8.6 percent now," Dasgupta said.

The environment for the free practice of religion has been completely curtailed, he added.

"The communal evil forces, which are hiding in the administrative and political fields, did not allow the religious and ethnic minorities and indigenous people of this country to ensure their land rights," he observed.

"The religious minority groups are still in fear. Their fate has not changed. They have no security for their lives," he said.

He alleged that the Awami League government has not implemented its commitments towards minorities pledged in their previous election manifesto, including the formation of a National Minority Commission.

Court issues

FROM PAGE 3
of Enamul, former commissioner of the Commissionerate of Customs Valuation and Internal Audit, in connection with the case.

The properties are: 11 flats in Kakrail, Mohammadpur, and Gulshan areas of the capital, five kathas of land in Gazipur, and eight kathas in Dhaka's Badda.

On July 31 last year, ACC Assistant Director Mahbubul Alam in Dhaka filed the case, accusing Enamul of amassing Tk 9.76 crore, which is inconsistent with his income and beyond his known sources of income.

According to the case statement, the accused bought land, flats, and commercial spaces at 64 places for Tk 21.52 crore between 1993 and 2022. He had gold ornaments, savings, and investment in share market, and fish farm worth Tk 58.32 lakh.

Univ teachers

FROM PAGE 3

Prof Habibur Rahman, president of RU Teachers Association, said, "We are being mentally tortured. We seek relief from this ordeal. This movement is not just for the current teachers but for future generations who aspire to join the teaching profession."

Teachers from 35 public universities have been refraining from work since Monday, demanding the reinstatement of the previous pension benefits instead of the newly introduced "Protoy" scheme under the Universal Pension System.

INDEPENDENT UNIVERSITY, BANGLADESH (IUB)

VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

Officer

Office of the Vice Chancellor

Application Deadline:
Thursday, July 18, 2024

For detailed information and to apply, please visit:
<http://iub.ac.bd/news-and-events/jobs-at-iub>
or scan the QR code

Request for Bids

The Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH is a federal enterprise with worldwide operations. We support the German Government in the field of international cooperation for sustainable development. We are also engaged in international education activities around the globe. Through our work we assist people and societies in shaping their own future and improving living condition.

GIZ has been working as a development partner of Bangladesh since 1972 under bilateral agreement. Currently, we are working in the areas of renewable energy, adaptation to climate change, textile and leather sector, biodiversity, as well as good governance, displacement, and migration.

Envisaging Development (EnDev) is a global technical assistance programme that has been working in Bangladesh since 2009. EnDev as facilitated access to modern and clean energy solutions for rural households and businesses. In Bangladesh, the programme has supported the provision of clean cooking technology and solar energy solutions. So far, over 1.9 million people have been reached with clean cooking technology and over 1.4 million people with solar energy solutions. Currently EnDev program in Bangladesh focuses on three main areas: development of the market for e-cooking appliances, support for biomass based improved cook stoves, including policy support for the sector, and demonstration of business case for solar battery charging stations for e-rickshaws.

GIZ is looking for a suitable organisation who intended to work on the promotion and dissemination of the improved biomass cookstoves in among the tribal and indigenous communities of northern flatland regions of Bangladesh, which mainly include Sylhet, Mymensingh, Rajshahi and Rangpur divisions. Following tasks need to be performed under this contract-

- Undertake promotional activities to raise awareness on improved cook stoves (ICS) for tribal communities.
- Strengthen the supply chain for manufacturer/distributor/supplier of improved cook stoves (ICS) in tribal region.
- Facilitate in selling of 3500 improved biomass cookstoves in the identified tribal communities.
- Provide training to 50 women and girls from tribal communities on the sales and maintenance of ICS to generate livelihood opportunity.

Technical Offer

• Technical -methodological concept • Strategy • Work Plan • Process • Personnel assignment plan • Detailed CV of Proposed Expert/Experts

Financial offer (In Separate Envelope)

Interested firms can collect the detailed Terms of Reference (ToR) and Assessment Grid at the following link: <https://enlistment.gizbd.org>. Please note, that firms need to register to collect the tender documents.

Interested parties are requesting to attend Prebid meeting which will be held on 15th July 2024 at 10:00 to 12:00 PM, please check pre-bid instruction file for address.

Interested parties with relevant and proven experience shall Submit Technical and Financial Proposal by 23rd July 2024 in separate sealed envelopes. The envelopes shall be addressed to "Contracts, Procurement & IT Unit" denoted with remark "83468610- Service Contract for Promotion and dissemination of improved cook stoves in tribal communities and training of women and girls on improved cook stoves for livelihood opportunities."

GIZ reserves the right to accept or reject offers in part or full without assigning any reason whatsoever.

EAST WEST UNIVERSITY

Progoti Foundation for Education and Development

Permanent Sanad Holder

TENDER INVITATION

Tender is invited from the bonafide/intending suppliers/firms for the following items:

- Procurement of 20 pcs Multiple Output DC Power Supply or equivalent Trainer Board for Electrical Circuit and Electronics Lab, Department of EEE**
- Procurement of 50 different types of Test Materials and Apparatus for Strength Materials Lab, Environmental Engineering Lab, Geotechnical Engineering Lab, Transportation Lab, Fluid Mechanics Lab, Surveying Lab and Engineering Materials Lab, Department of Civil Engineering**

The schedule of the items with terms and conditions can be obtained from the Finance & Accounts Department (1st floor) of the University until **28.07.2024** during office hours (until 03:00 p.m.) on working days. The price of the tender schedule (non-refundable) is Tk.500/- (Taka Five Hundred) only.

The interested bidders are requested to submit the tender schedule by **29.07.2024 within 02:00 P.M.** The tender (hard copy) must be dropped in the tender box kept at the 2nd floor of the office of the Treasurer (Room No-316) of the University. The tender(s) submitted within the deadline will be opened on **the same day (29.07.2024) at 02:30 P.M.** in the conference room (4th floor) of East West University in the presence of the representatives of the bidders.

The bidders must mention the **"name of the item"** at the top of envelope. Otherwise, the bid document will be treated as cancelled.

East West University authority reserves the right to accept any tender in full or part of it or reject all tenders without mentioning any reason thereof.

Chief of HR & Logistics

PROGRAMME ASSISTANT/ FINANCIAL ASSISTANT

The Embassy of Sweden is seeking a candidate for the position as Programme Assistant / Financial Assistant. The position forms part of the Development Cooperation Section and reports to the Head of Development Cooperation Section. The Programme Assistant / Financial Assistant also assists the Administrative Section with financial tasks. The Embassy has a staff of close to 40 persons. The duties of the Embassy involve working to implement bilateral development cooperation with Bangladesh, promoting political relations and trade between both countries and providing consular, visa and other migration services. For more information about the Swedish Embassy, please visit: <https://www.swedenabroad.se/en/embassies/bangladesh-dhaka/>

Qualification and Professional Experience

- Relevant academic background.
- Minimum 3 years of experience in similar roles in international organizations, Embassies, large non-governmental organizations, or private sector.
- Visit proedge-asso.com/careers/ for the main job responsibilities

Skills and Competencies

- Fluent written and spoken English and proficient in Bangla.
- Excellent IT literacy, especially high proficiency in MS Office.
- Ability to initiate and work independently, as well as having the capacity to meet deadlines with a high level of quality and accuracy.
- Excellent interpersonal skills. We seek someone who is flexible, and who can organize and plan their work and is able to work well in a team and respect individual differences.

Application process

Take advantage of this career opportunity and apply with a motivation letter (not more than 400 words), your resume and three professional references from former managers to eos@proedge-asso.com by 28 July 2024

Please mark your email subject line with **'Programme Assistant / Financial Assistant'**

Receipt of application will not be acknowledged. Only those that will be invited for an interview will be contacted.

PRO-EDGE ASSOCIATES
www.proedge-asso.com

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নির্বাহী প্রকৌশলীর কার্যালয়, সওজ

সড়ক বিভাগ, গোপালগঞ্জ

ফোনঃ ০২-৬৬৫৩৭৭/ফ্যাক্সঃ ৬৬৮১২৭১

ইমেইলঃ eegopal@rhd.gov.bd

স্মারক নংঃ ৩৫.০১.৩৫০০.৪২৮.০৭.০০২.২৪-১৭৬৭

তারিখঃ ০৪/০৭/২০২৪

সীমিত দরপত্র পদ্ধতিতে ঠিকাদার তালিকাভুক্তির/লাইসেন্স নবায়ন বিজ্ঞপ্তি

এতদ্বারা সংশ্লিষ্ট সকলের অবগতির জন্য জানানো যাচ্ছে যে, সড়ক বিভাগ, গোপালগঞ্জ কর্তৃক পাবলিক প্রকিউরমেন্ট বিধিমালা-২০০৮ এর আলোকে সড়ক ও জনপথ অধিদপ্তরের পরিচালনা (রাজস্ব) বাজেটের আওতায় সীমিত দরপত্র পদ্ধতি (LTM) প্রয়োগের মাধ্যমে প্রতিক্ষেত্রে ৫০.০০ (পঞ্চাশ) লক্ষ টাকা পর্যন্ত প্রাক্কলিত মূল্যের অভ্যন্তরীণ ক্রয়কার্য (NCT-Works) সম্পাদনের লক্ষ্যে ২০২৪-২০২৫ অর্থবছরের জন্য ঠিকাদার তালিকাভুক্তি/নবায়ন করা হবে। সিপিটিইউ (CPTU) কর্তৃক নির্ধারিত আবেদন ফরম নির্বাহী প্রকৌশলী, সওজ, সড়ক বিভাগ, গোপালগঞ্জ কার্যালয় হতে আগামী ০৭/০৭/২০২৪ হতে ০৬/০৮/২০২৪ তারিখ পর্যন্ত অফিস চলাকালীন সময়ে সংগ্রহ করা যাবে। ১০০০.০০ (এক হাজার) টাকা মানি রশিদের মাধ্যমে পরিশোধকরতঃ আগ্রহী ব্যক্তি/প্রতিষ্ঠান নির্ধারিত আবেদনপত্র (ডকুমেন্ট) সংগ্রহ করতে পারবেন। নির্ধারিত আবেদনপত্র (ডকুমেন্ট) সঠিকভাবে পূরণপূর্বক প্রয়োজনীয় কাগজপত্রসহ আগামী ১১/০৮/২০২৪ তারিখ বিকাল ৪:০০টার মধ্যে অত্র দপ্তরে জমা প্রদান করার জন্য অনুরোধ করা হলো। সীমিত দরপত্র পদ্ধতি (LTM) প্রয়োগের ক্ষেত্রে পাবলিক প্রকিউরমেন্ট বিধিমালা-২০০৮ এর বিধি ৬৩ অনুসরণপূর্বক এবং এ তালিকাভুক্তিকরণ দরপত্র আহবান/কাজ প্রদানের নিশ্চয়তা বিধান করে না।

উল্লেখ্য যে, ইতোপূর্বে অত্র দপ্তরের তালিকাভুক্ত ঠিকাদারগণ ২০২৪-২০২৫ অর্থবছরে লাইসেন্স নবায়ন ফি বাবদ ২,০০০.০০ (দুই হাজার) টাকা +১৫% ভ্যাট সহ বিনা জরিমানায় আগামী ৩১/০৭/২০২৪ তারিখের মধ্যে অত্র দপ্তরে জমা প্রদানপূর্বক লাইসেন্স নবায়ন করার জন্য অনুরোধ করা হলো। বার্থতায় কোন ওজর-আপত্তি গ্রহণযোগ্য হবে না।

মোঃ আজহারুল ইসলাম

পরিচিতি নংঃ ৬০২৩০৬

নির্বাহী প্রকৌশলী (চ.দা.), সওজ

সড়ক বিভাগ, গোপালগঞ্জ

GD- 23

BCL man ‘threatens’ CU quota protest leader

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

An organiser of the ongoing anti-quota protests at Chittagong University received a death threat from an alleged member of CU unit of Chhatra League. Khan Talat Mahmud Rafi, a student of the dramatics department and a resident of Alaol dormitory, claimed that his father, Tariqul Islam Khan, who resides in Netrakona, received a phone call on Sunday night. An unknown person said if Rafi did not back down from the protest, he will face dire consequences, he alleged. The call came from a phone number used by Hridoy Ahmed Rizvi, a student of the same department and a BCL activist, he added. Rizvi is associated with the shuttle train-based BCL faction “CFC group”, said university sources. “I told my father to lodge a general diary with the police station in Netrakona,” Rafi said. Asked, Rizvi said his cell phone got “hacked” recently. “I don’t know who called his family. My phone was shut down due to a technical issue for nearly 24 hours. After learning about the incident, I informed my political seniors to take steps in this regard. Apart from that, I will inform the proctor’s office to investigate the incident,” said Rizvi.

CHITTAGONG MEDICAL COLLEGE HOSPITAL
MRI machine non-functional for 2yrs

Patients bearing extra cost to do tests from outside

ARUN BIKASH DEY, Ctg

Jahangir Alam, 65, suffered a brain stroke on Friday and was admitted to the Neuro Medicine Ward of Chittagong Medical College Hospital. Doctors advised his family to get a Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) test. However, the lone MRI machine at CMCH has been non-functional for two years, leaving the family in a dilemma about how to afford the expensive test elsewhere. Many poor patients like Jahangir come to CMCH for treatment, only to find themselves unable to afford the costly MRI tests at private diagnostic centres, which range from Tk 9,000 to Tk 20,000. Before the machine broke down on May 16, 2022, CMCH provided MRI services for Tk 3,000-5,000. “I am retired and spent most of my savings on my daughters’ marriages while another daughter is still studying. I am struggling to collect money for this expensive test,” said Jahangir from his hospital bed. Md Nasir, 32, a vegetable vendor from Fatikchhari upazila in Chattogram, faced a similar ordeal after suffering a spinal cord injury.



“If CMCH’s MRI service was available, it would have benefitted us. Now, we had to do the test from outside spending much more than we can afford,” said his wife, Mamta Akter. “MRI is a modern diagnostic test that takes very clear images of internal organs to detect specific diseases or abnormalities,” explained Pradip Kumar Kayasthagir, a professor at CMCH’s Neuro Medicine Ward. He said around 120 patients are admitted to his ward daily, and at least 10 percent need an MRI. **HOW THINGS UNFOLDED** The health ministry allocated a Tk 9.84 crore new MRI machine of the Japanese Hitachi brand to CMCH in 2017 after the old one failed in 2014, according to Dr. Rajib Palit, CMCH’s deputy director. The machine was installed in the hospital’s cardiology building. After its inauguration on October 24, 2017, it couldn’t be fully utilised due to a lack of films. Full service began in January 2018, but the machine faced a technical glitch in October 2020, halting service for seven months until May 2021. The machine kept having glitches until it finally stopped working on May 16, 2022. “There is no post of biomedical engineer at the hospital, so medical equipment are not being properly maintained,” said Dr Subas Majumder, head of CMCH’s radiology and imaging department. **CMCH PAYING FOR HIS OWN DECISION** Since the machine’s warranty expired in August 2020, it will now take Tk 7 crore to repair it. CMCH could have repaired it for Tk 1 crore with a maintenance contract with the supplier company, but the hospital

only wanted to pay Tk 65 lakh, according to sources. “I have informed the health ministry about our requirements, including the need for an MRI machine. We need Tk 7 crore to repair the existing one and Tk 17 crore to buy a new machine,” said CMCH director Brig Gen. Shamim Ahsan. Health Minister Dr Samanta Lal Sen in a recent visit to CMCH said, “I feel bad knowing that the MRI machine in the hospital is out of order. Chattogram is the second largest city after Dhaka. I will do whatever is necessary to fix the problem.” **EMPHASIS ON FINANCIAL AUTONOMY** At least 20 MRI tests were performed daily when the machine was operational between 2018 and 2020. With each test costing a minimum of Tk 3,000, CMCH could collect at least Tk 60,000 daily, amounting to Tk 5,18,40,000 over three years. “We deposit all the money realised from patients’ diagnostic tests to the government fund,” said the CMCH director. Dr Faisal Iqbal Chowdhury, general secretary of the Bangladesh Medical Association’s Chattogram chapter, said government-run hospitals need financial autonomy to get urgent repairs done. The current system requires hospital directors to request funds from the health ministry even for minor emergencies, leading to unnecessary delays in providing essential services, he added.

Fun trip to Cox’s Bazar ends in tragedy

2 teens killed in bike crash

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

What started as a joyful trip by six teenage friends to Cox’s Bazar ended in a tragedy as one of their motorcycles was hit by a truck on the Chattogram-Cox’s Bazar highway early yesterday morning, killing two of the friends. Md Emon, 17, son of Md Yusuf, and Ariful Islam, 17, son of Abdur Rob, died in the accident that occurred at the Dohazari-Dewanhata intersection around 4:00am yesterday, said OC Khan Mohammad Erfan of Dohazari Highway Police Station. Both were residents of Noakhali district and 10th-graders at a school in Majidde. The six friends, on three motorcycles, were returning home from their trip to the seaside town when the truck, coming from the opposite direction, hit the motorcycle that Ariful and Yusuf were riding. Locals rushed them to Chandanaish Upazila Health Complex where Emon was declared dead. Ariful died at CMCH. Ahsan Ullah, maternal uncle of Ariful, said the six friends had travelled to Cox’s Bazar on Friday, but they told their families that they were going by bus. When asked how a 17-year-old could own a motorcycle, he said Ariful, being the youngest child, was favoured by his parents and they may have bought him the motorbike after repeated requests.

DENGUE
One dies, 63 get hospitalised in a day

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

One more dengue patient died and 63 others were hospitalised in the last 24 hours till yesterday morning. With the new death, the total number of deaths rose to 47 while the total number of cases reached 4,041. Some 266 dengue patients are receiving treatment in different hospitals. Of them, 138 are from outside Dhaka.

KALURGHAT BRIDGE IN CHATTOGRAM
Renovation delay prolongs suffering

SIFAYET ULLAH, Ctg

Abdul Malek, 52, was waiting at the ghat beside Kalurghat Bridge in Chattogram to board a ferry on his way back from the port city to Boalkhali upazila after visiting his doctor on Thursday. Even after waiting for 30 minutes, he failed to board the ferry as it was packed. “It is very difficult to remain standing for this long with multiple physical complications that I have. If the bridge had been opened to traffic, it would have saved us from a lot of miseries,” he told this correspondent. Like Malek, thousands of commuters who need to cross the Karnaphuli river are suffering immensely every day to board the ferry due to the delay in renovation work of the 93-year-old Kalurghat Bridge. “The delay in the bridge’s renovation work has prolonged our sufferings,” said Jalal Uddin, a



university student. In particular, people from the port city as well as from south Chattogram’s three upazilas – Boalkhali, Rangunia, and Patiya – have no alternative to crossing the river without using the bridge. According to the Roads and Highways Department, around 22,000-25,000 commuters cross the bridge on every working day. The Tk 43 crore renovation work

on the bridge, being implemented by Bangladesh Railway and carried out by Max Infrastructure Limited, a contractor firm, began in August last year. Since the renovation work began, the bridge has remained closed while RHD launched a ferry service next to the bridge for vehicles to cross the river. The work was supposed to be completed by October 31, 2023. Locals blame the negligence of both BR and the contractor firm for the delay in renovation work.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

Youth stabbed to death in Chattogram

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

A young man was stabbed to death allegedly by his friend in Pakhir Goli area of the port city on Sunday night. The deceased is Md Mona, 25, said police. Mona got into an altercation with his friend Jewel and some of Jewel’s accomplices, and at one stage, they stabbed him, said SM Obaidul Haque, officer-in-charge of Kotwali Police Station. Locals took him to Chittagong Medical College Hospital where the doctor declared him dead. Police are conducting drives to arrest the criminals, he said.

16 grenades found in Gazipur construction site



STAR REPORT

Police evacuated and sealed off a privately owned land in Gazipur city yesterday after the construction workers dug up 16 grenades at the property. The bomb disposal unit from the Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP) visited the spot and defused the grenades around 2:30pm, said Syed Rafiul Karim, officer-in-charge of Gazipur Metropolitan Police Station. While digging up the northern end of the land in the city’s South Chhayabeethi area, workers came across those buried in the ground in an urn around 9:00am, said the OC quoting locals. On information, police sealed off the spot, the OC said. Abul Kashem of the district’s Kapasia

upazila had bought and fenced the land in the city’s South Chhayabeethi area years ago. He recently decided to build a house there and appointed workers, according to locals. Rahmat Ullah Chowdhury, the chief of the bomb disposal unit, told The Daily Star, “We have recovered around 16 live military-grade grenades from the spot. All of those were disposed of successfully with adequate precaution and proper procedures.” It took around three hours to dispose of all the grenades, said Rahmat, also the deputy commissioner of the Counter Terrorism and Transnational Crime unit of DMP. “We assume the grenades were hidden under the soil during the Liberation War or later,” he added.

PRAYER TIMING
JULY 9
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

এসেনসিয়াল ড্রাগস্ কোম্পানী লিমিটেড
৩৯৫-৩৯৭ তেজগাঁও শিল্প এলাকা,
ঢাকা-১২০৮।
দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি
ইডিসিএল নিম্নোক্ত আইটেমটি প্রস্তুতকারী/সরবরাহকারীদের (সংশ্লিষ্ট ব্যবসার সাহিত জড়িত) নিকট হতে সীলমোহরকৃত খামে
দরপত্র আহবান করছে :-
ক্রমিক নং দরপত্র নং ও তারিখ বিবরণ পরিমান
০১। ইডিসিএল/ ক্রয়/স্থানীয়/দরপত্র/২০২৪/২৬৫ Calcium Lactate Pentahydrate BP (European Source) ৫,০০০.০ কেজি
তারিখঃ ৮/০৭/২০২৪ইং (সিডিউল মোতাবেক)
সিকিউরিটি/ আনেষ্ট মানি দরপত্র শিডিউলের মূল্য (অফেরৎযোগ্য) দরপত্র গ্রহণের শেষ তারিখ ও সময় দরপত্র খোলার তারিখ ও সময়
২.৫% টাকা ১,২৫০.০০ প্রতি সেট ২৩/০৭/২০২৪ইং বেলা ১২-০০ ঘটিকা ২৩/০৭/২০২৪ইং বেলা ১২-১৫ ঘটিকা
সকল কার্যদিবসে অফিস চলাকালিন সময়ে উপরোক্ত কার্যালয় হইতে শর্ত ও নিয়মাবলীসহ দরপত্র সিডিউল ক্রয় করা যাইবে। উল্লেখ্য যে, বাহাদের ভাট রেজিস্ট্রেশন নাই তাহাদের দরপত্রে অংশগ্রহন করার প্রয়োজন নাই।
দরপত্র খোলার দিনে কোন দরপত্র শিডিউল বিক্রয় করা হইবে না।
মহা-ব্যবস্থাপক, প্রকিউরমেন্ট পক্ষেঃ ব্যবস্থাপনা পরিচালক।
(৪.৫ ইন্সি ৪ কলাম)

Dhaka South City Corporation
Office of the Executive Engineer
Zone-02, Dhaka.
Ref No: 46.207.014.24.02.128.2024
উন্নয়নের গণতন্ত্র
শেখ হাসিনার মূলমন্ত্র
আমাদের ভাল
আমাদের গর্ব
Dated: 07/07/2024
Corrigendum-2
Sl. No. Tender ID Name of works Previous Last Selling date and Time Previous Tender Closing Date & Time Revised Last Selling date and Time Revised Tender Closing date & Time
01 Tender ID. 993288 Repairing Works of Road Cutting by different organization of ward no 6 and 8 under zone-2 (Group-kha), DSCC. FY 2024/2025 07-Jul-2024 11:15 07-Jul-2024 12:30 11-Jul-2024 13:15 11-Jul-2024 14:00
This is an online Tender, where only e-Tenders will be accepted in e-GP portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-Tender, please register on e-GP system portal (http://www.eprocure.gov.bd).
Signed/
(Md. Harunur Rashid)
Zone-2 (Khilgoan)
Dhaka South City Corporation
ডিএসসিসি/পিআরডি/১৩/২০২৪-২০২৫



Six months in review

BEST OF DHALLYWOOD

During Eid-ul-Azha, five films were released. The standout was Shakib Khan starrer ‘Toofan’, directed by Raihan Rafi, which was both commercially successful and well-received by audiences.

ZAHID AKBAR

In the first six months of this year, around 30 films have been released in the country, with only a few achieving notable commercial successes. However, several movies and songs have generated significant buzz in the entertainment industry and among audiences.

Early releases: A slow start

From January to March, a few films, including *Shesh Bazi*, *Rukhe Darao*, *Chhaya Brikkho*, *Kagojer Bou*, and *Peyarar Subash*, were released, but none made a significant impact commercially or critically. The situation changed with the arrival of April.

Eid-ul-Fitr releases

The festival of Eid has always been an opportune time for film releases due to higher audience turnout. Eleven films were released during Eid-ul-Fitr. Leading the charge was Himel Ashraf's *Rajkumar*, starring Shakib Khan. Although it had an extended run in multiplexes, it fell short commercially compared to last year's blockbuster *Priyotoma*.

Among other notable releases, Mishuk Moni's *Deyaler Desh*, starring Sariful Razz and Shobnom Bubly, received praise

for Bubly's performance. Mostafa Kamal Raz's *Omar*, featuring Razz as its lead, also garnered attention and was released internationally. Gias Uddin Selim's much-anticipated *Kajol Rekha*, featuring Sariful Razz and Mondera Chakroborty, sparked discussions among critics and

international film festivals, including Iran's prestigious Fajr Film Festival, *Fatima*, featuring Tasnia Farin in her first Bangladeshi silver screen project, generated buzz but failed commercially.

Eid-ul-Azha releases



PHOTOS: COLLECTED

audiences but did not perform well at the box office. The simultaneous release of three films featuring Razz failed to engage as many viewers as anticipated. Additionally, *Mona: Jinn-2* had a modest run in multiplexes.

Post-Eid-ul-Fitr releases

After winning awards at various

during Eid-ul-Azha, five films were released. The standout was Shakib Khan starrer *Toofan*, directed by Raihan Rafi, which was both commercially successful and well-received by audiences. According to the production house Alpha-i, *Toofan* set a record for the highest number of shows at Star Cineplex and was released internationally,

winning the hearts of viewers.

Chart-topping songs

Despite numerous releases, few songs gained widespread attention. However, songs from Shakib Khan's films stood out. The duet *O Rajkumar* from *Rajkumar*, sung by Somnur Monir Konal and Balam, became a crowd favourite. Prince Mahmud's *Borbaad*, sung by Alif, from the same film was also well-received. The duet *Ninduke* from *Lipstick*, sung by Nancy and Imran, and Mithun Chakra's *Bisorjoner Betha* from *Deyaler Desh* were popular among listeners.

The biggest hit of the first half of this year is perhaps the song *Laage Ura Dhura* from *Toofan*. A duet by Pritom Hasan and Debosrie Antara, it gained significant popularity across all audience segments, bringing emerging musician Antara into the limelight. The song *Dushtu Kokil* by Dilshad Nahar Kona from the same film is currently trending and well-received by listeners.

Although the beginning of the year didn't quite start on a high note for Dhallywood, it picked up its pace during Eid as audiences flocked to theatres to watch their favourite stars. Anticipation mounts high for the remaining six months of the year, hoping to prove fruitful for the industry.

Rituparna Sengupta to star in Bangladeshi film

Indian actress Rituparna Sengupta is set to collaborate with Rashid Polash on his latest directorial film *Tari*.

The director informed The Daily Star that the actress has given her initial confirmation over the phone. "We will officially sign the agreement with the actress soon," Polash said.

He also mentioned that some parts of the film have already been shot in Rajshahi. They plan to complete the remaining scenes in September when Rituparna arrives in Dhaka. In the movie, Rituparna will play the role of an extra artiste.

The story of *Tari* is written by Ahadur Rahman, with the screenplay and dialogues by Golam Rabbani. The director plans to release the film this year under the Punya Films banner.



‘Despicable Me 4’ tops box office on opening weekend

Animated comedy *Despicable Me 4* soared to the top of the North American box office during its opening weekend, according to figures from industry tracker Exhibitor Relations released Sunday.

The fourth main instalment in the *Minions* franchise, featuring Will Ferrell as the voice of a new villain, garnered USD 75 million in ticket sales in the United States and Canada since its release on Friday by Universal Pictures.

This is an exceptional opening for the fourth instalment of an animated series, second only to *Toy Story 4*, stated box office analyst David A Gross.

NEWS

Lavish lifestyle with illegal money

FROM PAGE 12

is the sign of cowards. Rather, an organisation becomes efficient through proper self-criticism. We do not want to shy away from criticism. We want to accept criticism and ensure maximum transparency in the judicial process," he said.

The National University organised the discussion titled "Bangabandhu's commentary on corruption and building corruption free society" at the International Mother Language Institute in the capital's Segunbagicha.

The chief justice said corruption has increased in comparison with the gradually increasing rate of literacy.

"Laws alone do not solve all problems and address corruption. Awareness and social movement are needed for this."

Justice Obaidul said young people have to ask whether their parents earned their money in a fair way.

"Wives must be curious about whether a part of the wealth of their husbands is illegal. Friends and families should be aware whether their relatives were making their incomes in the right way. This is the first step of social awareness. If the corrupt father, husband or colleague cannot be isolated and boycotted, the deep wounds from corruption will never be healed and the disease will

not be cured," he added.

He said corruption is not only depriving the people from the benefits of development, but is also destroying the traditional values.

"The show of wealth has now become a matter of competition and enjoying luxury services with illegal money has become the latest fashion. No one wants to know about the source of this money. Rather, many are feeling jealous Corruption has exhausted our sense of shame and made the pride of honesty meaningless."

The chief justice said strict enforcement of laws is needed to fight corruption.

France faces

FROM PAGE 12

common ground.

Prime Minister Gabriel Attal, a centrist and close ally of Macron, tendered his resignation but the head of state rejected it.

"The president has asked Gabriel Attal to remain prime minister for the time being in order to ensure the country's stability," Macron's office said in a statement.

A fragmented parliament will make it hard for anyone to push through a domestic agenda and is likely to weaken France's role in the European Union and further afield.

Interior Minister Gerald Darmanin was seen entering the Elysee presidential palace shortly after Attal, suggesting the president was canvassing opinions from his allies about what to do next.

Leaders of the component parties of the NFP met overnight and were due to meet again later yesterday to discuss who should replace Attal and what strategy the alliance should adopt, said a source at the Communist Party, one of its smaller members.

The NFP, hastily assembled for this election in an attempt to unify the left-wing vote against the far right, has no single leader and did not say before the election who would be its pick for prime minister.

Tondelier, one of a number of NFP figures seen as potential candidates for the post, said on France Inter radio it could be someone from the hard-left France Unbowed party, the Greens or the Socialists, the three largest parties in the alliance.

Generous exit policy offered to borrowers

FROM PAGE 12

another year, read BB notice.

Under the facility, borrowers will not be eligible to get new loans until they have adjusted the full loan amount.

The central bank said that this facility would not be considered as rescheduling or restructuring of loans.

BB asked banks for proper provisioning against the loans and taking security before adjustment of

the loans, it added.

Banks will have to take legal action to recover the loans if the borrowers fail to repay the loans after getting the facility.

Earlier in May 2019, the central bank introduced a one-time exit policy for defaulters to bring down the high bad loans in the country's banking sector. The bad loans then amounted to Tk 110,873 crore.

"The exit policy should have been left to the banks' discretion," said

Monzur Hossain, research director of the Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies (BIDS).

This policy will affect the banks' profitability, while the loan defaulters will be tempted by the facility, he said.

Mohammad Nurul Amin, former chairman of the Association of Bankers of Bangladesh, echoed the same. "Defaulters are likely to be encouraged to not repay loans due to the facility."

Israeli tanks storm

FROM PAGE 12

against Hamas infrastructure in the Gaza Strip, and that it had taken out of action more than 30 fighters.

The new Israeli offensive comes as Egypt, Qatar and the United States stepped up efforts to mediate a ceasefire agreement between Israel and Hamas as the Gaza offensive entered its tenth month.

Mediators were in contact with Hamas amid "intensive Egyptian meetings this week with all parties", Egypt's state-linked Al-Qahera News

said.

At least 38,193 Palestinians have been killed in Israel's military offensive in the enclave since October 7, and 87,903 have been wounded, the Palestinian enclave's health ministry said yesterday. A total of 40 Palestinians were killed in the past 24 hours, the ministry said in a statement.

Gaza residents said tanks advanced from at least three directions yesterday and reached the heart of Gaza City, backed by heavy Israeli fire from the air and

ground. That forced thousands of people out of their homes to look for safer shelter, which for many was impossible to find, and some slept on the roadside.

Medics at the Al-Ahli Arab Baptist Hospital in Gaza City had to evacuate patients to the already crowded and under-equipped Indonesian Hospital in the northern Gaza Strip, Palestinian health officials said. An Israeli strike in the eastern suburb of Shejaia killed four Palestinians, medics said.

‘Khaleda’s life at risk’

FROM PAGE 12

suffering from multiple critical illnesses and needs to be treated at a multi-disciplinary treatment centre abroad."

Fakhru alleged that the government was intentionally ignoring the issue of sending Khaleda abroad for treatment.

He voiced his concerns, saying Khaleda had to be admitted to hospital frequently as her illnesses were getting complicated.

Demanding her immediate and

unconditional release, Fakhul said, "She has been subjected to serious injustice because of political vendetta. By denying her treatment abroad, she is slowly being driven closer to death."

The BNP chairperson returned home on July 2 after spending 10 days at Evercare Hospital following the procedure for pacemaker implantation.

The 79-year-old former prime minister has long been battling various ailments, including liver

cirrhosis, arthritis, diabetes, and issues related to the kidney, lung, heart, and eyes.

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

Khaleda's doctors have advised sending her abroad since she was diagnosed with liver cirrhosis in November 2021.

Prof Yunus challenges court order

FROM PAGE 12

allegations brought against his clients, including Prof Yunus, were completely fabricated and baseless.

The six others are Nurjahan Begum, Md Shahjahan, Nazneen Sultana, Hizzatul Islam, Nazmul Islam, and Ashraful Hasan.

On June 25, two Supreme Court lawyers, who are also accused in the same case, filed another petition with the HC challenging the Dhaka court's

order that framed charges against Prof Yunus and 13 others.

SC lawyers Md Yousuf Ali and Jafrul Hasan Sharif submitted the petition saying that they have not committed any offence and that the trial court issued the charge-framing order using an AI tool, which is not permitted.

The entire amount of Tk 25.22 crore was part of the entitlement of Grameen Telecom's listed

164 employees. The employees contributed money to their trade union for paying for expenses, including lawyers' fees, they said.

The trade union representative paid the fees to them (lawyers Yousuf and Jafrul) out of that amount and the same does not constitute any offence and therefore, the instant proceedings are liable to be quashed to ensure justice, the SC lawyers stated in the petition.

Canada stand

FROM PAGE 12

Emiliano Martinez to get past Ecuador in the last eight and while Lionel Scaloni's team have yet to really hit top gear they start as clear favourites against Canada.

American coach Jesse Marsch has made an instant impact with Canada, taking over in mid-May and quickly implementing his high-energy, pressing style to great effect.

Marsch, who was reported to be close to taking over as USA coach before the decision last year to re-hire Gregg Berhalter, has had the last laugh as his team have produced a memorable run to the last four while the Americans failed to get out of their group.

Canada got past a Venezuela team that had won all three of their group stage games, winning on penalties at the end of a pulsating encounter on Friday.

However, they know that Lionel Messi and Argentina represent a very

different proposition.

The teams met in the opening group game of the tournament with Argentina winning 2-0, but there is no shortage of confidence in Marsch's team.

"It's going to take everything," said Bayern Munich wing-back Alphonso Davies.

"Going into this game, we know what's on the line. We win and go forward, we lose and go home. They're going to come out with everything. We're hungrier than ever, we expect a battle -- as they should," he said.

Three of the four quarterfinals were decided on penalties, but Marsch insists his team will play their usual attacking style.

"The game against Argentina will have to be the best we've ever played ... We're not going to sit back and just try to defend. We will be aggressive. We're going to try to play the way we want to play and see if we can keep it up," he promised.

Spare no one involved

FROM PAGE 12

candidates, who took part in the January 7 polls, compete to establish supremacy.

The gap within the party leaders further widened following AL's decision to open the field for all partymen to contest the upazila elections without allocating the party

symbol to anyone.

According to Human Rights Support Society, a rights organisation, a total of 1,004 incidents of political violence, including 781 incidents of post-polls violence, took place in the last six months, resulting in the death of 91 people. Of them, 70 were ruling partymen.

Inflation continues to break records

Lack of timely govt actions is costing us dearly

The government's inability to keep annual inflation anywhere near its target of 7.5 percent is deeply concerning. As reported by this daily, the annual average inflation has surged to 9.73 percent in the just-concluded fiscal year, according to Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS). This is the highest inflation experienced in 12 years since 2011-2012, when annual inflation was 10.62 percent. What is even more concerning is that this is the second consecutive year that the Consumer Prices Index has stood at more than 9 percent. This means that the tremendous inflationary pressure experienced by citizens has actually persisted for two straight years.

The resulting erosion of people's real income and the deterioration of their living standards—particularly of low-income groups—are there for all to see. According to an earlier survey by the South Asian Network on Economic Modelling (SANEM), as many as 70 percent of the households in Bangladesh had to change their food habits involuntarily to cope with rising prices. It further discovered that food insecurity among the poor had increased drastically, meaning that the prospect of malnutrition and various health concerns has also risen considerably. Despite such warnings, the fact that the government has failed to bring inflation down by now is completely unacceptable. True, there have been some measures to address it, but those were taken too late, and because of the “time lag effect,” we are yet to see them really kick in.

The good news is that some of those measures may eventually pay off down the line. However, as experts have said, the government needs to do more. For starters, perhaps it should increase the interest rate further to tame inflation. Moreover, its failure to properly regulate the market means that a section of business groups is continuing to artificially prop up prices. These businesses, unfortunately, are either politically connected, or have acquired monopoly powers due to failed government policies, which makes holding them accountable difficult. But that is exactly what the government must do, without exception.

So, while its focus—although late—has so far been on demand containment, now it must also shift to addressing the distortions in the market and the problems in supply chain. And these issues have persisted in our country for years and have somewhat become entrenched. Despite that, the government needs to take a holistic approach to finally fix them. Parallel to that, it must ramp up its support for lower-income groups. That should include its rice distribution programme, as well as selling essential food items at subsidised rates to low-income earners.

Bring discipline back into politics

HRSS data on political violence paints a scary picture

A new study on political violence has once again underscored the treacherous currents of politics in Bangladesh. According to a report citing the findings of the Human Rights Support Society (HRSS), in the first half of 2024, political conflicts claimed as many as 91 lives. Strikingly, 71 of them were supporters of the ruling party. These incidents were linked to electoral violence, territorial dominance, party infighting, and clashes between police and the opposition. The fact that even an affiliation with the Awami League, which “helped itself” to a record fourth consecutive term in January, was no guarantee for safety goes to show the overall deterioration of our political climate.

These numbers came up in an overview of the state of human rights in Bangladesh between January and June. During this period, there were 1,004 incidents of political violence that also saw at least 4,026 people getting injured. The list of fatalities, however, gives only a partial view of the precarity of political activists as it was the opposition that suffered disproportionately in every other aspect. For example, 714 political workers and leaders were arrested during this time, 574 of whom belong to BNP and Jamaat. Additionally, law enforcement agencies and ruling party activists foiled at least 99 opposition rallies. We also saw how questionable legal tactics were used to weaken the opposition before the general election, including ghost cases, mass arrests, mass convictions, long pre-trial detentions, etc.—as if to justify the opposition's decision to boycott the election.

But the absence of a functional opposition led to the ruling party allowing its “rebel” members to run “independently”, putting one segment of the party against another, disregarding the fracture growing within its fold. It is as if the chaos it sowed to derail the opposition campaign has come full circle to derail its own momentum. The lack of intraparty discipline far predates the January 7 election, however, and its “cultivation” over the years has led to constant infighting, so much so that ruling party members are now killing each other for their own gain.

This is deeply troubling. These political deaths—an apt description would be “murders”—are an extreme manifestation of a rot that has been eating away at our politics for a long time, and it will continue to spiral if steps are not taken to establish party discipline, rule of law, and of course, democracy in the country. As the party in power, the fallout of any chaos within it inevitably spills over into the public life, and as such, the party leadership must strictly discipline their rank and file. They also must ensure equal treatment and opportunities for all political entities.

THIS DAY IN HISTORY



South Sudan's independence

On this day in 2011, South Sudan declared its independence after a referendum to secede from Sudan passed overwhelmingly.

How a flawed data ecosystem can distort economic reality



MACRO MIRROR

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

FAHMIDA KHATUN

The recently published revised data on the Balance of Payment (BoP) by Bangladesh Bank (BB) is quite revealing, as it reconciled the discrepancy in export income reported by two government organisations: the Export Promotion Bureau (EPB) and the National Board of Revenue (NBR). According to the EPB, exports grew by 3.93 percent during July-April of the fiscal year 2024. However, the central bank has come up with a revised export figure indicating a negative export growth of 6.8 percent during the same period. The reconciled export statistics revealed a discrepancy of \$13.8 billion, which means the actual export income was \$33.67 billion as opposed to the \$47.47 billion shown. In FY2023, the difference of export earnings between the EPB and BB was \$12 billion. The reduced export income in the first nine months of FY2024—\$13.8 billion—is equivalent to three percent of Bangladesh's gross domestic product (GDP). According to the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS), the preliminary GDP estimate for FY 2024 is \$459 billion.

Although the overall deficit in the BoP remains the same, there are internal changes within the BoP statement. The financial account now shows a surplus of \$653 million for July-March of FY2024 instead of a deficit of \$9.25 billion reported earlier by the BB. This has turned a positive current account into a deficit one. The earlier data by BB covering July-March of FY2024 showed that the current account surplus was \$5.8 billion. The corrected data reveals that the current account is in a deficit of \$4.1 billion during the same period.

Though the BB has passed the buck to the EPB and the NBR, saying that the NBR made multiple entries of export data received from the EPB, the mismatch of export values among the BB, EPB, and NBR raises a fundamental question regarding the precision of economic reporting and its ramifications for Bangladesh's economy.

The modification was made in response to extensive criticism of the significant difference between the actual export receipts and the shipment value that has been consistent for several years. For a long time, it has been a mystery how there could be such a large gap between export receipts and shipment values.

This correction finally resolved the longstanding mystery surrounding the export data discrepancy. Exporters, who have been experiencing various challenges due to lower global demand and import control by BB, have consistently contended that the export data provided by EPB did not reflect the reality.

Due to time lag and disputes, there could be some differences between the BB and the EPB export value data. However, the astronomical difference between the numbers



ILLUSTRATION: BIPLOB CHAKROBORTY

from the two sources in FY2024 surprised everyone. In the absence of any clarification from the government bodies responsible for collecting export data, various explanations have been floating around. For example, the export proceeds could have been brought into the country through informal channels or as remittances. Another plausible reason could be that only a portion of the export proceeds were brought in since there is an expectation of the devaluation of the Bangladeshi taka against the US dollar. The uncertainty before the national elections in early 2024 could also have been a reason for capital flight through not bringing the export proceeds into the country.

But now, the BB has reconciled data on export income from various sources such as EPB and NBR and found that the NBR has been making

indicators are made.

The decline in exports reduces the contribution of exports to GDP, negatively affecting overall economic growth. Due to the export sector's interconnectedness with other sectors of the economy, including manufacturing, services, and logistics, this impact will be reflected in other economic activities as well. A decline in exports can lead to reduced industrial production, lower service demand, and decreased employment in export-oriented industries.

The export-GDP ratio is a key indicator of the economy. A lower export indicates a potential decline in export competitiveness or demand. Exports and remittances are the primary sources of foreign exchange earnings in Bangladesh. A decline in exports reduces the inflow of foreign currency, negatively impacting the

country's foreign exchange reserves and its ability to finance imports and service external debt.

Similarly, the debt-GDP ratio is a critical indicator of fiscal health and economic stability. A lower GDP growth rate due to declining exports can lead to an increase in the debt-GDP ratio. A higher debt-GDP ratio implies higher debt servicing costs, which can strain public finances. Currently, Bangladesh's debt stock stands at 37.7 percent of GDP as per the revised budget of FY2024, which is estimated to increase to 38.6 percent in FY2025 as per MTMPS.

The discrepancy in export data and its impact on macroeconomic indicators bring back the broader issue of our data ecosystem.

Accurate economic data is crucial for effective policymaking. The revised export figures will necessitate adjustments in economic policies to address the challenges posed by declining exports. Policymakers will need to take measures to stimulate export growth, diversify the export base, and enhance competitiveness.

Discrepancies in economic data can affect investor confidence. Accurate and reliable data is essential for investors to make informed decisions. To restore confidence, the government and relevant institutions must enhance transparency and accuracy in economic reporting.

The anomalies in export data from various sources reinforce the need to integrate data from multiple sources, providing a more comprehensive and accurate picture of export activities. This also necessitates strengthening institutional coordination. Advanced data analytics and technology are now needed to improve the accuracy and efficiency of data collection and reporting processes.

Though late, this initiative has finally been taken. It is high time we developed standardised data collection and reporting methodologies to ensure consistency and accuracy across institutions. There should be adequate human resources to work on export data at NBR. Besides, the capacity of those engaged in data management should be raised to ensure quality and precision.

Transparency and accountability are crucial for maintaining trust in economic data and policymaking. Enhancing transparency involves public disclosure of data and methodologies. Unfortunately, various government institutions are still reluctant to share data with the public. Now that major economic indicators estimated in the past have become mostly irrelevant, policymakers should revise all economic data and restore transparency to the data ecosystem without delay.

FROM LECTURE HALLS TO THE STREETS

Universities submerged in dual protests



Meherab Hossain
is a young fellow of Oxfam, Bangladesh and a post-graduate student of sociology at Khulna University.

MEHERAB HOSSAIN

The monsoon rains lash against the paved streets of Dhaka University, but the downpour does little to dampen the fiery spirits on campus. Huddled under a sea of colourful umbrellas, thousands of students stand defiant, their voices rising.

What began as a localised protest in the heart of the capital has swiftly morphed into a nationwide movement. From Khulna University in the south to Rajshahi University in the north, students across Bangladesh are joining the chorus of dissent. Social media feeds are flooded with images and videos from campuses nationwide. In Dhaka, students have traded the comfort of dry lecture halls for the wet streets, their textbooks temporarily abandoned in favour of protest signs that run with ink in the relentless rain. As news of their stand spreads, it ignites similar actions nationwide. Students gather in solidarity in Chattogram, Sylhet, and beyond; their umbrellas are a colourful testament to their resilience and unity.

But this isn't just a student

uprising. A parallel storm is brewing in faculty lounges and administrative offices nationwide. Professors and lecturers tasked with guiding the next generation find themselves locked in battle against a system they believe has failed them. It's as if the monsoon has washed away the thin veneer of normalcy, revealing the deep-seated frustrations that have long simmered beneath the surface of Bangladesh's academic world. Two distinct yet interconnected movements are unfolding, each threatening to reshape the foundations of higher education in Bangladesh. The students' grievances centre on the labyrinthine quota system that has long governed public sector jobs in Bangladesh, where 56 percent of government positions are reserved for various groups. It's as if the concept of affirmative action has been cranked up to eleven.

The students' demands are simple yet revolutionary. They want to tear down this quota tower, brick by brick, and build a new system where talent trumps all. They're calling for a return

to a 2018 circular that promised a fairer shake.

But this isn't just about jobs. It's about a generation's hopes and dreams. These students envision a future where their hard work and abilities matter more than their family history or connections. They're fighting for themselves and the Bangladesh they want to see: meritocratic, fair, and full of opportunity.

On the other side of this academic coin, we find the teachers. These men and women have dedicated their lives to shaping young minds, only to be caught in a bureaucratic tangle. Their beef is with the “Prottoy Scheme”—a new pension system.

To understand their fury, you need to know that these educators have long felt like the forgotten cousins of the civil service family. They've clamoured for a separate pay scale for years, recognising their unique societal role. Instead, they got lumped in with everyone else in the 2015 pay scale revision. This new pension scheme makes them feel like they're being pushed further into the margins.

It's not just about money, though. It's about dignity. It's about feeling valued in a society that often pays lip service to education while treating educators as an afterthought. The teachers' protests might be less visible than the students' because of the smaller number of umbrellas and the higher number of closed-door meetings, but they're no less passionate. So here we are, a nation

caught between two waves of protest, each threatening to overflow the banks of our higher education system. It's a crisis, yes, but it's also an opportunity. It is an opportunity to reimagine how we value merit, support our educators, and prepare the next generation for the challenges ahead.

The solutions won't be easy. Reforming the quota system means navigating a minefield of vested interests and historical obligations. Addressing the teachers' concerns requires fundamentally reconsidering how we value education. But the alternative—allowing this unrest to fester—is unthinkable. There's a palpable sense of déjà vu. Bangladesh has been at a crossroads where the choices will echo through generations. The question is: Do we have the courage to make the right choices? The students and teachers of Bangladesh have thrown down the gauntlet. It's time for the powers that be to pick it up. The future of a nation's education and perhaps the country itself hangs in the balance.

Let's hope wisdom prevails for all those young minds waiting to be shaped and all those dedicated educators ready to shape them. As the monsoon rains continue to fall, we're left wondering: Will these waters of discontent nourish the seeds of change, or will they wash away hope for another generation? Like the protests, the answer remains fluid and uncertain in the torrential downpour of Bangladesh's academic crisis.

Collective action can save us from a dystopian future

Twelve scholars, social entrepreneurs and advocates write about the International Panel for Social Progress (IPSP)’s new push to put social progress in the global centre stage.

The challenges of environmental degradation, social inequalities, democratic decline, disruptive technological innovation, and dysfunctions in global cooperation have never been more pressing. Pandemic, unjust wars, and extreme weather have threatened social cohesion and democratic institutions, revealed new vulnerabilities, and laid bare the weaknesses of prevailing development approaches and global governance. Addressing these challenges require new forms of coming-together to recognise the mutual interdependence of these challenges along with the diversity of local and national contexts, to fully grasp and unpack the complexity of systemic transformation and the timelines of ongoing dynamics on Earth and in societies. This is essential to imagine adequate solutions and to make the most of the emerging opportunities. We, representing a group of several hundred scholars, social entrepreneurs and advocates from across the globe, have come together as the new iteration of the International Panel for Social Progress (IPSP) to construct a vision that averts the looming dystopian future and drive a discourse that can put social progress in the global centre stage.

In 2018, the IPSP offered a general picture of the type of institutions and reforms which, by allowing substantial variations across the world, could inspire the advent of a society based on the values of equality, freedom, emancipation, participation, and inclusion. Such a perspective constituted a powerful narrative to support the implementation of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. However, there is a growing sense that the piecemeal or sectoral implementation of good public policies or that inspiring but isolated civil society initiatives do not suffice to counter the negative social, environmental and governance externalities produced by the current power structures and by the predominant forms of economic organisations. The clear identification of the



VISUAL: STAR

main causes of these negative externalities is key to developing a design, a sequencing, and an implementation of actions that would transform the dynamics at play.

A broad outline for better societies exists. It includes: creating an inclusive and responsible economy by taming markets and corporations through responsible socioeconomic and environmental regulatory systems and by fostering economic and social organisations with a broader purpose; bringing circularity into our value chains and way of life; reducing social inequalities and empowering people through universal services and through pre- and re-distribution; deepening democracy through participatory and deliberative mechanisms and better information systems; enhancing global cooperation and reforming global governance to preserve common goods such as biodiversity and to improve resilience under global changes; and harnessing technology for positive impact.

While recognising that many of the solutions for better societies already exist,

the need of the hour is a renewed big push on a global scale, both at the level of ideas and actions, because progress has been decidedly mixed and new complexities and concerns have accentuated the challenge. There is an urgency of new coming-togethers adapted to local conditions, cast in long-term systemic visions and narratives of better futures, and co-constructed, promoted and implemented by fluid coalitions of public, private and non-governmental actors. The question that motivates us as the new iteration of the IPSP is how we can help coalitions of actors to emerge and to organise, and how we can help nurture them, to implement the social progress agenda.

In 2023, the IPSP, established 10 years ago, decided to reconvene, in a larger and more inclusive format, to continue its tradition of scientific objectivity and independent analysis, but now also to engage in co-construction with stakeholders and member-based organisations to ensure greater relevance of its work for change-makers, and thus aiming

at much greater impact. It will gather cross-sectoral and transdisciplinary expertise, from science and from practice, to provide a comprehensive, systemic understanding of the complex dynamics of multi-actor interactions, with a special attention devoted to the Global South and to underrepresented voices. Starting in 2024, it will work towards operationalising the social progress agenda as a new global horizon through developing innovative formats and tools to support change-makers and to impact processes leading to the transition. It will work towards designing reforms and transformations that address the structural flaws of current economic and social institutions and regulations as well as the biases of power realities while fostering the potential for social change by supporting dissemination of social innovations and rethinking our relationship with living organisms to respect the system of complex and dynamic interactions in which we live. An International Platform for Social Progress as a web source will be available later this year to crowdsource the transformative initiatives and projects throughout the world and to provide a guide to the most inspiring and most replicable ones. Intergenerational dimensions will be central to our work and younger generations will be mobilised through networking, and social media.

There will be many options and possibilities to join the IPSP and to contribute to its work: from the local to the global, from inner communities to larger networks, from civil society to the largest corporations, from city governments to supranational organisations, from education circles to the general and social media. Technology will help us translate, communicate, transfer knowledge, and connect change-makers. The diversity of contributors will match the diversity of users of the knowledge base developed by the IPSP.

The new big push by IPSP to put social progress in the global centre stage starts with six priority work streams: mapping of the

systemic interactions and power structures of societal challenges; measuring what we value; rethinking the information system as a public good in the age of social media and artificial intelligence; developing a framework for an ecological rule of law; defining performance for governments and businesses that reflects social progress; and identifying and promoting new pathways for global solidarity.

A dystopian future cannot be humanity’s destiny. Coalescing the individual and collective will for sustainable and cohesive pathways towards better societies has never been more urgent. The task is huge and success far from certain. But the responsibility is existential, and the challenge must be seized now by everyone, everywhere, all at once.

A version of this article was first published in Le Monde on April 19, 2024.

Olivier Bouin, director of the Network of French Institutes for Advanced Study; **Marc Fleurbaey**, senior researcher, CNRS and professor, Paris School of Economics; **Merike Blofield**, professor of political science, University of Hamburg; **Pedro Conceicao**, director of the Human Development Report Office, UNDP; **Ravi Kanbur**, professor of economics and world affairs, Cornell University; **Takyyiwa Manuh**, emerita professor of the University of Ghana; **Elisa Reis**, professor of political sociology, Federal University of Rio de Janeiro; **Marie Laure Salles**, director of the Geneva Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies; **Dennis J Snower**, president, Global Solutions Initiative; **Margo Thomas**, president and CEO, Women’s Economic Imperative; **Ingrid Volkmer**, professor of digital communication and globalisation, University of Melbourne; and **Hossain Zillur Rahman**, founder-chairman of Power and Participation Research Centre (PPRC) and chairperson of BRAC Bangladesh.

Rememebering an educationist, artist, and socialite from the yester generation



Prof Syed Munir Khasru is chairman of the international think tank, The Institute for Policy, Advocacy, and Governance (IPAG).

SYED MUNIR KHASRU

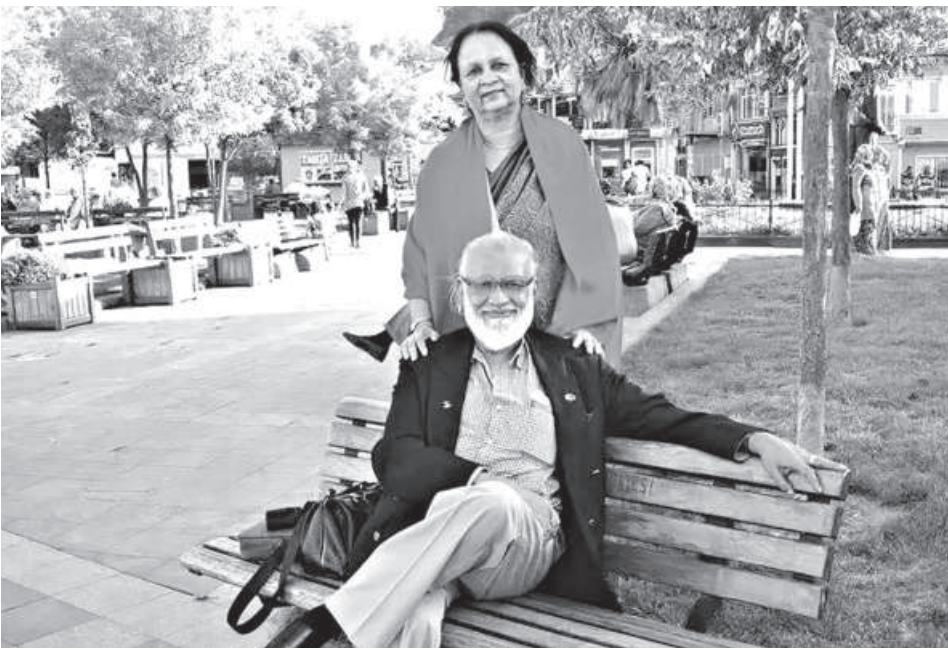
Asma Abbasi, who breathed her last on July 4, was a personality who epitomised values and a lifestyle that were modern and progressive enough to dwarf many of us from later generations. Born and having lived in a time when women having a career and active social life was frowned upon, she sailed gracefully in both, as an educationist and much-loved celebrity in social circles. From being a professor of Bangla to deftly anchoring education programmes, from being culturally active to engagement in multiple social outfits—her energy and enthusiasm were boundless. One of her remarkable traits was her incorrigible positivity and instant warmth that would make even a stranger feel at ease with her.

She was married to Mustafa Zaman Abbasi, a well-known singer, promoter, and researcher of folklore music who was the son of Abbasuddin Ahmed, the legendary Bengali folk song composer and singer. Coming from a traditional, conservative Sylheti family with her father being the principal of a Madrasa while being married to such a culturally enriched family must have been challenging for Asma Abbasi. But she blended in seamlessly by actively supporting the cultural heritage of her in-laws. Her two daughters delved into

creative fields: Samira Abbasi became a singer and Sharmini Abbasi a writer. Asma Abbasi, however, made sure that the core religious values and traditions remained strong within the family. She received education from the Islamic Centre, near their ancestral home in Purana Paltan.

When they were in their prime, the Abbasi couple was one of the most well known in Dhaka. While her husband has been a prolific singer and artist, Asma Abbasi was a well-known figure in most circles with the confidence to walk into any gatherings with poise and dignity. Her instant warmth would generate positive energy in the room. Never shy to take the stage, she would seize any opportunity to speak with her usual charm and ability to grab people’s attention. She was equally prolific in her literary work; books authored by her include Komola Ronger Dinguli (The Orange-Coloured Days), They Kon Bon er Horeen (From Which Forest is the Deer), and Hason Raja.

She received the gold medal award from the Ministry of Education as the best college teacher. As anchor of programmes on education and religion on BTV, she was well accepted by the audience when BTV used to be the only electronic media for information



Asma Abbasi with her husband, Mustafa Zaman Abbasi.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

and entertainment. She also did programmes for Radio Bangladesh. In addition, she served as a member of the Film Censor Board, Family Planning Board, and as advisor to Kochi-Kachar Mela (an organisation for children). Asma Abbasi was the longest serving cultural secretary of Ladies Club, one of the oldest and well-known social outfits for women of her generation. As member of Inner Wheel Club of Dhaka and District Chairman of Inner Wheel Bangladesh, she led social and philanthropic works in the community.

On a more personal note, Asma Abbasi was

the younger sister of my mother, late Najma Khasru, and they were among five siblings whose father was the late Maulvi Habibur Rahman Chaudhury, former principal of Sylhet (Govt.) Alia Madrasah and mother the late Syeda Hifzunnesa Khanam, sister of well-known literary figure Syed Mujtaba Ali. As Asma Abbasi’s nephew, I had the pleasure and privilege to enjoy her affection and be a witness to the childlike simplicity and candour that she had. Any of my friends she had met in our house would instantly become another nephew/niece and she would greet

them with the warmth of a favourite aunt. She would also go out of the way to make people happy, even at the trail stage of her life. She would cook by herself to send me her signature achari gosh (pickled beef curry), in spite of my repeated requests not to go through so much trouble as we lived in two different parts of the city.

After the last Qurbani Eid, she asked me to send her home-made sheek kabab. It was easier to do this when we used to live in an independent house in the picturesque Ispahani Colony and a little tricky in an apartment due to the need to have a stove that can burn charcoal. To satisfy her culinary desires, I bought a special stove to make the kebab at home and then sent it to her. A few days back she called me around midnight and before I could pick up the phone, it got disconnected. Since it was quite late, I wanted to call her back later, thinking that she must have been calling to thank me. I had no idea that the unanswered call would be the last call from her and in hindsight, I regret that I had not immediately call her back.

The lesson learned is that when people reach a certain point in their life, when every single day lived is a blessing to be counted and not life taken for granted—we should be vigilant to attend to them. When the time comes for our last phone call, last meal, last walk, last talk, last sunrise and sunset, last prayers—it is likely that we will know little of it beforehand and can only hope that our loved ones will be there as we make the transit from this world to the other. So, for those in the twilight years of their life, let no phone call from them be unattended or messages unanswered, and let them not be left alone. May Khala’s soul rest in peace.

CROSSWORD BY THOMAS JOSEPH

- ACROSS
- 1 Gum masses

5 Reduced amount

9 Homer classic

11 Pasta topping

12 Blackboard material

13 Inert gas

14 Sewing aid

15 Car parts

17 Stamp users

19 Maiden name label

20 Low card

21 Sleep spot

22 Country division

24 Dietary concern

26 Coped

29 Attach a patch

30 Sprees

32 Some fast-food chicken

34 Guy’s friend

35 Mexican farewell

36 Steer clear of

38 Gives for a time

39 Like the Capitol

40 Therefore

41 Hardy heroine

DOWN

1 Bits of smoke

2 In cahoots

3 Wiest of films

4 Was inactive

5 Cooking fat

6 Oregon city

7 Got a touchdown

8 Good judgment

10 Flaw

11 Lacking

16 Device for book lovers

18 Maid’s target

21 Abacus piece

23 Showed fear

24 Tributary

25 Storefront sight

27 Pea or peanut

28 Barters

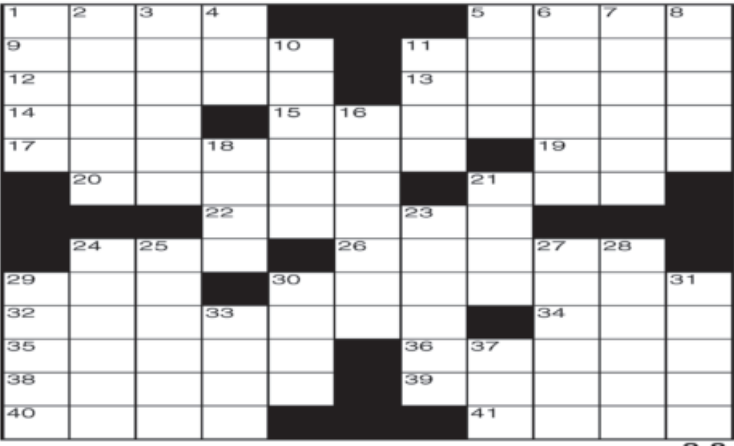
29 Hackneyed

30 Worgy’s love

31 Winter gliders

33 Ninny

37 Auction unit



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SUNDAY’S ANSWERS

R	E	D	I	A	L	R	A	C	E
A	G	E	N	D	A	O	M	A	N
M	O	C	K	I	N	G	B	I	R
D	J	O	D	I	E				
D	I	E	S	A	R	C	H		
C	E	N	T	A	N	T	H	E	M
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FUTURE-PROOFING YOUR FINANCES

Saving up the first paychecks

Aside from emergencies, saving up also means that you are investing towards the future. This can mean earning that dream vacation you have always wanted, buying that expensive piece of gadget, or even starting your own business down the line.

SHAMS RASHID TONMOY

Congratulations! You finally landed your first full-time job. Even if it's not the one you had dreamt of since you were a kid, it's still going to help pay the bills - at least, however much possible. Of course, this also means a bunch of new responsibilities, some more tedious than others. Now that you are in charge of your own money, one key duty you will be burdened with is financial management, which is a task definitely easier said than done.

While your first paychecks might feel like a magic ticket to financial freedom, think about how your current financial habits can impact your future for years to come. So, before you rush out and celebrate with a well-deserved shopping spree - consider the alternative of putting some of that money aside. Whether you still have your parents' support or some other source of money flow, the money that you earn in your first proper job will always help you out, especially in the case of emergencies.

So, what entails the process of saving up your first full-time paycheck? Let's take a look at the 'why' and 'how' of it.

Why save?

As much as we may dislike it, life throws us curve balls at times. An emergency fund, ideally three to six months of salary, is a safety net that you can always depend on no matter how dire a situation may get. Are you facing car troubles, unexpected medical bills, or a sudden job loss? Keeping some money saved

aside from your first paychecks will ensure that you won't spiral into debt during the worst possible scenarios.

Aside from emergencies, saving up also means that you are investing towards the future. This can mean earning that dream vacation you have always wanted, buying that expensive piece of gadget, or even starting your own business down the line. You might tell yourself that the money you are earning from your first full-time job isn't enough in quantity for a substantial investment. The truth is, it doesn't have to be.

If you start saving early, even a small amount tucked away now will grow significantly over time due to compound interest. Even aside from that, you are developing a valuable practice that will help you for the rest of your life. Soon into your adulthood, your personal expenses will pile up - more so if you decide to settle down and start a family of your own. At that time, you will be grateful to your past self for going through the arduous, yet rewarding path of saving up early.

How to save?

Now that you are well-acquainted with the benefits you will reap if you start saving early, the first thing you need to do to actually start saving is track your expenses. There are free budgeting apps that will help you track daily expenditures and monthly earnings on your phone. Or, if you are the traditional type, get a notebook and jot down your spending manually. Either way, identify areas you need

to cut back. This could be not having a cup of coffee every day and using cheaper modes of public transport at times to save up on commute costs.

A popular budgeting strategy is the 50-30-20 rule, which simply means that you use 50% of your income for essential needs, 30% on wants, and 20% towards savings and paying debts. Of course, you are free to adjust this percentage based on your lifestyle and preferences. For example, reducing the frequency of going to movies or dining out can subsequently increase the amount of savings, which can be greatly beneficial for you in the long run.

Another method you could consider is setting up automatic transfers on your bank account, so that any money deposited in your checking account gets sent to your savings account. This way, you are forcing yourself away from the temptation to spend recklessly. Mentally label that savings account as "do not touch" money - unless of course, in the case of emergencies.

All in all, adopting the practice of saving money early - especially your first-ever paychecks - will be appreciated by your future self down the line. It's often common for youths and young adults to splurge their first earnings into whatever they fancy. While doing so will certainly make you happy, keep in mind that this satisfaction is short-lived at best. Take control of your finances today and start reaping the rewards of smart saving!

Sustaining energy at work

A holistic guide to beating the afternoon slump

SYEDA ADIBA ARIF

Ever found yourself struggling to function properly during the second half at your workplace? You're not alone. Extended meetings, prolonged desk hours, and periods of intense focus are quite commonplace in corporate jobs. Hence, it's quite easy to get fatigued and burnt out if you're not mindful about your work habits during your 9 to 5. The following techniques can be useful in efforts to stay energised throughout the workday, which is essential for both your wellbeing and productivity. And no, it's not just coffee.

Start with good sleep

Without adequate sleep the night before, no matter what you do will be futile in keeping your energy levels high. Good sleep is needed to feel fresh, focus where it matters and make meaningful contributions at work.

Dr. Philip Stieg, a neurosurgeon who founded the Weill Cornell Medicine Brain and Spine Centre, claims lack of sleep might impair creativity, short-term memory, and attention span. Try to get at least seven hours of sleep every night. Humans are not machines; but even machines have planned downtimes that keep them functional, and the same applies in a truer scale for humans.

Eat the right way

Make a personal rule for yourself

to not take your lunch at your desk if you can avoid it. Find a nice place much away from your desk, be it in the cafeteria or a cosy lounging zone and take some time to eat your lunch with or without company. A nutrient-rich, well-balanced meal, devoid of excessive grease does an excellent job of preventing fatigue.

Always try to consume a balanced lunch consisting of lean meats, whole grains, fruits and vegetables. Carry practical snacks with you to refuel throughout the day. Make a realistic meal plan for your hours at work, and stick to it to the best of your ability. Additionally, always carry a bottle of water with you and take frequent sips throughout the day, refilling as necessary.

Get some movement

For any job, there will be some days that are busier than others. In corporate jobs, a busy day often translates to spending most of it at our desks or in back-to-back meetings. It's crucial to break free out of that & ensure at least some kind of movement throughout. Absorbing sunlight and

fresh air, or stretching limbs and taking short walks, or simply getting up every hour for only a minute, works wonders in offsetting the weariness that comes with extended periods of immobility. Even the shortest bursts of physical activity can instantly make one feel revitalised. Besides, it is also important to focus on good posture at work. If you have the option, opt for an ergonomic set up.

Recharge with colleagues

Nobody can relate more to whatever workplace struggle you are facing, than the colleagues who you work with daily. Taking a few breaks to interact with coworkers goes a long way in inducing joy. Dr. Ben Waber, Prominent scientist at the MIT Media Lab, highlights the advantages of taking 'micro-breaks' of up to ten minutes.

You can use these breaks to unwind with your favourite colleagues. To prevent burnout, view breaks as mandatory rather than voluntary, and plan your schedule accordingly.

Plan your time

It is not just the number of hours, but also the way those hours are

arranged that play a role in your energy levels. Zhang, Spreitzer, and Qiu's (2023) research demonstrates that energy levels are influenced by the ratio of meeting time to individual work. A well-structured week alternates between solitary work and meetings. Instead of compacting meeting schedules or pairing critical meetings with intense individual tasks, pair high-stress meetings with low-stress one-on-one work whenever possible and vice versa.

Employers and employees alike can benefit from the enhancing productivity, creativity, and job satisfaction that sustained energy at the workplace can bring. Employees should adopt a well-rounded approach that includes good planning, nutrition and workload management.

Employers should prioritise employee well-being by actively listening to the needs of the employees, designing wellness programs that truly work and eschewing the "set it and forget it" approach. By fostering an environment that supports these practices, all parties can win.

Adiba Arif is an HR Manager at BAT Bangladesh and a corporate columnist for The Daily Star. Having completed her Bachelor's from IBA, University of Dhaka, she is currently pursuing a Master's in Data Science & Analytics at East West University.

Financial Planning For Young Adults

Financial planning is crucial for establishing a strong financial foundation for the future, as well as for creating a safety net for emergencies.

Creating a budget

Develop a budget to track your income and expenses.


Building an emergency fund

This fund acts as a safety net in case of unexpected financial setbacks.

Saving

Consider saving for other goals, such as a home purchase, travel, or further education.

Clearly define your financial goals and the timeline for achieving them.



QUOTE OF THE DAY

"If you want to be a true professional, do something outside yourself."

RUTH BADER GINSBURG

JOBS SPOTLIGHT


United International University (UIU)
Lecturer, Public Health
Deadline: July 16
Eligibility:
● MBBS/BDS degree or Bachelor's degree in Public Health/Microbiology/Biochemistry/Environmental Science/Statistics/Anthropology and Master's degree in Public Health..
Minimum experience: N/A



IDLC Finance PLC
Associate Relationship Manager, Corporate Division
Deadline: July 10
Eligibility:
● MBM or MBA/BBA majoring in Finance, Economics, Accounting, or Banking with minimum a CGPA of 3.00 out of 4 from any reputed university.
Minimum experience: 2 years



H&M
Industrial Engineer
Deadline: July 12
Eligibility:
● Academic background in Industrial/Textile Engineering.
Minimum experience: 4-6 years



International Rescue Committee
Senior IT Infrastructure Manager
Deadline: N/A
Eligibility:
● Minimum graduation in engineering or technology with industry certifications such as CompTIA A+, Network+, etc. preferable.
Minimum experience: 6 years



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Generous exit policy offered to borrowers

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh Bank yesterday unveiled the latest iteration of its exit policy that offers borrowers the option to close off their loan account within three years by paying only 10 percent as down payment and no interest.

The move, which comes at a time when interest waiver facilities are being widely criticised in the parliament, is aimed at window-dressing the country's bad loan scenario.

At the end of March, defaulted loans soared to a record Tk 182,000 crore -- which is 11.11 percent of total outstanding credit -- much to the displeasure of the International Monetary Fund. The exit policy is expected to make the situation more palatable.

"The financial condition of clients has been adversely affected by various uncontrollable factors -- that's why an exit policy is needed to recover the loans from them," the BB said in a notice yesterday.

The exit policy applies to defaulted loans, loans with a low probability of recovery and loans taken by defunct companies.

Borrowers will have to provide a minimum of 10 percent down payment in cash by the borrowers and in return, they will get an interest waiver under the policy.

However, the interest waiver facility cannot be extended to loans created by forgery and wilful defaulters, as per BB's notice.

Clients can repay the loans in one instalment or more than one instalment but the maximum repayment tenure will be two years. However, banks can extend the tenure by

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Ranju Begum is making the most of monsoon as it ushers the blooming of water lilies in the marsh near her home in Turjnimahal village of Khulna's Rupsha upazila. She spends her mornings collecting the flowers, which she later sells for Tk 10 per 6-8 pieces, helping her earn some extra money for her family. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: HABIBUR RAHMAN

Prof Yunus challenges court order for charge framing

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Nobel Laureate Prof Muhammad Yunus and six others of Grameen Telecom yesterday filed a petition with the High Court challenging a Dhaka court's order that framed charges against them.

The case was filed over misappropriation of about Tk 25.22 crore of Grameen Telecom Workers' Profit Participation Fund.

Lawyer Abdullah-Al-Mamun submitted the petition on behalf of the accused seeking an HC order to scrap the trial proceedings.

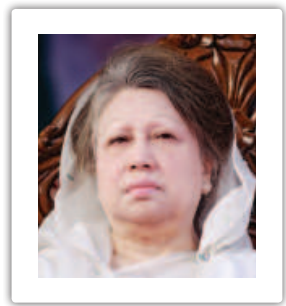
Mamun told The Daily Star that the HC might hear the petition today.

The lawyer said his clients have not committed any offence. They paid the money to their workers in accordance with the law and that there was no question of money laundering.

Mamun said the

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'Khaleda's life at risk' Says BNP after her hospital admission



STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The BNP yesterday claimed that its Chairperson Khaleda Zia's life was at risk after she was admitted to the Evercare Hospital in the capital yesterday morning.

"She [Khaleda] suddenly fell ill early in the morning. Her physical condition is deteriorating and her life is now in danger," Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir, secretary general of the party, said while talking to reporters at the BNP chairperson's Gulshan office.

"We've been repeatedly saying she has been

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AL INFIGHTING Spare no one involved in killings PM asks home minister

PARTHA PRATIM BHATTACHARJEE

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has asked Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan Kamal to ensure the arrest of all those linked to killings that occurred during infighting within the ruling Awami League.

She gave the order at a meeting with the home minister at the Gono Bhaban on Sunday, and asked him not to spare anyone regardless of their political identities and positions, said sources.

The development came after two union parishad chairmen were shot dead in Munshiganj's Tongibari upazila and Khulna's Dumuria upazila reportedly over internal feuds.

Contacted, Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan Kamal told The Daily Star that the PM has asked him to go for tough action against all those involved in the clashes and murders.

The issue of infighting was also discussed at a meeting, convened by AL General Secretary Obaidul Quader, at the party president's Dhanmondi office yesterday, where several ministers and AL leaders discussed the ongoing quota reform demonstrations and university teachers' protests over the new pension scheme.

According to meeting sources, AL leaders opined that the party's main concern is now infighting within the organisation and stressed the need to resolve it.

They said the meeting also decided that the party's top brass would sit with AL President Sheikh Hasina after her return from China and will seek her decision in this regard.

Many leaders at the meeting spoke of holding countrywide programmes by central AL leaders to bridge the gap between the partymen, which has widened over the last two polls, in order to bring discipline within the organisation, they added.

Infighting and killings have become almost regular within the Awami League as party-sponsored candidates and "party-independent"

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Lavish lifestyle with illegal money now latest fashion Says chief justice

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Chief Justice Obaidul Hassan has said some court officials' tendency to take bribes for placing cases before the judges has long been polluting the judiciary.

Speaking at a discussion in the capital yesterday, he urged all to give him information about corruption in the judiciary through the Supreme Court registrar general's office.

"There is no denying the fact that information about the tendency to indulge in corruption by different court officials is gradually heightening our concern and making us alarmed.

"...I have found our judges to be incredibly talented and most of them want to continue their work with honesty. But we don't have the right to tarnish the image of the judges for the sake of a few officials and employees. We know that denying or avoiding problems

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Obaidul Hassan

France faces coalition puzzle

Difficult negotiations loom to form govt as left-wing alliance denies far right a majority in surprise polls result

REUTERS, Paris

French President Emmanuel Macron yesterday asked his prime minister to stay in the role for now, pending what will be difficult negotiations to form a new government after a surprise left-wing surge in elections that delivered a hung parliament.

The leftist New Popular Front (NFP) emerged as the dominant force in the National Assembly after Sunday's election, thwarting Marine Le Pen's quest to bring the far right to power.

Of all 577 constituencies, the left won 182 seats, Macron's centrist alliance 168 and Le Pen's National Rally (RN) and allies 143, Interior Ministry data cited by Le Monde newspaper showed.

Other media had slightly different counts, and final numbers will depend partly on individual MPs joining different groupings. To govern with an absolute majority, 289 seats were needed.

However, with no single group securing a working majority, the outcome heralded a period of political volatility just before the Paris Olympics

Left-wing alliance wins 182 seats, centrist alliance 163 seats and right-wing alliance 143 seats

289 is the the majority mark in the 577-seated parliament

A fragmented parliament likely to weaken France's position globally and in EU

and raised uncertainty among investors about who would run the euro zone's second largest economy.

"It's not going to be simple, no, it's not going to be easy, and no, it's not going to be comfortable," Green party leader Marine Tondelier told France Inter radio. "It's going to take a bit of time."

The range of possibilities include the NFP forming a minority government or the cobbling together of an unwieldy coalition of parties with almost no

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Canada stand between Argentina and another final

AFP, Miami

The Copa America is down to the final four with a pair of fascinating semifinals and favourites Argentina hoping they can win their third straight major title.



The Argentines, world champions and defending Copa title holders, open the semifinal action when they face surprise package Canada in New Jersey, with the match kicking off at 6:00am Bangladesh time tomorrow.

Tied on 15 Copa America titles with Uruguay, Argentina are hoping to become the most successful nation in the tournament's history.

The Albiceleste needed penalty shoot-out heroics from their goalkeeper

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People walk past the rubble of destroyed buildings along a street in Khan Yunis in the southern Gaza Strip yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

Israeli tanks storm Gaza City districts

Residents report heavy fire; several buildings destroyed

AGENCIES

Israeli forces bombed Gaza City early yesterday and columns of tanks advanced into the heart of the city from different directions in what residents said was one of the heaviest attacks in the Palestinian territory since the start of the offensive.

The Gaza Civil Emergency Service said it believed dozens of people were killed but emergency teams were unable to reach them because of ongoing offensives in Daraj and Tuffah in the east and Tel Al Hawa, Sabra and Rimal further west.

Residents said neighbourhoods in Gaza City, which lies in the north of the Gaza Strip, had been bombed throughout the night into the early morning hours. Several multi-floor buildings have been destroyed, they added.

One Israeli tank thrust pushed people towards the western road near the Mediterranean, residents said.

"The enemy is behind us and the sea is in front of us, where we will we go?" said Abdel-Ghani, one Gaza City

Mediators to host new talks to push for truce
40 more Palestinians killed

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