

Achieving self-sufficiency crucial for sovereignty: Putin

INTERNATIONAL DESK

The main sign that a country is sovereign is that it can stand on its own two feet, Russian President Vladimir Putin said at a meeting with participants of the "Everything for Victory!" forum. "We must make our country self-sufficient, which is the key indicator of sovereignty," he said. The president emphasized that Russia will turn into a decrepit and worthless country unless it defends its own people. "If we did nothing, if we did not defend our people in Donbass, the Kherson and Zaporozhye regions, in Novorossiia, if we had abandoned the people of Crimea, what

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Stay vigilant to BNP-Jamaat's conspiracies: law minister

NEWS DESK

People have to remain vigilant as long as there are militant organisations and BNP-Jamaat is supporting them, said Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs minister Anisul Huq today. NHe made the remarks in response to questions from local journalists after inaugurating a 97-meter-long bridge built for 5 crore and 77 lakh Tk on the canal of Bongaj village under Dharkhar union in Akhaura upazila of Brahmanbaria in the Yesterday Saturday afternoon. Later, he spoke as the chief guest at the public meeting organised at the Eidgah ground of

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Fire breaks out at BIWTA warehouse in Narayanganj

NEWS DESK

A massive fire broke out at a warehouse of Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Authority (BIWTA) in Narayanganj Yesterday Saturday afternoon. Confirming the development, Fakhruddin Ahmed, deputy assistant director of Narayanganj Fire Service and Civil Defence, told our local correspondent that the fire started around 1:15pm. Seven fire engines are trying to bring the blaze under control, he added. In November 2018, a similar fire broke out at the BIWTA warehouse in Narayanganj which

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Bishwa Ijtema death toll rises to 10

STAFF REPORTER

Three more devotees have died at the Bishwa Ijtema venue in Tongi of the district, taking the death toll to 10. The deceased were indent as Nousher Ali, 65, hailed from Sherpur district, Abdul Qader, 55, an inhabitant in Bhola district and Shadhin, 45, a resident in Netrakona district. Mass Media Coordinator of Ijtema Organizing Committee Habibulla Raihan said today. "They have died of old-age complications mostly from Friday noon to Saturday noon during the first phase of the Bishwa Ijtema" he added. Earlier, seven people died

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U.S. launches strikes in Iraq Syria, nearly 40 killed

REUTERS

The United States launched airstrikes in Iraq and Syria against more than 85 targets linked to Iran's Revolutionary Guard (IRGC) and the militias it backs, reportedly killing more than 30 people, in retaliation for a deadly attack on U.S. troops. The strikes, which included the use of long-range B-1 bombers flown from the United States, were the first in a multi-tiered response by President Joe Biden's administration to the attack last weekend by Iran-backed militants. More U.S. military operations were expected in the coming days. The strikes intensified a conflict that has spread into the region since war erupted between Israel and Hamas after the militant Palestinian group's deadly assault on Israel on Oct. 7. Iran's foreign ministry spokesperson Nasser Kanaani said in a statement the U.S. attacks represented "another adventurous and strategic mistake by the United States that will result only in increased tension in instability in the region".

Iraq also condemned the U.S. attacks, saying they had killed 16 people including civilians. In Syria, the strikes killed 23

people who had been guarding the targeted locations, said Rami



Iran says U.S. attacks will increase tension

Strikes were in retaliation for attack that killed 3 U.S. troops

Iraq condemns U.S. strikes, says 16 killed

Syrian Observatory reports 23 killed in Syria

Abdulrahman, director of the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, an organisation that reports on war in Syria. U.S. Lieutenant General Douglas Sims, the director of the Joint Staff, said the attacks appeared to be successful, triggering large secondary explosions as

knowing that there would likely be casualties among those in the facilities.

Despite the strikes, the Pentagon has said it does not want war with Iran and does not believe Tehran wants war either, even as Republican pressure has increased on the Biden to deal a blow directly.

Iran, a backer of Hamas, has sought to stay out of the regional conflict itself even as it supports groups that have entered the fray from Lebanon, Yemen, Iraq and Syria - the so-called "Axis of Resistance" that is hostile to Israeli and U.S. interests.

'WE DO NOT SEEK CONFLICT'

U.S. Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin said after the strikes that Biden had directed additional action against the IRGC and those linked to it. "This is the start of our response," Austin said. "We do not seek conflict in the Middle East or anywhere else, but the president and I will not tolerate attacks on American forces," Austin said.

An Iraqi government statement said the areas bombed by U.S. aircraft included places where Iraqi security forces are stationed near civilian locations. It said 23 people had been wounded in addition to the 16 killed. The White House said the United States had informed Iraq ahead of strikes. Baghdad later accused the United States of deception, saying a U.S. claim of coordination with the Iraqi authorities was "unfounded". The Syrian

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India agrees to withdraw troops from Maldives by May 10

NEWS DESK

India has agreed to withdraw its military personnel from Maldives by May 10 and replace the aviation management staff with civilians. The Maldives government on Friday said the decision was announced after the second meeting of the India-Maldives High-Level Core Group in New Delhi. The core group was formed to negotiate Malé's demand that New Delhi remove its military presence from the island nation. The Maldives Ministry of Foreign Affairs in a press release said, "Both sides agreed that the Government of India will replace the military personnel in one of the three aviation platform by 10 March 2024, and will complete replacing military personnel in the other two platforms by 10 May

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Last Wednesday at 12 noon, the honorable president of the Bangabandhu Parishad, Professor Dr. AAMS Arefin Siddique Bangabandhu-Daughter paid courtesy call on Honorable Prime Minister, People's Leader Sheikh Hasina and congratulated her on behalf of the Council for assuming the duties of the Prime Minister of Bangladesh for the 5th time

Nasim: BNP wants to create chaos through black flag procession

STAFF REPORTER

Awami League Joint General Secretary and Dhaka-8 MP AFM Bahauddin Nasim on Yesterday Saturday said that the BNP wants to create disarray and obstruct the rule of law under the guise of the

warm clothes to the cold-stricken people of the Dhaka-8 constituency near Motijheel Ideal School and College. MP Nasim said: "BNP wants to capitalize on the suffering of people for political benefits. They want to mislead and endanger the people by



black flag procession. He said these things while speaking as the chief guest of the ceremony of distributing

spreading terror. They want to establish their rule through an undemocratic process.

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Bangladesh detects 25 new Covid-19 patients in 24hrs

STAFF REPORTER

Bangladesh reported 25 more Covid-19 cases in 24 hours till Yesterday Saturday morning. With the new numbers, the country's total Covid-19 caseload rose to 2,047,258, according to the Directorate General of Health Services. The official death toll from the disease remained unchanged at 29,482 as no new fatalities were reported during this period. The daily case test positivity rate stood at 7.35 per cent as 340 samples were tested, said the DGHS. The recovery and death rates remained unchanged at 98.4 per cent and 1.44 per cent, respectively.

Potatoes already selling at Tk25 per kg in Dinajpur as import starts through Hili

NEWS DESK

In a government move to tame the country's potato market, a total of 25 tonnes of potato arrived in Bangladesh through Dinajpur's Hili land port from India on Yesterday Saturday afternoon. As a result, the price of potatoes came down by Tk 10-15 per kg at retail markets in the district, reports UNB's Hili correspondent. Md Ifsuf Ali, deputy assistant quarantine officer of Hili Land Port Plant Quarantine Centre, said on Wednesday the government decided to import potatoes to rein in the runaway price.

On the same day, importers of Hili land port applied for permission at Khamarbari in Dhaka to import potatoes, he said. A total of 49 importers of the port got permission to

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BSMMU Rheumatoid Arthritis Awareness Day is celebrated
Taking painkillers without doctor's advice will damage kidneys: BSMMU Vice-Chancellor



STAFF REPORTER

Rheumatoid Arthritis Awareness Day was celebrated at Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University (BSMMU) with the theme 'Brighter Future in Rheumatoid Arthritis: Need for early diagnosis and appropriate treatment'. On the occasion of the day at 9:30 am on Saturday (3 February 2024 AD), the

Department of Rheumatology organized a colorful parade and discussion meeting at Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University. At 9:30 in the morning, the colorful procession started from in front of Shaheed Sheikh Russell Fountain of the University, went round Battala, A-Block and ended at D-Block via TSC. Besides, a scientific seminar was held in this

School Cup Martial Art Competition in Chapainawabganj

Shaheen Aktar

Schoolcup martial arts competition has ended in Chapainawabganj. Bangladesh Martial Art Sports School Chapainawabganj organized 180 students from all over the country including four educational institutions of Chapainawabganj participated in 29 events in this day-long competition. MP Abdul Odud was the chief guest at the prize distribution ceremony at Chapainawabganj Stadium on Saturday afternoon. Chapainawabganj District

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Government is working to make education system smart
Principal Secretary, Prime Minister's Office

Masum Billah

Chief Secretary of the Prime Minister's Office Md. Tofazzal Hossain Mia said that the present government is working to make the education system smart. Developing the infrastructure of educational institutions in all parts of the country to conduct advanced education programs. It is

implementing various initiatives to improve the quality of education, to smarten the education delivery system and education system. This Saturday morning, he said all this while inaugurating the newly-built academic building of Bhandaria Shahabuddin Kamil Post Graduate Madrasa and

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Courtesy meeting of journalists with Syed Kamrul Hasan Popi in Dasar, Madaripur



Md. Hemayet Hossain Khan

In Dasar of Madaripur district, the prominent industrialist and former Chhatra League leader-Managing Director of CLT BD Private Limited and advisor of Dasar Upazila Reporters Unit

Syed Kamrul Hasan Popi held a courtesy meeting with the journalists of the newly formed committee of Dasar Upazila Reporters Unit and exchanged flowers. On Friday (February 2) 2024 at 2.30 pm, Krissantan of Dasar Upazila

of Madaripur District, the managing director of CLT BD Private Limited, the advisor of Dasar Upazila Reporters Unit Syed Kamrul Hasan Popi, along with the journalists of the newly formed committee of Dasar Upazila

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Saber calls upon educational institutions to ditch single-use plastics

STAFF REPORTER

Environment, Forest and Climate Change Minister Saber Hossain Chowdhury yesterday urged the teachers and students to make educational institutions of the country free from all types of single-use (one time) plastics. "We want to declare the country free of single-use plastic with the aim of building a pollution-free smart Bangladesh. If the educational institutions come forward and teach the children, thousands of families associated with the institutions will know about the harmful pollution of plastic," the minister said that while attending the annual sports competition, 2024 in the city's Motijheel Ideal School and College as the chief guest today, said a release. "Not just plastic, educational institutions should be free of all types of waste and plant the required number of trees in the school premises. The steps will make the youngsters sensitive and careful about the

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World food price index down again in January: FAO

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

The benchmark for world food commodity prices fell further in January, albeit slightly, led by decreases in the prices of cereals and meat, which more than offset an increase in the sugar prices, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) reported on Friday. The FAO Food Price Index, which tracks monthly changes in the international prices of a set of globally-traded food commodities, averaged 118 points in January, down 1 percent from December and 10.4 percent from its corresponding value a year ago. The FAO Cereal Price Index declined by 2.2 percent from the previous month. Global wheat export prices declined in January driven by strong competition among exporters and the arrival of recently harvested supplies in the southern hemisphere countries, while those of maize fell sharply, reflecting improved crop conditions and the start of the harvest in Argentina and larger supplies in the United States of America. By contrast, price quotations for rice rose 1.2 percent in January, reflecting a strong export demand for Thai and Pakistani higher quality Indica rice and additional purchases by

Indonesia. The FAO Vegetable Oil Price Index rose marginally by 0.1 percent from December - but was still 12.8 percent lower than a year earlier - reflecting moderate increases in international palm and sunflower seed oil prices offsetting declines in the prices of soy and rapeseed oils. World palm oil prices were driven by seasonally lower production in major producing countries



and concerns over unfavourable weather conditions in Malaysia. Meanwhile, increased import demand slightly pushed up sunflower seed oil prices. By contrast, international soy and rapeseed oil prices declined on account of prospects for large supplies from South America and lingering ample availabilities in Europe, respectively. The FAO Dairy Price Index

remained virtually unchanged from its revised December value, standing 17.8 percent below its value a year ago.

In January, international price quotations for butter and whole milk powder increased largely due to higher demand from Asian buyers, nearly offsetting declines in those for skim milk powder and cheese.

The FAO Meat Price Index declined for the seventh consecutive month by 1.4 percent from December, as abundant supplies from leading exporting countries drove down international prices of poultry, bovine and pig meats.

By contrast, international ovine meat prices increased on high global import demand and lower supplies of animals for slaughter in Oceania.

The FAO Sugar Price Index in January was up 0.8 percent from the previous month, underpinned by concerns over the likely impact of below-average rains in Brazil on sugarcane crops to be harvested from April, coupled with unfavourable production prospects in Thailand and India.

Record cereal output in 2023

World cereal production in 2023 is seen on track to hit an all-time record high of 2 836 million tonnes - up 1.2 percent from 2022, according to new forecasts in the latest Cereal Supply and Demand Brief, also

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EU for strengthening partnership with Bangladesh

NEWS DESK

The European Union (EU) has expressed their willingness to strengthen partnership with Bangladesh in the coming days. European Commissioner for International Partnerships Jutta Urpilainen and European Commissioner for Crisis Management Janez Lenarcic expressed this during their separate meetings with Foreign Minister Dr Hasan Mahmud in Brussels on Friday evening on the sidelines of 3rd EU Indo-Pacific Ministerial Forum. During the meeting, the two European Commissioners expressed interest in working together with Bangladesh on various issues through increasing EU cooperation and strengthening partnership, said a foreign ministry press release received here today. The foreign minister

also held a number of bilateral meetings on the day with Foreign Minister of the Netherlands Hanke Bruins Slot, Austrian Foreign Minister Alexander Schallenberg, Foreign Minister of Hungary Péter Szijjártó, Foreign Minister of Portugal Dr. Joao Gomes Cravinho and Lithuanian Foreign Minister Gabrielius Landsbergis. During the bilateral meetings, the ministers discussed matters of mutual interest including increasing trade and investment. Dr. Hasan requested for increased international pressure on Myanmar for repatriation of the forcibly displaced Rohingyas with full rights. He also had fruitful exchanges with EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs Josep Borrell Fontelles, Vice Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade

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Prize distribution and freshman recruitment was held at Ideal Pre-Cadet School, Mirpur, Kushtia

KUSHTIA CORRESPONDENT

Award distribution and freshman admission were held at Ideal Pre Cadet School, Mirpur, Kushtia. Acting Principal of Mirpur Women's Degree College, Murtaza Hossain, was present as the chief guest at the ceremony at Khandakabaria, the heart of Mirpur municipality, on Friday at 3 pm. At this time crests and cash were distributed among 60 talent pool and general grade scholarship students in two categories under Bangabandhu Mirpur Merit Scholarship

Scheme-01. Kushtia Yasin Mahmuda Memorial Council organized prize distribution to the winners of the ideal pre-cadet school sports competition and welcomed the freshers. Under the chairmanship of Maudud Ahmed Rajeev, Chairman of Ideal Education Family, the special speaker at the event was Assistant Professor of Bogra Medical College and Cancer Center. Taufichur Rahman, special guest Mirpur Press Club President Bablu Ranjan Biswas, Mirpur Secondary

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RCC opens STS for modern waste management

NEWS DESK

The Rajshahi City Corporation (RCC) has opened one more newly constructed Secondary Transfer Stations (STS) today for modern waste management, taking the number to 16 in the city. RCC Mayor AHM Khairuzaman Liton inaugurated the 100-foot long and 30-foot wide STS at Sepoy para area as chief guest, saying the station was constructed at a cost of Taka around 55 lakh. Panel mayors Nizam Ullah and Abdul Momin, Ward Councilors M u h a m m a d Kamruzzaman, Towhidul Haque and Shahidul Islam and Chief Conservancy Officer Sheikh Muhammad Mamun were present. Mayor Liton said they have a plan to construct 30 STSs in the city in phases to remove and manage household

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Israel airstrikes on Gaza's two refugee cities as death toll rises to 27,238

INTERNATIONAL DESK

Israeli airstrikes killed 18 Palestinians in Rafah and Deir Al-Balah. Gaza health officials said on Saturday, in the last two Gaza Strip cities where troops had not been deployed, adding to residents' fears Israel would expand its ground operation, reports Reuters. Health officials said an Israeli airstrike on a house in Rafah, where more than half of Gaza's 2.3 million residents are now homeless, killed 14 people

including women and children. The Israeli military did not immediately respond to a request for comment. Israel's Defense Minister Yoav Gallant said forces would now press on to Rafah on Gaza's southern edge. Tens of thousands have arrived in Rafah in recent days, carrying belongings in their arms and pulling children on carts, since Israeli forces last week launched one of their biggest assaults of the war to capture nearby Khan Younis, the main southern city. In the central

Gaza Strip city of Deir Al-Balah, the second major concentration of displaced people, medics said four people were killed in an airstrike on a house earlier on Saturday. In nearby Khan Younis, residents said the army blew up a residential district near the city center. The Gaza health ministry said heavy Israeli bombardment around the city's two main hospitals continued to undermine healthcare systems and endanger the lives of staff, patients,

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Pro-Palestinian protesters hold up banners, flags and placards during a demonstration in London, Yesterday Saturday as they demand for a full cease fire and an end to the siege of Gaza

Pic: AP

Myanmar's rebels see unity as key to victory over weakened military rulers



An alliance of ethnic forces has gained much ground in military-ruled Myanmar, but some fear the movement may splinter.

AL JAZEERA

A young fighter looks out from the upper floor in a concrete skeleton of a church that villagers have been building for two years in this small pocket of southeast Myanmar. The construction work has been a slow undertaking, said 21-year-old Zayar, a member of Myanmar's Muslim community who moved from the country's biggest city, Yangon, to this rebel camp near the Thai border to fight against his country's military rulers. Air strikes by military warplanes are a constant threat in this hamlet in Karen State - also known as Kayin - where jobs are scarce and

money is tight. But, little by little, the ethnic Karen here were able to build their church. "Before, we thought the Karen people were dacoits [bandits]," said Zayar, who joined the rebellion against Myanmar's military just last year. "Now people understand the real situation," he told Al Jazeera. Zayar's opinion of the Karen - one of Myanmar's largest minorities - was shaped by disparaging depictions and stereotypes circulated under the country's military generals, who primarily hail from the ethnic Bamar majority and have violently suppressed the aspirations of Myanmar's diverse ethnic

groups for decades. The Myanmar military's attempts to pressure the country's minorities into submission - stretching as far back as the 1940s - fuelled one of the longest-running conflicts in the world. Now as military leaders mark their third

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NASA to 'wiggle' broken Ingenuity Mars helicopter's blades to analyze damage

SPACE.COM

Ingenuity's mission is officially coming to an end, but not before mission scientists try to determine how much damage the helicopter suffered. NASA held a livestream Wednesday (Jan. 31) to pay tribute to Mars helicopter Ingenuity, which suffered rotor damage on its most recent flight. During the livestream, mission managers revealed that all four of Ingenuity's blades were damaged during a rough landing on the Red Planet surface. Teddy Tzanetos, Ingenuity Project Manager, said that NASA and JPL still aren't sure what caused the damage to Ingenuity's blades; it remains unclear whether the helicopter's power dipped during landing, causing unwanted ground contact, or if it accidentally struck the ground to cause a "brownout." Tzanetos added that

NASA and the Jet Propulsion Laboratory (JPL) will slowly rotate the helicopter's blades and "wiggle" them, or adjust their angle, while collecting video in order to allow the team to determine the extent of Ingenuity's damage. However, Tzanetos said that no matter what such imaging will show, the dual-rotor drone has flown its last flight and will soon end its mission. "Helicopters like this are not designed to fly even with the smallest fraction of a gram of imbalance and we're gonna have the end of our mission in the weeks ahead," Tzanetos said during the livestream. Related: It's sort of been invincible until this moment: Mars helicopter Ingenuity pilot says 'bland' terrain may have doomed NASA chopper During the NASA Science Live webcast, Tzanetos and Tiffany Morgan, NASA's Mars Exploration Program Deputy Director, ▶ SEE PAGE-7





Gournadi Upazila Press Club laid flowers and paid respects at the grave of the Father of the Nation

Ataur Rahman Chanchal

On behalf of the newly elected working committee of the traditional "Gournadi Upazila Press Club" of Gourandi Upazila of Barisal district, flowers were laid and tributes were paid at the grave site of Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. On February 1st, Thursday at 11:30 am, the newly elected committee members of Preclub in Gournadi Upazila laid flowers and paid their respects at the tomb of Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman in Tungipara, Gopalganj. Upazila Press Club's newly elected Executive Committee President Mohammad Ali Babu, Gournadi representative of Dainik Sangbad, was present in the chairmanship of the former president Inkilab newspaper representative Md. Badruzzaman Khan Sabuj, Mullah Farooq Hasan, General Secretary Daily Kholā Kagaz newspaper representative, Ataur Rahman Chanchal, Vice President Daily Evening News newspaper representative, Abduch Chalek Mamun, Treasurer Daily Azkal Kanth Gournadi representative, Office Editor Daily Tritiya Marta Gournadi representative Md. Masud Sardar, Publicity Editor Daily News Saurabh Hossain Executive Member Daily Azkal Khabar Kazi Roni. At the end, prayers were conducted by Samadhi South Complex Jame Masjid Pesh Imam Hafez Kazi Yad Ali, Daily News Daily Syed Sakibullah Belali, B News 24 News Editor Hriday Amin and others.



The miscreants carried out extensive vandalism and looting in Gopalganj Muksudpur

Gopalganj representative:

The victim's family has alleged that miscreants have caused extensive damage and looting to the house of Kibaria Molla in Ragdi Union of Muksudpur Upazila of Gopalganj district and caused a loss of Rs. 30 lakhs. The incident happened last 30th afternoon. Kibria Molla's sister-in-law Manjila Begum said, "My brother-in-law does business in Dhaka." I take care of this house. The assailants carried out a massive attack and looted the house of Kibria Molla with about 300 terrorist forces on Nasimon trucks and motorcycles and extensively vandalized the documents of the house along with gold grains and furniture. Manjila Begum also said that when I and my nonad Khadija Begum stopped the looting, they beat us and shouted that Kibria Molla where will we kill him. When I prevented the vandalism, my nonad Khadija Begum was pushed to the ground and cut on her leg with a sharp weapon, injuring her severely. He is currently undergoing treatment at Faridpur Sadar Hospital. If Khadija Begum is healthy, we will file a case. In this regard, we demand exemplary punishment



Mozammel Haque Mahan accepted the award on behalf of Tama Concrete at the annual membership meeting of Palli Vidyut Samiti

Md. Ruhul Amin Raju

On 31st January 2024 Jamalpur Palli Vidyut Samity Beldia Headquarters 33rd Annual Membership Meeting Durmuth, a resident of Hamlampara Village, is receiving the award from Tama Concrete located in Hamlam village of Melandah Upazila Durmuth Union of Jamalpur district. Union Awami League Joint General Secretary Md. Mozammel Haque Mahan Mia. At this time, various officers, employees and association president, general secretary and directors and members of various boards of directors and members of Palli Vidyut Samiti along with print, online and electronic media journalists were present.

Achieving self-

would our country have eventually evolved into? Into a decrepit country, which is not self-sufficient, which actually nobody needs, which everybody on the outside would have patronizingly patted on the head because of its natural riches, and would have given us rotten potatoes as humanitarian aid, simultaneously scheming how to snatch something and get away," he said. "Right before my eyes over the past two decades, I have been watching what is going on: the speeches are sweet and good, but everybody plots to take a bite here or take a bite there and to establish such rules in the global economy so that all our competitive advantages are extinguished," Putin said. The president pointed out that Russia had demonstrated to the entire world that it is a self-sufficient country. "Look, they have an economy, and they will rise, as the fundamentals of the economy both in the United States and Europe are good, and there-

fore they will rise. However, they are currently down, as the main economies are in the red, while we are on the rise. The point is not even in the fact that it is like this today, but that we have proved to ourselves and to everyone that we are a self-sufficient country," he added. Additionally, the president hailed Russia's growth in a wide range of sectors, including in high-tech industries. "We are becoming a self-sufficient country in the fields of the economy, finance, defense and security and in the social sphere. Now we are talking about housing, but we do everything. In terms of housing construction, we boast the highest indicator in the country's history, as we have built more than 110 million square meters of housing. This is unheard of, but we have done it," Putin stressed.

U.S. launches

foreign ministry said the United States was fuelling conflict in the region in a "very dangerous way". On Friday, Iran's President Ebrahim Raisi said his country will not start a war, but it will "respond strongly" to anyone who bullies it. Hamas condemned the U.S. strikes and said Washington was pouring "oil on the fire". Britain called the United States its "steadfast" ally and said it supports Washington's right to respond to attacks. Polish Foreign Minister Radek Sikorski, arriving for an EU meeting in Brussels, said the U.S. strikes were the result of Iranian proxies "playing with fire". **MORE THAN 160 ATTACKS ON U.S. TROOPS** The strikes hit targets including command and control centers, rockets, missiles and drone storage facilities, as well as logistics and munition supply chain facilities, the U.S. military said in a statement. In Iraq, local residents said several strikes hit the Sikak Neighborhood in Al-Qaim, a residential area that locals said was also used by armed groups to store large amounts of weapons. Militants had left the area and gone into hiding in the days since the Jordan attack, local sources said. U.S. troops have been attacked over 160 times in Iraq, Syria and Jordan since Oct. 7, usually with a mix of rockets and one-way attack drones, prompting the United States to mount several retaliatory attacks even before the latest strikes. The United States has assessed that the drone that killed the three soldiers and wounded more than 40 other people in Jordan was made by Iran, U.S. officials have told Reuters. "Our response began today. It will continue at times and places of our choosing," Biden said. The top Republican on the Senate Armed Services Committee, Roger Wicker, criticized Biden for failing to impose a high enough cost on Iran, and taking too long to respond. Iranian advisers assist armed groups in both Iraq, where the United States has around 2,500 troops, and Syria, where it has 900.

Stay vigilant to

Bongaj village on the occasion of the inauguration of the new bridge. There, the law minister said, "Risk of terrorist attacks on important projects and installations including the country's developmental mega projects like Padma Bridge, Bangabandhu Tunnel, Elevated Expressway and Television channels remains. The news came out in the newspaper." The minister said BNP-Jamaat is good at creating situations where people would suffer. "They committed arson during the 2014 elections. In the 2018 election, BNP-Jamaat laundered money abroad by trading nominations. They tried to do the same in the 2024 election too. They do not count the people of Bangladesh for votes. Instead, they thought they could come to power wooing the foreign tyrants through the back door," he said. Addressing BNP-Jamaat, Anisul Haque said the people of Bangladesh will now control the destiny of Bangladesh. "If you want to do terrorism, want to destroy the achievements of Bangladesh, then I want to tell you, the law will run at its course. The law will be strictly implemented to deal with it," warned the minister. He urged everyone to remain alert to any conspiracies that BNP-Jamaat may hatch. Dharkhar Union Ward No. 4 unit Awami League President Shanu Mia presided over the event. Akhaura Upazila Awami League President Mohammad Ali Chowdhury, Akhaura Municipality Mayor and Upazila Awami League General Secretary Takzil Khalifa Kjal along with local Awami League, Jubo League and other leaders were present at the event.

Fire breaks out at

caused extensive damage.

Bishwa Ijtema

on the Ijtema ground. Of them, a policeman Hasanuzzan and two other devotees were crushed by a bus on the way to the Ijtema venue in Tongi. The first phase of 57th Bishwa Ijtema, one of the largest global Muslim gatherings, entered its second day today in Tongi with continued spiritual activities, including the recitation of Almighty Allah's divine names and sermons.

Taking painkillers with

doctor, you will be protected from the damage of this disease. Staying at home with pain will cause harm. It is a disease that affects other parts of the body as well. Such patients will get better treatment at Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University. If Rheumatoid Arthritis is not treated, people will be crippled and sitting at home. This causes economic damage to the country. Professor Dr. Md. Sharfuddin Ahmed said, Rheumatoid arthritis patients take pain medication at home. Do not take the medicine yourself but take the medicine according to the doctor's advice. Taking pain medication without a doctor's advice will damage the kidneys, leading to kidney failure. 17,000 patients in Bangladesh are on kidney dialysis and about 3,000 patients need a kidney transplant. The Vice-Chancellor also said that the Department of Rheumatology of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University is bringing reputation. Those who are doing pretty good research work. Through their research, the reputation of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University has increased in the international arena. Proctor Professor of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University Dr. Md. Habibur Rahman Dulal, Chairman of the Department of Rheumatology Professor Dr. Minhaj Rahim Chowdhury, Chairman of the Oncology Department Prof. Dr. Md. Nazir Uddin Mollah, director of further development projects, associate professor Dr. Farooq Hossain, Associate Professor (Surgical Oncology) Dr. Dr. Md. Russell, associate professor of rheumatology department. Shamim Ahmed, assistant professor Dr. Major (ret) Syed Jameel Abdul, Deputy Controller of Examination Debashish Bairagi and others were present. Editing: Associate Professor Dr. SM Year E Mahabub and Subrata Biswas. Photo: Sohail Ghazi and Arif Khan. News: Prashant Majumdar and Subrata Mondal.

India agrees to

2024." However, the statement issued by India's

External Affairs Ministry had no mention of this agreement. New Delhi stated that both sides "agreed on a set of mutually workable solutions to enable continued operation of Indian aviation platforms that provide humanitarian and medvac [Medical Evacuation] services to the people of Maldives".

Government is working

speaking as the chief guest of the first year students of Kamil. Also present as a guest in the event, Pirojpur-2 Constituency Member of Parliament Md. Mohiuddin Maharaj, Islamic Arabic University Vice-Chancellor Professor Dr. Muhammad Abdur Rashid, Deputy Commissioner Mohammad Zahedur Rahman, Bhandaria Municipal Mayor Faizul Rashid Khosru Pirojpur Executive Engineer Mr. Md. Zahirul Islam Including officials in various local government offices and heads of educational institutions. The program was presided over by the president of Bhandaria Shahabuddin Kamil Post Graduate Madrasa Md Moazzem Hossain Mia and conducted by the principal of the Madrasa Muhammad Abdur Rahim Khan. At the end of the program, all the activities of Kamil 1st year students of Bhandaria Shahabuddin Kamil Post Graduate Madrasa were conducted.

School Cup Martial

Sports Association General Manager Mostafizur Rahman Mukuler Former district council member Abdul Hakim, Vice President of Bangladesh Karate Federation Shihan Mostafizur Rahman, President of Satoryu Karate Federation Rahul Amin Chanchal, General Secretary of Bangladesh Samuray Federation Ilyas Ali and others were also present in the presiding ceremony.

Courtesy meeting

Reporters Unit. A courtesy call. At this time, Syed Kamrul Hasan said to the journalists of the newly formed committee of Popi Dasar Upazila Reporters Unity, I feel proud because you have honored me as the adviser of daily crime newspaper and the adviser of Reporters Unity. He assured that I will be by your side for any cooperation needed by Dasar Upazila Reporters Unit organization and journalists in fulfilling their professional duties. Syed Kamrul Hasan Popi also said that journalists are the mirror of the society, you are the warriors of the pen and the people of the country can know the true news through your writings. On this occasion, the Madaripur district representative of Daily Bangladeshi Alo Patrika, Dasar Upazila Reporters Unit President Md. Hemayet Hossain Khan, Vice President, Daily Gankanth Madaripur representative Durjoy Abbas, Daily Bangladeshi Alo Dasar representative, Emdadul Haque Kjal, Daily Khabar Alo Madaripur representative Emdadul Sheikh were present. Daily Shonali Khabar Madaripur Correspondent, Mahfuz Khan, Rajdhani Television Madaripur Correspondent Sohail Talukdar, General Editor Kamruzzaman Sohag, The Daily Evening News, Joint General Editor SM Azad Hossain Murad Daily Bangladeshi Alo, Ujjal Matubar Daily I Barta, Aynal Haque Khan Daily Human Rights Daily, Mehdi Hasan Babu News 21 Television, Organizational Editor, Hamid Khan Roni, Daily Human Rights Daily, Office Editor Real Howladar Daily Daily Crime.com, Publicity Editor Shahadat Ahmed Palash Rupshi Bangla Television, Religious Affairs Editor Md. Tariqul Islam Ripon, Daily Madaripur Sangbad, Member Rezaul Hossain Khan was present daily crime daily.

Potatoes already selling

import 34,000 metric tonnes of potatoes from Thursday afternoon while the import started on Saturday afternoon, said the quarantine officer. Shahidul Islam, an importer at Hili land port, said the price of potato has increased to Tk 40 per kg at retail level, despite the season. To deal with the situation, the government has decided to import potatoes to keep the market normal in Ramadan. Potato import from India through Hili land port started on Saturday, said the importer, adding that the price of potato decreased to Tk 25-30 per kg Potatoes already selling at Tk25 per kg in Dinajpur as import starts through Hili Sources at the land port said that the price of potato went out of control on the pretext of a crisis in the country's market last year. On October 30, the government allowed importing potatoes from India to keep the situation normal. Since then, the price of imported potatoes has come down in the market.

Following the market stability, the government again stopped importing potatoes through Hili land port from December 15.

Saber calls upon

environment," Chowdhury said. "As our aim is to make the earth habitable again for our kids, the syllabus of schools and colleges will include environment and biodiversity conservation, tree plantation and combating climate change to create widespread public awareness about the dire plastic pollution," he said, said the release. He then called upon the teachers and students to become aware and make others aware about the dangers of plastic and all other kinds of environment pollution to prevent it from happening and spreading. The function was presided over by the acting Principal of Ideal School and College Mohammad Emam Hossain. Teachers,

students and parents along with the teacher's representative of the governing body Shaheli Parveen were present among others. Earlier, the minister inaugurated the program by lighting a torch and enjoyed the parade and patriotic display performed by the students of various branches. Later, he distributed the prizes among the winners and wished them luck for their future.

World food

released on Friday. The global coarse grain output is now pegged at an all-time high of 1 523 million tonnes, following a 12-million-tonne upward adjustment this month. The bulk of the revision reflects new official data from Canada, China (mainland), Türkiye and the United States of America, where a combination of higher yields and larger harvested areas than previously expected has led to higher maize production estimates. World cereal utilisation in 2023/24 is now forecast at 2 822 million tonnes, up 8.9 million tonnes from the December forecast and surpassing the 2022/23 level by 1.2 percent, led by greater-than-earlier anticipated feed use, especially in the European Union as well as in Australia and the United States of America. Consequently, the 2023/24 global cereal stocks-to-use ratio is forecast at a comfortable level of 31.1 percent, exceeding the 2022/23 level of 30.9 percent. Global trade in cereals in 2023/34 is now forecast to reach 480 million tonnes, up by 0.8 percent from the preceding year, led mostly by larger traded volumes foreseen for coarse grains while world trade in wheat and rice could actually contract.

EU for

of Luxembourg Xavier Bettel and Foreign Minister of Slovenia Tanja Fajon.

Prize distribution and

School Principal Roknuzzaman Rokon were present.

RCC opens STS

wastes and garbage in a modern and hygienic way. In the first phase, sites for the construction of 20 STS have been selected and construction works of three of those are going to start within the shortest possible time. Earlier, the corporation has already constructed 15 stations for modern waste management. Liton asked all the officials and staff of the corporation concerned to render their duties with utmost sincerity and honesty to make the effort of making the city neat and clean. "We are committed to build the city green, clean and eco-friendly within the shortest possible time as per the demand of the city residents," he said. He added that the officials and employees who will be adjudged as good workers will be honoured and awarded incentives to inspire others. Liton also called upon all the staff to motivate the people against dumping household wastes besides the roads and other public places.

Nasim: BNP wants

"BNP-Jamaat should be resisted for the sake of the country's development. We must deal with those who terrorize and create chaos along with people and law and order forces," said the member of parliament," he continued. "Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina is working to improve the lifestyle of the people. She will turn the country into Smart Bangladesh with the support of the public," Bahauddin Nasim added.

Israel airstrikes

and displaced people who have taken shelter there. On Friday, the Palestinian Red Crescent Society said four people were killed by Israeli gunfire directed against the Al-Amal Hospital. In Gaza City, residents and militants said fighting continued against Israeli forces. Health officials said two people were killed by sniper fire. Israeli forces carried out arrests in the southern suburb of Tel Al-Hawa. Israel launched a war on Hamas, the militant group which rules the Gaza Strip, after an October onslaught on southern Israel by Hamas militants who killed 1,200 people and took 253 people hostage into Gaza, more than 100 of whom are still captive, according to Israeli tallies. Israeli officials say they aim to eliminate Hamas, which has vowed to repeat its October attacks, and repatriate the hostages, many of whom are women and children. Gaza health authorities, who do not differentiate between militants and civilians in their tallies, said on Saturday that at least 27,238 Palestinians have been killed and 66,452 others injured in Israeli strikes on Gaza since October 7, adding that strikes killed at least 107 Palestinians and injured 165 over the past 24 hours. The Israeli military said its forces killed dozens of Palestinian gunmen in northern Gaza. "During targeted raids in the northern and central Gaza Strip over the last day, IDF troops killed dozens of terrorists and destroyed numerous anti-tank missile launchers," the military said. Hamas, Islamic Jihad, and other smaller militant groups said in a separate statement their fighters engaged in fierce battles with the army in the north and the south of the Gaza Strip. "The more the occupation forces remain on the ground, the more we will get to them," one Palestinian militant official said.

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Office of the Executive Engineer, RHD
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e-Tender Notice

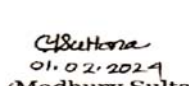
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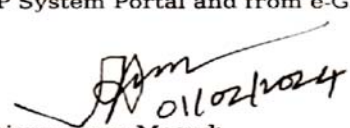
Sl. No.	Tender Notice No & Tender ID No.	Description of Work	Document Last Selling Date & Time	Closing Date & Time
01.	08/e-GP/KRD/2023-2024 (Tender ID: 945289)	Carpeting & Seal Coat work with Partial Strengthening by Base Type-II from Chainage 28+500m to Chainage 29+500m = 1000.00m of Paikgacha-Soladana-Batiaghata Road (Road No: Z-7608) under Road Division, Khulna during the year 2023-2024.	18-Feb-2024 at 17:00	19-Feb-2024 at 13:00
02.	06/LTMe-GP/KRD/2023-2024 (Tender ID: 945394)	Repair & Maintenance works at Road Division, Road Sub-Division-I & 2 RHD Inspection Bangalow and 1st Line Workshop, Khulna under Road Division, Khulna during the year 2023-2024.	18-Feb-2024 at 17:00	19-Feb-2024 at 13:00

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

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

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


 01.02.2024
(Madhury Sultana)
 ID No.700422
 Sub-Assistant Engineer, RHD
 Road Division, Khulna.


 01.02.2024
(Md. Anisuzzaman Masud)
 ID No.601952
 Executive Engineer, RHD
 Road Division, Khulna.

The auspicious opening

Additional Deputy Commissioner (General) Md. Moktar Hossain spoke as special guests, Jamalpur District Police Assistant Superintendent Abhijit Roy, Jamalpur District Awami League General Secretary Bijan Kumar Chandra, Jamalpur Mayor and District Sports Association Vice President Alhaj Chanwar Hossain Chanu, conducted the program. Jamalpur District Sports Association General Secretary Mirza Zillur Rahman Shipon. After the inauguration, the guests visited various stalls of the fair. District Awami League Vice President Mirza Shakhayatul Alam Moni, Joint General Secretary Sale Shafi Genda, District Jubo League General Secretary Farhan Ahmed, Jamalpur Municipality Ward No. 10 Councillor Shahinur Rahman and others were also present.

Myanmar's rebels

Year since seizing power in Myanmar, an uprising that melds the decades-old ethnic struggles for self-determination with the more recent armed fight to restore democracy has enveloped much of the nation. In October, the Myanmar National Democratic Alliance Army (MNDAA), based in the Mandarin-speaking region of Kokang on the border with China, along with two other powerful ethnic armed groups, as well as Bamar fighters, launched their offensive against the military.

The collaboration – known as the Three Brotherhood Alliance – has scored unprecedented victories against Myanmar's military, which toppled Aung San Suu Kyi's civilian government in February 2021.

Resistance to the country's military rulers is now a broad church and confidence in the movement and its campaign has been massively boosted by the participation of a growing number of armed actors. However, the alliance's common cause of removing the military from power remains set against a complex history of rivalries and suspicions between a multitude of ethnic armed groups – divisions which the military has successfully exploited to its benefit in the past. As the alliance's offensive moves from the countryside to urban areas in the west, north and east of Myanmar, the military is struggling to find a way back, and some fear the collaboration among the rebels will not hold together.

Unity of purpose

Zayar slings his rifle around his shoulder and takes the path past corn and peanut crops to his camp. His role in the revolution embodies much of the dreams and contradictions that have come to define the struggle in Myanmar. On a friend's recommendation, Zayar joined the Kawthoolei Army (KTLA), a fringe splinter group formed by General Ner Dah Bo Mya, who stormed out of the established Karen National Union (KNU) armed movement after refusing to participate in an investigation into the killing of a group of men allegedly carried out by his fighters in 2021.

This undated photo taken in May 2021 shows an anti-coup activist undergo basic military training with a weapon at the camp of Karen National Union (KNU), an ethnic rebel group in Karen State after people fled major Myanmar cities due to military crackdown and sought refuge in rebel territories. (Photo by AFP)

Ner Dah Bo Mya has not denied the killings were carried out by his fighters, claiming the 25 unarmed men were military spies. He has also cultivated a firebrand image for his KTLA unit that has attracted young people itching to take up weapons to overthrow the military dictatorship.

Though both are fighting the military, the KTLA has also clashed with the KNU in southern Myanmar. On other occasions, KTLA fighters and soldiers under KNU command have worked together on operations.

Unity, says Myanmar political analyst Kim Jolliffe, stands as the overriding factor in the success of the current armed revolt. Being unified is not only necessary for military success, said Jolliffe, but also for laying the foundation of a post-military Myanmar. Unity, he said, will be key to moving the country away from a "highly coercive centralised state" that "creates perpetual conflict" to one where "all ethnic groups are equal in a genuine power-sharing mechanism". "The central problem that the revolution must solve is how to create a system that enhances the diversity and create a power balance so that no single group positions themselves as overarching chauvinist controllers," Jolliffe told Al Jazeera.

"We will likely continue to see localised conflicts and tensions among resistance groups in some areas. But there is little to suggest that it will have a fundamental impact on the overall direction of the revolution," he added.

While some ethnic forces have aligned with the military or have remained neutral, most of the country's formidable ethnic armed groups have poured their resources and troops into the current campaign against the generals.

Zayar said he has risked everything for the revolution. "Living under the dictatorship is worse than death," he says. "I will fight back until I die."

For Zayar, he is fighting for equality. Being of the Muslim faith in predominantly Buddhist Myanmar, some have called him a "kalar" – a term used as a slur against Muslims or anyone of South Asian origin in Myanmar. His official Myanmar national identity card also marks him out as a "Muslim", not only as his religion but also as an ethnic identity, he says. "When the government put me as that, I felt discriminated," he told Al Jazeera.

"I was born and raised in Myanmar. Of course, I'm Myanmar." Zayar joined the revolution relatively late – in April 2023 – more than two years after the military's chief commander Min Aung Hlaing seized power from Aung San Suu Kyi. On the military's side, people are unwilling to fight for coup leader Min Aung Hlaing, who has overseen an unceasing chain of atrocities against civilians across the country since seizing power. News outlets such as Frontier Myanmar and Radio Free Asia have reported the military snatching young men off the streets at night and threatening to burn down villages as a way to secure recruits and boost their numbers.

Due to the military's postcoup violence driving peaceful protesters to seek combat training under the guidance of ethnic rebels, the regime's once experienced opponents have developed into battle-hardened fighters.

Troop movements by the military have become rarer. Mostly it relies on air strikes and heavy weaponry from

fortified positions. Mass surrenders by regime troops have reinforced notions of sinking morale among the rank and file. Discontent within the military at Min Aung Hlaing's leadership has also stirred persistent rumours that the coup leader may be overthrown himself by his comrades in arms.

In the opposing camp, fighters such as Zayar understand the importance of maintaining unity with other groups in the fight to free Myanmar from military rule.

But there is a paradox in Zayar and others joining splinter armed groups, such as the KTLA, which could in the long run lead to disunity in the war against the military regime.

Division and diversity

Zayar's commander, Lar Phoe, 30, points towards a plume of smoke rising from a hillside. The military had burned and abandoned their own outpost two days previous, he said. "If they didn't, they may not have got the chance to retreat again," Phoe, heavy-set and hobbling in a sleeveless traditional Karen tunic, told Al Jazeera. Injured by a blast from a mortar shell that hit his ankle a year ago was a bookmark in his service to the Karen cause, which began as a child in a refugee camp where he would emulate those he once called "the big soldiers".

Phoe continues to lead Karen fighters on the front line. He had returned only the week before from a two-day ambush on a military column. He tells how military reinforcement had dressed as farmers and hide their guns in bags used for corn cobs. Mistaking them for civilians, Phoe's unit of KTLA fighters allowed them to pass, only to be surprised with a sputter of gunfire. "We lost some fighters and sustained injuries," he said. "The junta soldiers know we care about locals, so they take advantage of that." Under Phoe's command are about 70 men and four women of mixed ethnicities. Many are from the cities. Wielding a mix of rifles and semiautomatic guns, they form a line and salute every time a car enters the camp.

"I never imagined a situation in which Bamar, and other ethnic people, would be under my command," he said, reflecting on the disunity of the Karen and hoping the KTLA and KNU could be "united as one".

"The nature of revolution is unity," he said. "It is the path to work as one. If the leaders are united, the rest of the forces would unite." It was a calling for unity against the military that drew Phoe Phue, 28, a female Bamar fighter, back to her native Myanmar for the first time since she was 15. Phue recounted how she moved to Thailand to work in a paper factory as a teenager and how a KTLA recruitment video on TikTok drew her home and into armed rebellion.

Sitting in a hammock, in a Guns N' Roses T-shirt, she tells how the Karen have shared their food and shelter with her, an ethnic Bamar, "so we can continue our revolution". "They take care of us for everything," she said. Phue also spoke of the arguments she had with her mother, who tried to pour cold water on the idea of her daughter joining an armed group to fight the military. Phue's mother asked her if she would be willing to kill her own relatives who serve in Myanmar's military if they were to meet in battle.

"I said 'yes, if I'm faster than them'," Phue said. "My mum was really angry, but it helped her realise how important this revolution is," she said.

Mohamed Salah returning to Liverpool but could head back for Afcon semis

SPORTS DESK

Mohamed Salah is poised to return to Liverpool to undergo his rehabilitation

know, but that's the plan," the Liverpool manager said. "I think it probably makes sense for everybody if he does the

Liverpool's fine form, with the leaders opening up a five-point gap to Manchester City, who have a game in hand.



from a muscle injury, but could fly back to the Africa Cup of Nations if Egypt advance to the tournament semi-finals. Without Salah, Jürgen Klopp's side moved five points clear at the top of the Premier League with a 4-0 win at Bournemouth courtesy of two second-half goals apiece from Darwin Núñez and Diogo Jota. Salah limped off during Egypt's 2-2 draw with Ghana on Thursday and has been ruled out of their final Group B match against Cape Verde on Monday, as well as the last 16 and quarter final, if the record seven-time Afcon champions make it that far. Klopp clarified the plan is for Salah to return from Ivory Coast to ensure he receives the best medical treatment. Diogo Jota scores his second and Liverpool's third goal as the visitors dominated the second half. Liverpool take their time before finding groove to ease fears over Salah "If that's already decided 100%, I don't

rehab with us – or with our people. That's the plan. If that is written in stone already, I don't know. I have spoken with him [Salah] directly after – pretty much the night when it happened – but since then he is in contact with our doctor [Jonathan Power] and the doc tells me the news. I think he will be back, but we'll wait." Asked whether Salah could return to Ivory Coast should Egypt go the distance, Klopp replied: "I'm not a doctor but I would say if he is fit before the final and Egypt qualifies for the final then probably, yes. Why not? Ivory Coast, I'm sure it's a wonderful country, but we have no people from us there. The people there have to take care of the players who are playing. Let's see." Later, Egypt's FA said in a statement: "Salah will now travel to England to receive treatment with the hope that he will join the Egyptian national team if it qualifies for the semi-finals." Goals from Núñez and Jota extended

Klopp conceded his team lacked rhythm in the first half but his side blew Bournemouth away in the second, the manager reserving special praise for the Argentina midfielder Alexis Mac Allister. "Absolutely exceptional performance ... I'm so happy for him," Klopp said. "He's a really good footballer. Defensively he did a job and offensively he is super important for us. All the good things in the first half happened with him." Bournemouth's head coach, Andoni Iraola, praised Liverpool's clinical streak and acknowledged his team could not maintain their optimum levels after a courageous first-half display. "They [Liverpool] kept for 100 minutes at this high intensity," Iraola. "Once we became a little bit weaker and gave them a bit more space, it became really difficult because they took their chances."

Cristiano Ronaldo says Ballon d'Or and FIFA Best awards losing credibility

SPORTS DESK

Legendary Portuguese footballer Cristiano Ronaldo believes UEFA's Ballon d'Or and FIFA's The Best awards are losing their credibility.

Al Nassr superstar Cristiano Ronaldo made the comments in an interview with a Portuguese sports newspaper after Dubai's Globe Soccer Awards ceremony where he won multiple awards, including the best goal scorer of the year, according to India Today. Notably, Argentina's Lionel Messi won both awards in the 2022-23 season. Messi was one of the favourites to win the Ballon d'Or in the 2022-23 season after his maiden FIFA World Cup triumph in Qatar. Cristiano Ronaldo said, "I think that, in a way these awards are losing credibility. We have to analyse the entire season. It's not to say that Messi didn't deserve it, or Haaland or even Mbappe, I simply no longer believe in these awards and it's not because I won at the globe soccer but these are facts, the numbers are there and the numbers don't deceive." "They can't take this trophy away from me because it's a reality. So it makes me even happier, because the numbers are facts," Ronaldo said. Ronaldo currently plays for Al Nassr in the Saudi Pro League. His team is currently placed second in the league table, seven points behind leaders Al-Hilal after playing 19 matches.

Mbappe gifted goal as Paris Saint-Germain beat Strasbourg

SPORTS DESK

Kylian Mbappe had a penalty brilliantly saved but was gifted the opening goal as champions Paris Saint-Germain edged energetic Strasbourg 2-1 away in Ligue 1 on Friday. PSG now have 47 points from 20 games with second placed Nice taking on third placed Brest Sunday on 38 and 35 points respectively. "They pressed us high, we weren't always precise enough, but we had a good match against an opponent who had a good dynamic and nothing to lose," said PSG coach Luis Enrique. Patrick Vieira's Alsace club flew out of the blocks and Gianluigi Donnarumma stopped a shot with his shoulder inside the first minute. And on his Ligue 1 debut for Strasbourg 22-year-old goalkeeper Alaa Bellaouch saved Mbappe's well-struck



penalty in the fifth minute to leave the superstar striker holding his head. Mbappe however took his 20th league goal of the campaign slamming the ball into a gaping goal after a panicked clearance from the rookie keeper. Mbappe then turned provider early in the second half with a deft centre clinically finished by Marco Asensio. A youthful Strasbourg struck back when a cross

About a year ago, Phue told her mother she was going to get her hair cut. "Then I ran away," she said. Since joining the KTLA she has stopped talking with her family. "I can't handle the feeling of missing my mum so much. I can't bear the heart break of my crying," Phue said, becoming tearful as she spoke to Al Jazeera. "When the revolution is over, I will go back home," she added.

Father, son among

ger bus was going to Dhaka from Natore. Sub-inspector (SI) of Tangail Gharinda Railway Police Ali Akbar said a Dhaka-bound passenger bus from Natore got out of order due to a technical glitch when it reached near the railway line in the area and the passengers of the bus including the deceased were roaming around the rail tracks. At one stage, the trio crashed under the wheels of a train around 8.20pm, he said. They died on the spot. Police recovered the bodies from the spot and sent these to Tangail General Hospital morgue for autopsy, officer-in-charge (OC) of Bangabandhu Bridge East Police Station Alamgir said.

NASA to 'wiggle'

sang the praises of the plucky 'copter. Morgan described how Ingenuity proved to be a valuable companion for the Perseverance rover, with whom it has been exploring Mars since the pair landed on Feb. 18, 2021.

The helicopter was initially designed to make just five flights — its mission ended after number 72. "Not only did it help us with designing for future missions, but it also helped with Perseverance's current mission. It scouted ahead and took a sneak peek at the operations Perseverance is going to experience, and that allowed the planners to navigate the terrain as well as to identify potentially compelling science targets," Morgan said. The fact that Ingenuity was able to fly in the thin Martian atmosphere and carry out as many sorties as it did is a true testament to JPL's expertise and could foreshadow future missions, she added. "The NASA JPL team didn't just demonstrate the technology, they demonstrated an approach that if we use in the future will really help us to explore other planets and be as awe-inspiring, as amazing, as Ingenuity has been," Morgan said. The helicopter far exceeded the agency's expectations, especially given the fact that it was built with off-the-shelf commercial cell phone components and represented a largely unknown premise: Flying an aircraft on another planet. "We couldn't be prouder or happier with how our little baby has done," Tzanetos said. "It's been the mission of a lifetime for all of us. And I wanted to say thank you to all of the people here that gave their weekends, their late nights. All the engineers, the aerodynamic scientists, the technicians who hand-crafted this aircraft." Morgan added that NASA is already envisioning using future helicopters on other planets or celestial bodies that will be built on the foundation that Ingenuity has laid and the knowledge the agency has gained from this completed mission. "I really look forward to the future and what we can do with the offspring of Ingenuity," she said.

GOVERNMENT OF THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF BANGLADESH
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER
EDUCATION ENGINEERING DEPARTMENT
DHAKA

Memo No. 37.07.2600.009.34.001.23.897 Date: 09-01-2024

e-Tender Notice: 27/2023-2024

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SL No.	Tender ID	Name of woks	Online Tender Publishing Date (On/After)	Online Tender Opening & Closing (Date & Time)
01.	935035	Construction of Four Storied Academic Building with Four Storied Foundation Including Sanitary, Water Supply & Electrification works at BPATC School & College under Savar Upazilla, Dhaka District.	10-Jan-2024	Please visit Tender Notice in e-GP Website

i) This is an online Tender, where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP Portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted.

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

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

iv) Further information and guidelines are available in the Procuring Entity Office, National e-GP System Portal and from e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd).


 (Md. Zahadul Karim)
 Executive Engineer
 Education Engineering Department
 Dhaka.
 09/01/2024



How I've learned to live without a stomach, and keep on laughing

Life Desk

I think of my cancer like math: I've accepted it, but I don't fully understand it. Writing about the experience helps me get to the bottom of my feelings. I had to get the words down because people are kind, and enough of them asked how I felt about my upcoming surgery and what it entailed. I wanted to start by saying, "They are removing my stomach," but this sounds so impersonal. The procedure will be performed by the wonderful and warm thoracic surgeon I have come to trust and admire. My next impulse was to say, "I'm having my stomach removed," but this makes it sound like it's a service I've requested like having a rotten tree cut down and hauled off. The rotten tree analogy is apt, but the tone is all wrong. Fussing with how to describe the procedure is just another way of skirting the question of how I feel about the procedure. I could just say "I'm having a gastrectomy," but calling it by an unfamiliar medical term is just another way of obscuring the reality of it. Basically, my entire stomach will be removed and attached to the lower portion of the esophagus. It turns out the stomach is not considered a "vital" organ. This is because one can live without one's stomach. I'm told many people do, so I'm not joining any kind of exclusive club here. Am I purposefully diminishing the seriousness of this by calling out how common it is? Yes. Going forward, I don't get to make jokes about "not having the stomach" for something because that's just too obvious. I declare here and now that I owe \$100 to the first person to

catch me saying I don't have the stomach for something. This includes shark wrestling, skyscraper base jumping, stand-up comedy and bare-knuckle street brawling. Come to think of it, if I survive this ordeal, I should have way more confidence about what I can handle in life. Living without a stomach is, apparently, as simple as eating less; five or six small "half adult size" meals a day instead of three normal-sized ones. Kiddie-menus it will be! I'm told there are no restrictions on what I can eat, just how much. These meals will need to be nutrient and calorie dense as people who have had a gastrectomy often have trouble gaining weight and muscle, and commonly experience B12, folate or iron deficiencies. I'm sure it will take getting used to, and I'm sure I'm oversimplifying. There's no way to know until it's done, and I'm living with it. Or, without it, as the case may be. I still haven't addressed how I feel about it. On the other hand, I have settled on the right description of what's going to happen: "A team of trained medical professionals lead by a competent and kind-hearted thoracic surgeon will remove my stomach and the lower part of my esophagus because they are cancerous. If they don't perform this procedure, the cancer will most likely return and kill me." There it is. Yes return. The chemo had worked "better than expected," and that tumour has "melted away," according to the doctor. But surgery is still required as the tumour will most certainly return and keep growing if it isn't excised completely. That's the thing about cancer. Obviously, I asked if removing my stomach

means space can be made for something else to be installed in its place; a 5G WiFi station, a miniature power source, flux capacitor, shield generator, laser emitter! The surgeon laughed in a way that suggested he'd heard the joke before. That might have hurt even more than the time he told me he'd have to remove my stomach. I worry about waking up feeling like I'm not me any more because pieces of me will be missing. Rationally I know I will still be me; I am greater than the sum of my parts. Irrationally, I worry about forever feeling like there's a void that leaves me less than I am now. Am I scared? I'm not conscious of being scared but this is my first time having my stomach removed and I have no idea what it will be like. That makes it the oldest fear in the book: fear of the unknown. Ultimately, it doesn't matter how I feel, this is just what must be done if I am to survive. Instead of thinking about the surgery, I'm thinking about the Post-it note I have on my desk in front of me. It says, "See This Through / See Through This." "See This Through" reminds that I am still here, and this is now. This is real and it's happening, and I can't go over it or under it. I have to go through it, and forge ahead regardless of my feelings. "See Through This" tells me to look past this episode to when it's over, and to focus on how awesome that will be as long as I get there with my head up and my outlook intact. If my bravado balloon doesn't deflate, I think I'll have the guts to have my guts removed without too much fuss. And that's the last time I'll make that lame joke. Source: The Globe and Mail

Brominated vegetable oil may soon be banned. But what is it, and how worried should you be?

Life Desk

The Food and Drug Administration has proposed banning the use of brominated vegetable oil (BVO) as a food additive in the U.S. If the proposal moves forward, the FDA would revoke its regulation that authorizes the use of the ingredient. This isn't the only time BVO has come under fire lately: California banned it in October with the passage of the California Food Safety Act, which also prohibits the sale of products that contain red dye No. 3. Brominated vegetable oil is already banned in Japan and Europe. "The agency concluded that the intended use of BVO in food is no longer considered safe after the results of studies conducted in collaboration with the National Institutes of Health found the potential for adverse health effects in humans," James Jones, deputy commissioner for human foods at the FDA, said in a statement. But what is brominated vegetable oil and what are the concerns surrounding it? Here's what health experts want you to know. What is brominated vegetable oil? Brominated vegetable oil is a vegetable oil that's modified with bromine, a chemical commonly used in flame retardants, Jamie Alan, an associate professor of pharmacology and toxicology at Michigan State University, tells Yahoo Life. "Currently it is used to keep citrus flavors stable, although there are limits on

how much can be added — 15 [parts per million]," she says. In 1970 the FDA determined that brominated vegetable oil was no longer "Generally Recognized as Safe" and started overseeing its use under the agency's food additive regulations. Have I been drinking BVO? Brominated vegetable oil is "mostly used in fruit-flavored sodas and sports drinks," Keri Gans, a registered dietitian and author of *The Small Change Diet*, tells Yahoo Life. It's usually found in "so-called off-brand products, including store-brand products and lesser-known, smaller brands that are sometimes sold regionally," adds Tasha Stoiber, senior scientist at the Environmental Working Group. That includes things like Sun Drop, made by Keurig Dr Pepper, along with Orangette and Great Value Fruit Punch, Stoiber says. But brominated vegetable oil isn't as commonly used as it once was: The FDA notes that many beverage makers have reformulated their products to remove BVO. What are the risks associated with brominated vegetable oil? "Exposure to BVO is associated with several types of health harms," Stoiber says. Those include impacted thyroid function in animal studies in doses that are similar to what you'd get if you drank soda that contained BVO, along with reproductive toxicity. The FDA also says that recent data shows that bromine can build up in the body over time and have toxic effects on the thyroid.

What is 'immunity theft'? How certain illnesses can leave you more vulnerable to other infections

Life Desk

Having a COVID-19 infection can shore up your immunity to the virus, but can it also leave you more susceptible to getting sick with other illnesses? That's the theory laid out in a new scientific paper in *JAMA Medical News and Perspectives*, which looks at a possible tie between COVID and the recent surge in respiratory illnesses. The term "immunity theft" is being used to describe this phenomenon, although it hasn't been well-studied at this point. So what is immunity theft and how concerned about it should you be? Here's what infectious disease doctors have to say about it.

What is immunity theft? It's important to point out that "immunity theft" is not a medical term. However, it's used to describe the theory that SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19, "steals" immunity, leaving some people who have had the virus more vulnerable to other infections.

That's different from the debated concept of "immunity debt," which refers to having lowered immunity to a slew of bacteria and viruses stemming from a lack of exposure to those pathogens. (It's usually referred to in the case of COVID-19 lockdowns and how cases of the flu and RSV surged afterward.)

A study published in October in the journal *Family Medicine and Community Health* demonstrates the idea of immunity theft. For the study, researchers analyzed electronic health record data from 61.4 million patients in the U.S., including 1.7 million children up to age 5. The researchers found that kids who had COVID-19 were at a "significantly increased risk" of getting an RSV infection afterward compared to those who didn't have a previous COVID-19 infection. "It's possible that your immune system is not normal after you have COVID-19," Dr. Thomas Russo, professor and expert in infectious diseases at the University of Buffalo in N.Y., tells Yahoo Life. "The best example of that is in critically ill

patients — they tend to get superinfections that can make them really ill." However, Russo isn't a fan of using the word "theft" to describe immunity: "Immunity is something we develop and not something that is stolen or needs to be paid back," he points out.

Dr. William Schaffner, an infectious disease specialist and professor at the Vanderbilt University School of Medicine, tells Yahoo Life that the idea of immunity theft is a "fascinating hypothesis," but notes that there

UVA Health, tells Yahoo Life. "The measles virus infects immune cells that give us long-lasting immune memory and wipes them out," he explains. Schaffner agrees. "Measles infection clearly seems to have some impact on the immune system," he says, noting that people can have more vulnerability to other infectious diseases for months after having measles. The phenomenon can also happen with the flu, Russo says. "Post-influenza, you have a period of time where people may

from getting the virus — or, at least the same strain of the virus — for a few months afterward. But Schaffner says it doesn't hurt to be aware that you may be more susceptible to other infections in the aftermath. Or, at the very least, know that you don't have immunity against those viruses. "Just because you've recovered from COVID doesn't mean you have protection against RSV and influenza," he says. If you're worried about getting sick after having COVID-19, Schaffner recommends wearing a



mask in crowded indoor spaces and doing your best to avoid people who are coughing and sneezing. Still, there's little evidence that having COVID-19 makes you more likely to get other illnesses. Because of that, Jackson says, you don't need to do anything different after having a COVID-19 infection. "There's nothing special people need to do when recovering from COVID that one wouldn't recommend for everyone," he says. "Get exercise as tolerated if you're feeling run-down after a bout of COVID, eat a variety of fresh foods and don't smoke."

get better and then develop a bacterial superinfection," he says. "That's because the influenza infection suppresses the immune response, making individuals more susceptible." But Russo says it's "less well sorted out" whether this is also the case with COVID-19. "Immunity theft is a real thing that can happen," says Jackson. "But I haven't seen convincing evidence this is a significant issue with SARS-CoV-2." How to protect your immunity while recovering from COVID-19? If you've had COVID-19, Russo notes that you're likely protected

isn't a lot of science to back it up at this point. Still, he says there is some data to suggest this could be real. "There is preliminary data from the field that would suggest that, if you've had a serious communicable disease, you may be more vulnerable to another infection for a period of time," Schaffner says. Can immunity theft happen with other health conditions? Yes, say experts. People who get measles, for example, "lose immune protection against other infections" for a period of time afterward. Dr. Patrick Jackson, an infectious disease physician at

Hitting the snooze button won't hurt your health, new sleep research finds



Life Desk

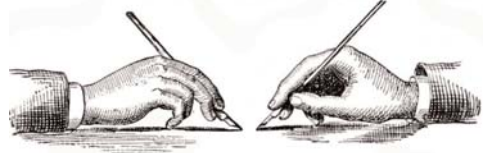
If you snooze, you lose? Maybe not, according to new research looking at the health impacts of hitting your alarm's snooze button. The research, published Wednesday in the *Journal of Sleep Research*, found no evidence that snoozing past your morning alarm has negative effects on sleep and cognitive processes. Instead, snoozing may actually help regular snoozers' waking process. The research included two studies. The first observed the waking habits of 1,732 adults, 69% of whom reported using the snooze function or setting multiple alarms as least some of

the time. In this group, snoozing ranged from 1 to 180 minutes, with an average of 22 minutes spent snoozing per morning. Researchers also found snoozers tended to be younger than non-snoozers and identified themselves as evening types more than morning people. The second study focused on the sleeping and waking patterns of 31 regular snoozers. After 30 minutes of snoozing, researchers found this group lost about 6 minutes of sleep but did not find clear effects on stress hormone levels, morning tiredness, mood or overnight sleep quality. For some, the snoozing also improved cognitive performance once awake, as compared to waking up immediately. "The findings

indicate that there is no reason to stop snoozing in the morning if you enjoy it, at least not for snooze times around 30 minutes. In fact, it may even help those with morning drowsiness to be slightly more awake once they get up," author Tina Sundelin of Stockholm University said in a news release. While these studies found a certain amount of snoozing is OK for your health, previous research tells us that not getting enough consistent sleep in general can have serious health consequences. 3 things you can do to improve your sleep hygiene According to research from the American College of Cardiology, released earlier this year, getting the right amount of good sleep each night

can play a role in heart and overall health, which could in turn add years to your life. The data also suggests that about 8% of deaths could be attributed to poor sleep patterns. "Certainly all of us... have those nights where we might be staying up late doing something or stressed out about the next day," Dr. Frank Qian, co-author of that study, told CBS News at the time. "If that's a fairly limited number of days a week where that's happening, it seems like that's OK, but if it's occurring more frequently than that's where we run into problems." According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, more than a third of Americans don't get enough sleep on a regular basis.

Editorial



Take initiative to handle the situation

The northern part of the country is experiencing a gradual increase in drought due to the excessive use of groundwater and disruption of infiltration. As a result, the water table is falling, and in many areas, tube wells are unable to provide adequate water. In contrast, the scarcity of fresh water in the southern region is intensifying, forcing people to drink harmful levels of salt water. The intrusion of saltwater is also increasing underground, negatively impacting crops, flora, and fauna, and causing health problems among the population. Climate change has caused an increase in natural disasters such as cyclones and floods, leading to subsidence of coastal lowlands and disruption of farming. The scarcity of clean water is also worsening, particularly in coastal areas of Bangladesh. Excessive salt in canals, rivers, and ponds is a major issue, with salinity levels in Mongla reaching up to 9 times the acceptable limit of 1000 milligrams per liter of water. This has led to various health issues including high blood pressure, heart disease, and stomach pain among the population. The entire coastal region, including Bagerhat, Satkhira, and Khulna, is affected by this problem.

In the northern part of the country, there are visible signs of the desertification process. Groundwater extraction is occurring excessively, but rainwater is not penetrating the ground adequately, resulting in a rapid decline in the groundwater level. Similarly, in the southern region, the water level is also decreasing, and saltwater is occupying the empty space. Consequently, the increased presence of saltwater is gradually spreading to the central part of the country. Experts suggest that immediate and significant actions must be taken to address the situation; otherwise, an extreme disaster is inevitable. To prevent this, the use of groundwater must be reduced, and efforts should be made to enhance groundwater infiltration and the construction of reservoirs. Additionally, there should be a focus on developing appropriate technologies for retaining rainwater and implementing projects to augment the supply of fresh water to coastal areas.

Govt must probe worker trafficking syndicates

SUFFERINGS of Bangladeshi migrant workers in Malaysia seem to have no end as many have been arrested in a recent drive by the Malaysian government against undocumented workers. In recent months, as a Malaysian daily newspaper reports, Malaysia's immigration authorities have conducted a drive against employers who have employed undocumented workers and, in the process, detained at least 205 Bangladeshis. Many Bangladeshi migrants became unemployed and undocumented because either their employment was not extended in time or their recruitment papers were forged. The Malaysian government launched the drive to address irregularities in the migrant worker management system and forced labour and decided to initiate a Royal Commission of Inquiry to take action against errant employers and corrupt officials with Malaysia's immigration agency. The initial investigation confirms that vested interests in both countries exploit Bangladeshis in Malaysia in the name of job opportunities in some non-operational companies or firms. No Bangladeshi officials in Dhaka or Kuala Lumpur could, meanwhile, confirm the number of Bangladeshis detained in the drive. The step to investigate irregularities in the recruitment process is promising, but indiscriminate detention of helpless migrants is not the solution. It will hurt aspiring workers and industrialists seeking to import labour.

This is, however, not the first time that the Malaysian government has taken such action against undocumented Bangladeshi workers. In 2018, following similar reports of exploitation of workers, the Malaysian government suspended its government-to-government plus arrangements — business-to-business, private-sector procedures — with Bangladesh for hiring Bangladeshis. At the time, a media investigation revealed that a human trafficking syndicate, spearheaded by a Bangladeshi businessperson with strong political connections in both countries, raked in at least two billion Malaysian ringgits in two years from Bangladeshi workers. Apparently, the same individual was instrumental in negotiating the G2G agreement. In the context that the whole recruitment process under the G2G scheme was running like a business aimed at benefiting certain individuals and resulted in the migrant workers paying exorbitant amounts of money to several middlemen in both countries, the scheme was cancelled. The Bangladesh government promised credible actions and an investigation of the allegations, but continued sufferings of the workers make it evident that no effective action was taken to break the trafficking syndicate. In December 2021, Malaysia decided to reopen the market for Bangladesh, but the structure of exploitation continues to remain. It is unacceptable that the undocumented Bangladeshis who are the victims of this corrupt system should pay the price, languish in jail, or live in constant fear of arrest. The Bangladesh government must immediately begin a diplomatic negotiation with the authorities there and demand that they should decriminalise immigration offences and use non-detention solutions to address root causes and not merely symptoms. Both the governments must judiciously investigate the human trafficking syndicate exploiting migrant workers with the promise of dignified jobs.

Setting realistic expectations for the nation

Among the many things that determine when a nation is on its way towards being recognized as a modern, developed economy is its ability to set realistic economic expectations and then meet them. While every nation would love to tout its progress and accomplishments, it is robust, empirical data that ultimately tells us how valid such claims really are. Bangladesh finds itself at a critical juncture in its pursuit of becoming a developed nation. Recently, Bangladesh Bank has revised economic growth projection for FY 2023-24 to 6.5% from the initial 7.5% and simultaneously, have revised the projection for inflation upwards to 7.5% from 6% percent. These revisions are not surprising. Consumer prices have persistently stayed high, and the economy continues to be facing one challenge after the other. However, setting targets and expectations and falling short of them are nothing new for the nation. To that end, it is high time for a recalibration. While ambition is commendable, setting unrealistic targets are detrimental in the long run. The key lies in playing the long game -- a strategic approach that acknowledges the complexities of development and the need for sustainable progress. Rather than fixating on short-term gains, it is crucial to adopt a pragmatic approach that emphasizes quality over quantity. Setting more achievable targets allows for a more stable and sustainable growth trajectory, preventing the pitfalls associated with overambitious objectives and enables the formulation of sound policies that address the root causes of economic challenges. It is imperative therefore for Bangladesh to recognize that sustainable growth is more enduring than rapid yet fleeting economic spurts. It is through a measured and pragmatic approach that Bangladesh can truly carve its path towards becoming a developed and prosperous nation.

The history of a vibrant civilization: Phoenicia

Rifat Ahmed

A busy seaport in Mesopotamia. A huge ship came and dropped the anchor. This time they were trading various products. The goods were swaying in a rhythm with the waves of the sea on the anchored ship.

Ten to twelve of them are standing on the deck of the ship. Sailors, traders, Sareng—all have towering noses; Bright copper complexions; some have a reddish tint, curly hair, and a long hat on their heads. This hat indicates that they have come from Phoenicia. The houses on that bank of Mesopotamia are glittering in the sweet light of the morning sun. Piles of stones and sand lie on both sides of the shore. Along with these piles, there are many other ships with crimson sails. Some came from Harappa and some from Egypt. Hat-clad traders made their presence known to the throngs of people standing on the banks. Everyone was busy buying and selling products.

These seafaring traders from distant Phoenicia brought a variety of luxury goods, stone jewelry and gold ornaments for the Mesopotamian king. Murex snails were harvested from the Mediterranean Sea. And the precious cloth dyed with blood-purple dye released from it was a product of the elites and emperors of that time.

When dyeing clothes, the color sticks to the skin of the hands, feet and body in such a way that it cannot be removed easily. That is why the people of Mesopotamia and Greece call them purple people. The name 'Phoenix' is given to the Greeks. Since then it is known as 'Phoenicia'.

Although the work of making this special purple colour was very laborious, the profit from this color was immense. This colour is very ripe. The more it is washed, the brighter it gets. Just one ounce of paint is made from about ten thousand snails. This use of purple dye in textiles transformed the Phoenicians into a commercial superpower.

Even the blind poet Homer wrote a poem calling them 'Phoenicians'. Homer wrote poems in praise of their carpentry skills, dressmaking, beadwork and glassware. Jews also praised their silver jewelry and ironwork. God himself is their teacher. The city-state god of Tyre was Melkart, who later became known to the Greeks as Hercules. While walking along the seashore with his beloved girlfriend one afternoon, Hercules's dog Murex began to eat a snail and the intense purple beauty emanating from it caught the attention of the god's lover. She earnestly requested to her beloved, to make her a shawl out of it. Hercules promised to fulfill his promise and this is how the Phoenicians and Greeks believe the reddish purple dye was first created.

Since ancient times, the lack of agricultural land allowed them to emerge as traders centered around the Mediterranean. They develop a deep friendship with the sea for life and sustenance. This civilization was located in present day Syria, Lebanon and northern Israel. Although unable to develop into a powerful political state, they formed a confederation of many city-states with a similar language, religion and culture. Each kingdom was

ruled by a sovereign and independent king. They also had their own separate army. On one side was the vast sea, and on the other side was a huge mountain. As nature had arranged their defense in this way, there was no possibility of enemy attack for a long time. Their products were highly valued in eastern countries. So great was the skill of the Sidonian artists in making glass that they were sometimes erroneously called the discoverers of glass. It is said that they were the ones who showed the Egyptians the way to make phoenix or purple dye.

Lebanon had an abundance of cedar trees. This tree also made them economically very strong. The wood of this tree is insect resistant and does not rot easily. So they became master craftsmen in making wooden ships. This cedar tree filled the lack of trees in the arid regions of Egypt, in exchange for endless gold. According to the historian George Rawlinson, King Solomon of Israel built the Great Jew Temple with Phoenician craftsmanship and wood.

In Egypt, the yield of grapes is not good because of the heat. Due to the efforts of the Phoenicians, the cultivation of grapes, olives and dates was extensive and trade with them was glorifying. So these Phoenician sailors would deliver wine to the king of Egypt on the way through Egypt. And by selling this wine at a high price, they collected a lot of gold from Egypt.

The Phoenicians brought linen and papyrus from Egypt. Copper was taken from Cyprus; embroidered cloth from Mesopotamia. They used to collect perfumes, spices, ivory and gold from Arabia and different products from Africa and sell them to different colonies. They used gold or silver as a medium of exchange and they had the best trade relations with the Jews and Egyptians.

Although written languages based on symbols were invented in Mesopotamia and Egypt, the alphabet used today is a gift from the Phoenicians. Initially using hieroglyphs, they introduced the alphabet to facilitate trade and eliminate the earlier complex system. It is said that this Phoenician alphabet is the basis of most of the western languages spoken today. Many say that the Egyptian and Arabic alphabets are also based on the Phoenician alphabet. The language of the Phoenicians spread to every region through their trade network. They had business dealings with many nations and had to keep accounting records with all of them. This is how their alphabet spread everywhere through the exchange of expressions. The Greeks and Romans were most indebted to the Phoenicians for this alphabet. They also made some changes while making this alphabet their own. They added two letters to the alphabet. Herodotus calls these Phoenicians the fathers of this alphabet. The Phoenicians were good at building ships. Those powerful ships adorned with horse's heads used to roam the ocean. Skillful engineering allowed their ships to travel great distances in a short time, making it easy for them to travel to Egypt, Greece, Africa, Spain, and even England. Later, the Greeks,

Egyptians and Romans built ships by imitating their ship designs and ruled the seas. They were the first to use the North Star by sea. Apart from naval trade, they were the first in history to initiate effective colonialism to maintain economic dominance. As they traveled by sea, they built homes for themselves in trade-friendly areas along the coast, and during the long journeys, water, food and ship supplies were provided from those colonies. Carthage in Tunisia became one such powerful commercial economic region. All these trading ports developed into independent states after several hundred years.

They had a polytheistic religion. There was also the practice of sacrificing animals and people. They even sacrificed the newborn. Their graves were some distance away from the locality. There is no evidence of making tombs like the Egyptians. The bodies were buried in coffins dug six meters below the ground. They did not believe in life after death. Drought and inter-state conflicts were slowly defeating them. The Greeks were getting stronger and were constantly cornering them. As a result, the Persians conquered their kingdom very easily.

However, they were living a good life. They were favoured by the Persians as they assisted Persia with a powerful fleet during various wars. Suddenly, Alexander the Great defeated the Phoenicians and drove them out of their land.

When Alexander captured Tyre and expressed his desire to sacrifice them in the temple, the people of Tyre refused. The people of Tyre requested them to perform a ritual outside the city as foreigners. This proposal was not acceptable to Alexander. Alexander aggressively sent envoys ordering the surrender of the people of Tyre. When the ambassador was killed by the Tyrians and thrown outside the walls, the enraged Alexander attacked the kingdom with all his might and killed about thirty thousand people. After this, many citizens of Tyre were sold as slaves. However, some wealthy people were able to escape with their lives with various tricks.

Most of the people went to Carthage. Then one by one the other states of Phoenicia also surrendered to Alexander. Thus the Phoenician civilization ended and the Hellenistic era began. They survive only in the writings of some archetypes and their enemies. The history of Phoenician civilization should not be underestimated. When these purple merchants ruled the sea trade, neither Greece nor Rome was in such a prosperous condition. When Carthage was flourishing, Rome was a small town. These Phoenicians conquered the turbulent seas and left their influence on the maritime trade for a long time.

It is our responsibility to revive the faded history of such an extraordinary adventurous nation. The writer is the Chairperson of Siddiqui's International School, founder of staycurioussis.com website, Treasurer of Bangladesh English Medium School Forum and a Psychology graduate from the University of Dhaka

Where is the 'never again' for Gaza?

Afaf Al-Najjar

Last week, we passed the 100th-day mark of Israel's latest episode of aggression against the people of Gaza. It was a depressing milestone to consider. A hundred days of Palestinians being mercilessly exterminated in all kinds of brutal ways: Israeli bombs ripping them apart, Israeli bullets piercing their skulls, and the Israeli-imposed siege starving them or killing them through otherwise treatable infections. A hundred days in which the countries that said "never again" almost 80 years ago did nothing to stop our extermination. A hundred days in which we pleaded, humanitarian organisations pleaded, the United Nations pleaded and people in the streets across the world pleaded, but we were all ignored. Perhaps we should not be surprised at the silence. After all, Israel's brutal and illegal occupation was allowed to go on for decades till it beat all records and became longest-lasting in modern history. Throughout this time, the Israeli occupying state, its governments and army have controlled virtually every aspect of Palestinian life: political, economic, social and — you may not believe it but — love life, too. Israel has been telling us what we can eat, what we can drink, what we can buy, where we can go, where we can travel, where we can live, where we can garden, where we can graze our cattle, where we can fish, where we can go to school, where we can get health services (if at all), and yes, who we can fall in love, get married to and settle with.

Israel has even tried to tell us who we are as a nation. It has told Palestinians that they are Arab, Muslim, Christian, Druze or Circassian, but not Palestinian. It has done everything and anything to break up the Palestinian social fabric. Israel has also persistently sown divisions between political forces in Palestine; in the past 15 years, it has made sure that any mediation seeking a unity government between the two biggest Palestinian parties, Hamas and Fatah, has failed. Political disunity has caused immense damage to the Palestinian community, ultimately leading to conflict and weakness from within.

Israel has also made sure that we remain poor and vulnerable not only through continuous dispossession — land theft, expulsions, and home demolitions — but also through economic dependence. It has purposefully kept the Palestinian economy on the brink of collapse, suffocating economic activity and private business. This has resulted in high unemployment rates and forced many Palestinians to work for the occupiers — sometimes even in illegal Jewish settlements literally built on their stolen land. Israel has also consistently undermined Palestinian agriculture — traditionally one of the strongest economic sectors in Palestine. Restricted access to land and water resources has led to a dramatic reduction of Palestinian agricultural output, fundamentally

disrupting traditional livelihoods. In Gaza, the economic devastation has been even worse, courtesy of the 17-year-long blockade imposed by Israel. It severely restricted imports and exports, effectively killing most trade with the outside world and wrecking the manufacturing and agricultural sectors. Israel even counted the calories of foods it was allowing into Gaza to ensure we barely have enough to survive. When we have resisted — peacefully or otherwise — the Israeli occupation has shown no mercy. It has killed, maimed, imprisoned, tortured and collectively punished. In the ongoing aggression against the Gaza Strip, this drive to decimate the Palestinian people has taken on genocidal proportions. In 100 days, in the killing fields of Gaza, Israel managed to slaughter at least 31,000 Palestinians — 23,000 who have been officially counted and at least 8,000 who could not be because their bodies are still under the rubble with no one to take them out. The rest of us, who have survived, have faced the deadly combination of fear, hunger and thirst under Israel's indiscriminate bombardment and total siege. Over the past 100 days, the Israeli occupation has denied the entry of food, water, and medicine to the Gaza Strip. Not only that, but Israeli air strikes have targeted every source of life. From water wells and water treatment plants to bakeries, farms, electricity generators, and solar panels, Israel has systematically targeted any means of relief for the people of Gaza. It is important to note that the aid that comes into the Gaza Strip right now cannot cover the needs of even a small proportion of the population. People have become so desperate due to hunger and thirst that aid trucks that come in are sometimes attacked and ransacked. These goods are then sold in the streets for three to five times the regular price and thus never reach the most vulnerable who desperately need them.

This is, of course, one of the intended outcomes of the siege. Another one was outlined by Member of the Knesset Tali Gottlieb in October. "Without hunger and thirst among Gazan population, we will not be able to recruit collaborators, we will not be able to recruit intelligence, we will not be able to bribe people, with food, drink, medicine, in order to obtain intelligence," she said, demonstrating just how emboldened Israeli officials have become in displaying their genocidal goals in public and how secure they feel in their impunity ensured by the backing of the United States.

To aid the process of "obtaining intelligence", the Israeli occupation forces have regularly dropped leaflets from the sky, offering Palestinians food, medicine and safety in exchange for "cooperation".

But there is another even more sinister goal that Israel is pursuing. The unpredictability and harshness of daily life in Gaza are producing a sense of helplessness and despair. Many Palestinians, especially children, suffer from depression, anxiety, and stress disorders; many had not healed from traumas from past aggressions before this one started. Israel wants not only to break and destroy our bodies; it wants to break and destroy our minds and souls. If we dig a little into history, we will find that these brutal tactics have been used before. The ancestors of part of the Israeli population experienced them during the Holocaust.

In the 1940s, Jews across Europe were forced into ghettos and concentration camps where they faced starvation, abuse and mass death. The Nazis used hunger as a method of control and dehumanisation. The constant threat of violence, deportation, and death destroyed bodies and souls.

Tales we have heard about the ghettos and concentration camps echo today in Gaza, where 2.3 million of us are crammed into ever-dwindling areas and forced to endure unliveable conditions. When you put side by side the accounts of atrocities both of these peoples faced, you will see that history is repeating itself, only this time the entire world is watching and it is doing nothing to stop it. The solemn vow of "never again", birthed from the ashes of the Holocaust, was meant to prevent the repetition of its horrors. The commitment etched into the collective conscience of the world was a promise to vulnerable peoples across the world that they would be protected, that their tormentors would be stopped.

Yet, as we turn our gaze towards the ongoing Palestinian struggle, this pledge rings hollow. The shadows of past atrocities linger in the present-day experiences of the Palestinian people. Still, as we marked 100 days of relentless slaughter, there was a spark of hope.

South Africa stood up for the principle of "never again" and took the state of Israel to court, accusing it — before the eyes of the whole world — of committing genocide. South Africa has our eternal love and gratitude for standing up for what is right, for giving us hope when we had fallen into despair. In these dark times, "never again" cannot remain a mere phrase of remembrance; it must become a call to action. The world must act on its pledge to uphold the dignity and rights of all people, in every corner of the world and prevent yet another genocide from taking place. The views expressed in this article are the author's own and do not necessarily reflect Al Jazeera's editorial stance.



Amazon's latest layoffs hit Buy with Prime, which lets you use Prime benefits on other websites

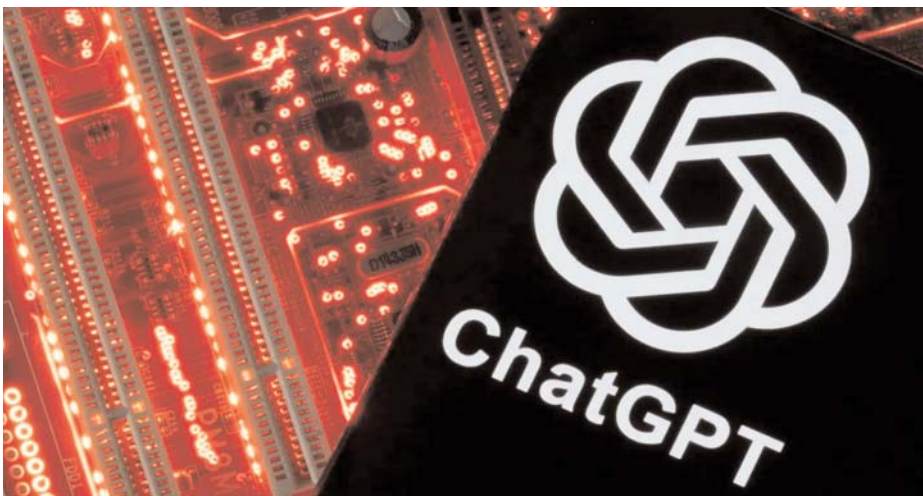
Tech Desk

The company told Engadget it's still fully invested in the program. Amazon tells Engadget it's letting go of about five percent of staff in its Buy with Prime division. Launched in 2022, Buy with Prime extends the membership's perks to third-party merchants selling and shipping goods on other sites. CNBC first reported the cuts on LAST Thursday. An Amazon spokesperson wrote in an email to Engadget that the cuts were part of a standard review of its business needs. "We regularly review the structure of our teams and make adjustments based on the needs of the business and, following a recent review, we've made the difficult

decision to eliminate a small number of roles on our Buy with Prime team," the spokesperson said. Amazon hasn't stated how many staff are in the division, but a source with knowledge of the matter tells Engadget about 30 employees are affected by the cuts. Promotional image for Amazon's Buy with Prime program. Closeup of a hand holding a phone with a Buy with Prime button highlighted in blue (on a generic headphone buying screen). Amazon says Buy with Prime is still a central focus. "Buy with Prime is a top priority for Amazon, with strong adoption from merchants and positive feedback from customers, and we will continue investing significant resources in Buy with Prime to build on that momentum,"

the spokesperson wrote to Engadget. "We're grateful to these employees for their contributions, and we're focused on supporting them in their next steps." The company spokesperson tells Engadget laid-off workers will receive at least 50 days of pay and benefits and be eligible for a severance package. In addition, the company says it's working to find new roles within Amazon for downsized staff. Although the number is much smaller this time, the layoffs add to the more than 27,000 workers Amazon has laid off since late 2022 (part of a brutal year-plus of job cuts in the broader tech world). The most recent round, earlier this month, hit Prime Video, MGM Studios, Audible and Twitch. Amazon posted record profits in 2023.

AI chatbots are trying to join the race for president



Tech Desk

Late Friday night, OpenAI suspended a developer who had created Dean.Bot — a ChatGPT-powered chatbot intended to support Minnesota Rep. Dean Phillips' 2024 presidential campaign — for violating new rules preventing lobbyists and candidates from using ChatGPT for politics, The Washington Post reported. Dean.Bot conversed with constituents in real time while mimicking the long shot Democratic challenger for president, using an AI-generated version of Phillips' voice to respond to user questions, like why Democrats shouldn't be throwing their weight behind incumbent President Joe Biden in the 2024 election. "While I respect President Biden, the data and conversations with Americans across the country indicates a strong desire for change," WaPo reported Dean.Bot responded in an AI-generated voice that sounded like Phillips' but had an unusual cadence. Phillips' background is in business. He ran his family's distilling company between 2000 and 2012 before pivoting to run Talenti, the popular gelato company he'd invested in until it was sold in 2014. He has represented Minnesota since 2019 and launched his campaign to challenge Biden in October last year. However, his polling numbers haven't indicated he'd be a significant threat to Biden. The creation of Dean.Bot was

funded by the Super PAC We Deserve Better, WaPo reported. The PAC then partnered with AI developer Delphi to build the bot. Delphi's account was suspended for violating the political rules late Friday, just a day after WaPo wrote about the creation of Dean.Bot. OpenAI earlier this month announced new rules preventing developers from building applications using its ChatGPT software intended for political campaigning or lobbying, saying the platform is "still working to understand how effective our tools might be for personalized persuasion." Representatives for OpenAI and Phillips' 2024 presidential campaign did not immediately respond to requests for comment from Business Insider. Despite OpenAI's new rules, Dean.Bot won't be the last AI creation we see this election season. The Hill reported Google and Meta have crafted policies requiring politicians and lobbyists to label content created by generative AI in campaign-related materials in response to a surge of AI-created content, including deepfakes and misleading audio. The outlet reported that several lawmakers, including Sen. Amy Klobuchar and Sen. Susan Collins, have also introduced congressional proposals to address AI use in advertisements. But viewers will need to keep their eyes peeled for AI-generated content this election season until those measures pass — if they pass at all.

NASA says it's reestablished contact with the Ingenuity Mars helicopter

The Perseverance rover picked up its signal on Saturday night.

Tech Desk

After a short period of worrying silence, NASA said on Saturday night that it was able to regain contact with the Ingenuity helicopter. The autonomous aircraft unexpectedly ceased communications with the Perseverance rover, which relays all transmissions between Ingenuity and Earth, on Thursday during its 72nd flight on Mars. It had already been acting up prior to this, having cut its previous flight short for an unknown reason, and NASA intended to do a systems check during the

latest ascent. The space agency said in an update posted on X that it's now reviewing the data from Ingenuity to understand what happened. Perseverance picked up its signal after the team instructed it to perform "long-duration listening sessions." Ingenuity has experienced blackouts before, as recently as last year, and was able to return to flight. But it's too early to say if that will be the case this time. The mini helicopter is already running well past the original timeline of its mission.

Spotify attacks Apple's 'outrageous' 27% commission

Tech Desk

Spotify has launched an outspoken attack on new transaction fees of up to 27% being levied by Apple in the US. On Wednesday, Apple announced it would permit app developers to sell products in places other than its own store - but only if they still paid commission. Spotify said that was "outrageous" and accused Apple of "stopping at nothing" to protect its profits. It is urging the British government to prevent similar fees being levied in the UK.

Apple has been approached for comment. The firm introduced the fees in the US as a result of a long-running legal battle with Fortnite developer Epic Games. The court found in favour of Apple on multiple issues, but it fell foul of a law by not allowing app developers to tell people about other ways of paying, including through links that bypass Apple's own App Store payment system. Apple charges the biggest developers a 30% fee to use this system, though smaller developers pay around 15%, and 85% of developers don't pay a fee at all. As a result of the ruling, Apple has introduced a new set of rules in the US which will allow people to subscribe to services without using its system, but it will

charge developers up to a 27% commission to do so. According to court documents filed by the firm, it said the commission charge was compliant with the court ruling, adding that App Store developers benefit from Apple's services. "All App Store developers - including those who place buttons or links with calls to action in their apps - benefit from (among other things) Apple's platform

court's attempt to enable greater competition. "Once again, Apple has demonstrated that they will stop at nothing to protect the profits they exact on the backs of developers and consumers under their app store monopoly," it said in a statement.

Spotify has a history of attacking Apple over its fees. In October 2023 it accused it of having an "insane" level of control over the internet. Now, it says the UK government should intervene. "The UK's Digital Markets, Competition and Consumer Bill must put an end to this false posturing, which is essentially a recreation of Apple's fees." "We strongly urge UK lawmakers to pass the bill swiftly to prevent Apple from implementing similar

fees, which will help create a more competitive and innovative tech industry for UK consumers and businesses." The Government put forward its digital markets bill last year aimed at curbing the power of the tech giants. The bill would empower authorities to "consider targeted measures" regarding app store transactions to maintain open and competitive digital markets, a



integrity," it said in the filings. It also listed other benefits developers receive, including: "marketing and external advertising, and a safe environment for users to download and purchase apps and in-app content." Spotify has reacted with fury, saying the policy "flies in the face" of the US

spokesperson for the Government told the BBC. However, the spokesperson declined to say if authorities would intervene in Apple's case after the bill passes. "It is not for us to comment on specific cases," the person said.

Palworld dev explains Steam and Xbox differences, missing features: "We're really at the mercy of the certification here"

Tech Desk

What you need to know Palworld dev Pocketpair has explained why the Xbox and Microsoft Store version of the game is missing features the Steam one has. Its community manager, Bucky, says that the studio is currently trying to get a patch through Microsoft's certification process and that "some of these things will take extra time." Though Pocketpair is "desperately trying to speed this up," this process has to be completed before updates can go live. The developer also explained that Steam and Xbox version numbers may always be different due to different underlying architectures, so players shouldn't consider them evidence that one platform is "behind" another. Pocketpair's new open world survival game Palworld has been enjoying a ridiculous amount of success since its recent Early Access launch on Xbox and PC, as well as Xbox Game Pass. Its creative blend of survival and base-building mechanics with a mix of creature collection and combat gameplay that's basically "Pokémon with guns" has quickly become extremely popular, with the game now even breaking 1 million concurrent players and shattering Steam records. But while Palworld has prospered on Valve's PC gaming client, players have noticed that the Xbox and Microsoft Store version is currently missing features and fixes. Many — including myself — assumed this was due to Palworld's earlier version number on Xbox at first. However, after joining Pocketpair's Discord server to try and find more information, I spotted a few recent posts from its community manager Bucky that clear things up. They said that the version numbers between platforms may always be different since they're two different versions of the game, and that the actual reason why the Xbox version is currently missing features is because updates have to go through Microsoft's certification queue. "On Steam, applied 2 days ago. On Xbox, sitting in the MS certification queue," wrote Bucky



in a reply to a fan asking about when a hotfix would be pushed live. Then, in another response to a post about feature parity: "Some of these things will take extra time...we're really at the mercy of the certification here. We're desperately trying to speed this up." "Issues like the missing exit game button etc are not a result of an 'older build', these are separate issues. In fact, Steam and Xbox will likely never have identical version numbers until the games are brought to be cross play compatible because at that point they will be the same game internally," they explained in a longer statement. "Again, that doesn't mean Xbox is necessarily 'behind' or anything, they are just fundamentally two different versions of the game because of the architecture on Xbox is different." So, there you have it. While Pocketpair aims to get the Xbox/MS Store edition of Palworld in line with the Steam one as soon as possible, it's taking some extra time to do so because the developer has to go through Microsoft's update certification process. In terms of what's actually different between the two editions of Palworld, Xbox and Microsoft Store users are unfortunately missing quite a bit. Players on

Reddit have been taking note of everything in the Steam version that's not in the others, and so far, that list includes the following: Considerably faster crafting (3 Arrows/craft (currently, you get 1) Using Technology Points to unlock Statues of Power (currently, you need Ancient Technology Points) The ability to name your character The ability to rename Pals Sound effects that are missing from Xbox/MS Store version Higher quality audio An exit button to close the game If this situation sounds familiar, it's because something similar happened with Conan Exiles back in 2022. Notably, that problem was taken care of pretty quickly, so hopefully Pocketpair is able to get Palworld patched on Xbox and PC Game Pass/the Microsoft Store swiftly. Perhaps Microsoft could step in to help While I'm glad that we now know why Palworld is currently missing features on Xbox, the Microsoft Store, and Xbox Game Pass, that's information I shouldn't have to dig through a Discord server to find. Pocketpair should have made this clear on larger channels like its official Twitter account (or X, I guess), and I hope it does so if

similar situations arise in the future. Although, it seems that right now, the game only has one community manager trying to field questions from every corner of the internet right now. This would perhaps be the ideal kind of scenario for Microsoft to step in and offer some support. Right now, the game has ended up as a defacto timed exclusive for Xbox, owing to its Xbox Game Pass inclusion. I'm not sure Microsoft (or Pocketpair) expected the game to blow up like it has. Perhaps there's a real opportunity here for Microsoft to offer improved support in exchange for ongoing exclusivity, given that Xbox often is criticized for its line up (although the list of upcoming Xbox games is looking might spicy right now.) Above all else, though, it's just good to know that the Xbox / MS Store version of Palworld will get updated soon. Hopefully future patches are able to get through Microsoft's certification process faster. Palworld is available now on Xbox Series X/S, Xbox One consoles, and Windows PC via either the Microsoft Store or Steam. It's quickly become one of the best Xbox games and best PC games of 2024 so far, and it's also playable through Xbox Game Pass.



HBO Reveals the Filming Location for 'The White Lotus' Season 3

ENTERTAINMENT DESK

The White Lotus must have the best PR team in the hospitality business: In spite of an ongoing string of murders at the resort collection's luxury hotels, guests are still booking additional stays. Before The White Lotus season 2 even reached its conclusion, HBO greenlit a third season—and there's at least some chance that Jennifer Coolidge's character could make an appearance from beyond the grave. The season 2 finale saw the end of Tanya McQuoid-Hunt, thanks to a twisted combination of failed assassination attempt, concussion, and drowning, but showrunner Mike White remains as attached as ever to Coolidge's character.

The award-winning show received a slew of nominations this award season, including Emmys for Outstanding Drama Series, Outstanding Supporting Actor in a Drama Series (F. Murray Abraham, Michael Imperioli, Theo James, and Will Sharpe), Outstanding Supporting Actress in a Drama Series (Jennifer Coolidge, Meghann Fahy, Sabrina Impacciatore, Audrey Plaza, and Simona Tabasco), Outstanding Directing for a Drama Series, and Outstanding Writing for a Drama Series. At the Creative Arts Emmy Awards, the show received nine nominations, and won Outstanding Casting for a Drama Series, Outstanding Contemporary Hairstyling, Outstanding Music Composition, and Outstanding Music Supervision. There's little we know about season 3, leaving plenty of room for speculation. Let's break down the breadcrumbs we have so far. When will The White Lotus season 3 premiere? Production for season 3 was delayed due to the 2023 writers and actors' strikes. The season "probably would have been [released in] 2024," chairman and CEO Casey Bloys said during an HBO and Max presentation on November 2, but it's now "pushing into 2025" given the pause. Indeed, the network confirmed in a sizzle reel a month later that The White Lotus season 3 will premiere in 2025. Not long after the actors' strike lifted on November 9, 2023, the team released a list of new characters and began casting for the new season. Production is slated to start early February 2024 in Thailand, Deadline reports. For reference, season 1 debuted in July 2021, and season 2 arrived in October 2022. Where will the season take place? HBO confirmed in early January that The White Lotus season 3 will be filmed in Thailand. Guests will be staying at various luxury hotels across the country. HBO didn't get too specific as to where they'll be shooting, but they did cite unspecified locations in Bangkok, Phuket, and Koh Samui. According to Bloomberg, "One executive who was personally involved in the deal says the cast of Season 3—including Parker Posey, Carrie Coon and Jason Isaacs—will spend about three months shooting at the Four Seasons Resort Koh Samui starting in February. One plotline features some cast members visiting temples in Phuket, where they'll stay at another hotel, the same person says. According to other sources, that hotel will be the Anantara Mai Khao Villas Phuket." Before HBO confirmed the news, Season 3 was rumored to be set in Thailand, per several sources. It had seemed, initially, that the show might be eyeing Tokyo as its next spot. (Johnny Knoxville almost revealed the season 3 filming location back in February. He told Vulture in an interview published February 16: "Mike White is a very close friend of mine. He and I had been in Tokyo together. I think that's where the next ... oh, I'm not



giving anything away.") With White planning to explore "eastern religion and spirituality" in the next season, filming in Tokyo made sense, but now Thailand has been dubbed the locale. What will season 3 of The White Lotus be about? The third season will follow a new group of guests, just as the season 1 cast passed the baton for season 2. In a post-finale interview on HBO, White teased that the third season will focus on, well, death. "The first season kind of highlighted money, and then the second season is sex, and I think the third season, it would be a satirical and funny look at death and eastern religion and spirituality. And it feels like it could be a rich tapestry to do another round of White Lotus," he said. Francesca Orsi, executive vice president of HBO Programming and head of HBO drama series and films, didn't give any specific details about the possible storyline as she announced the season 3 green light, but she did seem excited about creator Mike White's vision. "He's only continued to reach new heights in season 2, which is the ultimate testament to Mike's raw, unparalleled vision," Orsi said earlier. "His courage to explore the uncharted waters of the human psyche, paired with his signature irreverent humor and buoyant directing style, have us all dreaming of more vacation days at the resort we've come to adore." White told Entertainment Weekly in early November 2023 that season 3 is going to be "a supersized White Lotus" and that he's "seriously finishing scripts." He added, "It's going to be longer, bigger, crazier. I don't know what people will think, but I am super excited, so at least for my own barometer, that's a good thing ... I'm super excited about the content of the season." Who will be in the cast? Season 2's cast was entirely different than season 1's, with one notable exception: the incomparable Coolidge. Given White's attachment to Tanya—and his personal adoration for the actress playing her—it seemed possible the showrunner would bring her back for yet another round. But that no longer appears to be the case given how the season 2 finale ended. "Jennifer is my friend and everybody loved her in the first season, and I was like, 'I can't go to Italy without Jennifer,'" White previously told Deadline. "And maybe that's still the case. Like,

Sydney Sweeney explains infamous 'Euphoria' hot tub scene: 'Disgusting'

ENTERTAINMENT DESK

Sydney Sweeney is dishing on an infamous scene from "Euphoria" that viewers likely still can't get out of their heads. The "Anyone But You" actress, 26, on the latest episode of First We Feast's "Hot Ones," walked host Sean Evans through the notorious hot tub scene from Season 2. One of the season's storylines followed Sweeney's Cassie as she betrays her best friend, Maddy (Alexa Demie), by secretly sleeping with Maddy's on-again-off-again boyfriend, Nate (Jacob Elordi). As Cassie is forced to watch her best friend and lover together one night, she turns to drinking. Later, as Maddy and Nate argue, Cassie dramatically cries and vomits in the water of the hot tub. During the interview, Sweeney revealed how the gross scene was created, noting it was "a lot of work."

"Euphoria" director Sam Levinson "just wanted vomit everywhere, so they had to get a pump," she said. "And they had this pipe that they just taped and hid on my body." Sweeney said production edited the scene using computer-generated imagery, or CGI, to remove the pipe from her neck "and then there was a horse bit that I had to put in my mouth. And so during that scene,

they're filling my mouth with throwup." She continued: "And then I opened my mouth, and it just starts shooting out my mouth. And it was the most disgusting thing I ever experienced." Sweeney also got into her other roles — including Olivia Mossbacher in "The White Lotus," Eden Spencer in "The Handmaid's Tale" and her upcoming role as Julia Carpenter in Marvel's "Madame Web" — and her acting technique of writing journals as each of her characters. But she said Cassie was the journal that had the most potential as a "personal memoir." "Cassie's book is really, really cool. It's the most developed, 'cause I've had so most time with her," Sweeney said. "I have two seasons of her, so she's grown so much. And I was able to have Season 1 and Season 2 and just develop this book, so it's really cool to see how it changes." Season 3 of "Euphoria" is expected to be released in 2025.



Jess Glynne: I fell out of love with music - I was unhappy

ENTERTAINMENT DESK

Jess Glynne has revealed she was "deeply unhappy" in music and questioned returning after receiving death threats during a backlash. The singer, who has new music after a five-year hiatus, says she was "really burnt out" and hospitalized with exhaustion after her 2019 world tour. Her grandmother's and friend's death also left her "scared to go back into the studio", she told the Telegraph. In 2021 Glynne was accused of transphobia after using a slur. "It felt like the world caved in on me," said the chart-topper, who responded to the backlash after appearing on comedian Mo Gilligan's podcast by deleting her social media accounts. "People can be so aggressive. They hear one thing and all just jump on this bandwagon, and... it feels like the world is over." Glynne, 34, said: "The way I said it wasn't even an attack, it was actually me celebrating a community that I'm a part of, and that I love. "And instead of that community being supportive and saying, 'Oh, by the way, Jess, you know what, that word is actually really uncomfortable', there were death threats and all these awful things." The 34-year-old singer, who apologised at the time over her wry of expressing herself in public "for a year or two". Reflecting on her period

said: "I fell in and out of love with music. I was deeply unhappy." Glynne, who has seven UK number ones to her name, signed to a new record label, Jay Z's Roc Nation, in 2022 after spending years being told "I'm not allowed to do this, I have to wear this and go there, I have to be that. I can't say this and I can't do that". The London-born star, also touched on her relationship with presenter and former England footballer Alex Scott, saying: "Over the years, I've never hidden who I am. I'm a very open person. I believe that love is love. "And I've never hidden the fact that I've been in relationships with men, and I've been in relationships with women. That's a massive side of my life." It comes as Glynne prepares to release her first single in five years, titled Enough. The star said she was one song away from finishing her third album. She added: "I want the album to tell a story about vulnerability and power, being brave, showing all sides to who I am. I want it to be unapologetic."

the remarks - which she called "unacceptable" - told the Telegraph the incident made her wary of expressing herself in public "for a year or two". Reflecting on her period



Daisy Ridley On 'Star Wars: Rise Of Skywalker' Fan Backlash: "It's Still Upsetting"

Ridley said. "What was interesting again is intentionality. My feeling in that moment was that it was a goodbye, and that felt earned. You can call a kiss a thousand things, but I felt it was a goodbye. That whole scene felt emotional and I felt I was saying goodbye to the job, too." Ridley also brought up another divisive plot point regarding Rey's origins, which changed from The Last Jedi to Rise of Skywalker. In The Last Jedi, Rey is said to be the child of "no one," but by the last film, she is revealed to be Palpatine's granddaughter. "Well, J.J. [Abrams] was the one who was like, she is of no one, so it wasn't just The Last Jedi where that was the message," Ridley recalled. "What was interesting about the last one, for me, was that you can be a hero and not come from anywhere or you can be a hero and come from literally the worst person in the universe. You're not your parents, you're not your grandparents, you're not your bloodline and you're not the generations before you. So, I always was like, sure." She continued, "But it's beyond my pay grade. I say the words, do the thing. I do love the version of, you can be anyone you want to be, but I also love the version where you can rectify wrongs and can't help what you're born into." Watch the full interview with Ridley below.

ENTERTAINMENT DESK

Daisy Ridley is returning to the Star Wars universe to reprise her role of Rey in a film directed by Sharmeen Obaid-Chinoy. Ahead of diving back into that world, she is looking back at how the fanbase was divided with the final installment of the sequel trilogy with 2019's The Rise of Skywalker. "It's still upsetting," Ridley said during an appearance on the Happy Sad Confused podcast. "You don't want people to feel like you've not served the thing they're a fan of. But [The Last Jedi] was so divisive... it felt like the first one everyone was responsive in the same way. The second, super divisive. The last one, super divisive. It didn't change how I felt about it." One of the points of contention was when Ridley's Rey kisses Kylo Ren, played by Adam Driver. "I felt like we all... it felt earned," she said. "The Super Bowl is right around the corner, and people everywhere have been asking one burning question about the big game: is Taylor Swift going to make it? Fans haven't been so sure if Swift will be able to travel to Las Vegas to watch boyfriend Travis Kelce play in the Super Bowl with the Kansas City Chiefs, as the "Cruel Summer" songstress is scheduled to perform a concert in Tokyo, Japan, the night before. While Swifties have been doing the math to see if the Grammy-winner has enough time to make it back to the U.S. for the game, some have been worried that she might miss the Chiefs taking on the San Francisco 49ers—or worse, that she might rush her concert in order to make it there on time. But on Friday, Feb. 2, the Japanese embassy sent out a statement to reassure everyone that it is totally possible for Swift to make it back in plenty of time, as long as she hops on a plane right after her show. "The Embassy of Japan in the United States is aware of recent media reports concerning the steps Taylor Swift will need to take to travel from Tokyo after her concert on February 10th to Las Vegas in time to watch the Kansas City Chiefs play in Super Bowl LVIII," began the statement, issued via X (formerly Twitter). "Despite the 12-hour flight and 17-hour time difference, the Embassy can confidently speak Now to say that if she departs Tokyo in the evening after her concert, she should comfortably arrive in Las Vegas before the Super Bowl begins." "We know that many people in Japan are excited to experience Taylor Swift's Eras Tour, so we wanted to confirm that anyone concerned can be Fearless in knowing that this talented performer can wow Japanese audiences and still make it to Las Vegas to support the Chiefs when they take the field for the Super Bowl wearing Red," the statement—which was sprinkled with references to Swift's albums—concluded. Swift's upcoming shows in Japan mark her first time back on tour since November 2023. After just a few months off, Swift will make a return to stage at the Tokyo Dome on Wednesday, Feb. 7, and is scheduled to play three additional shows on that Thursday, Friday and Saturday.

Japanese Embassy Issues Statement on Taylor Swift's Super Bowl Travels

Parade Desk

The Super Bowl is right around the corner, and people everywhere have been asking one burning question about the big game: is Taylor Swift going to make it? Fans haven't been so sure if Swift will be able to travel to Las Vegas to watch boyfriend Travis Kelce play in the Super Bowl with the Kansas City Chiefs, as the "Cruel Summer" songstress is scheduled to perform a concert in Tokyo, Japan, the night before. While Swifties have been doing the math to see if the Grammy-winner has enough time to make it back to the U.S. for the game, some have been worried that she might miss the Chiefs taking on the San Francisco 49ers—or worse, that she might rush her concert in order to make it there on time. But on Friday, Feb. 2, the Japanese embassy sent out a statement to reassure everyone that it is totally possible for Swift to make it back in plenty of time, as long as she hops on a plane right after her show. "The Embassy of Japan in the United States is aware of recent media reports concerning the steps Taylor Swift will need to take to travel from Tokyo after her concert on February 10th to Las Vegas in time to watch the Kansas City Chiefs play in Super Bowl LVIII," began the statement, issued via X (formerly Twitter). "Despite the 12-hour flight and 17-hour time difference, the Embassy can confidently speak Now to say that if she departs Tokyo in the evening after her concert, she should comfortably arrive in Las Vegas before the Super Bowl begins." "We know that many people in Japan are excited to experience Taylor Swift's Eras Tour, so we wanted to confirm that anyone concerned can be Fearless in knowing that this talented performer can wow Japanese audiences and still make it to Las Vegas to support the Chiefs when they take the field for the Super Bowl wearing Red," the statement—which was sprinkled with references to Swift's albums—concluded. Swift's upcoming shows in Japan mark her first time back on tour since November 2023. After just a few months off, Swift will make a return to stage at the Tokyo Dome on Wednesday, Feb. 7, and is scheduled to play three additional shows on that Thursday, Friday and Saturday.

