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Library set up by a woman brings the world to former enclave dwellers in Dashiarchhara

ABDUL WAHED, Kurigram

Two book shelves, two tables and a couple of chairs in a tiny tin hut may not strike a city dweller as much of a library.

Yet, Golam Maola Alor Dishari Library is fostering enthusiasm among the book lovers in Dashiarchhara, a former Indian enclave in Kurigram's Phulbari upazila.

It was established in September 2015 in West Ajwatary village of Dashiarchhara following the exchange of 162 enclaves between Bangladesh and India in August of the same year.

Growing up in the locality, library founder Momotaj Mohal Baby was well-aware of the deprivation of citizenship rights of the enclave dwellers and felt the need to do something for them, especially for the women.

"Between 2000 and 2015, I worked as a teacher at a Brac pre-primary school which had a Kishori Club. Girls could come play, sing, and read books, lent by different people. The reading section, however, stopped when a fee was attached to the service," Momotaj said, recounting how she came up with the idea of opening a library.

Later, some of the club members told Momotaj that they missed reading books for free.

"Around 2009, I started collecting old books, and loaned those out to people for free for several days on condition of return," she reminisced, adding that she had begun with 50 books.

When Dashiarchhara merged with Bangladesh, Momotaj



People reading books in the tiny Golam Maola Alor Dishari Pathagar at the former Indian enclave Dashiarchhara in Kurigram's Phulbari. Momotaj Mahal Baby, at the back, is the founder of the library.

PHOTO: ABDUL WAHED

HC rule for counsellors, psychologists at schools

UNB, Dhaka

The High Court yesterday issued a rule asking the government to explain as to why directives should not be given to recruit counsellors and clinical psychologists in educational institutions across the country.

The HC bench of Justice M Enayetur Rahim and Justice Md Mostafizur Rahman issued the rule following a petition.

Advocate Farhad Uddin Ahmed Bhuiya, who filed the petition, stood for himself while deputy attorney general Advocate Amit Talukdar represented the state.

On November 24 last year, Farhad Uddin Ahmed Bhuiya filed the writ with the High Court seeking recruitment of clinical psychologists in all educational institutions.

According to the writ petition, reluctance of recruiting a clinical psychologist and counsellor in all educational institutions, is contradictory

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PROFESSIONAL MISCONDUCT ICT prosecutor removed 3 yrs after suspension

He enjoyed govt benefits during the period

TUHIN SHUBHRA ADHIKARY

Mohammad Ali has finally been removed from the post of prosecutor at the International Crimes Tribunal yesterday, almost three years after he was suspended over professional misconduct.

Since he was suspended in February 2016, he continued drawing a monthly salary of over Tk 1 lakh. He had used a government vehicle until last November. The government paid for its fuel and driver. Besides, there was an armed policeman for his safety.

The Law, Justice and Parliament Affairs Ministry spent over Tk 40 lakh for his salary and benefits until yesterday, according to The Daily Star estimate.

In May 2017, over a year after he was suspended, this correspondent asked Law Minister Anisul Huq about the privileges enjoyed by Ali while on suspension. "He [Ali] was suspended and was supposed



Mohammad Ali

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RECRUITMENT IN MALAYSIA

Won't send workers unless cost is cut

Says expatriates' welfare minister

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

The government doesn't want to send Bangladeshi workers to Malaysia before a low-cost and transparent system of recruitment comes into place, Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment Minister Imran Ahmad said yesterday.

"If I allow high charges for recruitment [of Bangladeshi workers abroad], I will betray my constituents," he told a press conference at the ministry yesterday.

The biggest challenge facing overseas job sector is the high recruitment cost. In 2016 and 2018, Bangladeshi workers were charged up to Tk 4 lakh for jobs in Malaysia, he said at the event organised by Reporters for Bangladeshi Migrants.

Malaysia suspended recruitment of Bangladeshi workers in September 2018, alleging that a cartel of 10 Bangladeshi recruiting agents patronised by several influential politicians of previous Malaysian government was charging exorbitant sums of money from migrant workers.

Despite several negotiation meetings between officials of the two countries over the last year, the market has not opened yet.

Members of the cartel had passed the blame onto illegal manpower brokers in Malaysia and Bangladesh.

Imran Ahmad has been expressing similar views, but he has not taken any concrete action to legalise the brokers or eliminate them from the recruitment system.

Asked, the minister said if the system was transparent, the brokers' involvement would have disappeared. But he didn't clarify what he meant by a "transparent system".

He said the government had asked the recruiting agencies to recognise

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Mob beats 'robber' dead

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Benapole

An alleged robber was killed by a mob in Sundali upazila of Jashore late Saturday night.

The deceased was identified as Mamun Hossain, 34, son of Abdus Sobhan of Ziadanga in the upazila, said police.

Tajul Islam, officer-in-charge of Abhaynagar Police Station, said Mamun and his two accomplices hired a motorcyclist to take them to Abhaynagar in the night.

When they crossed Sundali Bazar area around 11:30pm, the three asked the rider to stop, said the OC quoting the rider Bidyut Mondal of Manirampur upazila.

Bidyut told The Daily Star that as Mamun pointed a gun at him and asked him to leave, he jumped on him in an attempt to grab him.

At one point, he succeeded to disarm Mamun and pin him down while the other two fled

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Man fined for throwing coins into jet engine



INDEPENDENT.CO.UK

A first-time flier who threw coins into a plane engine for good luck has been ordered to pay £13,000 to a Chinese airline.

Twenty-eight-year-old Lu Chao threw the coins to wish for a safe journey as he was boarding a Lucky Air flight from Anqing to Kunming in February 2019.

He admitted to tossing the coins when Lucky Air staff quizzed passengers after finding two one yuan coins on the ground near the left engine.

The domestic flight was grounded due to safety concerns, and the 162 passengers were flown the next day following a full engine check.

The budget carrier claims the flight cancellation

SEE PAGE 11 COL 2

One killed under train in Jurain

UNB, Dhaka

A man was killed yesterday when he was hit by a train while trying to cross a level crossing near Jurain Rail Gate in the capital yesterday.

The unidentified person suffered critical injuries after the train hit him around 11:30am, said Anwar, a witness of the accident.

Inspector Bachchu Mia, in-charge of the Dhaka Medical College Hospital police outpost, said doctors at the hospital declared the victim dead after he was brought there.



PRAYER TIMING JANUARY 6

Fazr	Zohr	Asr	Maghrib	Esha
AZAN 5:30	12:45	4:00	5:30	7:00
JAMAAT 6:05	1:15	4:15	5:35	7:30

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

'Drug dealer' killed in 'gunfight'

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Cox's Bazar

An alleged drug peddler was killed in a "gunfight" with police in Teknaf upazila of Cox's Bazar early yesterday.

The dead was Samuda Begum, 40, a resident of Satghoria Para area in Teknaf, said police.

On information that some drug peddlers had gathered in Laboner Math area in Whykong union, a Teknaf police team conducted a drive there around 4:00am.

Sensing their presence, the criminals at the spot opened fire on the team forcing them to retaliate, said Pradip Kumar Das, officer-in-charge of Teknaf Police Station.

After the gunfight, police found the bullet-hit body of Samuda lying on the ground.

She was taken to the upazila health complex and was later moved to Cox's Bazar Medical College Hospital where on duty doctors declared her dead on arrival, said the OC.

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A burnt car among charred trees in Kangaroo Valley of Australia's New South Wales yesterday. Bushfires in Australia have so far claimed 24 lives and halved a billion wild animals.

PHOTO: AFP

AUSTRALIA BUSHFIRES

Rescuers race to save wildlife

Half a billion animals reportedly killed; Aus\$25m raised to help firefighters

AGENCIES

Vicki Lett has been a volunteer wildlife carer in New South Wales (NSW) for 32 years. While she says her work can sometimes be heartbreaking, this year she has witnessed Australia's wildlife being wiped out on an unprecedented scale by fires that continue to rage across the country.

"The scope of these fires is something we've never experienced before," said Lett, whose work with the Australian wildlife rescue group, WIRES, often involves searching for survivors amid the ashes.

"It's heartbreaking to see those injured animals. Many of them have to be destroyed, others, maybe you see the shell of a body but it's basically just a shape in the ash."

Since country-wide fires first flared up unseasonably early in September, hundreds of homes have been lost, more than five million hectares (12.4 million acres) of bush and farmland have been scorched, and at least 24 people have been killed.

Ecologists from the University of Sydney estimate almost half a billion mammals, birds and reptiles have died since the fires began.

As another heatwave sweeps across the country, the fires are showing no sign of abating and experts fear there may not be enough habitat or numbers left for some species to recover.

A global appeal to help Australian firefighters tackling catastrophic bushfires raised almost Aus\$25 million

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