



# The Daily Star

SECOND EDITION



REGD. No. DA 781 | Vol. XXX No. 14 | MAGH 13, 1426 BS | **Your Right to Know** | JAMADIUS SANI 1, 1441 HIJRI | 20 PAGES PRICE : Tk12.00

**“There is no level playing field within the Election Commission.”**  
ELECTION COMMISSIONER MAHBUB TALUKDAR EXPRESSING FRUSTRATION AT CURBED CAPACITY (PAGE 3)



**“I am the luckiest person on earth; I’m truly speechless by this gesture of our honourable prime minister Sheikh Hasina.”**  
SHAKIB AL HASAN ON A FACEBOOK POST AFTER THE PM COOKED AND SENT HIM HIS WIFE’S FAVOURITE FOOD (PAGE 5)



**“Iranian Foreign Minister says Iran wants to negotiate with The United States, but wants sanctions removed. @FoxNews @OANN No Thanks!”**  
US PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP (PAGE 8)



## Cox’s Bazar’s BAKKHALI RIVER Grabbed by ‘guardian’



MOSTAFA YOUSUF, back from Cox’s Bazar

Structures built by him encroached on the Bakkhali, a key river in Cox’s Bazar. Besides, a huge amount of garbage is dumped into the waterbody every day at his instruction.

Despite harming the river, he is a member of the river conservation committee formed by the district administration.

The man in question is Mujibur Rahman, the mayor of Cox’s Bazar municipality and the general secretary of ruling Awami League in the district. The district administration co-opted him into the committee in 2017, apparently giving in to his political clout.

In 2014, Mujibur was named on a BIWTA list of 52 people who encroached on the Bakkhali. The Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Authority prepared the list after it failed to build a river port in Cox’s Bazar

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**Supporters of Ishraque Hossain, BNP’s mayoral candidate for the Dhaka South City Corporation, clash with supporters of an AL-backed councillor candidate in the capital’s Wari yesterday. Inset, Somoy TV’s cameraperson on duty was caught up in the violence and injured.**

PHOTO: COLLECTED

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## AL, BNP men clash during campaign

15 including 2  
journos injured

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Supporters of BNP mayor candidate for Dhaka South City Corporation and those of an Awami League-backed councillor candidate clashed during campaigning in the capital’s Wari yesterday afternoon.

The clash that continued for over half an hour left at least 15 people, including two journalists, injured.

BNP’s DSCC mayor candidate Ishraque Hossain blamed the ruling party activists for the incident and said that the attack was made to ruin the election atmosphere. But AL supporters alleged that their rivals were chanting provocative slogans against them, leading to the clash.

Witnesses said the clash ensued minutes after Ishraque was leading a campaign procession near Central Women’s College around 1:00pm.

A procession by supporters of AL-backed

## Coronavirus’ ability to spread gets stronger

China bans wildlife  
trade, expands travel  
bans; death toll 56

AGENCIES

The ability of the new coronavirus to spread is strengthening and infections could continue to rise, China’s National Health Commission said yesterday, with nearly 2,000 people in China infected and 56 killed by the disease.

A handful of cases have been reported outside China, including in Thailand, Australia, the United States and France, with health authorities around the world racing to prevent a pandemic.

The newly-identified coronavirus has created alarm because there are

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## CORONAVIRUS OUTBREAK Govt mulls travel ban

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

In the wake of the Coronavirus outbreak, the government is considering a temporary travel ban to and from China.

Health Minister Zahid Maleque yesterday said the issue would be discussed at an inter-ministerial meeting tomorrow (Tuesday).

He made the remarks after a meeting at the ministry on precautionary measures to deal with the virus that has been spreading across the globe from China, according to a press release of the ministry.

“Bilateral trade between China and Bangladesh is very deep. A huge number of people from Bangladesh are travelling to China for business purpose. It would become a matter of serious concern if the virus makes its way into Bangladesh,” the press release said quoting Maleque.

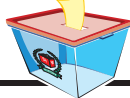
Meanwhile, the Institute of Epidemiology, Disease Control and Research (IEDCR) urged people not to panic as it has taken necessary preparation complying with World Health Organisation (WHO) suggestions to detect the virus.

Airport authorities in Dhaka had screened all 2,048 passengers coming from China between January 21 and yesterday and found none infected.

“No other country but China has been proved as the

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## DHAKA CITY POLLS 2020



### Cast your vote freely, without any fear

Atiqul tells people while  
campaigning in Mirpur

MATHEWS CHIRAN

Supporters of Awami League mayor candidate Atiqul Islam went around the city yesterday, asking people to vote for Boat in the upcoming mayor election.

After unveiling his manifesto in the capital’s Gulshan 2 area, Atiq, along with his supporters, distributed leaflets among the pedestrians. Atiqul then went to Mirpur and South Prierbag under ward-13 around 3:00pm, where he urged locals to cast their votes without fear.

There, he spoke to Nazma Akhter, a passerby, before handing her a leaflet and asking for her vote.



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### None to be evicted before rehabilitation

Tabith tells slum dwellers

MOHAMMAD AL-MASUM MOLLA

Riding on a rented bus, BNP-nominated mayoral candidate for Dhaka North City Corporation, yesterday rolled out a 38-point election manifesto with a focus on combatting air pollution and the mosquito menace.

He pledged to implement the Integrated Vector Management system to effectively tackle the mosquito menace round the year with the help of the health ministry, the Wasa, the DSCC and other nearby city corporations.

The mayoral candidate said air pollution would be reduced through mist blowers and other devices in different areas of North Dhaka.

He unveiled the manifesto with three segments -- Modern Dhaka, Healthy Dhaka and Vibrant Dhaka -- at a press conference at a city hotel.

In the manifesto, he has given priority to revival of lakes and canals, mitigation of waterlogging and expansion of public space. He said waterbodies in the DNCC would be



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## Anti-mosquito drive, clean air Atiqul’s focus

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Atiqul Islam, the Awami League mayoral candidate for Dhaka North City Corporation, yesterday rolled out a 38-point election manifesto with a focus on combatting air pollution and the mosquito menace.

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## Tigers fight for pride in third T20I

SPORTS REPORTER

After surrendering meekly in the first two T20Is and consequently losing the three-match T20I series, Bangladesh will be trying to salvage some pride when they take on hosts Pakistan in the third and final T20I at the Gaddafi Stadium in Lahore today.

The match will start at 3:00 pm (Bangladesh time).

In the absence of banned stalwart Shakib Al Hasan and Mushfiqur Rahim, who chose to sit out the tour, Bangladesh went to Pakistan with a young team and were duly dispatched by the home team in the first two matches, by five wickets and nine wickets.

Bangladesh’s batting has been their undoing in the

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**A family in Mirpur’s Chalantika slum is guarding what was left of their home after a fire ravaged the slum in the early hours of January 24. Mother Babi had left home looking for work, leaving behind with two daughters, when the disaster struck. The picture taken yesterday shows her eight-month-old daughter asleep under a mosquito net and her other daughter keeping vigil.**

PHOTO:  
PRABIR DAS

## GP wants to pay Tk 575cr in 12 instalments

Files petition against SC order  
for paying BTRC Tk 2,000cr

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Grameenphone yesterday filed a review petition with the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court asking permission to pay Tk 575 crore to the telecom regulator as an adjustable deposit.

The petition was filed against a previous SC order issued on November 24 last year that asked the operator to pay Tk 2,000 crore to the Bangladesh Telecommunication Regulatory Commission (BTRC) by February 23.

In the petition, the carrier also sought an order allowing it to pay the amount in 12 equal instalments, which means it wants to pay Tk 47.92 crore every month.

Confirming the development, Hossain Sadat, director and head of regulatory affairs at Grameenphone, said they wanted to pay Tk 575 crore, which represented 25 percent of the principal amount which the BTRC claimed Grameenphone owed.

In April last year, the BTRC had an audit done by a third party and claimed that Grameenphone owed Tk 12,579.95 crore in revenue shares, unpaid taxes, and late fees until 2014 since its inception.

However, the carrier said the amount was disputed.

Of the BTRC’s claim, regulator’s principal claim was only Tk 2,299 crore while Tk 6,194 crore was late fees and another Tk 4,086 crore payable to the National Board of Revenue.

A top executive officer at Grameenphone, the leading

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