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Your Right to Know

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**"The day is not far away when Bangladesh will be transformed into a developed and prosperous country."**  
PRIME MINISTER SHEKH HASINA PAGE 2



**"We will ensure that no drugs can go out of India nor come into India."**  
INDIAN HOME MINISTER AMIT SHAH



**"To be blunt, an amoral, 'keep-em-guessin' foreign policy that substitutes threats, fear and confusion for trust cannot work over the long haul."**  
FORMER US AMBASSADOR TO UKRAINE MARIE YOVANOVITCH PAGE 6

## What's the point then?

*SC expresses disappointment at non-implementation of 2003 HC directives over arbitrary arrests on suspicion, torture on remand*

ASHUTOSH SARKAR

The Supreme Court yesterday expressed disappointment that the 2003 High Court verdict directing police to refrain from making arbitrary arrests on suspicion and torturing people on remand has not been executed in 17 years.

"What is the point of delivering verdicts if the directives are not followed?" the Appellate Division of the apex court asked.

The SC was hearing a review petition filed by the government against its 2016 judgement that upheld the 2003 HC verdict against the arbitrary exercise of power

**"Will the state take its responsibility?"**

THE APEX COURT ON ENFORCED DISAPPEARANCE

by law enforcers using several sections of the Code of Criminal Procedure (CrPC), including section 54.

The top court yesterday said people could be arrested under section 54 of the CrPC and it might happen to anyone's family members. And then the person may never return.

"Will the state take its responsibility?" it asked, saying that incidents of disappearance were alarming.

At one stage of the proceeding Attorney General Mahbubey Alam sought adjournment of the hearing. The six-member bench of the Appellate Division headed by Chief Justice Syed Mahmud Hossain then adjourned the

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**Pedestrians dodge vehicles at speed and risk their lives to cross the Dhaka-Mymensingh highway near Uttara's Sector-6. The safer crossing, the footbridge near Rajuk Uttara Model College, inset, is not an option for them as it has been closed for repairs for the last two weeks.**

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS



### ANNOUNCEMENT

#### LIFESTYLE EVOLUTIONS

segment two of The Daily Star's 29th anniversary 200-page special supplement is out today, bringing you a glimpse of the ever-changing lifestyle of us Dhakalites. You will find a collection of articles on the facets of our digital life, cuisine, and fashion and tourism industries, and more.

Following are the names and publication dates of the three other segments:

**"REIMAGINING GROWTH IN THE DIGITAL AGE"** — February 16

**"DIGITISATION AND INCLUSIVITY: TAKING EVERYONE ALONG"** — February 18

**"THE YOUTH IN THE AGE OF DIGITALISATION"** — February 20

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## 'Two days' in 24 hours

AANILA KISHWAR TARANNUM

In recent memory, Pahela Falgun, the first day of spring according to the Bangla calendar, has fallen on February 13... or has it?

Turns out, it was merely our dependence on the Gregorian calendar that led to this day always being celebrated on a fixed date. If we look at the Bangla calendar, Pahela Falgun has actually fallen on February 14 for the past two years, and in the years from 2013 to 2016.

Rajib Kumar Saha, an officer at Bangla Academy's lexicography and encyclopaedia department, explained how there was always a discrepancy between the two

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## Deadliest day of coronavirus crisis

*Hubei alone reports 242 more deaths, 14,840 new cases; spike attributed to change in counting method*

AFP, Beijing

China's official death toll from the new coronavirus spiked dramatically yesterday after authorities changed their counting methods, fuelling concern the epidemic is far worse than being reported.

As the figures soared in China, a troubling new front opened abroad as neighbouring Vietnam placed 10,000 people under quarantine after six COVID-19 cases were discovered in a cluster of villages -- the first such lockdown overseas.

Japan also saw its first death of an infected person yesterday-- a woman in her 80s, according to the country's health minister -- making it the third outside mainland China after the Philippines and Hong Kong.

Under criticism at home over the handling of the crisis, China's Communist Party sacked two top-ranking officials

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COVID-19 UPDATE

**1,370**  
DEATHS  
**60,329**  
confirmed cases

**59,882**  
confirmed cases in mainland China

The virus spread to at least **25** countries

## Two more Bangaldeshis infected in Singapore

*312 from Ashkona to go home tomorrow*

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Two more Bangladeshi expatriates in Singapore have been infected with the novel coronavirus, The Straits Times reported yesterday.

Earlier, two Bangladeshis, aged 35 and 39, were reported to have been diagnosed with the novel coronavirus on February 9 and 11.

The two Bangladeshis found infected yesterday are aged 30 and 37 and all four are linked to a work site in Seletar Aerospace Heights.

One of the Bangladeshis confirmed to be infected yesterday fell ill on February 7.

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### RIVER GRABBING

## Direct the DCs to act tough

*ACC asks the cabinet secy*

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) has asked the cabinet secretary to give directions to district deputy commissioners (DCs) to save rivers from encroachers and take legal action against them.

In a letter to the cabinet secretary, the ACC's secretary Md Dilwar Bakh yesterday also suggested regular monitoring of the DCs activities in this regard.

The Daily Star obtained a copy of the letter.

The recommendation came following The Daily Star's four-page supplement published on February 07, 2020, titled "Save Rivers, Save Sonar Bangla", in which the grim picture of country's rivers was pointed out.

The newspaper appealed

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### 'DEFAMING' ILIAS KANCHAN

## Court accepts suit against Shajahan

*Transport leaders threaten counter-cases, demo*

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday accepted a Tk 100 crore defamation suit filed by road safety campaigner Ilias Kanchan against former shipping minister Shajahan Khan.

After scrutinising the documents, Dhaka's First Joint District Judge Utpal Bhattacharjee passed the order.

The court also summoned Shajahan and sought his explanation within March 22.

Ilias on Wednesday filed the defamation suit, claiming Tk 100 crore as compensation for his derogatory comments.

In his complaint, Nirapad Sarak Chai Chairman Ilias stated that Shajahan at a programme in Narayanganj on December 8 last year accused Ilias of illegally accumulating a huge amount of wealth.

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