

## GYANTAPAS LECTURE Political cinema in focus today

CITY DESK

Prof Naadir Junaid of Dhaka University's Department of Mass Communication and Journalism, will deliver a lecture on political cinema in Bangla, at the Institute of Modern Languages of DU at 4pm today.

Gyantapas Abdur Razzaq Foundation is organising the lecture, the seventh edition of its "Unpublished PhD Dissertation Lecture" series.

The session will be chaired by Dr Ahaduzzaman Muhammad Ali, former professor of Department of Mass Communication and Journalism, DU.



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina with the recipients of Prime Minister Gold Medal-2018 yesterday. The premier handed over the medals to 172 meritorious students from 36 universities as they secured the highest scores in their faculties. University Grants Commission organised the event at PMO.

PHOTO: BSS

## 14 sources of graft at land ports: ACC

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) has found 14 sources of graft at the 10 land ports of the country operated by Bangladesh Land Port Authority.

On the basis of annual and audit reports, victims' statement and interviews of former and current officials, a three-member team of ACC has found out the sources.

ACC Commissioner Dr Md Mozammel Haque Khan yesterday handed over the report to State Minister for Shipping Khalid Mahmud Chowdhury at the latter's office, said Director of the anti-graft body Pranab Kumar Bhattacharya.

According to the report, to pocket public money, top officials Bangladesh Land Port Authority divided big development works into small packages and gave work to the same contractor again and again.

"They divide the works into small packages to avert competition in tender process," it said.

As per the report, port authorities often violate the corresponding act to award jobs to unfit contractors. These land ports recruit staffers through outsourcing, and there is no supervision, which gives scope to draw wages illegally, it added.

The report said there are allegations against Compliance Bargaining Agents (CBA) of the land ports of taking bribe from contractors and syndicates who are involved in stealing.

There are also allegations against officials and staffer of taking bribe, and "anti-social activities" in the ports.

ACC found that port officers illegally engage outsiders in official work, including at weighbridge, yards and sheds.

There is a hearsay that a quarter of port officers have created a strong network, which is involved in stealing goods from warehouses. Port officials also help importers dodge tariffs, the report said.

The anti-graft watchdog made a 28-point recommendation to prevent corruption at land ports.

It suggested to launch automated system for goods handling, forming a joint vigilance team, improving intelligence system, taking action against smugglers and

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CORONAVIRUS

## Xi Jinping thanks PM for letter

BSS, Dhaka

Chinese President Xi Jinping has appreciated Bangladeshi Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's letter to him offering solidarity and assistance to deal with the deadly coronavirus outbreak.

"Your letter of sympathy and support has come at an unusual moment, when China is waging a battle against the outbreak of the novel coronavirus," the Chinese president said in an appreciation message to the Bangladesh premier.

"On behalf of the Communist Party of China, the Chinese government and the Chinese people, I would like to express our appreciation for the friendly sentiments that the government and people of Bangladesh cherish towards China," said Jinping.

On February 13, the Bangladeshi premier sent a letter to the Chinese president, expressing deep condolences for the loss of lives due to the outbreak of novel coronavirus in China, and offering the readiness of Bangladesh to extend any help to mitigate the plight of victims.

## Undying allure of homegrown classics

Sheba Prokashoni captivating readers for over 55 years

HASAN MEER



Stuck in an inescapable situation or pitted against a ruthless maniac determined to destroy the stability of the free world, what will our protagonist do, how far will he or she travel to save us -- these are the nail-biting cliffhangers that compel us to turn the pages of a thriller and finish it in one sitting.

It has been more than 55 years, yet the appeal of these books from Sheba Prokashoni have not diminished.

Enthusiasts of mystery, crime, thriller, spy, western and suspense novels continue to swarm its stall (648-649) at the Suhrawardy Udayan section of Ekushey book fair to buy titles of their choices.

Even parents, after letting their children enjoy "Shishu Prohor" (Children's Hours) on the weekends or buying books for them, were seen rushing to the stall to relive childhood memories.

After all, very few publishers can boast the fan following Sheba has; this evergreen publication house continues to enthrall readers across generations.

During multiple visits to this year's book fair, this correspondent saw an almost impenetrable crowd at its stall every time.

There were no books laid out on a table, unlike other stalls.

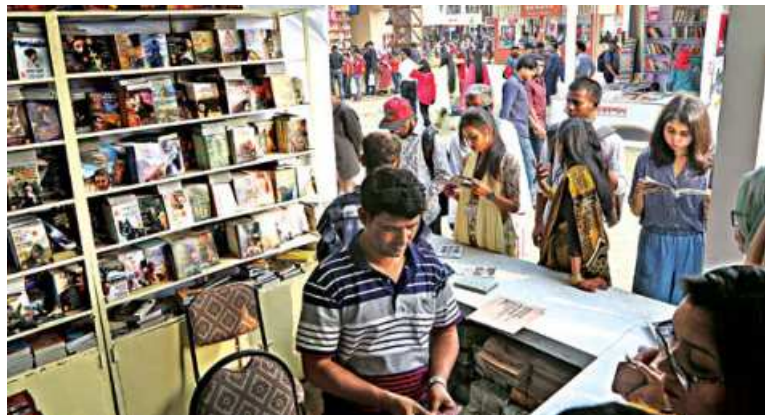


PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

Even after 55 years of being in operation, people of all ages still throng Sheba Prokashoni's stall, as the books hold a special charm for them.

Bookworms were picking up catalogues, looking through those diligently and asking the attendees to hand them the books from the shelves.

None were seen leaving the stall without Sheba's iconic paperbacks in newsprint and a smile on their face.

"I have been reading Tin Goyenda [three detectives] series since I was in sixth grade," said Taslima Anwar, a private job holder. "I'm trying to introduce my son to the world of Kishore, Robin and Musa," she said smilingly.

The Moghbazar resident bought Tin Goyenda volume 1 and 2 for her 10-year-old son Sabuj on Monday.

Based on English detective novels, Tin Goyenda was first published in 1985. The creator of

the series, Rakib Hasan, introduced the story of three teenage amateur detectives, and opened the window to a new and exhilarating world among countless readers.

He wrote 160 stories at a stretch, before Shamsuddin Nawab took the helm of the series.

Tania Sultana, a student of Shahjalal University of Science and Technology, bought 16 books from Sheba yesterday. "I started reading these books in my school years, and never stopped."

This correspondent also met Raihan Sadik, carrying around 20 books. When asked, the Narayanganj resident said he bought some juvenile classics and detective novels for his son.

"I was a die-hard enthusiast of Sheba's translated classics. Now my

son has also become a fan," said the proud father.

His son Arman Sadik, a fifth grader, said, "I was eagerly waiting to collect the volumes of Tin Goyenda. I also bought classics by Henry Rider Haggard, Mark Twain and Robert Louis Stevenson."

A major attraction of the publication house still remains Masud Rana, one of the most beloved characters created by Sheba Prokashoni founder Qazi Anwar Hussain. The first Masud Rana story was published in 1966.

The 83-year-old author has written the 463rd title of the series -- titled "Chhaya Gatak" -- which arrived this month.

Rana, the valiant Bangladeshi spy, who travels the world on secret missions, continues to attract new and old readers alike. The plot of the spy thriller was influenced by western novels, but that does not dissuade bookworms at all.

Mominul Islam, a staff member at the busy stall, said, "Not just the old editions, book lovers are also buying the latest ones. The new edition of Tin Goyenda (volume 152) and Masud Rana are in high demand."

Some also complained that many of their favourites were not published this time.

Long used to such demand, stall attendees assured them they will get those books soon at their Segunbagicha office.

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Workers under the banner of National Garment Workers' Federation (NGWF) yesterday brought out a procession, demanding an increase in salary and protesting the shutdown of some parts of the factory. They started moving from Press Club area, and submitted a memorandum to the director general of the Department of Inspection for Factories and Establishments. President of NGWF Amirul Islam Amin said the workers carried the national flag to dispel the notion that they are anti-state.

PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

## 2 books banned for 'hurting religious sentiments'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday banned two books -- "Dia Arefin" and "Nanir Bani" -- both written by Diarsi Arag, for hurting religious sentiments.

The court ordered the director general of Bangla Academy to seize copies of the books from Ekushey book fair immediately.

It also ordered the government to take steps to stop publication and marketing of the books.

The HC bench of Justice M Enayetur Rahim and Justice Md Mostafizur Rahman passed the order on a suo moto (voluntary) move after Advocate Azharullah Bhuiyan, a Supreme Court lawyer, placed the books before the judges for necessary order.

Azharullah told the court that the contents of the books hurt religious sentiments of people. The judges examined the contents of the books before passing the order.

## '2 people used to guard their vaults'

Says Rab official about Enamul-Rupon's flat where huge sum of money was stashed

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Inside the tiny flat on the narrow Lalmohon Saha Street of Old Dhaka, "casino brothers" Enamul Haque Enu and Rupon Bhuiyan had hired two people to guard their five steel vaults, law enforcers have found.

In a special drive on Tuesday, members of Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) recovered Tk 26.55 crore in cash and fixed deposit receipts worth Tk 5.15 crore from the vaults.

They also recovered around one kilogramme of gold, USD 9,300, 174 Malaysian ringgit, 5,350 Indian rupees, 1,195 Chinese yen, 11,560 Thai baht, 100 UAE dirhams and some gambling chips from the flat.

"We have found two small beds in two rooms of the flat; two people used to live there to guard the vaults and money," Sarwoer Alam, executive magistrate of Rab headquarters who led the drive, told The Daily Star yesterday.

He, however, said there might be more people to guard the flat from outside, adding that they need more investigation to get a better idea about the brothers' operations.

Another Rab official involved with the investigation said the elite force has hired ten people to move the vaults and money from the flat. "It's really suspicious that no one saw how and when the casino brothers kept those huge steel vaults in this tiny flat," he said, requesting anonymity.

Meanwhile, Rab yesterday handed over the recovered

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# ওমরাহ হজে গমনেচুক মেহমানদের জন্য সুখবর!!!

## পবিত্র নগরী মক্কা ও মদিনা ভ্রমণে বিমান-ই দিচ্ছে অত্যাধুনিক এবং সরাসরি ফ্লাইট

### মদিনা দিয়ে প্রবেশ করে ওমরাহ শেষে জেদ্দা থেকে ফিরে আসুন অথবা জেদ্দা দিয়ে প্রবেশ করে মদিনা থেকে ফিরে আসুন

## ঢাকা-জেদ্দা প্রতিদিন, ঢাকা-মদিনা সপ্তাহে ৩টি এবং চট্টগ্রাম-মদিনা সপ্তাহে ১টি ফ্লাইট

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