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Beating the odds

Mother of 4 from marginalised community in Manikganj becomes law graduate



ZAHANGIR SHAH, Manikganj

Nothing could stop Nelima Das. Born in the marginalised Robi Das community, where most members are cobblers by profession, she could not escape the curse of early marriage. Yet, she fought her way to earning an LLB degree while juggling work and the responsibility of maintaining her five-member family. "As a community, we never get any respect," said Nelima, referring to the social stigma faced by the Robi Das community. "To gain a social standing, there is no alternative to education," she asserted. The path to obtaining the law degree was not easy for the mother of four.

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With no safety gears on, workers knocking down the BGMEA Bhaban, illegally built on Hatirjheel, in the capital's Karwan Bazar area yesterday. Their disregard for safety puts them at risk.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

Nine out of 10 people biased against women: UN

AFP, United Nations

Nearly 90 percent of the world's population -- of every gender -- holds some prejudice against women, according to a UN study published Thursday, ahead of International Women's Day.

The United Nations Development Programme studied 75 countries representing 80 percent of the world's population and found that nine in 10 people -- including women -- hold such beliefs.

The prejudiced views include: that men are better politicians and business leaders than women; that going to university is more important for men than women; and that men should get preferential treatment in competitive job markets.

The percentage of those holding at least one sexist bias was largest in Pakistan -- where 99.81 percent of people held similar prejudices -- followed by

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India now a majoritarian state

Writes former Indian PM Manmohan Singh

THE HINDU ONLINE



It is with a very heavy heart that I write this. India faces imminent danger from the trinity of social disharmony, economic slowdown and a global health epidemic. Social unrest and economic ruin are self-inflicted while the health contagion of COVID-19 disease, caused by the novel coronavirus, is an external shock. I deeply worry that this potent combination of risks may not only rupture the soul of India but also diminish our global standing as an economic and democratic power in the world. Delhi has been subjected to extreme violence over the past few weeks. We have lost nearly 50 of our fellow Indians for no reason. Several hundred people have suffered injuries. Communal tensions have been stoked and flames of religious intolerance fanned by unruly sections of our society, including the political class. University campuses, public places and private homes are bearing the brunt of communal outbursts of violence.

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FIRST YEAR OF BANGLADESH BANGABANDHU'S NATION-BUILDING CHALLENGES

A symbol of hope



President Justice Abu Sayeed Chowdhury showing Bangabandhu around the newly renovated Bangabhaban on March 7, 1972.

MARCH 7, 1972

SHAMSUDDOZA SAJEN

BANGABANDHU BRIEFS CABINET ON SOVIET VISIT

Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman today informally meets his cabinet colleagues and briefs them about his talks with the Soviet leaders. PRESS BRIEFING ON BANGABANDHU'S SOVIET TOUR Bangladesh Foreign Minister Abdus Samad Azad today briefs journalists about Bangabandhu's Soviet tour. He says that the people in Soviet Union treated Bangabandhu as a symbol of revolution and the hopes and aspirations of the 75 million people of Bangladesh. He further says that in the discussions between the delegations of Bangladesh and the Soviet leaders, they found very large areas of



SEE PAGE 5 COL 2

Brac ranked top NGO in world for 5th time in a row

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Brac has been ranked the top NGO in the world in 2020, for the fifth consecutive year. NGO Advisor, an independent Geneva-based media organisation, revealed this in its TOP 100 NGOs ranking, Brac said in a statement yesterday.

Brac, retained its top spot in part due to its robust leadership and governance structure and continued commitment to systemic change, according to the statement.

"We are deeply grateful and humbled to receive this accolade. 2020 will be the first year for Brac family without our Founder, Sir Fazle Hasan Abed. We take this recognition as a reminder to be worthy of his legacy and continue the fight for a world free from all forms of exploitation and discrimination," said

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Egypt reopens its oldest pyramid after 14-year restoration



REUTERS, Cairo

Egypt on Thursday reopened Djoser's Step Pyramid, the first pyramid ever built, after a 14-year restoration costing nearly \$6.6 million.

The pyramid, a Unesco world heritage site, was constructed 4700 years ago during the era of Pharaoh Djoser, one of Ancient Egypt's Third Dynasty kings.

After decades of neglect and the risk of collapse, the Egyptian government started an ambitious project to restore it to splendour in 2006.

"Today we celebrate the completion of the project of warding off the danger and maintaining and restoring the first and oldest remaining pyramid in Egypt," said tourism and antiquities minister Khaled al-Anani.

The structure was designed by Imhotep, described by some as the world's first architect.

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Khagrachhari Clash Six BGB men sued

UNB, Khagrachhari

Six members of Border Guard Bangladesh were sued yesterday over opening fire during Tuesday's clash with villagers at Gazinagar Bazar of Matiranga upazila.

Manik Mia, son of Mofiz Mia who was among the five killed in the clash, lodged the case with Matiranga Police Station around 5:00pm.

On Thursday, habildar Ishak Ali of BGB Battalion-40 had filed another case with the police station against 19 locals, including four dead, and 60-70 unnamed people.

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PRAYER TIMING MARCH 7

Fazr Zohr Asr Maghrib Esha
AZAN 5-15 12-45 4-30 6-05 7-30
JAMAAT 5-50 1-15 4-45 6-10 8-00

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

Drug baron Amin Huda dies

He was sentenced to 79 years in jail

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Convicted yaba baron Amin Huda died at Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University (BSMMU) in the city yesterday.



"Amin Huda died around 1:00pm. He was being treated at the hospital for more than seven months," said Mahbulul Islam, jailer of Dhaka Central Jail in Keraniganj told The Daily Star.

He was sentenced to 79 years of imprisonment. Amin had been suffering from several health issues, including hypertension, diabetes and heart diseases, he said. Doctors said he died of cardiac arrest, the prison official said.

The body was sent to Dhaka Medical College Morgue for an autopsy.

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Sitting on a rail track, a woman cooks on mud stoves beside her shanty in the capital's Tejgaon area. Thousands of people from low-income families live in shanties built along rail lines in the city. Living in such areas expose them to accidents. The photo was taken on Sunday.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

27 killed in attack on Afghan rally

29 hurt as gunmen open fire from a construction site

AFP, Kabul

At least 27 people were killed in an attack on a political rally in Kabul yesterday, officials said, in the deadliest assault in Afghanistan since the US signed a withdrawal deal with the Taliban.

The attack highlights the glaring lack of security in the heavily fortified Afghan capital just 14 months ahead of the scheduled withdrawal of all foreign forces under an agreement signed on February 29 by the US and the Taliban.

Interior ministry spokesman Nasrat Rahimi said women and children were among the dead with an additional 29 wounded, adding that "special forces units are carrying out clearance operations against the attackers".

"The figures will change," he said. Nizamuddin Jalil, a health ministry official, gave a slightly higher toll, saying 29 people had been killed and 30 others wounded.

The Taliban immediately denied responsibility for the assault, which occurred at the commemoration ceremony for Abdul Ali Mazari -- a politician from the Hazara ethnic group, most of whom are Shia.

An Islamic State group-claimed attack on the same ceremony last year saw a barrage of mortar fire kill at least 11 people.

Rahimi had earlier said that gunmen opened fire from

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