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## Fixing phantom bridges over nothing

LGED's dodgy Tk 46cr tender cancelled in Barguna; probe begins

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Patuakhali

At places, there are no canals where they were said to exist. In other places, iron bridges that were supposed to be there are missing, with bamboo bridges taking their place at some sites.

Tenders have been invited for repair of iron bridges that apparently exist only on papers in Barguna's Amtali and Taltoli upazilas.

The irregularities cropped up when, on July 28, Forkan Ahmed Khan, executive engineer of the Local Government Engineering Department (LGED) in Barguna, invited tenders for repair of 33 iron bridges in eight packages at a cost of about Tk 46 crore.

A three-member probe committee has been formed to look into the matter, Forkan said. The committee started investigating and the report will be submitted soon, said its chief.

The LGED invited tenders under the Iron Bridge Reconstruction Project (IBRP) for the 2020-21 financial year. Among the bridges, 25 are in Amtali and eight in Taltoli upazilas. The deadline for participation in the tender was fixed on September 14.

Contractors of Barguna and Amtali held a press conference and arranged a human chain demanding cancellation of the tenders.

The LGED executive engineer of Barguna wrote a letter to the chief engineer of LGED on August 28 asking for

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Using this bamboo bridge, a man crosses a canal in front of Dakkhin Takta Bunia High School in Barguna's Amtali on Friday. Tenders had been invited for repairing 33 "iron bridges", including this one, that apparently exist only on paper in Barguna's Amtali and Taltoli upazilas. Of the bridges, 13 are actually bamboo-made footbridges. The tenders were cancelled following graft allegation.

PHOTO: SOHRAB HOSSAIN

## ATTACK ON UNO TIB demands judicial probe into motive

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Transparency International Bangladesh yesterday said the actual motive behind the attack on UNO Wahida Khanam should be found out through a judicial probe.

Saying that the gruesome attack was aimed at stealing is an ill-attempt, the graft watchdog said in a statement and urged the government to ensure exemplary punishment of the real culprits after identifying them through the probe.

It is very frustrating that such a grievous incident has been described as "mere theft" and "stray incident" based on primary confession of a suspect, said TIB Executive Director Iftekharuzzaman.

He referred to media reports that the officer became the target because of her firm stance against corruption, illegal sand lifting, and brick kilns in Ghoraghat upazila of Dinajpur.

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## 'Fox News is gone'

Trump calls on the media to fire reporter in war dead controversy

AGENCIES

US President Donald Trump has demanded the Fox News network fire its national security correspondent after she confirmed claims he had disparaged the military - a bombshell that has dogged him for two days.

Trump came under fire after The Atlantic magazine reported he had called marines killed in action in the World War I "losers" and "suckers" in connection with a November 2018 visit to France in which he skipped a visit to a United States' military cemetery.

Fox News correspondent Jennifer Griffin on Saturday said two former administration officials had confirmed to her the president "did not want to drive to honour American war dead" at the Aisne-Marne cemetery outside Paris, implying weather was not a factor.

One official also told her Trump had used the word "suckers" to denigrate the military, but in a different context related to the Vietnam War.

"When the president spoke about the Vietnam War, he said, 'It was a stupid

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## FIRST YEAR OF BANGLADESH BANGABANDHU'S NATION-BUILDING CHALLENGES

### Bangabandhu discusses constitutional matters

September 7, 1972

SHAMSUDDOZA SAJEN

BANGABANDHU SUMMONS DR KAMAL

Prime Minister Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman summoned Law and Parliamentary Affairs Minister Dr Kamal Hossain from Italy today for urgent talks on constitutional matters. The law minister flew to Geneva from Italy and held talks with Bangabandhu.

It is gathered that the prime minister asked Dr Kamal to expedite the framing of the constitution reflecting the hopes and aspirations of the people so as to enable the country to hold the first ever general elections on the free soil of Bangladesh early next year. It is also learned that Dr Kamal has had detailed discussions with Bangabandhu on different aspects of the constitution.

It may be mentioned that the Constitution Draft Committee will meet in Dhaka tomorrow and the draft is already in a final stage.

AMNESTY CHIEF CALLS ON BANGABANDHU

The Chief of Amnesty International Sean Macbride calls on Bangabandhu today. He remains with Bangabandhu for about an hour.

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## RU STUDENT'S DEATH

### HC orders tribunal to hold retrial

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday scrapped a tribunal's verdict in the case filed over the death of Rajshahi University student Wahida Sifat in 2015.

The Speedy Trial Tribunal-3 of Dhaka on February 27, 2017, sentenced Sifat's husband Mohammad Asif to 10 years' imprisonment for "provoking Sifat to commit suicide" and acquitted three other accused.

The tribunal acquitted Asif's parents - Md Hossain Ramjan and Najmun Nahar Nazil - and Jubaidur Rahman, assistant professor, forensic department of Rajshahi Medical College, saying the charges brought against them were not proved.

The tribunal also expressed disappointment over four investigation officers' probe as they

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## 'World's loneliest elephant' given chance of new life



INDEPENDENT.CO.UK

An elephant that lives alone under horrendous conditions in a Pakistan zoo will finally be granted the chance of a better life, the animal welfare group aiding the move said on Saturday.

Dubbed the "world's loneliest elephant" by animal rights activists, Kaavan spent more than 30 years in Islamabad's notorious Marghazar Zoo before catching the attention of campaigners - including Cher - who began lobbying for his relocation around four years ago.

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## MAJ SINHA MURDER

### Four cops on fresh four-day remand

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Cox's Bazar

Rab yesterday took four suspended policemen on a four-day remand for the second time in a case filed over the murder of Major (ret'd) Sinha Md Rashed Khan.

The four policemen are assistant sub-Inspector Litan Miah and constables Safanur Karim, Kamal Hossain and Abdullah Al Mamun.

A Rab team took them

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## PRAYER TIMING SEPTEMBER 7

Fazr Zohr Asr Maghrib Esha  
AZAN 4:35 12:45 4:30 6:20 7:45  
JAMAAT 5:10 1:15 4:45 6:25 8:15

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

## BSF shoots Bangladeshi dead

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Chapainawabganj

A Bangladeshi was shot dead allegedly by Indian Border Security Force along Telkupi border in Chapainawabganj's Shibganj on Saturday night.

The victim, Mohammad Badsha, 22, was the son of Mohammad Rafique of Telkupi village of the upazila, said locals.

Quoting locals, Tozammel Haque, chairman of Shahbajpur union parishad, said BSF members of Gopalnagar camp opened fire on Badsha when he along with others were entering India through the border around 11:30pm. He died on the spot.

The BSF members took his body from the spot yesterday morning, the chairman said.

Lt Col Mahmudul Hasan, commanding officer of Rohonpur 59 BGB Battalion, said they heard the sound of two gunshots near the border on Saturday night.

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Hard to believe it is a road. The road in front of Pashchim Talla Baitus Salam Mosque in Narayanganj has been in such a condition for a long time. An explosion on Friday that killed 25 devotees brought the mosque under media spotlight. This photo was taken on Saturday.

PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN

## COVID VACCINE 90pc of Sinovac staffers, families took it

Says CEO of Chinese firm

REUTERS, Beijing

About 90 percent of Sinovac Biotech Ltd employees and their families have taken an experimental coronavirus vaccine developed by the Chinese firm under the country's emergency use programme, its chief executive said yesterday.

The extent of inoculations under the emergency programme, which China launched in July but has released few details about, points to how actively it is using experimental vaccines in the hopes of protecting essential workers against a potential Covid-19 resurgence, even as trials are still underway.

The programme is intended for specific groups, including medical staffers and those who work at food markets and in the transportation and service sectors.

Sinovac, whose CoronaVac is in Phase 3 clinical trials and has been included in the emergency scheme, offered the candidate vaccine to approximately 2,000 to 3,000 employees and their families on a voluntary basis, CEO Yin Weidong told Reuters.

"As a vaccine developer and manufacturer, a new outbreak could directly impact our vaccine production," Yin said on the sidelines of an international trade fair in Beijing, explaining why his company was included in the emergency programme.

Data gathered from the programme could offer evidence of the vaccine's safety, but such data, which is not part of

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