City

Names of senior leaders were dropped while people close to local lawmakers and influential local leaders were included in many of the committees, Hasina said, adding that she didn't want the committees to be formed through nepotism, insiders told The

Hasina said these at a meeting of the AL Central Working Committee (ALCWC), the highest decisionmaking body of the party, at the Gono

According to party insiders, drafts for at least 20 district committees were submitted at the party president's

corruption and repression against women, and personal staff and close relatives of the district committee president and general secretaries, the

At yesterday's meeting, Hasina read out some of the drafts and mentioned the names of some "controversial and tainted individuals", said sources.

She also mentioned that some former presidents, general secretaries

She also said committees of some upazilas were announced through press releases rather than holding

Only 33 leaders out of 81 were present at yesterday's ALCWC meeting, which was held after almost seven months.

Trump is doing "very well" in his

hospital, his medics said yesterday, but

a source with knowledge of the US

president's condition said his vital signs

had been worrying, with the next 48

Trump is up and walking, has been

fever free for 24 hours and his cough,

nasal congestion and fatigue are

improving, physician Sean Conley said

during the first medical update on his

status since the president was admitted

to Walter Reed military medical center

Trump is not receiving extra oxygen,

he added, and is "doing very well". "We

have monitored his cardiac function,

his kidney function, liver function. All

of those are normal," another member

of the medical team, Sean Dooley said.

president's health gave a much more

vitals over the last 24 hours were very

concerning and the next 48 hours will

commented on the assessment. Conley

was evasive when asked whether Trump

had received supplementary oxygen

at any point since falling ill, only

confirming that he hadn't received any

at the hospital or on Thursday -- the

consultation with specialists. The

president was "not requiring any

supplemental oxygen," she said in a

Earlier, she said that medical experts

The hospitalisation indicated

The development also highlighted

an intense effort to make sure

the president's reportedly "mild"

the uncharted waters for the US

election on November 3, with Trump

-- who is well behind his Democratic

opponent Joe Biden in the polls --

having to freeze much of his campaign.

with Trump's chief of staff saying

the president, 74, had only mild

symptoms, was in "good spirits" and

But later Friday White House

physician Sean Conley said Trump

received a single dose of Regeneron's

antibody cocktail, a treatment not yet

president is in a higher-risk category.

In his 70s and technically obese, the

Daniel Griffin, an infectious

disease specialist, told AFP Trump

had an estimated 20 percent chance

of developing severe disease requiring

Jr told Fox News his father was

"obviously taking it very seriously, but

Trump spoke to Senate Majority

Committee Chairman

Leader Mitch McConnell and Senate

Lindsey Graham, McEnany said, and

discussed emergency declarations and

the coronavirus stimulus package with

"His first question to me this

morning was, 'How is the economy

doing, how are the stimulus talks

going on Capitol Hill?," Meadows told

Chief of Staff Mark Meadows.

The president's son Donald Trump

feeling "very energetic."

approved by regulators.

oxygenation.

he's a fighter."

At first, aides gave rosy assessments,

symptoms do not deteriorate.

recommended Trump work from the

presidential offices at Walter Reed "for

Meanwile, Press Secretary Kayleigh

White House has not

path to a full recovery."

day he had his test.

statement late Friday.

the next few days."

But a source familiar with the

family members infected with Covid-19 were asked to not attend the meeting. The last ALCWC meeting was held on March 9.

Hasina also asked her party leaders to make the organisations stronger and communicate closely with the general people.

She also asked her party men to be prepared to serve the people as she feared that the Covid-19 situation may worsen during the coming winter, meeting sources said.

The ruling party yesterday formed eight high-powered committees for eight divisions to strengthen the organisational activities of the party.

The AL chief also informed the meeting that 522 leaders and activists of her party died from Covid-19.

In her introductory speech, Hasina said her government has been able to put the coronavirus pandemic under control because different ministries government organisations, including the health ministry and Directorate General of Health Services, worked sincerely.

"Some people are saying many things regarding the Directorate General of Health Services or health ministry... Whatever I've directed them [to do] on an emergency basis, they have done. They worked properly... That's why we've been able to put coronavirus under control," she said, reports UNB.

She said when directing them to do anything on coronavirus-related issues, she asked that the work be done bypassing government rules as it was urgent to provide medical services to the people.

The prime minister thanked all government organisations, AL and its associated bodies for their coordinated with the coronavirus or have any and sincere efforts to help people.

Villagers painting an almost 42-foot long boat, which will be used in a local rowing championship in Bogura's Sariakandi upazila. The competition, to be held on the Bangali river, is a decades-old custom. PHOTO: MOSTAFA SHABUJ

# Pay or die

7:00pm on October 28," said Yasmin. Hasan died in a "gunfight" that very

This newspaper reported Pradeep as saying on October 28, 2018: "Police went to Nayapara area after being informed that two groups of drug traffickers were engaged in a gunfight around 4:00am. As the police team reached the scene, the armed gang members began to shoot at them. Officers retaliated and after the exchange of fire ended, police found the bullet-ridden bodies."

Pradeep, now under an Anti-Corruption Commission probe for illegal wealth, had also told this newspaper that Hasan was a "suspected drug dealer".

a son, all under the age of 12.

His wife said, "I saw the news

on Facebook the next morning and immediately fell unconscious. He was shot thrice, on the left shoulder, left hip

She went with her sister and father-inlaw to retrieve the body.

Nurul was killed because they fell Tk 10 lakh short, alleged his family members. Also resident in Jaliyapara, Nurul was a Dubai returnee who worked at a local cell phone store. He had no criminal cases

"My son worked for five years in Dubai as a store manager in Al-Khulliah supermarket. He came back in 2015 to get married, and had a child, so I did not let him go back," said his father Shukkur Ahmed, a frail old man in a crisp white panjabi, with generations of doing

beautiful two-storey family home in

Nurul was picked up on March 15, 2019 from his store around the same time as Maghrib," said his father.

mediator between the family and the police station, he added, claiming, "They asked for Tk 15 lakh and in return, Nurul would be charged with Section 54 and sent to court. That was too much for us to give, so we gave Tk 5 lakh to the dalals on March 18.

Nurul was killed on March 22, 2019.

"They [Nurul and another detainee] were interrogated at the police station. Based on their information, police along with them were going to Rajarchhara area to recover firearms and yaba pills around 3:00am yesterday. Sensing law enforcers' presence, some drug peddlers opened fire to snatch the arrestees, forcing them

called gunfight were Nurul, and the other detainee, a man named Nur Mohammed.

said his nephew Faruq who saw the body, "and he had two gunshot wounds,

reminder that these extrajudicial killings were not just faceless numbers, they were

This unwritten rule of Teknaf town is also why, when Belal was arrested two days before last Eid-ul-Fitr, his father, 60-year-old Nurul Alam, immediately put his trawler up as collateral and paid c 2 lakh to the police.

"I met the cops in front of Mathiner Kup [a local landmark] the very next day and gave the money to a sub-inspector and an assistant sub-inspector," claimed Alam.

"I have already lost a son to crossfire, I could not afford to lose another."

is still in jail.

had been picked up by law enforcers on October 22, 2018, and "given the crossfire" on October 29, family members claimed.

"They were bulldozing the homes of yaba dealers at midnight and Kamal was watching... he was picked up from the gate of our home," said Kamal's widow, 20-year-old Rukia Akhter, about the incident two years ago.

Police, however, denied in their official report that Kamal was detained a week earlier before the "crossfire".

armed gang members began to shoot at them. Officers retaliated and after the exchange of fire ended, police found the bullet-ridden bodies.

yaba dealers -- but two of their brothers

economic status of the family stands in stark contrast with that of their alleged peers. The family lives right in the middle of Najirpara, a neighbourhood locally famed as "Yaba Para" because of the sheer number of yaba dealers who

Talking to these correspondents, Alam, a bone-thin man dressed in a tattered vest and lungi, said, "None of my sons are here to feed me. I catch fish worth Tk 500 every day and that is all we survive on. You can check my pot, we only had daal and rice for lunch.

set off to catch fish to feed his family.

The Daily Star could not independently verify the claims in these cases. However, several other families have recently filed cases against Pradeep and other policemen with similar accounts. Five cases, copies of which have been

obtained by The Daily Star, have been filed against the cops of Teknaf police station since the death of Sinha -- all alleging that their family members were killed because not enough money was handed over.

filed a case with Teknaf Upazila Senior Judicial Magistrate's Court on August 18, accusing 27 police officers of killing her "On July 4, my sons Saddam Hossain

team of police led by Whaikhyang police camp's in-charge Moshiur Rahman. They were picked up from the street in a neighbourhood called Maulavibazar," narrated Gulcheher in the first information report (FIR) of her case.

them home and was asked for TK 10 lakh. I bargained for Tk 5 lakh. I handed over Tk 3 lakh on that very day while I sent over the other Tk 2 lakh the next day using their own chosen messenger. Javed was prosecuted and sent to court, but on July 7 at 10:00pm, Saddam was taken to a place close to his home and shot."

The Daily Star interviewed all but one

24, filed a case against Pradeep and SI Moshiur Rahman among others, for the death of her husband Abdul Jalil.

Jalil was in the custody of Teknaf police for eight months before being alleged in the FIR.

He was arrested at 9:30am on December 3, 2019 from Fuad Al Khatib hospital, she said.

7:30pm on March 3, 2020, SI Moshiur, OC Pradeep, ASI Arifur Rahman and an informant came to our house, and demanded Tk 10 lakh in exchange for Jalil. I gathered Tk 5 lakh by borrowing money and selling my gold and the above-mentioned cops came to my house again on March 16 to take the money," described Senowara in the FIR.

Months passed again, and her husband did not show up. On June 10, witnesses (named in the case) saw him inside room number 4 of the police station and

"He agreed to let my husband go, and kept going there every day hoping he will be freed, up until July 7 when he was killed," she said.

Between 2:00am and 2:45am that night, Jalil was taken to an area called Combo Borchhora and shot at states her FIR, adding that he was brought alive but wounded to Teknaf Upazila Health Complex.

The health centre referred him to Cox's Bazar, and he died on the way. Senowara's brother-in-law confirmed the same version of events to this

newspaper. The day after Jalil's death, Pradeep told this newspaper that they had gone to

by an arrested "drug dealer". The accomplices of the "dealer" was waiting in ambush resulting in a "gunfight". Two bodies were recovered --

that of the "dealer" and of Jalil. Essentially, Pradeep claimed that Jalil

was in the group lying in ambush to save On August 30, 22-year-old Sultana Rabiya Munni filed a case accusing

Pradeep and 34 others of Teknaf police of killing her husband Syed Alam, brother-in-law Nurul Alam, and nephew Abdul Monaf on May 6 this year.

a team led by Pradeep and SI Moshiur Rahman. At the time of detention, the two cops asked for Tk 50 lakh which we did not give. They were shot at 4:40am in a paddy field adjacent to our house," she stated, adding that she is now coming forward to file a case because she was

According to media reports, then OC Pradeep said these men were robbers who were killed in a "gunfight" with the

threatened with "crossfire" too.

Shahena Akhter also filed a case on September 2 against Pradeep and SI Moshiur Rahman alleging that her husband Md Musa Akbar was killed in a "gunfight" because the family only paid Tk 3 lakh instead of the sum of Tk 20 lakh that was demanded of them. Musa was arrested on March 28 this

year at 2:00pm from Uluboniya. When Shahena went to see Pradeep, he denied that Musa was at the police station. But two informants approached her

saying they were representing SI Moshiur and that her husband would be released if they could pay Tk 20 lakh.

Musa was killed the same day at

11:55pm, Shahena narrated in the FIR, when they were unable to pay in full. On September 2, Hafez Ahmed filed

a case alleging that his sharecropper brother Shahab Uddin was picked up from their residence on April 17, 2019, at noon, by Pradeep and SI Dipak Biswas, and killed in a "gunfight".

"At the time of arrest, SI Dipak and his informant Aminul Haque told me to bring Tk 5 lakh to the police station, or be ready to conduct my brother's funeral. I pawned all the gold jewelry in the house for Tk 50,000 and went to the police station to meet SI Dipak, but he asked me to hand over the money to Aminul. Aminul accepted the money but informed me the next day that the entire Tk 5 lakh would be needed," described Hafez in the FIR.

When he could not arrange the money over the next two days, Shahab was killed in a "gunfight between two groups of drug dealers" on April 20, 2019 as said by the police in official report.

The Daily Star was unable to locate or reach the policemen named by victims' families for comment. Other than suspended OC Pradeep, who is in jail, the policemen in question have been transferred from their posts, and their phone numbers too have changed. On September 25, The Daily Star

reported that 1,487 policemen -- ranging from constables to inspectors -- had been transferred from Cox's Bazar by police administration, the largest such reshuffle in district police in recent history.

Police sources told The Daily Star that the reshuffle was actually part of a "correction campaign" by police in the aftermath of the killing of Sinha Md Rashed Khan. The subsequent outcry led to increased scrutiny of "gunfights", and "shootouts" by police in the district.

Asked about the allegations regarding gunfights" in Teknaf, Deputy Inspector General, Chattogram Range, Md Anwar Hossain, said, "The court has initiated an investigation into the cases filed and is seeking information from the relevant police station. When the Teknaf police station submits a report providing information, further action can be taken.'

Asked why the police officers named in these cases are not being arrested, "We cannot take any action until these steps are completed and the court gives further direction.

NO MONEY, NO OPTION

While some well-off families were able to pay for their family members to live, albeit in jail, what happens when you are too poor to pay?

Anowara was never even given the choice to pay for her husband Abdur Rahman's life. She lives in a shanty on the side of the

road, poverty etched all over her walls. In the middle of a storm, she sat outside it, breaking a mountain of bricks into chips -- she would get Tk 600 if she could finish the pile before the day was out.

A construction worker by profession, Abdur Rahman and his brother-in-law Abdul Kader were picked up from their respective homes on June 25, 2019 at midnight by Pradeep and his team in civil dress, informed Anowara.

They killed them that night 2:00am on Marine Drive, near Moheshkhaliapara," she claimed.

Anowara found the body at the morgue the next day, shot on the left shoulder, chest, and stomach.

Then OC Pradeep told the media that they were killed in a "gunfight" which happened when police raided that spot to catch "traffickers"

There was no dillydallying, no negotiations -- it was all over within two hours of their alleged arrest.

Even in the lawless land of extrajudicial killings, it is the poorest

## Nepal PM's advisers test positive for Covid-19

REUTERS, Kathmandu

Three advisers to Nepal's Prime Minister KP Sharma Oli vesterday said they had tested positive for Covid-19, which has claimed the lives of 528 people in the country.

Oli's press, political and foreign affairs advisers told Reuters they had been infected and were isolating themselves.

An assistant working for Oli also tested positive, they added.

Oli has previously tested negative, but had yet to take a test after his associates tested positive, press adviser Surya Thapa said.

The prime minister has been exercising extreme caution while meeting with people," Thapa told

### Govt working

FROM PAGE 1

The government strongly believes that the World Bank will provide them with the loan, he added.

International news Reuters, in its report on Wednesday, mentioned that World Bank President David Malpass said on Tuesday that he sought board approval for a \$12 billion coronavirus vaccine financing plan to help poor and developing countries secure a sufficient share of vaccine doses when they become available in the coming months.

He said the board was expected to consider the plan in early October.

Global competition for early oronavirus vaccine doses is already fierce, months ahead of any approvals, as wealthy countries move to secure

Malpass said the World Bank plan nimed to put poor and middle-income countries, where the virus is spreading most rapidly, on the same footing as richer countries by ensuring financing to secure supplies and a system for distribution, which will encourage drug makers to meet their demand.

Without early doses that can bring outbreaks under control, many of these countries risk economic disaster that would push hundreds of millions

of people back into poverty. Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina on September 26 asked the world community to treat the Covid-19 vaccine as a "global public good" and urged the United Nations to ensure its timely availability to all countries at

the same time. The PM, while addressing the general debate at the 75th United Nations General Assembly, virtually said that her government announced 21 stimulus packages, worth \$13.25 billion which is equivalent to 4.03 percent of the total GDP, aiming to minimise the impacts of the Covid-19

pandemic. Hasina on September 10, told the parliament that the government is ready to procure Covid-19 vaccine from the country where it will be developed first.

On August 27, Bangladesh approved the final or phase-3 human trial of a prospective Covid-19 vaccine by China's private Sinovac Biotech Ltd, which appeared to be a forerunner in a global race for developing inoculates

against coronavirus. Indian Foreign Secretary Harsh Vardhan Shringla, while visiting Dhaka in August, said New Delhi would make its potential Covid-19 vaccine available for Bangladesh on priority basis once it was produced in partnership with its developer Oxford University.

### Three more accused

FROM PAGE 1

Magistrate Ziadur Rahman. Metropolitan magistrates Saifur Rahman and Sharmin Khanom Nila ecorded statements of Ainuddin and

On September 29, the three accused were placed on a five-day remand in the case.

Jyotirmoy Sarker, additional deputy commissioner (media) of Sylhet Metropolitan Police, said, "With these three, confessional statements of six accused have been recorded in the court and the remaining two accused will be produced before the court tomorrow

A day before, three of the other named accused in the case made statements under section 164 before a Sylhet court. They are Saifur Rahman, Rabiul Islam, and Arjun Lasker.

Meanwhile, DNA samples of two other accused in the case -- Tarequl Islam Tarek and Mahfuzur Rahman Masum -- were collected at Sylhet MAG Osmani Medical College Hospital yesterday morning.

On September 25, a group of youth aped a woman at a hostel of MC College after forcefully taking the victim

The husband of the victim filed

# AL chief riled by inclusion

Dhanmondi office earlier. The people named in the draft included several leaders accused of

insiders added.

and vice-presidents of immediate past committees who have no allegations against them and have been dedicated to the party were dropped. She sent back the drafts and asked those to be reformed according to her guidelines.

councils, said meeting insiders.

ALCWC leaders who are infected

Election concerns grip White House reporters outside the White House, adding he had spoken several times to Trump already.

Privately, some Trump advisers

worried Trump's illness could cost him the presidential election in just 31 days. "Clearly it changes the dynamic from us being able to travel and show enormous energy and support from the rallies, which has been part of our

calculation just like in 2016," said one

Frump adviser.

The Trump campaign said all planned events involving the president were either being postponed or going virtual -- starting with the cancellation of a Florida rally Friday, one Saturday in Wisconsin and others in western states like Arizona next week.

Even the second Trump-Biden debate, scheduled for October 15, is now in some doubt. Rallies are such a key part of worrying assessment. "The president's

the Trump brand that his sudden inability to travel leaves the campaign scrambling to reinvent its strategy be critical in terms of his care," the In addition, Trump has made his source said. "We're still not on a clear argument that coronavirus dangers are overblown a central plank of his reelection platform.

> Underlining his sudden advantage in the bitter race, Biden, 77, traveled to Grand Rapids, Michigan, going ahead with a previously scheduled campaign stop. He was tested negative for coronavirus, his campaign reveled on Friday.

McEnany said Trump was receiving the and his family, and his campaign anti-viral drug remdesivir following announced it would take down all negative ads. However, Biden also reminded voters that he has pushed consistently for taking seriously the coronavirus,

which has killed more than 208,000

Biden said he was praying for Trump

Americans, unlike his opponent who has mocked the Democrat for his rigorous use of masks. "Be patriotic," Biden told supporters in Michigan through a blue surgical

mask. "It's not about being a tough guy. It's about doing your part.' News of Trump's infection came after one of his closest advisors, Hope Hicks, tested positive -- sparking fears of a cluster of cases emanating from the

Trump met with dozens of people through the week and reportedly went to a fundraiser in New Jersey after it was known that Hicks had contracted the The White House said it was carrying

heart of the White House.

couple's 14-year-old son Barron had tested negative. Vice President Mike Pence and other senior figures tested negative. The White

out contact tracing, while Melania

Trump's spokeswoman said the

House said Supreme Court nominee Amy Coney Barrett was negative too. Former White House top aid Kellyanne Conway, however, announced late Friday she had tested positive with mild" symptoms.

Trump's campaign manager, 42-year-

old Bill Stepien, said he had tested

positive, US media reported, and was in quarantine with mild symptoms. As the news rattled global stock markets, leaders including Germany's Angela Merkel, Britain's Boris Johnson, and Russia's Vladimir Putin wished the president and first lady a speedy

Trump's predecessor Barack Obama noted the US is "in the midst of a big political fight" but set aside the bitter election battle to extend "best wishes" to the first family.



The amount was not enough and

Hasan left behind two daughters and

and stomach.

Thirty-two-year-old

business in the shutki industry.

The Daily Star spoke to him at his

Two police sources acted as

In the report of his death, published by this newspaper the next day, Pradeep admitted that Nurul was detained before

to fire back in self-defence. The only two casualties of this so-

"Nurul's right eye was bruised black,"

one to the chest and one in his stomach." Faruq took out a photo of the corpse to show to this correspondent; Nurul's father Shukkur who was standing at a distance, ambled over to see what was being shown, unintentionally spotted the photo and the impassively tall man doubled over, crying frantically -- a stark

heavy personal costs for families.

They paid and Belal lives, though he Another son, 23-year-old Kamal,

On October 29, 2018, OC Pradeep told The Daily Star, "Police went to Nayapara area after being informed that two groups of drug traffickers were engaged in a gunfight around 4:00am. As a police team reached the scene, the

The family, as well as locals, claimed that neither Kamal nor Belal were listed

"My brothers-in-law surrendered after Kamal was killed," said Rukia.

Drug dealers or not, the sociolive there in magnificent mansions.

He hoisted a bundle of fish nets and

The first was by Gulcheher, who

and Javed Hossain were detained by a

of those who filed these cases. On August 27, Senowara Begum,

found dead following a "gunfight", she

We looked for him for months. At

Senowara rushed to meet Pradeep.

the spot to recover drugs, accompanied

their comrade.

"They were picked up from our house

in Rangikhali, Gazipara at 2:00am by

who are the most deprived.

and her husband there.

he case on the same night with Shah Poran Police Station accusing Saifur Rahman, 28, Shah Mahbubur Rahman Roni, 25, Arjun Lasker, 25, Mahfuzur Rahman Masum, 25, Tarek Ahmed, 28, Rabiul Islam, 25, and two to three more unnamed men.