



4-LANE DHAKA-BHANGA EXPRESS HIGHWAY BUILT WITH BSRM XTREME

COUNTRY'S NO. 1 STEEL EXPERT

BSRM building a safer nation



GUINNESS WORLD RECORDS RECOGNIZES

World's Largest VRM

SHAH CEMENT

7 RAILWAY PROJECTS

Slow ADP fund release causing more delays

Say directors of projects funded by Indian LoC, grant

TUHIN SHUBHRA ADHIKARY

With railways projects under Indian Line of Credit and grants already facing delays, the project directors have pointed out some issues in implementing the work, which was taken up to boost connectivity among neighbouring countries.

The main issue in all the seven projects -- six being executed under Indian LoC while one with Indian grants -- is halt in fund disbursement from the Annual Development Programme (ADP), after all these were listed as "low priority projects".

Design and land-related disagreement with officials of other projects and agencies concerned and visa-related complications of Indian nationals involved in some of the seven projects, among other issues, were also discussed in a meeting, said railway sources.

Project directors shared the matter with Railways Minister Nurul Islam Sujan when he chaired the Monthly Development Review Meeting on Monday at the capital's Rail Bhavan, the sources said.

After learning about the issues, the minister gave relevant authorities several directives on solving them and asked the project authorities to expedite the work, which slowed down due to Covid-19 pandemic.

SEE PAGE 10 COL 2



Two people racing a raft made out of banana trees at Hasnapara in Sariakandi upazila of Bogura yesterday. The villagers found a way to enjoy an afternoon on the very water that has been causing problems. The flooding there has been devastating this year. PHOTO: COLLECTED

Vaccine may be ready by year-end

Says WHO chief
REUTERS, Geneva

A vaccine against Covid-19 may be ready by year-end, the head of the World Health Organization (WHO) said yesterday, without elaborating.

WHO Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus called for solidarity and political commitment by all leaders to ensure equal distribution of vaccines when they become available.

"We will need vaccines and there is hope that by the end of this year we may have a vaccine. There is hope," Tedros said in closing remarks to the WHO's Executive Board meeting that examined the global response to the pandemic.

The EU health regulator has launched a real-time review of a Covid-19 vaccine developed by US drugmaker Pfizer and Germany's BioNTech, it said yesterday, following a similar announcement for

SEE PAGE 10 COL 1

MAGISTRATES RUNNING MOBILE COURTS

SC yet to decide if it's legal

ASHUTOSH SARKAR

The Supreme Court's Appellate Division is yet to settle whether executive magistrates can operate mobile courts legally, although the issue has been pending with it for over three years.

The Appellate Division could not even start hearing government appeals against the High Court verdict that had declared unconstitutional the rules under which executive magistrates run the courts.

The HC scrapped the rules on May 11, 2017, after three writ petitions were filed challenging them.

The hearing was scheduled to take place two and a half years ago and the delay in holding it has halted the final settlement of the issue.

Neither the government nor the writ petitioners has taken any initiative for holding of the hearing. In the meantime, executive magistrates continue to operate mobile courts across the country following a stay order issued by the Appellate Division on the HC verdict.

Contacted, Additional Attorney General Momtaz Uddin Fakir told The Daily Star on Monday that the Appellate Division was now holding hearings, disposing cases and passing ad-interim orders virtually due to the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic.

SEE PAGE 10 COL 2

FIRST YEAR OF BANGLADESH BANGABANDHU'S NATION-BUILDING CHALLENGES

Bangladesh may stand on its own feet by next spring



Members of Mahila Samity call on Prime Minister Sheikh Mujibur Rahman at the Gono Bhaban on October 7, 1972.

October 7, 1972

SHAMSUDDOZA SAJEN

SPECIAL CELL TO DEAL WITH YARN PROBLEMS

Prime Minister Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman today presides over a high-level conference relating to the distribution of cotton yarns in the country. The problems relating to the distribution of cotton to the actual weavers are discussed at the meeting. Bangabandhu directs to immediately set up a special cell with the chairman of Cotton Corporation, chairman of Bangladesh Small Industries Corporation and registrar of Cooperative Societies to deal with

SEE PAGE 10 COL 1

Six held over rape, sodomy

STAR REPORT

Law enforcers arrested six people, including a madrasa teacher, in five districts in the last two days on charges of rape and sodomy.

In another incident, a Dinajpur court yesterday sent two people to jail in connection with a gang-rape case.

In Lakshmipur, police on Monday night arrested two youths on charges of gang-raping a widow in Charkalgacha area of Ramgati upazila.

The arrestees -- Md Sohel, 27, and Md Jamal, 27 -- are from Charkalakopa village in the same upazila.

Police said the victim, a mother of two, lived at her home with her son. Some local youths used to stalk her.

Being fed up, the 35-year-old woman filed a case with a court against five to six youths. This angered the youths.

SEE PAGE 10 COL 2

102-carat diamond fetches \$15.7m



AFP, Hong Kong

An exceedingly rare 102-carat flawless white diamond sold for \$15.7 million at an online auction in Hong Kong on Monday evening.

Described as "completely flawless" by auctioneer Sotheby's, the 102.39-carat stone went to an unnamed telephone bidder for HK\$122 million in an auction held online because of the coronavirus pandemic.

"The buyer of this diamond has bagged a bargain," said Tobias Kormind, managing director of online jeweller 77 Diamonds.

During a time of economic uncertainty, he said, "savvy investors are currently falling over themselves to acquire alternative safe haven assets like diamonds, property and gold".

SEE PAGE 10 COL 6

RIEAT MURDER

Minni appeals to the HC

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Ayesha Siddika Minni yesterday submitted an appeal with the High Court challenging her conviction and death sentence by a Barguna court over the murder of her husband Rifat Sharif.

Her lawyer Makkia Fatema Islam told The Daily Star that she filed the 18-page appeal on behalf of Minni along with more than 400 pages of documents,

SEE PAGE 10 COL 6



PRAYER TIMING OCTOBER 7

Fazr	Zohr	Asr	Maghrib	Esha
AZAN 4:45	12:45	4:15	5:53	7:30
JAMAAT 5:20	1:15	4:30	5:56	8:00

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

RETURN TO WHITE HOUSE

Trump faces backlash for removing mask

His doctor warns president won't be 'entirely out of the woods' for another week

AGENCIES

US President Donald Trump faced a backlash yesterday for removing his mask when he returned to the White House and urging Americans not to fear the Covid-19 disease that has killed more than 209,000 people in the country and put him in hospital.

Trump arrived at the White House on Monday in a made-for-television spectacle in which he descended from his Marine One helicopter wearing a white surgical mask, only to remove it as he posed, saluting and waving, on the mansion's South Portico.

"Don't let it dominate you. Don't be afraid of it," Trump said in a video after his return from the Walter Reed Medical Center military hospital outside Washington where he was admitted on Friday for the disease caused by the coronavirus.

"I'm better, and maybe I'm immune - I don't know," he added, flanked by American flags and with the Washington Monument in the background. "Get out there. Be careful."

SEE PAGE 10 COL 2



Installed almost in the middle of a road in Nizambagh area of Keraniganj, this electric transformer poses risk of accidents. It also obstructs movement of traffic and pedestrians. The photo was taken recently.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

BLACK HOLE RESEARCH

Trio wins Nobel Prize for Physics



Penrose Genzel Ghez

AFP, Stockholm

Roger Penrose of Britain, Reinhard Genzel of Germany and Andrea Ghez of the US won the Nobel Physics Prize yesterday for their research into black holes, the Nobel jury said.

The physicists were selected "for their discoveries about one of the most exotic phenomena in the universe, the black hole," the Nobel Committee said.

Penrose, 89, was honoured for showing "that the general theory of relativity leads to the formation of black holes", while Genzel, 68, and Ghez, 55, were jointly awarded for discovering "that an invisible and extremely heavy object governs the orbits of stars at the centre of our galaxy," the jury said.

Ghez is just the fourth woman to receive the physics prize since 1901 when the first Nobel prizes were handed out.

SEE PAGE 10 COL 1