

**KARABAKH TRUCE UNDER SEVERE STRAIN**  
Azerbaijan, Armenia accuse each other of intense shelling on civilian areas  
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# The Daily Star

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SAFAR 24, 1442 HIJRI

16 PAGES PRICE : Tk12.00



**"The government doesn't have any visible preparation to deal with the coronavirus situation in winter."**  
JATIYA PARTY CHAIRMAN GM QUADER



**"The time has come to accept that dialogue and agreements will not persuade or compel the People's Republic of China to change."**  
US NATIONAL SECURITY ADVISER ROBERT O'BRIEN



**"The Earth must be worked and nursed, cultivated, and protected."**  
POPE FRANCIS URGES LEADERS TO TAKE ACTION AGAINST CLIMATE CHANGE



## Nightmare in Jordan

*A helpless woman fell victim to human trafficking gang, returns home with horrific experience*

SHARIFUL ISLAM

Abandoned by her husband and struggling to feed her two children, Nazma Begum thought moving overseas for work would change her life.

It did, indeed, but not the way she thought it would.

The 32-year-old from a remote village in Moheshpur of Jhenaidah was lured by one of her villagers with the promise of a house-keeping job in a Middle-Eastern country.

But she ended up in the sordid world of sex trafficking in Jordan.

During her 10-month stay in the Arab country, Nazma endured torture, captivity and abuse. Instead of returning with money that could change their fate, she came back on September 10 empty-handed with physical injuries and shocking tales of abuse.

"Never did it occur to me that such a nightmare was awaiting me. I went there to earn for my family, but I was sold instead," Nazma told The Daily Star over the phone recently.

"I am in severe distress. I have no money for my treatment and food for my children. I don't know what would I do?"

With almost no formal education and any idea of the outside world, Nazma made up her mind to go to a distant land after Milon Mondol, an inhabitant of the village and

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This aerial view of the capital's Shapla Chattar shows students of various schools blocking traffic while protesting the recent epidemic of rape and incidents of violence against women. The students protested in the area from 1:00pm to 4:00pm yesterday.

PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN

## Anti-rape protesters list demands

*Quick probe, trial, fixing Evidence Act among them*

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Various political parties, students, youth and rights activists protesting over this past week have stated their demands -- including expedited police investigations and trials of rapists to ensure justice for victims and amending the Evidence Act to end victim blaming.

Condemning the rise of rape incidents in the country, under different banners, these groups held protest programmes across the country and issued several statements yesterday.

Quoting government data, Jatiya Ganatantrik Front, said in a statement that between 2001 and 2020, a verdict was given in only 3.56 percent of cases filed on women and children repression, and punishment was given in only 0.37 percent of cases.

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## Sylhet man dies in 'cop custody'

OUR CORRESPONDENT, SYLHET

The mysterious death of a 33-year-old man, allegedly in police custody in Sylhet city, sparked a protest yesterday.

Hundreds of locals blocked the Sylhet-Sunamganj highway for half an hour at Akhalia in the afternoon and demanded justice for the death.

Police later went to the spot and assured the protestors of proper investigation into the death.

News of the death of Rayhan Ahmed, 33, broke earlier in the day, with different local newspapers quoting the police officials as saying that Rayhan was beaten to death by a mob after he was caught mugging someone in Kasthogarh area of the city.

His family members,

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## KILLING OLD KHOWAI RIVER

# They are all in it together

*AL-BNP men, govt and pvt bodies feast on river land*

MINTU DESHWARA, BACK FROM HABIGANJ

It is called Old Khowai and as if to justify its name, it is on its deathbed being deserted by all.

For decades, the water body in Habiganj has been encroached upon by various government establishments and locally influential people belonging to both the Awami League and BNP.

Even a massive drive conducted last year could not yield much result as several of the buildings demolished then have been rebuilt with the land re-occupied.

Besides, a list of illegal occupants drawn up by the district administration in Habiganj town remains undisclosed though it was prepared a year ago.

The list includes influential locals as well as many government bodies which have set up offices and other buildings on this illegally occupied river land, say district administration sources.

While there are allegations that the number of illegal occupants is at least 2,000, environmentalists say only 83 have been mentioned in the district administration's list sent to the National River Conservation Commission.

Tareq Mohammad Zakaria, additional deputy commissioner (revenue)

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## Eight held over rape incidents in five districts

*6 remanded over gang rape of woman in Sunamganj*

STAR REPORT

At least eight people have been arrested since Saturday in connection with rape incidents in five districts, while a Sunamganj court yesterday remanded six accused in a gang-rape and abduction case.

In Rangamati, a man was arrested on Saturday night in Kaptai upazila for raping a physically-challenged indigenous woman.

The accused, Md Abu Taleb Saddam, 27, forcibly took the victim to a secluded place on Friday morning and raped her.

The victim's sister filed a rape case the following day, and Taleb was arrested, said Iqbal Bahar Chowdhury, officer-in-charge of Chandraghona Police Station.

Another man was arrested in Rangpur on Saturday night for raping a sixth-grader in Badarganj upazila.

Police said the victim and her family

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## Remain cautious about spending

*PM directs officials to avoid unnecessary expenditure as Covid situation may worsen*

UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday directed government officials to refrain from the unnecessary expenditure of public money as she feared a second wave of Covid-19 in the coming days.

"There's an apprehension that Covid-19 pandemic might hit again, because many countries including [some in] Europe are suffering from this pandemic again. We all have to remain safe from now on," she said at a programme where she handed over the national standard to 10 units and organisations of Bangladesh Army.

She joined the programme in Savar Cantonment virtually from her official residence the Gono Bhaban.

She said that the government had announced a budget of Tk 568,000 crore for the 2020-21 fiscal which was a very tough job due to the pandemic where many countries were suffering from severe economic constraints.

"We've given the budget defying all odds. We said that everyone has to remain cautious regarding expending public money, because if coronavirus hits again massively then we'll need a huge amount of money, we'll have to

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## THE BUSINESS

### Forex may be spent on ADP

The government has taken a decision to spend a portion of the country's foreign exchange reserves on the implementation of the annual development programme (ADP). "We are now carrying out a study to select the projects where the reserves can be invested," Finance Minister AHM Mustafa Kamal said.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina had asked officials concerned in July to find a way out as the existing laws do not allow investment of foreign exchange reserves in development projects. The Prime Minister's Office is now working on it and convening meetings with different ministries, Kamal said.

STORY ON B1

## 'ADVICE TO WOMEN' Ananta Jalil backtracks after backlash

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Amid countrywide protests over the growing incidents of rape and violence against women, actor Ananta Jalil in a video posted Saturday night blamed "revealing dresses" worn by women for inviting "unwanted sexual advances".

However, after a backlash on social media, the actor backtracked and uploaded a "corrected" version yesterday afternoon and claiming that he "does not want to be involved in controversy" and apologised for any "misunderstanding".

In the original six-minute video titled "Ananta teaches rapists a lesson", the actor was heard giving advice to women "as a brother".

"Women [in Bangladesh] wear indecent dresses inspired by women

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The six-storey Diabetics and General Hospital in Habiganj Sadar's Mashulia area was built on occupied land of the Old Khowai river. It is one of several large buildings and offices set up by the government and influential local bodies on illegally occupied river land.

PHOTO: MINTU DESHWARA

## NEW AG'S APPOINTMENT 'Disappointed', two top law officials quit

*New AG vows to go tough on corruption*

ASHUTOSH SARKAR

Three days after the appointment of senior lawyer AM Amin Uddin as the new attorney general for the state, two additional attorney generals -- Murad Reza and Momtaz Uddin Fakir -- yesterday resigned without citing any specific reasons.

Their resignation was the hot topic among Supreme Court lawyers yesterday.

Requesting anonymity, a former deputy attorney general, said both of them were disappointed by not getting the attorney general job.

In their resignation letters, sent to the president through the law ministry yesterday morning, they mentioned "personal difficulties" for stepping down.

Now there is only one additional attorney general. Some lawyers said Amin Uddin was almost contemporary to Murad and Momtaz, and both of them felt overlooked. The two had expectations to be attorney general following the demise of Mahbubey Alam.

The names of several lawyers, including Murad, Momtaz, current Additional Attorney General SM Munir, Ajmalul Hossain QC and Munsurul Hoque Chowdhury, had been in discussion for the top law officer post, a lawyer said.

Ajmalul and Munsurul were not young, the lawyer said.

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