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### Poultry farmer quarantined in Rajshahi

Bird flu infection suspected

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

A poultry farmer was quarantined at Rajshahi Medical College Hospital as doctors suspect that he might be infected with bird flu virus.

Ashraf Hossain, 32, of Terokhadia Pashchimpara in Rajshahi was admitted to the hospital on Wednesday as he showed multiple symptoms of the disease. His blood sample was sent to Dhaka for test.

"If his case is confirmed, he will be the first person in the country to have been infected with bird flu", said Dr Abdul Alim, who is treating the patient.

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### 2 JMB men held in Kurigram

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kurigram

Two members of outlawed Jama'atul Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB) were arrested at Bahalguri village under Bhurungamari upazila early yesterday.

The arrestees are Nashirul Haque Bintu, 40, and Hafizur Rahman Raju, 42.

Acting on a tip-off, a team of law enforcers from Bhurungamari Police Station raided the village at around 2:00am and arrested the two JMB men at their houses.

Hafizur and Bintu, close associates of JMB leader Matin Mehedi, are chargesheeted accused in a case. They went into hiding following the arrest of Matin in the district town in April last year.



Ali cuddles his son Didar, with his wife standing next to him, at the Moulvibazar District Jail gate, something he could not do since Didar's birth.

### Ali finally freed on bail after 15 years

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Moulvibazar

Ali Hussain alias Allya returned to his home after 15 years as he was released on bail from Moulvibazar District Jail Thursday evening.

His wife and son came to the jail gate to receive a speechless Ali.

Ali, 63, of Chhaysiri village under Chunarughat upazila in Habiganj district was languishing in jail for 15 years without conviction. He was arrested on August 5, 1992 in connection with a murder

case but failed to obtain bail since he is poor and could not afford legal assistance. However, his co-accused had been freed on bail after their arrest. He was 47 when he was arrested.

The Daily Star published a story on Ali on February 10 following which Md Alkama Siddique, deputy commissioner (DC) of Moulvibazar, constituted a five-member committee to give legal assistance to Ali. Former lawmaker

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### Rohingyas in KSA 'a major irritant' for Dhaka, Riyadh

PORIMOL PALMA

The activities of Rohingyas and a few Bangladeshis, posing as Rohingyas to get special favour from the Saudi authorities, have become a major irritant for Dhaka and Riyadh, officials said.

As Rohingyas have been subject to state persecution in their native Myanmar, Saudi Arabia handed out work permits or iqama to them even though they did not have necessary documents to get such permits, they said.

Coming to know about such advantages, many Rohingyas went to the Gulf country on Bangladeshi passports, an official at Bangladesh Embassy in Riyadh said, adding that Rohingya population in Saudi Arabia now stands at about 2.5 lakh.

He said they managed to get

Bangladeshi passports in the name of performing Hajj or Umrah, but destroyed the documents once in the kingdom in a bid to land jobs.

"The Rohingyas' getting work permits and jobs has never been an issue for Bangladesh. But problems arise when they pass for Bangladesh and want to be sent back to Bangladesh after Saudi police arrest them on criminal charges," the official told The Daily Star.

An official in Dhaka said Saudi police arrested 267 Rohingyas on criminal charges in Jeddah last year. Saudi authorities then asked the Bangladesh mission there to make necessary arrangement so they could be sent back here.

The request threw the Bangladesh officials into confusion as Saudi authorities could not show any documents that could prove

that the arrestees were Bangladeshis. The mission then informed the foreign ministry and the home ministry about the matter after which the government held an inter-ministerial meeting in August last year.

The meeting concluded that Bangladesh could not accept any migrants from a third country unless they could produce documents proving them to be Bangladeshis. "There have been no new development about the matter," said an official in Dhaka on March 5.

"Saudi authorities were seriously annoyed at the issue," said a foreign ministry official.

Meantime, the Bangladesh embassy official in Riyadh said a few Bangladeshi nationals flew to the kingdom to perform Hajj or

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### All-male rally vows to root out acid violence

International Women's Day today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Men will have to come forward to root out acid violence against women and children in the society as the brutality is perpetrated mostly by men, participants at an all-male rally yesterday said.

They called on all to carry on with the campaign against acid terror until the scourge is completely wiped out from the society.

Today is International Women's Day. Acid Survivors Foundation (ASF) and the Prothom Alo jointly organised the all-male rally at Rabintra Sorobor in the city's Dhanmondi neighbourhood on the eve of the day which will be observed across the globe with the theme 'Investing in Women and Girls'.

The participants called on all to work together to resist the violence that brings physical and mental devastation to a person.

Saying that acid terror stems from vindictiveness, Prothom Alo Editor Matiuur Rahman said, "Men are mainly responsible for acid violence against women and children. So we, the men, have to eliminate this terror from the society".

He said incidents of the violence have decreased significantly in the last couple of years but that the campaign will have to go on until

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| Prayer Timing |       |        |
|---------------|-------|--------|
| March 8       |       |        |
|               | Azan  | Jamaat |
| Fajr          | 5-10  | 5-45   |
| Zohr          | 12-45 | 1-15   |
| Asr           | 4-30  | 4-45   |
| Maghrib       | 6-07  | 6-11   |
| Esha          | 7-30  | 8-00   |

Source: Islamic Foundation



The Jessore-Benapole Highway in appalling state in Benapole. Unrepaired for years, the badly damaged part of the road often remains under water, causing vehicular movement difficult.

### Road to Benapole in bad shape, no repair for years

MOHSIN MILON, Benapole

The dilapidated Jessore-Benapole highway, one of the most important roads for trade between Bangladesh and India, has turned hazardous to hundreds of motor vehicles.

The highway that plays a vital role in the economy of the region by linking adjacent districts did not undergo any major repair work in the last five years, complained locals.

Several hundred trucks loaded with goods to and from India and as many buses carrying hundreds of

tourists ply this treacherous highway everyday.

The government of Bangladesh earns around Tk 1500 crore from Benapole land port, according to officials at Benapole customs office.

Hafizur Rahman, vice president of Benapole Transport Owners Association, told The Daily Star that the rundown highway causes delays in goods transportation, resulting in losses to both transport owners and traders.

More importantly, transport workers and travellers are often sustaining injuries as the road is

full of craters and potholes, he added.

The authorities cover up a few of the potholes haphazardly whenever newspapers run reports on the state of the poorly maintained highway, Rahman alleged adding that this sort of repair work is not suitable to withstand the heavy traffic on the highway.

Abdur Rahim, sub-divisional engineer of Roads and Highways Department (RHD) in Jessore, said the repair work of the highway is expected to commence by the end of this month.

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### Musharraf to call new parliament within ten days

AFP, Karachi

Pakistan President Pervez Musharraf said yesterday he would convene the country's new parliament within ten days and vowed his full support to the incoming coalition government.

Speaking at the opening of water-supply project in southern Sindh province, Musharraf said the international community recognised that he had fulfilled his pledge to hold free and fair elections.

"The national and provincial assemblies sessions will be called in a week or one and half weeks. There will be no hurdle to this," state-run Pakistan television showed him as saying.

"I promise if peace is maintained, I will fully support the new coalition governments," Musharraf said, without elaborating.

Musharraf said that moderate forces had triumphed in the elections.

The election winning Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) and Pakistan Muslim League-N (PML-N) are demanding the parliament and four provincial assemblies are convened immediately to speed up transfer of power to elected representatives.

Musharraf has repeatedly said since the February polls, which saw his political allies suffering heavy defeats, that he was ready to work with the new government.

PML-N, the second largest party in the parliament after the PPP, has continued to demand his resignation and hint at a possible move to impeach the embattled president.

"All political parties should demonstrate prudence and focus on governance and this is possible

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### EMPLOYMENT IN SAUDI ARABIA Govt fixes minimum wage for unskilled workers at 550 SR

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Minimum wage for each unskilled Bangladeshi worker who receives food and lodging in Saudi Arabia has been fixed at 550 Saudi Riyals (SR) per month.

According to a press release of the Ministry of Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment, The minimum wage will be effective from July 1 this year.

If the employer provides lodging only, the minimum wage for an unskilled worker has to be SR 750 (1SR-TK 19). If the employer does not provide any food and lodging, the minimum wage will have to be SR 950, the release added.

A recent inter-ministerial meeting chaired by Abdul Matin Chowdhury, expatriates' welfare secretary, fixed the minimum wage and decided that no employment

demand letter or visas will be approved if the wages are less than that fixed by the government.

According to officials and manpower agencies handling recruitment of workers to the kingdom, Bangladeshi workers get the lowest wages due to fierce competition between recruiting agencies and middlemen who buy visas from Saudi employers.

Presently, each of the around 1.7 lakh Bangladeshi workers in Saudi Arabia gets only around SR 200 to SR 300 per month, prompting

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The Daily Star

Coming out tomorrow - Star Campus

### Linking Young Minds Together

The Daily Star offers campus based weekly magazine 'Star Campus' - the ultimate magazine for the young generation - a common platform for the college and university students and academicians - to share their ideas, thoughts, dreams, opinions and views.

Star Campus is an endeavour to bring into the center stage the visionary aspects of our college and university students, alongside their lifestyle, cultural trends and their multidimensional talents.

Star Campus is a magazine broadly based on campus life! It contains articles, academic news, achievements, travelogues, interviews, book reviews, quiz, milestones, academic tips, profiles of educational institutes, cultural and extra-curricular activities in campus, jokes, cartoons, photographs and much more. This is a magazine Of the Students, By the Students and For the Students.

Star Campus helps link young minds together.



### ৮ মার্চ ২০০৮ আন্তর্জাতিক নারী দিবস

### নারী ও কন্যাশিশুর উন্নয়নে বাড়াও বিনিয়োগ

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