

# Woman kills herself along with son

OUR CORRESPONDENT, BOGRA

A woman killed herself along with her infant by jumping under a train at Borocapra in Dupchanchia upazila of Bogra yesterday.

Swapna Rani, 30, wife of Niranjan Pramanik of Parshun village under Nandigram upazila of the district, with her one and a half years old son Niloy Pramanik, jumped under a Santhar-bound train around 12noon, witnesses said.

Swapna's uncle Ashok Roy alleged she committed suicide after being tortured by her in-laws over a family dispute.

Her in-laws, however, denied the allegation, saying Swapna left home following a quarrel with her husband.

Sub-inspector of Bogra Government Railway Police (GRP) outpost Bimal Chaki said the bodies were sent to Shaheed Ziaur Rahman Medical College Hospital morgue for an autopsy.



A view of the illuminated Akshardham Temple in Gandhinagar, some 30km from Ahmedabad, is pictured ahead of Diwali festivities, yesterday. The Hindu festival of light, Diwali marks the homecoming of the God Lord Ram after vanquishing the demon king Ravana and symbolises taking people from darkness to light and the victory of good over evil.

PHOTO: AFP

# Who to blame for his injury? Shujan rolls out two options

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scotch tape, a technique used widely to make it a substitute for a much heavier cricket ball.

The coveted "toy" blasted in his hands at Panthapath intersection around 1:00pm, leaving the child screaming in agony.

The homemade bomb was lying on the road divider, in all possibility left there by political activists during recent harrals.

Murad was taken immediately to Dhaka Medical College Hospital. After primary treatment there, he was shifted to National Institute of Traumatology and Orthopaedic Research (NITOR).

Visiting the hospital, this correspondent found the victim's mother Rozina, a garment worker, sat shocked and speechless. She could only pray so that her son's hands would be spared from amputation.

His hands might be spared from amputation, but a few fingers might not, said physicians at NITOR.

A student at Rotary Govt Primary School, Murad on Fridays used to work as a conductor of a pick-up van without

letting his parents know.

The incident occurred when he was on duty in a New Market bound vehicle.

Roused to fury by such an incident, Murad's father Mohammad Jamal said, "Let them [political activists] rally on the streets as much as they want to, but why they leave cocktails so carelessly? My son is about to become crippled just because of somebody's carelessness."

Like Murad, nine-year-old Rahima in the capital's Jurain, Rony, 7, and Milton, 8, of Bogra, and Sumon, 16, of Jhalakathi, had got themselves critically injured over the last six days since October 27 after picking up unexploded cocktails. All of them thought that the attractive red objects were toys.

A kid was shot dead in Chandpur and another was injured in Bogra when crude bombs were hurled at him.

The BNP-led 18-party opposition alliance enforced countrywide 60-hour hartal on October 27-29 demanding a non-party polls-time government.

During the shutdown, the city saw many incidents of vandalism, arson and cocktail blasts.

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Reading from a statement, he said a search committee consisting of retired chief justices could be formed to pick the members of the election-time government.

The nonpartisan member/s nominated by the search committee, however, will have to be elected through by-elections to comply with the constitutional provision that no unelected person can be in the government.

Shujan also has some conditions for the members of the said government according to which none of the polls-time government mem-

bers would be able to contest the next parliamentary elections or conduct any election campaign.

According to the proposals, the tenure of the government will be 90 days starting from October 27 this year, and besides discharging the routine duties, the government will provide all necessary supports to the Election Commission to hold fair elections.

Badiul Alam Majumder said the polls-time government formulas were aimed at finding a feasible solution to the existing political crisis. He, however, mentioned that the goodwill of the

two major alliances was the prerequisite for solving the crisis.

If the leaders of the two alliances failed to immediately reach a consensus on the polls-time government, the nation would have to pay an extreme price, he warned.

Former advisers to caretaker government SM Shahjahan and M Hafiz Uddin Khan, columnist Syed Abul Moksud, Justice (retired) Kazi Ebadul Haque, Gonoshasthaya Kendra founder Zafrullah Chowdhury and local government expert Prof Tofail Ahmed also spoke at the press conference.

# N'ganj cricket fans clash with cops

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staging a demonstration on the Bangabandhu Road in Chashara area when they saw a notice hanging on the main gate of United Commercial Bank (UCB) Chashara branch, saying that the tickets for the match would be sold today instead of yesterday.

Failling to avail tickets, the agitated cricket fans threw brick chips at the bank and vandalised some vehicles on the road.

On information, police rushed to the spot and tried to disperse the agitated fans. They chased each other, triggering a clash.

Police fired shotgun and teargas shells to bring the situation under control, halting traffic on the busy road for about half an hour.

The cricket fans then blockaded Dhaka-Narayanganj Link Road in the city's Chandmari area around 8:00am. But police drove them away from there.

Police also detained six people in this connection.

Manjur Quader, officer-in-charge of Narayanganj Sadar Model Police Station, said the cricket lovers had started gathering at the UCB branch to get tickets since early yesterday. They were frustrated to see that their long wait was useless.

Contacted, the bank branch authorities said they had not yet got the tickets from Bangladesh Cricket Board.

# Egypt Islamists rally ahead of Morsi trial

AFP, Cairo

Islamists yesterday held protests and clashed with police in the Egyptian city of Alexandria ahead of the start of the trial of deposed president Mohamed Morsi.

The pro-Morsi coalition that called for the protests said it would hold a rally on Monday outside the court where Morsi is expected to appear.

The coalition, which demands Morsi's reinstatement, also called for rallies across Egypt starting on Friday.

Protesters clashed with police who used tear gas in the Mediterranean city of Alexandria, a security official said.

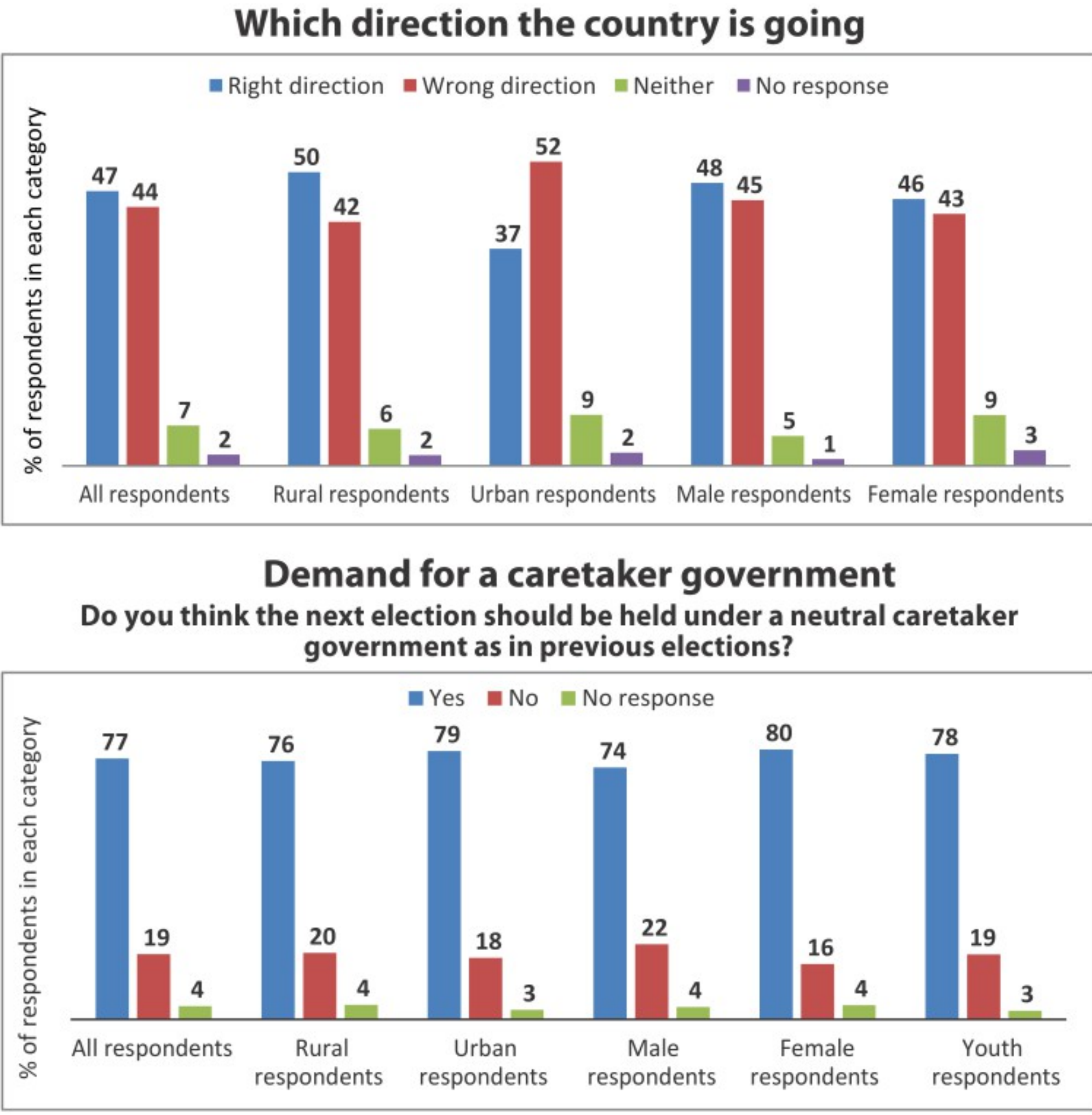
Police arrested 60 protesters, the official said.

The clashes came a day after police arrested 20 female Islamist activists in Alexandria after they scuffled with bystanders during a protest, another official said.

In the Nile Delta city of Zaqaq, five people were wounded when pro-Morsi protesters clashed with civilian opponents, the official MENA news agency reported.

In Cairo, hundreds of Islamists protested outside the main presidential palace as soldiers and police looked on, an AFP correspondent said.

"We want the true democracy that Egypt had when Morsi was elected. What we see now is not true democracy," said Mohammed, a doctor, pointing towards the tanks and security personnel stationed outside the palace.



# Good job, but short on votes

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as an overwhelming 77 percent respondents feel the next election should be held under a caretaker government. This issue might have had the single biggest impact on pushing voters away from the AL.

This is how people's perception was reflected in the latest public opinion survey conducted by The Daily Star and Asia Foundation. The study was done on 1,400 people in 14 districts during the second and third weeks of September 2013.

Despite the adversarial political environment, a large 62 percent people believe the next election would be held in a peaceful manner with participation of all political parties. But what was interesting is that 35 percent voters seem disenchanted by the bipolar political system and they would like to see a third party in politics.

A significant 55 percent people said they have confidence in the government, which is a high figure for a government that is completing its term. However, 45 percent said they have low confidence.

On the question of which direction the country is heading, 47 percent think it is going in the right direction and 44 percent do not think so. These figures remained static from our last survey done in December last year.

Inflation remained a persisting problem with over 80 percent complaining about it.

But people were happy about improved

power supply as 62 percent said the situation has improved. Eighty percent also said agriculture inputs such as diesel and fertiliser were available. As a result, a majority of 44 percent said agriculture activities have improved against 16 percent who replied in the negative.

On human rights front, about 50 percent of respondents stated that extrajudicial killings have decreased during the tenure of this government while 37 percent disagreed. This finding points to a perceived improvement in the human rights situation.

However, 43 percent of the respondents believe incidents of disappearances or intimidation of opposition members, political activists, labour rights activists and journalists have increased while 34 percent believe these have decreased. In the perception of people, therefore, political harassment continues in Bangladesh in violation of human rights.

The government also scored high in law and order as about 62 percent of respondents maintained that the extent of criminal activity is now lower (47%) or is about the same (15%).

However, when it came to corruption, respondents really flagged down the government with about 50 percent of respondents believing that corruption at the national level has increased compared to the situation under the previous elected government.

# Sri Lanka expels foreign media rights activists

AFP, Colombo

Sri Lanka expelled two Australian media rights activists for violating visa conditions, the information minister said Thursday, a day after they were detained while speaking with local colleagues.

Minister Keheliya Rambukwella said the two Australians -- Jacqui Park and Jean Worthington -- had come into the country as tourists but were engaging in "anti-government activism" in breach of their visa conditions.

"We have no personal interest in the two individuals, but they have broken the visa conditions," the minister said. "We are treating them according to the law. That means they will be sent back."

The local rights group, the Free Media Movement (FMM), said the two women were being subjected to lengthy grilling by immigration and police criminal investigations department officials for a second day Thursday.

The pair from the International Federation of Journalists (IFJ) were detained on Wednesday at a hotel in Colombo while speaking with colleagues from the FMM.

FMM spokesman Sunil Jayasekera said Park was on holiday and was simply meeting with her colleagues and not breaking any visa conditions.

Jayasekera said they were still in the country and were originally scheduled to leave later Thursday or early Friday.

There was no immediate comment from the IFJ.

Sri Lanka is known to have blacklisted many foreign journalists over their reports on the country's human rights record and alleged war crimes in the final stages of the Tamil ethnic war in 2009.

Local journalists have also been the victims of crimes and many say they practise self-censorship.

An anti-establishment editor fled the country in August, less than a month after armed men held her at knifepoint.

In 2009 the Sunday Leader newspaper's editor Lasantha Wickrematunge, a staunch critic of the government, was shot dead near his office just outside the capital.

# Artificial blood made from water, salt

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Dr Radu Silaghi-Dumitrescu added that it may even lead to the creation of 'instant blood' that can be transported and turns into artificial blood when water is added.

Up until now, efforts to create artificial blood have failed as the fluid was unable to withstand the chemical and mechanical stresses placed on it.

According Dr Silaghi-Dumitrescu, unlike hemoglobin, hemerythrin remains stable when exposed to physical and chemical stress.

So far the artificial blood has been tested on laboratory mice who didn't experience

any adverse side effects.

Laura Sinpetru from Softpedia reports that the researchers hope to roll the artificial blood out in clinical trials involving human volunteers within a year or two.

The work builds on research by Edinburgh and Bristol University who, in 2011, made thousands of millions of red blood cells from stem cells taken from bone marrow.

Edinburgh University's Professor Marc Turner hopes to make a supply of cells with the O-negative blood type.

This 'universal donor' blood could be given to up to 98 per cent of the population.

A supply of safe blood would also be a

boon in developing countries, where thousands of lives are lost to conditions such as haemorrhages after childbirth.

The French have started early-stage human trials with stem cell blood and other researchers around the world are making haemoglobin, the red blood cell protein used to ferry oxygen around the body.

Ideas being pursued elsewhere include using haemoglobin taken from cows as a blood substitute.

Some 1.6 million Britons give blood each year. In the UK, stocks can fall during holiday periods, with supplies of the highly versatile O-negative type particularly vulnerable.

# Food courts still stuck in red tape

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gazette notification asking judicial magistrates to conduct the food courts.

In the wake of growing concern over food adulteration across the country, Human Rights and Peace for Bangladesh in 2009 filed a public interest litigation seeking its directive on the government.

The High Court in June 2009 directed the government to set up pure food courts and appoint sufficient food analysts in each dis-

trict and metropolitan cities within two years.

In response, a few anti-adulteration drives were conducted. The mobile courts that operated the drives found some dishonest traders using toxic chemicals in local and imported fruits, fish, vegetables, eggs, baked items and juices. Unhygienic kitchens in many restaurants and fast food shops and date-expired processed food in the market were also found.

The authorities were supposed to file a progress report by July 1, 2011, on what they had done to protect the consumers but they failed to submit the document.

Such inaction on the part of the government prompted the court to issue a contempt rule last December which led the law ministry to issue a gazette notification saying that the government had set up a Pure Food Court in each district and Dhaka, Chittagong, Rajshahi and Khulna metropolitan cities.