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The ex-Indian PM is conferred with the nation's highest civilian honour
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Stampede kills 10 devotees

Rumour, law enforcers' sloppy crowd management blamed for tragic incident

SHAHEEN MOLLAH
A bathing ritual for thousands of Hindu pilgrims in Narayanganj turned into a tragedy when 10 devotees were killed and at least 20 injured in a stampede yesterday morning.

Of the dead, eight were aged 50 and above, and seven were women, Assistant Superintendent of Police in Narayanganj Forkan Sikder told The Daily Star.

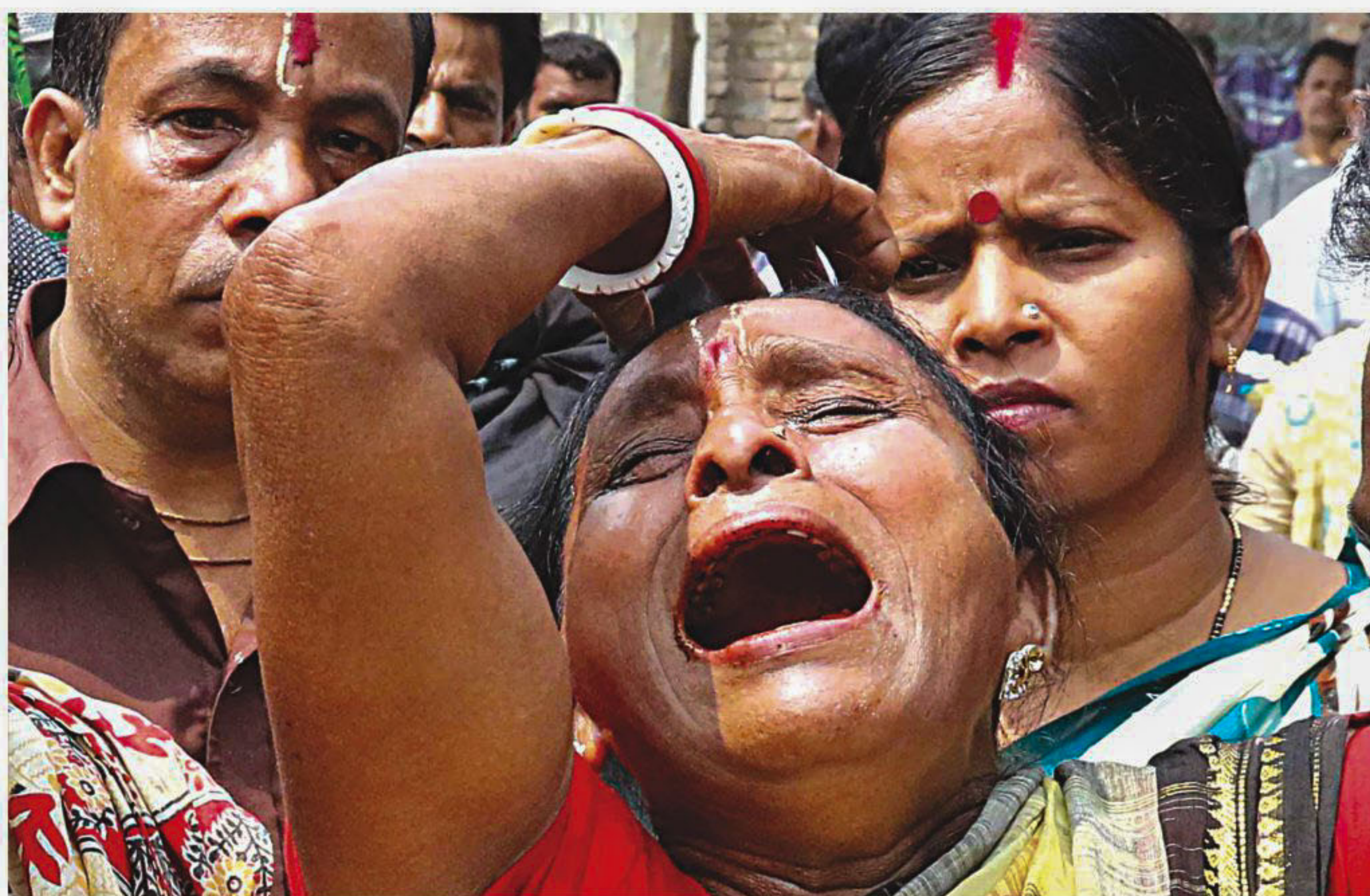
Hindu devotees have been taking a ritual bath every year in the Brahmaputra river for over a century now. The ritual site stretches over 3.5 kilometres area along the river at Langalbandh, reports our Narayanganj correspondent.

About eight to 10 lakh devotees thronged the site this year, according to police and other sources.

Locals said the incident happened on the road leading to Rajghat, the most revered ghat at the site. As this ghat usually sees the largest crowd of devotees, the road linking the bridge to the ghat was overcrowded.

They said rumours that the bailey bridge, 50-foot long and 12-foot wide, was collapsing triggered the stampede around 8:45am. Panic-stricken crowd ran back towards the ghat, trampling many underfoot.

The stampede lasted for about 30 minutes, reports our Narayanganj correspondent. SEE PAGE 2 COL 3



Minadashi Bhagabati wailing after her sister and niece were killed in a stampede during the Astami Snan, a Hindu ritual, at Langalbandh of Rajghat in Narayanganj yesterday morning.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

Holy dip ends in tragedy

SHAHEEN MOLLAH

Bhagabati Das, her daughter Rakhi Das and son-in-law Jony Das had just bathed in the Brahmaputra, holding each other's hands tight during their pilgrimage to Langalbandh to regain innocence.

They dipped in the river against the current and got onto the bank at Rajghat around 7:30am yesterday.

The tragedy struck moments after the three crossed a nearby bailey bridge.

Devotees flew into a panic on hearing rumours that the bridge was about to collapse. In the blink of an eye, a rushing crowd of devotees snatched the mother and daughter away from Jony.

A stampede there killed... SEE PAGE 2 COL 2

KARNAPHULI TUNNEL Rejoinder, our reply

Bangladesh Bridge Authority (BBA) has issued a rejoinder against a report headlined "Consultant set to become builder" published in The Daily Star Tuesday.

It said the CCCC-Arup Ove and Partners Hong Kong Ltd got the contract of the feasibility study through a competitive international bidding in line with the Public Procurement Rules (PPR) in 2011. "They merely conducted the feasibility study which mainly... SEE PAGE 2 COL 3

CITY CORPORATION ELECTIONS 2015

Abbas joins race

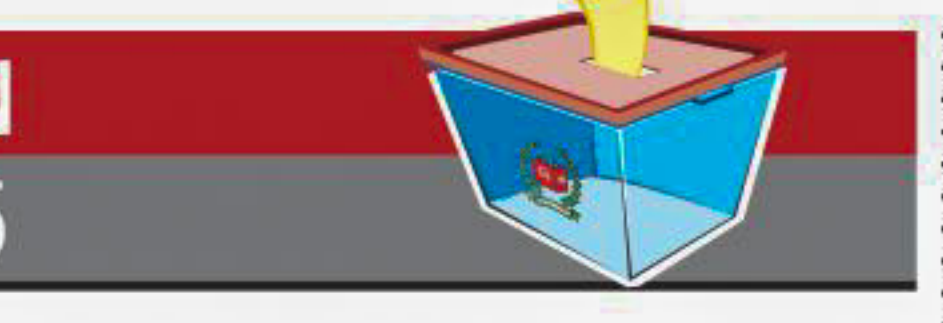
Manjur quits to seek re-election in Ctg

RASHIDUL HASAN and PRABIR BARUA CHOWDHURY

Mirza Abbas yesterday joined the mayoral race in Dhaka South City Corporation (DSCC) as his lawyer collected the nomination paper on behalf of the heavyweight BNP leader, apparently in hiding to avoid arrest.

In a move dubbed as "part of a strategy," a number of other BNP leaders have also collected nomination papers to contest the DSCC mayoral election.

"If BNP Standing Committee Member Mirza Abbas is disqualified from running... SEE PAGE 2 COL 3



for mayor, its Finance Affairs Secretary MA Salam, who bought the nomination paper on Wednesday, will contest the polls," a BNP leader told this newspaper yesterday.

Party insiders said a BNP delegation will meet the Election Commission in a day or two and raise some demands, including release of its leaders to create "a level-playing field" for all candidates.

"Although the BNP has decided to back its candidates in the three city elections [in Dhaka and Chittagong], we have plans to... SEE PAGE 8 COL 1

Get united for party-backed candidates

Hasina to Dhaka city AL leaders

HASAN JAHID TUSHER

Prime Minister and Awami League chief Sheikh Hasina yesterday directed leaders of all the AL units in the capital to work together for the party-backed candidates in the upcoming Dhaka city corporation elections.

Speaking at a meeting at the Gono Bhaban, she also formally introduced the mayoral candidates she chose for the April 28 polls... SEE PAGE 8 COL 4

7 lakh Bangla words added to Google

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

On the eve of the Independence Day, Bangalee volunteers contributed around seven lakh Bangla words and phrases to Google Translate breaking a record.

This was the highest number of inputs to Google's free online translation service in 24 hours.

With this, the total number of Bangla words and phrases contributed to Google Translate reached around 17 lakh in just last 55 days since February 1, Javed Sultan Pias, community manager of Google Developer Group (GDG) Bangla told The Daily Star.

The information and communication technology... SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

TOP! QUOTE

"You can say that we have walked into your trap, but it is actually you who have fallen into a trap."

BNP CHAIRPERSON'S ADVISER
KHANDKER MAHBUB HOSSAIN
ON THE GOVERNMENT'S PLAN TO HOLD THE MAYORAL POLLS AND THE BNP'S STANCE IN FAVOUR OF JOINING THE RACE



Rab displays the grenades, bombs and bomb-making materials recovered from a house in the capital's Dakkhin Khan area early yesterday. During the raid, the crime busters arrested four operatives of banned outfit Jama'atul Mujahideen Bangladesh. The photo was taken at the Rab headquarters in Uttara.

AIRSTRIKES IN YEMEN Saudi jets target militia bases

REUTERS, Aden

Yemen's beleaguered government said Saudi-led airstrikes against its Houthi militia opponents would not last long on the second day of a Gulf Arab-led campaign against the Iranian-allied militia that could escalate a proxy conflict spreading through the region.

Warplanes targeted Houthi forces controlling Yemen's capital and their northern heartland yesterday and, in a boost for Riyadh, fellow monarchy Morocco said it would join the rapidly-assembled Sunni Muslim coalition against the Shia Muslim group.

Tribes in Yemen's oil producing Marib... SEE PAGE 2 COL 3

Militants spreading wings

Say investigators; fear JMB and other radical groups are reorganising to target courts, cops and politicians

M ABUL KALAM AZAD

On Monday noon, a police team stopped a motorbike with three riders near Naogaon's Nachol Bazar for a routine check. As the bike pulled over, one of the three got down and ran away. Cops took the two others to Nachol Police Station where they, finding nothing suspicious, released another. The third man was detained on suspicion and sent to prison.

Police had no idea whom they caught. But while going through their records later that day, officials at the station found that the detainee was a militant operative. Alert to the fact, they conducted raids to arrest the man they had released. Finally on Wednesday night, they caught him from his village home in Naogaon's Manda.

And everything became clear when police interrogated him -- all the three are JMB men operating in the region for years.

The two arrested are Ashraf Islam alias Sajib, 26, and Abdul Motakabbir alias Nabin, 27. Police are trying to arrest the third man, Habib, who ran away. Habib is JMB's coordinator in Naogaon and Chapainawabganj

while Nabin is operations-in-charge of Naogaon, Rajshahi and Chapainawabganj regions, police said.

Nabin is accused of murdering JMB activist Nazmul Islam alias Talha in 2012. Talha was beheaded by his fellows as he cut connections with the outfit.

Nabin had been operating in Gazipur and Thakurgaon areas before settling in Naogaon a year ago, said police.

A fourth-year student of Islamic Studies at Rajshahi University, Ashraf joined JMB in 2004 and has been motivating youths in

Chapainawabganj and Rajshahi to join the group.

Al Mamun, additional superintendent of Chapainawabganj police, told The Daily Star that cops stopped the three when they were going to meet other JMB operatives in Chapainawabganj to talk about organisational activities.

Investigators in Dhaka said that amid a slack monitoring in recent months, Jama'atul Mujahideen Bangladesh and a few other militant outfits have become active across the country.

For the past several months, SEE PAGE 8 COL 5

গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার

বাস্তবায়ন পরিবীক্ষণ ও মূল্যায়ন বিভাগ (আইএমইডি)
পরিকল্পনা মন্ত্রণালয়, শের-ই-বাংলা নগর, ঢাকা-১২০৭

ই-জিপি বিষয়ে বিজ্ঞপ্তি

□ জাতীয় ই-গভর্নেন্স প্রকিউরমেন্ট (ই-জিপি) সিস্টেমে নিবন্ধিত দরপত্রদাতাদের জানানো যাচ্ছে যে, ইজিপি সিস্টেমে ছুটির দিনসহ সপ্তাহে ৭ দিনই ২৪ ঘণ্টা টেন্ডার প্রস্তুত ও দাখিলের সুযোগ রয়েছে। ই-জিপি সিস্টেমে টেন্ডার দাখিল করলে উক্ত টেন্ডারের তথ্য সাংকেতিকভাবে সার্ভারে জমা থাকে বিধায় তথ্য শতভাগ গোপন থাকে।

□ টেন্ডার দাখিলের শেষ সময়ে তাড়াহুড়া করে টেন্ডার দাখিলের বামেলা এড়াতে পর্যাপ্ত সময় হাতে রেখে টেন্ডার দাখিলের পরামর্শ দেওয়া যাচ্ছে। দরপত্রদাতা চাইলে টেন্ডার দাখিলের পরেও নতুন কোন ফি বা জামানত ছাড়াই দাখিলের সর্বশেষ সময়ের আগে তার টেন্ডারে পরিবর্তন (Modification) এবং প্রতিস্থাপন (Substitution) করতে পারে।

□ প্রয়োজনে সকাল ৭টা থেকে রাত ১১টা পর্যন্ত সপ্তাহের যেকোন দিনে হেল্পডেস্ক ফোন করে (+৮৮০৯৬০৯১১২২৩৩, +৮৮০১৭৬২৬২৫৫২৮, +৮৮০১৭৬২৬২৫৫২৯, +৮৮০১৭৬২৬২৫৫৩০, +৮৮০১৭৬২৬২৫৫৩১) অথবা www.helpdesk.eprocure.gov.bd এর মাধ্যমে কারিগরি সহযোগিতা গ্রহণ করা যাবে।

□ যে সকল আহ্বি টেন্ডারার এখনও ই-জিপি সিস্টেমে নিবন্ধিত নন তারাও এ সিস্টেমে নিবন্ধিত হতে প্রয়োজনে হেল্পডেস্কের সহযোগিতা গ্রহণ করতে পারবেন।

□ ক্রয়কারীগণকে আহ্বানকৃত টেন্ডার দাখিলের সর্বশেষ সময় ১২টা হতে ১টা এর মধ্যে নির্ধারণ সীমাবদ্ধ না রেখে অফিস চলাকালীন ভিন্ন ভিন্ন সময়ে নির্ধারণ করতে পরামর্শ প্রদান করা যাচ্ছে।

সেন্ট্রাল প্রকিউরমেন্ট টেকনিক্যাল ইউনিট (সিপিটিইউ)
জিডি-১১১৭