## EU urges unity

extremists in Bangladesh," said the EU spokesperson.

"The perpetrators of these murders must be swiftly brought to justice," the spokesperson said in a statement issued in Brussels on Wednesday. The murder of Oyasiqur in Dhaka

on March 30 is the second attack in a month that has targeted bloggers in Bangladesh. Earlier on February 26, writer-

blogger Avijit Roy was hacked to death on the Dhaka University campus. Avijit's wife was also injured in the attack. "The killings of Oyasigur Rahman

and Avijit Roy are an attack on free speech and democracy," the statement noted. Freedom of expression is recog-

nised as a human right by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and by the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, to which Bangladesh is a party, it added.

The EU reiterated its deep commitment to freedom of expression and freedom of thought, conscience, religion and belief.

"Tolerance and dialogue are essential elements of a democratic society," said the statement.

## Strict water

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"People should realise we're in a new era. The idea of your nice little green grass getting lots of water every day - that's going to be a thing of the past," he said. The new order will require uni-

versity campuses, cemeteries, golf courses and other large landowners to make major cuts in their water

Farmers in the United States' largest farm state have been hit hard in recent years.

But Brown's critics said his order did not go far enough to address agricultural use of water.

"In the midst of a severe drought, the governor continues to allow corporate farms and oil interests to deplete and pollute our precious groundwater resources that are crucial for saving water," said Adam Scow, California director of the group Food & Water Watch.

Previous extremely dry years led to catastrophic wildfire seasons in California in 2003 and 2007.

# Govt to slash

Mosharraf said the government would operate the eight centres and ensure a transparent system to send workers to Singapore.

After Oman and Qatar, which respectively hosts around 5 lakh and 2 lakh Bangladeshi workers, Singapore is the largest destination for Bangladeshi jobseekers.

Last year, 54,0750 Bangladeshis migrated to the Southeast Asian economic tiger, while 11,702 migrated till March this year, raising the total number of expatriate Bangladeshi workers there to over 1.5 lakh now, according to the Bureau of Manpower Employment and

Training. Bangladesh is currently sending workers to Malaysia under the G2G system at lower costs, but it has apparently failed to boost the country's manpower export. Since 2013, only 10,000 have found jobs in Malaysia, where several lakh

On the back of this, private recruiting agencies' association Baira requested the government to be careful about "controlling" the Singapore market.

jobseekers are waiting in the queue.

"We always appreciate the minister's concern for reducing migration costs. But we request him to be cautious so that our manpower market in Singapore does not face new hurdles," said Mohammad Abul Bashar, president of the Bangladesh

Association of International Recruiting Agencies Association (Baira).

Earlier, a delegation from Jordan discussed with the ministry officials the work opportunities and rights issues of female Bangladeshis

in the Middle-East country. Around 40,000 Bangladeshi women are currently working as

domestic helps and garment workers in Jordan, the minister said. The Jordanian authorities will

send a team of trainers to Dhaka to provide skills training to the female | jobseekers by next one or two

months, he added. Replying to a query about the Saudi Arabian government's deci-

sion to hire female Bangladeshi workers, Mosharraf said the recruitment procedure was going on, but he expressed frustration at the poor

response of the female jobseekers. Only 2,932 women have signed up for jobs in the Kingdom in the last one month till yesterday, the minister said, while there are opportunities for thousands of them.

CITY COUNCILLOR POLLS 244 nominations declared invalid

and Chittagong city corporation polls were cancelled mainly because of loan default and procedural errors. Of the total 1,776 nominations filed for councillors, 244 were declared invalid after scrutiny, according to

Nominations of many councillor

aspirants in the forthcoming Dhaka

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

returning officers. The city polls are scheduled for April 28. Sunday was the last date for filing nominations and the ROs scrutinised

those on Wednesday and yesterday. Most of the hopefuls, whose nominations were cancelled, are loan defaulters, said the officials. Besides, some of them hid information while some did not fill in the nomination papers properly.

In the two city corporations in Dhaka, a total of 150 nominations, out of total 1,129, for general ward councillors were cancelled. Besides, nominations for 53 councillor posts reserved for women, out of total 288, were rejected.

"If anybody has any complaint against our decision, they can file an appeal within next three days [of nomination cancellation]," said Mihir Dhaka South City Corporation.

As per law, the councillor aspirants,

whose nominations have been cancelled, can file the appeal with the Dhaka Division Commissioner within three days of the cancellation.

In Chittagong, nominations of 31 aspirants, out of total 288, for general ward councillor were cancelled, while 10 nominations for councillor posts reserved for women were also declared invalid. These nominations were cancelled

on different grounds, such as hiding information on the nomination papers and not mentioning the proper age of the candidates, said Returning Officer Abdul Baten, reports our Chittagong correspondent. Meanwhile, police yesterday

arrested a ward councillor aspirant from the office of Dhaka North City Corporation returning officer at Agargoan in the capital as the hopeful stands accused in a murder case. Saidur Rahman, general secretary of

Islami, faces charges of murder committed last February. Police nabbed Saidur the moment he went to the RO's office as his nomina-

ward-28 unit of Dhaka city Jamaat-e-

tion paper was being scrutinised there. The RO also cancelled Saidur's nomi-Sarwar Morshed, returning officer of nation as he did not mention anything about the murder in his nomination.

## Border guard, woodcutter trampled to death

STAR REPORT

Two people, including a Border Guard Bangladesh member, were trampled to death by wild elephants in Cox's Bazar and Chittagong yesterday.

The BGB man was identified as Lance Nayak Habibur Rahman, 44, who hailed from Jhalakathi, reports our Cox's Bazar correspondent.

Commander of BGB-17 Battalion in Cox's Bazar Col Khalequzzaman said Habibur was killed after three wild elephants attacked a BGB team which had gone to Himchhari Shampan Hill area in Ramu upazila around 2:00am to carry out a drive against human traffickers. He said they had information that

a group of people, after being lured into going abroad for a better future, had gathered there to get on a boat to go to Malaysia illegally. During the raid, the elephants

suddenly came out of a nearby jungle and attacked the BGB personnel, leaving Habibur critically injured.

The animals fled into the jungle after the other BGB members started

firing on them in self defence, said Khalequzzaman.

Later, Habibur was rescued and rushed to Cox's Bazar Sadar Hospital where doctors declared him dead.

The BGB official said the body was sent to the victim's village home in Jhalakathi.

The BGB battalion announced a Tk 5 lakh financial aid for the family of the deceased.

In a separate incident, a woodcutter was crushed to death by another group of wild elephants in Boalkhali upazila of Chittagong yesterday morn-

The dead was Ahmed Noor, 32, son of Siddique Ahmed.

After visiting the spot, Hamidul Huq Mannan, Ahala Karaldenga Union Parishad chairman, said Noor and other five to six men had gone to Karaldenga hill to cut logs there.

The elephants suddenly came out of a nearby jungle and ran amok around 7:00am, killing Noor. The others, however, escaped unhurt, adds our Chittagong correspondent.

## 'Cockpit error caused crash

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But it reportedly took Shah Makhdum Airport's fire unit to reach the scene 20 minutes after the crash, said witnesses and locals who scaled the airport's wall, ran 200 yards, and dragged instructor Lt Col (retd) Sayeed Kamal out of the burning plane. They could not rescue trainee pilot Tamanna Rahman Rhidi as the fire engulfed the plane.

Tamanna died on the spot while Lt Col (retd) Sayeed is now in Singapore for treatment. He had 70 percent of his body burnt.

Tamanna was buried at a family graveyard in Kanaya of Joydevpur in Gazipur yesterday evening.

Shah Makhdum Airport resumed operations around noon yesterday after the wreckage of the Cessna was removed.

Squadron Leader (retd) Capt HM Akhter Khan, chief of the fourmember investigation team, said within minutes of take-off, the Cessna tried to make a U-turn before it reached 200 feet altitude and the turn was unusual, beyond any flying procedures, and not approved.

He said such an aircraft must have 700 feet altitude to make such a turn and the instructor was practicing "power failure landing [PFL]".

Quoting recorded conversation with the air traffic control, he said the instructor told the controller that he would practice a PFL after the take-off.

"We are trying to figure out why the plane tried to take the turn from that low level," he told The Daily

Star. There was no cockpit voice recorder as the aircraft did not require to have one by the law, said

Akhter Khan. The team has to submit its report to CAAB within three days.

Aviation insiders said instructor Lt Col (retd) Sayeed Kamal had previous records of making mistakes. Some even said he had some discipline issues and was emotion- ture. ally unsettled and that was why he had not been made the chief instructor.

Bangladesh Flying Academy President Capt Mafidul Islam Khan, however, said almost all instructors make small mistakes during their long career and Lt Col (retd) Sayeed Kamal had made no major mistakes.

Aviation insiders alleged that although Civil Aviation Authority of Bangladesh (CAAB) was supposed to strictly monitor the licence renewal of pilots and fitness of aircrafts, it does not do so with due diligence.

FIRE RESPONSE

Moniruzzaman Rumi, chief engineer of BFA, said the fire engines were parked at the time of the accident and he had to drive one of the vehicles to the accident site as there was no other to drive the ambulance. An ambulance always accompanies the fire engines.

He said the crash scene was 1.5km away from the aerodrome's fire station. He said it took them over 10 minutes to drive there.

M Anisur Rahman, aerodrome fire leader, claimed that they took no more than two minutes to reach the scene after they were informed about the crash on the radio at

He said had they delayed for 20 minutes, fuel in both the tanks of the plane would have burnt out. He also claimed to have rescued Lt Col (retd) Sayeed Kamal and put out the fire on his body, which was contrary to what the locals, witnesses and the first few people at the scene told The Daily Star. He refuted Moniruzzaman's

claim that he drove a fire vehicle to the scene in the absence of an onduty driver. Capt HM Akhter said, "We are

looking into voice records, videos, and CCTV footage to see whether they were responsible for any delay." As the plane crashed, its nose gear

broke, then the right wing dragged through the grassy ground and the plane turned left breaking its left wing causing the fuel tank to rup-

The fire originated in the engine soon after the plane hit the ground and fed by the fuel, it caused the death of Tamanna in seconds, said

FROM PAGE 20

her way to the court, he said, adding that Khaleda was not on the run, but confined to her office. Criminals attacked Khaleda's car on

December 24 last year when she went to the court in Bakshibazar area in connection with Zia Charitable Trust and Zia Orphanage Trust corruption cases. Police have not taken any action

against the criminals, but filed cases against BNP leaders and activists and arrested them, Mahbub, also an adviser to the BNP chief, said. Khaleda has been staying at her

Gulshan office since January 3. On her instruction, the BNP-led 20-

party alliance has been enforcing nationwide blockade since January 6 to protest the government's not allowing her party and allies to hold rallies in the capital and elsewhere. On March 12, Khaleda flouted two

arrest warrants in the two cases, and did not appear before the court citing security reasons. The senior counsel also said the

judge (of the Dhaka court) should not deal with the cases against Khaleda since her two petitions expressing no confidence in the judge were pending with the High Court. In reply to a question about his

health condition, Khandker Mahbub Hossain said he was still sick. "I will tell the Supreme Court about

my illness on April 5, which has been fixed for hearing the review petition of Muhammad Kamaruzzaman," he Convicted war criminal

Kamaruzzaman on March 31 filed a petition with the SC.

The petition sought a four-week adjournment of hearing on the ground that principal defence counsel Mahbub was sick.

Following the petition, the apex court on April 1 adjourned hearing of the review petition until April 5.

### 8 killed

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spot and started rescue operation.

Narayanganj Deputy Commissioner Anisur Rahman Mian and Sadar Upazila Nirbahi Officer visited the spot Later Dhaka DC Tofazzal Hossain

and Keraniganj UNO also visited the spot and announced Tk 20,000 each for the victims' families.

In Munshiganj, four bodies were recovered till yesterday afternoon from the Meghna in another accident on Wednesday night when a trawler capsized after having been hit by a cargo vessel in Bhasanchar area under Gazaria upazila of the district.

Two of the dead were identified as Habib, 16, son of Shamim of Shubram village in Comilla district, and Moni Akter, 4, daughter of Manir Hossain in Shiddhirganj upazila of Narayanganj.

### Khaleda out

FROM PAGE 20 session of the 10th parliament, the leader of the House said the BNP chief had tried her best to foil the January 5 elections but she failed as people voted Awami League back to

power. The prime minister termed the current parliament very lively and effective.

She also claimed there has been a qualitative difference between the ninth and 10th parliaments, as the current opposition leader has relieved the nation of abusive language and remarks in the House.

"Now we don't have to listen to that kind of language," she said.

The PM also thanked Opposition Leader Raushan Ershad for coming to parliament regularly and making constructive criticism and assisting the government.

In a scathing attack on the BNP chief, Hasina said Khaleda had failed to show success everywhere except in corruption, terrorism, militancy and anti-social activities. "We carry out development, but she destroys everything.

She alleged that failing to make the movement a success, a desperate Khaleda now threatens her partymen and tries to lure them, but they don't move a bit. "Furious, she takes revenge on the common people by killing them."

Blasting the BNP chief for the ongoing blockade and shutdowns, the PM said, "Burning people to death and causing damage to public properties is her character." Condemning the arson attacks on

some land offices during the blockade, Hasina said necessary directives had been given to the intelligence agencies to identify those responsible for the attacks and confiscate their properties. Referring to Khaleda's long stay at her party office in Gulshan instead of

her residence, Hasina said perhaps one or two opposition members like HM Ershad can unearth the mystery behind this. Highlighting the success of her government in various fields over the

last six years, Hasina said the aim of

country by 2021 and a prosperous,

developed nation by 2041.

her government was to brighten the image of the nation so that people could live a better life. She renewed her resolve to turn party's conference room at the parlia-Bangladesh into a middle-income ment building.

## Khaleda needs | Lizard with in-built

Gecko (Gekko gecko), locally called Tokkhak, which is often traded now-adays due to the false notion that it can be sold to foreign buyers at a very high price.

Forest department officers had rescued many lizards before, but they were surprised to see that this lizard has wing-like outgrowths in two sides of its body that it unfolds to make a parachute-like structure when it glides from the branch of a tree to land on the ground, or to another branch. It also has skin outgrowths in legs and tail that helps it in gliding. After hearing the news, I went to see

the creature on January 25. I identified it to be a Smooth Parachute Gecko (Ptychozoon lionotum). Its snout-vent length was 92 mm and tail 87 mm. The colour was mainly brown with black markings. It is a very rare and secretive species of lizard that occurs mainly in a

few Southeast Asian countries.

It is rarely seen because it is nocturnal and occurs in the upper canopy of broad-leaved forests. Since it is known to occur in Myanmar and Northeastern Indian state of Mizoram, we expect that it occurs in the Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT), but a specimen was never found in

from someone else and didn't bother about it. Since it behaved like wild creatures and was in good health, I think it was

not have been in good health. Notably, it did not eat anything during the several days in the custody of the forest department.

#### Mintoo appeals for redress FROM PAGE 1 voter, said a senior BNP leader.

The person named Abdur Razzaque,

was a voter of Uttara Sector 13 under Harirampur union parishad which is not within the DNCC area. 'BLAME IT ON THE EC' Mintoo's lawyer Mahbub Uddin Khokon, who submitted the appeal

yesterday, blamed the "faulty voter

list" prepared by the Election

who supported Mintoo's nomination,

Commission for the mistake. "Some people of Uttara Sector 13 have been registered as voters of Dhaka North City Corporation ... We knew people living in the sector were voters of Dhaka North City Corporation," Khokon told reporters after filing the

appeal. "This is a fault of the Election Commission. So, his (Mintoo's) candidature cannot be cancelled because of a faulty voter list," Khokon argued.

"We hope his nomination will be declared valid after the appeal hearing," he said, adding that they will move the High Court if the cancellation of Mintoo's nomination is upheld in the appeal. Of the five mayor aspirants disqual-

in Dhaka North and Dhaka South, Mintoo was the only to be rejected for such a "silly mistake". Nevertheless, the BNP and its allies say it was the EC's fault, not Mintoo's,

that a non-DNCC voter was chosen to

ified from running the mayoral races

support his nomination proposal. "An allegation against the Election Commission has already been raised that it played a biased role during the scrutiny of nomination papers," said a statement of the 20-party combine last night.

"Besides, its [partisan] bias over the election code of conduct has made the election environment questionable," read the statement, signed by BNP Joint Secretary General Barkatullah

declared eligible for contesting the mayoral polls in the two city corporations in Dhaka.

INTENTIONAL MISTAKE? Ouestions have arisen within the BNP

take was intentional. Mintoo was provided a CD containing the full voter list of the DNCC when he bought the nomination paper. So, he had ample scopes to check whether or not the person, who seconded his candidacy, was a DNCC

"Mintoo is a meticulous man. I still

silly mistake," he told The Daily Star Party insiders said Mintoo had been preparing himself for the mayoral bid

Interestingly, Mintoo had his son Tabith Awal file mayoral nomination along with his for the DNCC elections, and Tabith has been declared an eligi-

said another senior leader of the party. He too wished not to be named. With Mintoo out of the race, the BNP now has no candidate from

However, party sources said the

final announcement. In Dhaka South, the party is likely

Ahmed Pintu too appealed against the rejection of his nomination for the DSCC mayor polls. "His (Pintu's) candidature has been cancelled due to legal discrimination.

We hope his candidature will be declared valid following the hearing," said Pintu's lawyer Aminul Islam after

The hearing is scheduled for tomor-

A total of 42 people have been Pintu's nomination was rejected for providing wrong information in the nomination paper about the cases

Besides, another DSCC mayoral high-ups over whether Mintoo's mis-

\*In yesterday's issue, we mistakenly mentioned "Uttara Sector 12" instead of "Uttara Sector 13" in Abdur Razzaque's

# Haji Salim agrees

FROM PAGE 20

race after "failing to secure party sup-

port. The lawmaker had also "submitted" his resignation letter to the Speaker, but later claimed that the resignation was not accepted. Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina advised him to remain

the sources Sources also said Sayeed Khokon was set to visit Salim's home at Chawkbazar in the capital this noon to have a meal together. The two leaders are also expected to offer jumma

Later, they would interact with locals.

The meeting was also attended, among others, by AL leaders Tofail Ahmed, MA Aziz, Mofazzal Hossain Chowdhury Maya, Qamrul Islam, Bahauddin Nasim, Abdur Razzak, Asim Kumar Ukil and Mohiuddin Khan Alamgir.

lawmakers to work for the partybacked candidates to ensure victory in the April 28 Dhaka and Chittagong city corporation elections. "You [lawmakers] will have to work cordially for our party-backed candi-

she was quoted as saying by a lawmaker present at the meeting. The meeting was held at the ruling

Hasina also asked AL lawmakers to

Bangladesh before. The trader who was in possession of it could not tell from where the lizard was captured because he bought it

probably captured in the CHT. Had it been brought from abroad, it would

can't believe how he could make such a yesterday, preferring anonymity.

for over a decade. The BNP leader even has done "substantial research work" and written some articles about the city problems and ways to resolve

ble candidate. This has fueled suspicion among BNP leaders about Mintoo's "real plan". "I believe Mintoo has a plan and he

is doing everything according to that,"

within the party in the DNCC mayoral

BNP might lend support to Mintoo's son in his battle against Awami League-blessed Annisul Huq. But it was waiting for the adjudication of Mintoo's appeal before making the

extend support to its Standing Committee Member Mirza Abbas. TWO MORE APPEALS Former BNP lawmaker Nasir Uddin

filing the appeal yesterday.

against him.

aspirant Rezaul Karim, whose nomination was canceled by the RO, also lodged an appeal against the decision.

an MP.

At yesterday's meeting, AL high-ups

asked Salim to join Khokon's cam-

paign and he agreed to do so, added

prayers together at Chawkbazar Shahi Masjid.

Earlier, at the AL's Parliamentary Party meeting, Hasina asked her party

dates so that they can win the polls,"

and development.

will make it virtually impossible for Iran to make nuclear weapons.

The so-called P5+1 group -- the United States, Britain, China, France and Russia plus Germany -- hope that the deal

#### form committees there to resist "subversive activities" by the BNP-led 20party alliance being carried out in the name of blockade and hartal, meeting sources told The Daily Star.

go back to their constituencies and

Iran nuclear deal

US Secretary of State John Kerry hailed a

global powers and Iran "now have parameters to resolve major issues on nuclear program. Back to work soon on a final deal". Iranian President Hassan Rohani said the drafting of a full agreement would

begin immediately with the aim of com-

"big day", saying on Twitter that the

pleting it by the June 30 deadline. Iranian media said the deal will include Iran slashing by two-thirds, to 6,000 from 19,000, the number of centrifuges, which can make fuel for nuclear power but also the core of a nuclear bomb.

Mogherini said the United States and the EU will lift all nuclear-related sanctions on Iran once the UN atomic agency has verified that Tehran has stuck to the ground-breaking deal. Mogherini, in a joint press statement with Iranian Foreign Minister

Mohammad Javad Zarif, also said that

the design of a new reactor will be

changed so that no weapons-grade plutonium can be produced. The Fordo facility, built deep into a mountain, will remain open but will not be used for enrichment but for research