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LIVING in DANGER

People live at this dilapidated building though it's at the risk of collapse anytime. Due to the aftershocks of recent Himalayan earthquakes, several cracks appeared and a portion of the ceiling crumbled injuring a resident. But there has been no reported attempt on the part of the administration for its repairs or the rehabilitation of the helpless families.

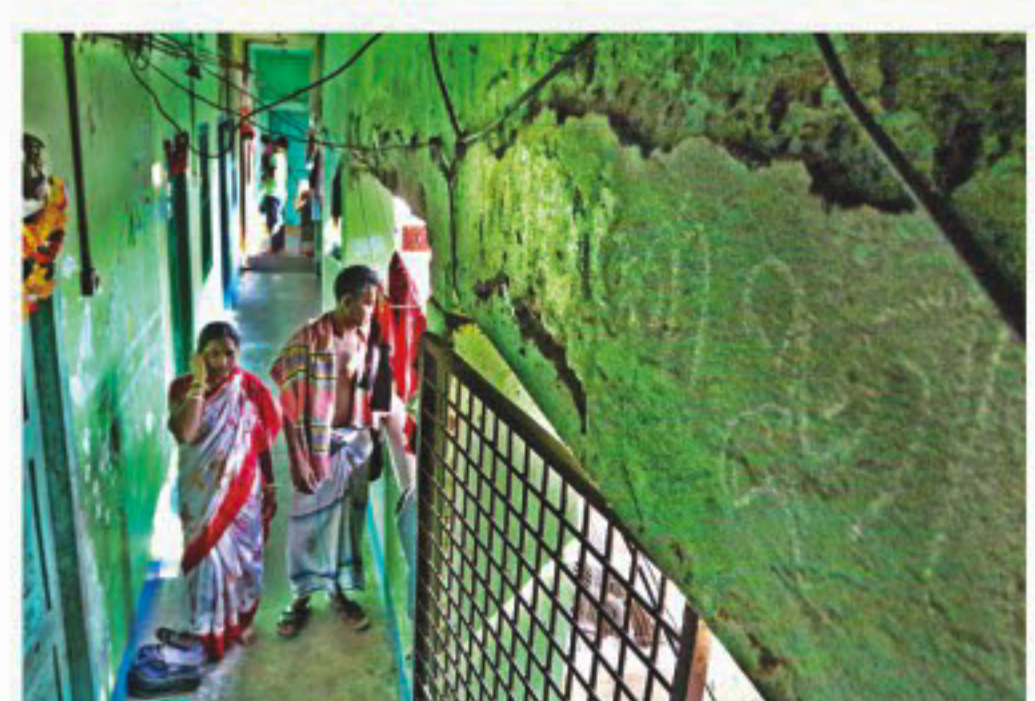


PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

City polls not fair

TIB report blames AL men, law enforcers for rigging, stuffing; says BNP's role was confusing

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Transparency International Bangladesh yesterday said the April 28 city polls were not free, fair and impartial as there were numerous incidents of ballot-box stuffing. "Awami League leaders and activists were engaged in vote-rigging, occupying polling centres, stuffing ballot boxes and some other irregularities to ensure victory for party favourites," said a TIB study. Even the law enforcement agencies in some polling centres directly assisted in vote-rigging, added the study which was released at the TIB office in the capital's Dhanmondi. Some lawmakers also exerted their influence within the polling centres to occupy them. The Election Commission failed to work independently, said the graft watchdog. The study was carried out on nine mayor and 101 councillor hopefuls in 28 general wards of Dhaka north, Dhaka south and

Chittagong city corporations. The wards were selected randomly from the total 134 in the two cities. The TIB had deployed several teams in the cities to monitor electioneering and polling. Speaking at the programme, TIB Executive Director Iftekharuzzaman said, "After a review of the overall situation, it appears that a level playing field was not created for all... The role of the Election Commission has been called into question. The commission couldn't perform its duty properly." The BNP's role was confusing as it was not clear whether the party had actually joined the polls race or contested the elections just to prove that a fair election was not possible under the incumbent government, mentioned Iftekharuzzaman. It has been found that the BNP didn't actively participate in the polls. In most of the cases, polling agents of the BNP-backed

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MOHAMMADPUR SCHOOL Cleaner to be sacked for attempted molestation

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The authorities of Mohammadpur Preparatory Higher Secondary School had decided to sack a cleaner for attempted sexual harassment of a grade-I student, according to school sources. They would also remove the girls' wing rector for her "indecent behaviour" with protesting guardians, the sources said yesterday. The decisions came after a meeting of governing body members and trustees on Sunday after the committee formed to a probe the allegation of molestation submitted its report with some recommendations. A trustee board member, who attended the meeting, said the decisions will be

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MODI'S DHAKA VISIT Bus service, power, shipping deals likely

OUR CORRESPONDENT, New Delhi

Bangladesh and India are expected to sign deals on passenger bus service between Dhaka and Guwahati and Dhaka-Kolkata-Agartala and agreements in power and shipping sectors during Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi's proposed visit to Bangladesh next month. Road Transport and Bridges Minister Obaidul Quader, who held nearly two and half hours of talks with his Indian counterpart Nitin Gadkari at the Parivahan Bhavan in New Delhi, said Bangladesh, Bhutan, India and Nepal (BBIN) are also likely to sign soon the Motor Vehicles Agreement for movement of goods. Such an agreement will allow trucks of each country to move into each other's territories seamlessly, avoiding the need for transshipment which causes delay. It may be mentioned that a similar deal among other Saarc countries remains stuck due to reluctance of Pakistan and could not be signed in the previous Saarc Summit in Kathmandu in November last year. Minister Obaidul Quader said while modalities for Dhaka-Guwahati bus service via Shillong were finalised during the talks yesterday, the deal on this would be signed during Modi's proposed visit to Dhaka and the Indian PM was likely to flag it off. He told representatives of Bangladeshi media in Delhi that the "first trial run" of Dhaka-Guwahati bus service would be undertaken on May 22.

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Indian rape victim dies after 42yrs in coma

AFP, New Delhi

A nurse died yesterday after 42 years in a coma following a brutal rape, in a case that led India to ease some restrictions on euthanasia. Aruna Shanbaug suffered brain damage and had been in a vegetative state in a Mumbai hospital since being strangled with a dog chain and sexually assaulted by a hospital worker in 1973. The 66-year-old Shanbaug had suffered a bout of pneumonia in recent days and was on ventilator, officials at King Edward Hospital in Mumbai told the Press Trust of India news agency.

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Indo-Bangla water transit to benefit third country

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The cabinet yesterday approved the draft amendment to the Protocol on Inland Water Transit and Trade (PIWTT) between Bangladesh and India with a provision of passage of goods to a third country using common rivers of the two countries. The approval came at the weekly cabinet meeting with Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina in the chair. Earlier in April, the cabinet approved a revised trade deal with India under which the two nations would be able to use each other's land and water routes for sending goods to a third country, removing a long-standing barrier in regional trade. Briefing reporters after the meeting, Cabinet Division Secretary (Coordination and Reforms) Nazrul Islam said under the amendment, a third country could be included in the mutually benefited arrangement for the use of waterways for commerce and passage of goods between two places in one country through the territory of the other. He added the clause for the transport of goods to a

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A sanitary tank is left open after the knocking down of a public toilet at Suhrawardy Udyan. In December last year, four-year-old boy Jihad lost his life falling into an abandoned well in the capital's Shahjahanpur.

PHOTO: STAR

Focus on Rohingya recognition

Experts urge int'l community ahead of May 29 Thai meet on migrant crisis

PORIMOL PALMA

The international community must mount pressure on Myanmar so that it recognises Rohingyas as citizens, say immigration experts as Thailand hosts a regional meeting on "irregular migration" through the sea on May 29. The meeting should also focus on smoothening legal ways of labour migration to Southeast Asian countries instead of having policies that tacitly support irregular labour mobility, they add. Experts say Myanmar's denial of citizenship to the Rohingyas as well as lack of livelihood options for poor Bangladeshis has

made it easy for the trans-national trafficking syndicates to prey on them. As a result, the problem has turned into a humanitarian crisis since Thailand's discovery of mass graves on May 1. With Thailand's drives against human traffickers, boats crammed with an estimated 6,000 to 8,000 people from Bangladesh and Myanmar are now drifting in the Andaman Sea and Malacca Straits as the crew have abandoned them in fear of arrest and prosecution. More than a hundred are reported to have died in the sea. Thailand, Indonesia and Malaysia have rescued some 3,000 people in trouble from the sea but turned

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Electronic skin makes body a computer

CNN.COM

A patch of gold, just a few centimeters wide and light as a feather, could reveal your innermost thoughts and feelings. This is the premise of Professor John Rogers' Biostamp. By attaching flexible, miniature sensors

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