

# Man hacked to death

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Narsingdi

Criminals hacked Nadir Khandker, a member of Arambagh Football Club, in Palash upazila here yesterday evening. He died of his wounds at Dhaka Medical College Hospital around 9:00pm. Abul Kalam Azad, officer-in-charge of Palash Police Station, said some criminals hacked 35-year-old Nadir with sharp weapons near a paddy field in Charangardi Bazar area around 6:00pm. Critically injured Nadir was sent to the hospital. An autopsy will be carried out today at Dhaka Medical College.

# Spanish local polls shake up political landscape

AFP, Madrid

Spain faced a changed political landscape Monday after the "Indignado" protest movement gave the ruling conservative rivals a battering in local elections, topping the vote in Barcelona and shattering the governing party's majority in Madrid. In a dramatic shakeup of Spanish politics, an upstart group backed by the anti-austerity protest party Podemos could now govern in the capital, a longtime conservative stronghold. The new political groups Barcelona En Comu and Ahora Madrid were formally launched just a few months ago, but the results of the vote show they are already loosening the grip of the two big parties that have run Spain for nearly four decades.

The new parties were born out of the "Indignado" ("Outraged") protests that swamped Spanish streets during recent years of economic crisis, campaigning against corruption and unemployment. Ahora Madrid, led by 71-year-old retired judge Manuela Carmena, came second behind Spain's governing Popular Party (PP) -- but it could govern the capital if it joins forces with the main opposition Socialists, who came third. That would mark a stunning blow to the PP, which has governed Madrid for 23 years, and to Prime Minister Mariano Rajoy as he braces for a general election due around November. "We will remember this as something special and extraordinary," Carmena told supporters in the city centre.

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# Arsenic menace

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"I was passionate about solving a crisis that results in one out of every five deaths in Bangladesh alone," Minhaj told The Daily Star in an interview during his recent Dhaka visit. The death of his grandfather from arsenic-related diseases years ago left a profound impact on the 25-year-old entrepreneur, who is originally from Chittagong.

But it wasn't until July 2011, when he visited Bangladesh as a Fulbright Fellow of the US Department of State, that he felt the clean water crisis was well solvable.

He found that high costs, maintenance requirements and low customer awareness are the reasons why community-based water filtration deployments break down within two years.

Minhaj then came up with a social business model, and co-founded Drinkwell Systems with three others in May 2013.

Social enterprises are businesses patterned after traditional capitalism models but with solutions that seek to address long-term goals such as poverty reduction.

US-based social enterprise Drinkwell transforms arsenic-affected tube-wells into local profitable water enterprises by using proprietary water purification systems and the micro-franchise model.

It uses locally made ion-exchange resins, which look like small beads, to remove heavy metals and chemicals such

# Newcomer Duda wins Polish presidential vote

AFP, Warsaw

Conservative opposition challenger Andrzej Duda has won a surprise victory in Poland's presidential run-off, trumping incumbent centrist Bronislaw Komorowski with promises of change and generous social spending.

An MEP and lawyer with a populist streak, Duda scored 52 percent support ahead of Komorowski, who mustered 48 percent, exit polls showed Monday.

The result is a stunning turnaround from expectations only a few weeks ago and gives a key indicator of the national mood ahead of an autumn parliamentary election in the heavyweight central European nation.

A former defence minister who has been president since 2010, the 62-year-old Komorowski is allied with the PO, the governing centrist Civic Platform party.

"Poles want change. They issued a yellow card to the PO and risk issuing the party a red card at the general election," wrote Poland's Polska The Times daily on Monday.

"PO politicians are used to governing. Power for them is not a duty but a privilege. They have just been dealt a lesson," added the conservative Rzeczpospolita daily.

Analysts said voters hungry for

change in the EU and NATO member state could in this year's parliamentary polls return the controversial Jaroslaw Kaczynski and his conservative Law and Justice (PiS) party to power after eight years.

"Those who voted for me, voted for change. Together we can change Poland," the PiS-backed Duda, 43, said to wild applause at his Warsaw campaign headquarters.

Komorowski was quick to concede defeat and said his loss was also a warning signal to his political allies in government.

"I congratulate my rival, Mr Andrzej Duda and I wish him a successful presidency because I wish Poland well," he told supporters in Warsaw.

The country's powerful Roman Catholic church also congratulated Duda, with whom it shares an opinion on certain social issues.

"Duda's victory signals a dramatic change on the Polish political scene," legendary communist-era dissident Adam Michnik said, warning that a potential victory of Kaczynski's PiS in parliament could mean that "Poland embarks on a velvet road to dictatorship".

Kaczynski gained a reputation for being highly combative and eurosceptic during his 2006-7 stint as prime minister.

# Ansarullah outfit banned

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police headquarters in a letter to the home ministry suggested banning the group for its alleged involvement in some recent attacks on secular bloggers and writers.

Police claimed the ABT members were involved in the killing of four bloggers, including Ananta Bijoy Das in Sylhet on May 12, and injuring two others.

Four members of the outfit have given confessional statements in the blogger Rajib Haider murder case. He was hacked to death in the capital's Mirpur in February 2013.

ABT is sixth Islamist outfit to be outlawed for militant and anti-state activities in the country.

The other five banned over the past 10 years are Hizb ut-Tahrir, Jama'atul Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB), Bangladesh chapter of Harkatul Jihad

al Islami (Huji), Jagrata Muslim Janata of Bangladesh and Shahadat-e Al-Hikma.

Despite the ban, Hizb ut-Tahrir, JMB and Huji are still active in the country. They have opened new fronts or are secretly working with little-known militant groups, police say.

ATB's ban comes at a time when three bloggers and writers have been killed between February and May. Police say militant outfits are behind the murders but have failed to arrest the killers or dismantle the outfits.

ABT has been working silently for several years, but in recent years it emerged as a radical group operating from underground and carrying out attacks on free-thinkers, bloggers and writers.

Drinkwell's activities are mainly concentrated in India, but its filters have been deployed across Laos and Cambodia as well.

The social enterprise has more than 200 profitable deployments around the globe. It recently rolled out its water filtration technology on a pilot basis in Manikganj, with plans to establish additional 10 such tube-wells this year.

And it aims to reach 1 million people in Bangladesh within the next two years.

"By launching an aspirationally-focused social business that is capable of delivering water while creating jobs, I am confident Drinkwell can eradicate Bangladesh's drinking water crisis," said Minhaj.

For his efforts to address the water crisis through a for-profit, social enterprise approach, Minhaj was included in this year's "30 Under 30: Social Entrepreneurs" list of Forbes.

The WHO reports that arsenic contamination of water, which affects more than 200 million people across 70 countries, is the largest mass poisoning in human history.

Arsenic is a colourless, odourless and naturally occurring metal that is found in groundwater in South Asia in dangerously high amounts.

Long-term exposure to high levels of arsenic can lead to arsenicosis, an incurable cancer-causing disease.

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made from India; in case of civil procurement, it will be 65 percent.

Of the first \$1 billion credit, \$200 million was later converted to grant and disbursed for the Padma bridge project.

The remaining \$800 million has been allocated for 15 projects, mostly railways, roads and bridges. As of March, \$188 million has been disbursed.

The finance ministry official said Bangladesh sought \$68 million more under the first LoC as project costs increased and the Indian side has agreed to it as well.

After the Modi-led government assumed power one year ago, various developments have started taking place among Bangladesh, Bhutan,

Nepal and India in areas of energy cooperation, land boundary and transit, among other areas.

In a major push towards sub-regional cooperation, the four countries are set to sign an agreement on June 15 that would allow free movement of vehicles through their borders just like within the 28 countries of the European Union.

Expected to be functional by the end of 2015, the deal would allow seamless transit of passengers and personal and cargo vehicles between the countries.

Officials of the commerce and shipping ministries said the service charge and fees for the transit would be fixed through talks.

# 'Tanks don't need visas' Blacklisted Russian official tells West

AFP, Moscow

An outspoken deputy prime minister in charge of Russia's defence sector has dismissed Western concerns over Moscow's increased assertiveness in the Arctic by saying that "tanks don't need visas."

Dmitry Rogozin, who oversees the defence industry, is known for his hawkish remarks and enjoys rattling Western officials.

"I've always joked about it... so what if they won't give us visas, put us on sanctions list... tanks don't need visas," Rogozin said on state TV late Sunday, after the host asked him whether Europe and the United States are concerned about Russia's presence in the Arctic.

Russia recently conducted huge military exercises in its Arctic north as it seeks to bolster its claims over the vast energy and mineral resources now increasingly accessible due to the receding ice caps.

Rogozin is known for inflammatory tweets about the West, writing at the weekend that it will "fall under the weight of Islamic State and gays" rather than a perceived threat from Russia.

The deputy prime minister formerly served as an envoy to NATO and once founded a nationalist party. He is on the sanctions list of both the US Treasury and the European Union following the annexation of Crimea

# Nationality

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"If the Indians in Bangladesh enclaves want to stay there, they will be given Bangladesh citizenship and if Bangladeshis living in Indian enclaves want to stay, they will be given Indian citizenship," he said.

With the exchange of enclaves, Bangladesh would get a total of 111 enclaves with 17,160.63 acres of land situated in Bangladesh, while India would get 51 enclaves with 7,110 acres of land situated in India, he said.

In respect of adversely possessed land, Musharraf said India would get 2,777.038 acres and transfer 2,267.682 acres to Bangladesh following the ratification of the agreement.

Besides, an un-demarcated 6.5km of land boundary with India would also be resolved according to the protocol, he noted.

He said as per the protocol, the people living in Angurputa-Dahagram could move through Tinbigha Corridor in the Indian Territory all the time as it would remain open round-the-clock every day.

An "exchange of instruments" regarding the LBA and the protocol will take place during the upcoming visit of Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi to Bangladesh, Musharraf said.

He said the agencies of the two countries would work for its implementation at official levels.

The Indian parliament recently ratified the LBA, also known as the historic Mujib-Indira agreement, by bringing an amendment to the constitution.

The cabinet also approved the drafts of Defence Services (Supreme Command) Act-2015 and Defence Services (Amendment) Act-2015.

# Rare bird

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(£646) for information about the whereabouts of a fourth bird.

The Society for the Protection of Nature in Lebanon told the BBC that finding the missing female, called Zenobia, is crucial.

She is the only bird who knows the migration routes to wintering grounds in Ethiopia and without her other captive birds cannot be released.

Then the species could go extinct in the wild in Syria, said ornithologists.

"Culture and nature they go hand in hand, and war stops, but nobody can bring back a species from extinction," said head of the society Asaad Serhal.

The BBC's Jim Muir in Beirut says that the species was thought to have been extinct in the region until seven birds were found nesting near Palmyra more than 10 years ago.

But despite being protected, their numbers dwindled to just four wild birds. Our correspondent says that this year only Zenobia made it back to the site.

Another three captive birds were being kept nearby but it is not clear if they are still safe.

The fall of Palmyra came just days after ISIS captured the major Iraqi city of Ramadi.

The capture of the World Heritage site next to the modern city of Palmyra has raised international alarm.

ISIS militants have destroyed several sites in Iraq - most recently the ancient city of Nimrud, one of Iraq's greatest archaeological treasures.

# Taliban truck bomber wounds more than 70 in Afghanistan

AFP, Kandahar

A Taliban truck bomber detonated about a tonne of explosives outside a government complex in southern Afghanistan yesterday, wounding more than 70 people as the summer fighting season sends civilian casualties surging.

Women and children were among those injured in the attack at the gate of the complex in Zabul province, which includes several government buildings including the provincial council.

The attack comes as the Taliban step up attacks on government and foreign targets despite Kabul's repeated overtures to the insurgents to reopen peace negotiations.

"Seventy-three people have been wounded in the suicide attack on the complex" in the provincial capital Qalat, deputy provincial police chief Ghulam Jilani Farahi told AFP.

Provincial police chief Mirwais Noorzai said more than 70 were hurt and four of them were in critical condition.

"Around 1,000 kilograms of explosives was used in the attack," he said.

Six police officers and four members of the provincial council were among the wounded, while other victims were government workers

and nearby residents. The Taliban, waging a 13-year war against the US-backed Afghan government, claimed responsibility.

"As part of the Azm operation, this afternoon a martyrdom-seeker... conducted an attack on the provincial council, where cruel and unjust decisions against Muslims and Islam were being taken," Taliban spokesman Qari Yousuf Ahmadi said in a statement.

The Afghan Taliban launched their annual spring-summer offensive -- titled 'Azm' (Determination) -- in late April, vowing nationwide attacks in what is expected to be the bloodiest fighting season in a decade.

The insurgents have launched a series of attacks in the capital and around the country as NATO forces pull back from the frontlines.

- Surge in attacks - A blast triggered by a Taliban car bomber ripped through the parking lot of the justice ministry in Kabul on May 19, killing four people and wounding dozens of others.

Also this month 14 people -- mostly foreigners -- were killed in a Taliban attack on a Kabul guest house that trapped dozens attending a concert.

Official efforts to bring the Taliban to the negotiating table have so far borne little fruit.

# Cops capture two IS men

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Asked, if he was an Isis member, Aminul kept mum. About his profession, he said he was an engineer.

Detectives arrested Aminul from Uttara and Sakib from Mohammadpur on Sunday night along with a laptop, three mobile phones and several books and publications that support fanaticism.

Over the last one year, police arrested at least 14 suspected IS operatives in Bangladesh.

During primary investigation, Aminul and Sakib denied having any link with them, but detectives are investigating it.

Police are also probing if the two

had any link with those who recently threatened to kill 10 distinguished personalities through identical letters.

On funds of the militants, Monirul said money was not a problem for most of the 20 selected operatives as they were from affluent families and some of them were having jobs.

During quizzing, the arrestees claimed they did not establish contacts with Isis leaders in Iraq and Syria. But detectives said they found technological evidence of their communications with militant organisations in different countries.

Yesterday, the two were produced before a Dhaka court that granted three days' remand for each.

# No trace of 44 yet

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Within days, Delwar went into hiding.

One of the five youths, Akkas Ali on May 17 called his son Nasim Hossain and asked him to put Feroz's mother on the phone.

Akkas told Sufia that he was in Thailand, but Feroz and three others have been missing.

"I don't know whether my son has reached Malaysia or died somewhere on the way there," said a worried Sufia.

Feroz's wife Rina Khatun urged the government to help her husband back home. "My husband was a day labourer. I don't know how I would support my two minor sons," she said.

Rafi Uddin's son Imadul Islam, 22, is one of the four missing youths of Mallikpur village.

"I had only 10 decimal land. I sold it for my son, but now I don't know

whether my son is alive or not," said Rafi Uddin.

Tripti Khatun, wife of Sabur Hossain in Brahimpur village of Shailakupa upazila, said her husband left for Chittagong in the last week of March.

Like many other youths, he wanted to go to Malaysia by sea. But Kamrul, who had accompanied Sabur on the journey, recently phoned from Malaysia and informed her that Sabur was missing.

Gopinath Kanjilal, assistant superintendent of police in Jhenidah, said four cases were filed with different police stations in the district from January to May 19 against 70 people for trafficking.

Law enforcers have so far arrested six of the accused, including Khairul Islam and Emdad Hossain of Jhenidah Sadar upazila. The six are now behind bars.

# Mob kills 2 'muggers'

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Bagharpara from the town on his bike Sunday night.

Brandishing a pistol, they told Barun to stop his bike, but he sped up, the OC quoted Barun as saying.

At one stage, the snatchers lost control over the vehicle and fell on the road at Hudarajapur around 10:30pm.

As Barun screamed for help, locals rushed to the spot and caught them, the OC added.

The locals then gave the snatchers a good beating, leaving them critically injured.

Being informed, police rescued them and took them to Jessore Medical College Hospital, where doctors

declared them dead around 1:00am on Monday.

Kazal Kanti, medical officer at the hospital, said the deceased bodies bore several injury marks.

Salauddin Sagor, younger brother of Ismail, said he went to the hospital after receiving a call from the police around 12noon on Monday. He said his brother was not accused in any case.

"He [Ismail] along with Al Amin went out of the house on Sunday evening on a motorcycle," Salauddin added.

OC Shikder said police recovered one foreign made pistol, two bullets and two sharp weapons from the spot. Two cases were filed with Kotwali police in this connection.

# Target connectivity

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completed, will make both the import of electricity from India and the transit of commercial goods to Nepal, Bhutan and India using the Bangladesh territory easier.

India though will finalise the project list once the agreement is signed.

The terms and conditions of the new loan are likely to be the same as the ones tagged with the 2010 LoC.

The first credit line had carried 1.75 percent interest rate per year, which was later lowered to 1 percent by the Indian government. The loan has to be repaid in 20 years with a grace period of five years.

Some 75 percent of the overall procurement for the projects has to be