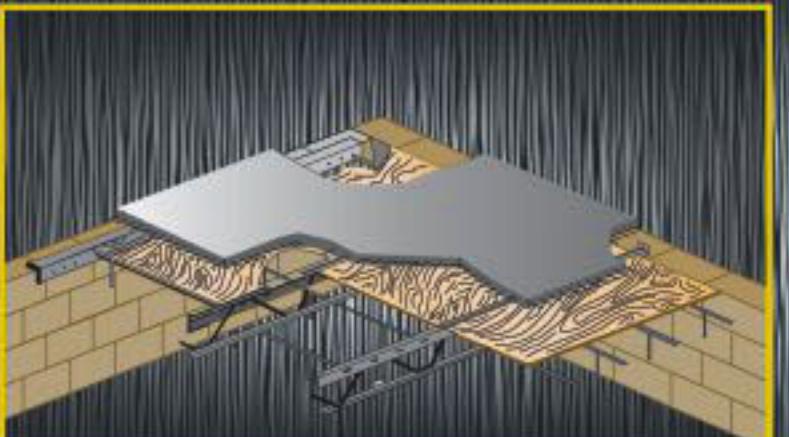


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Local govt bill passed

Municipal polls with party symbols get legal

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Jatiya Sangsad last night passed the Local Government (municipality) Amendment Act-2015, paving the way for chairmen hopefuls to contest municipality polls on political parties' ticket.

The Election Commission is likely to announce the polls schedule within two or three days, said EC sources.

LGRD Minister Khandaker Mosharraf Hossain placed the bill in parliament on November 15. The House passed it by a voice vote.

Under the new legislation, independent candidates will also be able to run for mayor after meeting some specific criteria.

However, the councillor aspirants will contest the polls independently like the previous elections, meaning they will not participate in the polls in a partisan manner.

Some opposition and independent lawmakers opposed the bill saying that it would introduce discrimination against the councillor hopefuls as they will not be able to contest the polls under political parties' banner.

The MPs proposed sending the bill to a special committee for further scrutiny, but the House rejected the proposal by a voice vote.

So far the political parties could only extend their

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FACEBOOK, VIBER BAN
Internet use drops sharply

MUHAMMAD ZAHIDUL ISLAM

Mobile data usage dropped over 22 percent after the government blocked Facebook, Viber and WhatsApp Wednesday.

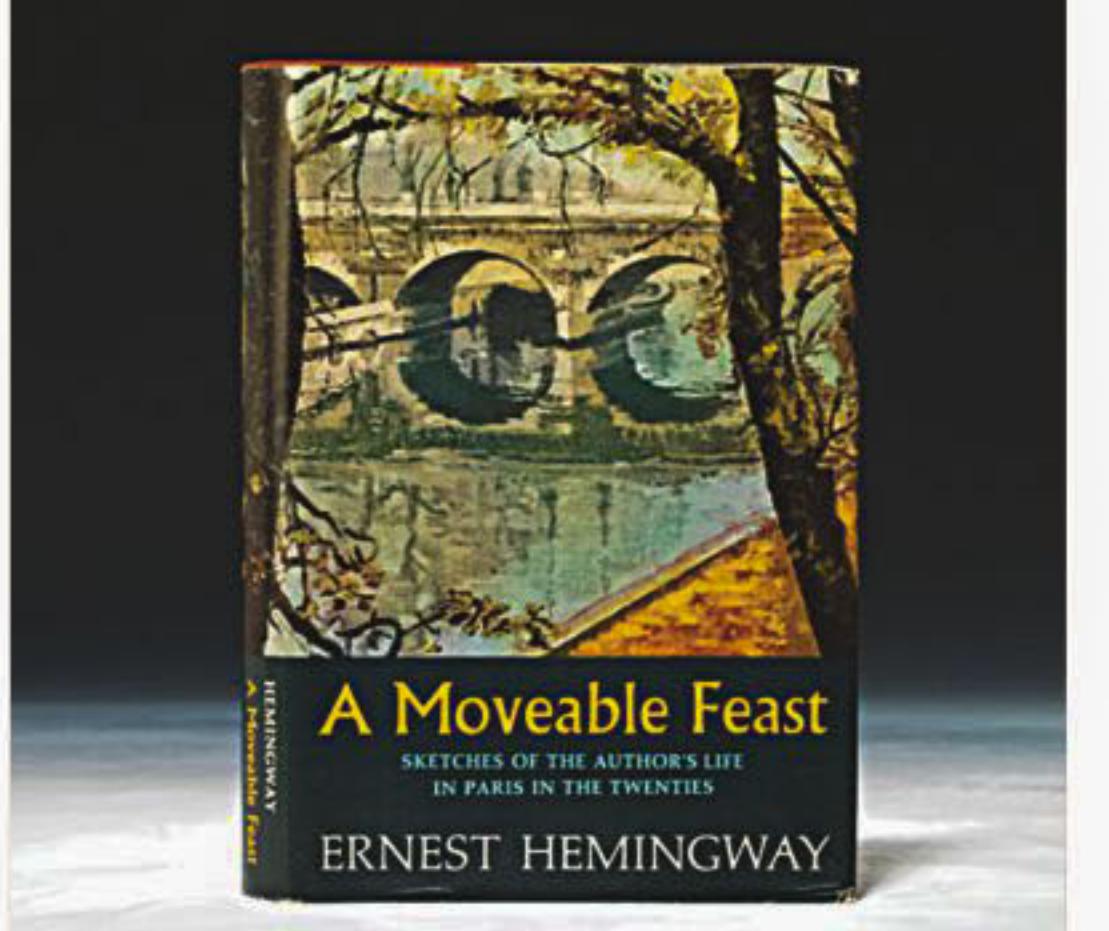
The Daily Star collected information from three mobile carriers yesterday and it was seen that total bandwidth usage through the three carriers dropped to 229 Terabits on Wednesday from 296 Terabits on Tuesday.

The data usage was close to 200 Terabits yesterday, said senior executives of the carriers requesting not to be named.

"No doubt Facebook is one of the major data consumer in our country, even digital marketing and sometimes trades are done on this platform," said a senior executive of a mobile carrier.

On Wednesday, telecommunication regulator BTTC blocked Facebook and online messaging and calling services WhatsApp and Viber just an hour after the Supreme Court

SEE PAGE 17 COL 2



Hemingway memoir becomes totem of post-attacks Paris

AFP, Paris

US literary great Ernest Hemingway's tender and joyful memoir of 1920s Paris, "A Moveable Feast", has enjoyed a surge in sales since last week's terror attacks in the French capital.

The author of such acclaimed novels as "For Whom the Bell Tolls" and "The Old Man and the Sea" spent time in Paris as a young man honing his writing skills and chronicling the exuberant mood of Paris after World War I.

Copies of "A Moveable Feast" have been flying off bookshop shelves, say sales monitors.

Paperback versions are being deposited, along with flowers and candles, in front of bullet-ridden

SEE PAGE 17 COL 2

69 hajj agencies lose licence
Found guilty of human trafficking

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government has cancelled licences of 69 hajj agencies for trafficking people in the guise of Umrah pilgrims to Saudi Arabia last year.

Twenty-six others were fined for committing the crime, said Chowdhury Babul Hassan, religious affairs secretary, yesterday at a press briefing at Economic Relations Division in the capital.

The action was taken on the basis of findings of an investigation.

Following the measures, the government hopes that the Saudi government will lift its embargo on Umrah visas for Bangladeshis, Babul said.

Saudi Arabia stopped issuing Umrah visas to Bangladeshis on March 22 after allegations had been raised of smuggling of 11,485 people in the guise of pilgrims.

On receiving such allegations against 104 Hajj agents, including the president of the private Hajj agencies' association (Haab), the religious affairs ministry formed a five-member committee to investigate the matter last June.

Umrah visas are issued only for 14 to 28 days and do not require any police verification and ministry certification, leaving scopes for unscrupulous local and Saudi hajj agencies to take advantage of

SEE PAGE 17 COL 3

No rhetoric, act to save lives

Governments urged at global conference on road safety

M ABUL KALAM AZAD, from Brazil

A two-day global conference on road safety kicked off in the Brazilian capital yesterday with experts, civil society members and NGO representatives urging political leaderships to act to curb road accidents.

Achieving sustainable development will be difficult if road crashes continue killing and injuring a large number of people, they said.

According to the latest report of the World Health Organisation, 1.2 million people are killed and 30-50 million others injured on roads around the world annually, leaving a great impact on their families and the national economy. Ninety percent of the fatalities occurred in the low and middle-income countries.

As many as 1,800 leaders, experts and civil society representatives from more than 100 countries gathered in Brasilia to review the progress in road safety worldwide. However, there was no representative from the Bangladeshi government.

Bangladesh is among the 68 countries where fatalities caused by road crashes saw a rise. WHO estimated annual victims of road crashes in the country at 21,000 but the government brings the figure down to 4,000.

Roads in Bangladesh are vulnerable to accidents, said WHO experts, adding the number of road accidents might remain steady due to little effort by the government to address the issue.

In improving road safety, Bangladesh is lagging behind in all fronts from having an effective law and its enforcement, ensuring compliance with speed limit, use of seatbelts and helpmate, imposing a bar to drunk driving to standardising of vehicles' safety condition.

Brazilian President Dilma Rousseff inaugurated the high-level conference, the first since the United Nations set an ambitious target in the newly adapted Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to halve the death figure

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ANNOUNCEMENT

STAR WEEKEND

has done a cover story this week on Universal Children's Day, an initiative of JAAGO Foundation, that was to be held this Thursday, November 19, 2015.

Due to the recent political situation and the hartal given on the same day, the event has been postponed to Saturday, November 28, 2015. The story is still running and you can find all the information on the event.

The story on our website www.thedailystar.net/star-weekend will be the updated version.



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PRAYER TIMING

NOVEMBER 20

Fazr Juma Asr Maghrib Esha

AZAN 5-05 12-30 3-45 5-21 7-00

JAMAAT 5-40 1-15 4-00 5-24 7-30

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

Serving poor for 3 decades

Attack on Italian doctor shocks Dinajpur villagers

KONGKON KARMAKER, Dinajpur

When he came to the modest rural dispensary for his regular consultation yesterday noon, Shambhu Sarkar was surprised to find it closed. He knew the doctor to be there on time. But today was different.

The 55-year-old tuberculosis patient from Mirzapur village in Dinajpur later heard the news-- doctor Piero Parolari, also a pastor at a local church, was shot and injured by some unidentified assailants a day earlier.

"I could not believe that somebody could do that to him," Shambhu said. He knew the doctor as a kind-hearted, soft-spoken person.

Three unidentified criminals riding on a motorcycle shot Piero, 57, in the back of his head on Wednesday morning when he was on his way to Dinajpur Medical College Hospital.

Locals rescued and rushed him to DMCH. Later he was taken to the Combined Medical Hospital in Dhaka by a helicopter of Bangladesh Air Force that afternoon.

Born in Lecco, some 50 kilometres north of Milan, Italy on June 27 in 1951, Piero came to Bangladesh three decades ago.

He started his career at a tuberculosis hospital in Rajshahi.

He then went to Dinajpur 15 years ago and started seeing patients there, said Father Silas of Dinajpur Catholic mission.

He worked as a pastor at Dinajpur church and also serves the St Vincent Missionary Hospital in the town and a local

SEE PAGE 17 COL 1



In a photo taken 15 years back, Italian doctor and pastor Piero Parolari poses with his colleagues at Mirzapur Catholic Church in Dinajpur.

PHOTO: STAR