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Leading by example

People of 7 villages in Manikganj building much-needed bridge on their own initiative

ZAHANGIR SHAH, Manikganj

People of seven villages in Manikganj Sadar upazila have set an example by taking an initiative to build a concrete bridge over a canal at Palora Mollar Ghat on their own.

This correspondent visited the spot early this month and talked to the villagers about the initiative of constructing the bridge.

Locals said 70 percent of the bridge construction work had been completed, spending Tk 25 lakh.

Most of the people of Char Betilar, Char Patrail, Chak Gobindopur, Palora, Dhakar Bajor, Paschim Rathora and Gujurir Char villages extended their hands to the initiative by giving money and labour.

The villagers have sought financial support from the government so that they can complete rest of the work.

They said the Palora Mollar Ghat is the only point for crossing the canal of people of 13 villages on both sides of the canal under Betila-Mitora union.

The villagers are now crossing the canal on a bamboo-made bridge.

Locals said some people of Char Betilar and Betilar villages first came up with the idea of building the bridge.

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An under-construction bridge over a canal at Palora Mollar Ghat in Manikganj -- an initiative of people from seven villages. The photo was taken early this month.

PHOTO: STAR

Robbers loot 2 jewellery shops

STAR REPORT

Robbers looted 300 tolas of gold ornaments from two jewellery shops in Dhaka and Chittagong yesterday.

SM Kawsar Ahmed, officer-in-charge of Demra Police Station, said a gang of seven to eight criminals stormed Keya Jewellers on the first floor of Manu Mollah Complex near Sarulia cattle market in Demra around 1:30pm.

Holding the shop employees at gunpoint, the gang looted 100 tolas of gold ornaments, worth around Tk 40 lakh, and fled in a microbus, he said, citing witnesses.

All these happened in just five to seven minutes, according to the witnesses.

The police official said the robbery took place during the Juma prayers when most of the nearby

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5,500 ATMs found undocumented

Customs Intelligence seeks import data from 53 banks

SAJJADUR RAHMAN

There are around 7,500 automated teller machines (ATMs) in Bangladesh, but only 2,000 of them are recorded in government documents, according to Customs Intelligence and Investigation Directorate.

The directorate hinted that unscrupulous businesses might have imported the undocumented machines in the name of computer accessories to evade tax.

A 31 percent tax is imposed on ATM imports while there is no tax on the import of computers.

"There are over 7,000 ATMs in Bangladesh, but our records show that the figure is much lower," Moinul Khan, director general of the directorate, told The Daily Star on Thursday.

He said they were trying to find out from where and how the "undocumented" ATMs were imported.

Officials of the custom intelligence unit said many of the machines were brought in as "samples" for avoiding paying taxes.

"We will also look into whether sub-

standard machines were imported. The issue of money laundering will also be examined," said the DG.

Recently, the directorate has issued a letter to the managing directors of 53 banks operating ATMs, asking them to provide it with data on ATM purchases and imports in 10 days.

According to the directorate, some banks have already submitted the information to it while others have asked for more time.

The directorate's move came following some ATM frauds that took place between February 6 and 12. The incident, in which at least Tk 25 lakh were stolen, caused quite a stir among people as it was first of its kind in the country.

Investigators found that a gang of foreigners and locals used stolen data "skimmed" from four ATMs around the capital in the crime. A central bank investigation detected that the criminals stole data of over 1,200 cards, but were able to withdraw cash by using around 40 cards only.

Insiders, however, said data of 4000-5,000 cards were stolen.

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4 'robbers' hurt in 'gunfight' with cops

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Gazipur

Four suspected robbers were hit by bullets during a "gunfight" with a team of Detective Branch of police in Gazipur city's Kodda Islampur area early yesterday.

The injured are Sultan Uddin, 42, Salam, 40, Hamidul, 30, and Mamun, 25.

Sub-inspector Ikbal Hossain of Gazipur DB said suspected robber Mizanur Rahman a few days ago managed a job at Ocean Garment Limited as a security guard. On Thursday evening, he fed sedative-heavy cakes to his colleagues, leaving all of them in deep sleep.

Around 2:30am yesterday, some 15 accomplices of Mizanur reached the factory by a microbus and started looting goods, said the SI.

Acting on a tip-off, the DB team launched a drive to foil the robbery. When the law enforcers reached the factory, robbers opened fire on the cops, he added.

The law enforcers fired retaliatory shots, leaving the four bullet-hit. However, the other members of the gang managed to flee.

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'Space-saving' burials in China



BBC ONLINE

People in China are being encouraged to opt for vertical burial or cremation under new government funeral guidelines aimed at coping with land scarcity.

It's hoped the guidance, issued by nine government departments, will promote environmentally friendly forms of burial that take up little or no land. These include burial at sea and tree funerals - where ashes are interred beneath a newly planted tree.

Shared family tombs and arranging coffins vertically also get the nod, as do smaller plots and gravestones. The guidelines stress that the funeral traditions of ethnic minorities should be respected.

Rapid development and urban growth has put pressure on the country's land resources, but state-run China Daily says previous

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US MASS SHOOTING Gunman kills 3 in Kansas

AFP, Los Angeles

A gunman killed three people and wounded 14 others at a lawnmower factory in Kansas on Thursday before being gunned down by police in the latest mass shooting to rock the United States, according to a police official.

Harvey County Sheriff T Walton said the gunman was an employee at Excel Industries, located in Hesston, a tight-knit community north of Wichita.

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Schoolchildren dance and sing along during a cultural performance at the Muktir Utsav-2016 organised by the Liberation War Museum yesterday. Held at the Dhaka University playground, the festival was arranged to enlighten students about the 1971 war and inspire them to learn the history of the nation's independence.

Mysterious death of two girls

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Moulvibazar

Two schoolgirls died within around half an hour after falling sick at Jaintapur of Sylhet yesterday.

Police suspected that Imrana Begum, 15, and Rosna Begum, 14, eighth graders at Durgapur High School in Kanaighat upazila, might have died after drinking contaminated fruit drink.

Imrana, aunt of Rosna, was from Dholkira village while the latter from Purba Laxmipur in Jaintapur upazila.

Quoting locals, law enforcers said the girls around 11:30am hired a CNG-run three-wheeler from Darbas Filling Station to go to Chatalu area.

After travelling some distance, the two told the driver that they were feeling unwell.

The driver stopped the vehicle in front of Darbas Union Parishad Complex and found Imrana lying motionless on the seat, said Safiul Kabir, officer-in-charge of Jaintapur Police Station, quoting the driver. The condition of Rosna was also bad.

Locals rushed the two to

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PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

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PRAYER TIMING
FEBRUARY 27

Fazr	Zohr	Asr	Maghrib	Esha
5-15	12-45	4-30	6-05	7-30

JAMAAT 5-50 1-15 4-45 6-10 8-00

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION