

German national confesses to ATM scam

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
A German national accused of siphoning off cash from ATM booths yesterday made a confessional statement about his involvement in the recent ATM scam. Metropolitan Magistrate Atikur Rahman recorded the confession of Piotr Szczepan Mazurek, said a court source. Maksud alias Maksud, Rezaul Karim alias Shaheen, and Refaz Ahmed alias Rony, all employees of City Bank, were also arrested and remanded in connection with the scam.

4 JMB men get life term for Mymensingh serial bomb blast

COURT CORRESPONDENT
A Dhaka court yesterday sentenced four leaders and activists of Jama'atul Mujahedin Bangladesh (JMB) to life term imprisonment in 2005 August 17 serial bomb blast case of Mymensingh. The convicts are Kawsar Alam Sumon, Yunus Mia alias Kawsar, Mehedi Habib alias Md Rafique and Ashraf Islam alias Sharif. Of them, Sumon and Kawsar were present while Rafique and Sharif are on the run.

The court acquitted eight others as the charges brought against them were not proved. The court also fined them Tk 20,000 each, in default to suffer three more months in jail. The punishment for the fugitives will be effective from the day of their arrest or surrender.

Judge Momtaj Begum of the Speedy Trial Tribunal-2 of Dhaka delivered the judgement in the presence of the 10 accused.

According to the prosecution, JMB men blasted several bombs adjacent to TSC of Bangladesh Agricultural University in Mymensingh on August 17 in 2005.

Later, a case was filed against unknown people for the incidents and police pressed charges against 12 leaders and activists of JMB on November 30 of 2005.

But the case was transferred to the tribunal for its quick disposal.



Illegal digging of soil from the banks of the river Surma remains a lucrative business for influential people. Truck full of earth, inset, regularly transporting soils to use in brick kilns and housing projects. Because of this unabated digging, villages along the riverbank often face erosion threat during monsoon. The photos were taken from a bank of Surma in the Mirerchor area of Tultikor union, yesterday noon. PHOTO: SHEIKH NAsER



Viqarunnisa parents against pry terminal exams, creative method

Form human chain saying the two put extra burden on students

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
The guardians of students of Viqarunnisa Noon School and College yesterday formed a human chain demanding scrapping of primary terminal examinations and creative question method in the tests. They said the examinations put an "extra burden" on the students. They said these at a programme held under the banner "Guardians of Viqarunnisa Noon School and College" in front of the school's main branch in the capital's Siddheshwari around 1:00pm. "It is an additional burden on the children at this very level as they need to study a lot for the test which is of no use. Therefore we demand a cancellation of the test," said Dilara Afroz, a student's guardian. Another guardian Swapna Ahmed

said most of the guardians get engaged in an awful competition for securing the highest grades for their children, making them dependent on coaching centres as well as guide-books. According to a report of the Campaign for Popular Education (Campe), students' expenditure increased after the introduction of the test as the students have become heavily dependent on coaching centres, private tuitions and guidebooks. About the creative test method, the guardians said many students found it pretty difficult to understand. "Therefore, we find no other ways but to send our kids to coaching centres," said Ayesha Parvin, a guardian of a fifth grader of the school, adding that teachers at many schools did not have clear understanding of the method.

Research for Advancement of Complete Education (RACE), a private research organisation, in a recent survey report said more than half of the primary school teachers surveyed were still unclear about the method. CREATIVE TALENT HUNT Education Minister Nurul Islam Nahid yesterday said that the government has taken initiatives to find out and patron the latent talents in the country so that they could lead the nation in future. He said this while briefing reporters at his ministry on the countrywide creative talent hunt competition kicked off on March 7. Students from class VI to class XII of schools, colleges, madrasas and technical institutions are participating in the contest. The grand finale will be held on

Uniform education system demanded

DU CORRESPONDENT
Sammilito Samajik Andolon yesterday held a rally on Swaparjito Swadhinata premises near the Teachers' Student Centre of Dhaka University, demanding a progressive, scientific and discrimination free single-stream education system. They also submitted a memorandum to the prime minister with mass signatures, collected from a three months long campaign. To spread an anti-racial, democratic and progressive education system, a uniform education system to be executed, where all the students of the country will study through a discrimination free single medium, the speakers said at the rally. Abdul Matin Bhuiyan, presidium member of the organisation, said three kinds of education systems are prevailing in the country - general, English and madrasa, which hinders forming of national unity and contradicts ideology of the Liberation War. They also demanded that vocational education be introduced at all levels so that students could become self-reliant. Pankaj Bhattacharya, president of Oikya Nap, Prof Syed Anwar Hossain, and Ajoy Roy, president of Sammilito Samajik Andolon also spoke.

One hacked to death over refusing to sell Yaba pills in N'ganj

Two others also injured
OUR CORRESPONDENT, N'ganj
Criminals hacked a person to death and injured two others allegedly for denial of selling of drugs in Narayanganj city yesterday. Deceased Likhon, 35, was a resident in Shantinagar area in the district's Bandar upazila. Injured victims include Jamal and Hridoy of the same area. Police and locals said a group of local goons, including Sunny, Mansur, Bayejid and Saddam, picked up Likhon and his friends Jamal and Hridoy from their Shantinagar homes in the morning. After tying up the trio at Sunny and Mansur's house, they hacked them indiscriminately, bringing an accusation of theft against them. Likhon's wife Shahnaj Begum alleged that they picked up her husband as he refused to sell Yaba pills in the area. Police recovered the body of Likhon from Sunny's house and took the injured two to Narayanganj Hospital. Abul Kalam, officer-in-charge of Bandar police, said police arrested siblings Sunny and Saddam and their cohort Titu after raiding different areas. A case was filed in this connection.

Ex-EIV chairman remanded

COURT CORRESPONDENT
A Dhaka court yesterday placed former Ekushey TV chairman Abdus Salam on a three-day remand in a case filed on March 2 this year over misappropriating about Tk 33.34 crore of the television channel, showing fake vouchers. Metropolitan Magistrate Khurshid Alam passed the order after Shamsul Alam, a deputy director of the Anti Corruption Commission and also the investigation officer of the case, produced Salam before it with a 10-day remand prayer. Defence submitted a bail petition along with a cancellation of the remand prayer, saying that the charge brought against their client was false and concocted. Salam was arrested on January 5, 2015 under the Pornography Control Act. Later he was also shown arrested in more cases including a sedition one. But he was granted bails, except the sedition case.

BNP unveils logo

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to light as we're now in dark. There is no democracy in the country. We want to restore democracy through our council." The party also started its campaign for the council on Thursday on social media network Facebook. The slogans and posters of BNP's associate bodies made for the council were also unveiled at the programme. BNP chairperson's adviser Abdul Awal Minto, and other leaders were also present at the programme.



When he is supposed to study at a school, this child works as a helper of a human hauler driver to make a living. Risking his life, he has to hold an iron bar of the vehicle almost all day long to remain standing behind it to collect fares from the passengers. He earns only Tk 200 to Tk 250 on a daily basis by doing this job. The photo was taken at the capital's Agargaon. PHOTO: Md Kawsar

Citizens' group accuses AL leader of grabbing

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Ain o Salish Kendra (ASK) Executive Director Sultana Kamal said attacking minorities and depriving them of their rights was never expected in an independent country. The constituency's lawmaker Primary and Mass Education Minister Mostafizur Rahman should stand by these threatened people, Sultana added. Talking to The Daily Star over telephone, Emdadul said he was the rightful owner of the lands and possessed all necessary documents. Asked why he did not file an "eviction

case" against them if his claims were true, he said, "The court gave verdict in my favour. So why do I need to file a case again?" He also denied all allegations of attacks on them. Among others, President of Bangladesh Puja Udjapon Parishad Kazal Debnath, General Secretary of Arpita Sampotti Aina Protirodh Andolon Advocate Subrata Chowdhury and Executive Director of Association for Land Reform and Development Shamsul Huda were present at the press conference.

EC to ask cops to sue Barguna AL MP

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speaker of the parliament against an AL lawmaker of Mymensingh-2 Sharif Ahmed for threatening a returning officer and attempting to influence the municipality polls. But the EC did not take actions against the MP. But this time, the commission itself has come up with the directive. Meanwhile, AL joint general secretary Mahbul Alam Hanif yesterday said the party would take actions against the lawmakers, who will join electoral campaign, breaching laws. He was talking to reporters at the EC

secretariat after a six-member AL delegation led by him met Chief Election Commissioner Kazi Rakibuddin Ahmad. The delegation requested the CEC so that the commission does not illogically apply laws on only AL men without proper investigation to show the commission as neutral, Hanif said. Elections to 732 UPs will be held on March 22 in the first phase and 650 UPs on March 31 in the second phase. More than 2,800 UPs will go to polls in four other phases until June, according to EC documents.

HC summons

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legality of the new circular. Then the museum authorities filed two petitions with the Appellate Division of the SC for staying the HC orders. The apex court on December 13 and 15 last year rejected their stay petitions and asked the HC to hear and dispose of the rules. The writ petitioners on January 18 this year submitted two separate supplementary petitions to the HC praying to it to order the museum authorities to submit papers relating to the recruitment before the HC. After hearing on January 20, the HC ordered them to submit the papers by February 3. But, the authorities did not submit the the papers, the lawyer added.

ICT decides to try Edris in absentia

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mass killing, rape, looting, arson and forced deportation. Sulaiman was a Muslim League leader and joined Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam to contest the 1970's election, only to be defeated and return to Muslim League. In

1971, he formed Peace Committee and Razakar Bahini to assist the Pakistani occupation army, according to the investigators. Edris was also a leader of Islami Chhatra Sangha, the then student wing of Jamaat-e-Islami.

Space for dissent shrinking

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diversity, the special rapporteur also noted ambiguities in the interpretation and implementation of that principle. He furthermore analysed the situation of people of various religious minorities, some of whom are also from ethnic minority communities. In his report, he sensed much positive commitment among different stakeholders to maintain the harmonious interreligious coexistence, open-mindedness and secular democracy, particularly in the face of rising religious polarisation. He said the government was encouraged to uphold its commitment to promoting the principle of secularism, as enshrined in the constitution. With such an inclusive understanding of secularism, he said, Bangladesh may provide an important contribution to international debates, in contrast to other restrictive concepts of secularism that prevail in many parts of the world. "The Government is

reminded that, when fighting the instrumentalization of religions, it should also refrain from using religion to achieve political goals," the report reads. The report said the government should double its efforts in facilitating and encouraging interreligious and cross-boundary communication, in order to maintain peaceful coexistence and reduce possible suspicion and misunderstanding among different religious and belief communities. The government should be consistent in expressing its position against any acts of intolerance, discrimination and extremism, it said. The report also recommended that the government should protect the vibrant civil society and pluralistic society in Bangladesh by addressing the existing anxiety expressed by members of religious and ethnic minorities who feel vulnerable in the face of rising religious extremism and acts of violence perpetrated against them.



Pedestrians look at the photos hung on the outside wall of the National Museum, during a daylong pictorial warning exhibition on packets of tobacco products yesterday with a call for raising awareness of implementation of the Smoking and Tobacco Products Usage (Control) Act 2005, organised by Dhaka Ahsania Mission. PHOTO: PALASH KHAN