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# AUTO-RICKSHAW STRIKE

## City people suffer badly

City dwellers had to endure transport crisis yesterday, especially during the morning rush hour, as a section of the CNG-run auto-rickshaw drivers went on a 24-hour strike.

The situation however started to become normal towards the afternoon.

Dhaka District Four-Stroke Auto-Rickshaw Drivers Union observed the strike from 6:00am to press home their 7-point demand that included ending "harassment" by traffic police, collection of higher deposits than the government-fixed rate of Tk 900 per day, and release of drivers in jail.

Another section of the driver's union -- Dhaka Auto-Rickshaw Sramik Union -- and owners' body Dhaka Mahanagar CNG Owners Association termed the demands "illogical".

Taking the advantage of the crisis, some drivers who defied the strike demanded sky high fares from helpless passengers trying to get to work. Many passengers yielded to their demands.

Sajib, one such victim of the exorbitant fare, had to wait outside of Dhaka Medical College Hospital for 30 minutes before he could get an auto-rickshaw.

He was asked Tk 250 to go to Mohakhali. He boarded the vehicle cursing the driver.

"Will their demand ever stop?" asked Mohammad Malek, who used to go to his Uttara office with colleagues from Bakshi Bazar on auto-rickshaw.

"On most days we negotiate a price with the driver since

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Traffic on the Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue, one of the city's busiest thoroughfares, near Farmgate looks unusually thin at 3:30pm yesterday despite it being the first day of the week. This was mainly because a section of CNG-run auto-rickshaw drivers went on a daylong strike, demanding an end to 'harassment' by police and collection of daily deposits higher than the government-fixed amount. Inset, CNG-run three-wheelers parked at a garage in Khilgaon.

PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN/PALASH KHAN

## ACC was under WB pressure to file Padma graft case

Says outgoing chairman

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Anti-Corruption Commission filed the Padma bridge graft case in 2012 without any relevant document and evidence because of pressure from the World Bank, its outgoing Chairman M Bodiuzzaman yesterday said.

He made the comment at his farewell programme at the ACC office in the capital's Segunbagicha.

In June 2012, the WB cancelled its \$1.2 billion credit for the Padma bridge project, saying it had proof of a "corruption conspiracy" involving Bangladeshi officials, executives of a Canadian firm and some individuals.

On December 17 of the year, the ACC filed the graft conspiracy case with Banani Police Station against Mosharraf Hossain Bhuiyan, ex-Bridges

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## Muggers kill shop employee, loot money

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Muggers shot dead a shop employee and snatched Tk 2.90 lakh from him in the capital's Hajipara yesterday.

The dead, Ismail Hossain, 35, was the manager of Bangladesh Sanitary shop at West Rampura.

After withdrawing the money from Al-Arafah Islami Bank's Rampura branch, Ismail was going to Dutch-Bangla Bank's Rampura branch on foot to deposit the money.

When he reached Hajipara Natun Rasta around 2:15pm, three to four muggers swooped on him and tried to take away the bag with the money, Abdul Motaleb, owner of the shop, told The Daily Star.

As he tried to resist the criminals, they opened fire on Ismail and fled the scene with the money.

Critically injured Ismail was taken to Khidmah Hospital at Khilgaon. As his condition deteriorated,

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## SC JUDGES' REMOVAL

# Draft law allows self-defence

ASHUTOSH SARKAR

A draft law has outlined the ways for removing Supreme Court judges for "incapacity" and "misbehaviour," giving them scopes for self-defence in writing and through lawyers.

The law ministry has prepared the draft after the Jatiya Sangsad passed the 16th constitutional amendment bill in September 2014, empowering the House to get rid of SC judges for the two reasons.

Previously, the SC judges were removed by the president on recommendations of the Supreme Judicial Council, a body formed by the chief justice and two senior most Appellate Division judges.

The attorney general's office yesterday submitted the draft on behalf of the ministry to the High Court for consideration in connection with a writ petition that challenged the constitutional amendment.

The HC is set to deliver its verdict on the petition on May 5.

Deputy Attorney General Motaher Hossain Sazu, who submitted the draft to the HC, told The Daily Star that a copy of the draft was also sent to Chief Justice Surendra Kumar Sinha for the SC's opinion.

After getting the apex court's views, the law ministry will finalise the draft and then place it before the cabinet for approval. Subsequently, the draft will be placed before parliament for passage.

According to the draft, if anyone wants to bring allegations of misconduct and incapacity against any judge, they must submit the complaint to the parliament Speaker in writing.

The Speaker will form a 10-member committee (of lawmakers) that will look into the allegation and verify its initial accuracy in seven days, maintaining its confidentiality.

If the committee believes there is substance in the complaint, it will submit a report to the Speaker.

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## 17-month-old stabbed over land dispute

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Mymensingh

A man stabbed and injured a 17-month-old baby girl of his neighbour over a land-related dispute with her father in Nandail upazila yesterday.

The victim, Bithi, is a daughter of day labourer Deen Islam of Chandipasha village.

Quoting locals, Ataur Rahman, officer-in-charge of Nandail Police Station, said there had long been a conflict between Deen and his neighbour Md Shahjahan alias Puitya Shahjahan over a nine-decimal land.

Deen built a tin-shed house on the disputed land a couple of days ago, but Shahjahan and his men vandalised it.

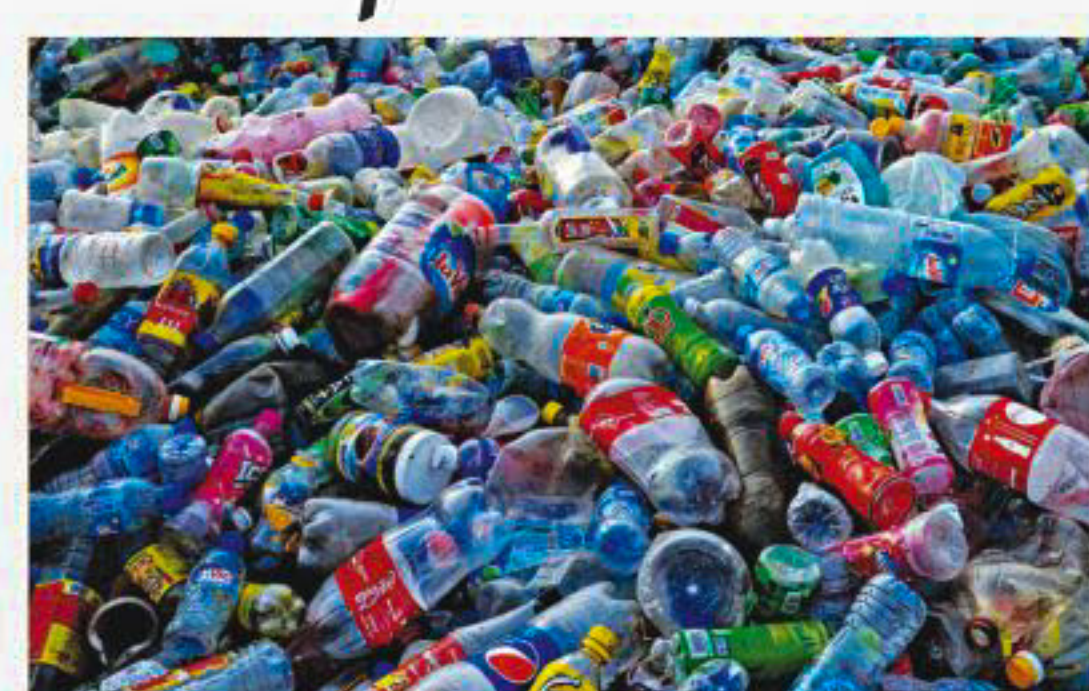
When Deen went to rebuild the house there around 11:00am yesterday, Shahjahan and his men appeared there and got locked in an altercation with Deen, said the police official.

At one stage, Shahjahan and his followers attempted to attack Deen with sharp weapons, but he fled.

As the attackers did not find Deen, they entered his house and snatched his daughter Bithi from Sharifa Khatun, another neighbour of Deen, and took her outside the house.

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## Bacteria that eats plastic



INDEPENDENT.CO.UK

A new species of bacteria able to eat one of the world's most common plastics has been discovered by Japanese scientists.

Polyethylene terephthalate, or PET, is the plastic commonly found in disposable water bottles. Lightweight, colourless and strong it is widely used, with 50 million tonnes produced globally every year.

Published in the journal Science, the discovery by researchers from Kyoto Institute of Technology and Keio University, could be a breakthrough in managing the plastic, which is notoriously resistant to being broken down by microbes or biodegradation.

To find the bacteria, a team of researchers collected 250 PET-contaminated samples including

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## WAR CRIMES TRIAL

# Mobarak appeal comes next for SC hearing

ASHUTOSH SARKAR

The Supreme Court is now set to hear and settle the appeal of convicted war criminal Mobarak Hossain.

The defence and the state counsels, however, could not say specifically when the apex court would start hearing the appeal.

Earlier, the SC completed the proceedings of the appeal of war criminal Mir Quasem Ali and upheld the

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**SIBL**  
Social Islami Bank Limited  
Prayer Timing  
MARCH 14  
Fazr Zohr Asr Maghrib Esha  
AZAN 5-05 12-45 4-30 6-12 7-30  
JAMAAT 5-40 1-15 4-45 6-15 8-00  
SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

## Trapped in Syria

'Scores of trafficked Nepali, Bangladeshi women languishing in the war-torn country

AFP, Murali Bhanjyang

Nepali villager Sunita Magar thought she was heading to a safe factory job in Kuwait, but only when she landed in Damascus did she realise "something had gone very wrong".

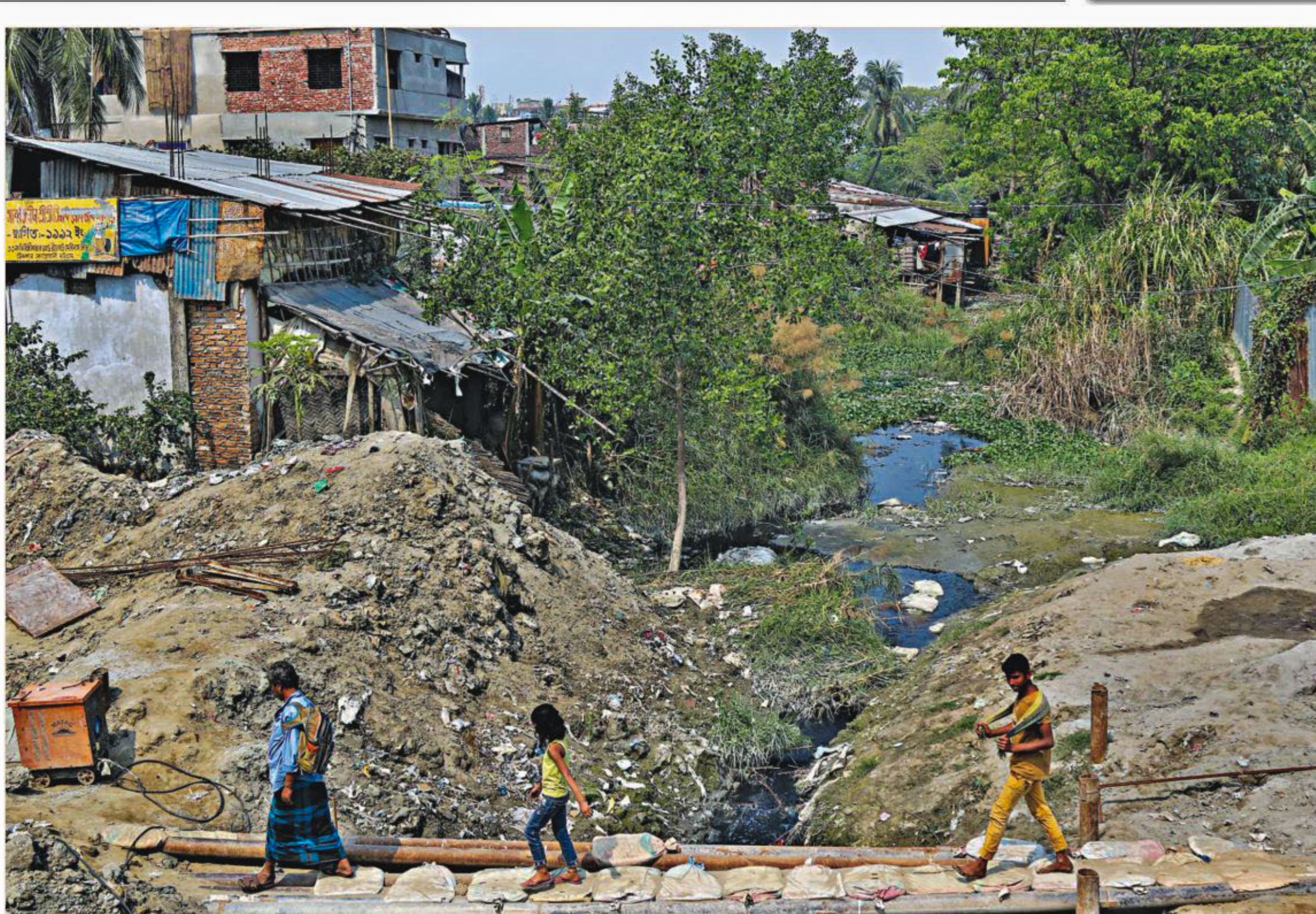
Frequently beaten with a baton and given only one meal a day, Magar says she spent 13 months working as a maid for a Syrian household and pleading to be allowed to go home.

"I was just in shock, I couldn't stop crying," the single mother-of-two told AFP.

Magar is among scores of poor Nepali and Bangladeshi women who travelled to the Middle East on the promise of a good job, only to be trafficked into Syria, wracked by five years of civil war.

Nepal's top diplomat in the region said nationals

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What now appears to be a lean flow of water was once a key water body of Chittagong city. The Mariam Bibi Canal in Firingi Bazar area is almost dead, thanks to mindless encroachment, unabated dumping of solid waste and indifference of the authorities concerned. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: ANURUP KANTI DAS

## Car bomb kills 27 in Ankara

75 wounded; a dozen critical

AFP, Ankara

A car bomb ripped through a busy square in central Ankara yesterday, killing at least 27 people and wounding 75, officials said, the latest in a spate of attacks to hit Turkey.

Ambulances rushed to the scene on Kizilay square, a key commercial and transport hub close to the city's embassy area, where the blast reduced several vehicles including a bus to burnt-out wrecks.

The attack comes just weeks after the city was hit by a suicide car bombing on February 17 targeting the military that killed 29 people, claimed by a dissident faction of the outlawed Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK).

The provincial governor's office said there were 27 dead and 75 wounded in the attack.

"The blast was caused by a vehicle packed with explosives close to Kizilay square," an official statement said.

Medical sources told AFP the wounded had been taken to 10 different hospitals around the city, with a dozen said to be in a very serious condition.

Turkey has been hit by a spate of deadly attacks since the middle of last year, most of them blamed on the Islamic State (IS) group, including a double suicide bombing in Ankara in October that left 103 people dead.

Coming so soon after the February bombing, yesterday's attack will raise fresh questions about Turkey's ability to manage the twin security threat posed by IS and Kurdish rebels, as Ankara presses the European Union to speed up its membership process in return for help with the migrant crisis.

The Kurdistan Freedom Falcons (TAK), linked to the PKK, said it carried out the February bombing in Ankara as revenge for operations by the Turkish military in the

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