



WITH TODAY'S ISSUE

Showbiz

A FATHER'S LOVE

Daughter writes about KM Shehabuddin, one of the first diplomats to leave Pak side in 1971

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BELGIUM MINISTER QUILTS

Galant faces accusations she ignored lapses in airport security before March 22 attacks

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Exposed to fatal cylinder blasts

Peoples' lives at high risk as thousands of vehicles use faulty, substandard CNG cylinders, mostly without re-test

TUHIN SHUBHRA ADHIKARY and AKRAM HOSEN

Passengers of a huge number of CNG-run vehicles are exposed to high risks of accidents in the absence of timely fitness verification of the gas cylinders. Further, many of these cylinders are counterfeit and therefore pose even greater threats.

According to international guidelines and a 2002 government circular, gas cylinders must undergo fitness tests every five years. But cylinders of some 1.5 lakh vehicles in the country have not been tested since their conversion into CNG years ago, officials said.

On the other hand, many unauthorised conversion centres fit vehicles with counter-

feit cylinders and even those not designed to contain compressed natural gas (CNG).

In the absence of a specific law for mandatory periodic test, many vehicle owners are reluctant to have their cylinders examined. Others seem blissfully unaware of the risk of using sub-standard or fake cylinders.

Two recent accidents testify to the damage they can do. The accidents happened, within a week, as a result of using counterfeit and defective gas cylinders, initial government investigations found.

Two people were killed and several others injured on Thursday as a gas cylinder of a private car exploded when the car was being

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2 KILLED IN CYLINDER EXPLOSION - PAGE 2



- Around 3 lakh vehicles converted into CNG-run ones so far
- Around 2 lakh turned into CNG-run vehicles till 2011
- Of the 2 lakh, around 1.5 lakh vehicles were not tested since their conversion
- Each cylinder has to be tested in every five years
- Only 11 test centres in Dhaka, Gazipur, Chittagong and Sylhet



This ramshackle room of the Lalbagh Police outpost, inset, with plasters and bricks falling off all around was abandoned after this newspaper printed a report with this picture on October 20, 2014. Part of the building was knocked down to make way for a new building. However, the building is yet to be built and the police operate from a flimsy open sided shade in the photo, above, taken on Monday.



PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

Writing against religion won't be tolerated

Says Hasina

UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has said hurting religious sentiments of others by writing something is not acceptable.

"We perform our religious rituals. But why should we tolerate anyone writing filthy words against our religion?" she questioned.

The PM was addressing the Awami League leaders and workers on the occasion of Pahela Baishakh at the Gono Bhaban on Thursday.

She said writing something against religion as

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No-hilsa campaign worked well

Prices slump in city markets

WASIM BIN HABIB with SHAHEEN MOLLAH

The sale of hilsa dropped significantly at retail markets the day before Pahela Baishakh, thanks to social media campaigns and calls to strike the fish off the Baishakh menu.

Fish traders in the capital say they are now selling hilsa, mostly from cold storage, at half the price they got a couple of days before the Bangla New Year. Yet, the sale is poor, and they are incurring losses.

They say it was the wholesalers who made a huge profit from hilsa sale.

Celebrating Pahela Baishakh with fried hilsa and *panta bhat* (rice soaked in water) has been a common trend among people, especially those in the capital.

Cashing in on the rising demand for hilsa before the festival, a section of unscrupulous traders sell the fish four to five times the normal price. Some of them even sell *jatka* (hilsa fry).

However, things were a bit different this year.

A week before the festival, there was a campaign on social networking websites, especially Facebook, urging people not to have hilsa on Pahela Baishakh.

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Govt sometimes failed to protect press freedom

Says US human rights report; blasts extrajudicial killings

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

The Bangladesh government has "sometimes failed" to protect the freedom of speech and media, the US has said in its Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2015.

"The constitution provides for freedom of speech and press, but the government sometimes failed to respect these rights," said the report released on April 13 in Washington DC by Secretary of State John Kerry.

"There were some limitations on freedom of speech. Some journalists self-censored their criticisms of the government due to harassment and fear of reprisal.

"The independent media were active and expressed a wide variety of views; however, the media outlets that criticised the government experienced negative

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No IS existence in Bangladesh

Reiterates home minister as IS magazine publishes interview linking Bangladesh

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan Kamal yesterday reiterated that there is no base or organisational existence of global militant outfit Islamic State (IS) in Bangladesh.

"I want to clearly state that there is no base or organisational existence of IS in Bangladesh. Some individuals may have belief in its path," the minister told journalists at his residence.

He was replying to queries about an interview of Shaykh Abu Ibrahim al-Hanif, the so-called chief of the "Khilafah's soldiers in Bengal", published on 14th issue of the terror outfit's propaganda magazine *Dabiq*.

In the interview published on April 13, Abu Ibrahim said IS wants to strengthen its capacity in Bangladesh as its "geographical position is convenient to operate Jihad in India and Myanmar in future".

He also said, "Atheist and anti-Islam people are scared. Our soldiers are sharpening their knife to slit throats of

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TOP QUOTE

"Who does it, these provocations? We know that there are some staff from official American institutions."

RUSSIAN PRESIDENT
VLADIMIR PUTIN
SAID ON THURSDAY OVER THE LEAK OF CONFIDENTIAL DOCUMENTS FROM A PANAMANIAN LAW FIRM



Under the hot sun and oppressive heat on the first day of Baishakh, a girl joins the colourful Mangal Shobhajatra with a dugdugi in her hand and "Shubho Nababarsha" painted on her cheeks. Thousands of revelers carried colourful masks and paper-made stylized animals in a procession to welcome the Bangla New Year on Thursday.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

In colour, in festivity

Pahela Baishakh celebrated

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The nation celebrated a colourful Pahela Baishakh on Thursday, despite security concerns and a ban on outdoor programmes in the capital in the evening following last year's sexual assault on women on the Dhaka University campus.

Braving scorching heat

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EU NATIONS ON PANAMA PAPERS

Call for crackdown on tax havens

Spanish minister resigns after alleged links to offshore deals

AFP, Washington

latest political victim.

In the strongest reaction yet to the leaked Panama Papers, the finance ministers of Britain, France, Germany, Italy and Spain proposed a blacklist of havens like Panama if they failed to share corporate registry data.

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HONESTY OF PURPOSE / GOOD GOVERNANCE ARE THE KEYS TO THE "SUCCESS"

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