

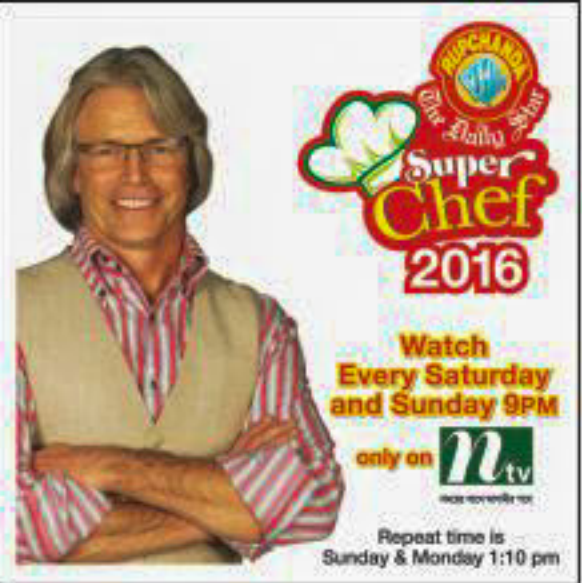
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WITH TODAY'S ISSUE
Showbiz

WHERE ARE WE HEADING?
 Rights activist Khushi Kabir talks about the recent brutal killings and freedom of expression
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ZUMA IN TROUBLE
 South Africa's High Court says the decision to drop 783 graft charges against the president should be reviewed
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The dead do not feel anything, but those who survive do. The horrendous experience of the insensitive test after rape. The courtroom insults during trial because a draconian law permits the accused to question the victim's character. The families suffer no less humiliation as they wait for justice. While nations around the world have overhauled relevant laws with provisions that shield the rape victims, ours still favour the offender instead. Isn't it time we were a little more sensitive towards the victims of a crime now regarded as a crime against society? In the wake of Tonu murder after suspected rape, The Daily Star tries to shed some light on all these aspects. Today, we run the third and final instalment of the three-part series.

RAPE VICTIMS IN BANGLADESH

Compensation hard to ensure

SHAKHAWAT LITON

She was gang raped by railway employees at the railway rest room in Kolkata while travelling in India on February 26, 1998.

The incident triggered outrage. Maitree, a network of 42 women's groups and NGOs in Kolkata, moved to Kolkata High Court seeking compensation for the 27-year old Shefali Begum (name changed to protect her identity).

The Kolkata HC in 1999 gave her 1 million rupees compensation for the humiliation she had undergone. But the Railway Board, which was asked to pay the compensation, challenged the order in the Supreme Court.

The Supreme Court in January 2000 upheld the HC verdict and said: "Even those who are not citizens of this country and come merely as tourists will be entitled to the protection of their lives in accordance with the constitutional provisions."

When the apex court ordered for the compensation, the criminal case against the rapists was still on in the lower court.

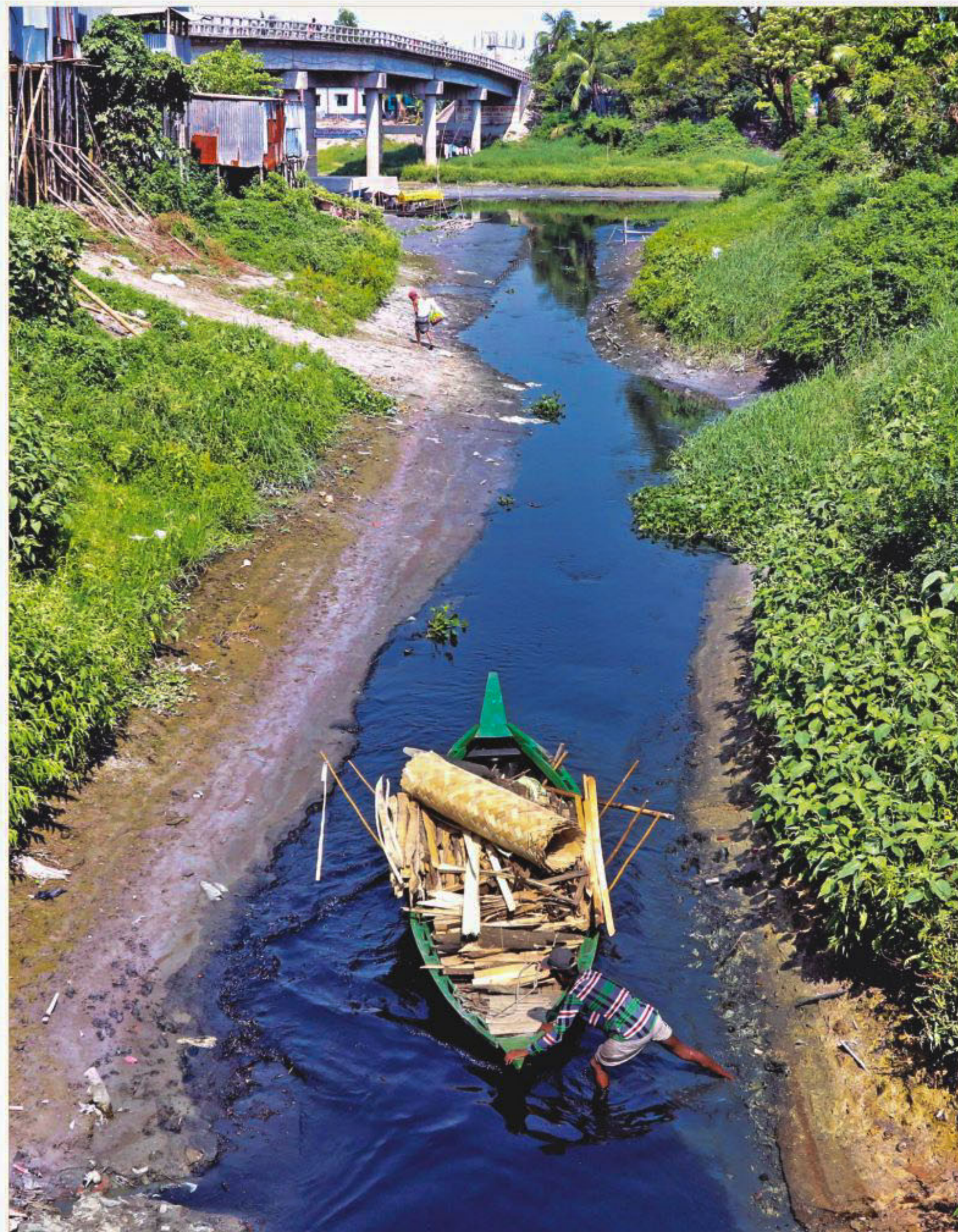
The judgement was very significant because such a huge



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"As far as I know, there is no such case in which the government has compensated the rape victim."

ADVOCATE FAHMIDA AKHTAR BANGLADESH NATIONAL WOMEN LAWYERS ASSOCIATION, AN ORGANISATION THAT WORKS FOR WOMEN VICTIMS OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE AND ABUSE.



The unnaturally coloured water and narrowing of the Jirani Khal speak of a saga of destruction that has all but killed the waterway in the capital's Khilgaon area. Houses and shops built on the canal have choked it and dumped waste contaminates the water. The photo was taken last week.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

SIM RE-REGISTRATION Late rush overwhelms operators

Deadline expires today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Telecom operators had to deal with a last-minute rush of mobile phone users yesterday, with the deadline for biometric SIM registration expiring today.

Meanwhile, State Minister for Posts and Telecommunications Tarana Halim hinted that the deadline might be extended, saying an announcement on the matter would be made today.

Mobile operators alleged that they had been facing serious problems in getting connected to the national identity database (NID) since Thursday evening, which slowed down the re-registration process.

Things got worse yesterday as it took 10-12 minutes to get connected to the NID database for matching fingerprints of SIM card holders, said a number of operators.

On condition of anonymity, a customer care manager of state-run mobile operator Teletalk in Farmgate area said they were facing the same problem.

This correspondent visited several customer care centres in the capital where the operators said the re-registration process was a lot slower than usual.

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CARGO VESSEL STRIKE CONTINUES

Businesses hit hard

DWAIPAYAN BARUA, Ctg

Two vessels carrying over 1,00,000 tonnes of wheat, yellow maize and yellow peas from Argentina and Canada arrived at the outer anchorage of the Chittagong Port in the middle of this month.

Before the water transport workers started a wildcat strike since April 20 midnight demanding a pay hike among other things, just about 5,000 tonnes of goods could be unloaded from the two vessels -- MV Mykonos Seas and MV Lara.

But due to the ongoing stalemate, two lighter vessels with these 5,000 tonnes of goods remain stranded at a private jetty on the Karnaphuli river for the last nine days.

For each day's overstay, mother vessels have to pay \$15,000 in demurrage. BSM Group Chairman Abul Bashir



Chowdhury, who imported the wheat, yellow maize and peas, yesterday said they were counting a loss of Tk 50 to Tk 60 lakh a day. This includes the cost of demurrage, damage of goods' quality due to overstay and bank interest.

Such a deadlock would disrupt the whole supply chain, he said.

The trouble continues because although the water transport workers lifted their strike on April 26, cargo vessel owners stopped operating their

vessels across the country protesting the wage hike proposed by the shipping ministry.

As a result, unloading and transporting of some 14 lakh tonnes of goods from over 60 mother vessels, including the two mentioned above, at the outer anchorage of the Chittagong Port remain uncertain.

Another 7.8 lakh tonnes of goods in 681 lighter vessels remain stranded in various private jetties in Chittagong, Narayanganj, Baghabari, Nogarbari, Bhairab, Ghorashal and other districts, said sources in the Water Transport Cell, a private organisation that coordinates schedules for lighter vessels.

These goods include wheat, raw sugar, poultry feed, urea, gypsum, raw materials like cement clinker, limestone, iron rod and scraps.

On Wednesday however, some

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HEAT WAVE

Schools asked to relax rules

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The authorities of secondary schools can reschedule classes amid a heat wave sweeping the country for the last three weeks.

The Directorate of Secondary and Higher Education (DSHE) issued a directive in this regard on Thursday.

The directive says the single-shift schools can start their classes earlier in consultation with the respective managing committees.

The schools having double shifts can suspend their daily assembly and begin the classes early too.

"We have sent a notice [to the school authorities] so that they can finish all their classes early in the sweltering heat," Prof Fahima Khatun, director general of the DSHE, told The Daily Star.

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Hackers may pocket \$70m

Slim chance to recover more BB funds, says Muhith

BLOOMBERG, London

Hackers are likely to get away with about \$70 million of Bangladesh's foreign reserves, according to Finance Minister AMA Muhith.

The Philippines -- where most of the funds ended up -- will probably recover as much as \$10 million of the \$81 million stolen in February from Bangladesh's account at the Federal Reserve Bank of New York, Muhith said.

The rest is hard to track, he said. "The way it has been lost, it's very difficult to identify the beneficiaries," Muhith told Bloomberg by phone yesterday. "It has gone largely into casinos and casino accounts."

The attempted theft of almost \$1 billion has prompted central banks around the globe to review defences against hackers looking to loot bountiful foreign reserve accounts. While the Fed blocked most of the transfers, about \$81 million ended up in the Philippines. Another \$20 million sent to

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Men carry home harvested boro paddy from a field in Shahjahanpur upazila of Bogra. Harvesting of the early-planted crop continues in full swing in 12 upazilas of the district and farmers are busy processing the ripe paddy. Weather has favoured this year's production in the northern district. PHOTO: STAR

FAILURE TO PAY EXTORTION MONEY Three burned with boiling water

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Three people, including a trader and his son, suffered burns yesterday as an Awami League activist of Old Dhaka reportedly threw boiling water at them for not paying extortion money.

The injured are Rob Pradhan, 60, general secretary of Islambagh Bibidho Shop Owners' Association, his son Abdus Salam, 29, and passerby Hossain, 50. They are undergoing treatment at the burn unit of Dhaka Medical College Hospital.

According to the father and son, it was Maruf Hossain Khoka, an

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Rob Pradhan at DMCH burn unit. PHOTO: STAR

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

"MICRO CREDIT" IS A WELL UNDERSTOOD "SUBJECT" BY THE "BENEFICIARIES"

Term Deposits (MTDR)	
Profit Rate	Duration
03 Months	09.00 %
01 Year	11.00 %
05 Year	13.00 %

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