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**MOGHBAZAR-MOUCHAK FLYOVER**



# Spirit of a youth changes lives

S DILIP ROY, Lalmonirhat

Jahangir Sarker could have been just another unemployed postgraduate the country has so many of. But the zeal within the 27-year-old is unrelenting.

Dejected by not getting jobs he deserved in four years even though he had a postgraduate degree in accounting from Dhaka College, he returned to his remote village home in Durakuti of Lalmonirhat in June, 2014.

Any other chap and that would have been the end. He would probably work in the crop field, not that there is anything wrong with it, or set up a small convenient store in the village if he could gather the capital.

That's what most people would have thought and they did so when Jahangir returned to his village.

Armed with a lousy 2G internet connection for his desktop, which was intermittent most of the time, Jahangir set his spirit of entrepreneurship into action.

In 2013, he had done some freelance work. So after returning home the first thing he did was scour the internet for freelance work. His hunt paid off and he started getting work. The jobs he was getting started from designing T-shirts to writing the literature for brochures and articles.

He started earning money finally.

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Jahangir Sarker, far right, giving a trainee lessons on freelance work at his home-cum-training centre in Lalmonirhat's Durakuti village. The 27-year-old gives free training on freelance work to youths in his area. The photo was taken recently. PHOTO: S DILIP ROY

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## Office timings revised for Ramadan

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The cabinet yesterday set 9:00am to 3:30pm as office timings for the month of Ramadan.

The decision was taken at the cabinet meeting presided over by Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, Cabinet Secretary Shafiqul Alam told reporters after the meeting at the secretariat.

There would be a 15-minute prayer break from 1:15pm. The new timing would be effective for all the government, semi-government, autonomous and semi-autonomous institutions, he said.

The Ramadan is likely to begin in the first week of next month.

## Bus fare may go down

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh Road Transport Authority (BRTA) wants to reduce fare by 3 paisa per kilometre for long-haul buses following the recent fuel price cut.

Bus owners, however, want that the fare be reduced by 2 paisa.

Both the parties came up with the proposals at a meeting at the BRTA office yesterday, said Nurul Islam, director (engineering) of the BRTA.

"We will send both the proposals to the ministry. The ministry will make a final decision in this regard," he told The Daily Star.

The government on April 25 cut fuel prices by Tk 3 to Tk 10. The price of diesel and kerosene has been reduced to Tk 65 from Tk 68 a litre, octane to Tk 89 from Tk 99 and petrol to Tk 86 from Tk 96.

Currently, a passenger has to pay Tk 1.45 for travelling each kilometre on inter-district routes.

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**PRAYER TIMING MAY 3**

Fazr Zohr Asr Maghrib Esha

AZAN 4-20 12-45 4-45 6-29 8-00

JAMAAT 4-55 1-15 5-00 6-34 8-30

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION



## Kuwait PM due today

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka will ask Kuwait to help set up an oil refinery, further liberalise its recruitment policy for Bangladeshis and import Bangladeshi products during the Kuwaiti prime minister's three-day visit to the country from today.

Three deals over an increase in and protection of investment, defence cooperation and simplification of visa procedure for diplomatic and official passport holders will be signed following official talks between Bangladeshi Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and Kuwaiti Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, according to the foreign ministry here.

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## 50,000 tonnes of wheat rejected

Consignment from Russia found substandard

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government has rejected yet another shipment of 50,000 tonnes of wheat imported from Russia on the grounds of poor quality.

The latest move came within a week of the rejection of two consignments of Russian wheat (weighing one lakh tonnes) on the same grounds.

Ilahi Dad Khan, director (procurement) at the Directorate of Food, yesterday told The Daily Star that upon tests carried on the latest consignment of wheat on April 27 "we informed the supplier ADM International that the wheat did not meet our specifications. We rejected it".

Bangladesh accepts wheat with a maximum of 0.7 percent foreign materials (non-grain particles) but the shipment had 0.93 percent foreign materials.

The test revealed that the wheat of the consignment had "test weight" of 74.8 hectoliter against Bangladesh's set standard of 76 hectoliter. It had 12.03 percent protein content against the standard of 12.5 percent, said food officials.

"Now that we've rejected it, the supplier has to take it back," Ilahi said.

A week ago the government rejected two consignments of wheat (each weighing 50,000 tonnes) sourced from Russia as it did not meet the set specifications.

A Russian official team visited Dhaka and Chittagong last week to know what was going on. Ilahi said the delegation returned home completely satisfied that "we followed due procedures in testing the imported wheat".

Asked about repeated incidents of Bangladesh being supplied with not-up-to-the-standard wheat, food officials in Dhaka said they have sought explanations from two suppliers -- ADM International and Phoenix Commodities Ltd -- whose three consignments had been rejected.

Russia, a major global wheat exporter, is the prime supplier country for Bangladesh.

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## GRABBING RAILWAY PROPERTY 7-yr jail for offenders

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The cabinet yesterday approved the draft of the "Railway Property (Unlawful Possession Reclamation) Act-2016" with a provision of maximum 7 years of jail or fine for illegally occupying and stealing railway properties.

Unlawful possession of any railway property would be considered as a punishable offence, Cabinet Secretary Mohammad Shafiqul Alam told reporters after the meeting at the secretariat.

The draft law is being formulated translating the martial law regime promulgated "Railway Property (Unlawful Possession) Ordinance-1979" into Bangla as per directives of the Supreme Court. There will be little changes in the proposed law, he said.

The cabinet secretary said anyone helping others in keeping railway properties under their possession illegally would be sentenced to five years of rigorous imprisonment or fine or both.

As per the proposed law, the railway security force could arrest any accused without warrant as such acts would be considered as "cognisable offences", he said.

The officer concerned in charge of the Railway Security Force could exercise

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## 'Obama out'

President gets in final laughs with US media



AFP, Washington

President Barack Obama cracked jokes and poked fun at rivals Saturday in his last appearance as US leader at the White House Correspondents' Association dinner, ending his performance with a mic drop and the words "Obama out."

The black-tie event -- at which the president, followed by a bona fide comedian, regale journalists and their celebrity guests with jokes about government and the media -- is an annual inside-the-beltway ritual.

Obama poked fun at himself, the Democratic and Republican presidential candidates, and reporters. On a serious note he praised Washington Post former Tehran correspondent Jason Rezaian, released in January after 18 months in an Iranian prison.

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## 10 receive death threat

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Natore

Ten dignitaries, including an academic, a lawmaker, several political leaders and journalists, have received death threats in Natore.

An organisation identifying itself as Islami Liberation Front Bangladesh sent a letter to Natore Press Club yesterday, naming the 10 people.

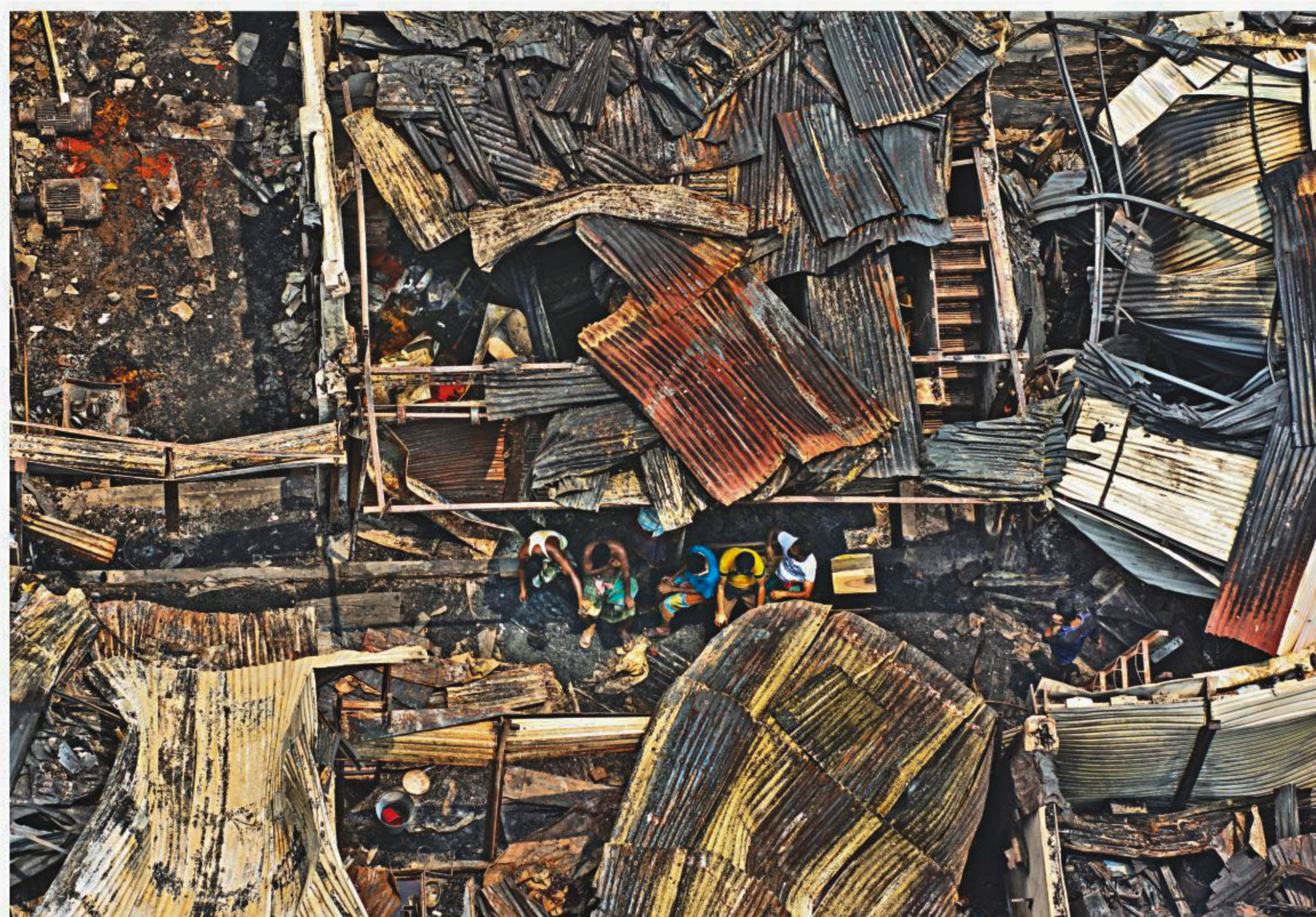
In the letter, the organisation also mentioned its 10 objectives, including "establishing Islami Khilafat in the country."

It also called upon the journalists to help its organisational activities.

About three months ago, a similar letter containing death threats to 21 people, including three lawmakers, was sent to Natore Press Club in the name of banned militant outfit Ansarullah Bangla Team.

Asked about the progress in the investigation into the first letter, Shyamol Kumar Mukharjee, superintendent of police in Natore, said both letters were sent

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The burnt shops at Uttar Karwan Bazar Babosayee Janakalyan Samity Market, also known as Hasina Market, after a fire gutted 186 shops there on Sunday night.

PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

## KARWAN BAZAR FIRE Probe report in 2 weeks

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The fire service yesterday started a probe into the Karwan Bazar fire that gutted 186 shops on May Day.

Jahurul Amin, deputy director (operations) of Bangladesh Fire Service and Civil Defence, leads the five-member committee, said Brig Gen Ali Ahmed Khan, director general of the fire service.

Jahurul said they would submit a report on the cause of the fire and extent of the damage in two weeks.

The Dhaka North City Corporation had been trying to move the market elsewhere and a section of the shopkeepers suspect that it was a case of arson.

DNCC Mayor Anisul Huq also visited the spot yesterday evening and said there was no link between the city corporation's attempt to move the market and the fire.

The fire broke out in Uttar Karwan Bazar Babosayee Janakalyan Samity (Hasina) Market, which mainly sells fruits, spices and groceries, near Janata Tower around 8:00pm.

Most of the shops in the market were closed for May Day.

Locals told The Daily Star that the fire began right after a nor'wester and that they tried to douse it.

The fire engines reaching the spot ran out of water after some time, they said.

A total 26 fire engines eventually tamed the fire after two hours of effort.

Mohammad Ali Babu, owner of Star Mahbub Bedding Store said he had a tin-roofed shop in the market. His shop was on the ground floor and his storage on the first floor.

He said he lost almost everything that night and that his five employees have no jobs now.

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