



## MODELS OF PRESS FREEDOM

Article on the 250th anniversary of first freedom of press and information law

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## 'LET IT BE' ACOUSTIC

Fans get ready for a mellow trip with Arnob and Jon

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## MESSI BOY FLEES AFGHANISTAN

Family members say they received threats of kidnap, including from a gangster

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# Singapore detains 8 Bangladeshis

The suspected militants were planning to launch attacks in Bangladesh, say Singapore authorities; another 5, deported earlier, held in Dhaka



Rahman Mizanur Mamun Leakot Ali Md Jabath Kysar Miah Rubel



Islam Shariful Sohag Ibrahim Soheli Hawlader Zaman Daulat

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Months after deporting 26 "radicalised" Bangladeshi workers, Singapore arrested eight other Bangladeshis who the authorities say were members of a group called Islamic State in Bangladesh (ISB).

Besides, another five Bangladeshis were deported for suspected militancy link. They were arrested from Banasree area in Dhaka yesterday.

The five were investigated as part of crackdown on the so-called ISB, and it was found that "they possessed and/or proliferated jihadi-related materials, or supported the use of armed violence in pursuit of a religious cause".

However, their involvement in ISB was not found, according to Singapore's home affairs ministry.

Briefing the media yesterday, Additional

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TERRORISM ON THE RISE - PAGE 3



Jute growers started sowing seeds early this season with rains in the Bangla month of Chaitra (March-April). In Demra's Sarulia, a city outskirts, seed sellers have a variety of local and Indian varieties of jute seeds on sale. Imported seeds are pricier, around Tk 300 a kg and the local ones, Tk 80-100 a kg. With the government's renewed stress on the Mandatory Jute Packaging Act, farmers expect increased demand of the fibre and are hoping to meet it.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

## PADMA BRIDGE PROJECT River training to be dearer

HASAN JAHID TUSHER

The cost of the Padma Bridge River Training Works (RTW) is likely to increase further as additional areas have been brought under the RTW beyond the original plan due to excessive erosion of the river banks.

The additional work would take more time. The budget for the work has already risen by Tk 700 crore from the initial cost of Tk 8,708 crore, said project officials.

Besides, another Tk 432 crore has been given to Bangladesh Army to carry out RTW along a 1,300-metre stretch of the river bank at Mawa point of the Padma. It was not a part of the initial project plan.

Seeking anonymity, a project official said the RTW would not be completed in time. He, however, noted that the delay in RTW would not affect the construction of the main bridge.

The government signed a Tk 8,708-crore river training deal with Sinohydro Corporation Ltd. The deal is now

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## Better rail link to south by 2022

Ecne sets aside Tk 41,241cr for rail, road projects

REJAUL KARIM BYRON and  
HASAN JAHID TUSHER

The government yesterday allocated Tk 41,241 crore for having a better rail and road connectivity between the capital and the southern part of the country to reap the maximum benefit from the Padma Bridge Project.

Of the amount, Tk 16,492 crore will come from the public exchequer and the rest will be financed by a government-to-government

Once implemented, the projects would boost the country's economic growth by 1.5

**RAIL LINK PROJ**  
Length 172 km  
Cost Tk 34,989cr  
China to finance Tk 24,749cr  
and govt Tk 10,240cr  
Project deadline June 2022  
A part to be completed by 2018  
Travel distance to be reduced on Dhaka-Jessore route by 185 km, Dhaka-Khulna by 212 km, Dhaka-Darshana by 44 km

(G2G) loan

link project, the government included it in the list of fast track projects directly supervised by the prime minister.

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## No compromise on freedom of expression

Govt urged not to restrict newsmen, social media users

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Media experts, journalists and human rights activists have called upon the government not to put restrictions on newsmen and social media users in the name of laws for ensuring freedom of expression in Bangladesh.

They have also urged the new media users to stay cautious while using the Internet, saying a vested quarter was trying to harm the unity and harmony of the people by spreading propaganda online.

The calls were made during a seminar titled "The State of Press Freedom in Bangladesh: Challenges and Way Forward" at Cirdap Auditorium in the capital.

Unesco Bangladesh, Mass-line Media Centre and Institute of Communication Studies jointly organised the

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## Nisha Biswal arrives today

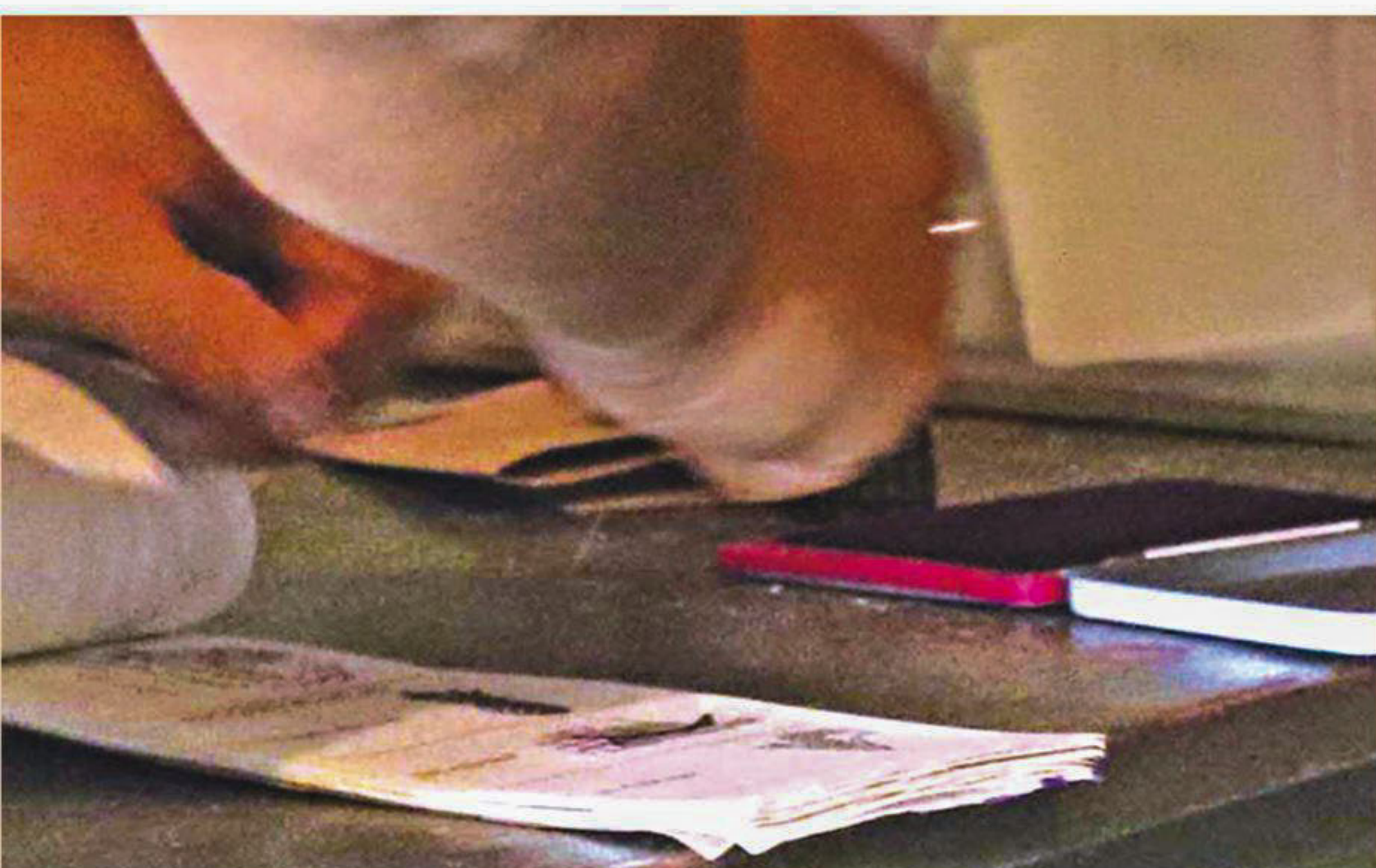
DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

US Assistant Secretary of State for South and Central Asian Affairs Nisha Desai Biswal arrives today to meet top government leaders and discuss ways to strengthen security cooperation.

She arrives more than a week after the brutal killing of USAID staff Xulhaz Mannan and his friend Mahbub Tonoy.

Diplomatic sources said the US Secretary of State John Kerry, who talked to Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina over the phone on April 28 about the murders, had asked Biswal to visit Bangladesh to bolster cooperation on countering violent extremism and terrorism.

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The photo on the left published by this paper on April 24 shows a man stamping ballots at Panchpukuria Govt Primary School polling centre of Sundorpur union parishad in Fatikchhari upazila of Chittagong while a policeman watches. A closer look into another blown-up photo taken then, top, shows the same.

PHOTO: STAR

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## Rejoinder, our reply

Fazlur Rahim, the presiding officer of 74 Panchpukuria Govt Primary School polling centre of Sundorpur union parishad in Fatikchhari upazila of Chittagong, has sent a rejoinder to a photo published in The Daily Star on April 24.

The photo taken on April 23 during the UP election showed a man stamping ballots in favour of the ruling party chairman candidate at the third booth of the polling centre right next to a policeman watching his act.

However, Rahim in the rejoinder claimed that voting process at the centre was free and fair.

He said there were three officers on duty at the centre -- assistant presiding officer Kazi Forhad Uddin and polling officers Nasir Uddin and Yeasmin Akter. The man who was seen in the photo was Nasir Uddin.

"After publishing of the news they informed me that Nasir Uddin was helping asst presiding officer Mr Forhad on request because



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