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WITH TODAY'S ISSUE

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#### TRUE TO ART

AGRAHAYAN 5, 1423 BS | SAFAR 18, 1438 HIJRI

Exhibition 'into the valley of beauty' opens at Zainul Gallery-2 of DU

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Your Right to Know

#### 'FELT PRETTY GOOD'

NSA chief says about his resignation before Trump takeover

PAGE 8

RANGPUR SUGAR MILLS

# Santals owned most of land before deal



1962 agreement condition flouted by leasing out part of the land allowing cultivation of crops other than sugarcane

PINAKI ROY

The Santals had owned most of the land, now at the centre of a row in Gobindaganj of Gaibandha, before the government acquired it in the 50s, according to old land

Though the land was acquired for sugarcane farming to produce raw materials for the Rangpur Sugar Mills Ltd at Mohimaganj in Gobindaganj, a portion of it was leased out for cultivating different other crops, flouting an agreement of 1962.

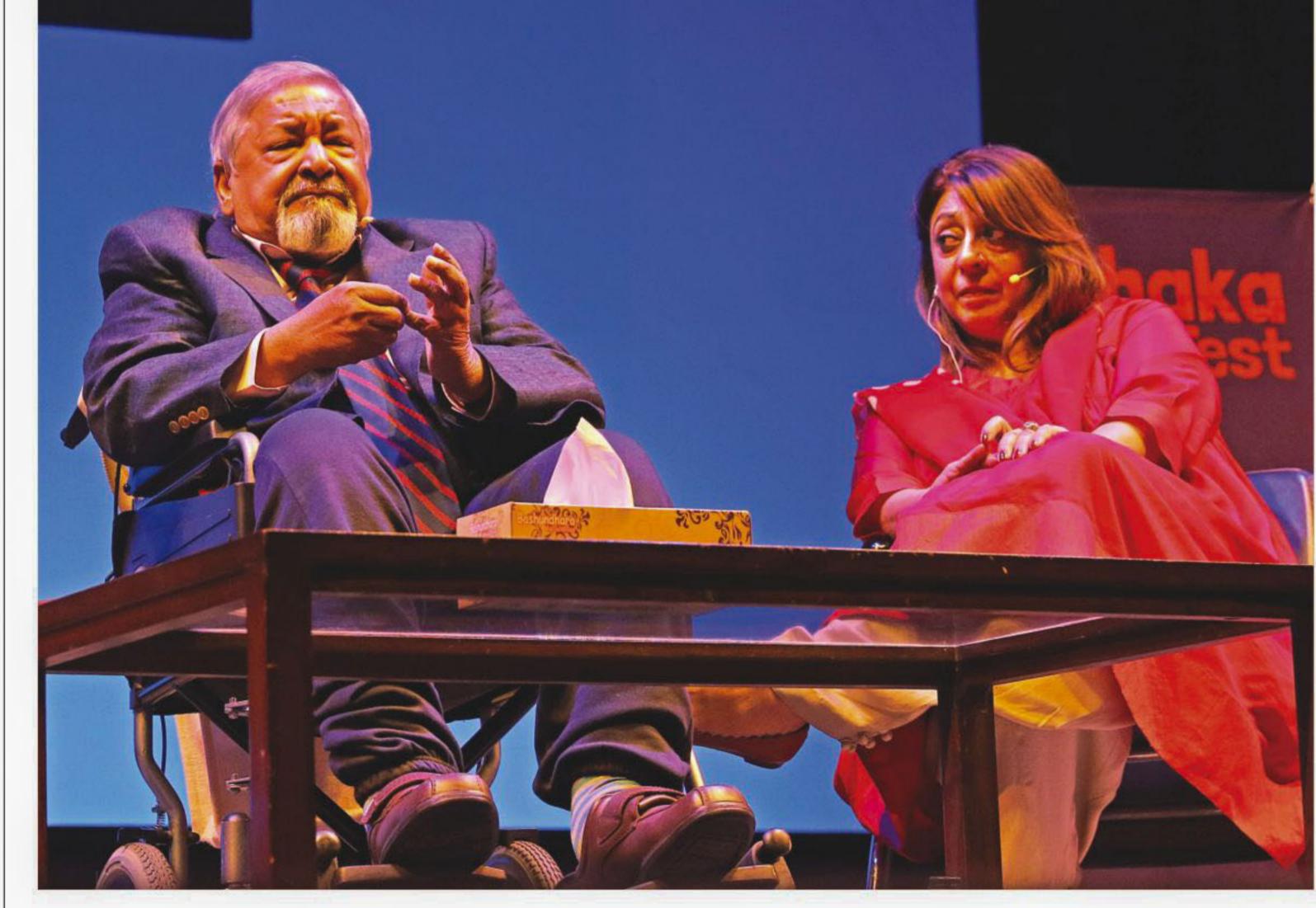
For this violation, the sugar mill should no longer remain the owner of the land and its management is supposed to surrender the land to the government, as per one of the conditions of the agreement.

The issue of original ownership came up following the November 6 eviction of 1,500 families, including 1,200 of Santals, from the land as they had built houses on part of it.

Local lawmaker Abul Kalam Azad and Industries Ministry Secretary Md Mosharraf Hossain Bhuiyan claim that the Santals never owned the land. "That land never belonged to Santals; it

was owned by Bangalees," Abul Kalam Azad told The Daily Star on November 14.

But the Santals firmly claim that they SEE PAGE 2 COL 1 THE SANTALS LOST LAND THE MOST-PAGE 2



Nobel Laureate VS Naipaul with his wife Nadira Naipaul on stage during the sixth edition of Dhaka Lit Fest (DLF) at the Bangla Academy Auditorium yesterday. Story on page 16. PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN



#### "Up to 30,000 people are now estimated to be displaced and thousands more affected by the 9 October armed attacks and subsequent security operations across the north of Rakhine state

A SPOKESMAN FOR THE UN'S OFFICE FOR THE COORDINATION OF **HUMANITARIAN AFFAIRS** 

[in Myanmar]."

## Consensus of all parties a must to form next EC

Khaleda places 13-point proposal

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

With a call for forming the next Election Commission on the basis of "consensus" among all political parties, BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia yesterday rolled out a 13-point proposal for its formation.

The former premier said she would unveil a framework for a neutral polls-time government at an

appropriate time, as only an impartial Election Commission is not enough for holding a free and fair election.

"The president should constitute a search committee on : posals by the BNP chief. the basis of consensus among all registered political parties · or the ones that had representation in parliament at differ- : for a search committee is ent times since the country's independence," she said at a : hollow and ridiculous," press conference at a city hotel.

The committee would pick the chief election commissioner and four commissioners, said Khaleda.

The BNP came up with the proposal as the five-year: move back from the

SEE PAGE 2 COL 4 .

## demands hollow

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia's proposals for forming the next Election Commission are "hollow and a mockery before the nation," ruling Awami League's General Secretary Obaidul Quader has said.

He made the comments while addressing a press conference at the AL president's Dhanmondi office yesterday. The press confer-· ence was organised after the announcement of the pro-

"Khaleda Zia's demand : Quader said.

The AL general secretary said the party would not

SEE PAGE 2 COL 3

# Quader terms Khaleda's EC Jute goods losing export market

Shrinking global demand key reason; 21 private jute mills shut, many running below capacity

SAJJADUR RAHMAN

Shrinking global demand and imposition of antidumping duty by India have threatened Bangladesh's export of jute goods, industry players said.

Conflicts in the Middle East countries, particu-

larly in Syria, Egypt, and Iraq, have almost halted the jute exports there. Developed countries do not import that much jute products either.

Now the export market has been squeezed to just India, Turkey, China and countries in the African continent.

Inefficiency of the millers, be it productivity, management or diversification of

products, has added further woes to the exports of jute goods.

"Some mills have failed to survive the losses and got closed in recent years," said Mahbubur Rahman Patwari, director of Alijan Jute Mills. Declining demand for jute goods forced Pubali Jute Mills, one of the oldest mills in the

country, to close last year. He said 21 jute mills out of 35 that were

privatised during the Ershad regime were now closed. Many of the existing mills were running below capacity, he said.

There were around 120 jute mills, including 25 state-owned mills. In addition, there SEE PAGE 2 COL 4

### AL picks Ivy for N'ganj mayoral race

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The ruling Awami League has picked incumbent Mayor

Selina Hayat Ivy for its mayoral candidate in Narayanganj City Corporation (NCC) polls slated for December 22.

At a meeting at the Gono Bhaban last night, the party's local government nomination board unanimously nominated Ivy to contest the polls with the AL's electoral symbol boat, said a party press release.

Awami League President and Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina chaired the meeting. Party sources said after

the decision was made, Ivy SEE PAGE 11 COL 1

### Comilla keep crashing

SPORTS REPORTER

Defending champions

Comilla Victorians skipper Mashrafe Bin Mortaza had said, when contemplating having lost four out of four matches, that they need only one win to get back on track in this season's Bangladesh Premier League. But that looks as far away now as it did when he spoke on Thursday, after yesterday's nine-wicket drubbing at the hands of Rangpur Riders at the Zahur Ahmed Chowdhury Stadium in Chittagong.

Having put up a paltry 122 for five in the first innings, Victorians' bowlers were toothless and ineffective in their efforts to contain their opponents who, led by opener Mohammad Shahzad's unbeaten 49-ball 51 and an unconquered

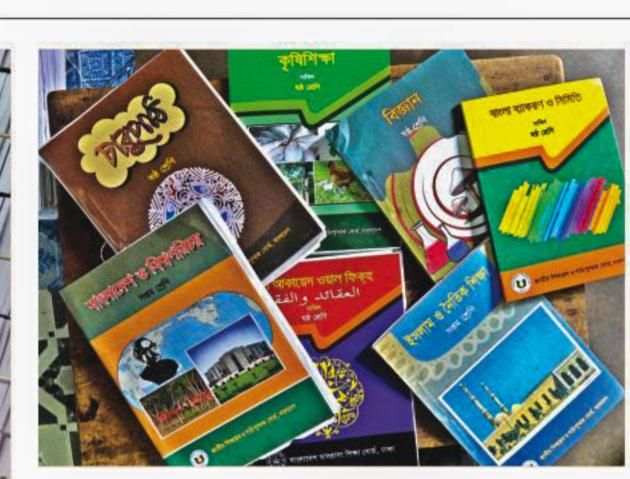
SEVEN RINGS

CEMENT

www.ssgil.com

SEE PAGE 11 COL 2







## **BUSY WITH BOOKS**

Workers passing busy time binding textbooks for the secondary schools' 2017 academic year in the capital's Sutrapur. A major chunk of the textbooks has already reached many upazila headquarters. This year, the education ministry aims to distribute around 36.22 crore copies of textbooks among 4.26 crore students of class I to X for free. The photos were taken three days ago. PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

# 2 killed in

Another killed as 'criminal groups exchange fire'

STAR REPORT

'shootout'

Two alleged robbers were killed in a "gunfight" with Rab in Feni Sadar upazila yesterday. In another incident, a listed criminal was

shot dead in an exchange of fire between two groups of criminals in Jessore, police claimed. Acting on a tip-off that some robbers were taking preparation to commit a robbery on Dhaka-Chittagong highway, a patrol team of the Rapid Action Battalion raided

Rampur in Feni Sadar

upazila around 2:45am,

said Squadron Leader

Shafayet Jamil Fahim, commander of Rab Feni camp. Sensing the Rab members' presence, criminals opened fire. The elite force members then returned fire,

triggering a "gunfight". At one stage, two robbers were caught in the line of fire and died on the spot, reports our Feni correspondent, quoting the Rab official.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 3