



Schoolgirls practise rollerblading at the deputy commissioner's tennis court in Lalmonirhat town.

PHOTO: STAR

Self-confidence on wheels

Lalmonirhat girls benefit from inline skating lessons

S DILIP ROY with ANDREW EAGLE

Around the world, from children to teenagers and even among adults, inline skating, commonly known as rollerblading, is a popular activity of leisure. Lalmonirhat's schoolgirls are likewise lacing up inline skates these days, but not solely because it's healthy and fun.

"We hope learning to skate can help the girls to be self-confident, and independent in their daily lives," says district sports association coordinator Mohammad Qamruzzaman. "Ours is the first training programme of its kind in Lalmonirhat. Many of the girls had never seen inline skates before." The training takes place on the deputy commissioner's tennis court.

"I got afraid on the first day when our coaches were preparing us for training," says Labonya Lucky, a class-eight student of Kobi Shaikh Fazlul Karim Girls' High School in Lalmonirhat town. "But now I feel comfortable. It's become easy."

"I want to inline skate from home to school," says

Jannatul Ferdous, 13, who studies in class seven of Collectorate Collegiate School, also in the town. "I will never have to wait for a rickshaw or other form of public transport again!"

Hasnath Ali, 48 of BDR Road in the town sends his daughter to inline skating training. "It's very much helpful for building her self-confidence," he says. "It's a good activity, especially for the girls."

According to the sports association, 70 girls aged between 13-16 years from various schools have enrolled in the training, with ten being trained at a time. There are plans to select the best inline skater in mid-November for national level training.

The coach of the national-level inline skating federation, Sohag Shikder notes this is the first training to be provided at a district level and he is impressed by the level of enthusiasm among the schoolgirl participants. "The difficult we face," he says, "is not having a larger, more suitable place for the training."

Trainee and class-eight student Tahamina Khatun, 14, agrees. "If we had a better place to practice inline skating, it would help us develop our skills," she says.

'Robber' killed in 'gunfight'

Family claims murder

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Benapole

A suspected robber was killed in a 'gunfight' between two groups of robbers on Jessore-Jhenidah highway in Daulatdihi area of Jessore Kotwali Police Station early yesterday.

The deceased was Jahangir Hossain, 32, son of late Nowser Ali of Santola village in Sadar upazila.

On information of the gunfight, police went to the spot and recovered the bullet-hit body of Jahangir around 1:45am, said Ilias Hossain, officer-in-charge of Jessore Kotwali Police Station.

They also recovered a shooter gun and one bullet from the spot, said the OC.

Jahangir was accused in 19 cases including those for robbery and murder, he said.

However, Abdur Rahman, uncle of the deceased, said some plainclothes men identifying themselves as policemen abducted Jahangir from his residence last night.

Later, police shot him dead, he said.

Earlier on Friday night, a listed criminal was killed in an exchange of fire between two groups of criminals in Kholadanga area of Sadar upazila, police claimed.

The dead was Hafizur Rahman, 35, of Sasthitala in Jessore town.

Admin's support to freelancers assured

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Lalmonirhat

Lalmonirhat Deputy Commissioner (DC) AFM Alauddin Khan has assured the freelancers of all kinds of support in their efforts to earn foreign remittance through freelancing jobs.

Alauddin Khan also exchanged views and ideas with the freelancers while visiting their community office at Durakuti village in Sadar upazila on Friday.

"I am glad to know that many youths from a remote village like Durakuti are now engaged in freelancing jobs and earning a good amount of foreign remittances through such works," Alauddin said.

The DC said he will take necessary steps to spread freelancing job facilities in other villages of Lalmonirhat.

Jahangir Sarker, who had a postgraduate degree in accounting from Dhaka College, returned to his village home in Durakuti in June, 2014.

In 2013, he had done some freelance work and after returning home he started searching the internet for freelance work and started getting work finally.

He later brought a broadband connection to the village and set up a training centre for the village youths in his home about one and a half years ago.

So far, at least 200 youths had training and formed the freelancers' community. Of them, many have already started earning money.

Sarwar Jahan Badal, a college student of the village, said he earns Tk 80 thousand to one lakh every month and his younger sister is also taking lessons on freelancing.

Nazrul Islam, a local schoolteacher, said he learned about freelancing at the community office and is now using his leisure time for freelancing works.

Learn better to serve nation

Zafar Iqbal tells students in Pirojpur

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Pirojpur

Eminent writer and scientist Prof Muhammed Zafar Iqbal at a meeting in the town on Friday urged the students to develop studying habit and learn about the Liberation War to change the country for the better.

Zafar Iqbal, professor of Shahjalal University of Science and Technology, came to Pirojpur by launch with his family members on Friday morning.

Zafar, his elder sister Sufia Haidar, younger brother cartoonist Ahsan Habib, wife Dr Yasmeen Haque and children went to Pirojpur municipality graveyard to visit the grave of his father Md Faizur Rahman Ahmed, a Liberation War martyr.

Faizur Rahman, then serving as a police officer in Pirojpur, was killed by the Pakistan occupation army on May 4 in 1971.

Zafar Iqbal and his family members also placed wreath on the martyrs' memorial beside the Baleshwar river, where hundreds of people were brutally killed by the Pakistan army in 1971.

Later addressing the students at Gopalkrishna Swadhinata Mancha in the town in the afternoon,

Zafar said Bangladesh is already doing what was once considered impossible and so, our country's great prosperity is not a far cry.

"Once I could not answer when students asked me why the cars of war criminals bear our national flag. But now we see the trial of the war criminals and execution of the verdicts," he said, urging the students to love the country like mother.

He answered different questions asked by students.

He also expressed happiness to see the roads in Pirojpur town named after freedom fighters.



Prof Mohammed Zafar Iqbal and his family members visit the Liberation War martyrs' memorial on the Baleshwar river in Pirojpur on Friday.

PHOTO: STAR

The bird

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behind those sharp blue eyes? Anyway, enough about Donald Trump. Check out this crazy bird.

This glorious golden pheasant at the Hangzhou Safari Park in China has become a thing because, well, look at him. He's got that "Trump hair in the front, medieval samurai in the back" thing going on.

His nickname is "Little Red." Oh, he's perfect. We really needed this today.

The only bad thing about this news is that The People's Daily in China beat us to the Platonic ideal of bird puns.

The Daily tweeted: Meet the pheasant-elect: Bird sporting 'Donald Trump's hairstyle' soars to internet fame in China.

According to The People's Daily, Little Red's keeper says the bird is "more colourful than the other pheasants because he is very healthy," which honestly sounds like something Trump's personal physician would say. Is it possible for a soul to inhabit two bodies? Is there room in the White House for an aviary?

Motor vehicle

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on Wednesday, the upper house (National Council) decided against it. This might derail the entire plan as any restrictions which are beyond the reasonable won't be accepted by the other member countries," said a senior ministry official who did not want to be quoted.

India is in a bilateral motor vehicle agreement

with Nepal and Bangladesh, but a multilateral pact would go a long way in boosting trade in the region.

A release issued by the National Council of Bhutan said on Wednesday that the Upper House voted on the agreement following thorough deliberations after its legislative committee pointed out its general as well as specific reservations on the pact. Of the 20 mem-

bers present and voting, two members voted for the ratification of the agreement, while 13 voted against it and five abstained.

Officials familiar with the developments say Bhutan has been pushing for a cap on vehicles entering its territory for some time. Such discussions came up during the transport officials' meeting in Dhaka in March.

Faraaz to be honoured

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was "the obvious choice" and the world needs heroes like him for his act of selflessness and choosing to lay down his life for his friends.

"He displayed courage and bravado when faced with life and death. We consider it our most humble privilege to bestow this honour on Faraaz," he said.

Faraaz was the grandson of Latifur Rahman, chairman of Transcom Group, and Shahnaz Rahman. Son of Simeen Hossain and Muhammad Waquer Bin Hossain, he was a student at Emory University's Goizueta Business School in the US.

After accepting the invitation, his parents said: "On behalf of our son Faraaz Ayaaz Hossain, it is an absolute honour and a privilege to have the opportunity to accept the Mother Teresa Memorial International Award for Social Justice. Though in deep grief, we, Faraaz's family, cling onto the immense pride with which Faraaz has filled our hearts."

The Mother Teresa Memorial International Awards for Social Justice is an initiative of Harmony Foundation that recognises extraordinary work undertaken by individuals or organisations.

As part of the award ceremony, the Harmony

Foundation has organised an International Conference on Combating Terrorism, which is likely to be addressed by former Afghanistan president Hamid Karzai, Saarc Secretary-General Arjun Thapa, and former union minister for New and Renewable Energy Farooq Abdullah.

On July 1, Faraaz stood up against terrorists and refused to leave his friends. He was eventually killed in the attack along with 20 hostages, 17 of them foreigners.

The award, instituted in 2005 in memory of Mother Teresa, is the only one in the world recognised by the institution she founded, the Missionaries of Charity, Kolkata, and the first time after she was canonised as Sainthood on September 4 by Pope Francis at the Vatican.

Some of the past recipients have been Medecines Sans Frontiers, the Dalai Lama, Malala Yousafzai, Dr Mahathir Mohammad, Baroness Caroline Cox and other global personalities or organisations, Mathai said.

In July, Garden of the Righteous, a commemorative garden, was set up in the Tunisian capital Tunis in honour of five Arab and Muslim righteous individuals, including Bangladeshi Faraaz Ayaaz Hossain.

Trump settles fraud

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hand-picked experts, said the suits brought in New York and California.

Trump's lawyers had countered for years that many students had given the program a thumbs-up and those who failed to succeed had only themselves to blame.

But, with the president-elect apparently seeking to put the thorny matter to rest as he builds his cabinet, a deal was reached.

"Today's \$25 million settlement agreement is a stunning reversal by Donald Trump and a major victory for

the over 6,000 victims of his fraudulent university," New York state attorney general Eric Schneiderman said.

"I am pleased that under the terms of this settlement, every victim will receive restitution and that Donald Trump will pay up to \$1 million in penalties to the State of New York for violating state education laws."

A spokesperson for Schneiderman's office said the settlement covers all three class-action lawsuits against Trump University: two in California dating to 2010 and one in New York filed in 2013.

Robert Guillo, a 76-year-old New Yorker who spent nearly \$40,000 on tuition alongside his son, had previously told AFP that the program was an "absolute scam."

"I learned absolutely nothing," Guillo said. "He fooled me for \$35,000."

The agreement came just before a hearing in a San Diego federal court was about to begin to decide on a request by Trump to delay the trial.

Jason Forge, one of the lead attorneys for the plaintiffs in the San Diego cases, hailed the settlement.

Local MP

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a civil body yesterday, quoting victims and locals.

They placed a seven-point demand including a judicial enquiry into the incident to bring the perpetrators to book, compensation to the victims' families and withdrawal of the officials involved of the local administration.

Under the banner of Shachetan Nagarik, rights activists, university teachers, politicians and minority community leaders pressed the demands at a press conference at Dhaka Reporters' Unity (DRU). They there revealed what they had found out during a visit on November 13 to the evicted Santals and Bangalees in Gaibandha.

Meanwhile, a fire broke out at a field of Rangpur Sugar Mills in Gobindaganj upazila of Gaibandha, two weeks after the eviction of Santals from the farm's land.

The cause of the fire damaging crops on 11 acres of land was unknown until filing of the report at 9:00pm yesterday, said Alamgir Hossain Khan, assistant general manager and superintendent of the farm.

Fire fighters put out the fire, reports our local correspondent.

The mill authority last year planted seeds on 600 acres of its land divided into eight blocks for sugarcane cultivation by rotation, said Managing Director Abdul Awal. The damaged crops amount to 160 tonnes equal

to one-day's crushing input this harvesting season, he added.

At the DRU, civil society members said the state must bear medical expenses of the Santals injured in the eviction drive, withdraw "false cases" filed against Adivasis and re-build Fulmani Murmu Shishu Shiksha O Sangskriti Kendra set ablaze at the time of the eviction.

"Talking to us, Santal people directly held local lawmaker Abul Kalam Azad and Union Parishad Chairman Shakil Akhand Bulbul responsible for the attack," said Sanjeeb Drong, general secretary of Bangladesh Adivasi Forum, while reading out the key-note paper.

Gaibandha MP Abul Kalam refuted the allegation. He said he was not in the area on the day of the incident.

Santals and Bangalee farmers clashed with sugar mill labourers and police as they tried to drive them out from a disputed land. When Adivasis resisted the eviction move, police opened fire at them, leaving three Santals dead and more than 20 injured, Sanjeeb said.

Two Santals were reported to have been killed but the Adivasi leader named three -- Shyamol Hembrom, Mangal Mardi and Ramesh Tudu.

Eminent columnist Syed Abul Maksud said what was done with the Santals was not only violation of human rights and their "right to land" but also violation of the constitution.

Oikya NAP President Pankaj Bhattacharya lambasted Industries Minister Amir Hossain Amu and Industries Secretary Mosharraf Hossain Bhuiyan for their role in the incident.

He said he had spoken with the industries minister regarding a peaceful solution to the matter but the minister spoke in favour of evicting Santals, which was unexpected.

The withdrawal of policemen and officials responsible is not enough; they must be brought to book, Pankaj said.

Dhaka University Prof Abul Barkat said Santals played a pivotal role in every movement against the British colonial rule and the Pakistan rule.

Whenever they were attacked, the successive governments kept their eyes shut, he said.

During the regime of Ayub Khan, Santals were forced to give their land to the sugar mill, said rights activist Khushi Kabir, adding that the Adivasis have the right to get land of their forefathers back since the mill authority violated the agreement signed in 1960s.

According to the agreement, the land should be used only for sugarcane cultivation but it has been used for growing potato, tobacco, pumpkin and rice.

Rangpur mill authority has begun planting sugarcane seeds on the disputed land for the next year's harvesting season.

A win at last

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The changes seemed to click for Comilla as Nazmul laid the foundation with a composed 41 off 40 balls. The batsmen around him were chasing boundaries and during that process both Khalid Latif and Ahmed Shehzad departed for 6 and 11.

Imrul Kayes, who seemed to be in good touch, hit five fours during his 25-ball 34 and provided much-needed impetus. However Comilla were pushed back by the loss of three wickets -- including Nazmul and Imrul -- in the span of four overs, leaving them at a precarious 111 for 5 by the 16th over. However, Ten Doeschate and Sohail Tanvir smashed 41 runs in just 4.5 overs to help Comilla to 152.

While it was a decent score, Comilla knew that with the

dew factor at night, there was no room to relax. They needed to start well and that is exactly what they did when Sohail Tanvir removed both Junaid Siddique and the main man, Sabbir Rahman, in consecutive deliveries in the fifth over.

Mominul Haque was the only batsman who seemed comfortable as he repeatedly found the boundary, but with none of the others managing to move along, the asking rate skyrocketed.

Mominul was dismissed for 53 as he attempted to meet that ever-increasing run rate and, with Darren Sammy run out in the next over, they eventually folded for 120. Sohail who also took four wickets was adjudged the player of the match.

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Lt Col Anwarul Azim, commanding officer of BGB in the Cox's Bazar sector, said those turned away had been provided with food and medicines.

SUU KYI CRITICISED

Rohingyas are trying to escape the military crackdown after a recent escalation in violence in Rakhine State, say residents, adding that some of them have been gunned down while attempting to cross the river that marks the frontier with Bangladesh.

According to the UN, up to 30,000 people have been displaced by violence, half of which occurred during the last week when dozens of people died in clashes with the military.

The resurgence of violence has deepened a crisis that has already threatened to derail the new administration led by democracy icon Aung San Suu Kyi.

The Information Taskforce on Rakhine, formed this week by the office of Nobel Peace Prize winner Suu Kyi has rejected the allegations against the military, known as the "Tatmadaw" in the Burmese language.

"Regarding those incidents, after asking the Tatmadaw and border guard troops in those regions, it is known that the information is absolutely not true," said the State Counsellor Office Information Committee in

a Facebook post.

The office added that the military and the border guard troops had not conducted operations near the border and were only engaged in an "area clearance operation" in the "inner part" of the state.

The UN envoy on human rights in Myanmar, Yanghee Lee, criticised Suu Kyi's handling of the crisis and renewed her appeal to investigate the allegations of abuses.

"State Counsellor Aung San Suu Kyi has recently stated that the government is responding to the situation based on the principle of the rule of law. Yet I am unaware of any efforts on the part of the government to look into the allegations of human rights violations," she said.

"It would appear, on the contrary, that the government has mostly responded with a blanket denial, she said, adding that security forces "must not be given carte blanche to step up their operations".

Reuters reports that soldiers have poured into the north of Rakhine along Myanmar's frontier with Bangladesh, responding to attacks by alleged Muslim militants on border posts on October 9.

They have locked down the district, where the vast majority of residents are Rohingya, shutting out aid workers and independent

observers.

Sixty-nine suspected insurgents and 17 members of the security forces have been killed, according to official reports, since the violence began last month.

Residents and rights advocates have accused security forces of summary executions, rape and setting fire to homes. The government and army have rejected the accusations.

Up to 30,000 people are now estimated to be displaced and thousands more affected by the October 9 attacks and the following security operation, said Pierre Peron, the spokesman of the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) in Myanmar.

"This includes as many as 15,000 people who, according to unverified information, may have been displaced after clashes between armed actors and the military on November 12-13," said Peron.

He added that humanitarian operations that had been providing food, cash, and nutrition to more than 150,000 vulnerable people have been suspended for 40 days.

More than 3,000 children have not received their regular treatment for severe acute malnutrition (SAM). "Without appropriate treatment and care, many children with SAM are at risk of dying," said Peron.