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# Patients suffer as docs at odds

BSMMU VC, pro-VC groups stop work; scuffle over VC's alleged assault of a pro-VC

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Healthcare services at Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University were disrupted after two groups of doctors had scuffled on the hospital premises yesterday.

The scuffles between the supporters of BSMMU Vice-Chancellor Prof Kamrul Hasan Khan and Proctor Prof Habibur Rahman Dulal and the supporters of Pro-VC (Academic) Prof ASM Zakaria Swapan panicked patients, mostly of the outdoor section.

The VC allegedly assaulted the pro-VC on Thursday after a Bangla daily ran a report hinting at corruption in the recruitment process of nurses.

Yesterday morning, more than 50 doctors from both sides took position and brought out processions on Battala Chatter and in front of the basic science building on BSMMU campus. They were involved in scattered brawls on campus.

Sensing trouble, many patients and their family members left the outdoor section of the hospital. Services at the diagnostic and surgery departments were also hampered, several doctors and officials at the BSMMU told The Daily Star.

Sources said the VC's supporters brought out the procession on campus around 9:00am, prompting a counter procession by the supporters of the pro-VC.

Those who joined the processions did not see patients and were not in their chambers at the outdoor section from 8:30am.

Talking to The Daily Star, a patient's attendant said the doctor who was supposed to see his ailing wife did not see her on time.

"Some junior doctors came in and they told me to discuss my wife's problem with the doctor when he comes," said the man from Gopalganj.

VC DENIES DISRUPTION OF HEALTHCARE

At an emergency press briefing at his office around 2:30pm,

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Bangladesh's ace all-rounder Shakib Al Hasan came up trumps in the dying stages of the second day of the second Test against New Zealand, taking three wickets to peg the visitors back and put the Tigers on the ascendancy at the Hagley Oval in Christchurch yesterday. PHOTO: BCB



## Electricity connection in a day

Pledges state minister

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government will provide electricity connections to households immediately after receiving an application in order to improve the country's record in the international benchmark, said the state minister for power yesterday.

It now takes more than three months after households apply for electricity connections, said State Minister Nasrul Hamid, which can be cut down.

"People will get connections on the day they will apply," he said at the monthly "Meet the Reporters" programme of Dhaka Reporters Unity in the capital.

A decision in this regard will be made within a month, he said.

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**TOP QUOTE**

"All achievements of the country will be marred if radicalisation in the text books is not stopped."

PROF MUNTASSIR MAMOON AT A PRESS CONFERENCE AT THE DHAKA REPORTERS UNITY

## Help or kill them

Man writes to Meherpur dist administration about his two sons, grandson ailing with 'incurable' disease

AMANUR AMAN, Kushtia

A man in Meherpur has asked the district administration either to allow euthanising his ailing two sons and grandson or take responsibility for their treatment.

Tofazzel Hossain took the step as the three have been suffering from a rare disease, muscular dystrophy, for years and he cannot bear their medical expenses anymore.

55-year-old Tofazzel, who runs a grocery shop in Meherpur town, has already lost his everything in his desperate attempt to save his sons Sabur Hossain, 24, Raihanul Hossain, 13, and grandson Sourav Hossain, 8. Sourav is Tofazzel's daughter's son.

On Thursday, Tofazzel wrote to the deputy commissioner in the district, requesting him either to give permission to have the three euthanised or take the responsibility for their treatment.

Muscular dystrophies are a group of genetic

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Tofazzel Hossain

## Pakistan market bomb kills 20

AFP, Peshawar

A bomb exploded at a market yesterday in a mainly Shia area of Pakistan's northwestern tribal belt, killing at least 20 people and wounding 40 others, officials said.

The bomb detonated in a crowded vegetable market in Parachinar city, the capital of Kurram tribal district on the Afghan border.

"20 people have been martyred [killed]," the Pakistan military said in a short statement, adding that the injured had been taken to military and civil hospitals in the region's main city of Peshawar.

"Troops from army and [paramilitary] Frontier Corps are under taking relief and rescue operations," it said.

Iqbal Zafar Jhagra, governor for Pakistan's northwestern Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province confirmed the death toll in a televised interview with Pakistan's private news broadcaster Geo.

Jhagra said at least 40 people were wounded in the blast, 12 critically.

Video footage from the site showed chaotic scenes with people running and shouting in panic and victims strewn in front of

vegetable shops among smashed crates and pushcarts.

Victims could be heard screaming and crying while ambulances arrived at the site with sirens blaring.

Ikrumullah Khan, a senior government official in Parachinar, told AFP that the blast was caused by an IED (improvised explosive device) hidden in a vegetable box.

In a telephone call to AFP, the Hakimullah Mehsud faction of the Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP), claimed responsibility for the attack.

"It was to avenge the killing of our associates by security forces and to teach a lesson to Shiites for their support for Bashar al-Assad," said the group's spokesman, Qari Saifullah, referring to the Syrian president.

Saifullah warned that his Sunni Muslim group will continue attacking Shiias if they back Assad, whose regime is entrenched in a civil war that began in 2011 and has claimed more than 310,000 lives.

In December 2015 an IED blast at the same market killed at least 23 people and wounded more than 30.

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## Capture of Enigma

Amazing moment that helped shorten WWII revealed

MAIL ONLINE

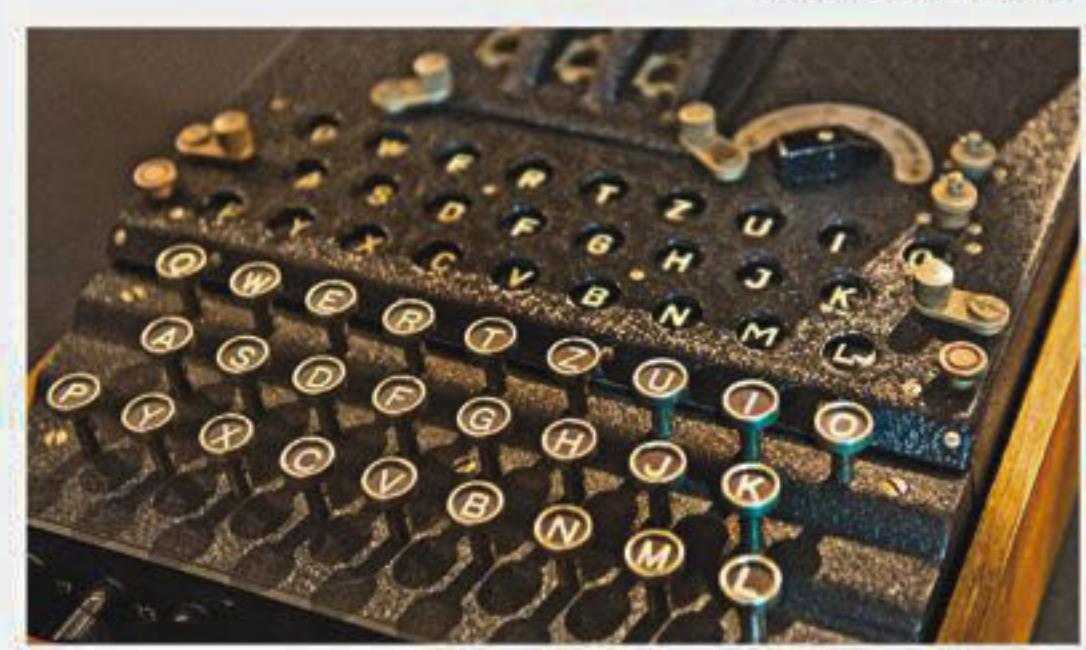
This is the moment a British Navy officer launched a raid upon a stricken Nazi U-boat that saw the top secret Enigma machine seized bringing an end to the Second World War.

The never before seen pictures see HMS Bulldog approaching the German vessel close to Greenland to capture it and two other warships.

And they prove it was indeed British forces that captured the Enigma machine and not the Americans as suggested in Hollywood film U571 starring Matthew McConaughey and Jon Bon Jovi.

When the raid party from HMS Bulldog boarded the U-Boat 1941, they would find the Enigma

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A potato field hit by late blight in Uttar Bhajanpur in Dinajpur's Parbatipur upazila. The fungal disease has affected potato production in several districts. Inset, a farmer looks at his paltry harvest in Jhanjira in Rangpur's Taraganj upazila. The photos were taken on Monday. PHOTO: STAR

## Farmers frown at fungal attack

Huge blow to potato production

REAZ AHMAD with KONGKON KARMAKER, from Dinajpur

Potato farmers of some northern and central districts fear production losses this winter due to sudden fungal attack in crops.

Experts have attributed fall in the nighttime temperature, fog and recent rain to the spreading of late blight, the most deadly fungal disease of potatoes, in Rangpur, Dinajpur, Naogaon, Lalmonirhat, Kurigram, Rajshahi, Bogra, Mymensingh and Kishoreganj.

They, however, have advised farmers to spray proper fungicide dosages to control the damage and stop further spread. There are some reports of tomatoes also being affected.

Ziaur Rahman, farmer in Rangpur's Taraganj upazila, said potatoes on his two acres of land have been substantially damaged by the late blight after a spell of rain on January 10.

Rezaul Karim, an official of the Department of Agricultural Extension (DAE) at Taraganj, has acknowledged receipt of the news of fungal infections from different areas, but added that situation was still under control.

"We have been experiencing unpredictable weather with changes in the night temperatures, fog and rain in the month of January and sporadic drizzle. This weather is very favourable for disease like blight on potatoes and tomatoes. Reports of blight in tomatoes in the kitchen garden of BAU [Bangladesh Agricultural University], blight in potato fields and blight in chilli fields have been pouring in," M Bahadur Meah, a revered plant pathologist, told The Daily Star recently.

Bahadur, who heads the country's first and only campus-based Plant Disease Diagnostic Clinic at BAU, advised spraying of fungicides like Daconil or Acrobat twice a week

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## 2nd phase of Ijtema ends today

STAR REPORT

The second phase of three-day Biswa Ijtema, the second largest Muslim congregation after the Hajj, ends today with Akheri Munajat seeking divine blessings for the people and the Muslim Ummah.

Noted Indian Islamic scholar Maulana Muhammad Saad is expected to lead the Akheri Munajat (concluding

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**PRAYER TIMING JANUARY 22**  
Fazr Zohr Asr Maghrib Esha  
AZAN 5:30 12:45 4:15 5:43 7:15  
JAMAAT 6:05 1:15 4:30 5:47 7:45  
SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION