

### JS Speaker warns AL MP for hurling expletives at Dr Yunus

**STAFF CORRESPONDENT**  
 Jatiya Sangsad Speaker Shirin Sharmin Chaudhury last night warned a ruling Awami League lawmaker who used very offensive and vulgar words against Nobel laureate Dr Muhammad Yunus. Speaking on the thanksgiving motion on president's speech, AL MP Abul Kalam Md Ahasanul Hoque Chowdhury from Rangpur-2 launched a blistering attack on Dr Yunus for his microcredit initiative. At one stage, the MP hurled expletives at him while describing high interest rate on the microcredit loan. The Daily Star refrained from mentioning those words. Shirin warned Ahsanul and advised him to follow section 270 of the rules of procedure of parliament. Shirin, however, did not clarify whether the abusive words were expunged.

### Use of bamboo in railway bridges 'no way dangerous'

**Mujibul Haque tells JS STAFF CORRESPONDENT**  
 Railway Minister Mujibul Haque yesterday told the parliament that use of bamboo in railway bridges is "no way dangerous." In reply to lawmakers' queries, the minister said, "Bamboo is never used in the main structure of the bridges. Local railway staff might use those to protect the sleepers from being curved. ...the bamboos do not carry any load." Jatiya Party MP AKM Mayeedul Islam informed him that the wooden sleepers on the rail tracks on Monu Bridge in Kulaura upazila of Moulvibazar are



**Prof Sakiko Fukuda-Parr, vice chair of the UN Committee for Development Policy, delivers the third CPD Anniversary Lecture titled "Health and global trade regime: Is it affecting equal access to medicines?", organised by the Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD) in a Dhaka hotel yesterday.**

## Death penalty for obstructing aircraft operation

**Cabinet gives final nod to draft law**  
**STAFF CORRESPONDENT**

The cabinet yesterday gave the final nod to a draft law with a provision of death penalty or life-term imprisonment and maximum fine of Tk 5 crore for obstructing aircraft operation in the country. The new law has been drafted to update "the Civil Aviation Ordinance, 1960" according to the guideline of the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), Cabinet Secretary Mohammad Shafiqul Alam told reporters after the meeting at the Secretariat. The law titled "Civil Aviation Act-2017" proposed more stringent punishment for offences of violation of the law, he said. In the previous law, there was a provision for one to three years' imprisonment and fine of maximum Tk 5,000 only. The law proposed a life-term imprisonment or fine of Tk 5 crore or both for any interference in the air navigation such as obstructing or damaging the lighting or signaling system or intervention in the flight operation. For violation of the air space of Bangladesh, one would get maximum seven years and minimum three years' imprisonment or maximum penalty of Tk 50 lakh. It proposed five years imprisonment and minimum fine of Tk 1 crore or both for violation of the Air Navigation

# Don't sign deals limiting access to life-saving drugs

**UN official Fukuda-Parr cautions govt while delivering CPD anniversary lecture**  
**STAFF CORRESPONDENT**

A leading UN official has advised Bangladesh to be cautious before signing any bilateral or multilateral trade agreements that may undermine national policies and people's access to life-saving drugs. Today's trade agreements contain extensive provisions that regulate the market environment for investors and exporters and affect public procurement, investor-state dispute settlement (ISDS) and intellectual property rights, said Prof Sakiko Fukuda-Parr, vice chair of the UN Committee for Development Policy. "Such rules can constrain the scope of action that national gov-

ernments have in pursuing their respective national priorities," she said, mentioning rising prices of essential drugs that are often not accessible by low-income people. Fukuda delivered the third CPD Anniversary Lecture titled "Health and global trade regime: Is it affecting equal access to medicines?" organised by the Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD) at Lakeshore Hotel in the capital yesterday. Her comments came at a time when the world pursues for the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) that, among others, target to achieve universal health coverage including access to essential healthcare and access to affordable

essential medicines and vaccines for all. In Bangladesh, households spend 63 percent of the total national health expenditure. High private healthcare expenditure pushes 4 to 5 million people into poverty every year, while many fail to access healthcare. Fukuda-Parr, who teaches international affairs at The New School in New York, was the lead author of a number of UNDP Human Development Reports. She has been an influential voice in advocating the interests of developing countries in global discourse. Fukuda-Parr said the intellectual property provisions in the agree-

ments like that of Trans-Pacific Partnership, or TPP (the US recently pulled out of the trade deal) strengthen and lengthen patents, giving pharmaceutical corporations new monopoly rights to charge high prices. The corporations impose standards to fit their own priorities and conditions, which reduce the scope for the policymakers in formulating national policies, she said. Even such agreements have provisions for special tribunals outside national legal systems for foreign corporations to sue governments for health policy that may get in the way of their future profits, she added.

## CONDUCT OF LOWER COURT JUDGES SC hopes for issuance of gazette by Feb 27

**STAFF CORRESPONDENT**  
 The Supreme Court yesterday hoped that the government would issue a gazette notification on the rules determining discipline and conduct of lower court judges by February 27. The apex court expressed the hope while hearing the Masdar Hossain case, known as judiciary separation case. An eight-member bench of the Appellate Division led by Chief Justice Surendra Kumar Sinha also adjourned the hearing till February 27. During the hearing, Attorney General Mahbubey Alam moved a petition seeking two weeks' time for the issuance of the gazette. Earlier, the SC several times directed the government to publish a gazette notification on the rules. The lower judiciary was officially separated in November 2007 but the disciplinary rules for lower court judges are yet to be finalised. The government had drafted the rules and sent those to the SC for its opinion. The court revised the draft rules in light of the 1999 verdict in the separation of the judiciary case. On December 12 last year, the apex court asked the law ministry to issue a gazette notification on the rules by January 15 this year.

### Ex-MP jailed for nine years in graft case

**OUR CORRESPONDENT, Patuakhali**  
 Shahidul Alam Talukder, former BNP lawmaker of Patuakhali-2 (Baufal), was sentenced to nine-year imprisonment by a Patuakhali court yesterday in a graft case over hiding information about Tk 21.60 lakh worth of wealth. Following ACC's notice, Shahidul on January 21, 2009 also submitted his statement, statements of his wife Salma Alam Lily and son Raian Akash, showing about Tk 1.62 crore. But the ACC found "inconsistency" in the statement.

## NON-RESIDENT BANGLADESHIS They will get property rights at home: Anisul

**STAFF CORRESPONDENT**  
 Law Minister Anisul Huq yesterday said the non-resident Bangladeshis will have rights to their properties in Bangladesh. No provision will be incorporated in the Citizenship Act so that the Bangladeshi expatriates become stateless, he said at a meeting with a British delegation at Jatiya Sangsad Bhaban yesterday afternoon. UK Parliament Members Jonathan Ashworth, Dr Rupa Huq and Rt Hon Dame Roise Winterton were among the delegation, said a law ministry press release. Law Minister Anisul Huq told the delegation that non-resident Bangladeshis can contest the local government bodies' elections in Bangladesh after coming back to the country and can be involved in political organisations once the proposed Citizenship Act is formulated. The Bangladeshi expatriates cannot contest the elections for the posts of lawmakers and president and cannot become a Supreme Court judge under the proposed law, he added.

## Malaysian relief vessel for Rohingyas to anchor at Ctg port today

**STAR REPORT**  
 The relief-carrying cargo vessel from Malaysia for Myanmar's persecuted Rohingyas, who fled a military crackdown into Bangladesh, will anchor at Chittagong Container Terminal (CCT) of Chittagong Port today. It was earlier scheduled that the relief goods would be unloaded in Cox's Bazar. Nautical Aliy will take berth at Chittagong Port at 11:00am today, Jafar Alam, member (administration) of the port, told The Daily Star yesterday.



**Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at a meeting with a delegation of Labour Friends of Bangladesh from the UK at her Gono Bhaban residence in Dhaka last evening.**



**Students waiting for buses under the ramshackle passenger shed near Jahangirnagar University entrance. Though one month has already passed since a bus hit the shed while trying to overtake another, the authorities concerned are yet to take any initiative to repair it. The photo was taken recently.**

## HC rejects challenge against EC's legality

**STAFF CORRESPONDENT**  
 The High Court yesterday summarily rejected a writ petition filed for challenging the legality of formation of the new Election Commission. The bench of Justice Quazi Reza-Ul Hoque and Justice Mohammad Ullah passed the rejection order saying that the president has the authority to form election commission by appointing retired persons as per the constitution. Petitioner Eunus Ali Akond told The Daily Star that he would move an appeal before the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court against the HC's rejection order. Eunus, an SC lawyer, filed the writ petition on Sunday seeking orders upon the government to cancel the gazette notification on the formation of the new EC. He also prayed for a stay order on the oath taking programme of the chief election commissioner and

# শ্রেষ্ঠ গল্প উপন্যাস

রকিব হাসান

Home Delivery Service  
 www.rokomari.com  
 16297

**বইটি পাওয়া যাচ্ছে অমর একুশে গ্রন্থমেলায় ডেইলি স্টার বুকসের ২৮-২-৮৩ নং স্টলে।**

আজিজ সুপার মার্কেট, শাহাবাগ: প্রথমা (৯৬৬৪৮২৫), পাঠক সমাবেশ (০১৭১৩০৩৪৪০)  
 কাঁটাবন: প্রকৃতি (০১৭২৭৩২৮৭২৩), বেইলি রোড: সাগর পাবলিশার্স (৯৩৫৮৯৪৪)  
 বিমানবন্দর: বুক ওয়ার্ম (৯১২০৩৮৭) | নরসিংদী: বই পুস্তক (০১৮১৮৫৩৪৮৯৩)  
 কুষ্টিয়া: বইমেলা (০১৭১১ ৫৭৫৬০৬) |

চট্টগ্রাম: বাতিঘর (০১৭১৩০৪৩৪৪), প্রথমা (০১৭১১৬৪৯৪২২)