## 3 railway

have to serve two more years in jail. It acquitted two other assistant engineers, Saiful Islam and Dipak Kumar Bhowmik, as the allegations brought against them were not proved

The judge cancelled bails of the convicts and sent them to jail with conviction warrants. On December 26, 2014, Jihad fell

into the 600-feet-long abandoned shaft with a diameter of 17-inch as he was playing with his friends near his house at Bangladesh Railway Colony in Shahjahanpur.

Jihad's father Mohammad Nasir Uddin told reporters he was not satisfied with the judgment as two accused were acquitted. After talking to his lawyer, he will decide whether he will appeal against it.

The 23-hour-long rescue operation by the fire service following the incident drew huge criticism as it failed and volunteers recovered the body just 15 minutes after the operation was put to an end.

The three engineers were in charge of the area and SR House that was implementing a railway project left the shaft uncovered. The court in the verdict said the

convicts had not taken any step to cover the pipe for safety of the people living adjacent to the place and consequently it cost the life of an innocent child.

There was no scope to be lenient in awarding punishment as per the existing law, it added.

Jihad's father had filed a case against Jahangir and Salam with Shahjahanpur Police Station the following day of the tragic incident.

Besides, two writs were filed with

the High Court, seeking a number of directives, including orders to the government to give adequate compensation to the victim's family and take action against the officials who failed to rescue the boy.

Sub-inspector Abu Zafar in April 2015 pressed charges against Jahangir and Salam. But the victim's father filed a no-confidence petition against the investigation.

Later, the court ordered further investigation. As per the order, detectives in May last year pressed fresh charges against six people including Salam and Jahangir.

In October last year, the same court framed charges against the six and recorded testimonies of 11 prosecution witnesses and heard arguments before it fixed the day to deliver the verdict.

### MPs denounce

FROM PAGE 2

resolve the Rohingya problem.

The meeting also discussed the Rohingya issue and suggested more efforts so that Myanmar takes back its nationals, including the new arrivals.

Earlier, the government stepped up its measures to effectively deal with the Rohingya issue by gradually relocating both documented and undocumented Rohingya refugees, who entered the country illegally, to Noakhali's Hatiya Island making it

liveable. Over 70,000 Myanmar nationals from its Rakhine state recently entered Bangladesh.

They are currently living in different camps -- Nayapara, Leda and Kutupalang in Teknaf and Ukhia of Cox's Bazar -- apart from other parts of the country.

### Principals

FROM PAGE 2

Secondary and Higher Education arranged a conference and workshop in the educational institute compound where 327 college principals from all over the country attended at 9:00am.

The students sat for "Bangladesh o Biswa Porichoy" (Bangladesh studies and introduction to world) test at the venue starting at 10:00am.

On invitation, reporters, including The Daily Star correspondent, entered the venue to cover the programme

when the exam ended around 1:00pm

Asked why the programme was being held here during the SSC exams, Prof SM Wahiduzzaman, director general of the directorate, said, "All the cars entered the venue before the exam started. No one of us went near the halls so that the stu-

dents do not face any hassle." Answering to another query on the choice of location, he said as they have a shortage of big auditoriums, they arranged the event there.

### Suu Kyi breaks silence on killing of top lawyer

AFP, Yangon

Myanmar's de facto leader Aung San Suu Kyi has broken a month long silence on the daylight assassination of her advisor, calling his killing a "great loss" for the country's democracy struggle.

Ko Ni, a prominent Muslim lawyer and critic of Myanmar's powerful military, was shot dead on 29 January outside Yangon airport in a murder that sent shockwaves through the country's young civilian government.

# Trump to skip White House I demand

FROM PAGE 16 He ripped the New York Times on Sunday for a television ad that the newspaper will air during the Oscars ceremony stating "The truth is more important now than ever."

"For first time the failing @nytimes will take an ad (a bad one) to help save its failing reputation. Try reporting accurately & fairly! "Trump tweeted.

Over the years the dinner organized by the White House Correspondents' Association has evolved -- or devolved, depending on one's point of view -into the self-described "Nerd Prom" packed with Hollywood celebrities.

The WHCA said it will proceed with this year's dinner, set for April 29. The event "has been and will con-

Amendment (on freedom of the press) and the important role played by an independent news media in a healthy republic," WHCA president Jeff Mason tweeted. Some news groups have already pulled out of events related to the

tinue to be a celebration of the First

dinner. Conde Nast, publisher of The New Yorker, Vanity Fair have all cancelled their exclusive before- and after-parties, and Bloomberg is reportedly pulling out as a party co-sponsor. The New York Times has skipped

the dinner itself for years to avoid charges that its reporters are too close to the White House. The dinner normally features a big-

name comedian to rib the president, but this year a funny person has yet to be booked. Comedian Samantha Bee earlier announced a "Not the White House

Correspondents' Dinner" on the same night at a nearby hotel to raise money for the Committee to Protect Journalists. Trump's cancelation comes after the White House denied access Friday to

US media outlets, including CNN and The New York Times. Smaller outlets that have provided favorable coverage however were allowed to attend the briefing by

an off-camera briefing to several major

spokesman Sean Spicer. The WHCA said it was "protesting strongly" against the decision to selectively deny media access.

The New York Times said the decision was "an unmistakable insult to democratic ideals," CNN called it "an unacceptable development," and The Los Angeles Times warned the incident had "ratcheted up the White House's war on the free press" to a new level.

It is not uncommon for Republican and Democratic administrations to brief a limited number of reporters on specific themes.

However the Friday event was billed as a regular briefing open to credentialed media before it became a closed event in Spicer's office for a tions. chosen group.

judicial service staff, when necessary.

Over the years, this article has been

Currently, the powers to control and

However, under article 48 (3) of the

amended several times, curtailing the

discipline subordinate courts are vested

in the president, who exercises these

constitution, the president acts on the

advice of the prime minister. This gives

the government ample scope to exer-

Legal experts view the present sys-

Chief Justice Surendra Kumar Sinha

has himself said such a "dual rule" was

hampering the judicial work and was

also increasing justice-seekers' suffer-

"The Supreme Court alone cannot

take steps regarding lower court

judges' promotion and transfer or any

disciplinary actions against them due

to the [present] article 116. Judges

cannot be appointed to fill many

vacant posts at district courts on time

due to the dual rule," he said in a mes-

sage on October 31 last year, the ninth

anniversary of the separation of the

The lower judiciary was separated

from the executive branch on

November 1, 2007, following the

Supreme Court directives in Masdar

Hossain case, popularly known as the

Yesterday, the HC in its ruling asked

the respondents to explain why they

should not be ordered to take neces-

sary steps to amend the relevant arti-

cles of the constitution so that the

president need not take the PM's

the SC registrar general and the secre-

taries to the cabinet division and the

The HC bench of Justice Quazi

Reza-Ul Hoque and Justice

Mohammad Ullah came up with the

ruling, following a petition filed by SC

In his November 3 petition, Eunus

Article 115 says, "Appointments of election."

challenged the legality of articles

persons to offices in the judicial service

or as magistrates exercising judicial

functions shall be made by the presi-

95(2)(b), 98, 115, 116 and 116(a).

lawyer Eunus Ali Akond.

The respondents are the Speaker,

advice for appointing any judge.

law ministry.

judiciary from the executive.

separation of judiciary case.

powers in consultation with the SC.

cise power over the judiciary.

tem as "dual rule" in the judiciary.

FROM PAGE 1

apex court's powers.

Several outlets that regularly cover the White House, including newswires

HC rule on legality

judicial power and could discipline the him in that behalf."

Reuters and Bloomberg, attended. They are part of the "pool," a small group of reporters who have access to certain events and share the contents with other media.

The Associated Press boycotted the event in protest at the exclusions, which included The Los Angeles Times and Politico.

AFP was not included despite being part of the press pool. Its journalist protested, and attended the briefing uninvited.

Spicer gave no explanation for the media selection.

As protests erupted a December interview re-emerged in which Spicer told Politico that the Trump White House would never ban a news outlet.

"Conservative, liberal or otherwise, I think that's what makes a democracy a democracy versus a dictatorship," he Ari Fleischer, a former George W

Bush spokesman, said the White House's stance was "unwise and counterproductive," but added that it should be kept in perspective. "Press secretaries need to meet with

the whole press," Fleischer told CNN. "But beyond that, there is nothing unusual about presidents meeting with selected reporters, and White House staffs do it all the time too."

### Ahmadinejad writes open letter to Trump

AFP, Tehran

Iran's ex-president Mahmud Ahmadinejad yesterday published an open letter to Donald Trump, welcoming his criticism of the US political system but taking issue with his visa ban and attitude to

Many Iranians see the new US president as cut from the same cloth as Ahmadinejad, who shocked the establishment with his sudden rise to power in 2005, combining hardline rhetoric and populist economic policies to win a powerful following among Iran's lower classes.

At times in the long and rambling letter, published in English and Farsi on his website, he appears to find a kindred spirit in Trump.

"Your Excellency (Trump) has truthfully described the US political system and electoral structure as corrupt and anti-public," he writes.

But much of the letter is spent exhorting Trump to end interventions in the Middle East and ditch the "arrogance" of past US administra-

Ahmadinejad also takes issue with Trump's visa ban on seven Muslimmajority countries, including Iran.

dent in accordance with rules made by

cluding the power of posting, promo-

tion and grant of leave) and discipline

of persons employed in the judicial

service and magistrates exercising judi-

cial functions shall vest in the president

and shall be exercised by him in consul-

that under article 95(2)(b) of the 1972

constitution, lower court judges had to

have three years' experience as district

brought through the fourth amend-

Similarly, article 98 of the 1972

constitution was changed through the

fourth amendment. As a result, the

president does not need to consult the

chief justice before appointing

ment brought changes to article 115 of

the original charter. Because of the

change, the president need not consult

the chief justice before appointing

1972 constitution, the SC had full

authority over the posting, transfer and

promotion of lower court judges. But

through the fourth amendment, the

powers were vested in the president,

who now does the job in consultation

Mahbubey Alam said he would contest

of the nation and his authority cannot

be curtailed, he said, adding that par-

liament had the power to bring

meant the constitutional validity of

these articles had to be looked into.

and interesting question," he added.

regarding the next parliamentary

Islam Alamgir, were present.

Senior BNP leaders, including

party Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul

Eminent jurist Dr Shahdeen Malik

"It promises to be a very important

the HC ruling during the hearing.

changes to the constitution.

New CEC

FROM PAGE 2

Contacted, Attorney General

The president is the symbol of unity

Eunus said under article 116 of the

The same constitutional amend-

Supreme Court judges, he said.

judges for becoming an HC judge.

ment in January 1975.

lower court judges.

with the SC.

Eunus told The Daily Star yesterday

tation with the Supreme Court."

Article 116 says, "The control (in-

FROM PAGE 16

all killings, not only Avijit's murder." In the two years, the court fixed 22 dates for the investigation officer to submit the probe report, but police failed to complete the probe. The next deadline for submitting the report is March 27.

"I have been assured that the probe report of the murder would be submitted to the court very soon. I hope they will keep their words," said the grieving father, addressing yesterday's event organised by a faction of Gonojagoron Mancha in front of the National Museum. Suspected militants hacked to

death Avijit, founder of Mukto-Mona blog, near the Teacher-Student Centre on the Dhaka University campus. His wife Rafida Ahmed Bonya was also injured in the attack. Ajoy, a professor of physics, also

slammed the government for "bringing changes to school textbooks prescribed by Hefajat-e Islam, which has taken up the task of turning Bangladesh into a Pakistan-like state". Lawyer Rana Dasgupta, general

secretary of Hindu-Buddhist-

Christian Oikya Parishad, also

expressed dismay. He said, "We are shocked to see the state being submissive to the Hefajat." Vice-Chancellor of Dhaka University AAMS Arefin Siddique said, "History testifies that the extremists always bow down when progressives stand united. Sometimes

we face challenges and hurdles but

we have always won." On a similar note, Nazim Uddin, father of another slain blogger Ahmed Rajib Haider, said, "I have lost my son. But I know the youths of Gonojagoron Mancha would resist all attempts to turn Bangladesh into a communal state. Countless Rajibs would give up their lives to resist

those doing politics using religion." Imran H Sarkar, spokesperson of a faction of Gonojagoron Mancha, said, "The government is engaged in a cat-and-mouse game [with the militants]. A game that strengthens its [the government's] power while our comrades are being killed." PROBE DELAY

Police said the investigation of the sensational murder was being delayed as law enforcers were yet to arrest the six suspects who were present during the murder.

Abdul Baten, joint commissioner of Detective Branch of Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP), told reporters on Saturday that police would submit the charge sheet as soon as they arrest the six.

Their involvement with the banned militant outfit Ansarullah Bangla Team (ABT) has been confirmed, he added. He, however, did not disclose the name of the suspects Police so far arrested eight people in connection with the murder.

Seven of the suspects -- Shafiur Rahman Farabi, Sadekur Rahman Mithu, Alimul Mallik, Towhidur Rahman, Julhaj Biswas and Jafran -are now behind bars.

Suspect Abul Bashar, brother of ABT's spiritual leader Jashim Uddin Rahmani, died while undergoing treatment at Dhaka Medical College Hospital. The jail authorities had taken him to DMCH when he fell ill.

# The bridge

FROM PAGE 16 who works at a garment factory in nearby Chairmanbari area, said when asked why she had taken the risk.

"I have to catch my class. It begins in less than half an hour," said Rifat Hasan, a school-going teen. Similar scenarios were seen at the

But the same article in the present place throughout the day. Those constitution has no such provisions, crossing the street that way gave he said, adding that this change was similar excuses.

> This dangerous practice is nothing new in the city. On many occasions, people were killed after being hit by vehicles while jaywalking. Some 40 percent of road accidents in the capital between 2010 and 2015 involved jaywalkers, according to reports published in this newspaper.

> Assistant Sub-Inspector Nuruzzaman, who was making frantic efforts to control traffic on the street near Sainik Club, said the practice not only puts pedestrians' lives at peril but also poses risks for those driving or travelling in the vehicles.

whether penalising them by mobile courts would wield any good results" Jaywalking was also seen at the

Asked, he said, "I am not sure

busy intersection near Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport. At that place, the Dhaka North City Corporation in August last year had opened the country's second footbridge with escalators. DNCC mayor Annisul Huq told

The Daily Star that they were going to make two such footbridges --- one at Khilkhet and the other near hotel Radisson Blu. Imported from Malaysia, the Tk 1.5-crore Banani escalator was

told The Daily Star the HC ruling installed at the footbridge under a World Bank-sponsored scheme, Clean Air and Sustainable Environment (CASE), for first time on a pilot basis to encourage people to use overpass and prevent unsafe road crossing. Shehab Ullah, one of the project

directors, said that 23 footbridges have been built under the project across the city.

Dhaka South City Corporation has also taken a scheme to build around a dozen more footbridges with escalators, he added.

# Industries, export

FROM PAGE 1

"The impact will be multidimensional," he told The Daily Star yester-

On Thursday, Bangladesh Energy Regulatory Commission raised gas prices and decided to implement the increase in two phases.

For industries, gas prices were last increased by more than 100 percent in September 2015. "We haven't yet been able to absorb

the previous hike completely," said Hoque, also managing director of Plummy Fashions, an internationally certified eco-friendly factory. "The latest price hike was not

expected at all... The timing is not good," he added. His company pays Tk 18 lakh in gas

bills every month. Now, it would go up by another Tk 2-3 lakh. On Saturday, the issue of gas price

hike was discussed at Dhaka Apparel Summit. Syed Nasim Manzur, a former president of the Metropolitan Chamber of

Commerce and Industry in Dhaka, said

gas price is a major issue for businesses that have to make long-term plans. According to Bangladesh Economic Survey 2016, households consumed about 13 percent of the total gas produced in the country in 2014-15, while

percent and industries 16.79 percent. The Dhaka Chamber of Commerce and Industry said the gas price increase would push up the cost of doing business and also inflation.

captive generators consumed 17.12

"It will also impede export competitiveness, increase transportation costs and the overall cost of doing business," it said in a statement on Saturday. Gas-based power generation, cap-

tive power generation and fertiliser production would also be costlier due to this gas price hike, said the chamber. The Exporters Association of

Bangladesh (EAB) said the increase would harm all industries, including the export-oriented ones. "The EAB thinks the hike goes

against the interests of the manufacturers, consumers and the public alike."

EAB President Abdus Salam Murshedy said the increase would have direct negative impacts on exporters of fish, frozen food, plastic, leather

competitiveness on the global market. Gas prices have been raised at a time when garment exporters are already under pressure for meeting compliance following the Rana Plaza disaster,

University and the State University of San Francisco, remediation cost at a garment factory is Tk 4.9 crore on average.

Sheikh Fazlur Rahman Bakul, president of Bangladesh Steel Mills Owners Association, said the industries don't get adequate gas supply even though they pay the bills regularly.

pressure in gas supply is low."

the World Bank in Dhaka, said gas prices in Bangladesh are low compared to those on the international market. He said Petrobangla would get more surplus money due to the price

With the country's gas reserves depleting fast, initiatives must be taken to improve infrastructure in the sector and explore new gas sources instead of keeping thousands of crores of taka in banks as idle money, he told

The economist noted that consum-

"At the moment, only the cost is increase in supply."

it market-based.

### Hitler's phone is 'fake' FROM PAGE 16

He highlights 'oddities' in the phone's

construction and quality. 'The actual telephone was manu-

factured by Siemens & Halske, but the handset comes from an English telephone,' he noted. 'Such phones were never produced this way. It must have been assembled later in England.' The auction house where the phone

came under the hammer, Alexander Historical Auctions in the Chesapeake City, Maryland, said a subsidiary of Siemens in the UK worked closely with the firm's German headquarters until the outbreak of war and had designed the receiver.

But Gnegel said: 'Why should a company in Great Britain construct an earpiece for Hitler before the war? Siemens would certainly have built a

new telephone for Hitler.' The phone was originally a black Bakelite phone that was later painted crimson and engraved with Hitler's

The peeling red paint is another clue that it is a forgery, he said: 'Siemens would have built a proper example from dyed plastic, instead of unprofessionally painting over a black telephone. Everything to do with Hitler was produced in a highquality fashion; why should an engraving be simply be painted over?'

The phone's rotary dial is also suspect, he said, stating that the Fuehrer would have been connected to whoever he wanted to speak with via a battery of telephone operators: manual dialing would have been beneath the great dictator.

Gnegel is curator of one of the most important collections of telephone history in Europe. But he is not alone in suspecting the authenticity of the Hitler phone.

The Telephone Museum, an American non-profit organisation, raised several pointed questions for the auction house on Facebook which were unanswered. Dutch telephone restorer and

blogger Arwin Schaddelee also raised question about the quality of the phone, stating: 'The engraving of the name is unevenly done, with the D particularly deformed. Certainly not the quality you would expect for the Führer.' According to the auction house, the phone was plucked from the ruins of the Reich Chancellery in Berlin, where Hitler tended his life on April 30 1945, by conquering Red Army troops. It was later handed over to Brigadier

Sir Ralph Rayner, a British officer, when he visited the bunker days after the fall of Berlin, the auction house said. The Siemens-made rotary telephone, embossed with a swastika

and eagle symbol of the Third Reich, was said to be presented to Hitler by officers of the Wehrmacht, Nazi Germany's armed forces, in 1943. The handset of the phone must be rotated almost 60 degrees before it can

be lifted out of its cradle. This feature kept the handset from

field headquarters.

shaking loose while being transported. The phone was used in vehicles and trains as well as the bunker and Hitler's

"There are days when we don't get any gas, and there are days when the

ers would not complain much about paying additional prices if they are convinced that gas supply would increase and new gas connections would be given soon.

going up, and there is no good news on Zahid suggested bringing reforms to the pricing mechanism and making

instruction at generals on the battlefield during World War Two and to order the death of his brother-in-law.

Russian officers gave the phone to

after Germany's surrender. Shortly before his death Brig. Rayner, who was the Conservative MP for Totnes between 1935 and 1955 and knighted in 1956, gave the phone to his son, who

up for auction on February 19. might be now that one of Europe's

# leading experts has declared it a fake.

reports published in different local and national newspapers and local ethnic organisations, which in turn were verified by Kapaeeng's staff, he

reported. Twenty eight of them were from the CHT and 25 from other

Last year, the number of cases on human rights violation against indigenous women was 69, while the num-

At least 96 members of ethnic communities were physically tortured and harassed, and 297 houses were ransacked allegedly by law enforcement agencies last year.

"Around 1,200 indigenous families in Gobindaganj were forced to run for their life as their houses were completely burnt to ashes. The incident of Gobindagonj is a glaring example of the extent of helplessness that indigenous peoples are thrust in," the report added.

seriously. Prof Mizanur Rahman, former

chairman of National Human Rights Commission, said if human rights situation is not improved, the government's claim of economic progress would not bring any change to the lives of the ethnic people. Requesting the government to give

importance on this report, rights activist Khushi Kabir said it is the government's responsibility to protect rights of the ethnic communities and take steps so that their rights will not be violated in future.

and garment, and also erode their

he said. According to a survey of Bangladesh

Zahid Hussain, lead economist of

increase. But this money has to be used for the development of the gas sector.

this correspondent.

millions of Jews, to scream brutal

British Brigadier Sir Ralph Rayner during a tour of the bunker shortly

stored it in a safe until deciding to put it It is unknown who bought the phone - or what the consequences

# 23 ethnic people

FROM PAGE 2

The data was collected from the related mentioned.

Last year, at least 17 women were allegedly raped and six were killed after rape, claimed the report, adding that five incidents of kidnapping were also reported. Besides, at least 53 cases of violence against the indigenous women were

places. However, human rights violation against the ethnic women and girls in the last year dropped slightly in comparison to 2015, the report said.

ber stood at 85 in 2015, it mentioned.

Speaking at the programme, Sanjeeb Drong, general secretary of Bangladesh Adivasi Forum, said the ethnic minorities were now passing the toughest time as their human rights are being violated

Kapaeeng Foundation Chairperson Rabindranath Soren chaired the

Hitler to demand the deaths of programme.