

## Acid thrown on mother, daughter

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Gaibandha

Unidentified criminals threw acid on a woman and her daughter in Taraf-Sadullah village of Gaibandha's Sadullapur on Thursday night.

The victims -- Rashida Begum, 47, and her daughter Sumi Akhter, 22 -- were undergoing treatment at Palashbari Upazila Health Complex.

Rashida said she and her daughter went out of home around 11:00pm, responding to the call of nature. When they were returning, some unknown people from behind threw acid on them and fled the scene.

Hearing their screams, neighbours rushed to the spot and sent the victims to Palashbari Upazila Health Complex.

Sajib Kumar, physician of the health complex, said Rashida suffered around 10 percent burns and her daughter around 5 percent burns.

Farhad Emrul Quaesh, officer-in-charge of Sadullapur Police Station, said the victims' family suspected their rivals had carried out the attack over a land dispute.

Rashida's husband filed a case with Sadullapur Police Station yesterday.

No one was arrested in connection with the attack.

## 'Neo JMB'

FROM PAGE 16

cordoned off a suspected hideout of 'Neo JMB' around 5:30pm, acting on information that militants were in the house," Mohibul Islam Khan, deputy commissioner of CTC unit of Dhaka Metropolitan Police, told The Daily Star.

"We are suspecting that some top 'Neo JMB' leaders were in there," he said.

Our Jhenidah correspondent added that the village is around four kilometres off the Sadar Police Station and there are two tin-shed small rooms in the house.

Mizanur Rahman, superintendent of Jhenidah police, told this newspaper that they primarily came to know that one Abdullah used to live in the house along with his family.

The house owner and his family members were missing, and police were looking for them, he said.

Quoting locals, police said Abdullah, whose previous name was Provat Kumar, converted to Islam from Hinduism around five years ago. He has three children.

Last month, CTC officials busted five hideouts of "Neo JMB" -- two in Chittagong, one in Sylhet and two in Moulvibazar. Nineteen people, including five children and five women, were killed in those incidents.

According to police, 16 of them were killed in suicidal blasts.

"Neo JMB", which is believed to follow the ideology and strategy of Islamic State (IS), was responsible for the Gulshan café attack. Twenty-two people, including 17 foreigners and two police officials, were killed in the attack, said police.

Since the attack, around 57 "Neo JMB" operatives have been killed in different drives.

## 'Drunk driving'

FROM PAGE 16

scene, but locals caught him and beat him up, said Abdulla Hil Kafi, assistant commissioner (Dhanmondi) of Dhaka Metropolitan Police.

People present at the scene took the victim to Life Care Hospital where he died soon afterwards.

They also vandalised the C-Class and found some empty and unopened cans of beers in the car, said Abdul Latif, officer-in-charge of Dhanmondi Police Station.

Police detained Prince after the incident and took him to Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) for primary treatment and a stomach-wash. Doctors told police that they found "primary evidence" of drinking beer.

Son of a businessman, Prince lives in Baitul Aman Housing Society and looks after his father's business, police said, adding that he was sent to jail by a Dhaka court yesterday.

On October 12, 2015, Fareez Rahman, an allegedly drunk teen and a former Awami League lawmaker's nephew, lost control of a sports utility vehicle (SUV) and rammed into two rickshaws, leaving four people injured in the capital's Gulshan.

## NDB

FROM PAGE 16

had primarily selected Bangladesh, he said the NDB was yet to select any country.

"They [NDB] are yet to select the first batch of countries.... Once they have selected the 15, they would conduct studies on the countries."

Muhith said the NDB's policy was quite different from any other bank. "It's a very different bank because they are saying that they won't impose any programme on any country."

# Cases of hepatitis B and C hit 325 million: WHO

AFP, Geneva

An estimated 325 million people are living with hepatitis B or C and few are aware of their condition, with death tolls from the viruses rising, the UN said yesterday.

The World Health Organization's latest hepatitis report identifies the condition as a grave public health threat that needs an "urgent response."

Hepatitis killed 1.34 million people in 2015, a toll roughly in-line with HIV and tuberculosis.

But in contrast to HIV and TB, hepatitis deaths are increasing, WHO said, recording a 22 percent mortality rise from 2000 to 2014.

Hepatitis is often symptom free, but types B and C can trigger liver cirrhosis and cancer if untreated.

Lack of awareness among those infected is driving the virus's spread.

For hepatitis B -- which is spread through bodily fluids like blood and semen -- only nine percent of those infected know their status.

And for hepatitis C, primarily spread through blood, just 20 percent of those infected are aware of their

condition.

Lack of access to testing and treatment leaves "millions of people at risk of a slow progression to chronic liver disease, cancer and death", WHO said in a statement.

The hepatitis B problem is most acute in the WHO's Western Pacific Region, which includes China, Malaysia and southeast Asia. An estimated 115 million people in the region have the virus.

Second worst is Africa, with 60 million hepatitis B cases.

An effective vaccine exists for hepatitis B.

WHO's latest data shows that hepatitis C -- for which there is no vaccine -- is most commonly spread through unsafe injections, notably among drug users.

Europe and the eastern Mediterranean region are afflicted with the most hepatitis C cases at 14 million and 15 million respectively.

WHO is trying to ramp up the global hepatitis response, aiming to treat some 80 percent of sufferers worldwide by 2030.

# Britain must pay EU divorce bill in euros: document

AFP, Brussels

Britain may be leaving the EU but it will still have to settle the divorce bill in euros, not pounds, according to an EU document on the upcoming negotiations Thursday.

"An orderly withdrawal of the United Kingdom from the Union requires settling the financial obligations undertaken before the withdrawal date," said the European Commission document seen by AFP.

"The agreement should define the precise way in which these obligations will be calculated ... the obligations should be defined in euro," it added.

The document did not say how much the Brexit settlement might cost but EU officials have previously said it could be as much as 60 billion euros, sparking howls of outrage in London which puts the figure nearer 20 billion.

Titled "Non Paper on key elements likely to feature in the draft negotiating directives," the document was drawn up for the European Commission which will conduct the Brexit negotiations with Britain.

It covers in more detail the same ground outlined last month by EU president Donald Tusk in response to Prime Minister Theresa May's official March 29 notification that Britain was leaving the bloc.

Tusk stressed then that the EU will insist on agreeing the future of citizens in Britain and the Brexit bill first before considering London's demand for a

free trade pact.

The Commission document outlined its aims for a reciprocal deal for EU citizens in the UK and Brits elsewhere in the bloc, saying their rights should last "for the life time of those concerned" rather than giving a cut-off date.

The Brexit divorce settlement should not just be limited to workers, the paper said, and should also apply to family members who join citizens "at any point in time before/after the withdrawal date".

Residency and social security were also highlighted by the Commission as rights it will seek to protect in the two-year negotiations with London, as the two sides try to undo the mass of legislation agreed since Britain joined then European Community in 1973.

Both the divorce bill and the fate of EU citizens are expected to be among the toughest areas to reach agreement on, following a Brexit campaign which rallied against Britain's payments to Brussels and the number of migrants in the country.

Anticipating possible disputes, the draft paper envisaged setting up "an institutional structure to ensure an effective enforcement of the commitments under the agreement," while maintaining the primacy of the European Court of Justice.

For disputes outside EU law, "an alternative dispute settlement should only be envisaged if it offers equivalent guarantees of independence and impartiality as the ECJ," it added.

# Terror rocks French polls

FROM PAGE 16

63-year-old Fillon said, promising an "iron-fisted" approach.

Macron, a 39-year-old moderate whom other candidates have portrayed as inexperienced, warned against any attempts to use the attack for political gain.

"Let us not give into fear, let us not give into division," he said, telling voters he would be "unwavering in protecting you."

US President Donald Trump tweeted that the attack "will have a big effect" on the election.

"Another terrorist attack in Paris. The people of France will not take much more of this. Will have a big effect on presidential election!" he said, breaking a silence over tomorrow's vote.

IS NOTE

The gunman drew up alongside a police van and fired at around 9:00 pm (1900 GMT) on Thursday, sending tourists and visitors to the world-renowned boulevard running for their lives.

After opening fire just a few hundred metres from the Arc de Triomphe monument, the gunman was shot dead while trying to flee on foot. A foreign tourist was slightly wounded by shrapnel.

In addition to the note praising IS, authorities found a Koran in the attacker's vehicle.

A statement by IS's propaganda agency Amaq said the attacker was one of its "fighters", identifying him as "Abu Yusef the Belgian".

But French authorities named him as Karim Cheurfi, a Frenchman living in the Paris suburbs.

The IS claim raised initial concerns that a possible second attacker could be on the loose.

A French interior ministry spokesman confirmed yesterday that a manhunt was underway for a second individual, based on information from Belgian security services.

It was "too early to say" if the man was linked to Thursday's shooting, said ministry spokesman Pierre-Henry Brandet.

Cheurfi was known to anti-terror police, sources told AFP. He had been arrested in February on suspicion of plotting to kill police officers but released because of a lack of evidence.

He had been convicted in 2005 of three counts of attempted murder, two involving police officers, sources said. Three people known to him were being questioned by police.

EXPLOITING ATTACK It was unclear how the election would be impacted by the shooting, which came days after two men were arrested in Marseille on suspicion of plotting an imminent attack.

The shooting follows a series of strikes around Europe in the last month, targeting Stockholm, London and the underground train system in Saint Petersburg.

Until now, surveys showed voters more concerned about unemployment and the economy than terrorism or security, though analysts warned this could change in the event of violence.

France has been under a state of emergency for nearly a year and a half, with more than 230 people killed in jihadist attacks since the start of 2015.

The offices of Charlie Hebdo magazine were hit in January 2015, IS gunmen and suicide bombers killed 130 people in Paris the following November, and a Tunisian man rammed a truck through crowds in Nice last July, killing 86 people.

## Taliban kill eight Afghan soldiers in base attack

AFP, Mazar-i-sharif

At least eight Afghan soldiers have been killed and 11 wounded during an ongoing Taliban attack on their base in northern Afghanistan yesterday, the defence ministry said.

"Gunmen wearing Afghan army uniforms have launched a complex attack on an army compound in the outskirts of Mazar-e-Sharif", capital of Balkh province, ministry spokesman Dawlat Waziri told AFP.

At least one armed man continues to resist, he said, with another killed and a third arrested. He could not confirm how many attackers there were in total.

"So far we have counted eight dead and eleven wounded, all military, there are no civilian casualties," General Waziri said.

General Mohmand Katawazi, the provincial corps commander, confirmed gunfire was continuing, and said one attacker had blown himself up in the assault.

Several military helicopters were hovering over the site and ambulances were evacuating the bodies of the victims, an AFP correspondent said.

In a statement the Taliban claimed responsibility for the operation.

The last major attack against a military site dates back to early March, a coordinated hours-long assault on the country's main military hospital in Kabul.

Officials said around 50 people were killed, though credible sources said it was more than double that.

That operation was claimed by the Islamic State group.

## Indian pair jailed for recruiting, fundraising for IS

AFP, New Delhi

Two men accused of fundraising and recruiting for the Islamic State group in India were sentenced to seven years in jail yesterday, an official said. Azhar-ul-Islam and Mohammad Farhan Shaikh were arrested by India's counterterrorism body the National Investigation Agency (NIA) last year after being deported from the United Arab Emirates for illegal fundraising activities.

"Both of them were already in jail, and were today sentenced to seven years in prison by the court," Alok Mittal, an inspector general at the NIA, told AFP.

The duo, both in their mid-twenties, had pleaded guilty to charges of criminal conspiracy last month "without any pressure, threat, coercion or undue influence", according to the Press Trust of India.

## Qawmi madrasa

FROM PAGE 16

Awami League presidium member and former home minister Sahara Khatun joined the function as the chief guest, while Food Minister Qamrul Islam was present as the special guest.

Asaduzzaman said Bangladesh was not only a country for Muslims, but also a non-communal and secular nation. "People of all religions are performing their religious rites peacefully here."

Sahara said Islam had no links with terrorism and militancy as the holy religion does not approve of killing human beings.

Qamrul said the people of Bangladesh were pious, but not fanatics.

He said the terrorists were undermining Muslims around the world by killing innocent people.

"The terrorists are instigating people to promote militancy by misinterpreting Islam," the minister said.

## 70 green groups

FROM PAGE 16

Some of these protests have turned violent. Earlier this year, one person was killed and about a dozen injured in a protest against a \$2.4-billion Chinese-backed coal-fired plant southeast of the capital Dhaka.

Last year, at least four people died when police opened fire at protesters against the plant.

Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, responding to criticism from former US Vice President Al Gore at the World Economic Forum this year, said Bangladesh desperately needs more power, and that the planned coal plants are far from the Sundarbans.

Clashes between villagers and governments keen to build infrastructure to spur growth are likely to become more common in South Asia as demand for scarce land rises, analysts say.

Environmentalists say the risks that fossil fuel plants pose to nature and the livelihoods of people are not being assessed.

"Women are particularly at risk, as displacement is linked to increases in gender violence, including falling victim to trafficking and prostitution," the non-profit groups said in their letter.

## Vast areas in Ctg

FROM PAGE 1

She came all the way from her village at Fatehabad in Hathazari upazila on a CNG-run auto-rickshaw. But the driver of the auto-rickshaw asked her to get down at Muradpur around 9:30am, as it was impossible for him to move ahead in the thigh-deep water on the road.

Julekha expressed disappointment at the officials of Chittagong City Corporation (CCC).

The heavy rainfall started around 6:00am and continued until around noon. The Patenga Met office recorded 69 millimetres (mm) of rainfall in the city during that time, said Met Officer Sheikh Farid Ahmed.

The areas that went under water include Chawkbazar, Bakalia, Muradpur, Bahaddarhat, Sholashahar Gate No 2, Kapasgola, Badurtola, Shulakbazar, Bibirhat, Agrabad CDA Residential Area, Probartak intersection, Kataganj, Bepari Para, Muhuri Para and Halishahar Shantibagh.

Filthy water overflowing from roadside drains entered houses, shops, shopping malls and other business establishments, damaging furniture and goods. Motor vehicles were hardly seen in those areas while a few rickshaws that braved the water charged higher fares.

Tapati Das left her home near the Teachers' Training College in Bakalia in the morning to attend her ailing father at Chittagong Medical College Hospital.

Though she managed to find a rickshaw, she could not travel more than 600 yards from her home. The rickshaw puller asked her to get down near Chawkbazar Kitchen Market, as the road ahead went under waist-deep water.

Helpless Tapati took shelter on the first floor of a roadside building and waited for another vehicle. "We voted for the present mayor as he promised to address waterlogging in his election manifesto, but now we are frustrated as the situation has not improved," she told The Daily Star.

Ayub Ali, a shopkeeper, was seen scooping out water with a bucket from his shop on KB Aman Ali Raod in West Bakalia. He said most of the goods, including sugar, flour and rice, of his shop were damaged.

Town Planner Subhash Barua told The Daily Star that waterlogging could be resolved if the authorities were cordial and worked honestly.

"I don't think any effective step has been taken to address waterlogging in the city in the last 22 years," he said, adding, "There is no proper action plan."

## Atomic energy experts

FROM PAGE 16

indeed coming from the drilling pits in Khasi Hills in Meghalaya bordering the haor region in Sunamganj, causing the death of aquatic resources, the official said on condition of anonymity.

Meanwhile, Forwardman Nongrem, president of Khasi Student Union in South West Khasi Hill Districts, one of the leaders protesting against the uranium mining in the Khasi Hills, spoke with The Daily Star yesterday.

He said many fish in the Raikor river died this year due to hazardous materials of the uranium mine.

Though the authorities in Dhaka and Meghalaya are denying any link between the two, he said they "firmly believed" fish were dying because of mining.

In support of the argument, he said

"As most of the canals in the city have silted up, there is no alternative to excavating new canals to address the problem."

"Dredging of silted canals as well as the Karnaphuli river should be done properly," he said, adding, "The canals should immediately be freed from illegal occupation."

Contacted, Shaibal Das Suman, chairman of CCC standing committee on addressing waterlogging, said the city corporation staff clean the drains regularly, but as the city is surrounded by hills, drains get clogged again with soil when it rains, which is one of the main reasons for waterlogging.

He said the CCC was taking up massive projects, including excavating a new canal to address waterlogging. **WHAT THE MAYOR SAYS** CCC Mayor AJM Nasir Uddin said it was not possible to address waterlogging overnight, as it had been a problem for the last 15 to 20 years.

"It's just the second season after I took office," he said, adding, "I'm trying to address the problem."

The Water Development Board had initiated a project to build sluice-gates with pump houses at the mouth of the canals in the city, the mayor said.

"The DPP [Development Project Proposal] of the project has already been sent to the Ministry of Water Resources, and the project work will start once the Ecnc [Executive Committee of the National Economic Council] approves it."

The CCC and the Chittagong Water Supply and Sewerage Authority have taken up a master plan to develop a comprehensive drainage and sewerage system in the city, Nasir said.

The World Bank would finance the project and it would be finalised this month, he added.

## Seven held

FROM PAGE 2

Ali Mallic, Abu Bakkar Sarder, Sahajahan Sarder and Jahan Ali Biswas of Ranai in Dumuria. All arrestees are between the ages of 65-75.

They were sent to the DB office in Khulna, he added.

Seeking anonymity, an official of Khulna DB said all seven arrested are also accused in a separate war crime case in Khulna filed against eleven people.

These seven men were members of the Razakar Bahini in 1971 and were involved in crimes against humanity in Phultala and Dumuria during the Liberation War, the official added.

such deaths started in 2012 after mining activities began there.

The authorities left some uranium pits open and toxic materials are mixing with the river water, he added.

"Some of the drilling sites of uranium mine at Porkut Nongri are just a few hundred metres from the India-Bangladesh border," said Nongrem.

Meanwhile, a team of Bangladesh Fisheries Research Institute reached the haor area yesterday, also to examine the cause of death of fish and ducks there.

Led by Chief Scientist Dr Masud Hossain Khan, the team examined waters from Khachar Haor, Halir Haor and Mahaliar Haor.

Talking to reporters, he later said, "The water of the haors is not in its normal condition and there is toxic gas in the water for which fish are dying."

## Remittance down

FROM PAGE 2

"Remittances are an important source of income for millions of families in developing countries. As such, a weakening of remittance flows can have a serious impact on the ability of families to get healthcare, education or proper nutrition," said Rita Ramalho, acting director of the WB's Global Indicators Group.

In keeping with an improved global economic outlook, remittances to developing countries are expected to recover this year, growing by an estimated 3.3 percent to \$444b in 2017.

The global average cost of sending \$200 remained flat at 7.45 percent in the first quarter of 2017, although this was significantly higher than the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) target of 3 percent. Sub-Saharan Africa, with an average cost of 9.8 percent, remained the highest-cost region.

A major barrier to reducing remittance costs was de-risking by international banks, when they close the bank accounts of money transfer operators, in order to cope with the high regulatory burden aimed at reducing money laundering and financial crime. This posed a major challenge to the provision and cost of remittance services to certain regions, said the WB.

According to the WB, several high-income countries that are host to many migrants are considering taxation of outward remittances, in part to raise revenue, and in part to discourage undocumented migrants. However, taxes on remittances are difficult to administer and likely to drive the flows underground.