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FOOD INFLATION

Spiralling rice prices are to blame as it rises to 6.89 percent

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SATISFIED WITH SECURITY

Cricket Australia security chief is happy with recent arrangements in Bangladesh

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IS 'ON BRINK OF DEFEAT'

Iraqi forces recapture 90 percent of Mosul with civilians still trapped inside

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Gold, crime go hand in hand

No gold import in last 3 decades; business thrives thanks to smuggling

SHARIFUL ISLAM

Customs Intelligence's raid on Apan Jewellers and finding 286kg gold apparently without valid documents reveal nothing new since the jewellery business in Bangladesh has been going on for decades with smuggled gold.

The current government policy allows import of gold and silver, subject to permission from Bangladesh Bank, but in Bangladesh, there was no import of gold through LC (letter of credit) in the last three decades, customs officials said.

However, the jewellery business is thriving.

Customs Intelligence and Investigation Directorate (CIID), customs and different other agencies seized over 2,000kg of gold in the last three years.

Police investigators believe that the gold quantity smuggled in was many times more than the amount they had seized. A small portion of the smuggled gold feeds local demand while the rest goes to India, the world's second largest consumer of gold after China, they said.

A section of biggies -- political and government high-ups -- and some dishonest officials in the administration, law enforcement and intelligence agencies collude with around 30 gold smuggling syndicates, according to an intelligence agency report submitted to the Prime Minister's Office in 2015, jewellers and investigators.

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Six-year-old Hasan hanging on to the human haulier he works for instead of being in school. He has been working as a helper for a month. Despite efforts to curb child labour, similar sights are all too common. The photo was taken in Jurain Level Crossing area recently.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

ILLEGAL WEALTH CASE Ex-BNP MP Monjurul acquitted

HC disposed of first of 27 appeals

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday upheld its earlier verdict acquitting former BNP lawmaker Monjurul Ahsan Munshi of charges related to acquiring wealth illegally and concealing information of his property.

He had been sentenced to 13 years' imprisonment.

The bench of Justice Md Ruhul Quddus and Justice Bishmadev Chakraborty came up with the verdict after rehearing the appeal filed by Monjurul challenging the lower court judgment that had sentenced him in 2007.

The Anti-Corruption Commission filed 27 cases during the military-backed caretaker government in 2007 and 2008 against 35 people, including Relief and Disaster Management Minister Mofazzal Hossain Chowdhury Maya and former BNP minister Nazmul Huda, in connection with

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HC stays 3 cases against Khaleda

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday stayed the trial proceedings against BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia in three criminal cases, including one for murder.

The court also issued three separate rules, asking the government to explain why the proceedings of the cases against Khaleda should not be scrapped.

With yesterday's stay, the HC has so far stayed trial proceedings against the BNP chief in 12 cases, including one for sedition.

The HC bench of Justice Md Miftah Uddin Choudhury and Justice ANM Bashir Ullah came up with the order and rules after they heard Khaleda's three petitions seeking stay

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Tigers take on Kiwis today

STAR SPORT DESK

The Bangladesh cricket team will attempt to get their stop-start tour of Ireland off the ground in their second tri-series match against New Zealand at the Clontarf Cricket Club in Dublin today.

New Zealand currently sit on top of the three-team league, having beaten Ireland convincingly on Sunday.

The match will start at 10:45am local time (3:45pm Bangladesh time).

Bangladesh's first match against Ireland last Friday was abandoned due to rain after the Tigers had reached 159 for four on a lush green pitch. Their practice schedule has also been disrupted because of sub-par facilities -- batsmen and bowlers were forced to split up because there were no available outdoor net facilities on Sunday -- and also because of rain, which forced them to stay indoors on Monday. Rain is also expected to have a role to play today, with scattered showers forecast at noon.

But both teams will

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THE GOOD SHEPHERD

Wife of runaway husband in Savar rewrites her fortune rearing sheep

AKLAKUR RAHMAN AKASH, Savar

Two months into her pregnancy, Farida Khatun suffered a fate all too familiar yet often glossed over; her husband, Atar Mia, left her and went off to marry another woman. Given this was sometime in the early 80s, Farida Khatun could have been forgiven for resigning to a future full of gloom. But like the rose that grows from concrete, Farida's resilience would spur her on to blossom to not only survive the odds stacked against her but resoundingly conquer them. And all that with a lamb purchased for Tk 80.

It is now hard to believe how

Farida Khatun, 50, redefined her fate, along with prevailing stereotypes of gender roles. Initially, she began living with her parents and gave birth to her son, Babul Hosen. Her parents often tried to convince her to remarry. They thought this would be the only way to ensure a bright future for their daughter. But Farida Khatun was determined to not rely on another man, especially with her newly born son's future in the balance.

It was in 1985 that her brother, Abul Hossen, bought a lamb for Tk 80 and gave it to her. Back then, Farida's son was only two years old. Her brother's gift was given in the hopes of offering his sister some

sustainability for her future. He had probably never imagined that it would end up with her one day becoming the proud owner of a sheep farm.

During a recent visit to Kumarkhoda Ashrayan Project in Savar, where Farida Khatun currently lives, The Daily Star correspondent found her in her farm, surrounded by 49 sheep. All this that stood before her today started with that one lamb. "When my husband left me, I was only 17 years old. Still, I wanted to do something on my own. But all I had was just a calf of a sheep. So I had to start with that," Farida says.

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Farida Khatun among her sheep in Savar on the outskirts of the capital. She turned her fortunes around with sheep farming after her husband left her. The photo was taken recently.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

CHILD MARRIAGE Tk 50 mobile phone credit for tip-off

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Natore

The administration of Gurudaspur upazila of Natore has taken up an innovative initiative to stop child marriage. It said it would reward members of the village police with Tk 50 mobile phone credit for advance information of such marriages.

Timely information is very important to stop child marriages and that is why the upazila administration went for such rewards.

Upazila Nirbahi Officer Monir Hossain yesterday made the announcement at the weekly meeting of village police at upazila headquarters.

Monir told The Daily Star last night that child marriage was going on in remote areas of the upazila. At least four incidents of child marriage were reported in the last three days in the upazila, he said.

Since it was not possible for the administration to monitor those areas all the time, they went for this reward system.

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Cops' negligence helped accused destroy evidence

Allege a victim, some law enforcers

RAFIUL ISLAM

The Banani rape accused were able to destroy evidence due to the negligence of police officials concerned, said a number of law enforcers and one of the two girls who were "raped at gunpoint" in a hotel on March 28.

The "culprits" could have been arrested much earlier had the police acted quickly, they said.

Their prompt arrests could have prevented them from deleting video clips from their mobile phones, said a police official, terming the evidence "crucial" as the case was filed over a month after the incident.

According to the girls, the accused filmed the rape with their mobile phones. The rapists repeatedly threatened that they would release the clip on social media and it would go viral, if the girls told anyone about the incident.

The accused also forced a male friend of the girls to hold a fist full of yaba tablets and filmed him. They threatened to brand him as a yaba trader, an accused allegedly told Rab investigators.

The girls went to the Banani Police Station for filing the case on May 4. But the police officials allegedly tried to brand them as "bad girls" instead and dilly-dallied over recording the case.

The law enforcers took two days to record the case in the name of primary investigation. Interestingly, they did not even meet any of the accused, let alone quiz or arrest them.

Talking to The Daily Star recently, two staffers of prime accused Shafat's home said Shafat was away but he was home in the morning of May 7. He stayed there for about an

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Heartiest Congratulations from Uttara University Family to Professor Dr. Eaysmin Ara Lekha on reappointment as Pro-Vice Chancellor



Professor Dr. Eaysmin Ara Lekha, a well known Essayist, Educationist, Researcher & Social-worker, has been reappointed as Pro-Vice Chancellor of Uttara University. Dr. Lekha has been reappointed as Pro-VC of Uttara University as per approval of the Honorable President of the People's Republic of Bangladesh and Chancellor of Universities and according to the order issued by the Ministry of Education. Prof. Eaysmin Ara will act as Pro-VC for the next four years for the 2nd term from the date of her rejoining according to the clause no. 32 (1) of the Private University Act-2010. It is mentionable that Dr. Eaysmin has successfully completed her 1st term (2012-2016) as Pro-VC with utmost sincerity, honesty and dedication. The members of the Board of Trustees, the Vice-Chancellor, Adviser, Syndicate & Academic Council Members, Registrar, Deans, Heads of the Departments, faculty members, officers and staffs expressed their amiable contentment on the occasion of rejoining of Prof. Dr. Eaysmin Ara. In response to that Dr. Eaysmin also assured that she will endow with her complete effort for the development of Uttara University during her tenure as Pro-VC. Besides, she sought for cooperation from all concerned in this regard. Prof. Eaysmin, renowned author of many books, had completed her B.A. (Hons) and M.A degree in Bengali literature from Dhaka University & Ph.D. in Linguistics from Jadavpur University, India. She attended different international conferences, seminar, symposium and workshops held in many countries of the world including UK, USA, Canada, Australia, France, Sweden, Finland, Malaysia, Singapore, Maldives, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Japan and India. Dr. Lekha was born in a respectable Muslim family of Gopalgonj district. Her father is late M. A Rouf and mother is Mrs. Sabira Rouf. Her husband Prof. Dr. M. Azizur Rahman is a well known educationist. In their personal life, Dr. Lekha and Dr. Aziz are successful parents of their two children, Nabil Aziz & Abid Aziz.