



PHOTO: AFP

Palestinians protest against the visit by US President Donald Trump to Israel, in Rafah in the southern Gaza Strip, yesterday.

# Trump in Israel

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 on lockdown and the plaza leading to the site cleared.  
 Trump was accompanied by the Western Wall's rabbi, Shmuel Rabinovitz, during the visit.  
 Trump's daughter Ivanka, who converted to Judaism and is married to one of the president's top aides, Jared Kushner, also visited the women's side of the wall.  
 Trump, who is Protestant, is the first US president to have Jewish members of his immediate family.  
 Under strict interpretation of Jewish law, men and women must pray separately there. The rule has been repeatedly challenged by progressive Jewish movements seeking equal prayer rights.  
 The Western Wall is the last remnant of the supporting wall of the second Jewish temple, built by King Herod and destroyed by the Romans in 70 AD.  
 It is situated below the Al-Aqsa mosque compound, Islam's third-holiest site, referred to by Jews as the

Temple Mount and considered their holiest.  
 The visit to the Western Wall drew controversy before Trump even left Washington, when US officials declined to say whether it belonged to Israel.  
 The status of Jerusalem is ultra-sensitive and has been among the most difficult issues in Israeli-Palestinian peace talks.  
 Israel occupied east Jerusalem, where the Western Wall is located, and the West Bank in 1967 in moves never recognised by the international community.  
 It later annexed east Jerusalem and claims the entire city as its capital. The Palestinians see east Jerusalem as the capital of their future state.  
 The traditional US position has been that Jerusalem's status must be negotiated between the two sides.  
 Trump's visit to the wall came as part of his first trip abroad as president. The trip includes stops at important sites for Christians, Muslims and Jews.

The first leg of his trip was in Saudi Arabia, while later stops will include the Vatican.  
 Before visiting the Western Wall, Trump toured the nearby Church of the Holy Sepulchre, built at the site where Christians believe Jesus was crucified, buried and resurrected.  
 A group of Christian Mexicans visiting Jerusalem to see the Church of the Holy Sepulchre discussed ways to get out of the Old City with Israeli police, after being told they could not visit.  
 Mauricio Guerra, one of the group of six, said he was "very disappointed" to not be able to visit the site as he only had one day in the city.  
 "We have travelled here to see the church," he said yesterday morning.  
 "We as Mexicans have Trump as our neighbour and now he is following us here as well," he laughed to AFP, with Trump having pledged to build a wall between the United States and Mexico during his campaign.  
 "He is our cross (to bear)," he said, holding his arms wide.

# No major negligence

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 Ahmed Shafat and Nayem Ashraf alias Halim -- on May 6.  
 Police refused to take the case on May 4 and 5 in the name of a primary investigation.  
 Interestingly, police refrained from quizzing any of the accused during their primary investigation.  
 Meanwhile, police have arrested all the accused. Of them, prime accused Shafat, his driver Billal Hossain, victims' friend Shadman Sakif gave confessional statements.

In the confessional statement, Shafat admitted that he and his friend Nayem raped the two university students on March 28 at hotel The Raintree Dhaka.  
**RAINTREE OWNER TO APPEAR IN CIID**  
 The Raintree hotel owner will have to appear before the Customs Intelligence and Investigation Directorate office today as the Supreme Court yesterday stayed a High Court order halting the summons

order.  
 The CIID on May 13 recovered 10 bottles of liquor without licence from the hotel in Banani where two university girls had been allegedly raped. Besides, the CIID accused the hotel authorities of dodging around Tk 8 lakh VAT and asked the hotel owner, Shah Md Adnan Harun, to come up with an explanation on May 17.  
 As two lawyers on behalf of the hotel owner sought more time saying that Adnan was sick, the CIID asked him to appear in its office today.

# CJ's opinion shall have primacy: HC

FROM PAGE 1  
 delivered the verdict on April 13 this year. The copy of the full verdict was released yesterday.  
 "Since the opinion of the chief justice has been made mandatory for the executive, presumably it can be said the chief justice being the head of the judiciary, one of organs of the state, will recruit the proper persons in the higher judiciary having proper legal background i.e. sufficient knowledge of law, man of dignity and integrity," said the verdict on the appointment of the SC judges.

make any such law.  
 The HC, however, disposed of the writ petition with some observations as it refrained from issuing any guideline.  
 "Since as per the constitution there is a provision of consultation with the chief justice before making any appointment in the higher judiciary, there is ample scope for the chief justice to select the competent persons for the higher judiciary," said the HC verdict.  
 Now it is the responsibility of the chief justice to select the candidates and to suggest the president in the form of recommendation to appoint them in the higher judiciary, it read.  
 "There is ample opportunity for the chief justice to select the proper persons having sufficient legal acumen and competence for the higher judiciary."

It also said, "In the process of selecting the persons for elevation to the High Court Division, the chief justice may, if feels indispensably necessary, consult or share his view with at least two of his senior most brother judges in the Appellate Division and two of the senior most Judges of the High Court Division as well in forming 'opinion' and also to ensure the recommendation appropriate, effective and transparent."

# Block supply

FROM PAGE 2  
 About Bangladesh's initiatives to combat terrorism, she said the law enforcement agencies were well prepared and equipped with proper training to combat extremism and they effectively dealt with home-grown terrorists.  
 Besides, the government launched a massive campaign to make people aware against the menace, she told the programme.  
 The premier said she was holding meetings and exchanging views with people, specially with public representatives, teachers, students and Imams of mosques, to build a social movement against terrorism and militancy.  
 Hasina expressed her gratitude to King Salman for inviting her to the summit. She also thanked the King for his initiative to set up the Islamic Counter Terrorism Centre in Riyadh.

It is his apprehension that since the president is bound to listen to the prime minister's advice as per the constitutional provision, there might be political influence in the process of recruitment of the judges in the higher judiciary, stated the HC verdict.  
 In its verdict, the HC focused on the selection process of judicial appointment.  
 "To achieve the objective of an independent judiciary the selection process of judicial appointment in the higher judiciary needs to be designed in such a manner as to guarantee the selection of highly qualified, honest and eligible person," it said.  
 It said the court wants to believe that if the existing system fails to work properly, legislatures will come forward to enact a charter into the constitution or make proper law as hinted by Article 95(2)(c) which shall elevate the higher judiciary to a rare dignity which will command the respectful obedience of the people of Bangladesh.  
 The HC also observed that a person should not be recommended for the post of its judge unless he or she has the commitment to the fundamental principles of the state policy and Liberation War.

# Youth crushed

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 from the opposite direction and he was crushed between the two buses, said Al Amin, a shop employee and witness.  
 The victim was rushed to Dhaka Medical College Hospital where doctors declared him dead.  
 Passengers were able to stop the bus but its driver managed to flee the scene.  
 Jatrabari Police Station Officer-in-Charge Anisur Rahman said that one of the buses was detained but the driver had fled.  
 The victim's uncle Golam Mahmud Milon while talking to The Daily Star yesterday demanded exemplary punishment.

# Islami Bank

FROM PAGE 1  
 The business group had allegedly bought shares of the bank in the name of seven companies that were registered with the joint stock companies last year.  
 At present, the seven companies hold 14.02 percent shares in the bank and have seven directors in the board, including Chairman Arastoo Khan, a retired bureaucrat.  
 The Arastoo-led board, formed after a major reshuffle in key positions in January, disbursed loans of over Tk 1,400 crore in just three months. Many of the loans were approved without maintaining proper rules and regulations, according to a Bangladesh Bank report.  
 Amid this situation, Islami Bank is set to hold its annual general meeting at the capital's Kurmitola Golf Club today.  
 One of the loans worth Tk 132.60 crore approved by the new board was for Infiniti CR Strips Industries, a new company formed in February this year.  
 The loan proposal came from Chittagong's Khatunganj branch and the client is a sister concern of Armada Spinning Mills, one of the companies related to "the controversial business group", according to a director of the bank.  
 Arastoo represents Armada Spinning Mills, a new company that has more than 2 percent shares in Islami Bank.  
 Infiniti's loan proposal, which was for building a steel-sheet manufacturing plant, did not include information about the client's banking activities, said the BB report.  
 In another instance of irregularity, the board in a recent meeting increased the loan limit for Sister Denim Composite, an affiliate of Thermax Group, from Tk 135 crore to about Tk 200 crore. The loan was given by violating the central bank's investment risk grading rule.  
 The bank's board also gave loans of over Tk 800 crore for six companies of Nassa Group without taking the required collateral, according to the central bank report.  
 The group has provided collateral worth Tk 268.63 crore against the requisite amount of Tk 338.59 crore.  
 Besides, the loans were given without credit ratings: some subsidiaries of Nassa are defaulters but the issue was overlooked when the loans were approved.  
 Nassa Group's Chairman Nazrul Islam Majumder is also the chairman of the Bangladesh Association of Banks, a forum for bank directors.  
 Moreover, some 150 employees were recruited without advertising for the positions in another act of malpractice by the new board. Of the new recruits, 34 were for the bank's sensitive IT department, said BB officials.  
 Islami Bank was set up in 1983 with nearly 70 percent of its sponsorship coming from the Middle East countries.  
 Since its inception, it has grown threefold every five years. It has over one crore depositors and handle about 30 percent of Bangladesh's remittances.  
 The bank has financed almost one in every four textile and garment factories in the country.

# Famous circus

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 balancing act kicking off the farewell performance of the "Greatest Show on Earth" after 146 years.  
 Capping a legacy that stretches back to 19th century showman P.T. Barnum, the circus bade adieu at a series of shows this weekend at the newly refurbished Nassau Coliseum in Uniondale on New York's Long Island.  
 "It's incredibly heartwarming to see all of you that have come out for the final performance," Kenneth Feld, chairman and chief executive of parent Feld Entertainment Inc, said at the show, which was sold out and live streamed on the Ringling website.  
 He said more than 250 million people had seen Ringling's shows and added: "It's the people, it's the spirit, the dedication, the perseverance of everyone that you'll see here tonight that makes the impossible possible."  
 Spacesuited tightrope walkers Laszlo Simet and his wife, Olga, launched the final show on a slowly revolving wedge-shaped wheel. Among the stunts, she did a headstand on his shoulders and Laszlo Simet rode a bicycle around the wheel's rim while carrying his wife and another performer.  
 The finale, announced by Feld in January, came a year after the company bowed to pressure from animal rights activists and agreed to stop using elephants in its performances. A featured attraction for more than a century, the elephants had come to symbolize the Ringling Bros brand.  
 Feld decided to fold its tent as a result of high operating costs combined with lower ticket sales, it said in a statement at the time. After phasing out the elephants, the owner said, the decline in attendance was "greater than could have been anticipated."  
 Ringling Bros continued to showcase tigers, lions, horses, dogs and camels until the end, despite fierce criticism from People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals.  
 The animal rights group tied Ringling's demise to its long-standing resistance to demands that it stop using animals. The circus has long defended its treatment of animals as humane.

# On payroll, for no job

FROM PAGE 1  
 "disobeyed" his assigned duties and tried to "exert illegal influence for securing bail for an accused in a case pending with the tribunal".  
 Though the accused was not named in the letter, several prosecutors said it was Jatiya Party lawmaker MA Hannan, arrested in 2015 for his alleged crimes during the 1971 Liberation War. The tribunal, however, denied him bail on February 4 last year.  
 On that day, the Chief Prosecutor Office withdrew Ali until further notice from all the war crimes cases he was involved with. Mohammad Ali, however, denied all the allegations against him.  
 The Daily Star talked with at least four prosecutors on this matter. None of them, however, wanted to be named.  
 "He just comes to the prosecution [chief prosecutor office] to collect his cheques," a prosecutor said. Ali enjoys the status of an addition attorney general.  
 "He receives all the facilities we avail. The difference is we have to deal with the cases but he doesn't," another prosecutor said. The prosecutor said they receive Tk 1,11,560 as salary with

risk allowance, Tk 10,000 as fuel cost, a government car, a driver paid by government and a policeman for security.  
 "Working as a prosecutor is not a permanent job. We are appointed to deal with the cases and get remuneration for this. So he [Ali] should not get salaries and other facilities as he is not dealing any cases," the prosecutor said.  
 Another prosecutor said, "As he [Ali] is not dealing with any war crimes cases, only the law ministry will be able to give an answer as to why he is given the facilities."  
 Contacted, Mohammad Ali said, "I am very much on the job."  
 "I was just asked not to get involved with any case. Besides, I did not get any instructions from the ministry. So I am getting my salary and other benefits," he told The Daily Star on May 17.  
 Replying to a question, he said, "I go to the office and am ready to deal with cases. But what can I do if I am not given any case."  
 Law Minister Anisul Huq told this newspaper on Sunday, "He [Ali] was suspended and was supposed to resign and go."  
 "I am looking into the matter."

# Power outages back again

FROM PAGE 16  
 shortfall in electricity generation and supply.  
 At a briefing yesterday, State Minister for Power, Energy and Mineral Resources Nasrul Hamid said the collapse of Ashuganj-Sirajganj tower, with 400-kv capacity, in rough weather caused an unexpected disruption of power supply, reports BSS.  
 The authorities have been working to repair the tower, which will take six to seven months even by engaging foreign technicians.  
 The minister, however, said the power situation would return to normalcy to some extent within four to five days.  
 The country's highest temperature yesterday was recorded at 37.8 degree Celsius in Jessore and minimum temperature at 21.5 degree Celsius in Rajshahi.  
 According to the Met office, the mild heat wave may continue for at least two more days.  
 The sultry weather coupled with frequent power outage across the country is affecting people's day-to-day activities, as reported by our district correspondents.  
 Aslam Uddin, of Godagari in Rajshahi, said he witnessed 8-10 hours of power cuts in the last 24 hours.  
 "I could not sleep well last night. Power stayed for like 20 minutes and then went off for at least two hours amid the sultry night."  
 Middle-aged Aminul Islam, a resident of Moilapota More in Khulna city, was waiting at a shop to get some important documents printed out yesterday evening. Power wasn't there and he had to wait for more than two hours.  
 "It has become a regular phenomenon here, but things got worse, intolerable in the past few days or so. We have been facing power outage seven to eight times a day.  
 "Even we could not charge our IPS (Instant Power Supply)," Aminul said.  
 Sheikh Jakir Ahmed, from Nazirpur upazila in Pirojpur, said residents in the area were getting electricity not more than six hours a day.  
 In the capital, the power situation

has not been as bad as it is in rural areas.  
 Yet, city dwellers in some areas said they were experiencing half-an-hour to one-hour-long power cuts.  
 "We saw power cuts some 10 times since yesterday [Sunday] evening until early morning. Sleeping in this hot weather is just a nightmare amid power cuts," said Ramon Haldar who lives in Mirpur-10 Senpara Parbata.  
 Residents of Shewrapara, Mohammadpur, Adabar, Shekhertek, Dhanmondi, Moghbazar and Malibagh are also experiencing frequent power cuts.  
 Businesses are bearing the brunt of the frequent load-shedding.  
 "Our silk and food processing industries are the worst affected as they cannot operate smoothly due to the power outage," said Liakat Ali, a businessman in Rajshahi.  
 In Lalmonirhat, power failure for seven to eight hours is affecting the production of mills and factories.  
 "We are counting losses," said Shahin Miah, flour and rice mill owner in Patgram town.  
 Similar was the picture in Dinajpur and Natore.  
 Replying to a question, the state minister assured that there would be no electricity crisis during Ramadan.  
 "We will be in a better position during the holy month."  
 According to the website of the Power Generation Company of Bangladesh (PGCB), there was no gap between power generation and demand on Sunday.  
 Prof Shamsul Alam, an energy expert, said Dhaka city consumes one-fourth of the electricity generated by the country.  
 Although the Rural Electrification Board supplies electricity to 70 percent of the population, it only receives half of the power it needs to serve the vast population.  
 "The power supply situation in the capital has remained almost unchanged compared to last year whereas the rest of the country is suffering power crisis. This inequality is unacceptable," he said.

# AL to float its

FROM PAGE 1  
 Secretary Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah put forward a proposal to float the new organisation at a party secretarial meeting at the party president's Dhanmondi office yesterday.  
 Meeting sources said some AL leaders backed Abdullah's proposal.  
 Chaired by AL General Secretary Obaidul Quader, the meeting decided not to give AL membership to anyone from other political parties without permission from the party high command. Some AL leaders demanded the party immediately expel the infiltrators, particularly those who joined the ruling party in the last couple of years.  
 The decision was taken after some grassroots AL leaders raised their voice against infiltration from the BNP-Jamaat at a special extended meeting on Saturday. They alleged that some AL lawmakers were helping BNP-Jamaat men to strengthen their own cliques.  
 Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, also the AL chief, asked all not to allow anyone from the BNP and Jamaat in the party and warned that organisational actions would be taken against the MPs involved in such activities.  
 Speaking at yesterday's meeting, Quader asked AL leaders to stay alert to communal forces so that they couldn't intrude into the party during the ongoing drive to collect members, which started on Saturday.  
 Talking to the Daily Star, Abdullah said some organisations like the Olama League were operating without the AL's consent.  
 "The Olama League has many factions and many of its activities go against the Awami League's ideologies. So I've put forward a proposal to float a separate wing of the party comprising Islamic scholars and thinkers [Ulema]," he said, adding that the

party didn't want any organisations like the Olama League to continue its activities.  
 The Olama League came up with some demands which went against the AL's declared ideologies of democracy and secularism and also against the government's major policies and decisions.  
 Over the last two years, a faction of the Olama League accused the administration of "favouring the Hindus" and demanded the government revoke the minimum marriageable age for girls, make a law with a provision of death penalty for demeaning Islam, ban the Chittagong Hill Tracts Commission and take all the Indian TV channels in Bangladesh off air.  
 It also raised voice demanding cancellation of "anti-Islamic" education policy and confiscation of textbooks containing write-ups of "anti-Islamic and atheist" writers.  
 AL sources said some leaders at the meeting questioned the police raid on the BNP chairperson's Gulshan office on Saturday and the LGRD ministry's orders suspending elected city mayors. The AL leaders said such activities were damaging the government's image.  
 A central leader told the meeting that the LGRD ministry suspended mayors, but the higher court stayed those suspension orders. "Then why was the government doing this?" a secretarial member of the AL quoted the central leader as saying.  
 Some recent government decisions indicated a lack of coordination between the party and the government, the AL leader added.  
 About the police raid on Khaleda Zia's office, the AL general secretary said he and many others in the government were not aware of the move.