

YESTERDAY'S  
TEMPERATURESDHAKA  
H 31.6 L 27.6MYMENSINGH  
H 30.6 L 26.0CHITTAGONG  
H 32.3 L 26.7SYLHET  
H 29.8 L 25.5RAJSHAHI  
H 33.7 L 27.1RANGPUR  
H 31.5 L 26.4KHULNA  
H 31.8 L 27.0BARISAL  
H 30.0 L 26.4COX'S BAZAR  
H 30.2 L 25.8

Light to moderate rain is likely to occur at most places over Rajshahi, Rangpur, Mymensingh, Dhaka, Khulna, Barisal, Chittagong and Sylhet divisions with moderately heavy to very heavy falls at places over the country till 6:00pm today, reports UNB. The sun sets in the capital today at 6:49pm



## Sri Lankan president due on Thursday

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Sri Lankan President Maithripala Sirisena arrives in Dhaka on Thursday on a three-day official visit at the invitation of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina.

Diplomatic sources said President Sirisena is scheduled to hold official meetings with Hasina and President Abdul Hamid.

The official discussions are expected to review progress made in the long-standing bilateral relationship, including the way forward to further promote trade and investment between the two countries.

The visit will be the first official visit to Bangladesh by Sirisena since he was elected president in January 2015. The two countries are expected to sign several agreements, the sources said.

## Dr Zahir's anniversary of death today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Today is the fourth death anniversary of eminent jurist and constitution expert Dr Muhammad Zahir. He died in 2013.

On this occasion, a qurankhani and a doa mahfil will be held at his Dhanmondi residence, says a press release.

Dr Zahir taught company law at Dhaka University and was a senior advocate of the Bangladesh Supreme Court, the convenor and member of several Company Law Reform committees in Bangladesh, it said.

He was elected a member of the Court of Arbitration at the International Chamber of Commerce in Paris, France. He was the author of "Company and Securities Laws". His colleagues and friends are requested to pray for his departed soul.

## Obituary

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Mymensingh



SM Ishaq Sarker, an advocate and president of Mymensingh Sadar

upazila unit of Awami League, died of a cardiac arrest at a Dhaka hospital yesterday. He was 60.

He left behind his wife, three daughters and a son. He will be buried in his family graveyard in Bararer Parh village in Mymensingh Sadar today.

Religious Affairs Minister Motiur Rahman, also former president of AL Mymensingh district, and other AL leaders mourned his death.

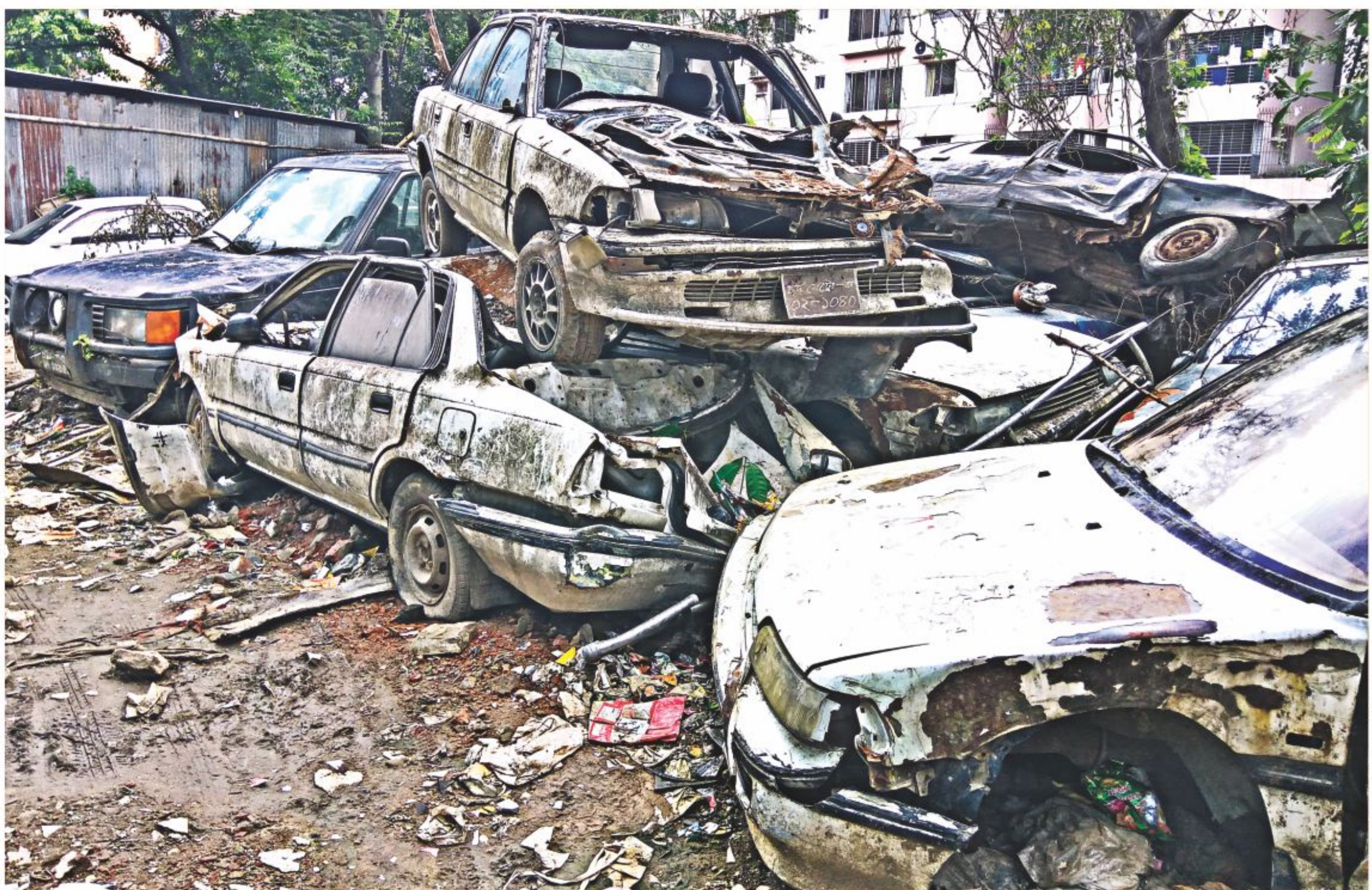


PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

At first sight, it may look like an industrial wasteland. But a closer look would reveal that it is a dumping ground of cars, which were seized by police and then left right there to rust away. This is not the only site. There are several others across Dhaka city where thousands of cars and motorcycles have been left abandoned like this. Lakhs of takas go to waste only because there is a lack of an efficient mechanism to dispose of the vehicles. The photo was taken at the former site of Dhanmondi Police Station. The station recently relocated from the place.

# Harijans want permanent houses, pay hike

Submit memorandum to prime minister

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Harijan community has demanded that the government build permanent residences for them, which they could own, to end their age-old accommodation problem.

They also demanded making their cleaning jobs at city corporations and municipalities permanent and raising their monthly minimum wages from Tk 800-Tk 3,000 now to Tk 10,000-Tk 12,000, considering the rising living costs.

Harijan Oikya Parishad raised the demands at a press conference it organised in association with Manusher Jonno Foundation (MJF) in the capital's Jatiya Press Club yesterday, on the occasion of the Parishad's 19th founding anniversary.

After the conference, they submitted a

memorandum containing the demands to the Prime Minister's Office (PMO).

Nirmal Chandra Das, secretary general of the Oikya Parishad, said around 15 lakh people of the community were living miserable lives at government quarters across the country.

The government need to reconstruct old buildings, build new ones, if necessary, and distribute those among the Harijans, he said.

Traditionally the community people pay rents for the government quarters, said Nirmal, so the families do not own the houses they are living in.

Turning to employment, he said, "We have been working under city corporations and municipalities for many years, but our jobs are not permanent."

Voicing solidarity with the commu-

nity, MJF Executive Director Shaheen Anam said their demands were logical and hoped that the prime minister would consider those seriously.

Although it is prohibited in the constitution, the Harijans and other marginalised communities are being discriminated against, she said, adding a change was needed in the society and people's mindsets because everything could not be fixed by law always.

Referring to the neglect to Harijans, former caretaker government adviser Hossain Zillur Rahman said development programmes must focus on communities like them to eradicate poverty in the country.

Rights activist Meghna Guhathakurta and Harijan Oikya Parishad President Karishna Lal also spoke among others.

## Speaker's help sought in withdrawal of case against journo Ajmal

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh Parliament Journalists' Association yesterday informed Speaker Shirin Sharmin Chaudhury about a case filed against senior journalist Ajmal Hoque Helal under section 57 of the ICT Act.

Faruk Hossain, a lecturer of Dr Rustom Ali Farazi College in Mathbaria, founded by independent MP Dr Rustom Ali Farazi, filed the case against Helal, a journalist of Daily Sokaler Khobor on July 7.

A six-member delegation of the association called on the Speaker at her office and sought her co-operation to withdraw the case. The Speaker assured that she will try her best to resolve the matter.



Former caretaker government adviser Hossain Zillur Rahman speaks at a press conference of Harijan Oikya Parishad at the capital's Jatiya Press Club yesterday on the rights and demands of the marginalised community. On his right are rights activist Meghna Guhathakurta and Manusher Jonno Foundation Executive Director Shaheen Anam and on his left is Harijan Oikya Parishad President Karishna Lal.

PHOTO: STAR

## NEWSIN brief

### SC clears way for trial of Moudud, Mosharraf in corruption cases

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Supreme Court yesterday upheld its earlier order that cleared the way for the lower courts concerned to run trial proceedings of corruption cases against BNP leaders Moudud Ahmed and Khandaker Mosharraf Hossain.

The apex court dismissed two petitions filed by the BNP leaders seeking review of its 2014 orders.

The SC passed the orders after holding hearing on the review petitions. On September 16, 2007, the ACC filed a case against Moudud alleging that he illegally acquired properties worth about Tk 17.70 crore as well as concealing an amount of about Tk 4.5 crore as his income.

The ACC lodged another corruption case involving Tk 15 crore against Mosharraf on January 10, 2008.

### 5 lawyers apologise before HC over assault on bench officer

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Five Supreme Court lawyers yesterday offered unconditional apology to the High Court for obstructing court proceedings, shouting in the courtroom and assaulting a bench officer on June 19.

They are Nur-e-Alam Uzzal, Motilal Bepari, Billah Hosain Lijen Patwari, BM Sultan Mahmud and Mohammad Ali. The HC fixed July 20 for passing order on the issue.

### Nine promoted to secretary post

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government has promoted nine of its officials to the rank of secretary.

The public administration ministry yesterday issued two gazette notifications in this regard. One was for their promotion and another for their new posting.

The nine are Kaikobad Hossain, acting secretary of Ministry of Food; Anwarul Islam Sikder, Ndc, rector of BCS Administration Academy; Abu Hena Md Rahmatul Muneem, chairman of Bangladesh Petroleum Corporation; Istiaque Ahmad, acting secretary of Ministry of Environment and Forests; Md Alamgir, acting secretary of Technical and Madrasa Education Division; Shubhashish Bose, acting secretary of Ministry of Commerce; Kazi Shofiqul Azam, acting secretary of Economic Relations Division; Mostafa Kamal Uddin, member of Planning Commission; and Akhter Hussain Bhuiya, acting secretary of Ministry of Defence.

### 'Neo JMB leader' Rajib

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involvement with the incident was found.

The case was filed with Dhanmondi Police Station last November 1.

Rajib was arrested in Tangail on January 13 this year. On the evening of July 1 last year, five gunmen burst into the eatery and started firing indiscriminately.

They brutally killed the hostages with guns and machetes, and used the victims' phones to publish images of the bodies on the social media.

Around 12 hours later, para commandos stormed the restaurant and found traces of mindless butchery. Twenty hostages were brutally murdered with the café's floor strewn with bodies. Two police officers were also killed in the attack.

# Dr Shahidullah steered society to modernism

Speakers tell discussion on his 132th birth anniversary

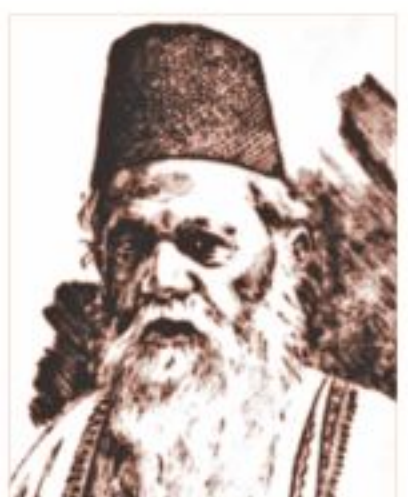
STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Linguist Dr Muhammad Shahidullah's contribution in Bangla literature is enormous while his research works triggered Bengali society to move towards modernism, speakers said at a discussion yesterday.

He was a pioneer in the field of linguistics while his unique thinking about the history of Bangla language changed the perspective, they said at the programme organised by Bangla Academy at its conference room in the capital marking his 132th birth anniversary.

Prof Mahbulul Haque, a former teacher of Bangla department at Chittagong University, said he successfully refuted predecessor's thoughts on the origin of Bangla language.

Bangla Academy Director General Prof



Shamsuzzaman said Shahidullah was a pioneer in changing the then Bengali society towards modernism through his research.

Prof Emeritus Anisuzzaman, president of Bangla Academy, chaired the event.

Shahidullah was born in Peyara village of 24 Pargana under West Bengal (now in India) on July 10 in 1885. He received Bachelor of Arts degree with Honours in Sanskrit in 1910 from City College in Kolkata and Master of Arts in 1912 in Comparative Philology from University of Calcutta.

Shahidullah joined University of Dhaka as a lecturer of Sanskrit and Bangla in 1921.

He was appointed Professor Emeritus by the University of Dhaka (1967) and awarded 'Night of the Order of Art and Letters' by the French government in 1967. Shahidullah died in Dhaka on July 3, 1969.

## AUGUST 21 GRENADE ATTACK CASES

# Four accused including two ex-IGPs hear charges

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday read out charges derived from statements of 225 prosecution witnesses to four of the accused in the August 21 grenade attack cases.

The accused are former inspectors general of police (IGPs) Ashraful Huda and Shahudul Haque, former BNP Dhaka City Corporation Ward Commissioner Ariful Islam Arif and Lt Commander (ret'd) Saiful Islam Duke, also nephew of BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia.

All the four, now on bail, claimed themselves innocent and demanded justice after Judge Shahed Nuruddin of the Speedy Trial Tribunal-1 of Dhaka asked them about the charges.

The four accused told the court that they would place their written self-defence state-

ments against the charges.

The tribunal then fixed today for the next hearing of the cases.

Earlier, the same tribunal read out charges to 23 other accused including former state minister for home and BNP leader Lutfozzaman Babar and former deputy minister Abdus Salam Pintu.

In the gruesome attacks on an Awami League rally on August 21, 2004, twenty-four people including Ivy Rahman, wife of late President Zillur Rahman, were killed and over 200 others were injured.

Awami League Chief Sheikh Hasina narrowly escaped the attack with ear injury.

Of the 49 accused, eight accused are now on bail, twenty-six in jail while 15 others including BNP Senior Vice-Chairman Tarique Rahman have been absconding.

# High hopes

Four Nepalese cyclists now in Bangladesh to create awareness about saving environment

ABIDA RAHMAN CHOWDHURY

With a view to creating awareness among people about the need for protecting environment, four visionary Nepalese cyclists are in Bangladesh now as part of their global tour.

The team aims to cycle around 100 countries in five years to drum up world support for the cause.

The four-member team comprising Ajit Baral, Surendra Sharma, Saroj Gurung and Yam Gurung started the journey on June 5 and entered Bangladesh on June 29. On Saturday, the team paid a courtesy visit to The Daily Star office to share their vision.

While talking with this correspondent, Ajit said it all started in September 2015 when he along with his brother Dr Amrit Baral embarked on a cycling adventure to spread awareness about environment.

He said they had traversed the breadth of Nepal and

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Four Nepalese cyclists in Benapole. The team entered Bangladesh on June 29.

PHOTO: COLLECTED