

Indian NIA team in Dhaka to enquire about Sohel

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A team of India's National Investigation Agency (NIA) arrived in Bangladesh yesterday. The same day, the NIA team held a meeting with Bangladesh police officials at Police Headquarters and discussed on information divulged by arrested key JMB militant Sohel Mahfuz regarding militant activities in India.

Sohel allegedly supplied firearms and explosives for the Holey Artisan Café attack in Gulshan. He is also one of the prime accused in a case over the 2014 Burdwan blast in India. Indian police

declared a bounty of Rs 10 lakh on his head following the explosion.

Arrested in Shibganj upazila of Chapainawabganj on July 8, Sohel is now on a remand.

Mohammad Moniruzzaman, assistant inspector general (confidential) of police, told The Daily Star that their meeting with the NIA team lasted two and a half hours.

"India presented some activities of JMB on their side and we also presented some activities on our side... We are working under a treaty to combat militancy..." he added.

A three-member special task force of Kolkata police, who are already in the city, also joined the NIA team.

The NIA team is scheduled to stay in Bangladesh for next two days, he said.

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A youth boarding a running bus in the middle of the road amid moving traffic with only one free hand. Transport operators continue to allow such practices endangering public safety without an effective measure to enforce traffic rules. The photo was taken on Mirpur Road in the capital on Sunday.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

Bangladesh headed for a population boom: Analysts

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh may experience a massive population explosion in near future if the country's total fertility rate cannot be reduced immediately, speakers told a roundtable yesterday.

The current fertility rate of the country is 2.3, which has to be reduced to 2.0 within 2021, they said, otherwise an explosion would be inevitable.

The fertility rate is the average number of children a woman would bear during her lifetime.

Addressing the discussion, Abu Sayed Mohammad Hasan, a technical officer of UNFPA, said if the current fertility rate sustained, the country's population would rise to 223.5 million in 2041, but if the rate was brought down to 2.0, it would be 206.5 million.

TO PREVENT A POPULATION BOOM

Strengthen family planning programmes and introduce campaign on social media

Reactive door-to-door family planning services

Target adolescents, urban poor and marginalised people

Make family planning material easy to avail

Focus on Chittagong and Sylhet region [higher fertility rates]

Voicing concerns over the issue, the speakers emphasised that the government strengthen its family planning

programmes through taking several new initiatives and reactivating some previous ones to reduce the rate.

The discussion was jointly organised by Bangla daily Prothom Alo and United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) at the newspaper's office in the capital.

Speaking as chief guest, Health and Family Welfare Minister Mohammed Nasim said the country's development would face a setback if the population growth could not be controlled.

The government is working on some unachieved targets in the health sector, like increasing the number of child deliveries at health facilities, he said, adding that the ministry would consider the recommendations made at the programme.

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Businessman shot in broad daylight

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A businessman was shot and injured by miscreants in broad daylight at Eskaton in Dhaka yesterday morning.

Injured Anwar Hossein, 50, president of Bangladesh Medical Device Association, is now undergoing treatment at Dhaka Medical College Hospital.

Anwar, who deals in medical electronic devices, was going to work at Bangla Motor from his Eskaton residence when two people shot at his private car, said Mashru Rahman, officer-in-charge of Ramna Police Station.

The bullet pierced through the car window

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Too much to bear

Three-year-old boy suffers from rare skin disorder

SHAHEEN MOLLAH and SHADMA MALIK

Every time he left Dhaka Shishu Hospital, his parents would have a feeling that their son recovered completely. After returning home, the boy would remain in good health for a few days before the old symptoms crept back. The parents would then rush him to the hospital again.

This has been going on for the last 14 months, as three-year-old Abdullah Al Mahadi has been diagnosed with a rare kind of diarrhoea that contributes to his skin loss. Whenever he suffers from diarrhoea, he loses skin on his body. After recovery, his skin grows over again.

On June 6, Mahadi got admitted to Dhaka Shishu Hospital again with severe diarrhoea and loss of skin pigments.

Dr Salauddin Mahmud, assistant professor at the hospital, said the boy is suffering from Acrodermatitis Enteropathica -- a condition that affects the skin due to zinc deficiency.



On Sunday afternoon, Mahadi was referred to International Centre for Diarrhoeal Disease Research, Bangladesh (icddr,b) in the capital's Mohakhali.

Though Shishu Hospital can treat diarrhoeal diseases, he was referred to the icddr,b as the latter is specialised in treating the diseases, he said.

As the rare skin disease is associated with diarrhoea, he needs to recover from diarrhoea first, added Dr Salauddin.

Earlier on the same day, during a visit to the Shishu Hospital, this correspondent found Mahadi wrapped in a towel. His body was covered with thick red plaques.

Mahadi's father Alauddin, an imam (religious leader) at a mosque in Comilla, told The Daily Star that his son's health was deteriorating.

Due to the skin disorder, Mahadi is experiencing burning sensation in his skin, said

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Chittagong Metropolitan Police recently installed complaint boxes for city residents. Made with transparent plastic sheets, these boxes have been placed at 142 beat locations of the CMP. Though laudable, the initiative may go in vain if the boxes are unprotected and left unlocked, as in the case of the box set up outside the Chittagong Press Club premises. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: ANURUP KANTI DAS

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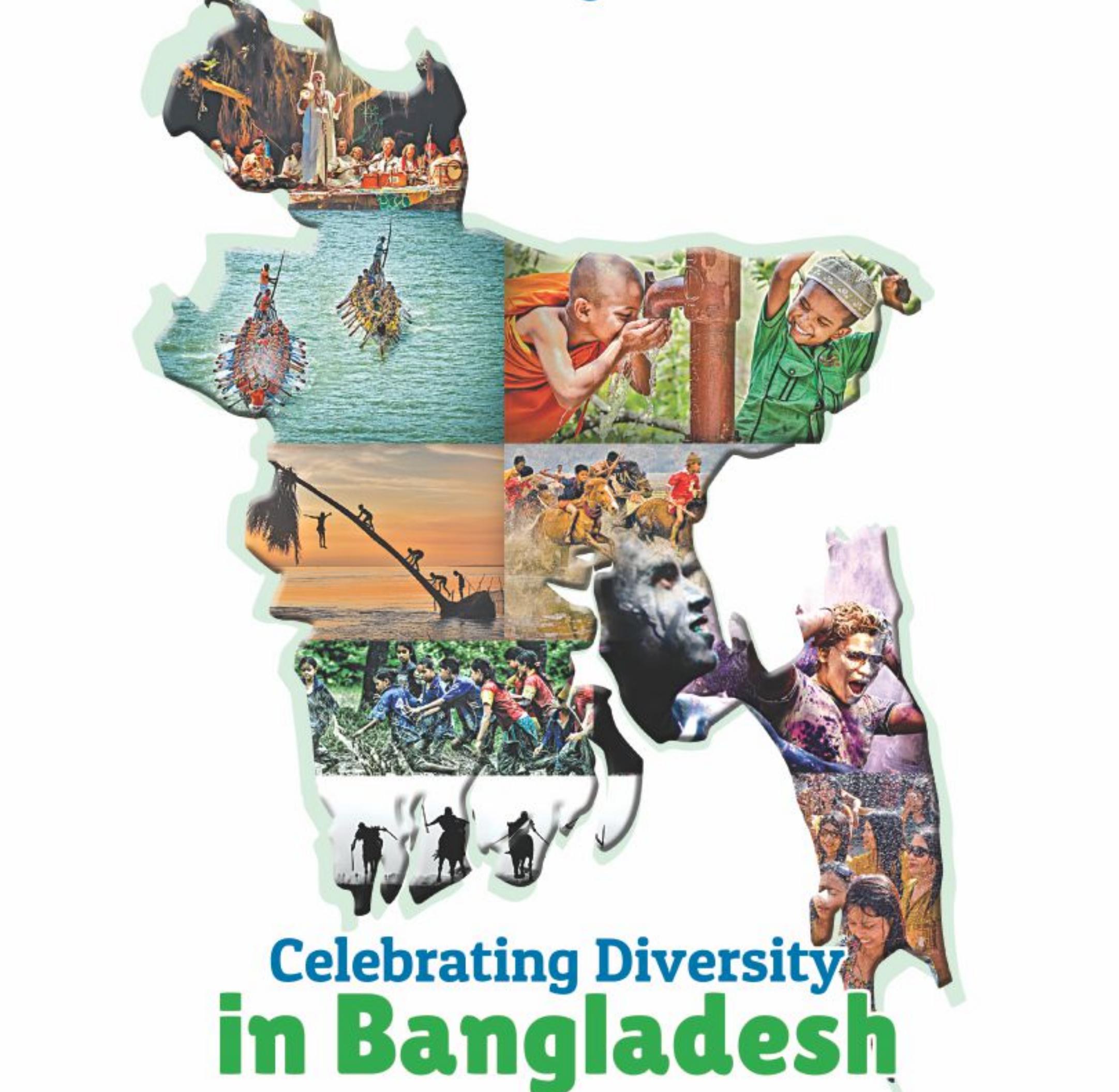
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