

JUST A HOOK TO SOME LOVED ONES' SAFETY TO US



HIGHEST SELLING 12 CEMENT for more than years

SHAH CEMENT

# 500-yr-old mosque in danger

RABIHUL HASAN with ANDREW EAGLE

The Chhoto Sona Masjid in Shibganj upazila of Chapainawabganj has withstood the test of time. Built by Wali Muhammad during the reign of Sultan Alauddin Hussain Shah from 1493CE, the relatively well-preserved mosque is an iconic example of medieval Islamic architecture. But the mosque that has survived centuries now risks irreparable damage. The constant vibration of cargo trucks plying the adjacent trans-border highway is undermining its integrity.

Located some 36km from the district town, the mosque measuring 25 by 16 metres is an impressive jewel in the archaeological crown of sites on both sides of the Indian border that constitute the remnants of Bengal's ancient capital, Gaur.

Smaller than its namesake Golden Mosque across the border, the Chhoto Sona Masjid built of thin bricks with an outer layer of stonework and featuring eleven arched entrances and five ornate black stone minarets is perhaps the best-known Gaur-related site on Bangladeshi soil. The mosque includes a ladies' gallery in the northwest corner with a number of finely carved stone columns. It has four minarets and a fifteen-domed roof which was once gilded, hence the name 'golden'. Perhaps the mosque's main charm is its superb decoration. Walls feature flowers, rosettes, hanging chain bells and geometric designs on terracotta plaques. The floor once included beautiful glazed tile illustrations.



Putting the Chhoto Sona Masjid at risk of damage, a heavy truck rumbles past the mosque in Chapainawabganj's Shibganj upazila. Vibration from around 400 trucks plying the busy road daily from Chapainawabganj town to the Sonamasjid Land Port causes significant stress to the foundations and walls of the centuries-old mosque. The photo was taken last week.

## CJ's wife flies to Australia

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Sushama Sinha, wife of Chief Justice Surendra Kumar Sinha, left for Australia last night, three days after her husband went there.

She left Hazrat Shahjalil International Airport on a Singapore Airlines flight around 11:55pm, Anisur Rahman, personal secretary to the CJ, told The Daily Star.

Justice Sinha, now on a month's leave on health grounds, left Dhaka for Australia around midnight on Friday. Justice Md Abdul Wahhab Miah, the senior most judge at Justice Sinha of the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court, is now carrying out the CJ's duties.

Before leaving the country, Justice Sinha told journalists that he was not sick, contradicting the government's claim that he went on leave on health grounds.

It was his first interaction with the local media since the government announced his 'sick leave' beginning October 3, the day the apex court opened after a court

PHOTO: STAR

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## Dhaka seventh worst megacity for women

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka has been ranked the seventh worst megacity for women in an international perception poll, conducted by Thomson Reuters Foundation, the philanthropic arm of Thomson Reuters, a news and information provider.

In the poll, Cairo positioned first in the list, followed by Karachi, Kinshasa and New Delhi.

The poll panel comprised of women rights experts answering questions to assess safety and security of women in 19 megacities under four criteria - sexual violence, access to healthcare, cultural practices and economic opportunities.

The poll's result published yesterday also ranked the capital of Bangladesh as the third most dangerous city for women due to harmful cultural practices against them, like child and forced marriage and female genital mutilation.

Besides, Dhaka also came fourth worst in terms of sexual violence, including rape or sexual attacks and harassment, against women. The city was placed in 12th position in the two other criteria - access to healthcare and economic opportunities, the result said.

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## Suicide attacks kill 71 in Afghanistan

170 wounded; Taliban bombers, gunmen target police, soldiers in the latest assaults

AFP, Gurdaz

Two separate suicide and gun attacks on police and soldiers in Afghanistan left at least 71 dead and nearly 170 wounded yesterday in the latest devastating assaults on beleaguered security forces.

The Taliban claimed the more deadly of the two assaults, a coordinated attack on police in the southeast city of Gardez in Pakia province.

That assault killed 41 people and injured 158, according to the interior ministry, and left hospital officials calling for blood donations. There were desperate scenes as relatives queued for news of loved ones after the hours-long battle.

A separate ambush blamed on the Taliban in the neighbouring province of Ghazni killed 25 security officials and five civilians with 10 wounded, the interior ministry said.

Afghanistan's army and police, on the front line against the Taliban since foreign combat forces pulled back in December 2014, have suffered shocking casualties over the past year. Their ranks are beset by corruption and desertion.

"The hospital is overwhelmed and we call on people to donate blood," said Shir Mohammad Karimi, deputy health director in Gardez, who put the number of wounded there at more than 200.

Doctors and nurses rushed to attend to the wounded women, children and police filling the corridors where some bodies also lay. Outside, university students formed a queue to donate blood, an AFP photographer said.

The attack, claimed by the Taliban in a tweet, began when two suicide bombers driving an explosives-laden truck and a Humvee blew them up near the training centre, which is close to the Pakia police headquarters.

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## Rape accused killed in 'gunfight'

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Cox's Bazar

An alleged rapist was killed in a "shootout" with Rapid Action Battalion in Kurushkul village in the early hours yesterday.

The dead was identified as Mohammad Selim, 22.

Selim was an accused in several cases, including one for rape, filed with Cox's Bazar Sadar Model Police Station. He was accused of raping a three-year-old girl on Biman Bandar Road on August 23, Major Ruhul Amin, company commander of Cox's Bazar Rab-7, told The Daily Star.

He said they arrested Selim in New Fishery Ghat area on Monday. Getting information from him, a Rab team conducted a drive in Kurushkul area around 2:00am to arrest his associates and recover firearms, he added.

Sensing presence of Rab

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## Lost Roman theatre found in Jerusalem

INDEPENDENT.CO.UK

Archaeologists have discovered an ancient Roman theatre near to the Western Wall in Jerusalem.

The 200-seat area was discovered eight metres underground, along with a large section of the Western Wall that had been buried underground for 1,700 years.

The discovery was made under Wilson's Arch in Jerusalem's ancient Old City. Researchers from the Israel Antiquity Authority have been excavating the site for the last two years.

During the time of the Second Temple, which

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## Why suspended drug official still in his job

HC asks govt to explain

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday asked the government to explain how an official of the drug administration was carrying out his job even after a HC directive ordering his suspension.

Assistant Director Shafulq Islam of the Directorate of Drug Administration was suspended for negligence in dealing with a case filed for

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**PRAYER TIMING OCTOBER 18**

Fazr Zohr Ash Maghrib Fajr

AZAN 4:50 12:45 4:00 5:38 7:15

JAMAAT 5:25 1:15 4:15 5:41 7:45

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION



Police and locals gather near the South Bijoypur Jaikhanra Bari Level Crossing in Comilla yesterday after the Sylhet-bound Paharika Express from Chittagong rammmed a van, killing three of its passengers. Witnesses said the vehicle had broken down on the rail crossing when the train hit it. *Inset*, the mangled van on the railway track.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

## Three killed as train hits van

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Comilla

Three people were killed as a train rammmed a van in Comilla Sadar upazila yesterday. According to locals, the vehicle had suddenly broken down at South Bijoypur Jaikhanra Bari Level Crossing.

The victims are Abdur Rashid, 42, regional supervisor of Sentry Security Services Ltd. Abu Taher, 50, field officer of the company, and Sohel Mia, the van driver.

Witness Sua Mia, a tea stall owner, said the accident happened around 11:30am when the Sylhet-bound Paharika Express from Chittagong hit the vehicle at the level crossing.

The train pushed the van along the railway track for around one and a half kilometres, killing all three passengers. Two of them died on the spot, while the other on the way to Comilla Medical College Hospital, he added.

Swapan Khandari Barua, sub-inspector of Laksham Railway Police, said there was no gate or organ at the level crossing.

The mangled van was recovered from the spot, he added.

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**PREMIER cement**

**Tigers Profile**

Nasir Hossain

Ever since his international debut for Bangladesh in 2011, high expectations were placed on Nasir Hossain. The cricketer from BRSP has all the makings of a perfect all-rounder, something the Bangladesh national team has been searching for to complement Shakib Al Hasan.

His potential was revealed during his very first international one-day match where he scored 63 runs against Zimbabwe, the highest by a Bangladeshi on an ODI debut. That performance led to his introduction into the Test side that played West Indies in October 2011, a month before his 20th birthday.

From an early point in his career, Nasir was hailed 'Mr Finisher' as he started to live up to his billing and win matches.

Nasir, who can bat in any order, offers great balance and could have become a crucial component to the team. He can also bowl his off-spin at decisive moments in addition to his fielding, which is electrifying.

However half way through, he somehow lost his way and was later dropped from the national side on various grounds. Despite this, Nasir has continued to prove his worth in the domestic circuit and manages to make a comeback every now and then but he has to truly do his talent justice.

বলটা ফাইণ্ডার  
বিলাসিতা আমরা  
গর্বিত অর্শিদার  
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