

## JS goes into session on Nov 12

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Jatiya Sangsad will go into its 18th session on November 12 after a 59-day recess.

President Abdul Hamid convened the session exercising the power bestowed upon him by article 72 (1) of the Constitution, said a release of parliament secretariat yesterday.

The House will go into session at 4:00pm on the day.

Prior to the start of the session, the Business Advisory Committee of parliament will meet with Speaker Shirin Sharmin Chaudhury in the chair to fix the duration and businesses of the 18th session.

Earlier, the 17th session of the current Parliament was prorogued on September 14 after five working days.

The upcoming session may also continue for a brief period of time, sources at the parliament secretariat told The Daily Star.

## Seven parts of college girl's body recovered in Barguna

UNB, Barguna

Police recovered seven body parts of a teenage girl from a house in Amtali municipality of Barguna yesterday.

The deceased was identified as Mala Akthar, 17, daughter of M Mannan Khan, a resident of Gudighata village of Barguna Sadar upazila.

Police have already arrested Alamgir Hossain Palash, who hails from Bashinda village in Mirjaganj upazila of Patuakhali district, from his house in this connection.

During primary interrogation, Palash claimed he had been in a four-year long relationship with Mala, a student of class XI.

On Sunday afternoon, he took Mala to the house of his relative, advocate Mainul Ahsan Biplob, at Amtali.

According to police, on Tuesday noon, Mala pressurised Palash to get married and subsequently the duo locked in an altercation over the matter.

At one stage, Palash hacked Mala with a sharp weapon, dismembering her body into seven pieces.

Being informed by Biplob, police recovered the body and arrested Palash, said Md Shahid Ullah, officer-in-charge of Amtali Police Station.

## Thumri queen

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queen", Girija Devi popularised the genre of semi-classical Indian music. She was conferred with all three Padma awards, and was honoured with the Padma Vibhushan in 2016.

Tributes from stalwarts in the Indian music industry began pouring in soon after news of the singer's demise broke.

"Deeply saddened by the passing away of the legendary Girija Devi. This truly marks the end of an era," tweeted Ustad Amjad Ali Khan.

"Girija Devi was not a national treasure. We are poorer without her," said lyricist Javed Akhtar in a tweet.

## Disruption

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through a motorbike ride sharing app on his phone, he could not pay the driver as his phone had no internet for a few minutes.

"I also had trouble attaching a file to an email I wanted to send to my boss," he said.

After the cable under the Bay of Bengal was taken out of service for the first time in its 12 years of operation, Bangladesh Submarine Cable Company Ltd (BSCCL) started managing the load by re-routing internet traffic.

The country's first undersea cable, SEA-ME-WE-4, was shut down at 12:30am yesterday and it would be out of service for the next two days as well.

"We are facing challenges of bandwidth shortage but we are trying our best to manage the crunch," said Md Mashru Rahman, managing director of BSCCL.

Usually state-run BSCCL supplies over 250Gbps of bandwidth to the country but yesterday the supply came down to 150Gbps, which the company got from SEA-ME-WE-5, the second undersea cable connecting the country to the internet.

Bangladesh uses about 450Gbps of bandwidth, about 250Gbps from BSCCL and 200Gbps imported from India.

However, President MA Hakim of Internet Service Provider Association, said ISPs suffered less interruption than they had feared.

For only a few minutes around noon there were some transmission issues and for a few minutes there was no internet from BSCCL. Apart from these, it was just like a regular day yesterday, he said.

Hakim said end users saw their regular work going slow but overall the situation was not bad.

BSCCL MD Mashru said they have about 50Gbps of bandwidth of the second submarine cable left unutilised and that they could not use it due to lack of interconnection capacity.

## No new gas field

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Also, the "new gas field" is in fact only one and a half kilometers away, and not 3km as claimed by the government, from the Shahbazpur well, sources at the Bapex confided.

Gazprom, the Russian contractor of Bapex, began the exploratory drilling in August and confirmed, through preliminary tests days back, the existence of gas at almost the same depth and with nearly similar gas pressure like Shahbazpur's.

These are the crucial geological indications that the "new gas field" actually belongs to the old gas field, Prof Humayun argued.

Another senior geologist, Maksud Kamal, also failed to understand why the discovery was disclosed in such a hurried manner.

"Needless to say, it is a very important discovery. But certain geological tests must be done first to be able to say for sure if it is a new gas field or to ascertain the reserve volume," said Maksud, who is chairman of the Department of Disaster Science and Management at DU.

"The Bapex [the explorer] has not done those tests yet. And it is highly unlikely that it is a new gas field," he added.

However, the discovery can be an indication that a small Shahbazpur gas field (only 10km long, 7km wide) is in fact much larger than it was thought when discovered back in 1993.

The Bapex is also preparing to conduct drilling 35km north of Bhola. And if the results turn out to be good, it would mean that almost entire Bhola is lying on a massive sub-surface structure of natural gas.

But however huge the reserve is, the rest of the country would not be able to use the new found gas because of Bhola's geographical isolation from the country's mainland. Like now, the gas would be used in power generation and in industries in the region. Pipelines through long rivers to the national gas grid are way too costly.

As the discovery was announced by the cabinet secretary following a cabinet meeting with Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina in the chair, the Bapex is not saying anything contrary to the announcement on record for obvious reasons.

Off the record, sources at the Bapex admitted that, almost certainly, it is the

same structure of Shahbazpur. And at least a couple of wells must be drilled to determine if it is an extension of the Shahbazpur well.

They also feel the disclosure should have been made after doing the DST (drilling steam test, a method to determine extractable reserve) and perforation test (a method to determine the flow pressure of the gas field).

"But if it is the same structure, the potential of the reserve will go up by many folds. As per our findings so far, the Bhola gas field has every potential to become the country's largest gas field," a competent Bapex source asserted.

Md Nowshad Islam, managing director of Bapex, meanwhile claimed they had carried out five logs and semi DST, meaning engineers have seen the structure in five different ways over an area of 3,500 square metres and all of the logs have shown the same result.

"We have lifted up the physical sample of the layers where the gas has been found. We have found the gas. It is proven. The pressures in the three layers at 5,000-plus PSI [pound-force per square inch] are the highest in Bangladesh."

But the Bapex went silent when asked about the reasons behind the hurried disclosure about the reserve.

But reliable sources said a certain secretary is to retire this month, and an early disclosure would ensure a job extension for him.

And that is probably why someone else, not Bapex, was in a hurry to make the announcement. Too bad, as they misled the prime minister in the process. There is another iron in the fire. There is a hefty bonus on offer for finding out new gas fields.

However, the secretary has not done anything new. Some years ago, a now former Petrobangla chairman had manufactured a discovery by declaring an old oil field as a new one for job extension.

Asked why the latest discovery was described as a new gas field, sources pointed fingers at the Gazprom. A "new gas field" tag would justify its mysterious involvement in a proven gas field zone.

"It's a success story for Bapex. Gazprom was thrust upon us early last year, for reasons best known to certain policymakers," quipped an insider.

shouts of "None!" echoed in the imposition Great Hall of the People.

"Now our country is unified, cohesive, and moving up in the world," northeast Jilin province delegate Li Hualiang told AFP.

'NEW ERA'

The congress also elected a new 204-member Central Committee, which included just 10 women. It will elect the party's new ruling council, the Politburo Standing Committee, today.

Xi is certain to secure a second five-year term as general secretary and could also consolidate his power by filling the standing committee with allies, possibly without even presenting an obvious heir apparent.

## Hasina

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yesterday.

In line with the election manifesto of the ruling Awami League, the government in 2011, without conducting any feasibility study, finalised Arial Beel as the location for the new airport and a satellite city.

The government then had to backtrack in the face of violent protests by locals. The clashes that ensued left a policeman dead and many locals and law enforcers injured.

Those who approve, raise your hands," Xi said during the vote as a flurry of arms shot up in unison. When he asked if anyone was not in favour,

Xi tightened grip

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tradition demands, analysts said.

Or he could carry on as party leader. Xi's time as national president must end in 2023 but there is no official restriction on how long a party chief can serve -- although Xi's two immediate predecessors, Jiang Zemin and Hu Jintao, stepped down after two five-year terms.

Jiang and Hu had their concepts included in the constitution, but without their names and only when they retired.

"China has a tradition of combining emperor and teacher, which means that the emperor is also the thought leader. That's rare in our history," Chinese political scholar Hu Xingdou told AFP.

Xi also managed to get at least two of his cherished programmes written into the constitution: an anti-corruption campaign that has brought down 1.5 million crooked officials since 2012 and the Belt and Road initiative, the massive global trade infrastructure project intended to increase China's influence abroad.

The congress declared the Communist Party China's "absolute leader", a clear sign that it intends to further tighten its grip on the country.

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He will be buried in his family graveyard in Homna today.

Born on January 1, 1933 in Khulna, MK Anwar joined government service in 1953 as an officer of Civil Service of Pakistan (CSP). He served in different important posts during the regime of the then Pakistan and Bangladesh. He took retirement after serving as the top-most civil service post cabinet secretary on December 30, 1990.

He joined BNP in January 1991.

He was elected lawmaker for five times and became minister twice.

BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia and Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir expressed deep condolence at the death of MK Anwar.

He said the two countries agreed "to restore normalcy in Rakhine to enable displaced Myanmar residents to return from Bangladesh at the earliest opportunity".

Tin Myint added that Myanmar had sent a list of suspects who had fled to Bangladesh and requested the authorities there to investigate and return them to Myanmar, reports Reuters.

Rohingyas are denied citizenship under the 1982 law enacted by former dictator U Ne Win. The law doesn't recognise the minority group as one of the country's 135 ethnic groups.

In March, the Rakhine Advisory Commission led by former UN chief Kofi Annan called for freedom of movement for all people in Rakhine and a review of the citizenship law.

Kamal urged the Myanmar authorities to take measures to end drug trafficking from Myanmar to Bangladesh.

Talking to BBC Bangla, the Bangladeshi minister said he asked Myanmar to stop the Rohingya perse-

## Rupa's sister gets govt job

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Tangail

Popy Khatun, younger sister of law student Rupa Khatun who was raped and killed on a moving bus in Tangail two months ago, got a job at the state-run Essential Drugs Company yesterday.

The appointment letter of an "office assistant" was handed over to her by the company's Managing Director Mohammad Ehsanul Kabir Jaglul at its headquarters in Tejgaon in the capital around 1:30pm.

According to the appointment letter, Popy will have to join the company's Bogra office on November 15.

Popy, the third daughter of late Jelhaz Pramanik in Sirajganj's Tarash upazila, graduated in management from Nawab Siraj-ud-Doula College in Natore. She had earlier worked for a multinational company.

Talking to this correspondent, Popy yesterday said she along with her elder brother, Hafizur Pramanik, went to Dhaka on Monday after receiving a call from the health minister's personal secretary.

She expressed gratitude to Health Minister Mohammed Nasim for arranging the job for her.

"I am feeling very good as a government job was badly needed for me to support my poor family. However, I never thought I would get the job in exchange for my elder sister's life," an emotional Popy said.

Her elder brother Hafizur said his family members, including his ailing mother Hasna Hena, were very happy to hear the news of Popy's new job.

He demanded capital punishment for Popy's killers.

Rupa was raped and killed on a moving bus by several staff of the vehicle on August 25. Police on the same day recovered her body from near Tangail-Mymensingh road in Tangail's Madhupur upazila.

Law enforcers on August 28 picked up five staff of the bus from Madhupur in connection with the Rupa murder case. Police said the arrestees during interrogation admitted their involvement in the crime.

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As you understand, humanity can enter, and most likely it will in the near future, a very difficult and very responsible period of its existence.

"What I have just described might be worse than a nuclear bomb."

His warning comes just a month after he revealed fears that AI robots will one day 'eat us.'

The Russian president was speaking to Arkady Volozh, chief of internet firm Yandex, during a tour of the company's Moscow headquarters.

Volozh was discussing the potential of AI when Putin caused surprise by asking when the technology will 'eat us'.

According to state-funded Russian broadcaster RT, the question baffled Volozh.

He said the two countries agreed "to restore normalcy in Rakhine to enable displaced Myanmar residents to return from Bangladesh at the earliest opportunity".

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