



THE COLOSSUS RISES
OUT OF THE MIGHTY PADMA

BSRM
building a safer nation

HIGHEST SELLING
CEMENT

SHAH
CEMENT

for more than 12 years

RU FINE ARTS ADMISSION TEST Questions over questions

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

"What is the name of the greatest book in the world?"

Students were asked to answer this multiple choice question (MCQ) at the entry test of Rajshahi University's fine arts faculty on Wednesday.

The question which had four choices -- A) The Holy Quran, B) The Holy Bible, C) The Holy Injil and D) Gita -- left the admission seekers surprised and baffled.

It was the 76th among 80 MCQs, each carrying 1.25 marks, on the question paper.

This particular MCQ, along with another controversial one from that paper, later triggered an outrage on the campus and criticisms in social media, with many blasting the university authorities for coming up with the "extremely communal" questions.

They also said the questions reflected the "radical mentality of the teachers concerned".

The other question was: "When did the Myanmar army and its local allies launch a coordinated attack on the Rohingya Muslims?" It was the 41st MCQ on the question paper.

In the face of criticisms, the faculty's admission committee withdrew the questions yesterday, saying all the examinees would receive full marks for them. It, however, did not say who exactly was responsible for the incident.

Talking to The Daily Star, Atia Yasmin, an admission seeker, said she avoided answering the question on the "greatest book" as it made her totally confused.

"It was a strange question. Students of different faiths will answer it differently," she said.

Terminally those who set the questions communal and irresponsible, another examinee, who wished not to be named, said.

SEE PAGE 17 COL 1

Deploying army in polls possible under law: CEC

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

It is possible to deploy army during the next general election as per the chief electoral law.

Chief Election Commissioner KM Nurul Huda said.

The Election Commission has the jurisdiction to deploy army, and it will take the decision in this regard later, he said at a press conference at the EC office in the capital's Agargaon.

During the electoral talks with the EC, most political parties have expressed their opinions in favour of army deployment ahead of the next polls likely to be held in December 2018.

However, not all parties have agreed on what sort of power the army should exercise at the time.

Some want the army to have magistracy power while others want it as a striking force in case an untoward situation emerges.

The CEC said the existing electoral laws were enough to hold a free and fair election and there was no need for any new law.

SEE PAGE 17 COL 4

Qatar moves to end modern-day slavery

*Decides to introduce minimum wage for
all foreign workers, scrap 'kafala' system*

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Qatar will introduce a minimum wage for all foreign workers as part of a reform initiative that the International Trade Union Confederation has termed a breakthrough towards ending modern-day slavery in the Gulf country.

The oil-rich nation has also decided to scrap the controversial "kafala" system that bars foreign workers from changing jobs or leaving the country at will.

The decisions made by the Qatari cabinet on Wednesday would ensure more freedom for foreign workers and allow them to have the necessary money to meet their living expenses.

The changes are good news for Bangladesh, as nearly four lakh Bangladeshi work in the Gulf country.

"This is a very welcome decision. Our workers will be benefited by this," said Serajul Islam, labour counsellor at the Bangladeshi Embassy in Qatar told The Daily Star over the phone.

There have been allegations that foreign workers don't get the wages promised before their recruitment by Qatari companies. The new minimum wage system will remove those problems, he said.

According to Minister of Labour and Social Welfare Minister Issa Al-Nuaimi said they would set up a "Workers' Support and Insurance Fund" which would ensure that overdue wages are paid to workers. And it would operate independently under the auspices of the cabinet.

Belgium-based International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC), the

SEE PAGE 2 COL 2



The den of sparrows

HABIBUR RAHMAN, Pirojpur

Every afternoon, thousands of sparrows from different areas of Pirojpur town congregate in a little banyan tree in Pirojpur Old Bus Terminal.

In a span of a few minutes, the cries of the birds ring through the air, transforming the lone tree into a hub of our feathered friends.

Unknowingly, the tree serves two functions; it acts as a shelter for the sparrows while serving as a visual treat for bird and nature lovers.

Locals say that everyday thousands of sparrows



Sparrows hiding among the leaves of a banyan tree in Pirojpur Old Bus Terminal. Thousands of sparrows call this tree their home, flocking to it on a daily basis and spending their nights under the protection of its foliage.

PHOTO: HABIBUR RAHMAN



BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia leaving a Dhaka court after the presentation of her defence statement yesterday. She could not finish reading out the statement on the day and the court said the rest would be heard at a later date.

PHOTO:
COLLECTED

SEE PAGE 6 COL 4

CID official suspended for taking Tk 45 lakh bribe'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

An allegation has surfaced that a CID sub-inspector has taken Tk 45 lakh as bribe from the co-owner of a recruiting and travel agency firm in the capital's Fakirapool.

Following a media report on the allegation, the Criminal Investigation Department yesterday suspended SI Susanta Kumar Rahat.

SEE PAGE 17 COL 5

'Planet-engulfing' star discovered



MAIL ONLINE

A star that devours planets has been discovered by researchers who believe it could have already eaten 15 of them.

The planet-gobbling star Kronos and its sister Krios are both around 4 billion years old and are around 350 light years from Earth.

Dubbed Kronos after the child-eating Titan of Greek mythology, the star is the clearest and most dramatic case yet of a sun-like star consuming its own planets.

"Even if our sun ate the entire inner solar system, it wouldn't come close to the anomaly we see in this star," said study co-author David Hogg, group leader for astronomical data at the Center for Computational Astrophysics (CCA) at the Flatiron

SEE PAGE 17 COL 6

PRAYER TIMING OCTOBER 27
Fazr Juma Asr Maghrib Esha

AZ 4:50-3:40-4:46 5:32 7:15

JAMAT 5:25-1:15 4:15 5:35 7:45

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

A band of brothers for gold trafficking

MOHAMMAD JAMIL KHAN and SHARIFUL ISLAM

Three brothers joined arms to conduct a gold smuggling business that spanned across Dhaka, Dubai, Masqat, Kuala Lumpur, Jeddah and cities in India. Their empire was built on the complicity of airport staff, cabin crew and even the cleaners.

Using encrypted messaging technology and farsightedness and keeping their heads down, the trio conducted their business under the noses of the law enforcers for years, while growing in size.

The information came to light when Detective Branch (DB) of Police arrested three members of a syndicate on Tuesday night.

The trio, arrested from the capital's airport area, is Faruk Ahmed, 38, Meez Hossain, 28, and Md Shahbin, 21. A team of DB officials found 80 gold bars weighing 9.33 kg in their possession. The DB officials also seized a car (Dhaka Metro Ga-22-1449) from them.

The estimated price of the gold seized is approximately Tk 4 crore, said Shaikh Nazmul Islam, deputy commissioner (north).

On Tuesday one of the siblings admitted to the investigators that for the last three years the syndicate have been smuggling in gold. The trio would smuggle in gold threac a week by bribing some cabin crew, airport staffs and cleaner.

"Usually the syndicate members bring five to six kg in every shipment, meaning at least 15 kg a week, from four countries," said a DB investigator who interrogated the arrestees. To avoid detection, they would curtail their operations at times of heightened security vigilance, an official said wishing anonymity.

To dodge law enforcers, they used to communicate among them using "WeChat", an online messaging application.

Faruk's elder brother, Masud Karim Rana, who is now on

SEE PAGE 17 COL 1