



Farmers in Chittagong's Rangunia harvesting Aman, the second most important rice crop after Boro in the country, yesterday. In many parts of the upazila, the crop was damaged by heavy downpours and flood in the past few months.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

Police sue

FROM PAGE 1
killed as they fell in the river along with a large chunk.
They were buried in the village graveyard following their namaz-e-janazah attended by hundreds of people yesterday afternoon.
The district administration and the district police have meanwhile formed two probe bodies in connection with the disaster.
Contacted, Salah Uddin Chowdhury, deputy director of the Department of Environment in Sylhet, said they were working to stop illegal stone extraction in Kaniatop.
Official sources said one Nazrul Islam of Sylhet filed a writ with the High Court in 2016 to stop stone extracting in Kaniatop upazila. The HC subsequently ordered all authorities concerned to take action and execute a provision order forbidding machine-based extraction.
As many as 28 people have been killed and 11 injured during stone extraction in this company.
The district administration upazilas since January 23 this year.
A joint statement by some concerned citizens of Sylhet said stone extraction could be stopped if only the people behind its syndicate were punished.
The statement was signed by Advocate Shah Shaheda Akter, regional coordinator of BELA Sylhet, Faruk Mahmood Chowdhury, president of SUJIAN Sylhet chapter, EIJ Shaidul Islam Shahin, former president of Sylhet District Lawyers Association, MD Irfanuzaman Chowdhury, coordinator of BLAST Sylhet chapter, Aziz Ahmed Selim, SONAK Sylhet, Advocate Syeda Shirin Akter, coordinator of Bangladesh Youth Mohila Ainjib Samity's Sylhet chapter, and Anjul Karim Khan, general secretary of BAPA Sylhet chapter.

HC commutes

FROM PAGE 1
The couple had earlier served two years in jail for the case.
The bench said that Sigma Huda's sentence will be considered as served because she has earlier served jail in this case.
The ACC on March 21, 2007 filed the case with Dharmodhi Police Station alleging that Nazmul Huda took Tk 2.40 crore bribe from a businessman, Mir Zahid Hossain, at different times, in exchange for awarding him five government contracts for construction works, including road renovations worth Tk 30 crore.
Sigma Huda was charged in the same case for aiding and abetting her husband in taking the bribe, which was found to be deposited in an account of Khopper D'Ontario, a weekly newspaper owned by her. Later Tk 1 crore of the bribe money was transferred to HSBC bank accounts of their daughter.
The special court on August 27, 2007 sentenced Nazmul Huda to seven years rigorous imprisonment, while his wife Sigma Huda was sentenced to three years rigorous imprisonment.
Nazmul Huda was also fined Tk 2.50 crore, in default of which he will have to serve additional year of the jail term. The court also ordered the state confiscate the bribes amounting to Tk 2.40 crore.
Following their appeal, the HC on March 20, 2011 acquitted the couple of the corruption charges.
However, the Appellate Division on December 1, 2014 scrapped the acquittal and asked the HC to hold a fresh hearing on their appeal.
Yesterday, ACC lawyer Khurshid Akter Khan told The Daily Star that the lower court order that fined Nazmul Huda will remain in force, as the HC did not say anything about it.
Barrister Nazmul Huda, who moved for himself, and Sigma Huda, could not be reached over cell phone for their comments.

Five-star prison!

FROM PAGE 18
Time reported on a video circulating online purportedly showed rows of detainees sleeping on mattresses on the floor of the palatial hotel while security personnel stood guard.
The Times said some VIPs have also been held in rooms at the Ritz.
An attempt to book a room on the hotel's official website says "not available for check-ins".
By detaining dozens of officials and tycoons, a new anti-corruption body headed by Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman is seeking to dismantle systems of patronage and kickbacks that have distorted the Saudi economy for decades.
The move, the most shocking aspect of the purge has been the detention of billionaire Prince Alwaleed bin Talal, the flamboyant, internationally known chairman of investment firm Kingdom Holding.
The names of other detainees have been equally stunning: Nasser bin Aqeel al-Tayyar, founder of the Al Tayyar Travel group, billionaire

Chakir Kamel; and Bakr bin Laden, chairman of the huge Saudi Binladin construction conglomerate.
But it is a risky process, because the crackdown is hurting some of the kingdom's top private businessmen - leaders of family conglomerates who have built much of the non-oil economy over the past few decades.
An article in The Guardian said demeaning a royal by putting him in prison could have implications as the society is branched into tribes.
"He would have put them in the jail," the report quoted a senior official as saying. "And he (Crown Prince) would have known that. So this was the most dignified solution he could find."
The arrests are being viewed widely as a attempt by the Crown Prince to neuter any opposition to his lightning ascent to the pinnacle of power. But admirers see it as an assault on the endemic theft of public funds in Saudi Arabia, an absolute monarchy where the state and the ruling family are intertwined.

Now university teacher

FROM PAGE 1
The grieving father came out of the story-house with his daughter yesterday afternoon and talked to reporters. He requested the law enforcers to find his son.
Motahar, who was a government official, said he called his son around 7:00pm on Tuesday, but found his mobile switched off.
I kept trying to reach him, but in vain. When we contacted every possible place where Mubashar could have gone and asked everyone who could give information."
Motahar lodged a general diary with Khilgaon Police Station around 2:30am yesterday.
Mubashar's younger sister Tamanna Tasmin said, "We are concerned and scared. I appeal to the authority to find my brother."
She said her brother was "in fear for his life" after a man, claiming to be his student, went to their house on October 25 and asked for him. Mubashar was not home at the time.
Mubashar installed security cameras around their house soon afterwards and had often been talking about his concerns over security, she said.
Moshiur Rahman, officer-in-charge of Khilgaon Police Station, said they were being investigating into the incident.
"We have found that he left home at 7:15am on Tuesday and reached NSU at 8:00am," he said.
By tracking his phone, police came to know that he had been near IDB Bhaban and Lions Eye Hospital around 6:41pm.
"We are trying to find the person with whom he talked [over phone] before he went missing. We are also checking the CCTV footage from the areas where he had been in order to find out who was with him at that time."
The officer also added that they were taking his anti-military writings into consideration while investigating the disappearance.
Journalist Zayadul Ahsan Pintu is among the dozens of people who

wrote on Facebook about his disappearance.
Pintu's Facebook status said Mubashar informed him over phone that he was in panic since two boys with "fake identities" wanted to enter his house.
"I told him to install CCTV cameras and he did it. He sought blessings and I told him to stay safe. I informed the matter to the chief of counterterrorism unit as well."
"He told his family members to inform me if he was in danger. When his younger sister informed me about his disappearance over phone in the morning, I felt helpless. I could not find a clue the whole day."
Meanwhile, Home Minister Anwaruzaman Khan Kamal yesterday said they will take steps to find him.
"It is not acceptable that law enforcers would sit idle when someone goes missing," he said after a programme in the capital.
The minister added, "I have always said that there are reasons behind [somebody] going missing. Many go missing willingly while many others go into hiding to embarrass others. It is hard for detectives to solve such incidents."

FM briefs

FROM PAGE 2
he cannot visit Nay Pyi Taw on Nov 16-17 as desired by Myanmar since the foreign ministers of China, Japan, Germany and Sweden are in Bangladesh at the time.
The minister advised informing them that he is willing to stay back in Nay Pyi Taw on Nov 22-23, after the ASEM Foreign Ministers' meeting for negotiation and finalisation of a bilateral "arrangement" on repatriation of Rohingya who crossed into Bangladesh following persecution in their homeland.
In addition to the visit of the four foreign ministers, the Canadian Minister for International Development Marie-Claude Bibeau is also expected in Dhaka on Nov 21.
A delegation of the US Senate Foreign Relations Committee is also expected to visit Bangladesh this month.

Twitter to double tweet limit to 280 characters

AFP, San Francisco
Twitter announced Tuesday it would double the limit for tweets to 280 characters in a bid to draw in more users and boost engagement at the social network.
"We're expanding the character limit! We want it to be easier and faster for everyone to express themselves," tweeted the site, which started testing an increase to its 140-character limit in most languages in early September.
The changes will be rolling out in all languages except Japanese, Korean, and Chinese, in which space limitations have not been an issue. Twitter said, "Twitter, which has been lagging behind rival social networks in user growth and struggling to reach profitability, faced a dilemma over the change in that it could alienate longtime users and transform the nature of the service.
Product manager Aliza Rosen said in a blog post that the test showed most people still used 140 characters or fewer, suggesting that fast-moving nature of Twitter will not change.

Thank you

FROM PAGE 18
Colleagues in The Daily Star, would like to pay a sincere debt of gratitude to our Board of Directors who have given us our first day of publication, insisted on stringent financial discipline and highest level of ethics in every aspect of the newspaper's management, especially in stringent effort to pay all due tax to the government. Not only of the paper's but of every citizen's income tax is paid for by the paper as mandated by the wage board.
It has been our firm belief that "trust" and "credibility," which are the life-blood of every media house, can never be demanded but must be earned, and the only way to earn both is not only to practice ethical journalism but to be absolutely clean and transparent about our financial practices.
We seldom, if ever, speak about ourselves. Seeking readers' indulgence we intend to do so today, but only because we took to practice ethical journalism and to be absolutely clean and transparent about our financial practices.
The North Korean nuclear crisis and efforts to ramp NATO to help it better combat the rising threat from Russia will also be high on the agenda.
The Pentagon has been set to arrive at the alliance's Brussels headquarters yesterday for two days of talks with fellow NATO defence ministers and a separate meeting with partners from the coalition fighting IS in the Middle East, who the jihadists continue to lose territory.
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US defense chief heads to Nato for IS, Afghan talks

AFP, Brussels
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Honour for top taxpayers

FROM PAGE 16
and the Prothom Alo, and their own companies were awarded tax cards as top taxpayers for the second consecutive year.
Among the journalists, Mahfiz Anam, editor and publisher of The Daily Star, and Matur Rahman, editor and publisher of the Prothom Alo, were honoured for paying big amounts of tax in the last fiscal year.
The recognition was given at a ceremony at the NBR building in the capital's Aghata. Finance Minister AMA Muhiuddin and State Minister for Finance and Planning MA Mannan, among others, were present.
Mediastar and Mediaword, the owning companies of the Prothom Alo and The Daily Star, were recognised as the two top taxpayers in the print and electronic media.
Rokta Azal Rahman, chairman of Mediaword, received the award on behalf of the organisation, while Arshad Waliur Rahman accepted the accolade on behalf of Mediastar.
The other two winners in the category are Transcraft Limited, a printing and packaging factory owned by Transcom Group, and East West Media Group Ltd, a concern of Bangladesh Media Group.
The taxpayers welcomed the government's initiative with some of them saying the recognition will encourage high-income families to pay taxes also properly.
They also urged the policymakers to ease the process of filing tax returns, create a hassle-free environment, and ensure proper and transparent use of tax money.
"Paying tax is not a choice. It is the responsibility of the citizens. If you are a patriotic citizen and want the welfare of the country, you must pay tax," said the group's chairman, Kabuddeen Ahmed, whose family got the recognition as "kar bahadur" was awarded.
His company was Dhaka Tax Card in the spinning and textile category.
Malek editor of the Dainik Azadi in Chittagong, Shykh Seraj, and Golam Sarwar, editor of the Samakal, were honoured in the journalist category.
The NBR began honouring taxpayers at the city corporation and district levels in 2008. A couple of years later, it introduced Tax Card to recognise top taxpayers at the national level.
Tax collection has risen over the last few years. Yet, Bangladesh lags behind other nations in the South Asia in terms of domestic revenue collection. The tax-GDP ratio now hovers around 10 percent in the country where tax evasion is believed to be high.
Kabuddeen said it's not good that a person with taxable income avoids

paying tax.
"We use roads, bridges and highways. Every day, thousands of people get treatment at public hospitals, including Dhaka Medical College Hospital. These were built with taxpayers' money."
The government should take into account the rising cost of living before fixing a tax rate. "If the rate is affordable, it does not affect your living standards, then you will surely pay tax," he noted.
Transcom Group Chairman Latifur Rahman said the recognition by the NBR would act as further encouragement not only for him but also for others to pay tax.
He noted that the NBR's capacity should be improved.
Citizens are paying taxes, and they should get services in return. "I will not say that there has been no improvement, but there should be more improvement in this direction," he said in reply to a question.
"As it citizens, we may have many demands or expectations, and the government should gradually become more sensitive about that," he added.
Alihussain Akbari, chairman of the ISBM Group that got Tax Card as the top tax payer in the engineering category, urged the government to fast-track the approval process of projects.
The decision on a project proposal should be made quickly," said Alihussain whose family was recognised as "kar Bahadur" from Chittagong.
The NBR honoured 16 families from Dhaka as tax icons, eight from Chittagong and one each from 60 districts. No family from Rangamati and Khagrachari was nominated for the accolade.
Abdus Salam Mursheedy, managing director of Envoy Group, said that as an individual, he got various important positions in the past. "But this is the first time my family and I have got such honour from the state. This is really a very prestigious recognition. This is very encouraging."
Mursheedy said many families, including those of businesspeople, will be eager to win a healthy competition among taxpayer families to become tax icons. This will eventually benefit the state.
"There may be a accolade competition among taxpayer families to become tax icons. This will eventually benefit the state."
But the tax payment system should be simplified and made convenient so that people feel encouraged to pay tax to the government without developing a system which would allow an individual or an organisation to pay tax without any hassle, he pointed out.
NBR Chairman MD Nojibur Rahman said the introduction of "kar bahadur" has taken this year's tax fair to a new height.

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REUTERS, Moscow
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Ryabkov's comments came hours after the UN Security Council rejected a report by the international inquiry blaming the Syrian government for a deadly toxic gas attack, casting doubt on the UN Security Council's ability to extend the investigation's mandate before it expires next week.
Russia last month cast a veto at the United Nations Security Council against renewing the investigation's mandate.
Turkey, which views the group as terrorists.
Mattis was asked for those weapons the US would be looking to develop in the September 11 attacks.
Mattis will meet his Turkish counterpart at Nato to discuss ongoing concerns.
The US has been in Afghanistan since the NATO invasion in late 2001 to the Middle East in the wake of the September 11 attacks.
Despite a 16-year war and hundreds of billions of dollars in investment in Afghan institutions and security forces, the country remains beset by corruption and an ongoing security crisis that is killing thousands of local soldiers and civilians each year.

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