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FISH IMPORTERS

Ticked off by test order

Containers full of fish left at the port since Jan 1

MOHAMMAD SUMAN, Ctg

Fish importers are not collecting their consignments from the Chittagong Port for the last three weeks, after the food safety authorities made it mandatory for all imported fish to go through certain tests for detection of heavy metals in them.

As a result, about 1,500 tonnes of fish have been lying in the port yard since January 1, hampering the normal operations of the port.

The Bangladesh Food Safety Authority (BFSA) ordered the compulsory test as it found high levels of harmful heavy metals in some previously imported Chandana Hilsa fish.

The test was done at the Atomic Energy Centre in the capital in the first week of December. Results show the fish contained 1.52mg of lead and 0.69mg of cadmium per kilogram, way beyond the permissible limits of 0.3mg and 0.25mg a kilogram.

The samples were collected from markets in Dhaka, but it was not clear when exactly the fish was imported.

The BFSA then asked the relevant authorities to ensure testing of all imported fish at the Atomic Energy Centre, Bangladesh Council of Scientific and Industrial Research in Dhaka or the Fish Quality Lab at Savar to detect the levels of lead, chromium, cadmium and mercury, said Md. Bayezid Hossain, assistant commissioner of Chittagong Customs House.

These substances may come either from preservatives or from the food consumed by the fish, experts said.

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Schoolchildren cover their faces on way back home at Kajla Bridge on Jatrabari-Demra Road in the capital. Repairs and expansion work of the road have left the area in a cloud of dust for months. The photo was taken on Monday.

PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN

4 killed in 'gunfights' in Jessore

Police could not yet identify them but say they were criminals

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Benapole

Four bullet-hit bodies were recovered from Sadar and Jhikargacha upazilas in Jessore early yesterday after what police claimed were two gunfights between rival groups.

The law enforcers, who gave almost similar versions of the incidents, said the dead were criminals, aged between 25 and 35. They could not confirm the identities of the four until last night.

The bodies were sent to the morgue of Jessore 250-bed hospital for autopsies.

Police also claimed to have recovered firearms and bullets from the scenes.

Ajmal Huda, officer-in-charge of Jessore Kotwali Police Station, said one of their teams conducted a raid following information about a gunfight in Nangorpur area on Jessore-Magura Highway in Sadar upazila around 3:20am.

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US government shuts down

One year on, Trump leads divided US into chaos; Republicans, Democrats blame each other as federal services hit by funding crisis



AGENCIES

President Donald Trump marked the first anniversary of his inauguration yesterday with his government in shutdown, accusing Democrats of taking Americans hostage with their demands and saying they "could have easily made a deal."

As the clock struck midnight, in the absence of an agreed spending plan, federal services began to come to a halt or be scaled back.

Essential services and military activity will continue but many public sector workers will be sent home without wages and even serving soldiers will not be paid until a deal

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ROHINGYA REFUGEES

More support needed as crisis growing: WB

STAR REPORT

The World Bank has said the Rohingya refugee crisis is growing at a rapid pace in Cox's Bazar and there is an urgent need to support the host communities to cope with the influx and to help those extremely vulnerable.

After visiting some Rohingya camps in Cox's Bazar yesterday, World Bank South Asia Vice President Annette Dixon praised the Bangladesh government and its people for sheltering and caring for the large number of Rohingyas fleeing violence in Myanmar, according to a WB statement.

She said the bank was ready to work with the government to help the host community and the displaced Rohingyas.

The scale of the influx is enormous. As far as the eyes can see, lines after lines of shelters – made of plastic sheets and bamboos – stretched over the deforested hills. It is creating huge pressure on the infrastructure and services as well as on the water resources and the environment. When the monsoon approaches, the challenges with disease and natural disasters will increase."



Annette Dixon

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Inmates exposed to radicalisation

Say families of some militants, suggest how parents should protect children from extremism

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Parents should always keep an eye on their children, discuss various issues in their lives and encourage them to engage in cultural activities, family members of a number of militants came up with these suggestions yesterday.

Speaking at a workshop, they also suggested that the government should take effective counter-narrative initiatives, visible de-radicalisation programmes in and outside the prisons and rehabilitate those who have already been de-radicalised.

Family members and relatives of 14 militants, including some of the Gulshan Café attackers and others who were on bail, and two de-radicalised people who are being rehabilitated, attended the workshop titled Radicalisation and Extremism Prevention: Role of Families and Societies". It was organised by the Counter Terrorism and Transnational Crime unit at its office in the capital.

Many of them cried while describing how their near and dear ones got radicalised and killed in police raids or were in jail. This paper is withholding their names upon their requests.

"For 10 years, I played [football] with my son so that he doesn't get spoiled ... But they took him away from me," said the father of one of the Gulshan attackers who killed 22 people, mostly foreigners, on July 1, 2016.

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Win or bust for Lanka

SPORTS REPORTER

It will be a test for Chandika Hathurusingha and his charges as they look to overcome a disappointing start to 2018 and stay alive in the race for the final of the tri-series when they take on a spirited Zimbabwe side at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur today.

Despite a comprehensive eight-wicket loss to host Bangladesh in the tournament opener, Zimbabwe recovered strongly and beat Sri Lanka by 12 runs, a fourth win in their past six encounters against the Islanders.

Sikandar Raza has been consistent with the bat, notching back-to-back fifties, and has also been instrumental with his off-spin, having picked up three wickets in two games. He has also been an electric presence on the field in which department the recently-concluded Bangladesh Premier League has helped him immensely, according to teammate Craig Ervine.

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House-12 inside the Ispahani Colony in Moghbazar is just rubble now. Habiba Huq, 85, was evicted from there and her belongings stolen even though a case is pending with a court regarding her removal.

PHOTO: TAWFIQUE ALI

Of a strange eviction

TAWFIQUE ALI and SHARIFUL ISLAM

The Victory Day morning of last year started like any other for the 85-year-old widow of a former Ispahani company director. She woke up, did her usual chores and had breakfast.

But soon the day turned like no other for Habiba Huq.

Around 10:00am, to her utter shock, unidentified men broke into her house in Ispahani Colony at the capital's Moghbazar.

"When I was sitting in the dining room, I saw a man trespassing and brandishing a stick. He had come through the backdoor," said Habiba, widow of Syed Mujibul Huq, while talking to The Daily Star at her daughter's

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