

WEATHER
FORECAST

YESTERDAY'S TEMPERATURES	DHAKA	MYMENSINGH	CHITTAGONG	SYLHET	RAJSHAHI	RANGPUR	KHULNA	BARISAL	COX'S BAZAR
	H 25.6 L 13.3	H 22.8 L 11.6	H 26.6 L 13.6	H 23.7 L 11.5	H 24.2 L 10.5	H 23.0 L 10.5	H 27.2 L 12.4	H 27.3 L 10.6	H 27.1 L 14.6

Weather may remain dry over the country in next 24 hours till 6:00pm today, said the Met office. Light to moderate fog may occur at places over the country during mid-night till morning. The sun sets in the capital today at 5:45pm and rises tomorrow at 06:39am. Highest and lowest temperature recorded in some major cities and towns today were:

PRESIDENT POLL SC lawyer serves legal notice on EC, govt

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A Supreme Court lawyer yesterday served a legal notice on the Election Commission and the government, seeking cancellation of the upcoming presidential election in 24 hours.

The EC on January 25 declared the schedule for holding the presidential election on February 18 as the incumbent President Abdul Hamid's tenure expires on April 23.

He took office on April 24 in 2013.

Yesterday, Advocate Eunus Ali Akond sent the notice saying that the current parliament cannot elect a new president as per Article 123 (1) of the constitution.

According to the article, if the term of the president expires before the dissolution of the parliament by the members of which he was elected, the election to fill the vacancy shall not be held until after the next general election of members of the parliament.

"In the case of a vacancy in the office of President occurring by reason of the expiration of his term of office an election to fill the vacancy shall be held within the period of ninety to sixty days prior to the date of expiration of the term:

Provided that if the term expires before the dissolution of the Parliament by members of which he was elected the election to fill the vacancy shall not be held until after the next general election of members of Parliament, but shall be held within thirty days after the first sitting of Parliament following such general election," the article says.

Eunus Ali said he will file a writ petition with the High Court seeking necessary directives if the respondents -- the Election Commission and the Government -- do not cancel the polls schedule.



Once a popular hotspot for migratory birds during winter, Tanguar Haor has worn a deserted look this time. Man-made causes like illegal hunting, destruction of biodiversity and climate change contributed to the decline in the number of winged guests visiting the area. The photo was taken recently.

PHOTO: SHEIKH NASIR

TANGUAR HAOR Unfriendly host, uninterested guests

UNB, Sunamganj

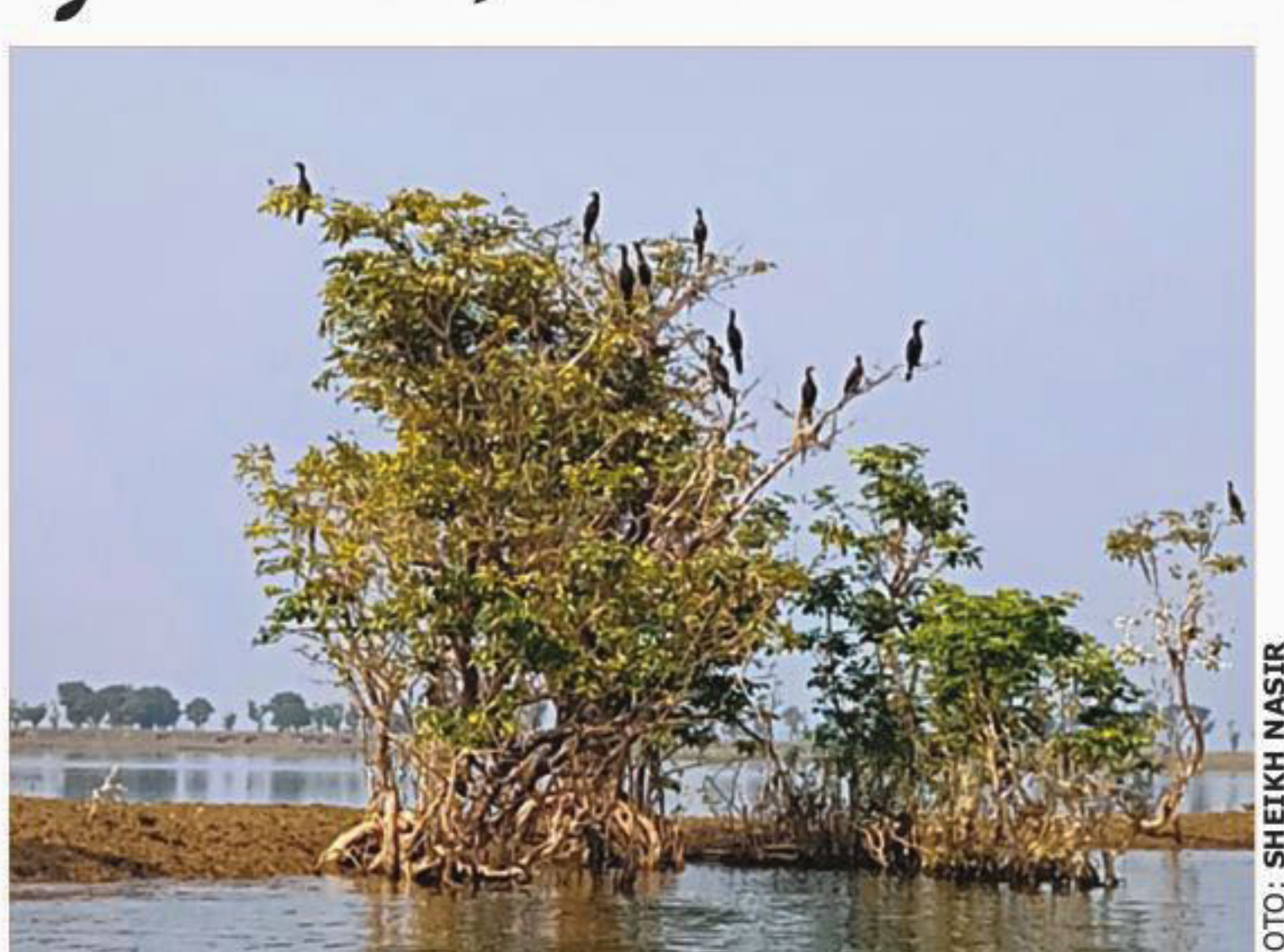
Tanguar Haor, a prominent Bangladeshi wetland rich in biodiversity, has long been known for attracting thousands of migratory birds during winter in the country's northeastern region.

But the haor sees a decline in the number of migratory birds visiting the area this winter, thanks to unabated bird hunting and ecological imbalances.

Locals and experts attributed such decline in seasonal "guest birds" to illegal hunting, loss of forage and biodiversity, and climatic changes, among others.

Each year, around 219 species of winged visitors used to flock to the haor flying thousands of miles from various parts of the world including Siberia, China, Himalaya and many other countries, bringing along a rich natural diversity and beauty to the wetland. These also used to attract a good number of tourists.

But this year, to the utmost



A small flock of migratory birds perched on trees in Tanguar Haor.

PHOTO: SHEIKH NASIR

disappointment of tourists and bird lovers, the number of visiting birds dwindled sharply.

Locals alleged that the main reason behind the decline is after-dark bird hunting dodging the guards, and a lack of forage that birds feed on.

Located in the Dharmapasha and Tahirpur upazilas of north-eastern Sunamganj district, Tanguar Haor is a unique wetland

ecosystem of national importance and has come into international focus.

The area of Tanguar haor, which includes 46 villages, spans over an area of 100 sq km. Bangladesh declared Tanguar haor as an Ecologically Critical Area (ECA) in 1999 considering its critical condition as a result of overexploitation of its natural resources.

In 2000, the haor basin was declared a Ramsar Site -- a wetland site designated of international importance under the Ramsar Convention. According to www.ramsar.org, the Ramsar Convention is an intergovernmental treaty that provides a framework for national action and international cooperation for the conservation and wise use of wetlands and their resources. Bangladesh is a signatory to the Ramsar Convention.

With this declaration, the government must be committed to preserve its natural resources

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HC bumps into forged bail order

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A High Court bench yesterday came across a forged bail order and directed the criminal investigation department (CID) and Supreme Court registrar general to investigate into the matter.

The bench of Justice Sheikh Abdul Awal and Justice Md Khasruzzaman took notice of the fictitious bail order that was placed before it during hearing a petition filed by an accused seeking bail in a case filed in Chittagong in January last year over the possession of 22,000 pieces of Yaba tablets.

While the court was hearing a bail petition filed by Rafique, one of the accused in the case, it was presented with the forged copy of an HC order granting bail to Selim Uddin, another accused in the case.

The court became suspicious when Rafique's lawyers -- Mohammad Rezaul Karim and Mohammad Azizur Rahman Mishu -- placed before it Selim's bail order issued earlier by the same court, Deputy Attorney General (DAG) Fazlur Rahman Khan told The Daily Star.

Since the judges of the court could not recollect granting bail to Selim in the Yaba possession case before, they called in four court officials -- tasked with typing, attaching, comparing and signing HC orders -- to verify whether the bail order was a forged one.

After scrutinising the document, the officials verified that Selim's bail order was not prepared by them, the DAG said, adding that the HC then ordered the CID and the SC registrar general to investigate into the incident and take

SEE PAGE 4 COL 7

Mujibul stands by Rubina

Assures family of her treatment, provides Tk 2 lakh

UNB, Dhaka

Railways Minister Mujibul Haque yesterday assured the family of Jagannath University (JnU) student Rubina Akhter, who lost her legs under a train on Sunday afternoon, of standing by her.

He said everything will be done to provide the 22-year-old with prosthetic legs.

The minister also handed over a cheque for Tk 2 lakh to her mother, Rahima Khatun, at his ministry office around noon, said a press release.

He also spoke to the director of Dhaka Medical College Hospital where Rubina is undergoing treatment and enquired about her physical condition.

A final-year student of social work department at Jagannath University, Rubina in a tragic accident lost both her legs after she stumbled and fell before a moving train in the capital's Kamalapur Railway Station on Sunday.

Rubina was in her final months to finish her studies and her poor family looked up to her for a brighter future. After losing her father, a farmer, two years ago, she had been facing difficult times to support herself for her educational and other expenses in the city. Rubina used to bear her expenses from a scholarship awarded by a private bank, but the tenure of the scholarship was about to end. She used to tutor a student, but that also ended recently.

Protests against

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hundred activists of pro-Awami League student body BCL attacked a group of students, and leaders and activists of left-leaning student organisations to "rescue" DU Vice Chancellor Prof Akhtaruzzaman, who was kept confined in front of his office by the protestors.

At least 50 male and female students and two journalists were injured in the attack.

The students were demonstrating to press home their four-point demand, including punishment of the BCL men who harassed some female students a few days ago.

Earlier on January 15, BCL men foiled another demonstration on the campus, harassed female students and beat up the protest coordinator, before handing him over to the authorities. The sit-in was staged demanding cancellation of the affiliation of seven colleges with the DU.

Upcoming polls a test case for new

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former IGP Nur Mohammad and was put forward by Hassan Mahmood Khandker and Shahidul Hoque.

He further sought assistance from all to ensure better policing services in the upcoming days.

A number of police officials also spoke at the farewell ceremony and praised Shahidul for taking different welfare and people-oriented tasks during his tenure, including introducing IGP media award, community policing day, police memorial day, and 999 emergency helpline.

Constable Keya Khatun thanked

Shahidul for ensuring a woman-friendly working atmosphere in the police force. She said it is a matter of pride that the ratio of female officials in Bangladesh Police is 8 percent, which is 6 percent in India and 1 percent in Pakistan.

Rapid Action Battalion Director General Benazir Ahmed, DMP Commissioner Asaduzzaman Mia, Chittagong Metropolitan Police Commissioner Mohammad Iqbal Bahar also spoke at the farewell ceremony while Additional IGP (admin) Mukhlesur Rahman chaired the function.

Number of voters now 10.41cr: EC

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released before the next national elections to be held in December next.

Some 44 lakh fresh voters were included in the voter list, while some 17 lakh dead voters were removed from it following the voter updating programme conducted from July 2017.

On January 31, 2017, the number of total voters was 10,14,40,601, he added.

As per the law, the EC publishes a draft updated voter list on January 2 every year, while the final updated voter list on January 31 every year disposing of complaints over fresh voters, if any.

Meanwhile, Chittagong district has got 1,62,828 voters. With the current addition, the total number of voters is now 19,50,669 in the port city and 36,94,714 in its 15 upazilas.



Banners of various political parties hanging from utility cables in the capital. Be it on the walls or hanging from top, the city seemed to be flooded with these eyesores. The photo was taken at Karwan Bazar on Tuesday.

Diplomatic efforts on to regularise

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RMMRU Chair Prof Tasneem Siddiqui said the workshop was arranged to share preliminary findings of a survey with different stakeholders before preparing a complete report which will be published in June.

RMMRU with the help of the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation conducted the survey in 2017 to compare livelihoods of expatriate migrants, internal migrants, and non-migrants in 20 districts with the findings of a similar study conducted in 17 of the districts in 2014.

Yesterday, findings of 15 districts were disclosed. It says the income of expatriate migrant workers was higher than that of the internal migrants and non-migrants.

The RMMRU findings say remittance of both male and female migrant workers

increased nominally between 2014 and 2017 with male migrants remitted Tk 183,045 annually and their female counterparts remitted Tk 118,950.

However, remittance as a fraction of total income of both male and female workers has reduced in the last three years. In 2014, male migrants remitted 54 percent of their income. In 2017, they sent 51 percent. In 2014, women sent 63 percent of total income, now it has reduced to 54 percent, it says.

Income remained same for workers living in Saudi Arabia, Malaysia, Bahrain and Jordan. Monthly income increased for those who live in the UAE, Kuwait, Oman, Lebanon and Singapore, according to the preliminary findings. It also says migration cost for male workers increased substantially while it decreased for females in the last three years.

HC slaps travel

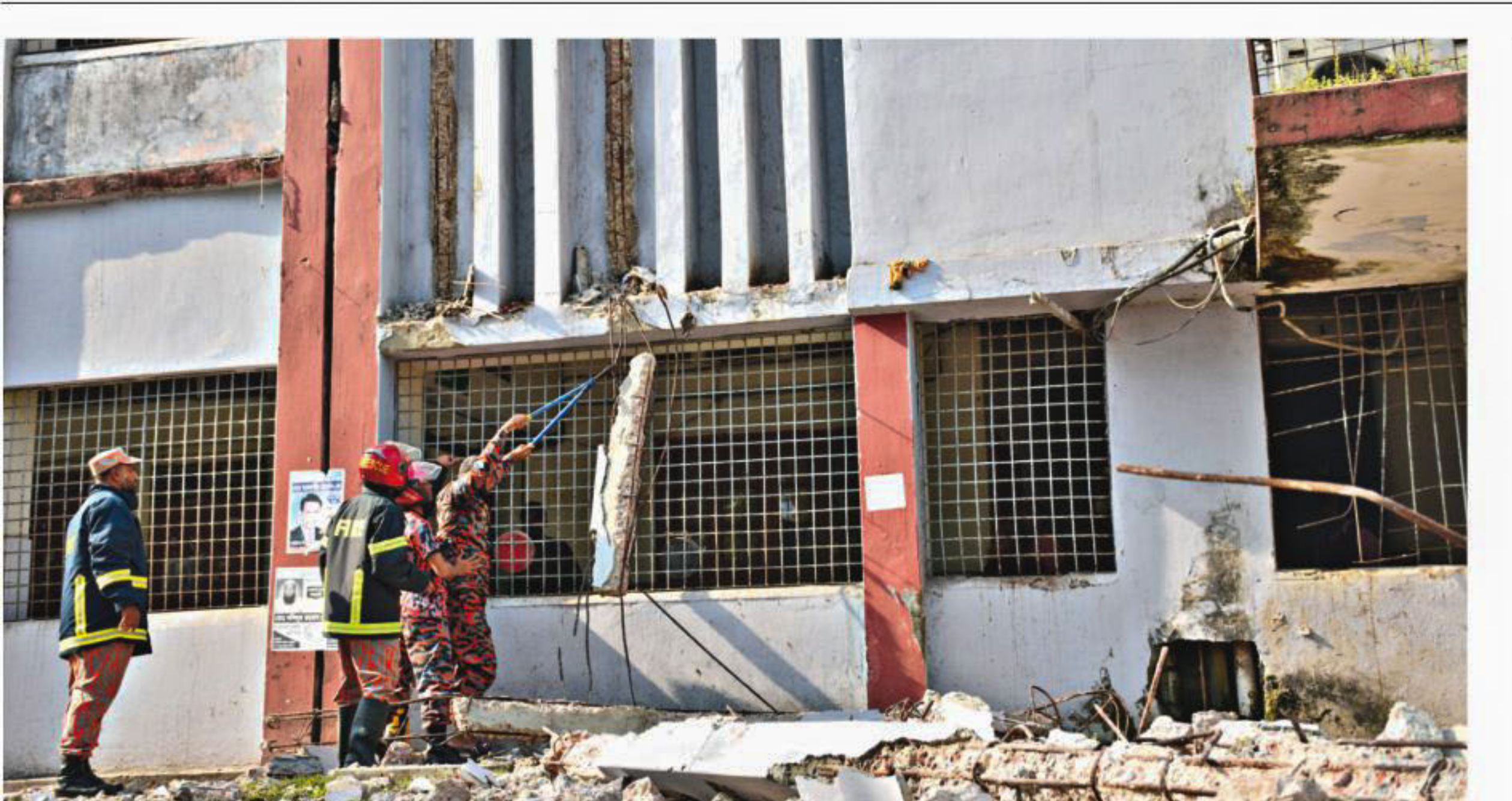
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offshore banking unit; Mohammad Mahuz Ull Islam, its vice president of corporate treasury department, and Nurul Azim, its senior vice president.

This newspaper, based on an investigation report prepared by the Bangladesh Bank, published a news item on December 17 about the amount of money allegedly laundered from AB Bank to the UAE.

According to the case statement, businessman "Saiful introduced his friends and members of international fraud syndicate Khurram Abdullah and Abdus Samad Khan to Wahidul [former AB Bank chairman] to launder money from AB Bank."

Saiful, chairman of Sky Aviation Services that is the general sales agent of Fly Dubai, is believed to be one of the kingpins of the laundering syndicate.



Fire fighters demolishing some columns on the five-storey building of Sher-e-Bangla Medical College Hospital in Barisal after one of the columns came apart yesterday when its exterior was being painted. In 1968, when the building was constructed, the columns were a part of its beautification. However, in the last 50 years the building has weakened and several cracks were developed on different parts. An official of Public Works Department (PWD), Barisal, said the building needs to go through a "major renovation", which includes reconstruction of some pillars and parts of roof and wall following a thorough inspection, he said.

PHOTO: STAR

No immediate plan to raise

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items and the number of export destinations also rose to 750 and 199 respectively.

Meanwhile, speaking on a point of order, Jatiya Party MP Kazi Feroz Rashid said there are many spots in the capital including Gulshan, Gulistan, Paltan and Dhanmondi

where street children openly use illegal drugs damaging their lives. The premier instantly replied that she has taken notes of the matter and will give instruction to launch a drive right away to stop children from using drugs. She also urged the MPs to look into the matter in their respective constituencies.