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সংস্করণ

বিশ্ব বলেছিলো- পদ্মা সেতু 'সম্ভব না'  
একজন প্রধানমন্ত্রী আর ১৬ কোটি বাঙালি বলেছিলেন-  
'কেন না!'

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# Trishal girls fight child marriages

Group of schoolgirls foiled 10 child marriage attempts in two months

MD AMINUL ISLAM with ANDREW EAGLE

In Mymensingh's Trishal upazila, child marriage has a dynamic new foe: a brigade of schoolgirls. Led by Mahbuba Alam Tripti, the group that originally consisted of 12 students studying in classes six to nine, with more girls since encouraged to join, is determined to eradicate eve-teasing and child marriage. Having prevented 10 child marriages in the last two months alone, they're proving a force to be reckoned with.

"Since we started our efforts we have only gained enthusiasm," says Tripti. "We have received a lot of spontaneous support from guardians and locals in general. So far, we have contacted over a hundred families to discuss the pitfalls of child marriage and their response is overwhelmingly positive." The group also organises student meetings at schools.

Based in Balipara union and equipped with uniforms, caps and bicycles, the group's motto is "prevention is better than cure." The initiative is the brainchild of Trishal's upazila nirbahi officer, Jafor Ripon, who has assured the girls of round-the-clock assistance from the upazila administration. The brigade was inaugurated by Mymensingh's Deputy Commissioner Md Khalilur Rahman on 31 October last year.

"Recently we visited Dhala Rishipara," says Tripti. "It's an area where many scheduled caste people live. They are often unaware of the negative consequences of early marriage, which is the reason such marriages are commonplace there."

"We held several courtyard meetings," she continues, "and were able to convince 39 families that child marriage is a really bad idea. Our upazila nirbahi officer was on hand to participate."

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Wearing uniforms and caps and riding bicycles, the schoolgirls are on the way to a village in Mymensingh's Trishal to raise awareness against child marriage there. Inset, some of the girls along with Upazila Nirbahi Officer Jafor Ripon holding a courtyard meeting to convince some local families that child marriage is a bad idea. The photos were taken recently.

PHOTO: STAR



## 4 policemen among 7 held over robbery

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Narsingdi

Detective Branch of police in Narsingdi has arrested seven people, including four policemen, on charges of robbing a family on Dhaka-Sylhet highway several days ago.

The seven were held in raids carried out on Tuesday and Wednesday morning.

They are sub-inspectors Sakhawat Hossain and Azharul Islam; and constables Mainul Islam and Saidul Islam of Raipura Police Station, their accomplices Nur Mohammad, Nuruzzaman and Sadek Miah, said DB Inspector (OC) Saidur Rahman.

Sources in Narsingdi DB said Mohammad Sohel, a Bangladeshi expatriate in Malaysia, landed at Dhaka airport on Friday evening. Later, he along with his family members, who had come to receive him at the airport, hired a microbus to go to their home in Raipura upazila's Hairmara village.

As the driver stopped the vehicle at a CNG station near Narsingdi Sadar upazila on the highway for fuel, the two sub-inspectors appeared there in another

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## Quota system in civil service challenged

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A writ petition has been filed with the High Court seeking cancellation of the quota system in the civil service.

The petitioners -- two journalists and a Dhaka University student -- submitted the prayer to the HC yesterday.

They appealed to the court to direct the government to re-evaluate the quota system, describing it as discriminatory and contrary to the constitution.

DU student Anisur Rahman Mir, Member Secretary of Comilla Journalists' Association Didarul Alam and Senior Sub-editor of daily Amader Orthoneeti Abdul Wadud filed the petition.

The petitioners said the constitution does not allow any discrimination.

In the petition, they mentioned that the then

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## A whale with words



AFP, Paris

Her head above water, Wikie the killer whale looks at the human trainer next to her pool, listens, then loudly vocalises: "Hello."

It is not a perfect imitation, but, astonishingly, recognisable.

It is the first scientific demonstration of an orca mimicking human words, which also included "Amy" -- the name of Wikie's handler -- "Bye-Bye", and "One-Two-Three".

"We were not expecting a perfect match, like a parrot," researcher Jose Abramson of the Complutense University of Madrid said of the experiment reported yesterday in the journal Proceedings of the Royal Society B.

Yet in a trial with six different words or phrases, some of Wikie's attempts were "a very high quality match", especially given that orcas' vocal anatomy is "totally different" to ours.

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## Trump urges unity, strong borders

AFP, Washington

President Donald Trump appealed Tuesday for national unity and strong borders in his first State of the Union address, calling for "one American family" after a year marred by acrimony, division and scandal.

Delivering his biggest speech of the year, this most polarising of presidents sought to put the spotlight on a robust economy, while pointedly calling on a packed joint session of Congress to enact tough curbs on immigration.

"Tonight, I call upon all of us to set aside our differences, to seek out common ground, and to summon the unity we need to deliver for the people we were elected to serve," he said.

"Tonight, I want to talk about what kind of future we are going to have, and what kind of nation we are going to be. All of us, together, as one team, one people, and one American family."

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## Under pressure to drop case?

Wife of man who died in Rajshahi Rab custody last year alleges her brother was picked up, released; Rab denies

ANWAR ALI, Rajshahi

It was a dreadful day for her as her husband "died from torture" in Rab custody.

She was at home in Kaibartapara of Naogaon's Manda upazila, but could do nothing to save him from torture.

Ten days later, she somehow managed to file a murder case with a Naogaon court. She accused a Rab official, 25 unnamed members of the elite force and eight locals of killing her husband Majharul Islam.

The incident happened nearly five months ago. And now, she fears she may lose another member of her family as the Rapid Action Battalion members allegedly have been threatening them with "crossfire" if the case is not withdrawn.

Talking to The Daily Star, Shamima Akter, mother of a five-year-old son, complained that Rab members recently picked up her brother and took her to the Naogaon court to press her to drop the case.

She said Rab-5 Director Lt Col Mahbubul Alam offered money to her, assured her of looking after her son's education and arranging a government job for him once he is grown up in exchange for withdrawing the case.

However, the Rab official claimed none of the allegations was true. "As my fellow force members have been accused of murder, it is quite natural that I will seek withdrawal of the case. But it has to be done under legal provisions, rather than by using force or threat," he said.

Majharul, aged about 30, died at Rajshahi Medical College Hospital early

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## 'Top outlaw' killed in 'gunfight'

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Pabna

An alleged top leader of an outlawed party was killed in a "gunfight" with police in Dhalarchar area of Pabna's Bera upazila early yesterday during a drive for recovering illegal firearms.

Four policemen were also injured in the incident.

The deceased, Julhash Mondol, 42, of village Darirchar Mondolpara in Dhalarchar area, was the

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**SIBL Foundation Hospital & Diagnostic Center**

**PRAYER TIMING FEBRUARY 1**

Fazr Zohr Asr Maghrib Esha

AZAN 5-30 12-45 4-15 5-52 7-15

JAMAAT 6-05 1-15 4-30 5-56 7-45

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

## 3-year-old 'raped' in Jessore

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Benapole

A three-year-old girl was allegedly raped at a village in Jhikargacha upazila of Jessore yesterday morning.

The victim's mother said her daughter was playing in front of their house in Laujani village and was lured by the alleged rapist.

Hearing the child's screams, family members rushed to the spot and found her in an abandoned building nearby.

She identified the rapist as a 25-year old man of the same village. He managed to escape.

The child was rushed to Jhikargacha Upazila Health Complex. Later, she was taken to Jessore General Hospital.

Dr Abdur Rahim of the hospital said the child was

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The moon is seen during a lunar eclipse, referred to as the "super blue blood moon", in Chittagong city yesterday.

PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

## First super blue blood moon in 35 years

AP, Cape Canaveral

The moon put on a rare cosmic show yesterday: a red blue moon, super big and super bright.

It's the first time in 35 years a blue moon has synced up with a supermoon and a total lunar eclipse, or blood moon because of its red hue.

Hawaii and Alaska had the best seats, along with the Canadian Yukon, Australia and Asia. The western US also had good viewing, along with Russia.

At the Griffith Observatory in Los Angeles, hundreds gathered on the lawn in the wee hours, under clear skies. Traffic was backed up more than a mile around the observatory. Sky-gazers also lined

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## SEARCH FOR LEADERS!

Panna Batteries Limited, a sister concern of Panna Group, is one of the largest battery manufacturing company in Bangladesh, is in the process of expanding its operation into the international market. The new expansion project will be one of the highly automated world class SMF battery factories in Dhaka. The new plant will be requiring **Dynamic Engineers** for working in a robotic environment.

**Position and Job requirements:**

**Departmental Heads:**

B. Sc in Electrical/ Mechanical Engineering  
Age 35 to 40 years  
Experience 12 to 15 years

**Executive/Sr. Executive:**

B. Sc in Electrical/ Mechanical Engineering  
Age 30 to 35 years  
Experience 5 to 7 years

**Officer/Sr. Officer:**

Fresh Graduates in Electrical or Mechanical Engineering/ Diploma with 3 years' experience  
Age below 30

Salary Range: Negotiable (Candidates are requested to mention the expected salary)  
Other Benefits: As per company policy

Initially, the individual will be enrolled in project activity and key personnel will be sent for overseas training at European machine manufacturer's premises. All the applicants must have a valid passport. Interested candidates are requested to apply with their detail resume latest by **February 13, 2018** to [hr@pannagroupbd.com](mailto:hr@pannagroupbd.com)

[www.pannagroupbd.com](http://www.pannagroupbd.com)