

# Every woman is a daughter

Jhalakathi daughters celebrate in nationwide first, despite threats

M. JAHIRUL ISLAM JEWEL with ANDREW EAGLE

Every girl, every woman is somebody's daughter. It's a simple fact worthy of celebration; and Jhalakathi town did just that. The inaugural "Konna Utshob", a first-of-its-kind festival dedicated to daughters, was held on 26 January 2018. Organised by five outstanding women, well over ten thousand daughters aged between five and ninety attended the event, held in spite of threats.

"I first dreamt of such a programme around two months ago," says local councillor Sharmin Mousumi Keka, 40, also the secretary of the women's Awami League organisation in Jhalakathi. "I hoped for a day where daughters could join together and share experiences. I wanted to honour daughters since it's still true that many families prefer boys."

It's unsurprising that Sharmin

would consider daughters: she has two of them. "At first, I shared my idea on Facebook. From women and girls there was a huge response! It really encouraged me to proceed."

With help from the upazila's officer for women's affairs, Nasrin Aktar, Jhalakathi municipality ward councillor Nasima Kamal and two primary school headmistresses Shimul Sultana Happy and Jefrin Farzana Shimul, the event came to life.

Industry Minister Ameer Hossain Amu agreed to be the chief guest and prominent singer Momtaz Begum MP performed at the daughters-only function, held at Harachandra Girls' High School.

"Women play an important role in the country's development," said the minister. "I am proud of this programme. It will inspire all present to strive for success."

"I have performed at innumerable

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From left, Happy, Keka, Nasrin, Nasima and Shimul -- the five women who organised the "Konna Utshob", a festival dedicated to daughters, in Jhalakathi town on January 26.

PHOTO: STAR

## 'Robber' killed in 'gunfight' in Munshiganj

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Munshiganj

A person was killed and three police officers were injured in an alleged gunfight between some law enforcers and a gang of robbers in Munshiganj yesterday.

According to police, the deceased, Rinku Dewan, 24, was an accused in 21 cases. He was from Dewankandi village of the district.

Officer-in-Charge of Munshiganj Sadar Police Station Alamgir Hossain said acting on a tip-off, police went to Charbeherpara area to arrest Rinku

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## Tension mounts in Maldives

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those serving jail sentences.

He said the decision cleared the way for him to return to the Maldives, a south Asian atoll nation known as a honeymooners' paradise.

"I can contest and will contest," he told AFP in Colombo.

"We must set up proper procedures for inclusive, free and fair elections with full international observation."

Nasheed was barred from contesting any election in the Maldives after the controversial 2015 conviction on a terrorism charge widely criticised as politically motivated.

He has urged the government to respect the top court's shock decision to quash the convictions of nine dissidents and order the release of those

serving jail sentences.

The court said the "questionable and politically motivated nature of the trials of the political leaders warrant a retrial".

The ruling brought opposition activists onto the streets in celebration, sparking clashes with police who fired tear gas to disperse the crowd.

It threatens to isolate President Abdulla Yameen, who has faced previous unsuccessful opposition attempts to impeach him for alleged corruption.

The Maldives' popular image as an upmarket holiday paradise has been severely damaged by a major crack-down on dissent under Yameen, who has overseen the jailing of almost all the political opposition.

Nasheed's Maldivian Democratic Party (MDP) welcomed the court's ruling, which it said "effectively ends President Yameen's authoritarian rule".

Nasheed, a charismatic and high-profile campaigner against climate change, was convicted in 2015 on a terrorism charge and sentenced to 13 years in jail.

In 2016 he was granted prison leave for medical treatment in London, where he secured political asylum.

A UN panel has ruled that his imprisonment was illegal and ordered the regime to pay him compensation.

The UN's rights agency yesterday urged the Maldives government to respect the court's decision and release those still in jail.

## BB still waits to get back

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**SLOW PACE IN RETRIEVING MONEY** Amid huge uproar, the BB governor, several ministers and MPs visited the US and the Philippines as part of their effort to bring back the money.

Initially, the Philippines authorities also cooperated, initiating legal steps against the RCBC and some individuals.

But BB officials said they found lacking in the Philippines' efforts lately.

Contacted, SK Sur Chowdhury, deputy governor of the BB and currently an adviser at the central bank, said bringing back money took time.

"But our effort to retrieve the money is on," he said.

BB Governor Fazle Kabir told reporters on January 29 that several cases were now pending with courts in the Philippines, and the process for bringing back over \$7 million was nearly complete.

A joint team of the BB and the CID left for the Philippines on January 29 to complete the formalities in this regard.

Of the \$66.46 millions yet to be retrieved, the Philippines authorities could trace \$47.2 million, now in possession of several individuals and companies and the matter is now pending with different courts and authorities, according to BB sources.

Holders of the rest of the money (\$19.26 million) could not be traced, they said.

Of the \$47.2 million traced, \$29 million were transferred to a Manila-based casino -- Solaire -- from the RCBC. A court froze the casino account and the case is now pending before the Supreme Court, they said.

Another \$17 million remains in the account of Philrem Service Corporation, a money remittance company. This matter too is pending before a court.

The remittance firm has been used as a "cleaning house" to hide the trail of \$81 million looted from the BB, according to a Reuters' report in April 2016.

Philrem muddied the process and washed the stolen funds via a web of transfers and currency conversions around Philippine bank accounts, before moving it into Manila casinos and junket operators, it added.

Philrem has denied any wrongdoing. **PREPARATION ON TO SUE RIZAL** Bangladesh will claim the \$19.26 million in untraced money from Rizal as it was transferred via the bank, BB officials said.

The Philippines Central Bank has already fined the RCBC \$21 million as it found irregularities in its money transaction linked to the heist, they said.

Bangladesh will sue Rizal if it does not send back the money, officials said, adding, preparations in this regard were underway.

NY Fed and SWIFT, the messaging system through which fund transfer requests were made, will help Bangladesh in this regard.

Under international money laundering laws, Bangladesh has to file the case within three years of the heist, BB officials said.

"So we will file the case within this year if Rizal Bank does send back the money," said a BB official, asking not to be named.

"We will claim more money from Rizal Bank if we do not get back the money from the individuals and companies after the cases are disposed of," he said.

The BB may file the case with a New York court as the money was transferred from there.

**NO ACTION AT BB** Mohammed Farashuddin, head of the

three-member committee that probed the theft, said they submitted the report in May last year, but the government did not publish the report.

"Had the government published the report and taken steps as per our recommendations, retrieving the money would have been easier," said Farashuddin, also a former governor of the BB.

In August last year, Finance Minister AMA Muhith said the government was not publishing the report as a case was pending with a court in the Philippines.

Ministry officials said the report may be publish on completion of the investigation.

US-based FireEye had conducted a forensic investigation into the heist. The BB handed its report over to the investigators.

The BB governor said they did not take any action in line with the probe report of Farashuddin-led committee and did not publish the report so as not to influence the ongoing investigations at home and abroad.

"We will take action about implementing the recommendations after the report is published," he added.

**CID INVESTIGATION** CID officials said they could not complete the investigation as they did not get response from other countries whose citizens were allegedly involved in the heist.

"It is difficult to say when we will be able to submit the charge sheet," said Molla Nazrul Islam, Special Superintendent of CID, who is coordinating the team probing the case.

"The case involves transnational crimes and criminals from different countries are involved. We have to exchange correspondences with different countries, which takes time," he said.

Citizens from eight to nine countries, including the Philippines, Sri Lanka, China and Japan, are involved, he said.

Investigators sent letters to those countries, seeking particulars of some 40 suspects in the last 10 months. No countries, except the Philippines, have responded.

"We are trying to get information from other countries through our embassies there," Nazrul said.

"People from Bangladesh -- inside and outside of Bangladesh Bank -- may have assisted in the hacking. We are investigating the heist keeping this in our mind," he said, but declined to give any details.

**REMEDIATION PLAN** As the hackers used sophisticated tools to break into BB's payment systems, the BB has taken up a major remediation plan involving around Tk 200 crore to strengthen its security system.

It has already purchased some sophisticated tools but they have not been installed yet, BB officials said.

For this reason, the BB continues to follow its three-stage payment system, which it had introduced to communicate with NY Fed following the heist.

The BB governor said the remediation plan would be implemented by June.

## Teenage girl

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screams, neighbours rushed in, broke the door and rescued her, it added.

Officer-in-Charge of Baliahangi Police Station Mostafizur Rahman told this correspondent that they arrested two of the accused, including Moyna Begum, the mother of the alleged rapist, in connection with the incident.

The main accused, Moinul, has absconded and police were trying to arrest him, said sources at the police station.



Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan Kamal, second from left, with Hefajat-e-Islam chief Shah Ahmed Shafi, left, at Darul Ulum Moinul Islam Madrasa in Chittagong's Hathazari yesterday. Story on Page 3.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

## SL in control

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Mendis, however, was lucky for the third time -- and Mustafizur Rahman was the aggrieved bowler for the second time -- after getting lines on four and 57 on the second day. Batting on 87 in the third over yesterday, the right-hander edged a back-of-a-length delivery from the left-arm seamer but it went between first and second slip.

From that point, Mendis and De Silva went on the charge and added 108 runs in the first session without losing a wicket, in the process reaching a few milestones.

Birthday boy Mendis, who resumed the day on 83, went on to register his fourth Test hundred in style with a boundary off left-arm spinner Sunzamul Islam, having faced exactly 200 balls. De Silva, having reached his fourth century the previous day, started cautiously before opening up and reached 150 off his 187th delivery. When he reached 157 he became the joint-fastest Sri Lanka batsman -- along with Roy Dias and Michael Vandort -- to score 1,000 runs.

Bangladesh finally got the breakthrough as Mahmudullah took the new ball after lunch and it was Mustafizur who got his deserved reward when he dismissed De Silva for a career-high 173.

The 26-year-old went for a pull off a rising Mustafizur delivery that was angled away but the right-hander only managed to get a leading edge for wicketkeeper Liton Das to run across to short cover and pouch safely.

Mendis at the other end shifted gears but was lucky yet again -- this time it was a run-out opportunity -- when he and Roshen Silva were stranded in the middle of the pitch but Mehedi Hasan Miraz's throw flew over the keeper's head.

Later, Mendis went past his previous best of 194 that also came against Bangladesh last year in Galle, and was eyeing his maiden double ton. However, the right-hander who has a tendency to

charge the bowlers just before a break paid the price when he came down the track to hit left-arm spinner Taijul Islam over midwicket but only managed to get a leading edge. Mushfiqur Rahim took a fantastic catch running backwards to end a superb knock of 196 off 327 balls that featured 22 fours and two sixes.

Meanwhile, the Tigers continued making mistakes. Silva was on one when wicketkeeper Liton was unable to hold on to the ball and missed a stumping chance down the leg side off the bowling of Mehedi in the 86th over.

The missed opportunity proved costly yet again as Silva and Chandimal watchfully played out the final session, during which the bowlers managed to keep things tight and limited the Lankans to 88 runs.

Silva capitalised on the opportunity and was eyeing his maiden hundred in just his second game. He will resume the fourth day on 87 while skipper Chandimal paused his innings on a 90-ball 37 and is set to add to the 89-run fourth wicket stand today.

## Airbus

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including forward flight.

The aircraft, which Airbus has been developing for less than two years, is designed to carry one passenger and fly autonomously, according to its website.

"Vahana aims to democratise personal flight and answer the growing need for urban mobility by leveraging the latest technologies in electric propulsion, energy storage, and machine vision," Airbus said in its statement.

Autonomous driving technology has made considerable progress in recent years with high-tech firms and established automakers putting test vehicles on the roads, while a handful of inventors and start-ups have developed flying cars.

## Justice Mahmud Hossain

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Yesterday evening, Justice Wahhab tendered his resignation to the president through one of his office staff, and an official concerned at the Bangabhaban received the resignation letter, a source close to his family told this correspondent.

But this newspaper could not verify it with the Bangabhaban immediately.

Citing from the resignation letter, the source said Justice Wahhab called it quits for "unavoidable personal reason".

He had been performing functions of the chief justice since October 3 last year when Justice Sinha went on leave on health grounds.

The appointment of Justice Mahmud will come into effect after he takes oath today evening.

President Abdul Hamid will administer the oath to the new chief justice around 7:00pm today at the Bangabhaban, Joynal Abedin, press secretary to the president, told The Daily Star yesterday afternoon.

The law ministry yesterday published a gazette notification on the appointment.

Contacted, Law Minister Anisul Huq told this correspondent that the president appointed Justice Mahmud as the new chief justice and he has the sole authority to make appointment to the post as per the constitution.

Asked why Justice Wahhab was not appointed chief justice though he is the senior most judge of the Appellate Division, the law minister said such a question should not be raised as it's the president's jurisdiction.

"I can't tell you why Justice Wahhab was not appointed chief justice and why the appointment of the new chief justice was delayed because the matter is president's jurisdiction," Anisul Huq added.

Attorney General Mahbubey Alam welcomed the appointment of the new chief justice.

"Justice Syed Mahmud Hossain is a very prudent judge and a socially conscious person. He has delivered a number of good judgments in his career. I hope Justice Mahmud will take the judiciary to a new height through his competent leadership," he said.

The attorney general added he will give felicitation to the new chief justice tomorrow morning.

In an instant reaction, Supreme Court Bar Association President and BNP leader advocate Zainul Abedin said deadlock was created as the post of the chief justice remained vacant for long.

Now this crisis is going to be resolved, he told The Daily Star.

Zainul mentioned that they will take decision about Justice Mahmud's felicitation at a meeting of the SCBA executive committee on Sunday.

Replying to a question, the lawyer said that seniority was disregarded in appointment of chief justice on several occasions in the past.