



Pakistani security personnel and organisers of an event hold a student, centre, after he hurled a shoe at former prime minister Nawaz Sharif during a ceremony in Lahore yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

Girl 'raped', thrown into septic tank

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

A minor girl was allegedly raped and thrown into a septic tank at Katirhar union of Hathazari upazila in Chittagong yesterday afternoon. The third grader of Katirhat Adoroso Uccho Biddaloy was rescued in a critical condition and rushed to Chittagong Medical College Hospital(CMCH). Police detained school employee Apon Chondro Mali, 45, in this connection and claimed that he had confessed to them about attempted rape. Officer-in-Charge Belal Uddin Mohammed Jahangir of Hathazari Police Station told The Daily Star yesterday. Belal said the victim was going to a nearby school to meet her brother and Mali was accompanying her. He took the girl to a desolate place and tried to violate her. It was not clear if he had succeeded.

Now kids

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When he left for home after his day care shift ended at 8:00pm, one of the kidnappers, who recently passed his SSC exams from the same school, asked Miskat to go with him to attend a function. The kidnapper, along with his two other cohorts, then got Miskat into a CNG-run auto rickshaw and took him to a nursery near Chittagong Collegiate School. There, they assaulted him till he lost consciousness. After Miskat lost consciousness, the boys left him at the nursery, fearing he was dead. They then called Miskat's mother over phone and asked her for Tk 10 lakhs as ransom, he added. "Being informed of the incident, police, pretending to be the victim's family, asked the kidnappers to come to Balirmat area of Madarbari where police arrested the trio. Using the information gleaned from them, police arrested another person in this connection", Nezam said. "I do not know why they did this. My son hasn't regained consciousness so I have not been able to speak to him," Abdul Jalil, the father of the victim said. They kidnapped the boy as they needed the money but they have not said why they needed such a big amount of money, OC Nezam added. The kidnappers are aged between 16-18 years old.

Of an alleged

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Locals brought the injured brother to Thakurgaon Sadar Hospital where he is undergoing treatment. Sub-inspector of Thakurgaon Police Station Azam Hossain said Ram Proshad had been raping the mentally-challenged girl since July 2017. Police arrested Sagor Devnath, Ram Proshad's brother, early yesterday in this connection. They are trying to arrest the others.

MPs want more

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The lawmakers now get allocations under three projects involving Tk 16,551 crore. In one of the projects titled "Priority-Based Important Rural Infrastructure Development Project-2", they are getting Tk 20 crore each for building roads and culverts in their constituencies over a period of five years. The project was approved in July 2015. Under another project, each MP gets Tk 1 crore over the same period for renovation of schools, mosques and temples. Under the third project, all MPs receive allocations for construction and extension of 10 school buildings in each constituency. About Tk 10,649 crore has already been allocated. The finance minister, however, did not give the MPs any assurance at the meeting. The lawmakers also expressed dissatisfaction over poor condition of roads. Ruhul Haque, former health minister and chairman of the parliamentary standing committee on science and technology, said highways are in a very bad shape in different parts of the country. The road from Jessore to Satkhira is in a poor state even after maintenance work, he said. Quality work cannot be expected from partisan contractors, he said, adding that money is being spent on construction and repair of roads but people are not getting desired benefits from it. Former state minister for home Shamsul Haque Tuku also expressed displeasure over low quality of construction work. "We want our people to get work. But it is not acceptable that they will do a sloppy job." He said syndicates have sprung up over getting contracts for development work. With political blessings, only two to three persons get all the contracts for development work in a district. At the meeting, there was also a debate over rice price. Citing his own calculation, Abdur Razzak, chairman of the parliamentary standing committee on finance ministry, said the cost of rice production is

only Tk 22 a kg, and it could be a maximum of Tk 32 a kg after adding up all costs including that of transportation. Muhith, however, said the statistics of the food and the agriculture ministries show that the production cost of rice is more than Tk 35 a kg. He said there is little scope for bringing the rice price below Tk 40 a kg. Some MPs said there is no need for including more schools in the Monthly Pay Order (MPO) system as an adequate number of schools are already on the MPO list. However, State Minister for Finance and Planning MA Mannan differed with them, and said many schools have not been brought under the MPO in his area. He said more schools should be given the MPO benefits in those areas that have only a few MPO-listed schools.

One-minute

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the Pakistani barbaric army on the eve of the Liberation War." The home minster said the government has undertaken all measures to ensure tight security at Savar National Memorial and also in the capital and its adjacent areas on the day. "Members of the law enforcement agencies have been asked to ensure security on March 25 and March 26." The Jatiya Sangsad during its 14th session unanimously adopted a resolution declaring March 25 as Genocide Day.

BGB, BGP

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joint patrol on the Naf river to improve harmony between two neighbouring countries. Recently, Myanmar security forces started building bunkers and barbed-wire fences along the border as well as carrying out patrols across Tambru area under Naikkhayangchhari in Bandarban which sparked fears among the Rohingya refugees stranded on no man's land near Bangladesh-Myanmar border.

HC order on Khaleda

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yesterday. Therefore, the bench would wait and see whether the case record reached in time, the HC said. The bench said this after Khaleda's lawyer Advocate Zainul Abedin prayed to it to pass an order on the bail petition, saying the HC has the jurisdiction to pass the order even without the case record. However, the officials concerned of the lower court brought the 5,373-page case documents to the criminal appeal section of the HC around 1:00pm. Advocate Sagor Hossain Leon, a lawyer for Khaleda, told The Daily Star the officials of the criminal appeal section would now examine the case documents and produce those to the HC bench along with an examination report for an order. Earlier on March 8, the HC fixed yesterday for passing a necessary order regarding the bail petition. The HC bench on February 25 heard the petition and said it would pass an order on it after receiving the case records. On February 8, the Special Judge's Court-5 of Dhaka sentenced Khaleda to five years' rigorous imprisonment after finding her guilty in the graft case. The court also jailed her elder son Tarique Rahman, now the acting chairman of BNP, and four others for 10 years and fined them Tk 2.1 crore, saying all the six convicts would have to

pay the fine in equal amounts. The Anti-Corruption Commission filed the case with Ramna police in July 2008, accusing the six of misappropriating over Tk 2.1 crore that came from a foreign bank as grants for orphans. Meanwhile, Health and Family Welfare Minister Mohammed Nasim said yesterday the government wants BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia to be freed through court orders. He also hoped that the BNP along with its chief would participate in the upcoming parliamentary election, expected to be held towards the end of this year. "We want Khaleda to be released as it looks odd that a big politician like her is in prison," the minister told journalists after joining a roundtable discussion organised by Bangla daily Prothom Alo at its office in the capital.

Medals made

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"We have a steady supply of work now. I pay my workers fairly. I understand their struggles. "I feel proud when I see my creations displayed in big, fancy stores," he said as he gave finishing touches on a sculpture. He added that he gets work orders from multinationals, schools and different event organisers.

Talks could fail

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leaders of China and Japan this week to update them on the talks, a South Korean presidential official said yesterday. Blue House spokesman Kim Eui-kyeom said in a mobile message that National Security Office head Chung Eui-yong will meet with China's Xi Jinping today, while spy agency chief Suh Hoon, accompanied by one of Chung's deputies Nam Gwan-pyo, will speak with Japan's Shinzo Abe tomorrow, reported Reuters. Chung and Suh will leave for China and Japan separately today to discuss their visit to North Korea with officials there. Chung is also scheduled to visit Russia after his trip to Beijing, but the details of that have yet to be announced. The two officials yesterday returned from a visit to the United States where an invitation from North Korean leader Kim Jong Un for dialogue on his nuclear programme was delivered to US President Donald Trump. Trump's sudden decision to meet with Kim stunned even people in his own administration. "The expectation is that the talks would lead to a discussion around a conclusion that we're ready to engage in negotiations," a senior State Department official said on Friday. Some US officials and experts worry North Korea could buy time to build up and refine its nuclear arsenal if it drags out talks with Washington.

More support

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cooperation movement. All over East Pakistan, under the instruction of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, all government, semi-government and private offices, educational institutions and banks remained closed. In Bogra, 27 prisoners broke out of jail. Law enforcement opened fire, and one prisoner died, while 15 were injured. While, at a press briefing in Lahore, Air Marshall Asgar Ali Khan said that fate was playing an odd game, where the fault was of Lahore, yet shots were fired in Dhaka. He said the people of the East region wanted to live with equal rights, not be the slaves of West Pakistan, and now the only way to alleviate this problem was to hand over power to Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. Meanwhile, National Committee member Mohammed Zahiruddin gave up the title given by Pakistan Government. In East Pakistan, Bangalee militancy kept moving up by degrees. On Dhaka University campus, students marched in military formations, giving the clear impression that the Bangalee nation was preparing for what could turn out to be a war of attrition against Pakistan. Women prominent in their various field, including the noted poet Sufia Kamal, organised themselves into resistance groups and declared absolute support and loyalty towards Bangabandhu and the movement. Overall, the atmosphere was one of a province that was about to become a free country, despite the fact that the Awami League and the regime were expected to engage in a dialogue on a resolution of the crisis sooner rather than later. Bangabandhu and his senior colleagues in the party met every day and over long stretches of time assessing the situation and directing the course of actions. For Bangabandhu and for the Bangalee nation, freedom was only a matter of time.

Colombians vote in elections seen as test for peace deal

AFP, Bogota

Colombia voted yesterday to elect a new Congress with a resurgent right, bitterly opposed to a peace deal that allows leftist former rebels to participate, expected to poll strongly. The election is set to be the calmest in half a century of conflict in Colombia, with the former rebel movement FARC spurning jungle warfare for politics, and the ELN -- the country's last active rebel group -- observing a ceasefire. "This is the first election in half a century when we will vote in peace, without the FARC as an armed group, but as a political party," said President Juan Manuel Santos, who signed a peace deal with the FARC in November 2016. The peace accord with the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) guarantees their new political party 10 of the 280 seats in the new Congress. The party uses the same Spanish acronym, which now stands for the Common Alternative Revolutionary Force, and replaced its crossed-rifles insignia with a red rose. But opinion polls give it little chance of adding to its 10 free seats, following a disastrous campaign dur-

ing which its rebels-turned-politicians were largely drowned out by a tide of public revulsion over crimes committed during the conflict. Candidates were mobbed by angry crowds at rallies and the party had to cancel its public meetings. "What is at stake for the FARC is positioning and the possibility of establishing itself with an eye to what really interests it politically: elections for mayor and governor in 2020, said Carlos Arias Orjuela, a political consultant at Externado University. The fledgling party suffered a fresh blow only days before the election when its leader, Rodrigo "Timochoenko" Londono, pulled out of the presidential race after undergoing heart surgery. With the left divided, the stage is set for hardline conservatives who oppose the agreement to win an absolute majority in Congress, and push on to win the presidential election in a few months. Opinion polls predict a triumph for ex-president and senator Alvaro Uribe and his Centro Democratico party, along with other parties opposed to the peace agreement that has polarized the South American country.

CCC office

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But Mayor Nasir, who assumed office in 2015, has a "different plan" about the flat block, alleged the people when this correspondent visited the place. Widowed and visually impaired Morjina Akther, one of the slum dwellers of Bottol, said she doesn't know what to say when the CCC betrays people like them. "We are needy in every sense. Year after year, we have been looking for a safe accommodation. That's why we all let them evict us. But we are left in the lurch as CCC temporises to allocate the flats." Saheda Begum is another widow who went through much hardship to manage Tk 10,000. "Now we are facing uncertainty as the CCC mulls shifting their office to the flat block," she said. Ramjan Ali, who is among those to pay for the flats, said they contacted the authorities concerned several times but only in vain. "The city corporation evicted us from the slum in 2013 saying they will rehabilitate us. We deposited the token money through a pay order with the account of the city corporation at the Janata Bank."

He alleged: "Every time we meet the mayor or deputy commissioner of Chittagong, we are assured of the flat handover. But these are only words. Practically they are buying time." Monjurul Alam Chowdhury, the contractor, said the construction was completed in 2016 and currently they are putting the final touches. "The city corporation has yet to take possession of the building," he added. Contacted, former mayor Manjur Alam said there were many government organisations in the port city but only the CCC came forward with humanitarian response and decided to construct the flat block after the devastating landslide in 2007. "We took an initiative to build the flat block on a 24-decimal land. The

families agreed to pay Tk 10,000 each as token money. We designed the scheme in such a way that they can pay Tk 2,500 in monthly instalment over 15 years," said the then mayor. Talking to The Daily Star recently, Manjur said all the families paid Tk 10,000 each in 2013. "I had the construction work almost completed but could not hand over the flats to them as my tenure ended," he laments. Evicted, the slum dwellers are now living in makeshift shanties near the flat block in the hope of moving there. Nasir said the former mayor should not have taken such an initiative as it is not CCC's duty to provide accommodation to the city people. There are government organisations which are tasked with the job. "There are more than a million slum dwellers in the port city. How many people would I be able to accommodate?" he questioned.

UPDF man

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attacked and hacked him indiscriminately, said the press release signed by Niron Chakma, information and publicity secretary of UPDF central committee. Contacted, Gyana Jit Chakma, secretary of Baghaichhari upazila unit MN Larma faction of the PCJSS, said Natun might have been killed over UPDF internal feuds. Their party was not involved in the killing. On December 16, Anol Bikash Chakma alias Pluto Chakma, 42, a UPDF member, was killed in Kawkhali upazila. UPDF central leader Mithun Chakma was shot dead in Khagrachhari Sadar upazila on January 4. Amir Hossain, officer-in-charge of Baghaichhari Police Station, said police recovered the body of Natun Moni and sent it to Rangamati Sadar Hospital morgue for an autopsy.

UN to gather evidence

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investigation team needs to be sent to Myanmar ... if they find the five acts of genocide, the perpetrators could be exposed to justice," he said. The NHRC chief, however, echoed Adama's fears that Myanmar might not allow the UN team to visit its western Rakhine State, the scene of atrocities. Naypyidaw earlier repeatedly declined to allow international groups from visiting the state since the army-led persecution began in August 25 last year forcing over 700,000 Rohingyas to take refuge in Bangladesh. The Article 2 of the UN Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide (1948) defines "genocide" as "any of the acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group. The acts are -- killing members of the group; causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group; deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part; imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group and forcibly transferring children of the group to another group. Hoque said if the team found elements of genocide, the UN could follow instances of Rwanda and Kosovo

for trying the Myanmar generals and others concerned in the International Criminal Court (ICC) in The Hague. The UN special adviser on the Prevention of Genocide revealed the plan days after UN assistant secretary general for human rights Andrew Gilmour said Myanmar's "ethnic cleansing" of Rohingya Muslims was still going on. "It appears that widespread and systematic violence against the Rohingya persists ... I don't think we can draw any other conclusion from what I have seen and heard in Cox's Bazar," Gilmour said. Separately, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees earlier this week said it was concerned about people living just inside Myanmar at its border with Bangladesh. Hoque urged neighbouring countries China and India to mount at least "economic pressure" on Myanmar to stop atrocities and take back their nationals ensuring their dignity and rights. He said Bangladesh would need to continue diplomatic efforts to convince China and Russia, the two permanent member of UN Security Council who opposed the UN resolution on Rohingyas, so they remain neutral to pass the resolution next time.