

### DNC gets drug detectors

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Korea International Cooperation Agency (Koica) yesterday handed over six modern drug detection devices to Department of Narcotics Control (DNC).  
The "remote drug detectors" will enable DNC to detect drugs concealed inside luggage or the human body.  
Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan Kamal, Koica Country Director Joe Hyang-Gue and DNC Director General Jamal Uddin Ahmed were present during the handover ceremony at DNC headquarters.  
Koica also handed over five cars, 125 computers and several other relevant equipment under a project titled "The project for Illicit Drug Eradication and Advanced Management through It (I Dream It)".  
Syed Towfique Uddin Ahmed, director (operations) of DNC and also the director of the "I Dream It" project, said, "We used to conduct manual search, but now the 'remote drug"

## Health ministry cannot avoid blame

HC observes on rule issued after 20 people lost eyesight following surgery

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court (HC) yesterday observed that the health ministry cannot avoid responsibility of any negligence by Directorate of Drug Administration (DGDA) in carrying out its duties.  
The court made the observation while hearing on a rule issued after 20 people lost their eyesight following surgical procedures at Impact Masudul Haque Memorial Community Health Centre (MHMCHC) in Chuadanga on March 5.  
During the hearing, Deputy Attorney General Abdullah Al Mahmud Bashar cited a health ministry report that said the drugs and surgical instruments used in the operations did not obtain clearance from the DGDA.  
The HC bench of Justice FRM Nazmul Ahasan and Justice KM Kamrul Kader examined two separate expert reports submitted by the health ministry over the incident.  
One of the reports prepared by a six-member body headed by Prof Dr Sania Tahmina, director (diseases control) of Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS), found no negligence of the hospital and said the incident was unintended and accidental.  
Another report prepared by a five-member committee headed by Md Mizanur Rahman, additional secretary, Health Services Division, said it seems the patients' eyes were damaged after being affected with germs and due to negligence in the surgical procedure.  
After concluding the proceedings, HC bench fixed today

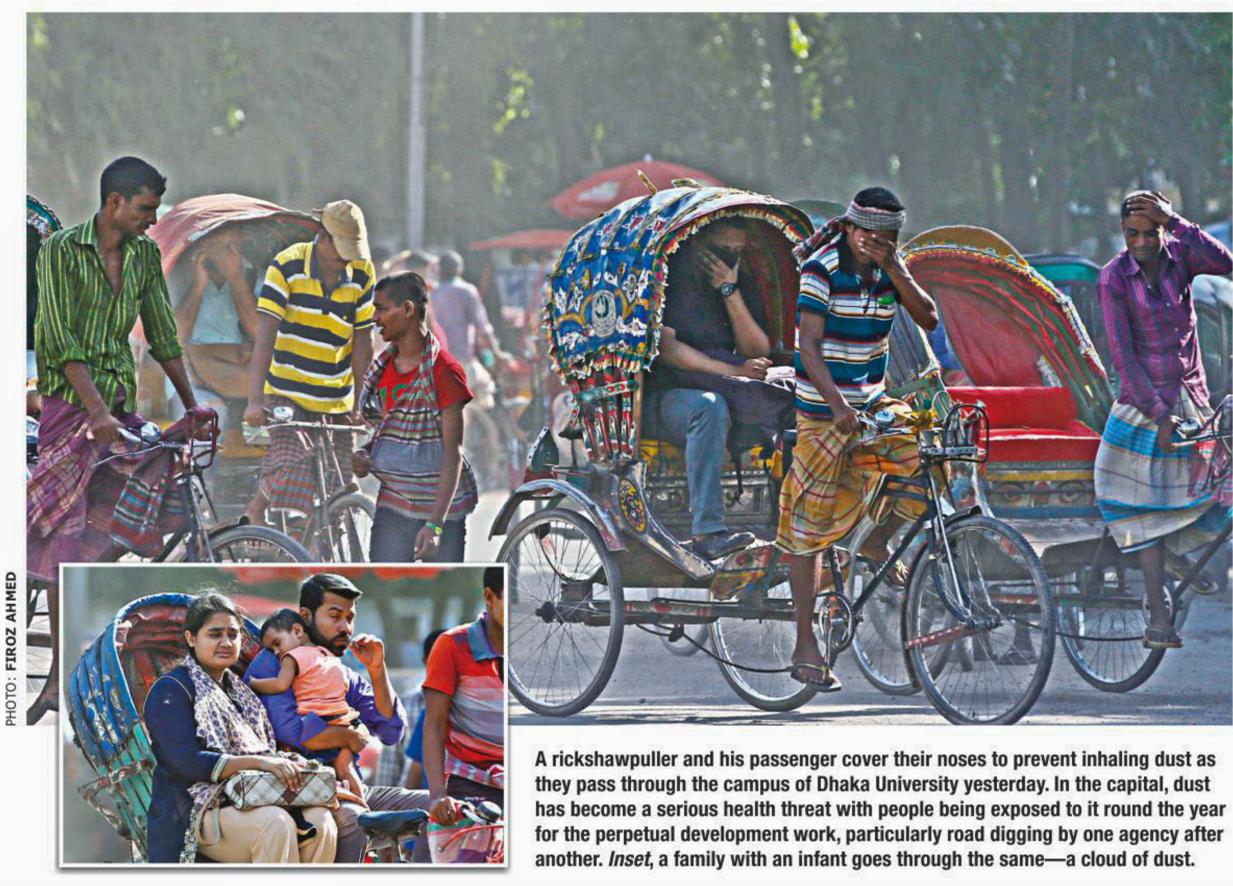


PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

A rickshawpuller and his passenger cover their noses to prevent inhaling dust as they pass through the campus of Dhaka University yesterday. In the capital, dust has become a serious health threat with people being exposed to it round the year for the perpetual development work, particularly road digging by one agency after another. Inset, a family with an infant goes through the same—a cloud of dust.

# Suspend crackdown on foreign workers, extend deadline for legalisation

Malaysian trade bodies urge govt

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

More than 100 Malaysian industry bodies have appealed to their government to suspend the ongoing crackdown on undocumented foreign workers, including Bangladeshis, and extend the legalisation deadline for six months.  
In a statement on July 13, the Federation of Malaysian Manufacturers (FMM) said 109 trade bodies jointly submitted the appeal to the ministers of home affairs and human resources over the foreign worker rehiring programme.  
"The nationwide crackdown to detain illegal foreign workers had affected genuine employers whose applications to legalise workers had been delayed, mainly by third party agents. These employers were badly affected and their business operations disrupted," said the FMM.  
The new Malaysian government ended a legal-

isation programme on June 30, and on July 1 began a nationwide raid that resulted in arrests of thousands of foreign workers, including Bangladeshis.  
The government said it wants to deport the detainees at the soonest and reduce dependence on foreign workers.  
The move is significant as Malaysia is home to some one million Bangladeshis and half of them are undocumented. Of them, many have applied for legalisation, but are yet to be legalised. Also, many have paid money to agents or sub-agents and then were deceived.  
Rights bodies in Malaysia and beyond also called for suspension of the crackdown and providing a fair chance for legalisation.  
"Migrants faced various forms of exploitation by their employers, which forced them to change jobs and become undocumented," said Adrian

Pereira, executive director of Malaysian rights body North South Initiative.  
They were also cheated in the process of legalisation but had no option for redress, he told The Daily Star.  
Abu Hayat, a Bangladeshi researcher on migration in Malaysia, said with the crackdown beginning on July 1, thousands of Bangladeshis and other nationals were going into hiding.  
FMM said it requested applications for foreign workers' legalisation be handled directly by and submitted to immigration counters nationwide, or online if a system is available, not by any third party.  
"Conditions for legalisation should adopt the 6P Amnesty programme, which requires workers to be medically fit, have valid passport for 12 months, no criminal record and at minimal costs," it said.  
It also urged for a clear and transparent process

## WAR CRIMES IN MOULVIBAZAR Verdict against 4 men today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The International Crimes Tribunal (ICT) -1 is set to deliver its verdict today in a case filed against four Moulvibazar men for allegedly committing genocide and crimes against humanity during the Liberation War in 1971.  
The three-member tribunal led by Justice Md Shahinur Islam fixed the date yesterday, three and a half months after the completion of proceedings in the case.  
The accused are Akmal Ali Talukder, Abdun Nur Talukder alias Lal Miah, Anis Miah and Abdul Musabbir Miah -- all from Rajnagar upazila of Moulvibazar.  
Akmal is now behind bars while the other three are absconding.  
On March 27 this year, the special tribunal kept the verdict pending after both the prosecution and the defence completed their closing arguments.  
The prosecution produced 13 witnesses including the investigation officer of the case, but the defence declined to produce any witness.  
After the prosecution pressed charges against the four on

## Try attackers of quota reform movement activists

Demands Fakhrul  
OUR CORRESPONDENT, Thakurgaon  
BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir yesterday demanded identification and trial of those who assaulted teachers and students of quota reform movement.  
He also demanded immediate release of those who were arrested during the movement in Dhaka.  
Fakhrul was addressing a joint extended meeting of BNP's Thakurgaon and Ruheha upazila units held at a community centre in Thakurgaon town yesterday.  
The BNP leader alleged that the government is not tolerating any opposition as it is making attempt to bolster its autocratic rule.  
The prime minister declared in the parliament that she will not keep the quota system in public services and the gazette for it will be issued soon, he said.  
About the upcoming parliamentary elections, the BNP leader said the party wants to participate in the polls as it is the only way to transfer power in a peaceful manner. "But the people's franchise has to be ensured."  
The election will not be accepted if people are forced to refrain from casting their ballots and voting centres are grabbed, he said.  
District BNP President Toimur Rahman President over the meeting that was addressed, among others, by the unit's Vice President Shahed Kamal Chowdhury Dalim and General Secretary Mirza Faisal Amin.



Christine Schraner Burgener, special envoy of UN secretary general on Myanmar, paying a courtesy call on Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at her office yesterday. During the meeting, the prime minister urged the UN to mount pressure on Myanmar to take back its nationals from Bangladesh.

## DU admission to begin July 31

DU CORRESPONDENT  
The online admission application process for first-year honours programmes under 2018-19 academic session at Dhaka University will begin on July 31.  
Beginning at 5:30pm, the online process will continue till 12:00am on August 26, according to a DU press release.  
The decision was made at a meeting of DU's committee on admissions for first-year honours programmes, held at Nabab Nawab Ali Chowdhury Senate Building yesterday.  
The admission test for 'Ka' unit will be held on September 28; 'Kha' unit on September 21; 'Ga' unit on September 14; 'Gha' unit on October 12; 'Cha' unit (general knowledge) on September 15 and 'Chha' unit (drawing) on September 22.

## BNP worries about 'fair rigging' during upcoming city polls

STAFF CORRESPONDENT  
BNP yesterday expressed doubt about holding of fair elections to three city corporations on July 30.  
The party alleged that the Election Commission is not taking any action against the ruling party people for indulging in "criminal activities" and widespread violation of the electoral code of conduct.  
"Awami League General Secretary Obaidul Quader has said the city polls will be fair like the ones in Khulna and Gazipur. Making such a comment, he has given an indication of a fair rigging," said BNP Senior Joint Secretary General Ruhul Kabir Rizvi.  
Addressing a press briefing at the party's Nayapaltan headquarters, the BNP leader alleged that the AL men have exerted undue influence in the cities while the opposition leaders and activists are being arrested and intimidated.  
Rizvi said the local administration in Rajshahi has been playing a biased role in support of the ruling party while the AL mayoral candidate's supporters have created an appalling situation there.  
"Voters are now in doubt whether they will be able to cast their votes as there is no atmosphere for fair voting."

# Cabinet approves mental health bill

BSS, Dhaka

The cabinet yesterday gave final approval to the draft of the Mental Health Act, 2018, aimed at taking necessary steps for overall welfare of patients with mental illness in the country, and ensuring their rights to property.  
The approval was given at weekly cabinet meeting, held at Prime Minister's Office (PMO) with Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina in the chair.  
Secretary of the Cabinet Division (Reform and Coordination) NM Zeaul Alam, in his post-meeting briefing said the draft has been prepared to make a time-befitting law considering the present perspective.  
He said the law will replace the 105-year-old The Lunacy Act, 1912. The new law suggests providing caring services to patients of mental health, protecting their rights including rights to health, rehabilitation and overall welfare, he added.  
The law also proposes rigorous punishment for provoking any mental health patient to commit crimes, and stringent punishment for setting up and operating a mental hospital without licence.  
According to the law, the government would carry out all activities for expansion,

development, control and coordination of the services of the patients.  
The government would provide long-term treatment to the mental health patients and constitute a Mental Health Review Monitoring Committee, to facilitate aggrieved persons getting remedy.  
The law also has provisions for setting up and operating hospitals and institutes under private sector for the treatment of mentally ill people, and providing quality services in this field.  
The draft law provides for a fine of Tk 3 lakh or one year's rigorous jail or both, for a false certificate about mental health of a person given by any mental health service provider.  
A guardian or manager would be found guilty to pay penalty of Tk 5 lakh or suffer three years' rigorous imprisonment for negligence in treatment or management of the patient, or in preparing the list of property of a mentally ill patient, or failure to obey any court order to protect the rights of such a patient.  
At the beginning of the meeting, the cabinet thanked Bangladesh Women's Cricket Team for qualifying to play T-20 World Cup Cricket in November this year.

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