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# Graft behind high cost of construction

Says Nagorik Oikya, launches campaign against state corruption

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The construction cost per kilometre of bridges, roads, flyovers, highways and elevated expressways in Bangladesh is four to five times higher than any other country in the world, claimed Nagorik Oikya, a political platform.

This was the result of massive corruption and was nothing but "the looting of public money," the platform said while launching a campaign against state corruption at the capital's Jatiya Press Club.

The campaign began with a slew of findings showing the huge difference in construction costs of vital infrastructures in Bangladesh compared to others.

Asked about the source of his findings, Mahmudur Rahman Manna, convener of Nagorik Oikya, told The Daily Star that a research team of the platform had prepared the presentation based on newspaper clippings and websites.

During the launch, Manna said the campaign was to "raise awareness in people through providing correct information on state corruption".

"We want to reach as many people within the quickest possible time through various modes of campaign including Facebook," he said.

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Fruit traders have set up makeshift shops obstructing the entrance to Loharpul Government Primary School in the capital's Gandaria. This has been causing problems for students, guardians and the school staff members. The photo was taken on Saturday.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

## UK for free, fair polls, freedom of expression

2017 rights-democracy report says on Bangladesh

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

The United Kingdom has said it will continue engaging closely with Bangladesh to support freedom of expression and other democratic freedoms and stress the long-term importance to its development of free, fair, inclusive and peaceful elections.

In a new report released on Monday, the UK highly praised the Bangladesh government and its people for having accepted and assisted over 700,000 Rohingya refugees, who fled Myanmar since August last year.

It also welcomed repeated government assurances that any returns of Rohingya refugees would be voluntary, safe, well-informed and dignified.

In the Bangladesh chapter of the "Human Rights and Democracy: the 2017 Foreign and Commonwealth Office Report", the UK said it would support progress towards gender equality, including on girls' education where a focus will be to promote equity in access, retention and learning outcomes for the most marginalised girls; combat modern slavery; and press the authorities on enforced disappearances and extrajudicial executions.

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## Trump says he misspoke

Flips on Russia election meddling comment after lawmakers' criticism

AFP, Washington

President Donald Trump yesterday said he accepts that Russia sought to influence the 2016 US election, and that he misspoke by appearing to accept Vladimir Putin's denials over those of his own intelligence chiefs.

"I have felt very strongly that while Russia's actions had no impact at all on the outcome of the election, let me be totally clear in saying that -- and I've said this many times -- I accept our intelligence community's conclusion that Russia's meddling in the 2016 election took place," Trump said, before a meeting with Republican lawmakers at the White House.



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## Death penalty for 4 war criminals

Tribunal convicts them of committing genocide in Moulvibazar in 1971

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The International Crimes Tribunal-1 yesterday found four Moulvibazar men guilty of committing genocide during the Liberation War and handed down death penalties to all of them.

The four, who were members of notorious Razakar force, have also been given jail until death for another charge -- committing crimes against humanity. However, the jail term would naturally be merged into the death sentence, the tribunal said.

"In the case in hand, it stands proved that the accused persons were conscious and a culpable part of the common design and criminal enterprise," the three-member tribunal observed.

"Their [the convicts'] culpable acts and conduct as have been found proved formed a part of attacks which was intended to wipe out the Hindu civilians, freedom fighters and pro-liberation civilians," it added.

Among the convicts, Akmal Ali Talukder, 76, is now in jail and was hauled before the tribunal yesterday. Convicts Abdun Nur Talukder alias Lal Miah, 62, Anis Miah, 76, and Abdul Musabbir Miah, 64, are on the run. All of them are from Rajnagar upazila of the district.

The tribunal, led by Justice Md Shahinur Islam, directed the home secretary

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## 'RAPE', MURDER Mob beats suspect to death

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Benapole

A man was killed in a mob beating early yesterday after he allegedly raped and killed a woman in Jessore.

Haiyat Mahmud, officer-in-charge of Bashundia Police Outpost alleged that Iradat Khan, 27, strangled a 70-year-old woman to death, after raping her on Monday evening. He later kept her body in a plastic sack and hid it in the kitchen.

The victim, Meherunnesa, wife of Mateleb Khan, was Iradat's neighbour.

Upon her disappearance, in late hours of Monday neighbours went and

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## Aston Martin reveals flying car concept



NDTV ONLINE

British luxury brand Aston Martin showcased the Volante Vision Concept, a luxury concept aircraft with vertical take-off and landing (VTOL) capabilities. The Volante Vision Concept is produced in partnership with Cranfield University, Cranfield Aerospace Solutions and Rolls-Royce.

The concept aircraft aims to bring luxury personal transportation to the sky. The Volante Vision Concept has room for three adults and is a near future study that previews a flying autonomous hybrid-electric vehicle for urban and inter-city air travel. Moreover, the Volante Vision Concept will

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Big trenches have been dug along the roads in the capital's Shahjahanpur intersection area to lay sewer pipes underground. The work has dragged on for about a month, causing frequent road accidents and sufferings to commuters. The photos were taken last week.

PHOTO: SK ENAMUL HAQ



## 10-yr-old dies after another child hits him with brick

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A 10-year-old boy died yesterday allegedly after another boy of the same age struck him with a brick in Dhaka's Khilgaon area.

The deceased was identified as Al Amin Hossain, 10, a resident of Sathkhira. He had come to stay at his grandmother's house at Meradiya of Khilgaon for a few days.

There, Al Amin used to play with the boy. A few days ago, Al Amin had beaten up the boy, Moshire Rahman, officer-in-charge of Khilgaon Police Station, told The Daily Star.

Yesterday, the boy today called Al Amin to an under-construction building. They then went to building's roof on the third floor where the boy allegedly hit Al Amin on the head with a brick, the OC said.

Hearing Al Amin's screams, locals rushed to the spot and found the boy running down the stairs. They caught him and then rescued Al Amin.

Locals sent Al Amin to a local hospital and also handed over the other boy

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