



"Relations between Bangladesh and India have now reached a new height as both the countries duly value each other." THE PM WAS QUOTED BY HER PRESS SECRETARY AS SAYING STORY ON PAGE 3

"People want to see that we, who enforce laws, follow those first." ACC CHAIRMAN IOBAL MAHMOOD AT A MEETING AT ACC HEADQUARTERS STORY ON PAGE 3

"Let me say a few words to the people: there will be no war, nor will we negotiate with the US." IRAN'S SUPREME LEADER KHAMENEI FOLLOWING RE-IMPOSITION OF SANCTIONS BY THE US STORY ON PAGE 8

## Scrap almost all quotas

*Suggests review body to give priority to merit in recruitment for govt job, to seek SC opinion for decision on freedom fighters' quota*

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Almost all quotas in civil service should be abolished and merit-based recruitment prioritised, suggests the committee formed to evaluate the quota system.

The panel, however, would seek the Supreme Court's opinion about the 30 percent quota for freedom fighters' children and grandchildren.

Cabinet Secretary M Shafiu Alam, who leads the seven-member committee formed on July 2, told this to journalists at the Secretariat after a cabinet meeting yesterday.

He said time has come for open competition and this is the key finding of the committee, which has almost finalised its recommendations.

ommendations.

There is an SC verdict regarding freedom fighters' quota and if any post under this quota is not filled, it should be left vacant, he said.

"This quota [for freedom fighters' children and grandchildren] will be abolished if the court wants," said the cabinet secretary.

In a verdict in 2015, the Appellate Division of the SC said, "The High Court Division observed that the reservation of 30 percent quota for the children of freedom fighters shall be followed strictly."

Legal experts, however, said observations, also known as remarks or opinions of judges, in a verdict are non-binding.

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**MYSTERIOUS 'HANDSHAKE'...** A rickshaw puller "shakes hands" with an Ansar member who was controlling traffic on Segunbaghica Road in the capital yesterday. Immediately afterwards, the rickshaw was allowed on the wrong side of the street. In some cases, those tasked with controlling traffic let rickshaw pullers or drivers take the wrong side of road in exchange for bribes. *Inset*, rickshaws moving against traffic in the same area. Such violations of traffic rules are taking place even during the ongoing traffic week.

PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN

### MASTER'S STATUS FOR TOP QAWMI DEGREE

## Towards legal recognition

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The cabinet yesterday approved in principle the draft of a law framed to recognise top Qawmi degree Dawra-e-Hadith as equivalent to master's in Islamic studies and Arabic.

The proposed law will bring some 15 lakh Qawmi madrasa

students under the mainstream education system, said Cabinet Secretary M Shafiu Alam.

A cabinet meeting, chaired by Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at her office, gave the approval, he told reporters after the meeting.

On April 11 last year, the prime minister had announced that Dawra

certificates would be recognised as equivalent to master's degrees. Two days later, the education ministry issued a circular to this end. Besides, it formed a committee led by Hefajat-e Islam chief Shah Ahmed Shafi, also the chairman of Befaul Madarisil Arabia Bangladesh, to facilitate the recognition.

Talking to The Daily Star yesterday, those linked with Qawmi madrasas said students with Dawra degrees, the highest in Qawmi education, can now seek jobs meant for master's degree holders.

Educationists, however, expressed scepticism about the

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## No bail yet for the 22

*Arrested during last week's road safety demo, these pvt university students sought bail at least twice*

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The private university students arrested on charges of vandalism and attacking policemen during protests for safe roads have repeatedly been denied bail in the last one week.

All 22 students appealed together for bail on August 7 and August 9 and got rejected. Four of them sought bail again on Sunday and eight others yesterday. But their prayers were turned down again.

However, the ones who attacked protesters and journalists with sticks and machetes remain untouched.

Similarly, quota reform leaders are languishing in jail while those who assaulted and injured the reformists have faced no consequence.

The 22 students of East West, North South, Southeast and Brac universities were arrested on August 6 following clashes between students and police aided by alleged ruling party men.

The eight denied bail by a Dhaka court yesterday were arrested in two cases filed over vandalism and attacks on police.

Dhaka Metropolitan Magistrate Pronab Kumar Hui passed the order after their lawyers moved two separate petitions seeking bail.

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### GOLAM SARWAR passes away

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Veteran journalist Golam Sarwar, editor of Bangla daily Samakal, passed away last night at a hospital in Singapore.

He was 75.

Sarwar, also president of the Editors' Council, breathed his last at Singapore General Hospital around 9:25pm (BST). He had been suffering from heart diseases and respiratory complications.

He left behind his wife

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SERAJUL ISLAM CHOUDHURY

Professor Emeritus Serajul Islam Choudhury has termed the government decision "unfortunate and harmful".

"Qawmi madrasa education and

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SYED MANZOORUL ISLAM

Noted academician Syed Manzoorul Islam said it appears to be a political decision rather than an academic one.

He mentioned that if this is an

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RASHEDA K CHOUDHURY

Prominent educationist Rasheda K Choudhury said the government has the right to make any decision.

But in this case, it needs to be looked into whether there is any

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MAULANA FARID UDDIN MASOUD

"This is a historic day for Qawmi madrasa students, teachers and pious people," said Maulana Farid Uddin Masoud, an Islamic thinker.

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Three labourers are struggling to control a bull being taken to a makeshift cattle market in Gendaria area of old Dhaka. *Inset*, a truck loaded with cattle is entering the market. With Eid-ul-Azha just over a week away, traders have started bringing sacrificial animals to the city's designated cattle markets from across the country. The photos were taken yesterday.

PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

## REHIRING PROGRAMME IN MALAYSIA 270 expat workers deceived by agent

STAR REPORT

Some 270 Bangladeshi workers have allegedly been defrauded of over 1.8 million Malaysian ringgits (Tk 3.6 crore) by an agent over securing valid work permits under the Malaysian rehiring programme.

Imran Haq Uzzal, one of the victims, said they had handed over their passports, other relevant documents and paid between RM 7,200 and RM 8,000 each to the agent for work permits, but nothing came from it, The Star Online of Malaysia reported yesterday.

This has now left the migrant workers with only one option -- returning to Bangladesh.

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## Minimum uniform call rate comes into effect today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Bangladesh Telecommunication Regulatory Commission has ordered the telecom operators to put in place the minimum uniform call rate of Tk 0.45 per minute from today.

Operators now charge Tk 0.35 to Tk 0.40 per minute on an average for on-net (the same network) calls and Tk 0.91 to Tk 1.05 for off-net (different network) calls.

In both cases, the upper ceiling is Tk 2 a minute, which will remain unchanged in the new rate structure.

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