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GETTING DRIVING LICENCE Govt relaxes experience requirement

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
 The government has relaxed until December 31 the requirement of experience for getting licences to drive medium and heavy vehicles.
 Under the current rule, motorists having light vehicle drivers' licence for three years can only apply for the licence to drive medium-sized vehicles. Similarly, the licensed drivers of medium-sized vehicles can apply for heavy vehicle drivers' licence.
 As per the relaxed requirement, light vehicle drivers can apply for medium-sized vehicle drivers' licence if they have professional licence and one-year experience. Holders of medium-sized vehicle drivers' licence can apply for heavy vehicle drivers' licence if they have the same experience.
 The government has taken the decision to make up for the shortage of drivers with licences for medium and heavy vehicles, reads a gazette issued by the Road Transport and Bridges Ministry on August 16.
 It will come into effect immediately and will remain in force until December 31.
 Transport owner and worker leaders at a meeting at Bangladesh Road Transport Authority office on August 11 urged the government to relax the experience requirements for getting medium and heavy vehicle drivers' licence.
 The move came weeks after widespread student protests

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Policemen take jaywalkers to a BRTA mobile court (not seen in the photo) in Farmgate area of the capital yesterday. Inset, a magistrate fines a pedestrian for trying to cross the street instead of using a nearby footbridge. The move from the Bangladesh Road Transport Authority came to check jaywalking, which is considered one of the main reasons for accidents on city roads. PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

Give Shahidul division as per jail code

Orders court
COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday directed the jail authorities to take measures to provide division to noted photographer Shahidul Alam as per the Jail Code.

Chief Metropolitan Magistrate Md Saifuzzaman Hero passed the order after Shahidul's lawyer Ehsanul Haque Shomaji submitted a petition seeking first class for his client in jail.

The photographer is behind bars on charges of "spreading propaganda and false information against the government".

In the petition, Ehsanul said his client is an internationally renowned personality and has won a number of awards for his contributions to the nation. Moreover, his parents were also given national awards for their outstanding activities. He should be provided first class division considering his social status, the lawyer argued.

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'AL INFIGHTING' Two brothers killed in Ctg

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

A ruling Awami League man and his younger brother died of stab wounds at Chittagong Medical College Hospital last night after they came under attack allegedly from some party rivals on Dhaka-Chittagong Highway in Sitakunda upazila.

The dead, Ramjan Ali Khokon, 35, and his sibling Md Srijan, 20, were from Mohalangka area in the upazila, said ASI Shilbrata Barua of the police outpost at Chittagong Medical College Hospital (CMCH).

According to locals, the victims came under attack around 8:00pm when they were returning home after attending a programme in Sitakunda, marking the National Mourning Day.

Mobarak Hossain, an activist of Sitakunda AL, rushed the victims to the

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JESSORE SCHOOL TEACHER Never late, absent in 31-year career

MOHSIN MILON with ANDREW EAGLE

Every school day morning like clockwork, maths and science teacher Satyajit Biswas is to be seen on his bicycle, commuting the seven kilometres from his Kucholia village home in Jessore's Monirampur upazila to Dhopadi Secondary School. In the course of his 31-year career at the school, Satyajit has never arrived late. He has never taken sick leave. Bangladesh is blessed with many dedicated teachers, but few could match his attendance record.

"I never set out to achieve anything grand," he says. "I never thought much about it at all, really. It's just that I know that I am the only science teacher at the school. If I take leave the students don't have anybody else to take their maths and science classes."

Through bouts of sickness and the predictable interruption of family affairs, on days of natural calamity the father-of-two arrived at school on schedule. There were times when he had to wade through mud and chest-deep water to get there. "Sometimes I had to wear lungie and take off my



shoes along the way," he says.

To recall such hardship makes the teacher's eyes moist. Wiping tears he adds, "I have a heart-and-soul relation with my students. I feel uneasy if I don't get to see them."

"One day I was suffering high fever," he continues. "Still I was taking a mathematics class. But I was so weak I fell down, suddenly. My students had to carry me to the office room."

In theory, such commitment is admirable. But it isn't so straightforward for a wife to accept that her new husband has to take classes on their wedding day.

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Quota reform leader Luma granted bail

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday granted bail to quota reform leader Lutfun Nahar Luma in a case filed over "spreading rumours on social media and instigating violence" during the recent road safety movement.

Metropolitan Magistrate Subrata Ghosh Shuvo passed the order after her lawyer had submitted a petition seeking bail.

Luma, a joint convener of quota reform movement's central committee and also a student of Eden College, was picked up from her grandfather's house in Belkuchi upazila of Sirajganj on August 15.

She was shown arrested in a case filed with Ramna police on August 5 under the controversial section 57 of the ICT Act.

She was placed on

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Naughty dolphin causes beach ban



AFP, Rennes

A love-lorn dolphin has prompted a French coastal town to ban bathing on its beaches, fearing people may be hurt by the antics of the over-excited mammal.

Roger Lars, mayor of Landevennec, on the western tip of Brittany, issued a ban on voluntarily approaching within 50 metres (yards) of the dolphin and outlawed bathing and diving from the district's beaches whenever the animal is spotted in local waters.

The move was made on the basis of advice from marine specialists after the visibly excited three-metre (10-foot) dolphin -- nicknamed Zafar -- bumped against boats and bathers, he said.

"I issued the decree to ensure safety... Several bathers were really afraid -- he even lifted up a

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INDIAN ELECTIONS Row over 'tinkering of EVM'

OUR CORRESPONDENT, New Delhi

With Indian parliamentary polls just months away opposition parties yesterday flagged before the Election Commission the alleged tinkering of Electronic Voting Machines which they claim ensures votes in favour of one party and demanded a return to paper ballots.

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PRAYER TIMING AUGUST 28
 Fazr Zohr Asr Maghrib Esha
 AZAN 4-30 12-45 4-45 6-33 8-00
 JAMAAT 5-05 1-15 5-00 6-36 8-30
 SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

200 Rohingyas wait to enter Cox's Bazar

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Cox's Bazar

A couple of hundred Rohingyas have gathered across the border in the last four days hoping to enter Cox's Bazar.

The Border Guard Bangladesh on Thursday came to know that over 200 of them were waiting near Shah Porir Dwip in Teknaf and intensified its monitoring on the area. Lt Col Asad-uz Zaman Chowdhury, director of BGB Battalion-2, told The Daily Star.

The BGB and coast guards are patrolling the Naf river, he added.

Abdul Motaleb Mater, a Rohingya community leader at Leda refugee camp in Teknaf, said he learnt from his family members and other contacts in Myanmar that many Rohingyas of several villages have gathered on the east side of the Naf to come to Bangladesh.

He added that he heard Myanmar army started another crackdown on Thursday on those villages, forcing many to flee.



Impounded rickshaws left to rot at a dumping station in Mansurabad area of Chittagong city. Every day, police seize many such vehicles from the streets of the city for breaking traffic rules, and leave them here out in the open. Grasses have covered parts of the rickshaws as they have not been released even after a long time. The photo was taken recently.

PHOTO: RAJIB RAIHAN

Malaysia bans foreigners from property project

AFP, Kuala Lumpur

Foreigners will be barred from buying properties in a planned \$100-billion Malaysian city, the country's leader said yesterday, after the huge development aimed at mainland Chinese buyers sparked widespread criticism.

Forest City, an "eco-city" of high rises and waterfront villas, will sit on four man-made islands in Malaysia's southern state of Johor, just an hour from Singapore.

The development, designed to house 700,000 people, is being built by Hong Kong-listed real estate giant Country Garden and a firm partly owned by Johor's sultan, and is due to be completed by 2035.

It was developed with wealthy mainland Chinese buyers in mind. But Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad, who has already axed multi-billion dollar deals struck with Beijing by Malaysia's former government, said foreigners would not be allowed to buy properties in the project.

"One thing is certain, that city that is going to be built cannot be sold to foreigners," Mahathir told a press conference.

"We are not going to give visas for people to come and live here."

"Our objection is because it was built for foreigners, not built for Malaysians. Most Malaysians are unable to buy those flats."

Many Malaysians had been unhappy with the project as it was clearly aimed at wealthy foreign buyers, and there were also concerns that it could damage the environment.

Country Garden Pacificview Sdn Bhd, a joint venture firm building Forest City, said it had contacted Mahathir's office seeking clarification of his comments.

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