

Majority should

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development consultant, said that like any other human being, differently-abled persons too have their rights. It is possible to send about 70 percent of the country's children with disabilities to regular educational institutions and ensure their inclusiveness, he said. "We have to understand that disability is normal," he added. On addressing challenges faced by indigenous people, Rani Yan Yan, advisor to the Chakma Circle Chief, said ethnic minority groups have been repressed for decades as they were ousted from their ancestral homes and their lands were also grabbed in the name of development. Besides publishing stories of violence against indigenous women, media should also tell stories of their struggles and "the process that is leaving them disempowered", said Sushmita S Preetha, editor of Star Weekend Magazine at The Daily Star. At a panel discussion on "Employment: The Future of Work", Rubana Huq, managing director of Mohammadi Group, said as global job market is stepping into the "era of automation", the Bangladesh government should take it into consideration and make policy to this end to cope with future challenges.

Accused found dead

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The OC also claimed that Kawsar was the only one in the lockup and the CCTV camera could not capture the incident due to power outage. Kawsar was accused in a rape case filed by his neighbour, said police. The body of Kawsar was sent to Shaheed Suhrawardy Medical College morgue where his autopsy was performed. until 11:00pm last night, no one claimed the body.

Don't nominate

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no neighbour came to help them out. Political leaders came forward in few places." He added that the administration also did not come to their help. "Religious and ethnic minorities as well as indigenous people feel that they are not getting justice in the country and are deprived of equal rights. We know that due to the lack of confidence in the state, many are forced to leave the country, which is extremely upsetting for us," he said. Eminent human rights activist Sultana Kamal said it is sad that after 47 years of independence, religious and ethnic minorities and indigenous people have to organise a rally like this for the protection of their existence. She pointed out that the government often says they could not implement many policies aligned with the spirit of the Liberation War because of strategic reasons. "I want to say to them that due to strategic reasons, one cannot turn back on or give up their principles. If principle has to be given up for strategic reasons then we can call it a surrender," she said, adding they will continue to blame the government for the failure of ensuring rights of religious minorities. Rana Dasgupta said, "Religious and ethnic minorities will extend full support to those political parties and alliances who will pledge for materialisation of seven-point demand in their electoral manifesto." In December 2015, the Oikya Parishad made the seven-point demand which included ensuring empowerment and representation of minority groups in polls, elimination of discrimination from education sector and equal rights and dignity, elimination of constitutional discrimination, enactment and implementation of minority-friendly laws and freeing the country from communalism, fanaticism and terrorism. Pointing out previous incidents of pre- and post-polls violence, the platform demanded that the Election Commission ensure safety and security of religious and ethnic minorities and indigenous people. "Under the existing political and social circumstances, religious and ethnic minorities have become fed up with any election. Nowadays, no election brings festivity to them; rather it brings disasters and misery," Rana said. "If security is not ensured, minorities and indigenous people will be bound to rethink whether they will go to vote centers," he added. Lawmaker Ushaton Talukdar presided over the rally.

Man killed

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son of Aftab Hossain of Sonaikandi area of the district. In a press release, Rab claimed that Hasibul was one of the top drug peddlers in the area and was accused in seven drugs-related cases. It claimed that the "gunfight" took place when a team of Rab's Mollapara camp conducted a drive in Kornohar area around 1:00am. "Sensing the presence of the elite force, the criminals opened fire on them, forcing them to reiterate," the release said, adding that later the law enforcers found Hasibul bullet-hit and took him to Rajshahi Medical College Hospital where doctors declared him dead. During the "gunfight", two Rab members were also injured, it claimed, adding, "A pistol, two bullets and 74 bottles of phensidyl were recovered from the scene". With Hasibul, at least 236 alleged drug traders and peddlers have been killed since the anti-narcotics drive began on May 4. Most of them were killed in so-called shootouts involving police and Rab. **WHAT HASIBUL'S WIFE SAYS** Hasibul's wife Anwara Begum suspects that her husband was killed after he had been arrested. Talking to this correspondent, Anwara said plainclothes law enforcers in several motorcycles and a white microbus picked up Hasibul from Muraripur area on Wednesday evening. "Locals called me to inform that the law enforcers picked up my husband," she said. Anwara went to Damkura police and was told that they did not know anything. She said Hasibul was engaged in drug peddling for many years but left the illegal trade two years ago. "Police arrested him many times. Two years ago, some locals beat him up for drug peddling and broke his hands and legs. He quit the illegal trade right there," she said.

Five held

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Mobile phones and any other electronic communication devices are prohibited inside the examination halls. All students were also scanned using metal detectors before entering exam centres. The DU proctor alleged that some coaching centres are behind such fraudulent activities during admission tests. He said they have enough evidence in this regard, which they will reveal after completing investigation. The one-and-half-hour honours first year admission test of "Ka" unit under the science faculty for the 2018-19 academic session was held at 84 centres inside and outside campus from 10:00am. A total of 81,096 candidates are vying for 1,750 seats in "Ka" unit this year. Students had to answer multiple choice questions (MCQs) worth 120 marks in the test.

PM emphasises three

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add 12-25 percent to global GDP by 2025, the prime minister said. She said realisation of 'leaving no one behind' is contingent upon gender equality and women's economic empowerment, adding "Despite our commitments and efforts, gender gaps around the world remain large, pervasive and persistent". About women's empowerment in Bangladesh, Sheikh Hasina said the government has emphasised various programmes and policies, especially targeted towards women that have not only left impact on women's economic empowerment but also reinforced women's status in society. In Bangladesh, women's empowerment has been identified as the most significant determinant of the economic progress of the country, she said. "Our aim is to focus on decreasing the gender gap in targeted sectors like education, employment, business and policy making." Sheikh Hasina said there are 72 women members in current parliament of Bangladesh, while the Speaker, the Leader of the House and the Deputy Leader of the House and the Leader of the Opposition are all women. According to the World Economic Forum's 2018 report, Bangladesh is Asia's second most gender equal country.

Lobby for int'l recognition

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genocide in Bangladesh got international recognition, then the USA and China would have to take responsibility," he said. "Now, it is time to talk about this," said Muntassir, also president of 1971: Genocide-Torture Archive and Museum Trust. Cultural Affairs minister Asaduzzaman Noor said the people who were involved in the genocide and supported it, also worked behind the rise of militancy in the country. A total of 14 distinguished personalities of eight countries, including India, Belgium and Egypt, presented articles at the conference. Dhaka University's Supernumerary Professor Syed Anwar Husain and Prof Mesbah Kamal, noted war crimes researcher Shahriar Kabir, eminent artist Hashem Khan, and India's National Research Professor Jayanta Kumar Ray, among others, spoke at the programme.



After appearing at the recruitment test for government banks, candidates overrun the street near Tejgaon College yesterday as many of the city buses stay put on the weekend, creating a shortage of public transport.

Hold members

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spokeswoman Heather Nauert said in yesterday's statement. He also reiterated US calls for Myanmar to immediately free two jailed Reuters reporters, according to a State Department summary of the meeting, which was seen by Reuters before its expected release yesterday. The military in Myanmar, previously known as Burma, where Buddhism is the main religion, has denied accusations of ethnic cleansing and says its actions were part of a fight against terrorism. Some US lawmakers and human rights groups have pressed Pompeo to make a declaration of genocide to intensify pressure on Myanmar. While US officials have not ruled this out in the future, some in the Trump administration are wary that it could have legal implications of committing Washington to stronger punitive measures against Myanmar. In calling for the release of Reuters reporters Wa Lone and Kyaw Soe Oo, Pompeo told Kyaw Tint Swe, minister of the office of the state counselor, that Myanmar must "strengthen and protect freedom of expression and the press." The two men were convicted on September 3 under the colonial-era Official Secrets Act in a case seen as a test of democratic freedoms in Myanmar. The reporters, who pleaded not guilty, had been investigating the killing of 10 Rohingya Muslim men and boys by security forces and local Buddhists amid the military response to insurgent attacks last August.

Demo in NY demands release of Shahidul Alam

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
Demonstrators in New York gathered outside the United Nations headquarters on Thursday demanding release of noted photographer Shahidul Alam, as Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina addressed the UN General Assembly. Participants condemned the passage of Digital Security Bill and called for freedom of the press and protection of journalists in Bangladesh at the programme, joined by the Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ), PEN America, Reporters Without Borders, Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch. Family and friends of Shahidul were also present, says a press release. They said the passage of the bill points to a disturbing trend towards suppressing freedom of press and speech. Steven Butler, the Asia program coordinator of CPJ, said the legislation "would violate constitutional guarantees of freedom of the press, and would create extensive legal dangers for journalists in the normal course of carrying out their professional activities." Amnesty International's South Asia Campaigner Saad Hammadi said, "Given how the authorities have arbitrarily arrested hundreds of people in the past six years under the ICT Act, there are serious concerns that the new act will be used against people who speak out." The protesters denounced the imprisonment of Shahidul, journalists, and student protesters in Bangladesh. "What is really important for the state is that if one silences the creative artists and intellectuals,

then the conscience of the state is killed, because it's the role of the creative artists and intellectuals to make constructive criticism so that the state can be a real democracy," said Columbia University's Prof Gayatri Spivak. Shahidul, also founder of Drik Picture Library, was picked up by plainclothes men from his home in the capital's Dhanmondi on August 5. He alleged he was tortured in jail. He has been denied bail on several occasions and has been staying in prison since then. Kerry Kennedy, human rights activist and daughter of Senator Bobby Kennedy, said, "Shahidul Alam is wrongfully detained, and I proudly stand with those who are calling for his immediate and unconditional release." "Bangladesh should comply with its international human rights obligations and free Shahidul Alam today," she said. Julie Trébaud, director of the Artists at Risk Connection at PEN America, said Shahidul's detention is an "attempt to intimidate and silence voices of dissent in Bangladesh." South Asia Director of Human Rights Watch Meenakshi Ganguly said the government has accused Shahidul Alam of "false propaganda" but he was doing what he has always done: speak up for human rights. Wasfia Nazreen, National Geographic Explorer and Bangladesh's only Seven Summit, said: "Shahidul is a living legend who taught throughout his life how to see the light of our country, even during her darkest hours... he is being wrongly imprisoned." Shahidul's cousin Salma Ahmed also spoke.

NEWS IN brief

Razia Khatun passes away

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
Razia Khatun, mother of Sangbad acting editor Khandaker Muniruzzaman, died at a Dhaka hospital yesterday, aged 96. Razia was undergoing treatment at Samorita Hospital, says a press release. She left behind her three sons, two daughters and a host of well-wishers. Her namaz-e-janaza was held at Dhanmondi Eidgah mosque after the Asr prayers. Razia was buried in the grave of her husband Khandaker Wahiduzzaman at Mirpur Martyred Intellectuals' Graveyard.



Youth found dead beside highway

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Brahmanbaria
A youth was found dead beside Dhaka-Sylhet highway in Brahmanbaria yesterday. Police said the body bore marks of injuries on the neck and other parts. The identity of the deceased could not be known immediately. The body was sent to Brahmanbaria Sadar Hospital morgue for autopsy after it had been recovered from Malihata village, said Istiaque Ahmed, sub-inspector of Brahmanbaria Sadar Model Police Station.

Faridpur road accidents kill three

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Faridpur
Three people were killed and three others injured in two road accidents in Faridpur yesterday, said police. In Bhanga, Monirul Islam, 72, and Rozina Begum were killed instantly and three others injured as a three-wheeler hit a truck parked on Dhaka-Barishal highway at Hamerdi Bazar. The injured were taken to Bhanga Upazila Health Complex. Meanwhile, Mujibur Sheikh, 45, a rickshaw-van puller, died as a bus hit his three-wheeler from behind in Kolatola area of the upazila.

Two girls drown in Dinajpur pond

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur
Two girls drowned in a pond in Dinajpur yesterday. Shamima Begum, 7, daughter of Muzam Mia; and Motahara Begum, 7, daughter of Shahinur Rahman, were bathing in the pond in Jhapupara of Khansama upazila, said police. They were declared dead at Khansama Upazila Health Complex, said its medical officer Sadhan Kumar Roy.

Ctg Jamaat leader arrested

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg
Chattogram police yesterday arrested local Jamaat-e-Islami leader Advocate Anwarul Alam Chowdhury, on charges of assaulting police and carrying out arson attacks and other subversive activities. Anwarul, 45, is an accused of over 12 cases filed with different police stations, said Rafiqul Islam, officer-in-charge of Satkania Police Station. He was held from his Chibbari residence in Satkania upazila.

Rape attempt case field against upazila chairman

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Mymensingh
A case was filed on Thursday against Barhatta upazila parishad chairman in Netrakona for attempted rape. A widow, aged 20, filed the case against Manik Azad, said Badrul Alam Khan, officer-in-charge of Barhatta Police Station. At around 9:00pm on Thursday night, Manik, 47, went to the house of the woman and attempted to rape her, the OC said quoting the case statement. After she screamed out for help, her neighbours arrived at the scene and roughed up Manik, he said, adding that the attacker however managed to run away and police are still trying to arrest him. Despite repeated attempts, this correspondent was unable to reach Manik on his cellphone for his comments over the accusation.

RTI Act ensures people's right to know: Mozammel Haque

UNB, Dhaka
The Right to Information (RTI) Act was initiated to ensure people's right to know any information any time, said Liberation War Affairs Minister AKM Mozammel Haque yesterday. Even a few years ago, some institutions didn't provide information as per people's demand, he said, adding, "But now according to the RTI Act they have the right to know any sort of information of any institution." The minister made the remarks while speaking at a seminar organised by Information Commission of Bangladesh

marking International Right to Information Day 2018, at the VIP lounge at Jatiya Press Club. Mozammel Haque said, "Our government is working to ensure fundamental rights of people. The RTI Act ensures the people's right to know information." "We gave licenses to many newspapers and television stations and ensured media freedom. But the media should follow the rules of objectivity," he added. Chief Information Commissioner Martuza Ahmed, Information Secretary Abdul Malek, Information Commissioner Nepal Chandra Sarker and Suraiya Begum, among others, spoke on the occasion.

Man held with 5 gold bars at Benapole port

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Benapole
Border Guard Bangladesh arrested a man with five gold bars weighing 500 grammes and worth Tk 22 lakh at Baropota border of Benapole Land Port area yesterday. The arrestee -- Safiqul Islam, 40 -- is from Putkhali village of Benapole. They found the gold bars after searching his body, said Lt Col Ariful Hoque, commanding officer of 49 BGB battalion.

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