



Parked human hauliers and rickshaws occupy almost half of one side of Green Road. Even the footpath is not spared from illegal occupation. The photo was taken opposite Green Super Market Friday. PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

### Worker dies in factory boiler blast

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Narayanj

A worker died and another was injured after a factory boiler exploded in Fatullah of Narayanj yesterday. The blast at Al-Nasir Washing-Dyeing factory in Lalkha area injured Selim Khan, 30, and Abdul Miah, 20, said Aminul Islam, sub-inspector of Fatullah Model Police Station. The boiler exploded around 4:45am, leaving the duo with critical injuries. They were taken to Dhaka Medical College Hospital. Selim succumbed to his injuries at 10:30am at DMCH. Abdul is still undergoing treatment. The factory management staff are absconding, SI Aminul said. The tin-roof was blown away in the explosion and damages were caused to the factory. Police are trying to arrest the management staff, SI Aminul added. The explosion took place as the machines of the factory were old. The matter is being investigated, he said.

### Stop industrialisation in Sundarbans before election schedule

Environmentalists urge govt

STAFF CORRESPONDENT  
The National Committee to Protect Oil, Gas, Mineral Resources, Power and Ports yesterday urged all political parties in the country to include forestry reservation, especially the Sundarbans, and environmental protection in their manifesto for the 11th national polls. Speaking at a press conference at Mukti Bhaban in Dhaka, activists also demanded that the government stop all industrialisation near the Sundarbans, the world's largest mangrove forest, before declaring the schedule of the election. The committee organised the conference to place its demands for the next polls where it announced rallies, human chains and seminars in October and November to wage the demands. In a keynote paper, its member secretary Anu Muhammad alleged that apart from the destructive coal-based Rampal power plant, a group of forest- and land-grabbers have undertaken more than 300 commercial projects near the Sundarbans. "Such projects should be stopped to protect the Sundarbans as well as our environment," he said. Two indemnity acts in the country's power sector -- that allow implementation of the projects in this sector beyond legal barriers -- create obstacles to stopping the harmful activities and protect the forest, said Anu Muhammad, a professor of Jahangirnagar University. Political parties should commit to abolish such indemnity acts, and include forestry reservation to their election manifesto, he added.

### Scaling up startups

Young Bangla, Microsoft join hands

BSS, Dhaka  
With an aim to boost growth of IT-based entrepreneurship, youth organisation Young Bangla and Microsoft's Bangladesh chapter yesterday pledged to launch a platform for providing potential startups with all sorts of assistance. On the last day of a four-day summit -- Young Bangla Microsoft Summit -- at IEB auditorium in Dhaka, five start-ups, out of 250, were awarded with cheques worth Tk 5 lakh each, alongside other support for expansion. Yesterday, 20 teams presented their ideas in front of judges, including Radwan Mujib Siddiqi, trustee, Center for Research and Information (CRI); Nasrul Hamid Bipu, state minister for power, energy and mineral resources; Sonia Bashir Kabir, managing director, Microsoft Bangladesh, Nepal, Bhutan and Laos; and Sabbir Bin Shams, executive director, CRI. The winning ideas are developing software for Bangla sign language (team BSL), connecting veterinary doctors with rural farmers (gorur doctor), using urban farming technologies to supplement traditional farming (micro beats), making lives better for senior citizens (blaze warrior) and introducing bicycle service "CHOLO" to avoid city traffic (finance wizard). Radwan Mujib said, "We always intend to build bridge between youths and policymakers so their [youths] voice gets properly reflected in national policies." Sonia Bashir said 100 volunteers engaged as campus ambassadors under the network will be made Microsoft's brand ambassador.

### Curb air pollution in Dhaka: green activists

UNB, Dhaka  
Green activists yesterday urged the authorities concerned to take immediate steps to properly control air pollution caused by dust in the capital and ensure punishment for people responsible. They came up with the demand at a human chain organised in front of Jatiya Press Club. Some 16 rights organisations including Poribesh Bachao Andolon (Poba) and Nagorik Odhikar Songrokkhon Forum (NASOF) organised the event to draw the attention of authorities concerned in this regard. The speakers said Dhaka's dust menace is getting worse, especially in dry season, due to unplanned development projects, brick kilns and drain sludge kept on roads. Their other demands include ensuring regular cleaning of streets, framing rules for mandatory covering of dusty construction materials during transportation and construction, and raising awareness among people.

### Two-day int'l seminar at CU

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg  
A two-day international seminar began at Chittagong University (CU) yesterday aiming to focus on alternative and effective ways to rethink development issues in South Asian context. CU Social Science Research Institute (SSRI) is hosting the seminar titled "Rethinking Development in South Asia". Addressing a press conference at Chittagong Press Club, Prof Farid Uddin Ahamed said the conference will provide a platform for discussion and critical engagement in achieving development goals in South Asia. Over a 100 academics from home and abroad will participate in the conference where around 70 articles and a keynote paper would be presented. Dr Imam Ali of CU sociology department, Prof Amir Mohammad Nasrullah of public administration, Dr Alauddin of anthropology and Abul Kalam Azad of communication and journalism were present.

### Taking bribe 'promising AL nomination'

Rab arrests Rajshahi BCL leader  
STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi  
Rajshahi district unit, said Merajul Islam, president of BCL's Rajshahi unit. According to Rab, Sazzad lured many aspirants promising them AL nominations ahead of the polls, and took large sums of money. He used the names of AL presidium member and Public Administration Minister Syed Ashrafur Islam, Assistant Press Secretary at PMO Afzal Siddiqui Bitu, and Assistant Private Secretary to the Prime Minister. Sazzad is joint general secretary of BCL's

### Rab arrests 5 for 'selling fake question papers'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT  
Rab yesterday claimed to have arrested five frauds who duped people by circulating fake question papers of MBBS admission tests, and six question paper-seeking admission aspirants, from different places of the capital in the last two days. The gang used to prepare fake question papers and circulated them among medical admission aspirants through messaging apps for money, said Md Kaiyumuzzaman Khan, commanding officer of Rab-10, at a press briefing yesterday. The gang used to sell fake question papers for MBBS and BDS exams of medical colleges, universities and dental colleges, he added. On information, several Rab teams arrested them along with bank cheques worth around Tk 1.24 crore and academic transcripts of the aspirants, he said. Some admission aspirants and their guardians gave those to the gang members to have the question papers, Rab said. The arrestees are: Mohidul Kabir Limon, 26; Sarwar Hossain, 29; Saddam Hosen, 25; Masud, 30; Ujjal Robi Das, 23; Rifat Sarker, 19; Faysal Ahmed, 18; Mustakin Fuad, 19; Abu Said, 18; Md Sha Alam, 21; and Tarek Hasan, 19.



National Skill Development Council (NSDC) Director Shah Alam; Underprivileged Children Education Programme (UCEP) CEO Tahsinah Ahmed; NSDC CEO ABM Khorshed Alam; Industry Skill Council (ISC) Chairman AKM Bari; NSDC Director Rezaul Karim and chef Tony Khan at Rising Star Skills Competition, 2018 held at UCEP in Mirpur yesterday. Bangladesh will participate in World Skills Competition 2019 in Russia. Towards that NSDC organised the competition to select competitors in eight trades including cooking and restaurant services. PHOTO: COLLECTED

### GIRL HIT BY BUS Case filed against driver, helper

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Narayanj  
A case was filed against the driver and helper of a bus that hit schoolgirl Sadia Akter in Narayanj on Thursday. Her father filed the case with Sonargaon Police Station yesterday. Sadia, a class-IX student, was hit by the bus while she was crossing the highway to go to school. The 15-year-old is being treated at Dhaka Medical College Hospital and her condition is critical, said family members. Morshed Alam, officer-in-charge of the police station, said police were trying to arrest the bus driver and his helper.



Demanding five percent quota in class-I and class-II government jobs, a group of physically challenged students of Rajshahi University form a human chain in front of the university yesterday. PHOTO: STAR

### An attempt to justify

FROM PAGE 3  
Law enforcers "randomly" picked up people who were later sent to jail without any conviction. Journalists were also beaten up, Anu Muhammad added. Attempt to bring such activities under a legal framework reflects the government's intention, added Anu, an Economics professor at Jahangirnagar University. Zonayed Saki, chief coordinator of the central executive committee of Ganasamhati Andolon, said very few of the country's laws were as repressive as the Digital Security Bill. Government employees have been given indemnity through the law, he said. "Thinking about it makes me shudder." Saiful Haque, general secretary of Revolutionary Workers' Party of Bangladesh and coordinator of the Left Democratic Alliance, said it would not be wrong if the bill was termed Government Protection Act. It is totally unimaginable that such a law could exist in present Bangladesh, he said, adding that LDA would organise programmes against the formation of the controversial bill.

### Girl dies in hospital, family alleges negligence

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet  
A mentally challenged girl died at Sylhet MAG Osmani Medical College Hospital on Friday night due to negligence of doctors, her family alleged. The deceased is Meherunnisa Khanam, 15, daughter of Abdus Sahid Khan of Sylhet Sadar. She was admitted to the medicine ward on Wednesday with physical illness. On Friday afternoon, her condition deteriorated, the family said. They alleged that they requested intern doctors to attend to her but they did not, saying the senior doctor was not there and once the doctor arrives he would check-up on her. Later, a doctor from another ward arrived and declared Meherunnisa dead, said her brother Jahangir Alam Khan. "My sister died due to negligence of the duty doctors," he alleged. Debapada Roy, deputy director of the hospital, said, "We have already taken statements from the patient's family and the duty doctors. We will take action if any negligence is found."

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