



A bamboo pole is the only warning of a manhole with a broken cover in Dhakeshwari's Azad Colony in the capital. It has already been the cause of multiple accidents, but the authorities concerned are yet to take any action. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN

## NOAKHALI GANG-RAPE 2 accused give confessional statements

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Noakhali

Two persons including the key accused gave confessional statements to a court over the incident of gang-rape in Noakhali's Subarnachar yesterday.

Judge Nobonita Guha recorded the statements of Soheli, the prime accused, and Jasim Uddin, another suspect.

Earlier on Monday, two other accused gave their confessions before the court.

The 35-year-old woman was gang-raped in the early hours of December 31, allegedly by 10 to 12 ruling party activists, as she voted for "sheaf of spaddy", electoral symbol of the BNP.

According to the victim, the men entered her home by cutting the fence around her house. They then tied her husband and four children with ropes, after which they took the woman outside the house and raped her.

The victim also said the rapists threatened to kill her husband and children and torch their house if she told anyone about the rape.

After the incident, the victim's husband filed a case against nine people.

The husband said the victim went to cast her vote around 11:00am on Sunday.

## 13 Rohingyas

FROM PAGE 2  
for several years. They were then brought to Dhaka after which they were sent to the metropolitan magistrate court yesterday, he told The Daily Star.

From their travel documents, five were identified as Abdul Majid, Mizanur Rahman, Habibur Rahman, Mohammed Salim and Omar Faruk -- all from Chattogram.

The others are Khaja Moyeen Uddin from Bogra, Bokul from Jhenidah, Mohammad Mia and Shamsul Alam from Pabna, Aman Ullah from Madaripur, Jamal Hosen from Cox's Bazar, Mohammed Anik from Cumilla, and Nazim Ullah from Joypurhat.

The deportees arrived at Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport around 2:00am on Tuesday on a Saudi Arabian Airlines flight. They were detained following their admission that they were Rohingyas, immigration police said.

Nay San Lwin, a Germany-based Rohingya activist with links to Rohingyas in Saudi Arabia, said more than 1,000 Rohingyas have been kept in detention camps in the kingdom for years for violating immigration rules, including overstaying their visas.

He said the Rohingya activists are approaching European governments to halt the deportation of Rohingyas from Saudi Arabia.

He urged the Bangladesh government not to detain them, but to instead send them to the refugee camps in Cox's Bazar on humanitarian grounds as they were victims of persecution in Myanmar's Rakhine state.

The Rohingyas, who have been denied citizenship in Myanmar since 1982, fled different waves of violence there and came to Bangladesh. The latest atrocities caused some 750,000 Rohingyas to flee to Bangladesh, making it a global crisis.

## Murders after rape

FROM PAGE 1  
cousin Azizul Bawani, 30 -- in the capital's Jatrabari and Demra areas on Tuesday night.

Azizul strangled Faria Akter Dola to death while Mostafa killed Dola's friend Nusrat Jahan with a towel, Farid Uddin Ahmed, deputy commissioner (Wari Division) of the Dhaka Metropolitan Police, told reporters at a press briefing.

Later in the day, police produced the two before a metropolitan magistrate who recorded their confessional statements, court sources said.

Both confessed that they were intoxicated during the time of the crime and that they murdered the children when they screamed, the sources said.

During the briefing at the DMP media centre, the DC said, "The accused played songs on loudspeakers so that no one could hear the victims' cries for help."

Police recovered the bodies of the children from Mostafa's flat in Demra on Monday night, hours after they had gone missing from near their homes in the same area.

The brutal incident sparked protests in the locality and also captured the attention of social media users. The locals formed a human chain and held a rally demanding capital punishment for the killers.

A case was filed against Mostafa and Azizul with Demra Police Station on Tuesday night.

The DC said Mostafa called Azizul over phone, called him to his home and planned the rape instantly. Mostafa went to the girls and lured them to his house. His wife and child were away.

The accused are drug addicts and Mostafa was also accused in a robbery case filed with Jatrabari Police Station, he said.

Police recovered the sandals of the victims, the speaker and the towel

## BRTC workers

FROM PAGE 2  
receive one month's arrears by yesterday and another month's by this month.

Besides, they would receive a total of nine months' arrears by August, he added.

As promised, the workers received a month's due from the BRTC authorities yesterday.

BRTC has 21 depots -- 19 for buses and two for trucks -- across the country. Of them, workers' salaries are due in 17, depots sources said.

According to BRTC's 2016-2017 annual report, 981 buses from a total of 1538 and 113 trucks from 138 were plicable.

## Bangladesh

FROM PAGE 16  
Norway came out on top and North Korea bottom of the list.

One of the more notable moves was that of Costa Rica, the only country to join the ranks of "full democracies" in 2018, and to break into the top 20.

Little change was felt in Asia's two largest democracies: India (ranked 41st) and Indonesia (ranked 65th), both were readying themselves for elections in 2019.

Sri Lanka fell back more than any other country in the region. It saw a marked decrease in its score from 6.48 in 2017 to 6.19, driven by a worsening in the functioning of government and in civil liberties.

China rose nine places in the global ranking, although it remains classified as an authoritarian regime and its climb in the index mainly reflects the worsening scores of other countries in the index, particularly in Latin America and Eastern Europe.

from Mostafa's house.

Meanwhile, the National Human Rights Commission yesterday formed a committee to investigate the double murder. The committee members yesterday visited the spot.

### DAUGHTER TESTIFY AGAINST FATHER

A girl yesterday testified before a Dhaka court that her father, Nahid, killed a two-year-old baby by throwing her off the second floor of a building in Gendaria on Saturday.

In her statement, the girl, 12, said she went to her father's room, hearing the victim's screams. Minutes later, the man killed the baby, said DC Farid.

"The circumstantial evidence suggested that Nahid took the baby in his house to rape her," the police officer said, adding that they recovered the baby's clothes and a doll from the scene.

Earlier, locals had staged a demonstration in Gendaria, demanding capital punishment for Nahid over the incident.

## Mango

FROM PAGE 16  
He has also produced 10,500 saplings and sold 500 of them for Tk 350 each.

The winter variety, locally known as "Baromashi", has not been officially named yet, Sirajul said, adding that he had got in touch with the local horticulture centre.

Johurul Islam, Chapainawabganj Horticulture Centre's germplasm officer, said, "Locally grown guavas dominate the winter fruit market. This mango may take over if promoted across the country."

"The mango ripens in December. When other varieties are unavailable, this one will be there and farmers will get a higher price than usual," said Saifur Rahman, deputy director at the centre.

## New JS sits

FROM PAGE 2  
According to the parliament's rules of procedure, the duration and proceedings of the first session will be finalised at a meeting of the business advisory committee of parliament with the speaker in the chair on the same day.

The new lawmakers took oath on January 3 and the 47-member cabinet was formed on January 7 with Sheikh Hasina as the prime minister.

Hasina has been elected Leader of the House for the 11th parliament while Jatiya Party Chairman HM Ershad will be the leader of the opposition.

The ruling Awami League won the two-thirds majority again in the December 30 parliamentary election. It won 257 seats while the Jatiya Party bagged 22 seats.

Around 266 MPs will sit on the treasury benches consisting of MPs belonging to the AL, Workers Party, Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal, Jatiya Party (Manju) and Tarikat Federation.

The treasury bench will get even bigger this time as it will be joined by more than 44 out of the 50 would-be MPs from reserved seats for women.

Alongside 22 JP lawmakers, three independent MPs will sit on the opposition benches.

Seven lawmakers elected from the BNP-led Jatiya Oikyafront are yet to take their oaths.

Meanwhile, the Jatiya Party, which played a dual role in the 10th parliament having represented both the government and the opposition, has decided to sit only in the opposition bench.

The 10th House sat for 410 days in 23 sessions and passed 193 bills with little or no opposition from the then opposition Jatiya Party.

Formed through the largely one-sided election on January 5, 2014, the 10th parliament sat in its maiden session on January 29 that year and is valid till January 28, 2019.

## Govt to try

FROM PAGE 2  
and punish any political party for committing crimes against humanity during the Liberation War in 1971.

"There is no provision in the International Crimes (Tribunals) Act-1973 [which was amended later] to try and punish any political party," he had said on May 29, 2014, around 15 months after the law was amended.

Parliament in February 2013 had passed the amendment, but it did not have a provision for punishing an organisation, if found guilty.

After its passage, an investigation agency in August 2013 had launched a probe into the alleged war crimes by Jamaat-e-Islami. The agency handed over the probe report to the prosecution in March 2014.

The agency had recommended banning Jamaat and six other organisations associated with the party in 1971 as the investigators found their involvement in grievous crimes committed during the war.

After receiving the probe report and other documents, a seven-member prosecution team started preparing the formal charges and the work was at the final stage.

But the preparation for filing a case against Jamaat remained suspended since May 2014.

On January 1 this year, the investigation agency of the International Crimes Tribunal expressed disappointment as the trial of Jamaat did not begin around five years after the completion of the probe into its role in 1971.

## A kidnap

FROM PAGE 16  
associates opened fire at police, prompting the cops to fire retaliatory shots in self-defence, said the officer.

At one stage, Billal was caught in the line of fire and died, he said, adding that a firearm and a bullet were found at the scene.

Police also detained two other suspects Lima Khatun, 20, and Masum Billah, 35, from Keshabpur early yesterday in connection with the abduction of Tarif.

Law enforcers handed over the two bodies to their relatives yesterday after autopsies at Jashore General Hospital.

Talking to reporters at the hospital, Tarif's uncle Akhter Hossain said his nephew along with his twin brother went to play cricket around 4:30pm on Sunday. But Tarif didn't return home.

OC Shahidul added that agitated locals in Fedaipur torched Billal's home around 9:00pm when his body was brought to the village last night.

Fire fighters extinguished the blaze, he added.

### 'YABA TRADER'S' BODY RECOVERED

Cox's Bazar police recovered the bullet-hit body of alleged yaba trader Jahangir Alam alias Yaba Jahangir from the town's Kolatoli Bypass area early yesterday.

Police said Jahangir, a listed yaba trader, was a resident of ABC Ghona area in Cox's Bazar municipality.

Law enforcers sent the body to Cox's Bazar District Sadar Hospital morgue for an autopsy.

Locals said some people kidnapped Jahangir from ABC Ghona Chairman Ghat area around 10:00pm on Tuesday.

Police were investigating the killing.

Our correspondents in Benapole and Cox's Bazar contributed to this report.

# Israel ex-minister to get 11 years for spying for Iran

AFP, Jerusalem

An Israeli ex-minister charged with spying for the country's arch-foe Iran has reached a plea bargain with prosecutors that will see him serve 11 years in prison, the justice ministry said yesterday.

As part of the agreement, Gonen Segev will plead guilty to serious espionage and transfer of information to the enemy, the ministry said in a statement.

Segev's lawyers, Eli Zohar and Moshe Mazor, said in a statement that as part of the deal a charge of treason was dropped.

"Indeed Mr. Segev had contacts with Iranians, but his motive was not 'to aid the enemy in time of war' - treason. That is why that offence was removed, inter alia, from the amended indictment.

"The amended charge sheet filed today and the plea bargain that was reached, returns this case to its natural and proper proportions," the Hebrew-language statement said.

A sentencing hearing was set for February 11.

The trial of Segev, who served as energy and infrastructure minister from 1995 to 1996, opened in July but was held behind closed doors in the Jerusalem district court, with few details of the accusations publicly released.

The original charges, as published by

the justice ministry, were aiding an enemy in wartime, serious espionage, attempted serious espionage and passing information to the enemy.

The Shin Bet internal security service accused him in a statement at the time of providing Iran with "information related to the energy market, security sites in Israel, buildings and officials in political and security bodies, and more" while he was living in Nigeria between 2012 and his arrest at Israel's Ben Gurion airport in May 2018.

The Shin Bet said Segev had been in contact with Iranian embassy officials in Nigeria and later he visited the Islamic republic for meetings with his intelligence "handlers".

Segev served in the Labour government of prime minister Yitzhak Rabin after defecting from the far right to cast the decisive vote in favour of the Oslo II peace agreement with the Palestinians.

He has previously served prison time on criminal charges.

In 2004, he was charged with trying to smuggle 30,000 ecstasy pills into Israel from the Netherlands using a diplomatic passport with a falsified expiry date.

The following year, he admitted the charges as part of a plea bargain.

He has also been convicted of attempted credit card fraud.

## High price for loyalty

FROM PAGE 16

Aminul Haq when the latter went to Pachondor union.

Later that evening, a group of stick wielding men went to the market and ransacked the outside of his tea-shop, according to eye-witnesses.

"The attackers were outsiders, not known to me," said a local businessman.

"I heard about the attack on my shop when I reached home, after campaigning that day," said Mofiz. A friend of his called him from the market and told him to hide as the attackers were looking for him.

Until polls day, local AL men used the tea-shop as the election office of Awami League candidate Omor Faruk Chowdhury.

"Two days after the election ended, some local AL workers damaged what was left of the shop, including the earthen room, tin-roof, furniture, television, and everything else inside."

Locals told this correspondent that they heard the AL men would build a party office in that place.

When contacted, Reaz Uddin, president of AL unit at Pachondor ward-2, said, "We are yet to decide on building our office there. If not an office, we may construct a passengers' shed that will come to the use of many."

## Man gets

FROM PAGE 1  
The court also fined him Tk 10,000.

Three others -- Alamgir Hossain, Subrato Shil and Provab Chandra Sarker -- were also accused in the case.

Of them, Alamgir and Subrato were acquitted as the allegations against them could not be proved.

Police dropped Provab's name while pressing charges in 2014.

The case was filed with Satoria Police Station in Manikganj over "distorting" photographs of late president Zillur Rahman, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and former Indian prime minister Manmohan Singh by using mobile phones.

## Bangabandhu

FROM PAGE 1  
nine and a half months of captivity in a Pakistan jail.

Bangabandhu was subjected to inhuman torture in the jail where he had been counting moments for the execution of his death sentence that was pronounced in a farcical trial.

Bangabandhu inspired the Bangalee nation. He was the inspiration of the freedom fighters.

Under his undaunted leadership, the Bangalee nation earned the ultimate victory through the nine-month Liberation War in 1971. The defeated Pakistani rulers were finally compelled to release Bangabandhu from jail. The victory of the Bangalees attained its fulfillment with his release.

The ruling Awami League, its associate and front organisations and various socio-political organisations have drawn up elaborate programmes to mark the day.

Meanwhile, President Abdul Hamid and Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina have issued separate messages on the occasion.

The president in his message urged all to take the pledge to continue the advancement of the country by implementing the unfinished tasks of the great leader imbued with the spirit of the Liberation War.

In her message, the PM called upon all to come forward to build a happy and prosperous "Sonar Bangla" as dreamt by Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.

He said the land was 'khas' and Mofiz had been illegally occupying it.

On the identity of the attackers, he said, "Nobody knows them. They were wearing helmets and came to the village on motorcycles."

He denied that it was local AL men who had damaged the shop after the election.

"It was Mofiz's brother, nephew and son who damaged the shop," he said. On why Mofiz's own relatives would damage the shop, Reaz did not have an explanation.

When contacted, Rajshahi Superintendent of Police Md Shahidullah said they had not heard about the incident.

"We will investigate all allegations of post-election violence," said the SP, adding that police circulated a message in the district so that no one would spread fear among others over feuds during the election.

Upon losing his source of income, Mofiz began work as day labourer on the potato fields to make ends meet, earning a mere Tk 300 a day.

"I am living in fear. I could not even go see the condition of my shop, the one I so dearly built from scratch," he said.

## Ershad

FROM PAGE 16  
Chairman HM Ershad [as the] leader of the opposition and its Co-chairman GM Quader deputy leader of the opposition."

## Dhaka protests

FROM PAGE 2  
Bangladesh is also firmly committed not to allow its soil to be used by any dissident group of any neighbouring country. The government has taken all possible measures, including comprehensive international engagements in counterterrorism, to fully implement the commitment.

"We affirm that there is no existence of any foreign terrorist groups within Bangladesh; nor is Bangladesh harbouring any terrorist organisation within its soil," the statement said, adding, "Security forces of Bangladesh alongside the border always remain vigilant to prevent any untoward incidents that may affect the existing peaceful relations between two neighbours."

The statement added that Bangladesh's comprehensive cooperation in counterterrorism with some of the neighbouring countries proved to be highly effective. The Bangladesh government had offered similar type of comprehensive bilateral cooperation mechanism to Myanmar on a number of occasions.

"Bangladesh, on several instances, proposed Myanmar [to] conduct joint operations in addressing claimed terrorist activities along the border area. But unfortunately, not much enthusiasm was received from the Myanmar side."

Myanmar even failed to provide Bangladesh with specific details and concrete evidence on the alleged terrorist elements and acts, read the statement.

Bangladesh is praised by the international community for its unflinching commitment and bold actions in combating terrorism at national, regional and global levels.

"Bangladesh always stands ready to engage in comprehensive cooperation mechanism with any country, including Myanmar, in combating terrorism," the statement said.