



THE KANCHPUR-MEGHNA-GUMTI BRIDGES ARE BEING BUILT WITH HIGHLY DUCTILE GRADE 420 BSRM ULTIMA BARS



HIGHEST SELLING 12 CEMENT for more than years

SHAH CEMENT

Blessings of syndicate

Couple, both mere DGHS staff, bought houses in Dhaka, Sydney, finds ACC

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

His monthly salary is only around Tk 24,000, but he has been able to buy a house in Australia's Sydney spending more than two lakh US dollars.

His wife, whose salary is around Tk 20,000 a month, owns several buildings in the capital, said ACC sources.

The man is Abzal Hossain, administration officer at the Institute of Health Technology under the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS). The Anti-Corruption Commission quizzed him about his wealth for about five hours yesterday.

His spouse Rubina Khanam is a stenographer of Medical Education and Health Manpower Development project under the DGHS.

The couple in their wealth statement submitted to the ACC said they have wealth worth Tk 12 crore.

Joining as an office assistant of a project under the Directorate of Health in 1995, Abzal set up a syndicate at the health ministry and managed jobs for about seven of his relatives, including brothers and brother-in-laws, at different offices under the ministry.

"The syndicate in association with DGHS high-ups looted hundreds of crore taka," said an ACC official.



Abzal Hossain

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Holding a photo of her five-year-old daughter Dola close to her chest, Parvin Begum wails at a human chain near the Jatiya Press Club yesterday. Two men strangled Dola and her friend Nusrat to death following attempted rape in Demra on Monday. The protest was organised demanding capital punishment for the killers.

PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN

PASSPORT POWER Bangladesh moves three notches up

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh has jumped three places to 97 in the latest Henley Passport Index which measures the access each country's passport affords without prior visa.

Passports of Bangladesh, Lebanon, Libya and South Sudan can ensure visa free access to 41 countries now, says the index based on data from the International Air Transport Association.

The number of countries where Bangladeshi passport-holders have access, however, has not increased much over the years. It was 40 in 2015; 39 in 2016 and 38 in 2017, according to the index released on Wednesday.

Masud Rezwana, immediate past director general of the Department of Immigration and Passports, said Bangladesh introduced machine-readable passports and is going for e-passport soon.

Besides, the department has put restrictions on

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Mother of four 'raped' in Cumilla

Police arrest two suspects

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Cumilla

Police arrested two suspected rapists in Lalmai upazila of the district on Wednesday.

They were arrested after a woman filed a case with Cumilla Sadar South Police Station nearly three weeks after she was allegedly gang-raped.

After interrogating Anisur Rahman and Liton Biswas, police said it seemed that the allegations against them were credible.

A court sent the duo to jail while police are looking for Jahurul Islam, another accused in the case, said investigation officer of the case Tofazzol Hossain.

The woman, who has been fighting a legal battle against her husband, told reporters that the accused

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4 women 'confined, raped' for months

Feni police rescue victims; culprits escape

STAR REPORT

Four women were allegedly confined and raped at a house in Rampur area of Feni town for around six months.

They were also tortured with burning cigarettes and electric shocks, police quoted the victims as saying.

They are aged between 19 and 26.

House owner Kawsar Bin Kashem, 33, took the four, two from Bhola and the rest from the capital, there on different dates, promising to marry or give them job, said Abul Kalam Azad, officer-in-charge of Feni Sadar Model Police Station, quoting the victims.

The women were produced before a Feni court following medical tests. The court freed them, police said.

The incident came to light on Monday, just days into the gang rape of a mother of four in Noakhali's Subarnachar early December 31 and the killing of two children in the capital's Demra following attempted rape on Monday.

According to a report of rights body, Ain o Salish Kendra, 732 women and children were raped from January 1 to December 31 last year. Of them, 203 women and children were gang-raped.

The report, revealed yesterday, also said 63 were killed after rape, while three were killed after rape attempts.

Acting on information, Feni police rescued the four from the Rampur house on Monday afternoon.

Police also recovered 53 yaba tablets and equipment used in taking drugs. The house owner and his accomplices fled.

The next day, one of the victims filed a case with Feni Sadar Model Police

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FAKE VISAS TO ROHINGYAS Bangladesh mission staffer involved?

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Australian Federal Police received at least six complaints against a Bangladesh High Commission official, based in Canberra, over his involvement in issuing fake tourist visas to Rohingyas.

Rohingya community members in Australia filed the complaints after Bangladesh authorities detained at least 20 of them in Dhaka's Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport with fake visas and sent them back last month, Australian news outlet SBS reported yesterday.

The news outlet also reported that Australian police were investigating the scam.

According to SBS, a Rohingya refugee in Australia for six years, Faruk, wanted to visit his family at a refugee camp in Cox's Bazar of Bangladesh. Accordingly, he obtained a tourist visa from the Bangladesh mission in Australia and travelled to Dhaka on December 19 last year.

But Bangladesh Immigration Police detained him along with some other passengers and sent them back from the airport

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Mona Lisa myth debunked



CNN ONLINE

The Mona Lisa is famed for two things: her enigmatic smile and her steady gaze, widely believed to follow her viewers around the room.

Indeed, Leonardo da Vinci's world-renowned painting, also known as "La Gioconda," inspired the name of a scientific phenomenon: the Mona Lisa effect, or the perception that the subject of an image is always looking directly at you, no matter where you stand.

But according to research by scientists from Germany's Bielefeld University, published in the journal i-Perception, there's one painting that definitively doesn't demonstrate the Mona Lisa effect: the Mona Lisa herself.

In fact, the researchers say, the subject of the painting is actually looking about 15 degrees to

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BUSINESS

RICE PRICE UP FOR SUPPLY CHAIN DISRUPTION

Prices of rice rose by Tk 2-3 a kg because of the supply chain disruption on the occasion of the parliamentary elections last month.

"Prices will not increase further," Food Minister Sadhan Chandra Majumder told reporters yesterday after a meeting with rice millers in Dhaka.

In the past week, prices of coarse grains, consumed mainly by low-income people, rose by Tk 1 to Tk 35-38 per kg. Prices of



PRAYER TIMING JANUARY 11

Fazr Juma Asr Maghrib Esha
AZAN 5-30 12-30 4-00 5-36 7-00
JAMAAT 6-05 1-15 4-15 5-40 7-30

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION



CHHOTO BHIMRAJ Seen in north '1st time in a century'

MOSTAFA SHABUI, Bogura

On a late December morning, an hour-long stroll through the centuries-old Bamboo forest surrounding the Gandagram village of Shajahanpur upazila revealed the sight of hundreds of small colourful minivets. In awe of such an astonishing sight, I suddenly spotted something different.

An emerald-blue shone out of a pitch black coating, and making it even more attractive were the ornamental feathers

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PHOTO: MOSTAFA SHABUI

TALIBAN ATTACKS ON AFGHAN CHECKPOINTS More than 30 security men, militias killed

REUTERS, Kabul

The Taliban launched a series of attacks on security checkpoints in four Afghan provinces early yesterday, killing 32 members of the security forces and pro-government militias, provincial officials said.

Both sides in Afghanistan's 17-year war have kept up attacks this winter, with the

Taliban inflicting a heavy toll on government forces, and the US military and their government allies killing Taliban field commanders with air strikes.

At the same time, tentative peace efforts have been under way with US Special Representative for Afghanistan Reconciliation Zalmay Khalilzad holding

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Obituary



Our father Mr. Nurul Islam, son of Akbar Ali and Zobeda Khatun of Madaripur, passed away peacefully yesterday evening. Inna Lillahi wa Inna liayhi Rajعون. He was 84 years young. Mr. Islam was the Chairman and Managing Director of Eastern Progressive Shoe Industries Ltd. (EPSI), the company he established after leaving a successful legal profession in the mid 60s.

Mr Islam was one of first industrialist in Bangladesh, a pioneer as well as a trendsetter for the entire industry.

His Namaz-e-Janazah will be held today after Jumma prayers at Gulshan Azad Mosque and he will be buried at Banani graveyard.

We request all family, friends and well wishers to attend the Janazah and pray for his departed soul.

Regards,
Farmin Islam, Reaz Islam and Fyaz Islam.