



A protester hurls an object at police officers during a demonstration against the agreement reached by Greece and Macedonia to resolve a dispute over the former Yugoslav republic's name, in Athens, Greece, yesterday. For most Greeks, Macedonia is the name of their history-rich northern province made famous by Alexander the Great's conquests.

PHOTO: REUTERS

## Transgenders

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Asked whether a transgender person could occupy a reserved seat, Attorney General Mahbubey Alam told The Daily Star that there was no specific provision in the constitution regarding this.

But if they claim that they are women, they can have the opportunity to contest the election for the reserved seats, he said, adding that the Election Commission will decide what to do.

The EC will announce on February 17 the schedule for elections for the 50 seats reserved for women in the 11th parliament. Of the 50, AL will have 43 seats.

About 35 aspirants from the Awami League will run for each seat. A total of 1,518 aspirants have collected party nomination forms for the 43 seats.

Apart from the AL and its ally party leaders, many writers, film stars, cultural activists, teachers, family members of martyred intellectuals and freedom fighters, among others, collected the forms.

Each aspirant had to pay Tk 30,000 for a form. The party has earned around Tk 4.5 crore by selling nomination forms for the reserved seats.

The form contains a questionnaire regarding the role of the aspirant during the caretaker government in 2007, their family's role in 1971, after August 15, 1975, and during the rule of BNP-Jamaat government.

The applicants will also have to write about their political career in the form, said sources.

AL Joint General Secretary Mahbubul Alam Hanif told The Daily Star that the party's Parliamentary Board would decide who to nominate.

Several family members of martyred intellectuals and freedom fighters will get party tickets, he added.

The voter list for the polls will be published by February 12 and the EC will ask political parties to inform it by January 30 whether they would contest the election as part of an alliance, EC Secretary Halal Uddin Ahmed told reporters last week.

On December 30, the AL-led alliance won a landslide victory in the national election. The AL itself won 257 out of 299 seats.

## 2 jailed

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for test, he added.

"After the test, we found [the presence of] chromium in the feed which is harmful for humans."

Consuming products made from poultry which were fed such toxic feed could result in kidney complications and cancer for humans, he said.

"We will also send a sample of the seized feed to the lab again for further tests," Sarwoer said, adding that the DLS would soon file a case with the police station concerned.

The magistrate said several syndicates in Hazaribagh area were making poultry and fish feed with leather waste from tanneries.

Law enforcers are looking for others involved in the racket, he added.

## Delivery in the open

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Jahidul Islam, the woman's husband, said his wife, Rina Begum, 30, from Balavir village in Boda upazila of Panchagarh, started having labour pain around 3:00am. He brought his wife to Boda Upazila Health Complex around 8:00am.

Rina first gave birth 10 years ago through a c-section and required one this time as well.

Asif Adnan, a doctor of the hospital, advised Rina to go to Panchagarh Sadar Hospital because the complex did not have a gynaecologist to perform a caesarean. Soon after she was handed the release documents, Sabana Akhter, a nurse, started pressuring Rina to leave the hospital, said Jahidul.

At one point, due to the nurse's pressure Rina left the complex around 12:00 noon. At that time Jahid was arranging money and transport. Within a few minutes of leaving the compound, she gave birth to her baby under a Eucalyptus tree outside.

Three women, including a part-time cleaner of the complex, who happen to be there while Rina was giving birth, extended their help to her. Witnesses

of the incident were enraged and took her back inside the complex to her hospital bed.

Hearing the incident, acting Civil Surgeon Dr Afroz Begum, Upazila Nirbahi Officer Syed Mahmud Hasan and Upazila Health and Family Planning (UHFP) Officer Rajiul Karim went to the complex.

Rajiul said a three-member investigation committee, headed by Resident Medical Officer of the complex Dr Zahid, had been formed and directed to file a report in this connection within seven days.

UNO Syed said that they would take action in accordance with the probe report.

The civil surgeon's office formed a separate committee, headed by Afroz Begum.

The UHFP office issued a show cause notice to Sabana for allegedly pressuring a patient to leave the premises. She was directed to produce an answer within three days.

When asked, Sabana said she asked Rina to rush for Panchagarh Sadar Hospital because she needed a caesarian which the complex would not be able to conduct.

## 3 of victim's relatives

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their faces with masks, I would have been able to recognise my relatives by their voices and body languages," said the victim while talking to The Daily Star yesterday afternoon.

She claimed that she could identify the prime accused Zakir Hossain Jahir, even though he too was wearing a mask.

Mirza Md Hasan, officer-in-charge of Kabirhat Police Station, however, said police arrested the three as Zakir made a confessional statement before a Noakhali court yesterday, where he named several people including the three.

Asked about the victim's claim, the OC questioned how she could make such a claim whereas the case statement read that she could not recognise anyone except for Zakir.

Asked whether the three arrestees had any political connection, the policeman said he did not know anything in this regard.

Early Saturday, the mother of three was allegedly gang raped. The wife of a BNP activist, who was arrested before the December 30 election, is undergoing treatment at Noakhali General Hospital.

The woman said seven men had broken into her village home around 1:30am while she and her three children were asleep.

Holding the children hostage at knifepoint, the men tied her hands and legs and three of them raped her. The men also took away the valuables from her house, she added.

She recognised one of the alleged rapists and filed a case accusing him and several unnamed people. Police on Saturday arrested Zakir.

Protesting the rape incident, people from all walks of life formed a human chain at Samity Bazar of Kabirhat upazila yesterday morning. The protesters demanded exemplary punishment to the rapists regardless of their political identities and influence.

They also asked not to harass general people with an intention to divert

the course of the case into a different direction.

Earlier in late December, a similar gang rape of a woman in Subarnachar upazila in the same district, allegedly for casting her vote for "sheaf of paddy", the electoral symbol of BNP, sparked outrage across the country.

The victim's mother, after being told about the incident the next morning, filed the case with Kotwali Police Station.

"Before we arrested Obaidullah, locals beat him up for the rape," the OC added.

The girl was sent to the One-Stop Crisis Centre of Faridpur Medical College Hospital for treatment and tests.

In Cumilla, an eighth grader of Maleka Momtaj Girls High School submitted a complaint to the school authorities against her math teacher alleging him of attempt to rape.

Speaking to The Daily Star the girl said, "On Thursday afternoon, I went to the teacher to change a book and he took me to the school's book storage room. He then molested and tried to rape me. I screamed and ran away. I immediately told the head master and other teachers before I fainted."

On Saturday morning, the victim and her father submitted written complaint against Mojammel.

Shahadat Hossain, head master of the school, said, "Our governing body had called a meeting immediately after getting the complaint. We formed a probe committee and suspended the teacher."

Contacted, the suspended teacher said, "It is a conspiracy against me. Other teachers are involved in it."

However, when asked why a 13-year-old would conspire against him, he remained silent.

They also asked not to harass general people with an intention to divert

## 'World's oldest man' dies in Japan at 113

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"World's oldest man" Masazo Nonaka, who was born just two years after the Wright brothers launched humanity's first powered flight, died yesterday aged 113, Japanese media said.

Nonaka was born in July 1905, according to Guinness World Records -- just months before Albert Einstein published his special theory of relativity.

Guinness officially recognised Nonaka as the oldest living man after the death of Spaniard Francisco Nunez Olivera last year.

"We feel shocked at the loss of this big figure. He was as usual yesterday and passed away without causing our family any fuss at all," his granddaughter Yuko told Kyodo News.

Nonaka had six brothers and one sister, marrying in 1931 and fathering five children.

He ran a hot spring inn in his hometown and in retirement enjoyed watching sumo wrestling on TV and eating sweets, according to local media.

Japan has one of the world's highest life expectancies and was home to several people recognised as among the oldest humans to have ever lived.

They include Jiroemon Kimura, the longest-living man on record, who died soon after his 116th birthday in June 2013.

## A day on Saturn

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vibrations within the planet itself, acting similarly to the seismometers used to measure movement caused by earthquakes.

The inside of Saturn vibrates at frequencies that cause variations in its gravitational field. The rings, in turn, detect those movements in the field.

"Particles throughout the rings can't help but feel these oscillations in the gravity field," Mankovich said.

"At specific locations in the rings these oscillations catch ring particles at just the right time in their orbits to gradually build up energy, and that energy gets carried away as an observable wave."

His research, published in the Astrophysical Journal, describes how he developed models of Saturn's internal structure that would match the rings' waves.

That allowed him to track the movements of the interior of the planet, and thus its rotation.

Unlike Jupiter and Earth's magnetic axis that are not aligned with its rotational axis, Saturn is different. Its unique magnetic field is nearly perfectly aligned with its rotational axis.

This is why the ring finding has been key to homing in on the length of a day.

"The researchers used waves in the rings to peer into Saturn's interior, and out popped this long-sought, fundamental characteristic of the planet. And it's a really solid result," said Cassini Project Scientist Linda Spilker. "The rings held the answer."

Cassini spacecraft, when low on fuel, made a fateful plunge into the atmosphere of Saturn on September 15, 2017, ending its 13-year tour of the ringed planet.

## Thousands join US women's marches

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Thousands of women marched Saturday in the US capital and across the country to convey a now-annual message opposing Donald Trump and supporting women's rights, but internal divisions appeared to steal some energy from the rallies.

In Washington, demonstrators arriving by car, bus or subway converged on the city's Freedom Plaza and marched defiantly past the nearby Trump International Hotel on Pennsylvania Avenue.

Many wore pink "pussy" hats to protest Trump's demeaning comments about women.

"We need to stand up for women all over the world -- for races, gender, sexual orientation," said Ann Caroline, 27, herself wearing a pink hat.

Some marchers carried posters portraying Trump as a Russian "puppet." Others decried his comments about women or minority groups, while many demanded his impeachment.

Just blocks away, the president spoke to reporters outside the White House before traveling briefly to Dover, Delaware for a ceremony to receive the remains of four Americans killed in an attack claimed by the Islamic State group in Syria. He made no public comment about the marches.

As in earlier years, thousands of women joined demonstrations in cities across the United States, and

around the world, though most turnouts appeared far short of the earlier women's events.

In New York, several hundred people converged on Manhattan's Foley Square, near the Brooklyn Bridge. Many more took part in a separate march in Central Park organized by women angered by what they saw as the anti-Semitism of one women's march leader.

Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, the newly elected Democratic congresswoman who has emerged as a progressive favorite and a bugbear of conservatives, spoke at both New York rallies.

"Last year we brought the power to the polls, and this year we need to make sure that we translate that power into policy," she said at the Central Park rally, to loud cheers. "That means we won't let anyone take our rights away."

Among the protesters was Nydia Leaf, an energetic, pink-hatted 86-year-old taking part in her third women's march.

She told AFP she would "keep opposing Donald Trump and his policies. Look at what he's done at the border, look at the shutdown -- every year there is a new atrocity."

In contrast to the 2017 march, which drew more than three million nationwide, and last year's event, when hundreds of thousands rallied, Washington police said they expected perhaps 20,000 demonstrators this year.

## JMB 'plan for prison

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He was the nephew of Abdul Awal, who was executed, along with his father-in-law, the then JMB chief Shaikh Abdur Rahman in 2007.

Ripon, with another JMB leader Sharif Islam Khaled, were on the run when Counter Terrorism and Transnational Crime unit of the Dhaka Metropolitan Police submitted a charge sheet on the café attack case on July 23 last year, accusing eight JMB militants.

Six of the accused in jail are -- Jahangir Alam alias Rajib Gandhi, recruiter of the café attackers; Rashed alias Rash, one of the planners; Sohel Mahfuz, grenade supplier; arms suppliers Mizanur Rahman alias Boro Mizan, Rakibul Islam, a so-called religious trainer and Hadisur Rahman Sagar.

Thirteen others, including café attack mastermind Tamim Ahmed Chowdhury and top JMB leader Sarwar Jahan Manik, found involved in the attack were killed in different anti-militancy drives. Their names were not mentioned in the charge sheet as they were dead.

Rab officials said Ripon and some others went to India in April 2016, just three months before the café attack that left 20 hostages and two police officials killed on July 1, 2016.

He supplied Tk 39 lakh to Sarwar and also provided three AK-22 rifles, pistols and grenades just before the attack.

Besides, Ripon, an inhabitant of Nandigram upazila in Bogura, coordinated a number of militant attacks and secret killings in the northern part of the country, Mufti Mahmud said.

He was at a meeting with top JMB leaders in February in Gaibandha where the café attack was planned.

According to Rab, Ripon was brought into militancy by once JMB self-claimed Ameer Dr Nazrul Islam when Ripon was working at a computer shop in Bogura in 2013.

Initially, his responsibility was fund collection. He gave Tk 8 lakh to Nazrul in 2013, collecting the amount by mugging three persons, Khan added.

"He then became Nazrul's second-in-command," Nazrul gave him the alias 'Ripon'.

In 2015, he was nominated as a "Sura member" of the outfit during a meeting in which Tamim and Sarwar participated.

"He was tasked with providing

## BB to file case

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Banking Corp (RCBC) as the prime accused in the case.

On February 4, 2016, unidentified criminals used fraudulent orders on the SWIFT payments system to steal the funds from the BB's account in the Federal Reserve Bank of New York. This has been one of the world's biggest cyber heists.