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Your Right to Know

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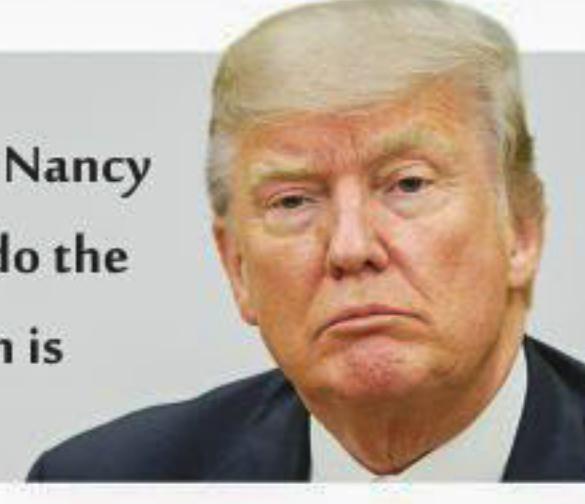
"When government officials get involved in corruption, they cease to be public servants. To uphold their dignity, government officials must refrain from corruption."



"They wanted my opinion and I gave it with cricketing logic. I never told them that they must



"This is her [House Speaker Nancy Pelosi] prerogative ... I will do the Address when the shutdown is



Magical way to get rich

The rise of five yaba lords

MOHAMMAD JAMIL KHAN and MOHAMMAD ALI JINNAT, from Cox's Bazar

Take a trip down the Cox's Bazar-Teknaf highway, and you cannot miss the eye-catching duplex building by the main road near Leda station.

It belongs to Nurul Huda, 36, a member of Hnila union council in Teknaf. But that is not the only shoe he wears.

He is also a listed drug dealer wanted in 10 cases. Luckily though, Huda is now safe in a government "safe home" like at least 62 more suspected "yaba kingpins" who surrendered to police last week.

More such surrender of listed drug dealers is expected in the coming weeks.

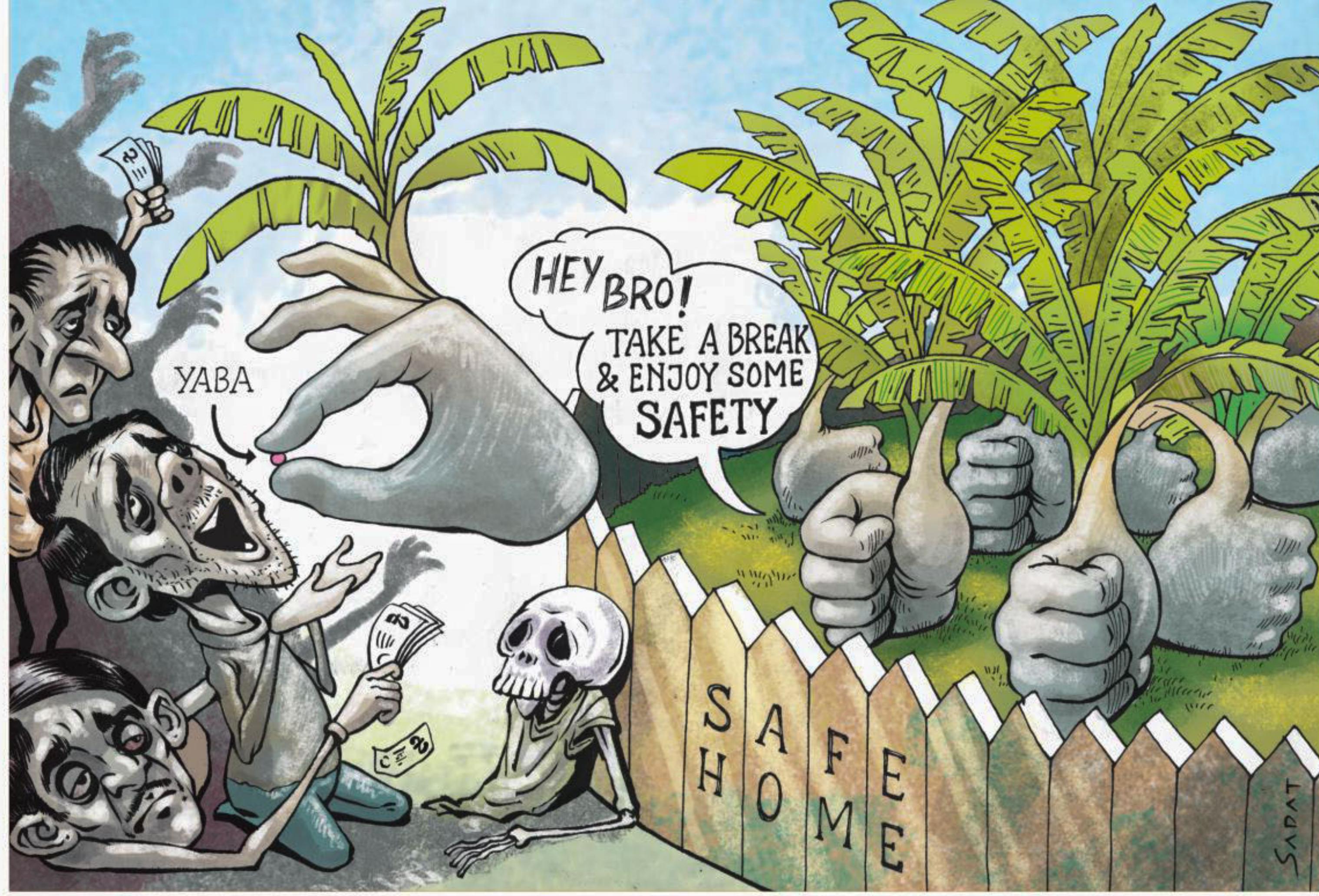
Huda's younger brother Nurul Kabir, also wanted in a number of cases, is also in the "safe home" inside the Cox's Bazar Police Lines compound, police sources said.

Only 10 years ago, Huda used to drive rented cars. His five brothers used to earn their living by fishing or working as day labourer in local salt fields.

But thanks to the powerful magic of yaba, the crazy pink pill, the family now owns a dozen "luxury" buildings and acre after acre of land, police and locals said.

Visiting the area and talking to locals yesterday, The Daily Star managed to get a glimpse of the early life of four other

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Three killed in Cox's Bazar 'gunfights'

Two were 'drug traders', Rab says

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Cox's Bazar

Two drug traders and a robber were killed in separate "gunfights" with law enforcers in Teknaf and Mosheshkhali upazilas early yesterday, officers claimed.

Including them, at least 285 people have been shot dead since law enforcers launched a crackdown on drug dealing on May 4 last year.

After most of the incidents, police or Rab said the people killed were drug dealers and they were shot during gunfights or shoot-outs involving officers.

In Teknaf, Rab said two drug traders were shot dead during a gunfight with officers early yesterday. But Rab could not identify the two men who, according to the



Cooperation is crucial

Hasina for regional collaboration in tackling disasters

UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday stressed the need for collaboration and cooperation among neighbouring countries to minimise damages caused by natural disasters.

"Collaboration and cooperation among nations, especially the neighbours, is very crucial in facing damages caused by natural disasters of greater magnitude," she said.

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One-phase Ijtema this year, from Feb 15

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Held in two phases since 2011, Bishwa Ijtema, the second largest congregation of Muslims after Hajj, will be held in one phase this year from February 15-17.

State Minister for Religious Affairs Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah made the announcement yesterday from a meeting held at religious affairs ministry in presence of delegations from two feuding groups of the Tablighi Jamaat, reports UNB.

Mawlana Zubair, Mawlana Omar Faruk, Syed Wasifur Islam and Sabahuddin Nasim were present at the meeting.

Organising the Bishwa Ijtema, also called the World Muslims' Congregation, every year since 1946, the Tablighi Jamaat authorities in 2011 split the Ijtema into two phases, dividing the participation of the 64 districts, to reduce pressure at the venue and ensure better management and security.

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Used cylinders line the premises of the Bangladesh Road Transport Authority's office in Poshthogola yesterday. CNG-run auto-rickshaw drivers have begun returning their vehicles which have crossed the 15-year old life-span in exchange for registration papers for new vehicles. The cylinders, along with the auto-rickshaws, will be scrapped and then auctioned. *Inset*, scrapped bits of auto-rickshaws on the premises.

PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

Dream comes true next year

Padma bridge likely to be opened to traffic in mid-2020

REJAUL KARIM BYRON and TUHIN SHUBHRA ADHKARY

The much-anticipated Padma Bridge is expected to open to traffic within June next year, as the complexity over some of the piers has been addressed.

"We hope vehicles will be able to use the bridge by the middle of 2020," Prof Jamilur Reza Choudhury, chairman of the government's panel of experts on Padma Bridge, told The Daily Star on Monday.

He, however, said the contractor would have to considerably speed up the work to meet the deadline.

Around 900metres of the bridge is now visible as the sixth span (superstructure) of the 6.15-km bridge was installed at Jazira point in Shariatpur on Wednesday.

The first span of the bridge was installed on September 30, 2017.

Once constructed, the bridge will directly connect the capital to 21 southern districts, through road and railways.

Two major components of the project are the main bridge and river training.

Seventy-three percent work of the main bridge and 50 percent work of river training have been completed. Road Transport and Bridges Minister Obaidul Quader said at a views-exchange meeting with the officials of the Bridge Division of his ministry on Sunday.

Meanwhile, Jamilur said the complexity over the design of some 14 piers was now over.

He said differences emerged between the information obtained through geotechnical investigation in the design phase and construction phase.

The soil profiles were assumed in the design are slightly

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