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Schools with excellence

MIRZA SHAKIL, Tangail

Primary schools around Tangail have begun transforming into colourful structures and each is being equipped with brand new multimedia classrooms, libraries and playgrounds.

According to officials, around one fifth of the 1,623 government primary schools in the 12 upazilas of the district have already been renovated to a certain extent. A modern classroom experience is being packaged in wonderful murals and paintings bringing life to previous dull grey walls.

The work is being done under the "Excellent Schools" project, which has the slogan "Amader Bidyalyal, Amrai Gorbo (Our School, Our Pride)." The initiative which began in January 2018 is the brainchild of the district primary education officer Md Abdul Aziz.

His model has also garnered national attention. At the Innovation Fair-2018, organised by the Directorate of Primary Education, the Tangail model was selected among the best five innovations, said Merina Akter, assistant upazila education officer in the upazila.

Abdul Aziz himself was also selected at the fair as the best district primary education officer at divisional level for his innovation.

He began the project soon after joining his post in 2017, but the seeds for the idea were sown a long time ago.

"I got the idea while working as an upazila education officer at Bishwanath upazila in Sylhet. There, the local expatriate guardians approached me and offered their support for the development work of some of the local schools," Aziz said to this correspondent.

"When I joined as Tangail's district primary education officer, I motivated the local education officials, as well as

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Children inside a colourful classroom of Sakrail Government Primary School in Tangail Sadar Upazila recently. Inset, a building of Meherunnesa Government Primary School in the district's Gopalpur has been painted in the colours of the national flag. A number of schools in Tangail have been decorated as part of an initiative to attract students.

N'GANJ WOMAN UNO 2 MPs call for probe into OSD order

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Two Awami League lawmakers last night demanded the public administration ministry carry out a departmental probe as to why Narayanganj Sadar UNO Hosne Ara Begum Bina was made an OSD during her pregnancy.

Speaking on a point of order, Meher Afroze Chumki from Gazipur-5 and Shamim Osman from Narayanganj-4 strongly criticised the authorities for making Bina an officer on special duty when she was 31 weeks' pregnant.

Chumki first raised the issue pointing to a Facebook status of Bina.

"Though I was carrying, I performed my duty as an assistant returning officer in the 11th parliamentary election successfully," the ruling party MP said, citing the post.

After going to medical check-ups at a hospital on

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Trip ends in tragedy

5 killed as their car hits truck in Khulna

STAR REPORT

All of Gopalganj town yesterday grieved the loss of five district Jubo League and Chhatra League men, including four students.

They died in a road accident on Sunday night after their car collided head-on with a truck while they were on their way back from Khulna.

The dead -- General Secretary of Gopalganj BCL Mahbub Hossain Babu, 26; Deputy Secretary Walid Mahbub Utshab, 25; Assistant Secretary Saju Ahmed, 24; Jubo League President of Sadar thana Sadiqul Alam, 32; and BCL Health Affairs Secretary of Sadar thana Aminul Islam, 24 -- were heading back to Gopalganj in Sadiqul's new car.

The accident took place in Khejur Bagan area on the by-pass road of Rupsha Bridge in Khulna around 11:30pm.

Their namaz-e-janaza was held at Sheikh Fazlul Haque Moni Stadium in Gopalganj yesterday.

Except Sadiqul, the other four were students of local college in district.

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UNREST IN MYANMAR'S RAKHINE Military violating human rights

Says Amnesty as crackdown limits civilians' access to food, humanitarian aid

AIJAZEERA ONLINE

Myanmar's military is shelling villages and preventing civilians from getting food and humanitarian help, amid an intensifying crackdown on the rebel Arakan Army in the restive northwestern state of Rakhine that has pushed thousands from their homes, Amnesty International has said.

The human rights group said yesterday its investigations also found that the security forces had used vague and repressive laws to detain civilians in its battle against the Arakan Army, an ethnic Rakhine group that is fighting for more autonomy.

"These latest operations are yet another reminder that the Myanmar military operates without any regard for human rights," Tirana Hassan, Amnesty's director of crisis response, said in a statement. "Shelling inhabited villages and withholding food supplies is unjustifiable under any circumstances."

Fighting between the military and Arakan Army intensified in January after the rebels attacked a police post leaving 13 officers dead.

The military responded by deploying more troops to the region, the site of a massive crackdown on the Rohingya Muslim minority in 2017, in an attempt to "crush" the fighters. The United Nations says some 5,200 people had been forced from their homes on January 28, as a result of the conflict.

There was no immediate response from the Myanmar authorities to

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Teenager held for raping girl

6th-grader molested

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Thakurgaon

A 13-year-old boy was arrested yesterday on charge of raping a 5-year-old girl in Debiganj upazila of Panchagarh, police said.

Officer-in-Charge of Debiganj Police Station Rabiul Hasan Sarkar said the boy had entered the girl's house on Sunday evening when no one else was there and raped the girl.

He fled the scene immediately after sensing presence of the girl's mother, the OC said, adding that the girl then narrated everything to her mother.

The girl was taken to Debiganj Upazila Health Complex on the night as she started feeling sick, Rabiul said.

Abu Sayem, medical officer of the hospital, said they had sent her to

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Insects could die out within a century: study



INDEPENDENT.CO.UK

Pesticide use is driving an "alarming" decline in the world's insects that could have a "catastrophic" impact on nature's ecosystems, researchers have warned.

More than 40 percent of insect species are at risk of dying out, with climate change and pollution also to blame, according to a global scientific review.

Their numbers are plummeting so precipitously that almost all insects could vanish within a century, the study found.

An overhaul of the agricultural industry is

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22 Rohingyas rescued in Cox's Bazar

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Cox's Bazar

The Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB) rescued 22 Rohingyas, including children and women, from Teknaf upazila of Cox's Bazar early yesterday. The 22 were going to be trafficked to Malaysia through the Bay of Bengal.

This was the second attempt of human trafficking that the BGB foiled in the last four days.

However, no one was arrested yesterday.

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PRAYER TIMING FEBRUARY 12
Fazr Zohr Asr Maghrib Esha

AZAN 5-25 12-45 4-30 5-57 7-15
JAMAAT 6-00 1-15 4-45 6-01 7-45

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

INDIA GENERAL ELECTION Priyanka kicks off campaign with roadshow

REUTERS, Lucknow

Priyanka Gandhi Vadra, the popular sister of the head of India's main opposition Congress party, made her political debut yesterday with a roadshow drawing thousands in the most populous state months before a general election due by May.

Congress President Rahul Gandhi pulled a surprise last month by appointing his younger sister a party general secretary. She will also be its face in Uttar Pradesh, the state that sends the highest number of lawmakers to the lower house of parliament and is currently dominated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi's ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP).

But a string of BJP defeats in state elections late last year and rising

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A schoolgirl waits on a median strip to cross the busy Airport Road in the capital's Mohakhali area yesterday. There is a footbridge nearby but people jaywalk there every day, putting their lives in danger. The death of two college students in a crash on that road in July last year sparked a nationwide outrage.

PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

US govt faces new shutdown

Talks on border security funding collapse as lawmakers clash over immigrant detention policy

REUTERS, Washington

Talks on border security funding collapsed after Democratic and Republican lawmakers clashed over immigrant detention policy as they worked to avert another US government shutdown, a Republican senator said on Sunday.

"The talks are stalled right now," Republican Senator Richard Shelby told "Fox News Sunday." He said the impasse was over Democrats' desire to cap the number of beds in detention facilities for people who enter the country illegally.

Efforts to resolve the dispute over border security funding extended into the weekend as a special congressional negotiating panel aimed to reach a deal by yesterday, lawmakers and aides said.

Democratic Senator Jon Tester played down any breakdown in talks. "It is a negotiation. Negotiations seldom go smooth all the way through," he told the Fox program. Tester, one of 17 negotiators, said he was hopeful a deal could be reached.

But Shelby put the chances of reaching a deal at 50-50. No further talks were scheduled, a source told Reuters on condition of anonymity.

The lawmakers hoped to have an agreement by yesterday to allow time for the legislation to pass the US House of Representatives and Senate and get signed by President Donald Trump by Friday, when funding for the Department of Homeland Security and other federal agencies expires.

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