



Fishermen caught a freshwater crocodile from the Padma in Pabna's Varara area yesterday afternoon. Later, a team of Rajshahi forest department's wildlife protection unit took the custody of the alligator. Forest department officials said this was the second freshwater crocodile spotted in the country in 50 years.

PHOTO: STAR

## 'Robber' killed

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enforcers indiscriminately with a sharp weapon and tried to escape. When police chased them, the criminals opened fire on the law enforcers, forcing them to retaliate that resulted in a "gunfight", he said. Shanto had a bullet injury while the two police officials Raqibul and Shukanta suffered stab injuries during the incident, Nurul said, adding that Shanto was taken to Dhaka Medical College Hospital where he died around 7:00am yesterday. Of the injured officials, Shukanta is undergoing treatment at National Institute of Cardiovascular Diseases with stab injuries in his head and hand, the police official said. Rakibul was admitted to Astar Ali Hospital in Old Dhaka with stab wounds in head, police said. Police caught two of Shanto's associates Munna, 23, and Sunny, 24, from the spot. Meanwhile, police recovered a man's bullet-hit body in Godagari upazila of Rajshahi yesterday. The victim, Motiur Rahman Moti, 40, stood accused in a criminal case, said Abdur Razzak, additional superintendent of Rajshahi district police. However, the police official could not go into detail about the case filed back in 2006. The body had two bullet marks on its forehead and chest, Razzak said. Amena Begum, wife of the victim, said Moti went missing since Monday morning after he took his child to school. The body was sent to Rajshahi Medical College morgue for an autopsy. Our Rajshahi correspondent contributed to this report.

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## 118 illegal

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"We have recovered around 3 acres of land of the Buriganga on the seventh day by demolishing the illegal structures," said Arif. He added they would conduct the drive in another area stretching from Kamrangichar's Nababchar to Basila today to recover the river from encroachment. Earlier, the BIWTA identified 906 illegal structures along the bank of the Buriganga stretching from Sadarghat to Gabtoli. They started a 13-day drive on January 29 to evict all illegal establishments. Influential people were behind the encroachment of the river, Arif observed. "We will not bow down to anybody and will demolish every illegal structure as we are getting the necessary support from the administration, judiciary and people," he added. He said they would continue the drive for seven more days to free the rivers around the capital. Under a new project, the government would set up some 12,000 demarcation pillars along the rivers in this regard. A tender would be floated by this month and the work might start within the next three months. The government has already appointed a consultant to implement the Tk 850 crore project. The government would also build some 50km-long walkways, plant trees along them, and set up three eco-parks at Shinnirek, Tongi and Ashulia under the project. The authorities would also build 19 jetties at Amin Bazar, Gabtoli, Kanchpur, Tanbazar, Machuwa Bazar, Khanpur and some other areas.

## One SSC test deferred

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Education Board. Jashore Education Board Secretary Prof Tabibar Rahman told this correspondent that they cancelled the ICT exam, as examinees found that 13 out of its 25 multiple-choice questions of Gha set were those of Career Education subject. The retake of the examination will start at 10:00am on February 28, said officials. "Examinees of many centres noticed it and informed the invigilators. We then decided to cancel the exam as we found the matter true," he said, adding, "I think that the BG Press has made a mistake." About 1.84 lakh students are taking the SSC exams under Jashore

Education Board, said officials. On the first day of the Secondary School Certificate exams, wrong question papers of Bangla first paper were distributed among examinees at several centres in Manikganj, Chattogram, Cox's Bazar and Munshiganj. Answer sheets of the examinees who were given the wrong question papers will be evaluated separately, Education Minister Dipu Moni said later. On Sunday, the authorities announced that SSC and its equivalent examinations scheduled for February 16, 17 and 18 would be held on February 26, 27 and March 2 due to Biswa Jitema.

## Stay alert to drug abuse

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given Moronuttar Shahoshikata Padak (Posthumous Gallantry Medals) at a rally. Sheikh Hasina said that the Ansar members have been demonstrating their competence and successes in all sorts of national crisis and emergencies. The authorities have already been directed to engage the members of Ansar and VDP with One House One Farm project through a cooperative system as they received training in this regard, the prime minister said. The government has been implementing various projects for the development of Ansar and VDP since it came to power in 2009, she said, adding, "Our Awami League government is always sincere and sympathised in solving your problem."

The prime minister said Bangladesh is now recognised as a developing country and asked all to work sincerely for keeping up the achievement and developing the country further. Later, the prime minister enjoyed a cultural soiree displayed by Bangladesh Ansar and VDP members and termed the programme as an "excellent" event. Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan, Public Security Division Secretary Mostafa Kamal Uddin and Director General of Bangladesh Ansar and VDP Major General Kazi Sharif Kaikobad welcomed the prime minister on her arrival at the rally venue.

## Protect identity

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trial of cases against them so that they can be corrected and rehabilitated and they are not treated badly in the society when they become adult, it said. The HC said the media cannot use words like "offender", "convict", and "accused" for the children involved in criminal cases. It, however, suggested using words like "guilty of an offence" in the relevant reports, Deputy Attorney General Mokhesur Rahman told The Daily Star. The HC asked the law secretary, information secretary and president of the Law Reporters Forum, a platform of reporters covering news on law, constitution and human rights, to be vigilant so that media publish and broadcast reports in light of the Children Act. The bench of Justice Sheikh Hassan Arif and Justice Razik-Al-Jalil came up with the verdict following the writ petition filed by Supreme Court lawyer Sayedul Haque Sumon about a report published in The Daily Star on November 5 last year under the headline "Boy gets 10 yrs for killing classmate". Barrister Tanjib-Ul Alam and barrister Kazi Ershadul Alam appeared for The Daily Star while barrister Sayedul himself moved the writ petition. The HC will later release the full text of the verdict.

She observed a parade of Ansar and VDP members riding an open jeep and received salute from them. In the programme, the prime minister handed over special medals to 153 Ansar and VDP members for their bravery and praiseworthy services. She gave Bangladesh Ansar Medals to 10, President's Ansar Medals to 20, Bangladesh VDP Medals to nine, President VDP Medals to six, Bangladesh Ansar Services Medals to 20, President's Ansar Services Medals to 40, Bangladesh VDP Services Medals to 16, and President's VDP Services Medals to 32 members. Liberation War Affairs Minister AKM Mozammel Huq and Deputy Speaker Fazle Rabbi Miah were also present at the programme.

## Complete probe

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Nurul then filed a petition with the HC seeking anticipatory bail in the case. Following the bail petition, the HC granted anticipatory bail to Nurul and summoned Halim to appear before it yesterday to explain why he had implicated Nurul in this case. Yesterday, Halim appeared before the HC bench and said he had dropped Nurul from the case. The court said Halim had purposefully implicated Nurul in this case and directed the superintendent of police in Gazipur to withdraw him from the police station within two weeks, DAG Kazal added.

## Poignant plea

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million yen in total -- including a 400-year-old gnarled juniper -- had been stolen from his garden. His wife Fuyumi wrote in a recent Facebook entry that the couple had raised the bonsai trees "like our children". "I am filled with sadness and heartache," she wrote. Iimura keeps some 3,000 miniature trees on display at the 5,000 square-metre (6,000 square-yard) garden so that visitors can appreciate bonsai art. Since the theft he has installed security cameras. "You know, bonsai is nature in miniature. Looking at a bonsai tree is like walking into a deep mountain while staying at home," Iimura said. Bonsai is an Asian art form of sculpting small trees. Bonsai trees often appear as if shaped by wind or the weight of snow. Sculpting them requires a delicate technique of chiselling branches to twist and pull them into shape, all the while battling to keep the tree alive. Exported Japanese bonsai trees have become a hit overseas. In 2018, Japan exported about 12 billion yen worth of trees, bonsai and potted flowers, up from 4.5 billion yen about a decade ago, according to data published by the agriculture ministry.

## Girl 'raped'

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victim came to the Pallabi residence of her cousin on February 6 in search of a job. On Sunday evening, when her cousin, a domestic help, went out for work, Shathi took the girl to a nearby residence, where Sohul and Tajul raped her, the OC said. Shathi is an acquaintance of the victim's cousin, the OC said, adding that they were launching drive to arrest the accused. Meanwhile, a case was filed with Hatirheel Police Station yesterday in connection with the rape of an eight-year-old girl at Maghbazar T&T Colony area on November 7 last year.

## Delhi hotel

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Even though the law limits construction only to four floors, the hotel had a fifth floor, like some other nearby structures, Jain said, adding that a kitchen and dining area on its top floor constituted another violation. Reuters could not immediately reach hotel officials to seek comment. Jain said hotel guests tried to flee through the hotel's narrow corridors, panelled in wood. Some were unable to break through the windows of their rooms.



The brother of a staff member who died in an early morning hotel fire reacts outside a mortuary at Lady Hardinge Hospital in New Delhi, yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

## 1 in 10 falls sick a year

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and middle-income countries to be in the range of \$95 billion (83.5 billion euros) per year. The conference, attended by ministers and deputy ministers from some 20 countries, is expected to issue a call for better coordination and support. "Food safety is a crucial issue for everyone on earth, but it is here in Africa that the impact of the scourge is felt most," AU Commission chair Moussa Faki told the conference, adding that a third of those affected come from the continent. Miyagishima said a multi-pronged approach was needed. This includes stronger laws, better training and equipment and beefing

# Russia set to disconnect from global internet

AL JAZEERA ONLINE

Russian legislators have given tentative approval to a draft legislation that could cut off Russia from the global internet. The bill, co-authored by Andrei Lugovoi - one of the main suspects in the 2006 murder of Kremlin critic Alexander Litvinenko in the UK - passed its first reading in the lower house of parliament yesterday by 334 votes to 47. A heated debate preceded the vote with many legislators from minority parties criticising it as too costly and argued that it was not written by experts. Authors of the initiative say Russia must ensure the security of its networks after US President Donald Trump unveiled Washington's new cybersecurity strategy last year, which threatened to respond to any cyber attack both offensively and defensively. Russia's new bill proposes creating a

centre to "ensure and control the routing of internet traffic" and requires that Internet Service Providers (ISPs) install "technical measures to withstand threats". It also mandates regular "drills" to test whether Russia's internet can function in an isolated mode. Taking questions on the floor, the authors were unable to estimate the long-term costs, what threats it would repel or even how it would work. They, however, said expert opinions could be incorporated into the bill for its second hearing. One of the authors dismissed a criticism, citing the scale of the potential threat from Washington. "This isn't kindergarten!" shouted Lugovoi. "All of the websites in Syria" have been turned off by the US before, he claimed. Critics say the bill shows the authorities' continued efforts to limit internet freedoms despite the huge public and private cost.

## 2 Manikganj cops held

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two-member probe committee. They are Hafizur Rahman, additional superintendent of police (Sadar circle) in the district, and Hamidur Rahman Siddiqui, senior assistant police superintendent of Special Branch. Hafizur, head of the probe body, told The Daily Star yesterday that the probe committee had enquired about the allegation and talked to the victim who said she had been held captive for two days last week and repeatedly raped by the police officials. The body is yet to submit its report. Both the police officials had been withdrawn and attached to Manikganj

Police Lines following the allegation. On Sunday, the woman met SP Rifat and informed him that SI Sekendar borrowed Tk 1 lakh from her aunt five years ago. He was supposed to give back Tk 3 lakh with interest. She and her aunt went to Satura Police Station on Wednesday afternoon to meet Sekendar. After meeting them, Sekendar took them to Satura Rest House. A few minutes later, ASI Mazharul went there, she said. The police officials then confined her aunt to one room and forced the victim to take yaba pills in another. She was raped several times until they were freed on Friday morning.

## ACC 'knew it months ago'

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On February 6, ACC Commissioner Aminul told reporters that Salek found a photograph of Jaha Alam which resembled that of him. So he used Jaha Alam's address in a bank account. The matter first came to his notice on February 26 last year and they immediately launched a further investigation, he added. Earlier on July 31 last year, ACC Deputy Director Sheikh Mesbah Uddin wrote to the EC seeking information about six people, including Saleq. The ACC also asked the EC to inform it whether Saleq used to work for it.

The EC replied to the ACC on August 14, providing it with information about Jaha Alam and Saleq. According to the EC's NID database, Jaha Alam's father is Yousuf Ali and mother Monwara Begum. Born on July 8, 1983, he was from Dhuboria village of Tangail's Nagarpur upazila. On the other hand, Saleq from Singia village of Thakurgaon's Baila union was born on May 1, 1983. His father is Abdul Kuddus and mother Saleha Khatun. Despite repeated attempts, this correspondent couldn't reach ACC Commissioner Aminul over the phone yesterday for comment. He didn't respond to SMS messages either.