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# Quader riled over quality of roads

*Asks RHD officials to ensure construction process is not faulty; warns against graft*

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Road Transport and Bridges Minister Obaidul Quader yesterday expressed discontent over the quality of roads as some of them get damaged even after a short spell of rain within two or three months of construction.

"What is the point of constructing a road if the newer ones get damaged after a short spell of rain... There are questions about the quality of roads and quality must be ensured," Quader said.

He came up with the remarks while speaking at a view-exchange meeting with the officials of Roads and Highways Department (RHD) at its head office in capital's Tejgaon.

Recognising that "overweight" of vehicles is a problem, Quader asked, "But still, why the roads would get damaged so quickly? The construction processes are definitely faulty then."

Quader, also the general secretary of ruling Awami League, pointed an incident of Begumganj in Noakhali where poor construction materials were used in road construction.

"If such an irregularity can take place in my own district, what is the guarantee that it won't happen everywhere else?" Quader asked.

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Furniture and household goods are left in the open in the city's Bhasantek area after the National Housing Authority carried out an eviction drive at Bhasantek slum yesterday. The authorities say they will build flats on 10 acres of government land there.

PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN

# BHASANTEK SLUM Thousands evicted in NHA drive

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

An eviction drive was conducted at a slum in Bhasantek by the National Housing Authority (NHA) yesterday.

The eviction drive was carried out in presence of a magistrate of the NHA and policemen, said Munshi Sabbir Ahmed, officer-in-charge of Bhasantek Police Station, told The Daily Star.

During the day-long drive, nearly 10-acres of government land were recovered by demolishing thousands of houses in slum, said the OC.

People from different professions including ready-made garment workers, day labourers and rickshaw pullers have been living in the state-owned space illegally for long, added the OC.

M Javed, a witness, told The Daily Star that the drive team demolished nearly 2000 shanties in Bhasantek slum no.3.

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# Blessings sought for mankind as Ijtema ends

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Gazipur

Seeking blessings for the Muslims and mankind, Bishwa Ijtema concluded with an Akheri Munajat on the bank of the Turag in Tongi yesterday.

Maulana Muhammad Shamim administered the second part of the Ijtema, one of the largest congregations of the Muslims, and said the Akheri Munajat (final prayers).

Thousands of devotees from home and abroad took part in the congregation.

This year's Ijtema was held in a single phase with two separate final prayers by two factions of the Tabligh Jamaat.

Followers of Indian preacher Maulana

SEE PAGE 2 COL 2

# Silent extortion rife in hills

*Armed groups linked to regional political parties blamed; victims rarely file complaints*

SHARIFUL ISLAM, back from Rangamati

Several armed groups allegedly affiliated with regional political parties in the hill tracts are extorting money from businessmen and contractors, locals said.

Two businessmen in Rangamati said the armed groups are affiliated with factions of Parbatya Chattogram Jana Sanghati Samiti (PCJSS) and United Peoples Democratic Front (UPDF) in Khagrachhari, Rangamati and Bandarban.

They added that the victims rarely lodge complaints with law enforcement agencies fearing backlash.

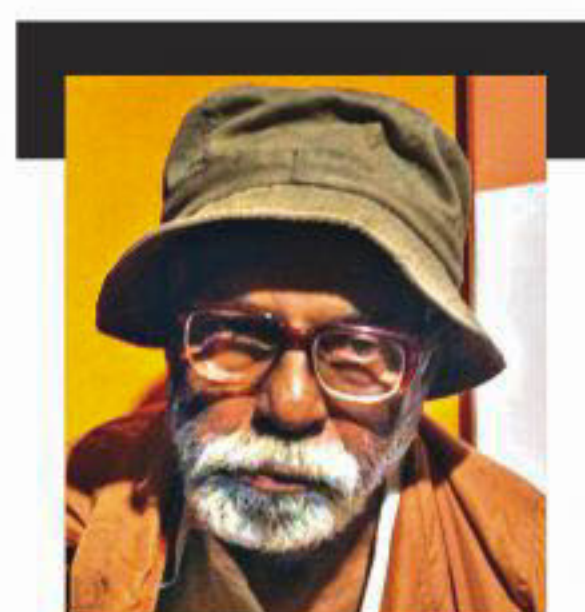
Belayet Hossain Bhuyan, president of Rangamati Chamber of Commerce and Industry, said, "Extortion in the districts has become a common practice. There is no point in lodging any complaint against the extortionists. After we started protesting, some drives are being conducted now."

Belayet is also the chief of Peshajibi Swamannay Parishad, a platform that he characterises as anti-extortion.

During a recent visit to Rangamati, this correspondent spoke to a 20-year-old man who claimed that he once worked as a toll collector for the PCJSS.

"I used to collect a fixed amount annually from timber traders ... The amount depended on the quality of timber," said the man who said he had shunned the path a year ago.

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# Film activist Khasru dies

UNB, Dhaka

Muhammad Khasru, the pioneer of film society movement in Bangladesh, died at a city hospital yesterday. He was 70.

"He has been suffering from pneumonia, breathing problems, diabetes and asthma for a long time," Anjan Jahidur Rahim, president of Bangladesh Short Film Forum, told UNB.

Khasru had been living alone in Mohanpur village of Rohingpur. He was brought to Dhaka last month after his health

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# The real Jaws

*Genetic secrets of great white shark revealed*



REUTERS, Washington

The great white shark, one of the most fearsome predators in the world's oceans in both fact and fiction, is a formidable creature -- right down to its genes.

Scientists on Monday said they have decoded the genome of Earth's largest predatory fish, detecting numerous genetic traits that help explain its remarkable evolutionary success, including molecular adaptations to enhance wound healing as well as genomic stability such as DNA repair and DNA damage tolerance.

The great white shark, whose scientific name is *Carcharodon carcharias*, boasts a very large genome, 1-1/2 times bigger than the human genome.

In theory, large genomes with a lot of repeated

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# 2 'robbers' killed in 'shootout'

STAR REPORT

Two alleged robbers were killed in a "gunfight" with police in Kushtia's Daulatpur upazila early yesterday.

The dead were identified as Mofazzel Hossain alias Mufa Dakat, 42, and Mahabul Islam, 40, both from the same upazila.

Nazrul Islam, officer-in-charge of Daulatpur police, said a team of law enforcers raided the Katdah field on information that robbers were holding a meeting

SEE PAGE 10 COL 4



# PRAYER TIMING FEBRUARY 20

Fazr Zohr Asr Maghrib Esha  
AZAN 5-20 12-45 4-30 6-03 7-30  
JAMAAT 5-55 1-15 4-45 6-07 8-00

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

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# EXPLOSIVES CASE Sayedee's son sent to jail

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Pirojpur

A Pirojpur court yesterday sent war criminal Delowar Hossain Sayedee's son Masood Sayedee to jail in connection with a case filed under the explosives substances act.

Additional District and Session Judge Mohammad Samsul Haque passed the order after cancelling his bail petition.

The court also sent two other Jamaat leaders -- Tofazzal Hossain Farid, amir of Pirojpur Jamaat, and Abdur Rab, general secretary of Pirojpur Jamaat -- to jail in another case filed under the arms act.

Masood, also the chairman of Indurkani Upazila Parishad, along with the two others appeared before the court after their six-week interim bail ended.

Wahiduzzaman Fakir, SI of Indurkani Police Station, filed the case on December 25, last year.

The two others are accused in a case filed by SI Arif Hossain of Pirojpur Sadar Police Station, on December 11, last year.

In loving memory of  
**Late Captain Syed Ali Asghar Rizvi**  
(22 April 1944 - 20 February 2017)

**SECOND DEATH ANNIVERSARY**

Milad Mehfil will be held at Rizvi's residence after Magrib Prayers on 22<sup>nd</sup> February (Friday)

His loving family **Salma, Zaki, Razi, Afraz, Ariana & Alazne**