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"Police are not the owner of the state; they are servant. They should perform their duties obeying the constitution and law."
DR. KAMAL HOSSAIN AT GONOFORUM COUNCIL YESTERDAY

"I request everyone who loves and respects Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman to make sure that his name is not used for business purpose."
FOREIGN MINISTER ABDUL MOMEN AT A DISCUSSION

"Peace and security on the Korean peninsula will entirely depend on the US future attitude."
NORTH KOREA LEADER KIM JONG UN

No pressure on MPs to take oath

Hasina tells press briefing, says it's not her policy to split any party



- Many int'l agencies, NGOs do not want relocation of Rohingyas to Bhasanchar.
- Worries about terrorism, militancy are there, but we're always alert.
- Govt will ensure punitive actions against the killers of Feni madrasa girl Nusrat.

UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has said it is not her policy to divide any party or do anything that leads to a split in a party. She was addressing a press conference at the Gono Bhaban yesterday about the outcome of her recent official visit to Brunei. Regarding the oath of BNP lawmaker-elect Zahidur Rahman against the party's decision, Hasina said there was no pressure from the government on the elected MPs to take oath.

"Why should we put pressure on them?"

They have already said the people of their own constituencies are mounting pressure on them... they took the oath on their own," said Hasina, also the Awami League president. Her comments came hours after BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir said his party was not worried over Zahid's oath-taking as he did it "under pressure from the government".

"Zahidur Rahman has taken oath violating the party's decision. He committed a serious offence and we will surely take organisational actions against him," he told.

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BIWTA, which launches drives against river grabbing, has fenced off a part of the Shitalakkhya river and filled it up with sand near the capital's Sultana Kamal Bridge in Demra. A pontoon has been placed there to serve boats. A vessel is seen offloading sand nearby.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

Ex-Jamaat men move to float new party

Want to part with religion-based politics; announcement today

MOHAMMAD AL-MASUM MOLLA

A number of former leaders of the Jamaat-e-Islami have taken an initiative to form a political party that will not be based on religion. "We believe in religious freedom of every citizen. We will not form any religion-based political party," one of the ex-Jamaat leaders involved in the process told The Daily Star yesterday. The leader said they would make an announcement on the initiative at a press conference today. In recent times, differences of opinion within the Jamaat have surfaced over reforms and whether it would apologise to the nation for opposing

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UN urges int'l help for 1.2m Rohingyas

UN under-secretary gen, IOM, UNHCR chiefs make the call, reiterate need for safe, sustainable return of refugees

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Top UN agency leaders have asked the international community to continue supporting the critical needs of 1.2 million people, Rohingya refugees and their local host communities, in south-eastern Bangladesh. In a joint statement issued yesterday, the heads of UN agencies reiterated their commitment to keep working towards safe and sustainable solutions for the Rohingya refugee crisis and noted the UN efforts in Myanmar to help create conditions conducive to their return.

United Nations Under-Secretary-General for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) and Emergency Relief Coordinator Mark Lowcock, Director General of the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) António Vitorino, and UN High Commissioner for Refugees Filippo Grandi made the commitment at the end of their three-day visit to Bangladesh.

The heads of OCHA, IOM and UNHCR arrived in Dhaka on April 24 to highlight the need for humanitarian support. In Dhaka on Wednesday, the delegation held talks with senior government officials, including Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, Foreign Minister AK Abdul Momen and State Minister for Foreign Affairs Md Shahriar Alam and then travelled Cox's Bazar on Thursday-Friday to assess preparations in refugee camps for the monsoon and cyclone seasons. After visiting the camps in Cox's Bazar, the UN officials highlighted the importance of supporting the Rohingyas during their time in exile, especially in expanding opportunities for learning and skills training.

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'Raid Modi's home too'

Says Indian PM after opposition's criticism on income tax raid

NDTV ONLINE

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi said yesterday there should be income tax raids at his home too if he does anything wrong. Modi's statements came amid the opposition's criticism over raids on various leaders of the opposition just ahead of the ongoing national election. "After income tax raids, Congress leaders say, 'we are politicians, why are you raiding our place?' The country's law is equal to all. If Modi does anything wrong, the Modi's home also must be raided by the Income Tax. The law must be equal to all," the Prime Minister said. Modi was speaking at a rally in Sidhi, 570 km from Bhopal, hours after he filed his nomination papers for the national election from Uttar Pradesh's Varanasi. Stepping up his offensive against Congress chief Rahul Gandhi, Modi said

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Murders he wrote

A key suspect in several murder cases, Banani don Sohel remains at large

SHAHEEN MOLLAH and OSAMA RAHMAN

A politically-affiliated murderer may just be planning his big comeback. At least that is what the locals in his area believe. For them, it is a nightmare come true. "He is a monster," a mother of one of his many victims said, when asked to describe him. "He is just a monster." Former Banani Jubo League Joint Convener Yusuf Sardar Sohel, whose brutality was captured on a close-circuit camera, reportedly fled the country in July soon after allegedly killing Kazi Rashid alias Rashidul, former vice-president of the local Jubo League Banani Thana unit. According to Detective Branch officials, Sohel has recently begun discreetly contacting his associates in Bangladesh. "Sohel has been calling his associates using a number with the country code of Albania. We suspect he is not in the country," said Inspector Moniruzzaman of the serious crimes division of the DB. Since news of him contacting his associates broke, those who were opening

up about his crimes have now gone silent. A victim The Daily Star talked to recently, now refuses to speak further on the matter and called 12 times just so his account is not published. Another victim has been calling on a daily basis. "He [Sohel] is sending me threatening texts to withdraw the case," she said. The physical distance does not comfort her any longer. She requested not to name her in this story. For Sohel who grew up in the capital's Mohakhali, this is not the first time he has escaped, only to return later, thanks to the blessings of political leaders that he enjoys. Back in 2001, after the BNP came to power, he escaped from the country and found himself in South Africa. When the AL returned to power in 2009, Sohel returned too. His evil streak had been sharpened, or so it seemed. In 2012, he was accused of shooting three Jubo League men, including the then general secretary of AL's youth front Zakir Hossain of the Mohakhali, on July 1 of that year.

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Trees are growing on a wall believed to be of a 1,000-year-old archaeological site in Khirtola village of Sirajganj. Left, villagers are seen picking up and collecting potential artefacts. A house, bottom left, believed to have been built with bricks of archaeological interest.

PHOTO: AHMED HUMAYUN KABIR TIPU

In search of a lost time

Archaeologists say they found brick structure in Sirajganj believed to be 1,000-year-old

AHMED HUMAYUN KABIR TOPU, back from Sirajganj

Archaeologists in Sirajganj have unearthed a brick structure which they claim could be more than 1,000 years old. "We've also collected samples of bricks, soil and pieces of terracotta pots from the structure in a village of Raiganj upazila. We believe there are at least five such structures in the area," Rifat Ur Rahman, lecturer of Rabindra University's cultural heritage and Bangladesh studies department, told The Daily Star recently. Rifat led a 36-member team from the department, including students, which carried out surveys in Tarash and Raiganj upazilas of the district between January and April. "The samples of the bricks and others resemble the ones from the Pal Dynasty. We believe those are from between the eighth and 10th centuries ... we are examining those to determine the exact time," he said, adding several other sites in the areas need to be excavated.

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