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## ROAD TRANSPORT LAW BRTA misses 4 deadlines for drafting rules

TUHIN SHUBHRA ADHIKARY

Bangladesh Road Transport Authority (BRTA) has failed to meet four deadlines to prepare the draft of the rules for the Road Transport Act-2018, halting implementation of the law.

At the monthly coordination meeting of the Road Transport and Highway Division on April 17, the division's secretary expressed discontent over the delay and ordered preparing the draft rules within 15 days. But the BRTA failed again.

Besides, a three-minister committee, formed on February 17 to look into how the act can be implemented, was supposed to submit its report within 14 working days. The committee too has not submitted the report yet.

So, the act, which was passed by parliament in September last year, has remained non-functional for seven months, forcing the authorities to use the Motor Vehicles Ordinance-1983 despite its many limitations.

The cabinet in March 2017 approved in principle the proposed Road Transport Act, but the draft act remained stuck at the law ministry for over a year as transport leaders opposed some of its provisions.

The Jatiya Sangsad passed the law following an unprecedented student agitation for safe road after two college students were killed by a bus at Dhaka's Airport Road on July 29.

Road Transport and Bridges Minister Obaidul Quader then had said discipline on roads will be restored once the

SEE PAGE 10 COL 5



Activists form a human chain in front of the Jatiya Press Club protesting irregularities in purchasing furniture and other household items for officials and other employees of Rooppur Nuclear Power Plant. According to media reports, those items were bought at much higher rates than their market value, such as pillows at Tk 5,957 each.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

## Test Wasa water in 34 areas

HC asks govt, says tests should be done at Buett, DU, icddr, b

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday directed the government to test the Wasa water supplied to 34 areas in laboratories of Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (Buett), Dhaka University and the International Centre for Diarrhoeal Disease Research, Bangladesh (icddr, b).

It has also directed the Wasa to pay Tk 1.7 lakh to the committee formed by the local government and rural development (LGRD) ministry for the test.

The committee was ordered to submit its report before the court by July 2.

The HC bench of Justice JBM Hassan and Justice Khairul Alam passed the order while hearing a writ petition filed by Supreme Court lawyer advocate Tanvir Ahmed.

During the hearing, Prof Sabita Rizwana Rahman, head of DU's Micro-Biology department, appeared before the HC bench as per its May 16 order.

She told the court the test report may vary in different seasons.

Earlier on May 16, Dhaka Wasa admitted that its water was polluted in 57

SEE PAGE 10 COL 4

## US gives Huawei temporary reprieve

Delays ban for 90 days; Chinese giant's founder says the firm already prepared for US action

REUTERS, Shanghai/New York

The United States has temporarily eased trade restrictions on China's Huawei to minimize disruption for its customers, a move the founder of the world's largest telecoms equipment maker said meant little because it was already prepared for US action.

The US Commerce Department blocked Huawei Technologies from buying US goods last week, a major escalation in the trade war between the world's two top economies, saying the firm was involved in activities contrary to national security.

The two countries increased import tariffs on each other's goods over the past two weeks after US President Donald Trump said China had reneged on earlier commitments made during months of negotiations.

On Monday, the Commerce Department granted Huawei a license to buy US goods until Aug 19 to maintain existing telecoms networks and provide software updates to Huawei smartphones, a move intended to give telecom operators that rely on Huawei time to make other arrangements.

Shares of US suppliers to Huawei including Qualcomm, Intel Corp and Lumentum Holdings Inc rose yesterday morning, with the Philadelphia Chip Index up more than 1%.

Radio frequency chipmaker Qorvo was the latest US supplier after mobile parts maker Lumentum to halt shipments to Huawei.

It is unclear what the US government extension permits, but if it allows Huawei to keep purchasing components, the company will likely order more to build inventory, said Mark Kelleher, an analyst at DA Davidson.

Huawei is still prohibited from buying American-made hardware and software to make new products without further, hard-to-obtain licenses.

Huawei founder Ren Zhengfei yesterday told Chinese state media that

SEE PAGE 10 COL 5

## Dhaka trashes media reports

Says visa issuance for Pakistanis not halted

BSS, Dhaka

Foreign Minister AK Abdul Momen yesterday rejected media reports that Bangladesh halted visas for Pakistanis, but acknowledged delays in issuing visas which he attributed to the Islamabad authorities.

"The reports should have appeared in the media in a reverse way," he told a press conference at his ministry.

The minister attributed the crisis to Islamabad's inaction in issuing visas to Bangladeshi diplomats to be posted there.

"We have not stopped issuing visas to Pakistanis, but delays could happen in some cases which are common worldwide," he said.

Momen said the Bangladesh High Commission in Islamabad was exposed to manpower shortage,

SEE PAGE 10 COL 4

## Take a bow

Samoa PM makes Pacific Games archery team



AFP, Wellington

Samoa's prime minister has turned back time to qualify for the archery competition at the Pacific Games at the grand age of 74.

Prime Minister Tuilaepa Sailele Malielegaoi made the national archery team after succeeding at trials on the weekend, the government said in a statement released yesterday.

The larger-than-life septuagenarian last fired an arrow competitively when Samoa held the Games 12 years ago, earning himself a silver medal.

Malielegaoi said he wanted to go one better this time and was putting in the work with his teammates on the archery range.

"We need to practice as often as possible to improve our shooting style. We know the techniques and we need to perfect our

SEE PAGE 10 COL 4



Growers sort through the litchi they have brought to sell at a market in Rangamati's Banarupa area. A good yield of this juicy fruit this year has led to an oversupply, causing prices to plummet and frustrating growers.

PHOTO: ANVIL CHAKMA

## Litchi growers unhappy as price drops

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Rangamati

The litchi growers in Rangamati are not happy even after a good yield this year as the price of the succulent fruit has dropped in the local markets in comparison with the last few years.

Visiting Banarupa Samataghat market in the town recently, our correspondent found that 100 pieces of local litchis were being sold at Tk 30-50 while the price was Tk 50-80 last year.

Traders were found to be selling China-3 litchi, a variety of the fruit, at Tk 100-150 while price varied from Tk160 to Tk 240 last year.

Dhana Moni Chakma, 35, owner of a litchi orchard in Rangamati Sadar upazila, told The Daily Star, "I have 250 trees in my orchard. The production of litchi was very good this year, but I didn't get a good price."

Another fruit trader Muhammad Sharif said the

SEE PAGE 10 COL 6

## Find if there's any harmful element

High Court orders authorities

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Expressing dissatisfaction at the BSTI for not properly testing raw cow milk, curd and fodder, the High Court yesterday ordered the authorities to test them to identify the quantity of harmful bacteria, chemicals, lead and antibiotics in them.

The court directed the Bangladesh Standards and Testing Institution and Bangladesh Food Safety Authority (BFSA) to get the samples of raw cow milk, curd and fodder examined in labs and submit test reports to it by June 23.

The HC said harmful substances were found in raw cow milk, curd and fodder in different tests, but the BSTI was not getting anything unsafe in its test, which is not credible.

"Unsafe substances were found in milk and curd in the tests conducted by International Centre for Diarrhoeal Disease Research, Bangladesh [icddr, b], and the Bangladesh Council of Scientific and Industrial Research [BCSIR] in 2017. But the Bangladesh Standards and Testing Institution is not getting anything harmful. Why is the truth not unearthed in the test of Bangladesh Standards and Testing Institution?" the court asked.

SEE PAGE 10 COL 1



### PRAYER TIMING MAY 22

Fazr	Zohr	Asr	Maghrib	Esha
AZAN 3:49	12:45	5:00	6:41	8:00
JAMAAT 3:59	1:15	5:15	6:51	8:30

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION



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### SEHRI, IFTAR TIMING

RAMADAN MAY SEHRI IFTAR

16	22	6:41
17	23	3:43 6:42
18	24	3:42 6:42

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