

THE DAILY Star ON FRIDAY

www.thedailystar.net

Your Right to Know

RAMADAN 18, 1440 HJRI

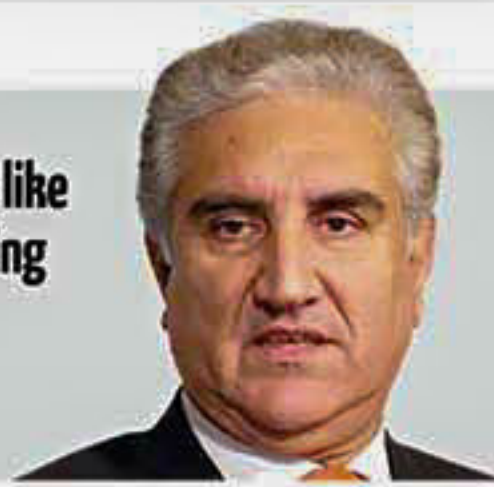
24 PAGES PLUS STAR WEEKEND PRICE : Tk12.00



"If the 350 MPs were free from corruption, no one else would dare indulge in corrupt practices."
CPB LEADER ABDULLAH AL KAFI RATAN (PAGE 3)



"We can and will use the full range of capabilities at our disposal."
NATO CHIEF WARNS RUSSIA OVER CYBERATTACK. (PAGE 8)



"We never speak bitterly, we want to live like good neighbours and settle our outstanding issues through talks."
PAKISTAN FM ON PEACE TALKS WITH INDIA

Modi wins big again

Vows inclusive future for all after stunning polls win; Congress concedes defeat



BJP + 349 | CONGRESS + 93 | OTHERS 100

AGENCIES

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi scored a dramatic election victory yesterday, putting his Hindu nationalist party on course to increase its majority on a mandate of business-friendly policies and a tough stand on national security.

His re-election reinforces a global trend of right-wing populists sweeping to victory, from the United States to Brazil and Italy, often after adopting harsh positions on protectionism, immigration and defence.

Official data from the Election Commission showed Modi's Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) won 349 seats, while the Congress party won 93 seats.

MORE STORIES ON PAGE 9 - GLOOMIEST PHASE FOR GANDHIS, WEST BENGAL SEES SAFFRON SURGE, AMIT SHAH: THE ARCHITECT OF MODI'S VICTORY



Supporters of Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) celebrate yesterday after learning of initial polls results in Chandigarh, India.

PHOTO: REUTERS

Hasina greets Modi on polls win

BSS, Dhaka

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday called Indian premier Narendra Modi and extended heartfelt congratulations to him on his party's landslide victory in the general elections.

The PM phoned her Indian counterpart at 5:30pm and extended heartfelt congratulations to him, PM's Press Secretary Ihsanul Karim told BSS.

"On behalf of the government and the people of Bangladesh, my party and family, I extend my heartfelt congratulations to you on the resounding victory of the National Democratic Alliance, led by Bharatiya Janata Party [BJP], under your dynamic leadership in the 17th Lok Sabha elections in India," she told Modi.

During the over five-minute telephonic conversation, Hasina said the emphatic verdict was a reflection of the trust and confidence reposed in Modi by the people of India.

REMOVAL OF 52 FOOD ITEMS HC rebukes food authority for inaction

Summons BFSA chairman

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday came down heavily on Bangladesh Food Safety Authority (BFSA) for not complying with its earlier order to get 52 sub-standard food items off the shelves.

"Bangladesh Food Safety Authority's activities over removing 52 substandard food items from markets are merely eyewash," said the HC bench of Justice Sheikh Hassan Arif and Justice Razik-Al-Jalil.

During the hearing on a writ petition, the court rebuked the BFSA chairman, summoned him, and issued a contempt of court rule against him for not complying with its order.

It directed the chairman to appear before it on June 16 to explain as to why he failed to comply with the order.

SEE PAGE 17 COL 2

Yaba sneaking in thru' couriers

MOHAMMAD JAMIL KHAN

An organised syndicate has been using courier services over the last one year to bring yaba pills to the capital from Cox's Bazar as a new strategy for carrying the mad drug amid strict vigilance of law enforcers.

The syndicate members in collaboration with a section of the courier service staff resorted to this mode of operation after the countrywide anti-narcotics crackdown began on May 4 last year.

Rab officials claimed to have learnt about the racket after two people were caught receiving a package of one lakh yaba pills from the Uttara branch of SA Paribahan courier service on Sunday.

The arrestees have been identified as Mir Kashem alias Mizan, 26, a contractual Ansar member in Cox's Bazar district and his associate Md Morshed Ali, 27. Both are from Cox's Bazar.

"Narcotics traders earlier smuggled small amounts of yaba pills, like 10 to 20 thousand, by courier. But in the last year, they sent big consignments using the services," Major Abdullah Al Maruf of Rab-3 told The Daily Star on Wednesday.

On August 27, 2018, Rab arrested four people and recovered 40,000 pink pills from a courier service office in the city's Dilkusha.

Smugglers find courier services convenient as they do not need own carriers in this operation, officials say.

"They found it safe also in the absence of scanners or security checks at the booking offices of courier services," said Major Maruf.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 2

Long queues for Eid train tickets at Kamalapur

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The suffering of ticket seekers continued for the second day yesterday as many complained that they could not buy advance train tickets online.

Hundreds of people had to wait in long queues for hours before they could buy tickets at the city's Kamalapur Railway Station.

Yesterday, the railway authorities sold tickets for June 1. Around 25,000 tickets went on sale in the capital from 9:00am to 5:00pm. Half of the tickets were on sale online.

Fatima Akter, a resident of the city's Agargaon area, had to wait for around seven and a half hours in a queue to buy tickets.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 5

Population growth not slowing down

Family planning indicators stagnant for 4 yrs

MOHAMMAD AL-MASUM MOLLA

There was a time when the family planning policy of Bangladesh was a role model for other countries. The government initiated campaigns and interventions and continues to hold a substantial programme, considering over population a major concern for the country.

Yet the country's population growth has shown no signs of slowing down over the last four years with the family planning indicators remaining stagnant, according to official data and expert opinions.

With no improvement in the key indicators like total and adolescent fertility rates, contraceptive use and child marriage, Bangladesh remains one of the most densely populated countries in the world.

Take the total fertility rate (TFR) as an example. TFR is the average number of children

a woman would bear during her lifetime. The rate was 2.3 in the 2014 Demographic and Health Survey report and it remained unchanged in the latest study completed in 2017.

The contraceptive prevalence rate is still stuck at 62 percent, according to the 2017 survey. The rate was the same four years ago.

According to the latest national census held in 2011, the country's population was 142.319 million with the density of 964 inhabitants per square kilometre.

And the country's population growth rate or average annual change in the population was 1.37 percent.

In the census, the crude death rate stood at 4.8 per thousand and birth rate at 17.88.

"Inefficient service, less home visit [by family planning officials] and unmet need for contraceptives are the reasons behind the stagnant indicators," said a senior official.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 2



'Focus should now be on June 2'

SAKEB SUBHAN from London

The aim of any global sporting showpiece should be to provide a level playing field, and it was note-worthy that -- whether by chance or design -- Bangladesh's Mashrafe Bin Mortaza and Afghanistan's Gulbadin Naib were the two captains sitting on either side of the World Cup trophy during yesterday's official World Cup captains' press conference in London.

It would be easy to say that these are the two nations least likely to win the World Cup as in the general perception they are not yet contenders, but the first question Mashrafe Bin Mortaza was asked during

SEE PAGE 17 COL 6



Bangladesh skipper Mashrafe Bin Mortaza answers questions during a press conference involving the captains of all 10 participating teams of the ICC Cricket World Cup, which begins on May 30. At the press conference, asked which opposition player he would have liked on the Tigers' squad, Mashrafe earmarked India's Virat Kohli.

PHOTO: AFP

RICE PROCUREMENT

Farmers' presence thin at govt depot

Mostly growers linked to AL go there on the first two days of purchase in Mohonpur upazila of Rajshahi

PINAKI ROY and ANWAR ALI

A flurry of activity yesterday afternoon set the Local Supply Depot at Mohonpur apart from other depots in Rajshahi.

While farmers were found reluctant to take paddy to most depots, some half a dozen labourers were seen at the Mohonpur depot, unloading sacks of paddy from a truck.

Abul Kalam Azad, the officer-in-charge of the depot, said a farmer, Ataur Rahman, had brought the truck loaded with 200 sacks of paddy, weighing two tonnes, to selling to the government depot.

The official then introduced Ataur Rahman. Clad in pair of a jeans, white T-shirt and a sneaker, Rahman showed his Agricultural Input Assistance Card as proof of his profession.

He said he was an activist of Bakshimol Jubo League, the youth wing of the Awami league, and had a retail shop at a local market where he sold rice.

Although the depot official claimed Ataur was selling two tonnes of paddy on his own, Ataur said two other Jubo League members also owned a share of the paddy.

Moreover, the official said the paddy they were taking into the depot yesterday would be shown registered as procured on Sunday.

Any entry into depots without stock registration is considered illegal, although officers can keep stocks of paddy for the farmer's benefit. Without an entry being made, however, the seller does not get any payment.

SEE PAGE 17 COL 1