

Police launch

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Investigation, Mia Masud Hossain. Further actions will be taken against DIG Mizan once the probe report is submitted, Soheli Rana, assistant inspector general of police (media) told The Daily Star.

Earlier on June 12, Soheli said that officials concerned were asked to start the primary investigation.

DIG Mizan was an additional commissioner of Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP). He was withdrawn on January 9 last year after allegations surfaced that Mizan, while serving as an additional commissioner of DMP, married a woman forcibly and tortured her.

He had also implicated her in a false case in which she was arrested and remained in jail for three weeks.

About the missing of former state minister Tanjim Ahmed Soheli Taj's nephew, the home minister yesterday said he had spoken to Soheli in this regard.

"A general diary was lodged and I asked the law enforcers to look into the matter," he said.

Asaduzzaman said, "Someone might have picked him up or he might have gone somewhere."

"He will be traced no matter where he is," the minister added.

Meanwhile, Soheli, on his verified facebook page, declared that he himself was going to investigate the matter as part of assisting the law enforcers.

5th phase

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polls results showed that chairman candidates of the ruling Awami League won in 10 upazilas and independent contenders in eight. Results from two other upazilas were not available till filing of this report at 1:00am today.

CLASHES IN TWO UPAZILAS

At least 13 people were injured in clashes in different areas of Brahmanbaria's Bijoyanagar upazila during polling.

Nasima Lutfur, an independent chairman candidate in the upazila, alleged that supporters of AL chairman candidate Tanvir Bhuiyan attacked her home in Brahmanbaria town's Haldarpara area.

Talking to journalists, Nasima said around 20 to 25 people vandalised several cars and a motorbike, and looted valuables from her house.

Denying the allegation, Tanvir said he knew nothing about the attack. Nasima later went on to win the election, beating her nearest rival Tanvir by around 7,000 votes.

Elsewhere, at least 10 AL men were injured when they clashed with villagers at Boropukurpar Government Primary School polling centre around 12:30pm. Locals said the clash ensued when the AL men tried to snatch EVM machines and other equipment from the centre.

In another incident, polling agents of the AL chairman candidate snatched EVM machines and computer monitors from Satgaon Government Primary School polling centre around noon. Polling was suspended at the centre for around an hour and forty-five minutes, said Presiding Officer Nur Mahmood.

In Sirajganj, at least 10 people were wounded in a clash between supporters of AL chairman candidate Abdul Matin and independent candidate Shahidullah Sabuz at Choubaria Islamia High School polling centre in Kamarkhand upazila in the morning. The clash began following an altercation between the two groups over distribution of voter slips, said Md Habibur Islam, OC of Kamarkhand Police Station.

Most of the polling stations in the upazila saw low turnout. In Feni, turnout was quite low in most of the polling stations in Chagalnaya upazila.

Only four out of 2,175 voters at Koiyara Zafar Imam High School polling station cast their votes till 4:00pm.

Our correspondents in Brahmanbaria, Pabna and Feni contributed to this report.

UN finds

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quarters," they should be shared and efforts made to understand them. Among the causes of the UN's failures, the diplomat notes "the initial fascination on the part of the international community with the political transition, based in no small part on the almost legendary status that Aung San Suu Kyi had reached," referring to the country's civilian leader.

He said then-United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein most consistently called out the rights violations taking place but this led to "some unease among those in the UN who favoured the 'quiet diplomacy' approach."

Asked Monday about the report, UN spokesman Stephane Dujarric said Guterres has accepted the recommendations "and is committed to implementing them so as to improve the performance of the United Nations system."

But Louis Charbonneau, United Nations director at Human Rights Watch, said the UN needs to hold accountable "UN officials most responsible for ignoring ethnic cleansing in Myanmar."

"UN 'lessons-learned' reports about its failure to act in the face of mass atrocities have become almost routine," he said.



The vandalised entrance to the house of Nasima Lutfur, an independent chairman candidate in Brahmanbaria's Bijoyanagar upazila. She alleged that supporters of Awami League candidate Tanvir Bhuiyan attacked her house in Haldarpara area of Brahmanbaria town around 2:00pm yesterday. Inset, Faiz Miah, a local, is injured after being attacked allegedly by supporters of Tanvir near Ahladi Government Primary School polling centre in the upazila.

PHOTO: MASHUK HRIDDY



Trump heads back to base for 2020 campaign kickoff

AFP, Washington

President Donald Trump will get a big crowd of his most loyal supporters as official 2020 reelection campaign kickoff in Florida but dismal early poll numbers show the larger-than-life Republican businessman is vulnerable.

Organizers claim the Orlando rally set to hold yesterday has sold out a 20,000-seat arena, with many more to gather outside, watching on big screens.

"Looks to be setting records," Trump tweeted Monday.

After more than two drama-filled years at the White House, the fast-

talking real estate salesman bets that a strong economy and his promise to fight for forgotten blue collar workers will persuade the country to give him a second term.

But more than 20 Democrats are lining up to take him on and there's no question that a lengthy probe into Trump's dealings with Russia and his divisive, bruising style have wounded the unconventional president.

A wide range of polls show Trump lagging far behind Democratic frontrunner Joe Biden, who is campaigning on a promise to return the country to what he portrays as the calmer, gentler days of Barack Obama, under whom he served as

vice president.

And it's not only Biden ahead.

Even Pete Buttigieg, the gay, small-city mayor emerging as one of the surprise stars of the Democratic field, narrowly pips Trump, according to a poll from Fox News released this weekend.

Polls so far in advance have limited value and in 2016 they famously failed to predict Trump's defeat of Democrat Hillary Clinton.

But in a sign of frayed nerves, Trump is lashing out at what he calls "fake" polling, while multiple US media reports say that his campaign has fired several of its own pollsters.

Democrats are fired up, with the

party's most active wing veering left and a vocal minority pushing for Trump's impeachment.

So if Trump is going to win, he'll need everyone from his own fervent base on the right to turn out, setting the stage for a sharply polarized election.

The Orlando speech will see him aim directly at that demographic in a state likely to be crucial to either candidate in amassing the necessary electoral college votes for victory.

Expect Trump, the self-promoting hero of his ghost-written book "The Art of the Deal," to claim the US economy is richer, the military stronger, and the country more respected than ever in its history.

Maternal causes behind 13pc deaths

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According to WHO guidelines, it should have been between 10 and 15 percent.

The study styled "Bangladesh Maternal Mortality and Health Care Survey 2016" was conducted by the National Institute of Population Research and Training (Niport) while icddr,b provided technical assistance.

It is the latest study by Niport on the matter.

A total of 298,284 households and 321,214 married women were interviewed as part of the survey funded by the Bangladesh government, the United States Agency for International Development and the Department for International Development.

Field data collection started on August 22, 2016 and was completed on February 10, 2017. As many as 90 interviewing teams joined the survey work in six phases, said the latest Niport report on the issue.

The report said cancer accounts for the highest - 24 percent - of death of females, aged between 15 and 49, in the country, followed by circulatory diseases (23 percent). The other reasons include suicides and injuries, both six percent.

The rate of females' deaths due to maternal causes was 20.2 percent in 2001. It dropped to 14.1 in 2010 and 13.1 in 2016, the report said.

According to the survey report, haemorrhage was the most common cause of maternal deaths, followed by eclampsia, a condition in which one or more convulsions occur in a pregnant woman suffering from high blood pressure, and abortion-related complications.

"Haemorrhage and eclampsia account for 55 percent of all maternal deaths according to BMMS [Bangladesh Maternal Mortality Survey] 2016, slightly higher than BMMS 2010 [51 percent]," it added.

The report adds that the section of people seeking healthcare has remained almost the same between 2010 (68 percent) and 2016 (67 percent).

Convulsion and bleeding are also responsible for maternal deaths amid no supply of related medicines from the government, the report said, adding that 72 percent of the government healthcare centres have no supply of two vital injections -- magnesium sulphate for preventing convulsion; and ergometrine or oxytocin for preventing and controlling bleeding after childbirth.

Meanwhile, although the report estimated the maternal mortality rate to be 196 per live births in 2016, Dr Kazi Mustafa Sarwar, director general of the Directorate General of Family Planning, said the number was 172.

He ruled out the report finding and

said, "We compile data regularly. The Niport report doesn't matches reality." **HOSPITAL SCENARIO AT A DHAKA UPAZILA** Recently, this correspondent visited Dhamrai Upazila Health Complex in Manikganj, a nearly two-hour drive from the capital.

Asked, the authorities concerned said there was no supply of magnesium sulphate and oxytocin from the government for over five years.

"We usually manage the medicines from alternative sources," said Md Fazlul Haque, the upazila health and family planning officer.

In 2018, the number of C-section deliveries was high in the upazila.

Some 2,656 out of 2,667 newborns were born through C-section in hospitals and private clinics, according to records of the health complex.

There were only 611 normal deliveries, of which only 226 happened at the hospital, the records show.

No maternal death was recorded in Dhamrai last year, but four stillborn babies were born then.

C-section is not available at the health complex since March 2018 as the only anaesthetist was leave preparatory to retirement (LPR), said hospital sources.

As a result, many were forced to go to private clinics.

One of them was Shakila Akter,

28, who gave birth to her baby boy through C-section at a private clinic in Savar several months ago

"I had to go to the clinic and pay Tk 30,000 for the operation since the health complex has no C-section facility," she told this correspondent.

Talking to The Daily Star, Khaleda Bari, member of the Obstetrical and Gynaecological Society of Bangladesh, said, "If you compare with the past, the number of C-section has come down."

When her attention was drawn to the report that said the proportion of the operation has increased, she said, "Neither the doctors nor the patients want to take the risk. But C-section can be avoided in most cases. It is all about ethics; we all have become greedy for money."

She urged for creating awareness among the people, especially the marginalised ones and those living in rural areas. "Assigning trained midwives in all community clinics could be a major step in this regard," she added.

Talking to The Daily Star, Dr Kazi Mustafa Sarwar, director general of DGFP, said they were planning to initiate a set of new programmes to improve the situation.

"C-section is a problem. We have planned to engage the community leaders in raising public awareness about it," he said.

Suspected jihadists raid Nigeria military base, town

AFP, Kano

Suspected Boko Haram jihadists have overrun a military base and looted a nearby town in northeast Nigeria, security sources and residents said yesterday, the latest such attack in the restive region.

The raids came a day after 30 people were killed on Sunday in a triple suicide bombing in the region that also bore the hallmarks of Boko Haram.

Boko Haram's decade-long campaign of violence has killed 27,000 people and displaced about two million in Nigeria.

Late on Monday assailants, arriving on nine armoured trucks, stormed into the military base outside the town of Gajiram, 80 kilometres (50 miles), north of the Borno state capital Maiduguri.

They were suspected to be from IS-affiliated Boko Haram faction known as the Islamic State West Africa Province (ISWAP).

"They dislodged troops from the base after a fight," a security source told AFP.

"We don't know the extent of damage and looting in the base. An assessment is being carried out."

It was not immediately clear if there were any casualties.

Residents said the Islamists drove into the town after sacking the base and looted shops, shooting into the air.

Their presence forced residents to flee into the bush while others shut themselves in their homes.

"The gunmen drove into the town around 6pm (1700GMT) after overpowering soldiers in the base," Gajiram resident Mele Butari told AFP.

Manpower

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Agencies (Baira), organised by the Ministry of Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment in its conference hall yesterday.

Imran said excessive migration cost was the major factor contributing to the exploitation of migrant workers. In many instances, the workers don't get the jobs they were promised.

He asked the recruiting agencies to open their branch offices in the districts. Presently, the recruiting agencies have their offices mostly in Dhaka and therefore they depend on unauthorised brokers to collect overseas jobseekers from rural areas.

They are often accused of providing false promises and charging additional money from the jobseekers.

The minister has sought cooperation from the recruiting agencies in cutting migration costs, saying that the role of the agencies was very crucial in disciplining the sector.

Baira President MP Benjir Ahmed urged the government to be careful so that the recruiting agents cannot create any syndicate to monopolise the labour market.

Earlier in 2016, a syndicate of ten recruiting agents of Bangladesh and the then powerful political leaders of Malaysia had created a cartel to control labour recruitment from Bangladesh.

There were allegations that some powerful syndicates are trying to create another one to send workers to the United Arab Emirates, another labour market for Bangladeshis.

Imran said the government would not allow any syndicate in the international recruitment sector.

Officials from the expatriates' welfare ministry and other Baira leaders were also present at the meeting.

Family branches

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one down is considered inauspicious.

"We believe that 350 million gods and goddesses reside in one peepal tree. The tree is also mentioned in the Geeta," a Hindu religious text, said Kesharwani.

His wife can pray without having to leave home, sitting before the tree in the mornings.

The family also wanted to send the message that people can put down roots in the middle of nature without destroying anything.

The four-storey building is a local landmark because of its unique facade. Leafy branches jut out from the windows, dwarfing the building and prompting curious looks from passersby.

"When the house was first built, engineering students used to come here to try and understand the unique design," Kesharwani said.

The tree has never caused any practical problems to the family, insisted Kesharwani.

"We don't even realise that the tree exists because it doesn't come in our way. It just stands there silently."

Earth

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The report also projects growing life expectancy generally, including in poor countries where it is now seven years less than the global average.

Global average life expectancy should reach 77.1 years in 2050 against 72.6 years currently, the report says. In 1990, the average life expectancy was 64.2 years.

Some shady traders holding people hostage

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writ petition filed by the Human Rights and Peace for Bangladesh (HRPB), a rights organisation, which sought its directive on the government to take steps against the use of chemicals in fruits.

The court also cited a recent report published in The Daily Star which said chemicals were being used in mangoes.

At one stage of the hearing, the court said our future generations were under threat due to the high use of chemicals in fruits.

The HC told the Bangladesh Standard and Testing Institution (BSTI) lawyer Sarkar MR Hassan that if the BSTI had worked properly, food adulteration could not take place in such a manner.

When the court wanted to know

the update on formalin testing machines, Hassan said the World Health Organization was supposed to provide financial assistance to purchase those.

"Millions of dollars is being laundered from the country. Will we have to beg for a few crores to purchase the machines? The people have to survive first. What will be done with this thing if the people cannot live?" the court said.

The court also refused to accept a report of the BSTI regarding the steps they have taken against the use of chemicals in fruits.

The bench did not accept the report as it was not comprehensive regarding the steps taken against the use of chemicals in fruit markets and warehouses in the country as per its earlier directive, petitioner's lawyer

Manzill Murshid told The Daily Star.

He said the HC asked the BSTI to make a complete report on this issue and submit it to court on June 23.

Citing the BSTI report, Manzill said the BSTI conducted drives in a few groceries in Dhaka's Mirpur, eight shops in Rajshahi and 200 shops in Chattogram, although the HC had ordered them to form surveillance teams and conduct drives in the fruit markets and warehouses at different places, including Dhaka.

The BSTI found in the report that it had not found chemicals in the fruits, Manzill said.

The court, however, accepted another report prepared by the Rapid Action Battalion on their countrywide drives against offending shops and warehouses.

Deputy Attorney General Abdullah

Al Mahmud Bashar represented the state.

Contacted, BSTI lawyer Hassan told The Daily Star that the HC had asked the BSTI to submit a report on its recent actions against the use of chemicals in fruits to the court on June 23.

He said BSTI has conducted the drives at different places across the country through mobile courts and surveillance teams.

Around 400 maunds of mangoes were destroyed at Jatrabari area in Dhaka as carbide was mixed with them and the dishonest traders were fined Tk 26 lakh, he said.

The HC on May 20 directed the government to form teams to monitor fruit markets and warehouses across the country to prevent use of harmful chemicals.