

Ershad responding to calls Condition unchanged, says GM Quader

Ailing Jatiya Party Chairman HM Ershad, undergoing treatment at the Combined Military Hospital (CMH) in Dhaka, yesterday responded to the calls. The former president's condition, however, remained unchanged, Ershad's younger brother GM Quader said at a press briefing at the JP chairman's office in the capital. Quader, also acting chairman of Jatiya Party, said Ershad has not been put on life support. Rather he is on oxygen support due to breathing difficulties, Quader said. "Physical condition of Pollibandhu [Ershad] remains unchanged. But he is responding to calls of his relatives and doctors," Quader told reporters. Quoting doctors at the CMH, Quader said doctors termed Ershad's present physical condition "positive".

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An almost-collapsing signboard is not the most inviting sight into the Tax Information and Service Centre of the National Board of Revenue in Segunbagicha. A dilapidated dropped ceiling at the entrance of the building, inset, does not invoke confidence either of the general public, who the office is supposed to serve. The photos were taken yesterday. PHOTO: STAR

ROOPPUR NUCLEAR POWER PLANT High Court wants to know about steps against irregularities

The High Court yesterday wanted to know about the steps taken against those who were allegedly involved in irregularities in purchasing furniture and other household items for officials of Rooppur Nuclear Power Plant. In response to a writ petition, the court also sought reports from the committees -- formed by housing and public works ministry -- probing the alleged irregularities. The HC asked the attorney general's office to inform the court on the steps taken and submit the enquiry reports before it in two weeks, writ petitioner Barrister Sayedul Haque Suman told The Daily Star. At the same time, the court issued a rule asking the authorities concerned of the government to explain in four weeks why their failure to act in good faith in buying and moving furniture into the flats of Green City Housing site of Rooppur Nuclear Power Plant should not be declared illegal. Secretaries to the ministries of housing and public works and science and technology, chief engineers of the department of housing and public works, additional chief engineer and executive engineer of Rajshahi, and the project director of Rooppur Nuclear Power Plant have been made respondents to the rule. The bench of Justice Tariq ul Hakim and Justice Md Shohrwardi came up with the order and rule. During a hearing on the petition earlier, Barrister Suman told the HC that the irregularities in purchasing furniture and other household items should be enquired by an independent judicial committee, as the committees formed by the housing ministry might be biased. The officials against whom the allegations have been made are listed in the order. SEE PAGE 4 COL 3

LOAN RESCHEDULING SC judge stays HC orders that halted central bank circular

The Supreme Court yesterday stayed till July 8 the High Court orders that halted a Bangladesh Bank circular allowing defaulters to reschedule their loans with a repayment period of up to 10 years, and to get further loans. Chamber judge of the Appellate Division of the SC, Justice Md Nuruzzaman passed the order -- following a petition filed by the finance ministry seeking stay on the HC orders in this regard. He also sent the finance ministry's petition to an SC full bench for hearing on the matter on July 8. Following a writ petition filed by Human Rights and Peace for Bangladesh (HRPB), the HC on May 21 issued a status quo till June 24 on the central bank's May 16 circular that allowed defaulters to reschedule their defaulted loans upon a down payment of just two percent of the total loan amount up to 10 years, and to get further loans. On June 24, the HC extended its May 21 order for next two months. The finance ministry recently filed a petition with the SC seeking stay on the HC's May 21 and June 24 orders. Attorney General Mahbubey Alam appeared for the finance ministry while Advocate Manzill Murshid represented HRPB during yesterday's hearing.

496 children raped in last six months Shishu Adhikar Forum report says

At least 496 children were raped in the first six months of this year at different parts of the country, in a significant rise comparing to that of the previous year, said a report. In the same period of time last year, the total number of rape was 351, according to the report. Bangladesh Shishu Adhikar Forum (BSAF), a platform of non-government organisations which works for child rights, prepared the report based on news published at 15 national dailies between January and June. The BSAF authorities shared the findings.

HOLEY ARTISAN ATTACK TRIAL Survivor recounts fateful night

Dr Satprakash, one of the eyewitnesses of the Holey Artisan Bakery attack, yesterday told a tribunal in Dhaka how he saw innocent people being killed by militants. Satprakash, director of Prottoy Medical Clinic Ltd in Baridhara, gave his statement before the Anti-Terrorism Special Tribunal of Dhaka and later he was cross-examined by defence lawyers. Judge (in-charge) Md Monir Kamal of the tribunal recorded the statement for an hour and set July 9 for the next hearing. Satprakash said he went to Holey Artisan Bakery around 8:30pm on July 1, 2016 to have dinner. Shortly afterwards, some youths opened fire inside the cafe. Some of the militants asked him whether he was a Bangladeshi. He said "yes". They then asked him not to be afraid and to go to another room. He stayed in the other room throughout the night. Dr Satprakash, an Indian who came to Bangladesh in 2002, said a man was shot dead right in front of him. Moreover, he found a number of bodies inside the restaurant. The next morning, police came and rescued him and several others. During investigation, he gave a judicial statement before a magistrate.

COP'S GUN STOLEN FROM BARRACK DMP releases suspect's photo, seeks help from public to identify him

Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP) yesterday sought help from the public in identifying a man who apparently stole a police official's service firearm and ammunition from a barrack almost two months ago. DMP released photograph and video footage of a youth, seeking information on a suspect who they claimed might have taken a 7.62mm pistol, two magazines and 16 rounds of bullets belonging to Assistant Sub-Inspector Himangshu Saha of Shabbagh Police Station from the police station's barrack on May 5. Himangshu came to his room on the first floor of the barrack after his shift on that day, left the gun and ammo on his bed and went to the washroom, according to a release on the DMP news portal. When he came back five minutes later, the gun and bullets were not there. Himangshu filed a case against unidentified people after he could not trace the pistol after searching the barrack, the news portal reads. On May 8, DMP suspended ASI Himangshu for losing his pistol and ammo. The investigating officer of the case, analysing nearby close circuit television cameras, collected potential suspects' photos and video. In the footage, an unidentified youth wearing black and white checkered shirt, carrying a black backpack was seen entering the police barrack and going away after a few minutes, said Masudur Rahman, deputy commissioner of DMP. The DMP news portal release asked anyone having any information on the man to inform the officer-in-charge of Shabbagh Police Station.



President Abdul Hamid exchanges greetings with a hajj pilgrim at the Ashkona Hajj Camp yesterday. PHOTO: PID

Don't cheat Hajj pilgrims: President

UNB, Dhaka President Abdul Hamid yesterday warned against negligence, irregularities and corruption in Hajj management, saying that individuals, agencies and institutions involved in such malpractices will be punished. He said this during the inaugural ceremony of the Hajj programme-2019 at the Hajj Camp in Dhaka's Ashkona in the afternoon, where he also met pilgrims. "You make profit from Hajj pilgrims. Don't cheat them. It's very sensitive," the president said. He said anyone found guilty of mismanagement will be punished.

Advertisement for a medical seminar titled 'ল্যাপারোস্কপিক রেকটাম ক্যান্সারের উপর লাইভ ওয়ার্কশপ অনুষ্ঠিত'. It features a group of medical professionals in green scrubs. The text describes a live workshop on laparoscopic rectal cancer surgery, organized by the Bangladesh Poribesh Andolon at the Science Lab area. It also lists a seminar on Bangladesh-India cooperation and an academic session on ECA and scholarships.

Advertisement for Prandairy milk. The headline is 'নিশ্চিত্তে পান করুন প্রাণ দুধ' (Drink Prandairy milk with confidence). It features images of Prandairy milk cartons and a cow. The text promotes the safety and quality of the milk, mentioning that it is produced in Bangladesh and is safe for consumption.

Advertisement for Dr. Md. Faruk Mafizul Haque's clinic. The headline is 'ইডেন মাল্টি-কয়ার হস্পিটাল' (Eden Multi-Care Hospital). It lists the clinic's address at 75, Sait Masjid Road, Dhaka, and provides contact information including phone numbers and a website (www.profrakmafizulhaque.com). It also mentions the clinic's specialization in various medical fields.