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SHAH CEMENT

APPELLATE DIVISION OF SC

22,000 cases for 7 judges

ASHUTOSH SARKAR

Each judge of the Supreme Court's Appellate Division is burdened with more than 3,140 cases on average as some 22,000 cases are pending with this court.

The number of apex court judges came down to seven from 11 in 2009 after appointments and retirements of some judges.

The situation is worse in the High Court Division of the SC where 92 judges are loaded with more than 5,500 cases each on average. About 5.06 lakh cases are pending with this court.

Lower court judges are also burdened with a huge number of cases as there are only 1,819 judges to deal with 30.53 lakh cases filed in courts across the country, which means each of the judges will have to dispose of 1,700 cases on an average.

As of March 31 this year, a total of 35,82,347 cases were pending with the courts, including the Appellate and HC divisions, according to the latest SC study report.

The study report also said a total of 3,82,649 cases were filed with all the courts while 3,45,509 cases were disposed of since January 1 to March 31 this year.

A previous SC study showed 30,07,860 cases were pending with the courts as of December 31, 2014.

The backlog of cases is growing every day, causing immense sufferings to justice seekers.

SC lawyer and Editor of Dhaka Law Reports Khurshid Alam Khan told The Daily Star that shortage of judges, the growing number of cases, and improper selection of cases have been the main reasons behind the backlog.

More efficient and experienced judges are needed to be

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Dengue infected Siam has been at the Mugda Medical College and Hospital in the capital since Thursday. The three-year-old's parents had to bring his baby sister to the hospital as there is no one at home to look after her. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN

BNP to seek global focus on Khaleda Zia's release

UNB, Dhaka

The BNP has decided to draw the international community's attention to the issue of Khaleda Zia's release and proper treatment.

BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir informed journalists about the decision after a standing committee meeting at the party chairperson's Gulshan office yesterday.

"We've taken a decision to inform the democratic countries about the issue of our leader's release and her health condition. We'll also take necessary steps to notify the international community that she has been kept in jail unfairly," he said.

Referring to the rejection of Khaleda's bail petition by the High Court in the Zia Charitable Trust corruption case, Fakhrul said the "nega-tive" order of the court has strengthened their perception that the judiciary now cannot work independently.

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Mob beats 2 'criminals' to death

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Pabna

Two suspected criminals were beaten to death by a mob near Sondah canal in Pabna's Santhia upazila early yesterday.

The dead are Shahin, 45, and Abdullah, 35, of Santhia upazila, said police.

Jillur Rahman, assistant superintendent of Pabna police (Bera circle), said the duo tried to rob a house in the middle of the night.

On information, a police team was sent to raid the area and detain them. But locals beat the criminals up badly before police could reach there, he added.

The suspected criminals sustained critical injuries before police rescued them. Police then sent them to Bera Upazila Health Complex, the ASP said, adding that the duo was later shifted to Pabna General Hospital as their conditions deteriorated.

Later, they died at Pabna General Hospital.

The bodies were sent to Pabna Medical College morgue for autopsies.

Of the duo, Shahin was accused in five cases filed with different police stations, said ASP Jillur.

Robiul Islam Liton, chairman of Nandapur Union Parishad, said locals beat up the men after they intruded into some Siddik's house.

SEIZED IRAN VESSEL OFF GIBRALTAR US warrant puts tanker in limbo

AFP, Gibraltar

A last-minute US warrant to seize an Iranian oil tanker preparing to leave Gibraltar after weeks of detention cast doubt over its departure yesterday, prolonging a diplomatic spat between Tehran, London and Washington.

The US Justice Department alleged the ship was part of a scheme "to unlawfully access the US financial system to support illicit shipments to Syria from Iran by the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps," which Washington has designated a foreign terrorist organisation.

There was no comment from Britain or Gibraltar, its overseas territory.

Any detention order would ultimately have to come from Gibraltar's Supreme Court. So far, that has not happened and the ship is still free to sail.

Richard de la Rosa, managing director of Astralship, the vessel's shipping agent, told AFP the ship was preparing for departure.

"Within the next two days, she'll be going," he said.

"They're performing crew changes. She needs some reprovisioning," he said, adding new Indian and Ukrainian crew members were due to arrive today.

Gibraltar seized the ship on July 4 on suspicion it was transporting oil to Syria in breach of European Union sanctions, triggering a sharp deterioration in relations between Tehran and London. Iran has repeatedly denied this.

Iran subsequently detained the British-flagged tanker Stena Impero in what was seen as a tit-for-tat move.

On Thursday, Gibraltar's Supreme Court ordered the tanker released after the British overseas territory said it had received assurances from Iran that the Grace 1 would not head to any country subject to EU sanctions.

But in a last-minute twist on Friday, the United States, which is at loggerheads with Iran, issued the warrant.

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Bhola rape victim's condition worsens

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The condition of the sixth grader, who was gang-raped in Bhola on August 11, deteriorated yesterday.

"She bled again from her injuries. We have given her some medicines to stop the bleeding. If those do not work, she will be operated on tomorrow [today]," said Dr Bilkis Begum, coordinator at the One-Stop Crisis Centre at Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH).

Family members and doctors said the 12-year-old girl showed signs of trauma on Friday night. She woke up several times during the night and said she had nightmares about being sexually abused.

Bilkis said they offered psychological counselling to the victim.

A brother of the victim yesterday said his sister

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Robotic tail that will keep elderly upright

REUTERS, Tokyo

Millions of years after the ancestors of humans evolved to lose their tails, a research team at Japan's Keio University have built a robotic one they say could help unsteady elderly people keep their balance.

Dubbed Arque, the grey one-meter device mimics tails such as those of cheetahs and other animals used to keep their balance while running and climbing, according to the Keio team.

"The tail keeps balance like a pendulum," said Junichi Nabeshima, a graduate student and researcher at the university's Embodied Media Project, displaying the robotic tail attached to his

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CURTAILING ASYLUM Court deals setback to Trump rule

REUTERS

A US appeals court on Friday dealt a setback to the Trump administration attempt to bar almost all asylum applications at the US-Mexico border, but stopped short of applying its decision nationwide.

While ruling against a provision of President Donald Trump's hard-line anti-immigration policy, the 9th US Circuit Court of Appeals said the decision

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PRAYER TIMING AUGUST 18

Fazr Zohr Asr Maghrib Esha
AZAN 4-25 12-45 4-45 6-38 8-00
JAMAAT 5-00 1-15 5-00 6-41 8-30

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

Road crash kills two Bangladeshis in Kolkata

UNB, Jhenaidah

Two Bangladeshis who went to India for treatment were killed in a road accident in Kolkata early yesterday.

The deceased were identified as Moinul Alam Sohag, 35, from Jhenaidah municipality area and a senior official of Grameen-phone; and Farhana Islam Taniya, a resident of Dhaka's Lalmatia area and an official of City Bank's Jhenaidah branch.

Kazi Shojib, a cousin of Sohag, said two cars collided head-on in Shakespeare Sarani of the city around 1:50am. At one stage, one of the two cars hit the two victims who were waiting beside the road stuck amid heavy rainfall, leaving them critically injured.

Later, they were rescued and taken to The Institute of Post-Graduate Medical Education and Research and Seth Sukhlal Karnani

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Kamalapur Railway Station is abuzz as thousands of people are returning to the capital after Eid holidays. The photo was taken yesterday afternoon.

PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN

Eleven killed on roads in two days

STAR REPORT

Eleven people, including four students, were killed in road crashes in the last two days.

In Narsingdi's Shibpur, three students were among the four people killed when a bus rammed into a car around 3:00am yesterday, police said.

Four others were injured in the crash on Dhaka-Sylhet Highway.

Akib Hossain, 27, Jannatul Ferdous, 25, Sadia Akter, 24, and her husband Ekram Mia, 35, died after a bus of Shyamoli Paribahan rammed into their car, officers said.

All of them, except for Ekram, were MBA students at Millennium University in the capital.

"They were returning from a picnic in Sylhet," said Sergeant Jakrul Kabir of Itakhola Highway Police Outpost.

The car was mangled in the crash and the bus plunged into a roadside ditch, he said.

On Benapole-Jashore highway, BBA student Sobuj Hossain, 22, of the Jashore Cantonment College was killed in Tapshidanga area early yesterday.

He was hit by a truck while going across the road, said Samir Kumar Sarker, officer-in-charge of Jashore Kotwali police station.

In Noakhali's Companiganj, four-year-old Muntaha was killed in Natun Bazar area when a CNG-run three-wheeler hit her around noon yesterday.

Locals said she was playing with other children beside a road when the three-wheeler hit her and fled the scene.

In Rangpur's Manthana-Gangahari area, Anis, 35, of Dinajpur was killed and 30 other passengers of a bus were

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