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FINAL ASSAM NRC LIST

# Uncertainty grips Bengali colonies

AGENCIES

Durga Puja is barely a month away, but the festive mood has been punctured by the final National Register of Citizens (NRC) in the Bengali-dominated village of Khairbari in lower Assam's Barpeta district.

This year, Bikash Saha and Dilip Kumar Basak were planning to celebrate the 50th anniversary of their neighbourhood puja with a Rs 10 lakh replica of Gujarat's imposing Somnath temple as the pandal. The families of neither have made it to the final citizen's register.

"It seems like they are determined to not accept many of us Bengalis," said Basak, who runs an iron welding shop. He had submitted his father Narayan Chandra Basak's citizenship certificate given at a refugee camp in Coochbehar in 1956.

Saha, who lives in a small two-bedroom house inside a slum, has bigger problems. He was dubbed a D or doubtful voter five years back. Border police and election officials can mark anyone a D voter if they suspect he or she to be an illegal migrant.

Saha has since been fighting a case against his designation as D voter in the Barpeta foreigners tribunal. His dubious citizenship status has meant that his two children have also been struck off the citizenship rolls.

"We are not sure what to do now," said Saha's wife, Padma. "What do we have to fear? We have papers. We will appeal," she said, waving a sheaf of photocopied documents.

Not everyone is as upbeat. Across Khairbari, where many Hindu Bengali-speaking families settled down after fleeing riots and religious persecution in erstwhile East Pakistan, the exclusion from the NRC has fomented resentment and suffering. Planning finances for trips to the foreigner tribunal for appeals have replaced holiday plan

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Vehicles stuck in traffic jam at the capital's Shantinagar as a BNP procession crosses the area yesterday, causing sufferings to commuters. The party brought out the procession from its Nayapalton headquarters marking its 41st founding anniversary. Inset, a part of the procession at Nayapalton. Story on page 2.

PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN

## SC clears way for Minni's release

Upholds HC verdict granting her bail

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Supreme Court yesterday cleared the way for Aysha Siddika Minni to walk out of jail.

The apex court upheld a High Court verdict that granted bail to Minni in her husband Rifat Sharif murder case.

Justice Hasan Foez Siddique, chamber judge of the Appellate Division, passed "no order" on a government petition seeking stay on the HC verdict.

Minni's lawyer Makkia Fatima Islam told The Daily Star that there was no legal bar for her client to get released from the jail following the SC order.

"We have already communicated the High Court verdict to the authorities concerned in Barguna. We hope Minni will get released from Barguna jail tomorrow (today)," she said.

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LOSING LEG IN ROAD CRASH

## Victim's plight continues

Doctors operate on her amputated leg to check infection; bus driver held

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Doctors have cut another three inches off the amputated leg of Krishna Roy Chowdhury as it became infected. The BIWTC official lost her left leg in an accident in the city's Banglamotor area a week ago.

"We carried out an operation on Sunday and cut off part of her left leg from above the knee," said Prof Abdul Gani Mollah, director at National Institute of Traumatology and Orthopaedic Rehabilitation (Nitor).

"She may need two or three more surgeries and stay at the hospital for about a month," Gani, head of the 10-member medical board treating Krishna, told The Daily Star yesterday.

Meanwhile, the Police Bureau of

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## CHECKING VEHICLE OVERLOADING

# Highways to get 21 more weighbridges

Doubts over success of govt move as existing 3 weighbridges fail to yield expected results

REJAUJ KARIM BYRON and TUHIN SHUBHRA ADHIKARY

The government is going to set up another 21 weighbridges on major highways to check overloading as the practice is causing damage to roads and bridges.

A project proposal to this end is likely to be placed before today's Ecnec meeting for approval, Nazrul Islam, secretary to Road Transport and Highway Division, said yesterday.

As per the plan, the authorities will build the excel load control centres for Tk 1,630.28 crore at the entrance points on the highways within June 2022.

The aim is to protect the roads from overloading. Talking to The Daily Star, a prominent transport expert, however, said the initiative might not be effective unless the government follows the international standards of weight limit and stops giving fitness clearance to illegally modified vehicles.

There are already three permanent axle load control centres at Sitakunda in Chattogram, Meghna Toll Plaza in Cumilla and Rustampur in Manikganj.

The authorities for the first time had imposed fines for overloading in August 2016. But on the very day, transport owners and workers damaged the weighbridges in Manikganj and Chattogram. The government was then forced to increase the maximum weight limit of goods-laden vehicles in January last year.

At present, two-axle vehicles (six wheels) can carry maximum 22 tonnes, three-axle vehicles (10 wheels) maximum 30 tonnes and four-axle (14 wheels) maximum 40 tonnes all over the country. As per the global standards, the limits are 15.5, 22 and 32 tonnes respectively.

Around 25 percent of the country's roads under the Road and Highways Department are in "poor, bad or very bad" shape, according to an RHD survey on 17,452km of roads in March.

There are 21,576kms of national and regional highways and district

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## ATTACKS ON COPS

# DMP forms body to help investigate five cases

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Amid slow progress in the investigation of five cases filed over the recent bomb attacks on police and planting bombs near two traffic boxes, Dhaka Metropolitan Police has formed an eight-member committee to accelerate the probe.

DMP Commissioner Asaduzzaman Mia yesterday formed the committee led by Monirul Islam, chief of Counter-Terrorism and Transnational Crime (CTTC) unit.

Other members are Mahub Alam, joint commissioner of Detective Branch (DB) of Police, Hasan Arafat, additional deputy commissioner of DB, Sanwar Hossain and Saiful Islam, deputy commissioners of CTTC, Saiful Islam, assistant police commissioner (New Market Zone), Zahidul Islam Sohagh, assistant police commissioner (Khilgaon zone), and

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## Man jailed over mistaken identity

### A mentally challenged man spent 15 days in jail; Ctg court orders his release

FM MIZANUR RAHAMAN, Ctg

A Chattogram court yesterday ordered the release of a mentally challenged man who had been languishing in jail for the last 15 days.

Police on August 18 arrested Nurul Absar of Satkania area of Satkania upazila, mistaking him for a fugitive convict of the same name.

The actual convict is from Garangira Hatiarkul area of the same upazila. He was sentenced to three months in jail in a case filed by a bank but had on the run.

The fugitive was the owner of an automobile workshop in the port city's Dewanhat area, police had found.

The order for his release came after police submitted a report to the court admitting their mistake, said Bench Assistant Farid Ahmed.

Mentally challenged Nurul Absar was sent to jail after Assistant Sub-inspector Jahirul Islam of Satkania Police Station arrested him and produced him before a court, Farid said.

The mistake occurred even though the two persons had different addresses and fathers' names. The ASI later informed the court about his mistake.

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## 5 wounded in BSF firing

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

Indian Border Security Force yesterday opened fire on a group of Bangladeshis leaving at least five wounded at Char Khanpur frontier in Rajshahi.

In a press release issued yesterday evening, the BGB said the five were admitted to Rajshahi Medical College Hospital. They are Sujon Mia, 22, Md Sohel, 22, Md Rabiul, 25, Dulal Mia, 40, and Suruj Mia, 20, from Char Khanpur in Paba upazila.

Talking to The Daily Star, Lt Col Ferdous Mahmud, director of BGB Battalion-1 in Rajshahi, said they protested the unnecessary firing and that the BGB would send a protest note to the BSF.

The incident took place around 10:30am, local sources claimed.

PRAYER TIMING SEPTEMBER 3

Fazr Zohr Asr Maghrib Esha  
AZAN 4-30 12-45 4-45 6-23 7-45  
JAMAAT 5-05 1-15 5-00 6-26 8-15

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION



শীর্ষ রপ্তানিকারক

হিসেবে স্বীকৃতিস্বরূপ

স্বর্ণ পদক

জাতীয় রপ্তানি ট্রফি ২০১৬-২০১৭

রপ্তানি বাণিজ্যে উল্লেখযোগ্য অবদানের স্বীকৃতিস্বরূপ এনার্জিপ্যাক ইঞ্জিনিয়ারিং লিমিটেড ইলেকট্রিক এবং ইলেক্ট্রনিক ক্যাটাগরিতে গোল্ড ট্রফি অর্জন করেছে।

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