

"We don't want to see any hard conflict between these two nuclear powers. It's dangerous for the region, it's dangerous for the world."

VISITING IRANIAN FOREIGN MINISTER JAVAD ZARIF ON INDO-PAK TENSION



"The government will formally withdraw the [extradition] bill in order to fully allay public concerns."

HONG KONG CHIEF EXECUTIVE CARRIE LAM

"We are living in a time of politics without policy."

EMINENT JURIST SHAHDEEN MALIK AT A DISCUSSION.



LAB TESTS ON MILK

Everything same, only results vary

Wide gaps in findings raise questions about credibility; experts blame machines, methods, men behind the machines and reagents

MOHAMMAD AL-MASUM MOLLA

Same product, same sample, same batch. But take them to two different government labs for analysis, the results will vary by up to 766 percent or about nine times.

In late July, Bangladesh Food Safety Authority provided pasteurised milk samples of 14 top brands to three renowned local labs to determine the level of heavy metal and antibiotics in them.

The labs are Bangladesh Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (BCSIR), the Institute of Public Health (IPH) and Bangladesh Atomic Energy Commission (BAEC) -- all state-funded agencies.

But their findings have raised questions about their credibility.

Take the case of Pabna-based Ichhamoti Dairy and Food Products (PURA), one of the brands whose milk was tested.

The test at the BAEC found the lead level to be 0.208 microgram/kg as opposed to 0.024 microgram/kg at the BCSIR -- a 766 percent difference.

In Bangladesh, the permissible limit of

lead in milk is 0.02 microgram/kg. Samples of state-owned Milk Vita was also tested. In the test, the BCSIR, popularly known as Science Lab, found that the milk contains 0.023 microgram/kg lead, which is 1.15 times the permissible limit. The BAEC found it to be 0.011 microgram/kg, or about half of what the Science Lab test found.

There is more. While the BCSIR test detected the level of Ciprofloxacin, an antibiotic used to treat infections in bone and joint, abdomen, respiratory tract and urinary tract, among other things, to be at 53.83 microgram/kg (which is still within the permissible limit of 100 microgram/kg) in all the 14 samples, the Institute of Public Health found no trace of it in any of the samples.

Based on the test results from the BCSIR, IPH and BAEC, the High Court recently banned the production and consumption of 14 milk brands. The Supreme Court subsequently stayed the HC order, essentially lifting the ban.

However, the wide gaps in the test results have raised serious questions about the authenticity of the results. SEE PAGE 2 COL 3



Young men strolling on the roof of a moving train as if they are in a park. Railway authorities' decision to strictly enforce the law against rooftop travellers from this month has evidently failed to change the behaviours of some. The photo of Chattogram University's shuttle train was taken yesterday at Sholoshahar Railway Station.

PHOTO: RAJIB RAIHAN

Hall-Mark may get a lifeline

In a dramatic move, the government is considering rescheduling the Tk 3,000 crore loan of Hall-Mark, the disgraced group that made off with the sum from state-run Sonali Bank.

FULL STORY ON B1

DATABASE ON BRIDGES, CULVERTS

Poor data collection delays RHD work

Info on only 67 bridges out of over 18,000 reaches assessment servers

TUHIN SHUBHRA ADHIKARY

Slow pace of data collection by field officials is holding back the Roads and Highways Department's (RHD) initiative to create a database for automatically assessing the condition of bridges and culverts and suggesting remedial actions.

Despite repeated reminders over the last eight months, the department has as of August 21 got data of only 67 bridges and culverts out of over 18,000, officials said.

RHD has 4,404 bridges including 856 Bailey bridges and 14,814 culverts.

The poor response from field officials also put the department in a spot of bother as the International Cooperation Agency (Ica), which funds the project for the new Bridge Management Software (BMS), wrote to the department in July to make it effective.

Against this backdrop, Rowshan Ara Khanam, additional chief engineer (bridge management wing) of RHD, wrote to the officials concerned on August 5 and asked them to give necessary inputs to the software "immediately".

It was the latest of several letters since those designated field-level officials were directed to submit data from January onwards.

A top official of RHD's planning and data circle, however, said field officers could not provide



information due to other engagements between January and June, the busiest period of the year for them.

Another RHD official, who is also a master trainer, said bridge inspection is a time-consuming process, and the BMS requires 26 types of data that takes about a week to collect from a single medium-sized bridge.

BMS was developed under the Bridge Management Capacity Development Project, which started in November 2016 and was completed in December 2018. The cost of the project was Tk 31 crore.

The purpose of developing this software was

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Cop held for 'trying to rob' businessman

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A policeman was held allegedly for attempting to snatch Tk 10.5 lakh from a businessman in Dhaka's Motijheel area yesterday.

The detainee is Al Mamun, 38, constable of Bangshal Police Station.

Abul Kalam, a trader of electrical goods in Old Dhaka, went to a private bank in Motijheel, withdrew money and headed towards another bank to deposit the money when Mamun and his cohort Jitu stopped him, said Omar Faruque, officer-in-charge of Motijheel Police Station.

Mamun introduced him as a cop and asked Kalam to get on a motorbike with him and Jitu. Mamun said he had information that Kalam was carrying illicit money and that he needed to go to police station for investigation, OC Omar added.

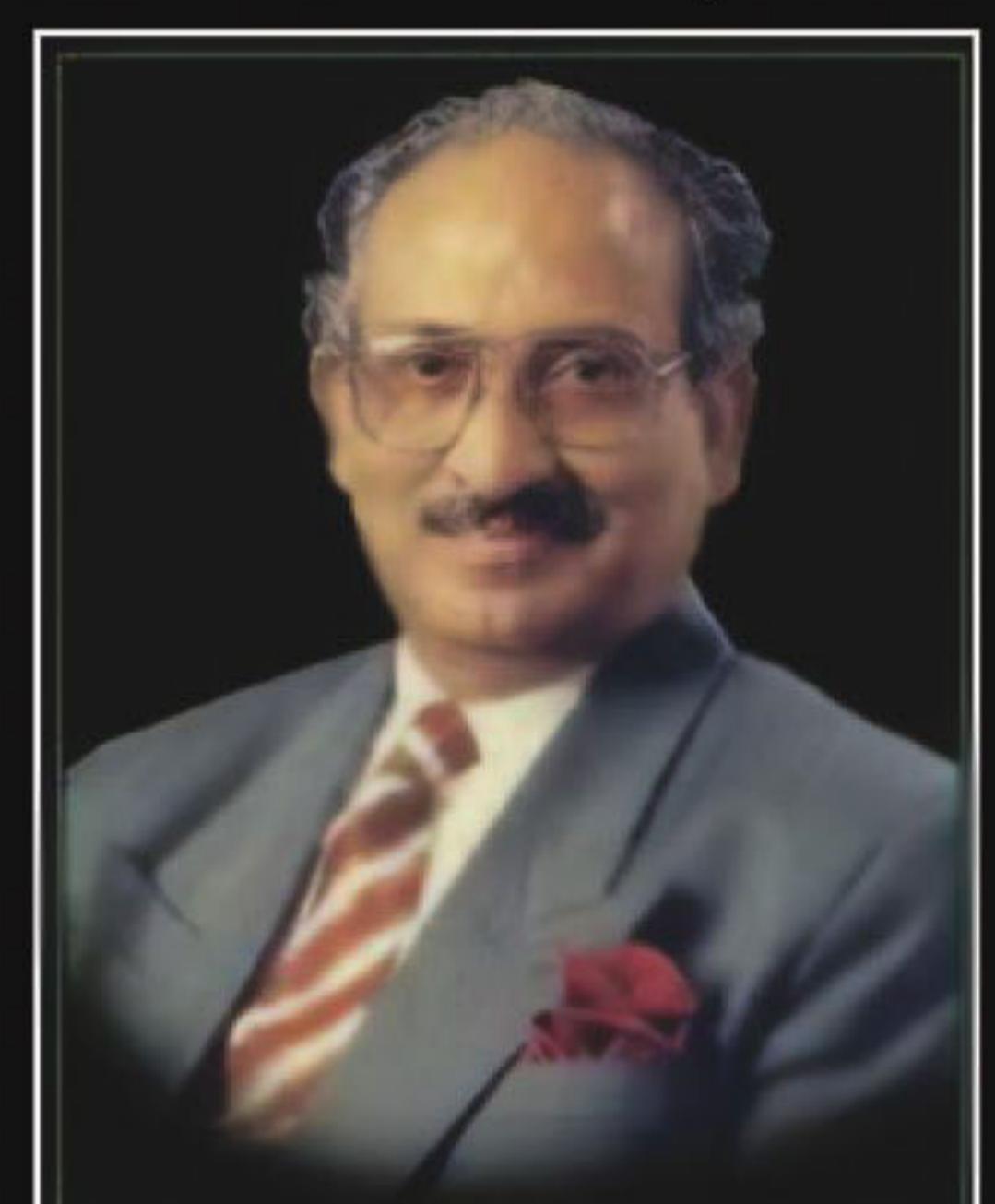
On the way, Kalam suspected Mamun and Jitu to be fake cops and tried to pull the bike's brake. Mamun then hit Kalam's head with his handcuff. At this point, Kalam started screaming saying he was being robbed. Locals then held Mamun and handed him over to police. Jitu managed to flee, OC Omar further said.

Kalam was taken to Dhaka Medical College Hospital for treatment.

Shaheen Fakir, officer-in-charge of Bangshal Police Station, said Mamun

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We fondly remember one of our founder partners



M. Saifur Rahman
6 October 1932 – 5 September 2009

From all at

KPMG

Rahman Rahman Huq
Chartered Accountants

Tigers seek new beginning

MAZHAR UDDIN from Chattogram

Bangladesh cricket has not been in the best of states both on and off the field since a disappointing exit from the ICC World Cup in England, which was followed by a humiliating one-day series defeat in Sri Lanka. The Tigers will however try to put all those forlorn experiences behind them when they take on Afghanistan in a one-off Test as favourites at the Zahur Ahmed Chowdhury

SEE PAGE 2 COL 3



HEARTFELT GRATITUDE TO
NOMAN
G R O U P
FOR THE CONSECUTIVE ACHIEVEMENT

Berger Paints Bangladesh Limited takes great contentment in commending Mr. A.S.M. Rafiqul Islam Noman Chairman & Managing Director, Noman Group, for achieving the "National Export Trophy of Highest Exporter of Bangladesh of Financial year 2016-2017" for 11 consecutive years from the Honorable Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina.