## Bangladesh

FROM PAGE 16 the name clearance fee for new company registration, abolished digital certification fees and reduced registration fee calculations based on share capital.

In Dhaka, the electricity supplier cut the security deposit for a new connection by half and undertook major investments to expand its staffing and digitisation of processes; licensing times by the Office of Electrical Adviser and Chief Electrical Inspector were also reduced, the report said.

Bangladesh's credit information bureau improved access to credit by expanding its coverage to include five years of records and data on loans of any amount.

According to the report, the other "improver" countries are Azerbaijan, Bahrain, China, Djibouti, India, Jordan, Kenya, Kosovo, Kuwait, the Kyrgyz Republic, Myanmar, Nigeria, Pakistan, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Tajikistan, Togo, Uzbekistan and Zimbabwe.

### Vast area lost

FROM PAGE 16

Shibchar Education Officer Rafigul Islam said they would take every necessary step to ensure education to the students in the area.

In August, another such situation occurred in the union and devoured one madrasa, two bridges, three canals, 300 homesteads and around 100-acre of cultivable land.

## Couple found

FROM PAGE 16

said, adding that police recovered the bodies around 9:15am.

The bodies were sent to Kurigram General Hospital morgue for autopsies, he said, adding that a case was filed in this connection.

Police are suspecting that the two were choked to death, OC Rawshan

Nazrul was a loan shark and he had two wives, the OC also said, adding that his other wife lives in a separate house in the area.

## Fire at French chemical plant extinguished

AFP, Caen

Firefighters said yesterday they have extinguished a huge blaze that broke out at a chemical factory in northern France and forced authorities to close schools and warn of pollution risks for the river Seine.

The fire erupted early Thursday at a storage facility near the city of Rouen owned by Lubrizol, a manufacturer of industrial lubricants and fuel additives that is owned by the billionaire American investor Warren Buffett.

No injuries were reported in the blaze, which sent acrid black smoke billowing over some 22 kilometres

(14 miles). "The fire is out... we are keeping manpower at the site to continue the

cooling of all drums," Chris Chislard, a spokesman for the regional fire service, said. He said some white smoke was

still coming from the factory and there was an "unpleasant smell". More than 200 firefighters were

deployed to tackle the blaze at the plant, just a few kilometres from the centre of the city of around 100,000 people.

Lubrizol said the fire damaged a storage facility, a drumming warehouse and an administrative building, and that the cause was still unknown.

It advised residents not to eat fruit or vegetables from gardens without washing them thoroughly, and not to touch the soot or other particles on

the ground. Pierre-Andre Durand, the top regional official, said Thursday that that floating anti-pollution booms had been placed on the Seine due to the risk that fuel or waste water from the site could overflow retention

## ponds. Japan power firm execs admit \$3m in 'gifts' from

local official AFP, Tokyo

The president of a Japanese power firm yesterday admitted that he and other executives received money and gifts worth around \$3 million from a town hosting one of their nuclear plants.

The money and gifts totalled 320 million yen over seven years from 2011 and came from the late deputy mayor of Takahama town, nuclear plant.

where Kansai Electric (KEPCO) has a "I deeply apologise for causing

great concern to stakeholders and the public," KEPCO president Shigeki Iwane told reporters.

The admission came after investigations by tax authorities into the deputy mayor revealed the payoffs.



A truck negotiates the waterlogged approach road to Dhalai Bridge on Companiganj-Dayarbazar road in Sylhet's Companiganj upazila. Locals say the road is left in such a bad shape for over four years as several thousand heavily loaded trucks use it daily to carry stone chips to different districts. People organised several demonstrations in the area to draw the attention of the authorities to the battered road, but to no avail. The photo was taken on Wednesday.

РНОТО: SHEIKH NASIR

## Modi silent, Imran fumes

FROM PAGE 16

"Per capita wise India's contribution to global warming is very low, but we are a leading nation in mitigation plans," Modi said in his address to world leaders at the UNGA in New York.

He announced his commitment to make the country single-use plastic

While Modi avoided mentioning Kashmir, Pakistan's Prime Minister Imran Khan took the world stage to highlight the issue. He warned there would be a

bloodbath when India lifts its curfew in disputed Kashmir and that any allout conflict between the two nucleararmed nations would reverberate far beyond their borders. "There are 900,000 troops there, they haven't come to, as Narendra Modi says

-- for the prosperity of Kashmir... These 900,000 troops, what are they going to do? When they come out? There will be a bloodbath," he said.

for the best but be prepared for the worst," Khan said.

between the two countries ... anything could happen. But supposing a country seven times smaller than its neighbor is faced with the choice your freedom till death?

question ... and we will fight. ... and when a nuclear-armed country fights to the end, it will have consequences far beyond the borders."

Ahead of the speeches of the India and Pakistan leaders, security forces in Indian administered Kashmir imposed tough new restrictions, fearing protests. Concrete and razor wire barricades

went up across Srinagar and other

towns in the disputed Muslimmajority territory, which has been under lockdown since New Delhi scrapped Kashmir's semi-autonomous status in early August.

protests after Friday prayers. Similar restrictions are in place in other towns and areas," a police officer told AFP on condition of anonymity, as he was not authorised to speak to media.

Schools and colleges have also remained shut, along with stores and many businesses. The main business district was largely deserted with "If this goes wrong, you hope soldiers barring entry to the area.

#### US PRESSES INDIA ON KASHMIR RIGHTS

"If a conventional war starts On Thursday, US pressed on New Delhi to quickly ease restrictions imposed in Kashmir.

Alice Wells, the State top Department official for South Asia, either you surrender or you fight for also reiterated President Donald meeting with Khan. Trump's willingness to mediate to ease "What will we do? I ask myself this tensions between India and Pakistan its actions will spur economic only raise issues in private.

over the territory. Trump met separately this week

with both Modi and Khan. While Trump has forged a close from meddling. bond with Modi, joining the Hindu nationalist at a massive rally on

Sunday in Houston where the Indian leader boasted of his actions in Kashmir, a senior official said that the United States had concerns over the clampdown in the region. "We hope to see rapid action

-- the lifting of the restrictions and the release of those who have been detained," Alice Wells told reporters. While some measures have been

"There were worries about big eased, internet and cellular service has remained off in Kashmir for well over a month. Hundreds of Kashmiris are being

held in detention without any charge announced, including both pro-Indian and pro-separatist political leaders. Nearly 200 people have been sent to Indian jails outside the restive Himalayan region, according to official records seen by AFP.

Kashmir is divided between India and Pakistan and served as the trigger for two of their full-fledged wars.

India, however, has long rejected any outside role on Kashmir and quickly shot down the idea after Trump mentioned mediation in a July

saying that Pakistan had a "special The Modi government says that relationship" with China and would

development in Kashmir and defends the restrictions as temporary means to ensure calm and prevent Pakistan Kashmir inflames passions across

South Asia, with right-wing Hindu activists long seeking to rescind its special status within India -- and Pakistani politicians saber-rattling over the Himalayan territory for decades. Khan has used his New York trip

to make fiery denunciations of Modi, even likening his ideology to Nazi Germany. Wells Khan's characterised

comments as unhelpful, saying: "A lowering of rhetoric would be welcome, especially between two nuclear powers." She also questioned why Khan was not also speaking out about China,

million Uighurs and other Turkicspeaking Muslims. "I would like to see the same level of concern expressed also about Muslims who have been detained in western

which has detained an estimated one

China, literally in concentration-like conditions," she said. economic partner of Pakistan. Khan, asked about the Uighurs at a think tank on Monday, declined comment,

denying what he said. China is a major diplomatic and

"We don't need to have a months-long hearing ... We have the president's own words, and we have his conduct after the fact," he said, referring to Trump's attack on the still 'anonymous' whistleblower and other potential White House witnesses against him, labelling them spies and

# Cattle antibiotics

FROM PAGE 1 SHORTAGE OF VETS

According to the officials of Department of Livestock Services, there are around 65,000 commercial cattle farms and around 2.39 crore cows in the country, mostly reared by traditional farmers who in many areas rely on quacks and compounders amid a shortage of trained vets.

"The problem is the local quacks and pharmacy staff. Most often they prescribe antibiotics meant for humans in case of cattle diseases," Hiresh Ranjan Bhowmick, director general of DLS, told The Daily Star recently.

"Although we are assigned to look after these things, we cannot monitor at the union level. For a single veterinary surgeon, it is not humanly possible.

upazila has only one veterinary

in the area and one livestock officer for the administrative tasks. The department is struggling with 118 posts of veterinary surgeons remaining vacant.

Take the example of Pabna. There are only nine veterinary surgeons in the district, which has around 13 lakh cattle.

"I have 60 cattle in my farm and disease of the animals is very common. But most of the time I don't get the upazila veterinary surgeon. So, I have to go to a veterinary trainee or veterinary shops and they prescribe antibiotics," said Md Saiful Islam, a dairy farm owner in Faridpur upazila.

Asked about what kind of antibiotics he uses, Saiful said he does not know the names of the medicines.

Md Saiful Islam, owner of According to DLS officials, each a veterinary medicine shop in Chatmohar upazila, said he used is that farmers use antibiotics

surgeon to look after all the cattle to sell various antibiotics but has indiscriminately for animals, even the stopped it now.

> Of the antibiotics, Gentamycin, Safety-1, Combicilin LA and Ciprofloxacin are mostly used, he noted. "Mostly veterinary experts from different companies recommend The Daily Star recently. these medicines."

According to Pabna Livestock Officer Al Mamun Hossain Mondol, there are over 6 lakh cows, 1 lakh buffaloes and 6 lakh goats in the district.

"So many animals could not be supervised due to manpower shortage, but we have already ordered all the medicine shop owners not to sell medicines without prescriptions."

Livestock officials said they have a list of antibiotics but they do not know how many antibiotics are used by the veterinary surgeons. "My personal experience

high-ended antibiotics like Colistin which is strictly prohibited," Maj General Md Mustafizur Rahman, former director general of Directorate General of Drug Administration, told

"We have banned 32 veterinary antibiotics. Farmers use antibiotics when they prepare food for cattle and thus it is entering human bodies."

However, there are examples of good practices too.

Shamim Ahmed has a cow farm in Barail village in Dinajpur Sadar. In the farm, there are 97 cows, and 25 of those give milk regularly.

"When there is any disease, we give medicine to our cows. We have a retired veterinary officer in the farm and he guides us. District livestock officers sometimes visit our farm," Dhabendranath Roy, a caretaker of the farm, told The Daily Star.

# Half of Europe's endemic tree species risk extinction: study

AFP, Geneva

More than half of Europe's endemic tree species, including the horse-chestnut, risk extinction, Friday, conservationists warned blaming invasive species, unsustainable logging and urban

development for their decline. In an update to the tree section of its "Red List" of threatened species, the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) said that out of the 454 tree species native to Europe, 42 percent could

disappear from the continent. And a full 58 percent of the tree species endemic to Europe, meaning that they only exist on the continent, were now considered threatened

with extinction.

from going extinct.

species, were considered "critically endangered", or just a step away The report comes amid a growing assessed as vulnerable following moss.

found that 15 percent of them, or 66

sense of urgency to address global environmental degradation, with fires raging in the Amazon and following UN warnings in May that climate change, habitat loss and other factors are pushing one million plant and animal species to the brink of extinction. The IUCN described the

development for Europe's tree species as "alarming", saying pests and diseases were especially fuelling their decline as well as invasive plants introduced by humans.

"Trees are essential for life on earth, and European trees in all their diversity are a source of food and shelter for countless animal species such as birds and squirrels, and play Even more worrying, the update a key economic role," Craig Hilton-

Taylor, who heads the IUCN Red List Unit, said in the statement. IUCN said that the iconic horsechestnut, or conker tree, had been

This was mainly due to the leafminer moth -- an invasive species

significant declines across Europe.

that originated in the Balkans but which has rapidly spread throughout the continent -- as well as logging, forest fires and tourism, it said. Crucial for ecosystems -While great attention is often Italy, humans.

paid to the decline of so-called charismatic species, like the African elephant or rhinos, IUCN stressed the need to heed developments in lesser-known species and include them in conservation planning. The Red List's European edition

evaluated the status of many lesser-known species for the first

It found that nearly half of all shrub species in Europe were threatened with extinction, as were a fifth of terrestrial mollusc species like

snails, and bryophytes species, which

are non-vascular plants that include

IUCN said while such species are often overlooked, they are crucial to ecosystems that provide us with the food we eat and the air we breathe. Terrestrial molluscs play a key

role in soil regeneration, and are an important food source for birds, mammals and at least in France and "The impact of human-led

activities is resulting in population declines and a heightened risk of extinction of important species across Europe," Luc Bas, who heads IUCN's Europe office, said in the statement. The report, he said, shows "how

dire the situation is for many overlooked, undervalued species that form the backbone of Europe's ecosystems and contribute to a healthy planet." "We need to mitigate human

species."

impact on our ecosystems and prioritise the protection of these Salisbury said.

### 'We are at war'

FROM PAGE 16 The recording of the event, part of which was first published by the LA Times, showed Trump suggesting that whoever gave compromising information to the whistleblower was "close to a spy."

While that comment prompted

chuckles from the crowd, it has since been criticized by Trump's opponents as being a veiled threat to the safety of the whistleblower and his sources. The extended video clip published by Bloomberg showed more of the remarks in which Trump also refers to

Biden as "dumb as a rock" -- getting

more laughter from the diplomats.

He also calls journalists "animals," "scum" and "crooked." Democrats, meanwhile, stepped up the ante and yesterday pledged to move quickly on the impeachment investigation of the president.

"The clarity of the president's actions is compelling and gave us no choice but to move forward," said House Speaker Nancy Pelosi. "This is about the national security of our country: The president of

the United States being disloyal to

his oath of office, jeopardizing our national security, and jeopardizing the integrity of our elections." She announced that House Intelligence Committee Chairman Adam Schiff, who accused Trump of acting like a "mafia boss" this

week, would take the lead in the investigation. The fast-moving events have shaken the foundations of Trump's two-and-a-half-year tempestuous presidency.

On Monday, Trump blithely

swatted away a whistleblower report

that alleged he sought to pressure Ukraine for information that could damage Biden. At the same time, Pelosi was pushing back against mounting pressure in her party to impeach

Trump, trying to keep the focus on battling next year's elections. But the tables have turned with the release of a memo on Trump's July 25 call with President Volodymyr Zelensky, which confirmed he pressed for dirt on the Bidens, followed by the whistleblower's complaint, which alleged the White House had

attempted to cover up the call. Democrats now appear able to muster the majority they need to vote through an impeachment motion in the House -- for only the third time in US history -- setting the stage for a possible trial of

the president by the Republicancontrolled Senate. "We should move quickly but not hurriedly, and we should focus on this Ukraine call," Eric Swalwell, a member of the House Intelligence Committee,

said on CNN Friday. "As a former prosecutor, I should tell you that cases are made much easier when the defendant cops to the act, and here the president is not

## traitors. 3,000-yr-old baby

FROM PAGE 16 such items found buried in child

graves in Germany. The oldest of the three vessels described in the study was made between 2,800 and 3,200 years ago during the Bronze Age. Other similar objects dating back as far as about 7,000 years ago during Neolithic times have been found in various

other locations, the researchers said. "I think this has provided us the first direct evidence of what foods baby were eating or being weaned on to in prehistory," said biomolecular archaeologist Julie Dunne of the University of Bristol in Britain, lead author of the study published in the journal Nature. "I think this shows us the love and care these prehistoric people had for their babies."

These objects, little enough to fit into a baby's hands, served as vessels for milk, with a narrow spout for the baby to suckle liquid. While the three objects examined for the study were somewhat plain, others boasted lively shapes including animal heads with long ears or horns and humanlooking feet. "I find them incredibly cute. And

prehistoric people may have thought so, too - they would certainly have a dual function of entertaining the children just like modern stuffed animals," said archaeologist Katharina Rebay-Salisbury of the Institute for Oriental and European Archaeology of the Austrian Academy of Sciences, a study co-author. "They testify to the creativity and

playfulness we often forget to attribute to our ancestors," Rebay-Salisbury added. Life at the time was not easy, Rebay-Salisbury added, with many people

living in unhygienic conditions, experiencing famine and disease and facing low life expectancy. During the Bronze Age and subsequent Iron Age in Europe, perhaps about a third of all newborns died before their first birthday and only about half of children reached adulthood, Rebay-