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# A food bank for a rainy day

The underprivileged in a Sirajganj village set it up so they can borrow rice when things are tight

MD ASADUZ ZAMAN, back from Sirajganj

The underprivileged people of Borangile village in Sirajganj's Chauhali upazila can sleep a little better at night, knowing that if they are ever unable to find work as day labourers the next day, they can easily borrow some rice from the community food bank.

Such little comfort is all thanks to the smart thinking of Kohinoor Begum, who along with some 40 other villagers, set up the food bank for times of need.

The initiative is now a source of inspiration for neighbouring villages.

Situated around a hundred kilometres from Sirajganj town, the people of Borangile often fall out of the purview of receiving government amenities or relief, even though they are among those critically affected by flood.

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A woman weighs the rice villagers want to deposit to the food bank in Borangile village of Sirajganj's Chauhali upazila. About 40 villagers set up the food bank where they can deposit grains and take loans during hard days.

PHOTO: MD ASADUZ ZAMAN

Afghanistan vote held in relative calm

3 killed; turnout low

REUTERS, Kabul

Tight security yesterday ensured Afghanistan's presidential election was held in relative calm, though several small attacks, low turnout and complaints about the voting system heightened fears an unclear result could drive the country into further chaos.

Preliminary results are not expected before Oct 17 and final results not until Nov 7. If no candidate gets 51% of the vote, a second round will be held between the two leading candidates.

Taliban fighters attacked several polling stations across the country to try to derail the process, but intense security prevented the large-scale violence of previous polls.

"This election was the healthiest and fairest election in comparison to the previous elections," said Hawa Alam Nuristani, head of country's Independent Election Commission

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# AI gaining foothold in universities

In use at one-third of higher edn institutions in Asia-Pacific region

MOHIUDDIN ALAMGIR, back from Bengaluru, India

About one-third of higher education institutions in the Asia-Pacific region have taken measures for machine learning, reveals a study by Microsoft Asia and International Data Corporation (IDC) Asia/Pacific.

Funding of the institutions that have implemented Artificial Intelligence (AI) in their academic processes is expected to be increased by four times, the study also said.

The study titled "Future Ready Skills: Assessing APAC Education Sectors Use of AI" was unveiled at the sixth edition of Asian Summit on Education and Skills (ASES) held in Bengaluru, capital of the Indian state of Karnataka, from September 22-24.

"Only 32 per cent of education institutions in the Asia-Pacific have embarked on their AI journey," said Larry Nelson, regional general manager

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## UNSAFE PACKAGED MILK Mothers' new malady

MOHAMMAD AL-MASUM MOLLA

Sharmin Afroz, a housewife, does not know what to do.

Her two school-going children, aged seven and eleven, would only take porridge with milk for their breakfast. But Sharmin, 39, is not sure if she should allow her children to take pasteurised milk anymore.

Her concerns deepened after the High Court banned production and consumption of pasteurised milk of 14 brands, on grounds that they contain harmful substances such as lead and antibiotics.

Although the Supreme Court subsequently stayed the HC order and a new government-sponsored lab test done in India found that milk of seven of these brands was safe for consumption, Sharmin still hesitates to take any risk.

"I do not know which report to believe and which order to follow," she said, referring to the varied test results and contrasting court orders.

The High Court considered three of the four reports placed before it while imposing a five-week ban on July 28.

The three reports were prepared by the Bangladesh Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (BCSIR), Institute of Public Health (IPH) and Bangladesh Atomic Energy Commission (BAEC) -- all government-funded agencies.

The court did not consider the icddr,b report as it does not have the capacity to detect heavy metal and antibiotics in milk.

The tests found that all the milk samples contain lead beyond permissible limit although the presence of antibiotics was within the safe zone.

"The three reports placed before the court by Bangladesh Food Safety Authority alerted the learned court to the presence of adulterant and heavy metal, chiefly lead, and antibiotics like Oxytetracycline, Tetracycline and Ciprofloxacin, at such levels in 14 brands of pasteurised milk has led to a prima facie satisfaction that continued consumption of such pasteurised milk may unduly expose unwary consumers to potential health risk," said the HC bench of Justice Syed Reefat Ahmed and Justice Md Iqbal Kabir in the judgment.

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## ROAD TRANSPORT ACT Amendment move cause for concern

Says TIB

UNB, Dhaka

Transparency International Bangladesh (TIB) yesterday expressed deep concern over the government move to amend the Road Transport Act-2018 amid pressure from transport owners and workers' associations.

It also urged authorities concerned to prevent any move to amend the act going against public interest and the Prime Minister's directive to restore discipline in road transport sector.

"As per media reports, if the government compromises with the unjust demands of transport owners and workers then it will be tantamount to contempt of court," said TIB Executive Director Iftekuzzaman in a statement.

On September 25, Law Minister Anisul Huq said

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## \$6M masterpiece found in kitchen



AFP, Paris

An early Renaissance masterpiece by the Florentine master Cimabue has been discovered in an old lady's kitchen in a town near Paris, art experts said.

"Christ Mocked", by the 13th-century artist who taught Giotto, is estimated to be worth between four and six million euros (\$4.3 million \$6.6 million), according to the Old Masters specialists Turquin.

They said the work was owned by an old lady in the northern French town of Compiegne, who had it hanging between her kitchen and her sitting room.

It was directly above a hotplate for cooking food.

The painting is thought to be part of a large diptych dating from 1280 when Cimabue painted

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RAJSHAHI RALLY  
BNP finally gets the nod from police

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

The BNP was yesterday given a conditional police approval for holding a rally in Rajshahi city today.

BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir and most of the party standing committee members are likely to address the rally in front of Central Eidgah Maidan this afternoon.

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## PRAYER TIMING SEPTEMBER 29

Fazr Zohr Asr Maghrib Esha  
AZAN 4:35 12:45 4:15 6:00 7:30  
JAMAAT 5:10 1:15 4:30 6:05 8:00

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

# BCL factions clash; 40 injured

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Faridpur

At least 40 people, including six policemen, were injured in Madaripur Sadar upazila yesterday as a factional clash of Bangladesh Chhatra League ensued during celebration of Awami League President Sheikh Hasina's birthday.

The law enforcers had to fire 226 rounds of rubber bullets and four rounds of teargas shells to bring the situation under control, said Sougatul Alom, officer-in-charge of Sadar Police Station in the district.

Seven men were detained from the spot -- Government Nazimuddin College campus -- for questioning, he added.

The clash broke out around 12:00 noon as Zahid Hossain Anik, president of Madaripur district unit BCL, and Tanvir Mahmud Abir, former general secretary of Madaripur district unit BCL, brought out procession at the same venue, said witnesses.

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Two factions of Bangladesh Chhatra League clash in Government Nazimuddin College area of Madaripur yesterday during celebration of Awami League President and Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's birthday. At least 40 people, including six cops, were hurt.

## TRUMP IMPEACHMENT PROBE Democrats subpoena Pompeo

Report says the US president told Russian officials he wasn't concerned by interference

AFP, Washington

Democrats charged aggressively into an impeachment investigation of President Donald Trump on Friday, ordering Secretary of State Mike Pompeo to turn over Ukraine-related documents and scheduling testimony for witnesses to alleged abuse of power by the US leader.

Three House committees gave Pompeo one week to produce the documents, saying multiple State Department officials have direct knowledge of Trump's efforts to enlist the Ukraine government's help in his US campaign for reelection.

"The Committees are investigating the extent to which President Trump jeopardized national security by pressuring Ukraine to interfere with our 2020 election and by withholding security assistance provided by Congress to help Ukraine counter Russian aggression," they said.

Public support is growing for impeachment after the release of an anonymous whistleblower's complaint on Thursday, reportedly made by a CIA analyst who had worked in the White House.

It accused Trump of pressuring Ukraine's President

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