



PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

A man leaves a crowd of customers after buying onions from a TCB truck in Khamarbari yesterday. Trading Corporation of Bangladesh (TCB) is selling per kg of onion at Tk 45. The move came as the vegetable's price soared in the country following India's ban on its export.

## Renew migrant workers' passports within 15 days

*JS body to Department of Immigration and Passports*

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A parliamentary body yesterday raised questions over the necessity of police verification for acquiring passports, as people often face harassment in the regard.

The parliamentary standing committee on foreign affairs in its meeting at the Jatiya Sangsad Bhaban also asked top officials of Department of Immigration and Passports to ensure that Bangladeshi migrants can renew their passports within 15 days without any hassle.

"In case of failure, we have asked the director general of the Department of Immigration and Passports to inform the respective Bangladeshi migrants about the delay," Awami League MP and chief of the parliamentary watchdog Lt Col (ret'd) Faruk Khan told reporters after the meeting.

He said while travelling abroad on several occasions, many Bangladeshi workers complained to him that they face harassment during renewal of their passports.

Faruk Khan said Bangladeshi migrants also alleged that due to delay in the renewal process, they faced problems at their workplaces abroad.

In reply, Major General Shakil Ahmed, director general, Department of Immigration and Passports, informed the JS body that errors in providing information like date of birth, name of parent etc. often lead to delay in renewal of passports.

He said after completion of passport renewal, they have started sending those to the respective Bangladeshi migrants through courier service.

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## Teenager killed by cousin

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A teenager was killed and two of his older brothers were injured after their cousin stabbed them at their house in Uttarkhan area of the capital Monday night.

The deceased were identified as Riad Hossain (15), an eighth grader at a local school. Riad's siblings Shamim Hossain (25) and Rizwan Hossain (18) were injured.

Inspector Bacchu Miah, in-charge of Dhaka Medical College Hospital Police Outpost, told The Daily Star that they are all sons of Raju Miah.

The incident occurred in Taltolta area of Uttarkhan around 10pm on Monday when Swapan (24) stabbed his three cousins, following a scuffle over borrowed money.

Riad was admitted to Intensive Care Unit of Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) in critical condition where he succumbed to his injuries at 11am yesterday, sources at DMCH told The Daily Star.

Swapan is son of Joj Miah, brother of Riad's father Raju Miah. They all lived in the same house.

Officer-in-charge of Uttarkhan Police Station Helal Uddin said they arrested Hasna Begum, an aunt of the victims. Swapan and his family members are on the run.

## 1 in 7 Bangladeshis undernourished

*Country ranks 88th on 2019 Global Hunger Index*

SOHEL PARVEZ

The hunger situation in Bangladesh continues to remain "serious" with one in every seven persons suffering from undernourishment, according to 2019 Global Hunger Index (GHI) released yesterday.

The GHI, published by Concern Worldwide and Welthungerhilfe, showed that Bangladesh has made strides in fighting hunger and undernourishment since 2000 due to steady economic growth.

Yet, hunger and undernourishment situation in the country remains troubling.

The country scored 25.8 on a 100-point scale, where 0 reflects no hunger, in the 2019 GHI -- down from a score of 36 in the 2000 GHI, which was considered alarming.

This year, the GHI ranked Bangladesh 88th out of 117 countries. The country falls behind Sri Lanka and Nepal in fighting hunger but stays well above Pakistan, India and Afghanistan in South Asia.

The report said Bangladesh has made significant advances in child nutrition. Citing a study, it said stunted growth dropped from 58.5 percent in 1997 to 40.2 percent in 2011. It was 36.2 percent in 2018, according to the GHI.

"The study attributed the decrease primarily to rising household wealth associated with pro-poor economic growth and gains in parental education, as well as health, sanitation, and demographic factors reflecting decreased fertility rates," said the report.

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## 'I need to be with my parents'

Abrar's brother leaves Dhaka College

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kushtia

Abrar Fiyaz, younger brother of murdered Buet student Abrar Fahad, has left Dhaka College for Kushtia Government College. He applied for a transfer certificate (TC) yesterday morning.

"It was a family decision," said his father Barkatullah. "He did not want to stay in Dhaka after his brother's death as he is not feeling well," he added.

Prof Kazi Manjur Kadir, principal of Kushtia Government College, said, "His [Fiyaz] father called and informed me of the matter." It will take three to four days to complete the proceedings such as credit transfer, he added.

The principal said he has informed the matter to Prof Abdul Alim, chairperson of Jashore Board.

Contacted, the chairperson said, "We will

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## Progress in implementing UPR recommendations unsatisfactory

*Human Rights Forum Bangladesh says*

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Human Rights Forum Bangladesh (HRFB) Convenor Sheepa Hafiza yesterday said that the government's progress in implementing different recommendations in last one year of Universal Periodic Review (UPR) -- a process that monitors human rights records of a country -- was not satisfactory.

It is not clear how the ministries are coordinating and how the government is working to implement the recommendations made at UPR, Sheepa said while speaking at a seminar in the capital.

The forum, a coalition of 20 human rights organisations, arranged the seminar on 'One year of UPR 2018, where we stand now'.

Speakers at the seminar said that United Nations Human Rights Council in May 2018 reviewed human rights situation of Bangladesh in the last four years.

In the review, different countries made 251 recommendations. In September that year, Bangladesh accepted 178 recommendations and rejected or noted the rest.

Supreme Court senior lawyer ZI Khan Panna, at the programme, said that possibilities of unhealthy politics rises due to shrinking space for practicing political rights and citizens' rights. "This is an ominous sign," he said.

The seminar also recommended formulation of a national work plan with deadline on implementation of the accepted recommendations and holding discussions with experts and civil society members while formulating the work plan.

It also recommended engaging lawmakers in the process and discussion at parliament.

Transparency International Bangladesh Executive Director Iftekharuzzaman, Manusher Jonno Foundation Executive Director

Shaheen Anam, honorary Executive Director of Bangladesh Legal Aid and Services Trust Sara Hossain, among others, spoke at different sessions of the daylong seminar.

The Universal Periodic Review is a unique process which involves a review of the human rights records of all UN Member States. The UPR is a state-driven process, under the auspices of the Human Rights Council, which provides the opportunity for each state to declare what actions they have taken to improve the human rights situations in their countries and to fulfil their human rights obligations.

As one of the main features of the Council, the UPR is designed to ensure equal treatment for every country when their human rights situations are assessed. The ultimate aim of this mechanism is to improve the human rights situation in all countries and address human rights violations wherever they occur.

## RAPE OF 4 CHILDREN Accused on 4-day remand

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Savar

A Dhaka court yesterday placed a man on a four-day remand in connection with a case filed over the rape of four children -- aged between five and nine -- in Ambagan area of Dhaka's Dhamrai upazila.

A judge granted the remand for Afshar Uddin (55) after police sought a seven-day remand for a rape case filed against him, said Dipok Saha, officer in-charge of Dhamrai Police Station, yesterday.

On Sunday, police arrested Afshar from his home on charge of raping four children. One of the victims' family members filed a case against Afshar on Sunday night.

Law enforcers later showed Afshar arrested in the case and produced him before a Dhaka court on Monday. The hearing did not take place on the day, and he was sent to jail, according to police. He was again produced before a Dhaka court yesterday, seeking remand.

Quoting victims' families, police said that on Thursday evening, the accused first took the children to his house -- luring them with candy. He then raped the children after taking them to the rooftop, one by one. As the children started crying, the accused fled the scene. Later, some neighbours and family members of the victims rushed to the spot and rescued the children. The incident came to light so late because the victims' family members initially did not disclose the matter to protect their social image.

Later, the family members went to one Waser Ali, a village arbiter, and disclosed the matter to him. Waser then informed

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## First taste of entrepreneurship Teach for Bangladesh helps second-graders set up stalls at school fair



Afsana Ariya, second from right, with her classmates assisting her and a proud mother standing behind, at her stall.

PHOTO: MATHEWS CHIRAN

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Second-grader Afsana Ariya dreams of opening her own business when she grows up, where she can sell healthy food products and become financially independent.

Ariya, daughter of a domestic help, got a taste of that experience yesterday, selling snacks and yogurt at a fair at her school. Teach For Bangladesh (TFB) organised the event at Gawair Nobin Government Primary School premises in Dakkhin Khan, aiming to spark the spirit of entrepreneurship among children.

"This is my first time selling food to my school mates. My seniors are buying products from my stall and my friends are helping me out," a happy Afsana told this correspondent, between attending to customers.

Her mother Rubina Begum stood proudly by her side. "My daughter is a good student, and such activity is giving her a practical experience."

A total of 120 students divided into 22 groups of the school's second grade participated at the festival, part of a project under TFB.

Most students of the school are underprivileged children. Their parents works as rickshaw pullers, masons or house helps.

Bags, handicraft, cakes and snacks were on tables for sale while other students of the school crowded. Price of the products varied from Tk 10 to 50.

Farzana Rahman Biva and Nadia Afrin Bintu, fellows of TFB who teach at the school, facilitated the project and helped children generate ideas.

Speaking about the initiative, Bintu said, "The children came up with their own business ideas; this activity will help them to grow confidence and is also a learning opportunity."

Reiterating her, Biva said, "We provided Tk 200 to 500 to each group, and trained them on how to produce their goods according to their interests. We have made selling saplings mandatory at each stall, to raise awareness about importance of tree plantation."

Head teacher of the school Umme Kulsum Munni said, "TFB collaborated with our school in 2016, when there were 650 students and only five teachers. But now we have a total of 11 teachers. Of them, four are TFB teachers and another one is a guest teacher."

TFB, a part of the international initiative Teach for All, is working to expand education opportunities for all. As part of that vision, TFB fellows has been teaching at different schools where there is a shortage of teachers and resources.

## Stories from the transgender community

*Two books launched*

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Publication ceremony of two books on transgender community was held at Sofia Kamal Auditorium of the National Museum in the capital yesterday.

Two books, titled Hijra Shobdokosh and Rupantorito Manusher Golpo, narrate stories of the community's struggle in life. The books were edited by prominent litterateur Selina Hossain.

Nasima Begum, chairperson of National Human Rights Commission (NHRC), among others, unveiled the books at a ceremony jointly organised by Faria Lara Foundation and United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). Swedish International Development Cooperation (SIDA) and Swiss Agency For Development And Cooperation (SDC) supported the publications.

Speaking as chief guest, Nasima said the

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PHOTO: COLLECTED

Dhaka South City Corporation demolished illegal structures in front of Motijheel Police Station yesterday.