





**"Police members will have to carry out their work showing honour and respect to people. Otherwise, they will have to quit Dhaka Metropolitan Police."**  
DMP COMMISSIONER MD SHAFIQUK ISLAM AT A PROGRAMME IN THE CITY (PAGE 5)



**"Most media talk about flooding and other negative issues. That's not justice to the country."**  
NEW YORK STATE SENATOR JAMES SKOUFIS AT A RECEPTION IN DHAKA ON NEGATIVE PERCEPTION ABOUT BANGLADESH (PAGE 3)



**"Ukraine investigation is just as Corrupt (sic) and Fake (sic) as all of the other garbage that went on before it."**  
US PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP

## Shipbuilder making wooden bench!

Controversial ex-VC of Gopalganj university found to have flouted procurement rules, handed Tk 28cr job to Khulna Shipyard

MAHBUBUR RAHMAN KHAN

A shipbuilder is making wooden classroom benches!

No matter how weird it may appear, the former vice-chancellor of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman Science and Technology University in Gopalganj has actually made it possible.

Flouting public procurement rules, Dr Khondoker Nasiruddin, who had to step down amid a string of controversies, assigned Khulna Shipyard (KSY) to supply office and lab equipment and make wooden benches and hostel beds.

The project director resigned in protest, yet the ex-VC remained firm on his decision.

Nasiruddin inked deals worth Tk 28 crore in June with KSY, to purchase Dell computers, Cannon scanners, HP printers and lab equipment. Of the amount, BSMRSTU has paid out about Tk 26.25 crore in advance.

These deals were not placed before the Board of Regents for approval and faced a good deal of opposition from some officers, said an official of BSMRSTU's administration department.

"The former VC arbitrarily gave the work

to Khulna Shipyard," he said.

The website of KSY states that the company builds large patrol crafts, inshore patrol vessels, oil tankers, cargo and container vessels, tugs, inland and coastal work boats, heavy duty speed boats, barges, ferries, floating cranes, pontoons, etc.

It also reads KSY is the first and the only warship builder in Bangladesh. Construction of Bailey bridges, steel structures, foot over bridges, dredging and earth filling are also examples of work carried out by the company.

Shish Haider Chowdhury, director of the Central Procurement Technical Unit under the implementation, monitoring and evaluation division of the planning ministry, said, "There is no scope for direct contract in procuring furniture and office equipment."

Section 76 of Public Procurement Rules 2008 points out the circumstances under which direct procurement method (DPM) will be applicable.

An organisation could only go for DPM if there is no alternative source, goods are perishable, goods come as addition to existing tender, exceptional benefit is

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Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at the 18th NAM Summit at Baku Congress Centre in Azerbaijan yesterday.

PHOTO: BSS

## Fire in flat kills elderly woman

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

An elderly woman died from smoke inhalation and two others required medical attention after a fire broke out at a residential building in the capital's Dhanmondi area yesterday.

The dead, Jamila Kuti, 65, used to work as a domestic help on a seventh-floor flat of Zahir's South Lakeview, a 13-storey building located on road 6/A.

Residents of the building said Jamila got trapped in the staircase while rushing downstairs as large plumes of smoke started billowing upwards from the second floor, where the fire originated around 9:00am.

Firefighters found her lying unconscious on the staircase between the third and fourth floors and took

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## Bullying goes unreported, ignored

23pc students bullied at schools, says Unesco; Unicef wants a policy to tackle the scourge

MOHIUDDIN ALAMGIR

Sixth grader Zakaria Hasan (not his real name) suddenly lost interest in school. On different pretexts, he stayed at home. It was a new school and a new bunch of classmates, so his parents thought this could be a reason.

But the boy continued to show reluctance. After a few days, his father Mahmudul Hasan, a private organisation employee, decided to enquire.

"I sat with my son and convinced him to tell me what actually went wrong. He told me some classmates made fun of him and manhandled him several times. He doesn't like the harassment," the father said.

"I somehow managed to make him understand that these things are part of life and you have to face up to it," he said. Mahmudul, however, did not inform the matter to the school authorities because he thought he would not get any remedy.

Such behaviour is not uncommon



because there is a strong prevalence of school bullying in Bangladesh. Unesco says more than 23 percent of students have been bullied by peers, leaving negative impact on the children's mental development.

Speaking at a programme in Dhaka early this month, Education Minister Dipu Moni said, "It is unfortunate that bullying and ragging occur in many schools. Many students are reluctant to go to class and

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## PREFERENTIAL TRADE AGREEMENT Finalise it next month

Hasina urges Nepal PM

AGENCIES, Baku, Azerbaijan

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday urged her Nepalese counterpart KP Sharma Oli to finalise the Preferential Trade Agreement between the two countries during the upcoming visit of the Bangladesh president to Nepal.

President Abdul Hamid is scheduled to visit Nepal on November 11-14.

She said this when Sharma Oli met her at the Baku Congress Centre on the sidelines of the NAM Summit here, reports UNB.

Briefing reporters after the meeting, Foreign Secretary Shahidul Haque said both the prime ministers agreed on making the Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Nepal (BBIN) Motor Vehicles Agreement operational among the three countries, if Bhutan needed more time.

Mentioning that Bangladesh has already raised the issue with India, Hasina requested Nepal to do the same.

During Hasina's recent visit to New Delhi, the PM and her Indian counterpart Narendra Modi agreed on "early operationalisation"

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## BCB, Shakib at odds again

SPORTS REPORTER

The Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) issued a letter addressing Test and T20I captain Shakib Al Hasan yesterday, asking him to clarify why he had breached his contract by signing a deal with one of the country's top mobile phone operators without informing the board.

On Tuesday, Shakib had inked an agreement with the national team's former sponsors, Grameenphone, for an undisclosed sum at a time when he was also playing a pivotal role behind the cricketers' strike for better pay and benefits.

According to BCB CEO Nizamuddin Chowdhury, Shakib was not supposed to sign any such deal for two reasons.

"He cannot sign such a deal for two reasons. Firstly, it is clearly mentioned in one of the clauses in the players' central contracts that all players must get clearance from the board before signing any commercial endorsement. Secondly, there is a written memo through which all players were advised to discuss with the board before signing any deal with any telecom company," Nizamuddin told The Daily Star yesterday.

BCB President Nazmul Hassan echoed similar sentiments earlier in the day. "According to our laws, he was not in any way supposed to do that [sign the deal]. The telecom company and the player, both parties are aware of it. So, at first we need to give him a chance to clarify why he did it and that's why we are serving him with an official letter. But one thing we know is that in no way he could do that -- it is completely illegal," Hassan told reporters in Mirpur.

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After Dhaka South City Corporation urged building owners through loudspeakers to demolish the parts of their buildings that have encroached on state properties, many building owners in Manda area have hired workers to get the job done. Workers are seen with no safety gear.

PHOTO: SK ENAMUL HAQ

## Bhola to celebrate subdued Kali Puja

MOHIUDDIN ALAMGIR

There will be not much festivities centring Kali Puja today in Bhola where tensions still prevail following a clash in Borhanuddin upazila that left four people dead.

Leaders of the Hindu community in the district have decided not to hold any cultural programme, marking the puja, to mourn those killed.

"We will only perform the rituals of the puja. This is part of our efforts to show sympathy to the families of those killed in the clash," Abinash Nandi, president of Bhola chapter of Bangladesh Hindu Bouddha

Christian Oikya Parishad, told The Daily Star yesterday.

On October 20, at least four people were killed and more than 100 others injured as religious zealots clashed with police in Borhanuddin over a hate conversation spread through Facebook and its Messenger application.

Hindu devotees also celebrate Diwali during Kali Puja. They illuminate the doors and windows of their houses with candles, while others light lamps inside small paper houses to be elevated on top of long bamboo poles.

Abinash said worries still prevail

among the Hindus in the upazila after the zealots vandalised 12 of their houses and torched one on the day of the clash.

Fences of some Hindu houses were also set on fire in Kachia and Kunjuehat areas while stacked betelnut leaves were burned in Manikerhat area in Borhanuddin.

Contacted, Bhola Deputy Commissioner Mohammed Masud Alam Siddique said there was no reasons for the Hindus to be worried.

"We have taken adequate measures to beef up security at all temples of the districts," he said.

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