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# EYE-WATERING ONION PRICES

## Govt dropped the ball

*It should have responded much earlier, agriculture minister says*

MOHIUDDIN ALAMGIR and RASHIDUL HASAN

A parliamentary watchdog yesterday raised questions over the commerce ministry's delay in importing onions to face the ongoing crisis, while another minister separately admitted the government's "failure" in this regard.

The Standing Committee on Ministry of Commerce also blamed some businessmen for hoarding imported onions and thus contributing to the price hike.

The issue came up as the onion price skyrocketed in recent time and went out of the purchasing capacity of middle and lower income people.

Indian and local onions are selling at Tk 140-150 per kg in the kitchen markets of Dhaka, while both varieties sold for around Tk 50 in September.

Traders said the Indian onion price started shooting up in the third week of September due to a supply shortfall, and it left an impact on the price of local varieties.

In the last week of September, India banned onion export with immediate effect after extended monsoon downpours delayed harvest and supplies shrivelled.

The resulting price hike in Bangladesh raised concern among consumers. Later, state-run Trading Corporation of Bangladesh (TCB) began selling onions at Tk 45 a kg with a limit of 2kg per person through 35 mobile vans in Dhaka.

"India banned export one month ago. The ministry concerned should have taken a prompt decision on onion import and the opening of LC at that time. Why was there delay?" asked Tofail Ahmed, chairman of the standing



A look of contentment steals over a girl's face as she gets hold of a bag of onion for Tk 45 a kg after waiting in the queue for nearly three hours. The photo was taken at a booth of the Trading Corporation of Bangladesh in Khamarbari area of the capital yesterday.

PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON



## MONEY FOR LEATHER

### PM assures incentives for 5 years

UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday said financial incentives in the leather sector would continue for at least the next five years to achieve the target of export earnings from the leather goods and footwear industry.

She was addressing the Bangladesh Leather Footwear and Leather Goods International Sourcing Show at the capital's Bangabandhu International Conference Centre.

Leathergoods and Footwear Manufacturers and Exporters Association of Bangladesh together with the commerce ministry organised the third edition

## Separatists declare independence of India's Manipur

### Forms govt-in-exile in UK

AFP, Ndtv

Dissident political leaders from the Indian state of Manipur have unilaterally declared independence from India and said they were forming a government-in-exile in Britain.

The former princely state became part of India in 1949, two years after the country won independence from Britain, but has since seen decades-long violent separatist campaigns.

Narengbam Samarjit, external affairs minister in the self-declared Manipur State Council, on Tuesday said the exiled government would push for recognition at the United Nations.

"We will run the de jure exiled government here... from today onwards," he told reporters in London, after a declaration of independence first announced in Manipur in 2012 was read aloud.

"We will seek recognition from different nations... to become a (UN) member. We hope many of the countries will recognise our independence."

Narengbam Samarjit, accompanied by Yamben Biren, who claimed to be the chief minister of 'Manipur-in-exile', addressing

## UK starts election battle over Brexit

### Johnson claims only his party can deliver EU divorce; Corbyn urges people to vote for 'real change'

AGENCIES

Prime Minister Boris Johnson yesterday locked horns with his rivals in a fiery debate, setting the tone for an unpredictable early general election aimed at breaking Britain's protracted Brexit deadlock.

Johnson's battle of wits with the main opposition Labour Party leader Jeremy Corbyn came a day after parliament backed the premier's call for Britain's third vote in four years.

The December 12 poll was decided two days before Britain was due to leave the European Union and a few hours after Brussels granted London more time to figure out what it plans to do.

Parliament now has up until January 31 to either lend its support to Johnson's divorce deal or even push for a second EU referendum that might help Britain move past its biggest political crisis since World War II.

Weary leaders in Europe will hope the vote ends a year of uncertainty that has chilled the business investment climate and required costly preparations for the possibility of a chaotic "no-deal" end to the 46-year relationship.

The European Union's Brexit negotiator Michel Barnier yesterday said the risk of Britain's chaotic departure from the bloc without a divorce agreement still existed, and that future trade talks would be "difficult and demanding."

Johnson said at a record-breaking 71-minute question-and-answer session with MPs the "only way to deliver a great Brexit is to vote for this party and for this government."

He accused the socialist Labour leader of pushing an "economically

## JU assistant proctor assaults 2 students

### Protesters say

JU CORRESPONDENT

Assistant Proctor of Jahangirnagar University Mohibur Rouf Shaibal, along with some students, yesterday allegedly assaulted two of the protesters demanding removal of the vice-chancellor.

Nazir Amin Chowdhury Joy, president of JU Student Union, one of the two assaulted students, said they were staging the protest in front of the old Arts and Humanities building in the morning, demanding removal of Vice-chancellor Prof Farzana Islam for alleged corruption.

"He [Shaibal] gathered a bunch of students and attacked some of the protesters. He grabbed me in an attempt to remove me from the faculty gate,"

## Hubble spots spooky face in galaxy collision

CNN ONLINE

Although it looks a bit like an eerie, floating face suspended in space, the optical illusion spotted by the Hubble Space Telescope is really the result of two galaxies colliding.

Hubble took the image in June as part of its snapshot program, using gaps in its observation schedule to take photos of other intriguing targets.

The two glowing eyes of the face each represent the centre of a galaxy. Young blue stars help make up the outline of the face, while other groupings of new stars seem to sketch out a mouth and nose.

Galaxies aren't the kindest of neighbours. They

## AZHAR'S WAR CRIMES

### SC to deliver verdict today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Supreme Court is scheduled to deliver its verdict today on whether ATM Azharul Islam, a Jamaat-e-Islami leader, would be acquitted of charges related to war crimes.

The International Crimes Tribunal previously awarded Azharul with death penalty for crimes he allegedly committed during



A guard standing by the sealed off entry to the underpass on Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue at Karwan Bazar yesterday. The authorities appear to have tightened the measures after The Daily Star published a photo, inset, on Tuesday of people sneaking inside the underpass amid heavy construction work in the area.

PHOTO: STAR

## Will be able to call 999 even without your network

MUHAMMAD ZAHIDUL ISLAM

Mobile phone users will soon be able to call 999 or any other emergency numbers without a mobile SIM card or internet access during natural disasters. Any live mobile network can be used to make the call.

A trial run on this by a joint team of the disaster management division, telecom regulator and army officials in the last two days proved to be a success.

During the trial, it was found that if a user found their mobile network down or destroyed, they could still immediately contact the authorities using the emergency number.

Currently 999 is used for emergency situations. It was developed by the information communication division in 2017 and is being currently run by police.

Every mobile phone, both smart and otherwise, have an emergency calling

**রাজধানী উন্নয়ন কর্তৃপক্ষ**  
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**সতর্কীকরণ বিজ্ঞপ্তি**

এতদ্বারা সর্বসাধারণের অবগতির জন্য জানানো যাচ্ছে যে, সম্প্রতি কতিপয় বেসরকারি হাউজিং কোম্পানি/রিয়েল এস্টেট ডেভেলপার বেসরকারি আবাসিক প্রকল্পের ভূমি উন্নয়ন বিধিমালা, ২০০৪ (সংশোধিত ২০১২ ও ২০১৫) এর আওতায় যথাযথ কর্তৃপক্ষের অনুমোদন ব্যতীত তাদের প্রকল্পে রাজউক কর্তৃক প্রণীত মহাপরিচালনার ব্যত্যয় করে মাটি ভরাট করছে এবং বিভিন্ন পত্র পত্রিকায় ও টেলিভিশন চ্যানেলে তাদের প্রকল্পের বিজ্ঞাপন প্রচার করছে। যা প্রচলিত আইন ও বিধি-বিধান বহির্ভূত। যারা এ ধরনের বিধি বহির্ভূত কাজ করছে তাদেরকে এহেন অবৈধ কাজ করা থেকে বিরত থাকার জন্য অনুরোধ করা হচ্ছে। অন্যথায় প্রচলিত আইন ও বিধি অমান্যকারীদের বিরুদ্ধে আইনানুগ ব্যবস্থা গ্রহণ করা হবে।

জনমনে বিজ্ঞপ্তি দূরীকরণের লক্ষ্যে রাজউক কর্তৃক অনুমোদিত বেসরকারি আবাসিক প্রকল্পের তালিকা (১৯৮৪ থেকে ২০০৩ সাল পর্যন্ত) এবং বেসরকারি আবাসিক প্রকল্পের ভূমি উন্নয়ন বিধিমালা, ২০০৪ (সংশোধিত ২০১২ ও ২০১৫) এর আলোকে শর্তসাপেক্ষে অনুমোদিত বেসরকারি আবাসিক প্রকল্পের হালনাগাদ তালিকা রাজউক এর ওয়েবসাইটে www.rajukdhaka.gov.bd প্রকাশ করা হয়েছে।

এ বিজ্ঞপ্তি জনস্বার্থে প্রচার করা হলো।

**সুশান্ত চাকমা**  
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জিডি-১৭৯৩