

## PADMA BRIDGE RAIL LINK PROJECT

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## KILLING OF THREE, EVICTION Justice still eludes santals

MOSTAFA SHABUJ, Bogura

Santals who were evicted from a sugarcane farm in Gaibandha three years ago are yet to get justice for the killing of three of their men and compensation for the loss of their livelihood.

Instead, many members of this landless indigenous community of Gobindaganj upazila have to fight cases filed against them by police, Rangpur Sugar Mill authorities and their associates.

On November 6, 2016, more than 2,000 Santal and Bangalee families were ousted from the "disputed" farmland, on which Rangpur Sugar Mill was established.

The eviction took place following a violent clash between the families, mill employees and police. Three Santal men were killed and 20 others, including nine policemen, injured.

Tatu Tudu, 57, a day labourer and the brother of Romesh Tudu, who was killed during the clash, was made an accused in eight cases.

"Every month, I have to appear five to eight times before courts as part of my bail condition. Now, I am not able to go outside the upazila to look for work," he said.

Philimon Baske, president of the Shahebganj-Bagda Farm Bhumi Uddhar Sangram Committee, said that more

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Around 300 Santal families set up makeshift homes in Gaibandha's Sahebganj, amid looming threats of eviction by the local administration and Rangpur Sugar Mill authorities. They were previously evicted from the area, which they say is where ancestral land is on, in November 2016.

PHOTO: MOSTAFA SHABUJ

US wants to make big investment in Bangladesh  
Says visiting asstt secy Alice Wells

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

The US wants to make big investments in Bangladesh -- in infrastructure, energy, as well as in strengthening Bangladesh's institutions to improve governance -- under the Indo-Pacific Strategy (IPS).

"We discussed how we can improve foreign direct investments and expand American business in Bangladesh and help the country develop its ambitious goals. That was a significant part of the conversation," said US Acting Assistant Secretary for South and Central Asian Affairs Alice Wells.

She said this after holding separate meetings with Foreign Minister AK Abdul Momen and Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan Kamal at their respective ministries.

Alice arrived in Dhaka yesterday on a three-day visit. She is also scheduled

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## BTRC's AUDIT CLAIM Robi may go to int'l body for arbitration

MUHAMMAD ZAHIDUL ISLAM

Mobile carrier Robi yesterday hinted that it may move to an international arbitration body to settle the government's audit claim worth Tk 867.23 crore if the operator fails to get justice in Bangladesh.

In an interview with a group of journalists at Robi headquarters in the capital, Mahtab Uddin Ahmed, chief executive officer and managing director of the company, said they may take the issue to the International Centre for Settlement of Investment Disputes, one of the five agencies of World Bank Group.

He also said they have every respect for the country's courts and their judgments and that they want the issue to be resolved under the country's law.

Robi's shareholders invested in Bangladesh under the Foreign Private Investment Promotion and Protection Act, which allows the investors to move to an international court, Mahtab said.

"Shareholders have that option of taking it to an international court, and as far as we are concerned, this is not desirable. But depending on the situation

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## MANPOWER EXPORT STALEMATE Crucial talks with Malaysia today

Minister hopes the market will reopen soon

PORIMOL PALMA

Bangladesh and Malaysia are scheduled to hold a meeting in Putrajaya today with a hope of having a fresh human resources recruitment deal between the two countries amid concerns of syndicates.

A six-member delegation of Bangladesh, headed by Imran Ahmad, minister at the Ministry of Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment, reached Kuala Lumpur yesterday to meet Malaysian Human Resources Minister M Kulasegaran in this regard.

In the last week, Imran said, "We have some outstanding issues that will come up in the meeting. We need clarification on some issues. The decisions taken in the meeting will be included in a MoU [memorandum of understanding]."

He, however, could not specify exactly when the MoU, which is supposed to provide a new framework on human resources recruitment, would be signed. "We hope the market will reopen soon," he said.

Malaysia suspended labour recruitment from Bangladesh on September 1 last year, alleging monopoly by a syndicate of 10 recruiting agents and charging of high migration cost of up to Tk 4 lakh each.

The syndicate of agents included Noor Ali of Unique Eastern Pvt Ltd, Rubul Amin of Catharsis International, Ghulam Mustafa of Prantik Travels & Tourism Ltd, Mohammed Bashir of Rabbi International, Zainal Abedin Zafar of Al Islam Overseas, Ruhul Amin of Amin Tours & Travels, ASM Khairul Amin of Career Overseas Consultants Ltd, Tuhin Siddique Ome of ISMT Human Resources Development Ltd, Arif Alam of Passage Associates and Shaikh Abdullah of Shanjari International.

These agencies were selected by the then Malaysian government without providing any basis though Bangladesh had proposed the names of 745

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## FR TOWER TRAGEDY HC stays bail orders for 3 accused

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday stayed the lower court orders that granted bail to three accused in a case filed for forgery over the design of 23-storey FR Tower in the capital's Banani.

It also ordered the accused to surrender before the lower court concerned within seven days.

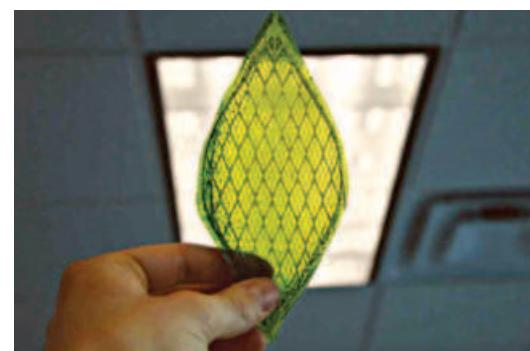
The accused are FR Tower land owner Syed Md Hossain Imam Faruque, Rajuk's former inspector Md Aurangzeb Siddique Nannu and its former deputy director (estate) Md Shawkat Ali.

Moreover, the HC issued three separate rules asking the accused and the government to explain as to why the lower court orders in the case should not be scrapped.

Judge KM Emrul Kayesh of Dhaka Metropolitan Sessions Judge's Court gave bail to Faruque, Aurangzeb

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## 'Artificial leaf' to turn CO<sub>2</sub> into fuel



INDEPENDENT.CO.UK

Scientists have created an "artificial leaf" that could turn carbon dioxide into fuel.

The new technology was inspired by the way plants use photosynthesis to turn carbon dioxide into glucose and oxygen. The artificial leaf mimics this process -- with the help of a cheap red powder called cuprous oxide -- and produces methanol and oxygen.

The methanol can be collected and used as fuel by heating the solution so the water evaporates, according to the paper published in Nature Energy.

Lead researcher Yimin Wu, an engineering professor at the University of Waterloo told The Independent: "This technology has achieved the solar to fuel efficiency about 10 per cent. This is already larger than the natural photosynthesis (about one per cent)."

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## Khoka's body to arrive tomorrow

UNB, Dhaka

The body of freedom fighter and former mayor of undivided Dhaka City Corporation Sadeque Hossain Khoka is expected to arrive home from the USA tomorrow morning.

An Emirates Airlines flight carrying the BNP vice chairman's body, was scheduled to leave John F Kennedy Airport at 11:00pm yesterday, his eldest son Ishraque Hossain told UNB.

His first namaz-e-janaza was held at Jamaica Muslim Center in New York on Monday night in the



## PRAYER TIMING NOVEMBER 6

Faz Zohr Asr Maghrib Esha  
AZAN 5-00 12-45 3-45 5-25 7-00  
JAMAAT 5-35 1-15 4-00 5-30 7-30

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

## CLIMATE ACCORD Dismay as US starts pullout

AFP, Washington

The United States has formally notified the United Nations that it is withdrawing from the Paris climate accord, triggering expressions of concern and regret from other major powers yesterday.

President Donald Trump went ahead with the pullout despite mounting evidence of the reality and impact of climate change.

Washington presented its withdrawal letter to the UN on the first possible date under the accord negotiated by Trump's predecessor Barack Obama, making the world's largest economy the sole outlier from the agreement.

The US will be officially out of the deal on November 4, 2020, one day after the presidential election in which Trump is seeking a second term on appeals to the white working class.

Announcing the move, Secretary of State Mike Pompeo reiterated Trump's

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A bulldozer knocks down parts of a building on Jamal Khan Canal during a drive against illegal structures by Chattogram Development Authority. The CDA launched the drive yesterday.

PHOTO:  
COLLECTED

## Iran to restart enrichment at Fordow plant

AFP, Tehran

President Hassan Rouhani yesterday said that Iran would resume uranium enrichment at an underground plant south of Tehran in its latest step back from a troubled 2015 agreement with major powers.

The suspension of all enrichment at the Fordow plant in the mountains near the Shia holy city of Qom was one of the restrictions on its nuclear activities that Iran accepted in return for the lifting of international sanctions.

But Washington's abandonment of the deal in May last year followed by its reimposition of crippling sanctions prompted Iran to begin a phased suspension of its own commitments in May this year.

Rouhani recalled that under the terms of the agreement Iran had retained more than 1,000 centrifuges at the plant which had been running empty since it went into effect.

"Starting from tomorrow (Wednesday), we will begin injecting (uranium hexafluoride) gas at Fordo," Rouhani said in a speech broadcast by state television.

His announcement came a day after tensions flared anew on the 40th anniversary of the US embassy siege and hostage crisis, with thousands in Tehran taking to the streets and Washington imposing fresh sanctions.

Iran said the resumption of enrichment at Fordow would be carried out transparently and witnessed by inspectors from the UN nuclear watchdog, the International Atomic Energy Agency.

But Russia, which has close ties with Iran, expressed concern about the latest move.

"We are monitoring the development of the situation with concern," President Vladimir Putin's spokesman

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