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“Where are the onions that have arrived by planes and ships? Why haven’t the prices gone down yet?”
NAGORIK OIKYA CONVENER MAHMUDUR RAHMAN MANNA AT A HUMAN CHAIN IN THE CAPITAL PAGE 3



“To us, neighbours come first. Among the neighbours, Bangladesh comes first.”
INDIAN ENVOY TO BANGLADESH RIVA GANGULY DAS ON INDO-BANGLA RELATIONS



“Today I can reveal further hard evidence that Johnson is deliberately misleading the people”.
UK LABOUR LEADER CORBYN SAYS LEAKED REPORT EXPOSES PM’S BREXIT CLAIMS PAGE 8



Smugglers rule Benapole train

Drugs, other items being smuggled right under the noses of law enforcers



The smugglers sometimes illegally stop the train and get off. They throw away their goods through the windows and get back on the train, allege regular passengers

MOHAMMAD JAMIL KHAN, back from Jashore

A valid ticket is not enough to guarantee you a seat on the Benapole Commuter Train. You will have to pay an additional amount to touts if you don’t mind standing all the way.

To get a seat you will have to collect a slip from the representatives of a racket, paying them Tk 150-200, before boarding the train. The fare for the three-hour journey between Khulna and Benapole is only Tk 45.

“These people who keep the seats occupied are none but smugglers and nobody dares say a word against them,” Shafiqul Alam, a commuter, told this newspaper.

“You have to pay them to grab a seat, or else complete the journey standing,” he said.

The train, which run four times a day between Khulna and Benapole via Jashore, is virtually ruled by the smugglers who transport illegal items including yaba and phensedyl on it under the very nose of law enforcers, said passengers and local people.

Some women who act as the mules for the smugglers also keep seats occupied for the passengers who would pay the racket. The seats are their additional source of income, they alleged.

Benapole is the country’s busiest land port, through which many travel to and from India every day and goods are also transported in huge quantities.

A JOURNEY BY TRAIN

In an attempt to get a first-hand experience, this correspondent embarked on a journey by the commuter train from Benapole on October 15.

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Workers sort out discarded plastic bottles beside Tangail-Bhuapur road in the district’s Kalihati upazila. Bought from different villages in the upazila by traders, these bottles will be sent to the capital for recycling. The photo was taken recently.

PHOTO: SK ENAMUL HAQ



Bronze stacks up amid silver lining

ATIQUE ANAM from Kathmandu

The front pages of most of the national newspapers in Nepal on Friday were flush with blown-up pictures of Gaurika Singh, the Nepalese swimmer who just won her country its first-ever swimming individual gold in the history of the South Asian Games.

The Games’ official newsletter printed a full-page picture of her holding the 200m freestyle gold medal, with the headline reading ‘Fairylake Historic Gold’ in Nepalese.

The 16-year-old, who

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Murder, not suicide

Autopsy report which confirms the murder arrives two years after incident; forensic expert has no answer; victim’s family alleges negligence

SHARIFUL ISLAM

Twenty-three days after Asaduzzaman went missing, police recovered his body from an under-construction building in the city’s Basundhara area on July 11, 2017.

The victim, 33, was an accounts officer of PFI Properties Ltd, a developer company which was constructing the building.

Initially, police suspected it to be a case of suicide and an unnatural death case was filed with the local police.

Assaduzzaman’s family members, however, said he could never take his life. They said the soon-to-be-father had called his mother over phone on June 16, promising to visit their Natore home in two days to take his pregnant wife for delivery.

Shockingly, it took two years for the law enforcers and the family to know that the man was murdered and his body was hanged from the ceiling, apparently to confuse the investigators.

At the centre of this delay is a forensic doctor at Dhaka Medical College (DMC), who took too a long time to submit the autopsy report which



Asaduzzaman

confirmed Asaduzzaman was strangled to death.

The sheer negligence in dispatching the report took place despite the High Court in May directed investigation officers to submit autopsy reports to the magistrates concerned within 10 days of any murder.

In Assaduzzaman’s case, police now believe the delay in receiving the report would make cracking the case more difficult. Crucial evidence could have been damaged or gone missing by now.

Talking to this correspondent recently, Aleya Begum, the victim’s mother, said, “I always believed that my son cannot commit suicide. Two days before he went missing, he told me that he would come home in a couple of days to be beside his pregnant wife.”

“How can a man who was so eagerly waiting to hug his baby kill himself?” asked the woman who is from Boroigram in Natore.

After the body was recovered, Bhatara police sent it to the DMC morgue for autopsy.

According to the autopsy report, a copy of which

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ROHINGYA GENOCIDE TRIAL

ICJ on course to hold hearings

PORIMOL PALMA

The Gambia is set to launch a legal battle against Myanmar at the International Court of Justice as it starts hearing the Rohingya genocide case on Tuesday.

Gambia Attorney General and Justice Minister Abubacarr Marie Tambadou and Myanmar State Counsellor Aung San Suu Kyi will lead the lawyers on behalf of their respective countries during the December 10-12 hearing at the court in The Hague.

The hearing will be held from 10:00am to 1:00pm on Tuesday and Wednesday and from 10:00am to 4:30pm on Thursday (Netherlands local time), according to the ICJ, the top UN court that holds the state parties accountable.

The Gambia is seeking provisional measures to protect the Rohingya from further violence in Rakhine, according to a brief on the case prepared by International Commission of Jurists, a Geneva-based non-profit organisation.

The court can issue such orders to protect the rights of the parties to a case pending the final decision to avoid irreparable damage to the rights of the subject of the case, it added.

According to the case statement, all members of the Rohingya group in Myanmar are presently in grave danger of further genocidal acts. They continue to face daily threats of death, torture, rape, starvation and other deliberate actions aimed at their collective destruction, in whole or in part.

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On this day in 1971

DECEMBER 7

Bhutan acknowledges Bangladesh as an independent and sovereign state. In the break of dawn, Indian paratroopers drop near Sylhet airport. They attack the main Pakistan base in Sylhet. Within the afternoon, the Pakistani general in-charge of Sylhet is compelled to surrender along with his troops. The 9th division of Indian army reaches Jashore Cantonment

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Modi to join Bangabandhu birth centenary celebration

Pranab, Sonia will also take part

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Prime Minister of India Narendra Modi is expected to attend the birth centenary programme of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman next year, Foreign Minister AK Abdul Momen said yesterday.

During the celebration, Pranab Mukherjee, former president of India, and Sonia Gandhi, president of Indian National Congress, would also be present as luminaries, he said.

Momen made the statement while addressing a discussion programme as chief guest at Begum Sufia Kamal Auditorium of the National Museum in Dhaka. Ekattorer Ghatok Dalal Nirmul Committee organised the programme marking the 48th anniversary of India’s recognition of Bangladesh.

Momen said the warm relationship that has

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An onion trader sits idle at his shop in the city’s Karwan Bazar as there is no buyer around. Traders said sales of the cooking ingredient have dropped significantly due to its high price. It was sold for Tk 100 to Tk 250 a kg yesterday, depending on variety. Inset, traders sort out onion at another shop in the market.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

INDIAN VET’S RAPE, MURDER

Police kill 4 suspects

Rights groups, politicians caution against extrajudicial killings

AGENCIES

Indian police yesterday shot dead four gang-rape and murder suspects, prompting celebrations but also accusations that they were extrajudicial executions.

The men, who had been in custody for a week over the latest rape case to shock India, were shot in the early hours during a re-enactment of the crime organised by police in Shadnagar, outside the southern city of Hyderabad.

“The police brought the accused to the crime spot as part of the investigation. The accused then started attacking the police with stones and sticks and then snatched the weapons and started firing,” police commissioner V C Sajjanar said.

“The police warned them and asked them to surrender but they continued to fire. Then we opened fire and they were killed in the encounter,” he told reporters at the scene, adding that the men had confessed to the crime during interrogation.

Television images showed the shoeless bodies of the suspects still lying in an open field yesterday afternoon, with guns in the hands of two of them.

The four men were accused of gang-raping and murdering a 27-year-old veterinary doctor before setting fire to her body underneath an isolated bridge late on November 27.

Like in the infamous 2012 rape and murder of a woman on a Delhi bus, the case sparked demonstrations and calls for swift and tough justice.

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