

The Daily Star

SECOND EDITION



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Public indifference to voting is now being noticed. It is an ominous sign for democracy.
ELECTION COMMISSIONER MAHBUB TALUKDER SPEAKING ON THE OCCASION OF NATIONAL VOTERS' DAY.



If he [Tamim] can get one or two more boundaries, all you guys [media persone] will get off his back.
BANGLADESH BATTING CONSULTANT NEIL MCKENZIE ON THE CRITICISM FACED BY OPENER TAMIM IQBAL (PAGE 14)



The doors are now open. Now, you will have to take your share of the burden.
TURKISH PRESIDENT RECEP TAYYIP ERDOGAN UPS PRESSURE ON WESTERN COUNTRIES OVER REFUGEE CRISIS (PAGE 8)



Seven killed in a single 'gunfight'

Rab says they were members of a notorious Rohingya robber gang; firearms recovered

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Cox's Bazar

Seven suspected Rohingya robbers were killed in an alleged gunfight with Rab in Cox's Bazar's Teknaf early yesterday.

This is the highest number of casualties in a single incident of "gun-battle" in Bangladesh in recent times.

With the seven, at least 15 alleged Rohingya criminals have been killed in "gunfights" with law enforcers since February last year, show media reports.

Talking on the issue, rights activists said such incidents were the result of a culture of impunity prevailing in the country.

Wing Commander Azim Ahmed, commanding officer of Rab-15, said acting on a tip-off that a group of robbers was hiding in Shalbagan Lalporirjum Hill, adjacent to Jadimura-Nayapara 26 and 27 Rohingya Refugee Camps, a Rab team raided the area around 2:00am yesterday.

First, the Rab members cordoned off the area and then using a megaphone asked the robbers to surrender. But at this, the criminals opened fire on them, forcing the law enforcers to fire retaliatory shots, he claimed at a press briefing at his office in Cox's Bazar last evening.

The "gunfight" continued for nearly four hours. After it ended, the Rab members searched the area and recovered seven bullet-hit bodies, he said.

Talking to The Daily Star, Sakia Hoque, a doctor at the emergency unit of Teknaf Upazila Health Complex, said the seven bodies and three injured Rab members were taken there early yesterday morning.

The seven were brought dead and the Rab members were released after they were given primary treatment, he said.

Azim also claimed to have recovered three pistols, seven one-shot guns, 12 bullets and 13 abandoned bullet shells from the spot.

Rab officials said the deceased were members of a notorious robber gang led by Zokir Ahmed.

Azim said they had been trying to nab the gang for the last 15 days. Its members were involved in robbery, yaba trade and human trafficking.

He identified four of the deceased as Md Faruk, 35, a resident of

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Buses going against traffic on the newly-built one-way overpass on Dhaka-Mawa highway in the capital's Postogola area. On-duty traffic policemen on the bridge were not doing anything to stop them. Such violations of road rules pose risks of accidents, putting lives at risk. The photo was taken around noon yesterday.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

SAGAR-RUNI MURDER

Nothing new in Rab report on probe

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Eight years after the murders of journalist couple Sagar Sarowar and Meherun Rumi, Rapid Action Battalion could not produce anything new information as the High Court wanted to know the latest update of the investigation.

Rab yesterday handed over a report regarding the inquiry into the murders of Sagar and Rumi to the attorney general's office to place it before the HC.

"There is no new information. Earlier, we used to take the case docket to court. Now the High Court asked the investigation officer to submit it through an affidavit. That is why the progress report was sent to the AG office," Maj

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CAA misunderstood in many senses

Indian foreign secretary tells seminar in Dhaka

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Indian Foreign Secretary Harsh Vardhan Shringla yesterday said the Citizenship Amendment Act passed by Indian parliament late last year was misunderstood in many senses.

"This is a proactive legislation that has been undertaken on humanitarian grounds. In other words, the people who were refugees or faced political persecution and came to India within a cut off time were allowed fast track citizenship," he told a seminar in the capital.

The seminar, Bangladesh and India: A Promising Future, was organised by Bangladesh Institute of International and Strategic Studies (BISS) and Indian High Commission in Bangladesh at the Pan Pacific Sonargaon hotel in the capital.

Shringla arrived yesterday on a two-day visit meant to prepare the

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Harsh Shringla

End border killings, allay concern over internal issues

Dhaka urges Delhi

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh wants India to bring border killings to an end and address the peoples' concerns caused by the "internal issues" of India.

"We had decided to bring [down] border killings to zero, but it increased in the recent months. It is regrettable. Shringla said he would look into the matter,"

Bangladesh's Foreign Minister AK Abdul Momen said after a meeting with the Indian Foreign

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CORONAVIRUS OUTBREAK

EU raises risk level to 'high'

Toll tops 3,000; cases soar; OECD warns of severe economic hit from outbreak

COVID-19 UPDATE	3,043 DEATHS	80,174 confirmed cases in mainland China	The virus spread to at least 65 countries
	88,930 confirmed cases		

AFP, Brussels

The death toll from the new coronavirus epidemic surpassed 3,000 yesterday as more people died in China, Iran and the US and Europe raised its state of alert.

The virus has now infected more than 89,000, spread to over 60 countries and threatens to cause a global economic slowdown -- after first emerging in China late last year.

With fears of a pandemic on the rise, the World Health Organization urged all countries to stock up on critical care ventilators to treat patients with severe symptoms.

In Brussels, EU president Ursula von der Leyen said the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC) had increased its risk assessment for Europeans after Italy's outbreak doubled in 48 hours.

The virus has raised fears for the world economy, with the OECD lowering its global growth forecast by half a point to 2.4 percent, the worst performance since the 2008 crisis.

China's economy has ground to a halt with large swathes of the country under quarantine or measures to restrict travel. Takings at Macau casinos fell a record 88 percent in February.

Other countries have started to enact their own draconian containment measures, including banning

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Tigers looking to seal series today

MAZHAR UDDIN from Sylhet

Hosts Bangladesh will be desperate to secure the series when they take on Zimbabwe in the second of the three-match ODI series at Sylhet International Stadium today. The match is scheduled to start at 1:00pm.

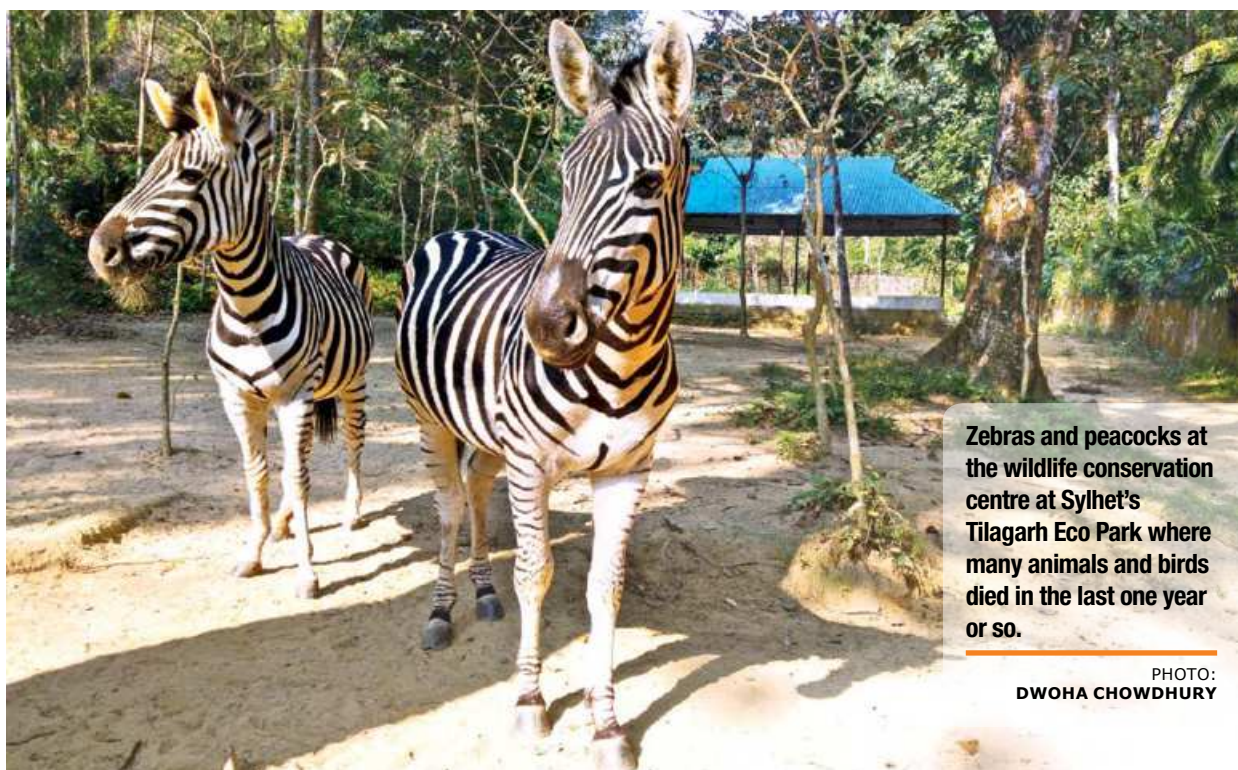
Following the 169-run win -- Bangladesh's biggest in ODIs -- in the first ODI on Sunday Bangladesh will be oozing with confidence and will look to continue the right kind of attitude to improve their skills.

It will not just be about winning the game against a weaker and less experienced opposition side ranked 12th in the world in ODIs; instead head coach Russell Domingo's charges will look to display a commanding approach to show the difference between the two sides.

Things have not gone well for the Tigers since the eighth-place finish in

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WORLD WILDLIFE DAY TODAY



Zebras and peacocks at the wildlife conservation centre at Sylhet's Tilagarh Eco Park where many animals and birds died in the last one year or so.

PHOTO: DWOHA CHOWDHURY

Condemned cell for animals

Everything wrong with Sylhet wildlife conservation centre

DWOHA CHOWDHURY, Sylhet

The wildlife conservation centre in Tilagarh Eco Park of Sylhet has turned into a death trap for animals since it started operation in November 2018.

Over these months, at least 33 animals and birds died at the centre, said Forest Department officials.

Confirming the number of deaths, Chayanbrata Choudhury, acting beat officer of Tilagarh Forest Beat, said four deer, four chukar partridges, four peacocks and one swamp hen were among the dead.

Besides, 20 love birds either died or managed to escape from the cage, he added.

An insider who closely monitored the animals, however, said the number of deaths was as high as 50 and at

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