

US ELECTION
Trump's team asks judge to declare Trump winner in Pennsylvania; Georgia, Wisconsin to release recount results
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"We need to understand and internalise that, and realise: we have got to climb this mountain Coronavirus second wave this time, without vaccines."
WHO'S EMERGENCIES DIRECTOR MICHAEL RYAN

"The government will intensify its actions and use all laws, all articles, to take action against protesters who broke the law."
THAI PM PRAYUTH CHAN-OCHA WARNS PROTESTERS

"Pompeo is intoxicated by apartheid wine stolen from Palestinian land. It is opportunistic and self-serving, and it damages the chances for peace."
HANAN ASHRAWI, A PALESTINIAN NEGOTIATOR, ON US TOP DIPLOMAT'S VISIT TO WEST BANK SETTLEMENTS

LOCALLY MADE THREE-WHEELERS

Bribes keep them running

Local syndicates get cuts to enable operations of the illegal, risky vehicles ignoring court, govt directives



TUHIN SHUBHRA ADHIKARY

Despite being illegal and risky, they are used nationwide, thanks to the backing of influential who find them an easy way to make a quick buck. Tens of thousands of locally made three-wheelers have been operating for years, ignoring court and government directives issued to get them off the roads.

Over the years, the use of these vehicles, usually motorised by single-cylinder diesel engines meant for power tillers or pumping water and lacking even half decent braking capabilities, has seen exorbitant growth in districts, upazilas and rural Bangladesh.

They have become an unofficial part of the transport system. Mostly unskilled, untrained, and unlicensed drivers operate these vehicles bribing local syndicates of some unscrupulous political leaders, policemen, and administration officials, insiders said.

When these slow-moving vehicles at the hands of unskilled drivers get on highways or roads alongside fast-moving vehicles, it becomes a perfect recipe for disaster.

Experts say the slow-moving vehicles are posing serious threat to road

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People gather as an illegal vehicle, locally known as Bhotbhoti, lies in a roadside ditch in Barik Bazar area of Chapainawabganj's Shibganj upazila. Nine farmers were killed and five others injured after the vehicle skidded off the road and fell into the ditch around 5:30am yesterday. Such three-wheelers, which are banned on highways, are often involved in road accidents. *Inset, one such vehicle plies the Dhaka-Sylhet highway in Tarabo area of Narayanganj, defying the ban.*

PHOTO: RABIUL HASAN/ FILE PHOTO

Nine killed as three-wheeler falls into ditch

Loaded with rice, it was carrying passengers far more than its capacity

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Chapainawabganj

Nine people were killed and five injured when a locally made three-wheeler carrying paddy overturned and plunged into a roadside ditch in Barik Bazar area of Chapainawabganj's Shibganj upazila yesterday.

Mahbub Alam Khan, additional superintendent of police, and locals said the accident occurred around 5:30am when the vehicle -- carrying some 15 people returning to Baliadighi after harvesting paddy -- reached Barik Bazar, overturned and plunged into a roadside ditch, killing seven on the spot and injuring six persons.

The deceased were identified as Abdul Kashem, Mohammad Babu, Mohammad Tajamul, Mohammad Mithun, Mohammad Karim, Mohamad Minu, Ahad Ali, Abdul Latif of Baliadighi village and Ataur Rahman of Lawghata village (whose in-laws' house is in Baliadighi) under the upazila.

One of the injured, Ahad Ali, succumbed to his injuries on the way to Shibganj Upazila Health Complex.

Police recovered the bodies of eight victims and later handed them over to their families in the presence of upazila administration officials.

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SIPHONING OFF Tk 10,200Cr Explain steps taken to arrest PK Halder

HC asks ACC, govt agencies to reply in 10 days

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday wanted to know what steps were taken to arrest Proshanta Kumar Halder, also known as PK Halder, and bring him back home from abroad.

Halder, former managing director of NRB Global Bank and Reliance Finance Limited, fled the country after allegedly siphoning off about Tk 10,200 crore from four non-banking financial institutions.

The court ordered the government authorities concerned and the Anti-Corruption Commission to explain in 10 days the steps taken to arrest and bring Halder back home.

It also issued a rule asking the authorities to show causes why their

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'Govt cannot put children at risk'

PM against opening of schools; historic JS session on Mujib Borsho ends

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday acknowledged that staying at home had been increasingly difficult for students, but the government would not put children's lives at risk by reopening the educational institutions.

She was delivering the winding up speech in the first ever special session in parliament.

Before her speech, Deputy Leader of the Opposition and Jatiya Party Chairman GM Quader demanded that the government reopen all educational institutions.

The PM replied that the USA, different European countries, and the UK had reopened their educational institutions. "But amid rising cases of Covid-19, those countries were forced to shut their schools again," she said.

Hasina said she and the education minister had discussed reopening of schools when there were fewer daily new cases of coronavirus.

"But there has been a second wave of Covid-19 in Europe. No treatment for this contagious disease has been invented. There are risks of infection if children go to school. Why would we take the risk?"

GM Quader in his speech criticised the government for promoting children to the next class without exams.



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Country sees rise in Covid deaths again

30 die in a day, 2,364 infected

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The daily number of Covid-19 deaths has increased again as the health directorate reported 30 deaths in the last 24 hours till 8:00am yesterday.

This was the second highest single-day casualty in the past 37 days, while the highest -- 39 -- during this period was reported on Tuesday.

During the same 37-day period, the number was limited to 20 with a sudden rise to 25 or below for several days, according to data from the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS).

Over the last week, a

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SENIOR ASP'S DEATH Psychiatrists want judicial probe

Voice distrust of police probe after arrest of NIMH registrar

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Psychiatrists have protested the arrest of National Institute of Mental Health and Hospital Registrar Dr Abdullah Al Mamun in connection with the death of senior ASP Anisul Karim after he was assaulted by staffers of Mind Aid Psychiatry and De-Addiction Hospital on November 9.

At a press conference yesterday on the NIMH premises, Bangladesh Association of Psychiatrists President Prof Wazul Alam Chowdhury expressed distrust over the investigation by police and demanded a judicial probe into the death of the police official and the arrest of their colleague Dr Mamun.

Terming Dr Mamun's arrest "unjustified", they called police's assertion that he took commissions through brokers from private hospitals for referrals a false one.

Demanding the unconditional release of Dr Mamun, BAP announced closure of all psychiatrists' private chambers and online therapy until further notice and vowed to announce tougher programmes from tomorrow.

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THE THIRD VIEW



MAHFUIZ ANAM

FROM A PRO-PARTY TO PRO-PEOPLE POLICE FORCE

Political use has prevented its growth into a neutral professional institution

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RAPE OF DU STUDENT Lone accused gets life term

Tribunal completed trial in just 12 working days

COURT CORRESPONDENT

The 30-year-old man who was accused of raping a Dhaka University student in January was sentenced to life imprisonment yesterday.

Judge Begum Mosammat Qamrunnahr of the Women and Children Repression Prevention Tribunal-7 in Dhaka delivered the verdict in a packed courtroom after the trial ended in just 12 working days.

The judge also fined the convict, Md Majnu, Tk 50,000, and said he would be in jail for an additional six months if he failed to pay the fine.

She said the prosecutors proved the charges of rape and the accused had been handed the highest punishment for his crime.

The accused committed a heinous crime and he deserved the highest punishment as per the existing law, the judge observed.

This judgment will send a clear message to all rapists like Majnu, the judge added.

Before the delivery of the verdict, Majnu, a homeless man, told reporters that he was tortured into giving a confessional statement before a magistrate.

"Release me," he said, claiming that police arrested him for no reason. Four others had raped the girl, and he got

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A child shows another a discarded bag which she just found at Aminbazar landfill on the outskirts of the capital. Dozens of ragpickers, including children, search for recyclable items amid heaps of garbage at the landfill every day. None, however, uses any gloves or masks, putting their health at risk. The photo was taken a couple of days ago.

PHOTO: SK ENAMUL HAQ

Rape linked to women clad in T-shirts

Bogura-7 MP tells The Daily Star

GOLAM MORTOZA

Independent lawmaker Rezaul Karim Bablu on Tuesday told parliament that feminists are to blame for the rise of rape incidents across the country. He even advocated the implementation of the "tamarinds theory (women are like tamarinds, men will salivate at the sight of them, and so they must remain covered)" of late Hefajat-e-Islam supremo Ahmad Shafi.

Regarding his remarks, which caused outrage, The Daily Star spoke to the Bogura-7 lawmaker over the phone yesterday.

Following is an excerpt of the impromptu interview:

DS: How did it dawn on you that feminists are responsible for the rise of rape incidents in the country?

Bablu: Bangabandhu formed the Women's Rehabilitation Board on February 16, 1972. That board gradually became the

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