

## Mass Upsurge Day today

BSS, Dhaka

The historic Mass Upsurge Day will be observed today to commemorate the 1969 movement for autonomy of the then East Pakistan -- a movement that eventually led to the 1971 Liberation War and emergence of Bangladesh.

On this day in 1969, Matiur Rahman Mallik, a grade-IX student of Nabakumar Institution, and Rustam Ali, a rickshaw-puller, were killed in police firing on demonstrators in Dhaka as the Pakistani rulers tried to suppress the uprising.

The killings sparked protests across the country that eventually saw the fall of the regime of General Ayub Khan.

President Abdul Hamid and Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday

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Sonia and Sabina hail from Keraniganj. Everyday, they come all the way to Dhaka University to sell flowers, along with their infants. When sales are a little low, they watch Bollywood film songs on their phones to spend time. This photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: SK ENAMUL HAQ

## Who will get it first?

Preparations on but no list yet; frontliners to get priority; 8 districts to get 662 vaccination points

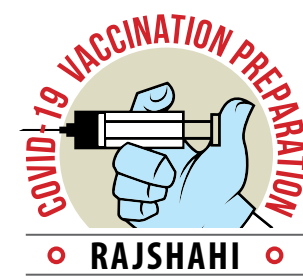
ANWAR ALI, Rajshahi

Even though the authorities in Rajshahi have started preparing for Covid-19 vaccination campaign by setting up centres and storages across the division, they are yet to prepare a list of people to be vaccinated.

According to officials, health workers and other frontliners would be vaccinated first on priority basis. However, they have not taken any step to prepare a list of the elderly and adults suffering from long-term diseases -- who are most vulnerable to Covid-19.

Dr Habibur Ahsan Talukder, Rajshahi divisional director of Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS), said civil surgeons, administrations and local government officials are likely to complete a list comprising health workers within a few days. Then they will prepare another list with other frontliners, including law enforcers and journalists, he added.

They said the government is launching



a smartphone app at the end of this month for people to get registered for vaccination.

"Once people get registered using their NID and mobile phone numbers, they will be selected as per their age and asked to come to the centers through an SMS," said the

health director.

He said those who are not familiar with using smartphones and the app would get assistance from the government digital service centres.

Meanwhile, this correspondent spoke to at least 20 elderly people and almost all of them expressed willingness to be vaccinated.

"The frontliners deserve to be at the top of the list for vaccination but the elderly should also be given precedence," said 60-year-old Jalal Uddin Ahmed, a businessman in the city's Uposhohor area.

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## CHATTOGRAM CITY POLL: TWO CANDIDATES UNVEIL MANIFESTOS

### Rezaul for a modern, tourism-friendly city

ARUN BIKASH DEY, Ctg

Awami League (AL) nominated mayoral candidate for Chattogram City Corporation (CCC) polls Rezaul Karim Chowdhury said he would like to develop the port city to be modern, aesthetic and of international standards, if voted mayor.

He said he has nothing to gain and wants to serve the city dwellers, if given a chance.

Rezaul, also a joint general secretary of Chattogram city unit AL, announced his election manifesto at Chattogram Press Club's Bangabandhu Hall yesterday.

In the manifesto, he stated 37 pledges and requested all to vote for him on election day on January 27.

Rezaul's top priority in the

manifesto is addressing waterlogging, one of port city's major problems. He acknowledged that waterlogging is the oldest and most longstanding problem, and considering the urgency, the prime minister allocated over Tk 10,000 crore for a mega project to address the issue.

Service organisations, including CDA, Wasa and CCC, have been implementing the project, he said, while elaborating on the pledges. He would prioritise proper implementation of the mega project.

Rezaul would initiate a 100-day programme on priority basis to get rid of all sorts of hindrances to free canals, drains, rivers and waterbodies from illegal occupiers. Through this, he would play a role to complete work

for the mega project on time.

The candidate would take initiative to save rivers and waterbodies, including Kamaphuli and Halda, from pollution and also tackle the mosquito menace in an environment-friendly way.

He would also take a stand against filling up of ponds and other waterbodies, and would take strict steps against adolescent gang culture.

Traffic mismanagement is another major problem, he said, and so, he also prioritised this issue in his manifesto.

He said many buildings and educational institutions mushroomed by the city's thoroughfares, and the establishments do not have their own parking space. Therefore, private

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### Shahadat promises to be a servant of the city

DWAIPAYAN BARIUA, Ctg

BNP nominated mayoral candidate Dr Shahadat Hossain yesterday pledged to make Chattogram city safe, clean and tourist-friendly, keeping international standards and communal harmony in mind.

Prioritising waterlogging, he made 75 pledges on nine different issues in his manifesto.

Urging the government to "give back people's voting rights", Shahadat read out the manifesto with the slogan "Cholo Shobai Badho Jote, Ebar Debo Amar Vote (let us unite and cast our votes)" at a press conference at a local restaurant in the city.

He promised to take recommendations from all former elected mayors as well as professionals

and experts to develop the port city into a waterlogging and traffic jam-free, modern city.

Mentioning that he considers himself as an activist in politics, not a leader, Shahadat said if elected he does not want to be the "city's father" but its servant.

The nine issues in the manifesto are waterlogging, health care, education, holding tax and housing, cleanliness, safety, communal harmony, aesthetics and tourism, and IT.

To resolve waterlogging, he made six pledges: recovering and digging city canals and drains; renovating them before every monsoon; collecting funds from Asian Development Bank, Kuwait fund or Jica to implement Drainage Master Plan-1995; reinstating the step of

renovating city drains, which was initiated by BNP government during 1991-1996; dredging of Kamaphuli river; and stopping hill cutting to prevent siltation.

Mentioning that health care is the most neglected sector, Shahadat said no new government hospital has been set up in the city in recent memory, although its population increased 20 times in the last 50 years, and the city lacks specialised hospitals.

Saying that Bangladesh Institute of Tropical and Infectious Diseases, the only hospital in the city for infectious diseases, is yet to be a full-fledged facility, he promised to take steps to rectify this and set up another hospital for treating Covid-19 or other such diseases.

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## Stop sand-filling, road building along Kohelia

Demand National River Alliance and Bapa, alleging DoE approval not being followed properly in Cox's Bazar power plant project

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government must stop sand filling and road construction beside the river Kohelia in Cox's Bazar, demanded National River Alliance and Bapa yesterday.

Expressing concern over the matter, they sought that the government follow the High Court directives to save the country's rivers.

The green organisations placed the demands during a protest programme at Dhaka Reporters Unity in Segunbagicha.

Funded by Jica, "Matarbari Ultra Super Critical Coal-Fired Power Project", is being implemented by Roads and Highways Department in Matarbari of Moheshkhali, Cox's Bazar.

Under the project, a 7.5km road along the river is proposed to be constructed for carrying materials for the power plant

and peoples' movement. Although the Department of Environment allowed RHD to build road for 6.5km, the local constructing company already dumped sand on 7.4km stretch to construct the road.

Visiting the place on January 16 and 17, National River Alliance observed the scenario and alleged that since the start of the project, Kohelia River has come under different environmental threat. Local canals and wetlands are being harmed, and fishermen are being prevented from fishing.

Bapa General Secretary Sharif Jamil said, "While constructing the road, the current laws and regulations haven't been considered, which is very unfortunate. We talked to the Cox's Bazar DC about this matter, but to no avail."

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## DISABLED MAN MURDER IN M'SINGH Immediate arrest of accused demanded

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Mymensingh

Family members of Mozammel Hossain Babul, who was killed over land dispute recently in Mymensingh, yesterday demanded immediate arrest of the killers.

Babul (50), a small grocer from Kalyanpur village in Mymensingh Sadar, was killed by his rivals on December 25.

None was arrested yet after one month into the killing and they are being threatened by the accused, alleged Babul's wife Sheuly Akter at a press conference at Mymensingh Press Club yesterday.

Sheuly, a mother of three children and a domestic help in Dhaka, said Babul lost his right leg following a road accident in 2007 and started the grocery shop.

"When we were in Dhaka, a neighbour named Suruj Ali, 35, and his accomplices grabbed 3 decimal of our 16 decimal homestead and they were trying to grab the rest. Since 2014, Babul lodged several general diaries with Kotwali Police Station but no action was taken," alleged Sheuly.

Sheuly further alleged former chairman of Khaghdahor Union Parishad Khairul Alam Sohagh and its present Chairman Anwar Hossain Nannu were informed about the matter but they did not take any initiative to settle the long standing dispute.

Recently Babul decided to sell his homestead and leave the area to avoid the dispute that angered Suruj.

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## A divine intervention

By-chance tip-off returns newborn to parents

ANWAR ALI, Rajshahi

On his way to the office yesterday morning, constable Mahfijur Rahman of Rajshahi Metropolitan Police (RMP) got a weird tip-off.

"I had just got out of home to go the office," said the Detective Branch (DB) constable. "It made me curious. Apparently, some woman in the city's Raninagar slum had given birth, but none of her neighbours had seen her pregnant." As things unfolded, this curiosity ultimately led to the return of a four-day old infant to her mother's lap.

Mahfijur took a detour to the slum before going to office. There, he saw the woman in question, Mousumi Begum (23), and her husband Md Sajib (25) cradling the infant as if she was their new born daughter.

Locals said they had never seen Mousumi pregnant, not just prior to this "childbirth", but ever since the couple's marriage several years ago. Mousumi had told her neighbours she gave birth on a street the previous night while she was returning home.

Mahfijur gathered the insights and reported back to office. This set some alarms off.

The previous day, a baby had gone missing from Rajshahi Medical College Hospital (RMCH). A CCTV footage showed a woman going into the section and stealing a newborn, Abdullah Al Mamun, Deputy Commissioner of the DB, RMP, told this correspondent.

DB officials immediately formed a five-member operation team -- led by ASP Rakibul Islam -- and dispatched them for investigation.

The team visited Mousumi's house and found her appearance matching with the woman in the CCTV footage. The team proceeded to take the infant into their care and arrested the couple.

The baby was found out to be the daughter of Shilpi Rani Das and her husband Masum Rabi Das, of the city's Baganpara area. On Wednesday, Shilpi had given birth to the infant at RMCH.

On Friday, Mousumi snuck into the hospital and posed as an aide helping Shilpi in her chores at the hospital.

After the baby went missing, her father Masum filed a general diary with Rajpara police station.

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## Indian student found dead at dormitory

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

An Indian student of a private medical college in Rajshahi city was found dead in his room at a dormitory on Friday night.

The deceased -- Iqbal Sharif (25) from Murshidabad district of India's West Bengal state -- was a fifth-year student of Barind Medical College.

He was staying in the dormitory designated for the college's foreign students, according to Sirajum Munir, officer-in-charge of Chandrima Police Station.

Sharif went to his village home in India as the medical college was closed due to coronavirus. He returned on Tuesday.

Superintendent of the hostel Golam Maula said Sharif's friends broke open the door of his room when he was not responding and found his body hanging from the ceiling fan around 9:30pm on Friday.

Sharif was taken to Rajshahi Medical College Hospital where he was declared dead, police said.



To get a solid deal, a woman was seen haggling for a cabbage at a bazaar in the capital's Tejgaon area yesterday. As vegetable prices have significantly dropped in the past weeks, people of lower income group can finally enjoy the fresh produce winter brought with it.

PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

## RISE IN RAPE INCIDENTS

### Perps believe they can get away with it: Shaheen Anam

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Due to the very low conviction rate in rape cases, a large majority of rapists in Bangladesh believe they will get away with the crime, said Manusher Jono Foundation executive director Shaheen Anam yesterday.

Delayed justice, lack of monitoring and accountability of service providers related to violence against women, and the tendency of blaming victims only fuel the rape culture, she added in her speech as chief guest at a shadow parliament debate competition in the city.

Debate for Democracy organised the competition titled "UCB Public Parliament", with the subject "Parents Are Responsible for Degradation of Diahans". Mazid Jarina Foundation School and College of Shariatpur won the debate as the opposition party in the contest, defeating Cambrian School and College.

Condemning the words of mother of the lone accused Fardin Iftekhar Dihan in Mastermind student rape and murder case, Shaheen Anam also expressed her fear whether the family of the victim will be served justice or not.

The programme was presided over by Debate for Democracy chairman Hassan Ahmed Chowdhury Kiron.

He said juvenile delinquency is on the rise due to indifference and excessive affection of parents, lack of moral education, weak social bonds, easy availability of drugs, free use of information technology, lack of good governance etc.

He presented a 10-point demand to prevent juvenile crime, and also said guardians and teachers must be aware to build religious and moral values in children.