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"The last thing we need is Neanderthal thinking that in the meantime, everything's fine -- take off your mask, forget it. It still matters."
US PRESIDENT JOE BIDEN AS TEXAS AND MISSISSIPPI ORDERS TO LIFT MASK MANDATES



"Myanmar's military must stop murdering and jailing protesters."
UN RIGHTS CHIEF MICHELLE BACHELET AFTER SECURITY FORCES KILL 38 ANTI-COUP PROTESTERS IN A DAY



"A couple of things went through my mind before the sixth ball... I told myself 'Wait Polly, take a chance.'"
WEST INDIES CAPTAIN KIERON POLLARD ON HITTING SRI LANKA SPINNER AKILA DANANJAYA FOR SIX SIXES IN AN OVER. PAGE 11

METHAMPHETAMINE IN BANGLADESH

Crystal death SUMMONED

The highly addictive drug arriving by air and land became big headache of police, anti-narco officials



- ICE IN BANGLADESH**
- Smuggled in by air, land from Thailand, Myanmar, Malaysia
 - Returning expatriates often used as carriers
 - 10g costs at least Tk 1 lakh
 - Syndicates target upscale neighbourhood

Big haul of meth seized in Teknaf

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Department of Narcotics Control said it seized two kilogrammes of highly addictive crystal methamphetamine, popularly known as Ice, near a Rohingya camp in Teknaf, Cox's Bazar. Officers arrested 31-year-old Abdullah, a Bangladeshi, during the raid on Rohingya Camp-28. There is no established market for the substance in Bangladesh, said DNC

MOHAMMAD JAMIL KHAN

Targeting users in upscale neighbourhoods, organised syndicates have been smuggling in high-priced crystal meth over the last few years, much to the concern of law enforcers and narcotics control officials.

The highly addictive drug, also nicknamed ice, arrives in Bangladesh from Malaysia, Thailand and Myanmar, and the syndicates often use expatriates travelling back home as carriers, according to investigators.

At least two to three consignments of the drug, each weighing around 0.5kg-1.5kg, have arrived every month over the last three years through the

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With her sister Sheikh Rehana beside her, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina receives her first dose of the Covid-19 vaccine. The photo was taken at the Gono Bhaban yesterday afternoon.

PHOTO: PID

THE THIRD VIEW



MAHFUZ ANAM

Why is personal freedom such a plaything of the law enforcers?

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Connectivity can change the region

Visiting Indian FM stresses stronger connectivity between India, Bangladesh

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh and India are looking forward to stronger connectivity between the two countries and with South Asia and beyond in the next 20 years.

As the two neighbouring countries celebrate their 50th year of diplomatic relations, Indian External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar said, "Connectivity is productivity."

Emerging out of a meeting with Bangladesh Foreign Minister AK Abdul Momen at the state guesthouse Padma yesterday, he said, "If we can get connectivity right between India and Bangladesh, I can tell you the entire geo-economy of the region will change. The Bay of Bengal will look very different."

At a joint press conference after the meeting, Jaishankar said they spoke about involving a third country, preferably Japan, which is a very good friend of Bangladesh and India, in terms of connectivity. Japan is already involved in a number of major connectivity projects in the Bay of Bengal under the Bengal Industrial Growth Belt.

"Our relations transcend orthodox partnerships, and I believe our bonding is central to the realisation of the dream of a peaceful, prosperous

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Fake businessmen joined hands with financial rogues

HC observes on People's Leasing scams

ASHUTOSH SARKAR

Some unscrupulous people in the guise of businessmen conspired with rogues of the financial sector to loot the money of general people, said the High Court in an order on the liquidation of People's Leasing and Financial Services Ltd (PLFSL).

It also observed that a vested group was hatching plots to destabilise the economic growth for which the people of the country worked so hard.

The court said it expected all constitutional and statutory bodies, divisions, departments, and directorates to work fast and transparently to prevent the undermining of the economic solvency of the country.

The HC bench of Justice Muhammad Khurshid Alam Sarkar made the observations in the full text of the order after Bangladesh Bank in 2019 sought permission to liquidate People's Leasing, a

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Scars of torture all over him

Cartoonist Kishore describes his ordeal to The Daily Star hours after getting out on bail

ZYMA ISLAM

"If you come close to me you will smell the pus."

This was the first statement by Ahmed Kabir Kishore to this correspondent. He was released from Kashimpur Central Jail-2, on bail, around 12:20pm -- mere hours back. The cartoonist had spent 10 months in prison for the crime of drawing cartoons, prosecuted under the Digital Security Act.

Kishore turned his head to show an oozing ear canal, before rolling up his jeans to show numerous scars on his leg. The scar tissue shone mottled, scaly and white against his wiry dark legs. The 10 months in prison has rendered



him absolutely skeletal, his glassy eyes sunk deep.

"The jailer took photos of my legs, the day before yesterday. The inspector general of prisons also met me and told me, 'You will get out in two days, please get your ear treated outside,'" narrated Kishore. "I had asked the prison doctor on many occasions to take me outside for medical treatment, but I was told that detainees cannot be taken out at the moment," he said. "I was prescribed antibiotics and painkillers but that did not work."

But how did he come by the ear and leg injuries? For that, Kishore takes us back to May 2, 2020.

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Using his gamcha (towel) and small sticks, this van puller has come up with a unique way of taking protection against the scorching sun. Temperature has gone up across the country in recent days after the departure of winter. The photo was taken in Amin Bazar area on the outskirts of the capital yesterday.

BASIC BANK SCAMS Fate of 56 cases still up in the air

Current ACC's term ends this month

MAHBUBUR RAHMAN KHAN

The five-year tenure of the Anti-Corruption Commission is about to end and a new one is to take charge this month but the fate of the probes into 56 cases filed in connection with the BASIC Bank loan scam remains uncertain.

Whenever asked about progress in the last five years, the ACC sounded like a scratched record. It always said it had failed to find the Tk 4,500 crore siphoned off from the bank between 2009 and 2013.

Dissatisfied with the ACC's delays, the High Court in 2018 even raised the question of whether the investigation officers was in "connivance with the

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FULL INTERVIEW OF ACC CHIEF ON PAGE 9



WE DEEPLY MOURN

With deep grief, we announce that Mrs. Bakhtunnesa Chowdhury, beloved mother of Mr. Azam J Chowdhury, Chairman of East Coast Group and Managing Director of MJL Bangladesh Limited, passed away on Tuesday night (Inna Lillahi Wa Inna Ilaihi Raji'un).

May Allah grant her Jannatul Firdaus. We convey our heartfelt condolences to the bereaved family.



MJL Bangladesh Limited