### Boy killed after kidnap, ransom demand

Two held

Our Correspondent, Kushtia

A schoolboy was killed after abduction for ransom in Meherpur's Gangni upazila on Saturday.

Police detained two people in this connection.

The victim was Abir Hossain, 12, son of Asadul Islam, who is a Malaysian expatriate from Sarishadanga village in Chuadanga's Alamdanga.

Abir used to live in his maternal grandfather's house with mother in Minapara of Meherpur's Gangni. He was a class-V student at Minapara Government Primary School.

His mother Shahana Khatun said her son went to the village field on a motorcycle with his two co-villagers on Saturday afternoon.

In the evening, the two co-villagers returned and informed the villagers that an unknown person held Abir hostage and took him away.

Later, an unidentified person called Abir's mother from Abir's mobile phone around 8:00pm and demanded a ransom of Tk 1 one

An hour later, Abir's phone was found switched off, said his mother. The victim's family then informed Gangni police of the matter.

A team of Gangni police went to the spot and recovered Abir's body from the field with his arms and legs

Bazlur Rahman, officer-in-charge of Gangni Police Station, said police detained the two co-villagers for their alleged involvement in the murder.

This paper could not mention the detainees' names as they are below

## 93pc people FROM PAGE 12

percent had the antibodies.

However, these findings should not be generalised, the speakers

"We do not know how long the antibodies will last inside the body, said Prof SM Samsuzzaman, head of microbiology at the college, who led the research done over five months.

The participants were all aged over 30, and 80 percent of them were over 50, he said

College Principal Prof Titu Mia said, "Anyone can get infected with the coronavirus even after they get inoculated. However, it reduces the chances of developing severe illness.

"But, the number of samples is not small. The study at least gives us an idea. Research on a larger scale is needed.'

On February 7, Bangladesh launched a mass inoculation campaign with the Oxford-AstraZeneca Covid-19 vaccine. But the campaign stumbled amid depleting stocks of the doses, thanks to non-compliance of the international supply commitments.

#### Govt officially

Nasrul said an English daily earlier published a list of the cancelled plants but that was not a correct

He claimed that the move will not adversely impact the power supply to the national grid as some alternative plants are now under construction and would generate electricity to meet the demands.

"After adjustment in the plan, finally the national grid will have 13,313 MW surplus electricity by 2041. There will be no problem of power supply to meet demands ", he

He, however, said there will be a special thrust on renewable energy promotion in the future planning of electricity as part of the country's commitment to the Climate Vulnerable Forum (CVF) as Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina is currently chair of the organisation.

"We have pledged to the CVF to generate 40 percent electricity from renewable sources by 2041", said

Responding to a question he said that the Sustainable and Renewable Energy Development Authority (Sreda) has been given the responsibility to prepare a roadmap to achieve the goal.

"Sreda has already started work on the issue", he added informing that a significant portion of renewable energy will be imported from Nepal and Bhutan

"We're going to sign a final deal with Nepal to import hydropower from an Indian company's generation plant in Nepal", he said.

Discussions are going on with both Nepal and Bhutan to set up hydropower plants there under a bipartite or tripartite arrangement, he

The state minister said there is also a plan to increase the import of LNG to set up more gas-based power plants across the country.

"We want to take gas pipeline to south-western and northern regions including Gopalganj through Padma Bridge", he said.



French President Emmanuel Macron greets local residents as he arrives at a polling station in Le Touquet, France during the second round of regional elections yesterday.

## Over 3,000kms of roads

not accept poor construction work as one of the main reasons behind it. They have blamed lack of budgetary allocation, along with overloading and waterlogging, for this condition. SURVEY FINDINGS

According to the RHD, there are 22,428km of national and regional highways and district roads under the department across the country. The RHD carries out the survey every

year to project the total maintenance costs for its road network and also to prioritise the roads for maintenance, as it does not get enough allocation.

The latest survey was conducted between November last year and March this year.

According to the report, released on the RHD website on Sunday, a total of 18,473.67km (82.36 percent) of road was surveyed this year. The survey excluded the roads under rehabilitation or reconstruction work.

The survey found some 1524.29km (8.25 percent) of the roads in "poor", 789.6km in "bad" and 691.83km in "very bad" conditions, totalling 3,006km.

The rest are in "good" or "fair" condition, according to the survey.

RHD officials classified the roads in five categories on the basis of roughness of roads, said a RHD engineer, who has knowledge of the

Once a road is classified as very bad, the road needs immediate attention. While a bad road also needs attention and if not given, it would turn into a very bad one next year, he said.

If anyone travels on a "poor road", he or she would take relatively more time and get less comfort during travel, he added.

The previous survey report in July last year found some 3,590km (18.61 percent) of road was in "poor, bad or very bad" condition.

Total 4,247km (24.34 percent) road was found in the same condition in 2019's survey.

REASONS BEHIND POOR ROADS Prominent transport expert Prof Shamsul Hoque said overloading, waterlogging, poor construction work and lack of timely maintenance are the main reasons behind the poor road condition.

He said the government, in a suicidal decision, was allowing overloaded trucks that were destroying roads long before the service life.

He said a two-axle truck is supposed to carry 16 tonnes, but the government is permitting it to carry 22 tonnes. Similarly, larger truckers are carrying more load against the approved load capacity set by the manufacture.

Prof Shamsul said most of the roads do not have proper drainage system, causing waterlogging which damages roads.

Poor construction work and lack of timely maintenance are also major reasons, he said, adding that, "RHD men do not actually maintain roads; rather they rehabilitate roads after roads are damaged." Contacted, RHD's Chief Engineer

Abdus Sabur, however, blamed inadequate budgetary allocation for poor condition of roads. "We don't get our required amount

of money for road maintenance. However, we try to maintain roads with the limited allocation," he told The Daily Star last night. The budgetary allocation was Tk

2,645 crore in the outgoing fiscal year, against RHD's demand of Tk 14,622, shows RHD document.

He also admitted that overloading and lack of proper drainage system in some cases for bad condition of roads. He, however, turned down poor road construction work as a reason for this.

# Bangladesh poised to reach targets

fuel the global TB epidemic, the is increasingly recognised as an of infectious disease every day in bacteria. important tool for the management of both TB and HIV.

"We have to keep the transmission under control and if we can do that, we can achieve the SDG target," he told The Daily Star yesterday, ahead of the unveiling of the findings of the study, the first-of-its-kind,

A nationwide cross-sectional survey was conducted among 12,065 TB patients managed by the TB Reporting Centre (TRC) of the National

Tuberculosis Control Programme As the HIV epidemic continues to (NTP) from June to December 2020. new patients and 4.9 percent are surveillance of HIV among TB patients health concern as 129 people die diagnosed with the drug-resistant TB

> Bangladesh, according to the data of the government in 2019. The disease also makes 978 people

> ill every day, according to the NTP. At least 3.57 lakh TB patients are

> identified in a year in Bangladesh, with an incidence rate of 221 per lakh and mortality of 29 per lakh, according to the data.

Every year, at least 5,900 TB patients are identified with multi-drug resistance, which is concerning, the

Among them, 1.5 percent are TB patients was found with HIV Tuberculosis remains a public previously-treated patients but re-"The good news is that not a single

> HIV positive case was found among drug-resistant TB patients, as they are the most vulnerable patients," Riaz said. As none of the HIV positive cases

> had any history of blood transfusion, it indicates the country's blood transfusion system is safe at large. The study also found that none

of the TB-infected third gender was detected with HIV.

positive and among them four were It means either their husbands are

HIV positives or they infected by other

means, according to Riaz. found that the The study prevalence of HIV among the TB

patients was same for both the male and female. The report also found that of those

who are infected with HIV, 83 percent were suffering from pulmonary tuberculosis.

When it comes to occupation, the study found that HIV prevalence was also found higher among transport Out of the samples, only 12 labours and day labourers.

## It's a case of suicide, not murder

judgment delivered by the lower court and acquitted Mostafa.

But Assistant Attorney General Zahid Ahammed Hero expressed surprise, saying the postmortem report and other evidence, upon which the trial court considered the case, supported the conclusion that it was homicide.

Citing the post-mortem report, AAG Zahid said the death was due to the combined effect of intracranial haemorrhage and violent asphyxia resulting from strangulation, which was ante-mortem and homicidal in nature. The HC observed that the incident of homicidal haemorrhage was not proven beyond doubt, he said. The state will challenge the HC

verdict at the Appellate Division, he

Mostafa's lawyer Shishir Manir said the forensic department at Barishal College Medical Sher-e-Bangla

concluded that the incident was homicidal in nature.

But, transverse ligature mark on the neck and protruded tongue are indicative of suicide, he added.

Besides, he said, Kohinur's father Asmat Ali Sarder and her two children told the magistrate concerned that Kohinur died by suicide.

The lawyer said his client Mostafa will be released from Barishal jail if the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court does not stay the HC verdict.

The details of the observations could not be known as the full text was not released yesterday. THE CASE

According to the complaint, Mostafa, a small trader at Lalkheraj Kasba village in Gournadi, married Kohinur and had two daughters and a son together.

Two months before Kohinur's death, Mostafa married another woman named Bulu Begum. The second marriage had been the source

of friction and quarrels between Mostafa and Kohinur.

On February 1, 2010, Kohinur's father Asmat Ali Sarder came to know from a neighbour, Hasi Begum, that his daughter had been missing for a few days.

Informed, police and locals recovered Kohinur's decomposed hanging body.

Asmat Ali Sarder later filed a case accusing Mostafa, Bulu Begum, her exhusband Lal Miah and two others of killing his daughter.

On May 31, 2010, police pressed charges against Mostafa, Bulu Begum and Lal Miah.

The additional district and sessions judge's court concerned of Barishal on October 8, 2015 sentenced Mostafa to death and acquitted Bulu and Lal

Mostafa then filed the appeal with the HC challenging the trial court

#### Moscow posts

solution," Moscow mayor Sergei Sobyanin told state-run television on

fresh outbreaks in Southeast Asia and Australia where authorities have brought back or prolonged

of a two-week lockdown yesterday to contain an outbreak of the strain.

shuttered and stay-at-home orders were issued, leaving the city centre virtually deserted.

More than 110 Covid-19 cases have been reported in Sydney since a driver for an international flight crew tested positive in mid-June for the Delta

normality after months with few local Australia's northern city of Darwin

also entered a separate snap 48-hour lockdown yesterday after a handful of cases were linked to a coronavirus outbreak on a remote gold mine.

recently been seen across Southeast

Thailand will reimpose restrictions on restaurants, construction sites and gatherings in the capital Bangkok from today as it tries to contain a wave of infections.

The country's latest wave kicked off in April when a cluster was found in upscale Bangkok clubs.

Premier Prayut Chan-O-Cha has said he plans to fully reopen the country by October, but this would require hitting a target of vaccinating 50 million Thais in four months.

#### accused, Public Prosecutor Faridul

Charges framed FROM PAGE 12

Alam told this newspaper. Security was beefed up in the

court area with the deployment of additional policemen and ansar

In December last year, the investigators submitted the charge sheet of the case against the 15, about five months after Sinha was killed in police firing at a check post in Cox's Bazar's Teknaf upazila on July 31.

Sinha's elder sister filed the murder case with Teknaf Senior Judicial Magistrate's Court against Pradeep, Nandadulal and several others on August 5 last year.

## Quader Mirza

The enemy is taking me down. Obaidul Quader has taken a stand against me ... I have found out why he has taken that stance. "I have spoken against the ill-motivated politics of Obaidul Quader and his wife," he

He said if he is jailed or killed, he has prepared someone to kill Obaidul Quader -- also the Awami League general secretary -- along with his wife and AL lawmaker Ekramul Karim.

"Obaidul Quader is a disgusting person with a cheap mentality, Quader Mirza said, and wrote on the Facebook post that the minister had turned the whole family against the mayor by abusing his power.

Quader Mirza claimed that his brother had planned to kill him seven times and that Obaidul Quader wants to give the Basurhat mayoral post to his wife, Isratunnesa.

Quader Mirza also declared that he would never contest any polls in the

## HC questions

a Talaq notice, in which words like 'wife's being disobedient to husband" and "completely contradictory to Sharia" had been used.

The use of such words is illegal and unconstitutional, as article 11 of the constitution specifically states that the republic shall be a democracy in which fundamental human rights and freedoms and respect for the dignity and worth of a person shall be guaranteed, Abdullah said.

Citing the petition, he added that due to the use of such abusive words and phrases, women are humiliated and often face severe discriminations, and as such, the practice followed by the Nikah Registrar is liable to be set aside for securing the ends of justice.

Deputy Attorney General Bipul Bagmar represented the state during a virtual hearing on the writ petition.

#### China reveals

Following that will be a manned Mars mission to develop the base, while the third stage will be transporting cargo fleets from Earth to Mars to construct a community on the planet; the current timetable schedules these launches approximately every two years from

2033 until 2043. A potential fourth stage - a "sky adder" that could reduce the cost and time spent travelling to Mars - is also being developed, but it is unclear how

much progress has been made yet. Theoretical designs, developed in computer simulations, feature a space capsule travelling along a "ladder" made of carbon nanotubes to reach a space station; following that, the capsule would be relaunched from the

station to Mars. The notion of a "sky ladder" or corresponding space elevator has been considered by humans since 1895, when it leapt from the brain of Russian space pioneer Konstantin Tsiolkovsky.

It is likely the elevator would need to be in geostationary orbit, so it moves concurrently with the planet. Engineers would first assemble an enormous space station, and then drop cables down to the Earth that would be fixed on the equator - as it would be impossible to build in the United States or Europe. Unfortunately, a cable that is both long enough, and strong enough, to maintain its integrity is yet to be invented.

#### AstraZeneca

FROM PAGE 12

of existing vaccines and new variant vaccines is important to ensure we are best prepared to stay ahead of the pandemic coronavirus, should their use be needed," said Andrew Pollard, chief investigator and director of the Oxford Vaccine Group at the University of Oxford.

Britain has had a succesful vaccine roll out programme, but experts do not know how long protection lasts.

"This study will provide vital evidence on whether further doses including 'tweaks' against new virus variants may be needed in the future," said Maheshi Ramasamy, Principal Investigator at the

Oxford Vaccine Group. Initial data from the trial is expected

Current vaccines are believed to be less effective against the Beta variant, although it is the Delta variant, which emerged in India, that is currently causing most concern.

Although the main vaccines are pelieved to be highly effective at preventing serious illness, the Delta variant's transmissible nature is leading to a spike in cases in some countries, including Britain.

#### Yahya banned Awami League elections to fill the seats of some Awami

Yahya announced today that Awami League had been banned. He ruled out, in effect, the formation of any East Pakistan-based political party to replace the now-banned Awami League saying that under guidelines he had given the constitutional committee, the new constitution would not permit the existence of any political party which is confined to a specific region and which is not national in scope.

He said there would not be fresh elections before the new constitution

was introduced. He stressed that the results of the provincial and national elections held last December and January would stand, although there would be byLeague leaders who were disqualified for engaging in "antistate activities". In the nation-wide broadcast

Yahya declared that he had set up a committee to draft a constitution so that Pakistan could return to civilian rule. He hoped to transfer power to elected representatives in a matter of four months or so. "The precise timing will naturally depend on the internal and external situation at the time," he said.

US SAYS IT WILL CONTINUE AID TO PAKISTAN The Nixon Administration reaffirmed

today that it intended to provide economic aid to Pakistan despite international pressures to halt foreign

Most of the 11 nations forming the Aid to Pakistan Consortium had concluded that assistance, running at about \$500 million a year, should be withheld pending a political settlement of the crisis. World Bank, coordinated assistance to Pakistan,

Britain, Canada and Belgium, among other members of the consortium, have taken a similar stance. Their positions emerged at an informal meeting of the consortium held in Paris on June 21, 1971 to receive the report of a World Bank

had recommended against further aid.

mission that toured Pakistan. Shamsuddoza Sajen is a journalist and researcher. He can be contacted at sajen1986@gmail.com

#### FROM PAGE 12

The Delta variant is also feeding

restrictions. More than five million Sydney residents endured their first full day

Restaurants, bars and cafes were

The flare-up has been a shock for a place that had returned to relative

Similar spikes in infections have