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# SALARY, EID BONUS OF 38 SPS Uncertainty over payment of dues goes

*Now they've been attached to PHQ; their posting to Rab led to complications*

SHARIFUL ISLAM

Thirty-eight SPS who went without any salary or Eid bonus for the last two months due to complications over their posting in Rab, will finally get their salaries as they were attached to Police Headquarters last week.

The home ministry issued a circular on July 25, which said the 38 officers of BCS police cadres have been attached to the PHQ, cancelling their postings as deputy directors in Rab so that they can finally withdraw their salaries and allowances.

They were among 48 superintendents of police (SPs) who were posted to the Rapid Action Battalion through a home ministry order issued on May 16. They joined the elite force on May 18, but 38 of them did not get an internal posting order in Rab, causing frustration among them.

"The home ministry transferred us to Rab with the President's order, but we are yet to be posted," said one of the officers recently, requesting to remain anonymous.

"In my 13-year service life, I have made many sacrifices for my duty. I hardly get any leave. But now I am sitting idle

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1



Trains which in normal times would have been ferrying passengers all across the country lie idle at the Kamalapur Railway Station in the capital. After eight days of activity surrounding the Eid rush, passenger rail services have been suspended due to a nationwide lockdown from July 23 to August 5. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

# Sinha murder trial halted due to Covid lockdown

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The trial proceedings in the Maj (retd) Sinha Rashed Khan



murder case remain halted due to the pandemic-induced lockdown.

The witnesses in the case were scheduled to testify on July 26, 27 and 28. But due to the lockdown restrictions, judicial proceedings in the Cox's Bazar District and Sessions Judge's Court like other courts across the country have been suspended. That is why, no witnesses' statement was recorded in the case on the scheduled date, said public prosecutor of the court.

On this day on July 31 last year, Sinha Md Rashed Khan died in police firing at an APBn check point on the Cox's-Teknaf highway.

He was shooting videos for his YouTube channel at

SEE PAGE 4 COL 5

# PEGASUS SCAM India SC to hear plea seeking probe next week

OUR CORRESPONDENT, New Delhi

India's Supreme Court yesterday agreed to hear next week the plea of senior journalist N Ram seeking a probe by a sitting or a retired judge into the Pegasus snooping matter.

A bench, headed by Chief Justice N V Ramana, took note of the submissions of senior advocate Kapil Sibal, appearing for Ram and another veteran journalist Sashi Kumar, that the petition has been filed and numbered and needed to be heard in view of the huge ramifications of the alleged snooping.

"We will list it sometime in next week," Justice Ramana said.

The plea by Ram and Kumar said the alleged snooping represented an attempt by agencies and organisations to muzzle and chill the exercise of free speech and expression of dissent in India.

Mentioning the Pegasus matter before the bench yesterday morning, Sibal, also a senior Congress leader, said the issue "is an urgent matter that is making waves not just in India but internationally."

An international media consortium has reported that over 300 verified Indian mobile phone numbers were on a list of

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1

## ROAD TO FREEDOM THIS DAY IN BANGLADESH LIBERATION WAR HISTORY

### UN to send team to East Pakistan

JULY 31, 1971

SHAMSUDDOZA SAJEN



#### UN AID EXPERTS TO BE POSTED IN EAST PAKISTAN

The United States, working behind the scenes, won the agreement of both Pakistan and the United Nations to station an international group of 153 civilian relief and rehabilitation experts in East Pakistan under United Nations sponsorship, officials said today.

Moreover, they said, the United States had notified U Thant, secretary general of the United Nations, that it would contribute \$1 million as an initial payment to help the group organise and fly necessary equipment to Dhaka.

Among the United Nations staffers will be 73 monitors who will be stationed at four area offices in Dhaka, Chittagong, Rajshahi and Khulna and at 69 other locations. Each monitor would be linked by radio with a United Nations headquarters in Dhaka, qualified informants said.

"The presence of 73 UN monitors, each reporting on conditions in his area, may cool off passions and damp down military reprisals," one informant said. "It's not the UN function to do this—but it will be an important side effect."

One official today described the agreement of Thant and of Pakistan President Yahya Khan to the proposals for a United Nations group in East Pakistan as "the only ray of sunshine in an otherwise gloomy situation".

Pakistan's agreement to the United Nations force was said to have been inspired largely by unremitting, but unpublicised,

SEE PAGE 4 COL 5

# 2 killed in attack on Israel-linked oil tanker

AFP, London

Two crew members of an oil tanker managed by a company owned by a prominent Israeli businessman were killed in an attack off Oman, the vessel's London-based operator said yesterday.

Analysts said the attack bore all the hallmarks of tit-for-tat exchanges in the "shadow war" between Israel and Iran, in which vessels linked to each nation have been targeted in waters around the Gulf.

Zodiac Maritime, owned by Israeli billionaire Eyal Ofer, said the incident on board the MT Mercer Street on Thursday left one Romanian and a UK national dead.

"We are not aware of harm to any other personnel," it said in a statement, adding that the Japanese-owned tanker was back under the control of

SEE PAGE 4 COL 5

# Sponge structures may be Earth's oldest animal life



AFP, Paris

Fossilised structures discovered in northwestern Canada may be from sponges that lived in oceans as long as 890 million years ago, making them the earliest known animal life on Earth, research showed on Wednesday.

The findings also challenge the long-held idea that animals did not arise on Earth until after a major infusion of oxygen into the atmosphere and oceans.

Sponges are simple animals with an ancient history. Genetic evidence gathered from modern sponges has shown they likely emerged between 1 billion and 500 million years ago.

But until now there has been no evidence of

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

# Schoolgirl raped in Jamalpur

Three arrested

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Mymensingh

A Jamalpur court yesterday sent three men to jail for their alleged involvement in the rape of a schoolgirl in the district's Bakshiganj upazila on Thursday.

The accused are Hossain Shanto, 21, Mohammad Aminul, 21, and Angur Alam, 23, of Kurigram's Roumari upazila, said police.

Shafiqul Islam, officer-in-charge of Bakshiganj Police Station, said the 17-year-old victim filed a rape case against the trio with the police station early yesterday.

According to the case statement, the police official said, the victim, along with her five neighbouring youths, came to visit Lauchapra Picnic Spot in Bakshiganj on Thursday.

Reaching the spot, they discovered that the

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

# Fire guts 2 freezers for storing Covid vaccine jabs

No shots were inside

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Patuakhali

A fire gutted two deep freezers which used to preserve Covid vaccines at the civil surgeon's office in Barguna yesterday morning.

There were no vaccine shots in the refrigerators.

Md Khorshed Alam, station officer of Barguna fire service, said when a pedestrian called the firefighters after he saw smoke coming out of the window of the civil surgeon's office, firefighters rushed to the spot and brought the fire under control.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 3



## PRAYER TIMING JULY 31

Fazr Zohr Asr Maghrib Esha  
AZAN 4:20 12:45 5:00 6:50 8:15  
JAMAAT 4:55 1:15 5:15 6:55 8:45

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION



Ferry passengers walking on the highway in Paturia after crossing the Padma river. With no public transport available amid the nationwide lockdown, they will try to reach Dhaka by hitching rides on pickups and other vehicles. Inset, a family on a rickshaw van crossing a checkpost in the capital's Nayabazar.



PHOTO: STAR, ANISUR RAHMAN

# SPREAD OF DELTA VARIANT China battles worst outbreak in months

India sees highest cases in 3 weeks; US ramps up vaccine push; Japan extends emergency

AGENCIES

Hundreds of thousands of people in China were in coronavirus lockdown yesterday as the country battled its worst outbreak in months, while India reported most new cases in three weeks and US intensified vaccination efforts in the face of a Delta variant-fueled surge.

The World Health Organization has warned that the highly transmissible strain, first detected in India, could unleash more outbreaks in a high-risk area from Morocco to Pakistan where vaccination rates are low.

In China, a cluster of infections in Nanjing city linked to airport workers who cleaned a plane from Russia earlier this month had reached the capital Beijing and five provinces by yesterday.

Hundreds of thousands of people have been locked down in Jiangsu province, of which Nanjing is the capital, while 41,000 came under stay-at-home orders in Beijing's Changping district.

At least 206 infections across China have been linked to the cluster, and the outbreak is geographically the largest in several months.

It challenges Beijing's aggressive containment efforts which have relied on mass testing, lockdowns and swift contact tracing.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4