

BORDER TENSIONS
India tells China troop
pullback needed for
better ties
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The Daily Star

SECOND EDITION



REGD. NO. DA 781

VOL. XXXI No. 237

ASHWIN 3, 1428 BS

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SAFAR 10, 1443 HJRI

12 PAGES PRICE : Tk12.00

"If tuition fees are high, school authorities can allow guardians to pay those in instalments."
DIPU MONI SAID IN CHANDPUR YESTERDAY



"Illegal occupants residing at residential halls or dormitories of universities should be stopped."
ROAD TRANSPORT AND BRIDGES MINISTER OBAIDLUL QUADER SAID YESTERDAY



"The staggering inequity and severe lag in shipments of vaccines threatens to turn areas in Africa ... into breeding grounds for vaccine-resistant variants."
WHO'S AFRICA DIRECTOR MATSHIDISO MOETI



ROAD TRANSPORT ACT

LAW LEFT CRIPPLED when crashes leap



- Several sections of the 2018 act ineffective even after three years
- Demands of transport associations get priority
- Country sees **40%** rise in road accidents, deaths this year

TUHIN SHUBHRA ADHIKARY

Although the Road Transport Act was passed three years ago, its rules have not been formulated yet, preventing the authorities from executing some vital sections of the law which aims to curb crashes and bring discipline to the road transport sector.

In the meantime, the Bangladesh Road Transport Authority (BRTA) continues to carry out its day-to-day functions, including issuing vehicles' registration and fitness certificates, following the rules of the now-defunct Motor Vehicles Ordinance-1983.

Under those rules, however, compensations cannot be handed to road

accident victims and their families. So, they have to wait for the formation of a government trustee board under the new rules to get the compensation.

Road safety campaigners say several key sections of the Road Transport Act-2018 remain "ineffective" following "negotiations" between transport associations and the government since November 2019.

Also, at a time when the draft rules are still at the law ministry for vetting, the government has taken a move to amend the act in face of demands from road transport platforms. The government has already prepared a draft in this regard.

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A child sleeps precariously on the median barrier of a busy street in the capital's Kakrail area. His mother left him unattended while she was asking for alms from cars stuck near the traffic lights around noon on Thursday.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

PM off to New York

To attend UNGA session in her first foreign trip during pandemic

UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina left Dhaka for the US yesterday morning to attend the 76th session of the United Nations General Assembly in New York, with a scheduled stopover in Finland.

A VIP chartered flight of Biman Bangladesh Airlines carrying the PM took off from Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport for Finnish capital Helsinki at 9:10am.

The flight reached Helsinki at 3:37pm (local time) yesterday. Ambassador of Bangladesh in Finland (non-resident) Md Nazmul Islam received the PM at Vantaa

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Liabilities transfer was Evaly trick

CEO of the e-commerce company planned to file bankruptcy as last resort, Rab says

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Amidst crushing liabilities of Evaly, its CEO Mohammad Rassel was eyeing two possible escape routes: Either sell Evaly to a foreign investor or file for bankruptcy.

Commander Khandaker Al Moin, Rab's legal and media wing director, told a press briefing yesterday that Rassel planned to get the controversial e-commerce company enlisted in the stock market at the end of the third year of its operation so as to be able to put some of the liabilities on the market. The company's expenditures were borne from the money paid by the shoppers, Moin said. "As a result, the liabilities started to increase gradually."

Since they were arrested on Thursday evening, Rassel and his wife Evaly Chairman Shamima Nasrin told investigators that the company's total liability was over Tk 1,000 crore.

A Rab official, wishing not to be named,

- Total liabilities now over Tk **1,000**cr
- It owes four large companies over Tk **200**cr

said Evaly owes four of the country's largest companies over Tk 200 crore. There are a host of other businesses waiting for payment of their supplied goods.

"Rassel was planning to file for bankruptcy if the company failed to

clear the debts," Moin said. "There was only Tk 30 lakh in the bank accounts of Evaly. Besides this, Tk 30-35 crore paid by the shoppers was with several online payment gateways."

Asked how customers and vendors will get their money back, the Rab director said it was for the government agencies concerned to decide.

In late June, the government ordered that payment gateways would not pay the e-commerce companies until the consumers get their deliveries.

According to Rab, Rassel owns properties and assets in Savar.

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SCHOOL TUITION FEE Instalment can be an option if amount is big

Says education minister

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Education Minister Dipu Moni has said the school authorities concerned can allow guardians to pay tuition fees in instalments if those are big.

She said no one can realise fees from a student or a guardian while handing out assignments to students and submission of those.

The minister was speaking to reporters at Chandpur Circuit House after inaugurating the construction work of a school building yesterday.

"Schools reopened after a long closure. So many students might not have deposited tuition and other fees. If tuition fees are high, school authorities can allow guardians to pay those in instalments," Dipu Moni said.

She urged guardians capable of paying tuition fees to pay it regularly.

In-person classes at schools and colleges resumed on September 12 after the educational institutions remained shut for 543 days due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

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PCR LAB AT SHAHJALAL AIRPORT CAAB, healthcare facilities at odds



RASHIDUL HASAN

Complications have arisen regarding setting up rapid RT-PCR labs at the Dhaka airport to test outgoing passengers for Covid-19, continuing the uncertainty surrounding the return of around 30,000 expatriate workers to their workplaces in the UAE.

The seven facilities made responsible for testing the workers said in a meeting with Civil Aviation Authority of Bangladesh (Caab) officials on Thursday that the venue provided to them is unsuitable, and there is the added complication of their standard operating procedures being approved by UAE authorities.

In this context, sources at the expatriates' welfare ministry and Caab failed to say exactly when the labs would be set up at the Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport (HSIA).

Following Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's directives to setting up rapid

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BANGABANDHU BRIDGE 45pc bearings problematic

Authorities to replace those

TUHIN SHUBHRA ADHIKARY

Around 45 percent pot bearings, a vital element for load transmission, of Bangabandhu Bridge have been found problematic and require replacement.

Although experts don't see any immediate threat to the 4.8-kilometre bridge due to the problem, they said delay in replacement may cause damage to the large structure.

Bridges Division has already directed the authorities concerned to take necessary steps to replace those bearings after communicating with the Italian company which supplied those.

The country's largest bridge on the Jamuna river, which was opened to traffic in 1998, is a vital strategic economic road, rail, energy and telecommunication link between its northern and southern parts.

Bridges Division on August 24 held a meeting on the operation and

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Police get Evaly CEO Mohammad Rassel, in black polo shirt, off a microbus in front of a court in Old Dhaka to produce him before it in a case filed over embezzling money. Rassel's wife Shamima Nasrin, chairman of the e-commerce company, was also produced before the court yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

2YRS OF CASINO DRIVES

Online gambling now uncontrolled

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

It all started with a buzz -- raiding well-known sporting clubs only to discover running of gambling and illegal casino business where ruling party leaders were at the helm.

Although the month-long drive largely contained sporting club-based gambling, online gambling continues, dodging the law enforcers' eyes.

On September 18, 2019, the much-talked about crackdown on gambling, extortion, land grabbing and other forms of corruption started with raids in five sporting clubs.

Though government high-ups repeatedly hinted that the drive would continue, it apparently lost steam after a series of raids that saw the arrests of over 250 people, including several leaders of different affiliated bodies of ruling Awami League. There has been no such drives since November 1 that year.

Talking to The Daily Star yesterday, Commander Khandaker Al Moin, director, legal and media wing of Rab that spare-headed the drives, said now the club-based casino and gambling has been contained. "We are collecting intelligence. If we found any such activities again, we will re-launch drives."

He, however, admitted that online-based gambling was going on and their cyber monitoring unit was on alert.

"Whenever we get information, we launch raids," he added. On September 14, detectives arrested three members of an online gambling gang -- Delwar Hossain, Mohiuddin and Jamal Mia -- in the capital's Demra area.

In May, Anti-Terrorism Unit held four members of a gang on charge of smuggling money using a social media gambling app called StreamKar. Using various apps and sites, online gambling continues, say law enforcers.

They said online gambling is being done during cricket matches through bitcoin or digital currency (cryptocurrency). They said crores of taka are being

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