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Blinken warns Russians may stay in KZ



**Dyeing** industry stagnant



Encroachment, pollution ruin the Sundari



**Kiwis will** be under pressure



## AL focuses on polls, tackling demos

PARTHA PRATIM BHATTACHARJEE

The ruling Awami League is reorganising itself to be in a stronger position ahead of the next parliamentary polls and weighing options for expanding its electoral alliance.

It is also gearing up for tackling any possible movements over Election Commission's formation and polls-time neutral government which have been demanded by several parties.

AL insiders say 2022 will be the party's "year of conferences" as it aims to increase organisational strength and prepare its leaders and activists for the election through those programmes.

In the build-up to the polls, slated for next year, the party has already started holding conferences at the grassroots levels. It wants to wrap those up before its 22nd national council in December when the current central committee's tenure

We will go for a revamp of the party from the central to the grassroots -- by the end of this year. After finishing all conferences, we want to take part in the polls as a stronger and more organised party," AL Joint General Secretary

Mahbubul Alam Hanif told The Daily Star. The party has also set

ts sights on uncoming upazila and city corporation polls after facing troubles in the ongoing union parishad elections.

In the absence of the BNP, the AL has taken majority of chairman posts in its grip, but the UP polls exposed internal feud and lack of

command within the party. AL high-ups have failed to stop many of its leaders from contesting as independents even after issuing a strong warning.

Insiders said the more damaging

SEE PAGE 2 COL 3

## **BNP** shoring itself up for movement

MOHAMMAD AL-MASUM MOLLA

Even though the BNP's official stance is that it is yet to decide if it will run in the 2023 national polls, its focus for this year is to complete the party reorganising process and ready itself for the elections.

The rationale behind reorganising is that the party wants to be in a stronger position with which it can mount pressure on the government to hold the polls under a non-partisan interim government, a demand it has been making since the system was abolished 10

years ago. The other headache the BNP has is that it has been unsuccessful in getting its Chairperson Khaleda Zia released and sending her abroad for better medical treatment. Khaleda has been at the capital's Evercare Hospital since

"Our main target in the new year is to restore democracy. Party reorganising process will continue and at the same time movement for restoring democracy will go on," Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir, secretary

general of BNP, told The Daily

Fakhrul emphasised that the main problem that "democracy has been destroyed" and that there was no way out but to restore the electoral system with polls under a caretaker non-partisan government.

Party insiders said they were planning to mobilise public opinion and heat up the ground for a movement centring the Election Commission. They said the movement would be launched at the end of this

In the meantime, the party would

SEE PAGE 2 COL 3

## Covid eating away jobs for the youth

### Finds a first-of-its-kind study by finance ministry

REJAUL KARIM BYRON AND ASIFUR RAHMAN

As many as 1.6 million youths lost their jobs and about 20 million faced income loss for the pandemic, found a government study -- signifying the global public health crisis's outsize economic consequences for Bangladesh's vounger population.

In 2020, youth employment dropped 8.7 percent and adult employment 3.7 percent around the world, according to the International Labour Organisation.

But for Bangladesh's youth labour force, the pandemic has been particularly brutal. Despite the steady economic growth in recent

**FIVE-POINT ACTION** 

**PLAN FOR HUMAN** 

**DEVELOPMENT** 

**①** Pursue human

Design youth

development-led

employment plan

Improve governance

and institutions

human security

Close gender gap

**①** Devise national

strategy

growth strategy

years, Bangladesh has failed to create enough exciting opportunities for its younger population. And the pandemic has exacerbated the problem of economic disenfranchisement of

young people. Unless action is taken to tackle the way the pandemic has affected young people's employment opportunities, many of them could continue to struggle for decades, according to the ILO.

In Bangladesh, the current youth labour force is not the only demographic facing the effects of pandemic induced economic harm: about two million college

students and 1 million university students are unsure whether they would be able to complete their degrees on

schedule due to the disruption to their lessons. The pandemic has made it doubly challenging for the country to stay on track in its human development trajectory, said the National Human Development Report, a first-of-its-kind study by the Economic

Relations Division. And due to the pre-existing gender disparities, there has been a disproportionate impact on females' lives.

The pandemic might have exacerbated inequalities on various planes, with the impact felt more by the

marginalised and vulnerable groups "They will have a tougher time getting out of it," said the report, which has been forwarded to the prime

minister last month and will be published soon With most of the learning now being online, students from poorer households would be at a disadvantage.

There will be disparities in learning and life opportunities between richer and poorer households, the report said.

Even though Bangladesh achieved outstanding human development outcomes, like any other society, all the regions and all groups of people did not equitably benefit.

In 2016, the income share of the richest 5 percent was nearly 30 percent, while that of the poorest 5 percent was less than 0.3 percent.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 7

# Man dies in police custody

### Family alleges he was tortured to death; cops deny

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A tea stall owner died while he was being interrogated in a room of Hatibandha Police Station in Lalmonirhat on Friday. The CCTV camera in that room was not working when it happened.

Relatives and locals alleged that the man, Himanshu Roy, 36, was tortured to death.

Hatibandha police denied the allegation and said he died by suicide as he hung himself from the window grilles using a cable. Himanshu was taken into custody for questioning after

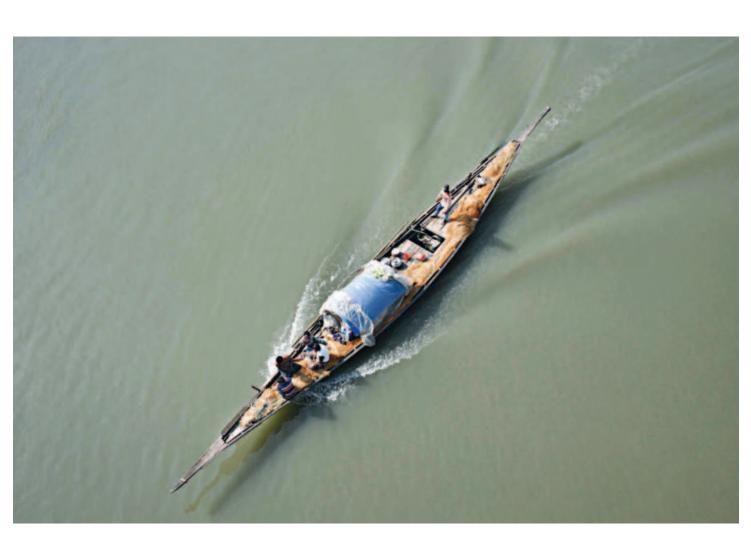
law enforcers recovered the body of his wife Sabitri Rani, 30, in Purba Kadma Maldahpara village of the upazila on Friday morning. Sabitri allegedly died by suicide. "He was only interrogated. He was not tortured in any way," Ershadul Alam, officer-in-charge of the police

station, said, adding that he was kept in the women and children help desk's room. Replying to a question, he said 10 CCTV cameras were installed in and outside the station, but only three were functional. "One of them is in my room while the other

two are in the duty officer's room and outside the station." He said all the other cameras had been out of service since he joined the station one and half years ago. "I had alerted the higher authorities about this, but no steps

have been taken.' Abida Sultana, superintendent of police in the district, said she knew that the station had 10 CCTV cameras.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 7



Fishermen with their gear on a boat race to their favourite spot to catch fish. The photo was taken on the Sugandha river in Babuganj upazila of Barishal. PHOTO: TITU DAS

### Govt to issue circular on Covid curbs in days

Decision on inperson classes today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Health Minister Zahid Maleque yesterday said the government would implement the latest recommendations of the National Technical **Advisory Committee** (NTAC) on Covid-19 regarding restrictions on public movement.

"We have to abide by the directives of the government as well as the technical committee [NTAC]. The directives will be published [as circular] within a couple of days," he said while addressing an event in Manikganj.

Meanwhile, Education Minister Dipu Moni yesterday said they would come up with a decision about in-person classes at educational institutions

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1