



Workers casting metal to make various ship equipment at a shipyard in Keraniganj's Aganagar. A lot of risk is involved in the work but people and children are seen working there without any safety gear. This photo was taken recently.

PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN

## Former prisons DIG jailed for 8yrs

### Sentenced on two charges in a graft case

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday sentenced Partha Gopal Banik, a suspended deputy inspector general (prisons) of Sylhet division, to eight years' imprisonment in a graft case.

Judge Shaikh Nazmul Alam of the Special Judge's Court-4 handed down the verdict in presence of Partha, the lone accused in the case.

The court also fined him Tk 50,000, in default of which he will have to serve three more months in jail.

Partha's sentence was given on two separate charges -- three years' imprisonment for being involved in corruption despite being a government official, and five years for his illegal income, the judge said while delivering the verdict.

The sentences will run concurrently.

Out of the Tk 80 lakh recovered from Partha's residence in July 2020, a total of Tk 65,14,000 was amassed illegally, the judge said.

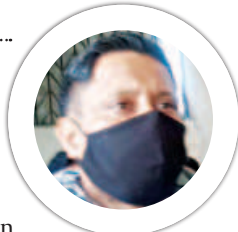
The court also asked authorities concerned to confiscate Tk 65,14,000 in favour of the state, while Tk 14,86,000 would be handed over to the convict's family as those were earned legally.

This is the first instance in Bangladesh of a high-level official of the prisons department being jailed in a graft case, the prosecution said.

In the judgment, the judge said the time that Partha has already spent in jail will be deducted from his sentence.

The charges brought against Partha for laundering

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## NARAYANGANJ CITY POLLS

# Cops 'coercing' AL leaders into Ivy campaign

### Alleges Taimur; police deny

MOHAMMAD AL-MASUM MOLLA AND SANAD SAHA

Although the atmosphere surrounding the Narayanganj city polls is still peaceful, locals believe candidates will face a big challenge maintaining it as internal conflicts between parties and leaders have started coming to light.

AL nominated mayor candidate Selina Hayat Ivy's comment on Narayanganj-4 ruling party MP Shamim Osman has again brought to the fore their old rivalry, while independent candidate Taimur Alam Khandakar has alleged that Ivy has been violating electoral conduct by making indecent comments against him.

Meanwhile, a Narayanganj Chhatra League committee was dissolved on Saturday as a section of its leaders are yet to join Ivy's campaign.

Habibur Rahman Ryad, president of the committee, claimed law enforcers went to his and some other BCL leaders' houses on Saturday night.

"The administration told me to work more sincerely in favour of Ivy," he told The Daily Star.

Asked, Jayedul Alam, Narayanganj superintendent of police, said they went to Ryad and other leaders' houses as part of their regular patrol to avert any untoward situation centring the January 16 polls. "But we did not ask any of them to work in favour of any particular candidate."

On the other hand, Taimur said Ivy's situation has become so fragile that the police and

administration are forcing ruling party leaders to extend their support to her.

"Police are going to houses of those who haven't yet campaigned for Ivy and threatening them."

He also alleged that police have been harassing opposition men so that they refrain from supporting him.

"It is a big barrier on the path to free and fair polls. Chaos may take place before the election, but I hope the administration will remain neutral."

On Saturday, Ivy alleged that her main contender Taimur is "a candidate of Shamim and Selim Osman", after supporters of the latter took part in Taimur's campaign the day before.

Asked whether she will seek Shamim's support, she said, "He is involved with Awami League politics. If he does not give me his support, that is his choice. I have nothing to say if he does not want to carry out his responsibility [towards the party]."

Mokhles Mridha, a resident of Sonakanda, said both Ivy and Taimur are yet to garner support from other political leaders. "Except for a few AL leaders, others have not yet joined Ivy's campaign."

Humayun Kabir, a bookstore owner in Chashara area, said both candidates are worthy.

"Ivy did a lot of development work in the city corporation area and Taimur is also a good candidate. If the situation remains calm, it would be a good contest."

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## Apex court gets 4 new judges

STAR REPORT

Four High Court judges have been elevated to the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court yesterday, raising the judges' number to eight.

The judges are Justice Borhan Uddin, Justice M Enayetur Rahim, Justice FRM Nazmul Ahasan and Justice Krishna Debnath.

Three of the judges took oath yesterday, with Justice FRM Nazmul Ahasan unable to do so due to illness. He will take oath later when he will recover.

Chief Justice Hasan Foez Siddique administered the oath at the Judges' Lounge of the SC where the judges of both the Appellate Division and High Court Division were present.

After the three new apex court judges were sworn in, Attorney General AM Amin Uddin and Supreme Court Bar Association Secretary Md Ruhul Quddus Kazal accorded them felicitation at the Chief Justice's Courtroom.

The newly appointed judges -- Justice Borhan Uddin, Justice M Enayetur Rahim, Justice FRM Nazmul Ahasan and Justice Krishna Debnath -- paid homage to Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman by placing wreaths to his portrait at Dhanmondi-32 in Dhaka.

Later, they went to Savar and paid tribute to the martyrs of the Liberation War by placing wreaths to National Martyrs' Memorial.

President Abdul Hamid made the appointment of apex court judges under article 95(1) of the constitution, Law Minister Anisul Huq told The Daily Star.

He hoped that the new judges would work towards ensuring justice in the country.

The minister later told reporters that the president may appoint new judges to the HC Division as their number has reduced.

## He had no right to drive heavies

### Says Rab after quizzing driver of Gulistan crash

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The driver of Meghla Paribahan bus, which hit and killed two pedestrians in the capital's Gulistan on Saturday, used to drive the bus with a light-vehicle licence.

"He didn't have a licence to drive heavy vehicles. He worked as a helper of a [Meghla Paribahan] bus for seven-eight years. Then he drove the bus with a light-vehicle licence for the last two years," Khandaker Al Moin, Rab's legal and media wing director, told a press conference yesterday.

A team of Rab-3 arrested driver Rakib Sharif, 25, in the capital's Wari on Saturday night

Rakib was appointed by the bus owner on daily contracts and that is why he used to drive fast to make as many trips as possible in a day, the Rab official said. He had to pay the owner Tk 2,250 daily, the official added.

Rab said Rakib lost control at the Gulistan exit ramp of Mayor Hanif Flyover due to speeding and brake failure.

The Rab official said Rakib had been driving the particular bus for 15 days. The brakes had not been working properly for several days, the official added.

The official said they quizzed the bus owner. "The driver is made the lone accused in the case filed with Wari Police Station. While probing, if the investigation officer finds any irresponsibility of the bus owner and helper, the officer will definitely take necessary action."

## 'Avoid visiting India now'

### Doraiswami tells Bangladeshis as Covid cases surge in the neighbouring country

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Vikram K Doraiswami, the Indian High Commissioner to Dhaka, has discouraged Bangladeshis from travelling to the neighbouring country unless if it is absolutely essential.

"The number of cases of infection with the Omicron variant of coronavirus is on the rise in India -- that's why it is better for the citizens of Bangladesh not to travel to India except for emergency," he said yesterday.

India's Omicron tally rose to 3,623 on Sunday, according to data released by the Union Ministry of Health and Family Welfare.

But the neighbouring country is going through a third wave of Covid-19 cases, believed to be driven by the highly transmissible Omicron variant, prompting many Indian states to impose some form of movement restrictions.

For now, the Indian High Commission in Bangladesh will continue to issue

visas and the borders will stay open, Doraiswami said, adding that all international arrivals from January 11 will have to go on seven days' quarantine.

"Not only Bangladeshis, but I would also request all including Indian citizens living abroad to avoid visiting India now," he added.

Doraiswami's comments came at a programme arranged for administering a booster dose of the Covid-19 vaccine for diplomats stationed in Dhaka.

The government would discourage travel through the Bangladesh-India borders to keep the Covid-19 cases at check, said Foreign Minister AK Abdul Momen, who inaugurated the programme at the capital's Sheikh Russel Gastroliver Institute & Hospital.

"There should be more health safety measures [at the borders]. Hopefully, we will be able to protect our people."

The government is not considering lockdown at this moment for the sake of

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New Zealand's captain Tom Latham plays a shot during the first day of the second Test between New Zealand and Bangladesh in Christchurch yesterday. He ended the first day with an unbeaten 186.

PHOTO: AFP

## BOAT CAPSIZE

### Six bodies found in the Buriganga

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Six bodies were recovered from Buriganga river in Narayanganj yesterday, four days after a motorboat capsized in the district.

The deceased were identified as Jesmin Akter, 35, her daughter Tasmim, 15, Sabbir Mia, 18, Josna Begum, 33, Motalab, 42 and Awlad, 25.

All the victims were from Baktabali Char Madhyannagar area of Narayanganj Sadar upazila.

Abdullah Al Arefin, deputy assistant director of Narayanganj Fire Service and Civil Defence, said the bodies were handed over to family members yesterday.

On January 5, a motorboat carrying around 50 passengers.