



"We must... rapidly inject liquidity into the economy and avoid a meltdown that would lead to poverty, hunger and destitution for millions."

UN chief Antonio Guterres on Afghan humanitarian crisis

YOUR  
RIGHT  
TO KNOW

SECOND EDITION

DHAKA SATURDAY JANUARY 15, 2022

REGD. NO. DA 781

VOL. XXXII No. 2

MAGH 1, 1428 BS

www.thedailystar.net

JAMADIUS SANI 11, 1443 HIJRI

16 PAGES : Tk 12.00



Celebration  
of colours at  
Shakrain



Crisis in the  
planet of the  
apes



Ukraine hit  
by massive  
cyberattack



Djokovic fights  
deportation  
again



Illegal brick shops have been set up on the land of Bangladesh Water Development Board and BIWTA on the Turag river in Aminbazar on the outskirts of the capital. The authorities conduct eviction drives to clear the illegal occupants once in a while, but they show up again within a few days. The photo was taken recently.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

## AUTOMATED TRAFFIC SIGNAL Money thrown down the drain

HELEMUL ALAM AND WASIM BIN HABIB

Over the last 15 years, the government has spent Tk 119 crore to upgrade Dhaka's traffic signal system. The plan involved some ambitious experiments to modernise the capital's traffic control system, including digitising signal lights and installing timer countdown and digital display boards in some major intersections.

But nothing seems to have worked, as traffic in the city of more than 1.5 crore people remains as chaotic. In some cases, it has turned worse as traffic cops reverted to the old system of manual control, using their stretched hands to control vehicular movement.

Ropes, cones and bamboo fences are also used to control the disorderly city traffic, one of the worst in the world.

In the World Traffic Index 2020, Dhaka has ranked 10th in terms of poor traffic management among 228 cities, according to a report published by the largest user-contributed database Numebo.

Despite costly experiments, Dhaka's traffic signal system is in a shambles

TK 119 crore spent over last 15 yrs, but little has improved

The number of vehicles in Dhaka city is about twice its road capacity

Unplanned vehicle registrations are largely responsible for Dhaka's poor traffic management



Institute (ARI).

Urban transport experts blame unthoughtful traffic management, unrealistic projects and unplanned

permission for new vehicles that are way beyond the road capacity for the situation.

Poor road condition, rickety public transport, jaywalking and movement of non-motorised vehicles also contribute to worsening the gridlock.

In many cases, projects were taken up without considering the rising number of vehicles and road conditions, experts said.

"Basically, our traffic signal system has become a joke," noted transport expert Prof Shamsul Hoque told The Daily Star.

A 2015 study by Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) found Dhaka's traffic volume was over 1.5 times higher than its road capacity that year, Prof Shamsul said.

The situation has worsened now. As of December 2021, at least 17,80,597 motorised vehicles were registered under Bangladesh Road Transport Authority (BRTA) in Dhaka.

Adil Mohammad Khan, general

SEE PAGE 2 COL 3

"We have, I think, a few weeks left to see if we can get back to mutual compliance... We're very, very short on time."

US Secretary of State  
Antony Blinken  
on saving Iran nuke deal



## Ex-DU teacher found dead in a Gazipur bush

STAR REPORT

Police yesterday recovered the body of retired Dhaka University Professor Sayeda Gaffar Khaleque from a bush in Gazipur's Kashimpur area, three days after she was killed.

Police recovered the body around 10:30am and arrested one Anwarul Islam, 25, an assistant mason working at the under-construction building on the deceased's five-kantha piece of land inside Dhaka University Teachers' Housing Project in Kashimpur.

The 71-year-old ex-teacher had been living in a rented house in area to look after the construction of the building.

Police arrested Anwarul, 25, from Gaibandha early yesterday. During interrogation, he admitted to strangling Sayeda to death with her scarf on Tuesday and dumping her body inside a bush at the housing project, said Sub-inspector Dipankar Roy after quizzing Anwarul.

The arrestee decided to kill the victim in order to steal Tk 10,000 that he spotted in her purse when she paid him for cutting down trees at the construction site on Tuesday evening, the SI said.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 8



Panishail



A crowd of joyful supporters of Selina Hayat Ivy, mayoral contender of the ruling Awami League, chanting slogans during a procession in Narayanganj city's Chasara area last evening. There was an air of festivity in the city yesterday, the last day of the city polls campaign.

Leave them alone

Statement slams 'pressure' on disappearance victims' families

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Human Rights Forum Bangladesh (HRFB) yesterday said the government should immediately instruct the police to stop harassing the families of the victims of enforced disappearance.

The forum, a coalition of the country's leading rights and development organisations, in a statement expressed deep concern over such police harassment and called upon the authorities concerned to ensure security of the victims' families and ascertain the whereabouts of their dear ones.

It demanded that actions be taken against those involved in such harassment and also against their superiors who gave the orders.

"Instead of performing their duties and finding

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

"We have, I think, a few weeks left to see if we can get back to mutual compliance... We're very, very short on time."

US Secretary of State  
Antony Blinken  
on saving Iran nuke deal



NCC ELECTION

## Campaign ends with fear over violence, rigging



"I'll win the polls if there is no violence on the voting day."

Selina Hayat Ivy



"Local administration is trying to manipulate the election..."

Taimur Alam Khandakar

MOHAMMAD AL-MASUM MOLLA AND SANAD SAHA

Selina Hayat Ivy and Taimur Alam Khandakar have accused each other of plotting to cause violence as the campaign for the Narayanganj city polls ended midnight yesterday.

Security has been stepped up across Narayanganj ahead of the voting tomorrow. No one from outside was being allowed to stay in the city.

Both major candidates expect to win the ballot battle, which is set to put one of them at the helm of Narayanganj City Corporation for the next five years. They urged the administration to ensure a free, fair and transparent election.

Voters, meanwhile, say they hope that polls will be peaceful like the previous two elections.

"I'll win the polls if there is no violence on voting day... My opponent wants violence," Ivy, who is contesting with AL's "boat" symbol, told journalists yesterday, wrapping up her 18-day campaign.

Asked why she fears violence, the two-time mayor said, "The election will be between Ivy and many things. The opposition camps may get united and cause violence".

She urged the Election Commission to ensure that female and new voters can cast votes without any fear, saying such voters could make a difference.

Ivy's rival Taimur, who is contesting with "elephant" symbol as an independent candidate, alleged that government machinery, including the local administration in Narayanganj, was trying to manipulate the election to ensure the ruling party candidate's victory.

He accused the administration of planning to rig the vote.

Asked about Ivy's fears of violence, he said it was she who was out to foil the election by causing violence.

Besides, he alleged that a vested quarter was trying to spread a rumour that he would withdraw from the election race. "Whatever the situation is, I will never quit. I would ask voters not to pay heed to such rumours."

Taimur had withdrawn his candidature just five hours before the NCC polls in 2011.

He urged the administration to create an atmosphere conducive to free and fair voting.

Superintendent of Police in Narayanganj Jayedul Alam said five lakh people are expected to cast votes tomorrow to pick their mayor for a city with around 35 lakh residents.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1