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After four people died in two landslides yesterday, volunteers of Chattogram district administration ask people to evacuate houses that are built near the hill slopes in the port city.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

## Mother dies saving twins from landslides

Her sister also killed; two others die in separate mudslide in Ctg

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

A mother sacrificed her life to save her six-month-old twin daughters from a landslide in Barishal Ghona area of Chattogram city on Friday night.

Shahinur Akter shielded her daughters with her body as the landslide fell. Both the babies remained unhurt, but she died as the landslide crushed her, said witnesses.

Her husband Jainal Abedin was out when the land slid over their house on the slope of Jhiler Pahar in the area.

Shahinur's sister Mahinur Akter, 24, was also killed in the accident while their parents Fazlul Haque, 70, and Ranu Begum, 60, were injured critically.

Jainul's six-month-old twin daughters Tanna and Tinni were saved in the accident.

The family have been living in the house for the last 10 years. No accident ever happened there before, said Jainul.

"We thought nothing will happen. I never thought I would have such a consequence for ignoring their call," he said.

U Ching, team leader of Fire Service and Civil Defence, Chattogram, said they rescued six people, including the twins, from there.

Of them, doctors of Chattogram Medical College Hospital declared Shahinur and Mahinur dead, he added.

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## 'Fierce battles' rage in Donbas

Zelensky visits war-torn southern city, hails EU backing for Ukraine's membership bid

AFP, Kyiv

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky yesterday visited the war-damaged southern city of Mykolaiv for the first time since the Russian invasion as "fierce battles" raged again in the eastern Donbas region.

Making a rare trip outside Kyiv, Zelensky surveyed a badly-damaged high-rise building and met officials in Mykolaiv, which has been holding the defence of the Black Sea coast against Moscow's troops.

Russian forces have directed their firepower on the east and south of Ukraine in recent weeks since failing in their bid to take the capital Kyiv after the February 24 invasion.

Zelensky has appealed for western support and weapons, and he hailed an announcement from Brussels on Friday that it backed Ukraine's EU membership drive as a "historic achievement."

"Ukrainian institutions maintain resilience even in conditions of war. Ukrainian democratic habits have not lost their power even now," Zelensky said in a video address overnight.

A video released by Zelensky's office showed the Mykolaiv governor talking to the president to see a tall building with a gaping hole, before the president met officials in what appeared to be a basement.

Mykolaiv is a key target for Russia as it lies on the way to the strategic Black Sea port of Odessa. It is around 100 kilometres northwest of Kherson, which fell to Russia in the first weeks of the war.

The worst of the fighting continues to be in the eastern Donbas region, with battles raging in villages outside the city of Severodonetsk, which Russia has been trying to seize for weeks.

"Now the most fierce battles are near Severodonetsk. They

(Russia) do not control the city entirely," the governor of the eastern Lugansk region, Sergiy Gaiday, said on Telegram.

Gaiday said there was "more destruction" at the besieged Azot chemical plant in Severodonetsk, where he said 568 people were sheltering, including 38 children.

He also said Lysychansk — a Ukrainian-controlled city across a river from battered Severodonetsk — is being "heavily shelled".

Lysychansk residents were preparing to be evacuated. "We're abandoning everything and going. No one can survive such a strike," said history teacher Alla Bor, waiting with her son-in-law Volodymyr and 14-year-old grandson.

Meanwhile, five civilians were killed and 12 injured in a Ukrainian bombardment of the eastern separatist city of Donetsk, local authorities said yesterday.

## EVM USE EC to sit with parties today

BNP's joining iffy

MOHIUDDIN ALAMGIR

The Election Commission is all set to begin talks with political parties from today to gain their trust over Electronic Voting Machines.

The commission would hold views-exchange programmes on the EVMs with all 39 registered political parties in three phases.

Representatives of 13 political parties, including the opposition in the parliament Jatiya Party, are invited to sit with the EC today, SM Asaduzzaman, joint secretary to the EC, told The Daily Star.

The commission also had sent an invitation to sit with the opposition BNP and 12 other political parties on June 19.

It sent an invitation to sit with the ruling Awami League and another 12 political parties on June 28.

With the next parliamentary elections just one and a half years away, fresh debates over the EVMs have taken the centre stage in the political arena.

The debate over EVMs surfaced after Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, also the ruling Awami League chief, at an AL Central Working Committee meeting on May 7, said the EVMs would be used in all 300 parliamentary constituencies during the next general polls, according to insiders.

Since then, Chief Election Commissioner Kazi Habibul Awal on subsequent occasions said the EC was yet to make a final decision regarding the use of EVMs in the next general election.

**Several civil society members and eminent citizens, in recent talks organised by the EC, also advised against EVMs unless there is a national consensus.**

The BNP has long been opposing the use of EVMs, saying the devices would allow the ruling party to "steal votes".

Several civil society members and eminent citizens, in recent talks organised by the EC, also advised against EVMs unless there is a national consensus.

Amid this situation, information technology experts, while taking part in a views exchange programme on May 25, said EVM manipulation was almost impossible.

EC officials said the EC invited Jatiya Party, Jatiya Party (JP), Krishak Sramik Janata League, Bangladesh National Awami Party, Bangladesh Jatiya Party (BJP), Zaker Party, Bangladesh Muslim League, Gono Forum, Gano Front, Bangladesh Jatiya Party, Bangladesh Nationalist Front and Bangladesh Congress on today's event.

For June 19's discussion, EC invited Bangladesh Nationalist Party, Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal (JSD), Bangladesh Khelafat Andolan, Bangladesh People's Party, Jamiote Ulamaye Islam Bangladesh, Islamic Front Bangladesh, Bangladesh Kalyan Party, Islami Oikyojote, Bangladesh Khelafat Majlish, Islami Andolan Bangladesh, Bangladesh Islami Front, Khelafat Majlish and Bangladesh Muslim League.

For June 28's views exchange the commission invited Bangladesh Awami League, Bangladesh Tarikat Federation, Bangladesher Samyabadi Dal (ML), Communist Party of Bangladesh, Liberal Democratic Party (LDP), Ganatantry Party, Workers Party of Bangladesh, Biklapadhara Bangladesh, Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal (Jasod),

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## Most powerful pulsar discovered shed its mask



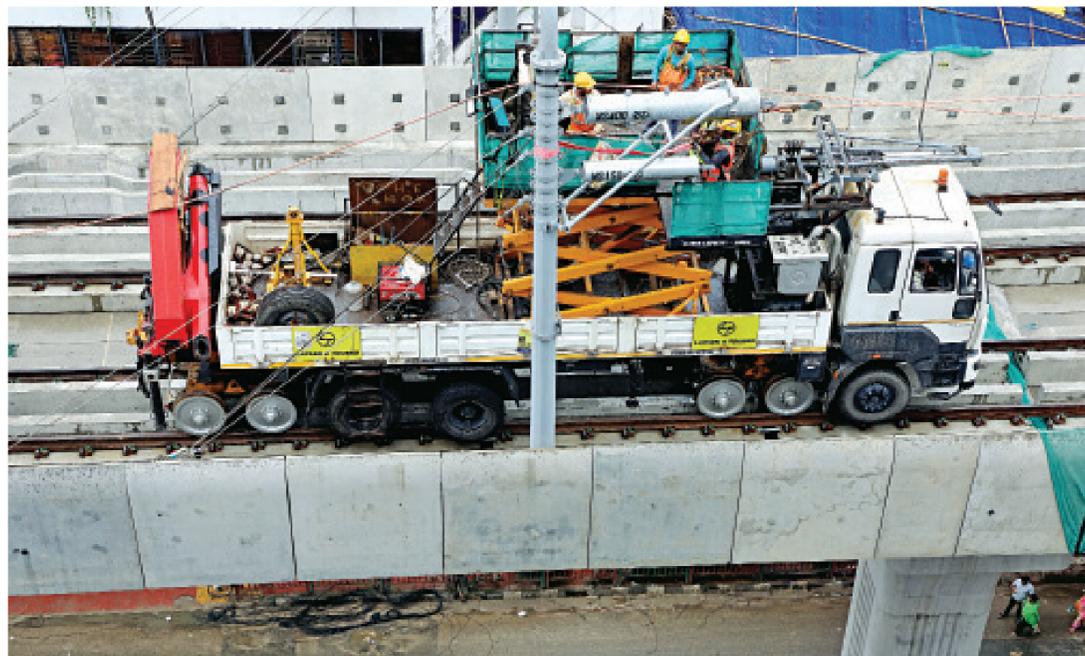
INDEPENDENT.CO.UK

The most powerful pulsar ever discovered may have just shed its mask and announced its presence on the scene.

Pulsars are spinning neutron stars, the dense remnants of formerly giant stars that have gone supernova, and their enormous magnetic fields power regular radio bursts that are among the brightest signals in the sky.

But the pulsar VT 1137-0337 didn't show up on radio

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Electricians setting up wires for the metro rail line at Farmgate of Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue yesterday. This part of the project is scheduled to be inaugurated in December next year.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

## Positivity rate still above five

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The number of Covid-19 cases declined yesterday as the health directorate reported 304 cases.

The previous day, the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS) reported 433 cases, the highest in 16 weeks.

Against a total of 5,122 tests, the positivity rate was 5.94 percent. It was 6.27 percent on the previous day.

With the latest count, the total number of confirmed Covid-19 cases rose to 19,55,731.

Meanwhile, no Covid-19 patient died yesterday.

On March 8, 2020, the first three cases of Covid-19 were reported in the country.

So far, Covid-19 has claimed 29,131 lives in the country.

Since the beginning, the country witnessed three

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