

## Two kids drown in Lalmonirhat, Kurigram

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Lalmonirhat

Two children died in separate incidents of drowning in Lalmonirhat and Kurigram on Monday.

The deceased are Abdur Rahman, 7, son of Shafiqul Islam of Ramna village in Kurigram's Chilmari upazila, and Nirmal Chandra, 4, son of Khitish Chandra of Bhatibari village in Lalmonirhat Sadar upazila.

Quoting the deceased's family members, police said, Rahman, a Class I student at Ramna Govt Primary School, drowned while he was fishing in a waterbody (Beel) nearby his house.

Meanwhile, Nirmal died when he fell into the water while playing beside a pond adjacent to his house.

Hearing screams, villagers rescued the boy and took him to the hospital where the doctors declared him dead.

## Natore UP member found dead, wife injured

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Natore

Police recovered the body of a local union parishad (UP) member from his second wife's house at Joanpur in Naldanga upazila early yesterday.

The deceased, Abdul Alim, 40, a member of Ward No 1 under Madhanagar UP, was son of late Ashraful Islam of West Madhanagar village in the upazila.

The law enforcers also rescued Alim's second wife Rima Begum, who sustained stab injuries, and admitted her to Rajshahi Medical College Hospital.

Madhanagar UP Chairman Abdul Jabbar said Alim went to his second wife Rima's house on Monday evening.

After having their dinner, the couple locked in a quarrel over different family issues at the dead of night.

Later, hearing Rima's screams, her mother Eleka Begum entered the room and found the duo lying in the floor unconscious and informed the police, he said.

Being informed, Naldanga police recovered Alim's body and sent it to the hospital morgue for autopsy.

Deceased's younger brother Ashiq Ali alleged that his brother was killed in a planned manner and demanded proper investigation in this regard.

Officer in Charge of Naldanga Police Station Shafiqul Islam said the reason behind the death will be clear once the autopsy is done.



Defying the law, a local influential man has been constructing these shops taking lease of a rural market in Tangail's Ghatail upazila.

PHOTO: STAR

## ILLEGAL POND A threat to surrounding cropland Ruling party leader did the dishonest act failing to purchase adjacent farmland, locals alleged

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Lalmonirhat

A local Awami League (AL) leader has dug a pond illegally posing threats to the surrounding cropland and homesteads. An act that he has done after failing to buy the villagers' land at a cheap rate, locals said.

Aminul Islam is the general secretary of Durgapur union unit of AL in Lalmonirhat's Aditmari upazila.

Union Assistant Land Officer Abdul Hamid has filed a case against Aminul with Aditmari Police Station under the Sand Mahal and Land Management Act 2010.

According to what could be known, Aminul wanted to buy cultivable land and homesteads of eight villagers at a cheap rate. However, as the villagers refused his offer, he started digging a pond on his eight bighas of land illegally posing threats to surrounding cropland and homesteads, inhabitants of Dwardkuti village said.

Around one kilometre stretch of the dirt road in the village is now in an impassable state due to transporting earth and sand from the pond. The village graveyard lying on the bank of the pond is also at the risk of being devoured.

Mostafa Ali, 55, a farmer

**Around 1 kilometre stretch of a dirt road is now in an impassable state, while the village graveyard on the bank of the pond is also at risk of being devoured.**

from Dwardkuti village, said his farmland was being devoured by the illegally excavated pond and his homestead was also under threat.

"AL man Aminul Islam proposed me that I sell my land to him and move to somewhere

else. But I didn't agree to it. Now, I am losing my arable land and homestead," he said.

Contacted, Aminul Islam said that he was digging a pond on his own land and it matters little to him whose land and homesteads being devoured.

However, he denied the allegations that he had offered to buy land at low prices.

Rafiqul Alam, general secretary of Aditmari upazila AL, said Aminul deserves to be punished. Aditmari Upazila Nirbahi Officer GR Sarwar said according to the law, no one can dig a pond and extract sand without permission. A case has been filed against Aminul Islam.

## Permanent shops on leased land!

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Tangail

Violating rules and without taking permission from the authorities concerned a local influential man has been constructing permanent shops after taking lease of a rural market at Dhalapara in Ghatail upazila.

Moreover, the lease holder evicted the former traders, who had been running their business for long, and allocating the newly-constructed shops to others in exchange of huge money, evicted traders alleged.

The influential leaseholder, backed by powerful political quarters and a section of local public representatives, allegedly realizing Tk 5 to Tk 6 lakh for allocating each shop to the other people, they said.

As a result, nearly 300 small traders, who had been holding business on the rural market, became unemployed.

Finding no other alternative, the aggrieved traders submitted a written complaint to the local upazila nirbahi officer (UNO) recently, but yet to get any solution in this regard.

Shafiqul Islam, who was the previous lease holder, took lease of the traditional Dhalapara market this year at a cost of Tk 20.71 lakh.

But surprisingly, soon after taking lease of the market this year, Shafiqul evicted the former traders from their allocated places, saying some new shops will be constructed in front of the market.

Usually, a small space (viti) of the rural market is allocate to traders in exchange of a small amount of revenue every year, but the scenario is different this year, traders alleged.

They said leaseholder Shafiqul has already constructed a number of permanent shops, including 48 in front of the playground of a local school and a pond, on the leased market.



PHOTO: STAR

He later started allocating those shops to other traders in exchange of huge money, depriving the previous small traders, they further said.

Asked about the matter, Abdul Awal, a land official (Nayeb) at Dhalapara Union Land Office, said Shafiqul got the lease of the market for one year and he didn't know anything about construction of any shops there.

Contacted, Shafiqul said after getting lease of the market this year he has constructed some new shops there.

In an interview with a private TV channel, Tangail Deputy Commissioner Dr Ataul Gani said construction of permanent structures or shops on any leased rural market is a complete violation of rules.

After investigation, necessary steps will be taken in this regard, he added.

## Tigers eye series

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two of their premier players in Shakib Al Hasan and Mushfiqur Rahim -- the first time since their debuts that both of these players are missing an ODI series -- but left-arm spinner Nasum Ahmed seemed to have adapted to the ODI role nicely after making an impressive debut in the first ODI.

The Tigers will crave a better performance from their batting department but will still be happy to dish out more of the same in the second ODI while the hosts would need to come with a much more commanding batting approach if they are to turn things around.

## Rawhide market

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cost of processing the skins and transportation and labour costs. They bought cowhides at Tk 300-550, depending on the size.

Chattoogram-based traders bought skins at Tk 400-700, up about 20 percent from last year.

Traders in the port city have set a target to procure about 3.5 lakh pieces of rawhides, down 15 percent year-on-year. They collected 1.5 lakh pieces of rawhides.

Seasonal traders have 2 lakh pieces under their disposal and the skins would start to come to markets within a few days, according to Moslem Uddin, president of the Chattogram Rawhide Warehouse Traders.

"The price of rawhides at the grass-root level is a bit lower. As a result, seasonal traders will get better prices when they sell the salted hides to wholesalers and merchants," said Ghosh.

The tannery owners in Dhaka have cleared dues, according to Shahidul Islam, general secretary of the Natore Leather Traders' Association.

Our correspondents from Chattogram, Natore and Narayanganj contributed to this report

## Curbing inflation

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wheat and fertilisers, last fiscal year due to the price hike of the items in the international market.

The reserves dropped to \$39.80 billion yesterday for the first time in nearly two years. It stood at \$46.15 billion in December last year, shows BB data.

The new governor's another priority is to keep the financial sector stable.

"The banking sector has performed well enough. One or two banks might have been in trouble," he said.

The central bank will put emphasis on reducing defaulted loans, and efforts will be made to enhance the capital base of banks, said the new BB governor.

About non-bank financial institutions (NBFIs), he said the majority of them are doing well, but a few might have been facing problems, which is why common people have a negative impression about them as a whole.

"We will work to win back people's trust in the NBFIs sector."

The central bank will try to

increase the credit flow to the private sector so that new jobs can be created, Rouf said.

Asked whether the BB would withdraw the 9-percent interest rate cap on lending to contain inflation, he said no commercial bank faced any loss so far due to the ceiling.

The country earlier had maintained a high interest rate on lending, which is rare in the world, he noted.

"Many economists have frequently criticised the initiatives taken by the central bank and the finance ministry ... We know which measure is good for the economy."

Responding to another query, he said the BB will reduce its intervention in the foreign exchange rate but it will use the required tools to control the rate.

Rouf replaced Fazle Kabir whose six-year tenure ended earlier this month.

He holds an MSc in Development Management from the University of Birmingham, and an MBA from the Institute of Business Administration of Dhaka University.

## Unfit vehicles, crashes

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But people's journey to the hometowns before that Eid was smoother as they got a nine-day vacation. But people got a four-day vacation this time.

Besides, thousands of people left Dhaka on motorcycles before Eid-ul-Fitr. But this time, the authorities imposed a ban on bikes for seven days from July 7.

"As a result, a large number of sub-standard vehicles without fitness clearances hit the highways while the authorities did not enforce the law properly," said an official from a control room of the Road Transport and Highway Division to monitor the roads during Eid.

Prominent transport expert Prof Shamsul Hoque said the road

and transportation system was not capable to cope with the pressure of holidaymakers ahead of Eids.

The authorities' only emphasis is on the construction and maintenance of highways, not on operation, which is crucial for optimum use of highways, he said.

People got the benefit of access-controlled Dhaka-Mawa-Bhanga expressway and the toll collection must be automated to let people get its full benefit, he added.

The authorities should make other major highways access-controlled to prevent indiscipline, he said.

Buses that operate on the major corridors should be brought under some particular companies to prevent unhealthy competition.

## 22 die on roads

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when a bus hit a CNG-run three-wheeler carrying the four on Dhaka-Tangail highway in Tangail's Rabna Bypass area around 2:00pm.

The dead were identified as Riya Moni of Jamalpur's Dewanganj and her aunt Mousumi Akter, 35, of Natore's Noldonga.

The injured were undergoing treatment at Tangail General Hospital as of yesterday afternoon, said hospital sources.

On Monday, a 12-year-old boy was killed and 12 other people injured in a road accident in Porabari area of Tangail's Ghatail upazila.

The dead, Sourav, was a resident of Brahmanbari village in Tangail's Modhupur upazila.

The accident occurred when a pick-up carrying passengers hit a roadside electricity pole along the Tangail-Mymensingh highway after the driver lost control.

On Saturday, two people were killed in as many accidents in Nalya area of Tangail Jamalpur highway in Dhanbari upazila and Siguria area of Elega-Bhuanpur regional highway in Ghatail upazila.

The same day, an unidentified man died after being run over by a bus on Bangabandhu Bridge east link road in Char Vabla area of Tangail's Kalihati upazila.

On Friday, two motorcyclists were killed when a truck hit their bike on Dhaka-Tangail highway in Mirzapur upazila's Jamurki area. Two more unidentified people were killed and six others wounded in separate road accidents in Tangail the same day.

In Dinajpur, a pedestrian was killed yesterday after a speeding truck ran him over in Gopalganj area of the district.

The dead, Nur Alam, 28, was from Ramjibanpur village in the same upazila.

In Rangpur, a student of Gangachara Government College was killed when a speeding microbus hit his motorcycle on Rangpur-Gangachara road in Buraburi area of Gangachara upazila on Sunday.

The dead was identified as Mahmudul Hasan, 23.

## Journey to the edge

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Lamiya is one of the over 1,000 astronomers working with the James Webb Space Telescope (JWST) project.

"This joy is incomparable and I cannot be happier. We will now start analysing the data to find more details of the galaxies as more pictures will be released soon," she told The Daily Star over the phone yesterday.

Lamiya has been working with the Canadian team on the JWST since 2020.

"I have developed the analysis pipeline to study the structures of the galaxies," she said while explaining her role in the project.

A graduate in astrophysics from Wellesley College, Lamiya completed her PhD from Yale University before working with Dunlap Institute for Astronomy and Astrophysics in Canada as a fellow in 2020.

The young scientist said she initially planned a different career path for herself, but everything changed with one single telescope.

"I was admitted to Wellesley College and in the very first semester, I found a telescope on campus. The moment I put my eye on that telescope, [I knew] my destiny changed forever."

Lamiya completed her O and A level exams from Willes Little Flower School and College. She then flew to the USA to major in neuroscience.

"I wanted to study neuroscience because I was curious to know how the brain works," she said.

"[But] I always looked for logic, and physics is all about logic."

Asked whether other Bangladeshis

## 3 accused

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me to a nearby pharmacy for treatment." On June 30, she reported her rape to Khagrachhari district hospital, and filed the case on July 2.

Speaking to The Daily Star yesterday, Mohammed Rashid,

are involved in the team, she said, "In the 15-member Canadian team, I am the only Bangladeshi. But some 1,000 astronomers [from different countries] are working on the project. I would be surprised if I don't find any other Bangladeshi."

As a scientist, she said Bangladeshi students should give more emphasis on research and practical knowledge.

"We stress on learning by rote, which is dangerous. We have to come out of this practice. Universities should stress on research and the government must come forward to create scope for it."

She further said students should be encouraged to ask questions. "The more questions they ask, the more they will learn."

Lamiya said she had been trying to bring some small telescopes to a private university in Bangladesh but could not due to "red tape".

"The government should create an environment so that this sort of assistance can be easily accessible in Bangladesh. If the government creates an environment that promotes research, students would not leave the country."

Regarding women in science, she said Bangladeshi female students are ready to take up the challenge.

"I am very proud of female students of the country. What our country needs is an environment conducive enough for them to flourish."

She credited her mother for her long journey.

"My mother is my inspiration and nothing could have been achieved without her support."

officer-in-charge of Khagrachhari Police Station, however, said they have not been able to arrest the accused as they are in hiding. "We have heard that the men are from an armed political groups, but we are still investigating."