

## Six to die for rape of teen in Khulna

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

A Khulna court yesterday sentenced six people to death for raping a 14-year-old girl in Bihari Colony area of the city in June of 2019. Four adolescents, aged between 14 and 17 years, were sentenced to eight years in prison each in the case.

Khulna Women and Children Repression Prevention Tribunal-3 Judge Abdus Salam Khan gave the verdict, said court's Public Prosecutor Farid Ahmed.

The six convicts are Morshedul Islam Shanto alias Shanto Biswas, Sheikh Shahadat Hossain, Md Rabbi Hasan Parash, Md Mahmud Hasan Akash, Kazi Ariful Islam Pritam and Md Mim Hossain, he added.

Among them, Shanto, Shahadat and Pritam are absconding. The three others were present at the time of the verdict.



A makeshift "garage" on Bayezid Link Road in port city rents out these rickshaws to pullers for Tk 100 per rickshaw, per day. After a day's work, the pullers return the rickshaws to this garage at nightfall. Although it is illegal for owners to conduct business by occupying the road, they seem to be running things smoothly in the area. This photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: RAJIB RATHAN

## Nephew killed schoolteacher Say police after arresting him

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kusthia

Police have arrested a youth on charge of killing his aunt, who was a schoolteacher in Kusthia.

The arrestee is Nowroz Kabir Nishat (19).

Nishat killed his aunt, Roksana Khanam, because the latter tried to prevent him from gambling, said police. The youth lives in one of the flats of his aunt's six-storey building. A team of Detective Branch arrested him on Monday night from the flat.

Kusthia DB Officer-in-Charge Nasir Uddin said Nishat confessed to the murder during preliminary interrogation.

Nishat killed his aunt, who lived in the same building, by hitting her on the head with a pestle while she was sleeping around 1:30am on Monday.

Roksana was an English teacher at Kusthia Zilla School. Police recovered her body from her residence on Monday morning.

According to family, after the death of his father, Nishat lived with her mother and sister in his aunt's building. The OC said Nishat was addicted to drugs and gambling. He kept demanding money from his aunt and used to get angry when Roksana refused to comply. After Roksana refused one last time, he decided to kill her.

# Forest staffers helpless against offenders

## Sand seized for illegal extraction being taken away by miscreants

MOSTAFA YOUSUF

A group led by a forest offender allegedly took away illegally extracted sand seized by the forest department from the reserve forest in Cox's Bazar's Chakaria upazila by attacking and threatening the department's staffers at gunpoint.

The incident took place after the local administration auctioned off the sand seized by the forest department to one Saiful Alam. Powered by the auction paper, Saiful's men are not only threatening forest staffers in the Dolahazara area, they are also using firearms to scare them away.

The forest department has seized around 8,97,000 cubic feet of sand at Dulahazara union of Chakaria upazila since May after a High Court bench came up with the order to scrap the lease of the canals.

The sand was stored in the Dulahazara reserve forest for the last three months under the supervision of the forest department.

As per the documents obtained by this newspaper, one of the miners, named Saiful Alam -- accused in forest cases over his involvement in sand mining -- filed a petition with the HC to have the seized sand released in August.

The HC directed the local administration to dispose of the matter on September 14 responding to the petition. Following that, Chakaria UNO allegedly auctioned off the sand to Saiful Islam at the end of September on the pretext of the court order.

On September 22, forest staffers came under attack and their vehicles were vandalised when they rushed to stop the miscreants in Dulahazara union on information that the sand was being transported away. A general diary was filed in this regard with Chakaria



Police Station.

Chandan Kumar Chakrabarti, officer-in-charge of Chakaria Police Station, said a GD was filed with their station by the forest department. However, they could not identify the attackers.

"We are investigating to find out their identities," he said.

Prantosh Chandra Roy, assistant conservator of Cox's Bazar Forest Division (north), told The Daily Star that some canals were leased out for sand mining. However, the lessees extracted sand from the forest.

"Local administration auctioned off the sand seized by us without consulting the forest department. We urged them to demarcate the area between the forest and the canal before the auction but to no avail," he added.

On September 21, JP Dewan, upazila nirbahi officer of Chakaria, auctioned off the sand to Saiful Islam, who was sued several times by forest officials for his involvement in forest crimes.

Saiful on September 26 was sent to jail by the Cox's Bazar forest court.

Prantosh said there is no sand left in the canals auctioned by the local administration.

"Now Saiful's gang is claiming that the sand seized by the department was auctioned off to them. They are now threatening forest staffers. They also launched an armed attack on the staffers on September 22, vandalising their vehicles and injuring them," he added.

UNO Dewan said they auctioned off the sand mined from the leased area and not the sand stored by the forest department.

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## Ctg AL moves to make Dec 4 rally a success

### Intra-party rivalry may become a headache for central leaders

ARUN BIKASH DEY, Ctg

The Awami League public rally in Chattogram, where AL President and Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina is scheduled to be present as chief guest, is still a month away, but AL has already started all-out efforts to make it a success.

However, intra-party rivalry in Chattogram may negatively impact preparations, said party insiders.

The rally is scheduled to be held at Polo Ground in the port city on December 4.

AL General Secretary Obaidul Quader has already thrown a challenge to BNP, saying that AL will gather 10 times the number of people BNP's rally witnessed at the same venue on October 12.

In a programme at the capital's Agargaon on October 29, Quader said AL will gather 10 lakh people on December 4. He said BNP could hardly gather 70,000 to 80,000 people on October 12.

Meanwhile, to make the rally successful, Chattogram AL has rescheduled all other organisational programmes.

For example, the party has rescheduled councils of two vital organisational units in Chattogram, which were supposed to be held on December 1 and 4.

Mofizur Rahman, general secretary of Chattogram south district AL unit, said they have already started organisational drives to make the rally successful.

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## Worship, festivity through the night

### Ras festival observed in Kuakata

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Patuakhali

This year too, the traditional Ras festival was observed in Patuakhali's Kuakata through a night-long worship and bathing in the sea. After being stopped for the last two years due to the pandemic, this three-day religious festival ended at Kuakata Radhakrishna Temple and Tirthoyatri Sevashram yesterday.

The number of people attending the festival increased this year. Kuakata was crowded with devotees, pilgrims and visitors on the shores of the Bay on Ras Purnima.

About half a million devotees as well as tourists gathered there for the festivities.

Five hundred members of various police units were deployed for overall security.

Santos Kumar Paul from Kalaiya area of Patuakhali's Baulf said Ras festival wasn't held for two consecutive years due to the pandemic. "This time I worshipped in the temple all night and worshipped in the sea in the morning. I prayed to God for forgiveness of all sins."

Dibkar Chandra Halder, another devotee from Barishal's Banaripara, said the festival was organised beautifully.

On Sunday at 9:00pm, Ras Puja rituals began. On Monday evening, the formal opening of the festival took place at the temple grounds.

President of Temple Committee and Mayor of Kalapara Municipality Bipul Halder presided over

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## INT'L DAY OF RADIOLOGY

# Tests still cheaper at the CMCH, but patients unaware

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Rahima Begum took her daughter to the dentistry department of Chattogram Medical College Hospital (CMCH) on Sunday, as the girl's tooth was hurting. The on-duty doctor suggested getting an X-ray of the tooth.

Rahima did not know that they could get the X-ray done at CMCH's radiology department. So, she was thinking about where to go. At that time, a stranger approached her with the visiting card of a diagnostic centre adjacent to the hospital.

Rahima took her daughter to the centre and got the X-ray. But later, she found out that she could have gotten it done for cheaper at the radiology department.

"I had no idea that I could do all these tests at CMCH," said Rahima. "When I went to see the doctor with the X-ray report, the attendant of another patient told me that I could've gotten it done for three times cheaper at CMCH."

The International Day of Radiology was observed at CMCH yesterday, like elsewhere in the world. But even so, many patients do not know that they can get most radiological tests done at the hospital for cheap, instead of going to expensive diagnostic centres.

Due to this lack of awareness, private diagnostic centres have mushroomed around the hospital and perform these tests at higher rates.

However, CMCH authorities said they have already

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World Cup isn't even here yet but the excitement is already brewing in the air. As a country that feels as passionately about football as they do about cricket, preparations for experiencing the thrilling matches have already begun. In that course, local flag sellers are gaining business as football lovers have been busy hoisting their favourite team's colours at homes. This photo was taken on Barishal Sadar Road.

PHOTO: TITU DAS

## Three killed as truck hits motorbike

### SI killed in Ctg road accident

STAR REPORT

Four people were killed in road accidents in two districts during the last two days.

In Bagerhat, three motorcycle riders were killed in a head-on collision between their bike and a brick-laden truck in Fakirhat area on Monday night. The accident happened on Dhaka Khulna highway in Balai Shop area.

The deceased are Matleb Khan (80), Ruhin Khan (25), grandchild of Matleb, and Saikat Khan (25).

In Chattogram, SI Mostafizur Rahman died while undergoing treatment at CMCH Chattogram Medical College Hospital yesterday hours after he had a road accident. The accident happened when he hit a road divider in Boropole area on Sunday night, said police.