

## New AL central committee pays homage to Bangabandhu

UNB, Tungipara

The newly-elected Awami League national committee, central working committee, and advisory council yesterday paid tributes to Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman at Tungipara in Gopalganj.

Led by party President and Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, they placed a wreath at the mausoleum of Bangabandhu.

During the time, the Awami League leaders offered prayers, seeking eternal peace of the departed souls of Father of the Nation and other martyrs of August 15, 1975 carnage.

Prayers were also offered seeking continued peace, progress and prosperity of the country.

## US national security council official in town

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

US National Security Council's Senior Director for South Asia Rear Admiral Eileen Laubacher arrived in Bangladesh on a four-day visit yesterday.

She will visit the Rohingya camps in Cox's Bazar and likely to meet Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and Foreign Minister AK Abdul Momen.

"Despite differences on opinions on some issues,

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Awami League President and Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, along with the newly-elected AL national committee, central working committee and advisory council, places a wreath at the mausoleum of Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman at Tungipara in Gopalganj yesterday.

PHOTO: PID

## Cold brings misery for little ones

Cases of pneumonia among children rise as winter peaks

MOUDUD AHMED SUJAN

As winter peaks, childhood pneumonia cases and deaths have increased around the country as reflected in the number of patients in the two major hospitals of Dhaka.

In December last year, a total of 437 children with pneumonia were admitted to Bangladesh Shishu Hospital and Institute (BSHI) in Dhaka -- around a 25 percent increase compared to the previous month. In November, the number was 315.

"Casualty in pneumonia increases during cold weather. A total of 43 children died from the disease in our hospital in November. I do not have the

- Children under 5 most vulnerable to pneumonia
- Bacteria, viruses, fungi common causes for infection
- Common symptoms coughing, breathing problems, fever
- Around 12,000 children die of pneumonia in country per year
- Most deaths prevented with vaccines, low-cost antibiotics
- Medical access not sufficient to tackle disease



Star on Thursday.

Besides, the BSHI also refers many children suffering from acute pneumonia to other

hospitals for ICU support, a physician at the BSHI Pneumonia ward said. Those who were referred to different hospitals, were not included in the fatality list of BSHI, according to the doctor.

Cases of pneumonia increases during winter season around the country every year, said Prof Dr Ifat Ara Shamsad, head of the pediatric department at DMCH. About 10 children with the disease are being admitted to Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) everyday on an average in recent times, she added.

In November, the number was 2,3, cases have been on the rise since then, the DMCH doctor said.

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The 19th edition of the Asian Art Biennale came to an end yesterday at Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy premises with a closing ceremony. The month-long art exhibition featured 493 artists participating from 114 countries.

## Curtain falls on '19th Asian Art Biennale'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The 19th edition of the Asian Art Biennale, a month-long art exhibition in which 493 artists from 114 countries participated, ended yesterday.

The closing ceremony was held on the premises of the capital's Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy.

The ceremony commenced at Shilpakala's National Theatre Hall, in which Speaker Shirin Sharmin Chaudhury was present as chief guest.

Presided over by Shilpakala Academy Director General Liaquat Ali Lucky, State Minister for Cultural Affairs KM Khalid, Secretary Abul Monsur, and noted artists Monirul Islam and Shahbuddin Ahmed were present as special guests.

The biggest achievement of this

## DHAKA LIT FEST: DAY 3 Big books, big ideas

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The third day of the 10th Dhaka Lit Fest featured a big list of authors and topics yesterday.

Author and literary critic Nilanjana Roy moderated a session on "A World Without a Centre", with Nobel laureate Abdulrazak Gurnah, Bengali litterateur Amitav Ghosh, and novelist

are culture and politics impacted by "icons", and how film can help preserve the linguistic diversity of Bangladesh, particularly the languages and culture of Mro, Rakhine and Chakma people were some of the talking points.

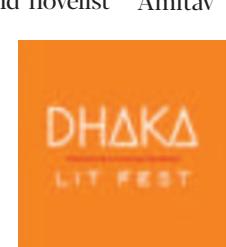
Meanwhile, Bookworm Bangladesh held author signing sessions with Geetanjali Shree, Daisy Rockwell, and Amitav Ghosh. HerStory Foundation, Mayurpankhi, and UPL each held sessions on recently released titles. Other bookstores shared that sales have been significant in volume, but it has paled against the registration charges they had to pay for participation.

Just an hour later, writer Rifat Munim unpacked the 2022 International Booker Prize-winning Tomb of Sand with its author Geetanjali Shree and translator Daisy Rockwell. At the same time, writer Parvez Hossain explored the new dimensions of the Bengali novel with authors Anisul Hoque, Shaheen Akhtar and Mohit Kamal.

Today will be the last day of this year's Dhaka Lit Fest. Abdulrazak Gurnah will speak with publisher Alexandra Pringle. There will be sessions on climate change, poetry, gaming, feminism, the culinary arts and more.

Daily Star Books' session on "Is A Book Worth Reading? Who Decides"

will be held in the PSR Seminar Room at 1:45pm. It will be moderated by SEE PAGE 4 COL 6



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## Protect rights of minorities

Oikya Parishad submits memorandum to PM after march to Dhaka from Ctg

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh Hindu-Buddhist-Christian Oikya Parishad yesterday submitted a memorandum to the prime minister, demanding that the ruling Awami League materialise its election manifesto to protect the rights of minority communities.

The submission came after the parishad ended its road march to Dhaka from Chattogram.

The parishad also staged a rally in front of the capital's Ramana Kali Temple. At that time, parishad general secretary Rana Dasgupta read out the memorandum.

After the rally, when the parishad members were heading to the PMO, police intercepted them at Shahbagh intersection around 3:30pm.

Later, the parishad's presidents Ushaton Talukder and Nim Chandra Bhowmik, general secretary Rana Dasgupta and four of its members submitted the memorandum to the Prime Minister's Office.

Kajal Debnath, presidium member of the Oikya Parishad, said as police barred them from moving forward, an eight-member delegation took the

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## A move to make ACC 'toothless'

TIB slams decision to give secretaries power to transfer, promote investigation officers

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Transparency International Bangladesh has asked the Anti-Corruption Commission to withdraw its decision of giving the commission's secretaries the ultimate power to transfer and promote investigation officers.

It is ultimately an awful move to transform the ACC into a government organisation like the now-defunct anti-corruption bureau, said TIB in a statement issued yesterday.

On December 18, the ACC published an order on "Delegation of Administrative and Financial Power". According to it, secretaries have been given sole authority to transfer and promote deputy directors and assistant directors, who are

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