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## Abandoned, left to starve

### Mother, 2 daughters rescued from Uttara flat

SHAHEEN MOLLAH and SHARIFUL ISLAM

A woman and her 10-year-old twin daughters, who were rescued in critical condition from their flat in the capital's Uttara early yesterday, had not eaten for at least four days.

According to police, there was no food inside the home of Shafana Afifa Shemi, the mother, when officials of the social welfare directorate went there after the rescue.

The officials found only some salt and a source of water – for which the mother and daughters were able to survive.

There were even no clothes of the children or mother in the house, except what they were already wearing, presumably for a very long time, and a torn salwar kamiz, they added.

Muzahidul Islam, inspector (Investigation) of Uttara East Police Station, said, "All three of them were listless. They did not have the strength to even speak."

"We found the mother in the bedroom and the two children in the drawing room. They were so weak that they had urinated and defecated on the bed and floor."

The apartment had no electricity or gas supply.

According to a relative, Shemi was unable to pay the bills and so the lines had been snapped several days ago.

Police were notified about the mother and children after a call from someone in the building and later rescued them with the help of the Fire Service and Civil Defence.

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A mother with her two children tries to negotiate a trench dug in a road to install sewers in front of Habibullah Bahar College in the capital's Shantinagar. Pedestrians are enduring sufferings due to the slow progress of the development work. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN

### IRREGULARITIES IN BIMAN

## ACC sues former director, 22 others for Tk 1,161cr loss

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Anti-Corruption Commission yesterday filed a case against former director of Biman Bangladesh Airlines Ishrat Ahmed and 22 others for their alleged involvement in irregularities that caused the national flag carrier to lose Tk 1,161 crore.

ACC Deputy Director Selina Akter filed the case with the commission's Dhaka-1 integrated office, its secretary Mahbub Hossain told a press conference.

According to the case statement, Biman opened a tender to lease B777 aircraft on September 11, 2013.

Four bidders – Jesco Aviation of the USA, Euro Atlantic of Portugal, Standard Chartered of London, and Egypt Air Holding Co. of Egypt – participated in the bidding.

The complainant said that Egypt Air was considered as the lowest bidder, followed by Standard Chartered.

Egypt Air's aircraft engines were very old and weak and its spare parts were not easily available, whereas Standard Chartered's were in better condition.

Since Standard Chartered, a



world-renowned company, was the immediate lowest bidder, there was an opportunity for negotiations, reads the case statement.

Besides, Standard Chartered was in operation with Singapore Airlines, while Egypt Air had been lying idle for around seven months.

"Despite this fact, Biman Bangladesh Airlines decided to lease two aircraft from Egypt Air Holding Co.," the statement added.

In the primary inspection, led by Captain Ishrat, some maintenance works on both the leased aircraft were found to be pending – rendering them both inoperable as per the rules.

"The inspection team did not mention the pending maintenance works in the report," the complainant said, adding that there was an oil leak from the engines.

According to the terms and condition of the tender, the aircraft engine should have at least 4,000 cycles remaining.

But, out of the two leased aircraft, one (of MSN 32629) had 3,615 cycles and another (of MSN 32630) had 2,100

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## DEATH IN CUSTODY Cops now say trader was held earlier

Refute allegations of torturing him to death

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Gazipur

A police probe body has found that Gazipur trader Md Rabiul Islam, who died last month allegedly due to torture in police custody, was arrested days before he died.

"We have found that the information about Rabiul's arrest four days before his death was partially correct," said Molla Nazrul Islam, Gazipur Metropolitan Police (GMP) commissioner, while briefing journalists on the probe findings yesterday.

He, however, didn't confirm the date of the 38-year-old trader's arrest by cops from Basan Police Station.

In the early hours of January 18, a person identifying himself as a cop phoned Rabiul's wife Nupur and said her husband died in a road accident.

The trader's family alleged that police picked him up from his tailoring accessories shop in Pearabagan of Bhogra on January 15 night on charges of gambling.

The GMP commissioner yesterday claimed that the probe body didn't find any evidence of torturing Rabiul in police custody. "We have found evidence that he died in an accident."

He said they have found negligence by some cops in discharging their duties.

"We have already suspended two ASIs for neglecting duties. Besides, we have sent a letter to the inspector general of police, recommending that legal and administrative steps should be taken against the OC of Basan Police Station," he added.

Replying to a question, Nazrul said they found some negligence on the part of several cops. The negligence

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JCD LEADER'S DEATH  
Court scraps case against 15 cops hrs after filing

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday dismissed a case, hours after it was filed against 15 police officials, including a former DMP chief, over the "custodial death" of Chhatra Dal leader Nuruzzaman Jonny in January 2015.

Tapash Kumar Pal, additional metropolitan public prosecutor, said finding no sufficient grounds for taking cognizance of the charges brought against them, Judge Md Asaduzzaman of Dhaka Metropolitan Sessions Judge's Court passed the order.

Md Asaduzzaman Miah, former Dhaka Metropolitan Police commissioner, and Krishna Pada Roy, then deputy commissioner of Detective Branch of police and now commissioner of Chattogram Metropolitan Police, are among the accused.

Jonny, then general secretary of Khilgaon thana JCD, a pro-BNP student body, was killed in a "gunfight" in Khilgaon

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## DATA PROTECTION ACT Don't make sweeping remarks

Law minister requests all after US envoy voices concern

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

In response to the remark made by US Ambassador in Bangladesh Peter Haas about the proposed Data Protection Act, Law Minister Anisul Huq yesterday requested all not to make any sweeping comments about it.

"This law is needed for every country," said the minister, claiming that Haas also said this.

"Further discussions will take place on the draft with the stakeholders. This law is for protecting data, not for controlling it."

"As there is scope for discussion, I will request all not to make such sweeping remarks on it [draft]. If there is any ambiguity in the draft, we are willing to review. I hope that everybody will refrain from making such comments," he said.

The minister was talking to reporters after attending the inauguration of the 11th orientation course for the promoted additional district and sessions judges

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## Jupiter's moon count jumps to 92, most in solar system

AP, Cape Canaveral

Astronomers have discovered 12 new moons around Jupiter, putting the total count at a record-breaking 92.

That's more than any other planet in our solar system. Saturn, the one-time leader, comes in a close second with 83 confirmed moons.

The Jupiter moons were added recently to a list kept by the International Astronomical Union's Minor Planet Center, said Scott Sheppard of the Carnegie Institution, who was part of the team.

They were discovered using telescopes in Hawaii and Chile in 2021 and 2022, and their orbits were confirmed with follow-up observations.

These newest moons range in size from 0.6 miles to 2 miles (1 kilometer to 3 kilometers), according to Sheppard.

"I hope we can image one of these outer moons close up in the near future to better determine their origins," he said in an email Friday.

In April, the European Space Agency is sending a spacecraft to Jupiter to study the planet and some of its biggest, icy moons. And next year, Nasa will launch the Europa Clipper to explore Jupiter's moon of the same name, which could harbor an ocean beneath its frozen crust.

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## GM Quader casts doubts about polls atmosphere

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Jatiya Party Chairman GM Quader has said it seems that a fair election is not possible under the present circumstances.

He said the government should take initiatives to improve the election atmosphere.

"If the government wants us to, we will discuss the issue in the party forum and put forward a proposal on behalf of the Jatiya Party," Quader said while talking to reporters at the party chairman's office in the capital's Banani yesterday.

Responding to a question from a journalist, the JP chief, also the deputy leader of opposition in parliament, said the Awami League government "lost the people's trust" after staying in power for a long time.

"We respect the court. We are following all court orders. There is a lack of full independence of the judiciary due to some clauses in the constitution. Because of those clauses, the judiciary can be controlled to some extent."

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The BRTA has put up banners in the capital's Banglamotor intersection to create awareness among the people on road safety, but this does not work for jaywalkers who dash across the road instead of using the footbridge. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

## THEFT ALLEGATION N'ganj mayor humiliates 3 children in public

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A municipal mayor in Narayanganj's Araihazar upazila publicly shamed three children by cutting their hair after accusing them of theft.

The children, between the ages of seven and 11, are students of a local madrasa, said their guardians.

Halim Sikder, mayor of Gopaldi Municipality, was shifting his textile factory in Ramchondra Bazar. Some machine parts were kept scattered on its premises.

The children were playing in front of the factory and found a metal chain. When the mayor saw them with it, he got furious, said witnesses.

He tied their hands, took them to the Ramchondra Bus Stand area and cut their hair, reports our local correspondent, quoting witnesses.

The father of one of the children, who is an imam of a mosque, told The Daily Star that he was not home when the

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