



Colleges around the country were seen abuzz with the celebrations of students who passed their HSC exam with flying colours. After results were published yesterday, the examinees were seen celebrating this milestone achievement of their academic lives with friends. The photos were taken from Dhaka's Viqarunnisa Noon College, Notre Dame College, Milestone College and Barishal's Amrita Lal Dey College.



# What’s the point of spending public money: Quader

## Castigates RHD for poor road construction, maintenance

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Road Transport and Bridges Minister Obaidul Quader yesterday came down heavily on road engineers for poor construction works, which warrant maintenance within a year or two of the projects’ completion.

The minister also castigated the authorities of the Roads and Highways Department (RHD) for long delays to install 28 axle load control centres on highways to protect the roads from overloading.

The minister made the remarks during a contract signing ceremony of an RHD project at a city hotel.

RHD yesterday hired two China-Bangladesh joint ventures to expand a 35-kilometre portion of the Dhaka Sylhet Highway at a cost of Tk 2,318 crore.

“We are building four-lane roads but they need repair work after one or two years of their completion. If that is not done, what is the point of building roads and spending huge amounts of public money?” he asked, specifically mentioning the Dhaka Chattogram and Nabinagar-Chandra four-lane highways.

RHD engineers, however, blamed the road ministry’s decision to allow overloading beyond the international standard.



# MLM scam, in guise of an NGO

## Rab arrests 11 over fraud, embezzlement

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Three years back, Mirza Abdul Quader founded “Global Human Rights and Environment Development Society”, an NGO that was supposed to work on human-rights and climate-change issues. However, in the guise of that, he and his cohorts embezzled several millions from hundreds of clients, by turning it into an MLM (multi-level marketing) business.

Rab yesterday arrested 11 people, including Quader, 44, from the organisation’s office at the capital’s Badda, Rab-1 Commanding Officer Lt Col Abdullah Al Momen told reporters at Rab media-centre in Karwan Bazar.

Though he could not provide the exact embezzled amount, he mentioned that the arrestees targeted people from lower- to middle-income backgrounds and lured them with job offers with salaries ranging from Tk 10,000 to Tk 1,25,000 per month.

They used to take Tk 20,000 to Tk 30,000 per person as “donation”. Several hundred people who were cheated in the scam started filing complaints, and then Rab started its investigation.

In this course, they raided the fake NGO’s office and arrested the 11.

Apart from Quader, the other arrestees are – Mirza Nasir Uddin, 25; Mahfuzur Rahman, 50; AR Abdul Momen, 49; Mehdi Hasan, 25; Amjad Hossain, 34; Monjurul Hasan Khan, 35; Abdul Barik, 38; Ruhul Amin, 25; Munni, 30; and Nilufa Islam Nipa, 34.

Rab seized four computers, four laptops, 17 mobile phones, Tk 97,380 in cash and several cheque books, vouchers, contracts, pads and seals of various banks from their office.

Momen said Quader founded the organisation in 2020.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

**They told the targets that after paying Tk 30,000 to become a donor member, their entry-level salary would be Tk 10,000. After becoming a donor member, they were instructed to bring new members. The condition was that if they failed to do so, they would not be paid.**

## JONNY’S CUSTODIAL DEATH

# ‘Still deprived of final justice’

Family yet to receive compensation; case may take long time to be disposed of

ASHUTOSH SARKAR

It’s been nine years since the brutal custodial torture and death of Ishiaque Hossain Jonny, a garment-waste trader from the capital’s Mirpur, and yet, his family is still waiting for ultimate justice.

Jonny’s family members, who have been suffering emotionally and financially, are yet to get any compensation from the convicted accused. Twenty-eight months ago, the trial court directed them to give Tk 6 lakh, but the High Court has issued a stay order to this effect.

It is still uncertain when the HC will finally dispose of the convicts’ appeals, as their lawyers are visibly not so sincere about moving the appeals and are rather trying to secure bail for them.

A group of 25 to 26 police officers – including then sub-inspector of Pallabi Police Station Zahidur Rahman – raided a house during a wedding ceremony in Pallabi’s Irani camp area and picked up Jonny, who was 28 years old, and his brother Imtiaz Hossain Rocky on February 8, 2014.

Police informants Sumon and Russell called police after Jonny slapped Sumon for stalking and harassing women at the programme. Police brutally tortured the brothers at the station, according to the case statement.

After Jonny fell sick the next day, he was admitted to a local clinic. Later, he was transferred to Suhrawardy



**Neither the government nor police has given us any financial assistance. I can’t work regularly, as I become sick very often due to the torture. We now want the High Court to settle the case quickly and give the verdict.**

IMTIAZ HOSSAIN ROCKY  
Jonny’s brother

Hospital, where doctors declared him dead.

On August 8, 2014, Rocky filed a case with the Metropolitan Sessions Judge’s Court of Dhaka in connection with the death of his brother.

On September 9, 2020, a Dhaka court sentenced three former officers of Pallabi Police Station to life imprisonment and two others to seven years in jail.

The three officers are former sub-inspector Zahidur, and

SEE PAGE 4 COL 2

## Don’t hold programmes on weekdays

DMP chief urges BNP ahead of party’s march today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

DMP Commissioner Khandker Golam Faruq yesterday requested BNP not to hold any programme on weekdays as it leads to city dwellers suffering.

He said the party can hold programmes on big fields, instead of occupying roads.

Faruq made this call while briefing reporters at Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP) headquarters about security measures taken centring the BNP march today.

BNP will hold the march from Old Dhaka to Jatiya Press Club via their central party office. The party informed the DMP boss about it on Tuesday.

Alongside development work, these political programmes lead to traffic jams if they are held on weekdays, he said.

In response to a query about whether he requested BNP not to hold the march, Faruq said, “I have requested BNP not to cause suffering. We are discouraging it. We have large grounds; all these programmes can be arranged on holidays.”

Asked whether BNP has received permission, he said, “We will not obstruct. However, if they violate law and order and commit vandalism or arson, action will be taken against them as per law.”

# Fakhrul, Abbas get permanent bail

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday granted permanent bail to BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir and



standing committee member Mirza Abbas in a case filed over last year’s December 7 clash between police and BNP men in Nayapaltan.

The HC bench of Justice Md Salim and Justice Md Riaz Uddin Khan delivered the verdict holding the final hearing on a bail petition filed by them.

On the same petition, the HC on January 3 granted six-month ad interim bail to them.

The case was filed with Paltan Model Police Station on December 8 last year, a day after the clash broke out in front of BNP’s Nayapaltan office. The clash left one person dead and many injured.

# Sarah Cooke new British envoy

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT



Sarah Cooke has been appointed new British high commissioner to Bangladesh in succession to Robert Chatterton Dickson.

Cooke will take up her appointment during April/May, according to a press release of the UK Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office.

Sarah Catherine Cooke is now head of South East Asia Department of FCDO where she has been working since 2020.

She was British high commissioner to Dar es Salaam, head of the Department of International Development in Bangladesh (DFID); DFID Head of Growth and Resilience Department.

She also worked in different capacities in UK Foreign and Commonwealth, DFID, ministries of trade and commerce in the UK, Guyana, Solomon Islands. Sarah Cooke also worked as economic consultant at PricewaterhouseCoopers.

## AMAR EKUSHEY BOI MELA

# Readers hungry for new books

DIPAN NANDY

Although the Amar Ekushey Boi Mela is yet to go in full bloom, bookworms are already scouting the stalls looking for new reading material.

Some fair attendees are beginning their hunt by collecting catalogues of new books from different publication houses. Looking at all the lists would help them make their decision on what to buy this year, they said.

With new books making their entrance every day. Since the opening of the fair at 3:00pm, the information centre ceaselessly announces the advent of new titles.

Arrangements have been made for authors to interact with the readers directly, via the “Lekhok Bolchhi” stage. On another stage, new books are being unveiled every day. With each passing day, the fair is getting more happening, and so are the sales.

Yesterday at 4:00pm, a discussion programme, titled “Birth Centenary Tribute: Ustad Ali Akbar Khan”, was announced to be held on the main stage of the fair located in its Bangla Academy venue.

In that programme, Saim Rana presented the main essay, where he said the reason behind the worldwide fame of Ustad Ali Akbar Khan is his unique style of playing and creativity. In August 1971, Ustad Ali Akbar performed at Madison Square Garden in the “Concert for Bangladesh”, organised by famous Beatle George Harrison to the

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4



With new titles hitting the shelves every day, the premises of Ekushey Boi Mela are seeing more and more visitors, who are in search of the books worthy of taking home. This photo was taken in Suhrawardy Udyan yesterday.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

# HC allows Adarsha’s conditional participation

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday directed Bangla Academy to immediately allow publishing house Adarsha Prokashoni to participate in the ongoing Amar Ekushey Boi Mela.

However, the court ordered Adarsha Prokashoni not to sell or display three books, about which Bangla Academy raised objections, at its stall in the Boi Mela.

Three books are: “Mediocrityr Sandhane” written by Faham Abdus

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

PRAYER  
TIMING  
FEBRUARY 9

Fajr

Zohr

Asr

Maghrib

Esha

AZAN

5:30

12:45

4:15

5:52

7:15

JAMAAT

6:05

1:15

4:30

5:56

7:45

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION