## LALMONIRHAT SHAHEED MINAR Neglected for years on end

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Lalmonirhat

The Central Shaheed Minar of Lalmonirhat, located on Thana Road in the district town, has long been neglected by the authorities.

Despite repeated pleas from residents, no permanent steps have been taken to preserve the sanctity of the

Activists of the Language Movement, freedom fighters, political and cultural activists together built the Shaheed Minar in 1972.

Since its establishment, the Central Shaheed Minar has been a meeting place for the cultural and political activists, teachers, students and progressive minded

The authorities concerned only seem to care about the dignity and beautification of the place before February 21 every year, said locals.

Besides, locals expressed their dissatisfaction as the original design of the Shaheed Minar was changed during its renovation work in 2020.

A number of local cultural activists alleged that former mayor of Lalmonirhat Municipality Riazul Islam Rintu demolished the old Shaheed Minar and renovated it,

SEE PAGE 4 COL 3

## **AMAR EKUSHEY BOI MELA** Highlighting stories of the overlooked

**DIPAN NANDY** 

Becoming a writer was always a distant dream of theirs. But due to harsh realities of life and meagre income, they had to sustain themselves first. In the process, they had to bury that dream a long time ago.

Little did they know, that distant dream would become

In this year's Ekushey Boi Mela, Bidyanondo Prakashani has published a book titled "Nirokkhorer Golpoguccho" in translation "stories of the illiterate".

The writers of the 12 story compilation are -- Joynal Uddin, Mainuddin Majhi, Ruhul Amin, Zakir Patwari, Sirajul Islam, Moslem Howlader, Asutosh Chakraborty, Naren Mondal, Momela Bibi, Shahidul Shikder, Bidhan Howlader, Zakir Hossain and Karim Ullah.

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	Fazr	Zohr	Asr	Maghrib	Esh
Azan	5-20	12-45	4-30	6-03	7-3
Jamaat	5-55	1-15	4-45	6-07	8-0
SOURCE: <b>ISLAMIC FOUNDATION</b>					



Renovation work of the Central Shaheed Minar on Thana Road in Lalmonirhat town goes on in the month of February. The photo was taken a few days ago. PHOTO: STAR

# Ensure basic facilities before relocation

Demands Telegu community

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Some 130 families of the Telugu community have agreed to be shifted to a new place, but they want a house each and some essential utility facilities before leaving their current location.

They made the demand when general secretary of Bangladesh Hindu-Boudha-Christian Oikya Parishad Rana Dasgupta informed them about the assurance of DSCC Mayor Sheikh Fazle Noor Taposh that they will be shifted to buildings in future.

"As long as temporary houses on the new location are not built, authorities should not demolish

of a church of the community.

Around 1,200 residents of the Telugu community living at No-14 Outfall Colony at Dhalpur, are currently in constant fear of getting ousted, after Dhaka South City Corporation's alleged directive to evict the colony.

On February demolished around structures -- which it identified as illegal -- to recover 15 acres of land in Dhalpur.

The colony, with its two churches, one temple and a school, s still intact.

While visiting Telegu colony residents yesterday, Rana stated that he and other leaders of rights our houses," said Maria Das, priest organisations met with Mayor

Taposh on Sunday, who assured them of building temporary houses for all Telugu families on a five-acre plot of land.

While visiting the colony, Rana informed the victims that the mayor also assured them that they will be shifted to permanent buildings in future.

Two buildings have already been constructed where 120 Telugu families have been shifted and two more buildings will also be constructed where 130 others will be shifted, said Rana, quoting the

Rana also said the mayor assured the Telugu community to provide jobs gradually in the SEE PAGE 4 COL 1

project, forcing

its plan.

were unusable.

Govt body starts with learning

tonne.

Development

## Licences fake, guns real! Rab arrests 6 of a firearm-

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

smuggling gang

First, they buy each weapon for Tk 10,000 to 20,000 in India and smuggle it into Bangladesh through Dinajpur. The gang then sells the firearm for a hefty price of Tk 2 to 3 lakh.

To use guns, one needs a government-approved firearm licence. And the gang got that covered as well. Generally, it takes almost a year to get a licence, but one can get a fake one in just five days through the group.

In this way, a transnational gang has been involved in selling illegal firearms.

The more alarming part is that using these fake licences and firearms, at least two dozen people are now working at buildings of different financial institutes as security guards.

Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) disclosed this after claiming to have arrested the mastermind of the gang -- Polash Sheikh, 32 -- and his five associates from different areas of the capital on Sunday.

The other arrestees are Monowar Hossain, 32,

Rashidul Islam, 40, Nazim Molla, 35, Maruf Hossain, 24, and Naimul Islam,

A team of Rab-2 also seized a foreign pistol, seven oneguns, two magazines, over a hundred rounds of bullets of different weapons, and 19

institutes as security guards.

Using these fake

firearms, at least

two dozen people

are now working

different financial

at buildings of

licences and

seals of different government officials. Commander Khandaker Al Moin, director of Rab's legal and media wing, gave this information while addressing a briefing at the capital's Rab media centre yesterday.

According to Rab officials, Polash passed his SSC exam in 2004 and arrived in Dhaka in 2013. He then started working as a guard under a security agency.

In 2015, he bought an illegal firearm with a fake licence and got appointed as a security guard for a private bank.

This eventually led to his path of crime, as he then started smuggling and selling firearms after forming a gang of four to five members, said Moin.

Using his experience, Polash used to offer security-guard jobs with a salary of Tk 30,000 to 32,000, and in the process, sell the illegal firearms, said Rab. Arrestee Monowar did not continue his studies

after eighth grade. SEE PAGE 4 COL 1

## Anwar never

FROM PAGE 3

He went to his village about two months ago to see his wife, who was expecting on February 7. He sought leave from the flat owner but was asked to go later during the delivery period, said Rabeya.

"My grandma came to Dhaka a few days ago. She will leave for the village today [yesterday]. Uncle [Anwar] had told grandma to take some money for his wife before leaving for home," she said. "Instead of taking the

money home, now she'll return with her son's dead body," she said.

Like Anwar, Razib Peres, a cook of another flat in the apartment complex, iumped off the balcony on the 10th floor to save himself from the blaze.

A father of two siblings. Razib hailed from Paoran village in Nagori union of Gazipur's Kaliganj upazila.

After hearing the news of the fire, Sajib Peres, his younger brother, rushed to Gulshan.

"He was on the 10th floor. We were talking to him on the phone. He was telling me how he could save himself from the fire," said Sajib.

"He didn't tell me once about jumping off the balcony," he said, adding that he found his brother unconscious inside an ambulance.

"He was alive for about one hour," he said.

Rajib's daughter is a seventh grader and his son studies in second grade.

"We're a joint family. And now we've lost our breadwinner," he added.

### SSC exams

FROM PAGE 3

made considering the fact that the candidates of these public exams have fewer inperson classes compared to the pre-Covid period.

Schools remained closed from March 17, 2021, and from January 20 to February 21, this year because of Covid-19.

# Death toll now 2, probe on He said wood had been The mayor

firefighting. they could not respond to quickly. the incident accordingly," he said.

Replying to a query, ne jumped off the building. 'We repeatedly told them not to jump. After some breathing gear entered ducts were next to the lift. the building and rescued

blaze died vesterday, raising the death toll to two.

Mohammad Raju, 30, who was a cook in an apartment on the 12th floor, died around 3:30am yesterday at a hospital in Gulshan.

On Sunday night, Anwar Hossain, 32, died.

Three people are under Burn and Plastic Surgery.

The fire began around 7:00pm on the sixth floor and spread up to the 12th floor. It could be brought under control around 11:00pm with the efforts of firefighters who were joined and army personnel.

Firefighters rescued 22 people, including 11 The fire spread to the women and a child, from whole building through the building on Road-104 of Gulshan-2.

The fire could have circuit inside the building's told The Daily Star.

"But the decoration in the building had no training on it and for the fire spreading this the huge crowd blocking

conducted the search GULSHAN, BANANI told this operation said the two died as they newspaper that ducts from were badly burnt and those had electrical lines. The gas time, our firefighters with line was close by too. The

Engineer Mahfuzul trapped victims alive," he Hasan, who worked at building during One person who jumped construction, claimed that off the building to avoid the the building had a central AC system which helped the fire spread.

He also claimed that the 10th floor was damaged the most and that floors 10 and 11 belonged to a garment factory owner.

Mohammad Sajal, a caretaker of a flat, told The Daily Star that he and treatment at the Sheikh his colleagues first heard Hasina National Institute of the fire alarm at 6:35pm and then they called the reception.

"When the smoke was rushing in, we went downstairs [from the sixth floor] with a fire extinguisher. We first saw the fire near one of at one point by the air force the two staircases ... . We somehow managed to get down from the building. the central AC system," he

suspected. Visiting the spot originated from a short yesterday, DNCC Mayor Atiqul Islam claimed that lift which then spread the building was compliant quickly due to the wooden and that it followed every décor inside the lift, Brig code stipulated by Rajuk. Gen Md Main Uddin, But unfortunately, the director general of Fire residents of the building Service and Civil Defence, did not have training on how to respond to fires.

The mayor said the respond to fires with initial used a lot for interior extinguishing of the fire and the rescue efforts residents of this building and that could be a reason were hampered due to

> surrounding roads. Two firefighters who NO FIRE STATION IN

There is no fire station in Gulshan and Banani the third to the 11th floors areas which sometimes causes delays in firefighters reaching those areas, fire service officials said.

However, firefighters managed to reach the spot within 10 minutes of receiving the call. The neighbourhoods need a fire station close by as unfavourable conditions in future could delay fire service response, they said.

Brig Gen Main Uddin said they wrote to the DNCC for space to establish fire stations in Gulshan and Banani but did not get any response.

Mayor Atiqul said the city corporation does not have any piece of land to allocate and it was Rajuk that allocates plots.

"The fire department should write to Rajuk, not the city corporation," he said. As there is no fire station in Gulshan and Banani, fire engines from Bhatara

those areas. During a spot visit yesterday afternoon, police were seen guarding the building. Not even caretakers and guards were allowed in.

respond to incidents in

### Med diet linked FROM PAGE 12

ICB is a relatively new and highly successful treatment against severe cancers used in immunotherapy to boost the immune system.

### PM confers FROM PAGE 2

language and literature. Meanwhile, Bangladesh

National Museum received the award in the category 2020, to September 11, of education and the Bidyanondo Foundation in social service.

Each awardee received

a gold medal, a replica and Maniruzzaman in of a medal, a certificate of honour, and a cheque worth Tk 4 lakh.

KM Khalid for cultural minister affairs chaired the award giving ceremony, while Md Mahbub Hossain, cabinet secretary, conducted it and read out the citations of the award recipients.

Monsur, Md Abul cultural affairs secretary, delivered the welcome

The Ekushey Padak was introduced in memory of the martyrs of the 1952 Language Movement.

## EC asks for Tk 3,954cr

to EC on Thursday. The EC in August last year started assessing the EVMs as it decided to use the machines in highest 150 constituencies. At that time, EC officials said they would be able to hold elections to 70-80 constituencies with the EVMs and that they would need to procure more machines if they were to use them in up to 150 seats.

Accordingly, commission prepared a project involving Tk 8,711 crore to buy 2 lakh new EVMs. But the government

wanted to know the

pricing system of the

companies concerned,"

said a committee member,

member

"[imported] Coal is a new

fuel for our country. We

had no idea about its

pricing when we signed

the deals with different

power producers. The first

meeting was a kind of a

officials of two coal-

based power companies

The official said top

learning session."

wishing anonymity.

The

in January shelved the

at BMTF and the rest at the EVM customisation centre. So far, the quality

the meeting virtually.

A recent power cell

analysis found that Adani

was buying coal at higher

prices than other local

plant's coal price at \$346

per tonne whereas Payra

plant buys for \$245 a

schedule, the country is

likely to import 750MW of

According to a Power

It estimated Adani

power plants were buying.

commission to reconsider An internal EC workshop

in September 2022 was told that there were 93,000 EVMs at the commission's field offices and schools in require repairs. districts and upazilas across the country. About 30 percent of those machines

EVM project officials said 75,404 EVMs are stored need to hold upazila polls now at field offices, 73,810 in several phases.

Talking

coal price.

correspondent

checking of EVMs in five City Corporation polls out of 10 EC regions has between March 11 and

the been completed. A total of 43,624 more

were checked and 27,223 or 62 percent of them apparently need repairs. At least 25,000 EVMs in five other regions may

EC sources said that they usually need more money in the national election year than other years. From July 2023 to June 2024, last national polls held in the commission will also December 2018. The figure

Besides, the EC will have to conduct Gazipur needed to spend Tk 265

yesterday's meeting, two

members of the committee

said they have recently

asked for a revision of

power purchase agreement

with Adani owing to high

"But we need to know

the pricing system in the

international market to

negotiate with them and

was Tk 500 crore for the JS polls held in January 2014, but the commission

crore as 153 MPs were

September 10, Khulna City

Corporation and Rajshahi

City Corporation elections

between April 13 and October 10, Barishal City

Corporation polls between

May 14 and November 13,

and Sylhet City Corporation

elections between May 6

crore was allocated for the

EC officials said Tk 700

and November 5.

elected unopposed. New 6.4-magnitude FROM PAGE 12

A few metres away, a digger was clearing a road was covered with rubble after the new quake.

**AFTERSHOCKS** "This one just fell," a

rescuer said, referring to a collapsed building. Hatay province is on the

Mediterranean Sea and the disaster agency said the sea level could rise by 50 centimetres, warning that is why the committee people to stay away from was formed," said one of the coast.



শারক নং-৪৬.৪৭.৭৭০০.০০২.৩৩.০১৫.১৭.১৮৪

said,



operating in the country -- Power Plant in Jharkhand

Payra and Rampal -- joined of India from March.

Board

electricity from an Adani the members.

বিজ্ঞপ্তি নং-১/২০২২-২০২৩

গ্রাম শহরের উন্নতি

৮ ফাল্পন, ১৪২৯ ২০ ফেব্রুয়ারি, ২০২৩

এতহারা সর্বসাধারণের অবগতির জন্য জানানো যাচ্ছে যে, পঞ্চগড় জেলা পরিষদের আওতাধীন বোদা ডাকবাংলো প্রাঙ্গনে প্রস্তাবিত নতুন, দ্বি-তল আধুনিক ডাকাবাংলো ভবন নির্মাণ লোকেশনে বর্তমানে মোট ২৩টি গাছ (৮টি আম ও ১৫টি কাঁঠাল) রয়েছে। এ সকল গাছ জীবিত, মরা, পোকা খাওয়া ও ঝুকিপুর্ণ। এছাড়া জেলা পরিষদ চতুরে আপের কেটে রাখা ২টি মহগনি গাছের কাঠ রয়েছে। এ প্রেক্ষিতে, বোদা ডাকবাংলোর ভেতরের উক্ত ২৩টি গাছ এবং ২টি মেহগনি গাছের কাঠ প্রতিযোগিতামূলক দরপত্রের মাধ্যমে বিক্রয় করা হবে। সে উদ্দেশ্যে আগ্রহী ক্রেতাগণের নিকট হতে সীলমোহরকৃত খামে দরপত্র আহ্বোন করা যাচ্ছে। আগামী ১২ মার্চ ২০২৩খ্রিঃ তারিখ বিকাল ৫.০০টা পর্যস্ত জেলা পরিষদ কার্যালয় হতে দরপত্রের সিভিউল ক্রয় করা যাবে জেলা পরিষদ অফিসে রক্ষিত দরপত্র বাস্ত্রে আগামী ১৩ মার্চ ২০২৩খ্রিঃ তারিখ বেলা ১.০০টা পর্যন্ত দরপত্র গ্রহণ করা হবে এবং একই দিন বেলা ১.৩০টা দরদাতাগণের উপস্থিতিতে (যদি কেউ উপস্থিত থাকেন) দরপত্র বাক্স উন্মুক্ত করা হবে। যে কোন কারণ ব্যতিরেকে কর্তৃপক্ষ যে কোন দরপত্র গ্রহণ বা বাতিলের ক্ষমতা সংরক্ষণ করে।

### শর্তাবলিঃ

দরপত্রদাতাকে দাখিলকৃত দরের ১০০% হারে বিভি/পে-অর্ডার প্রধান নির্বাহী কর্মকর্তা, জেলা পরিষদ, পঞ্চগড়, বরাবর দাখিল করতে হবে।

দাখিলকৃত দরের সাথে ৫% আয়কর ও ১৫% ভ্যাট (মুসক) জমা দিতে হবে দরদাতাকে অবশ্যই নাম ও ঠিকানা স্পষ্ট অক্ষরে খামের উপর লিখতে হবে।

দরপত্র দাখিলের পূর্বে দরদাতাকে গাছসমূহ সরেজমিনে পরিদর্শন করে দরপত্র দাখিল করতে হবে। এ বিষয়ে পরবর্তীতে কোন প্রকার ওজর আপত্তি গ্রহণ করা হবে না।

মোঃ ফোরশেদ আলম উপ-সহকারী প্রকৌশলী জেলা পরিষদ, পঞ্চগড়