

## Man shot dead trying to save neighbour

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Savar

A man was shot dead when he tried to stop robbers from breaking into his neighbour's house in Savar's Ashulia around 3:00am yesterday.

The dead is Mofizul Mollah, 32, a readymade garment worker, said police.

Robbers tried to break into one Shakil Munshi's house in Ashulia's Kathgora Nayapara area, said locals.

"We started screaming for help when the robbers started cutting our grille. Mofizul responded to our call and got out of his home. He even caught one of the robbers but then we heard gunshots," said Shakil.

Robbers shot Mofizul and fled the scene immediately. He was rushed to Centre for Woman and Child Health in Savar where doctors declared him dead, said Mohammad Ali, member of local union parishad, quoting witnesses.

Harun-or-Rashid, manager (operation) of the hospital, said the man was brought dead to the hospital with multiple bullet wounds.

SM Kamruzzaman, officer-in-charge of Ashulia Police Station, said, "A man was shot dead but we cannot yet confirm whether it was during a robbery incident... We are investigating the matter."

## BAU students 'assault' scientist on campus

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Mymensingh

A group of Bangladesh Agricultural University (BAU) students have allegedly assaulted a scientist of Bangladesh Institute of Nuclear Agriculture (BINA) on campus.

Shams Al Mahmud, a scientific officer of BINA, along with his wife, a master's student at the BAU, and his brother-in-law, went to Jobbarer Mor on campus to have dinner around 10:00pm on Wednesday.

While they were on their way to a restaurant, BAU Proctor Prof Azharul Islam stopped them and asked for their identities, reports our local correspondent quoting the Shams.

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People buying groceries as part of preparation for Ramadan beginning today. Among the items, sugar, edible oil, chickpea, and pulse are in high demand. The photo was taken at the capital's Karwan Bazar yesterday afternoon.

PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

## ASSAULT ON BAKHMUT Russia 'running out of steam' Says Ukraine; situation at Zaporizhzhia plant 'perilous'

AGENCIES

Ukrainian troops, on the defensive for four months, will launch a long-awaited counterassault "very soon" now that Russia's huge winter offensive is losing steam without taking Bakhmut, Ukraine's top ground forces commander said yesterday.

The remarks were the strongest indication yet from Kyiv that it is close to shifting tactics, having absorbed Russia's onslaught through a brutal winter and prevented Moscow from claiming its first victory since last August.

Russia's Wagner mercenaries, trying to capture Bakhmut in the longest and bloodiest battle of the war, "are losing considerable strength and are running out of steam", Kyiv's ground forces commander Oleksandr Syrskiy said in a social media post.

"Very soon, we will take advantage of this opportunity, as we did in the past near Kyiv, Kharkiv, Balakliya and Kupiansk," he said, listing Ukrainian counteroffensives last year that proved turning points in the war, recapturing swathes of land.

President Volodymyr Zelensky continued a tour of frontline provinces yesterday, visiting the Kherson region in the south a day after meeting troops near Bakhmut. He posted a video showing him meeting residents in Posad Pokrovske.

"We will restore everything, we will rebuild everything. Just like with every city and village that suffered because of the occupiers," he wrote.

The UN nuclear agency's chief, meanwhile, said that the situation at Ukraine's Zaporizhzhia power plant "remains perilous" following a Russian missile strike this month that disconnected the plant from the grid, reports AFP.

Europe's largest nuclear power plant needs a reliable electricity supply to operate pumps that circulate water to cool reactors and pools holding nuclear fuel.

A slow-down in Russia's assault on Bakhmut could be in part a consequence of Moscow diverting its troops and resources to other areas.

Britain said yesterday that Russian troops had been making gains further north this month, partially regaining control over the approaches to the town of Kreminna, a Ukrainian target. Intense battles were also under way further south, reports Reuters.

But any shift in momentum in Bakhmut, if confirmed, would be remarkable given the city's symbolic importance as the focus of Russia's offensive, and the scale of the losses on both sides there in Europe's bloodiest infantry battle since World War Two.

SUED UNDER DSA

## JnU student moved to condemned cell for 'misbehaviour'

She has been in jail for 8 months

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A Jagannath University student, who has been languishing in jail since August last year after being sued under the DSA, has been shifted to a condemned cell, where inmates waiting execution are kept in solitary confinement.

The student, Khadijatul Kubra, was arrested in two cases under the Digital Security Act on August 27 and has since been denied bail five times.

She is only being allowed out of her condemned cell for two hours every day, confirmed the jail superintendent.

At the age of 17, Khadija was sued as an adult in 2020 by Kalabagan and New Market police stations.

The Daily Star verified her age from her National ID card and academic documents.

Her crime was hosting a Facebook webinar, where a guest speaker made "contentious" remarks.

The guest speaker was Major (retired) Delwar Hossain, who lives abroad and has a large social media following for his shows where current events and politics are discussed.

Obaidur Rahman, superintendent of Kashimpur Women's Central Jail, said Khadija has been shifted to the condemned cell for seven days for "misbehaviour".

"She was taken to Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University Hospital for a health

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## Gold bars worth Tk 2.5cr seized at Ctg airport

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Members of Customs Intelligence and Investigation Directorate yesterday seized 23 gold bars worth Tk 2.5 crore from Shah Amanat International Airport in Chattogram.

Ziauddin, a passenger of flight BG-146 of Biman Bangladesh Airlines, brought the gold bars from Dubai under his clothes, said CIID Joint Director Saifur Rahman.

After seizing the gold bars, he was sent to a local hospital as CIID had information that he was carrying more gold in his rectum, he added.

A case will be filed with Patenga Police Station and the gold bars will be submitted to Bangladesh Bank as per the rules, the official further said.

## Tigers script more history

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'fiercely competitive' at this level. They may still be a little way off, but the pacers' inspiration has been telling since last year.

This time against Ireland, the three pacers in the form of Taskin Ahmed, Hasan Mahmud and Ebadot Hossain bagged all 10 wickets -- the first time in Bangladesh's history that all 10 wickets came courtesy of pace.

The early morning rain had made for pretty good conditions for seamers as Hasan bagged the first fiver of his career, keeping things simple and finding joys in the little movements off the seam and in the air. He struck the first blow, getting Stephen Doheny's outside edge with one that held its line slightly. Two in-dippers then accounted for Paul Stirling and Harry Tector as he ended his first spell with three wickets.

Taskin got pace and movement along with extra bounce as Andy Balbirnie tried to force one through off side but was caught at slip. A 42-run stand between Locran Tucker and Curtis Campher of 42 saw Ireland weather a bit of the early losses but Ebadot Hossain, who bowled the fastest delivery this series at 146 km/h, rattled at pace with wickets off back-back deliveries -- Tucker out leg-before off a yorker and a full-length in-swing accounting for Gerorge Dockrell.

Taskin got two more to finish with three wickets while Hasan completed a fiver as the Ireland innings lasted just 137 minutes and produced 101 runs in 28.1 overs.

Early wickets were needed to rattle Bangladesh during their chase, but openers Tamim Iqbal and Liton Das made short work of the chase, completing it in 13.1 overs.

Liton hit fifty off 38 balls and Tamim Iqbal got a run-a-ball 41 as the Tigers got their first 10-wicket win in ODI cricket. History made in style and pacers were at the heart of it.

## Arav Khan

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She said the foreign ministry will extend assistance if the home ministry needs it.

Earlier, Bangladesh police sent a letter asking Interpol to issue a red notice for Arav, who owns Arav Jewellers in Dubai.

On March 16, a senior Detective Branch official said cricketer Shakib Al Hasan and content creator Hero Alam, who participated in the inauguration of Arav Jewellers, may get questioned during the investigation.

## ADB, partners to give \$2b by June

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The government must also consolidate and revise the law on income taxes and secure cabinet approval for the new Income Tax Code with the view to making its administration robust to new and emerging issues such as base erosion and profit shifting by global internet-based entities, transfer pricing and so on.

The Manila-based multilateral has also called for the withdrawal of selected income tax exemptions by amending the income tax ordinance in the parliament or issuing an SRO with the view to reducing unproductive income tax exemptions.

The National Board of Revenue will have to issue an order for information exchange between the large taxpayer units of VAT and income tax as well as introduce risk-based VAT audits. A risk-based audit manual must be adopted too.

It must also expand the electronic deduction of income tax at source system.

## Chinese firm keen to invest

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government initiative. China is providing a loan of Tk 21,036 crore for the project.

Two more rail projects were expected to be implemented with Chinese loans. Beijing even selected two Chinese contractors for those projects, but implementation of those is uncertain now as China pulled out from funding one while the selected Chinese contractor declined to work for the other project after the negotiated price was cut by the Prime Minister's Office.

Different Chinese companies are also involved in at least five major ongoing railway infrastructure projects, including two fast-track schemes -- Padma Bridge Rail Link and Chattogram-Cox's Bazar Rail Link.

**BHANGA-PAYRA RAIL LINE**

The BR was willing to construct the rail line from Faridpur's Bhangra to Payra via Madaripur and Barishal. The BR authorities expect that the direct link between the sea port and the capital would boost its revenue through freight train operations.

It completed feasibility studies and detailed designs for the line in 2021. The line, which will have 19 stations, will cost around Tk 41,797.60 crore (\$4.93 billion).

The estimate was made when US dollar exchange rate against taka was 85. If the current exchange rate (Tk

ADB has also stipulated mandating online payment of VAT for amounts exceeding Tk 20 lakh and piloting online personal income tax return filing by taxpayers with income exceeding Tk 70 lakh.

This would improve tax collection efficiency, tax assessment and avoidance of fraudulent transactions.

The government will merge the budgets for the annual development programme and non-development programme from the next fiscal year.

Under the co-financing programme, the government will close down loss-making sugar mills under the Bangladesh Sugar and Food Industries Corporation.

The government must also secure cabinet approval for the Bangladesh Public Procurement Authority bill for the establishment of an autonomous public procurement body.

The electronic contract management system of e-GP must be rolled out with the view to establishing direct linkages between procurement

value, budget and actual expenditure, facilitating real-time capturing of procurement budget utilisation, procurement commitment and expenditure data, and monitoring and tracking of payments.

This would help avoid cost escalations and enable efficient monitoring of contract performance.

The government must use key public investment management tools for all development project proposals submitted for approval from the next fiscal year.

Thanks to the steps taken by December 2024, the country's revenue to GDP would increase to at least 10.4 percent from the existing 9.7 percent and tax to GDP ratio to 8.8 percent from 8.1 percent at present, according to ADB's estimation.

The Bangladesh Bank must also introduce innovative financing options for CMSMEs.

The government must also submit to the cabinet the Collateral Protection Bill to promote the use of movable assets as collateral.

operation, keeping the income and profit generated from passenger and freight transport, and paying back the investors, read the letter.

Powerchina wanted to sign an MoU with the BR immediately to start updating the feasibility study of the project and other preparatory works.

## Belarus jails reporter for three years for article on KGB

AFP, Moscow

Belarus yesterday sentenced a journalist who worked for a Russian newspaper to three years in prison for an article that mentioned the reclusive country's powerful KGB secret police, state-run media reported.

Moscow-aligned Belarus, ruled by President Alexander Lukashenko since 1994, has forced most of the media to flee and jailed remaining independent journalists.

Reporter Gennady Mozheyko was found guilty of insulting Lukashenko, as well as inciting national and social discord, state news agency BELTA reported.

## Hackers want \$5m

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not verify, they said.

The attackers said they would provide the key to decrypt all data once they are paid, highly-placed sources in the aviation industry told The Daily Star.

However, Biman's Managing Director Shafiul Azam said no data has been stolen and that the hackers have not demanded any ransom.

Biman sent a press release yesterday claiming that the media has been publishing "confusing" information about the hacking.

Biman Bangladesh Airlines was declared a critical information infrastructure in October of last year.

"The malware used for attacking Biman's email server is called zero-day attack, which the IT officials and investigating officials of Digital Security Agency have not seen before," a Biman official told The Daily Star.

A "zero-day" attack refers to an attack taking advantage of a

vulnerability that was not known before, leaving IT engineers and experts zero days to prepare.

However, sources in a government agency told The Daily Star that Biman had been asked to patch this vulnerability twice in 2022.

Biman was attacked by malware in 2022.

Biman in its press statement yesterday claimed that email IDs related to aircraft operations were restored via Microsoft cloud services and alternative arrangements.

It said on Saturday that a number of computers and servers were attacked the servers concerned were isolated and email service was halted.

It also said steps were being taken in light of the technical guidelines issued by the Digital Security Agency as Biman is a critical infrastructure.

After the hack, the national carrier could not correspond with any domestic or international outposts with its official email.

## EC invites BNP to talks

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Habib Khan confirmed this to The Daily Star.

According to a top EC official, the CEC in the letter wrote that the commission thinks an official or unofficial discussion or a views-exchange meeting with the BNP can take place on the 12th parliamentary election.

If the BNP agrees, the date of the meeting can be fixed, read the letter.

Contacted last night, Fakhrul said talks with the incumbent EC over the next election is "meaningless".

"We opposed the formation of this Election Commission. So we don't think there is a necessity for holding talks with the commission."

The EC issued the letter at a time when the BNP and some other political parties have announced that they would not join the next parliamentary polls if held under the incumbent government.

The BNP and its like-minded political parties have been pressing for 10-point demand that includes formation of an impartial caretaker or interim government which would form a neutral EC to ensure a level-playing field for all parties.

The BNP and eight opposition political parties skipped the talks organised in July last year regarding the next general election. They said they don't believe the commission

would be able to hold a free, fair, and participatory national election.

The BNP and several others parties also skipped another dialogue organised by the EC in June 2022 to discuss the use of EVMs.

Besides, the BNP late last year did not join President Abdul Hamid's initiative on formation of the Election Commission.

## Sweden to seek explanation from Hungary on Nato delay

AFP, Stockholm

Swedish Prime Minister Ulf Kristersson said yesterday he would seek an explanation from Hungary about why it is delaying its parliament's ratification of Sweden's Nato bid but not Finland's.

"I'm going to ask why they are now separating Sweden from Finland. These are signals we have not received before, so I'm absolutely going to raise this with (Viktor) Orban today," Kristersson told public broadcaster Sveriges Radio.

Orban and Kristersson are both attending an EU summit in Brussels yesterday.