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DU beset with gang crimes

'Proloy Gang' is not the only one, there are others; inter-hall probe body formed

SIRAJUL ISLAM RUBEL with MASHFIQ MIZAN

Two more student gangs -- "Nishachor" and "Bhai Brothers" -- had been carrying out criminal activities on Dhaka University campus for several years, say students.

A section of third-year honours students, who lived in "gono rooms" during their first year at residential halls, had formed the gangs.

The gang members ran their activities through Facebook messenger and WhatsApp groups. They roamed around the campus at night and got involved in various crimes including taking drugs, harassing women, and mugging in the Central Shaheed Minar, Suhrawardy Udyan, Fuller Road, and Curzon Hall areas, said students.

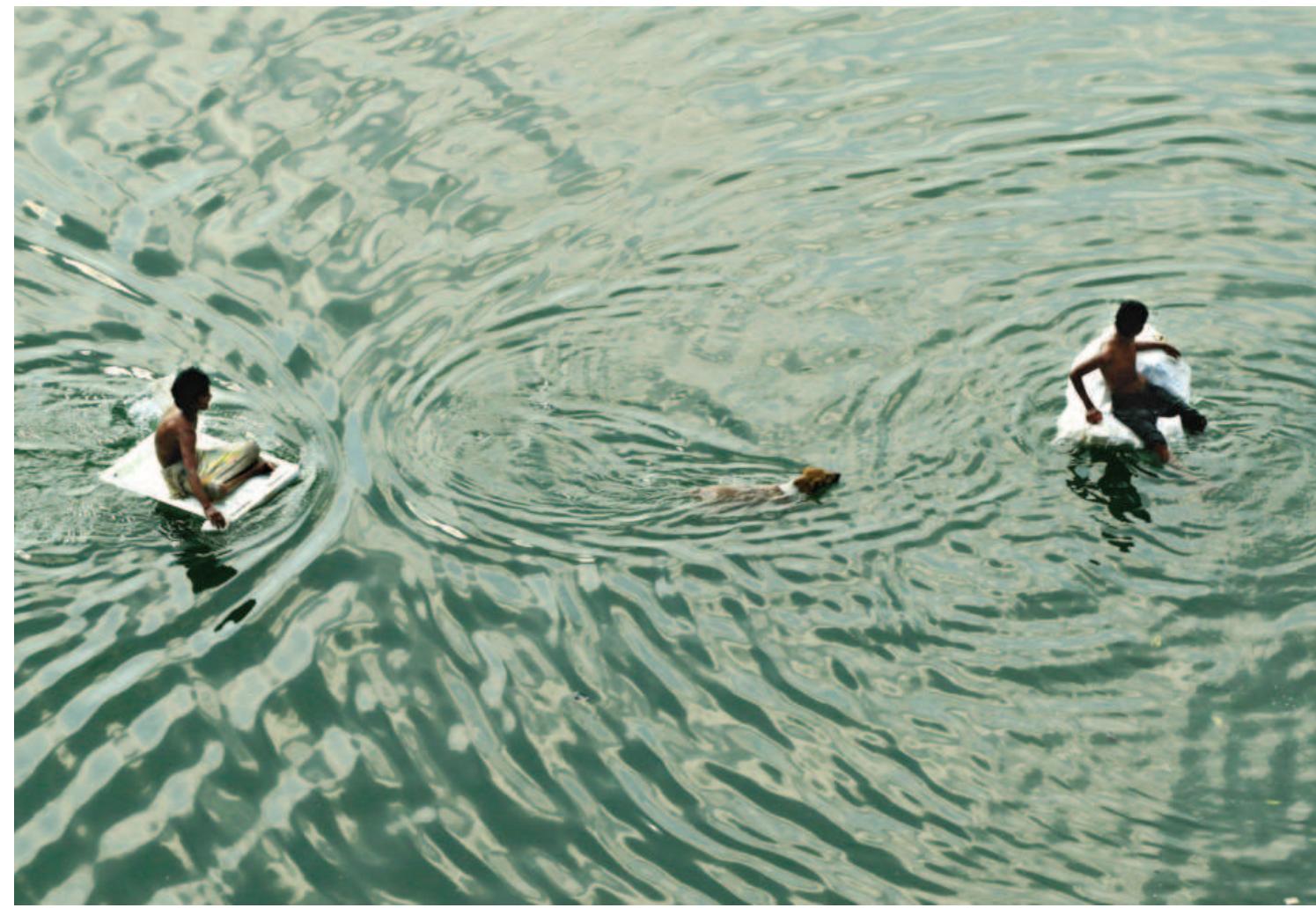
Meanwhile, the DU yesterday suspended two members of "Proloy gang", which came under the spotlight after its members beat up Zubair Ibne Humayun, a criminology student, on campus on Saturday evening.

The DU provost standing committee formed an inter-hall probe body, headed by Salimullah Muslim Hall Provost Prof Iqbal Rouf Mamiun, to identify the members of "Proloy gang". The committee was asked to submit its report in seven working days.

Many members of "Proloy gang" are druggies, involved in mugging and beating up of DU students, said general students.

The DU in a statement yesterday said Naimur Rahman Durjjoy of anthropology department and Sakib Ferdous

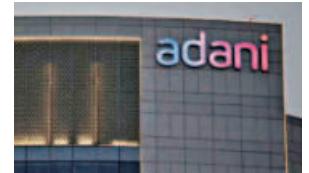
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These two boys and their furry friend are making a splash in the Surma river on a scorching hot day near the Keane Bridge in Sylhet city. It looks like they're having a blast on their Styrofoam boards.

PHOTO: SHEIKH NASIR

Adani buys 49pc stakes in another Indian media outlet



OUR CORRESPONDENT,
New Delhi

After buying NDTV, embattled billionaire Gautam Adani's AMG Media Networks Limited (AMNL) has acquired about 49 percent stake in another Indian news platform.

AMNL bought the stake in digital business news platform Quintillion Business Media Pvt Ltd (QBML) for nearly 48 crore rupees.

"AMNL has completed the acquisition of 49 percent equity stake in QBML," Adani Enterprises Ltd said in a mandatory filing with the stock exchange.

"The transaction was completed on March 27 for Rs 47.84 crore," it said.

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ONLINE NEWS OUTLETS 33 at risk of spreading disinformation Finds study

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

An analysis of thirty-three news domains of Bangladesh media has found that all of them are at medium to high risk of disinforming their online users, according to a report published yesterday.

Of them, at least 16 sites are at high risk of spreading disinformation because of a lack of transparent checks and balances and the absence of policies to ensure accuracy.

The report titled "Disinformation Risk Assessment: The Online News Market in Bangladesh" is based on a study conducted by Digitally Right, in partnership with the Global Disinformation Index (GDI), between July and December 2022.

The study analysed around 700 articles published in the mainstream media based on two pillars -- content and operational pillars.

The content pillar assessed the domains based on nine indicators, including news bias, headline accuracy, sensationalism, and attribution. All 33 sites performed well in these indicators scoring 86 out of 100 on an average.

However, the domains performed poorly in the six indicators under operational pillar, including ownership information, editorial guideline, post publication correction policy, and fact checking policy. The average score was 29.

Shafiqul Alam, bureau chief at AFP, Dhaka; Ayesha Kabir, head of English, Prothom Alo; Talat Mamun, executive director, Channel 24; and Saiful Alam Chowdhury, associate professor, Dhaka University, shared their insights during presentation of the report through an webinar.

Digitally Right's founder Miraj Ahmed Chowdhury moderated the event.



US DEBATE CONTEST Bangladeshi schoolboy breaks all records

OUR CORRESPONDENT,
Dinajpur

A Bangladeshi student has become the best debater by winning 144 consecutive debates, breaking all the records of the US government's parliamentary debate tournament organised by the White House.

The international competition titled "Finding World Future Leaders" was held virtually from February 27 to March 14, said a statement released by the White House.

Shah Muhammad Rakib Hasan, a tenth grader at Rangpur Police Lines

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CTG-COX'S BAZAR HIGHWAY

RHD moves to get rid of bottlenecks

To build bypass roads, flyover under Japan-funded project

TUHIN SHUBHRA ADHIKARY

The Roads and Highways Department will build 24km of bypass roads and a flyover on Chattogram Cox's Bazar highway to eliminate bottlenecks in five town areas.

A feasibility study of the project, which will be financed by Japan, has been done and the department is now working on the project proposal.

The Japan International Cooperation Agency is set to sign today an agreement with the Bangladesh government regarding the finance for this and two other projects.

The total amount will be around Tk 12,814 crore. The other projects are Matarbari Port Development and technical assistance for construction of a dual-gauge double rail line between Joydebpur and Ishwardi, a source said.

The government is working on a two-pronged approach to improve traffic flow on Chattogram-Cox's Bazar highway as congestion and crashes are becoming increasingly common due to heavy traffic, said officials.

One is to rid the highway of

bottlenecks within the next few years because the number of vehicles will significantly rise once the Matarbari Deep Sea Port in Maheshkhali comes into operation in 2026.

The other is to widen the entire highway into a four-lane expressway that will be under a Public Private Partnership model. It will be under a government-to-government initiative with Japan, a RHD source said.

Under the first of the aforementioned, JICA-appointed consultants who did a feasibility study recommended four bypasses and a flyover to rid the road of five major bottlenecks.

According to a document, there will be the 5.4km Patiya bypass, 3.3km Dohazari bypass, 5.1km Lohagara bypass, 6.8km Chakaria bypass, and 3.5km Keranihat flyover.

The bypasses will be four lanes with a 2.5metre wide breakdown lane on each side, said Interim Project Director Shyamal Kumar Bhattacharya.

The flyover will be six lanes, he told The Daily Star yesterday, adding that a Development Project Proposal (DPP) will be prepared soon.

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Scientists find water inside glass beads on Moon

AFP, Paris

Scientists have discovered water inside tiny beads of glass scattered across the Moon, suggesting that one day it could be extracted and used by the explorers of tomorrow.

The Moon was long believed to be dry, but over the last few decades several missions have shown there is water both on the surface and trapped inside minerals.

Mahesh Anand, a professor of planetary science and exploration at the UK's Open University, told AFP on Monday that water molecules could be seen "hopping over the lunar surface" when it was sunny.

"But we didn't know where exactly it was coming from," said Anand, a co-author of a new study published in the journal Nature Geoscience.

The study, carried out by a team led by the Chinese Academy of Sciences, said that the glass beads are "probably the dominant reservoir involved in the lunar surface water cycle".

The team polished and analysed 117 glass beads which were scooped up by China's Chang'e 5 spacecraft in December 2020 and brought back to Earth.

The beads are formed by tiny meteorites that bombard the surface of the Moon, which lacks the protection of an atmosphere.

13 Jamaat men held in capital

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Gulshan police on Monday night arrested 13 leaders and activists of Bangladesh Jamaat-e-Islami, including two women, from Dhaka's Shahjadpur area.

The arrestees are Hussain Bin Mansur, Mufti Rahmatullah Bin Tofazzal Hossain, his wife Jesmin Akter, AKM Abdus Salam, Abdullah Al Mahfuz, Saimum Jami, Hafizur Rahman, Anjum Bin Kamal, Nur Mohammad Monir, Salahuddin Sabir, Abdur Nur, Nasir Uddin, and Sahera Akter.

Police claimed that the Jamaat members were holding a meeting to plan subversive activities while their lawyer said they were performing Isha prayer when police detained them.

A Dhaka Court yesterday granted one day remand for each after sub-inspector Ohidul Islam of Gulshan Police Station produced them before it with a seven-



Buses pick up passengers blocking the ramp of Mayor Mohammad Hanif Flyover in the capital's Gulistan yesterday. Inter-district buses parked in the area also choke the road.

PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

Myanmar junta dissolves Suu Kyi's NLD party

REUTERS

The ousted ruling party of Myanmar's former leader Aung San Suu Kyi was among 40 political parties dissolved yesterday, after they failed to meet a registration deadline for an election set to perpetuate the military's political dominance.

The National League for Democracy (NLD) is among dozens of parties that held parliamentary seats in the past decade that were severely weakened by the military's 2021 coup and crackdown on its opponents.

Many of the parties are unable or unwilling to contest the election, which has widely been dismissed by critics as a sham.

In a live broadcast late yesterday, state-run Myawaddy TV said 63 parties had registered for the election at local or national level and named 40 parties that were automatically disbanded for failure to sign up.

The polls, for which no date has been announced, are almost certain to be swept by the Union Solidarity and Development Party (USDP), a military proxy that was trounced by the NLD in the 2015 election and in a 2020 vote that the generals eventually voided, citing unaddressed irregularities.

The hugely popular Nobel laureate Suu Kyi is among scores of NLD officials currently in prison. She has been found guilty of multiple counts of corruption, a breach of a state secrets law and incitement, among other crimes.

The NLD has previously declared the polls as legitimate and refused to register.