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PM lauds country's progress in healthcare



UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has said doctors in Bangladesh are now capable of performing critical operations, including kidney transplant, as the country has advanced in healthcare.

The PM said this when a delegation of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University, led by its Vice-Chancellor Prof Sharafuddin Ahmed, paid a courtesy call on her at the Gono Bhaban yesterday.

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The 6km-long Port Connecting Road in Agrabad being dug up by Chattogram Wasa, just three months after the road was repaired for the smooth plying of vehicles. Locals are blaming both Wasa and the Chattogram City Corporation for this irresponsible move just ahead of Eid-ul-Fitr and the monsoon season.

PHOTO: RAJIB RAIHAN

PUBLIC UNIV ADMISSION Single entry exam from next year Govt to form national body to conduct the test

MOHIUDDIN ALAMGIR and ARAFAT RAHAMAN

From the next academic year, all public universities have to enrol students through a single admission test and the government will set up a separate authority to hold that exam.

The education ministry and the University Grants Commission said such a centralised test will reduce the hassle of admission seekers and cut both time and cost.

The schedule of the entry test will be declared immediately after the completion of the HSC exams and all public universities will start classes at the same time, officials said.

The UGC at its office yesterday held a meeting on forming a separate body titled "National Testing Authority". The meeting was attended by Education Minister Dipu Moni as the chief guest.

It was decided that a high-powered committee under the leadership of UGC Chairman Prof Kazi Shahidullah will soon be formed to work out how to initiate an acceptable admission process, UGC member Prof Muhammed Alamgir told this newspaper.

He also said the committee will comprise representatives from all public universities.

Dipu Moni, while talking to reporters after the meeting, said the decision of a single entrance test has been taken

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ACQUITTAL FROM CASE Man's 25-year ordeal comes to an end, finally

EMRUL HASAN BAPPI and CHAITANYA CHANDRA HALDER

For the last 25 years, Oliar Rahman had been shuttling between Madaripur and Dhaka to appear before courts in a case filed over the death of his fellow worker.

Oliar, who was an employee of an embroidery factory at the capital's New Super Market, was only 13 when he was arrested in the case.

He spent seven months behind bars before coming out on bail. Since then, he had to appear before courts for about 150 hearings during the long trial.

And all these years, he had to endure unfathomable mental stress and bear financial burden for being accused in the case.

Finally, Oliar's ordeal came to an end yesterday as a Dhaka court acquitted him and four others of murder charges as the prosecution failed to prove the charges brought against them.

"I am the happiest person in the world now. I got justice at long last," said an emotionally-choked Oliar, now 38 and father of three daughters.

"The moment I heard the verdict, I felt that I am relieved of the agony that I had been going through since my tender age," he told The Daily Star.

Judge Monir Kamal of the Speedy Trial Tribunal-3 of Dhaka delivered the verdict around 12:20pm.

Oliar was the only accused who stood in the dock while the four others were on the run.

"I had been appearing before courts over the last 25 years. I cannot remember skipping a single hearing

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BIGGEST ROAD SAFETY PROJECT Concern rising over fate of WB fund

A year of the stipulated 18 months gone, govt yet to approve the project; roads secy sees no uncertainty

TUHIN SHUBHRA ADHIKARY

The World Bank in March last year approved a loan for the biggest road safety project in Bangladesh. The loan contract with Bangladesh authorities has to be signed within one and a half years of the approval, or else, the loan would be cancelled, said officials.

One year has already gone by, but the project has not been approved yet, a pre-condition for signing the loan deal, rising concern over the fate of the project's funding, they said.

The Tk 4,988.14 crore project now has to get the nod within three or four months by the Executive Committee of the National Economic Council, because it takes some time to issue office order regarding the approval, they added.

After changes in the Development Project Proposal, the Roads and Highways Department, the lead implementing agency of the project, re-submitted it to the Road Transport and Highways Division on Sunday.

RHD sources said WB already wrote to the authorities concerned to complete the DPP approval process quickly.

Any project, after submission of the DPP by the implementing agency

concerned, usually goes through a lengthy process that include several meetings involving different agencies. It takes quite a long time. So, the fate of the project depends how quickly the process will be completed and how fast the Ecneec approves it, the officials said.

The deadline for the project is June 2028.

The project is getting delayed when

The project proposal is now with the Planning Commission and its approval is expected soon

ABM Amin Ullah Nuri
Road Transport and Highways
Division Secretary

road safety issue has become a major concern as thousands of people are getting killed or maimed every year. The issue came to the fore again after a bus, which had no fitness clearance, veered off the Dhaka-Bhanga expressway and crashed, killing 19 people last month.

Contacted, Road Transport and Highways Division Secretary ABM

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Scrap DSA, case against Prothom Alo journalists

Demand teachers, jurnos, cultural activists

STAR REPORT

Journalists, teachers, and cultural activists yesterday expressed concern over the suing of Prothom Alo Editor and Publisher Matiuur Rahman, reporter Samsuzzaman Shams, and other journalists under the Digital Security Act.

They also demanded the withdrawal of the case and the scrapping of the act.

A statement from the University Teachers' Network said the government has enacted the law to create panic among people by harassing those, who criticise the government.

Journalists and social media activists are the worst victims of the DSA, said the statement signed by 48 teachers from different public and private universities.

Referring to a statistic of Ain O Salish Kendra (ASK), the teachers' network said some 56 journalists were tortured and harassed in three months from

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SEABED OFF JAPAN Scientists film deepest ever fish



CNN ONLINE

Cruising at a depth of 8,336 metres (over 27,000 feet) just above the seabed, a young snailfish has become the deepest fish ever filmed by scientists during a probe into the abyss of the northern Pacific Ocean.

Scientists from University of Western Australia and Tokyo University of Marine Science and Technology released footage of the snailfish on Sunday filmed last September by sea robots in deep trenches off Japan.

Along with the filming the deepest snailfish, the scientists physically caught two other specimens at 8,022 metres and set another record for the deepest catch.

Previously, the deepest snailfish ever spotted was at 7,703 metres in 2008, while scientists had never been able to collect fish from anywhere below 8,000 metres.

"What is significant is that it shows how far a particular type of fish will descend in the ocean," said marine biologist Alan Jamieson, founder of the Minderoo-UWA Deep Sea Research Centre, who led the expedition.

Scientists are filming in the trenches off Japan

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Finland to join Nato today Sweden still waiting

REUTERS, Brussels

Finland will join Nato today, marking the completion of a swift journey into the military alliance for the Nordic nation following Russia's invasion of Ukraine, officials said.

Finland has a 1,300-km (810-mile) border with Russia, meaning Nato's frontier with Russia will roughly double in length, and the move drew a pledge from Moscow that it will beef up its forces in border regions.

"Tomorrow we will welcome Finland as the 31st member of Nato making Finland safer and our alliance stronger," Nato Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg told reporters in Brussels, hailing the move as "historic".

"We will raise the Finnish flag for the first time here at Nato headquarters. It will be a good day for Finland's security, for Nordic security and for Nato as a whole," Stoltenberg said.

Finnish President Sauli Niinisto will travel to Brussels to take part in the ceremony, his office said.

Russia's invasion of Ukraine in February last year pushed Finland and its neighbour Sweden to apply for Nato membership, abandoning decades of military non-alignment.

The last hurdle to Finland's membership was removed last week when Turkey's parliament voted to ratify Helsinki's application even as it kept Sweden's bid on hold.

"President Putin went to war against Ukraine with the clear aim to get less Nato," Stoltenberg said. "He's getting the exact opposite."

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Vehicles stuck in a long tailback on the Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue in the capital around 5:15pm yesterday. Traffic in many places was at a standstill during that time as many rushed home for iftar.

PHOTO: SK ENAMUL HAQ

ALLEGED EXTORTION Mob beats UPDF man to death

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Rangamati

A member of the United People's Democratic Front (UPDF), beaten by a mob over extortion allegation on Sunday night, died hours later while undergoing treatment in Khagrachhari.

The deceased Hlachingmong Marma, 23, of Baidya Para in the district's Ramghar upazila, was UPDF's district organiser, party sources said.

"On Sunday evening, locals apprehended the man over extortion allegation and gave him a thrashing in the Schoolpara area of the Jaggyachola union in Manikchhari upazila," said Anserul Karim, officer-in-charge of Manikchhari Police Station.

Police rushed him to Manikchhari Upazila Health Complex Hospital after he was handed over to law enforcers, he said.

Later, he was shifted to Khagrachhari General Hospital, where he died while undergoing

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