

## Rab busts 'arms factory' in Cox's Bazar

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Cox's Bazar

Rapid Action Battalion yesterday busted an "arms factory" in a remote hilly area under Ramu upazila in Cox's Bazar after conducting a 16-hour drive there.

They also arrested four persons in this connection.

The drive was conducted at Tulatali Hill in Chhagirakata under Eidgaon union in Ramu, said Lt Col HM Sajjad Hossain, commander of Cox's Bazar Rab-15 Battalion, at press briefing yesterday.

Rab recovered 10 locally-made guns, 10 rifle bullets, 12 cartridges and a large cache of arms making materials from the spot, he also said.

The arrestees are Zafar Alam, Lal Mia, Main Uddin and Shahab Uddin. A case was filed against them with Ramu Police Station.

However, Maniul Haque, owner and chief arms maker of the factory, managed to flee, the official said.

# 2 more flights diverted due to dense fog

Mild cold wave may hit several areas in north, west

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Two international flights bound for Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport in Dhaka, between 12:00am and 7:00am yesterday, were diverted to Kolkata due to dense fog.

Group Captain Kamrul Islam, executive director at the HSLA, confirmed the information to The Daily Star.

He said the diverted flights started to return to the Dhaka airport from 8:00am when the weather became normal.

Meanwhile, Shahinul Islam, meteorologist of the Bangladesh Meteorological Department, said temperatures may drop across the country today and mild cold waves may also sweep over northwest and western parts of the country.

According to the weather forecast of BMD, weather may remain dry with temporary partly cloudy skies over the country in the next 24 hours.



A day labourer warms her feet above a fire by the roadside in Rajbandh area of Khulna's Batiaghata upazila. Amid the chilly weather, like her, many head out from home early in the morning in search of work.

PHOTO: HABIBUR RAHMAN

Moderate to thick fog may occur over the country between midnight to morning. Night temperature may rise slightly and day temperature may remain nearly unchanged over the

country, it added.

The lowest recorded temperature in the country, in the last 24 hours till 3:00pm yesterday, was 12 degrees Celsius in Rajshahi.

## Stop filling up waterbodies

Speakers urge authorities

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Green activists and urban planners yesterday said the illegal filling of waterbodies must be stopped for the sake of the city, as it is frequently facing climate issues like excessive heat and waterlogging.

They demanded that the government take necessary actions to protect wetlands and waterbodies.

They made the remarks at an event organised by Bangladesh Institute of Planners at their headquarters, in cooperation with TIB, Centre for Urban Studies, Bapa, BLAST and Nijera Kori, for protesting the recent filling of a waterbody in Mirpur by BADC.

Adil Mohammed Khan, professor at Urban and Regional Planning Department of Jahangirnagar University, said Dhaka had 31 percent of wetlands in 1995, while it has come down to 4.6 percent now. "A city needs at least 12 percent of wetlands," he added.

Sultana Kamal, founding president of Manabdhikar Shongskriti Foundation, said government agencies are grabbing public space as they have no accountability and no respect for the country's laws.

TIB Executive Director Dr Iftekharuzzaman said BADC has been misusing its power to violate existing laws and directives of the PM. It must have accountability for filling the Mirpur wetland, he said.

**Dhaka had 31 percent of wetlands in 1995, while it has come down to 4.6 percent now. A city needs at least 12 percent of wetlands.**

ADIL MOHAMMED KHAN

## Cumilla Mayor Arfanul Haque passes away

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Cumilla

Cumilla City Corporation Mayor Arfanul Haque Rifat died at Mount Elizabeth Hospital in Singapore last evening. He was 65.

He breathed his last around 6:30pm (Bangladesh time), confirmed Atikul Islam Khokon, joint secretary of Cumilla city Awami League, quoting Rifat's family members.

He left behind his wife, two daughters, and a son to mourn his death.

Rifat, also the general secretary of Cumilla city unit AL, was elected the city corporation mayor on June 15 last year. He was born on February 2, 1958.

Rifat was the sports affairs secretary of Cumilla Victoria College unit student council in 1981. Later, he was made senior vice president of Cumilla South District Jubo League and founding general secretary of Cumilla city unit AL.

He served duties as the president of Cumilla District Football Federation for four consecutive terms. Besides, he was involved with several social organisations.



## Address parents'

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Otherwise, our children will be left behind compared to other developed countries," she said.

Noted author and academician Prof Muhammad Zafar Iqbal highlighted the positive impact of the new curriculum on children's learning. "The children have accepted this curriculum with joy. That is the biggest achievement," he said, adding that science education has been given more importance in the new curriculum.

Meherunnesa, headteacher of Rayer Bazar High School, said, "We have engaged with parents through meetings to help them understand the curriculum."

Ferdousi Begum, principal of Rotnogorva Farida Zaman School and College, said, "The problem is not in the curriculum, but with the skills of teachers, and mindset of parents."

"We need additional training for teachers, awareness campaigns for parents, and improving required physical infrastructure to address these challenges," she added.

She also urged the government not to make frequent changes to curriculum, which may hamper a student's general learning process.

Prof Md Abdul Mannan of North South University said the new curriculum will help students identify the real world aspects and learn effectively.

Prof Syed Mahfooz Ali, director of the Directorate of Secondary and Higher Education, shared plans for providing further training to teachers in phases and bringing all educational institutions under the curriculum's scope.

NCTB member (Curriculum) Prof Md Moshuazzaman said the curriculum is focused on reducing rote learning and adapting to modern technologies.

He shared plans for organising education fairs at upazila level to expand awareness and display students' class outcomes.

Rokeya Kabir, executive director of BNPS, moderated the roundtable, chaired by BNPS chairperson and educationist Shaymoli Nasrin Chowdhury.



The organisers later held a brief programme at Aparajeya Bangla.

PHOTO: STAR

## It's against DU spirit

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Following the cancellation, the organisers hung two posters at the entrance of the auditorium, one of which read "curbs on freedom of speech will not be tolerated at the university".

They later held a brief programme at Aparajeya Bangla followed by a protest rally with participants wearing black badges.

During the event, speakers said teachers and guardians have every right to be concerned about the updated curriculum as students eventually enroll in universities after studying it.

"That is why I am talking about this curriculum," said Dhaka University Prof Kamrul Hasan Mamun.

He said all the successive governments including the incumbent one did not take any steps to increase

the standard of education.

"If you look at the education model in developed countries, you will not find any examples of changing the existing curriculum overnight because it has an impact on tens of thousands of students, teachers, and guardians," he said.

Jagannath University Prof Nasir Uddin Ahmed suggested that for practical education, the government should focus on vocational institutions, but they should not blend traditional education with vocational training.

Rakhal Raha, an activist of Sammilita Shikha Andolan, said they have been speaking about the curriculum since 2019 when the draft was prepared. "They did not pay any heed to our concerns," he said.

## EC declares 46

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Nasirul Chunnus challenged Nasirul's candidacy alleging that he concealed information of loan default.

Meanwhile, the EC in three separate letters sought information from the foreign ministry regarding the dual citizenship of three aspirants with assistance from concerned embassies in Dhaka, who are AL candidate for Barishal 4 Shammi Ahmed, AL candidate for Faridpur-3 Shamim Haq, and independent AK Azad from the same constituency.

Shamim and Azad appealed against each other's candidature in this regard, and the hearing is still pending.

## Court refuses

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was produced before it. Later his bail was again rejected by the Dhaka Metropolitan Sessions Judge's Court on November 22.

The HC on December 7 dismissed his bail petition for the third time.

Meantime, BNP Standing Committee Member Amir Khasru Mahmud Chowdhury yesterday sought bail in nine cases while its media cell convener Zahir Uddin Swapan sought bail in seven cases filed over political violence.

Detectives detained the two from the Gulshan area on November 3.

## Heart stent prices

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According to the DGDA order, a separate cash memo will have to be provided mentioning the name of a coronary stent, its maximum retail price and the name of the manufacturer. The packet of a used coronary stent will have to be provided to the patient.

Bangladesh is dependent on foreign suppliers to meet the demand for cardiac stents, as there is no

local producer. Each year, around 45,000 stents are used at different hospitals across the country.

Contacted yesterday, DGDA deputy director and spokesperson Md Nurul Alam said coronary stents are not manufactured in Bangladesh. The government has now fixed the price. If any person or organisation charges more than the prescribed price, strict action will be taken as per law, he added.

## I miss the war of words

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"No one can claim that our democracy or democracy of any other country is flawless. No one is perfect... but to achieve this perfection, to be perfect, we will eliminate those issues and make the journey of democracy smoother," he said.

Quader questioned whether BNP wants to establish democracy in the

country by setting fire to buses, vandalising trains, arson and terrorism.

Regarding independent candidates, Quader said, "I have clearly talked about independent candidates. We have also informed those who are negotiating from the alliance - we cannot withdraw independent candidates. There is no room for compromise here."

## We welcome

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invest in Bangladesh including in its agro-based industries.

"Many entrepreneurs are keen to visit Bangladesh and invest here," the Spanish ambassador said.

During the meeting, both the premier and the Spanish envoy expressed satisfaction over the existing relationship between the two countries and hoped that this relationship will be strengthened further.

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