



## THE SHRINKING JAMUNA

A portion of the Jamuna in Bogura's Sariakandi upazila turns into a narrow channel as the water level goes down during the dry season, exposing the silt accumulated throughout the year. According to Bogura's Water Development Board, around a billion tonnes of silt is deposited during the monsoon as water rushes in from the upstream in Rangpur, Gaibandha and Bogura. When the water recedes before the rainy season, the chars, or shoals, rise back up. In 2021, a Bogura-Jamalpur ferry service was launched but had to be halted in just a few days due to poor navigability during the dry season. The photo was taken recently.

PHOTO: MOSTAFA SHABUJ

## Govt sets prices of 29 food items

The move aimed at reining in price spiral during Ramadan; experts doubt its effectiveness

SHAHEEN MOLLAH and MD ABBAS

Despite failure to enforce the price caps on some daily essentials in recent times, the government has once again fixed the prices of 29 commodities from producer to consumer level.

The Department of Agricultural Marketing in a circular yesterday fixed the prices of the commodities, including red lentils, chickpeas, egg, onion, potato, broiler chicken and beef, and asked the traders of all levels to sell the items at the fixed prices.

The prices took effect immediately and will remain in force until further directives, said the circular.

According to the circular, the price of red lentils (large) was fixed at Tk 96.5 per kg at producer level, Tk 100 at wholesale and Tk 105.5 at retail level.

The item now sells for Tk 120 per kg at different kitchen markets. The department fixed the wholesale price of chickpeas at Tk 93.5 per kg and retail price at Tk 98, down from the current retail price of Tk 120.

At retail level, the price of local onion has been fixed at Tk 65 per kg, potatoes at Tk 28.5 per kg, egg at Tk 10.50 per piece, green chillies at Tk 60 per kg, broiler chicken at Tk 175 per kg and beef at Tk 664 per kg.

On September 14 last year, the government fixed the prices of eggs, onions and potatoes after the prices of those essentials shot up. However, the authorities concerned could not enforce the price caps despite raids by different government agencies in different wholesale and retail markets.

Ghulam Rahman, president of the Consumers Association of Bangladesh (CAB), said the process of fixing commodity prices by the

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

## HIJACKED MV ABDULLAH Pirates take it further north of Somali coast

DWAIPAAYAN BARUA

The pirates took the Bangladesh-flagged ship 45 to 50 nautical miles to the north and anchored it 4 nautical miles off the coast of Godobjiran town of Somalia yesterday evening.

According to a satellite image, the pirates took the vessel from Garacad to Godobjiran, said Shakawat Hossain, general secretary of Bangladesh Merchant Marine Officers' Association.

According to Shakawat, the pirates were still busy settling the ship in a place where they felt safe.

Meanwhile, the Indian Navy said its long-range maritime patrol aircraft located the MV Abdullah hours after it was hijacked with 23 crew members on March 12.

The Indian Navy also ascertained that the crew held hostage by armed pirates was safe.

The European Union on Thursday said it deployed a ship to monitor the hijacked vessel.

Reuters reports that the European Union naval force on Thursday said Somali pirates who seized the Maltese-flagged bulk cargo ship Ruen in December last year may have used the vessel in the

SEE PAGE 2 COL 4

## Fire incidents keep rising

Nearly 3,000 lives lost in 1.73 lakh fires in last 7 years

SAJJAD HOSSAIN

Amid poor enforcement of safety rules, the number of fire incidents has risen in the last four years.

At least 27,624 fires killed 102 people and injured 281 last year, compared to the previous year, according to data from the Fire Service and Civil Defence.

Over the past seven years, 2,884 people lost their lives, and 1,73,709 fires occurred across the country, according to fire service data.

At least 64,447 of the fires were caused by electrical short-circuits.

"Unplanned construction work done without adhering to fire safety regulations often causes tragedies. Major accidents keep happening because of the lack of fire safety measures," says Ali Ahmed Khan, former director general of Bangladesh

Fire Service and Civil Defence.

The government bodies involved in fire prevention and response should be more strict in enforcing the rules, he adds.

"Violators should be penalised appropriately and action must be taken as per the law."

There were safety rules violations at the Green Cozy Cottage Shopping Mall on Bailey Road where 46 people died in a fire on February 29. The fire service issued three notices to the owners of the seven-storey building about the serious risks, but it did not take any legal steps.

From January 2020 to December 2023, firefighters inspected 24,193 buildings and identified 7,801 with risks. Of these, 1,803 were at high risk.

Professor Adil Mohammed Khan, president of Bangladesh Institute

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

| YEAR | FIRE INCIDENTS | DEATHS |
|------|----------------|--------|
| 2023 | 27,624         | 102    |
| 2022 | 24,102         | 98     |
| 2021 | 21,601         | 219    |
| 2020 | 21,073         | 154    |

## Nagad's rejoinder, our reply

Nagad has sent a rejoinder to The Daily Star in response to a report headlined "Nagad's user info in the public domain: Govt cyber response agency also confirms similar theft from other entities; Nagad says customer data remain secure" published on March 12, 2024. Below we publish the unedited rejoinder in full followed by our response.

**Rejoinder**  
The Daily Star published a report titled "Nagad's user info in the public domain" on Tuesday (12 March 2024), but it is pathetic that this esteemed daily seems to have forgotten to follow the journalist standards in this report that it always claims to uphold. Through media reports, including yours, we have learned of a few incidents involving data leaks through different national entities last year.

In a pre-meditated attempt to malign

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1

## Nissanka ton helps SL level series

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Thanks to Pathum Nissanka's sixth ODI ton and a solid ninety-odd knock from Charith Asalanka, Sri Lanka were able to bounce back in the three-match ODI series against hosts Bangladesh with a three-wicket win in the second ODI at Zahur Ahmed Chowdhury Stadium in Chattogram yesterday.

Bangladesh bowlers picked up wickets in clusters at the start and at the latter part of the game, with Taskin Ahmed getting to 100 wickets in ODIs, but a record 185-run fourth-wicket stand between Nissanka and Asalanka meant Sri Lanka eventually prevailed in their 287-run chase with 17 balls to spare.

Nissanka smashed a 113-ball 114, laced with 13 boundaries and three maximums, while Asalanka scored 91 off 93 deliveries as the duo stitched together

SEE PAGE 2 COL 4



Sri Lanka's Pathum Nissanka celebrates after completing a commanding century against Bangladesh which helped the visitors complete a three-wicket win with 17 balls to spare in the second ODI and level the three-match series 1-1 at the Zahur Ahmed Chowdhury Stadium in Chattogram yesterday.

PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

## CONTROL OVER BUS STAND Pedestrian shot dead as 2 groups clash in Cumilla 3 others suffer bullet wounds

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Cumilla

A pedestrian was shot dead and four other people were injured in a clash between two groups in Cumilla's Shashongachha bus stand area yesterday afternoon.

Deceased Jamil Hasan Arnab, 30, was a staffer of the Satata Paribahan counter at the stand.

He had recently graduated from the Cumilla Victoria Government College and was the joint convener of Cumilla South unit Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal, said Farid Uddin Shiplo, convener of the unit.

Of the injured, three suffered bullet wounds. Two of them - Nazmul and Anik -- were sent to hospitals in Dhaka for better treatment.

Firoz Hossain, officer-in-charge of Kotwali Police Station, said the two groups clashed around 2:30pm over establishing supremacy at the stand in Shashongachha.

After being shot, Arnab was taken to Cumilla Medical College Hospital, where he was pronounced brought dead, the OC said.

Many of those involved in the clash are supporters of the ruling Awami League men, he said.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1



Jamil Hasan