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AL MP Ekramul Karim Chy's son wins UZ polls, swelling the ranks of public representatives in the clan

ASHIK ABDULLAH APU and SIRAJUL ISLAM RUBEL

With his son's victory in Wednesday's upazila chairman polls in Subarnachar, local Awami League lawmaker Ekramul Karim Chowdhury have further consolidated his grip on politics, said party insiders.

A novice in politics, 26-year-old Atahar Ishraq Shabab Chowdhury defeated incumbent AHM Khairul Anam Chowdhury Salim, a veteran AL leader, by 703 votes.

Shabab, a business by profession, is the latest addition to the list of public representatives from Ekram's family and relatives. At least six of his family members and close relatives already hold political posts and public offices.



Shabab Chowdhury

Ekramul's wife Kamrun Nahar Shiuly is the chairman of Kabirhat Upazila Parishad in Noakhali, while his nephew Jahirul Haque Raihan is the mayor of Kabirhat Municipality.

His stepbrother Hazi Ibrahim is the president of Kabirhat upazila Awami League. Another brother of Ekramul, Moahmmad Ilias, is the chairman of Sundolpur Union Parishad under Kabirhat upazila.

Visiting Ekramul's constituency recently, The Daily Star found that the lawmaker has named a market, Ekram Nagar, in Subarnachar after himself, a high school after his wife, and a road and a river ghat after his son.

Local AL leaders said the MP, who has already cornered his political

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Farmers using a threshing machine to separate the seeds from the recently harvested Boro paddy in Dharmadi village of Barishal's Sadar upazila yesterday. Once the process is done, they will then sell the paddy at the weekly village market.

PHOTO: TITU DAS

TODAY'S RALLIES 18 conditions for AL, 19 for BNP

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Archivals Awami League and BNP are going to hold rallies in the capital today.

Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP) yesterday gave permission to ruling AL to hold its "peace and development rally" on Gaznabi Road at Mohammadpur on 18 conditions.

While opposition BNP got the police permission on 19 conditions to hold a rally in front of its Nayapaltan office, demanding the unconditional release of Chairperson Khaleida Zia and other jailed leaders and the withdrawal of false cases against its acting chairman Tarique Rahman.

AL's Dhaka city (north) unit will hold the rally at 2:30pm while BNP's programme, to be organised by its Dhaka city (south) unit, will start at 3:00pm.

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How dolls brought empowerment to Abdulpur women

KONGKON KARMAKER

The women and girls of Abdulpur village in Dinajpur's Chirirbandar upazila have found a remarkable way to empower themselves - doll making.

The doll makers there have become so popular that the village



is now dubbed "putul gram", literally translating to "doll village".

Taking their art a step further is the fact that their works are now exported to different countries, earning them recognition both at home and abroad.

Over 600 women and girls have taken up the art to not only express

their creativity but generate income to support their families.

According to the locals, the journey began in 2018 after AB Crusade, a local organisation of the upazila, took up the initiative to empower the women of this underdeveloped village through different means.



AB crusade is part of AB Foundation, founded by eminent orthodontist Dr Amjad Hossain, in Chirirbandar upazila. The foundation is involved in many sectors, especially education and health.

It began with only three women, one of whom is Manisha Rani Das.

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India willing to finance Teesta project here

Says foreign minister after talks with Indian foreign secy; date for Hasina's Delhi visit to be decided after India polls

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

India has expressed interest in financing Bangladesh's Teesta project, Foreign Minister Hasan Mahmud said after a meeting with Indian Foreign Secretary Vinay Mohan Kwatra yesterday.

"You know we have taken up a big project on Teesta. India wants to finance this project. It will have to be implemented in line with our needs. We want to see that our needs get fulfilled," Hasan told reporters at his ministry, reports UNB.

Asked about China's interest in funding the "Teesta River Comprehensive Management and Restoration Project", Hasan said they discussed the issue of India's interest in financing the project, not of other countries.

The foreign minister stressed on early conclusion of Teesta Water-Sharing Treaty and renewal of Ganges Water Sharing Treaty, which was signed in 1996. That is the only water-sharing treaty with India, though the two countries have 54 transboundary rivers.

India's interest in financing the Teesta project bears significance as it has been an issue of strain in the bilateral relations. In 2011, Bangladesh and India failed to sign the Teesta water-sharing agreement due to West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee's last-minute opposition during the then Indian prime minister Manmohan Singh's visit to Dhaka.

Because of surface water shortage, farmers in Bangladesh's northern region depend heavily on

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ROAD CRASHES

This April deadliest in 16 months

Shows BRTA data; high number of mobile court drives last month fails to bring down fatalities

TUHIN SHUBHRA ADHIKARY

April saw the highest number of road crashes and deaths since January 2023, when Bangladesh Road Transport Authority started releasing road crash data. The month turned deadliest despite

year, indicating that roads are getting riskier.

Moreover, the road accidents and deaths have gone up by 53.91 percent and 39.69 percent respectively in the first four months of this year compared with the corresponding period of last year, according to BRTA statistics.

	DEATHS, INJURIES IN 2024		
	ROAD CRASHES	DEATHS	INJURIES
April	658	632	866
March	624	550	684
February	579	523	722
January	437	404	514

SOURCE: BRTA



the operations of the highest number of mobile courts in recent months.

Ten executive magistrates of BRTA conducted 234 mobile court drives in Dhaka and Chattogram last month, which was 6.44 times more than the previous month, shows BRTA data.

It also revealed a trend of gradual and steady rise in road crashes and deaths this

"All our warnings to control unfit vehicles and unskilled drivers have not been acted upon and that's why road crashes have risen," Prof Hadiuzzman, former director of Accident Research Institute at Buet, said.

BRTA data proves that only trying the errant drivers and vehicle owners or

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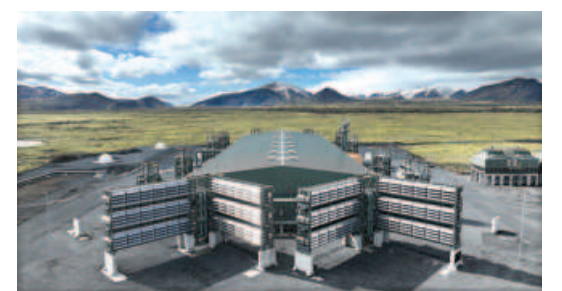


GIVING COLOUR TO THE SEAS

A sea slug, more specifically a dorid nudibranch or Goniobranchus reticulatus, spotted around 12ft deep into the Bay of Bengal off Saint Martin's Island. This species is widely reported from the Indo-West Pacific, though sea slugs occur in seas worldwide. They are almost completely restricted to salt water, but some species are known to inhabit brackish waters with less salinity - such as this particular one. Though visually stunning, the bright colours of this reef-dwelling species is not particularly for aesthetic purposes. The colours are actually to ward off predators and warn them of its toxic stinging cells or "offensive" taste. The species gains its toxicity from the food it consumes, which can include certain jellyfish, sea anemones or even other species of sea slugs. Because of the short life span of sea slugs, their reaction to changing environments, especially in the absence of food, is quicker than most animals. Due to this, scientists have actually been studying the movement of sea slugs to better understand the impact of climate change.

PHOTO: SHARIF SARWAR

New Iceland plant scales up CO2 removal from air



AFP, Hellsheidi

A Swiss start-up on Wednesday unveiled its second plant in Iceland sucking carbon dioxide from the air and stocking it underground, scaling up its capacity tenfold with the aim of eliminating millions of tonnes of CO2 by 2030.

Dubbed Mammoth, the plant lies just a few hundred metres from its little sister Orca, a pioneering facility opened by Swiss start-up Climeworks in September 2021 in the middle of a moss-covered lava field about a half-hour drive from the capital Reykjavik.

Here, 12 containers similar to those used in maritime transport are stacked up against a backdrop of mountains.

In recent days, fans in the containers began drawing in ambient air and releasing it, largely purified of CO2, through vents at the back. It's all done through a chemical process, and powered by the nearby geothermal plant ON Power.