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## Public univs 'reopen' today

### 20 VC, 10 pro-VC posts remain vacant

MOHIUDDIN ALAMGIR and ARAFAT RAHAMAN

Public universities are set to reopen today amid a vacuum in the administrations after the resignation of at least 20 vice-chancellors, 10 pro-vice-chancellors, and many other officials.

Classes and other academic activities have been disrupted for more than one and a half months. When the universities reopen, academic activities may not be at full swing due to the vacancies at key posts.

The wave of resignations in different institutions in the wake of the fall of Hasina-led government has put the interim government in a challenging situation.

"I hope academic activities will fully resume later this week or early next week," said Prof Muhammed Alamgir, acting chairman of the University Grants Commission, adding that discussions with students will be needed to fully resume the academic activities.

SEE PAGE 6 COL 4



Traders have set up tin-roofed shops encroaching upon the Shubhadya canal in Keraniganj's Purbapara area. The canal has become clogged with waste and construction debris. The photo was taken recently.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

## 5 secretaries appointed on contract

### They were earlier forced into retirement; existing contracts of many scrapped

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Five additional secretaries, who were forced to resign during the Awami League government, were appointed as secretaries yesterday on a contractual basis.

The new administration, which took charge after the student-led uprising earlier this month, also terminated several top officials who had been appointed contractually by the ousted Sheikh Hasina administration.

All the newly appointed secretaries are from the 1982 batch (regular) of the admin cadre, said sources in the public administration.

The Ministry of Public Administration issued circulars on these appointments.

Dr Mohammad Abdul Momen has been appointed secretary to the Public Security Division under the home ministry.

Md Mokabbir Hossain, who was appointed as the senior secretary to the division just three days ago, was transferred to the science and technology ministry.

Dr Momen had reportedly been sent on compulsory retirement on June 6, 2013, after he completed 25 years in

SEE PAGE 6 COL 1

## DGHS issues guidelines for mpox

### Asks people with symptoms to contact 16263 or 10655

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Three days after the World Health Organisation (WHO) declared the mpox outbreak a global public health emergency, the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS) yesterday issued a guideline to control the disease.

It detailed the dos and don'ts of preventing mpox. It also described the symptoms and treatment of the disease.

The DGHS also advised people to contact 16263 or 10655 immediately, if any symptoms of mpox appear. However, no mpox patient has been found in Bangladesh so far.

Meanwhile, Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport (HSIA) yesterday started screening the temperature of the passengers who arrived from abroad.

Mpox was first identified in monkeys in Denmark in 1958. WHO said that the disease has already spread to Burundi, Uganda, Rwanda, Sweden and Kenya. Mpox was also detected in Pakistan for the first time on Thursday.

WHO declared a state of emergency for the disease twice in the last two years. Last Wednesday, it declared mpox a global public health emergency over the upsurge of the disease in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) and a growing number of countries in Africa.

Regarding the spread of the animal-borne disease, DGHS said that mpox virus was initially transmitted from animals to humans. But now it is being transmitted from person to person. Mpox belongs to the same class of viruses responsible for smallpox, but it is much less harmful than smallpox.

Mpox's typical symptoms include fever, headache,

SEE PAGE 6 COL 1

## Gaza truce an 'illusion'

### Says Hamas as US president says deal closer than ever; death toll in Palestinian territory crosses 40,000 mark

AGENCIES

A senior Hamas official yesterday dismissed optimistic talk by US President Joe Biden that a Gaza truce is nearer after negotiations in the Gulf emirate of Qatar.

"To say that we are getting close to a deal is an illusion," Hamas political bureau member Sami Abu Zuhri told AFP. "We are not facing a deal or real negotiations, but rather the imposing of American diktats."

He was responding to Biden's comment on Friday that, "We are closer than we have ever been."

Biden spoke after two days of talks in Qatar where Washington tried to bridge differences between Israel and Palestinian Hamas militants. The two sides have been at war for more than 10 months in the Gaza Strip.

Previous optimism during months of on-off truce talks has so far proven futile. But the stakes have significantly risen since the killings in quick succession in late July of Fuad Shukur, a top operations chief of Lebanon's Iran-backed Hezbollah movement, and Hamas political chief Ismail Haniyeh.

Their deaths led to vows of vengeance from Hezbollah, Iran and other Tehran-backed groups in the region which blamed Israel.

Western and Arab diplomats have been shuttling around the Middle East to push for a Gaza deal which they say could help avert a wider regional conflagration.

Biden's secretary of state, Antony Blinken, was scheduled to head to Israel yesterday in a bid to finalise an agreement.

As efforts towards a truce continued,

so did the killing on Saturday in Gaza and Lebanon.

Lebanon's health ministry said an Israeli air strike in southern Lebanon killed 10 people including a Syrian woman and her two children.

The strike was among the deadliest in southern Lebanon since the onset of near-daily exchanges of fire between Israel and Hezbollah following the start of the Gaza war in October.

- Hamas rejects 'new' Gaza truce conditions
- Israeli strike in south Lebanon kills 10
- Gaza rescuers say Israeli strike kills 15 from same family
- First polio case recorded in Gaza in 25 years

Israel's military said it struck a Hezbollah weapons storage facility.

In Hamas-run Gaza, civil defence rescuers said an Israeli air strike killed 15 people from a single Palestinian family. The fatalities in Al-Zawaida helped push the Gaza health ministry's war death toll to 40,074.

"We are in the morgue seeing indescribable scenes of limbs and severed

heads and children who are dismembered," said Omar al-Dreemli, a relative.

The Gaza war has displaced most of the territory's population, destroyed much of the housing and other infrastructure, and left diseases spreading.

The United Nations on Friday appealed for seven-day pauses in the fighting so it could vaccinate children against polio, after the Palestinian health ministry reported Gaza's first polio case in 25 years.

Israel claimed the killing of Shukur, in a strike in south Beirut, but has not commented directly on the killing of Haniyeh while he visited Tehran.

On Friday Hezbollah released a polished video appearing to show its fighters trucking large missiles through tunnels at an underground facility.

On his visit to Israel, Blinken will seek to "conclude the agreement for a ceasefire and release of hostages and detainees", the State Department said.

Egyptian, Qatari and US mediators are working to finalise details of a framework agreement initially outlined by Biden in May. He said Israel had proposed it.

In a joint statement after two days of talks in Qatar, the mediators said they presented both sides with a proposal that "bridges remaining gaps".

Talks aiming to secure a deal are to resume in Cairo "before the end of next week", they said.

Hamas did not attend the Doha talks. An official of the Islamist movement, Osama Hamdan, had told AFP the group would join if the meeting set a timetable for implementing what Hamas had already agreed to.

## BDR CARNAGE

### Make all probe reports public

### Victims' families demand, call for independent probe

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The families of the victims of the 2009 Pilkhana carnage demanded that all investigation reports related to the tragedy be made public and that an inquiry commission be formed to uncover the truth behind the brutal killings.

At a press conference held yesterday at Skyline Restaurant in Dhaka's Mohakhali, the families of those killed presented a series of demands, seeking justice and transparency, urging the interim government to take decisive action to this effect.

They claimed that a neighbouring state was involved in the massacre. They also said that the narrative of a dispute over "Operation Dal-Bhat" led to the killings is false, adding that it was spread with the intention of diverting attention away from the actual motives behind the massacre.

Rakin Ahmed Bhuiyan, son of Maj Gen Shakil Ahmed and Naznin Ahmed, both of whom were murdered during the carnage, made accusations against prominent political figures of the Awami League, including the former prime minister Sheikh Hasina.

"Sheikh Hasina, Sheikh Fazle

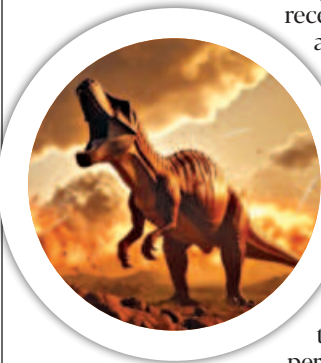
SEE PAGE 6 COL 4

## Scientists find origin of asteroid that wiped out dinosaurs

INDEPENDENT.CO.UK

Scientists may have finally found where the object that wiped out the dinosaurs came from.

The mass extinction event that occurred 66 million years ago - the most recent on Earth - came about when a rare kind of asteroid collided with Earth, researchers say.



In that incident, about 60 per cent of the Earth's species including all of its non-avian dinosaurs were wiped out.

Researchers believe that it led to a horrific period in the planet's history, during which its planets

were lit on fire, the Earth was covered in ash and the climate would have turned deadly.

And it all began in the distant outer solar system, beyond Jupiter. There, a C-type asteroid formed that would give rise to what scientists call the Chicxulub impactor, which crashed into Earth and left the vast crater after which it is named.

Scientists say the discovery should help solve long arguments about the history of the Earth, as well as the objects that have collided with it from elsewhere in space.



While the Karwan Bazar wholesale fish market is overflowing with various types of fish, including hilsa, prices have not dropped at the local markets as one would expect. The photo was taken yesterday around 7:00am.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

## COLLEAGUE'S RAPE, MURDER

### Indian doctors go on strike

AFP, New Delhi

Indian doctors held a nationwide strike yesterday, escalating protests after the "barbaric" rape and murder of their colleague that has channelled outrage at the chronic issue of violence against women.

The discovery of the 31-year-old doctor's bloodied body at a state-run hospital in the eastern city of Kolkata on August 9 sparked furious protests in several cities across the country.

Many have been led by doctors and other healthcare workers but also joined by tens of thousands of ordinary Indians demanding action.

In Kolkata, thousands held a candle-lit vigil into the early hours of Saturday morning.

"Hands that heal shouldn't bleed," read one sign held by a protester in the eastern city.

"Enough is enough," read another at a rally by doctors in the capital New Delhi.

"Hang the rapist," another said.

The murdered doctor was found in the teaching hospital's seminar hall, suggesting she had gone there for a rest during a 36-hour shift.

An autopsy confirmed sexual assault and, in a petition to the court, the victim's parents said they suspected

SEE PAGE 6 COL 1