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## Daring midnight robbery in Pabna

Several hurt as armed gang loots multiple vehicles; CA's Press Wing says media reports exaggerated

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Pabna

At least three people were injured when a gang of robbers looted a microbus carrying a Bangladeshi expatriate and at least two other vehicles in Pabna's Santhia upazila early yesterday.

The robbers placed timber barricades on the Pabna-Bera regional road around 2:00am, stopping vehicles and robbing passengers and drivers for nearly an hour, said Md Saidur Rahman, officer-in-charge of Santhia Police Station.

The OC said most vehicles use the Santhia-Bera road to bypass a longer route on the Dhaka-Pabna highway.

"The robbers looted passengers of microbuses and trucks after blocking the road. They also attacked microbus passengers, leaving three injured," he said.

The victims alerted police by calling the national emergency helpline, 999.

"Upon receiving the information, police rushed to the spot and rescued the victims, but the robbers managed to flee. Efforts are underway to identify and apprehend them," the OC added.

Asked about the exact number of looted vehicles, he said he heard there were at least 20 vehicles. "An investigation is ongoing, but no case has been filed yet."

"Following the incident, police patrols have been

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Demonstrators, mostly women, staging a sit-in at the capital's Shahbagh yesterday, demanding reinstatement of their appointment as primary school teachers.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

## Farooki questions Syed Jamil's claims

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Cultural Affairs Adviser Mostofa Sarwar Farooki has questioned some of the issues raised by Syed Jamil Ahmed in his statement while handing his resignation as the director general of Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy at a public event.



The cultural arena was shaken by the sudden resignation of Syed Jamil during the closing ceremony of the Munier Chowdhury Prothom Jatiya Natyutsav (Munier Chowdhury First National Theatre Festival) on Friday night.

In his resignation, Jamil Ahmed cited various "bureaucratic challenges" and "restrictions on artistic expression", among other reasons.

Farooki shed light on the circumstances surrounding Jamil Ahmed's resignation through a

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## 3 suspected robbers killed, 4 injured in mob beating

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Shariatpur

Three suspected robbers were killed and four of their associates injured in a mob beating in Shariatpur.

Nine others were also wounded when the robbers opened fire after being chased by locals during the incident on Friday night.

Shariatpur Superintendent of Police Md Nazrul Islam said the injured robbers and locals were receiving medical treatment. Four suspected robbers and two gunshot victims were undergoing treatment at Dhaka Medical College Hospital.

Police said a group of seven robbers entered Rajarhat of Madaripur's Kalkini upazila around 8:30pm. After being chased by locals, the robbers opened fire indiscriminately, injuring seven people in Madaripur and two in the bordering Shariatpur district.

Six of the injured were being treated at Madaripur and Shariatpur sadar hospitals. Another was discharged after first aid.

While fleeing via the Kirtinasha river, the robbers were intercepted by enraged locals in the Tetulia area of Domsar union under Shariatpur's Sadar upazila. They were severely beaten by the locals.

On information, Palong police had set up checkpoints at various locations, and later, police and army personnel arrived at the scene, transporting the injured and deceased to the hospital.

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## BGB warns of 'stronger response' as another Bangladeshi killed

MOHAMMAD JAMIL KHAN, from Cox's Bazar

The chief of Border Guard Bangladesh issued a stern warning yesterday, saying that continued killings by the Indian Border Security Force will prompt a "stronger response".

"We have made it very clear that such incidents are unacceptable and cannot be tolerated under any circumstances," BGB Director General Maj Gen Mohammad Ashrafuzzaman Siddiqui said. "If this goes on, then how long can we continue to arrest and handover the Indian intruders in line with the legal framework, the way we now do?" he added.

His remarks came in reply to a reporter's query after a flag raising ceremony in Cox's Bazar as another Bangladeshi was killed in BSF firing, along the border in Brahmanbaria.

Maj Gen Siddiqui said killing can never be the ultimate solution to any situation and BGB will continue protesting such incidents. "If another

killing occurs, we will take an even tougher stance."

According to BGB, 24 Bangladeshis were killed along the border last year, including 19 by BSF and five by Indian nationals. The number of Bangladeshis injured by BSF and Indian nationals last year was 68 and nine respectively.

The latest victim is Md Al-Amin, 32, who was shot dead by BSF at the Putia border of Kasba upazila in Brahmanbaria on Friday evening.

Citing BGB, Kasba Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO) Mohammad Samiul Islam said Al-Amin, son of Sultan Miah from South Putia village, was spotted roaming beyond the barbed-wire fence on the Putia border. Suspecting him to be a smuggler, BSF personnel opened fire, critically injuring him.

Later, BSF rescued him and took him to Bishalgarh Sub-Divisional Hospital in India, where he succumbed to his injuries later.

Naik Subedar Abu Bakkar, in charge of the Saldanadi camp under BGB's Battalion-60, said BSF fired a single

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If another killing occurs, we will take an even tougher stance.

BGB Chief Maj Gen Ashrafuzzaman

## ICT CHARGES

### Trial of Hasina, some others may start by May

Says chief prosecutor

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

Chief Prosecutor of the International Crimes Tribunal Md Tajul Islam yesterday said that the investigation report on several cases including those against ousted prime minister Sheikh Hasina is expected by this month and the trial will start within one to one and a half months after that.

He made these remarks while speaking to journalists after attending a workshop on the importance of human rights, environmental issues, and law enforcement held at the Primary Teachers Training Institute in Sylhet.

"Justice in these cases will be ensured by maintaining international standards and there will be no rush in holding the trials," he said.

He mentioned that efforts are underway to bring Hasina back to Bangladesh through Interpol.

"Bangladesh has a prisoner exchange agreement with India, which was signed by the Awami League government. Under this agreement, it is expected that India will return Sheikh Hasina to Bangladesh," he said.

The chief prosecutor also said that delays should not undermine public expectations and the biggest challenge now is to coordinate the extensive work, conduct a flawless investigation, and ensure justice while keeping the tribunal free from controversy.

## Two lunar landings in a week for Nasa's private Moon fleet

AFP, Washington

More than fifty years passed between the last Apollo mission and the United States' return to the lunar surface, when the first-ever private lander touched down last February.

Now, starting today, two more missions are set to follow within a single week, marking a bold push by Nasa and its industry partners to make Moon landings a routine part of space exploration.

First up is Firefly Aerospace's Blue Ghost Mission 1, nicknamed "Ghost Riders in the Sky."

After launching in January on a 45-day journey, it is targeting touchdown near Mons Latreille, a volcanic feature in Mare Crisium on the Moon's northeastern near side, at 3:34am US Eastern

time (0834 GMT). Along the way, it has captured stunning footage of the Moon, coming as close as 60 miles (100 kilometers) above the surface.

The golden lander, about the size of a hippopotamus, carries ten instruments, including one to analyse lunar soil, another to test radiation-tolerant computing, and a GPS-based navigation system.

Designed to operate for a full lunar day (14 Earth days), Blue Ghost is expected to capture high-definition imagery of a total eclipse on March 14, when Earth blocks the Sun from the Moon's horizon.



## NCP LAUNCH Pirojpur DC requisitioned buses for students

Govt denies any role; TIB slams such 'old practice'

STAR REPORT

Pirojpur district administration requisitioned several private-owned buses to facilitate students' travel between Pirojpur and Dhaka to attend the launch of the National Citizen Party (NCP) on Friday.

The district administration did it in the face of "pressure" from the local chapters of the Students Against Discrimination and Jatiya Nagorik Committee, said Chief Adviser's Press Secretary Shafiqul Alam yesterday.

However, the interim government did not have any role in the requisition, he said at a press conference at the Foreign Service Academy in Dhaka.

"The deputy commissioner of Pirojpur has informed us that representatives of the Students Against Discrimination and the Jatiya Nagorik Committee in Pirojpur requested him for the bus requisition a day before [the programme]," he said.

The people injured in the July uprising and the families of two people who died

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South Africa's Rassie van der Dussen shakes hands with Heinrich Klaasen during their seven-wicket win against England in their last Group B fixture of the ICC Champions Trophy at the National Stadium in Karachi yesterday. Both batters hit half-centuries as the Proteas reached the 180-run target with 125 balls to spare, thereby sealing a last-four berth as Group B winners.

PHOTO: REUTERS

Harsh reality of domestic abuse in Bangladesh

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**PRAYER TIMING MARCH 2**

	Fajr	Zohr	Asr	Maghrib	Esha
AZAN	5-05	12-45	4-30	6-02	7-30
JAMAAT	5-15	1-15	4-45	6-12	8-00

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

**SEHRI, IFTAR TIMING**

RAMADAN	MARCH	SEHRI	IFTAR
1	2		6:02
2	3	5:03	6:03
3	4	5:02	6:03