

Pedestrians walk along a section of Kazi Nazrul Islam Road in the capital's Lalmatia, dug up for development work implemented by the city corporation. The work has stalled after the initial 15 days, disrupting traffic, causing noise pollution and forcing pedestrians to navigate the damaged stretch on foot. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: **PRABIR DAS**

IN FOCUS

JOURNALIST ALIF MURDER

Court places second arrestee on 3-day remand

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Netrokona*

A Netrokona court yesterday placed a youth on a three-day remand in connection with the murder of journalist Lutfuzzaman Fakir Alif in Netrokona's Durgapur upazila.

Netrokona Senior Judicial Magistrate Court-2 Judge Md Alimul Islam granted the remand for three days after police produced Ashiqur Rahman Prangon, 21, seeking a seven-day remand, confirmed Court Inspector Abdul Momin.

A team of Special Response Battalion (SRB-14) arrested Prangon of Durgapur municipality in the Shaheed Minar area on Tuesday night.

Durgapur Police Station OC Khondokar Shaker Ahmed said Prangon is the nephew of a man locally known as "Shooter Shamim", who faces at least 30 cases, including three murder cases, filed with the police station.

Alif was shot dead by unidentified assailants in the Telenjia area of Uttrail Bazar on the Shyamganj-Birishiri road in Durgapur on the night of October 15.

Alif was the Netrokona correspondent of private television channel Ruposhi Bangla. He also operated a Facebook page named "Detective Article", where he published investigative reports on border smuggling, criminal activities and various irregularities.



Star journalist Sohrab Hossain laid to rest

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Barishal*

Md Sohrab Hossain, The Daily Star's Patuakhali correspondent for more than 22 years and vice-president of the Patuakhali Press Club, was laid to rest at his family graveyard in Auliapur, Patuakhali, yesterday morning.

His namaz-e-janaza was held at 10:00am on the grounds of Auliapur Sabina Akter High School, attended by relatives, colleagues, fellow journalists, and local residents.

His elder son, Atikur Rahman, sought prayers for his father at the janaza. His other son, Sufian Molla, also spoke on the occasion.

Earlier, The Daily Star's Content Editor Md Al-Amin, Patuakhali Press Club President Zakir Hossain, and representatives of different social, political and professional organisations paid their last respects to Sohrab.

Following the janaza, he was buried next to the grave of his elder brother, Maulana Wahab Molla. SEE PAGE 9 COL 1

The uneven road to controlling hypertension

Education, wealth shape disparities in diagnosis and treatment, studies find

TASNEEM TAYEB

Bangladesh is among 14 countries where hypertension diagnosis rates differ by at least 10 percentage points across educational groups, according to a World Health Organization report released on Tuesday.

Using Bangladesh's 2018 STEPS survey, the WHO found that hypertension diagnosis was more common among adults aged 30-69 with secondary or higher education than those with less than primary schooling. The comparison is part of an assessment of 32 countries with education-disaggregated data.

The report, State of inequality: noncommunicable diseases and their risk factors, is the WHO's first global assessment of within-country inequalities in the burden, detection and treatment of major chronic diseases. It draws on nine international datasets and examines 35 indicators.

A Bangladesh study published three days earlier found a substantial education gap even among patients receiving treatment.

Blood pressure was controlled in only 35.8 percent of treated patients without formal schooling, compared with 59.4 percent of those with higher education, according to the paper published on October 17 in the Journal of Epidemiology and Global Health.



- 19.7% with hypertension have their blood pressure under control
- 45.1% of adults with hypertension receive treatment
- Blood pressure is controlled in 59.4% of treated patients with higher education, against 35.8% of those without formal schooling
- 66.3% of patients in the wealthiest 20% of households had been diagnosed, compared with 53.6% in the poorest 20%
- Only 43.6% of treated patients had controlled blood pressure.

The researchers analysed 13,760 adults aged 18 and above from the 2022 Bangladesh Demographic and Health Survey (BDHS). They found that patients with higher education had just over twice the odds of achieving blood pressure control.

However, the association does not prove that education itself caused better outcomes.

Hypertension affected 20.7 percent of adults in the analysis. Of those with the condition, 54.8 percent knew they had it, and 45.1 percent were receiving treatment.

Among treated patients, 43.6 percent had controlled blood pressure. As fewer than half of those with hypertension were receiving medication, only 19.7 percent of all adults with the condition had their blood pressure under control.

A separate study published in June, also based on the 2022 BDHS, found that access to diagnosis and treatment varied by wealth.

Among adults with hypertension, 66.3 percent of those from the wealthiest 20 percent of households had been diagnosed, compared with 53.6 percent of those from the poorest 20 percent.

Among those diagnosed, 79.5 percent of the richest group received treatment, against 61.7 percent of the poorest.

Published in PLOS Global Public Health, the study also found that hypertension prevalence was higher among the wealthiest 20 percent of households, at 27.1 percent, than the poorest 20 percent, at 17.3 percent. The poorer group's disadvantage lay in diagnosis and treatment, rather than a higher measured prevalence.

Another analysis of the 2022 BDHS, published in July, found that blood pressure control among people with hypertension improved from 12.5 percent in 2017–18 to 19.3 percent in 2022. Treatment coverage rose from 37.0 percent to 44.6 percent over the same period.

The June, July and October SEE PAGE 9 COL 6

Biman sets Riyadh flight, resumes Dammam services

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Biman Bangladesh Airlines has decided to operate a flight to Riyadh early on October 26 as conditions improve following attacks on Saudi Arabian airports.

The flight is scheduled to depart Dhaka at 1:25am (Bangladesh time), the national flag carrier said in a press release yesterday.

Biman said it would decide on operating additional Riyadh flights after reviewing the overall situation.

Meanwhile, the airline resumed flights to Dammam yesterday, with daily departures from Dhaka scheduled for 8:00am until October 26. The flights will be operated using Boeing 777 aircraft.

Biman flight BG350 departed Dammam for Dhaka yesterday and was still airborne at the time of reporting, according to flight-tracking website Flightradar24.

For Jeddah, Biman will operate two flights from Dhaka today, followed by one daily flight at 7:20pm on October 23, 24, and 25.

Flights to Madinah have been operating as usual since October 18 using Boeing 787 aircraft. The airline said the current schedule would remain unchanged until further notice.

Biman said passengers will be informed of any further changes to flight schedules, and they were advised to contact its sales offices for booking and travel information.

Restrictions at Saudi Arabian airports have affected 134 flights involving Bangladesh, disrupting travel for 20,254 passengers, according to the latest figures from the Civil Aviation Authority of Bangladesh.

Meanwhile, flight operations at Riyadh's King Khalid International Airport remain restricted SEE PAGE 9 COL 6

Rajshahi divisional commissioner transferred over 'breach of protocol'

STAR REPORT

Rajshahi Divisional Commissioner Yusuf Ali was transferred to the Public Administration Ministry on Tuesday evening, hours after an apparent "breach of protocol" while greeting Prime Minister Tarique Rahman at Shah Makhdum Airport.

A video circulating on social media shows Yusuf raising his left arm and moving forward as if to tap the prime minister on the back. Tarique steps away and gestures for him to stay back.

Sources in the Cabinet Division and Public Administration Ministry told The Daily Star that Yusuf was withdrawn over what they described as "unprofessional behaviour". The official notification gave no reason for the transfer.

Yusuf was instructed to leave Rajshahi around 7:30pm, and he departed for Dhaka around 11:00pm, according to sources.

When contacted, Public Administration Secretary Quamruzzaman Chowdhury described the transfer as routine.

Yusuf was appointed divisional commissioner on August 19, after serving as a member-director of the Bangladesh Agricultural Development Corporation.

Yusuf could not be reached for comment. Officials from the Cabinet Division and Public Administration Ministry declined to comment on the record.



Choked with plastic, polythene and household waste, Kalunagar canal in the capital's Hazaribagh remains virtually blocked, emitting a foul odour. A partly damaged fence along the canal allows more waste to enter. During the monsoon, canal water and rubbish spill onto the road, causing waterlogging. The photo was taken recently.

PHOTO: **PALASH KHAN**

'Your wrong politics giving Awami League chance to return'

Porwar tells govt

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Jamaat-e-Islami Secretary General Mia Golam Porwar yesterday accused the government of creating an opportunity for the Awami League to return to politics through "wrong politics".

"Do not push the country into a fire of anarchy and instability. By creating unrest and pushing the streets towards confrontation, you are giving the Awami League a chance to return to politics through your own wrong politics," he said.

Porwar made the remarks at the 49th founding anniversary programme of Bangladesh Labour Party as the chief guest at the party's central office in Segunbagicha, Dhaka.

Speaking at an event in Rajshahi on Tuesday, Prime Minister Tarique Rahman alleged that the ousted regime and a section of the opposition were conspiring to destabilise the country. Citing intelligence reports, he claimed that the AL was sending money from abroad to a political party in Bangladesh to create unrest.

Jamaat-e-Islami's central publicity department issued a press release containing Porwar's remarks.

The Jamaat leader said the government had become embroiled in disarray within seven months because the BNP had failed to move away from political immaturity and short-sighted leadership.