



PADMA BRIDGE RAIL LINK PROJECT
IS BEING BUILT WITH BSRM

COUNTRY'S NO. 1 STEEL EXPERT **BSRM**
building a safer nation



GUINNESS WORLD RECORDS
RECORD HOLDER

GUINNESS WORLD RECORDS
RECOGNIZES

World's Largest VRM

SHAH CEMENT

Protesters heap pressure on Iran

Demand heads roll after admission of shooting down plane; UK envoy detained briefly for 'inciting' protests

REUTERS, Dubai

Protesters piled pressure on Iran's leadership yesterday with demands for top authorities to quit after the Iranian military admitted it had mistakenly shot down a Ukrainian airliner at a time when it had feared US strikes.

"They are lying that our enemy is America, our enemy is right here," dozens of protesters outside a university in Tehran chanted, according to video clips posted on Twitter. Scores of demonstrators were also shown gathered in other cities.

The social media posts could not be verified by Reuters. But state-affiliated media had reported protests on Saturday shortly after the Iranian military apologised for mistakenly bringing down the Ukrainian plane on Wednesday, killing all 176 aboard.

Tehran residents told Reuters police were out in force in the capital yesterday, as public anger boiled up following days of denials by the military that it was to blame, even as Canada and the United States said a missile had brought the plane down.

Riot police fired teargas at thousands of protesters in the capital on Saturday, where many had chanted "Death to

SEE PAGE 11 COL 2



Iranian students demonstrate following a tribute to the victims of Ukraine International Airlines Boeing 737 in front of the Amirkabir University in Tehran late Saturday. Police dispersed the students chanting "radical" slogans during a gathering to honour the 176 people killed when an airliner was mistakenly shot down.

PHOTO: AFP

Stability, peace for all

Hasina lands in UAE with message

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka wants peace and stability all over the world and this is something Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina will emphasise during her three-day visit to the UAE where she reached last night.

She will attend "Abu Dhabi Sustainable Week", which is aimed to accelerate the world's sustainable development, and "Zayed Sustainable Awards Ceremony" at the UAE government's invitation.

She will also address global leaders and brief the Bangladesh envoys posted in the Middle Eastern countries.

Bangladesh maintains its core diplomatic motto: Friendship to all and malice towards none, Foreign Minister AK Abdul Momen said at a press briefing at his office yesterday. It was organised to brief the media on the visit.

The visit comes at a time when tensions have flared up in the Middle East following the killing of a

SEE PAGE 11 COL 5

Make a list of Ichhamati grabbers, polluters

HC asks govt

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court (HC) yesterday issued a rule asking authorities concerned of the government to prepare a list of encroachers and polluters of the Ichhamati river in Pabna and to submit it before the court in 90 days.

The court also issued a rule asking the authorities to explain in four weeks why they should not be directed to declare the 84-kilometre long river an ecologically critical area.

In the rule, the authorities have also been asked to show why they should not be directed to free the river from all encroachment and pollution by demarcating its boundary as per the Cadastral Survey report, remove all harmful

SEE PAGE 11 COL 1

Plastic it is not

Local company makes biodegradable packaging materials, bags from corn and maize



MOHAMMAD AL-MASUM MOLLA

A Bangladeshi company is producing biodegradable packaging from an unlikely source material -- corn or maize -- with the aim of offering a suitable alternative to polythene bags, which survive in soil for several hundred years and leave devastating impacts on the environment.

Expo Accessories Ltd has initially targeted Bangladesh's garment industry and supplies the bags to 30 factories, said Md Enamul Haque, its managing director.

"As our items are biodegradable and compostable, we are getting a huge response from the market," he said. "The demand for biodegradable products is increasing globally, and Bangladesh is no exception."

At present, Expo Accessories produces around 300,000 bags every day, but it has the potential to manufacture 800,000 pieces, he said.

The factory is located at Kamarpara in Gazipur.

SEE PAGE 11 COL 2

5 killed as bus, threewheeler collide

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Faridpur

Five people were killed and three others injured in a road accident on the Dhaka-Khulna Highway at Charkhankanapur area in Rajbari's Sadar upazila around 3:30pm on Sunday.

The dead were identified as Raseda Begum, 30, from Dhaka, Md Rifat, 32, from Faridpur, Md Mostafa, 45, from Rajbari and Md Mohasin, 30. A female victim was not identified immediately.

Quoting locals, Masud Parvaz, officer in-charge of Alladipur Highway Police Station, said, "The accident occurred when a Dhaka-bound bus collided head-on with a three-wheeler. Five people, all passengers of the three-wheeler, died on the spot. The three injured were taken to Goolanda Upazila health Complex and later referred to Faridpur Medical College Hospital as their conditions worsened."

Sumon Sheikh, 34, a passenger of the three-wheeler, said, "The driver of our vehicle was driving too fast. The accident occurred because he had no control over the three-wheeler."

Mehedul Hasan Akkas, an eye witness, said, "The bus driver tried his best to avoid the accident, but the three-wheeler was being driven rashly."

The OC said, "We have seized the bus but the driver of the vehicle fled the scene."

'Pre-school Picasso' shakes up art world



AFP, Berlin

Mikail Akar doesn't flinch as the cameras click around him. Born in 2012, the German artistic prodigy has spent half his life in the limelight.

With his striped jumper, goofy grin and dreams of becoming a professional footballer, Akar seems just like any other seven-year-old boy.

Yet the Cologne-born youngster is actually an expressionist whizz kid who has taken the international art scene by storm.

Dubbed the "pre-school Picasso" by German media, Akar's paintings now sell for thousands of euros (dollars) to buyers from across the world.

"At just seven years old, he is established in the art world. There is interest from Germany, France and the USA," his father and manager, Kerem Akar, told AFP.

Akar senior discovered Mikail's precocious talent by chance several years ago, when he gifted his son a canvas and some handprint paints for his

SEE PAGE 11 COL 5

Digital Security Act Singer held for 'hurting' religious sentiment

AFP, Dhaka

A Sufi folk singer has been arrested in Tangail under the Digital Security Act for allegedly hurting religious sentiment.

Shariat Sarker, 40, was detained in Mirzapur on Saturday after a cleric filed a case over comments made at a show in December, local police chief Saidur Rahman told AFP.

Clips of the show was uploaded to YouTube and a group of people, including

SEE PAGE 11 COL 5



PRAYER TIMING JANUARY 13

Fazr	Zohr	Asr	Maghrib	Esha
AZAN 5:30	12:45	4:00	5:36	7:00
JAMAAT 6:05	1:15	4:15	5:40	7:30

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

Teen with challenges raped at home

One arrested

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Pabna

An 18-year-old girl, who is deaf and disabled, was allegedly raped in her residence in Gokulnagar village in Pabna's Atghoria upazila on Saturday noon.

A case was filed by the victim's mother with Atghoria Police Station in this connection accusing two people, of whom one was arrested by police early yesterday. The court sent him to jail the same day.

The arrestee is a 50-year-old local man.

Officer-in-charge of the police station Md Rakibul Islam, quoting the victim's family members, said the arrestee and his associate of the same village raped the girl when she was alone in her home.

When her family members returned home, the victim managed to convey to her mother what happened and who were involved, police said.

The victim's mother first

SEE PAGE 11 COL 1



A man taking part in the Akheri Munajat of Biswa Ijtema that began on January 10. The photo was taken yesterday morning in Tongi Railway Station area. The first phase of the Ijtema ended yesterday and the second phase begins on Friday.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

Thousands seek divine blessings

First phase of Biswa Ijtema ends with Akheri Munajat

STAR REPORT

Hundreds of thousands of devotees yesterday raised their hands to seek divine blessings for mankind and the Muslim Ummah during Akheri Munajat of the first phase of Biswa Ijtema.

Maulana Zubair Hassan, imam of the capital's Kakrail mosque and leader of a faction of Tabligh Jamaat, administered the prayer.

The Akheri Munajat or final prayer began around 11:06am on the bank of the Turag in Tongi, Gazipur. Devotees gathered there from across the world and prayed for world peace, spiritual progress, happiness, and welfare of the Muslim community.

Many people of the country, who do not have the ability to go to Saudi Arabia for hajj due to health and financial constraints, consider the Ijtema as an alternative.

People in vehicles, on boats and rooftops in the area also raised their hands as the imam administered the prayer through loudspeakers.

PM JOINS MUNAJAT

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina joined the prayers of the 55th Biswa Ijtema from the Gono Bhaban, BSS reports.

She was accompanied by her younger sister Sheikh Rehana.

RESTRICTION ON TRAFFIC

Dhaka-Mymensingh highway between Turag bridge and Bhogra was closed to traffic until 4:00pm. Several nearby roads were also closed.

The authorities operated 30 shuttle buses from Bhogra to Gazipur intersection for those who attended the Akheri Munajat.

SEE PAGE 11 COL 1