




Against the tide

A Barguna fisherwoman fights against poverty as well as social barriers

SOHRAB HOSSAIN, Patuakhali

She has become the only fisherwoman with licence to catch hilsa in Barishal division after securing a place in the traditionally male-dominated fishing industry.

A member of rural coastal community, Laily Begum has been sailing and fishing in the Bishkhali river for the last 13 years.

This correspondent met the tall, robust fisherwoman one winter afternoon at her tin-hut house in North Dalbhanga village at Dhalua union in Barguna Sadar upazila.

The 35-year-old recounted how necessity had driven her towards the arduous task of fishing in the river and sometimes the sea.

Life in the disaster-prone Dalbhanga has always been hard because of the continuous erosion. Like other villagers, her family has never seen prosperity.

Things worsened further after the cyclone Sidr hit their village in 2007. Within a couple of months, Laily lost her farmer father Hachon Pader and her elder brother to illness.

Her younger brother got married and moved away with his family. With his meagre income, he could not support his family and also provide for Laily and her sick and elderly mother.

"I felt completely at loss as I did not know how to look

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Laily Begum along with a local man pulling up a fishing net in the Bishkhali river near Barguna Sadar's Dalbhanga village. The 35-year-old fisherwoman took up the male-dominated occupation to run her family. The photo was taken recently.

PHOTO: SOHRAB HOSSAIN



PM leaves for Italy today

BSS, Dhaka

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina will leave Dhaka for Rome today on a four-day official visit to Italy at the invitation of her Italian counterpart Giuseppe Conte.

The PM would hold a bilateral meeting with Giuseppe Conte tomorrow, PM's Press Secretary Ihsanul Karim told BSS.

He said a VVIP flight of Biman Bangladesh Airlines carrying the premier and her entourage members will take off from Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport for Rome in the morning today.

The flight is scheduled to land at Fiumicino Airport, Rome at 4:15pm (local time). Minister Plenipotentiary of Italian Foreign Ministry Cristiano Cottafavi and Bangladesh Ambassador to Italy Abdus Sobhan Sikder will receive the PM at the airport.

After the reception, the Bangladesh PM would be taken in a motorcade to Parco dei Principi Grand Hotel and Spa, where she will be staying during her visit to the Italian capital.

Hasina will attend a reception, to be accorded in her honour, at the hotel in the evening.

Tomorrow morning, she will inaugurate the Chancery Building of the Bangladesh Embassy in Rome's Via Dell'Antartide area.

In the afternoon, the PM will hold bilateral talks with the Italian premier and join an official lunch at Palazzo Chigi, the latter's official residence.

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GENDER DETECTION OF FOETUS HC seeks govt's explanations

Questions why guidelines should not be framed to prevent such detection

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday issued a rule asking the government to explain within six weeks why they should not be directed to frame a guideline to prevent gender detection of unborn babies, in order to ensure protection of the unborn and pregnant mothers.

In the rule, the court also asked respondents to show cause why their failure to frame a guideline to prevent gender detection of unborn babies should not be declared illegal.

Secretaries to the ministries of health, women and children affairs, and social welfare affairs, Directorate General of Health Services, family planning department of women affairs, and national institute of population research and training have been made respondents to the rule.

The HC bench of Justice M Enayetur Rahim and Justice Md Mostafizur Rahman issued the rule following a writ petition filed by Supreme Court lawyer Ishrat Hasan seeking necessary orders.

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FIRST YEAR OF BANGLADESH

Bangabandhu's nation-building challenges



A set of 14 volumes of works of Tagore which were looted by Pakistan Army from Bangabandhu's Dhanmondi residence after March 25, 1971 is being presented to him by Shahana Khanam, lecturer, Dhaka College who purchased these books from a footpath shop (Feb 4, 1972).

FEBRUARY 4, 1972

SHAMSUDDOZA SAJEN

UK, WEST GERMANY AND EIGHT OTHERS RECOGNISE BANGLADESH

Ten nations announce their recognition of Bangladesh, thus bringing the total number of countries recognising the new republic so far to 30. The latest list is made up of Britain, Norway, West Germany, Denmark, Israel, Iceland, Republic of Ireland, Finland, Sweden and Austria.

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DIGITAL SECURITY ACT Baul singer sued over comments on religion

COURT CORRESPONDENT

Yet another Baul artist was sued under the Digital Security Act for making "derogatory comments" about religion and hurting people's sentiment.

Recently, a video had gone viral on social media, which showed singer Rita Dewan making the comment during a song performance.

On February 1, another video surfaced where Rita, along with her two daughters, was shown apologising for the matter.

Advocate Imrul Hasan had earlier on Sunday filed the case against the singer with the cyber tribunal in Dhaka, while short filmmaker Rasel Mia filed another case with the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate Court in Dhaka yesterday.

After a hearing on

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Albatross 'cops' spy on illegal fishing vessels



INDEPENDENT.CO.UK

Albatrosses have been fitted with technology to help in the fight against illegal fishing in a new trial.

Researchers tracked the birds as they flew over the Antarctic Ocean and were drawn towards fishing boats.

The study found that the albatross successfully "detected and localised fishing vessels over large oceanic sectors".

"Our results demonstrate the potential of using animals as ocean sentinels," the researchers said.

The birds were "perfect candidates" for the experiment because they "fly great distances and are particularly attracted by fishing boats", according to the France's National Centre for Scientific Research (CNRS), who were involved in the study published in the US journal PNAS.

Henri Weimerskirch, the lead author, told AFP:

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PRAYER TIMING FEBRUARY 4

Fazr Zohr Asr Maghrib Esha
AZAN 5:30 12:45 4:15 5:52 7:15
JAMAAT 6:05 1:15 4:30 5:56 7:45

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

SSC examinee raped after abduction in Mymensingh

One held

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Mymensingh

Police arrested a man on Sunday night on charges of raping a female SSC examinee after abduction in Mymensingh's Tarakanda upazila.

The arrestee, Yusuf Ali, 35, is a father of four in Charia Purbapara village of the upazila.

The girl's father filed a case with Tarakanda Police Station against Yusuf and his accomplice on Sunday night. Police then arrested Yusuf from a relative's house in Charia Purbapara village.

The other accused is on the run, police said.

Quoting the case statement, Abul Khayer, officer-in-charge of the station, said Yusuf, owner of a grocery shop at Charia Bazar, abducted the girl when she was going to her tutor on January 26 morning. He took the girl elsewhere of the upazila

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A community police member asks two children to get down from the front side of a locomotive parked at the capital's Airport Railway Station yesterday. Every day, many like these two children travel on footboards of locomotives or even train roofs without tickets, putting their lives at risk.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

OIC rejects Trump's ME peace plan

Calls on its member states not to help implement it

AFP, Jeddah

The Organisation of Islamic Cooperation yesterday rejected US President Donald Trump's peace plan for the Middle East, calling on its 57 member states not to help implement it.

The pan-Islamic body, which represents more than 1.5 billion Muslims worldwide, "rejects this US-Israeli plan as it does not meet the minimum aspirations and legitimate rights of the Palestinian people and contradicts the terms of reference of the peace process", it said in a statement.

A meeting of foreign ministers at OIC headquarters in the Saudi city of Jeddah called on "all member states not (to) deal with this plan or cooperate with the US administration efforts to enforce it in any way or form".

Under the US plan unveiled last week, Israel would retain control of the disputed city of Jerusalem as its "undivided capital" and annex settlements on Palestinian lands.

Trump said Palestinians would be allowed to declare a capital within annexed east Jerusalem.

The OIC reiterated its support for east Jerusalem as capital of a future Palestinian state, stressing its "Arab and Islamic character".

It said peace would "only be achieved with the end of the Israeli occupation, the full withdrawal from the territory of the State of Palestine in particular the holy city of Al-

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