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SILICA SAND QUERIES

Illegal lifting UNSTOPPABLE

No EIA done in Moulvibazar extraction zones despite HC order

MINTU DESHWARA

Illegal silica sand lifting at various quarries in Moulvibazar continues unabated while the Bureau of Mineral Development is yet to conduct an environmental impact assessment of the extraction zones despite a High Court order two years ago.

On July 3, 2018, an HC bench ordered the BMD to conduct an EIA of the silica sand quarries.

It also declared illegal the extraction of silica sand from 51 identified quarries in the district's six upazilas -- including 19 already leased out by the BMD -- without an environment clearance certificate (ECC).

Silica sand, or industrial sand, is high in demand for use in making glass and in construction in general.

The court also said the lease of the quarries can "only be granted after obtaining environmental clearance certificate on environmental impact assessment".

The court rulings came following a writ petition filed by the Bangladesh Environmental Lawyers Association (Bela) in 2018.

Syeda Rizwana Hasan, who represented Bela, said in her submission that unregulated, indiscriminate, and hazardous extraction of sand from the leased-out silica sand quarries and other areas in the six upazilas violated various laws, rules, and government policies.

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Illegal silica sand lifting going on at Islampur in Moulvibazar's Sreemangal upazila. The High Court declared illegal the extraction of sand from 51 identified quarries, including Islampur, in the district's six upazilas on July 3, 2018. This photo was taken last month.

PHOTO: MINTU DESHWARA



Latifur Rahman's chehlum held

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The chehlum of Latifur Rahman, the late chairman and managing director of Transcom Group, was held at his Gulshan home after Maghreb prayers yesterday.

The event was attended by his immediate family members, near relatives and a close-knit group of friends and admirers.

Prayers were offered for his departed soul and the blessings of the Almighty.

Prayers were also offered for Latifur's daughter Shazneen Rahman, who was brutally murdered in 1998, and for his grandson Faraz Ayaaz Hossain, one of three Bangladesh victims of the terrorist attack at the Holy Artisan Bakery in 2016.

Latifur breathed his last on July 1 this year at his
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Flood ravaged, they wait for rehabilitation

STAR REPORT

People whose houses have been damaged by floods are passing their days in extreme hardship amid insufficient government relief and support for their rehabilitation.

Most of them are struggling to earn their livelihood, let alone arrange money to repair their homes.

While government officials claim the flood-hit people have been provided with relief and other assistance, many victims say they did not receive any.

According to the latest report of National Disaster Response Coordination Centre, the government has so far allocated Tk 4.18 crore, 16,510 tonnes of rice, Tk 2.88 crore for fodder, and Tk 1.40 crore for baby food for people in the flood-affected districts.

Besides, 300 bundles of corrugated iron sheets and Tk 9 lakh have been allocated for rebuilding houses of the victims, the report said, adding that over 54 lakh people under 163 upazilas of 33 districts have been affected by floodwater.

But failing to get any help, many were struggling to survive, reports our correspondents from several districts.

In Nilphamari, as the Teesta was becoming calm, most of the victims in
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FIRST YEAR OF BANGLADESH BANGABANDHU'S NATION-BUILDING CHALLENGES

UN Council considers Bangladesh membership



Sir Edward Muir (centre), Queen's surgeon, who operated upon Bangabandhu, is seen with the prime minister while he is recovering at the London Clinic.

August 10, 1972

SHAMSUDDOZA SAJEN

CHINA THREATENS TO VETO BANGLADESH'S UN ENTRY

The UN Security Council meets today and considers Bangladesh's candidature for membership of the United Nations. The consultations being held by the Security Council president on admission of Bangladesh to the United Nations reveal a diametrically opposite position taken by the Soviet Union and China. While the Soviet Union demands that the Security Council put forward Bangladesh as soon
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INDIA-CHINA BORDER

Pull out troops from Depsang

Delhi asks Beijing at military talks

TNN, New Delhi

India asked China to pull back its troops and stop further construction activities in the strategically-located Depsang-Daulat Beg Oldie (DBO) sector of eastern Ladakh, where both have amassed thousands of soldiers as well as tanks and artillery guns, in another round of military talks on Saturday.

India stressed the "importance of reducing tensions to prevent any inadvertent escalation or clash" in the Depsang Plains, which has been a major flashpoint over the years because the rival "perceptions" of the line of actual control (LAC) vastly differ in the region, said sources.
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'Robotaxis' take riders for a spin



AFP, Shanghai

Chinese entrants in the race to put autonomous vehicles on the road are bringing "robotaxis" online in hopes that a hired-car format can be the key to unlocking wide acceptance of the futuristic technology.

It is expected to be years before cars that operate completely without human intervention are unleashed owing to lingering technological, regulatory, and safety hurdles.

But as China challenges US tech dominance, Chinese players such as Baidu, Alibaba-backed AutoX and ride-sharing king DiDi Chuxing recently launched autonomous taxi pilot projects in cities around the country.
SEE PAGE 10 COL 1

India moves to take back citizens stuck here

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

India's Ministry of External Affairs has sought permission from West Bengal's Mamata Banerjee-led government to take back 2,680 people from the state stranded in Bangladesh since the Covid-19 lockdown began in March.

In a letter dated August 7, it stated that 2,399 people want to return to their villages in West Bengal through the Petrapole-
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PRAYER TIMING AUGUST 10
Fazr Zohr Asr Maghrib Esha
AZAN 4:25 12:45 4:45 6:41 8:00
JAMAAT 5:00 1:15 5:00 6:44 8:30

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

BEIRUT PORT BLAST Lebanese call for an uprising

Info minister resigns

REUTERS, Beirut

Some Lebanese yesterday called for a sustained uprising to topple their leaders amid public fury over this week's devastating explosion in Beirut, and the country's top Christian Maronite cleric said the cabinet should resign.

Protesters have called on the government to quit over what they say was negligence that led to Tuesday's explosion. Anger boiled over into violent scenes in central Beirut on Saturday.

Information Minister Manal Abdel Samad yesterday said she was resigning, citing the explosion and the failure of the government to carry out reforms.

Christian Maronite Patriarch Bechara Boutros al-Rai said the cabinet should resign as it cannot "change the way it governs".

"The resignation of an MP or a minister is
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Some dogs taking shelter on high places while two others trying to do so as the house is flooded at Bhakurta in Savar. Animal lover AKM Nazirul Islam rented a house there to take care of injured or sick street dogs. Thirty-two dogs live there. This photo was taken on Saturday.

PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN

India Covid tally crosses 21 lakh

Records highest single-day spike of 64,399 cases

AGENCIES

With a highest single-day spike of 64,399 cases, India's Covid-19 tally zoomed past 21 lakh yesterday, while the death toll climbed to 43,379 with 861 more fatalities, the Union Health Ministry said.

The country now has a total of 21,53,010 recorded cases, with the highest single day spike. This is the third consecutive day that the Covid-19 cases have increased by more than 60,000 infections in 24 hours, according to the ministry's data.

India had crossed the 20 lakh mark on Friday and it took only 2 days to cross 21 lakh mark.

So far 14,80,884 patients have recovered with record 53,879 more people recuperating in the past 24 hours, taking recovery rate to 68.78 percent. The case fatality rate has dropped 2.01 percent, according to the health ministry data.

"Focused and effective efforts towards containment, testing, isolation and treatment by the Centre, states and Union Territories have resulted in the recovery rate rising to 68.32 percent and fatality rate steadily declining to 2.04 percent," the ministry said.

According to the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) as many as 7,19,364 samples were tested on Saturday, the highest in a day so far. A total of 2,41,06,535 samples have been tested so far in the whole country.
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