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History erased

Old Dhaka's heritage sites and antiquities demolished, on Haji Salim's watch or thru' his active participation

ZYMA ISLAM

Elected lawmaker of Dhaka-7 three times since 1996, he has over the years either had a hand in the destruction of heritage sites and antiquities in his constituency or never showed political support to heritage conservation.

There is no exact count of how many heritage sites were destroyed over the last few years, but Dhaka-6 and Dhaka-7 contain hundreds of structures that can legally be termed antiquities.

Salim's constituency covers Old Dhaka areas including Armanitola, Bongshal, Kotwali, Chawkbazar, Lalbagh and Nazirabazar, and parts of Dhanmondi.

While Rajuk's list of protected buildings is merely 75, civil society organisations listed 2,793 sites across Old Dhaka.

It was only in 2018 that the High Court declared a list of 2,200 sites as protected -- up until then, the lack of government protection made them easy targets for destruction.

DEMOLISHED HERITAGE SITES

The arrest of Haji Salim's son Erfan



The century-old building, affectionately called Jahaj Bari, was destroyed by Haji Salim. PHOTO: FILE

following the assault of a navy official last month brought to the fore some of the misdeeds of the father-son duo.

The most talked-about example is Jahaj Bari at the heart of Chawkbazar.

A 19th century commercial building with Gothic revival arches and columns, and an ornate balustrade running along the length of its facade, it was reportedly razed by the lawmaker's men at the dead of the night on Eid in June last year.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 3



Aklima Khatun working at a winter vegetable farm at Hazratpur, Keraniganj in a rather cold morning recently. Temperatures have begun to drop and it won't be long before it's harvesting time.

PHOTO: SK ENAMUL HAQ



Country ever ready to protect its sovereignty

PM says in her address on Armed Forces Day

UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has said Bangladesh always believes in peaceful coexistence with all neighbours, but it is also ever ready to protect its sovereignty from any aggressive attack.

"Our foreign policy is operated with the main principle of 'Friendship to all, malice to none' as introduced by the Father of the

SEE PAGE 2 COL 3

A salesman who struck gold!

Rab arrests 'Golden Monir' for gold smuggling, land grabbing

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

He worked as a salesperson at different shopping malls in the capital in the 90s. Then he started smuggling in gold bars to the country, and became so good at it that his acquaintances started calling him Golden Monir.

He then opened his own jewelry store called Uma Jewellers in Baitul Mukarram Market.

In 2001, he started grabbing lands in different parts of Dhaka with the blessings from the then housing and public works minister and a section of unscrupulous officials of Rajdhani Unnayan Karttripakkha (Rajuk) and the ministry. He eventually amassed a wealth of over Tk 1,050 crore.

Rab arrested Monir yesterday after a 12-hour raid that started Friday night around 11:00 at his six-storey building on Road-11, Merul Badda.

"He amassed wealth through forging Rajuk documents, smuggling gold and committing other crimes," Lt Col Ashique Billah, Rab Legal and Media Wing director, told reporters.

"We have information that Monir owns at least 200 plots in Badda DIT Project, Nikunja, Keraniganj, Purbachal and other areas. He has admitted to owning 30," the Rab official said.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1



Govt alerts banks about cyberattack

Instructs them to take necessary measures

AKM ZAMIR UDDIN and REJAU KARIM BYRON

The government has alerted the banks about the threat of a cyberattack, instructing them to put in place precautionary measures to prevent hackers from stealing money.

The financial institutions division of the finance ministry sent a letter to the banks on Thursday, asking them to take necessary measures to ward off any cyberattack, said a bank official, preferring anonymity.

A North Korean hacker group named "Beagle Boys", which had been involved in stealing

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

Antigen test still a far cry

Govt struggling to launch it at 39 facilities 2 months after approval

MOUDDUD AHMED SUJAN

The government has not yet been able to launch the antigen-based rapid testing kit at the designated healthcare facilities even two months after approval.

Officials at the health directorate said the procurement of the kits has not been completed yet, thus causing the delay.

The kit was approved in order to ensure a greater number of tests and quicker results.

"The procurement of the kits from the Central Medical Store Depot is underway. We will start the antigen-based rapid testing as soon as we receive them," Md Habibur Rahman, spokesperson for the DGHS told The Daily Star.

Sources said the Directorate General of Drug Administration (DGDA) has not received no objection certificates (NOC) from any organisation about importing the kits.

The NOC from the DGDA is mandatory for importing any medical device into the country.

SEE PAGE 10 COL 2

Covid deaths on the rise

28 die in a day, 1,848 infected

UNB, Dhaka

The country saw a rise in the number of deaths from Covid-19 as 28 more people died in 24 hours till yesterday morning, taking the death toll to 6,350.

During the same period, 1,848 new cases were detected, bringing the total to 445,281.

The death rate stood at 1.43 percent, said the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS).

A total of 1,921 patients have recovered from the virus during the 24-hour period. The total number of recovery now stands at 360,352, which is 80.93 percent.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 5



A mustard seed grinding machine on a pickup in the capital's Motijheel. As more people are tending to favour foods with fewer artificial ingredients and those are less processed, the demand for mustard oil has spiked, making such mobile shops quite common in the city.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

We Mourn

The Board of Directors of **Roxy Paints Limited** and all the Workers, Employees & Executives are deeply saddened by the death of **Alhaj Md. Mujibur Rahman**, Director and former Managing Director of **Roxy Paints Limited**.

We extend our deepest condolences to the bereaved family members and seek the forgiveness of his soul from the most Merciful Allah.

TORCHING OF BUS 3 BNP men held in city

DB says it identified them thru' video clips

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Detectives yesterday arrested three leaders and activists of BNP-affiliated bodies on charges of being directly involved in torching a bus in the capital's Paltan on November 12.

The Detective Branch's Motijheel division identified the trio from photos and security camera footage.

They were arrested in separate drives around 5:00am in Paltan and Khilgaon areas, said Deputy Commissioner Asaduzzaman.

The arrestees are Md Leon Haq, 30, former organising secretary of

SEE PAGE 10 COL 1

WE MOURN

Rubab Akberali

Wife of late Akberali Alibhai Africawala, mother of Alihussain Akberali, Chairman, BSRM Group, grandmother of Aameir Alihussain, MD, BSRM Group has passed away at the age of 91 on the 21st of November 2020 in Chattogram. She leaves behind her three sons, two daughters, and a host of relatives and well-wishers.

The BSRM Family is deeply saddened. Each and every member of BSRM prays for the departed soul.