

## Elephant!

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elephant at Everland zoo in Yongin, a city south of Seoul, greeted visiting journalists by "saying" choah (good) and nuo (lie down).

He can also make the sounds annyong (hi), anja (sit down) and aniya (no), according to a team of scientists from South Korea and Europe who studied his vocalisations.

Elephants cannot use their lips to make sounds like humans do, as their upper lips are fused with their noses to form their trunks.

But Koshik formulates the words by rolling up his trunk and putting it into his mouth. He then either places the tip of his trunk on his tongue or on the ceiling of his mouth to create different sounds.

The researchers said they were not completely sure how the elephant picked up the skill, but they believe Koshik learned the words from his trainer of 19 years, Kim Jong-Gap.

Although the elephant can clearly hear and imitate the words, whether he understands them is still being studied, he said.

Everland conducted its research along with scientists from the University of Vienna in Austria and Germany's University of Jena.

Koshik was born in 1990 in a state-run zoo in Seoul and transferred 49 kilometres south to Everland, part of South Korea's largest theme park, three years later.

"Koshik is like my baby because I've trained him since he came here," trainer Kim told AFP.

"I slept in a sleeping bag near Koshik for a month when I first started training him and I think that's why we became so close to the point where he started imitating my voice," he said.

"I've never thought an animal, especially an elephant, could mimic human sounds, so I was surprised and thrilled to see Koshik 'speak,'" he added.

Elephants are highly social mammals which in the wild live in groups and use low-frequency vocalisations to keep in contact over great distances.

## Malaysia

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hoped that the recruitment will begin in January.

He said the two governments will sign a memorandum of understanding (MoU) on employment of workers at the end of the month. "We have completed almost all the process to sign the MoU."

Last month, the cabinet approved a proposal for signing the MoU, under which a jobseeker will be able to land a job in Malaysia at a maximum cost of Tk 40,000.

To complete the hiring process under state arrangement, the two sides discussed elaborately the signing of the MoU during the Malaysian Human Resources Minister S Subramaniam's visit to Dhaka in September.

## Mashir's

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Bangla, said, "The ACC acts independently and impartially. If he [Mashir] remains at work, it will not influence the ACC's enquiry in any way.

"It will make no difference to the ACC in making decisions."

The anti-graft body last week asked Mashir to appear before it on November 4 for questioning.

The ACC chief said its enquiry team quizzed many people and examined a lot of data and information. And it was going to question Mashir regarding those.

In June, the World Bank cancelled its \$1.2 billion loan for the bridge citing "corruption conspiracy". It had said the government has to meet three conditions, including sending Mashir on leave, for revival of the loan agreement.

The global lender decided to revive its loan on September 21 after the Bangladesh government agreed to its terms and conditions. It then appointed a three-member external panel early last month to assess the conduct of the ACC investigation. The panel recently visited Dhaka.

He urged all to engage

## Gala cultural

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Life", a Standard Chartered Bank and The Daily Star cooperative endeavour aimed at recognising emerging artistes in these fields through giving them a platform to make themselves known.

This year's theme was "Celebrating Youth of Bangladesh".

The chief guest on the occasion, Cultural Affairs Minister Abul Kalam Azad, handed over the awards to 6 winners and 12 contestants who received honourable mention in the competition at the gala evening where classical music maestro Pandit Ajoy Chakrabarty along with his daughter Kaushiki Desikan performed.

The award giving ceremony was marked by jubilation as the audience burst into cheery applause while the names of the awardees were being announced at the three-hour event.

The stage was strewn with light beads against a black backdrop, resembling a starry night.

Hosted by media personality Afzal Hossain, the gala began with Bangladeshi diva Sabina Yasmin rendering a song written by Ripa Sarker, who won the first prize in lyrics contest. The song was accompanied by a dance performance.

Four notable personalities received Lifetime Achievement Awards for their contributions to their respective disciplines. Each of them received Tk 1 lakh in prize money.

Renowned Nazrul Sangeet exponent Firoza Begum received the Lifetime Achievement Award for Nazrul Sangeet and modern Bangla songs. Celebrated film star Abdur Razzak was honoured with the Lifetime Achievement Award for his contributions to film.

Veteran photographer Amanul Haque received the Lifetime Achievement Award for his gifted photographs which underpin various phases in Bangladesh's history and noted singer Ferdousi Rahman was honoured for film songs and "Bhawaiya" (folk) songs.

The Daily Star Editor and Publisher Mahfuz Anam adorned the lifetime achievement awardees with Uttorio (celebratory scarf) while the acting chief executive officer of Standard Chartered Bank in Bangladesh, Imtiaz Ibne Sattar, handed over the crests and prize money.

Channel i Managing Director Faridur Reza Sagor received the award of Razzak who could not attend the programme.

"I have learned all types of songs. But I learned Nazrul Sangeet from an innate urge as it was neglected," said Firoza Begum in her instant reaction. She said she had never thought of coming by such appreciation before.

Ferdousi Rahman in her turn said, "Life is beautiful and I enjoyed my life singing. This is how I celebrate my life."

Encouraging the promising artistes, Ferdousi said time had come to give the talented youngsters their due and let them establish.

She thanked the organisers for taking the initiative of rewarding the young creative minds.

Abul Kalam Azad also thanked the organisers for arranging and creating the platform where young and promising people of the country can get inspiration and an opportunity to flourish. He also congratulated the participants.

"Through this competition and the subsequent recognition of unknown talents, the nation will find a treasure of creativity. The young generation of the country will get a source of inspiration from this event," Azad added.

Mahfuz Anam said, "Patriotism is one of the defining characteristics of the Bangladeshi people and people express their patriotism in different ways. To be creative is also patriotism."

"That's why we are organising this event to recognise and help flourish creativity among our young generation. It is the panel recently visited Dhaka."

He urged all to engage

themselves in creative activities, saying that creativity is one of the core aspects of human life.

"We are human because we are creative," he said, calling upon the country people to show creativity in all spheres of their lives.

"We must make ourselves beautiful and make our city beautiful through becoming conscious," he concluded.

Imtiaz Ibne Sattar said, "We believe it is our responsibility to uphold the positive image of every country we call home."

The creative endeavour pursued by the artistic minds today will shape the culture of the future and no doubt it will be a vital element in the future we aspire to achieve here in Bangladesh."

Imtiaz said his organisation wanted the world to see the stereotype some people make about Bangladesh sitting in other parts of the world are not what make this country.

Rahul Talukder won the first place in the photography contest while Rezwan Razzaq and Suvasish Paul became second and third. They received Tk 1,00,000, Tk 50,000, and Tk 25,000 respectively.

Ripa Sarker, Bilal Hossian Nuri and Ashanuzzaman became the first, second and third in lyrics category, receiving Tk 50,000, Tk 25,000 and Tk 15,000 respectively.

The rest twelve contestants also got honourable mention in photography and lyrics category.

The judges' panel, however, could not select any winners in film category.

The award formalities were followed by a spell-binding classical performance by Kaushiki, daughter of maestro Ajoy Chakrabarty and herself a renowned artiste in India. She was followed by Chakrabarty, who in his varied demonstrations of classical musical forms gave the Dhaka crowd an event to remember.

It was an evening of profound poetry, swiftly passing into a night of melodious ecstasy.

## Khaleda

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Gadkari at his residence yesterday afternoon, BNP Vice Chairman Shamsher Mobin Chowdhury told media persons that the meeting between the Indian president and the party chief has been fixed at 10:30 hours today.

Mobin also said Khaleda and Gadkari had discussed issues of bilateral interest, including Teesta water-sharing and border killings, and agreed that a resolution of pending issues would help further strengthen the ties between the two countries.

Gadkari said today's young generation is more concerned about poverty and once this problem is solved, relation between the two countries is bound to improve.

On October 28, Khaleda had met another BJP leader Sushma Swaraj soon after her arrival in New Delhi.

Earlier in the day, Khaleda returned from Jaipur after a two-day visit to India's Pink City and paying obeisance to the shrine of Hazrat Khwaja Moinuddin Chishti in Ajmer.

Since her arrival, Khaleda had met Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, Foreign Minister Salman Khurshid, Foreign Secretary Ranjan Mathai and National Security Adviser Shivshankar Menon.

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## Four deals

FROM PAGE 1

witnessed the signing ceremony at the latter's office in Hanoi after the official talks.

Of the two agreements, one was related to the extension of an MoU between the two countries on cooperation in the field of agriculture and rural development signed in 2004.

Abdul Hamid, additional secretary of the agriculture ministry of Bangladesh, and Nguyen Thi Xuan Thu, deputy minister of agriculture and rural development ministry of Vietnam, signed the agreement.

The other agreement for cooperation on the establishment of the Bangladesh-Vietnam Business Council and Vietnam-Bangladesh Business Council was signed between the Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industries (FBCCI) and the Vietnam Chamber of Commerce and Industry (VCCI).

FBCCI President AK Azad and VCCI President Vu Tien Loc signed the deal on behalf of their respective sides.

Of the remaining two MoUs, one was signed in the field of fisheries and livestock between agriculture and rural development ministry of Vietnam and fisheries and livestock ministry of Bangladesh.

Ujjal Bikash Dutta, fisheries and livestock secretary of Bangladesh, and Nguyen Thi Xuan Thu, deputy minister of agriculture and rural development ministry of Vietnam, signed the MoU.

Another MoU on trade promotion was signed between the Vietnam Trade Promotion Agency (VIETRADE) and the Export Promotion Bureau (EPB) of Bangladesh.

After the signing ceremony, the two premiers noted that these deals would provide an important legal foundation for relevant agencies and ministries of the two countries to implement and expand cooperation in specific fields.

## US man

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materials to al-Qaeda, and seeking to damage US government buildings with explosives.

Under a plea deal, prosecutors agreed to drop four other charges.

Prosecutors said Ferdousi had been planning "jihad", or holy war, since 2010. They also said he had plotted to use explosive devices detonated by mobile phones to target US soldiers in Iraq and Afghanistan.

In an FBI statement following the sentencing, First Assistant US Attorney Jack Pirozzolo described Ferdousi's actions as "self-initiated, deliberate and dangerous".

In court on Thursday, Ferdousi thanked his friends and family for supporting him, but offered no apology.

US District Judge Richard Stearns said Ferdousi's friends and family had sent letters of support suggesting that he had lived "90%" of his life in a positive way.

Everyone noticed that there was a point when Mr Ferdousi's life turned darker," he said.

Outside court, his mother told reporters: "My son is innocent."

Ferdousi's sentence includes 10 years of supervised release. He could have faced 35 years without a plea deal.

## UPDF activist

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group of Shantu Larma-led Parbatya Chattagram Jana Sanghati Samity (PCJSS) cadres picked up Rupayan from Dullatali bazar area on Thursday around 8:30pm as he was on his way home. The next morning, locals recovered his body from nearby Hazachharamukhi.

However, PCJSS Press and Information Secretary Sajib Chakma denied the involvement of his party men in the killing.

Officer-in-Charge Mohammad Kamrul of Laxmichhari Police Station said police recovered the body of Rupayan around 9:00am and sent it to Khagrachhari Adhunik Sadar Hospital for an autopsy.

No one from the victim's family has contacted with the police, and no case has been filed, said the OC.

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## Bangladesh made

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It further said Bangladesh has also made huge gains in education and health.

More than 90 percent of girls enrolled in primary school in 2005, slightly more than boys. That was twice the female enrolment rate in 2000.

Infant mortality had more than halved, from 97 deaths per thousand live births in 1990 to 37 per thousand in 2010. Over the same period child mortality fell by two-thirds and maternal mortality fell by three-quarters. Maternal mortality now stands at 194 per 100,000 births, the reports added.

In 1990, women could expect to live a year less than men; now they can expect to live two years more than men do.

"Some of these changes are among the fastest social improvements ever seen. Remarkably, the country has achieved all this even though economic growth, until recently, has been sluggish and income has risen only modestly," said the reports.

On family planning, the reports said Bangladesh not only halved the rate of fertility within a generation, but also increased women's influence within their own households. For the first time, wives controlled the size of families.

The reports also said Bangladesh has maintained a broad consensus in favour of basic social spending despite military coups and a toxic politics dominated by the bitter infighting of the "battling begums" (Sheikh Hasina and Khaleda Zia).

Moreover, Bangladesh's achievements remain vulnerable to political interference, the reports said, adding that Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina was vindictively meddling with Grameen Bank, removing its boss and trying to impose her own choice upon the institution's shareholders, all to punish its founder, Muhammad Yunus, for

money into women's pockets, from which it is more likely to be spent on health, education and better food," the reports added.

According to the reports, four main factors contributed to the surprising success.

They were the government's programme of voluntary family planning, growth in textile sector where four-fifths of its workers were female, remittance from abroad sent by six million Bangladeshis, and green revolution, microcredit and the role of NGOs, particularly Brac and Grameen Bank.

"And both the boom in the textile industry and the arrival of microcredit have, over the past 20 years, put

## Poor but impressive

Wealth and health

	Bangladesh	India	Pakistan
Income per person, \$PPP*			