



WITH TODAY'S ISSUE

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Showbiz**BURUNDI COUP BID FAILS**President Pierre Nkurunziza
returns to the capital

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THE THRILL IS GONEThe King of the Blues, guitarist
and singer BB King, dies aged 89

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HUMAN TRAFFICKING

900 survive

*Indonesian fishermen rescue 800;
another 106 found on Thai
island; more pushed back*

AFP, Langsa

About 900 Rohingya and Bangladeshi migrants made it to shore in Indonesia and Thailand yesterday, as Myanmar undermined calls for a coordinated response to Southeast Asia's human-trafficking crisis by threatening to boycott a planned summit.

The Indonesian and Malaysian policy of turning away stricken boats filled with Bangladeshis and ethnic Rohingya from Myanmar has been met with outrage, including from Washington and the United Nations.

Indonesian police said at least 797 people were rescued yesterday by fishermen in Aceh province on the east coast of huge Sumatra island.

In Thailand, the navy discovered 106 Rohingyas on an island off the coast of Phang Na province but it was unclear whether their boat had a problem or they had been abandoned, the provincial governor said.

Activists estimate up to 8,000 migrants may be at sea in Southeast Asia, with horrific tales emerging of passengers abandoned by abusive smugglers, horribly cramped conditions, starvation and death.

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A group of rescued migrant children housed in the new confinement area at the fishing town of Kuala Langsa in Aceh province, Indonesia, yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP



From Satkhira to UK supermarkets

*First shipment of Himsagar mangoes
goes to UK tomorrow*

REAZ AHMAD

Consumers in the United Kingdom will be able to buy Bangladesh-grown soft and juicy fleshed mangoes from their neighbourhood supermarkets from this Monday.

Some of the best quality mangoes grown in Satkhira are set to enter the European supermarkets, for the first time, with an Emirates flight ferrying the first consignment from Dhaka to London tomorrow.

Officials at the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and Horticulture Export

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Reduce cost of business

*Businesses, economists call for measures to boost investment,
support political unrest-hit sectors*

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The upcoming budget should have measures to boost investment, reduce cost of business and support sectors affected by the recent political violence, said industrialists and economists yesterday.

"We hope the budget will inject life into the investment scenario and reduce cost of doing business," said Syed Nasim Manzur, president of the Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Dhaka (MCCI), at a pre-budget discussion at the auditorium of the chamber in the capital.

He urged the government to increase the infrastructure spending to

4 percent of the GDP from 2.1 percent now.

"There has been a huge change in the rural economy. So, allocation for agriculture and rural development has to be increased. If we can do that, it would bring about a revolution in the country."

The entrepreneur requested Finance Minister AMA Muhith, who was present at the discussion, to create a Tk 250 crore fund and lend exporters at 5 percent interest rates from the fund until the euro appreciates.

MCCI, the country's oldest trade body, organised the discussion in association with Maasranga

Television.

Speaking there, the finance minister said he would set revenue generation target at Tk 176,000 crore for the forthcoming fiscal year.

"We have expanded the workforce of the National Board of Revenue in the last six years. We hope to reap the benefits of the increased manpower from this year," Muhith said, adding that he was planning to do "something" for the exporters affected by the drop in the euro exchange rate.

AB Mirza Azizul Islam, former finance adviser to a caretaker government, said he did not think the budget

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Rickshaws ply the waterlogged road in the capital's Fakirapool as rain keeps pouring down, accompanied by thunder and lightning, yesterday.

PHOTO:
PALASH KHAN

Salahuddin may face Shillong court by next Saturday

Cops to seek time for questioning

RASHIDUL HASAN and PRABIR BARUA CHOWDHURY

Meghalaya police are likely to produce BNP leader Salahuddin Ahmed before a Shillong court by next Saturday and seek time from the court to question him for trespassing, Meghalaya police said.

"Salahuddin seems quite well physically. Therefore, we hope he will be produced before the Shillong court next week," a top police official told The Daily Star yesterday afternoon by phone.

Vivek Syiem, superintendent of police (city) of East Khasi Hills in Meghalaya, confirmed this but could not give the specific date.

He said police might take up to two weeks to press charges against Salahuddin from the day of producing him before the court. And if the court accepts the charges, the trial proceedings may take up to three months.

Shillong police earlier said locals and police found the BNP leader roaming Golf Link area on Monday. Finding him "mentally unbalanced," law enforcers sent him to Meghalaya Institute of Health & Neurological Science and then to Shillong Civil Hospital.

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Ctg mayor Nasir meets Hefajat chief

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

The newly elected mayor of Chittagong city corporation (CCC) met Hefajat-e-Islam Ameer Shah Ahmed Shafi at Hathazari Madrasha yesterday afternoon.

AJM Nasir, also general secretary of Chittagong city unit Awami League, came to attend the "Khatme Bukhari Sharif and Doa Mahfil" held at the Darul Ulum Moinul Islam, locally known as Hathazari Madrasha, said Muneer Ahmed, assistant personal secretary of Hefajat Ameer.

Nasir also sought blessing from Shafi and enquired about his health, said Muneer.

Among others, Awami league Chittagong District (South) president Moslem Uddin Ahmad, Raozan

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Man kills 3 daughters

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Cox's Bazar

In a horrific incident, a father allegedly killed his three minor daughters at Chowdhurypara village of Badarkhali in Cox's Bazar early yesterday.

Abdul Gani slit the throats of Ayesha Siddiqua Champa, 11; Shiru Jannat Sheuli, 9; and one-and-a-half-year-old Sharaban Tahura Baily while they were sleeping around 2:30am, according to police and relatives.

Gani, a rickshaw puller by profession, fled home after committing the heinous homicides, said the victims' mother Fatema Begum, who suspects that her husband's "extramarital affair" might have led to the murder.

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The couple had four children. Their eldest child Mohammad Rifat, 14, stays with his maternal grandparents who live close by.

Fatema's elder brother Asgar Ali said Gani had phoned him around 3:00am and asked him to inquire about his sister and nieces. "Saying only this, he [Gani] hung up the phone."

Asgar immediately rushed to the Gani's house and found the bodies of his nieces in a pool of blood.

Fatema, married to Gani for 16 years, claimed to police that her husband has been involved in an extramarital relationship with his elder brother's wife for the last five years.

Female farmers go organic

BELAL HOSSAIN BIPLOB and AZIBOR RAHMAN

Pesticide-free vegetables have become a rarity, even in rural areas, nowadays. But some 45 female farmers have created new opportunities for three villages in Kaliganj upazila of Jhenidah.

People can buy fresh vegetables at a makeshift market at Balarampur village every Thursday afternoon. Another temporary market Bau Bazar sells the produce every Saturday morning.

Grown using organic compost, vegetables like tomato, bottle gourd, okra and red amaranth are up for sale. There are also pumpkins, brinjals, string beans, ribbed gourds,

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A group of female farmers set up a makeshift bazaar to sell chemical-free vegetables at Balarampur village under Kaliganj upazila in Jhenidah.

PHOTO: AZIBOR RAHMAN