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GEARING UP FOR EID

A craftsman spray-paints a motif on a bed sheet fabric at New Market in the capital yesterday. Another man, top right, prints blocks on bed sheets. With the Eid-ul-Fitr days away, boutiques at the capital's New Market are busy filling their shelves with colourful clothes and other products.



PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

2 top Shibir leaders apologise

Tribunal exonerates them from contempt of court charge

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The International Crimes Tribunal-1 yesterday exonerated two top leaders of Islami Chhatra Shibir from contempt of court charges, as they apologised unconditionally for a media statement they had jointly issued criticising the war crimes verdict against Jamaat leader ATM Azharul Islam.

The tribunal, however, warned Abdul Jabbar and Atiqur Rahman, president and secretary general of the Jamaat-e-Islami's student

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EXTORTION ALLEGATION AGAINST DETECTIVES

Complainant goes missing

He was picked up by plainclothesmen, alleges wife; law enforcers deny

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A businessman was allegedly kidnapped by some detectives on Thursday for the second time since February.

He was supposed to testify before police on Monday last in connection with his earlier 'abduction by plainclothesmen', claimed the victim's wife Tahmina Aktar.

Fazlul Haque Rahim, who deals in real estate, was first kidnapped by a group of law enforcers led by sub-inspectors Abdul Alim and Nazrul Islam on February 28, shown arrested in an arson case and had to pay them Tk 10 lakh in the face of "crossfire threats", the wife alleged at a press conference at the Jatiya Press Club yesterday.

These members of the Detective Branch (DB) of police also extorted an

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KARNAPHULI TUNNEL

\$705m deal signed with Chinese firm

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The road transport and bridges ministry yesterday inked a \$705 million deal with a Chinese firm in Beijing for the construction of a dual-lane tunnel under the Karnaphuli river in Chittagong.

Construction work of the 3.5-kilometre tunnel, the first of its kind in the country, will begin in December and is expected to be completed within four years.

Bridges Division Secretary Khandker Anwarul Islam and Liu Qitao, chairman of China Communication Construction Company Ltd (CCCC), signed the agreement, Md Abu Naser, senior information officer of the ministry, told The Daily Star over phone from Beijing.

According to a study, the tunnel would significantly facilitate transit traffic and relieve the existing bridges of traffic pressure. It would also promote regional economic growth and enhance joint development of the regional economy.

It will provide convenient transport conditions for the planned Deep-Sea Port in south Bangladesh, thus exerting a significant role in promoting development of the

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2 killed as BGB opens fire on 'smugglers'

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

Two persons were killed and three others sustained bullet injuries as a BGB team opened fire on smugglers while raiding Birampur Railway Station yesterday afternoon, said police.

The dead are Mohammad Shahin, 28, son of Shukur Ali, and Mohammad Sultan, 24, son of Abdur Rashid of Colonypara in Birampur upazila.

Locals claimed that the two were innocents and used to run a tea stall in the station area.

Immediately after the incident, protesters blocked the Dinajpur-Dhaka highway near Kalabagan of the upazila.

A Border Guard Bangladesh official claimed that they had shot fire in self-defence after being attacked by smugglers during the regular raid.

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3 more held over liquid cocaine haul

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Customs Intelligence yesterday picked up three more people in connection with the seizure of a barrel of cocaine in Chittagong about three weeks ago.

The three arrestees are Atiqur Rahman, Mostafa Kamal and AK Azad.

Director General of Customs Intelligence Moinul Khan said Indian national Raju contacted with Bakul, a Bangladesh-born UK citizen, to release the consignment of sunflower oil from Chittagong Port. Bakul is a relative of Atiqur and Mostafa.

Raju was scheduled to come to Bangladesh on June 8, Moinul told a press conference at the Customs Intelligence headquarters in the capital.

"They [smugglers] had planned either to re-export the consignment to an Indian port or send it back

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BAF PLANE CRASH

Pilot Tahmid still missing

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Like other times, Bangladesh Air Force pilot Flight Lieutenant Rumman Tahmid called his parents to seek their best wishes before flying on Monday morning.

He could talk to his mother who had been staying in his maternal aunt's home in Cox's Bazar.

But Tahmid could not talk to his father as he was sleeping at his home in Dhaka, said Sajid, one of Tahmid's cousins.

He then talked to his younger sister and said, "I have a scheduled flight and I am going alone."

Tahmid remains missing after his F-7MB aircraft crashed into the Bay of Bengal near



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Indonesian rescue personnel work at the scene of an Indonesian military C-130 Hercules aircraft crash in Medan yesterday. The transport plane crashed shortly after take-off in the city on Sumatra island, exploding in a ball of flames in a residential area.

PHOTO: AFP

Indonesia plane crash kills 116

AFP, Medan

At least 116 people were killed yesterday when an Indonesian air force transport plane crashed into a major city shortly after take-off and exploded in a fireball, officials said.

Buildings were left in ruins and cars reduced to flaming wrecks when the Hercules C-130 came down in a residential area of Medan, a city of two million on the island of Sumatra.

Air force chief Agus Supriatna said the manifest showed there were 113 people on board the plane -- 12 crew and 101 passengers -- when it crashed, and he did not believe any had survived.

"No, no. No survivors, I have just returned from the site," he told AFP in answer to a question.

So far 66 bodies had been pulled from the debris and brought to a hospital in Medan, said a Red Cross official helping in the recovery effort.

Many passengers were likely to be family members of servicemen and women, said a spokesman for Medan airbase from where the plane departed. At least one child has so far been confirmed killed.

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SEHRI, IFTAR TIMINGS				
Ramadan	July	Sehri	Iftar	
13	1		6-54	
14	2	3-42	6-54	
15	3	3-42	6-54	

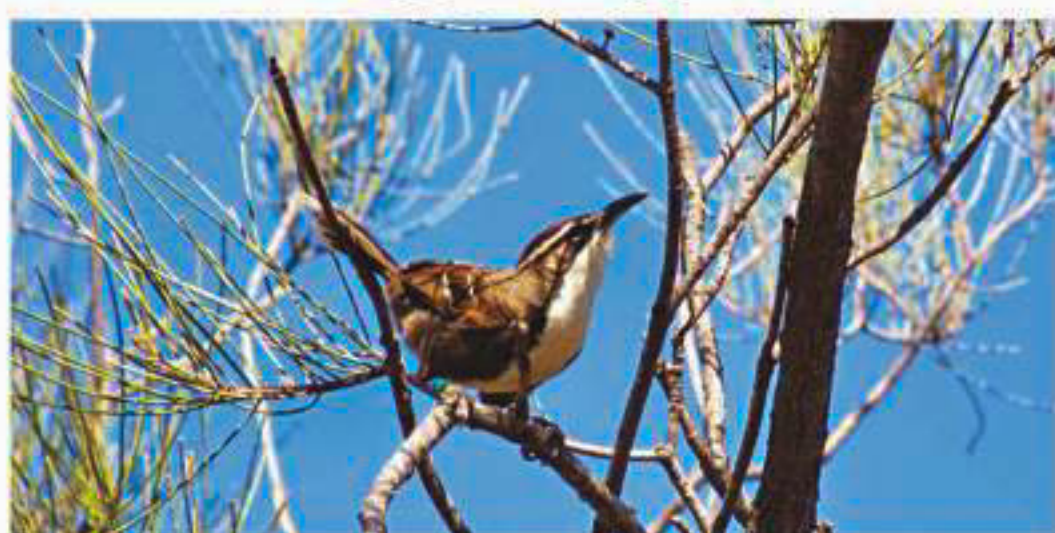


PRAYER TIMING

JULY 1				
Fazr	Zohr	Asr	Maghrib	Esha
AZAN	3-42	12-45	5-00	6-54 8-17
JAMAAT	3-52	1-15	5-15	6-64 8-45

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

Babblers speak a 'language'



INDEPENDENT.CO.UK

A small gregarious bird that lives in the Australian outback has been found to communicate with one another using a simple form of language -- the first species other than humans known to do so.

Scientists studying the vocal noises made by the chestnut-crowned babbler have shown that it uses combinations of different sounds that on their own

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