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FOOD SHORTAGE Wild monkeys come out of forest

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Mymensingh

Villages in Phulbaria upazila of Mymensingh are finding themselves rather reluctant hosts to monkeys from the nearby Santoshpur Forest.

Around 300 wild monkeys living in the forest area often come out of the forest to visit villages in search of food as the food available in the forest is not adequate for them, locals say.

Abdul Khaleque, a local union

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PHOTO: AMINUL ISLAM

Middle-income status in 3yrs

PM sees Bangladesh's continuous progress

UNB, Dhaka



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has affirmed that Bangladesh would become a middle-income country within the next three years.

Speaking at a function at the Gono Bhaban yesterday, she said, "We've already stepped into that stairs as Bangladesh has been declared a lower middle-income country."

"I can assure you it won't take 2021, before that time we would be able to establish ourselves as a middle-income country... Perhaps it would take 2-3 years... I've that conviction."

Earlier, she opened the Cox's Bazar International Airport construction project through videoconferencing from her official residence.

Addressing the function, the PM said, "Bangladesh doesn't want to stay at the lower ladder... it wants to climb to the peak and we'll do whatever necessary for that."

She mentioned that the government has to overcome so many obstacles while accomplishing any task.

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'Huji plans Qaeda merger'

**Rab arrests 12 alleged members of banned militant outfit
Huji; claims Trishal-style ambush was being planned**

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Harkat-ul-Jihad-al-Islami, Bangladesh (Huji-B) leaders were preparing to build their organisational capability to join al-Qaeda in Indian Subcontinent (AQIS). They wanted to go on a bombing spree after Eid to let everyone know that they exist.

Rapid Action Battalion made the claim after arresting 12 alleged Huji leaders and activists.

Arrestee Maulana Mainul Islam Mahim's job was to coordinate with

AQIS and organise the Huji leaders and activists to join al-Qaeda. Arrestee Mufti Zafar Amin Salman was acting as an adviser for the whole operation, Rab officials said.

Rab also said the arrestees were trying to label themselves as "Dawate Tablíq" and "313 Badrul Sainik". Their plan was to join AQIS after the two organisations had spread across Bangladesh.

"They [arrested militants] had a plan to carry out bomb attacks across the country after Eid to send a message to the inactive members of militant

outfits about their existence," said Mufti Mahmud Khan, Rab's Legal and Media wing director, at a press briefing at its headquarters in the capital yesterday.

He said their plan was to get as much media coverage as possible through the bomb attacks and recruit more operatives.

Rab officials said the militants had so far recruited 50 operatives and of them, 20 were supposed to have training at a madrasa in Bogra.

The Rab's claim about the arrestees'

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The seized bomb-making materials, sharp weapons and books on jihad on display at the Rab headquarters in Uttara yesterday. The crime busters also arrested 12 alleged Huji members during recent raids in the capital.

PHOTO: STAR

AL fears fair polls

Says Khaleda; claims AL clinging to power to avoid trial for its corruption

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia yesterday claimed the ruling Awami League did not want elections as it feared to face trial for its irregularities and corruption after leaving power.

"Everyone, including foreigners, opined that a free fair and participatory polls is needed in the country. But the AL does not want to leave power as well as hold the elections," she said at an iftar programme.

Islami Oikya Jote, a component of the BNP-led 20-party alliance, arranged the programme at a city hotel.

There, the BNP chief said, "The ruling party

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SEHRI, IFTAR TIMINGS

Ramadan	July	Sehri	Iftar
15	3		6-54
16	4	3-43	6-54
17	5	3-44	6-54



PRAYER TIMING

JULY 3			
Fazr	Juma	Asr	Maghrib
3-47	12-30	5-00	6-54
JAMAAT	3-57	1-15	5-15

Esha 8-17

6-64

8-45

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

SUSPECTED BOKO HARAM CARNAGE

Nearly 150 people killed in Nigeria

AFP, Maiduguri

Suspected Boko Haram militants killed nearly 150 people in northeastern Nigerian villages, mowing down men and children praying in mosques. They also shot women preparing food at home, witnesses said yesterday.

Dozens of militants stormed three remote villages in the flashpoint Borno state on Wednesday evening, slaughtering residents and setting houses ablaze in the bloodiest day of attacks by the extremist group since President Muhammadu Buhari came to power in May.

Gunmen killed at least 97 people in Kukawa, the worst-affected village, a local who gave his name as Kolo and who said he had counted the bodies told AFP.

"They wiped out the immediate family of my uncle... They killed his children, about five of them, and set his entire house ablaze," Kolo said.

A fisherman who witnessed the attack corroborated the death toll.

Another witness in Kukawa, Babami Alhaji Kolo, who fled to the state capital Maiduguri, said more than 50 militants had stormed the village.

"The terrorists first descended on Muslim worshippers in various mosques who were observing the Maghrib prayer shortly after breaking their fast," he said.

"They...opened fire on the worshippers who were mostly

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BRIBE FUND
Suspended
BMP top
cop returns
Tk 50 lakh

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barisal

A Barisal Metropolitan Police (BMP) top official, who was suspended over his involvement in the creation of a bribe fund, has returned Tk 50 lakh yesterday.

BMP Deputy Commissioner Zillur Rahman submitted two cheques of Tk 25 lakh each to the BMP headquarters.

BMP Commissioner Shaibal Kanti Chowdhury told The Daily Star.

Shaibal said they formed a committee led by Abu Saleh Md Rahyan, another deputy commissioner of the BMP, to return the "bribe money" to those who gave it.

The home ministry on Wednesday suspended

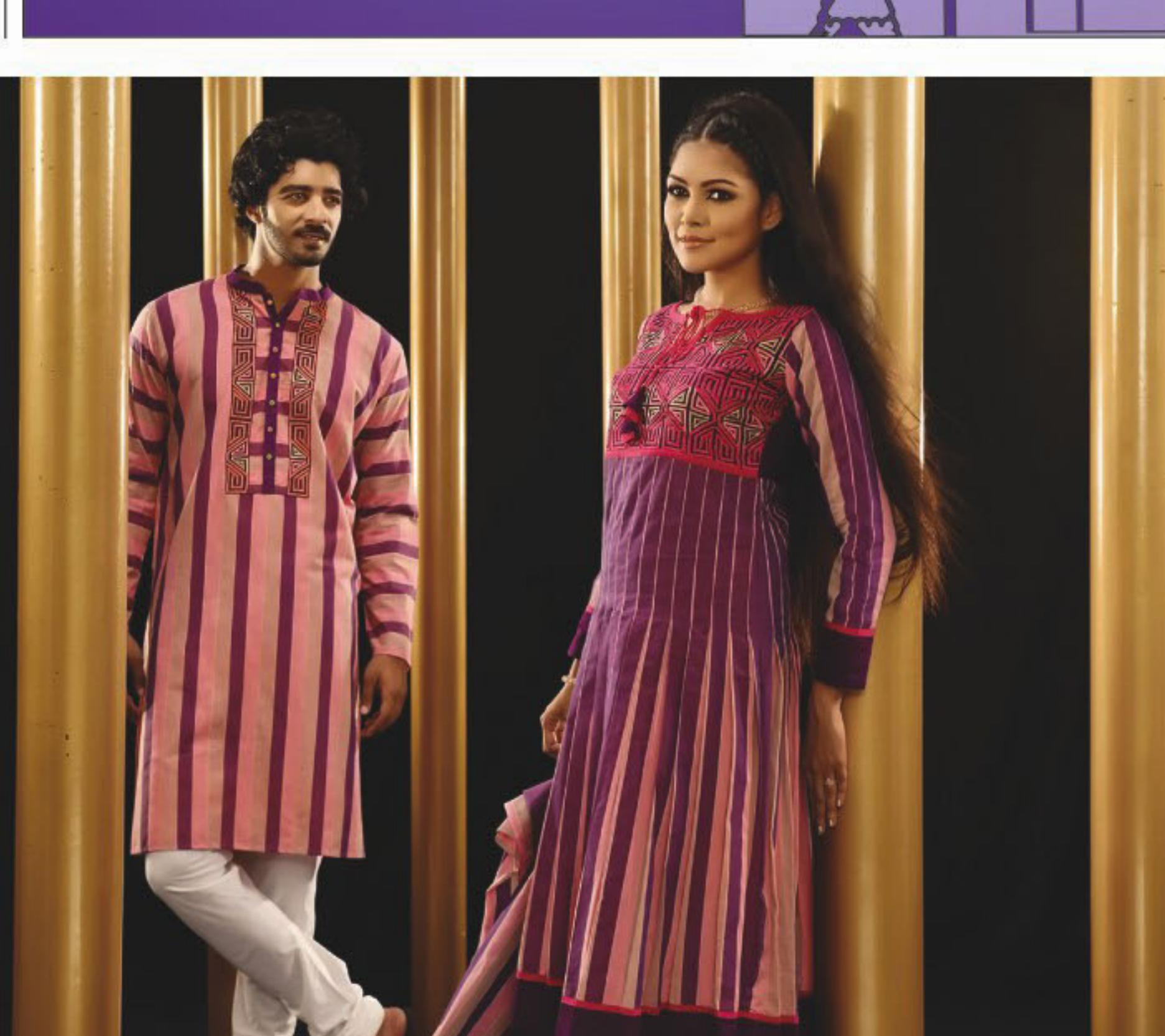
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OBITUARY



We are deeply grieved to announce that Mr Rezaur Rahman FCA, Chairman of Shaw Wallace Bangladesh Ltd and of A F Mujibur Rahman Foundation and Founder-Partner of Rahman Rahman Huq passed away on 01 July 2015 peacefully in London where he has been based for the last few years. He was 86. Mr Rahman was the eldest surviving son of late A F Mujibur Rahman ICS of Gerda, Faridpur and Msmt Zohra Khatoon of Phulshuti, Faridpur. He leaves behind 2 brothers, a sister and a host of nephews and nieces to mourn his death. He will be buried next to his wife in London. We mourn his death and pray for the salvation of the departed soul. May Allah rest his soul in peace.

**Shaw Wallace Bangladesh Ltd
and
A F Mujibur Rahman Foundation**

COCAINE SEIZURE Arrestees remanded

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Investigators were keen to identify the persons involved in smuggling liquid cocaine into Bangladesh as they took three arrestees on 10-day remand through a Chittagong court yesterday.

"We will try to know who else were involved in smuggling cocaine and what was its possible destination," said Tanvir Arafat, additional deputy commissioner of Detective Branch of police in Chittagong.

Metropolitan Magistrate Farid Alam placed the three arrestees -- Atiqur Rahman, Mostafa Kamal and AK

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