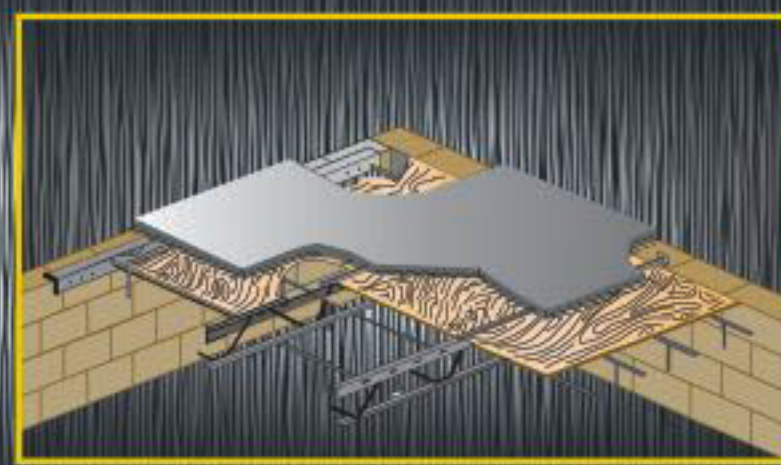


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Wheat import hits a snag

Govt rejects 2 consignments of 1.04 lakh tonnes of wheat for poor quality

REAZ AHMAD

This year's public sector wheat import has hit a snag over quality issues.

After a nationwide outcry over import and distribution of allegedly substandard wheat, the food minister in parliament declared in June not to import wheat from Brazil anymore.

Since then ships carrying 2.6 lakh tonnes of wheat anchored at two seaports in the country, but only 1.56 lakh tonnes has been unloaded and taken to the granaries, food officials confirmed.

The government had to reject two more consignments of wheat last month weighing 1.04 lakh tonnes from France as lab tests at Chittagong Port found the quality not up to the standard set by the Directorate of Food.

Ships carrying half the consignments weighing 52,000 tonnes left the port for India after the food directorate had refused to accept it. But ships carrying the other half weighing 52,000 tonnes still remained stationary in the country's territorial waters, officials told The Daily Star.

Reached over phone, State Minister for Food Nuruzzaman Ahmed acknowledged rejection of a few wheat consignments from France and said, "We have notified the port and customs authorities accordingly."

The import hiccup apart, domestic procurement also fell short of target. Against a 2.55-lakh-tonne target set for procurement directly from wheat growers, the government could procure 2.05 lakh tonnes.

Talking to The Daily Star last week, lawmaker Abdul Wadud, chairman of the parliamentary standing committee on food ministry, said he would convene a meeting of the Jatiya Sangsad body soon to take stock of the wheat situation.

Earlier this year when the government imported 2.05 lakh tonnes of wheat from Brazil, its grain quality and insect infestation sparked a huge outcry across the country. Even ruling party men put up barricades at places blocking entry of the consignments into public granaries.

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On this day three years ago, religious fanatics ran amok and destroyed 12 pagodas and more than 50 houses in Ramu of Cox's Bazar. The violence was touched off by rumours that a Buddhist youth had demeaned holy Quran on Facebook.



Tulip Siddiq in shadow cabinet of Labour Party

BSS, Dhaka

Bangladesh-origin politicians have consolidated their foothold further in British politics as Tulip Rizwana Siddiq has been inducted in the shadow cabinet of opposition Labour Party.

"Tulip Siddiq has been made state minister for culture, media and sports in the Labour Party shadow cabinet," Nadeem Qadir, minister (press) at Bangladesh High Commission in London, told BSS over the phone on Saturday night.

Tulip is a granddaughter of Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and a niece of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina.

Newly elected Labour leader Jeremy Corbyn included British MP Tulip as a junior member in his

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THREE YEARS OF RAMU MAYHEM

Wait for justice adds to agony

ASHUTOSH SARKAR with MOHAMMAD ALI JINNAT from Cox's Bazar

Three years have passed since the mindless communal attacks on the Buddhist community in Cox's Bazar's Ramu upazila, but justice is yet to be delivered.

Three separate probe reports were also submitted to the High Court in this regard more than two years ago. But the HC bench concerned could not hold the final hearing on the matter due to reconstitution of its judicial powers and also apparently lack of seriousness of the lawyers concerned, insiders say.

Even the lower courts of Cox's Bazar could not start trial proceedings in the cases filed after a mob destroyed 12 pagodas and more than 50 houses in

Ramu on September 29, 2012, as witnesses allegedly refrained from appearing before the courts.

Three probes were conducted upon HC orders following two public interest writ petitions filed by two Supreme Court lawyers seeking necessary orders for ensuring justice.

The violence was provoked using a fake Facebook profile of a Buddhist youth named Uttam Kumar Barua. The profile carried a picture demeaning the holy Quran, according to an investigation conducted by The Daily Star.

Supreme Court lawyers Jyotirmoy Barua and Eunus Ali Akond filed the writ petitions on October 2 and 3, 2012 seeking actions against the perpetrators responsible for the attacks and the local administration officials on charge of neglect of duty.

The probe reports and the writ petitions are pending with the HC bench headed by Justice Mirza Hussain Haider, but it has no jurisdiction to hear the appeals.

The petitioners now have to appeal to the chief justice to give jurisdiction to the bench for adjudicating their petitions.

The petitioners have been showing apathy to take the move causing delay by the HC to dispose of the issue and give a final decision regarding the matter, sources in the HC said.

"I am now considering moving my petition before another High Court bench for its disposal after the court reopens from the ongoing vacation," Jyotirmoy Barua told The Daily Star on September 27.

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A woman, who along with 418 other pilgrims came from Saudi Arabia on the first Hajj return flight of Bangladesh Biman, is greeted by her relatives at Shahjalal International Airport last night. The return of the pilgrims was a relief for their families as hundreds, including Bangladeshis, died in a crane crash and a stampede during the Hajj this year.

Biman's first Hajj flight returns

11-hr delay causes sufferings of Hajjis

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The first return Hajj flight of Biman Bangladesh Airlines arrived in Dhaka last night nearly 11 hours behind schedule, causing sufferings to pilgrims.

The flight carrying 419 pilgrims landed at Shahjalal International Airport at 8:21pm instead of its scheduled arrival time of 9:30am.

Talking to The Daily Star, Biman General

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TRAVEL TO BANGLADESH

UK alerts its citizens

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

The British government yesterday issued a travel alert where it claimed "militants" may be targeting western interests in Bangladesh in late September.

"There is a general threat from terrorism. Attacks can't be ruled out and could be indiscriminate, including in places frequented by foreigners," read the foreign

travel advice.

As of late September 2015 there is reliable information that "militants" may be planning to target western interests in Bangladesh, it claimed.

"UK officials have been advised to limit their attendance at events where westerners may gather, for example in hotels or conference centres.

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Joint secy run over by train

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Mymensingh

A joint secretary was run over by a train at Mymensingh Railway Station yesterday.

The victim, Ranjit Kumar Sarker, 55, joint secretary of the Primary and Mass Education Directorate, slipped while trying to get on a moving train and got himself badly injured.

Later he died at Mymensingh Medical College Hospital.

Ranjit, of Bakorpur village in Mohanganj, Netrakona, was returning to Dhaka by Haur Express alone after spending Eid vacation at his village home, said Abdul Ahad Khan, officer-in-charge of Mymensingh Railway Police Station.

The train stopped at Mymensingh station for about 25 minutes when he got down and went to the washroom of the station-master, said Abu Taher, Mymensingh station superintendent.

As the train started rolling again around 12:30pm, Ranjit tried to catch the moving train from the platform but unfortunately fell down as one of his legs

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'Blood moon' shines bright

AFP, Washington

Skygazers were treated to a rare astronomical event yesterday when a swollen "supermoon" and lunar eclipse combined for the first time in decades, showing Earth's satellite bathed in blood-red light.

The celestial show, visible from the Americas, Europe, Africa, west Asia and the east Pacific, was the result of the sun, Earth and a larger-than-life, extra-bright moon lining up for just over an hour.

Images from France, Argentina and the United States, among others, capture the progression of the lunar eclipse to a striking red finale.

In Brooklyn, New York, crowds of people gathered on plazas and sidewalks, gazing up at the sky and trying to take photos with their smartphones -- though in other cities, including Washington, cloud

SEE PAGE 11 COL 5

Toxic gas kills 3

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Bogra

Three workers died after reportedly inhaling toxic gas inside a paper mill at Kahaloo upazila yesterday, police said.

The dead are Hira Mia, 28, of Jogarpara village and Adar Ali, 22, of Jinai village in the upazila, and Shahadat Hossain, 19, of Kulahar village in Shibganj upazila.

Police sources, quoting witnesses, said the accident occurred around 11:30am inside a room of Azad Pulp and Paper Mills situated

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Catalans vote yes to independence

Claim mandate to break with Spain

REUTERS, Barcelona

Separatists on Sunday won a clear majority of seats in Catalonia's parliament in an election that sets the region on a collision course with Spain's central government over independence.

"Catalans have voted yes to independence," acting regional government head Artur Mas told supporters, with secessionist parties securing 72 out of 135 seats in the

powerful region of 7.5 million people that includes Barcelona.

The strong pro-independence showing dealt a blow to Spanish Prime Minister Mariano Rajoy, three months before a national election. His centre-right government, which has opposed attempts to hold a referendum on secession, has called the separatist plan "a nonsense" and vowed to block it in court.

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Catalan pro-independence supporters celebrate with European and Catalan flags following the closing of polling stations during Catalan regional elections in Barcelona, Spain on Sunday.

PHOTO: AFP

BEGUM JAHANARA ROB

(Jan 1, 1930-Sep 29, 2014)



We miss our precious mother, grandmother and a noble heart on this day of September 29. She left us a year ago in 2014. We remember her with gratitude, love, affection and the message of unity that she has left behind for all of us.

She was a Member of the Parliament from Pabna-Bogra from 1973 until 1975 representing Awami League.

Begum Jahanara Rob was the wife of Late Abdur Rob (Boga Mia) of Pabna Sadar, Member of Constituent Assembly (MCA).

We, the family, are praying for her eternal salvation and peace.



PRAYER TIMING

SEPTEMBER 29

Fazr	Zohr	Asr	Maghrib	Esha
4:35	12:45	4:15	6:00	7:30
JAMAAT	5:10	1:15	4:30	6:05
SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION				