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Don't 'play with fire'

Turkey warns Russia as war of words escalates; Moscow threatens retaliatory economic measures

AFP, Moscow

Moscow slapped sanctions on Ankara yesterday as the war of words over a downed Russian warplane escalated, with Turkish strongman Recep Tayyip Erdogan warning Russia not to "play with fire".

Russia announced it was halting a visa-free regime for Turkish visitors, after threatening a raft of retaliatory economic measures to punish the Nato member state.

Tuesday's incident has sent recriminations flying between two rival players in the Syrian war just as countries such as France are pushing for a broader coalition to try to defeat the Islamic State group.

"We advise Russia not to play with fire," Erdogan said in a speech in Ankara, lashing out at Russia's response to the downing as well as its support of the regime of Syrian President Bashar al-Assad.

Erdogan nevertheless said he wanted a direct meeting with Russian counterpart Vladimir Putin when the two leaders are in Paris next week for the UN climate summit.

SEE PAGE 11 COL 2



Kaushiki Chakrabarty mesmerises the Dhaka music lovers with her sweet khayal performance on the opening night of the fourth Bengal Classical Music Festival at Dhaka's Army Stadium yesterday.

PHOTO: RIDWAN ADID RUPON

Time to bask in classical music

Bengal festival begins

FAHMIM FERDOUS

The fourth edition of Bengal Classical Music Festival, the biggest festival of classical music in the world, opened yesterday in the capital's Army Stadium, as thousands gathered at the venue to enjoy performances by stalwarts of Indian classical music.

The festival began with a 30-minute group performance by Bharatanatyam Pallavi Dance Center, a dance school run by dancer-choreographer Minu Haque.

The production, titled "Desh", blended patriotic songs "O Amar Desher Mati" and "Ekti Bangladesh Tumi Jagroto Jonotar" with traditional Bharatanatyam.

It was followed by another group performance

SEE PAGE 11 COL 5

Ensuring pedestrians' safety top priority

130 countries make commitment in Brasilia Declaration after road safety conference

M ABUL KALAM AZAD, back from Brazil

More than 130 countries have made a commitment to making their roads safer for users, especially the most vulnerable pedestrians, cyclists and motorcyclists, by improving and enforcing laws and developing sustainable public transport.

The commitment came in the Brasilia Declaration recently adopted after a two-day global high-level conference on road

safety in the Brazilian capital Brasilia.

"The promotion of sustainable means of transportation -- particularly safe public transport, walking, and cycling -- is essential for the promotion of safety in traffic," says a document as declared by the participant countries.

The participants have also reasserted, under the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (SDGs), to decrease by half

SEE PAGE 11 COL 4

DR MILION DAY

Mother wants trial of Ershad

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Shaheed Dr Milon's mother Selina Akter yesterday said democracy cannot be established until the government ensures trial of autocrat HM Ershad for killing her son 25 years ago.

Expressing her frustration, she said her son sacrificed his life to overthrow the regime of autocrat Ershad, who is now a part of the country's ruling system.

"It is very painful for me. I cannot tolerate this when I recall my son's sacrifice," she said at a programme on Shaheed Dr Milon Day commemorating the 25th martyrdom anniversary of Dr Shamsul Alam Khan Milon.

SEE PAGE 11 COL 1

LATEST ALERT

Australia to withdraw volunteers by Dec 31

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

The Australian government yesterday said it will withdraw its volunteers from Bangladesh by December 31.

"We will withdraw Australian Government funded volunteers by 31 December, as it is becoming increasingly difficult for them to undertake their assignments," according to a travel advice posted on Australian foreign ministry website.

The government also authorised the dependants of posted Australian staff to return to Australia on a voluntary basis.

The announcement came hours after the attack on a Shia mosque in Bogra that left one person killed and three others injured.

The advisory said the ISIL on November 27 claimed another attack against a Shiite mosque in northern Bangladesh.

"We advise you to exercise a high degree of caution in Bangladesh due to the high threat of terrorist attack and the uncertain

SEE PAGE 11 COL 2

Abducted child found dead

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Narayanganj

A day after her kidnapping, a five-year-old girl was found dead at Araihaazar in Narayanganj yesterday.

An alleged kidnapper, Fazle Rabbi, 15, was detained in police raid hours before the murder.

Police and locals said Hafsa Akhter Rupa, daughter of Hazrat Ali, a Bangladeshi expatriate in Malaysia, went missing when she was playing near her home in Banti Chowdhuripara area on Thursday noon.

Later in the afternoon, some kidnappers called a local flexi-load shop and asked its owner to tell Hafsa's parents that they would kill her if they were not paid Tk 3 lakh as ransom immediately.

On being informed, police launched drives in several

SEE PAGE 11 COL 1



Police guard the Shia mosque in the capital's Mohammadpur and search people at Hossaini Dalan in Old Dhaka as security is beefed up at the places a day after assailants shot one dead and injured three others at a Bogra Shia mosque on Thursday.

PHOTO: STAR



Himalayan lakes 'expanding dangerously'

BBC ONLINE

Lakes that have been forming near Mount Everest could threaten settlements downstream if they overflow.

Ponds on the surface of the Khumbu glacier in the Himalayas have expanded and joined together to form larger bodies of water.

Climbers need to cross the glacier, including the treacherous Khumbu Icefall, to climb the mighty peak.

The accelerated meltdown of glaciers in the region is causing concern against a backdrop of rising global temperatures.

Scientists say the warning is the first of its kind for Khumbu, although other glaciers in the Himalayas have seen an increase in the number of lakes formed.

SEE PAGE 11 COL 1

PARIS CLIMATE CONFERENCE

Support for tough deal declines: poll

BBC ONLINE

Public support for a strong global deal on climate change has declined, according to a poll carried out in 20 countries.

Only four now have majorities in favour of their governments setting ambitious targets at a global conference in Paris.

In a similar poll before the Copenhagen meeting in 2009, eight countries had majorities favouring tough action.

The poll has been provided to the BBC by research group GlobeScan. Just under half of all those surveyed viewed climate change as a "very serious" problem this year, compared with 63% in 2009.

SEE PAGE 11 COL 5



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