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Safe water for all in Khulna in 2 years

TAWFIQUE ALI, back from Khulna

Half of 1.5 million Khulna city dwellers are eyeing an end to their chronic water crisis as an ambitious scheme to supply 110 million litres of safe water a day in the next two years is underway.

With severe salinity in the Bhairab and the Rupsha -- two major rivers flowing near Khulna city -- the \$364 million scheme aims at fetching Madhumati river's surface water from 69km away and remedy the water crisis, said project officials.

"We have been suffering from water crisis due to salinity and supply shortfall for decades," said retired jute mill officer Abdur Rashid who lives in Sonadanga of the city.

"Now we are eyeing an end to a perennial scarcity of safe water with the increased supply."

Khulna Water Supply and Sewerage Authority (Khulna Wasa) now pumps up 60 million litres of groundwater and supplies it through its pipelines against an aggregated daily demand of 240 million litres. This serves just a quarter of the city population, said Khulna Wasa Managing Director Md Abdullah.

Khulna Wasa also has 10,000 hand tube wells that pump up 50 million litres of water.

Together, they do not meet even half the demand.

As a result, around eight lakh people, including two lakh slum dwellers, in the 56-square kilometre city remain out of any formal coverage of safe water supply, he said.

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People working at the construction site of a water treatment plant in Khulna. Once in operation, the plant is expected to considerably alleviate the perennial water crises city dwellers face every day.

PHOTO: STAR

No case filed yet over navy mosque blasts

STAR REPORT

No case was filed till yesterday evening in connection with Friday's blasts at a navy mosque in Chittagong.

"I know that no case over the incident has yet been filed," Inspector (Investigation) Javed Mahmud of Chittagong EPZ Police Station told The Daily Star around 6:00pm.

The Issa Khan Base of Bangladesh Navy, where the explosions took place during Juma prayers, falls under the jurisdiction of his police station.

When this paper contacted the Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR) Directorate over the phone in the afternoon, an official said they had no new information to share.

Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan could not be reached for comments.

According to an ISPR press release on Friday, two cocktails exploded at the navy mosque causing minor injuries to five to six people, who were released after first aid.

A Chittagong police official told the BBC Bangla that "two grenades" were hurled as soon as Juma prayers began.

Devotees caught a batman of the navy while he was trying to hurl the third grenade, the BBC Bangla reported citing the police.

It was later found that he was actually a textile engineer and joined the navy as a batman, submitting fake certificates.

'ALARMING... A FAILURE' Security expert Major Gen (ret'd) Abdur Rashid yesterday told the BBC Bangla that Friday's incident was

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ADVERSELY POSSESSED LAND Dhaka, Delhi start demarcation

REZAUL KARIM

After successful completion of the exchange of enclaves, Bangladesh and India have begun demarcating the land in adverse possession and the unmarked areas between the neighbouring countries to end their long pending border disputes.

India will receive 2,777 acres of land already in its adverse possession and transfer 2,267 acres of land to Bangladesh, according to official sources. The adversely possessed pieces of land are located at 25 points along the border with West Bengal, Tripura, Meghalaya and Assam.

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2 parties 'face pressure to quit' 20-party

RASHIDUL HASAN

The Islami Oikya Jote and the Jomiat-e-Ulamaye Islam, two components of the BNP-led 20-party alliance, are under "huge pressure" from the government to quit the opposition platform, according to their leaders and other sources.

Besides, Bangladesh Khelafat Andolon, a Qawmi madrasa-based organisation which

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Struggling with identity

REUTERS, San Francisco

Mirvette Judeh began covering her hijab with a hoodie two weeks ago while in the car with her young children. Someone might want to hurt their mother, she explained to them, because the head scarf easily identifies her as Muslim.

"Now I have to have these conversations with my kids," said Judeh, 39, who lives in southern California. "That's what breaks my heart - to tell my kids that a choice I made to stand up for my religion could make me unsafe."

As anti-Muslim sentiment swells following the Dec 2 massacre in San Bernardino,



California, by a young Muslim couple inspired by Islamic State, many Muslim parents and their children say they fear for their safety and are struggling with their

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People gather to see two wild elephants that came down from the hills to a dried-up water body in Bheola of Chakaria in Cox's Bazar yesterday. The elephants stayed there for 10 hours until forest department employees chased them towards the hills.

PHOTO: MOHAMMAD ALI ZINMAD

NATIONAL HERALD CASE Sonia, Rahul appear in court, get bail

REUTERS, New Delhi

Indian opposition leaders Sonia Gandhi and her son Rahul made a rare court appearance yesterday and won bail in a case of alleged graft they say Prime Minister Narendra Modi uses in a vendetta against their family.

Hundreds of members of the Congress party were massed outside the court premises in Delhi in a show of support for the torchbearers of the Nehru-Gandhi dynasty that has ruled India for most of its post-independence era after 1947.

In the case, a prominent

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Greetings from battlefield

MAIL ONLINE

A set of Christmas cards sent by British soldiers during the Great War show what life was like at this time of the year on the front line.

The cards, which depict servicemen in battle or during downtime in the trenches, were sent by members of the forces to their loved ones who remained at home.

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UNSC resolution a milestone

Says US on Syria peace process; Assad's role remains unsolved

AGENCIES

Major powers yesterday cautiously welcomed a UN Security Council's resolution to end Syria's brutal civil war by summoning rebels and the regime to the negotiating table.

The US and Russian initiative, which emerged from talks with a 17-nation group, foresees a rapid ceasefire in the almost five-year conflict, perhaps as early as next month.

If the plan brings Bashar al-Assad's

regime to the table with the armed opposition, it will allow Russian and US-led forces to focus their firepower on the Islamic State group.

US Secretary of State John Kerry yesterday hailed the UN plan a "milestone" in the efforts to end the conflict there.

He said the plan gave Syrians a "real choice... between war and peace".

"In January we hope and expect to be at the table and to be able to implement a full ceasefire," Kerry told reporters after UNSC adopted the resolution.

"And that means all the barrel bombs will stop, all the bombing, all the shooting, all the attacks on either side."

The Security Council met Friday after the latest round of talks by the International Syria Support Group (ISSG), which had gathered in New York to renew its push for peace.

Attention now turns to Moscow and Riyadh, as Russia pressures Assad's regime to agree to a ceasefire and Saudi Arabia wrangles the opposition to

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PRAYER TIMING

DECEMBER 20

Fazr	Zohr	Asr	Maghrib	Esha
5-20	12-45	3-45	5-22	7-00
JAMAAT	5-55	1-15	4-00	5-25
				7-30

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

BGMEA-BUFT JOURNALISM FELLOWSHIP 2015

BGMEA and BUFT are jointly announcing the **BGMEA-BUFT Journalism Fellowship 2015** to encourage constructive in-depth reports on the country's RMG sector and to help develop required professional skills of journalists working in Bangladeshi media. Applications are invited from journalists working in print and electronic media for the BGMEA-BUFT Journalism Fellowship 2015 in 5 categories: **Bangla and English daily, TV channel, radio and online news portal.** Each selected candidate will be offered a certificate and a consolidated amount of Taka 1 lac. The Fellows selected last time will not be eligible to apply this time. Please visit www.bgmea.com.bd/fellowship for details. Application for the fellowship along with required documents should be sent to BGMEA, BGMEA Complex, 23/1 Panthapath Link Road, Karwan Bazar, Dhaka 1215 with the superscription "BGMEA-BUFT Journalism Fellowship 2015". **Last date for receipt of application: 15 June 2016.** For any query, contact Mr. Omar Gias, Sr. Deputy Secretary, BGMEA; Mobile: 01738 301102.