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A palace in ruins

Two-century-old abode of Chakma king in Chittagong now covered in moss and weeds

MINHAJ UDDIN, Chittagong

A two-storey dilapidated building covered in moss and weeds is losing a war against age and is now barely a testimony to its rich historic past in a remote village of Rangunia upazila.

About two centuries old and built during the colonial era, the crumbling structure was once the palace of a Chakma king, even though it is located in the plains of Razanagar union, almost 33 kilometres away from incumbent Chakma King Debasish Roy's residence in Sadar upazila of Rangamati.

The protruding bricks on the walls and the large chunks of stones lying on the ground stand as evidence to the lost Chakma kingdom which once stretched from Alikadam, Bandarban in the south to the Feni river in the north, the Lusa Hills in the West to the Dhaka Trunk Road in the east.

"It attracts hundreds of visitors in the remote village every day. The building, aged around 250 years, might have been built by Chakma Queen Kalindi or some earlier king," said Rumel Dewan, who is looking after the property owned by King Debasish Roy.

As there is no stone inscription, there are different

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A roofless room of the battered palace of Chakma king Debasish Roy in Rangunia upazila of Chittagong. Due to decades of neglect, the two-century-old building, inset, also has moss and weeds everywhere.

PHOTO: MINHAJ UDDIN



SEHRI, IFTAR TIMINGS

Ramadan	June	Sehri	Iftar
14	20		6-52
15	21	3-39	6-52
16	22	3-40	6-52

BANGLADESH-MYANMAR RELATIONS Dhaka moves to strengthen ties

Special envoy to visit Nay Pyi Taw at the end of this month

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh has taken a fresh move to build the best possible relations with Myanmar with the change of regime in the neighbouring country and decided to send a special envoy in Nay Pyi Taw to convey Dhaka's intention to that end.

Diplomatic sources said Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina is sending Foreign Secretary Md Shahidul Haque as her special envoy, who will meet Myanmar President Htin Kyaw and Minister of President's Office and Foreign Minister Aung San Suu Kyi to renew ties for Bangladesh's strategic interests.

Haque will carry special letters from the prime minister to the Myanmar leaders conveying Dhaka's eagerness for stronger relations through holding dialogues in different areas for cooperation for the benefit of the two peoples.

The special envoy is expected to make the visit on June 30-July 1 and meet other high-profile leaders and officials. The visit also aims at giving a signal to remove misunderstanding and gap between the two neighbouring countries.

Foreign ministry officials said the premier has given the directives to engage Myanmar at the highest level, keep the channels of dialogue open, set up mechanisms to resolve border differences, strengthen confidence-building measures to prevent actual border incidents and increase trade and investment for economic development.

They said Bangladesh has been making all kinds of positive gestures as per the prime minister's directives "to build the best possible relations with Myanmar."

They added Bangladesh has already proposed through diplomatic channels to work with Myanmar in areas of climate change, energy, agriculture, education and increase border trade and tourism.

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Pak couple shot dead for 'honour'

AFP, Islamabad

A pregnant woman and her husband have been abducted and shot dead by relatives who disapproved of their marriage, police said yesterday, the latest in a surge of reported "honour killings" in Pakistan.

The couple were murdered near the village of Thikriwala in Punjab province last Wednesday, senior local police official Malik Waris told AFP. The bodies were discovered after they washed up in a canal.

Waris said Aqsa Bibi, aged 22, and Shakeel Ahmed, 26, both worked at a local pharmacy and had got married in a court ceremony four years earlier.

Aqsa was expecting a child, though it was not immediately clear how many months' pregnant she was.

Their match enraged Aqsa's family, who lived in a nearby village.

Matters came to a head when one of her brothers, named as Muhammad Moavia, who had recently returned from abroad assembled a group of relatives to kidnap the couple.

They then shot them both in the head and dumped their bodies in the canal.

The accused remain at large, said Waris, adding that raids are underway.

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China's "Monkey Village"



ODDITYCENTRAL.COM

A picturesque Chinese village where humans live alongside hundreds of macaques sounds like a great vacation destination, but for the local population it's apparently a daily living hell.

A little over a decade ago, authorities in Xianfeng village, in southwestern Sichuan Province came up with an ingenious plan to boost tourism and turn their quaint settlement in one of China's most popular destinations -- attracting wild macaques from the surrounding mountains to their village.

Locals spent 48 days drawing in 73 monkeys using food, and their plan worked like a charm. The animals started settling in, and as word about a real-life monkey village spread throughout the region,

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DEATH FOR WAR CRIMES Mir Quasem seeks review of SC verdict

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

War criminal Mir Quasem Ali yesterday sought review of the Supreme Court verdict that upheld his death penalty for crimes against humanity during the Liberation War.

The Jamaat-e-Islami leader submitted a petition to the apex court through his lawyers seeking acquittal of all seven charges for which his punishment was upheld.

The International Crimes Tribunal-2 convicted and sentenced him based on hearsay statements of prosecution witnesses, claimed Quasem's principal counsel Khandker Mahbub Hossain at a press briefing at the Supreme Court Bar Association auditorium after filing the review petition.

Mir Quasem Ali was sentenced to death on a "defective" charge, he said, adding that his client is a businessman and a social worker, not a politician.

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