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# Eid shopping online doubles

Traffic jam, rush at malls prompting people to buy from home

MUHAMMAD ZAHIDUL ISLAM

The volume of online Eid shopping has more than doubled this year compared to the previous year's, with many opting to buy products online to avoid nagging traffic jam and mad rush at shopping malls.

More than 20,000 purchases a day are being made on the country's e-commerce market during this Ramadan against 10,000 last year, according to market insiders.

E-traders are likely to see sales of more than Tk 200 crore till this Eid-ul-Fitr. The amount was around Tk 100 crore last year, Fahim Mashroor, convener of E-Commerce Alliance at Bangladesh Association of Software and Information Services (BASIS), told The Daily Star.

Razib Ahmed, president of the e-Commerce

Association of Bangladesh, said "I have talked to more than 40 e-commerce companies. All of them said they were now doing better than in the previous year."

He noted that accurate figures on online sales are hard to come by as most of the payments are made in cash upon delivery of products.

According to the World Bank, Bangladesh recorded retail sales of \$10-12 billion (Tk 77,350 crore to Tk 92,820 crore) during the two Eid festivals in a span of three months in 2014.

Riding on the rapid growth of the internet and mobile phone use across the country, around 500 e-commerce sites and more than 3,000 Facebook-based traders are now selling goods online.

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## 'Musa was arrested a week ago'

Claims wife of key suspect in Mitu murder; police deny having him

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Police claimed that they are still looking for their informant Kamrul Islam Sikdar Musa in connection with the Mitu killing case, but Musa's wife said the law enforcers had already picked him up over a week ago.

Motaleb Mia Wasim, an accused in the case, reportedly told a magistrate on June 26 that Musa hired seven to eight hit men, including him, for killing Mahmuda Khanam Mitu, the wife of Superintendent of Police Babul Akter.

Now, only Musa's arrest could unveil the mastermind of the brutal killing and whether Babul had any hand in the murder of his wife, police sources said.

Babul had been picked up early Saturday from his

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# Agrani Bank MD axed for Tk 792cr loan irregularities

ACC arrests 3 other high officials for illegally sanctioning Tk 108cr loans

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The day Bangladesh Bank removed the managing director of Agrani Bank in connection with illegally sanctioning loans, the Anti-Corruption Commission swooped in and arrested three Agrani Bank high officials, including the one replacing the MD, for irregularities and corruption.

The state-owned bank has 935 branches country-wide.

On Wednesday, Bangladesh Bank removed Managing Director Syed Abdul Hamid for violating rules in granting loans amounting to Tk 792 crore. His removal came into effect yesterday, Zaid Bakht, chairman of Agrani Bank, told The Daily Star.

Late yesterday afternoon, the ACC arrested Agrani Bank Deputy Managing Director Mizanur Rahman Khan just hours after the finance ministry made him the acting managing director of the bank.

They also arrested Deputy General Manager of the bank's principal branch Akhtarul Alam and Assistant General Manager Shafiqullah, spokesman for the ACC Pranab Kumar Bhattacharya told The Daily Star.

According to the ACC spokesman, they were arrested in the city's Motijheel area and would be in police custody until they were produced before a court today.

MUJITH WORRIED OVER BANKING PLUNDER -- PAGE 2



Abdul Hamid

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# SWISS BANKS Deposits of Bangladeshis Tk 4,423cr

REJAUUL KARIM BYRON and MD FAZLUR RAHMAN

Bangladeshi citizens' deposits with Swiss banks rose to 8.85 percent year-on-year in 2015 to an astounding Tk 4,423 crore (550.85 million Swiss franc), shows Swiss central bank data.

The deposits went up despite an ongoing global clampdown on the famed secrecy wall of Switzerland's banking system.

The amount had stood at Tk 4,283 crore in 2014, 36.02 percent up from the previous year. It was Tk 3,149 crore in 2013 and Tk 1,991 crore in 2012, shows the data from the Swiss National Bank (SNB).

India nationals put 1.206 billion franc while Pakistanis 1.477 billion franc in the banks last year. Nepalese and Sri Lankan citizens deposited 314 and 77 million franc respectively.

The total amount of money kept in Swiss banks by all their foreign clients fell by nearly four percent to 1.41 trillion franc or \$1.45 trillion, shows the SNB data.

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# Shady trade over mobile SIM

Pre-activated, illegally registered SIMs with duplicate fingerprints in market for open sale

MUHAMMAD ZAHIDUL ISLAM

A large number of pre-activated SIMs -- registered biometrically with duplicate fingerprints and national identity cards -- are streaming into the market for open sale, say industry insiders.

The people whose fingerprints and NID cards were copied by errant and unscrupulous retailers are unaware of it.

All these pre-activated SIMs have been on sale for high prices -- up to Tk 1,000 each -- after the deadline for biometric re-registration and authentication expired on May 31.

The surreptitiously re-registered SIMs are found in parts of the capital as well as in district towns. Salesmen are often seen trying to get customers for these SIMs in the city's Motijheel, Nilkhet and Mirpur-10 areas.

Some mobile phone users who fell victim to forgery are now panicking.

Kohinur Begum, a housewife from the capital's Manda area, went to a nearby retail shop to get a new cell phone connection using her NID card early this year.

She was in utter shock to learn that at



least 10 SIM cards had already been registered with her biometric fingerprints and NID card.

Kohinur told this correspondent that she had no clue that her fingerprints had been copied several times.

"The retailer told me that my fingerprints couldn't be matched with the one on the NID database even after several attempts," she said.

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2,531 ACTIVE SIMS SEIZED -- PAGE 2

# Indian boy reunites with his family

Ordeal of Bangladeshi who made the reunion possible continues

OUR CORRESPONDENT, New Delhi

Sonu, the Indian boy who was abducted and brought to Bangladesh six years ago, reunited with his family in Delhi yesterday.

However, Jamal Ibne Musa, whose efforts made this possible, is still facing trial in five cases lodged by the 12-year-old boy's alleged captors.

Sonu was flown to Delhi by a Jet Airways flight. His parents were at the Indira Gandhi International Airport to receive him. Later, they were driven to their house in New Seemapuri locality in the northeast part of Delhi.

The reunion was impossible even six months back before Sonu met 52-year-old Musa while trying to get free of the clutches of his abductors for the third time.

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Indian External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj hugs Sonu while his parents look on at Sushma's office in New Delhi yesterday. The 12-year-old Indian boy was finally reunited with his parents, thanks to Jamal Ibne Musa, a Bangladeshi man dubbed the real-life "Bajrangji Bhaijaan". Sonu was trafficked into Bangladesh in 2010.

COURTESY: SUSHMA SWARAJ TWITTER PAGE

# People start leaving city for home

M ABUL KALAM AZAD and PANKAG KARMAKER

People, mostly civil servants and their families, started leaving the capital for home last night to celebrate Eid-ul-Fitr with their near and dear ones.

Yesterday was the last working day for government employees before Eid as they will enjoy a nine-day vacation, including four weekends, thanks to the announcement of a public holiday on Monday which was the only working day left in next week.

Around 60-70 lakh people will travel by roads, rail and rivers until Wednesday to reach their destinations. This year, the Eid-ul-Fitr will be either on July 6 or the following day.

According to Urban Area Report 2014 of Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics, 1.41 crore people live in Dhaka.

Like every year, majority of the holidaymakers will travel by road. Their trips are likely to be a little more comfortable this year than the previous years due to the long vacation. Besides, most highways are in better condition.

Previously, the usual three-day Eid vacation coupled with rain-battered highways used to make people's trips very difficult.

Transport operators, police and officials of the Roads and Highways Department (RHD) hoped that there would be less pressure on highways this year compared to previous years as holidaymakers would leave the city in a staggered manner. Similarly, there would be less hassle for train and

PHOTO ON PAGE 16

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