

বিশ্ব বলেছিলো- পদ্মা সেতু 'সম্ভব না' একজন প্রধানমন্ত্রী আর ১৬ কোটি বাঙালি বলেছিলো- 'কেন না!'

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Overcoming the odds

7 women of a family run restaurant, shop on Dhaka-Rajshahi highway

ANWAR ALI, Rajshahi

Roadside restaurants are a common scene across Bangladesh. But it is considered a male's domain, with transport workers and travellers as the main customers.

However, seven women of a family at Rajshahi city have broken past the stereotype and help run the family style restaurant. It is now frequented by travellers and locals alike. Their popular dishes include khichuri, rice, bread, egg, chicken and beef.

Housed on the South side of the Dhaka-Rajshahi highway, opposite the old railway station and near Haq's Inn Residential Hotel at Seroil, the women also run a tea stall and variety grocery store alongside the restaurant.

"Woman cook at home all the time; why not cook at a restaurant and help run the family as well? What these ladies have accomplished here is extraordinary," said Jahana Begum, a customer and neighbour.

The story behind their start-up is even more inspiring, thanks to the vision and forethought of Asma Begum. "We have no power, money or influence; but what we do have is unity. And that is needed to better your living condition," she said.

"We are united in our struggle and that is our strength." One peek into this cosy little place and the women are seen hard at work, with a clear division of work. One woman rolls out the bread, another washes the dishes, another places firewood under the stove, while another takes orders and serves the dishes.

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These four women are part of an all-female ensemble that runs a roadside restaurant, a tea stall and a variety store on the south side of Dhaka-Rajshahi highway. Setting up their business with a Tk 30,000 loan, they turned their fortunes through hard work and unity and have never looked back since.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

AMBUSH IN RAKHINE Rohingya rebels claim responsibility

AFP, Yangon

Rohingya rebels yesterday claimed responsibility for an ambush on Myanmar security forces that left several wounded in northern Rakhine state, the first attack in weeks in a region gutted by violence.

Rakhine was plunged into turmoil last August, when a series of insurgent raids prompted a military backlash so brutal the UN says it likely amounts to ethnic cleansing of the Muslim Rohingya minority.

The army campaign sent some 650,000 Rohingya fleeing for Bangladesh, where refugees have given harrowing accounts of rape, murder and arson at the hands of security forces and vigilantes.

Myanmar's military, which tightly controls information about Rakhine, denies any abuses and insists the crackdown was a proportionate response to crush the "terrorist" threat.

The insurgents, known as the Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army (ARSA), have launched few attacks in recent months.

But the army reported that "about ten" Rohingya militants ambushed a car with hand-made mines and gunfire on Friday morning, wounding two officers and their driver.

The militants claimed responsibility for the ambush in a rare post from an official Twitter account yesterday.

"Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army (ARSA) hereby declares that we carried out an ambush against the Burmese terrorist army... at around 10:00am on 05 January 2018," it said.

The statement did not

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SEPARATE SECRETARIAT Law minister rejects SCBA demand

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Law Minister Anisul Huq has rejected the Supreme Court Bar Association's demand for setting up a separate secretariat for the judiciary.

In the context of Bangladesh, establishing a separate secretariat for the judiciary is "an unrealistic idea", the minister said yesterday.

He was talking to reporters after attending a programme for the district and sessions judges at the Judicial Administrative Training Institute in the capital.

On January 4, the SCBA, dominated by pro-BNP lawyers, demanded that the government amend the disciplinary rules for lower court judges for incorporating a provision for setting up an independent secretariat for the judiciary.

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Unrest quelled

Says Iran's Revolutionary Guard; concerns mount over fate of arrested students

REUTERS, Dubai

Iran's Revolutionary Guards said yesterday the country's people and security forces had put an end to unrest fomented by foreign enemies, as parliament and security officials met to discuss the boldest challenge to the clerical establishment since 2009.

There has been more than a week of unrest in Iran in which 22 people have died and more than 1,000 arrested, according to Iranian officials. The protests spread to more than 80 cities and rural towns as thousands of young and working-class Iranians expressed their anger at graft, unemployment and a deepening gap between rich and poor.

Residents contacted by Reuters in various cities have said the protests had subsided after the government intensified a crackdown by dispatching Revolutionary Guards forces to several provinces.

"Iran's revolutionary people along with tens of thousands of Basij forces, police and the Intelligence Ministry have broken down the chain (of unrest)," the Guards said in a statement on their Sepahnews website. The Guards said the unrest had been "created ... by the United States, Britain, the Zionist regime (Israel), Saudi Arabia, the hypocrites (Mujahideen) and monarchists."

Parliament met yesterday to discuss the week of unrest with the ministers of interior and intelligence, Iran's police chief and the deputy commander of the elite Revolutionary Guards, state television said.

Late on Saturday, videos on social media showed a heavy police presence in cities, including Khorramabad in southwestern Iran where on Wednesday evening social media posts showed protesters throwing stones at riot police.

As protests have ebbed, the government has lifted restrictions it imposed on Instagram, one of the social media tools used to mobilise protesters. But access to a more widely used messaging app, Telegram, was still blocked, suggesting authorities remained uneasy about the possibility of further protests.

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QUESTION PAPER LEAK Govt to go all out to stop it

Says education minister

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government is going to take all-out measures to prevent question leak, said Education Minister Nurul Islam Nahid.

"We will by no means tolerate it [question leak]. There would be no compromise in this regard," he said at a reception accorded to newly appointed State Minister for Technical and Madrasa Division Kazi Keramat Ali at Paribahan Pool in the capital.

At the programme, Keramat stressed the need for putting much attention on the issue so that questions cannot be leaked out in future.

Their comments came hard on the heels of widespread allegations of question leakage in all public examinations like JSC, SSC and HSC, medical college and university admission tests, and government banks' recruitment exams in last few years.

In most cases, questions were allegedly leaked on some Facebook pages.

Even the question papers of class-I and IV in the school final examinations were

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Mexicans polish off massive king cake



AFP, Mexico City

Mexico City's giant plaza was girdled with king cake late Friday as part of the capital's traditional Three Kings Day celebration.

Some 250,000 people turned out to the main plaza known as the Zocalo to devour the enormous brioche-style king cake, known as "Rosca de Reyes."

Some 2,142 bakers helped make the rosca -- which measured 1.44 kilometers and weighed 9.375 tonnes -- for the city's annual Epiphany eve feast.

"This rosca is so delicious!" exclaimed Dolores Rodriguez, who at 84 years old was attending the party for the first time.

Mexico City's government emphasized that this year a portion of the delicacy -- traditionally adorned with candied fruits -- was made without sugar, so people avoiding sweets could still partake.

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SIBL Foundation Hospital & Diagnostic Center

PRAYER TIMING JANUARY 8
Fazr Zohr Asr Maghrib Esha

AZAN 5:30 12:45 4:00 5:30 7:00
JAMAAT 6:05 1:15 4:15 5:35 7:30

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION



A fisherman displays his catch. Top right, The fish market in Chittagong's Firingi Bazar comes alive with the hustle and bustle of fishermen and customers. Top left, varieties of freshly caught fish being sold at comparatively lower prices attract buyers from all over. The photos were taken at the new fishery wholesale market.

PHOTO: RAJIB RAIHAN

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