

বিশ্ব বলেছিলো- পদ্মা সেতু 'সম্ভব না'

একজন প্রধানমন্ত্রী আর ১৬ কোটি বাঙালি বলেছিলো- 'কেন না!'

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Architectural marvel needs preservation

Barisal's age-old Baroda Kanta Math inching towards ruination

SUSHANTA GHOSH with ANDREW EAGLE

The year is 1899: the Second Boer War rages in South Africa; Guglielmo Marconi succeeds in transmitting the first radio signal across the English Channel; Spanish rule ends in Cuba... In the Subcontinent that same year, designated as 1305 on the Bengali calendar, Lord Curzon arrives to be Viceroy of India and national poet Kazi Nazrul Islam is born.

Meanwhile in Barisal, Kanai Mitra, the zamindar landlord of Mehendiganj, having experienced the recent death of his father, organises the construction of the iconic Baroda Kanta Math, a memorial structure of Hindu tradition with twin 80-foot towers watching over three acres of grounds. The site, near Kawria Bazar in modern-day Guarekha union of Hizla upazila, every day still now attracts many visitors, wishing to experience firsthand its architectural grandeur.

"When I first got here, I was astonished to see its height," says one visitor, Tapankar Chakraborty. "The building is not dissimilar to other 'maths' but it's so tall! This beautiful architecture should be properly preserved. Many people will want to visit this place."

"With its double towers the Baroda Kanta Math is really first class, especially for its ornamentation and eight turrets," says Sahin Anam, custodian of the Barisal Divisional Museum. "It has archaeological significance. Three months ago an official visit was made to the site and a proposal sent to the culture ministry seeking its protection. We are waiting for instructions from the archaeology department concerning its preservation."

SEE PAGE 12 COL 4

The iconic Baroda Kanta Math near Kawria Bazar in Barisal's Hizla upazila is in a state of ruin due to poor repair and upkeep of the century-old structure. The photos were taken recently.

PHOTO: SUSHANTA GHOSH

Marma girls taken to ex-UP chairman's house: cops

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The two Marma sisters released from hospital on Thursday have been taken to the house of a former union parishad chairman in Rangmati.

The town became anxious about the whereabouts of the girls, one of whom was allegedly raped and the other sexually assaulted by members of security forces last month, after Rangamati Sadar Hospital handed them over to their parents in presence of police.

Several photos of the sisters, their parents, Superintendent of Police Sayeed Taruqul Hassan and Deputy Commissioner Manzarul Hannan were uploaded on a Facebook page titled SP Rangamati yesterday afternoon.

The post said the Marma girls were under the guardianship of their parents as per the High Court order since February 15.

Manzarul Hannan told The Daily Star that they visited the girls yesterday morning at the house of the former UP chairman.

SEE PAGE 12 COL 5

BNP plans to hold rally in Dhaka Feb 22

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

As part of its ongoing protest programmes, the BNP has decided to hold a rally in the capital on February 22, demanding release of party Chairperson Khaleda Zia.

The rally will be held either at Suhrawardy Udyan or in front of the party's Nayapaltan central office, Ruhul Kabir Rizvi, BNP senior joint secretary general, announced while addressing a press briefing at the party's headquarters.

The BNP leader said they had already sought permission from the authorities concerned for holding the programme.

Rizvi also said the party's countrywide mass signature campaign demanding the release of Khaleda would formally begin at the central office at 11:00am today.

He claimed that more than 4,650 BNP activists had been arrested across the country since January 30.

On Thursday, the BNP declared fresh agitation programmes, including submitting memorandums to all deputy commissioners on Sunday and staging

SEE PAGE 12 COL 4

Military ops bear all hallmarks of genocide

UN envoy says Suu Kyi could be complicit in the 'systematic persecution' of Rohingyas; Thai honour for Myanmar army chief despite accusations

AGENCIES

The United Nations special envoy on human rights in Myanmar has claimed that Aung San Suu Kyi could be complicit in the systematic persecution of Rohingyas, which bears all the hallmarks of genocide.

In an interview with Channel 4 News posted on the British broadcaster's website on Wednesday, Yanghee Lee said there were grounds for bringing Myanmar's de facto leader before an international tribunal for failing to intervene in the military's "clearance operation" in Rakhine State.

She also said she had personally been told that more mass graves were likely to be discovered in the country, though she did not offer details.

The UN envoy observed that the military's clearance operation, which has seen over 700,000 Rohingyas flee to Bangladesh, bears "all the hall-

marks" of genocide.

Global condemnation has rained down on Myanmar since August 25 when a military crackdown on Rohingya insurgents began in response to an insurgent attack.

Civilian leader Aung San Suu Kyi has borne the brunt of the outcry and been stripped of a welter of honours from her days fighting for democracy under Myanmar's junta.

Asked about Suu Kyi's role, Lee said, "I think that she's either denying [what's happening], or she's really far removed."

The state counsellor "can't be not accountable", Lee said, adding that she believed Suu Kyi was guilty of "complicity or neglecting to do anything to halt this..."

She, however, thinks the chances of Suu Kyi actually appearing before some sort of tribunal were "very small".

SEE PAGE 12 COL 5

China deploys 60,000 troops to plant trees

INDEPENDENT.CO.UK

China has reportedly reassigned over 60,000 soldiers to plant trees in a bid to combat pollution by increasing the country's forest coverage.

A large regiment from the People's Liberation Army, along with some of the nation's armed police force, have been withdrawn from their posts on the northern border to work on non-military tasks inland.

The majority will be dispatched to Hebei province, which encircles Beijing, according to the Asia Times which originally reported the story. The area is known to be a major culprit for producing the notorious smog which blankets the capital city.

SEE PAGE 12 COL 4

Woman killed, her daughter-in-law 'raped'

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Chandpur

Two criminals allegedly raped a housewife after killing her mother-in-law at a house in Deichar area of Faridganj early yesterday, according to Chandpur police.

The housewife, aged 20, told the law enforcers that the criminals entered their home after midnight and strangled her mother-in-law first.

Then, they came to her room and took her to a nearby garden where they raped her, she said.

Police sent the body of Monwara Begum, 56, to Chandpur Sadar Hospital for autopsy, and the housewife was sent to the same hospital for a medical test, Shah Alam, officer-in-charge (OC) of Faridganj Police Station, told this correspondent.

SEE PAGE 12 COL 4

Mourners stand during a candlelight vigil for the victims of Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School shooting in Parkland, Florida on Thursday. A former student, Nikolas Cruz, opened fire at the school leaving 17 people dead and 15 injured. Story on page 8.

PHOTO: AFP

Russians indicted in US election meddling probe

Indictment names internet agency, 13 Russians and two other companies

REUTERS, Washington

A Russian Internet agency and more than a dozen Russians interfered in the US election campaign from 2014 through 2016 in a multi-pronged effort with the aim of supporting then-businessman Donald Trump and disparaging his rival Hillary Clinton, the US Special Counsel said in an indictment yesterday.

The indictment names the Internet Research Agency, based in St Petersburg, Russia; 13 Russian nationals; and two other companies.

The 37-page indictment filed by Special Counsel Robert Mueller described a conspiracy to disrupt the US election by people who adopted false online personas to push divisive messages; traveled to the United States to collect intelligence; and staged political rallies while posing as Americans.

Russia's Internet Research Agency "had a strategic goal to sow discord in the US political system, including the 2016 US presidential election", the indictment said.

The indictment broadly echoes the conclusions of a January 2017 US intelligence community assessment, which found that Russia had meddled in the election, and that its goals eventually included aiding Trump, the Republican candidate who went on to win a surprise victory over Democratic Party candidate Clinton in November 2016.

SEE PAGE 12 COL 1

ROOF COLLAPSE Construction worker killed, 8 others hurt

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Mymensingh

A construction worker was killed and eight others were injured as the roof of an under-construction auditorium collapsed on them in Gafargaon upazila town of Mymensingh yesterday morning.

The victim, Jahan Ali, 25, was from Netrakona's Durgapur upazila.

The under-construction

SEE PAGE 12 COL 4

PRAYER TIMING

FEBRUARY 17

Fazr Zohr Asr Maghrib Esha

AZAN 5-25 12-45 4-30 5-57 7-15

JAMAAT 6-00 1-15 4-45 6-01 7-45

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