



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

BSRM
building a safer nation



শেখ হাসিনা



SHAH CEMENT

**PROUD
CONSTRUCTION
PARTNER OF
PADMA BRIDGE**

Another dies in 'death-pit'

Toll now 21 in illegal stone extraction in Sylhet



OUR CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

Another stone quarry worker was killed yesterday morning while “illegally” extracting stones in Jaflong area of Gowainghat upazila in Sylhet.

With this, this year's death toll at illegal stone quarries in four upazilas of Sylhet now stands at 21. Last year, 32 people were killed in such quarries.

The dead has been identified as Babul Kha, son of Ashu Kha of Mougati in Netrokona.

Hillol Roy, officer-in-charge (investigation) of Gowainghat Police Station, said a group of stone quarry workers were digging the earth to extract stones illegally in a pit near Londoni Bazar Mosque.

A chunk of earth collapsed on them leaving Ashu dead and another injured, the inspector said. He added that the injured and the deceased had both been sent to Sylhet MAG Osmani Medical College Hospital.

On January 2, five stone quarry workers died during stone extraction in the same area. But despite different administrative initiatives, the stone extraction continued, costing lives.

SEE PAGE 10 COL 1



Binoy Chakma tends his watermelon plants on a hillock in Khagrachhari. He has been able to reap the harvest three months ahead of the season, due to innovative farming methods and risk taking. The photo was taken recently.

PHOTO: SAIKAT DEWAN

Watermelons before time

Two farmers in hills bend season's rule to reap benefit

SAIKAT DEWAN, Khagrachhari

No summer afternoon without chilled watermelons. But two unlikely men in southeast Bangladesh are bending the rules and harvesting watermelons before summer heats up.

The risk-taking duo Binoy Chakma and Pravakar Chakma from Karalachari village in Mahalchhari upazila, Khagrachhari district, started to bear the fruits of hard work last month.

Paddy is the crop of choice in the sadar upazila as most pieces of land are inundated in water for most parts of the year.

But Binoy and Pravakar wanted to try something new in their 30 decimals of high land that did not collect water during the winter months. For the last three years, they have been planting watermelon seeds in October, while the unconventional crop takes 3-4 months to yield harvests.

The watermelon is a high maintenance crop, requiring extra care as it is disease prone in winter along with fertilisers and irrigation at regular intervals. The Department of Agricultural Extension Khagrachhari provided the necessary training to take care of the plants, said Pravakar, who owns the land.

Last month, the duo sold 150 watermelons for Tk 220 each to wholesalers. They are still waiting to harvest another 400. “We expect to earn at least Tk 1.5 lakh this year from this crop,” he added.

“Cultivating this fruit is painstaking; we had to cover the saplings with large polythene sheets during occasional rains in winter and heavy fog,” said Binoy. “It is also

SEE PAGE 10 COL 1

His greed still not satisfied

Husband already got Tk 7 lakh, presses for more dowry money

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Pabna

A housewife has filed a case against her husband and in-laws on charges of demanding dowry money even after they received Tk 7 lakh from her family by signing a stamped paper.

Jannatul Ferdous, who married Md Al Amin on February 13 last year, filed the case with the Pabna Judicial Magistrate's Court-3 on Thursday. The court accepted it and asked the accused to appear on April 24.

“My family in 2014 agreed to pay him Tk 7 lakh under an agreement that he will marry me after his recruitment as constable. Accordingly, he was given Tk 7 lakh,” Jannatul told The Daily Star.

In the case statement, she said, “We got married after his recruitment as constable, but my husband demanded Tk 5 lakh more. As I turned down his demand, the accused started torturing me mentally and physically.”

Contacted, Al Amin, now posted with the Chittagong Police Range, admitted

SEE PAGE 10 COL 4

Macron, Modi sign key security deal

AFP, New Delhi

French President Emmanuel Macron yesterday said defence ties with India had reached a new high after the two nations signed a key security accord for the Indian Ocean to counter China's growing influence in the region.

“Defence cooperation between the two countries now has a new significance,” Macron said as a gushing Prime Minister Narendra Modi stood by his side.

Under the deal, India and France will open their naval bases to warships from each other, a move seen as an attempt to undermine China's territorial ambitions.

“A strong part of our security and the world's stability is at stake in the Indian Ocean,” Macron said.

“The Indian Ocean, like the Pacific Ocean, cannot become a place of hegemony,” he added in an apparent reference to China.

Modi, who welcomed Macron with a bear hug on his arrival Friday, said the accord was crucial as the Indian Ocean region would play a “very significant role” in the days to come.

The comments from the leaders followed a slew of agreements signed by the two countries in the spheres of defence, space and clean energy.

“From the ground to the sky, there is no subject on which India and France are not working together,” said Modi.

A technical agreement was also signed on the French-assisted nuclear power project at Jaitapur in western Maharashtra state.

Sources in the French presidency told AFP they were optimistic of a final agreement being signed before the end of the year.

The \$9.3-billion framework agreement for six nuclear reactors was signed during a visit to India in 2010 by then president Nicolas Sarkozy.

But the project has since run into stiff opposition from environmentalists

SEE PAGE 10 COL 2

Khaleda will restore democracy

Says Fakhru in Khulna rally; HC order on her bail today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Terming Khaleda Zia “the mother of democracy”, BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhru Islam Alamgir yesterday said the party chairperson would “restore democracy in the country”.

He also alleged that Khaleda was put behind bars as part of the government's “evil design” to hold “another one-sided” election for staying in power.

“The government wants to hold another one-sided election as it did in 2014. That's why it sent Khaleda Zia to jail,” he said while speaking at a rally in Khulna. The district and city unit of BNP organised the programme demanding the immediate release of Khaleda.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 3

Viking settlement 'found in Canada'



INDEPENDENT.CO.UK

A long lost Viking settlement that featured in sagas passed down over hundreds of years, may have been located on the east coast of Canada.

Birgitta Wallace, an award-winning specialist in Norse archaeology and Viking evidence in the West, said she had uncovered evidence that the new site known as Hop – meaning tidal lagoon – is in the province of New Brunswick, on the country's east coast.

If she is proved correct, it would be the second Viking settlement to be discovered in North America.

Experts have known from Norse sagas that there was a settlement in North America of 11th-century

SEE PAGE 2 COL 3

Mother, son burnt alive in Ctg fire

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

A woman and her 12-year-old son were burnt alive in a fire that razed their house to the ground in Satkania upazila on Friday night.

The deceased were identified as Monju Shil, 35 and younger son Amit Shil, 12. Monju's two daughters were able to escape the fire.

Police and fire fighters said the fire originated from the earthen stove inside the tin-shed earthen house at around 11.00pm when

SEE PAGE 10 COL 1



SIBL Foundation Hospital & Diagnostic Center

PRAYER TIMING MARCH 11

Fazr Zohr Asr Maghrib Esha

AZAN 5-05 12-45 4-30 6-12 7-30

JAMAAT 5-40 1-15 4-45 6-15 8-00

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION



Disclaimer: The photograph used in this advert is solely for the purpose of illustration and is not the exact representation of the original structure.






CUSTOMIZED SOLUTION FOR SPECIFIC REQUIREMENT IN SOIL STABILIZATION

Rooppur Nuclear Power Plant is a mega structure that requires firm ground to be built on. Holcim Cement provides **Customized Solution** for soil stabilization of this grand construction. No matter how demanding and critical a project is, Holcim is here to deliver.

