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"If we are to save Bangladesh, we must save farmers."
 PORIBESH BACHAO ANDOLON PRESIDENT ABU NASER KHAN AT A SEMINAR IN THE CAPITAL (PAGE 5)

"Those who adulterate food in the month of Ramadan should be awarded death sentence..."
 AWAMI LEAGUE PRESIDUM MEMBER MOHAMMED NASIM AT A ROUNDTABLE IN THE CAPITAL

"We're not looking for regime change, I want to make that clear. We're looking for no nuclear weapons."
 TRUMP ABOUT US RESPONSE TO ALLEGED IRANIAN THREATS (PAGE 8)



City traffic in disorder

Poor traffic management amid metro rail construction causes sufferings to commuters

TAWFIQUE ALI

The metro rail construction work on 8km of the capital's key thoroughfares has made the chaotic traffic even worse, largely because steps have not been taken for better use of the narrowed down streets, experts and officials said.

The elevated rail lines -- from Agargaon to Motijheel via Farmgate, Shahbagh, Dhaka University and Press Club -- is the second half of the 20km metro rail line-6.

Experts said the Dhaka Mass Transport Company Ltd (DMTCL) authorities had not done enough to alleviate public sufferings caused by the significant narrowing down of streets during construction of the first half -- 12km from Uttara to Agargaon.

In the second half, the DMTCL is also building seven elevated stations and viaducts along the stretch.

Over 11 metres of the 22-metre-wide Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue have now been occupied from the middle with concrete barriers placed way past the fast lane.

However, the remaining street width has not been widened and footpaths have not been cleared of obstacles, according to transport experts and traffic enforcement high officials.

As a result, traffic flow is seriously bottlenecked at Farmgate, Sonargaon, Shahbagh, Jatiya Press Club, and Paltan intersections.

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Vehicles are stuck in long tailbacks as the metro rail construction work has narrowed down the capital's Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue. Experts say a lack of proper measures from the authorities has worsened the traffic situation in some places of the city. The photo was taken at Banglamotor around 10:00am yesterday.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS



PM flies to Japan today

To meet Abe, top business leaders

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina leaves Dhaka today for a 12-day visit to Japan, Saudi Arabia and Finland, amid high hopes of boosting trade and investment as well as mobilising support in addressing the Rohingya crisis.

Finance Minister AHM Mustafa Kamal, PM's Private Secretary and Investment Adviser Salman F Rahman, State Minister for Foreign Affairs Shahriar Alam, State Minister for Power, Energy and Mineral Resources Nasrul Hamid, State Minister for Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment Imran Ahmad, and other officials

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NUSRAT MURDER

Arrest warrant for former Sonagazi OC

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A tribunal in Dhaka yesterday issued an arrest warrant for former Sonagazi OC Moazzem Hossain on charges of recording a statement of madrasa student Nusrat Jahan Rafi on camera and circulating the clip on social media. Judge Ash Sams Joglul Hossain of Dhaka Cyber Tribunal issued the warrant after Rima Sultana, senior assistant superintendent



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Farmers lose, millers gain

Govt rice procurement designed to deprive farmers of fair price; only 1pc of total production bought from them

MOKAMMEL SHUVO

Under the ongoing food grain procurement programme, the government is buying only 1.5 lakh tonnes of paddy from farmers, which makes up less than one percent of the total estimated production of around 1.96 crore tonnes this boro season.

Under the same scheme, the government is purchasing 11.5 lakh tonnes of rice (equivalent to about 20 lakh tonnes of paddy) from millers.

Although the primary goal of the procurement programme is to give "price support" to farmers, it is not benefiting them much.

On one hand, millers are buying paddy in the open market at low prices

and selling rice to the government at higher rates. On the other, the government is buying almost 13 times more (in terms of paddy) from millers than from farmers.

This means millers are gaining more both ways.

This is the case when farmers are facing losses due to low selling prices in the open market. Moreover, the amount of government procurement from farmers is paltry compared to the amount it would buy from millers.

The procurement started on April 25 and will continue till August 31.

According to government estimates, a farmer had to spend Tk 24,000 to grow one tonne of paddy. But millers are buying the same amount for Tk

15,000, inflicting a Tk 9,000 loss on farmers per tonne. If the government procures directly from farmers (at Tk 26,000 a tonne), the farmers get Tk 2,000 in profit.

At the same time, under the procurement programme, the government pays millers at least Tk 21,600 for the rice produced from one tonne of paddy. In this case, the millers have to spend only Tk 15,750, including the husking cost of Tk 750 per tonne. This means, the millers garner about Tk 5,850 in profit every tonne.

In simple terms, while farmers make a profit of Tk 2,000 per tonne from government procurement, the same scheme

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STATE-RUN JUTE MILLS

Workers to get dues before Eid

Govt allocates Tk 169.14cr following prolonged agitation

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Workers of state-owned jute mills will get their arrear wages ahead of the Eid, thanks to an allocation of Tk 169.14 crore by the government.

The finance ministry yesterday sent a letter to the textiles and jute ministry about the funds for clearing ahead of the Eid the wages of 29,000 workers of 25 mills of the Bangladesh Jute Mills Corporation (BJMC).

The development comes nearly two months after widespread demonstrations by workers demanding fair wages and arrears began in different districts.

"We are going to get our due wages at last... But we had to suffer a lot in the last two months," said Nasima Begum, a worker at Khalishpur Jute Mills in Khulna.

She said her family had been taking

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Tigers' final warm-up today

SAKEB SUBHAN from Cardiff

After their first World Cup warm-up game against Pakistan on Sunday was washed out due to rain, the Bangladesh squad practised under bright sunshine yesterday at Cardiff's Swalec Stadium. With just five days to go till Bangladesh start their World Cup campaign with their opening match against South Africa on June 2, the Tigers will have a last shot to finalise the team combination and possible strategies when they take on India in their final warm-up game here today.

The match is set to start at 10:30 am local time and each side can use all the players in their squad, with a maximum of 11 allowed to bat.

Although weather forecasts can never be seen as ironclad, especially in the United Kingdom, the prediction for tomorrow is

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Fishing boats lying idle on the shores of the Karnaphuli river in Chattogram's Chaktai yesterday as a 65-day ban on fishing in the Bay of Bengal has been in force since May 20. Inset, fish depots in the area remain closed. The government has imposed the ban to ensure smooth breeding of sea fish.



PHOTO: RAJIB RAHMAN

It was a powerful explosive

Says a DMP official on the bomb used in attack on police pickup in city's Malibagh

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

What exploded in a police pickup in the capital's Malibagh on Sunday was an Improvised Explosive Device (IED) and its chemicals and other ingredients were powerful. The impact, however, was comparatively less as those who made the bomb were not properly trained, according to an explosive expert.

"The IED could have caused massive damage had it been prepared with efficient hands," an official of the Dhaka

Metropolitan Police's (DMP) Counter Terrorism and Transnational Crime (CTTC) unit said after examining the blast scene.

The official also said the bomb was similar to the one that had gone off in Gulistan last month. Both the IEDs had batteries attached to them, a technique used by militants.

However, Sunday's bomb had a timer, splinters and a special kind of chemical, which were not there in the previous bomb, said the official, who wished not to be named.

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