



Two children embrace each other after Eid prayers at Baitul Mukarram National Mosque on Wednesday morning. Top right, apart from meeting relatives and friends, visiting places has also become a part of the celebration with people turning up in droves at tourist attractions. Bottom, fun continues for the little ones as they enjoy rides at DNCC Wonderland in Shyamoli on Thursday. PHOTO: PRABIR DAS



Old Dhaka's Jahaj Bari demolished on Eid night

HELEMUL ALAM

"Jahaj Bari" -- the ship-shaped building on Old Dhaka's Chawk Circular Road famed for its aesthetic value -- was demolished on Wednesday night, the night of Eid-ul-Fitr. The demolition was done allegedly by a local lawmaker who

was done on the night of Eid and they sent forces upon receiving information. Demolition was, however, done by that time. The OC said Haji Salim, local lawmaker of Awami League, was present during the demolition and informed them that he bought the two-storey building. When asked about the land

said. Eight traders whose shops were in the building lamented that they were not informed about the demolition earlier, he said. "I failed to save any of my goods in the shops and now I have no money to continue my business," said Aftab who took possession of the shops from the building's

its own, scrutinising the USG list. Moreover, the land belongs to Waqf Estate and no one has taken any permission for the demolition, according to a Waqf administration official. Md Abdul Quddus, assistant administrator of Bangladesh Waqf Administration, had earlier said it is mandatory to take permission

Relocation of climate change victims should be an option

Shahriar Alam says at Berlin conference

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

State Minister for Foreign Affairs Shahriar Alam has demanded climate justice in the form of compensation and financial assistance in addressing the impacts of climate change. He also called for the countries responsible for producing the most greenhouse gases to triple their nationally determined commitments to limit the rise of global temperature below 2 degree centigrade. The calls came at the Berlin Climate and Security Conference 2019 on June 4, organised by the German Federal Foreign Office, German think tanks Adelphi and Potsdam Institute of Climate Research, and the German foreign ministry project "Climate Diplomacy", according to a foreign ministry statement. Shahriar Alam said migration and relocation of people should be considered as options of adaptation for those displaced by the impacts of climate change. In this regard, he called for a new legally binding global deal as the existing instruments are not adequate and are mostly voluntary. Bangladesh, with over 160 million

people, is one of the countries in the frontline facing severe impacts of climate change. A large part of coastal areas in the country's southwestern region may go under water with the rise in sea level, according to climate change experts. Alam said Bangladesh has contributed nothing to global warming but has become one of the worst victims due to irresponsible actions of some developed countries. As some participants proposed referring climate change and the security nexus to the UN Security Council, Alam called for considering the issue necessarily as a development concern which should be covered by all organs and agencies of the UN. He demanded true implementation of the Paris Agreement, 2030 Development Agenda (SDGs) and the Sendai Framework and continuation of existing facilities for LDCs after graduation as effective measures to fight climate change. Foreign and state ministers of Germany, Sweden, Ghana, the Maldives, Malta, Palau, the UK, Cote d'Ivoire, Afghanistan, UN High Commissioner for the Refugees Filippo Grandi, foreign secretaries of different countries attended the conference.



Left, while the nation celebrated Eid on Wednesday, Jahaj Bari was demolished, violating a High Court order. Right, the ship-shaped building before demolition. PHOTO: COLLECTED

also tried to demolish the building around two months back. The demolisher violated a High Court order and did not take permission from Waqf Estate even though the land belongs to it (a charitable donation that cannot be sold). A general diary was filed by Taimur Islam, chief executive of Urban Study Group (an organisation working to protect Dhaka's architectural heritage), at Chawkbazar Police Station on Thursday against the demolition. But even after the GD was filed, it continued on Thursday night. Officer-in-Charge of Chawkbazar Police Station Shamim Or Rashid Talukdar said the demolition

belonging to Waqf Estate, he said no one from the organisation came to him with papers. Haji Selim could not be reached for comments despite repeated phone calls. Sohail Ahmed, personal assistant of Haji Selim, said they have no idea who demolished Jahaj Bari. He said Haji Selim is now abroad and will get in touch upon return. Only rubbles were found where the building once stood while visiting the site yesterday morning. Aftab, who had two shops on the first floor of Jahaj Bari, claimed that Haji Selim's men demolished the building. "I'm counting Tk 20-30 lakh loss due to the sudden demolition [of the building]," he

mutawalli (caretaker) in 1996. The previous attempt to demolish the building in March was stopped after Taimur Islam filed a GD. This time around they chose Eid night for the demolition to avoid resistance and used bulldozer to tear down the building overnight, said locals. Shop owners, who were forced to vacate the building around four months back, were also not properly compensated, they added. The High Court on August 13 last year issued a directive on Rajdhani Unnayan Kartripakkha (Rajuk) to not approve or allow construction on, demolition or modification of 2,200 archaeologically significant buildings, listed by USG, until Rajuk prepares an amended list of

from them for handing over or selling a Waqf land, or doing any development work. Haji Abdul Haque is the current mutawalli of the charitable trust. Haji Selim took a part of the land from another successor but demolished the entire building, said a frustrated Aftab. Abdul Haque also did not respond to repeated calls made by this correspondent. Taimur Islam said the two-storey building was built in the late 19th century or early 20th century, following neoclassical architectural style. The building is called Jahaj Bari for its triangular shape resembling a boat, he said. The nearly 100-ft long building was built as a trading centre.

Japanese footballer Hasebe visits Rohingya camps

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Japanese soccer player Makoto Hasebe, who is also a Unicef goodwill ambassador, has appealed to the global community to support Rohingya children who are growing without education in the Cox's Bazar refugee camps. "One of the major challenges they face is that they don't see future [without education]," he told journalists at Japanese ambassador's residence in Dhaka on Thursday, following his two-day visit to the camps. The scale of Kutupalong camp and sheer number of refugees surprised him, he said,

lauding Bangladesh for providing shelter and humanitarian assistance since the influx, beginning in August 2017. He also played soccer with children at the camp. "It's not only a problem of Bangladesh or Myanmar. It's a problem of the world and it needs to be solved," said Hasebe, who currently plays for Germany's Bundesliga club Eintracht Frankfurt. Hasebe played as Japan's national team captain from 2010 till 2018 FIFA World Cup in Russia. Japanese Ambassador to Bangladesh Hiroyasu Izumi too advocated for education of Rohingya children.

Ex-SP Kohinoor Mian's daughter dies from fall

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Elona Taqwa, 18, daughter of suspended police officer Kohinoor Mian, died after falling from a six-storey building in Banani on Eid day. Assistant Commissioner of Dhaka Metropolitan Police's Gulshan Circle, Rafiqul Islam, said they suspect that Elona died after jumping from the roof of the building. He said the incident happened on Wednesday afternoon. Elona was rushed to United Hospital where the on-duty doctors declared her dead. Her body was later taken to Dhaka Medical College morgue for autopsy. Elona, who recently passed O level from an English medium school in the capital, lived on the first floor apartment of the building with her mother and brother. No case was filed till yesterday evening in connection with the incident. Elona's father Kohinoor Mian has been traceless since 2009 after the home ministry suspended him following a criminal case filed in connection with beating up of a woman in Dhanmondi on March 12, 2006.

A whiff of fresh air

Dhaka's air quality improves during Eid

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

With millions leaving Dhaka for Eid and less vehicles plying the streets, the capital's air quality saw a significant improvement. Rain helped too, as it washed away pollutants. According to AirVisual report yesterday, Dhaka ranked 20th among the most polluted cities in Air Quality Index (AQI). Level of air pollution in Dhaka is so alarming that the city is often ranked among the most polluted ones. Brick kilns, unfit vehicles, dust from roads and construction sites, and toxic fumes from industries are the major sources of air pollution. But during Eid holidays, brick kilns and industries remain out of operation, fewer vehicles ply the roads and construction activities stay suspended, which resulted in the improvement, said experts. The city's air is contaminated with not only metals like lead, chromium, cadmium, nickel, arsenic, manganese and copper but also with other poisonous particles, show studies of Department of Environment (DoE). The presence of pollutant particles in the air even on a normal day, except for the rainy season, is more than three to four times the desirable limit. The level of pollutants is higher in the city than other parts of the country, and it gets worse with

the advent of winter, according to DoE officials. World Health Organization (WHO) in 2018 said Dhaka was the world's third worst city in terms of air pollution, behind Delhi and Cairo. Continued exposure to poor quality air can cause heart diseases, lung cancer, chronic obstructive pulmonary diseases, and respiratory infections, including pneumonia. It could also cause stroke, according to WHO. Bangladesh National Ambient Air Quality Standard guidelines say the presence of particulate matters (PM) 10 in the air should remain within 150 microgram per cubic metre (mg/m3) within 24 hours and that of PM2.5 within 65 mg/m3. In January this year, the average concentration level of PM10 was 104-401 mg/m3 and that of PM2.5 was 87-229 mg/m3 in the capital, according to the DoE, which measures the air quality under its Clean Air and Sustainable Environment (CASE) project. Experts say these particulate matters may cause bronchial and kidney diseases and even lung cancer. A significant number of city dwellers suffer from respiratory diseases and asthma in the winter every year. Ziaul Haque, DoE director for air quality management, earlier said in 2017-18 fiscal year, half the air pollution in Dhaka was caused by brick kilns while construction work contributed around 25 percent and vehicle emission 10-12 percent.



Makoto Hasebe playing football with Rohingya children at a camp in Cox's Bazar. PHOTO: COLLECTED