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BANGLADESH'S CHOICE
2018

Joy of Eid eludes farmers

ANWAR ALI

Because of low prices, Allam Hossain decided not to sell his paddy but rather wait for the situation to improve. However, as Eid was around the corner, he went out to the local market with 30kg of mangoes from his four trees.

But none of those sold, and the 45-year-old farmer of Edolpur village of Rajshahi's Godagari upazila returned home empty-handed.

"Nobody even asked about the price," Allam said. "I took the fruits to the market twice, and faced the same situation every time. Mangoes were not in demand before the Eid."

Still, the farmer found a way of managing the Eid expenses, but it would require him to sell half the paddy he had harvested this boro season. So, with no alternative left, he borrowed and bought 2kg of beef to have a delicacy on Eid day.

Allam could at least manage some beef, but most farmers could not.

Apart from low paddy prices, a steep fall in litchi and mango prices during Eid shocked many of Rajshahi's farmers and dampened their celebrations. Having delicious food or presenting new clothes to children be-came a luxury to them.

Farmers said it took them at least Tk 800 to grow one maund (40kg) of boro paddy, but the selling price barely crossed Tk 650.

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The wreckage of a car that veered off a road and hit a parked truck in Harinchhora area of Sirajganj around 8:00am yesterday. The accident left two people in the car dead.

PHOTO: STAR



New Indian FM sets goal for Indo-Bangla ties

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The newly appointed Indian Foreign Minister Subrahmanya Jaishankar is committed to achieving the goal of Indo-Bangla bilateral relations that was set by Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman during the inception of Bangladesh.

Jaishankar made the remark in a letter sent to Bangladesh Foreign Minister AK Abdul Momen on Tuesday.

In the letter, he wrote, "As the foreign minister of India, I am committed to take the bilateral relations between Bangladesh and India towards the goal that was set by Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman during the independence of Bangladesh."

Relations between the two neighbouring countries have only improved ever since Bangladesh achieved its liberation, he added.

This happened as a result of wise and prudent leaderships of Sheikh Hasina and Narendra Modi in Bangladesh and India respectively, the letter added.

Jaishankar, who went to Bhutan yesterday after taking office of the foreign minister on May 30, expressed his willingness to visit Bangladesh soon, said a statement of Bangladesh Ministry of Foreign Affairs yesterday.

According to the Indian Express, Jaishankar has been one of the most active diplomats in the panel of Modi government and steered the government's agenda across the world.

Jaishankar has previously served as Indian ambassador to US (2014-2015), China (2009-2013) and some European states.



PRAYER TIMING JUNE 8

Fazr Zohr Asr Maghrib Esha
AZAN 4-05 12-45 5-00 6-45 8-15
JAMAAT 4-40 1-15 5-15 6-50 8-45

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

ANTI-GOVT PROTESTS

Saudi Arabia 'to execute' another teen

BUSINESS INSIDER ONLINE

Saudi Arabia is seeking the death penalty for an 18-year-old it detained in 2014 for protesting on his bicycle as a 10-year-old, a CNN investigation has found.

It would make him the fourth teenager to be executed this year.

Murtaja Qureiris was retrospectively arrested by Saudi police in 2014 for allegedly staging a number of protests during the country's Arab Spring movement in 2011.

Saudi prosecutors claim that Qureiris' alleged activities encouraged the "sowing of sedition" and made him part of "an extremist terror group," which warranted the death penalty. Qureiris denies those charges.

Qureiris is known to have taken part in one protest against the Saudi regime, and is accused of staging at least two more, CNN reported.

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IN DOHA WITHOUT PASSPORT

Biman pilot, airport officials face probe

Civil aviation, Biman make contradictory statements

RASHIDUL HASAN

The Biman Bangladesh Airlines and Cabinet Division yesterday issued contradictory statements on whether Biman pilot Capt Fazal Mahmud was detained by immigration officials in Doha for not having his passport on him.

The national flag carrier in a statement said Capt Fazal, who flew a 787 Dreamliner to Qatar on Wednesday from Dhaka, was not detained or arrested there.

Hours after the Biman statement, the Cabinet Division in a gazette mentioned that Capt Fazal was detained at Hamad International Airport in Doha by the immigration authorities for not carrying his passport.

Capt Fazal was scheduled to fly Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina back to the country today after her tri-nation official visit.

The Cabinet Division also formed a four-member inter-ministerial committee to investigate how Capt Fazal travelled to Qatar without his passport and why immigration officials at Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport failed to check him.

Contacted yesterday, Capt Fazal Mahmud said there was no question of him being detained at Hamad as he didn't attempt to go past the immigration check point.

He added that he had inadvertently left for Doha without his passport. The Biman statement signed by its General Manager (PR) Shakil

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Bangladesh man held for 'plot to attack Times Square'

US prosecutors say

REUTERS, New York

A US green-card holder from Bangladesh was charged with illegally acquiring firearms as part of a plan to attack Times Square, one of mid-town Manhattan's most crowded crossroads, federal officials said yesterday.

Ashiqul Alam, 22, from Jackson Heights in the city's Queens borough, was arrested on Thursday after receiving two Glock 19 nine millimetre semi-automatic pistols with their serial numbers stripped off from undercover law enforcement officers, according to a complaint unsealed yesterday in Brooklyn federal court.

Alam, who is from Bangladesh, is not being charged with any terrorism-related crimes, re-ports The

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Bees link symbols to numbers: study



INDEPENDENT.CO.UK

We already knew bees were smart enough to recognise zero and do basic maths but the latest research has found they have another string to their bow – they can link symbols to numbers too.

For the first time researchers trained honeybees to match characters to specific quantities, so for example they could recognise that "two" could represent two bananas, two trees or two hats.

This study proves that despite their small brains, bees are able to learn complicated ideas such as human-made symbolic language. Previous studies have shown primates and birds have this ability, but this is the first time it's been found in insects.

The discovery could lead to "exciting new pathways for future communication across species", says lead researcher Adrian Dyer, an associate professor from RMIT University in Melbourne.

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Bichhanakandi, a tourist spot in Sylhet, teeming with visitors on Thursday during Eid vacation.

PHOTO: SHEIKH NASIR

RUSSIA ECONOMIC FORUM

Putin, Xi hit back at US dominance

AFP, Saint Petersburg

China's Xi Jinping and Russia's Vladimir Putin yesterday hit back at US global economic dominance as they took the stage together at Russia's showcase business forum.

With China embroiled in a trade war with Washington and Russia under Western sanctions, Xi and Putin lashed out at "inequalities" in the global economic system and vowed to pursue closer ties between their countries.

Putin, speaking in front of political and business leaders at the annual Saint Petersburg International Economic Forum, accused Washington of seeking to "extend its jurisdiction to the whole world".

Denouncing the "rhetoric of trade wars and sanctions", Putin called for rethinking the role of the US dollar in global trade and slammed US pressure against Chinese tech giant Huawei.

"They are attempting not just to squeeze but to unceremoniously push (Huawei) out of the global market," Putin said.

Xi said steps needed to be taken to "overcome inequalities" in the global economic system, adding: "The aspirations of nations toward a better life cannot be stopped."

Pointing to Russia as a key partner, he said China was looking to build "beneficial

cooperation on the basis of equality and mutual respect" with friendly countries.

"China is ready to share technological inventions with all partners, in particular 5G technology," Xi said.

Xi arrived in Moscow on Wednesday for a three-day visit with Putin and described the Russian leader as his "best friend" during a cosy meeting at the Kremlin.

The trip comes five years after Moscow's annexation of Ukraine's Crimea peninsula led to a serious rift with the West and a move towards Russia's neighbour to the east.

China meanwhile is locked in a trade war with the United States that has seen Washington impose sweeping duties and move to blacklist companies like Huawei.

Moscow and Beijing's economic ties have grown in recent years, though they remain heavily weighted in favour of China, which dwarfs Russia in economic and demographic terms.

DOZENS OF DEALS SIGNED
Xi's visit has seen the signing of dozens of commercial contracts in e-commerce, telecoms, gas and other areas.

Other deals have been signed at the forum, including one between Russian and Chinese shipping companies to work together to develop Arctic sea routes.

While this is the Chinese leader's first

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