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# Airfare shoots up amid mad rush home

Domestic flight carriers charging up to 4 times the usual fare

RASHIDUL HASAN

Airfare of country's almost all domestic routes shot up significantly ahead of Eid-ul-Azha vacation as holidaymakers are rushing to get air tickets to avoid hassle and time-consuming travel by road and train.

Airfare on Dhaka-Jashore and Dhaka-Barishal routes has increased by around four times because of huge tailbacks at Mawa and Paturia ferry ghats, the two waterways to enter the southern region, said sources at different airlines.

Apart from the two routes, demand for ticket on Dhaka-Saidpur and Dhaka-Rajshahi routes is also high as it takes around 14 to 15 hours for holidaymakers to reach their destinations in the northern region.

Biman Bangladesh Airlines and three private carriers -- US-Bangla Airlines, Novo Air and Regent Airways -- said all tickets for August 9 and 10 on Jashore, Barishal, Saidpur and Rajshahi routes had already been booked or sold out.

Ticket price for travelling on Dhaka-Saidpur route on August 11 is Tk 8,200 to Tk 10,500, according to bdtickets.com website. During normal time, average fare on the route is Tk 2,600 to Tk 3,000.

On Dhaka-Barishal route, airfare is now Tk 8,800, which is Tk 2,300 to Tk 2,700 during normal time.

It will cost Tk 6,500 to Tk 8,000 to visit Jashore on August 11. During normal period, it costs Tk 2,300 to 2,600.

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## INTERNATIONAL DAY OF THE WORLD'S INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

Indigenous girls perform at a programme on the premises of Rangamati Municipality yesterday. Bangladesh Adibashi Fourm organised the event marking the International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples.

PHOTO: ANVIL CHAKMA

## Ensure our land rights Indigenous people urge

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Indigenous communities yesterday observed the International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples in different parts of the country, demanding their constitutional rights and right to land.

In Khagrachhari, Bangladesh Adibashi Forum brought out a procession from Government's Women's College area and started marching towards Shapla Chattar.

The procession, however, was stopped at the Gate of Yongda Buddhist Biha Temple by police.

Condemning the action of police, people from the procession demanded recognition as per the constitution.

In Bandarban, a rally was brought out demanding execution of the Chittagong Hill Tracts Peace Accord.

Speakers at the rally alleged that indigenous people in the area are still deprived of their fundamental rights regarding land, culture, education, and language.

They also urged the government to take stern action against the jhum land grabbers on the area.

People from different communities including Marma, Chakma, Tripura, Tongchanga, Khyang, Bawm, Mro, Lusai, Khumi and Chak brought out a colourful procession in Bandarban town.

Indigenous people in Rangamati and Gaibandha districts also observed the day with different programmes.

The United Nations' (UN) International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples is observed on August 9 each year to promote and protect the rights of the world's

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## FAMILY DISPUTE Woman tied to tree, tortured

Brother-in-law, another held

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

A woman was allegedly tortured by some of her relatives over a family dispute in Rangpur's Gangachara upazila on Wednesday.

Quoting locals, police said the relatives tied the woman, 38, to a tree, beat her up, cut her hair and then placed a garland of shoes around her neck.

Two people, including her brother-in-law, were arrested on Thursday after a case was filed with Gangachara Police Station over the incident.

According to locals, daughter of the woman's brother-in-law and a youth from Rangpur Sadar upazila married about a month and a half ago. The youth, however, sent a divorce notice to the girl on July 21, accusing her of being a person of bad character.

The two families had several altercations in the following days and during the time, the girl's family members blamed the victim woman for the situation.

On Wednesday morning, the elder brother of the woman's husband along with his wife, daughter and brother tortured the victim near their home for

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## Anger builds in Kashmir

Friday prayers held amid tight security; India urges Pakistan to accept 'reality'; Pak FM visits China; US urges for calm

AGENCIES

Authorities in Kashmir eased some restrictions to allow people to attend Friday prayers but anger was still mounting against India's decision to revoke the special status of the Muslim-majority region, residents and officials said.

Seeking to tighten its grip on the region also claimed by neighbouring Pakistan, India this week scrapped the state's right to frame its own laws and allowed non-residents to buy property there.

Since Sunday telecoms links have been suspended, at least 300 political leaders detained and public gatherings banned, effectively confining residents to their homes.

Dozens of people walked on the streets of Srinagar, the region's main city, for the first time this week to offer prayers at mosques guarded by police.

"Every time we have embraced India, they have cut our throats," read a handwritten poster at one mosque, which also urged Kashmiris not to sell land and to hold protests after Eid prayers on Monday, reported Reuters.

Leaders in Kashmir had warned that scrapping the special status would be seen as an act of aggression against the people of the Himalayan state, where more than 50,000 people have been killed in a 30-year-old revolt against Indian rule.

Arch-rival Pakistan, which lays claims to Kashmir, has downgraded diplomatic ties with India and suspended trade in anger.

Yesterday, senior Chinese diplomat Wang Yi said China was gravely

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## Fugitive killed in 'gunfight'

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Gaibandha

A suspected criminal was killed in a "gunfight" with police in Gaibandha's Gobindaganj upazila early yesterday.

The dead -- Chinu Mia, 28, of the upazila's Bishwanath village -- was accused in 18 cases filed over illegal arms dealing, attempt to murder, arson, fraud, extortion, violence and other criminal offences, said police.

AKM Mehdi Hasan, officer-in-charge of Gobindaganj Police Station, claimed they conducted a raid on the banks of the Karatoa on information of Chinu and his gang's whereabouts.

Sensing police presence, the criminals opened fire, forcing the law enforcers to retaliate, he added.

During the "gunfight", Chinu sustained bullet injuries and died on the spot, he claimed.

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## Oldest fossil forest in Asia discovered



INDEPENDENT.CO.UK

The oldest fossil forest in Asia which existed between 359m and 419m years ago, has been discovered by scientists.

Dating back to the Devonian period, a geological era known as the age of fishes, it was found in the walls of clay quarries in China, near the town of Xinhang, in the country's Anhui province.

It is made up of 250,000 square metres of fossilised lycopsid trees, an area as big as 35 football pitches.

Researchers said it is the largest example of a Devonian forest to ever be discovered. Two others have been found, in the US and in Norway.

The latest discovery is the oldest example of a forest in Asia, according to a study published in the Current Biology journal.

The trees which can be seen in the walls of

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**PRAYER TIMING AUGUST 10**  
Fazr Zohr Asr Maghrib Esha  
AZAN 4-25 12-45 4-45 6-41 8-00  
JAMAAT 5-00 1-15 5-00 6-44 8-30

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

## US slaps Hezbollah financier with prison

AFP, Washington

A Lebanese businessman designated by US authorities as an important financial supporter of Hezbollah was sentenced to five years in prison and ordered to forfeit \$50 million, the Justice Department said Thursday.

Kassim Tajideen, 63, pleaded guilty in December to one count of conspiracy to launder money as part of a scheme to evade US sanctions.

He was named a Specially Designated Global Terrorist in May 2009 by the Treasury Department based on tens of millions of dollars in financial support given to Hezbollah, a Shiite political party and militant group in Lebanon.

In a plea, Tajideen admitted to conspiring with at least five other people to conduct more than \$50 million in transactions with US

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Defying a ban, a temporary cattle market has been set up along the Dhaka-Chittagong highway in the capital's Shanir Akhra area. Inset, currency is being checked with a fake note detector machine at the market. The photos were taken yesterday.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

## CITY CATTLE MARKETS Sales yet to pick up

Sellers spend lazy time

MAHBUBUR RAHMAN KHAN

With the Eid-ul-Azha only two days away, sale of sacrificial animals at the capital's cattle markets is yet to pick up pace.

Traders, however, hope that the sale will increase today. Visiting three cattle markets yesterday, this correspondent found low presence of buyers. Traders were seen spending time gossiping and wiping dirt off their cattle.

Yasin Ali brought 13 bulls to Kauartek cattle market from Pabna's Chatmohar upazila on Monday. But he could not sell one till yesterday afternoon.

The same is the case with Jinarul Haque. He was yet to sell any of his 45 cattle brought from Chuadanga on Wednesday.

He said his bulls weigh between two and 15 maunds. He was demanding Tk 5 lakh for his bull of Australian breed, weighing 15 maunds.

Jinarul hoped that the all his bulls would be sold by Sunday.

A total of 24 Hasil (service tax paid by buyers) booths were set up at the temporary market, which occupied part of Dholaikhal road.

Bimal Saha, in-charge of a Hasil booth, told this newspaper that he collected Hasil for only one bull till 3:30pm.

"There are about 25,000-30,000 cattle in the market. I hope sale will pick up pace from the evening," he said. Though there were only a few buyers, crowds of children were seen asking traders about their cattle.

"Children are roaming around the market but their

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