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**"If needed, she [Khaleda] will endure more sufferings in jail, but she will not make any compromise with the current government."**  
BNP LEADER MOUDUD AHMED (PAGE 3)

**"Teachers are still respected, they are in the students' heart, and the society is ready to honour them."**  
NATIONAL PROFESSOR ANISUZZAMAN AT "IPDC-PROTHOM ALO PRIYO SHIKHKOK SHOMMANONA". (PAGE 3)

**"She [Hong Kong leader Carrie Lam] has to obey the masters, at the same time she has to ask her conscience... I think [the] best thing is to resign."**  
MALAYSIA PM MAHATHIR MOHAMAD (PAGE 8)

## Outrageous offer for a defaulter

Rupali Bank's loan rescheduling package includes waiving off Tk 440cr interest, paying back Tk 728cr principal amount by 2040; proposal awaits BB nod

AKM ZAMIR UDDIN

Anyone would balk at the idea of granting yet another rescheduling facility to a defaulter who has outstanding loans of Tk 1,168 crore since 1993 and has not shown any genuine interest or effort in paying back its loans. But the Rupali Bank board didn't.

On August 6, the board of the state-owned lender signed off on an extraordinary rescheduling package for Mother Textile, a client with an abysmal track record.

The company is not only getting its loans rescheduled for another 10 years, its accrued interest of Tk 440 crore will also be waived off.

In other words, Mother Textile, which accounts for about 27 percent of Rupali's defaulted loans as of June, will have until 2040 to pay back the principal amount of Tk 728 crore.

And it will remunerate the sum using the balloon payment method, meaning the size of the instalments will progressively become larger.

The company will pay monthly instalment of Tk 1 crore in 2020 and Tk

1.25 crore between 2021 and 2025.

Surprisingly, Mother Textile will not have to make any down payment to get this facility whereas a deposit of at least 5 percent of the outstanding amount is stipulated by Bangladesh Bank for any form of loan restructuring.

The BB's latest rescheduling package for troubled borrowers drew the ire of experts and stakeholders for being too indulgent towards delinquent borrowers. But this package, offered by Rupali to the dubious textile manufacturer, is outrageous, say a number of bankers and analysts.

"This is unprecedented," said a BB official seeking anonymity.

The deal is now awaiting the green light from the central bank.

"If the central bank gives its nod to this egregious package, it will spark off moral hazard in the banking sector," former BB governor Salehuddin Ahmed told The Daily Star.

"The central bank should take a strict stance against the Rupali board," he noted.

The BB should also take punitive measures against the officials involved in



A train bound for Narayanganj passes through a kitchen market, illegally set up along the Dhaka-Narayanganj rail line, in the city's Shyampur area. Locals said the market was built along a one-kilometre stretch of the track about a month ago after the railway authorities had evicted vendors from another nearby kitchen market in Jurain. Such disregard for safety can lead to fatal accidents. The photo was taken on Wednesday.

## Shun misperception to boost regional cooperation

PM urges South Asian countries

AGENCIES, New Delhi

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday said the South Asian countries should eliminate "misperceptions and false apprehensions" to strengthen regional cooperation and development.

"In the past decades, we have seen many lofty regional ideas and initiatives. Some succeeded, others could not deliver," she said, stressing the need for ensuring mutual trust between the South Asian nations.

The PM was addressing the closing plenary session of the two-day India Economic Summit of the World Economic Forum at Hotel Taj Palace in New Delhi, reports UNB.

Hasina suggested that four principles should be followed in the next decades, with much emphasis on managing geo-political realities through friendship and collaboration.

Talking about the first principle, she said, "We must strive to secure peace, stability and harmony, for every individual across our societies. We must move beyond the majority-minority mindset."

The PM said pluralism has been a strength of South Asia for centuries. "So, we should be able to celebrate South Asia's diversities in religion, ethnicity and language."

## Focus on connectivity, bilateral trade

Hasina-Modi talks today; 6-7 MoUs to be signed

OUR CORRESPONDENT, New Delhi

As Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and her Indian counterpart Narendra Modi are set to hold talks in New Delhi today, India yesterday said the two countries were discussing steps to take the bilateral relations to the next level.

Indian external affairs ministry's spokesperson Raveesh Kumar told reporters that the two sides were expected to sign six to seven MoUs in areas of connectivity, capacity-building and culture after the talks at the Hyderabad House.

He said Hasina and Modi would also jointly inaugurate three projects, but declined to give details.

Asked about the agenda of the talks, Kumar yesterday said, "I don't want to prejudge what will come up for discussion, but the focus will be on bilateral ties and other issues of mutual interest."

"Relations between India and Bangladesh have never been so close and it is important to understand that we are talking about measures to be taken to take



the relations to the next trajectory," he said, adding, "We are looking forward to the talks tomorrow."

Replying to a question regarding Modi's assurance to Hasina at their September 27 meeting in New York that Bangladesh need not be worried over Assam's National Register of Citizens (NRC), Kumar said, "India's position on this is very clear. It is an ongoing exercise."

"We have been saying that the NRC was Supreme Court-mandated and monitored process and I think it is important to understand that the due process has to be completed first."

## DENGUE OUTBREAK

### Rain brings fresh concern

HELEMUL ALAM

Though the number of dengue patients has been declining for the last one month, the rain for the last one week is increasing the risk of further dengue spread, experts say.

They also suggested continuing effective measures by all so that the number of dengue patients does not rise.

According to Directorate General of Health Services, 326 new patients were admitted to hospitals across the country in 24 hours till 8:00am yesterday. With them, the number of patients who were hospitalised with the mosquito-borne disease rose to 89,347.

The unofficial number of deaths from dengue is now 158. However, the official figure is 81.

"This spell of rain will increase the density of Aedes mosquito if the authorities concerned as well as people from all walks of life do not continue their efforts to control the Aedes mosquito," said Prof Kabirul Bashar, an entomologist of Jahangirnagar University.

He said the drive against the mosquitoes would have to go on at least this month to maintain the declining trend of dengue patients.

This rain will help increase the breeding sources of the mosquitoes and the authorities concerned and the people will have to destroy the sources, he said.

Look out for tomorrow's The Daily Star initiative

**Own Home When Young**

Special issue that includes reports on the changing concept of home in Bangladesh, how to plan for a home and home financing at an early age, home financing market in Bangladesh and innovative solutions to urban housing challenges.

## Zeesan to be brought back soon

Says home minister

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan yesterday said top-listed criminal Zeesan Ahmed would be brought back to the country soon.

"The process is underway to bring back Zeesan. We hope that he will be brought to the country soon," he told journalists after visiting a Durga Puja pandal at the city's Krishibid Institution, Bangladesh.

Zeesan, aged about 50, was detained by Dubai police four days ago, but his identity was confirmed on Wednesday, said Mohiul Islam, assistant inspector general (national central bureau) at the Police Headquarters.

A notice of Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP) yesterday said the law



People are living in these partially-demolished buildings on Beribadh Road in the capital's Islambagh, putting their lives at risk. Parts of these houses along the Buriganga were knocked down by Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Authority during an eviction drive around eight months ago. The photo was taken earlier this week.

## Hunt on for 33 Huji operatives

MOHAMMAD JAMIL KHAN

Aiming to reorganise Harkat-ul-Jihad al-Islam Bangladesh, Afghan-war returnee Atikullah has been able to establish communication among 33 local leaders of the banned militant outfit in the last six months.

Before Atikullah and two other militant suspects of the militant outfit were arrested last week, some of the 33 local leaders used to work in different madrasas, while others were involved in different businesses, officials of the Counter Terrorism and Transnational Crime unit of police said yesterday.

At least five of them are hiding in Dhaka and the rest are in Feni and Chattogram, officers said after interrogating the arrestees.

Atikullah, who came to the country from Dubai six months ago, is known by the aliases Asadullah and Julfiqar.

Two other suspects arrested with him in the capital's Khilgaon on Wednesday are Nazim Uddin alias Shamim, 43, and Borhan Uddin, 45.

They were placed on a four-day remand on Thursday.

Investigators now have information about the other members, CITC Deputy Commissioner Saiful Islam told The Daily Star yesterday.

"We are hoping some of them would be arrested soon," he said.

The suspects had held meetings with each other in the capital, Feni and Chattogram on multiple occasions since Atikullah started trying to reorganise the group.

"Some of the members had been quite active after meeting the top leaders," said Saiful.

According to the remand prayer submitted by CITC Inspector Moniruzzaman to a Dhaka court, Atikullah had taken part in armed fighting in a foreign country in 1992. He went to Afghanistan in 1997 from Pakistan and had

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN