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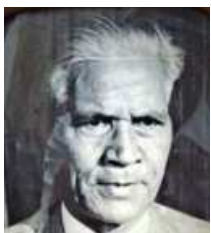
SHAH CEMENT

A free man and a lost kingdom

DWOHA CHOWDHURY, Sylhet

In the hilly terrain of Sunamganj's Tahirpur upazila, right at the foot of the Khasi Hills of Meghalaya, there is the grave of a visionary leader who dreamt of an independent Khasi state till his last day.

Though his state declared independence in 1948, it was made a part of the Indian Dominion and he was exiled.



Wickliffe Syiem

Wickliffe Syiem, the khynnah (deputy king) of Hima Nongstoin (State of Nongstoin), located in present-day South Khasi Hills district of Meghalaya, vowed neither to go back to his own land nor to set foot on any other Indian territory.

"If I wish to do so, I'll go as a conqueror, not as a captive to surrender under the control of the foreigners," Wickliffe used to say, according to his living family members in Bangladesh.

However, his political negotiations and diplomacy failed and he was unable to materialise his dream of an independent state, according to historians and researchers on Khasi independence.

After Wickliffe vowed never to go back, the then Pakistan government permitted him to settle down in Rajai village, where he could be near among others from his own community, his son Andrew Sholomar told The Daily Star.

"The village was historically part of the Khasi Hills.

SEE PAGE 10 COL 2



Locals gathered to collect fuel spilled from the wagons of a freight train that came off the lines near Satgaon Railway Station in Moulvibazar's Sreemangal upazila yesterday. Inset, ripped out rail lines and undercarriages after wagons of the train derailed. There was another rail accident in Gazipur in which a bus and a train collided. At least two people died in that incident.

PHOTO: SK ENAMUL HAQ

Freight train derails in Sreemangal

Snaps communication with Sylhet; 2 die as bus, train collide

STAR REPORT

Rail communication between Sylhet and the rest of the country was suspended for hours yesterday after the derailment of a fuel oil-laden train in Sreemangal. Meanwhile, two people died after a train hit a bus in Gazipur.

In Moulvibazar's Sreemangal, the derailment of seven wagons of the train occurred around 11:40am, which caused the fuel to spill at Satgaon Rail Station.

Till the filing the report at 6:30pm, a rescue and repair operation was underway and railway officials hoped that rail communication would resume early today.

Immediately after the incident, locals thronged the spot and stole large amounts of spilled oil.

Many were seen collecting oil in buckets, jar and other pots.

"People seemed to be

SEE PAGE 10 COL 6

Unending holiday hurting a lot

Over 3k Bangladeshis can't return to work in Kuwait as flights yet to resume

JAMIL MAHMUD

Over 3,000 Bangladeshi expatriate workers have been stranded at home for several months as they cannot fly to Kuwait to rejoin work due to suspension of air communications between the two countries amid the pandemic.

All the expatriates, who came home on vacation early this year, had confirmed return air tickets, but they are now stuck at home. They are facing uncertainty and financial hardship as they have no income for months.

Take for example the case of Selim Ahmed.

A construction worker in Kuwait for more than two decades, the 48-year-old man came home on February 28 on a three-month holiday. He had a June 4 return ticket of Biman Bangladesh Airlines.

Selim, who hails from Sylhet, contacted the Bangladesh embassy in Kuwait last month to know about the availability of flights, but the embassy could not confirm

SEE PAGE 10 COL 2

FIRST YEAR OF BANGLADESH BANGABANDHU'S NATION-BUILDING CHALLENGES

First Eid on free soil of Bangladesh



Prime Minister Sheikh Mujibur Rahman offering his Eid prayer at Dhanmondi Maidan on November 8, 1972.

November 8, 1972

SHAMSUDDOZA SAJEN

EID-UL-FITR OBSERVED

The Eid-ul-Fitr on the free soil of Bangladesh is celebrated today in an atmosphere of joy and celebration. The Eid is observed after a month of abstinence and self-purification. Last year the people of Bangladesh could not celebrate Eid due to the atrocities of the Pakistan occupation army. In spite of high cost of essential commodities this year, the people are remarkably enthusiastic to celebrate the Eid with due festivity.

SEE PAGE 10 COL 1



JEWEL'S MURDER

Suspect 'who started the rumour' held

STAR REPORT

Detectives yesterday arrested Abul Hossain alias Hossain Ali, who allegedly spread the rumour that Abu Yunus Md Shahidunnabi Jewel demeaned the Holy Quran, in the capital's Kuril Bishwa Road area.

Hossain, 44, is the key accused in a case filed after a mob beat Jewel up and set him on fire on October 29, following the rumour that the victim had demeaned the Quran inside a mosque in Lalmonirhat's Patgram.

Investigations by detectives, district administration and National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) revealed that Hossain was the first person to bring the allegation against Jewel.

Later, the rumour spread across the village and people attacked the union parishad building,

SEE PAGE 10 COL 1

Ancient skeleton offers clues on prehistoric diet



AFP, Berlin

German researchers are piecing together the life of a prehistoric woman who died more than 5,000 years ago in the Neolithic period, after her skeleton was found during excavation works for wind turbines.

The "Lady of Bietikow," as she has been named, was found near a village of the same name in northeastern Germany's Uckermark region.

The skeleton had been buried in a settlement in a squatting position, one of the oldest known forms of burial, according to local media.

SEE PAGE 10 COL 6

3 held for gang-raping woman

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Narayanganj

Police yesterday arrested three people on charges of gang raping a woman in Narayanganj Sadar upazila.

The arrestees are Nurul Islam, 65, Ainul Mia, 22, and Raj Ballav, 63, said Aslam Hosen, officer-in-charge of Fatulla Model Police Station.

The trio were arrested during raids -- between Friday night and yesterday morning -- conducted in Fatulla area, he said.

The incident took place

SEE PAGE 10 COL 6



PRAYER TIMING NOVEMBER 8

Fajr Zohr Asr Maghrib Esha
AZAN 4-55 12-45 4-00 5-30 7-15
JAMAAT 5-30 1-15 4-15 5-34 7-45

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

4 'Neo-JMB' men arrested in Bogura

Firearms, explosives seized

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Bogura

The Detective Branch of police claimed to have arrested four members of militant outfit "Neo JMB" in Bogura's Sherpur upazila early yesterday.

The arrestees are Tanvir Ahmed alias Abu Ibrahim, 25, Jakaria Jamil, 31, Atiqur Rahman, 28, and Abu Saaid, 32, hailing from Gopalganj, Tangail and Mymensingh respectively, said Abdul Baten, deputy inspector general (DIG) of DB's Rajshahi range.

Tanvir was a member of the IT section of Neo-JMB while Jakaria was the head of the media wing of the outfit, Baten said in a press briefing at the office of the Superintendent of Bogura police.

Acting on a tip off, a team of DB police arrested the four in Chandihara area around 1:30 am, said the DIG.

The DB team also recovered one pistol, one

SEE PAGE 10 COL 6



People, mostly fathers of newborns, sleeping under the open sky with their children and relatives admitted at the Agargaon Shishu Hospital in the capital. The hospital allows only one attendant with patents inside their territory. Many of these people came from other districts and have no place to stay in the capital. The photo was taken recently.

PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

US sees record Covid cases 3rd day in a row

Biden vows virus action on 'day one' as Europe suffers under second wave

AFP, Washington

The United States reported record new coronavirus cases for the third day in a row, as Joe Biden vowed to act against the pandemic on "day one" if he wins the presidential election in the world's worst-hit nation.

Global infections have surged past 49 million and Europe has become the new pandemic epicenter in recent weeks with more than 300,000 deaths -- nearly a quarter of the global total.

More than 127,000 new infections were reported in the US on Friday, the third straight day of record cases, as votes from the bitterly fought election were still being counted.

The novel coronavirus has killed at least 1,243,513 people since the outbreak emerged in China last December, according to a tally from official sources compiled by AFP at 1100 GMT yesterday.

On Friday, 9,018 new deaths and 610,768 new cases were recorded worldwide. Based on latest reports, the countries with the most new deaths were the United States with 1,149 new deaths, followed by France with 828 and India with 577.

No winner has been declared but Biden promised he would not waste time in addressing the pandemic if he is victorious.

"I want everyone, everyone to know on day one we're going to put our plan to control this virus into action," the Democrat said.

SEE PAGE 10 COL 2