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PADMA BANK IN TROUBLE

Fails to pay back BCTF's overdue funds

AKM ZAMIR UDDIN

The Bangladesh Climate Trust Fund (BCTF) has warned Padma Bank of legal action over its failure to pay back the fixed deposit receipt (FDR) worth Tk 29.1 crore upon maturity.

The FDR had matured on May 25, and despite sending a letter to the troubled bank on May 20 of legal action if the amount was not returned on its date of maturity, no pay order came through.

"We will go for legal action," Mashud Ahmed, managing director of BCTF, told The Daily Star yesterday.

In 2016, the government agency had deposited about Tk 508 crore with the bank, then known as Farmers Bank, in the form of one-year FDRs at varying interest rates.

But due to acute cash crunch, the bank had failed to return the sum then, too.

While a major portion has been recovered since then after the bank's liquidity position propped up following the onboarding of five state-owned financial institutions as shareholders of the then-Farmers Bank in 2018, the bank also renewed some of the FDRs at favourable rates, said an official of BCTF on condition of anonymity as he is not authorised to speak with media.

The BCTF still has Tk 71.6 crore tied in the form of FDRs with the bank, which was renamed Padma Bank in 2019 in an attempt to get an image makeover. Of the sum, Tk 29.1 crore became overdue after May 25.

The BCTF provides salary and wages to its employees

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The tanneries have been moved to Savar from the capital's Hazaribagh on paper, but some unscrupulous businessmen are still processing rawhide there, causing environment degradation and spreading a foul smell for the locals endure. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN



New Air Force chief takes charge of BAF

UNB, Dhaka

Newly appointed Chief of Air Staff Air Vice Marshal Shaikh Abdul Hannan yesterday took over the command of Bangladesh Air Force, an ISPR press release said.

He took over from outgoing chief of air staff Air Chief Marshal Masihuzzaman Serniabat at a ceremony at Chief of Air Staff's secretariat.

Principal staff officers, along with other senior officers, of Air Headquarters were present during the occasion, said Inter Services Public Relations Directorate (ISPR).

Earlier in the morning, the outgoing air chief

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Rab arrests two suspected human traffickers

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Mymensingh

Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) arrested two suspected human traffickers conducting separate raids in Mymensingh early yesterday.

The arrestees are Mohammad Yusuf Mia, 32, of Mymensingh's upazila, and Mohammad Robbil Sheikh, 29, of Narail's Kalia upazila, said the elite force.

Mohammad Anwar Hossain, assistant director and media officer of Rab-14, told The Daily Star that the arrestee Yusuf introduced himself as a factory worker and married a 22-year-old woman of Mymensingh's Cafargaon upazila.

Primarily, he did not inform family members about the marriage, but as it was revealed, he started living with his wife and 19-year-old sister-in-law.

At one stage, he trafficked both his wife and sister-in-law to India in exchange for a huge sum of money, the Rab official said, quoting the arrestee.

Recently the sisters managed to flee captivity in India and a case was filed against Yusuf with Sreepur Police Station on June 5.

Rab conducted a raid in Ishwarganj's Bahihata Kandabari village around 12:00 noon yesterday and arrested Yusuf.

In another drive, Rab arrested Robbil,

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ROAD TO FREEDOM
THIS DAY IN BANGLADESH LIBERATION WAR HISTORY

Our victory is assured: Tajuddin

JUNE 13, 1971

SHAMSUDDOZA SAJEN

TAJUDDIN'S RADIO BROADCAST
Bangladesh Prime Minister Tajuddin Ahmad said today that the refugees now in India were keen on coming back home. In a broadcast over the Swadhin Bangla Betar Kendra, Tajuddin Ahmad said the refugees were actively trying to hasten the day of their return by joining the liberation forces of Bangladesh in great numbers.

He expressed his gratitude to the government of India for what the country had been doing to relieve the distress of these people. But regretted that even after the appeal of the UN secretary general, the offer of help from the other countries was not commensurate with the magnitude of the problem.

He appealed to the big power not to aggravate the monumental wrong done to a peace- and freedom-loving democratic people by interfering in favour of the blood-thirsty military dictatorship of West Pakistan. The Bangladesh prime minister was more outspoken when he charged the big powers of having a large share in the "vast evil being enacted in Bangladesh today." The big power, he said, had assisted the rise of dictatorship and a capitalist-bureaucratic-military oligarchy in Pakistan by giving it arms and economic aid.

"I urge them not to try to prop up the crumbling economic base of the Islamabad government either directly or through the World Bank and IMF unless it withdraws its occupation army of Bangladesh. Let there be no doubt that aid given to Islamabad now will be sucked in cynical and devious ways into the war machine

SEE PAGE 12 COL 2

3 bodies found in Naf river

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Cox's Bazar

Three unidentified bodies were found in the Naf river in Cox's Bazar's Teknaf upazila yesterday, said police.

Teknaf Police Station Inspector (Investigation) Abdul Alim said the bodies of two children and a woman were recovered from the river near Hnila Union around 12:30pm.

Police are trying to confirm the identities of the victims, he said.

The police official said the locals informed the law enforcers about the bodies after they saw them floating. He said the victims could be Rohingyas and they might have drowned while crossing the river.

The bodies were sent to Cox's Bazar District Sadar Hospital morgue for autopsy, Alim added.

People with large pupils more intelligent



MAIL ONLINE

People who have larger pupils in their eyes are more intelligent than those with smaller pupils, according to a new study.

Volunteers sat reasoning, attention and memory tests so the Georgia Institute of Technology team could investigate the link between pupil size and intelligence.

They found that as well as being linked to arousal and exhaustion, pupil dilation can be used to understand the individual differences in

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Low form over Bay

STAR REPORT

The maritime ports of Chattogram, Cox's Bazar, Mongla and Payra have been advised to hoist local cautionary signal no-3 as a low pressure has formed over northwest Bay and adjoining coastal areas of Bangladesh.

Under its influence, deep convection is happening over the North Bay and adjoining coastal areas of Bangladesh, said a warning message on the website of the Bangladesh Meteorological Department.

Squally weather is likely

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PRAYER TIMING JUNE 13

Fajr	Zohr	Asr	Maghrib	Esha
AZAN 4:05	12:45	5:00	6:50	8:15
JAMAT 4:40	1:15	5:15	6:55	8:45

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

Chinese man held at border claims to be hotelier

OUR CORRESPONDENT, New Delhi

A 35-year-old Chinese national held by India's Border Security Force, near the border with Bangladesh in West Bengal's Malda district, for illegal entry on June 10, has claimed he runs a hotel in a posh locality of Gurugram -- a satellite city in Delhi -- along with an Indian partner, police sources said.

According to the interrogators of the Indian security agencies, the man, who identified himself as Han Junwe from China's Hubei province, said he and his Indian partner PP Kumar had taken a 10-year lease of a 100-room hotel named "Star Spring" from one Jaivir Lohia in October 2019, reports our New Delhi correspondent.

Han also claimed to have set up a company in partnership with Kumar in Hyderabad.

During interrogation at Kaliachawk outpost of BSF in Malda, Han revealed

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A 70-year-old man, admitted to a dedicated building for coronavirus patients at Khulna Medical College Hospital, being taken to the x-ray room. Hospital staffers and the attendant had to take him out of the restricted area and in the open as there was no other way to the x-ray room. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: DIPANKAR ROY

COVID-19 TREATMENT

India cuts taxes on medicines, equipment

REUTERS, New Delhi

India yesterday cut taxes on medical equipment such as oxygen concentrators and drugs used to treat Covid-19 infections, after widespread criticism over healthcare costs during a devastating second wave of the virus in April and May.

The government cut taxes on medical grade oxygen, ventilators, the remdesivir antiviral drug, diagnostic kits, pulse oximeters and hand sanitizers to 5% from 12-18% with immediate effect.

The new levies will be in place until the end of September, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman said, adding it would include taxes on electric furnaces in crematoriums and ambulances.

"The rate cut has not been done with any cost implication (on government finances) in mind, it has been done so that people get some ease...the decision has been taken to provide ultimate ease to patients," Revenue Secretary Tarun Bajaj told a news conference.

The government, however, would continue to tax vaccines at 5%, he added.

The world's second-most populous country, where coronavirus cases hit a peak of 400,000 a day in May, reported 84,332 new infections on Saturday, the lowest in more than two months, data from the health ministry showed. There were 4,002 deaths.

The South Asian country's total Covid-19 cases stands at 29.4 million, with 367,081 fatalities.

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