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NATORE 'WORK FOR MONEY' Poor deprived as graft rules

BULBUL AHMED, Natore

A government scheme aiming at generating income and ensuring food security for the rural poor has plunged into corruption and irregularities in Natore.

Around Tk 2 crore was allocated in the 2020-2021 fiscal year to implement 71 small projects in Natore Sadar upazila under the "Kajer Binimoye Taka" or "Work for Money" scheme.

However, depriving the poor of income, money has allegedly been embezzled with no concrete evidence of where a majority of the funds were spent and no hiring of locals in many project areas. In some cases, machinery was used at the expense of labourers.

Locals raised allegations that such corruption took place through underhanded dealings with some peoples' representatives and government officials, who deny any wrongdoing.

The authorities concerned turned a blind eye to the misdeeds, saying only now they will investigate allegations of corruption.

Usually, a committee is formed at the upazila level to implement such projects. Locally influential people and politicians along with members and the chairman of the local union parishad are included in the committee.

The committee oversees the work under the supervision of the project implementation officer, local upazila nirbahi officer (UNO), lawmakers, and the upazila parishad chairman.

The programme, under the disaster management and relief ministry, was originally undertaken to create jobs for villagers during the traditionally lean monsoon season.

SEE PAGE 10 COL 2



Standing near her mother's coffin, seven-year-old Shoma stood staring into space with glistening eyes. Her mother was a victim of the Hashem Foods factory fire in Narayanganj. The child came to DMCH with her father as the CID was handing over the bodies of some of the victims yesterday.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

N'GANJ FACTORY FIRE Remains of 21 victims handed over to families

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bodies of 21 workers, killed in the fire in Narayanganj's Hashem Foods factory last month, were handed over to family members yesterday. With them, remains of 45 workers, who died in the incident, have been handed to family members.

On August 4, 24 bodies were received by family members.

Coffins with the 21 bodies in them were received by family members at the Dhaka Medical College morgue. Sajeb Group, which owns the factory, arranged ambulances to carry the bodies to the victims' village homes for burial.

A total of 51 people were killed in the fire that ravaged through the factory in Narayanganj on July 8. Three of them died after jumping off the six-storey factory building to escape the flames.

SEE PAGE 10 COL 6

Jubo League leader on the run seen with MP

Cops eventually arrest him; gets bail

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Natore

A Jubo League leader absconding in four loan defaulter cases was arrested, and later bailed out, after he was seen accompanying a lawmaker in Natore yesterday.

The accused is Bashirur Rahman Khan Chowdhury, acting president of Natore Jubo League.

He was seen with Shafiqul Islam Shimul, Awami League MP of Natore-2, at a mass Covid-19 vaccination programme at Kafuria High School in the district's Sadar upazila around 11:00am yesterday.

After several media reports, police arrested Bashirur around 5:00pm the same day from his residence in the district headquarters.

He was then produced before Natore's Senior Judicial Magistrate's Court, said Liton Kumar Saha, said the district's superintendent of police.

After a hearing, the court granted him bail and directed him to surrender before the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's Court of Dhaka in 15 days, said Sirajul Islam, public prosecutor at the Natore Judge's Court.

SEE PAGE 10 COL 1

ROAD TO FREEDOM THIS DAY IN BANGLADESH LIBERATION WAR HISTORY

Yahya speaks of mediation

AUGUST 8, 1971

SHAMSUDDOZA SAJEN

YAHYA SEEKS BRITISH SUPPORT

Pakistan President Yahya Khan said that he would like British mediation between India and Pakistan. "But," Yahya continued, "I do not want it if she [Britain] remains much less than neutral."

In an interview with The Sunday Times, the general said, "The risk of war with India had grown. There are skirmishes daily. ... continuous statements from the Indian leaders that they will do this or that against Pakistan have justified me in stating there is real danger if this is allowed to continue."

THANT'S HELP SOUGHT FOR MUJIB'S RELEASE

The Bangladesh Central Action Committee appealed to the UN Secretary General U Thant for his personal intervention in saving the life of the Bangladesh leader Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. In a cable to U Thant, the convener of the committee, SK Day, said any secret trial of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman or his execution by the West Pakistan rulers would be contrary to the rule of law and human rights charter and would start a fresh conflagration.

GROMYKO MEETS SWARAN SINGH

A crowd of about 4,000, mostly members of India's pro-Moscow Communist party, gave Soviet Foreign Minister Gromyko a tumultuous welcome at New Delhi's Palam Airport today. Many carried Soviet flags and banners with slogans supporting the Bangalee independence movement in East Pakistan.

SEE PAGE 10 COL 1



'Robber' killed in 'gunfight'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

A suspected robber was killed in a "gunfight" with the members of Rab in Chattogram's Sitakunda upazila early yesterday.

The dead is Mohammad Kajol, 49, the ringleader of a local robbers' gang named Kajol Bahini, claimed Rab.

According to the law enforcers, he is also the prime accused in a case filed over the murder of a truck driver named Abdur Rahman.

Abul Kalam Azad, officer-in-charge of Sitakunda Police Station, said a Rab team conducted a raid in the upazila's Bayezid-Foujderhat Link Road on information that a robbers' gang was preparing for a robbery at midnight.

Reaching the spot, Rab got engaged into a "gunfight" with the robbers, he said, adding that Kajol's body was

SEE PAGE 10 COL 1

28,000-yr-old lion cub found frozen in Siberia



CNN ONLINE

Found frozen deep in the Siberian Arctic, the cave lion cub looks like she's asleep and one touch might awaken her.

The cub's golden fur is matted with mud but otherwise undamaged. Her teeth, skin, soft tissue and organs are mummified but all intact. Some 28,000 years since she last closed her eyes, her claws are still sharp enough to prick the finger of one of the scientists who are studying this remarkable -- and unprecedented -- permafrost-preserved specimen.

SEE PAGE 10 COL 6

India okays J&J's shot

Australia suffers worst Covid day this year

AGENCIES

India yesterday gave emergency approval to Johnson and Johnson's single-shot coronavirus vaccine to ramp up its flailing immunisation campaign as new wave of infections fuelled by Delta variant of coronavirus continues to spread across the globe.

India's Health minister Mansukh Mandaviya said the approval will boost the fight against the pandemic in India, where at least 200,000 people died in a

SEE PAGE 10 COL 1



PRAYER TIMING AUGUST 8

Fajr	Zohr	Asr	Maghrib	Esha
AZAN 4-20	12-45	5-00	6-47	8-15
JAMAAT 4-55	1-15	5-15	6-50	8-45

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

GREECE WILDFIRES Hundreds of families left homeless

AFP, Pefkiofyo

Hundreds of firefighters yesterday fought wildfires and flare-ups that have devoured record numbers of woodlands in Greece and left hundreds of families homeless, but heavy rains brought some respite to hard-hit Turkey.

More than 1,450 Greek firefighters backed by at least 15 aircraft were battling the fires, with reinforcements arriving from other countries, the fire service said.

The blazes in Greece are set to continue, with strong winds and temperatures of up to 38 degrees C (100 F) forecast in some regions yesterday.

This year's fires have been far more destructive than in previous years.

In the last 10 days, 56,655 hectares (140,000 acres) have been burnt in Greece, according to the European Forest Fire Information System. The average number of hectares

SEE PAGE 10 COL 6



"Open your eyes, son. Look at your mother," she was wailing, to her 22-year-old Covid-infected son whose condition started deteriorating from yesterday morning. The photo was taken at DMCH. The patient was taken there from Munshinganj yesterday.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

2nd provincial capital falls to Taliban

Britain tells its nationals to leave country immediately

AFP, Kabul

The Taliban seized the stronghold of a notorious Afghan warlord yesterday, officials said, the second provincial capital to fall to the insurgents in under 24 hours.

The deputy governor of Jawzjan province told AFP he was with government forces who had abandoned Sheberghan city and retreated to the airport on its outskirts, where they were preparing to defend themselves.

The city is home to warlord Abdul Rashid Dostum.

SEE PAGE 10 COL 2

আমরা শোকাহত

শোক সন্তপ্ত পরিবারের প্রতি গভীর সমবেদনা জ্ঞাপন করছি

হাসেম ফুডস্ লিমিটেডের রূপগঞ্জ কারখানায় অগ্নিদুর্ঘটনায় ক্ষতিগ্রস্ত অধিকাংশ পরিবারকে ইতোমধ্যে আর্থিক ক্ষতিপূরণ প্রদান করা হয়েছে। আহত কর্মীদের আর্থিক ক্ষতিপূরণ প্রদানের পাশাপাশি চিকিৎসা ব্যয় বহন করা হচ্ছে। আহত কর্মী ও ক্ষতিগ্রস্ত প্রতিটি পরিবারের পাশে সর্বতোভাবে থাকতে আমরা অঙ্গীকারবদ্ধ। যেকোনো প্রয়োজনে সংশ্লিষ্ট পরিবারের সদস্যদের নিম্নোক্ত নম্বরে যোগাযোগের জন্য বিনীত ভাবে অনুরোধ করা যাচ্ছেঃ ০১৭১৩০৫৮৯০১।

হাসেম ফুডস্ লিমিটেড