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SPIRALLING FOOD PRICES

Low-income group half-fed



SHAHEEN MOLLAH and AKANDA MUHAMMAD JAHIID

For Razia Sultana, a 50-year-old widow with three children to look after and a Tk 22,000 of fixed monthly income, every paisa counts.

And the ongoing price spiral of daily essentials has left her double-counting every paisa that she spends.

Which is why, she braved indignation and scorching temperature yesterday to stand in a queue for about two hours to buy 5 kilogram of rice and 3 kg of flour from an open market sales truck parked near her home in East Kazipara.

She would be able to save Tk 131.

"This is humiliating for me but I had no other option," said Sultana, whose family has halved their food intake since the price spiral and stopped eating meat.

A kg of rice costs Tk 30 at the OMS truck run by the Directorate General of Food -- Tk 22 less than at the retail level.

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Metro rail goes on a performance test run on Diabari-Mirpur route in the capital for the second time yesterday. The authorities plan to open Uttara-Agargaon route by December next year. The photo was taken at Mirpur point.

PHOTO:
AMRAN HOSSAIN

City sees 2nd metro test run

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The authorities yesterday operated metro train on viaduct for the second time as part of a series of test runs to be done before the new mode of public transport is formally launched in the capital.

The six-coach train was operated at 25km per hour on the main tracks twice between 9:30am and 12:56pm.

The train left the metro rail depot at Diabari and travelled to Uttara north, Uttara centre, Uttara south, and Pallabi stations before returning to the depot.

"This was the second performance test on the viaduct," Project Manager ABM Arifur Rahman told The Daily Star yesterday. Several tests with four other trains were underway inside the depot, he said.

Road Transport and Bridges Minister on August 29 inaugurated the series of test runs. That day, he announced that the country's first ever metro rail service will be launched

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BEGUMGANJ RAPE TRIAL

Victim valiant against rapists

Say speakers at discussion

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Even though the rapists who gang-raped the housewife in Noakhali's Begumganj got life-term for the heinous crime they committed, this is just one case of many, pointed out speakers at a webinar yesterday.

The woman, nicknamed Shahoshika, whose gang-rape video went viral last year and sparked a massive protest nationwide, had bravely fought against her rapists at court, they said at the webinar organised by Nari Sanghati.

On October 4, her rapists Delwar Hossain alias Delu and Mohammad Ali alias Abul Kalam were sentenced.

Veteran rights lawyer Salma Ali said, "It is sad that Shahoshika would not have access to justice if the video of her rape had not gone viral."

Shahoshika was gang-raped in September, but it was only after the rapists released her video that she had access to justice.

Advocate Habibur Rasul Mamun, one of the lawyers supporting her legal battle in Noakhali, said, "The main rapist had entered her home before and when she refused his advances, he threatened her

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ROAD TO FREEDOM

THIS DAY IN BANGLADESH LIBERATION WAR HISTORY

Pope's appeal for Bangladesh refugees

OCTOBER 10, 1971

SHAMSUDDOZZA SAJEN

BANGLADESH LEADERS CONFIDENT OF EARLY FREEDOM

The roving ambassador of Bangladesh, Abdus Samad Azad, addressed a meeting in London today expressed his confidence in early liberation of Bangladesh. He stressed the unity achieved by all sections of the Bangladesh people.

Professor Muzaffar Ahmed, chief of NAP (Muzaffar), who arrived in London along with Abdus Samad, said the majority of the nations at the UN was in full sympathy with the aspirations of Bangladesh. He also visited Washington, and it was his belief that there was no chance of Pakistan getting an extension of the debt service moratorium by October 31, 1971 nor a further loan from the World Bank or the Aid Pakistan Consortium.

'HELPING EAST BENGAL MEANS CONTRIBUTING TO GENUINE PEACE'

Pope Paul VI today voiced his satisfaction over the huge response to his appeal to help Bangladesh. He thanked them for heeding to his appeal to make today a day of prayer and fasting for the millions of suffering and dying Bangladesh refugees.

He declared, "To help East Bengal means to contribute to genuine peace."

There is possibly no parallel in world history to the distress in East Bengal, the Pope added.

ON THE WAR FRONT

In the Rangpur-Dinaipur-Rajshahi sector, Mukti Bahini today

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MUNIA MURDER CASE

Tribunal summons IO to explain inaction

Asks why the accused not arrested yet

UNB, Dhaka

The special tribunal to protect women and children in Dhaka has summoned the investigating officer of the Munia murder case to appear before it in person today to explain the lack of visible progress on four particular points, including why the accused have not been arrested yet.

Bashundhara Group Managing Director Sayem Sobhan Anvir and seven others stand accused in the case over rape and murder.

The court would also seek an explanation on why the DNA of Anvir or anyone else has not been matched with the samples collected from the body, room, or clothes of Mosarat Jahan Munia, a 21-year-old

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Edge-of-space balloon trip to cost \$50,000



CNN ONLINE

What do you do for ultimate bragging rights when you've already visited the Grand Canyon, the Great Barrier Reef, the Serengeti and the Giza Pyramids?

You go see them all again -- but from the edge of space.

Stratospheric ballooning company World View has just opened up reservations to get in line for epic five-day balloon voyages that promise to take travelers 100,000 feet above some of the most magnificent landmarks on the planet.

The company's first commercial flights are slated to begin in early 2024 -- with Grand Canyon National Park as the location for its first

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Chunnu made secy gen of JP

RASHIDUL HASAN

Jatiya Party Co-chairman Mujibul Haque Chunnu was the party's secretary general yesterday, ending the weeklong division and tension in the main opposition in the parliament.

Jatiya Party Chairman GM Quader appointed him to exercise his power in line with the party's charter.

The post of secretary

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PRAYER TIMING OCTOBER 10

Fazr	Zohr	Asr	Maghrib	Esha	
4:45	12:45	4:15	5:45	7:15	
JAMAAT	5:20	1:15	4:30	5:50	7:45

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION



An artisan is putting the final touches to the idol of a deity at Ramna Kali Mandir in the capital as the last moment preparations are on ahead of Durga Puja. The largest religious festival of the Hindu community begins tomorrow.

PHOTO:
RASHED SHUMON

DOHA TALKS ON AFGHANISTAN

High-level US delegation meets Taliban

REUTERS, Washington

A US delegation was scheduled to start a two-day meet with senior Taliban representatives in Doha yesterday in their first face-to-face meeting at a senior level since Washington pulled its troops from Afghanistan and the headline group took over the country, two senior administration officials told Reuters.

The high-level US delegation will include officials from the State Department, USAID and the US intelligence community, will press the Taliban to ensure continued safe passage for US citizens and others out of Afghanistan and to release kidnapped US citizen Mark Ferichs, the officials said.

Another top priority will be to hold the Taliban to its commitment that it will not allow Afghanistan to again become a hotbed for al Qaeda or other extremists while pressing the group to improve access for humanitarian aid as the country faces the prospect of a "really severe and probably impossible to prevent" economic contraction, US officials said.

US Special Representative Zalmay Khalilzad, who has for years spearheaded US dialogue with the Taliban and been a key figure in peace talks with the group, will not be part of the delegation.

The US team will include the State Department's Deputy Special Representative Tom West as well as top USAID humanitarian official Sarah Charles. On The Taliban side, cabinet officials will be attending, officials said.

"This meeting is a continuation of the pragmatic engagements with the Taliban that we've had ongoing on matters of vital national interest," said a senior administration official, speaking on the condition of anonymity.

"This meeting is not about granting recognition or conferring legitimacy. We remain clear that any legitimacy must be earned through the Taliban's

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