

COUP IN SUDAN
Army chief sacks six envoys, including US, EU diplomats, as condemnation grows
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"The government of Sheikh Hasina does not want to score goals in an empty field. The government wants competitive elections."
AWAMI LEAGUE GENERAL SECRETARY OBAIDUL QUADER



"If me taking a knee helps to educate others, and makes the lives of others better, I am more than happy to do so."
SOUTH AFRICA BATSMAN QUINTON DE KOCK



"We need to work together to make the [Afghanistan] economy breathe again and to help people survive."
UN SECRETARY-GENERAL ANTONIO GUTERRES

PLEDGED CHINESE LOAN

Coming but at crawling pace

REJAUUL KARIM BYRON and DWAIPIYAN BARUA

In 2017, with the view to alleviating the capital's absurd traffic congestion, the government took up the Dhaka-Ashulia Elevated Expressway project to implement largely with Chinese funding.

The \$1.1 billion loan agreement for that project was signed on Tuesday -- four years after it got the nod of the Executive Committee of the National Economic Council.

The delay is not an anomaly but has become characteristic of the \$20 billion soft loan pledged by Chinese President Xi Jinping on his maiden visit to Bangladesh in October 2016 to usher in a new era of bilateral ties between the two nations.

Some 27 projects, including mega-projects, were earmarked for implementation with the \$20 billion pledged, but prising the funds out of China's hands has been a dawdling process, compelling the government to put the projects on hold.

So far, loan agreements have been signed for only eight projects, including the Padma rail link, Karnaphuli tunnel, installation of single-point mooring with a double pipeline, Info-Sarker 3.

Between June last year and October this

CHINA-BANGLADESH LOAN IN XI JINPING ERA

- ➔ \$20b promised in Oct'16 for 27 projects
- ➔ \$7.8b of loan agreements signed for 8 projects
- ➔ \$2.3b disbursed so far

year, no loan agreement was signed with China.

The impasse was broken with the signing of the loan deal for the Tk 16,901 crore-Dhaka-Ashulia Elevated Expressway project, which was originally scheduled for completion in June 2022.

With the signing of the loan agreement, construction work for the 24-kilometre expressway connecting Hazrat Shahjahan International Airport with Abdullahpur, Ashulia, Baipail and Dhaka Export Processing Zone on the Nabinagar-Chandra highway can finally begin.

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Putting their lives at risk, people, mostly garment workers, commute home standing on the footboards of human hauliers on Dhaka-Aricha highway in Ulaia area of Savar, on the outskirts of the capital. They have to travel this way frequently as a large number of workers stream out of garments in the area after the end of their work hours, leading to a transport crisis. The photo was taken around 10:10pm on Tuesday. PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

MAYHEM DURING PUJA

Local admins failed to save Hindus: HC

Judicial probe ordered

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday observed that the local administrations failed to save the people of Hindu community, their properties and places of worship in different districts during this year's Durga Puja festival from communal attacks.

The court, however, said the government has taken actions after the incidents.

The HC directed the authorities concerned to conduct judicial inquiries into the incidents of violent attacks in six districts between October 13 and 18.

The districts are Cumilla, Feni, Noakhali, Chattogram, Chandpur and Rangpur.

During hearing of a writ petition, the court asked the chief metropolitan magistrates and chief judicial magistrates concerned to submit their inquiry reports to it within 60 days.

At the same time, the HC issued a rule asking the authorities concerned of the government to explain as to why the inaction and failure of the local administrations to protect Hindu citizens,

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REGULATING E-COMMERCE

Companies have to register in 2 months

PM issues directives at cabinet meet to bring discipline in the sector

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

All e-commerce businesses will have to register with the commerce ministry within the next two months.

Besides, they will have to deposit a security amount in Bangladesh Bank.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina gave the directives at a cabinet meeting yesterday. She joined the meeting, held at the Secretariat, from the Gono Bhavan virtually.

The directives came against the backdrop of alleged forgery and misappropriation of clients' money by some e-commerce firms, including Evaly.

After the anomalies came to light, the government acted to address the issue.

Briefing reporters after the meeting, Cabinet Secretary Khandker Anwarul Islam said, "E-commerce businesses will have to register with the commerce ministry within the next two months under a precise programme."

Besides, they will have to deposit a security amount in Bangladesh Bank so that clients can be paid from it if anything happens, he said.

"Bangladesh Financial Intelligence Unit and the intelligence agencies have been given clear instructions to check the characteristics of those firms."

Directives have also been given to conduct mass campaigns to make people aware of not making any transactions with unauthorised e-commerce companies, the cabinet secretary said, adding that the list of registered e-commerce firms will be published.



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Prepare list of grabbers

JS body tells nat'l commission over four Dhaka rivers

RASHIDUL HASAN

A parliamentary body has asked the National River Protection Commission to prepare a list of grabbers and illegal structures in four rivers surrounding Dhaka that includes the Buriganga, the Turag, the Sitalokkha and the Balu rivers as soon as possible.

The parliamentary standing committee on the shipping ministry also wanted to know from the NRPC how many illegal structures would be possible to evict in three months and serve notice to the respective grabbers accordingly.

NRPC has informed the parliamentary watchdog that as a model they have formed a 14-member committee to completely free the Balu river from grabbers and pollution within six months and to prepare a master plan for increasing navigability of this river within one month.

According to the working paper of yesterday's meeting of the Jatiya Sangsad committee, Kamrun Nahar Ahmed, permanent member, NRPC, was made

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DSA CASE OVER FACEBOOK POST

A price too steep for a minor girl

Denied bail 4 times, she languishes in a juvenile centre for a year now

ZYMA ISLAM

A 17-year-old girl has been languishing in a juvenile correction centre for a whole year because of a Facebook post that she allegedly made demeaning the Quran and hurting religious sentiment.

Exactly a year ago, Dipti Rani Das, a tenth grader from Dinajpur's Parbatipur upazila was dragged off a train and charged under the Digital Security Act 2018.

The minor girl was sued by Parbatipur police for what the first information report says "the crime of deteriorating the law and order situation by hurting religious sentiment using electronic means".

Since being booked, her bail was denied four times -- the fourth in a decision by the highest court in the land.

Dipti had almost gotten out once when the High Court granted her a six-month bail on May 11, 2021. This was after her bail was already denied thrice by the court in Dinajpur.

Eight days later the district's deputy commissioner appealed to the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court praying that the bail order be stayed.

"The interim order of bail granted by the High Court Division in a pending appeal clearly shows non-application of judicial mind having failed to appreciate that the accused respondent is named in the FIR having strong prima-facie and specific over act of committing a heinous offence under section 25, section 28, section 31 of the DSA," said the appeal.

Section 25 criminalises the spreading of false information or propaganda to "annoy, insult or humiliate" while section 28 deals with hurting religious sentiment, and section 31 is to prosecute a person who causes the law and order situation to deteriorate.

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David Warner (R) signalled a timely return to form, hitting a 42-ball 65 with 10 boundaries to hasten Australia's chase of a 155-run target set by Sri Lanka in a T20 World Cup Super 12 clash in Dubai yesterday. The Aussies got over the line in 17 overs with seven wickets to spare. PHOTO: AFP

Can Tigers get going?

SPORTS REPORTER from Dubai

'When the going gets tough, the tough get going' is probably the quote that can most motivate a demoralised Bangladesh team in their do-or-die encounter against defending champions the West Indies in their third Super 12 game of the ICC T20 World Cup at the Sharjah Cricket Stadium today. The match starts at 4:00pm Bangladesh Standard Time.

Bangladesh and West Indies have both lost their first two games and are desperate to win the remaining three games to fight for a place in the semi-final, knowing that one slip could lead to elimination.

The morale is low in the Bangladesh camp following intense criticism from all corners that has made things even more toxic for

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Congratulations

কবরু শেখ মুজিব শিল্প পুরস্কার ২০২০

Engineer Abdus Sobhan, Managing Director of AUKO-TEX GROUP, has been honored with **Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Industrial Award** for the year 2020 by the Ministry of Industries in recognition of his Extra Ordinary Performance in terms of Ethical Business Practices and massive contributions towards Corporate Responsibility on Environment & Social issues. We express our heartfelt thanks and gratitude to the **Honorable Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina & the Ministry of Industries** for honoring us with this Prestigious award which will definitely inspire us to contribute further towards Social and Environmental activities. On this auspicious occasion, we acknowledge and appreciate the Honesty, Integrity, Strong Leadership, Intellectual Rigor, Determination and Dedication of our beloved Managing Director which has helped him in paving ways to achieve this significant milestone.

On behalf of all members of **AUKO-TEX GROUP**, we express our cordial wishes and warm greetings to our Managing Director for this great achievement. We pray to Almighty to bless him and our beloved company to achieve more glory and laurels in future.

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