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Crucial third day for Tigers

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The third day of the second and series-deciding Test in Mirpur will be crucial for Bangladesh and their hopes of seizing control by taking a first-innings lead against Sri Lanka. The visitors will resume on 143 for two, trailing by another 222 runs.

Lankan skipper Dimuth Karunaratne was solid during an unbeaten 70 and, along with Oshada Fernando, forged a 95-run stand for the opening wicket to ensure Sri Lanka replied solidly to Bangladesh's first-innings total of 365.

Pacer Ebadot Hossain broke the partnership, removing Fernando for 57. But Karunaratne and Kusal Mendis joined together and were looking to end the day on a dominant note. They even found some luck when Shakib Al Hasan failed to hold on to a rather tough chance to send back Karunaratne,

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Bangladesh batsman Mushfiqur Rahim is congratulated by Sri Lanka pacer Kasun Rajitha as the players go off the field at the end of Bangladesh's first innings of the second Test at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur yesterday. Mushfiqur remained unbeaten on 175 as Bangladesh scored 365, with Rajitha taking five wickets.

PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

The poet's return

Celebrating 50 years of Nazrul coming back to an independent Bangladesh



DIPAN NANDY

It has been 50 years today since an independent Bangladesh got its national poet.

On this day in 1972, Kazi Nazrul Islam, having just turned 73, was declared the national poet by Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. Nazrul

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

Hajj flights begin on June 5

BSS, Dhaka

The first hajj flight of this year will leave Dhaka for Saudi Arabia on June 5 instead of May 31.

The religious affairs ministry yesterday issued a gazette notification in this regard saying that the first hajj flight from Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport has been delayed to ensure smooth completion of pre-arrival immigration formalities of pilgrims in Dhaka.

It said pre-arrival immigration for Bangladeshi hajj pilgrims is scheduled to be done at the Dhaka airport under the Route to Makkah Initiative.

The notification said the Saudi Arabian authority informed that its 40-member team of Route to Makkah Initiative will not be able to reach Dhaka before June 2.

The team will carry with it necessary devices and equipment. Later, the devices and equipment will be installed at the airport which will take time.

The ministry has also asked the authorities concerned in Bangladesh to make necessary arrangements to begin hajj flights on the rescheduled date.

'Knowledge gained' but for whom?

Senior secy retires a day after returning from official tour in Europe

MAHBUBUR RAHMAN KHAN

A senior secretary embarked on a study tour in Europe just before retiring from his job.

Helal Uddin Ahmed, a senior secretary of the Local Government Division (LGD), came back from his all-expenses-paid trip to the Netherlands and Spain on Saturday. The next day was his last day at work before his LPR (leave preparatory to retirement) began.

The study tour at the end of his career as a bureaucrat begs the question: How will the training be of any use to the government?

The expenses of his 10-day trip were borne from funds of three government projects.

Experts termed the retiring bureaucrat's study tour a waste of money.

Contacted, Former Cabinet Secretary Ali Imam Majumder said, "It was unethical. He cannot do that."

He added that learned individuals

become senior secretaries. "He does not need a study tour. It is needed for the new officers so that they can make a contribution to the nation."

Helal, however, said, "I'm not too old. Since I have retired, my experience can be of use in any sector. There is WASA, LGED and other organisations. They can take our expertise by involving us in different projects."

Helal joined Bangladesh Civil Service in February 1988 and was the Election Commission secretary during the 11th Parliamentary Election in 2018.

THE TRIP

Six others who went on this trip include Minister Tazul Islam of the Local Government, Rural Development and Cooperatives ministry.

According to the ministry documents, the individuals participated in the International Study Tour on Delta Plan 2100 in the Netherlands and Global Water Summit in Spain between May 11 and May 20.

The Global Water Summit took

place from May 17-18. The Netherlands tour was a part of the preparation for the Bangladesh Delta Plan 2100 Conference which will be held in Dhaka from May 26-27.

But Helal is not even participating in the delta plan conference.

The funds of Dhaka's Food System (DFS) Project, Emergency Multi-Sector Rohingya Crisis Response Project (EMCRP) and City Governance Project were used for this trip, says a ministry document.

The Netherlands granted \$12.5 million to the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations for the DFS Project to develop a safe, sustainable and resilient food system for the Dhaka metropolitan areas. The EMCRP project, with \$165 million granted by the World Bank, is aimed at providing basic services and social resilience for the Rohingyas in Cox's Bazar. And the JICA-funded Tk 2,904 crore City Governance Project is aimed at developing urban infrastructure.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 3

Paraglider makes first legal flight off Everest

AFP, Kathmandu

A South African paraglider has made the first legal flight off Mount Everest, an expedition organiser said yesterday, opening doors for "climb and fly" adventurers on the world's highest mountain.



Pierre Carter, 55, leapt off near the summit at an altitude of nearly 8,000 metres (26,247 feet) last week, cruising above the Himalayas as other mountaineers descended on foot.

Carter flew down at a top speed of 80 kilometres (50 miles) per hour, taking only 20 minutes to

land near the small settlement of Gorakshp at 5,164 metres.

"It was a beautiful flight down. Above the clouds and then through the clouds and down," Carter told AFP.

Weather conditions dissuaded Carter from climbing all the way to the top of Everest's 8,849-metre (29,032-foot) summit before his flight from the South Col ridge around noon.



A picture taken on Sunday shows the destroyed bridge connecting Lysychansk with Severodonetsk in the eastern Ukrainian region of Donbass. Inset, Olga Khomenko, 67, looks for the remains of her son who allegedly died after a Russian tank shell hit his car outside the village of Mala Rogan near Kharkiv.

PHOTO: AFP

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EVM USE EC yet to earn confidence of all: CEC

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Chief Election Commissioner Kazi Habibur Awal has said the Election Commission is yet to gain the confidence of all regarding the use of electronic voting machines.

Speaking at a press briefing at the EC office yesterday, he said the commission was working to earn the confidence.

The EC was holding meetings on the use of EVMs and would sit with the technical committee, he added.

Habibur said the next general election will be held in due course and it would of course not take place "at night".

He said he was in Sydney during the last parliamentary polls on December 30, 2018 and saw that voting was held during the daytime. BNP leader Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir had expressed satisfaction at the atmosphere on the polling

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