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ON FRIDAY

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"We are facing an extraordinary situation, because Russia is an unreliable supplier and is manipulating our energy markets."



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Elizabeth II no more

Britain's longest-reigning monarch passes away at 96; her son becomes King Charles III

AGENCIES

Queen Elizabeth II, the longest-serving monarch in British history and an icon instantly recognisable to billions of people around the world, died yesterday. She was 96.

Buckingham Palace announced her death in a short statement, triggering 10 days of national mourning and an outpouring of tributes to her long life and record-breaking reign.

"The Queen died peacefully at Balmoral this afternoon," said the statement issued at 6:30 pm (1730 GMT).

"The King (Charles) and The Queen Consort (Camilla) will remain at Balmoral this evening and will return to London tomorrow."

The eldest of her four children, Charles, Prince of Wales, who at 73 is the oldest heir apparent in British history, becomes king immediately.

Royal officials confirmed he will be known as King Charles III, the first king of that name to sit on the throne since 1685.

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1926-2022

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People react outside the Buckingham Palace, after Queen Elizabeth, Britain's longest-reigning monarch and the nation's figurehead for seven decades, died aged 96 in London, Britain, yesterday.

PHOTO: REUTERS

Demise of an erudite soul



SOHEL PARVEZ and RASHIDUL HASAN

Former adviser to caretaker government Akbar Ali Khan breathed his last yesterday, leaving behind the gift of his wisdom on issues ranging from economics to literature.

He was 78. "He had a heart attack and we took him to Evercare Hospital tonight [last night]," his younger brother Kabir Uddin Khan told The Daily Star over phone.

He was brought to the SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

Lightning strike kills 9 in Sirajganj

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Pabna

At least nine people, including two minors, were killed and four others injured by a lightning strike while they were on a paddy field in Sirajganj's Ullapara upazila yesterday.

The incident occurred in Matikora village of the upazila's Ponchokrashi union around 5:00pm.

Of the dead, eight were identified as Abdul Kuddus, 60, Shahin Hossain, 50, Mostofa, 55, Afsar, 52, Mofazzal Hossain, 60, Monnaf, 50, Ritu Khatun, 13, and five-year-old Awlia.

Apart from Ritu and Awlia, all were farmers working on the field when the lightning struck.

Nazrul Islam, officer-in-charge of Ullapara Police Station, said at least 15 people were collecting Aman seedlings at that time.

Eight of them died on the spot and five others were injured. Of the injured, one died on the way to the upazila health complex, the OC added.

Talking to The Daily Star, Firoz Uddin, union parishad chairman, said it was SEE PAGE 2 COL 6

OUTCOMES OF PM'S INDIA VISIT Between hope and despair

MOHAMMAD AL-MASUM MOLLA

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's four-day visit to India brought some positive outcomes like the offer of free transit through India to third countries and the Kushiara water-sharing MoU.

However, little progress towards the signing of a long-sought Teesta deal was somewhat of a dampener.

Experts said India's offer to Bangladesh for free transit via its territory for exporting products to third countries through specific land ports, airports, and seaports was a positive move.

Speaking to The Daily Star, former foreign secretary Touhid Hossain said, "The MoU on Kushiara water sharing is a good development, considering that nothing happened for a long time in the realm of water sharing."

"This is a welcome gesture but the sad part is there is no progress on Teesta. Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina talked about Teesta water sharing but there was no concrete response from the Indian side."

He also said that although both sides agreed to work towards bringing the border killings down to zero, SEE PAGE 5 COL 4



HASINA'S INDIA TOUR Mamata blasts Modi govt for not inviting her

OUR CORRESPONDENT, New Delhi

West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee yesterday lambasted the Indian government for not inviting her to meet Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina during her four-day state visit to India.

Mamata, who has long been refusing to give her nod to a Teesta water-sharing deal with Bangladesh, also said she was curious to know why the Prime Minister Narendra Modi-led central government was "worried" about her meeting foreign dignitaries.

"I share an excellent relationship with Bangladesh PM Sheikh Hasina, but the Centre [central government] did not invite me to be a part of her visit," she said at a special session of her party, Trinamool Congress, at SEE PAGE 2 COL 6

REMITTANCE Tk 25,000cr lost to hundi in last four months

Says CID; '5,000 MFS agents involved'

MUNTAKIM SAAD and MOHAMMAD JAMIL KHAN

At least 5,000 agents of different mobile financial services made suspicious transactions involving around Tk 25,000 crore, meant to be remitted by Bangladeshi expatriates, in the last four months.

The money was channelled through hundi, a cross-border money transfer method that bypasses the legal banking system.

Hundi traders have been luring Bangladeshi migrants into using the illegal channel to send home money. They use local MFS agents to pay the migrants' relatives or designated persons here in taka against any amount of foreign currency that the migrants want to send home, according to the Criminal Investigation Department of police.

In so doing, the agents deprived the country of around Tk 25,000 crore in remittance in the past four months, ultimately hitting the country's foreign currency reserves, CID chief Mohammad Ali Mia told journalists at the CID office yesterday.

Analysing the trends, the CID estimated that Bangladesh may have lost around \$7.8 billion (around Tk 75,000 crore) in remittance in the last one year.

The CID's findings, however, give only a partial picture, as they don't provide detailed data on transactions made through hundi abroad. SEE PAGE 2 COL 4

Blender's Choice The Daily Star OTT & DIGITAL CONTENT AWARDS 2021 A collaboration of ISPAHANI The Daily Star TODAY KEEP YOUR EYES ON CHANNEL 1 TIME: 5.20 PM

India levies 20pc export duty on rice

B1



People waiting to collect water from a "water ATM booth" in the capital's Jigatola area. This water demand is high as it does not need to be boiled before drinking. Dhaka Wasa has set up such booths inside water pump stations in different areas to supply fresh water, at Tk 0.4 per litre, to the people. Inset, a woman inserts a card in an ATM. The photos were taken yesterday.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

বাংলাদেশ নির্বাচন কমিশন ইভিএম-এ ভোট দিন, আপনার ভোটাধিকার প্রতিষ্ঠা করুন। ভোটাধিকার প্রমাণের জন্য ভোটাধিকার প্রমাণের জন্য ভোটাধিকার প্রমাণের জন্য... ভোটাধিকার প্রমাণের জন্য ভোটাধিকার প্রমাণের জন্য ভোটাধিকার প্রমাণের জন্য...