



WR1
A discovery that may save Bara Katra



P11
UK avoids recession in boost for Truss



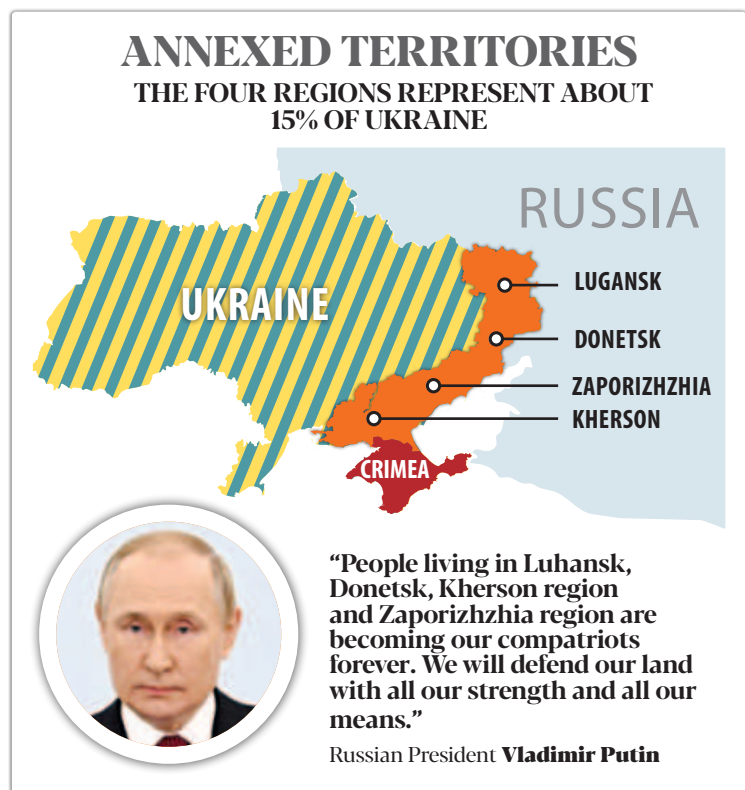
P15
Tigers fly to New Zealand for final WC tune-up



WR4
SATIRE Not clashes, just preparing for world cups

Russia annexes four regions of Ukraine

Kyiv applies for Nato membership, rules out talks till Putin in power; West slams the move; US imposes more sanctions



AGENCIES

A defiant Vladimir Putin proclaimed Russia's annexation of a swathe of Ukraine in a pomp-filled Kremlin ceremony yesterday, promising Moscow would triumph in its "special military operation" against Kyiv even as some of his troops faced potential defeat.

Putin's proclamation of Russian rule over about 15 percent of Ukraine -- the biggest annexation in Europe since the second world war -- has been firmly rejected by Western countries and even many of Russia's close allies.

The declaration has been condemned by the West and prompted Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky to request fast-track Nato membership.

In one of the toughest anti-American speeches the Russian president has delivered in more than two decades in power, he signalled he was ready to continue a battle for a "greater historical Russia" using whatever tools he had at his disposal and slammed the West as neo-colonial and Satanist.

Putin said the US had set a precedent when it had dropped two atomic bombs on Japan in 1945, but stopped short of issuing new nuclear warnings against Ukraine himself, something he has done more than once in recent weeks.

US Secretary of State Antony Blinken said the US had not yet seen Russia take any action that suggested it is contemplating the use of nuclear weapons, despite what he called Putin's "loose talk."

"Truth is on our side. Russia is with us!" Putin told his country's political elite, who had gathered in one of the Kremlin's grandest halls to watch him sign documents annexing four Ukrainian regions.

The ceremony culminated in the 69-year-old leader chanting "Russia Russia!" as he clasped the hands of the four Russian-backed officials

SEE PAGE 2 COL 4



Sand traders have encroached on the Gomoti river just beside the Dhaka-Chattogram highway in Cumilla's Daudkandi upazila. Loading and unloading of sand in the area have significantly narrowed the river at this point. The photo was taken a couple of days ago.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

Tell the world about BNP's misrule, graft PM to expatriates



UNB, Washington

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has called upon the expatriate Bangladeshis to tell the world about various irregularities, corruption and brutality committed during the past rule of the BNP, alongside depicting the true picture of development done by her government.

She made the call on Thursday while exchanging views with expatriate Bangladeshis in

SEE PAGE 10 COL 2

Myanmar conflicts hurting Bangladesh

Rohingya repatriation process gets complicated

PORIMOL PALMA

Conflicts in Myanmar intensified after the military coup on February 1 last year, as pro-democracy activists, the armed wing of National Unity Government and three dozen ethnic armed groups began fighting the junta.

The Arakan Army, which was maintaining a ceasefire since November 2020, engaged in conflicts with the military from the middle of this year.

The conflict has escalated to the point that there have been instances of mortar shells landing on Bangladesh's side of the border.

Given that Bangladesh has been negotiating for repatriation of around one million Rohingya refugees, the conflict has serious implications on Bangladesh and beyond, analysts say.

They observed that the Myanmar military is losing the public trust it enjoyed for decades. The junta has also become weaker while fighting the combines of the NUG's armed wing Peoples' Defence Force and ethnic armed groups that have been fighting for autonomy.

Now, armed groups have become stronger and are stepping up their battle for full autonomy.

The Arakan Army has been able to control administration in much of Rakhine State and is now desperate to take full control of the state, which is strategically important due to its proximity to the Bay of Bengal, they observed.

Shahab Enam Khan, professor of international relations at Jahangirnagar University, said the junta also could not deliver on the five-point ASEAN consensus, including ending violence and restoring democracy. Also, the economy is suffering, and that is affecting Rakhine, already a cash-starved region.

Harvard University Fellow Anu Anwar, an expert on Myanmar and China, said the Myanmar military had for decades been able to maintain territorial integrity despite being in a civil war with various armed groups.

"What is new is the addition of new rebel groups, intensification of fighting in Arakan, and the emergence of NUG's armed wing. Most importantly, [there is] a tacit consensus among major armed groups on a common enemy -- military junta. Therefore, certainly this time the challenge is much greater."

Free Rohingya Coalition Co-founder Nay

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1



DURGA PUJA GREETINGS!

We wish our readers a joyous celebration of Durga Puja. Let the festivities end on a note of communal harmony and prosperity.

Durga Puja begins today

STAR REPORT

Durga Puja, the biggest religious festival of the Hindu community, begins today with Maha Shashthi puja at temples across the country with due religious fervour.

Preparations at all puja mandaps have almost

SEE PAGE 2 COL 4



A woman cooks on a kerosene stove at the kitchen shared by several families in the capital's South Mugda yesterday. Residents of the area have been using gas stoves for only about three hours a day for the last one and a half months because of low pressure of gas.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

TEACHERS AT PUBLIC UNIVS

Worktime set at 40 hours a week

University Grants Commission finalises policy

MOHIUDDIN ALAMGIR

A public university teacher will have to work 40 hours a week. Of this period, 13 hours must be spent on providing direct lessons to students on average.

This has been stipulated by a policy, drawn up by the University Grants Commission in order to fix the teaching workload of all faculty members of the public universities.

The policy titled "Teaching load calculation policy for public university teachers" has been prepared to keep teachers on the campus for a longer period and determine how many teachers are needed for a particular university for proper education and research.

Under the policy, a professor's direct teaching hour will be 10 hours, an associate professor's 12 hours, an assistant professor's 14 hours and a lecturer's 16 hours, said UGC officials.

Besides lecturing at classes, each teacher will have to conduct student counseling for one hour per week.

UGC officials said once the policy comes into force next week, teachers' stay on the campus and their engagement with

students will increase significantly.

The policy will be sent to all public universities by next week.

According to officials, there are allegations that many public university teachers do not spend enough time on the campus, and teach at private universities instead. Many even take classes at five-six private universities. Some of them spend time on consultancy jobs.

"We hope that public university teachers will stay at the campus for a longer time following the implementation of the policy," said Ferdous Zaman, secretary of UGC.

He said that a UGC meeting on Tuesday finalised the policy.

Commission officials also said that sufficient number of teachers is essential for ensuring proper educational and research activities at public universities. The policy has been devised to ensure this. It will also be helpful in determining the number of teachers needed for any particular university.

"Following the implementation of the policy, it will be easier to determine how many teachers will be required for the

SEE PAGE 10 COL 5