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Bangladesh, India start Asia Cup with wins

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Defending champions Bangladesh and India started the Women's Asia Cup on a winning note, beating Thailand and Sri Lanka respectively at the Sylhet International Cricket Stadium yesterday.

The hosts thrashed Thailand by nine wickets after Nigar Sultana's troops bundled out the opposition for just 82. The Tigresses reached the target with fifty balls to spare.

Thailand faced the music immediately after electing to bat and the Tigress never looked back. Rumana Ahmed scalped three while Nahida Akter, Sanjida Akter and Shohely Akter took two wickets each.

In reply, Shamima Sultana's quickfire thirty-ball 49 and Fargana Hoque's unbeaten 26 helped Bangladesh center to the target.

Nigar hailed the team's approach and appreciated the morale-boost.

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Bangladesh skipper Nigar Sultana Joty (R) and opener Fargana Hoque rejoice over a job well done as they walk back to the dressing room after ensuring a thumping nine-wicket victory against Thailand, commencing their Women's Asia Cup title defence in style at the Sylhet International Cricket Stadium, Ground 2 on Saturday. It was also the first international match held at the venue.

PHOTO: BCB

BANGABANDHU KILLER RASHED

Efforts on to bring him back

Says Hasina

BSS, Dhaka

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has said efforts are continuing to repatriate war criminals and Bangabandhu's fugitive killer Rashed Chowdhury from the US to inflict punishment.

"We are holding talks with the USA time and again and requesting them to send back Rashed Chowdhury, a convicted

killer of Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, to Bangladesh," she said.

The PM was speaking at a views-exchange meeting with the leaders and activists of the US chapters of the Awami League and its front and associate bodies and Bangladeshi expatriates at a hotel in Washington DC on Friday.

PM's Deputy Press Secretary KM Shakhawat Moon briefed journalists after the meeting.

Hasina said the USA is talking about the human rights despite the fact that they have sheltered the killers of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and most of his family members.

The killers even didn't spare the children, including a four-year-old, and women, she said.

Military dictator and BNP founder Ziaur Rahman introduced the politics of killings, forced disappearances

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BBC BANGLA RADIO

A voice in history to go off air

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

The BBC Bangla radio broadcast, the most reliable source of news during the years leading up to the Liberation War and later, will be discontinued after 81 years.

The station's broadcast in other languages, including Arabic, Persian, Kyrgyz, Uzbek, Hindi, Chinese, Indonesian, Tamil, and Urdu, will also stop by early next year.

The decision comes as part of the BBC World Service's plans to accelerate its digital offering and increase impact with audiences around the globe, while adhering to austerity measures.

"High inflation, soaring costs, and a cash-flat Licence Fee settlement have led to tough choices across the BBC, and the its international services need to make a saving of £28.5m, as part of the wider £500m of annual savings and reinvestment to make the [a] BBC digital-led [platform]," the BBC announced on Friday.

The decision will also cause closures of around 382 posts.

This, however, comes as a shock to the long-time BBC listeners.

Salahuddin Dolar of Rajshahi, who started listening to the BBC Bangla when he was an eighth grader in 1994, said he not only listened to the radio but also wrote letters every month and actively attended various listeners' events.

"BBC Bangla was the major source of knowledge on the national and global political, economic and social events. BBC has been close to all public exam candidates."

He said though the BBC Bangla programme will be heard online, not all people, especially in the rural areas,

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War escalates after annexations

Russia abandons key Donetsk bastion as Ukraine steps up offensive to recapture country's east

AGENCIES

Fighting escalated in Ukraine yesterday, a day after Russian President Vladimir Putin annexed four territories of the country, earning condemnations from both friends and allies.

Russia yesterday said its troops had abandoned their bastion of Lyman in Ukraine's east for fear of encirclement and the leader of Chechnya, a close Kremlin ally, said Moscow should consider using a low-yield nuclear weapon in response.

The fall of the town is a major setback for Moscow after President Vladimir Putin proclaimed the annexation of the Donetsk region, along with three other regions, at a ceremony on Friday that was condemned by Kyiv and the West as a farce.

"Allied forces were withdrawn from the settlement of ... Lyman to more advantageous lines because

of the creation of the threat of encirclement," Russia's Ministry of Defence said.

The statement ended hours of official silence from Moscow after Kyiv first said it had surrounded thousands of Russian troops in the area and then that its forces were inside the town of Lyman.

- **Civilian convoy attack kills 25 in Kharkiv**
- **China, India abstain from UNSC bid against annexations**

Ramzan Kadyrov, the leader of Chechnya who describes himself as a footsoldier of Putin, said he was unable to remain silent after Moscow abandoned the territory, which the Kremlin had proclaimed to be part of Russia just a day earlier.

"In my personal opinion, more

drastic measures should be taken, right up to the declaration of martial law in the border areas and the use of low-yield nuclear weapons," Kadyrov wrote on Telegram in a post in which he derided a Russian general.

The Russian defence ministry's statement made no mention of its troops being encircled.

"The Russian grouping in the area of Lyman is surrounded," Serhii Cherevatyi, spokesperson for Ukraine's eastern forces, said hours earlier.

He said that Russia had had 5,000 to 5,500 troops at Lyman but the number of encircled troops could be lower because of casualties.

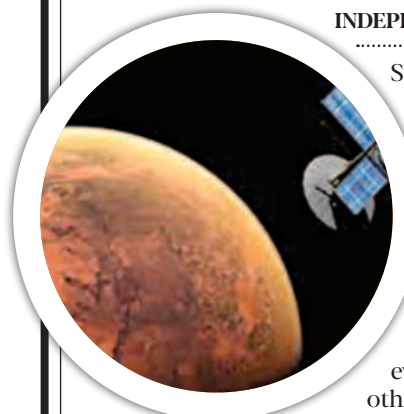
"We're already in Lyman, but there are battles," the spokesperson said on television.

Two grinning Ukrainian soldiers taped the yellow and blue national flag on to the welcome

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Scientists find more evidence of liquid water on Mars

INDEPENDENT.CO.UK



Scientists have discovered new evidence suggesting there could be liquid water on Mars.

The study, led by the University of Cambridge, provides the first independent line of evidence using data other than radar, that there is liquid water beneath

Mars' south polar ice cap.

The research team, which included scientists from the University of Sheffield and the Open University, said this "does not necessarily mean that life exists on Mars".

Like Earth, Mars has thick water ice caps at both poles, roughly equivalent in combined volume to the Greenland Ice Sheet.

Earth's ice sheets are underlain by water-filled channels and even large subglacial lakes, however, those on Mars were until recently thought to be frozen solid all the way to their beds due to the cold Martian climate.

Dr Frances Butcher, second author of the study from the University of Sheffield, said: "This study gives the best indication yet that there is liquid

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Arches have been built on both sides of the Jatir Pita Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman Highway in the capital's Dholaipar for councils for Awami League units. The councils ended recently but the posters and banners of AL leaders' own publicity remain. Inset, a footbridge in Dholaipar is covered with posters and banners. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

Mother, two sons found dead at home

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Pabna

Police recovered the bodies of a woman and her two children from a house in Sirajganj's Belkuchi upazila yesterday.

The victims are Rawshan Ara Begum, 45, wife of Sultan Hossain, her two sons Jihad Hossain, 10, and three-year-old Mahin of Moupur village.

Police said the bodies decomposed as they died a few days ago.

Siddique Ahmed, assistant superintendent of Sirajganj police (Belkuchi circle), said locals found the house closed for the last several days. On suspicion, they informed police.

Police went there in the evening and found the bodies.

Tajmilur Rahman, officer-in-charge of Belkuchi Police Station, said the three might have been killed.

Quoting locals, police said Rawshan did not live with her husband and that he remarried.

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Your thoughts and deeds and calm fortitude
Still guide and inspire all the lives you touched.

We ask all friends and family to remember him in your prayers.