

We don't need any external advice: Momen

UNB, Sylhet

Foreign Minister Dr AK Abdul Momen yesterday said Bangladesh does not seek any suggestion from outside. "Ours is a nation which gave blood to establish democracy, justice and people's rights," he said.

"I would say let them (foreign critics) see their own faces in the mirror first before talking about others. We don't want that much suggestion," he said, while talking to reporters after laying the foundation stone for the development of Saheberbazar High School in Sylhet Sadar.

Momen said AL came to power again and again through "transparent and credible" elections.


Without mentioning any country's name, he said many of them, who are giving lectures on human rights and democracy, were not beside Bangladesh when the nation fought for independence and struggled for establishing democracy, justice and human rights and when the people's voices were denied.

Momen said the tendency of showing hegemony has increased when Bangladesh is walking towards a better position and doing better on the economic front.

He said the government never indulges in any extrajudicial killings and does not want to see anyone getting disappeared, but accidents happen in all the countries. "We are very serious so that such accidents do not happen."

He expressed displeasure over a section of the media mentioning that the media people go to foreigners to ask questions on Bangladesh's internal issues.

PRAYER
TIMING



OCTOBER 9

Fazr	Zohr	Asr	Maghrib	Esha
AZAN 4-45	12-45	4-15	5-53	7-30
JAMAAT 5-20	1-15	4-30	5-56	8-00

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

Their guardian angel

Despite hardship, UP member Setara Begum perseveres with her commitment to help others

S DILIP ROY

Setara was a playful child, curious about the world and always up for helping everyone around her. To contribute to her community, she wanted to keep on studying in school. But life doesn't always go according to plan for a poor girl from a small Lalmonirhat village. Her father couldn't afford her education, so Setara had to drop out when she was in eighth grade. The next years of her life was a story of agony. After her father passed away, she was married off to



Every day at the break of dawn, Setara sets out from her home. She goes from village to village, hearing problems and trying to solve them as soon as possible, covering at least five villages on foot daily.



Shamsul Alam, known among locals as Shamsu Pagla, because he suffered from mental illness. But Setara isn't the one who surrenders. She remained by his side in every way possible. Earlier, Shamsul used to sell nuts and eggs in the village. Besides, doing household chores, Setara often accompanied him. Setara and Shamsul don't have any land of their own and have been living in a small tinshed house at Mogholhat of Lalmonirhat for years. "Look, many people are not so kind to an individual like my husband. They used to mock him. But my sheer presence used to comfort him a great deal," she told this correspondent. In a way, this knack for being there for people who are vulnerable inspired her to run for reserved chair-member post

in Mogholhat union parishad elections, she said. Initially, locals laughed the idea off. But Setara, with her innocent smile and down-to-earth attitude, soon won them over. So much so that the same locals financed her entire campaign. And she ended up winning. When the results came out on November 28, 2021, it showed Setara securing 2,600 votes, while her competitor got 1,700. Now the 37-year-old Setara is on a mission to give back to her voters, working tirelessly for them. Every day at the break of dawn, she sets out from her home with a bag on her shoulder, accompanied by her husband. "I'm happy to have Shamsul as my husband. I don't let him sell nuts and eggs anymore," she

said. Her bag contains various important documents, including those on how to get old-age or disability allowance and how to apply for a VGD card. She goes from village to village, hearing problems and trying to solve them as soon as possible, covering at least five villages on foot daily. Day labourer Nazar Ali (50) of Etapota village told The Daily Star that his son Shihab Islam (14) has physical disabilities. With Setara's help, his son got a disability allowance card. And for this, he did not have to spend any money. "She is always there for us. She is like our guardian angel," he added. Hawa Begum (63) of the same village said Setara arranged

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Muezzin 'missing' for 22 days in Ctg

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

A 42-year-old muezzin of a mosque in Chattogram city has been missing for 22 days.

Failing to trace Md Khademul Haque, muezzin of Hazrat Kutub Billah (R) Mosque in Port North residential area, his family lodged a general diary with Bandar Police Station.

The incident took place when seven youths in Cumilla aged between 17 and 25 went missing in August. The investigators believed that the youths have been radicalised.

Md Hasan, nephew of Khademul Haque who is from Sandwip, told The Daily Star, "My uncle had left home on September 16 around 3:00pm without his cellphone."

"He has been missing ever since," said Hasan.

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Man, his mother held over wife's death

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Natore

Police yesterday arrested a man and his mother over the death of his wife in Natore's Gurudaspur upazila early.

Md Naeem Hossain (27) and his mother Arabi Begum (50) were arrested from Khamarnachkoir area.

Victim's father Ranju Pramanik filed a murder case, accusing the two, with Gurudaspur Police Station in the morning.

According to the case statement, Ratri got married to Naeem four years ago. After marriage, Naeem and his mother used to torture her for dowry.

Yesterday, hearing Ratri's cries, locals rushed to Naeem's house and saw

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Prabarana Purnima today

BSS, Dhaka

The Buddhist community will celebrate their second largest religious festival -- Prabarana Purnima -- across the country today with due solemnity.

The festival is also known as Ashwini Purnima that marks conclusion of the three-month-long seclusion of the monks inside their monasteries for self-edification and atonement of their defilement.



The Purnima follows a month-long preaching of sermons by Buddhist monks for the welfare of every being and the whole of humankind through a month-long yellow-robes offering ceremony that begins the day after the Purnima.

According to the legend, Buddha once clipped some strands of his hair and said that if he were qualified to attain supreme wisdom and enlightenment, the strands would not fall down but go up instead -- which they did in the long run.

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Locals halt train, demand gateman at unmanned crossing

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Tangail

Locals stopped a train and formed a human chain in Tangail yesterday, demanding appointment of a gateman at an unmanned level crossing.

The residents from Nardahi, Bhawal, Analiabari, Bilchayia and Hatia in Salla union under Kalihati upazila took part in the human chain for an hour in front of the level crossing in Hatia area on Joydevpur-Bangabandhu Bridge railway line.

At that time, the villagers intercepted the Chilahati-bound Nilsagar Express train from Dhaka for 20 minutes.

Abdul Khalek, member of ward-7 of the union parishad, Jahirul Islam of ward-8, Md Humayun of ward-9, and Fatik Mandal, a freedom fighter, spoke at the human chain.

They demanded that a gateman at Hatia level crossing on Hatia-Dhunail road be appointed immediately.

The speakers said at least 150 people -- including children -- have died in train accidents at the level crossing since it was constructed. Yet, no gateman was deployed there, they said.

They also threatened to wage a tougher movement if their demand is not met immediately.



PHOTO: TITU DAS

A girl buys an idol of Goddess Laxmi from an artisan on the premises of Barishal Hatkhola Hari Mandir on the eve of Laxmi Puja yesterday. The puja is being held to honour Goddess Laxmi for wealth and prosperity.

Three dead, 712 hospitalised

Dengue death toll rises to 67

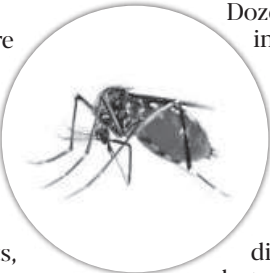
UNB, Dhaka

Three more dengue patients died in 24 hours till yesterday morning, raising this year's death toll from the mosquito-borne disease in Bangladesh to 67.

During this period, 712 more patients were hospitalised, according to DGHS.

The dengue death toll in Chattogram division remained unchanged at five. Of the new patients, 499 were admitted to different hospitals in Dhaka.

A total of 2,416 dengue patients, including 1,838 in the capital, are now receiving treatment at hospitals across the country. This year, the directorate has recorded 20,235 dengue cases and 17,752 recoveries so far.



Dengue grips Rooppur plant

Conflicting statements on number of infected staffers

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Patna

Dozens of employees, including foreigners, have been infected with dengue since mid-September at the Rooppur Nuclear Power Plant site.

Of them, two died of the disease last month, sources at Ishwardi health department confirmed.

At least 30 workers are still receiving care at different

medical facilities, they told The Daily Star.

However, Dr Asma Khan, Ishwardi upazila's health officer, said that the health department has already collected samples from the project site and no dengue larvae was found.

She added that a dengue outbreak began at the project site in the middle of September. More than 100 people had to be admitted to different hospitals of Ishwardi in the past few weeks.

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Let's Build A Beautiful Tomorrow

Owners of land plots are invited to discuss their proposals

Dhanmondi, Gulshan, Banani, Old DOHS, Uttara, Banasree, Kalabagan, Pallabi, Mirpur DOHS, Shyamoli, Monipuripara, Green Road, Wari, Bashundhara, Shantinagar, Moghbazar, Eskaton, Segunbagicha, Paribagh, Indira Road, Mohammadpur, Lalmatia, Khilgaon, Malibagh, Bashabo & Siddheswari.



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