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Bangladesh wins UNHRC membership

Gets highest vote

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh has won the election for the membership of the UN Human Rights Council for the term 2023-25, by securing 160 votes from 189

At the voting in the UN General Assembly in New York yesterday, the other three countries from the Asia Pacific region elected were the Maldives (154 votes), Vietnam (145 votes) and Kyrgyzstan (126 votes), the foreign ministry said in a statement.

South Korea and Afghanistan lost the election, bagging 123 and 12 votes respectively.

This year, 17 countries have contested the election for 14 seats in the Council.

This would be the fifth term of Bangladesh as a member of the 47-member Council.

Bangladesh previously won in 2006, 2009, 2014 and 2018.

"This prestigious win is indeed significant as this was the most

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Students of Vigarunnisa Noon School and their guardians blocking a section of Mirpur Road in protest of the rumoured shifting of the institution's Dhanmondi-7 campus. Later, Principal Kamrun Nahar assured them that no such notice was issued from the authorities. Because of this protest that lasted for over four hours, hundreds of commuters in the city suffered long delays yesterday.

PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN

Govt might import fuel oil from Brunei

Foreign minister says ahead of Sultan's visit

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh has advanced the discussion on importing fuel oil from Brunei, said Foreign Minister AK Abdul Momen yesterday.

"Brunei has enough oil, gas, and LNG. Hopefully, we will be importing energy from them in a systematic and regular way," he said.

He made the comment at a press briefing at the foreign ministry on the occasion of the first-ever state visit of Brunei Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Mu'izzaddin Waddaulah.

Sultan Hassanal will be visiting Bangladesh on October 15-17, reciprocating Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's first state visit to the Southeast Asian country in April 2019.

Momen said Bangladesh was thinking about importing energy from Malaysia and Indonesia too.

"We are keeping all options open. We are working on this," he said.

During the visit of the Brunei Sultan, the two countries may sign at least three memorandums of understanding on introducing direct flights between Bangladesh and Brunei; labour recruitment and recognition of sailors' certificates.

Around 20,000 Bangladeshis currently work in Brunei, but the

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Russia fires missile salvo on Ukraine as G7 meets

Energy facilities hit; Zelensky asks for air defence weapons

AGENCIES

Russian strikes on several regions in Ukraine did "serious" damage to energy facilities, Ukrainian officials said yesterday, on the second day of massive missile salvos across the country.

"The Russians fired missiles at energy infrastructure in the Pavlograd and Kamian districts. There is serious destruction. Many settlements still do not have electricity," Valentin Reznichenko, governor of central Ukrainian region of Dnipropetrovsk, said on social media.

The Ukrainian military's southern command said Russian forces had fired missiles at the southern Mykolaiv and Odessa regions, also causing damage to energy infrastructure.

"During a massive attack in the first half of the day, the enemy launched 16 cruise missiles... on south Ukraine. It has also dispatched two kamikaze drones against sites of critical infrastructure," the military said, according to the Interfax news agency. Officials in western region of Lviv said at least three Russian missiles targeted energy infrastructure and the mayor of the region's main city, also called Lviv, said about one-third of the city was without power.

Russia's defence ministry confirmed the attacks saying it had carried out massive strikes using long-range and high-precision weapons and that "all assigned targets were hit".

Other parts of the country remained blacked out after the cruise missile attacks on Monday which officials said killed 19 people in the biggest air raids since the start of the conflict.

Ukrainian Foreign Minister Dmytro Kuleba said the main targets were energy facilities in a campaign to make life unbearable for civilians that had been planned well in advance, reports Reuters.

"They've hit many yesterday and they hit the same and new ones today," he wrote on Twitter. Hundreds of settlements around Kyiv, Lviv and elsewhere were still without power yesterday.

As Russia rained down cruise missiles on cities across Ukraine in a new escalation of the war, President Volodymyr Zelensky yesterday asked the leaders of the G7 group of nations to urgently supply Ukraine with air defence weapons.

The White House said US President Joe Biden and other G7 leaders met virtually to discuss what more they can do to support Ukraine and listened to Zelensky, who has called air defence systems his "number 1

priority".

The Ukrainian leader urged leaders to back a tough cap on Russian oil and gas exports, and again ruled out talks with Russian President Vladimir Putin. He also urged G7 countries to help create "air shield" for Ukraine and asked the G7 to support an international mission on the Ukraine-Belarus border.

Biden has already promised more air defences, a pledge that Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said would extend the conflict. "The mood of this summit is already obvious and predictable. The confrontation will continue," Peskov told reporters.

US-led Nato said yesterday its member states were boosting security around key installations. Nato was closely monitoring Russia's nuclear forces, but had not seen any change in its nuclear posture, Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg told reporters in Brussels.

Putin yesterday met the president of the United Arab Emirates, a member of the group of oil producers known as OPEC+ that rebuffed the United States last week by announcing steep production cuts.



Court denies bail to 24 Chhatra Odhikar activists

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday rejected the bail petitions of 24 Bangladesh Chhatra Odhikar Parishad activists who were attacked by Chhatra League men on Dhaka University campus on Friday.

Dhaka Metropolitan Magistrate Mahbub Ahmed passed the order after lawyers of the parishad activists submitted separate petitions, seeking bail in cases filed against them.

In his order, the magistrate said the accused were arrested recently and the cases were at the primary stage of investigation.

Besides, the charges brought against them were non-bailable. So, their bail petitions were rejected considering the depth of offences.

All the 24 activists were sent to jail on Saturday after they were produced before another Dhaka court in connection with the cases.

The court, however, fixed yesterday for hearing on the bail petitions.

During yesterday's hearing, advocate Masud Ahmed Talukder told the court the accused were mercilessly beaten by the complainants and their associates.

The victims were sued, arrested, and sent to jail whereas the arrestees were supposed to file cases against the attackers for their involvement in the attacks.

So, their bail petitions should be granted, the lawyer added.

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Taibpur High School in Khulna's Dumuria becomes inundated almost every day as a dam along the Bhadra river in the area collapsed around one and a half months ago. The authorities, however, seem to be paying no heed to the situation even as of hundreds of students of the school endure daily hardships.

PHOTO: HABIBUR RAHMAN

MD'S SALARY, ALLOWANCES

Dhaka Wasa has to submit report to HC

SC upholds High Court order

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Supreme Court yesterday upheld a High Court order that sought a report on the salaries, allowances and others facilities provided to Taqsem A Khan, managing director and chief executive officer of Dhaka Wasa over the last 13 years.

The Appellate Division of the SC maintained another HC order that restrained Wasa authorities from distributing performance bonus to its employees for three months and asked the HC to dispose of the rule issued on this issue as soon as possible.

The chamber judge of the Appellate Division, Justice Borhanuddin, delivered the orders after hearing two appeals filed by the board of Wasa and its MD seeking stay on the HC orders.

The judge passed "no order" on the leave to appeal petitions, Barrister Jyotirmoy Barua, lawyer for writ petitioner Consumers' Association of Bangladesh (CAB), told The Daily Star.

He said the chairman of Dhaka Water Supply and Sewerage Authority (Wasa) must submit the report on the Wasa MD's salaries, allowances and

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Properties of 'baby talk' similar across many languages



INDEPENDENT.CO.UK

Some features of "baby talk", or the animated way in which caregivers speak to infants, such as pitch and melody have the same properties across most of the world's languages, according to a new study.

Researchers, including those from the University of York in the UK, say the findings shed more light on how children grasp language and also on their cognitive development.

In the study, published last week in the journal Nature Human Behaviour, they assessed previous research on the sound properties of baby talk, and asked what these revealed about its function in child language development.

Overall, scientists analysed data from 88 unique studies on speech parameters, including frequency and its variability, vowel use and articulation rate.

Scientists found that some features of baby talk, including pitch, melody, and articulation rates remain similar across most of the world's languages.

But how caregivers exaggerate differences between vowel sounds varied significantly across languages, they said.

No possibility of famine

Says Razzaque, announces recipients of Bangabandhu Jatiya Krishi Award

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Brushing aside any possibility of famine in the country, Agriculture Minister Muhammad Abdur Razzaque said there was sufficient stock of rice.

"Aman will be harvested after two months. There is no chance of famine right now, as the government has 15 lakh tonnes of rice in stock which is enough for the period," he said yesterday at a press briefing.

As the wheat price shot up, people have begun consuming more rice. This is creating further pressure on rice.

"The inflation rose to 9 percent. I admit it [high price] is putting huge pressure on the people belonging to the middle and low income group," he said.

The press briefing was organised to officially declare the name of recipients of "Bangabandhu Jatiya Krishi Award 1425 and 1426" at

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