



## A fitting end to a thunderous World Cup

AL-AMIN

We could not have asked for a better ending to a magnificent World Cup in Qatar on Sunday, with little magician Lionel Messi finally laying his hands on that glittering piece of glory after a nerve-racking final that Argentina won 4-2 on penalties against holders France after regulation and extra time ended with the scores level.

This was a World Cup for the ages, not just because of the pulsating final which exploded into life after Kylian Mbappe's double strike in a matter of minutes deep into the second half neutralized Argentina's two-goal cushion.

But in truth, that moment captured the Qatar World Cup in a nutshell — a true roller-coaster littered with plots, subplots, drama, upsets, heartbreak and joy. Football is inexplicably beautiful. It is not for the faint-hearted. And after 28 days of unyielding drama that captivated the hearts and minds of global audiences, the bravest one prevails.

Were Argentina the bravest of them

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MESSI SOLVES THE ARGENTINA PUZZLE—PAGE 10



Argentina fans celebrate winning the Qatar 2022 World Cup at the Obelisk of Buenos Aires yesterday, a day after their victory against France in the final that ended La Albiceleste's 36-year wait for football's ultimate prize and allowed Lionel Messi to get his hands on the only trophy that has eluded the 35-year-old. Fans across the world toasted the victory but the Argentines erupted in unmatched celebrations as millions gathered at the monument.

PHOTO: AFP

## BNP places 27-point state reform plan

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

If the BNP is voted to power, it will implement reforms so that no prime minister or president can serve more than two back-to-back terms, the party has said while unveiling its set of state restructure plans.

The BNP in its 27-point outline, "The structural reforms of the state", also said it would ensure a balance of power between the PM and president.

The outline included the establishment of an inclusive and egalitarian "rainbow nation" based on nationalism and amalgamation of diverse views and paths.

"To achieve this, a new forward-looking 'social contract' is a must through continuous dialogue, exchange of views and mutual understanding.

A National Reconciliation Commission shall be formed in this regard," Khandaker Mosharraf Hossain, party's standing committee member, said during a press conference at a city hotel yesterday.

BNP acting chairman Tarique Rahman made the introductory speech on the reforms via videoconference and Mosharraf unveiled the reforms in details afterwards.

The BNP said the current authoritarian government has shattered the structure of the state.

"The state has to be repaired and rebuilt. With the aim of returning the ownership of the country to its people, a 'public-welfare government of national consensus' will be established with all political parties taking part in the ongoing movement after winning a free, fair, credible and participatory election."

It said the national government would implement the 27 reforms in the executive, judiciary, and legislative branches.

The BNP said "to restore democracy and right to vote" and give democratic process a permanent, constitutional and institutional shape, a "polls-time non-partisan caretaker government system" would be introduced.

It said parliament would be bicameral and the upper house would be comprised of eminent educationists, professionals, political scientists, sociologists and people with administrative experience.

The party proposed examining an amendment to Article 70 of the constitution so that lawmakers could express their opinions independently.

On the Election Commission and voting, it said

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- No back-to-back terms for PMs, presidents
- Balance of power between PM and president
- National reconciliation commission to be formed
- Jatiya Sangsad to be bicameral

## Five on easy bike killed in Rangpur crash

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

Five passengers of a battery-run easy bike were killed and two more were injured in a road accident in Rangpur's Taraganj upazila yesterday.

The deceased are Shahir Uddin, 40, Khademul Islam, 38, Azanur Rahman, 45, and Md Habibullah, 45. They all were from Taraganj.

The fifth victim could not be identified till the report was filed last night.

Crammed with passengers, a battery-run easy bike was heading to Nilphamari's Saidpur from Taraganj Bus Stand around 6.30pm yesterday.

As it arrived at Nengtimor on the Dinajpur-Rangpur Highway, an ambulance rear-ended the easy bike causing it to collide head-on with a truck coming from the opposite direction, said police, quoting witnesses.

Local Fire Service and Civil Defense

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## STANDARD ASIATIC OIL CORRUPTION

# Eight employees siphon out Tk 21.64cr

Finds the Directorate of Power and Energy Audit

MOHAMMAD SUMAN, Chattogram

Eight officials of Standard Asiatic Oil (SAOIL), a subsidiary of the Bangladesh Petroleum Corporation, have embezzled Tk 21.64 crore by showing advance cost and fake bill vouchers, found investigations by the Directorate of Power and Energy Audit and BPC.

The officials were recruited by Moinuddin Ahmed, a controversial director of SAOIL, and Mohammad Shahed, the company's former general manager, without recruitment notice, application, written examination, police verification report or board's approval — violating government recruitment policies.

While the Directorate of Power and Energy Audit found six more were

recruited in this manner, Moni Lal Das, SAOIL's chief executive officer, said the number is more than 50.

"Moinuddin Ahmed and Mohammad Shahed misused their power to embezzle company money," said Sudipta Ahsan, deputy director of the Directorate of Power and Energy Audit and also a member of the audit committee.

The Directorate of Power and Energy Audit found 49 counts of irregularities at SAOIL. The findings were forwarded to the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG).

The CAG in its final report to the parliament said the government has been deprived of Tk 472.7 crore for 21 counts of irregularities by SAOIL.

Ahmed, who was previously the

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### HOW TK 21.64CR WENT MISSING

- Director Moinuddin Ahmed illegally recruits 14 employees
- Head of accounts dept, seven employees among the illegal recruits
- Head of accounts dept withdraws Tk 9.87cr in seven employees' name
- No signature of officials on the cheques
- Three employees say they did not know about withdrawals
- Head of accounts dept withdraw Tk 11.77cr in name of several organisations
- Those organisations do not exist

## PROBE REPORTS ON DB RAID

# More questions than answers



Screen grab from CCTV footage that shows a group of men in plainclothes handcuffing the manager and chef of Hotel Bondhu in Paltan area on November 6, 2016.

MUNTAKIM SAAD

Police submitted two contradictory probe reports before a Dhaka court in a case filed over the "confiscation" of fake bank notes from a hotel in Paltan in 2016.

The first probe questioned the merit of DB officers' claim that the counterfeit notes were confiscated from a hotel manager and a chef while the second probe found it to be true.

Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP) prepared the two probe reports as the accused individuals Hasan Majumdar, manager of Hotel Bondhu, and Sohnel Rana, the chef, complained to top police officials that the DB men had framed them in 2016.

According to the case filed with Motijheel Police Station, a Detective Branch team arrested Hasan and Sohnel near Fakirapool kitchen market

around 4:15pm on November 6, 2016. The two were caught in an alley while fleeing with fake notes of Tk 25 lakh, it mentioned.

But security camera footage and multiple witness accounts contradicted the first information report because the CCTV footage shows a team of officers in plainclothes detaining Hasan and Sohnel from the hotel, not an alley.

Reviewing the video clips and 32 witnesses' accounts, the first probe conducted by DMP's then Cantonment Zone Additional Deputy Commissioner Mohammad Shahed Miah pointed out that the place of arrest mentioned in the case contradicted the video evidence.

"Actually, the accused was arrested from the hotel and the video footage did not show any evidence of fake notes being confiscated from the accused during a search," Shahed Miah wrote in

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## 'BNP-Jamaat's plot' to be foiled unitedly

### Say 14-party alliance leaders

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Alleging that the BNP is involved in anti-state conspiracy, leaders of the Awami League-led 14-party grand alliance yesterday vowed to resist the BNP and Jamaat unitedly.

They made the statement while speaking at a discussion organised to mark the Martyred Intellectuals Day and the Victory Day.

"BNP's December 10 rally was a complete failure .... The 14-party alliance will together foil any BNP-Jamaat's plot," said AL Advisory Council member Amir Hossain Amu, also coordinator and spokesperson for the alliance.

Dhaka South City Corporation Sheikh Fazle Noor Taposh said all the progressive forces are united in the country and would resist the BNP-Jamaat's anti-state conspiracy.

Speaking at the programme, Bangladesh Workers Party General Secretary Fazle Hossain Badsha said, "The anti-liberation forces see each partner of the 14-party alliance as a separate political power. But if the pro-liberation forces unite, then the BNP-Jamaat will be eliminated from the country, let alone assume power."

"If we are in unison,

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## মহান বিজয়ের মাসে সাফা আন্তর্জাতিক অ্যাওয়ার্ড (গোল্ড) অর্জন করেছে জনতা ব্যাংক লিমিটেড



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