

Building a stronger and safer nation for 70 years

Our victories are for the people





PADMA BRIDGE

Construction Partner

AMBASSADOR TO VIENNA Momen defends rejected diplomat

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

Foreign Minister AK Abdul Momen yesterday defended Md Tauhidul Islam, who was tipped to become the ambassador of Austria but was refused by Vienna.

Momen said Tauhidul top diplomat and blamed backstabbers for the controversy.

A row erupted after a recent report of a national daily said the Austrian government refused Tauhidul's candidacy citing his alleged misconduct with a woman when he was working as the consul general in Milan.

"He is a very good officer. He is brilliant and intelligent. He is a performer. I will continue to defend him as long as I am here [in the ministry]," he told reporters while responding to a question in Sylhet.

According to the Bangla daily report, Momen on September 19 last year wrote to the Austrian federal minister for European and International Affairs, defending Tauhidul without any success.

Tauhidul is now the high commissioner of Bangladesh

Hinting at a conspiracy, Momen, when asked, said the government wanted to send Tauhid to Vienna as he had a good track record.

"He [Tauhidul] is a top diplomat. He stood first in his MBBS exam. When he entered the administrative service, he stood first in his batch. He is very good. Now his colleagues in the ministry, friends are continuously trying to bring him down," Momen said.

SEE PAGE 6 COL 1



Illegal structures built on three sides of the Dhaka-Narayanganj-Demra (DND) canal and garbage dumping have shortened the length of the water body. The photo was taken yesterday from the Shimrail area of Narayanganj on the Dhaka-Chattogram Highway.

Ijtema ends today

Several roads to close, metro to run till 5pm

UNB, Dhaka

The second phase of Bishwa Ijtema is set to end on the banks of the Turag in Tongi today through Akheri Munajat.

The second phase of the 56th Bishwa Ijtema began on Friday with "Aam Bayaan" after Fajr prayers with the participation of the followers of Indian Islamic preacher Maulana Muhammad Saad Kandhalvi.

Devotees from home and abroad thronged the banks of the Turag to take part in the religious event

to seek divine blessings. Today, Indian Islamic scholar Maulana Yeakub Ali conducted a sermon after Fajr prayers.

Meanwhile, five devotees have so far died at the Ijtema venue during the second phase as two more devotees died due to old age complications on Friday night and Saturday morning.

SEE PAGE 6 COL 4

India blocks BBC docu on Modi

OUR CORRESPONDENT, New Delhi

The Indian government has issued directives for the blocking of multiple YouTube videos and Twitter posts sharing links to BBC documentary "India: The Modi Question", several Indian media outlets reported yesterday.

The directions were reportedly issued by Apurva Chandra, secretary of India's information and broadcasting ministry, on Friday using the emergency powers under the IT Rules, 2021, the media said quoting unnamed sources.

They said senior officials of several ministries, including external affairs, home, and information and broadcasting, examined the documentary and found it to be an attempt to cast aspersions on the authority and credibility of the Supreme Court, sow divisions among various Indian communities, and make unsubstantiated allegations regarding actions of foreign governments in India.

They said the documentary was found to be undermining the sovereignty and integrity of India and having the potential to adversely impact friendly relations with foreign states, as well as, public order within the

Orders have also been issued to Twitter to block over 50 tweets containing links of the YouTube videos concerned, they said, adding that social media platforms have complied with the directives.

The Ministry of External Affairs spokesman Arindam Bagchi on Thursday described the BBC documentary as a "propaganda piece" that lacked objectivity and reflected a colonial mindset.

The two-part BBC documentary claims it investigated certain aspects relating to the 2002 Gujarat riots when Prime Minister Narendra Modi was the chief minister of

A group of 302 former judges, ex-bureaucrats, and SEE PAGE 6 COL 1

Project to save the Karnaphuli stuck in red tape

SIFAYET ULLAH

Bangladesh Water Development Board's project to save the Karnaphuli has been in limbo as the water resources ministry is yet to review the estimated cost in line with the government's cost containment policy.

Meanwhile, BWDB officials say river erosion in Chattogram's Boalkhali upazila keeps wreaking havoc on the lives of at least 120,000 people, and that number would gradually rise if the project is not implemented soon.



In July last year, the government rolled out a mix of austerity measures for development projects in the face of strained foreign currency reserves, elevated global and domestic inflation, and continued tensions surrounding the Russia-Ukraine war.

Tayan Kumar Tripura, project director and executive engineer of Rangamati BWDB, told The Daily Star they sent the ministry a development project proposal (DPP) with a cost estimation of Tk 144 crore in 2021, mentioning that the project was crucial.

SEE PAGE 6 COL 4

Boy rescued from container is from Cumilla A family claims

OUR CORRESPONDENT,

The boy found in a cargo container in Malaysia's Port Klang on January 17 is from Cumilla. He went missing more than two months ago, a family from the district claimed yesterday.

His name is Ratul, 14, the eldest son of day-labourer Faruk Mia from Satpukuria village in Monoharganj upazila, said one Azgar Mia, who identified himself as the boy's uncle. "We identified Ratul

after seeing his photos in the media ... He is mentally challenged. He went missing around two months ago," Azgar told The Daily Star over the phone yesterday.

"Faruk has three sons. Ratul is the eldest among them. Faruk is poor and did not have the money to go and file a general diary with police when his son went missing," claimed Azgar.

correspondent yesterday spoke to Md Shahidullah, a local union parishad member.

SEE PAGE 6 COL 5

Buzz Aldrin marries on 93rd birthday

AFP, Los Angeles



Ventures, were wed in a private ceremony. "On my 93rd birthday... I am pleased to announce that my longtime love Dr. Anca Faur &

I have tied the knot," Aldrin tweeted along with pictures of himself and Faur, who is reportedly 63. "We were joined in holy matrimony in a small private ceremony in Los Angeles & are as excited

as eloping teenagers." According to her LinkedIn profile, Faur

earned a doctorate in chemical engineering from the University of Pittsburgh in 1996 and had previously worked for Union Carbide and Johnson Matthey before joining Buzz Aldrin Ventures. She had also served as treasurer for the California Hydrogen Business Council.

Aldrin's three previous marriages ended in

The US astronaut is the last surviving member of the Apollo 11 mission, during which he and Neil Armstrong become the first people to set foot on the Moon, on July 20, 1969.

Michael Collins, who piloted the command module while his crewmates walked on the lunar surface, died in April 2021 and Armstrong died in

WOMEN'S U-19 T20 WC Bangladesh suffer first defeat

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Following three batting displays Bangladesh batters faltered as the young Tigresses tasted their first defeat in the ongoing ICC Women's Under-19 T20 World Cup, losing by five wickets to hosts South Africa in the first Super Six encounter Senwes Park in

Potchefstroom yesterday. The young Tigresses struggled to rise to the occasion, managing to post a meagre 106 for six, with South Africa off-spinner Kayla Reyneke turning destroyer in chief with four for 19 in four overs.

South Africa, in reply, had to rely on Madison Landsman's 38-ball 37 and Karabo Meso's unbeaten 32 to get over the line with seven balls to spare in what transpired to be a trickierthan-expected chase for the hosts with Bangladesh leg-spinner Rabeya Khatun

SEE PAGE 6 COL 1



Overrun by street vendors and cluttered with banners, a lone signboard reading "Historic Amtala Site" is now the only reminder of the location where Language Movement activists gathered in defiance of Section 144 on February 21, 1952. PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

MURDER OF FREEDOM FIGHTER

Police have no clue about who killed him

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Lalmonirhat

Freedom fighters in Lalmonirhat yesterday held a rally protesting the killing of a former college principal, also a freedom fighter, as police said they couldn't find any clue

pointing to the motive of the killing or the killers. The 68-year-old M Wazed Ali was hacked to death by unidentified criminals near his house in Sahebdanga area of Patgram on Friday around 10:30pm, said Omar Farooq, officer-in-charge of Patgram Police Station.

Wazed, the former principal of Patgram Women's College, was the deputy commander of the district Freedom Fighters' Council and a member of the upazila unit Awami League. Wazed was also the younger brother of late Abed Ali, a former AL MP of Lalmonirhat-1.

After the rally, freedom fighters demanded that police identify the killers and arrest them. They also demanded exemplary punishment of the killers.

Police, locals and family members told The Daily Star that the unidentified assailants fled after stabbing Wazed in the head, neck and shoulder, just 10 yards away from

Hearing him scream, family members and neighbours rushed to the spot and took him to the emergency department of Patgram Upazila Health Complex. The doctors there declared him dead, they added.

Chairman of Patgram Upazila Parishad and General Secretary of Upazila unit AL Ruhur Amin Babul, who is the nephew of Wazed, said that his uncle was involved in