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Rana Plaza owner's bail stayed by SC

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Supreme Court chamber judge yesterday stayed until May 8 the High Court verdict that granted bail to Sohel Rana, owner of the ill-fated Rana Plaza, in a murder case filed hours after the building's collapse about a decade ago.

Rana will not be released from jail after this, his lawyer Md Qamrul Islam told The Daily Star.



Sohel Rana

Justice Md Abu Jafer Siddique, chamber judge of the Appellate Division of the SC, passed the order after a petition was filed by the state challenging the HC verdict.

The apex court chamber judge also sent the state's petition to its full bench for further hearing on May 8.

The allegations against Rana are so serious that he cannot be granted bail in the case, Deputy Attorney General Sarwar Hossain Bappi, who argued

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As part of Dhaka North City Corporation's efforts for beautification and to keep people from pasting posters, a pillar of Moghbazar-Mouchak Flyover was painted and daubed with a slogan "Don't honk". The photo was taken at Moghbazar-Tongi Diversion Road yesterday.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

MOMEN-BLINKEN MEET Democracy, human rights, trade to top agenda

UNB, Dhaka

Foreign Minister AK Abdul Momen and US Secretary of State Antony J Blinken are scheduled to have a bilateral meeting in Washington today to discuss ways to advance the Bangladesh-US ties on key fronts.

Momen is scheduled to reach Washington from New York Sunday, said a senior official, adding that the meeting is likely to be held at 2:00pm US time.

The US is likely to raise issues related to democracy and human rights, said a diplomatic source.

During the meeting, Bangladesh will seek efforts to enhance relations on trade and investment fronts, reiterate its call for the return of the killer of Father of the Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, withdrawal of sanctions on Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) and discuss issues of mutual interests.

The two sides will also focus on their ongoing cooperation to deal with the climate crisis, meet the needs of Rohingyas, their safe return

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Youths account for 28pc of population

Finds latest census

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh's youth population has increased by 15.81 percent to 4.59 crore in the last decade, as per the recent census -- raising the stakes for the government to take measures to make the most of their potential.

"Youth population is the country's wealth," said Shahnaz Arefin, secretary of the statistics and informatics division, at a programme yesterday to unveil the adjusted data of the Population and Housing Census 2022.

The Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics released the data after scrutiny by the Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies.

The total population now is 16.98 crore and 27.96 percent of them are aged between 15-29 years. In the last survey, the total population was 14.98 crore number, 26.4 percent of which were youth.

The census report is published every ten years. The latest report was delayed, with the preliminary report published in July last year.

Arefin went on to underscore the need for studies for the proper utilisation of the youth population.

"The youth need to be utilised properly to cash in on the demographic dividend," said Binayak Sen, director-general of BIDS.

Demographic dividend refers to the economic growth potential that can result from shifts in a population's age structure, mainly when the share of the working-age population (15 to 64) is larger than the non-working-age share of the population (14 and younger, and 65 and older).



The youth need to be utilised properly to cash in on the demographic dividend.

BINAYAK SEN
Director-general of BIDS

To get the most out of Bangladesh's ongoing demographic dividend phase, Sen suggested creating job opportunities.

"Otherwise, it may turn into a disaster. Policymakers need to find out what students do after graduating from university," he added.

Planning Minister MA Mannan raised questions on why the census, which cost Tk 1,500 crore, is published every ten years whereas many countries publish the population data every year.

The report shows that the Dhaka division has the highest population: 4.56 crore. It is 26.88 percent of the total population.

The Chattogram division has the second

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LIBERATION WAR Make law to punish those who speak against it

Minister tells JS

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Liberation War Affairs Minister AKM Mozammel Huq in parliament yesterday sought a new law enabling the government to take action against those who speak against the Liberation War and the spirit of independence.

While speaking during a discussion on a motion on the golden jubilee of the Jatiya Sangsad, the minister said if there is no opportunity to take legal action against those who lie, distort history, oppose freedom, the state may be under threat.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina on Friday placed the motion in the House on the 50th anniversary of parliament.

In his speech, Mozammel said, "There should be new laws so that action can be taken against those who lie

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Trial in Mitu murder case underway

Her father testifies against ex-SP Babul

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, City

A Chattogram court yesterday began the trial of seven suspects, including former superintendent of police Babul Akter, in a case filed over the murder of his wife Mahmuda Akter Mitu in 2016.

As the first witness in the case, the court of 3rd Additional Metropolitan Sessions Judge Md Jasim Uddin recorded the testimony of Mosharraf Hossain, Mitu's father and a former policeman.

Mosharraf said Babul murdered his daughter as she learnt about his affair.

"Babul used his informant to kill my daughter. Babul and prime accused Musa knew each other since Babul was Hathazari Circle ASP," Mitu's father told the court.

Babul's lawyer Golam Mowla Murad was there while lawyer Abdur Rashid represented the state.

Before the testimony, Golam informed the court that they filed a petition with the High



Mitu

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Italian artist makes 'largest' Picasso portrait with tractor

THE STRAITS TIMES ONLINE



An Italian artist has created a giant land portrait of Pablo Picasso using a tractor, to mark the 50th anniversary of the Spanish painter's death.

Dario Gambarin created the portrait on a 25,000 sqm wasteland in Castagnaro municipality, 80km south-west of Venice.

Gambarin said he was inspired by Picasso's 1907 self-portrait to create what he said is the largest portrait of the Spanish artist in the world.

Picasso, who created more than 20,000 paintings, drawings, sculptures, ceramics and other items such as costumes and theatre sets, died on April 8, 1973, in Mougins, France.

"I wanted to dedicate this colossal portrait to Picasso because he is one of those masters from whom you never stop learning," said Gambarin.

This is not the first time Gambarin has created larger-than-life land portraits.

Prior to the 2016 US presidential election, he has used a tractor to create a giant portrait of then presidential candidate Donald Trump as well as Trump's rival, Hillary Clinton.

Shams gets bail in another DSA case

COURT CORRESPONDENT

Prothom Alo reporter Samsuzzaman Shams yesterday got bail in another case filed with Tejgaon Police Station under the Digital Security Act.

Dhaka Metropolitan Magistrate Mohammad Sheikh Sadi granted bail until May 11 when the next hearing in the case will be held, said an official.

Shams appeared at the court and sought bail through his lawyer.

Earlier on April 3, Shams got bail at another court in a case filed with Ramna Police Station under the same act.

On March 26, the Prothom Alo made a "photo card" to post a report written by Shams on Independence Day on social media. The card had a quote from a day labourer named Zakir Hossain

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People on the bank of the Rupsha in Khulna city wait for iftar time while enjoying the cool breeze after yesterday's scorching heat.

PHOTO: HABIBUR RAHMAN

Journo beaten up over report Finger pointed at Zilla Parishad member, UP chairman

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Jamalpur

A local journalist in Jamalpur was attacked allegedly by some followers of Jamalpur Zilla Parishad member Sheela Sarwar and Bagarchar Union Parishad Chairman Siddiqur Rahman yesterday.

This incident happened in front of Bakshiganj Upazila Parishad where Roni went after getting a phone call from Sheela.

Victim Rashedul Islam Roni, 45, of Bagarchar village in the upazila, is the upazila correspondent of the daily Bhorer Kagoj.



Rashedul Islam

Contacted, Roni said, "Recently, the chairman of Bagarchar Union, Siddiqur Rahman Siddique, beat up a local journalist over a trivial matter and I reported the incident.

"After publishing the news, Chairman Siddiqur Rahman was angry with me."

Sheela and Siddiqur asked him to go to Bakshiganj Upazila Parishad to settle the matter. As he reached there,

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