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EARTHQUAKE
AWARENESS DAY 2023





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METRO RAIL

PM to open
service up to
Motijheel in
October

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The metro rail route from Agargaon to Motijheel will be opened to public in October this year, said Road Transport and Bridges Minister Obaidul Quader.

“Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina will inaugurate this section of the MRT Line-6,” he added.

He made the announcement yesterday while addressing a seminar organised by Dhaka Mass Transit Company Limited (DMTCL) at Bangabandhu International Conference Centre.

The Uttara-Agargaon section of the country’s first elevated metro rail line, formally known as MRL Line-6, was opened in December last year.

At that time, it was announced that the Agargaon-Motijheel section would open in December and the Motijheel-Kamalapur section would open in June 2025.

In April, Quader said the

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PHOTO: HABIBUR RAHMAN

People, mostly women, from low-income groups, brave the rain to stand in line for hours on end in front of a TCB truck to purchase essential commodities at subsidised rates. As the prices of daily necessities continue to rise in the market, the poor are left with no choice but to rely on TCB goods. The photo was taken yesterday in front of Ershad Ali High School in Khulna town.

Budget not for
common people

Say speakers at CPD Budget Dialogue

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The members of parliament are not adequately involved in formulating the national budget even though they are an integral part of the parliament, Jatiya Party Co-chairman Anisul Islam Mahmud said yesterday.

Even some ministers were not consulted before the budget was prepared, said Anisul Islam Mahmud, chairman of the parliamentary standing committee on the ministry of expatriates’ welfare and overseas employment.

The prescriptions given by the International Monetary Fund about various reforms in the financial sector were discussed for over 10 years now but we did not listen to them. Instead, the dollar exchange rate was artificially maintained stable for 10 years and now the rate has drastically jumped as a result, said Mahmud while speaking at the CPD Budget Dialogue-2023 at a hotel in Gulshan yesterday.

Ministers, members of parliament, political leaders, economists, labour leaders, researchers and officials from

different non-governmental organisations participated in the discussion expressed their views on the budget for the next fiscal.

CPD’s Distinguished Fellow Debapriya Bhattacharya moderated the discussion while the keynote speech was delivered by CPD Executive Director Fahmida Khatun. Planning Minister MA Mannan was present as chief guest.

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created because of the government’s artificial exchange rate over past 10 years. The government printed Tk 75,000 crore taka, which also aggravated the inflation, he said.

Most of the large loans in the banking sector are politically linked and a large

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Woman who
jumped off
bus to escape
rape dies

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Mymensingh

The woman who jumped off a moving bus to escape rape in Bhaluka upazila died at Mymensingh Medical College Hospital yesterday.

Dr Md Jakiul Islam, deputy director of MMCH, said the woman was admitted to the hospital on Saturday morning with critical head injuries and later she was shifted to the ICU of the hospital where she died around 11:00am.

On-duty doctor Kamal Hossain of the neurosurgery department said the woman died due to excessive bleeding following her injuries.

The 45-year-old woman, mother of two children, was identified as Shamsunnahar who had been living in the Mallickpur area of Bhaluka for 10 years. Her ancestral home was in Joyka village at Karimganj upazila of Kishoreganj.

A garment worker, Shamsunnahar was returning home on a bus from her factory in Gazipur’s Mawna when the driver and helpers assaulted her on Friday night, said Md Kamal Hossain, officer-in-charge of Bhaluka Police Station.

Hearing her scream, some locals rushed to the scene and took the victim to a local hospital. Later she was shifted to MMCH.

The victim’s elder brother filed a

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UKRAINE FRONT LINE

Russia reports
fierce fighting

Ukrainians retake village,
blow up Russian ammo dump

REUTERS

Russia yesterday reported fierce fighting on three sections of the front line in Ukraine, a day after hosting an African peace mission that failed to spark enthusiasm from either Moscow or Kyiv.

A Russian-installed official said Ukraine had recaptured Piatykhatky, a village in the southern Zaporizhzhia region, and were entrenching themselves there while coming under fire from Russian artillery.

“The enemy’s ‘wave-like’ offensives yielded results, despite enormous losses,” the official, Vladimir Rogov, said on the Telegram messaging app.

Russia’s defence ministry made no mention of Piatykhatky in its daily update, in which it said its forces had repelled Ukrainian attacks in three sections of the 1,000 km (600 mile) front line. A separate statement from Russia’s Vostok group of forces said Ukraine had failed to take the settlement.

There was no comment from Ukraine, which last week said it had recaptured another nearby settlement, Lobkove, and a string of villages further east, in Donetsk region, at the start of its long-awaited counteroffensive.

Iraq unveils
2,800-yr-old tablet
returned by Italy

AFP, Baghdad

Iraq yesterday unveiled a 2,800-year-old stone tablet returned by Italy, as the war-ravaged country works to recover from abroad antiquities looted from its territory.

The tablet -- whose text is written in cuneiform, the Babylonian alphabet -- bears the insignia of Shalmaneser III, the Assyrian king who ruled the region of Nimrod, in present-day northern Iraq, from 858 to 823 BC.

The circumstances surrounding the tablet’s arrival in Italy remain unclear, but the Italian authorities handed it over to Iraqi President Abdul Latif Rashid during a visit to Bologna over the past week.

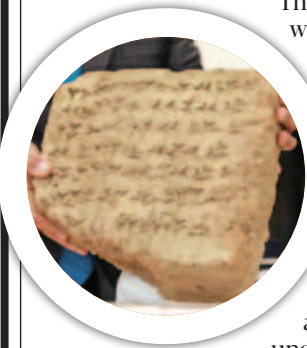
“I would like to thank the Italian officials for their efforts and cooperation in bringing back this piece,” Rashid said during a ceremony at a Baghdad presidential palace to hand the artefact over to the national museum.

The tablet had arrived in the 1980s in Italy, where it was seized by police, said Laith Majid Hussein, director of Baghdad’s council of antiquities and heritage.

Iraqi Culture Minister Ahmed Fakak al-Badrani said the circumstances behind its discovery were unclear.

“Perhaps (it was found) during archaeological excavations or during work on the Mosul dam,” Iraq’s biggest built in the 1980s, he said.

He underlined the importance of the piece, “whose cuneiform text is complete”.



Blinken, Qin hold
‘candid’ talks
Agree to meet again

REUTERS, Beijing

US Secretary of State Antony Blinken stressed the importance of keeping open lines of communication to reduce the risk of miscalculation in talks with the Chinese foreign minister yesterday, and the two agreed to meet again in Washington.



As the first US secretary of state to visit China in five years, Blinken held “candid, substantive, and constructive talks” with People’s Republic of China (PRC) State Councilor and Foreign Minister Qin Gang, a State Department spokesman said.

Before the talks, US officials saw little chance of any breakthrough on the long list of disputes between the world’s two largest economies, which range from trade and US efforts to hold back China’s semiconductor industry

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Motorcycles parked illegally on the pavement leave little space for pedestrians. The photo was taken yesterday from the capital’s Chairman Bari area.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

Banks now
bankrupt

Says JP MP Kazi Firoz

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Jatiya Party MP Kazi Firoz Rashid yesterday in parliament came down heavily on the government saying that all banks have gone bankrupt “due to looting”.

“According to Bangladesh Bank, defaulted loans were worth one and a half lakh crore of taka. In reality the amount is double. The actual amount of the loan is Tk 3 lakh crore. Banks have become bankrupt today due to money laundering,” he said taking part in the discussion on the proposed budget for fiscal 2023-24.

He said, “We have become smart in theft, extortion and money laundering. Bribes are being paid in dollars, not taka.”

Kazi Firoz highlighted the reports published in different media to this end.

He said politics today has gone into the hands of flatterers. Those who are flattering, looting money and sending it abroad are thriving.

Joining the discussion, Awami League MP Sheikh Fazlul Karim Salim said a political party’s leaders

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