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## Pilgrims ascend Mt Arafat in hajj climax

AFP, Mt Arafat

Hundreds of thousands of Muslim pilgrims prayed at Mount Arafat in searing heat yesterday at the height of an annual hajj pilgrimage held in the Saudi Arabian summer.

Worshippers crowded the rocky rise and surrounding area from before dawn and when the sun appeared, it revealed vast numbers of white-robed worshippers thronging the sacred site.

The ritual is the high point of the annual pilgrimage, one of the five pillars of Islam.

This year's hajj pilgrimage has drawn more than 1.8 million worshippers, Saudi Arabia's statistics authority said yesterday, a long way short of a record despite predictions of peak attendance.

"I'm very happy. It's a moment I have been

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Muslim pilgrims crowd Saudi Arabia's Mount Arafat, also known as Jabal al-Rahma or Mount of Mercy, during the climax of the Hajj pilgrimage yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

## BANGLADESHI MIGRANTS UN special envoy concerned over rights abuses

Points at lack of probe, prosecution in destination countries

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

A special rapporteur told the UN Human Rights Council in Geneva that the lack of investigation and prosecution of perpetrators of human rights abuses of Bangladeshi migrants in the countries of destination was concerning.

Felipe González Morales, the UN special rapporteur on the human rights of migrants, who visited Bangladesh on January 20 to 31, presented a report at the 53rd session (19 June to 14 July) of the council on Monday.

"Reports of widespread human rights abuses in the countries of destination continued, including abuses instigated within the kafalah system against domestic workers."

He urged the countries of destination to conduct a continual and thorough monitoring of the conditions of migrants, particularly women in the domestic service sector.

Morales particularly highlighted the rights abuses faced by the women migrants, who comprise around 10 percent of some 12 million Bangladeshi migrants working mostly in the Gulf and Southeast Asian countries.

They annually send home over \$ 21 billion, which is about 40 percent of the total foreign exchange earnings and 7 percent of GDP. However, gaps in regulations and enforcement at home, as well as, lack of protection mechanisms in the destination countries often lead to exploitation.

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## DHAKA AIRPORT 3rd terminal to open partially in October 77.5pc work complete

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

At least 77.5 percent work of the third terminal of Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport has been completed and there could be a soft opening in the first week of October.

"We want to complete 90 percent of the project before October. We hope the work will be completed before time," said Civil Aviation Authority of Bangladesh (CAAB) Chairman Air Vice Marshal M Mafidur Rahman during a press conference on the first floor of the terminal yesterday.

Work on the interior of the terminal and installations of various equipment are going on.

Mafidur said the terminal will be fully functional in 2024 and that work was going on round the clock so that the soft opening could happen.

"Although the Eid-ul-Azha holiday starts today [yesterday], our 3,000 to 4,000 workers will work even during the Eid holidays," said Mafidur.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina in December 2019 inaugurated the construction work of the third terminal which will cost Tk 21,399 crore.

The three-storey terminal building, which will be 2.30 lakh square metres, will have 115 check-in counters, 64 departure and 64 arrival immigration desks, 27 baggage scanning machines, 40 scanning machines, 12 boarding bridges, 16 carousels, and 11 body scanners.

## Wagner chief starts exile in Belarus

President Lukashenko confirms; Russia drops criminal case against mutineers; Putin praises troops for 'stopping civil war'

REUTERS

Russian mercenary leader Yevgeny Prigozhin arrived in Belarus yesterday under a deal that ended a brief mutiny against the Russian military by his fighters, state news agency BELTA said, quoting Belarusian President Alexander Lukashenko.

A plane linked to Prigozhin and believed to be carrying him into exile landed in Belarus from the southern Russian city of Rostov early yesterday, a flight tracking service said.

"I see Prigozhin is already flying in on this plane," Lukashenko was quoted as saying by BELTA. "Yes, indeed, he is in Belarus today."

In Moscow, President Vladimir Putin praised Russia's armed forces for "stopping a civil war" as he sought to reassert his authority after the mutiny led by Prigozhin in protest against the Russian military's handling of the conflict in Ukraine.

Russian authorities also dropped a criminal case against his Wagner Group mercenary force, state news agency RIA reported, apparently fulfilling another condition of the deal brokered by Lukashenko late on Saturday that defused the crisis.

Prigozhin, a former Putin ally and ex-convict whose mercenaries have fought the

bloodiest battles of the Ukraine war and taken heavy casualties, had earlier said he would go to neighbouring Belarus at the invitation of Lukashenko, a close Putin ally.

Flight tracking service Flightradar24's website showed an Embraer Legacy 600 jet, bearing identification codes that match a plane linked to Prigozhin in US sanctions documents, descending to landing altitude near the Belarus capital Minsk.

It first appeared on the tracking site above Rostov, the southern Russian city Prigozhin's fighters had captured during the mutiny.

Putin meanwhile told some 2,500 security personnel mustered for a ceremony on a square in the Kremlin complex that the people and the armed forces had stood together in opposition to the rebel mercenaries.

"You have defended the constitutional order, the lives, security and freedom of our citizens. You have saved our Motherland from upheaval. In fact, you have stopped a civil war," he said.

In Ukraine, President Volodymyr Zelensky said in his nightly address that the military had made advances on Monday in all sectors of the front line, calling it a "happy day".

Kyiv hopes the chaos caused by the

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## Whenever in power, BNP indulged in graft, looting Says Quader

BSS, Dhaka

Awami League General Secretary Obaidul Quader yesterday said the BNP engaged in "corruption and looting" whenever it came to power.

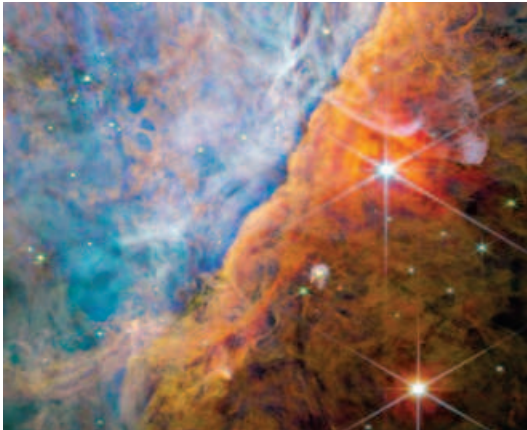
"In continuation of that, they have already finalised the outline of conspiracy and robbery," he said, referring to BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir's recent statement on the outline of a non-party caretaker government.

Protesting and condemning the statement, Quader said the BNP never cares about the welfare of the country and its people.

The people of the country will not support any outline on returning to the terrible rule of corruption and looting by Hawa Bhaban and brutal killings like those of August 21, militancy and terrorism, said Quader, also the road transport and bridges minister, in a press statement.

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## Webb detects crucial molecule in space for first time



CNN ONLINE

Astronomers have detected a crucial carbon molecule in space for the first time using the James Webb Space Telescope.

The compound, called methyl cation, or CH<sub>3</sub><sup>+</sup>, was traced back to a young star system located 1,350 light-years away from Earth in the Orion Nebula, according to Nasa.

Carbon compounds are intriguing to scientists because they act as the foundation for all life as we know and understand it. Methyl cation is considered a key component that helps form more complex carbon-based molecules.

Understanding how life began and evolved on Earth could help researchers determine if it's possible elsewhere in the universe. The highly sensitive capabilities of the Webb telescope, which views the cosmos through infrared light that is invisible to the human eye, is revealing more about organic chemistry in space.

## Modi bats for uniform civil code Says Muslims being instigated

OUR CORRESPONDENT, New Delhi

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi yesterday made a strong pitch for a uniform civil code, a key ideological issue for his Bharatiya Janata Party, and had a dig at the opposition parties' attempts to firm up a united front against him in coming general elections.

"Muslims of India should understand who are those inciting them for their own gains. Today we are seeing some people inciting others (Muslims) in the name of uniform civil code. The Constitution talks about equal rights to the citizens. The Supreme Court too has backed it," Modi said during an interactive session with BJP workers in Bhopal.

Asked by a BJP worker about triple talaq, Modi said those opposing triple talaq "are doing injustice to the Muslim



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These boats on display at Salutikar Bazar are for sale. The demand for boats increases in the rainy season as it becomes the main mode of transport for the people of the haor regions during the time. Boat prices range between Tk 3,000 and Tk 10,000. This around 100-year-old market in Sylhet's Gowainghat remains open on Saturdays and Tuesdays. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: SHEIKH NASIR

## Booters eye semis after 14 years



SPORTS REPORTER

from Bengaluru

Fresh from a morale-boosting 3-1 win over Maldives, Bangladesh are eager to make it to the semifinals of SAFF Championship as they take on Bhutan in their final Group B fixture at the Sree Kanteerava Stadium in Bengaluru today.

The match will kick off at 8:00pm (BST) after Lebanon take on Maldives in the day's first match at the same venue.

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