



## 2 stalwarts of Swadhin Bangla Betar pass away



### STAR REPORT

Swadhin Bangla Betar Kendra artiste Bulbul Mahalanobish and its founding organiser Ashfaqur Rahman Khan died yesterday.

The two stalwarts of the clandestine radio station were both suffering from old-age complications. He was 81 and she was 70.

Bulbul passed away at her Gulshan residence around 2:00am.

And just hours later, Ashfaqur breathed his last at Square Hospital around 8:30am.

He was awarded the Independence Award in 2001 for his outstanding

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Tyres are left in the open by traders in the capital's Signboard area. Rainwater accumulated inside the tyres is a perfect place for the Aedes aegypti mosquitoes, carriers of the dengue virus, to breed. Dengue fever has spread to almost all parts of the country, and the number of cases and deaths from the disease have been rising for weeks. The photo was taken on Thursday.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

## Vegetables get pricier

Eggplant, okra, pointed gourd now cost Tk 25-40 more a kg than last month

### STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Vegetable prices have been rising at the capital's kitchen markets for about a month, making it even harder for low-income people to afford a balanced diet.

Officials say vegetable production has not been satisfactory because heavy rains damaged the farms.

Unscrupulous businesspeople are taking advantage of the production crunch and making additional profit by hiking the prices, they added.

Ashraf Uddin, additional director (monitoring and implementation) at the Department of Agricultural Extension, said there was no justification for the way the prices were rising.

At kitchen markets in the city, eggplants sold for Tk 90-100 a kg yesterday, up from Tk 60-70 a month ago.

A kg of bitter gourd was around Tk 130, nearly double the price in mid-June.

On June 13, the prices of each kg of okra and pointed gourd were Tk 40 and Tk 35 respectively. On Thursday, these summer vegetables were sold for between Tk 60 and Tk 70 a kg.

The spicy green chilli still costs Tk 320 a kg, which is beyond the reach of people with limited income.

A couple of days after Eid last month, the price of green

## 165m fell into poverty in three years of crisis

Says UN, calls for pause in debt repayments for developing nations

AFP, United Nations

The Covid-19 pandemic, the cost-of-living crisis and the war in Ukraine have pushed 165 million people into poverty since 2020, the United Nations said Thursday, calling for a pause in debt repayments for developing countries.

Because of these shocks, 75 million people will have fallen into extreme poverty, defined as living on less than \$2.15 a day, between 2020 and the end of 2023 -- and 90 million more will fall below the poverty line of \$3.65 a day, according to a study published by the United Nations Development Program.

"The poorest suffer the most and their incomes in 2023 are projected to remain below pre-pandemic levels," the report said.

"Countries that could invest in safety nets over the last three years have prevented a significant number of people from falling into poverty," UNDP chief Achim Steiner said in a statement. "In highly indebted countries, there is a correlation between high levels of debt, insufficient social spending, and an alarming increase in poverty rates."

The report called for a "debt-poverty pause" in economically struggling countries "to redirect debt repayment towards financing social expenditures and countering the effects of macroeconomic shocks."

"The solution is not out of reach for the multilateral system," the report said.

According to another UN report published on Wednesday, some 3.3 billion people, nearly half of humanity, live in countries that spend more on paying interest on debt than on education and health.

## 50 BNP men hurt in attack on convoy

### Allege Cumilla BNP leaders; 30 vehicles vandalised

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Cumilla

Around 50 BNP leaders and activists were injured and 30 vehicles damaged as ruling Awami League activists attacked a motorcade of the opposition in Laksam upazila of Cumilla yesterday, local BNP leaders said.

The BNP activists were going to Noakhali from Muradnagar to attend a rally of the party. When they reached Laksam Bypass Road, they were attacked, said Molla Mujibul Huq, general secretary of Muradnagar upazila BNP.

"They attacked us to foil our peaceful rally. We demand immediate arrest of the attackers," he said.

Contacted, Yunus Bhuiyan, president of Laksam upazila AL, said the allegation against his party activists was baseless.

"I have just heard about the incident from you," he told this correspondent.

## Kyiv receives cluster bombs from US

Pledges limited use; Russia hits Zelensky's hometown with drone strikes

REUTERS, Kyiv

Ukraine has received cluster bombs from the United States, munitions banned in more than 100 countries, but has pledged to only use them to dislodge concentrations of enemy soldiers.

Valeryi Shershen, a spokesman for the Tavria, or southern, military district confirmed an announcement by his commander later on Thursday that the weapons had arrived a week after the US said it would send them as part of an \$800-million security package. The Pentagon also announced their arrival.

Moscow has denounced their shipment. Defence Minister Sergei Shoigu warned that Russia could resort to deploying similar weaponry if faced with their use.

Kyiv said yesterday its troops had advanced nearly two kilometres along the southern front over the past week as Ukraine pushes ahead with its counteroffensive.

"This will further demotivate Russian occupying forces and fundamentally change things in favour of the Ukrainian armed forces," Shershen told

US-funded Radio Liberty.

The munitions, he said, would be used strictly within the legal framework, "only for the de-occupation of our territories."

In Moscow, the Kremlin said yesterday that Russia could grant legal status to private military groups, in what would be a U-turn prompted by the fallout of the Wagner group's short-lived insurrection last month.

Meanwhile, a 56-year-old man was injured in an overnight Russian drone strike on Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky's hometown, the central city of Kryvyi Rih, the regional governor said yesterday.

The attack damaged a number of buildings in Kryvyi Rih but Ukraine's air force said 16 of the 17 Iranian-made Shahed attack drones launched by Russia overnight had been shot down in southern and eastern areas of the country.

In Turkey, President Tayyip Erdogan said yesterday that he is in agreement with Russian President Vladimir Putin that a deal allowing the Black Sea export of Ukraine grain should be extended.

**Ukrainian troops advance nearly 2 km along southern front this week: Kyiv**

## HISTORIC MOON MISSION

# Indian rocket blasts into space

REUTERS, Bengaluru

India's space agency yesterday launched a rocket that sent a spacecraft into orbit and toward a planned landing next month on the lunar south pole, an unprecedented feat that would advance India's position as a major space power.

The Indian Space Research Organisation's (ISRO) LVM3 launch rocket blasted off from the country's main spaceport in the southern state of Andhra Pradesh yesterday afternoon, leaving behind a plume of smoke and fire.

About 16 minutes later, ISRO's mission control announced that the rocket had succeeded in putting the Chandrayaan-3 lander into an Earth orbit that will send it looping toward a moon landing next month.

The lunar landing is expected on August 23, ISRO has said.

If the mission succeeds, India would join a group of three other countries that have managed a controlled lunar landing, including the United States, the former Soviet Union and China.



Strong currents put the embankment along the Manga river at risk in Pankhali village of Khulna's Dakope upazila. Residents of several villages are in panic as any breach in the embankment would inundate their neighbourhoods. The Manga earlier eroded a large chunk of land in Pankhali. The photo was taken on Wednesday.

PHOTO: HABIBUR RAHMAN

## SHAHIDUL MURDER

# Another accused held in Cox's Bazar

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Another accused in the case filed for the murder of Gazipur labour leader Shahidul Islam Shahid was arrested in Cox's Bazar yesterday.

Akash Ahmed Babul, 38, the second accused in the murder case, was arrested from "Motel Zone" hotel in Cox's Bazar town, said Major Syed Sadiquul Haque, second-in-command of Rab-15, in a press briefing.

Members of Rab arrested Akash during an operation with the help of the agency's intelligence wing, the official said.

Akash has admitted to his involvement in the murder during primary interrogation, Sadiquul added.

Shahid, 50, the president of the Gazipur unit of Bangladesh Garments and Industrial Workers Federation (BGIWFF), was beaten to death outside Prince Jacquard Sweater Ltd in Tongi on the night of June 25.

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