



3 HIGH-PROFILE VISITS

Rohingya, security issues to figure prominently

US deputy assistant secy flies in today; Lavrov due Sept 7, Macron next week

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka will see three high-level visits from the US, France, and Russia this week and the next, and much of those will feature discussions on the Rohingya crisis, and security and defence cooperation.

The visits are considered significant because of the geopolitical competition among the global powers, which has intensified further since the Russia-Ukraine war and also ahead of Bangladesh's national polls.

Mira Resnick, deputy assistant secretary of the US Bureau of Political-Military Affairs, will arrive today and hold the ninth annual US-Bangladesh Bilateral Security Dialogue tomorrow.

Meanwhile, Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov will be visiting on September 7-8, just before joining the September 9-10 G20 summit in New Delhi. This will be the first visit by any Russian foreign minister to Bangladesh.

On the other hand, French President Emmanuel Macron will be visiting Dhaka after the G20 summit — either on September 10-11 or September 11-12.

Foreign ministry officials of Bangladesh in Dhaka, New



Vehicles plying the long-awaited Dhaka Elevated Expressway after it was opened to the public from 6:00am yesterday. The photo was taken near the Kakoli intersection on Airport Road.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

HASINA-MODI TALKS

Teesta water sharing to be on agenda

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka would raise the issue of Teesta water-sharing deal and renewal of the Ganges Water Treaty, which will expire in 2026, during the bilateral meeting between Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and her Indian counterpart Narendra Modi next week.

"The prime minister will definitely raise the Teesta issue. Other issues are there. We have 54 common rivers," Foreign Secretary Masud Bin Momen told journalists at the foreign ministry after a follow-up discussion on Bangladesh's 10 commitments made at the UN 2023 Water Conference.

He said the Ganges water treaty of 1996 will expire and the Joint River Commission continues to discuss the matter. "At the highest political level, we continue to discuss

SEE PAGE 6 COL 3

THE BUSINESS

Not many takers for bank, NBFIs stocks

Investors are hardly showing any interest to buy stocks of banks as the sector's key indicators are portraying a gloomy outlook.

Stocks of eight banks have remained below their face value of Tk 10 for the last couple of months amidst the scarcity of buyers.

The scenario is almost the same for stocks of eight non-bank financial institutions. "The intrinsic value of the banks and NBFIs is below their par value, if we calculate, so their share price also remains low," said Prof Mohammad Musa, a stock market analyst.

STORY ON B1

A trip to Germany to learn fogging!

Questions raised as none of the 'trainees' involved in anti-mosquito drives

MOUDUD AHMED SUJAN

Experts have raised questions about a recent foreign trip by four government officials and a ward councillor to Germany to acquire skills in operating mosquito fogging machines.

These officials and the ward councillor from Dhaka North City Corporation visited Germany from August 17-23 for a training at PulseFog, a prominent thermal fogger manufacturer, although they are not directly involved in anti-mosquito drives.

The travel cost was borne by the German company, according to an office order by the LGD ministry. Recently, the DNCC bought 100 fogging machines from PulseFog, a DNCC official said.

Sources said the objective of the trip was to train the people involved in DNCC's anti-mosquito drives and the operation of the newly procured fogger machines.

The officials who were sent for the training are Md Nura Alam, LGD's Deputy Secretary; Ramendra Nath Biswas, Deputy Secretary and DNCC's Chief Store and Purchase Officer; Md Ziaur Rahman, Deputy Secretary and DNCC's Zonal Executive Officer (Zone 2); Mutakabbir

Ahmed, Deputy Secretary and DNCC's Zonal Executive Officer (Zone 5); and Md Ahsan Habib, Sprayman Supervisor in Zone 3 of DNCC. DNCC's ward-32 Councillor Syed Hasan Nur Islam accompanied the officials, according to the office order signed by LGD ministry Deputy Secretary Pintu Bepari.

Of them, only Ahsan Habib is directly involved in anti-mosquito drives.

The foreign training comes at a time when the country has been grappling with a record-breaking surge in Aedes mosquito-borne dengue outbreaks.

"Sending bureaucrats for the training makes no sense. The training could have been conducted in Dhaka rather than in Germany," Kabirul Bashar, a renowned entomologist and professor at Jahangirnagar University told The Daily Star yesterday.

A more logical choice would have been to send individuals directly involved in mosquito control efforts, including fogger operators, entomologists, and health officials from the DNCC, for the training, he added.

"This should never have happened. Entomologists should have been sent for the training," said Dr Be-nazir Ahmed, former

SEE PAGE 6 COL 7

"Sending bureaucrats for the training makes no sense. The training could have been conducted in Dhaka rather than in Germany."

Kabirul Bashar
Entomologist and professor at
Jahangirnagar University

12KG LPG CYLINDER Households have to pay Tk 144 more

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The price of a 12kg LPG cylinder has been hiked to Tk 1,284 — an increase of Tk 144 from last month.

Per kg liquefied petroleum gas now costs Tk 107.01, up from Tk 94.96, and per litre "auto gas" (LPG used for motor vehicles) costs Tk 58.87, up from Tk 52.17. Bangladesh Energy Regulatory Commission (BERC) announced this month's prices of the key fuel during a press briefing yesterday at its office in the capital.

The new price came into effect yesterday at 6:00pm, said Md Nurul Amin, chairman of BERC.

The prices of other LPG cylinders — from 5.5kg to 45kg — will go up accordingly, he said.

Two days prior to the price hike, this newspaper published a report about consumers buying LPG cylinders at a higher price due to non-compliance by importers, distributors, and retailers.

On August 2, the BERC fixed the retail price of a 12kg LPG cylinder at Tk 1,140. Consumers in different parts of Dhaka, however, said they bought a refilled 12kg cylinder at no less than Tk 1,400.

The Daily Star talked to at least three LPG distributors and 10 retailers, who all said they were buying LPG cylinders at a higher rate than the price fixed by the energy regulatory body.

Low water levels reveal 110m-yr-old dinosaur tracks

CNN ONLINE

As Texas baked in record-breaking heat this summer and a growing drought pushed water levels down, a group of volunteers uncovered something sort of magnificent: new giant dinosaur tracks that are believed to be from around 110 million years ago.



Paul Baker, the retail manager at Dinosaur Valley State Park, told CNN he has "never seen this many dinosaur tracks" before.

"It's exciting to see something that nobody else has seen; it's almost like a treasure hunt, in a way," said Baker, who helps clean up and map dinosaur tracks at the park. "I thought I'd seen every dinosaur track there is, but within the last two years with the droughts we've had and the hard work by our volunteers, it's just an amazing sight."

Dinosaur Valley State Park, around an hour and a half south of Dallas, is home to a large number of dinosaur tracks imprinted by saurpods and theropods that lived in the area roughly 113 million years ago. It is a hotspot for dinosaur enthusiasts and tourists who typically flock the now-dry Paluxy River to fish, swim and kayak.

As water levels got lower this summer, more ancient history was revealed. A brutal dry spell has spread across parts of Texas since June, with extreme drought now covering more than a third of the state, the US Drought Monitor reported Thursday.

Fakhrul, Rizvi indicted in arson case

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday framed charges against BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir and seven others in a case filed over torching a garbage truck of Dhaka South City Corporation in the city's Paltan area in 2012.

The seven others are BNP Senior Joint Secretary General Ruhul Kabir Rizvi Ahmed, Jamaat-e-Islami South City Secretary General Shafiqul Islam Masud, BNP Information and Research Secretary Azizul Bari Helal, former Jubo Dal president Saiful Alam Nirob, BNP activists Moazzem Hossain Babu, Kazi Rezaul Haque Babu, and Khondaker Enamul Haque Enam.

Fakhrul, Rizvi, and six others, now on bail, pleaded not guilty and demanded justice after Dhaka Additional Chief Metropolitan Magistrate Md Tozazzal Hossain read

SEE PAGE 2 COL 6



Passengers at the Kamalapur Railway Station had to wait for hours for their trains, as temporary rail workers yesterday held a sit-in, demanding job regularisation, at the Malibagh level crossing. Due to the agitation, which lasted around four hours from 10:00am, railway tracks were blocked and many scheduled trains were delayed.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

SUDAN CONFLICT 20 killed in air strike on Khartoum

AFP, Wad Madani

Residents of Khartoum awoke to artillery and rocket fire yesterday, hours after an air strike in the city's south killed at least 20 civilians including two children, according to Sudanese activists.

"The death toll from the aerial bombardment" in southern Khartoum "has risen to 20 civilian fatalities," according to a statement by the neighbourhood's resistance committee. They are among many volunteer groups that used to organise pro-democracy demonstrations and now provide assistance to families caught in the crossfire between the army and paramilitary fighters.

In an earlier statement, they said the victims included two children, and warned that more fatalities went unrecorded, as "their bodies could not be moved to the hospital because they were severely burned or torn to pieces in the bombing".

Since war began between the regular army and the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces on April 15, around 5,000 people have been killed, according to estimates from the Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project.

The Sudanese Armed Forces control the skies and have carried out regular air strikes while RSF fighters dominate the streets of the capital.

Western countries have accused the paramilitaries and allied militias of killings based on ethnicity in the western Darfur region, and the International Criminal Court has opened a new probe into alleged war crimes.