

## 78TH UNGA PM to leave for New York September 17

UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina will leave Dhaka for New York on September 17 to attend the 78th session of the UN General Assembly (UNGA 78).

She will lead the Bangladesh delegation to the UNGA, Foreign Minister AK Abdul Momen, who will accompany the PM, told reporters yesterday.

World leaders will gather in New York for the opening of the UNGA 78.

The high-level general debate will begin on September 19, Momen said in a media briefing at the foreign ministry.

Hasina will deliver a speech on behalf of Bangladesh during the general debate on September 22.

In her speech, she will talk about Bangladesh's incredible development progress, inclusive economic development, and success in the health sector.

The premier will also mention about issues related to world peace, security, safe migration, Rohingya crisis and establishment of climate justice.

She will attend a number of events, including Climate Ambition Summit – a high-level breakfast summit on climate mobility – at the invitation of UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres.

Momen said a side event titled “High-level side event on the Rohingya crisis” will be organised where the PM will deliver a speech.

Responding to a question, the foreign minister said the US has invited the premier to attend a reception to be hosted by President Joe Biden.

The UN secretary-general and the UNHCR chief will call on the PM.

## 2 Rohingya men killed in ‘gunfight’

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Cox's Bazar

Two Rohingya men were killed and several others were injured in a “gunfight” between two rival groups at Madhurchara of Cox's Bazar's Ukhiya yesterday evening.

One of the deceased, Shamsul Alam 23, of Camp-7 in Kutupalong, was brought dead at Cox's Bazar General Hospital, said Sheikh Mohammad Ali, officer-in-charge of Ukhiya Police Station.

Rohingyas identified the other deceased as Noor Mohammad, 17, of Camp-6.

Seeking anonymity, a Rohingya community leader said the “gunfight” took place between the members of Myanmar-based armed groups Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army and Rohingya Solidarity Organisation.

OC Ali said they came to know that the “gunfight” took place over establishing supremacy.

## Russia expels two US diplomats for links to ‘spy’

AFP, Moscow

Russia yesterday said it was expelling two US embassy staff for allegedly “liaising” with Robert Shonov, a former US consulate worker accused by Moscow of spying.

Shonov, who worked for the US consulate in Vladivostok, was charged with allegedly passing information about the conflict in Ukraine to American diplomats, a claim the US has rejected.

## SL set up India final

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wicket stand with Sadeera Samarawickrama, who made 48, but Asalanka took it on himself after their departure.

Off-spinner Iftikhar Ahmed took three key wickets including Mendis and Samarawickrama to keep the game in the balance till the last.

Earlier Mohammad Rizwan hit an unbeaten 86 to steer Pakistan to 252-7 after they elected to bat first in the rain delayed start to the match.

Sri Lanka's bowlers took regular early wickets to check Pakistan's scoring, but Rizwan hit back with his 12th ODI half-century and a 108-run stand with Iftikhar, who made 47.

Fast bowler Pramod Madushan struck first as he bowled Fakhar Zaman for four with a yorker that raised the decibels in the ground.

Abdullah Shafique (52) and skipper Babar Azam (29) then rebuilt the innings in their stand of 63 despite surviving a few close calls including an lbw review off Dunith Wellalage.

Pakistan returned from a rain break on 130-5 with Rizwan digging deep and he got support from Iftikhar, who took his time to get his rhythm and hit two sixes in his 40-ball knock.

Pathirana sent back Iftikhar for his third wicket and Madushan took one more scalp of his own late on, but Rizwan remained unbeaten and finished with a boundary.

MY DHAKA



# Try upcycling with BEAUTIFUL ANTIQUES

BY RBR

Bamunshur is a sleepy hamlet tucked inside the belly of the bustling Keraniganj. While many may hardly visit this part of the city outskirts, they might, however, cross this odd place while driving towards the Bosila river point from the popular Ati bazaar at the Keraniganj end.

You can also venture from the Mohammadpur end till you reach Ati bazaar.

This unremarkable place has nothing to offer except an old antique store, almost hidden from public gaze.

The haphazardly piled copper and brass cauldrons on display will grab your attention for a few fleeting seconds.

But if you are a veteran in shopping for vintage items, you will know instantly that in this odd store, in the middle of nowhere, you have hit the jackpot – assuming, of course, old rusted, forgotten pieces excites your imagination.

Old bell metal, or kasha as it is colloquially known, used utensils, with the owner's name engraved on it; tea pots and chinaware dating back to the British rule that are stamped with Made in England or Holland labels; teak wood antiquated dressers and various sizes of cooking pots and other belongings of a lost generation are on display here.

They are, however, not stored carefully like in any normal antique shop; the place looks almost rundown. You have to really look for the treasure

in the mess. The place does carry some fine vintage items, dating back roughly a hundred years or so, after the end of the British period.

Times are now leaned towards recycling and upcycling, so vintage or antique shopping has gained momentum among a niche group of enthusiasts, even in Dhaka.

If you are the kind that fancies the ethnic chic style of décor, using offbeat old furniture or huge cooking pots or storage tubs as statement decor pieces in your home, then this store, Ronny Collection, belonging to the passionate Aminul Islam Ronny, might be just what you were looking for.

“My father had a brass and bell metal store in Karwan Bazar. My interest in these wares started early on. When my father gave up his business and wanted to close shop, I continued it on my own. My main source of earning is actually from selling tea and snacks at a corner of my gallery, and antique collection is my obsession.

“My peers call me crazy but I am a zealot in this regard. I source these by going house to house, asking if they are willing to sell me their vintage items, which aren't in use anymore. I go to all parts of the country, as far as Rangpur, to buy old items,” said Ronny, while serving tea to his customers.

“These are slow items, and you cannot think of making a steady income or profit out of it, at least for small collectors like me. I don't keep replicated items, just the original one. I feel happy when someone appreciates and picks up a few items from my shop. It makes me think that there is someone else other than me who see wonders in

old pieces.”

Prices vary on the weight of the product, after which, Ronny adds his cut. Small items like cast metal candlestands start from Tk 1,500, a copper pot to hold clarified butter is Tk 2,000, and big cauldrons can go up to Tk 16,000.

There are many stores in Dhaka and websites selling antiques. We are now looking back at our history and picking up by gone designs and possessions and replicating them.

When recycling is trending, these items, perceived as holding their value because of their age, aesthetic, or historical significance, can be re-used in many ways. Many of Dhaka's elites are pursuing this hobby of collecting such vintage items.

A small cooking pot made of copper, with a name engraved on the rim – Aziz Miah – excites your imagination as to what this pot was used for in the past! Was Aziz Miah a chef, or a patriarch? What sort of a man was he? This tiny pot, after a copper polish, could be reused as a planter for assorted ferns, for example. The lively green and old copper would be an impressive centrepiece.

A uniquely shaped cauldron or witch's kettle can be made into a table or a tub to house a big ficus tree in your balcony, while an antique Chinaware bowl can be placed as a centrepiece in any food spread while hosting a party.

A little bit of imagination, entwined with creativity and a sprinkle of love for the vintage, can allow unknown collectors like Ronny to keep on pursuing their passion to find and stock up more such vintage wonders for Dhaka's buyers to purchase.



## Shahed gets 6 months' bail in graft case

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday granted six months' bail to Mohammad Shahed Karim, chairman of Regent Group, in a graft case in which he was sentenced to three years' imprisonment.

The bench of Justice Md Akhtaruzzaman granted the bail after Shahed filed a petition challenging the trial court judgement.

On August 21, the trial court convicted and sentenced him to three years' imprisonment for not submitting his wealth statement to the Anti-Corruption Commission.

Shahed's lawyer Md Aminul Islam told The Daily Star that his client cannot get released from jail following the HC bail order as he is convicted to life imprisonment in an arms case.

Shahed is accused in total 24 criminal cases and he has secured bail in 23 of those, he added.

Meanwhile, ACC lawyer Khurshid Alam Khan said they will move an appeal before the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court challenging the HC bail order.

## Rab member dies of burn injuries

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Narayanganj

A Rab member died of burn injuries yesterday afternoon, hours after he was critically injured in a fire in Narayanganj's Nitaiganj.

The victim, Abhijit Singh, 28, a member of Rab-11, passed away around 4:45pm at Sheikh Hasina National Institute of Burn and Plastic Surgery.

Partha Sangkar Paul, a resident surgeon at the hospital, said a woman injured in the incident was also admitted to the hospital's ICU.

Earlier in the day, police said the duo suffered burns after a fire broke out in a flat in Nitaiganj's Bhabaniganj area.

## Maritime ports asked to hoist local cautionary signal 3

BSS, Dhaka

Maritime ports of Chattogram, Cox's Bazar, Mongla, and Payra have been advised to keep hoisted local cautionary signal three as the low over Northwest Bay and adjoining West-central Bay has intensified into a well-marked low over Northwest Bay off North Odisha-West Bengal coasts.

Under its influence, a steep pressure gradient lies over North Bay and adjoining coastal areas of Bangladesh, according to the Met office.

Squally weather may affect the maritime ports, North Bay, and adjoining coastal areas of Bangladesh.

All fishing boats and trawlers over North Bay have been advised to be close to the coast and proceed with caution till further notice.

## Govt fixes egg, onion, potato prices

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“Fixing of prices should not be for the sake of it. But at the same time, only market monitoring will not yield any positive result – the supply needs to be increased, too,” Rahman added.

The effectiveness of the government's price control measures goes unnoticed as its instruments for making the decision effective are not adequate, said Khondaker Golam Moazzem, research director of the Centre for Policy Dialogue.

“The government has been fulfilling the legal requirement despite having weakness in instruments but it is avoiding the accountability.”

Sufficient production of the goods needs to be ensured at the same time.

“If the production and supply of the items are not adequate, the government should also look for the reasons.”

For instance, if the government notices that the production is low, it can subsidise fertiliser or other important agricultural inputs, Moazzem added.

Maintaining the supply of goods is important, said Mahbubul Alam, president of the Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industry.

“Where there is any artificial crisis of goods, the government should increase the supply. When it is noticed that someone is hoarding the goods, the government should interfere in it,” he added.

This is a directive of the government and businesses should comply with it, said Sameer Sattar, president of Dhaka Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

“If anybody does not comply with it, they should face punishment. Moreover, containing inflation is the main issue of the government now and businesses should follow the direction for the greater good,” he added.

However, Munshi does not sound too confident that the price controls would work.

If potatoes are being sold at more than Tk 35-36 a kg at the retail level, the government will auction the tuber stashed in the cold storages at Tk 27 a

kg at the wholesale level to increase the supply in the markets, he said.

Similarly, the government has decided to import the egg if it is not sold at the rate fixed.

Already four companies have applied to the commerce ministry for permission to import eggs, Munshi said.

“If it is seen that the eggs are selling at the government fixed rate after a day or two, we will go slow on egg imports. If it is the opposite, we will allow egg imports.”

The officials of the Directorate of National Consumers Rights Protection will start monitoring the markets soon to ensure that the businessmen and traders comply with the directive, Munshi added.

Meanwhile, The Daily Star visited the Kawran Bazar, Kanchukhet, Shevrapara and Kazipara kitchen markets yesterday and found no reflection of the new prices for eggs, potatoes and onions.

Potatoes were selling at Tk 45-50 per kg and locally-grown onions at Tk 74-90 a kg.

“If we cannot purchase potatoes at a price lower than the one set by the government authority, we would find it difficult to sustain our trading,” said Md. Milon, a potato wholesaler at Kawran Bazar.

He was selling potatoes at a wholesale price of Tk 43 a kg for a minimum purchase of 50 kgs, which yields him a Tk 0.5 profit on each kg.

The new price set by the authority cannot be maintained if the price is not reduced at the wholesale level, said Hena Begum, a retail trader at Mirpur's Shevrapara area, who bought potatoes at Tk 41 a kg from Kanchukhet Bazar yesterday.

“If I cannot sell potatoes or onions at a price that's Tk 7-8 more than the wholesale rate per kg, I won't be able to turn in a profit. This is because we incur a Tk 2 transportation cost per kilogram of potatoes and there is a 10 percent risk of damage,” she added.

Abdul Alim, a food seller who supplies meals to student messes in

the Garden Road area, however, would be heaving a big sigh of relief if the new prices could be implemented.

## Fire rips

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two fire trucks arrived almost half an hour after they were called. “By then the fire had spread.”

Fire service Director Tajul said firefighters struggled because of the large crowd of onlookers.

Narrow alleys divide the rows of shops in the market, but those alleys are blocked by piles of goods, he said, adding that the first responders had to break in because no one had the keys to the collapsible gates.

Two people suffered minor injuries in the fire.

Muhammad Shamim, an employee of the traders' association office, said he reached the market before daybreak.

“I saw smoke coming out of Haque Bread and Bakery. Then we switched off the electricity connection to the market,” he said, adding that only the bakeries and fish and meat shops have overnight electricity connections.

Abdul Hamid Khan Liton, who owns two jewellery shops, said he had been able to save the jewellery because he arrived just on time, but furniture and fittings worth almost Tk 50 lakh were gutted.

Most of the damaged shops used to sell groceries, clothes, crockeries and jewellery.

The part where fish, chicken, meat and egg are sold has not seen much damage.

City corporation CEO Selim said the traders had largely ignored the fire safety-related warnings.

Dhaka Deputy Commissioner Anisur Rahman said assistance would be provided to the affected traders.

Massive fires at Siddikbazar, Bangabazar, Chawkbazar, Nawabpur, New Super Market and a shopping mall near Science Laboratory caused substantial damage to thousands of shops earlier this year.

The fire service last night formed a committee to identify the cause of the fire and come up with a report in 15 work days.

## Odhikar's Adilur, Elan jailed

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each of them Tk 10,000, in default of which they would have to serve one month more in jail.

Public Prosecutor Mohammad Nazrul Islam Shamim told The Daily Star that they were not satisfied with the judgment and that they would appeal before the High Court.

Adilur said he did not get justice from the court and that he too would appeal.

Human rights activist Nur Khan Liton, who was present during judgment delivery, told journalists that Adilur, a prominent rights activist, was convicted under the controversial section 57 of the ICT Act which contradicts human rights and justice.

In the verdict, the judge said the accused ran the distorted report and doctored images just to malign the image of the government nationally and internationally. Moreover, their report about the death of people was false.

On June 10, 2013, the Detective Branch of police filed a general diary with the Gulshan Police Station in this connection, which was later converted into a case.

Detectives arrested Adilur at Gulshan on August 10, 2013, shortly after filing the GD which said the rights body on its website ran a false report titled “Assembly of Hefajat-e-Islam Bangladesh and Human Rights Violation”.

The report tarnished the images of the country, the government, and the law enforcement agencies, read the GD.

The Odhikar's report claimed that 61 people died in the wee hours of May 6 when the law enforcers flushed several thousand Hefajat activists out of the Shapla Chattar in the capital's Motijheel.

The government put the number of deaths at 13.

On August 11, 2013, police raided Odhikar's Gulshan office and seized three laptops and two desktop computers.

After probing the case, the DB on September 4, 2013, pressed charges against Adilur and Elan.

Odhikar in a statement yesterday denounced the arrest, trial and imprisonment of the two. It said it believes that justice has not been served.

“As an organisation, Odhikar has drawn the sustained wrath of the establishment for becoming the voice of the victims of human rights violations, including those of enforced disappearances, extrajudicial killings, torture, arbitrary detention and against the suppression of free expression and assembly; and for its engagement with the United Nations Human Rights Mechanisms,” it said.

The US embassy in Dhaka expressed concern that yesterday's judgment against Adilur and Elan might further undermine the willingness of human rights defenders and civil society to play their vital democratic role.

Seventy-two national and international human rights organisations in a joint statement yesterday said the Bangladesh authorities should immediately release Adilur and Elan, quash their convictions, and end all reprisals against them and other human rights defenders.

Amnesty International, Capital Punishment Justice Project, Australia, Human Rights Watch, FIDH (International Federation for Human Rights), Asian Forum for Human Rights and Development (FORUM-ASIA), and Robert F Kennedy Human Rights are among the signatories to the statement.

Human rights defenders should be allowed to conduct their necessary and important work without fear of harassment, intimidation, and reprisals. Instead of prosecuting and punishing those who document and expose human rights violations, the government should investigate and hold the perpetrators of these violations accountable, the statement said.