



Gazans await ‘life and death’ aid

Israeli strikes level Gaza district, church; Hamas says two US hostages released

AGENCIES

Thousands of tonnes of “life and death” aid for Gaza should be delivered soon, the United Nations said yesterday, to relieve a “beyond catastrophic” situation after unrelenting Israeli bombing in response to an unprecedented Hamas attack.

Some 175 lorries stuffed with vital medicines, food, and water stretched into the distance at the Rafah crossing with Egypt, which has removed concrete roadblocks and is scrambling to repair the route into besieged Gaza – the only one not controlled by Israel.

Overseeing operations personally, UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres told reporters: “These trucks are not just trucks, they are a lifeline, they are the difference between life and death for so many people in Gaza.”

Israel launched a ruthless bombing campaign in Gaza on October 7 after Hamas fighters intruded into the Jewish state. More than killed 1,400 people were

killed in the assault.

Hamas gunmen also kidnapped some 200 hostages including foreigners from around two dozen countries.

The Islamist group yesterday said that its armed wing had released two Americans among the captives, a mother and her daughter, the first fruit of mediation efforts by the Gulf state of Qatar.

The Islamist group did not detail how or when the hostages were released.

The Israeli military said earlier that most of those abducted to Gaza were still alive. It said more than 20 were minors.

Israeli bombers have levelled entire city blocks in Gaza in preparation for a ground invasion they say is coming soon. The Hamas run health ministry said 4,137 Palestinians, mostly civilians, have died in the onslaught.

Israeli jets pounded more than 100 targets in Gaza overnight, the army said, with AFP reporters hearing loud explosions and witnessing plumes of

4,137 Palestinians have been killed in Gaza so far.



A mother comforts her child, who was wounded in an Israeli strike, at Nasser Hospital in Khan Yunis, southern Gaza Strip yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

Martyred Hafizur finally recognised after 52 years

AHMAD ISTIAK

Martyred guerrilla of the Liberation War, Syed Hafizur Rahman, has finally been recognised as a freedom fighter after his family's appeals were rejected nine times.

After scrutinising an appeal filed by his family, Jatio Muktijoddha Parishad recognised him as a martyred freedom fighter, parishad member Major (ret'd) Waqar Hasan Bir Pratik told The Daily Star.

The Ministry of Liberation War Affairs recently published a gazette that recognised Hafizur as a martyred freedom fighter.

His serial number is 4171.

Hafizur had 11 siblings. Only two of them are alive.

His sister Syeda Anwara Khatun told this newspaper, “We have said time and again that we did not need anything except his recognition. The children and grandchildren of my brother don't even want the allowances and other benefits.”

Thanking The Daily Star for running reports on Hafizur not being recognised, she said they had given up hope of seeing their brother acknowledged.

“But due to The Daily Star reports, our application was closely scrutinised, leading to his recognition,” she added.

Linu Billah, who fought alongside Hafizur and



SEE PAGE 6 COL 1

Dengue cases cross 2.5 lakh mark

Experts suggest providing local govt bodies with equipment, manpower to control Aedes mosquitoes

HELEMUL ALAM

With 1,558 new dengue cases reported yesterday, the total number of dengue cases has surpassed 2.5 lakh, marking yet another milestone for the mosquito-borne disease this year.

According to the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS), at least 12 people died of dengue, four of whom died outside Dhaka in the last 24 hours.

With the new deaths and cases, the total number of dengue deaths rose to 1,226 and the total number of cases rose to 251,101 this year.

Though the number of cases in Dhaka remained between 500 and 600 in recent weeks, it was between 1800 and 2,000 outside the capital.

A complete lack of planning, coordination, and accountability among the government bodies has emerged as the narrative of Bangladesh's fight against the Aedes mosquito, according to entomologists.

The starting point for any definitive large scale action is a policy that would serve as a guideline. Bangladesh's Vector Management Policy – which is being drafted by the ministry of local government, rural development and co-operatives – is yet to see the light of day, they said.

The authorities concerned failed to chalk out an early plan when they saw over 62,000 cases last year, said GM Saifur Rahman, assistant professor of medical and applied entomology at the National University in Gazipur.

“Failing to destroy the Aedes mosquito eggs laid towards the end of last year led to them hatching at the beginning of this year, earlier

The total number of dengue deaths has risen to 1,226 and the total number of cases has risen to 251,101 this year.

SEE PAGE 6 COL 5

Removal of river commission chief worrying

Says TIB, urges govt to probe allegations of river grabbing

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Transparency International Bangladesh yesterday expressed deep concern over the abrupt removal of the National River Conservation Commission's chairman, saying it goes against the government's commitment to protect rivers.

In a statement, the anti-graft watchdog said the government can remove the NRCC chairman. But the message it tried to convey through this removal is a cause of concern.

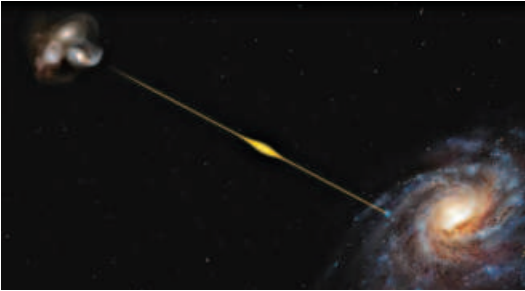
The tenure of Manjur Ahmed Chowdhury as NRCC chairman ended abruptly on Wednesday when the government cancelled his appointment, less than a month after he said a female minister from Chandpur was lending support to a syndicate extracting sand from the Meghna river.

“This move [the removal of Manjur] contradicts the government's commitment to protect the rivers,” claimed the Bangladesh chapter of the Berlin-based organisation in a statement.

TIB Executive Director Iftekharuzzaman said the people became hopeful as Manjur took a

SEE PAGE 6 COL 3

8 billion-year-old radio signal reaches Earth



CNN ONLINE

Astronomers have detected a mysterious blast of radio waves that have taken eight billion years to reach Earth. The fast radio burst is one of the most distant and energetic ever observed.

Fast radio bursts, or FRBs, are intense, millisecond-long bursts of radio waves with unknown origins. The first FRB was discovered in 2007, and since then, hundreds of these quick, cosmic flashes have been detected coming from distant points across the universe.

The burst, named FRB 20220610A, lasted less than a millisecond, but in that fraction of a moment, it released the equivalent of our sun's energetic emissions over the course of 30 years, according to a study published Thursday in the journal Science.

Many FRBs release super bright radio waves lasting only a few milliseconds at most before disappearing, which makes fast radio bursts difficult to observe.

Radio telescopes have helped astronomers trace these quick cosmic flashes, including the ASKAP array of radio telescopes, located on Wajarri Yamaji Country in Western Australia. Astronomers used ASKAP to detect the FRB in June 2022 and determine where it originated.

BNP leader accused of crimes here while in KSA

FM MIZANUR RAHAMAN, Ctg

ABNP leader, who has been in Saudi Arabia for performing Umrah since October 4, has been sued by police over attempted robbery in Chattogram's Raozan upazila.

Firoz Ahmed, the joint convener of Raozan upazila BNP, alleged that police implicated him for attempted robbery just to harass him.

Apart from Firoz, eight others were also accused in the case filed with Raozan Police Station by Sub-inspector Tuton Mazumdar. Two of them are involved in BNP politics, said locals and party sources.

Police filed another case against the nine over possession of illegal firearms.

According to the case statement, three people – Jane Alam, 46, a Jubo Dal leader, Abdullah Al Khakon, 38, and Abu Bakkar Siddique Babu, 28, – were caught red-handed by police early Thursday in Raozan's Thakurpara village when they were preparing for committing a robbery.

Police also recovered two locally made firearms, two bullets, two machetes, and a cutter from their possession.

SEE PAGE 6 COL 1



People wait for buses at an undesignated spot on the Dhaka-Mawa expressway in the capital's Postogola area yesterday morning. Many people are leaving the capital during the weekend which coincides with the Durga Puja celebrations.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

METRO RAIL Agargaon-Motijheel part's opening pushed back to Nov 4

UNB, Dhaka

The opening of the Agargaon-Motijheel section (MRT Line-6) of the country's first metro rail service has been rescheduled from October 29 to November 4.

Road Transport and Highways Division Secretary ABM Aminullah Noori confirmed the matter to UNB yesterday.

Asked about the reason for another delay in the inauguration, the secretary said that the date has been postponed to accommodate the schedule of the Prime Minister. “There is no other reason.”

Earlier, on October 9, the inauguration was rescheduled to October 29 from October 20.

There are seven stations on the Agargaon to Motijheel part – Bijoy Sarani, Farmgate, Karwan Bazar, Shahbagh, TSC, Press Club, and Motijheel.

Once the Agargaon-Motijheel part of the Dhaka Metro Rail opens, commuters will be able to travel from Uttara to Motijheel in just 38 minutes – a miracle by Dhaka standards.

Initially, five trains will run from Agargaon to Motijheel every 15 minutes, and the number of trains will be increased gradually by reducing the time interval, the minister informed.