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**INDOMITABLE MARCH**

**Bhutto's urgent appeal to Mujib**

SHAMSUDDOZA SAJEN

In a telegram sent to Mujib on March 11, 1971, Bhutto expressed his willingness to come to Dhaka immediately to work out a solution so that the National Assembly session could be held soon.

He urged Mujib to work together to build a "new system" where there would be no discrimination among provinces as well as among citizens.

**KEEP ECONOMY RUNNING**

Tajuddin Ahmad, general secretary of the Awami League, in a statement, urged people to be prepared to foil the conspiracy of the vested interests and the anti-people forces to destroy the economy of Bangla Desh.

The statement called upon people engaged in various economic activities to follow rigorous discipline in every respect for the victory of the people's cause.

The statement also contained several directives for government and non-government organisations.

The ports were allowed to operate their regular activities but non-cooperation would be extended for mobilisation of forces or for materials that might be utilised for the repression of the people.

**US DIPLOMATIC CABLE**

In accordance with Mujib's request for a political solution, the American Consul General in Dhaka

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PHOTO: BFF

Bangladesh players and members of the team management celebrate with the trophy after a 3-2 win on penalties over India saw the young girls regain the SAFF Women's U-16 Championship following a gripping final at the ANFA Complex Stadium in Kathmandu yesterday.

**Metro to run for 1hr extra from 16th Ramadan**

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The metro rail trains will run for one extra hour starting from the 16th day of Ramadan, MAN Siddique, managing director of Dhaka Mass Transit Company Ltd (DMTCL) said yesterday.

The last train from Motijheel will leave at 9:40pm and the last train from Uttara North at 9:00pm, he told reporters.

However, ticket counters will close at 7:50pm and only the holders of MTR and Rapid passes will be able to avail metro service after 8:00pm.

Currently, people can use metro until 8:00pm at Uttara end and until 8:40pm at Motijheel end.

The metro rail authorities will also increase the length of peak hours from the first of Ramadan.

Until 15th Ramadan, trains from Uttara North

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**PM's press secy Ihsanul Karim no more**



BSS, Dhaka

Prime Minister's Press Secretary and veteran journalist Ihsanul Karim passed away last night. He was 73.

Ihsanul Karim breathed his last at the Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University (BSMMU) Hospital at 8:00pm, PM's Deputy Press Secretary MM Emrul Kayas told BSS.

Prior to his appointment at the Prime Minister's Office on June 15, 2015, Karim worked as the press secretary to President Abdul Hamid from May 21, 2013.

On April 7, 2009, Karim was appointed as the managing director and

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**No Gaza truce in sight on eve of Ramadan**

Fighting rages in besieged Palestinian territory

AFP, Palestinian Territories

Deadly fighting raged in Gaza yesterday between Israeli forces and Hamas, with no truce in sight as the Muslim holy month of Ramadan neared and a dire humanitarian crisis gripped the besieged Palestinian territory.

A Spanish charity ship with food aid prepared to sail from the Mediterranean island-nation of Cyprus to help alleviate the suffering in the coastal Gaza Strip, now in its sixth month of war.

The non-governmental group Open Arms said its boat would pull a barge with 200 tonnes of food, which its partner the US charity World Central Kitchen would then unload on the shores of Gaza.

Vessel tracking websites showed the Open Arms still in Larnaca last evening. It was expected to depart "in the coming hours", Cypriot government spokesman Konstantinos Letymbiotis told Cyprus News Agency.

With the UN repeatedly warning of famine, United States, Jordanian and other planes again airdropped food aid, but the United Nation's aid coordinator for the area has said more supply by land is the best way to get

assistance to territory's 2.4 million people.

Weeks of talks involving United States, Qatari and Egyptian mediators have aimed for a six-week truce and the release of many of the roughly 100 hostages Hamas is still holding in return for Palestinian prisoners released from Israeli jails.

There have been no result so far. The widely shared target had been to halt the fighting by the start of Ramadan, which is expected to begin as early as Monday depending on the first sighting of the crescent moon.

Both sides have blamed each other for failing to reach a deal, after Israel had demanded a full list of surviving hostages, and Hamas had called for Israel to pull out all its troops from Gaza.

Israel's government accused Hamas of "entrenching its positions like someone who is not interested in a deal and is striving to inflame the region during Ramadan".

Attention during the Muslim fasting month will focus on the Al-Aqsa mosque compound in annexed east Jerusalem, a frequent flashpoint in the past as it is both Islam's third holiest site and sacred to Jews who call it the Temple Mount.

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- Israel tightens security in Jerusalem's Old City
- 31,045 Palestinians killed since Oct 7
- 85 fatalities recorded in 24hrs

**Infrastructure needed to utilise Matarbari port**

Says Japanese ambassador

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Now is the time for Japan, Bangladesh and India to work together to fully utilise Bangladesh's only deep sea port, Matarbari, for the prosperity of the entire region, said Japanese Ambassador to Bangladesh Iwama Kiminori.

Japan is supporting the development of Matarbari deep sea port in Cox's Bazar, which is expected to be complete by 2027.

However, harnessing the deep sea port's potential depends on infrastructures connecting it to India's Northeast, West Bengal, Nepal, Bhutan, and setting up industries, analysts say.

"The global economy's centre of gravity is shifting," said Kiminori at a seminar on "multi-layered connectivity in the Bay of Bengal".

The event was organised by the Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD) and the Japanese embassy yesterday.

The Bay of Bengal is very important for this region and Japan is already working for infrastructure development in Northeast India and Bangladesh, he said at the event at the Japan embassy.



Iwama Kiminori

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**Patagonia cave paintings are earliest found in South America**



REUTERS, Neuquen

Archaeologists have discovered the earliest dated cave paintings in South America in Argentine Patagonia, dating back 8,200 years.

The 895 paintings were found by Argentine and Chilean archaeologists in the Huenel 1 cave, a 630 square meter rock shelter located in the province of Neuquen, some 1,100 kilometres (684 miles) southwest of the capital Buenos Aires.

"We were able to date four black pigment patterns that were drawn in charcoal. These proved to be the earliest direct dating of cave paintings in South America," said Dr Guadalupe Romero Villanueva, author of the research published in the Science Advances journal.

The Argentinean archaeologist said the discovery indicates that the production of cave art began in the Huenel cave about 8,000 years ago and that the practice of painting the particular pattern seen in the cave was sustained for a period of at least 3,000 years.

The discovery provides evidence of the artistic ability and cultural transmission of the hunter-gatherer societies which inhabited the region during the middle Holocene, a period roughly from 7,000 to 5,000 years ago, and reveals the socioecological resilience to climate, as well as serving as a means of communication between scattered populations.

**MUNICIPALITIES, UNIONS 21 hurt in post-polls violence in 3 districts**

STAR REPORT

At least 21 people, including two police personnel, were injured in post-polls violence in three districts yesterday and on Saturday night.

Twelve of them were hurt as the supporters of mayor-elect of Barguna's Amtali municipality and the defeated candidate clashed yesterday.

The condition of four is critical and they were admitted to Sher-e-Bangla Medical College Hospital, Barishal. The rest were undergoing treatment at the local upazila health complex.

Md Matiar Rahman won the polls held on Saturday, defeating Nazmul Ahsan Khan.

Witnesses said the men of the candidates came face to face and attacked each other in Locha area around 8:00am.

On information, police brought the situation under control. No case was filed till filing of the report in the evening, said Kazi Shakhyat Hossain Tapu, officer-in-charge of Amtali Police Station.

In Narsingdi's Raipura upazila, seven people were injured yesterday in a clash between the supporters of a member-elect of Char Aralia Union Parishad and a

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As if a mere minute saved could rewrite their destinies, two men gamble with life as they sprint across the railway lines at Mohakhali level crossing while a train approaches at speed.

PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

**Kyiv vows 'never' to surrender to Russia**

AFP, Kyiv

Ukraine yesterday slammed Pope Francis's call to negotiate with Russia two years into its invasion, vowing "never" to surrender after the pontiff said Kyiv should "have the courage to raise the white flag".

The Catholic leader had fuelled anger in Kyiv after saying in an interview published Saturday that Ukraine should negotiate with Russia, which has seized large swathes of its territory during the war.

"Our flag is a yellow and blue one. This is the flag by which we live, die, and prevail. We shall never raise any other flags," Ukraine's Foreign Minister Dmytro Kuleba said on social media.

While battling its bigger neighbour, Ukraine has vowed not to give up its territory. The Pope fuelled anger by saying: "When you see that you are defeated, that things are not working out, to have the courage to negotiate."

Kuleba called on the elderly pontiff to stand "on the side of good" and not put the opposing sides "on the same footing and call it 'negotiations'."

He also thanked Pope Francis for his "constant prayers for peace" and said Kyiv hoped the cleric would visit Ukraine.

"We continue to hope that after two years of devastating war in the heart of Europe, the Pontiff will find an opportunity to pay an Apostolic visit to Ukraine to support over a million Ukrainian Catholics, over five million Greek-Catholics and all Ukrainians," Kuleba said.