



Help people instead of hosting iftar parties: PM

UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday urged people to stand beside the common people as much as possible during Ramadan.

She made the appeal, while chairing the Cabinet meeting held at her office in the city.

Cabinet Secretary Mahbub Hossain briefed reporters after the meeting at the Bangladesh Secretariat.

"Today (yesterday) the Prime Minister has made an appeal. She earlier gave

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Jumping from one palash flower to another, a squirrel finally rests as it comes across nectar. Holding onto the flower delicately, it sips the sweet delight in contentment in Khulna University campus area yesterday morning.6

PHOTO: HABIBUR RAHMAN

SAGIRA MORSHED MURDER CASE

Two sentenced to life, 3 acquitted

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday sentenced two people to life imprisonment in the case filed over the murder of Sagira Morshed 34 years ago.

The two convicts are Anas Mahmud alias Rezwan and Maruf Reza.

Judge Mohammad Ali Hussain of the Special Judge's Court-3 of Dhaka delivered the verdict in their presence, said Farhana Hossain, bench assistant of the court.

The judge also fined the duo Tk 50,000, in default of which they would have to serve six more months in jail.

The court acquitted Sagira's brother-in-law Hasan Ali Chowdhury, his wife Sayedatul Mahmuda Shahin, and one Montu Mondol, as the charges brought against them were not proven during the trial.

Among the convicts, Rezwan is the brother of Sayedatul Mahmuda Shahin. A total of 17 prosecution witnesses gave their statements before the court.

On July 25, 1989, 34-year-old Sagira was shot dead on the capital's Bailey Road, while going to Viqarunnisa Noon School and College by a rickshaw to pick up her elder daughter Saharat.

Her husband Abdus Salam Chowdhury filed a murder case against unknown people with Ramna Police Station the same day.

During yesterday's verdict, Abdus Salam Chowdhury and his daughter Samia Sarwat Chowdhury were present in the courtroom.

Salam told, "To be honest, I am still left with a little regret. It is an old case; I expected a better judgement for it. Anyway, I am not entirely satisfied. Next steps will be taken after talking to my lawyer."

Samia was six years old at the time of her mother's murder.

Asked about the verdict, she said, "We are not satisfied at all. Because the accused had suppressed the incident. Even then, if such a normal verdict is delivered, then people's confidence in the judicial system will be lost."

"Those who planned to kill my mother were acquitted of the charges. How do the planners get acquitted? We are not satisfied at all. We will certainly appeal against the verdict," she added.



BANGLADESHI HOSTAGES OF 'SOMALI PIRATES'

Distressed, their families now fear the worst

STAR REPORT

Atik Ullah Khan's family was having iftar on Tuesday, during the first day of Ramadan, when a phone call shattered their world.

Bangladesh flagged cargo ship MV Abdullah's Chief Officer Atik managed to call his mother Shahnur Begum after suspected Somali pirates hijacked the vessel in the Indian Ocean.

"My son has been working on ships since 2008. I have seen news of Somali pirates hijacking ships before. But I never thought my son would have to see such a day. I never thought such danger would befall my family," said the 62-year-old mother at her residence in Chattogram's Nandankana area yesterday.

Suspected Somali pirates on Tuesday hijacked MV Abdullah with 23 crew members in the Indian Ocean, according to the ship's owner SR Shipping Limited -- a subsidiary of KSRM Group.

Shahnur said her son informed them that some Somali pirates boarded the ship and held them hostage at gunpoint in a cabin, but none were hurt by them.

"Around 15 minutes later, my son sent a voice message, saying the pirates were taking away the cell phones of every crew member and they would be out of contact," said a weeping Shahnur.

"My daughter-in-law is pregnant, and she fell sick after hearing the news," she said, urging the vessel's owners and the government to take steps to bring her son and the 22 other crew members back home safely.

Several family members of the hijacked crewmen gathered at the KSRM group head office in



PHOTO: TITU DAS

Mother and wife of Mohammad Ali Hossain, a crewman of MV Abdullah, have been inconsolable since the news broke. The photo was taken from Hossain's house at Umar Par village in Bisharkandi union of Barishal.

Chattogram's Agrabad area yesterday and demanded that the government and SR Shipping take immediate steps to rescue the sailors.

Josna Begum, mother of fourth Engineer Tanveer Ahmad, also came to KSRM office.

"My son asked me to request the firm to pay the ransom. So I came here," said the mother.

"PRAY FOR ME" Taufiq Islam, second engineer of MV Abdullah, called his mother Dil Afroza in Khulna. "I am in danger. Forgive me, ma. I don't know what will happen. Pray for me," he said.

Then someone took his phone away, said the mother before breaking into tears.

Taufiq has a seven-year-old daughter and a five-year-old son. He boarded the ship from Khulna on November 25 last year and was supposed to come home before Eid-

ul-Azha.

"The last time he called, he said that the pirates locked the hostages in the bridge room and were taking them to Somalia," said Taufiq's wife Zobaida Noman.

"THIS COULD BE OUR LAST CONVERSATION"

Mohammad Ali Hossain, another crewman, called his father Imam Hossain Molla in Barishal.

"I got a call from my son just after iftar. While crying, he said this could be his last conversation," Imam, an office bearer of a local school, told this newspaper.

Ali also spoke to his mother and his wife for a few minutes. Despite being the youngest, Ali mainly looks after us, said Imam.

In Tangail's Nagarpur upazila, the news of pirates capturing the ship devastated the family of Sabbir

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Consumers must not pay the price

CPD suggests cutting power production costs to reduce subsidies in the sector

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Centre for Policy Dialogue yesterday urged the government to reduce the cost of electricity production instead of burdening people with increased tariffs to cut subsidies in the sector.

CPD also urged the authorities to look for alternatives to cut the subsidies as the increased price of power generation is a result of faulty systems, wrong policy, and overcapacity.

The call came at a press briefing yesterday as CPD unveiled a study titled "Recent Electricity Tariff Hike: Isn't there a better alternative for subsidy adjustment?"

Amid a price hike of daily essentials, the government's decision to adjust the electricity price further will add to people's woes, it added.

On March 29 last year, the government increased the average power tariff from Tk 8.25 to Tk 8.95 per kilowatt-hour.

"With the price hike, the subsidy reduction would be around Tk 2,650 crore. If the government wants to reduce the subsidy to zero, the tariff would have to be Tk 16.41," said Dr Khondaker Golam Moazzem, research director of CPD.

At present, the average cost of power generation is Tk 11.33, almost double the figure in 2020, according to the PDB annual report.

Bangladesh Power Development Board has been incurring losses mainly due to an increase in operating expenses driven by diesel or furnace oil used for power

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A narrow escape

Man survives after truck crashes into his car

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A man narrowly escaped death after a truck tipped over and fell on his running private car in Dhaka's Bijoy Sarani early yesterday.

The incident took place around 1:00am when Sohail Rana, 40, a trader, was returning to his Mohammadpur home from Gulshan, said Mohammad Mohsin, officer-in-charge of Tejgaon Police Station.

The driver of the truck lost control of the vehicle and it fell on the private car, the OC said.

Md Shahidullah, an official of Tejgaon Fire Station, said almost all parts of the private car, except the driving seat, were badly damaged, trapping Sohail inside.

After spotting Sohail alive, fire officials carefully rescued him by chopping off a portion of the car, he said, adding that the rescue operation took around 45 minutes to complete.

Akter Jamil, Sohail's brother, said his brother is now at home following treatment at DMCH and is experiencing pain throughout his body. "We are glad he is still with us," he added.

Police seized the truck but the driver fled.

FEMALE RMG WORKERS

Poor pay, long work hours making them quit jobs: study

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Disruption to work-life balance due to extended working hours alongside family responsibilities is compelling many female ready-made garments workers to leave their jobs, according to a study.

The findings of the study, "Unpaid Care Work: Perspective of Employers and Workers in RMG Sector," were revealed at a seminar at Dhaka's CIRDP auditorium yesterday.

Aimed at investigating the current challenges being faced by female RMG workers, the study was conducted during February-March this year, by

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A pedestrian holds on strongly to the railing of the footbridge's staircase in the capital's Paribagh as he sets foot on the rusty broken steps on his way down yesterday afternoon. While a rope has been tied across the staircase to prevent untoward incidents, many are seen using it anyway, risking injuries.

PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN



My son has been working on ships since 2008. I have seen news of Somali pirates hijacking ships before. But I never thought my son would have to see such a day.

SHAHNUR BEGUM, mother of Atik Ullah Khan, chief officer, MV Abdullah

<p>শেখ হাসিনার নির্দেশ জলবায়ু সচিবকে বাংলাদেশ</p>		
<p>Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh Bangladesh Forest Department. Sustainable Forests and Livelihoods (SUFAL) Project Chattogram South Forest Division, Chattogram</p>		
Memo No: 22.01.0000.731.29.001.24.814		Date: 13/03/2024
<p>Corrigendum for SRAEP /23-24/GD-2</p>		
<p>e-Tender is invited in the National e-GP System Portal http://www.eprocure.gov.bd for the procurement of the following goods Corrigendum details are giving below:</p>		
Field Name	Old value	New value
Last date & time for Tender/Proposal Security Submission	13/03/2024 13:00 PM	20/03/2024 13:00 PM
Documents last selling date & time	12/03/2024 17:00 PM	20/03/2024 17:00 PM
Opening Date & Time	13/03/2024 14:00 PM	21/03/2024 14:00 PM
Closing date & time	13/03/2024 14:00 PM	21/03/2024 14:00 PM
<p>The other conditions will remain unchanged as per tender notice.</p>		
<p><i>30.03.24</i> Abdullah-Al-Mamun Divisional Forest Officer Chattogram South Forest Division, Chattogram Phone: 02333- 357328</p>		
GD-422		