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Prof Yunus takes 'social business' to Olympics



AFP, Paris

Since the early days of Paris's bid for the 2024 Olympics, the city has been receiving advice from a prestigious counsel: Nobel Peace Prize winner and social business guru Muhammad Yunus.

Yunus pioneered microcredit in Bangladesh from the 1970s, helping lift millions out of poverty by providing traders with small loans to help them start businesses.

His role in Paris as an
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BABBLING AWAY!

A chestnut-capped babbler, known as 'Lal tupi chhatore' in Bangla, spotted in Chattogram's Hathazari upazila. This medium-sized passerine bird is native to many south and southeast Asian countries, including Bangladesh and India, where it prefers swampy areas and scrub-jungles as its habitat. What makes babblers special is their cheerful, energetic and social behaviour and their commitment to their flock. When it's non-breeding season, they form cohesive social groups of around three to 23 individuals and do everything – foraging, roosting, maintaining the territory – together. At night, they gather at their communal roosting nest, which they build together in dead or partly-living trees. They are playful creatures and have also been known to form trenches on the ground from chasing each other!

PHOTO: NOBLE CHAKMA

Oman to open 12 types of visas for Bangladeshis

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government of Oman announced granting visas to Bangladeshi nationals in 12 categories, including family visas, reports Times of Oman, quoting Sirajul Haque, chairman of Bangladesh Social Club Oman.

The other categories include family visas, visit visas for Bangladeshi nationals living in Gulf Cooperation Council countries, doctors' visas, engineers' visas, nurses' visas, teachers' visas, accountants' visas, investors' visas, and all types of official visas, according to the report published on May 29.

Oman halted the issuance of visas for citizens of Bangladesh in all categories on October 31. Since then, the arrival of Bangladeshi nationals in Oman dropped by over 50 percent.

His 'friends' played a role

Investigators find clues linking aides, their relatives to the gruesome killing

MOHAMMAD JAMIL KHAN and RASHIDUL HASAN

Investigators are now analysing the roles of Jhenaidah-4 MP Anwarul Azim Anar's relatives and friends to find further clues about his gruesome murder in Kolkata.

One suspect is a former leader of Collective Bargaining Agent at a sugar factory in Jhenaidah, who was a close friend of the slain lawmaker, according to a source in a Bangladeshi intelligence agency.

The former CBA leader's identity was not disclosed for the sake of the ongoing investigation.

The same man was also found to be close to Aktaruzzaman, one of the masterminds behind the murder. Both were members of the gold smuggling syndicate along with Azim, the source said.

Law enforcers suspect that in the absence of Aktaruzzaman in Jhenaidah, the ex-CBA leader provided information about Azim's schedule and movements to the killer.

He used to identify himself as a law enforcement agency source, the source said, adding that he was a Jamaat leader, who joined Awami League in 2014 with Azim's help.

Anwarul Azim Anar went to Kolkata on May 12 and spent the night at a friend's house. He left the next day saying he had a doctor's appointment.

Nine days later, India and Bangladesh police said the MP was murdered in a flat in Kolkata's New Town.

Investigators so far found that some of his friends, such as Aktaruzzaman, and their relatives, joined



MP AZIM MURDER

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Nayeemul set to be PM's press secy



STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Nayeemul Islam Khan, emeritus editor of daily Amader Notun Shomay, is set to be the next press secretary to Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina.

He told The Daily Star last night that he was yet to be appointed, but a decision has been made to that end.

An official of the Prime Minister's Office confirmed issuing a note to the public administration ministry for issuing a gazette notification.

He added that the notification may be issued on Sunday or Monday.

The post remained vacant since former press secretary Ihsanul Karim Helal and veteran journalist died on March 10 this year.

Nayeemul was also the founding editor of popular daily Amader Shomay in 2003. He has been frequently seen on TV talk-shows since 2007.

Israel presses with raids into Rafah

Seizes Philadelphi corridor along Egypt-Gaza border; 53 more Palestinians killed

AGENCIES

Rafah residents reported intense artillery shelling and gunfire in Gaza's far-southern city yesterday after Israel said it had seized Philadelphi corridor on the Palestinian territory's border with Egypt.

Israeli military spokesman Rear Admiral Daniel Hagari announced that Israel had taken "operational control" of the narrow border area, where he said troops had "discovered around 20 tunnels".

Egypt, a longtime mediator in the conflict which has become increasingly vocal in its criticism of the Israeli operation, has rejected claims of smuggling tunnels running beneath the buffer zone.

"Israel is using these allegations to justify continuing the operation on the Palestinian city of Rafah and prolonging the offensive for political purposes," a high-level Egyptian source was quoted as saying by state-linked Al-Qahera News.

Egyptian officials have said a potential Israeli takeover of Philadelphi could violate the two countries' landmark 1979 peace deal, though there has been

no official comment from Cairo since the military's announcement.

Meanwhile, the Slovenian government yesterday approved a decision to recognise an independent Palestinian state, Prime Minister Robert Golob said, following in the steps of Spain, Ireland and Norway.

"Today the government has decided to recognise Palestine as an independent and sovereign state," he said at a news conference in Ljubljana.

The parliament of the European Union member country must also approve the government's decision in coming days.

On a visit in Beijing, Egyptian President Abdel Fattah al-Sisi called for increased humanitarian

assistance to besieged Gaza, and reiterated his country's longstanding opposition to "any attempt at forcing Palestinians to forcibly flee their land".

Chinese leader Xi Jinping, meanwhile, called for a "broad-based, authoritative and effective international peace conference" to address the offensive, as he hosted Arab leaders including Sisi.

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CYCLONE REMAL Crops on 1.53 lakh hectares affected

Says DAE official citing data on 48 districts

SAJJAD HOSSAIN

More than half of all standing crops across 48 districts have been affected by Cyclone Remal, according to a preliminary report prepared by the Department of Agricultural Extension (DAE).

"The cyclone's impact has affected standing crops on 1.53 lakh hectares, out of the total 2.23 lakh hectares of cropland in 48 districts," DAE Director General Badal Chandra Biswas told The Daily Star last evening.

The affected crops include paddies, vegetables, fruits, jute, maize, sesame, chillies, and betel leaf.

"Some crops were submerged by tidal surges, while others were affected by strong winds during the storm," Badal said.

The report, however, mentioned that the actual extent of the damage is not yet determined and will become clear after seven to eight days.

The DAE is now listing affected farmers, all of whom will get financial assistance under a Tk 1.48-crore scheme, informed the official.

The report says the cyclone has affected 52,190 hectares of summer vegetables, 10,843 hectares of Aush seedbeds, 21,434 hectares of standing Aush paddy, 7,730 hectares of Boro paddy, 4,826 hectares of Aman paddy, over 29,000 hectares of jute, and over 7,000 hectares of betel leaf.

The most affected areas include six districts under the Barishal division: Barishal, Pirojpur, Jhalokathi, Patuakhali, Barguna, and Bhola; four districts under the Khulna division: Khulna, Bagerhat, Satkhira, and Narail; and three districts under the Chattogram division: Noakhali, Lakshmipur, and Cox's Bazar.

The Barisal division was the worst hit, with 180,481 farmers affected and crop damage totalling Tk 508.97 crore, according to the regional DAE office.

SEE PAGE 6 COL 3

স্মরণ

এনসিসি ব্যাংক পি.এলসি. এর সাবেক পরিচালক, আবদুল মোনেম লিঃ এর প্রতিষ্ঠাতা চেয়ারম্যান মরহুম আবদুল মোনেম-এর ৪র্থ মৃত্যুবর্ষিকীতে তাঁর অবদান আমরা গভীর শ্রদ্ধায় স্মরণ করছি এবং বিদেহী আত্মার মাগফেরাত কামনা করছি।

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Benazir moved money before accounts froze

ACC finds evidence

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Former inspector general of police Benazir Ahmed and his family had withdrawn large sums from banks before the authorities froze their accounts, the Anti-Corruption Commission has found.

"Fixed assets have been frozen. But we have discovered that money was withdrawn from their accounts beforehand," said ACC Commissioner Jahurul Haque.

ACC sources said Benazir Ahmed, his family members, and their entities had 33 identified bank accounts. It is not known how much money was withdrawn from these accounts.

On April 18, the graft watchdog launched an investigation into allegations that the former inspector general of police amassed illegal wealth. It also formed a three-member committee to conduct the probe.

A Dhaka court on May 23 ordered to freeze and attach all moveable and immovable properties of Benazir and his family.

Benazir and his family members acquired almost all their land during his tenure as the chief of the police and Rab, according to property records listed by the ACC.

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