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## Mahalaya today

BSS, Dhaka

Mahalaya, an auspicious occasion that heralds the advent of Goddess Durga, will be celebrated at dawn today through different rituals by the Hindu community across the country.

With the beginning of "Devipaksha", Mahalaya is observed six days before Durga Puja.

Marking the day, special programmes will be arranged at different temples, including the capital.

Hindus will remember and pay homage to their ancestors, who passed away, by performing puja, and offering the Brahmins clothes, food and sweets in their names.

Mahanagar Sarbajanin Puja Committee will hold a special programme at Dhakeshwari National Temple at 6:30am.

Similar programmes will also be arranged in different temples in the capital city and across the country.

Durga Puja will formally begin on October 9 on the day of Maha Shasti.



PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

A man tries to squeeze through the space between a bent railing on a road divider to go to the other side of the road. This particular spot opposite the Sonargaon hotel in the capital has become a hotspot for crossing the road illegally amid risk. The photo was taken recently.

## Tulee seeks justice for brother's detention

Demands withdrawal of ISPR statement

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Sanjida Islam Tulee, one of the coordinators of Mayer Dak, has demanded trial of those involved with picking up her elder brother Saiful Islam Shyamol from their residence on Monday.

She also demanded withdrawal of the statement of ISPR that said Saiful was picked up and taken to a nearby army camp from Shaheenbagh area for interrogation over allegations of extortion.

Tulee came up with the demands through a statement yesterday.

Mayer Dak, a platform for family members of the victims of enforced disappearance, will wage tough movement on streets, if any effective

SEE PAGE 4 COL 7

## BAN ON POLYBAGS

# Mixed reactions in some shops

Shoppers seek free, practical alternatives

ARAFAT RAHAMAN and SHAHEEN MOLLAH

The government has begun enforcing a ban on polythene and polypropylene shopping bags in various supermarkets.

However, this has sparked debate among shoppers over the affordability, practicality, and availability of alternative options.

The interim government initiated the ban yesterday, targeting supermarkets first, with kitchen markets set to follow from November 1.

During visits to supermarkets in Mirpur 10, Kazipara, Shewrapara, and Dhanmondi, this newspaper observed that several stores had already implemented the ban, but customer reactions were mixed.

At Agora in Shewrapara, a loudspeaker informed shoppers of the polythene ban and urged them to bring eco-friendly bags.

A salesman at the store said, "This isn't new for us;

we have avoided polybags for a while. But with the government's renewed directive, we have reminded customers and encouraged them to bring bags from home."

He pointed to jute bags for sale as an alternative, adding, "We offer these at a minimal cost, but customers aren't happy with the pricing so far."

**Across the supermarkets visited, alternative bags made from jute or paper were priced between Tk 6 and Tk 30. Some shoppers were not happy about it as polythene bags were previously free.**

Across the supermarkets visited, alternative bags made from jute or paper were priced between Tk 6 and Tk 30.

Some shoppers were not happy about it as polythene bags were previously free.

Md Salah Uddin, a customer at Shawpno's Kazipara branch, said, "Banning polythene is positive, but what are the practical alternatives? It would be better if these were free."

Another shopper expressed concerns about carrying perishable items, asking, "How will we carry

SEE PAGE 4 COL 5

## RANA PLAZA

### Sohel Rana receives ad-interim bail

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday granted ad-interim bail to Rana Plaza owner Sohel Rana for six months in a case filed over deaths during the collapse of the plaza in April 2013.

The bench of justices Md Aatur Rahman Khan and KM Hafiz Ul Alam also issued a rule, asking the state to explain why he should not be granted regular bail.

At least 1,135 people, mostly garment workers, were killed and over 2,500 injured as the nine-storey building came crashing down in Savar on April 24, 2013, raising questions about labour and human rights standards in Bangladesh.

Wali Ashraf, sub-inspector of Savar Police Station, filed the murder case, accusing Sohel, a former Jubo League leader, his father and several others.

## Food secy loses job 9hrs after being hired

STAFF CORRESPONDENT



Elahi Dad Khan's appointment as secretary to the food ministry was cancelled less than nine hours after the public administration ministry issued a notification announcing the appointment.

Dr Mokles-ur-Rahman, secretary of the public administration ministry, told reporters of the decision to cancel the appointment through text message around 7:30pm yesterday.

Earlier in the day, the ministry communicated his appointment as food ministry secretary around 11:00am.

The secretary did not mention any reasons for scrapping his appointment.

## Put an end to shrine attacks

### MSF urges govt

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Protesting vandalism and arson attacks on shrines across the country, the Manabdhikar Shongskriti Foundation (MSF) urged the government to take appropriate measures to put an end to such incidents.

They mentioned the recent attacks at Lalon Anandadham in Faridpur, the house and shrine of a Sufi saint in Savar, and the Darbar Sharif in Kushtia in this regard.

In a statement sent to the media yesterday, the rights organisation described these acts as deliberate, adding that similar attacks, vandalism, and arson have been occurring in various parts of the country, which is extremely disgraceful.

Citing media reports, the statement mentioned

SEE PAGE 4 COL 7

## TAQI MURDER

### Azmeri's relative arrested

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Narayanganj



Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) yesterday arrested another suspect in connection with the Tanvir Muhammad Taqi murder case in Narayanganj.

The arrestee, Abdullah Al Mamun alias Jamai Mamun, was arrested from a Khagrachhari-bound bus on the Dhaka-Chattogram highway, said Lt Col Tanvir Mahmud Pasha, commanding officer of Rab-11.

The arrest was made based on the confessions of other accused who were arrested in this case before, Rab said.

Mamun is a relative of Azmeri Osman, son of late lawmaker AKM Nasim Osman and nephew of former MP Shamim Osman.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

## 3 more die of dengue, 1,144 hospitalised

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

At least three dengue patients died in the 24 hours till 8:00am yesterday while 1,144 were hospitalised.

Of the deaths, two were in Dhaka North City Corporation and Dhaka South City Corporation areas.

According to the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS), with the new deaths and cases, the total number of deaths rose to 166 while total number of cases rose to 32,082.

Currently, 3,495 dengue patients are undergoing treatment.

A total of 28,421 patients have been released till Monday.

PRAYER TIMING	
OCTOBER 2	
Fazr	Zohr
Asr	Maghrib
Esha	
AZAN 4:45	12:45 4:15 5:53 7:30
JAMAAT 5:20	1:15 4:30 5:56 8:00

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

## 'Create an elderly-friendly society'

Speakers urge govt; demand formation of dedicated commission

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A government-level commission is needed to create an elderly-friendly society, said participants at a roundtable yesterday.

With Bangladesh's elderly population rising, so too are their sufferings, as the country's healthcare system remains ill-equipped to meet their needs, they said.

"A dedicated commission should review national policies and provide recommendations to protect elderly rights and improve their quality of life," said Jiban Kanai Das, country director of the Sir William Beveridge Foundation.

The event, held in the capital to mark International Day of Older Persons, was jointly organised by the All Bangladesh Senior Citizen Welfare Society, Daffodil International University, and the Daffodil Family.

Hossain Zillur Rahman, former adviser to a caretaker government, stressed the need to raise awareness among both younger and older generations.

"Caregivers must be properly trained, and medical devices are crucial for supporting the elderly," he said. He urged a change in mindset, calling for the elderly to develop self-identity rather than feeling helpless.

Harun-Ar-Rashid, former chief of army staff, highlighted that the

SEE PAGE 4 COL 5



PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

A member of the Center for Atmospheric Pollution Studies (CAPS) stands with a placard in front of Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport, Dhaka, as part of the "Silent Zone" campaign yesterday. The area around the airport, including 1.5 kilometres to its north and south, has been declared a horn-free zone to combat noise pollution. This initiative aims to raise public awareness and enforce regulations to reduce honking and create a quieter environment. The campaign will expand to other parts of the capital and beyond.