

জন্য ও নিরাপদে রেসিটিয়ান্স পাঠান  
প্রিয়জনকে প্রয়োজনে...

যেকোনো শাখা থেকে রেসিটিয়ান্স গ্রহণ করলেই  
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সাথে আরও আছে নিশ্চিত আকর্ষণীয় পুরস্কার  
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ইসলামী ব্যাংকিং সেবা প্রদানে 'ইসলামী ব্যাংকিং কর্ণার' পূবালী ব্যাংকের প্রায় সকল শাখা এবং উপশাখায়



## Abul Mansur Ahmad's death anniv today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Today is the 46th death anniversary of Abul Mansur Ahmad, a renowned litterateur, journalist, and politician of the sub-continent. He passed away in 1979.

One of the greatest satirists of Bangla literature, he was also a pioneer of modern and progressive journalism. He worked for prominent newspapers such as Krishak, Nabajug, Sultan, and Mohammedi, and was editor of the Kolkata-based Daily Ittehad from 1946 to 1948.

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Large crowds thronged the outpatient department at Dhaka Medical College Hospital yesterday, as many patients sought consultations and tests ahead of returning to their villages for Eid.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

## DEATH IN CUSTODY Ensure fair, impartial investigation: MSF

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Manabadhikar Shongskriti Foundation (MSF) has called for an immediate, impartial, and fair investigation into the death of a murder suspect -- Hezaz Bin Alam, also known as Ezaz -- in police custody.

The rights organisation also urged that those responsible be held accountable and face legal action to ensure justice.

In a press statement issued yesterday, MSF said the death of an individual in police custody is a matter of grave concern.

The organisation emphasised that all custodial deaths require thorough investigations, as they raise serious public concerns.

The state has a legal obligation to ensure the safety of individuals in custody, said the statement, signed by rights activist and MSF Founding President Sultana Kamal.

Ezaz, 37, died at Dhaka Medical College Hospital on Saturday, just hours after detectives detained him from the Japan-Bangladesh Friendship Hospital in Jigatola, Dhanmondi, where he was undergoing treatment.

An inquest report prepared on Sunday by Sheikh Kader Ahmed, a sub-inspector at Mohammadpur Police Station, in the presence of an executive magistrate, documented dark bruises on Ezaz's back, handcuff marks on his wrists, and additional bruises on his thighs, buttocks, and swollen legs.

Ezaz's father, Shah Alam, claimed his son was taken by a joint forces team from Mohammadpur's Baroikhal area on March 10 and tortured at a nearby camp before being handed over to Mohammadpur police early on March 11.

According to police, an army team arrested Ezaz and then handed him over to police on March 11 as his name was found in a murder case.

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## Visa suspension puts Umrah pilgrims in limbo

RASHIDUL HASAN

Several thousand Umrah pilgrims and hajj agencies are facing major disruptions as the Saudi government has almost completely stopped issuing Umrah visas without prior notice.

This sudden decision has left thousands of pilgrims stranded, while many travel agencies are facing huge losses, said the Hajj Agencies Association of Bangladesh (HAAB).

The abrupt policy change has created uncertainty for those planning to perform umrah.

Many Bangladeshi pilgrims are now in limbo due to the visa situation.

Amid this situation, the Religious Affairs Ministry will hold a press conference on Umrah visas at its office at the Secretariat office today.

The Saudi government had opened Umrah visas through the Nusuk app, allowing millions of pilgrims to travel.

However, due to overcrowding, particularly in Makkah and Madinah, visa issuance has been reduced by 90 percent, sources at the ministry said.

This situation is not limited to Bangladesh, as other countries are also facing similar issues.

According to ministry sources, Saudi Arabia is currently seeing a lot of visitors, more than it sees even during the Hajj season, making it difficult for people to worship properly.

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The Saudi government may have temporarily halted visa issuance due to the overwhelming number of pilgrims during Ramadan, they added.

Farid Ahmed Majumder, secretary general of HAAB, said around 45,000 to 50,000 Bangladeshis travel to Saudi Arabia for Umrah during Ramadan.

"The sudden visa halt has put these people in uncertainty," he said, adding that many have already purchased airline tickets and booked hotels, which has put them in trouble.

"In previous years, Saudi authorities informed us in advance before reducing or stopping visa issuance, but this time, they didn't give any prior notice," he added.

Farid also mentioned that around 30,000 to 33,000 Bangladeshis have already bought air tickets for Umrah.

The Religious Affairs Ministry has already written to the Saudi ambassador expressing concerns but has not yet received a response.

Regarding ticket refunds, a ministry official said they are in contact with the respective airlines to ensure refunds.

Unlike Hajj, there is no formal agreement between Bangladesh and Saudi Arabia for Umrah.

## Interim govt overstepping elected govt's role

Says Amir Khasru

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP standing committee member Amir Khasru Mahmud Chowdhury yesterday questioned why the interim government's structure and activities were expanding further.

It seems like a certain group is taking on the responsibility of carrying out all the tasks of the upcoming government, he said while speaking at an event at Jatiya Press Club.

"It looks like the future elected government of Bangladesh will have little to do, as the interim government wants to take responsibility for everything -- short-term, mid-term, long-term, and even beyond, if anything remains. As if all issues must be resolved by the interim government," he said.

"If that's the case, then why even talk about democracy and elections? Why do we talk about the ownership of the people of the country? Why do we mention accountability and responsibility?" he asked.

Meanwhile, at another programme, BNP Senior Joint Secretary General Ruhul Kabir Rizvi yesterday accused advisers of the interim government of attempting to create a division between the long-standing anti-government movement and the recent July-August uprising and

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## Man gets life term over rape in Dhaka 5 sent to jail, 2 arrested in 3 districts on same charges

STAR REPORT

A Dhaka tribunal yesterday sentenced a 22-year-old man to life-term imprisonment for raping a seven-year-old girl in South Keraniganj in 2014.

Judge Munshi Md Mashiar Rahman of Women and Children Repression Prevention Tribunal-4 of Dhaka delivered the verdict in presence of the lone convict, Md Arshad.

The tribunal also fined him Tk 1 lakh, in default of which he will have to serve one year more in jail.

Meanwhile, at least five people were sent to jail and two others were arrested yesterday over rape charges in three districts.

In Jashore, a youth was arrested on charge of raping a woman keeping her four-year-old child at knifepoint at their home.

The accused is Hasan Ali, 18, from Sadar upazila, said Babul Hossain, OC of Jashore Kotwali Station.

While leaving the scene, Hasan also stabbed the woman and the child, according to the case.

In another incident, four Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) leaders allegedly gangraped an 18-year-old girl in the district on Sunday.

A court sent Al Mamun Hossain, 20, is general secretary of Gadkhali union unit of JCD; Yasin Arafat, 21, office secretary; Jaber Hossain, 22, executive member; and Amirul Islam, 20, activist, to jail yesterday, said Jhikargachha Police Station OC Bablur Rahman Khan.

Ashrafal Alam Rana, Jhikargachha upazila JCD convener, said the four were expelled from their organisational positions.

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## HC scraps food adulteration case against Yunus

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday scrapped the trial proceedings of a food adulteration case filed in 2010 against Prof Muhammad Yunus, the then chairman of Grameen Danone Food Limited.

The HC bench of Justice KM Hafizul Alam and Justice Md Atabullah delivered the verdict after hearing a petition filed in 2011 by Prof Yunus, challenging the legality of filing the case and its trial proceedings.

Dhaka South City Corporation filed the case with the Pure Food Court on the charge of storing adulterated dairy products against Grameen Danone Food Limited.

The HC quashed the case proceedings after examining an affidavit submitted by the DSCC's chief health officer on March 13.

## A DAY IN COURT

## Shajahan's smirk gives way to tears

EMRUL HASAN BAPPI

The smirk was still there as Shajahan Khan stepped out of the Dhaka Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's Court lockup. His lips curled into the familiar expression that had become his signature -- whether in moments of controversy, tragedy, or now, as an accused in a murder case.

But the confidence that once fuelled it seemed to waver.

At 10:08am, he silently stood in the dock, a stark contrast to his earlier demeanour in the holding area, as he was usually seen chatting and laughing before.

The prosecution argued for a five-day remand, linking him to the death of Rafiqul Islam in Badda on July 19 last year.

During the hearing, Shajahan raised his hand, trying to get Dhaka Metropolitan Magistrate MA Azharul Islam's attention. No response. He tried again -- nothing. Only after his lawyers had spoken did the court permit him to speak. "Honourable court, please give me some time to speak. I want to say something," he began.

With permission granted, his tone turned pleading. "The public prosecutor mentioned that police fired

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Manik Howlader and his wife Baby Akter spray pesticides on their sunflower plants to protect them from pests. They sowed the seeds in mid-November last year and are now waiting for the flowers to fully mature. The photo was taken from South Char Aicha village of Barishal Sadar upazila yesterday.

PHOTO: TITU DAS