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Yunus to join Boao Forum for Asia today

Reaches China

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus will attend the Boao Forum for Asia in Hainan Province on the second day of his four-day China trip today.

He will also hold a bilateral meeting with Ding Xuexiang, executive vice premier of the State Council of China, according to the foreign ministry.

The chief adviser will hold meetings with former UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, currently chairman of the forum, and several participants of the forum.

They include Sonexay Siphandone, prime minister of Lao PDR; Qu Dongyu, director-general of the UN Food and Agricultural Organization; and deputy prime ministers of Russia and Mongolia.

Prof Yunus arrived in Hainan at



SEE PAGE 2 COL 1



Chars have emerged in the Brahmaputra as the flow of water drops in the dry season. China last year approved the construction of a massive hydropower dam upstream on the Brahmaputra in Tibet, raising concerns in India and Bangladesh about potential environmental and water resource impacts. This drone shot was taken in Gaibandha's Pulichhari upazila on Tuesday.

PHOTO: RH RUHAN

First bird flu case since 2018 detected

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The authorities have detected a bird flu case at a government poultry farm in Jashore – the first in Bangladesh since 2018 – raising concerns among farmers.

Officials were closely monitoring the situation after the infection was detected on March 13, Fisheries and Livestock Adviser Farida Akhter told The Daily Star yesterday.

Necessary measures were taken to contain the spread of the virus, she said.

Md Rashedul Haque, district livestock officer of Jashore, told The Daily Star that the virus detected there was Avian influenza Type-A.

Adviser Farida said that officials from the Department of Livestock Services visited the site and gathered all relevant information, including details on how the virus entered Bangladesh.

Citing the World Organisation for Animal Health, news agency Reuters reported that the outbreak in Jashore district killed 1,900 birds out of a flock of 3,978. All remaining birds were culled.

SEE PAGE 6 COL 4

Robbers pose as Rab men in daring heist

Storm Dhanmondi building, loot valuables; 4 of them arrested

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Criminals disguised as Rab members robbed a jewellery trader's building in the capital's Dhanmondi early yesterday.

Police arrested four of the robbers, including a sergeant of army, while the others escaped, according to police and the case filed with Dhanmondi Police Station.

The criminals took Tk 36.5 lakh and 2.5 bhoris of gold ornaments, the case statement added.

The six-storey building on Road-8 belongs to MA Hannan, owner of "Alankar Niketan Jeweller's".

Touhidul Islam Limon, manager of the house, also the nephew of Hannan, lodged the case against 24 robbers, including the four arrestees.

The arrestees are Farhad Bin Mosharraf, 33, a sergeant of army, Yasin Hasan, 22, Mobasher Ahmed, 23, and Wakil Mahmud, 26.

"The four arrestees were produced before a Dhaka court today [Wednesday], seeking remand. The army sergeant would be handed over the force through the court," Masud Alam, deputy commissioner (Ramna division) of Dhaka Metropolitan Police, told The Daily Star.

The DC said that they were also investigating whether any other members of any law enforcement agency or security forces are involved in the robbery.

Complainant Touhidul in the case statement said the ground floor of the building houses the office of SM Sourcing, a buying house, and the second floor a consultancy firm. The third and fourth floors are also rented by SM Sourcing.

Hannan's duplex apartment is on the fifth and sixth floors.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

India reaffirms support for Bangladesh

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

India has committed to advancing its partnership with Bangladesh on the occasion of Independence Day yesterday.

In a message sent to Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi said the spirit of the Liberation War of Bangladesh remains a guiding light for the bilateral relationship.

He extended felicitations to the CA and the people of Bangladesh, saying this day stands as a testament to the two countries' shared history and sacrifices that have laid the foundation of the bilateral partnership.

The relationship has flourished across multiple domains, bringing tangible benefits to the people of the countries, he said in the message which was shared with this newspaper by the Indian High Commission in Dhaka.

"We remain committed to advancing this partnership, driven by our common aspirations for peace, stability, and prosperity, and based on mutual sensitivity to

SEE PAGE 6 COL 4

CHINA'S BRAHMAPUTRA DAM PROJECT

Experts voice concern, govt asks Beijing for info

PINAKI ROY

Bangladesh has expressed concern over China's plan to build a massive hydropower dam upstream on the Brahmaputra in Tibet and has formally requested detailed technical information from Beijing.

The Chinese government approved the construction of the Medog

environmental impact assessment, feasibility study, climate impact assessment, and disaster impact assessment.

However, Dhaka has yet to receive any response.

"We have sent a letter enquiring about those issues from China. But we are yet to get any reply," said Syeda Rizwana Hasan, an adviser to the

ministries of environment, forest and climate change, and water resources.

Rizwana said that during the foreign adviser's recent visit to China, Chinese officials assured Bangladesh that the dam would be a run-of-the-river hydropower project and that no water diversion would take place. However, she noted that the issue may not receive official attention during Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus' visit to China.

SEE PAGE 6 COL 1

“Seventy percent of the dry season flow of the Ganges-Brahmaputra-Meghna [GBM] basin that passes through Bangladesh comes via the Brahmaputra.”

MALIK FIDA A KHAN, executive director of CEGIS

Star INTERVIEW

Inefficiency holding power sector back

Says Prof Saifur Rahman of Virginia Tech

ASIFUR RAHMAN

Bangladesh's power sector is burdened by overcapacity and systemic inefficiencies, hindering its ability to deliver reliable and cost-effective electricity, says Prof Dr Saifur Rahman, a Bangladeshi expert based in the US.

With a grid system weakened by past neglect and a lack of skilled manpower, the country faces significant challenges in optimising its power generation and distribution, according to Saifur, founding director of the Advanced Research Institute at Virginia Tech University.

In an exclusive interview with The Daily Star, he said power distribution and transmission did not get the same attention as generation did in Bangladesh.

SEE PAGE 6 COL 1



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Turkey protesters defiant despite mass arrests

P7



PRAYER TIMING					
MARCH 27					
Fazr	Zohr	Asr	Maghrib	Esha	
AZAN 4:40	12:45	4:45	6:12	7:45	
JAMAAT 4:50	1:15	5:00	6:27	8:15	
SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION					
SEHRI, IFTAR TIMING					
RAMADAN	MARCH	SEHRI	IFTAR		
26	27		6:13		
27	28	4:38	6:13		
28	29	4:36	6:14		



People busy with last-moment shopping in the capital's New Market as Eid-ul-Fitr is days away. The market saw a huge crowd of shoppers yesterday, which was a public holiday.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

Hostages to return 'in coffins'

Hamas warns Israel against attempts to free them by force

AGENCIES

Palestinian group Hamas warned yesterday that hostages may be killed if Israel attempts to retrieve them by force and air strikes continue in the Gaza Strip.

The group said in a statement that it was "doing everything possible to keep the occupation's captives alive, but the random Zionist (Israeli) bombardment is endangering their lives," adding: "every time the occupation attempts to retrieve its captives by force, it ends up bringing them back in coffins".

It added that breaching the ceasefire and returning to war was a "premeditated decision" by Netanyahu, who succumbed to pressure by far-right National Security Minister Itamar Ben-Gvir.

"Netanyahu bears full responsibility for the failure of the agreement, and the international community and mediators must pressure him to halt the aggression and return to the path of negotiation," the statement said.

However, Netanyahu repeated threats yesterday to seize territory in the Gaza strip if Hamas failed to release the remaining hostages it still holds.

At least 12 people, including a mother, her six-month-old baby, and four other children, were killed as Israeli forces continued their bombardment of Gaza since the early hours of yesterday morning.

The health ministry in Hamas-run Gaza said that at least 830 people have been killed in the Palestinian territory since Israel resumed large-scale strikes on March 18.