

## Yunus in Rome to attend Pope Francis' funeral

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus reached Rome yesterday to attend the funeral of Pope Francis.

He arrived in Rome at 2:15pm local time, where he was received by Bangladesh Ambassador to Italy ATM Rokebul Haque, Chief Adviser's Deputy Press Secretary Abul Kalam Azad Majumder told BSS.

He left Qatar for the Vatican around 9:25am local (12:25pm BST), where the Chief of Protocol of the State of Qatar, Ibrahim bin Yousif Abdullah Fakhroo, saw him off at Hamad International Airport in Doha.

An hour after his arrival, Yunus visited St Peter's Square to pay homage to the mortal remains of the head of the Catholic Church.

Cardinal Mauro Gambetti, vicar general of His Holiness for Vatican City, greeted Yunus and the Bangladesh delegation at the St Peter's Square.

On Saturday, around 9:30am, the CA will again visit St Peter's Square to attend the funeral mass of Pope Francis, who died on Monday aged 88.

After joining the funeral, the chief adviser will depart the Leonardo da Vinci Rome Fiumicino Airport around 8:00am (12:00pm Bangladesh Standard Time) on Sunday and is expected to reach home in the early hours of Monday.



Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus at the St Peter's Square in the Vatican City yesterday. The chief adviser is in Rome to attend the funeral of Pope Francis today.

PHOTO: PID

## Suspected mugger stabbed to death

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A suspected mugger was stabbed to death in the capital's Karwan Bazar area on Thursday.

The deceased was identified as Mohammad Rafiq, 20, who had multiple stab wounds, according to police and morgue sources.

Police arrested a youth named Asif, also known as Ashik or Ibrahim Khalil, 22, in connection with the incident.

Mobarak Hossain, officer-in-charge of Tejgaon Police Station, told The Daily Star that initial investigation suggests Asif stabbed Rafiq in front of a restaurant in Karwan Bazar around 11:30am on Thursday.

Rafiq's grandmother later arrived and tried to take him home, but he succumbed to his injuries near the railway tracks due to excessive bleeding, the OC added.

Acting on a call made through the national emergency helpline 999, police from Tejgaon Industrial Area recovered the body from the eastern side of the railway tracks around noon, said OC Gazi Shamimur Rahman of the police station.

The body was sent to Shaheed Suhrawardy Medical College morgue for autopsy.

OC Mobarak said Rafiq, a resident of Dewanganj upazila in Jamalpur, was involved in mugging in the Karwan Bazar area.

"Both the victim and the arrestee had eight cases each against them for theft and mugging," he said, adding that the murder stemmed from a dispute over sharing money from their criminal activities.

## Polls shouldn't be delayed to complete reforms: Rizvi

UNB, Dhaka

BNP Senior Joint Secretary General Ruhul Kabir Rizvi yesterday questioned why the interim government has not taken action against those who helped Sheikh Hasina establish fascism.

"Why are those responsible for establishing fascism still at large? Why haven't those who destroyed institutions and used their entrusted positions to serve Sheikh Hasina and entrench fascism been arrested yet?" he said.

He made the remarks while speaking at an event organised by "Amra BNP Poribar" at the BNP chairperson's Gulshan office. The programme was

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4



## PARVEZ KILLING

## Prime accused on five-day remand

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday placed the prime accused, Meheraj Islam, on a five-day remand in the case filed over the murder of Primeasia University student Jahidul Islam Parvez.

Dhaka Metropolitan Magistrate Mehara Mahub passed the order after police produced him before the court with a 10-day remand prayer, said a sub-inspector working in the court.

Law enforcers have so far arrested six accused, three FIR-named ones, in connection with the case.

Of the six arrestees, Mahathir Hasan and AlKamal Sheikh earlier gave their confessional statements to the magistrates in connection with the killing.

On April 19, 24-year-old Parvez, a third-year student of the university, was stabbed to death in front of the campus in Banani.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 8

## 'Nightmares don't let me sleep'

## Lokman recounts horror in Libyan captivity



Lokman Hossain with his family members at his home in Pirojpur.

KM HABIBUR RAHMAN, Pirojpur

The slightest noise now wakes Lokman Hossain from his sleep, bringing back the horrors of his ordeal in Libya.

"Even as I try to close my eyes, the nightmares don't let me sleep. So, I stay awake every night, but the memories keep swarming in my mind, leaving me traumatised," said the 37-year-old.

Lokman recently returned home after his family paid Tk 12 lakh in ransom to a criminal gang in Libya on March 27.

Lured by the hope of changing his fortune abroad, Lokman had earlier paid Tk 3.5 lakh to go to Libya, followed by another Tk 10 lakh to move to Italy from there.

To arrange the total amount, his wife Rimi Akter had to sell everything they owned, including their residential land at Noly Joynagar village in Mathbaria upazila, Pirojpur.

Lokman first travelled to Libya via Dubai through one Shah Alam and his brother-in-law Mannan of Barguna's Patharghata upazila to work as a salesman in August 2023.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 7

# Why veggies cost less at Karwan Bazar

SHAHEEN MOLLAH

Every other day, trader Babul Miah boards a crowded bus from West Shewrapara and heads to Karwan Bazar to buy vegetables for his family.

"It's not convenient to carry seven or eight kilogrammes of vegetables back home by bus," he said.

"But I do it out of necessity. My business hasn't been doing well, and I save around Tk 100 on every Tk 300 purchase by shopping here instead of my neighbourhood market," he added.

Like Babul, many Dhaka residents are turning to Karwan Bazar to stretch their household budgets.

While the market is best known as the city's largest wholesale hub for kitchen essentials, a makeshift retail section springs up along its roads and footpaths every morning, offering vegetables at noticeably lower prices than other kitchen markets across the capital.

The secret behind the affordability lies in timing and proximity. Wholesale trading at Karwan Bazar takes place from midnight to 7:00am. As the wholesale rush winds down, leftover produce, still fresh but unsold, is quickly snapped up by local vendors who set up temporary stalls to serve the early morning crowd.

"Just before the wholesale market closes, traders are eager to offload unsold stock," explained Ashrafur Islam, a regular seller in the retail section. "We buy at

reduced prices and pass the savings on to our customers."

This practice, combined with zero transport costs and minimal spoilage from storage, enables Karwan Bazar vendors to offer significantly lower prices.

### THE PRICE GAP

Recent visits to at least eight kitchen markets, including Mirpur 11, Shewrapara, Kazipara, Farmgate, Ibrahimpur, Kachukhet, and Korail Beltoli Slum, revealed that vegetables at Karwan Bazar's



retail section were on average 10-15 percent cheaper. In some cases, the difference was even more pronounced.

For example, eggplants, pointed gourds, okra, long beans, ridge gourds, and papayas were selling for Tk 40-60 per kilogramme at Karwan Bazar, while the same items were priced between Tk 60 and Tk 100 at other city markets.

Potatoes at Karwan Bazar cost just Tk 18-20 per kg, compared to Tk 20-25 elsewhere. Green chilies

sold for Tk 70-80 per kg—Tk 10-40 less than prices in other areas.

Despite sourcing their produce from the same wholesale markets -- Karwan Bazar or Mirpur 1 -- vendors in neighbourhood markets say they are compelled to charge more.

"Vegetables are perishable. Around 3 to 5 percent are damaged during storage and transport," said Mohammad Rakib, a seller at Ibrahimpur Market.

"We also pay for staff, rent, and

transport. Altogether, that adds about 5 to 15 percent to our costs."

This results in a price difference that's leading more cost-conscious buyers like Babul to bypass local vendors and make the journey to Karwan Bazar.

### TRADE-OFF BETWEEN COST, CONVENIENCE

While the journey to Karwan Bazar may be inconvenient, many shoppers consider it a worthwhile trade-off. For families navigating

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1

## Dhaka selection round of Star-bKash Newspaper Olympiad held

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Aiming to inspire the youth to read newspapers, the selection round of The Daily Star-bKash Newspaper Olympiad Season-4 was held at The Daily Star Centre in the capital yesterday.

Over 1,000 enthusiastic participants took part in the competition across five different shifts throughout the day.

Launched in 2018, the Newspaper Olympiad has grown into a nationwide movement, driven by the commitment of more than 3,000 volunteers across the country.

In the Season-4 of the Olympiad, bKash joined as the title partner.

This season has already seen over 15,000 participants from across the country, with the selection rounds still ongoing in different divisions. The Dhaka round commenced at 7:00am and concluded at 7:00pm.

The programme began with an inaugural speech from Labby Ahsan, president of Newspaper Olympiad and Youth Coordinator at The Daily Star.

The closing ceremony was attended by Tajdin Hassan, chief business officer of The Daily Star, who joined as the chief guest.



A group of participants of the Dhaka selection round of The Daily Star-bKash Newspaper Olympiad at the capital's The Daily Star Centre yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

## Six AL activists held in Dhaka

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Detectives have arrested six leaders and activists of the Awami League and its associate bodies in Dhaka, including one accused in a case filed over the torching of an army vehicle in Gopalganj.

The arrestees are -- Abed Ali Sheikh, 52, former chairman of Shuktail Union and former member of Gopalganj Zila Parishad; Momtaz Parvin Shimu, 42, president of the Mohila Awami League's Ramna and Hatirjheel units; Zakir Hossain Sagar, 43, former vice president of the banned Chhatra League and a member of the Jubo League's Dhaka North unit; MR Badol, 50, acting general secretary of Mirpur thana Chhatra League; and Monirul Islam, 38, an activist of Uttara thana AL.

Quoting detectives, Talebur Rahman, deputy commissioner (media) of DMP, said Abed Ali, a named accused in the arson case, was detained from Dhanmondi around

SEE PAGE 4 COL 7