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UN not involved in talks on 'humanitarian corridor'

Says Gwyn Lewis

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

The UN has not been in discussions to establish a humanitarian corridor via Bangladesh to Myanmar's Rakhine State, said UN Resident Coordinator Gwyn Lewis yesterday.

She said it is not the UN's decision to put in place a humanitarian corridor, the decision rests on sovereign agreements between Bangladesh and Myanmar, and any other group involved.

She said this at an event organised by the Diplomatic Correspondents' Association, Bangladesh (DCAB) at Jatiya Press Club.

During the visit to Bangladesh in March this year, UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres told media he discussed the possibility of humanitarian aid channel from Bangladesh. He had said that would require authorisation of the parties involved in the conflict.

At the DCAB Talk, Gwyn Lewis said any such agreement has not

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The Labondaho river in Gazipur's Sreepur has withered into a polluted canal now known as Lobolong, its waters darkened by toxic industrial waste. One corner overflows with scrapped polythene bags, while an adjacent enclosed water body remains green in an unsettling contrast. Photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

BNP slams budget as 'unilateral'

Says it lacks concrete strategies to tackle challenges

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The BNP yesterday said it had expected the interim government to hold talks with parties involved in the July uprising to build a minimal national consensus before announcing the national budget.

The party also described the proposed budget for the fiscal 2025-26 as "unilateral, traditional, and non-participatory", adding that it lacks concrete strategies to address persistent economic challenges, such as rising inflation and worsening poverty.

The BNP has laid out a 180-day action plan focused on education, healthcare, women's rights, rural development, and honouring martyrs if voted to power.

"If the interim government had wanted, it could have sought opinions from people of various classes and professions. Experts, civil society members, businesspeople, and youth representatives could also have participated. In that case, the budget would have symbolised a unified economic perspective," BNP Standing Committee member Amir Khosru Mahmud Chowdhury told a press conference on the party's budget reaction held at the BNP chairperson's office in Gulshan.

"The budget could have reflected the voices of various sections of society, but that opportunity has been missed."

The BNP leader said that if there had been political

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BB plans to merge five Islamic banks

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh Bank plans to merge five troubled Islamic banks in what could be the country's largest financial sector consolidation in recent memory. The formal merger process will begin in July and is expected to be completed by October 15, according to officials familiar with the plan.

Arief Hossain Khan, spokesperson for the central bank, confirmed that a meeting on the subject took place. "We heard that the agenda of the meeting was the merger," he said, but declined to elaborate.

A high-level meeting was held yesterday at the central bank headquarters between Governor Ahsan H Mansur and the managing directors and chairmen of the five Islamic banks -- Social Islami Bank, Global Islami Bank, First Security Islami Bank, Union Bank, and EXIM Bank.

According to officials, five joint teams, comprising Bangladesh Bank representatives and qualified staff from each bank, will begin work on the integration process and continue over a three-and-a-half month period. The banks will come under temporary government control after the merger process starts.

The current managing directors

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Once a lifeline, Labondaho now a curse

29km long river turned into polluted canal affecting farming, daily life, livelihoods

PINAKI ROY and MONJURUL HAQUE

Abdul Aziz once harvested rice in abundance from his fields next to Labondaho, once a picturesque river located in Indrapur, Gazipur's Sreepur. Today, he stands on cracked earth, nursing losses and lamenting poisoned waters.

This year, he invested Tk 18,000 in cultivation, expecting to reap 37 maunds (1 maund = 37.3242 kilogrammes) of paddy. Instead, he harvested only 21. "If the water wasn't so polluted, I could've met my target," he told The Daily Star.

Aziz farms on 35 decimals of land beside the river, now reduced to a narrow canal with stagnant water, choked with industrial waste and sewage. Locals no longer call it Labondaho, but Lobolong, the bitterness in their voices unmistakable.

We met Aziz just past a culvert on the road to the Gazipur Safari Park, a tourist trail that masks the silent crisis unfolding behind the treeline. For locals, the devastation is inescapable.

Aziz's neighbour, Matiur Rahman, fared even worse. His land, flooded with foul-smelling water, yielded just five maunds of rice since the embankment he made to save the land was breached.

The pollution of Labondaho has turned

farming into a game of chance, one that farmers increasingly lose. Across at least 50 villages, including Kabarghata, Beltoli, Uttar Beltoli, Korotoa, Shibit Chala, Baniar Chala, Beraider Chala, Boirar Chala, Paillabandha, Pirujali, Bhanipur, Mirzapur and more, farmers share the same story. Fields either wither in drought or drown in toxic runoff. Yields plummet. Illnesses rise.

Locals and environmentalists estimate that hundreds of acres of farmland have become uncultivable due to persistent waterlogging and contamination.

Once the lifeblood of an agrarian economy, the Labondaho is now a cautionary tale of industrial recklessness. What was once a river is now a black, foul-smelling stream that poisons land, sickens families, and suffocates livelihoods.

According to the water resources ministry, the 29-kilometre-long Labondaho originates in Gazipur Sadar and empties into the Turag. But residents say it flows from the Khiru river in Bhaluka, Mymensingh, coursing through Maona Uttar Para, Maona Bazar, Gargaria Master Bari, Bagher Bazar, and the Indrapur Safari Park area before joining the Turag at Bhabanipur.

Pollution, locals say, began in the 1990s

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Govt to roll out revised curriculum from 2027

Says edn ministry

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The interim government is set to introduce a revised secondary education curriculum in phases starting from 2027, officials said.

In the first year, it will be implemented for students of class six and gradually extended up to class twelve, said Siddique Zohair, senior secretary of the Secondary and Higher Education Division, while speaking at a press conference yesterday.

The conference was held at the education ministry office.

Education Adviser Chowdhury Rafiqul Abrar, widely known as CR Abrar, said the 2012 curriculum was reinstated under

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Aid sites in Gaza shut

Israel issues 'combat zones' warning; airstrikes kill 26 Palestinians



AGENCIES

The US-backed Gaza Humanitarian Foundation did not distribute any aid yesterday as it presses Israel to boost civilian safety beyond the perimeter of its distribution sites, a day after dozens of Palestinians seeking aid were killed.

The GHF said it has asked the Israeli military to "guide foot traffic in a way that minimises confusion or escalation risks" near military perimeters; develop clearer guidance for civilians; and enhance training to

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পবিত্র ঈদ-উল-আজহা উপলক্ষে সকল গ্রাহক ও শুভানুধ্যায়ী-কে

ঈদ মোবারক

গ্রাহকের আমানত সম্পূর্ণ সুরক্ষিত ও নিরাপদ

বাংলাদেশ কৃষি ব্যাংক

গণমানুষের ব্যাংক

Million gather in Makkah as hajj begins



AFP, Makkah

More than a million pilgrims participated in Islam's most important rite under a scorching sun yesterday as the hajj pilgrimage began.

With temperatures expected to top 40 degrees Celsius, pilgrims slowly circled the Kaaba -- the black cube at the heart of Makkah's Grand Mosque which is Islam's holiest site.

State media reported that others had begun arriving in the sprawling tent city of Mina on Makkah's outskirts where they will stay overnight before the hajj's high-point today -- prayers on Mount Arafat, where the Prophet Mohammed (pbuh) is believed to have delivered his final sermon.

About 1.4 million pilgrims arrived in Saudi Arabia ahead of the hajj, one of the five pillars of Islam that must be performed at least once by all Muslims with the means.

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কোরবানি উপলক্ষে জরুরি নির্দেশনা

কোরবানির হাটে সুস্থ পশু চেনার উপায়:

১. পিঠের কুঁজ মোটা ও টানটান থাকবে।
২. সব সময় কান ও নেজ নাড়াচাড়া করবে।
৩. পশু স্বাভাবিক প্রাণবন্ত থাকবে এবং জাবর কাটবে।
৪. শরীরের চামড়া টানটান, পশম মসৃণ চকচকে ও উজ্জ্বল হবে।
৫. চামড়া টান দিয়ে ছেড়ে দিলে দ্রুত পূর্বের অবস্থায় ফিরে আসবে।
৬. মুন্দের সামনে খাবার ধরলে নিজ থেকে জিহ্বা দিয়ে টেনে খাবে।
৭. পশুর চোখ উজ্জ্বল, নাকের উপরের কানো অংশ ভেজা ভেজা এবং চকচকে হবে।

কোরবানির হাটে পশুর যত্নে করণীয়:

১. পশু খাবার জায়গা নিয়মিত পরিষ্কার রাখতে হবে।
২. প্রয়োজনীয় খাবার ও বিপজ্জনক পানীয় ব্যবস্থা রাখতে হবে।
৩. হাটের নিচে বা ঠাণ্ডা হারায়ুক্ত স্থানে পশুকে রাখতে হবে।
৪. অতিরিক্ত গরমে হিট স্ট্রোক এড়াতে পানি হিটলো যেতে পারে।
৫. পশু অসুস্থ হলে হাটে অবস্থানরত ভেটেরিনারি মেডিকেল সিনের সহযোগিতা নেয়া যেতে পারে।

কোরবানির পশুর চামড়া ছাড়ানো বিষয়ে করণীয়:

১. পশু জবাই করার পূর্বে গোসল করাতে হবে এবং পর্যাপ্ত পানি পান করাতে হবে।
২. ধারালো ছুরির সাহায্যে জবাই করার স্থান থেকে গলা, সিনা ও পেটের উপর দিয়ে সোজাসুজি দাগ কাটতে হবে।
৩. সামনের দু'পায়ের হাঁটু থেকে সিনা পর্যন্ত একটি দাগ কেটে প্রথম দাগের সাথে যোগ করাতে হবে এবং অনুজপভাবে পিছনের দু'পায়ের হাঁটুয় নীচ থেকে দাগ কেটে প্রথম দাগ পর্যন্ত কাটতে হবে।
৪. চামড়া ছাড়ানোর কাজে বাঁকানো মাথার ছুঁড়ি ব্যবহার করাতে হবে।
৫. ছাড়ানো চামড়া যথাশীঘ্র বিক্রয়/সংরক্ষণ/প্রক্রিয়াজাত করাতে হবে।

কোরবানির পর পশুর বর্জ্য ব্যবস্থাপনায় করণীয়:

১. সন্ন্যাস কর্তৃক নির্ধারিত স্থানে পশু জবাই করাতে হবে।
২. পশু জবাই করার পর রক্ত চরানিকে ছড়িয়ে যাতে পরিবেশের ক্ষতি না করে সে ব্যাপারে বিশেষ সতর্কতা অবলম্বন করাতে হবে।
৩. সন্ন্যাস কর্তৃক নির্ধারিত স্থানে পশুর বর্জ্য ফেলাতে হবে।
৪. পশু জবাইয়ের স্থান পানি দিয়ে ভালোভাবে বৌত করে জীবাণুনাশক ঔষধ বা ত্রিচিং পাউডার ছিটানতে হবে।
৫. সীতি কর্পোরেশন বা পৌরসভা কর্তৃক বিতরণকৃত ব্যাগ ব্যবহার করে এবং কর্তৃপক্ষের নির্দেশনা মোতাবেক বর্জ্য অপসারণ করাতে হবে।

প্রাণিসম্পদ অধিদপ্তর
মত্যা ও প্রাণিসম্পদ মন্ত্রণালয়।