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ONE YEAR OF GAZI TYRES TRAGEDY

No closure yet for the families

‘At least 182 remain traceless’



Family members of some of those missing.

PHOTO: STAR

SAURAV HOSSAIN SIAM, *Narayanganj*

One year after the devastating fire at Gazi Tyres factory in Narayanganj, the fate of at least 182 missing people remains unknown, while their families still await answers from the authorities.

Among them is 55-year-old Hormuza Begum, whose 22-year-old son, Abdur Rahman, is still missing.

Rahman, a power-loom worker, ventured into the factory in Rupganj area on

August 25 last year when it was set ablaze after looting.

“My son went to the factory with some of our neighbours. Not a single one returned home,” said Hormuza, who is now grappling with yet another tragedy – the death of her rickshaw-puller husband five months ago.

“I think my son died in the fire. I don’t blame anyone. My only regret is that I never saw his body. His father died from

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A boy uses a raft, made with discarded polystyrene stuffed inside sacks, to collect plastic from the Kalyanpur canal in the capital so that those can be sold to recycling shops. Apart from polluting the environment, the mindless dumping of garbage in the canal has turned it into an ideal breeding ground for mosquitos.

PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

Israel pounds Gaza suburbs, vows to press on

Launches attacks on Yemen’s Sanaa, killing two

REUTERS

Israeli planes and tanks pounded the eastern and northern outskirts of Gaza City overnight Saturday to Sunday, destroying buildings and homes, residents said, as Israeli leaders vowed to press on with a planned offensive on the city.

Witnesses reported the sound of explosions non-stop overnight in the areas of Zeitoun and Shejaia, while tanks shelled houses and roads in the nearby Sabra neighbourhood and several buildings were blown up in the northern town of Jabalia.

Fire lit the skies from the direction of the explosions, causing panic, prompting some families to stream out of the city. Others said they would prefer to die and not leave.

Meanwhile, Israeli strikes also hit the Yemeni capital Sanaa on Sunday in retaliation for Houthi missiles fired towards Israel, with Houthi media saying the attack killed at least two people and injured five.

The strikes are the latest in over a year of direct attacks and counterstrikes between Israel and Houthi rebels in Yemen, part of a spillover from the onslaught in Gaza.

The Israeli military said the targets included a military compound housing the presidential palace, two power plants and a fuel storage site.

The Houthi-controlled Saba news agency said the strikes killed at least two people and injured five.

“The strikes were conducted in response to repeated attacks by the Houthi terrorist regime against the State of Israel and its civilians, including the launching of surface-to-surface missiles and UAVs toward Israeli

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One killed in mob beating in Patuakhali

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Patuakhali

One person was killed and another injured after being beaten by locals on allegations of robbery in Bauphal upazila of Patuakhali early yesterday.

The incident occurred around 3:30am at Kashipur Bazar area under Adabaria union, police and locals said.

A gang of robbers allegedly broke into the houses of Khalil Hawlader and Azhar Jamaddar, held the families hostage at knife point, and looted Tk 10 lakh in cash and gold jewellery.

Hearing screams, locals rushed to the spot, caught two suspected robbers, and beat them while the others fled with the looted valuables.

Police rescued the injured and took them to a hospital where one died during treatment. The body was sent to Patuakhali Medical College Hospital for autopsy.

Bauphal Police Station OC Akhtaruzzaman Sarker said the identities of the deceased and the injured could not be confirmed immediately. Police are conducting drives to arrest others involved.

Referendum on July Charter, polls could be held same day

Experts suggest at meet with commission

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A referendum on the implementation of the July Charter could be held on the same day as the next general election, a group of legal experts suggested at a meeting with the National Consensus Commission yesterday.

They also opined that issues requiring constitutional amendments should not be enacted through ordinances.

“There was a discussion on the pros and cons of holding a referendum regarding the proposed reforms. This topic will be placed for further discussion with the political parties,” said a legal expert, wishing anonymity.

“If the referendum and the national election are held on the same day, political parties may be less likely to object. But if the referendum is held before the election, many may claim that the election is being deliberately delayed,” the expert added.

“The results of the referendum could be highly unpredictable. But if the referendum results favour the reforms, political parties will face both political and moral compulsion to accept them,” the expert also said.

Speaking on the issue, a commission

member confirmed that the matter was discussed but said “nothing was finalised”.

The consensus commission yesterday held its second meeting with experts to discuss the methods and procedures for implementing the July Charter.

Experts also opined that issues requiring constitutional amendments should not be enacted through ordinances.

Law Adviser Prof Asif Nazrul, Attorney General Md Asaduzzaman, former Justice MA Matin and Moinul Islam Chowdhury, Supreme Court Advocate Sharif Bhuiyan, and Barrister Imran Siddique, along with others, attended the meeting at the Foreign Service Academy.

At the meeting, participants discussed the possibility of seeking an official opinion from the Supreme Court under Article 106 to resolve key

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REFORMS IMPLEMENTATION

Yunus should have invested his authority

Says Prof Rehman Sobhan

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Eminent economist Prof Rehman Sobhan has said reforms not yet initiated and operationalised may remain unimplemented in the end.

“If they are going to be put into process even in the course of the next week or the next 10 days or the next 10 weeks, possibilities of these reforms being legislated and operationalised are not very high,” he said.

He was speaking at an online discussion titled “Political Economy of Economic Reforms in Bangladesh: Promises, Obstacles and Realities”. Shomaj Gobeshona Kendro organised the discussion that started on Saturday night and continued for four hours till 1:00am yesterday.

Sobhan, chairman of the Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD), said Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus is recognised in the global community as a Nobel laureate, which gives him significant authority to carry out reforms.

He said Yunus should have invested his authority behind a set of reforms that he could realistically initiate and bequeath to the next government.

But Yunus and his government have not done that, the economist said. The task has instead been left to a small group of civil society members, who have been given the extraordinary challenge of distilling reform proposals coming from 10 commissions, said Sobhan.

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Extremely rare bright orange shark with white eyes discovered

INDEPENDENT.CO.UK

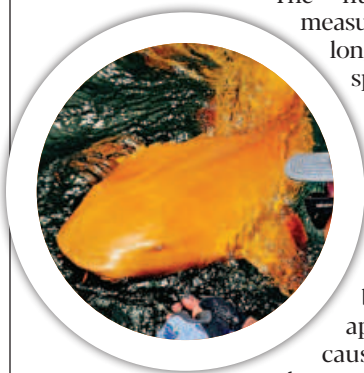
A shark with a striking orange appearance caused by a rare skin condition has been caught off the coast of Costa Rica.

The nurse shark, which measured more than six feet long, stood out from the species’ usual brown colouring. The shark was captured on a sport fishing trip near Tortuguero National Park, at a depth of 37 metres.

Researchers believe the unusual appearance was caused by xanthism - also known as xanthochroism - a pigmentation condition that creates excessive yellow or golden colours in the animals’ skin due to a lack of red pigmentation.

The rare condition has never been seen in cartilaginous fish, a group that includes sharks, rays, and skates, in the Caribbean before, according to Federal University of Rio Grande research.

The shark also showed traits of albinism, including a pair of striking white eyes.



A displaced Palestinian man and his family warm up chickpeas as they sit amid the destruction in Saftawi neighbourhood, west of Jabalia in the northern Gaza Strip yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

Hall provosts flag uneven field ahead of Ducusu polls

MAHATHIR MOHAMMED

Most of the provosts of Dhaka University’s dormitories have expressed concerns over whether the environment at the halls is conducive enough for the upcoming Ducusu and hall union elections.

At a meeting with the election commission on Friday, attended by DU Vice Chancellor Prof Niaz Ahmed Khan and Proctor Saifuddin Ahmed, they alleged that both partisan and independent candidates face an uneven playing field because of the rise of “covert politics”.

This correspondent approached seven meeting attendees, three of whom agreed to speak anonymously.

They said that after the university reopened following the political changeover on August 5 last year, a “Sringkhola Committee” was informally set up in each hall.

Each hall has different clubs, many headed by student leaders engaged in covert politics, who were then appointed to these committees, though university authorities had no role in their formation, they added.

“Some of those members are now contesting in the hall union and Ducusu polls,” a meeting source said, adding that some groups linked to the covert student bodies are also spreading propaganda on social media through different Facebook groups.

“The ‘Sringkhola Committees’ engaged with other hall residents through various activities, giving them an advantage in the election,” one provost, preferring

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