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DOUBLE MURDER

Suspect domestic worker held in Jhalakathi



STAFF CORRESPONDENT

House help Ayesha planned to steal valuables from the house in Mohammadpur and after working for three days, she carried a sharp knife with her, intending to use it if anyone noticed.

Upon arriving at the flat on Shahjahan Road early Monday morning, she went to the kitchen and took another knife from there and kept it with her.

When her employer Laila Afroz saw her stealing valuables, Ayesha allegedly stabbed her indiscriminately, wielding two knives in both hands.

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Though the iron bar was lowered to stop pedestrians and vehicles before the Tejgaon level crossing, a man with a rickshaw-van and others crossed the barrier and stood nonchalant inches away from a train at speed yesterday.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

Make the polls fair, historic

Yunus tells UNOs

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Chief Adviser Professor Muhammad Yunus yesterday described the upcoming national election as a historic opportunity to build a new Bangladesh following the mass uprising and stressed that it must be conducted in a fair and credible manner.

He made the remarks while issuing directives on election preparations to Upazila Nirbahi Officers (UNOs) across the country through a videoconference from the state guest house Jamuna.

Deputy commissioners, divisional commissioners, and officials of the Cabinet Division also joined the meeting online.

Addressing the UNOs, Yunus said history had offered the nation a rare opportunity.

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BNP will ensure rights, reconcile

Says Tarique

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP Acting Chairman Tarique Rahman yesterday said his party, despite facing the most repression over the last 16 years, does not want revenge and is instead committed to ensuring accountability, reconciliation and democratic rights.

In a Facebook post on the occasion of Human Rights Day yesterday, he wrote that BNP envisions a future Bangladesh built on unity, dignity and democratic freedoms, with human rights upheld.

"BNP has suffered deeply, yet emerged stronger, guided by the belief that truth, justice, accountability, reconciliation and a shared commitment to the rule of law can build a Bangladesh that honours every voice and every life, a nation where human rights are defended as essential to our collective future," UNB reported quoting Tarique.

He said Bangladesh was "under a dark sky" for 16 years as fear replaced basic freedoms, adding that no political organisation bore this burden more than BNP.

"...and in the 2024 mass uprising, it was again BNP's ranks that suffered the highest number of deaths and injuries.

"Yet even from enforced silence, I kept fighting for the rights and democracy denied to millions, proving that a spirit committed to justice cannot be muted by decree."

Sharing personal accounts, Tarique said his own mother, Khaleda Zia, endured the pain of seeing her son tortured in custody, and his family suffered the loss of his brother.

Calling for a rights-based future, he urged Bangladeshis to remember the stories of Abrar Fahad, Mushtaq Ahmed, Ilias Ali, Sajedul Islam Sumon, Sagar-Runi and many more, so that injustices are not repeated.

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Natural disasters internally displaced 4.96m: IOM study

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Nearly 4.96 million people are currently internally displaced persons (IDPs) due to natural disasters in Bangladesh, according to the International Organisation for Migration (IOM), in its first comprehensive nationwide estimate.

The report highlights how floods, cyclones, river erosion and other hazards continue to disrupt lives across the country.

Chattogram Division hosts the largest share of IDPs with 1.21 million, followed by Dhaka with 0.79 million and Rajshahi with 0.66 million, the report said.

Four districts -- Chattogram, Sirajganj, Bhola and Noakhali -- account for a quarter of all displaced persons. Most IDPs, about 85 percent, live in rural union areas, said the report, which was released yesterday.

The report was prepared by the IOM, in partnership with the government of Bangladesh and development partners.

The assessment found that two out of three IDPs were displaced before April 2020, indicating long-term unresolved displacement. One in four were displaced between April 2020 and April 2024.

The assessment covered all eight divisions, 64 districts, 4,579 unions, 329 municipalities and 480 city

corporation wards. Data collection took place between September and October, including more than 5,300 field visits and interviews with more than 29,000 key informants.

Understanding the scale of displacement is essential for effective disaster management and long-term planning, said Lance Bonneau, chief of mission of IOM Bangladesh.

Chattogram division hosts the largest share of internally displaced people with 1.21 million, followed by Dhaka with 0.79 million and Rajshahi with 0.66 million.

Says the IOM report, prepared in partnership with the government and development partners

The findings give national authorities, local leaders and development partners a shared foundation to respond to displacement with greater clarity and coordination, he added.

Government representatives welcomed the report as a major step

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SHEIKH HASINA'S DEPORTATION

Nothing to do if India does not agree

Says Touhid



DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh can do nothing if India does not extradite the deposed prime minister Sheikh Hasina, except for continuing the efforts to persuade India, Foreign Adviser Touhid Hossain said yesterday.

"There is nothing to do if India does not agree," he told reporters at the foreign ministry yesterday.

He was responding to questions from journalists about Indian External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar's remarks on Hasina's deportation.

In an interview on December 6, Jaishankar said Hasina's stay in India is her personal decision, influenced by the

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Gazette out on the police commission

Govt nod required for making regulations

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government has finally issued the long-awaited gazette on establishing a Police Commission empowered to recommend measures to strengthen discipline, accountability, and overall effectiveness within the force.

The five-member body will be led by a retired judge of the Supreme Court's Appellate or High Court Division and will recommend a panel of three candidates for the post of inspector general of police.

However, the commission will need government approval to frame any regulations, which will be issued through separate gazettes.

According to the law ministry's gazette notification published on Tuesday, the commission will include a retired government official with district magistrate-level experience or equivalent to Grade-1 in the National Pay Scale; a serving or retired professor with expertise in a relevant field; and a human rights activist with at least 15 years of experience in rights development, implementation, or promoting good governance.

It will also include a retired police officer of at least additional IGP (Grade-1) rank, who will serve as member secretary.

To ensure gender balance, the commission must have at least two female members. The chairperson will retain the rank they held before retirement, while the government will determine the ranks of the other members.

The president will appoint the chairperson and members based on recommendations from a government-formed selection committee, with terms of up to four years.

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Rescue ongoing since 2yr-old fell into shaft yesterday

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A massive rescue operation is underway in Rajshahi's Tanore upazila as a two-year-old boy, Sazid, fell into an abandoned deep tube-well shaft about 30 feet deep yesterday afternoon.

The incident occurred around 1:00pm at Koel Hat Purbo Para village in Panchandar union, police said.

By 10:50pm, rescuers had managed to dig nearly 18 to 20 feet underground, confirmed Tanore Fire Service official Abdur Rouf.

At least three Fire Service units continued working till late last night in a desperate attempt to rescue the boy alive. "Every effort is being made to bring the child out safely and unharmed," Rouf said.

Since 5:30pm, an excavator has been digging a parallel pit beside the shaft while two tractors removed soil. Oxygen was being supplied continuously into the hole to keep the child alive.

According to police, the incident unfolded after a soil-laden trolley

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A rescue operation underway after a two-year-old boy fell into an abandoned deep tube-well shaft, about 30 feet deep, in Rajshahi's Tanore upazila yesterday afternoon. Firefighters, along with locals, were digging the ground next to the shaft to rescue the child.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

Cooking oil waste yields glue strong enough to tow car

INDEPENDENT.CO.UK

Scientists have developed a way to turn cooking oil waste discarded by restaurants into recyclable plastic and a superglue strong enough to tow a car.

The new method could be a sustainable way to create new household materials from non-edible waste.

Researchers, including those from the University of South Carolina, have found a way to use discarded cooking oil to make "mimics" of polyethylene or polythene -- the material commonly used in plastic bags.

"Waste streams offer a potentially attractive alternative to biomass-derived feedstocks [to make plastics]," scientists wrote in the study.

These new materials have a chemical structure and physical behaviour resembling that of polyethylene (PE), they say.

Cooking oil is made of long fatty acid chains, and researchers found that a series of chemical reactions can turn them into long polymer chains, mimicking those in polyethylene.

