Missing man found dead in Netrokona

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Netrokona*

Police recovered the body of a 55-year-old man from a wooded area beside the Kangsha river in Netrokona's Mohanganj upazila yesterday, two days after he went missing.

The deceased was identified as Fazlul Rahim Kajol of Kakiam village in Sunamganj's Dharmapasha upazila. He worked at a solar power project there.

A cattle grazer spotted the body on a tree branch in Birampur village around 8:00am after noticing a foul smell. A rope was found around his neck.

Kajol went missing on October 7 after leaving home to withdraw money from a bank for an office project. His family filed a general diary with Dharmapasha Police Station that day.

His elder brother, Fazlul Karim Bulbul, alleged that Kajol had been murdered and demanded a fair investigation.

Md Hafizul Islam Harun, officer-in-charge of Mohanganj Police Station, said police recovered the body and sent it to Netrokona Adhunik Sadar Hospital for an autopsy.

The cause of death will be confirmed after receiving the autopsy report, he added.



Fishermen unload nets bundled with fishing gear from a boat and move them to a riverside warehouse near Fishery Ghat in Chattogram following a 22-day nationwide hilsa fishing ban from October 8 to 29. The ban aims to protect spawning mother hilsa and boost production. Catching, transporting, storing, marketing, buying and selling hilsa are prohibited during the period. The photo was taken recently.

PHOTO: **RAJIB RAIHAN**

UN says Gaza faces grim winter without shelters

AFP, *Geneva*

Virtually all of Gaza's two million population will go through winter without adequate shelter as the Palestinian territory enters a fourth year under heavy Israeli war restrictions, the United Nations said yesterday.

The International Organization for Migration (IOM) said nearly 1.8 million people in the territory "are facing a fourth winter without adequate protection from rain, flooding and cold".

The UN agency called for international funding for humanitarian aid and for Israel to ease the "constraints" on the entry of critical supplies.

A ceasefire in the Gaza war, sparked by the Hamas attacks on Israel on October 7, 2023, was announced in October last year but conditions remain dire in Gaza, according to aid agencies.

More than half of all the tents and makeshift shelters are in poor condition and should be replaced, the IOM said.

"With few alternatives available, many families are living in war-damaged buildings that pose serious risks to life."

IOM highlighted the deaths of 21 people, including 12 children, when a war-damaged six storey building collapsed in Gaza city last month.

"Shelter materials must enter quickly, predictably and at the scale required," said Amy Pope, the IOM director general.

The agency said the El Nino weather phenomenon risked making this year's winter rains more intense for Gaza which "could further weaken unsafe buildings, while heavily damaged drainage systems leave communities exposed to flooding".

A taste of winter at a steep price

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because it was the first weekend after getting my salary. But it is not possible for me to continue buying vegetables at such prices."

Meanwhile, the price of round brinjal has increased by Tk 30 per kg. It was selling at Tk 150-160 a kg, up from Tk 120-130 last week.

Other vegetables, including long brinjal, okra, ridge gourd, sponge gourd, sweet pumpkin, and bitter gourd, were selling at Tk 50-80 per kg.

Mosharraf Hossain, a trader at Karwan Bazar, said prices of almost all vegetables went up, with papaya and potatoes being the exceptions.

"Customers are purchasing less because many say they don't have enough money," he said, adding that his sales had fallen sharply.

People are now buying smaller quantities or opting for smaller vegetables to stay within their budgets, he said.

Md Saifur Rahman Chowdhury, general secretary of the Karwan Bazar Kachamal Arat Baboshayee Malik Bohumukhi Somobai Samity, said all kinds of winter vegetables were available at Karwan Bazar.

"We have been seeing winter vegetables arriving early for the past five to six years, with tomatoes being an exception."

He explained that production costs remain high during the off-season, making it difficult to sell vegetables at lower prices. Traders' tendency to seek higher profits from early supplies also contributes to the high prices.

Regarding the recent surge in tomato prices, Saifur said locally grown tomatoes usually arrive in November. Until then, Indian tomatoes help meet market demand.

However, imports of Indian tomatoes have been suspended for the past few days, contributing to the price hike, he said.

Trafficking convictions fall despite rise in probes

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terms ranging from three months to life imprisonment, along with fines between Tk 5,000 and Tk 5 lakh.

"The imposition of fines rather than proportionate jail time weakened deterrence and undercut the government's overall anti-trafficking efforts," the report said.

During the reporting period, the government investigated 961 cases involving 5,263 suspects, up from 811 cases previously.

The government identified 1,135 trafficking victims during the period, down from 1,462 previously. These included 199 victims of sex trafficking, 510 of forced labour, and 426 of unspecified forms of trafficking.

However, civil society organisations and international agencies identified an additional 4,758 victims.

The report said the government strengthened protections for migrant workers to reduce vulnerabilities to trafficking, but did not meet the minimum standards in several key areas.

"The government identified fewer victims, and victim protection and reintegration efforts remained insufficient, particularly for Rohingya refugees and returning Bangladeshi migrant workers. Additionally, the government continued to permit worker-paid recruitment fees that rendered many migrant workers indebted, increasing their vulnerability to trafficking."

More than one million Rohingyas live in Cox's Bazar and on Bhasan Char. They remained vulnerable to sex trafficking and forced labour in Bangladesh and through cross-border trafficking networks into India, Malaysia, and Nepal, according to the report.

It also pointed to the growing risk of Bangladeshis being fraudulently recruited for forced criminality in online scam operations, mainly in Southeast Asia.

High recruitment costs continued to leave many Bangladeshi migrant workers vulnerable to exploitation and trafficking.

The government maintained official recruitment fees between Tk 85,000 and Tk 2.62 lakh, which the report said were high enough to leave many workers indebted. Workers frequently paid far more than the official ceilings to recruitment agencies and intermediaries, commonly known as "dalals".

Rules governing sub-agents continued to permit fees equivalent to six to eight months of a worker's salary, adding to migrants' financial burden.

Nearly 100 recruitment agencies faced charges for collecting excessive fees, with the cases still pending, the report said.

Bangladesh's storytellers

FROM PAGE 1

artistes and her family, she dedicated the award to director Vicky Zahed and expressed excitement over his move into filmmaking.

Asked whether audiences could expect to see them collaborate on the big screen, she teased, "Something is cooking."

Nisho thanked viewers for voting for him, along with director Vicky Zahed, the producers and his family. He said the recognition meant a great deal but did not diminish the achievements of his fellow nominees, all of whom deserved appreciation.

He dedicated the award to the late actor Humayun Faridi, whom he considered his mentor.

Vicky Zahed won Best Director (Drama/Series) for "AKA", thanking producer Shahriar Shakil and the entire team for believing in its challenging storyline. Describing "AKA" as his third OTT film, he said bringing such a story to the screen required considerable courage.

Raihan Rafi won Best Director (Film) for "Amalnama". He said he had long wanted to explore a taboo subject and thanked Chorki for giving him the creative freedom to realise his vision.

He described the production as risky because of its sensitive subject matter but said he enjoyed taking such risks. He also urged audiences to support Bangladeshi cinema by watching films in theatres.

Manoj Pramanik won Best Supporting Actor (Male) for "Omimangshito" and Runa Khan Best Supporting Actor (Female) for "Bohemian Ghora".

Runa thanked viewers for their love and support for her portrayal of Ambia, as well as director Amitabh Reza Chowdhury, Hoichoi and the entire production team.

Hoichoi's "Bohemian Ghora" was named Best Drama/Series, while Chorki's "Ghumpori" won Best Film. "Daagi" received the People's Choice award.

In the Critics' Choice categories, Mosharraf Karim won Best Actor (Male) for "Dui Shaw", Tama Mirza Best Actor (Female) for "Amalnama", and Chorki's "Feu" Best Film/Drama/Series.

Accepting the award on Karim's behalf, Nuhash called him "a national treasure" and praised his generosity towards fellow artistes.

Tama said she had not expected to win against so many accomplished nominees. Describing her mother, who attended the ceremony, as her lucky charm, she thanked Chorki and director Raihan Rafi for the opportunities that helped shape her career.

Nuhash accepted the Best Director (Film/Drama/Series) and Best Screenplay awards for "Dui Shaw" alongside his mother, Gultekin Khan.

"I am dedicating this to my mom and to my whole Dui Shaw team," he said, thanking the crew for bringing his script to life. He added that recognition in his own country made the awards particularly special.

"Dui Shaw" also won Best Cinematographer for Joaher Musavvir Jyoti and Abdul Mamun; Best Makeup Artist for Md Emon Hossen and Sworna Bhoumick; Best Editing for Fuad Shourav; Best Art Director for Rainirr Borshon; and Best Costume Designer for Edila Farid Turin. Rajesh Saha, Sajib Ranjan Biswas and Rasheed Sharif Shoaib shared Best Sound Design.

In the music categories, "Premeri Jokhom" from "Ghumpori" won three awards: Best Lyricist for Jahid Preetom, Best Singer for Mahtim Shakib and Shithi Saha, and Best Music Composer for Jahid Nirob. Nirob thanked the singers for bringing the song to life.

Ishaan Mozumder won Best Music (Digital Platforms) for "Gulbahar", while Ruslan Rehman won the Critics' Choice award for Best Background Score for "Gulmohor".

Ruslan said awards made his otherwise ordinary life feel extraordinary for a few days, bringing particular joy to his mother and elder brother. He thanked the organisers for recognising background scoring, saying such honours helped music directors overcome the social anxiety associated with working largely behind the scenes. He also thanked his colleagues and the "Gulmohor" team.

In the Individual Content categories, Sunehra Tasnim won Best Content Creator of the Year under Popular Choice, while Syed Rashad Imam Tanmoy took the Critics' Choice honour.

"Awards have never been my primary motivation. It's my audience, their love and the work that I get to create that keep me going," Sunehra said.

Tanmoy recalled how a rickshaw puller once recognised his cartoons, convincing him that videos could take his drawings to audiences he had been unable to reach through newspapers over 15 years.

Nadir On The Go won Best Content Creator (Food & Recipe/Travel), while Sameerscane won Best Content Creator (Infotainment/Podcast).

Sameerscane, who said he had previously attended the ceremony only to support friends, thanked his family.

"I just want to thank my parents for always allowing me to pursue content creation," he said.

The evening also featured performances by Sunerah Binte Kamal and Irfan Sajjad, as well as Mehazabien Chowdhury. Musician Emon Chowdhury's band -- Bengal Symphony -- also took the stage.

Rafsan Sabab and Afsan Ara Bindu hosted the ceremony.

Four million displaced in central Sahel: UN

AFP, *Geneva*

The United Nations yesterday raised the alarm about a displacement crisis in the central Sahel where nearly four million people have been forced to flee their homes in Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger.

The number is more than double that of six years ago, the UN refugee agency (UNHCR) said, before a wave of coups in a region bedevilled by instability and violence.

It includes 818,000 refugees and asylum seekers, it added.

"The crisis is being compounded by continued attacks affecting civilians, climate-related shocks and severe humanitarian funding shortfalls," the UNHCR said in a statement.

In 2020, the UNHCR said the region had counted more than 1.7 million internally displaced people and 365,000 refugees.

"Together, these pressures are forcing more families to flee, eroding livelihoods and limiting opportunities for displaced people to rebuild their lives, contributing to further movements within and beyond the region," said Abdouraouf Gnon-Konde, UNHCR's regional director for west and central Africa.

"Unfortunately, the international attention is receding," he added in Geneva, following a visit to the region.

Gnon-Konde added that the instability was ramping up pressure on the asylum system as affected countries struggle with weak public services.

Delhi turns into a fortress

FROM PAGE 1

Anger over the voter verification drive, which began last year, has become one of the biggest political controversies since Prime Minister Narendra Modi came to power in 2014. The controversy comes ahead of crucial state elections beginning early next year.

Election Commission data, also cited by the BJP, shows that about 130 million names -- more than Japan's population -- have been deleted from voter lists during the verification exercise. These include 63 million people who had relocated, 30 million who could not be traced and 28 million who had died.

Opposition parties say the deletions affected the outcomes of some recent state elections won by Modi's Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), casting a shadow over the electoral process in the world's largest democracy.

A wave of street protests, including in New Delhi, has attracted key leaders from India's main opposition Congress party, including Rahul Gandhi, who was briefly detained during rallies this week.

Rahul, the leader of the opposition in parliament, and other opposition leaders met President Droupadi Murmu late yesterday and submitted a memorandum of their complaints against ECI chief Gyanesh Kumar over alleged voter theft.

"The president sought proof of vote theft... and we will share the proof happily," Rahul told reporters after meeting Murmu.

Thousands of police and paramilitary personnel, including some from sensitive areas such as Indian Kashmir, were being sent to the capital for the protest, according to a government document seen by Reuters.

The Cockroach movement, however, remained defiant.

"The youth of this country are no longer scared of you," founder Abhijeet Dipke said in a post on X, addressing Modi ahead of the protest.

PRAYER TIMING
OCTOBER 10

	Fazr	Zohr	Asr	Maghrib	Esha
AZAN	4-40	12-45	4-15	5-45	7-15
JAMAAT	5-20	1-15	4-30	5-50	7-45

SOURCE: **ISLAMIC FOUNDATION**

Honouring literary legacies

FROM PAGE 3

He acknowledged the need for government patronage of arts and literature but cautioned against partisan divisions in such support.

"We do not want such divisions to enter the literary and creative fields," he said, stressing the importance of freedom of thought in intellectual pursuits.

Noting that literature is not a particularly lucrative profession, Wahiduddin said people pursue it out of creative instinct but deserve at least a minimum level of recognition.

"This award is a form of such recognition," he said, welcoming the initiative to recognise young writers as an encouragement to emerging talent.

At the 2024 awards, Abul Ahsan Choudhury won in the essay, autobiography, travel and translation category for his book "Vidyasagar, Bankimchandra, Rabindranath and Musolman Samaj".

Anwara Syed Haq won in the poetry and novel category for "Shomoy Bohiya Gelo", while Nizam Biswas received the Young Writer Award for writing "Jolmakorer Noukabaich".

For 2025, Nasreen Jahan won in the essay, autobiography, travel and translation category for her book "Paloker Chinhogulo".

Shaheen Akhtar won in the poetry and novel category for the book "Manchitra", while Mahbub Mayukh Rishad received the Young Writer Award for "Cyanide Phool".

A total of 460 books were submitted for the 2024 awards and 510 for 2025. A jury comprising Begum Akhtar Kamal, Faizul Latif Chowdhury, Abid Anwar and Khalikuzzaman Elias selected the winning books.

The Lifetime Achievement Award recipients received Tk 5 lakh each, while winners in the essay, autobiography, travel and translation, and poetry and novel categories received Tk 3 lakh each. The Young Writer Award winners received Tk 2 lakh each.

The winners were also given crests and citations.

BRAC Bank Vice Chairperson Faruq Mayeenuddin Ahmed said the award has become a unique example in society, inspiring writers and readers to engage more deeply with literature.

He said the initiative also carries a greater responsibility to nurture talent, intellectual depth and creativity across the country.

BRAC Bank Additional Managing Director and Head of SME Banking Syed Abdul Momen said the award has established a firm place in the country's literary landscape, encouraging creative minds and providing a platform for emerging writers.

Daily Samakal Editor Shahed Mohammad Ali said literature and culture are integral to quality journalism, adding that the newspaper will continue to promote cultural values as part of its journalistic mission.

AK Azad, managing director of Ha-Meem Group and Times Media Limited, said the initiative reflects a commitment to social responsibility and expressed hope that it would grow in scale and impact.

Literary figures and eminent personalities attended the event.

Probe body recommends

FROM PAGE 12

JCD assistant general secretary; and Tanim Rahman of the mass communication and journalism and a JCD activist.

It also recommended further investigation before taking action against Rakibul Islam, assistant cultural affairs secretary of the Rajshahi University Central Students' Union (Rucsu), for his alleged role in instigating the incident.

Meanwhile, the committee recommended warnings for JCD vice-presidents Bulbul Rahman and Shariful Islam, and assistant office secretary Shahriar Alam.

At the briefing, the VC said the probe committee's report clearly stated that further investigation is needed into the matter.

Prof Rezaul Karim, convener of the probe committee, said Ariful Islam and Rakibul had played roles in instigating the incident.

Dengue battle grows harder amid ICU crisis

FROM PAGE 12

HM Nazmul Ahsan, associate professor at Shaheed Suhrawardy Medical College Hospital, said such fluctuations were not typical of uncomplicated dengue but could occur due to additional infections or complications, particularly in severe cases involving shock.

He said hospitals were struggling to accommodate critically ill dengue patients, with ICU beds not always available.

At Shaheed Suhrawardy Medical College Hospital, the existing 100 beds remained unchanged, but additional spaces were being arranged in different wards to accommodate dengue patients.

As a result, some patients were being treated outside designated dengue wards.

Nazmul said most dengue patients, including many who develop shock, could be managed in general wards with appropriate treatment and supportive care. Only a small proportion require ICU admission.

However, patients with other serious conditions, including heart disease, heart attacks or additional infections, may need advanced support beyond fluid therapy and might require transfer to hospitals with available ICU beds.

He also stressed the need for accessible dengue testing facilities near people's homes, particularly for low-income communities in urban and rural areas.

Early diagnosis was crucial, he said, as many patients resumed work once their fever subsided despite remaining vulnerable to complications.

"If a person knows that they have dengue, they may stay at home and rest for around 10 days," he added.

According to the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS), at least 295 dengue patients died, and 95,451 others were hospitalised this year as of yesterday.