

Ashrayan homes bring smile to millions

Staff Correspondent

Realising the sufferings of the homeless marginal and ultra-poor people, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, after coming to power in 1996, envisioned the Ashrayan project for rehabilitation of the millions.

"In all shabby weather particularly during monsoon and winter, we had to face unbound sufferings, as I virtually lived under the open sky," according to Monira Begum, one of the beneficiaries of the Prime Minister's Ashrayan Project. Now, smiles glowed on Monira's face after receiving her dream home at Lakshmipur district, about 190 km from capital Dhaka. Like Monira, a small piece of land and home on it has made thousands of shelter-less people happy as they got it as 'gift', free of cost from the Prime Minister. "Ashrayan project has changed the lifestyle of my family, as the home provided

me with the sources of livelihood and creating some other facilities as well like water supply, hygiene and sanitation," according to Monira. In rural Bangladesh, thousands of people, since country's independence, used to live floating from one place to another to sustain their lives. They had no permanent address. "After 50 years of independence we have got our permanent address at Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's noble gesture," Monira observed. The Ashrayan project-home for the homeless- is seen as a "Sheikh Hasina Model" for inclusive development. So far, around 10 lakh families received such homes across the country, giving shelter to more than 3.5 million people. According to the officials, in the first phase of their project, a total of 63,999 houses were distributed among poor while 53,330 houses were given in the second phase and

▶ see page-2



Speaker Dr. Shirin Sharmin Chowdhury inaugurated 'Green TV' by cutting a cake at Bashundhara International Convention City in the capital. Meanwhile, the Minister of Information and Broadcasting, Hasan Mahmud was present. -PID

Myanmar not diligent despite talking repatriation: Momen

Staff Correspondent

Foreign Minister AK Abdul Momen on Saturday reproached Myanmar for not showing due diligence about taking its displaced nationals back despite the repatriation pledge of Rohingya refugees living in Bangladesh.

"Myanmar has promised to take back their Rohingya population, but has not taken the initiative to implement it, the minister complained at a seminar on Rohingya repatriation in the city on Saturday.

Noting Bangladesh's all-out effort to solve the enduring

▶ see page-2

State Minister Kamal seeks death penalty for food adulterators

Staff Correspondent

State Minister of Industries Kamal Ahmed Majumder has said that traders who adulterate food should be jailed for life or hanged for their crimes. "White sugar is made with chemicals that have the potential to cause cancer," he said while speaking as the special guest at a Bangladesh Standard and Testing Institute (BSTI) organised discussion marking the World Metrology Day on Saturday (20 May).

There is a need for collective efforts against those who adulterate food items and use inaccurate weighing scales, he added.

▶ see page-2

The drug invasion undaunted, undeterred

Staff Correspondent

Zabirul Islam (not his real name) had been waiting outside an apartment in the capital's Kalabagan for more than an hour. His impatience was evident in his jittery demeanor. "I will wait only 30 more minutes," he said. He had said the same an hour ago. Zabirul, 22, was waiting for his next hit. His drug dealer was not responding as quickly as promised. Eventually, he would find another dealer, wait again and continue the cycle until his needs were met. The scourge of drugs has become an inescapable epidemic. The threats of arrest, imprisonment and even death fail to act as a deterrent. The latest Annual Drug Report of Bangladesh 2022 reveals some worrying figures. The floodgates have opened, with nothing stymieing the spread of the crazy medicine yaba or the proliferation of Phensedyl. From 2010 to 2022, within a decade yaba seizures rose to around 4.5 crore of pieces from some 8 lakh, meaning it

was 50 times higher. On the other hand, despite law enforcement agencies claiming they had increased vigilance, data shows that more Phensedyl has been smuggled this year compared to previous years. According to the



Department of Narcotics Control (DNC), around 7 lakh bottles of Phensedyl were seized in 2022 by all law enforcement agencies, including the police, the Border Guard Bangladesh, and the DNC. In the previous year, the seizure was a little shy of 6 lakh bottles. Besides, 4.59 crore yaba tablets were seized last year across the country, a dip from the 5.31 crore - the

highest in ten years - registered in 2021. According to a study by the United Nations Office for Drug and Crime, only 8-10% of the total smuggled narcotics is usually seized by law enforcers. Those concerned have tried to ramp up the pressure on drug dealers.

The DNC alone set up around 2,783 temporary checkpoints on the bordering districts in the fiscal 2021-22.

Besides, the DNC conducted 92,627 operations and filed 22,169 narcotics cases across the country.

Police, RAB and other law enforcement agencies made fighting narcotics their top priority. In the meantime, courts are swamped with thousands of narcotics related cases. Yet, nothing seems to be working. 80 lakh and counting Jennifer (not her real name) had arrived in Dhaka from California, USA in 2013. Having grown up in the US, she had family but no friends in Bangladesh. A chance meeting with a boy outside a coffee

▶ see page-2

Quader wants to know specific time of gov't fall from Fakhru

Staff Correspondent

Awami League (AL) General Secretary Obaidul Quader today urged BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhru Islam Alamgir to disclose whether the directives of their movements to oust the government will come from London or Thakurgaon.

Pointing out at Fakhru, he said: "If the date of when the government has to leave is known, the government can make preparations to leave. Besides, it's also better to be known that whether the storm of falling of the government is coming from London or Thakurgaon."

"BNP is saying every day that the government's time is over so as the general secretary

▶ see page-2

Bangladesh seeks int'l community's support in implementing Rohingya pilot repatriation project

Staff Correspondent

Bangladesh has sought international community's support in implementing the Rohingya pilot repatriation project.

"We urge the United Nations, ASEAN and regional countries to support the pilot repatriation project and help the Rohingya returnees reintegrate in Myanmar"- said the Permanent Representative of Bangladesh to the United Nations in New York Ambassador Muhammad Abdul Muhith while speaking at the Security Council aria formula meeting on Myanmar.

The meeting convened by the United Kingdom was held at the United Nations Headquarters today.

Referring to the recent dialogue between Bangladesh and Myanmar, Ambassador Muhith informed the Security Council that the two sides have decided to undertake a pilot repatriation project under which a group of verified Myanmar nationals will return to Myanmar in the first batch.

The repatriation will continue and additional Rohingyas will be repatriated in successive batches. He further informed that a group of 20 Rohingya visited Rakhine State on 5 May 2023 to see arrangements made in Myanmar for their return.

Citing the pilot project as an important step in the right direction, Permanent Representative said that Bangladesh is taking all measures to ensure the voluntary return of the Rohingyas in family units. Ambassador

▶ see page-2



The Homecoming Day of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina was celebrated on the initiative of Bangabandhu Parishad

Staff Correspondent

This morning at the Abdus Salam Hall of the National Press Club on the initiative of Bangabandhu Parishad, the historic 17th May (1981) Homecoming Day of Honorable Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, 20th May (1971) Chuknagar Genocide Day and 23rd May (1973) Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman by the World Peace Council A discussion meeting was held on the occasion of the Julio Curie Peace Medal Award Day. "Your homecoming, we have returned Bangabandhu's philosophy of development and peace" the acting president of the organization Prof. Dr. Under the chairmanship of AMS Arefin Siddique and moderated by Organizing Secretary SM Lutfar Rahman, eminent journalist and former information advisor to the Prime Minister Iqbal Sobhan Chowdhury, renowned historian, researcher and writer Prof. Muntasir Mamun, General Secretary of Bangabandhu Parishad Prof. AB M

Farooq, Jom. General Secretary Matiur Rahman Laltu, Organizing Secretary, Ed. Abdus Salam, Participating in the discussion, Professor Muntasir Mamun said that there is no sustainable development without cultural development. Today, the country is on the highway of development because the people's leader Sheikh Hasina returned to the country. Bangladesh is a role model for development in the world meeting. He regretted that there is no PhD degree on Bangabandhu, but it is in the name of Ziaur Rahman. Iqbal Sobhan Chowdhury said, after spending 6 years in exile, the public leader returned home that day, nature welcomed her and the people of Bengal warmly greeted her. What he promised that day, he is implementing today. Professor ABM Farooq said that the Prime Minister is the shaper of modern Bangladesh. The digital Bangladesh he envisioned has been fulfilled today. In the president's speech, Professor Dr. AMS Arefin Siddique said, Jannetri Deshratna Prime Minister

▶ see page-2


Unquestioned amnesty to black money may not continue

Staff Correspondent

Holders of black money in Bangladesh are unlikely to get the opportunity to legalise their undeclared wealth without facing any questions about the sources of their income in the next fiscal year, officials said.

Besides, the unquestioned amnesty to bring back money stashed abroad may also not continue in 2023-24, which begins in July. The move might come as no taxpayer has declared in their tax returns to have brought back their untaxed income by using the opportunity to legalise the wealth by paying only 7 per cent tax, which is less than a third of the highest tax rate of 25 per cent applied to personal income in Bangladesh. The National Board


▶ see page-2



MOBILE APP
DOWNLOAD NOW

Available on the App Store

GET IT ON Google Play



DAILY FLIGHT TO DUBAI

Stretching Wings TO NEW HORIZON

DHAKA → DUBAI		DUBAI → DHAKA	
DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL
06:30 PM	10:00 PM	11:30 PM	06:00 AM+1
MON, THU, FRI & SUN		MON, THU, FRI & SUN	
05:30 PM	09:00 PM	10:30 PM	05:00 AM+1
TUE		TUE	
03:55 PM	07:25 PM	08:55 PM	03:25 AM+1
WED		WED	

usair.com | usair

15404 | 01277777800-804



UK-Bangladesh trade hits record £4.7b in 2022

Staff Correspondent

In a significant milestone in bilateral trade, the United Kingdom (UK) and Bangladesh witnessed a remarkable surge in trade volume, with the total trade reaching a record £4.7 billion (\$5.83bn) in 2022.

The UK's Department for Business and Trade released these figures on Thursday, revealing a substantial

increase of 50.4% compared to the previous year. The trade balance heavily favoured Bangladesh, largely attributed to its thriving readymade garments (RMG) sector, which accounted for the lion's share of the trade. The UK's total imports from Bangladesh surged by 54.0% to £3.8 billion in 2022. At the same time, UK exports to Bangladesh increased by

36.7% to reach £897 million during the same period. Syedur Rahman Ranu, president of British Bangladesh Chamber of Commerce & Industry (BBCCI) told The Business Standard that bilateral ties with the UK have further strengthened in recent times, which is reflected in the trade volumes as well. "Many countries are boosting business ties with" [▶ see page-7](#)

1000 pieces of yaba recovered in police operation in Brahmaputra, arrest 3

Abdul Quader, Kurigram:

Three drug dealers were arrested by the police in a raid on the Brahmaputra river in Ulipur upazila of Kurigram. Meanwhile, 1000 pieces of yaba have been recovered. On Thursday (May 18) at around 8:30 p.m., the police conducted the raid in Gendar Alga area of Alga Union of Upazila Saheb. The district police informed this information in a message sent on Friday (May 19) morning. The arrested persons are Habibur Rahman (27), Mohsin Mia (23) of Dai Khawar Char area on the west bank of Brahmaputra river in Gendar Alga village of Union and Ripon Mia (18) of Kazaikata village of Roumari upazila. According to the district police, around 8:30 pm on Thursday night, a team of Namazer Char Police Investigation Center of Ulipur police station raided the curd eating" [▶ see page-7](#)

Wild elephant attack on border BGB-BSF meeting



বর্ডার গার্ড বাংলাদেশ
ময়মনসিংহ ব্যাটালিয়ন (৩৯ বিজিবি)



Ayub Ali Mymensingh: Border Guard Bangladesh, BGB Mymensingh Sector 3 battalion responsible border areas (Mymensingh, Sherpur, Jamalpur and Netrakona) held a public awareness meeting on the attack of wild elephants. Today, a public awareness meeting was held in the presence of Union Parishad Chairman, UP members, dignitaries and general public of 37 Unions along with BOP commanders in

order to protect the lives and crops of the bordering public from the intrusion and attack of wild elephants in the mentioned border areas. It is to be noted that five Bangladeshis were killed in the attack of wild elephants in the mentioned border area in five months. Among them, there are five Bangladeshis including 2 in Haruaghat, 1 in Dhobaura and 2 in Sherpur border. This information" [▶ see page-7](#)

1,300 sued, 13 arrested after Police, BNP clash in Khulna

Staff Correspondent

Some 1,300 unnamed people have been sued following clashes between BNP leaders and activists with the police in Khulna. SI Khalid Uddin filed the case with Khulna Sadar police station on Friday (19 May) night, confirmed the police station's OC Hasan Al Mamun to The Business Standard. He said, "The case, suing some 1,200-1,300 people, was filed yesterday night. The 49 people who have been named in the case include BNP Information Affairs Secretary Azizul Nari Helal and" [▶ see page-7](#)

Maize making its mark on farmers' lives

Staff Correspondent

In 1991, when Abul Kasem, a farmer of Hatibandha upazila in Lalmonirhat, a northwest bordering district, decided to cultivate maize, he was one of the few growers in his area. The yield of the grain" [▶ see page-7](#)

Distribution of training certificate among Asharyan-2 project beneficiaries in Buraburi Union of Tentulia

Panchagarh representative: Under the project entitled 'Shelter-2 Project (Poor, Liberation and Rehabilitation)', certificates of ten-day income-generating and vocational training have been distributed for the purpose of rehabilitating the beneficiaries of Shelter-2 Project of Buraburi Union of Tentulia Upazila of Panchagarh. On Friday (May 19) at 10:30 a.m., this charter was distributed at the Buraburi Union Parishad hall in the



organization of the upazila administration and with the cooperation of the upazila youth development office and under the supervision of the" [▶ see page-7](#)

Free eye camp organized by Thakurgaon district police

Shamsul Alam: Thakurgaon District Police organized a free eye camp for the treatment of the helpless and distressed. A camp was held at Police Lines Drill Shed yesterday Saturday. Thakurgaon Police Super Mohammad Jahangir Hossain inaugurated the eye camp organized by Thakurgaon District Police and in collaboration with Deep Eye Care Foundation of Rangpur. Additional Superintendent of Police (Administration and Finance) Liza Begum, President of Thakurgaon Press Club Mansoor Ali, Director of Rangpur Deep Eye Care Foundation AKM Feroz Alam Saifullah, Officer Logistics and Hospitality Service Md. Masuk Mehbub, Medical Officer Dr. Musfiqur were present among others. Alam, Dr. Sazzadul Bari Rocky, Jr. Field Coordinator Md. Sadrul Hasan Raju, various members of the district police, various doctors, officials and employees involved in medical work and patients who came for treatment. During this time free eye services were provided to 70 eye patients from different upazilas of the district. Services include eye examination, visual acuity and other tests. Patients who require glasses or first aid are treated at the camp. Also, all the patients who need cataract or other operations will be taken to Rangpur by Deep Eye Care Foundation and will be brought back to Thakurgaon after the free operation, said the Superintendent of Police. Nasima Begum of Bara Khochabari village of Sadar Upazila and Chandra Basak, an elder of Bara Balia village of Sadar Upazila who came for treatment, Kajli Rani from Ranishankail Upazila said that this is a wonderful and commendable initiative. They are happy to receive medical care here" [▶ see page-7](#)

Sylhet Mayor Ariful to skip city polls

Staff Correspondent

Ariful Haque Chowdhury on Saturday announced he will not participate in the upcoming Sylhet City Corporation elections, ending speculation over his candidacy amid BNP's decision to boycott the polls. The city's current mayor announced his decision on Saturday (20 May) while addressing a rally at Sylhet Registry Ground. Ariful Haque said, "A fair election is not" [▶ see page-7](#)

Onion prices double in a month

Staff Correspondent

Onion prices hit Tk 90 per kg on Friday, reflecting a staggering about 100 per cent increase within a month, according to trading sources. Onion was selling between Tk 42 and Tk 45 per kg nearly a month back. As prices of the kitchen staple show no sign of calming down amid a severe market volatility, Commerce Minister Tipu Munshi on Friday said that the government would consider allowing onion import. "If the price of onions does not decrease within the next one or two days, the government will consider importing it," said the commerce minister in Rangpur. The minister said that the prices of essential commodities are currently under control, except for onions and sugar. Despite the government setting sugar prices at Tk 120-125 per kg on May 4, the actual prices remain as high as Tk 140-150 per kg. "We do not control the market of raw produce as it falls under the purview of different ministries," said Tipu Munshi. However, he assured reporters that the overall situation is "not dire", as fluctuations in raw produce prices are "natural". He also attributed temporary price hikes in the" [▶ see page-7](#)

Singer Nobel detained, taken to DB office for interrogation

Staff Correspondent

Singer Mainul Ahsan Nobel has been taken into custody after being detained by the Detective Branch (DB) of Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP) this morning (Saturday, 20 May).

The singer has been taken to the Dhaka DB office for quizzing over a case filed for fraud and a complaint filed by his wife, a DB official confirmed to The Business Standard while seeking anonymity.

According to sources, the case was filed last week with the Motijheel police station as the Sa Re Ga Ma Pa-famed singer skipped a prescheduled event.

Reportedly, one Md Shafayet Islam, a former student of Shariatpur's Bhedarganj Headquarter Pilot Govt High School, filed the case on 16 May.

The following day, a Dhaka" [▶ see page-7](#)



Distribution of rations and cash among fire victims in Mirpur, Kushtia

Bablu Ranjan Biswas Kushtia:

Mirpur Upazila of Kushtia distributed cash and cash to families affected by natural calamities and fires. At 9:30 am on Saturday morning, cash and cash were distributed among 24 affected families at the Upazila Auditorium. Jasad President Kushtia-2 (Mirpur-Bheramara) Constituency Member of Parliament Hasanul Haque Inu was present as the chief guest on the occasion. Upazila Executive Officer (Acting) Harun Or Rashid, Mirpur Thana Officer In-Charge Rafiqul Islam, Jasad Central Committee Member and Upazila Jasad General Secretary Ahmed Ali, Jasad Central Committee Member Mohammad Abdullah, Upazila Jasad Joint General Secretary Karshed Alam, were present as special guests. Saidur Rahman Montu, President of Bahalbaria Union Jasad, Abdul Jalil, President of Chation Union Jasad. Former Chairman of Amla Union Parishad Aftab Uddin, Principal of Sagarkhali Adarsha College Rabiul Islam, Organizing Secretary of Municipal Jasad Nasir Uddin Tokon, Headmaster of Jahanara Secondary School Enamul Islam, Women Alliance Leader Shefali Khatun, Ruma Khatun, Youth" [▶ see page-7](#)



Industries Minister Nurul Majid Mahmood Humayun delivered the chief guest speech at the discussion meeting on the occasion of "World Metrology Day" at BSTI head office in Tezgaon, capital. State Minister for Industries Kamal Ahmed Majumder was present

4 detained in Khagrachari for forced body trade

Khagrachari Representative:

The police arrested 4 people on the charge of forcing a young woman who had escaped from a Tabalchhari into prostitution at Gamaridhala in Khagrachari district headquarters.

When they were sent to court on Thursday (May 18) afternoon, the court ordered them to be sent to jail.

The arrested are members of the same family, Setara Begum, daughter Amena Begum, Shamima Akhter and her husband Ismail Hossain. On Wednesday (May 17) afternoon, the police arrested them from their home in Gamaridhala area of the district headquarters. The victim, Bilkich Akhter (20), said that he could not bear the torture of his step-mother and ran away from his house in Tabalchhari Gaurang neighborhood of Matiranga district and came to Khagrachari on May 11. Come to Jeromile area of ??the city and look for

work. From there, a woman took her to a house in Gamaridhala area of ??Khagrachari Sadar Union, saying that she would work for a salary of 4,000 taka. There, the girl was intimidated and forced into an immoral relationship in exchange for money. At that time, about 10 people including Pahari-Bengali raped her. Last Tuesday (May 16) afternoon, an old man went to that house and helped him escape. Additional Superintendent of Police of Khagrachari Circle Jinia Chakma said that based on the complaint of the victim, the police arrested the accused and brought them to the police station. In this incident, a case was filed under the Prevention of Human Trafficking Act at the Sadar police station. The 4 arrested persons were handed over to the court on Thursday afternoon after preliminary interrogation. He said that further action will be taken after the investigation.

Brahmanbaria Yabas and 2 people detained

Brahmanbaria Correspondent:

A raiding team of RAB-14 Bhairav camp arrested two drug smugglers with 26 thousand 700 Yaba tablets from Brahmanbaria while smuggling from Cox's Bazar to Dhaka. This information was informed through a press release sent by RAB at around 11 o'clock on Friday. Earlier on Thursday evening, they were arrested from Nandanpur area of ??Brahmanbaria Sadar Upazila on Comilla-Sylhet highway. The arrested are - Abu Said Akib (26) of Chakaria police station of Cox's Bazar district and Lama police station of Bandarban district. Hefaz Uddin" [▶ see page-7](#)

