

SUBMARINE CABLE

# BTTB given unlawful control over network

Other ISPs will be discriminated against

**ABU SAEED KHAN**  
The government violated the law by allowing the state-run telecoms monopoly to own and operate the country's only submarine cable network. Bangladesh Telegraph and Telephone Board (BTTB) built the SEA-ME-WE4 submarine cable and its associated infrastructure from the earnings of its other telecoms ventures and the law explicitly prohibits such practices of subsidisation.

provides more than one service, but there exists competition in the market in providing one of such services and no competition in case of another service provided by him, then subsidy from the earnings of the service which is subject to competition shall not be allowed for the other service which is not subject to competition."  
BTTB built the cable's landing station in Cox's Bazar and from there it deployed an optical fibre link up to Chittagong from the earnings of its fixed telephony, Internet and data connectivity services. This is

what the law explicitly prohibits because the private sector is also offering all these three categories of services through competition.  
Therefore, the government cannot build the submarine cable from the earnings of the services 'which are subject to competition' and it must take away the submarine cable's control from BTTB's grip as soon as possible to comply with the legal provision and create a level playing field to foster the growth of telecommunications and ICT

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## Jalil submits contempt petition against CEC

BDNEWS, Dhaka

Awami League (AL) General Secretary Abdul Jalil yesterday filed a contempt petition with the High Court against the chief election commissioner (CEC) the election commissioner and the secretary of the Election Commission for non-compliance with the High Court directives over preparation of the voter list.

After hearing the contempt petition, a division bench of the High Court comprising Justice MA Matin and Justice ATM Fazle Kabir, fixed Tuesday (today) for delivering order on the petition.

Jalil in his contempt petition accused the CEC MA Aziz, Election Commissioners Justice Mahfuzur Rahman and SM Zakaria and

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PHOTO: SYED ZAKIR HOSSAIN

Buyers of plots in Rajuk's Purbachal project on the Balu river pay their last instalments this year but no development at the site is visible except land filling.

## 14-party to defer Dhaka siege again

HASAN JAHD TUSHER

The Awami League-led 14-party opposition combine is going to defer its June 5 Dhaka siege programme for the second time as it coincides with the A-level examinations.

Leaders of the 14-party opposition alliance will sit today at alliance coordinator Abdul Jalil's Nam flat to fix a new date for the agitation programme, opposition sources said.

The programme will reiterate their demand for reforms in the caretaker government system, Election Commission (EC) and cancellation of draft voter list.

"We are now considering to hold back the Dhaka siege programme

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## Diarrhoea cases mark sharp rise in city

About 450 being hospitalised a day as weather turns sultry

SHAHEEN MOLLAH

Outbreak of diarrhoea, cholera and other diseases due to the scorching heat of midsummer is causing a huge rush of patients to different hospitals in the capital.

International Centre for Diarrhoeal Disease and Research, Bangladesh (ICDDR,B), Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH), Mitford and Dhaka Shishu Hospital have been facing the influx of patients suffering from these diseases.

Dr Mohammad Shahadat Hossain of ICDDR,B told The Daily

Star that though an average of 180-220 patients usually get admitted to the hospital daily for different water borne diseases all the year round, the number increases sharply during the period of March-May and August-September.

On average, around 450 patients are now hospitalised daily for diarrhoeal diseases, he added. Most of them are children and day-labourers, who work in the sun.

"Though people in the country suffer from diarrhoea more or less all the year round, during the summer

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## BCL leader hacked to death

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Criminals hacked a Bangladesh Chhatra League leader to death at Shyampur in the city early yesterday.

The deceased, Amir Hossain Tanvir, 24, was the vice-president of Shyampur unit of the opposition Awami League's student front and was involved in the transport business.

Shyampur police said they have arrested two youths, Ratan and Zakir Hossain, in connection with Tanvir's murder. Police said the arrestees admitted their involvement in the murder and were sent to a court to record their confessional statements.

Ratan and Zakir were not named in the first information

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## Jubo Sangram lays siege to EC Secretariat, election offices

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Jubo Sangram Parishad (JSP), a platform of the opposition's youth fronts, yesterday laid siege to the Election Commission (EC) Secretariat in Dhaka and district election offices across the country.

The JSP announced the programme to press home its demands for immediate cancellation of the draft voter list, removal

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## 80 Taliban, 16 civilians killed in US-led air raid

AFP, Kandahar

Up to 80 Taliban rebels and at least 16 civilians were killed yesterday during a coalition air and ground attack on a village in southern Afghanistan, officials and witnesses said.

The US-led coalition said it called in warplanes after troops who were trying to capture insurgents in Kandahar province came under fire, while a governor said some of the militants had hidden in local people's houses.

Bloodied men, women and children who streamed into a nearby hospital using vehicles that withstood the bombing said dozens of civilians died and scores more were wounded.

The air strike came amid some of the worst violence since the 2001 fall of the Taliban in Afghanistan. Around 300 people have been killed in the past week, about twice the number reported killed in Iraq.

"Coalition forces conducted a significant operation early this morning in the Kandahar region near the village of Azizi that resulted in the unconfirmed deaths of possibly up to 80 Taliban members," a coalition statement said.

There were 20 confirmed deaths among "active members of the Taliban network" and 60 uncon-

firmed fatalities in the operation, the third in the area in a week.

"The purpose of this morning's operation was to detain individuals suspected of terrorist and anti-Afghanistan activities. However, during the operation, coalition forces encountered organized armed opposition," it said.

"Ground and close air support assets engaged the extremists, who were firing on coalition troops and endangering innocent civilians," the statement added.

The coalition said it was investigating reports of civilian deaths. Its troops "only targeted armed resistance, compounds and buildings known to harbour extremists," the statement said.

Kandahar provincial governor Asadullah Khalid told reporters that at least 16 civilians were killed and 15 wounded in the attack.

"There were reports that the Taliban were in this village but when the US planes started bombardment the Taliban used the people's houses as a front - that's why there were civilian casualties," Khalid said at the main hospital in Kandahar city, 35km east of the bombed area.

An elderly man, Attah

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## Janata Bank to be managed by consultant firm

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government is giving the management of state-run Janata Bank to its consultation firm International Development Ireland (IDI) Ltd.

A contract between the IDI and the government is going to be struck soon and the hand-over will see a change in the post of the bank's managing director (MD).

The Irish firm has been working as the consultant for Janata Bank since last year.

The IDI has already sent four names - Janata Bank MD SM Aminur Rahman, City Bank MD Abbas Uddin Ahmed, Oriental Bank MD CM Qoyesh Sami and former Sonali Bank MD SA Chowdhury - for the post of chief

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PHOTO: STAR/FOCUS BANGLA

Agitating garment workers, left, set fire to a bus at Purba Narshinghapur in Ashulia in Savar yesterday. Firefighters try to tame the blaze at Bando Design factory in the area which the workers set afire.

## Journalist Golam Rasul Mallick passes away

UNB, Dhaka

Veteran journalist and chief editor of now-defunct Eastern News Agency (ENA) Golam Rasul Mallick died at Apollo Hospital in the city early yesterday. He was 68.

Golam Rasul was admitted to the hospital on Friday night following brain haemorrhage. He breathed his last at 12:15am, family sources said.

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Prayer Timing		
May 23		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	4-05	4-40
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	5-00	5-15
Maghrib	6-40	6-45
Esha	8-00	8-30

Source: Islamic Foundation

