

The Daily Star

SECOND EDITION



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"Expectation of the whole nation cannot be unfulfilled due to the indecision of some universities"
UGC CHAIRMAN PROFESSOR KAZI SHAHIDULLAH ON HOLDING COMBINED ADMISSION TESTS (PAGE 3)

"I feel like I'll wake up to find it's all a dream. It all feels very surreal."
SOUTH KOREAN FILMMAKER BONG JOON-HO AFTER HIS FILM PARASITE MADE HISTORY BY WINNING OSCAR FOR THE BEST PICTURE

"We have to be very tough obviously... there is no other remedy. Tough decisions are likely"
BCB PRESIDENT NAZMUL HASSAN AFTER BANGLADESH'S DISMAL LOSS IN THE FIRST TEST AGAINST PAKISTAN

UPGRADATION OF JOYDEVPUR-ELENGA HIGHWAY

Project delayed, cost doubles

- » Original cost Tk **2,788cr** » Original deadline March **2018**
- » Cost rose to Tk **5,593cr** » Extended deadline June **2020**
- » Tk **621cr** more sought » Extension sought till June **2022**

TUHIN SHUBHRA ADHIKARY

It's a classic case of how poor planning can increase the cost of a project and delay its implementation. The upgradation of the 70-kilometre road from Joydevpur to Elega in Tangail to a four-lane highway was due to be completed by March 2018 at a cost of Tk 2,788.45 crore. But thanks to poor planning, the deadline has been extended till June this year with the project cost escalating to more than two times the initial amount. The cost is set to go up again. In December last year, the authorities sought an additional Tk 621 crore and extension of the deadline till June 2022. Meant to improve the capital's link to 20 northern districts, the project has so far undergone three revisions, and the total cost has increased to Tk 5,593.15 crore. If the fourth revision is endorsed, the project cost will be Tk 6,214.41 crore.

Previous revisions predominantly sought funds for additional land acquisition to incorporate slow-moving lanes and more structures, as work on the project advanced. The 70km stretch is instrumental to Dhaka's road networks with the northern region and its upgradation will ensure better connectivity. The Roads and Highways Division (RHD) has been implementing this project, titled "SASEC Road Connectivity Project: Improvement of Joydevpur-Chandra-Tangail-Elega Road to a 4-lane Highway", since 2013. It is RHD's one of eight "mega projects" now under implementation. A government report cites a lack of advanced planning in the development project proposal (DPP) for the 70km road. Had it been better planned in advance, the cost of land acquisition in particular and other structural and time-bound expenses would have been much less.

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An under-construction flyover on the Dhaka-Tangail highway in Tangail Sadar's Rabna Bypass area. This is one of the nine flyovers being built under a project to upgrade a 70-kilometre stretch of the highway to a four-lane one. The project authorities may not be able to complete construction of four of the flyovers within an extended deadline ending in June. The photos were taken on Wednesday. PHOTO: MIRZA SHAKIL

No separate tribunal for drug cases

Cabinet okays bill dropping related provision

UNB, Dhaka

The cabinet yesterday approved in principle the draft of an amendment bill, dropping the provision of setting up separate narcotic control tribunals, to pave the way for competent courts to try narcotic-related crimes. Amid a huge backlog of narcotic cases, the draft of the Narcotics Control (amendment) Bill, 2020 was cleared at the weekly cabinet meeting, with Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina in the chair. The meeting was held at the Prime Minister's Office in the capital's Tejgaon. Briefing reporters at the Secretariat after the meeting, Cabinet Division Secretary (coordination and reform) Sheikh Mujibur Rahman said the bill was brought to include a provision of holding the trial of narcotic-related cases in the courts having

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HC bans all sorts of gambling

Directs govt to take steps to stop games involving money or luck all over the country

ASHUTOSH SARKAR

Declaring gambling in any form, involving cards or roll of the dice or luck and through games like bingo, a criminal offence, the High Court yesterday asked the government to stop these nationwide. These games depend on luck or chance and not on competence and therefore is banned by the law, the HC observed. Delivering the verdict on a writ petition, the court also ordered the law enforcers to immediately seize any kind of equipment used for gambling and to take action against the people who organise gambling or gamble. Since the Public Gambling Act 1867 was applicable outside metropolitan areas, the law needs to be updated and stricter punishment should be included, the court observed. It mentioned that the maximum punishment under the law was three months' jail and a fine of Tk 200. The court said Public Gambling Act 1867 was discriminatory since there was no scope for taking action against people for gambling and organising gambling in the metropolitan areas. Discrimination is contradictory to the constitution as

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'The Bangladesh fans deserve this win'

Bangladesh's first World Cup-winning captain, Under-19 skipper Akbar Ali talked to The Daily Star's Abdullah Al Mehdi over the phone from South Africa regarding the team's triumph, discussing his and the team's feelings after delivering the historic result.



The Daily Star (TDS): How does it feel to be Bangladesh's first World-Cup winning captain? Akbar Ali (AA): We can't express such feelings with words. We got the job done because we executed the plans that we had put forward. The Daily Star (TDS): Did you have the belief that you could win the World Cup? AA: We've been playing good cricket for the past year and we had the belief that we would be able to continue that trend at the World Cup. The cricket board should also be given credit for arranging so many matches in the last year. We got the chance for the best preparation and the plan bore fruit. TDS: You have a cool head under pressure and have drawn comparisons with

Dhoni... AA: We did not think along those lines and were thinking about the simple plans we had. Since we lost wickets quickly and the target was small, there was no dearth of deliveries. Keeping wickets intact was the only important factor. It's a bit much [Dhoni comparisons]. I don't follow him like that and try to be myself. I like a lot of players but don't follow anyone. TDS: Your favourite cricketer? AA: AB de Villiers. TDS: What about the arguments with Indian players that followed the match? AA: It was actually an unwanted incident that happened. Since it was a final, maybe some of them became emotional. We made mistakes and the Indian players made mistakes too. What I will say is that it was a good learning experience. Next time we can't do that again. TDS: Who would you dedicate this trophy to? SEE PAGE 11 COL 1

We may be seeing tip of the iceberg

WHO chief says cases outside China may be under-reported

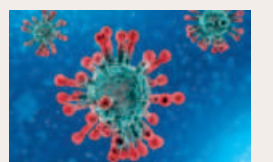
AFP, Geneva

The head of the World Health Organization has warned that confirmed cases of coronavirus being transmitted by people who have never travelled to China could be the "tip of the iceberg". Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus's remarks come as members of a WHO-led "international expert mission" flew to China yesterday to help coordinate a response to the outbreak. The death toll from the epidemic rose to 908, all but two in mainland China, on Sunday as 97 more fatalities were recorded - the largest number in a single day since the virus was detected in the city of Wuhan in December. Across mainland China, 3,062 new infections were confirmed on Sunday, bringing the total number to 40,171, according to the National Health Commission (NHC). "There've been some concerning instances of onward #2019nCoV spread from people with no travel history to (China)," Tedros tweeted Sunday, using the virus's provisional scientific name. "The detection of a small number of cases may indicate more widespread transmission in other countries; in short, we may only be seeing the tip of the iceberg." While the spread of the virus outside China appeared

RELATED STORY PAGE 2

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CORONAVIRUS



Total deaths **910**

Deaths in mainland China **908**

Confirmed cases **40,624**

Confirmed cases in China **40,171**

Worst hit Chinese region Hubei **(29,631 cases)**

Countries affected **25**

SOURCE: WHO



A day after their ICC Under-19 World Cup triumph, Bangladesh Under-19 cricketers take a selfie with the coveted trophy in Potchefstroom of South Africa yesterday. The young Tigers will return home this afternoon.

PHOTO: BCB

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Another Test humiliation

SPORTS REPORTER

Pakistan crushed Bangladesh, handing the Tigers a humiliating innings-and-44-run defeat on the fourth day at the Rawalpindi Cricket Stadium yesterday to take a 1-0 lead in the two-Test series. Bangladesh, who resumed the day on 126 for six, were bowled out for 168 in their second innings of the World Test Championship fixture. Despite a flat Rawalpindi pitch, Pakistan's pace and spin attack appeared too hot to handle for the Tigers, who could not put up any commendable partnerships throughout the Test. Pakistan pacer Naseem Shah, who at 16 years and 359 days became the youngest bowler to take a Test hat-trick on the third day, finished with figures of

29TH ANNIVERSARY SPECIAL SUPPLEMENTS

The Daily Star has been bringing out a series of diverse and informative supplements around this time of the year for quite some time. And this year too, we are pleased to bring out a five-part 200-page special supplement series, beginning February 12, on the occasion of the newspaper's 29th anniversary. Renowned experts from various fields have enriched these supplements with their insightful contributions.

The five segments are: "DEVELOPMENT, GOVERNANCE AND A SUSTAINABLE BANGLADESH" which features a collection of articles on the many challenges on the path to developing a sustainable Bangladesh.

"LIFESTYLE EVOLUTIONS" which covers how our everyday lives have changed forever due to giant leaps in technology.

"REIMAGINING GROWTH IN THE DIGITAL AGE" which sheds light on the most critical issues concerning the future growth of Bangladesh.

"DIGITISATION AND INCLUSIVITY: TAKING EVERYONE ALONG" which looks at the challenges and opportunities digitisation presents towards creating an inclusive society.

"THE YOUTH IN THE ERA OF DIGITALISATION" which focuses on how our resilient youth created opportunities for growth, innovation and employment in this era of rapid digitalisation.

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