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The Daily Star

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Jamuna Bridge to open on schedule in June
By Staff Correspondent
The 940 million US dollar Jamuna Multipurpose Bridge (JMB) is expected to be opened as per schedule in June this year. Communications Minister Anwar Hossain Manju told a group of journalists at his office yesterday while briefing about the progress of construction.
See Page 12 Col 5

TOMORROW
Rapid and unhindered advancement of Information Technology is the answer to all global woes — that is the general outlook of the 90s. While the rest of the world may have other options but for Bangladesh, that just about sums up the future. But in order for us to take advantage of the situation, we need to take swift and appropriate action. Question is — are we? Read the Star Weekend Magazine's cover story this week on the prospect of IT in Bangladesh.

Inside Today
Article
PM's meeting with Editors-I
We Should Do Some Home Work before Meeting the PM
by Mahfuz Anam
Page 4
Supplement
A two-page supplement on 'Real Estate' on Pages 8 & 9

Probe committee report on Magurchhara explosion

Design flaws in drilling main reason

By Mizan Ali

Design flaws in drilling and cementation have been identified as the main reasons for the explosion at Magurchhara exploration site in June last.

This was revealed in a report by the six-member inquiry committee, formed to probe the causes of the blow-out, submitted to the government in September last, sources close to the committee said yesterday.

"The Magurchhara blow-out is an incident and not an accident," one source said categorically and added that under the terms and conditions of the Production Sharing Contract, "the operating company is responsible for meeting the costs for the blow-out."

"Data of the drilling programme recorded 24 hours before the blow-out suggested flaws in the drilling and cementation design," the source said quoting the inquiry report.

A group of geologists from the Dhaka University who also visited the site following the incident observed that "the inci-



A fire gutted a slum at Rayer Bazar in the city yesterday. (Inset) A slum dweller wailing. — Star photo

Task Force recommendations

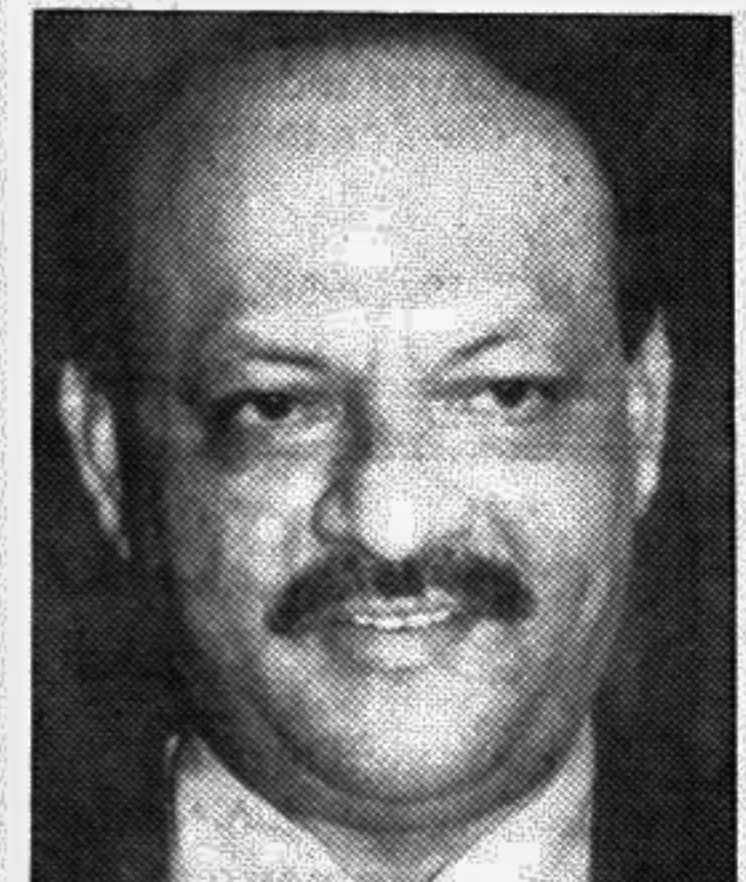
Ban TUs to restore discipline in banking sector

Star Report

The Task Force on Trade Unions (TUs) in the Banking Sector has recommended a complete ban on the formation and activities of TUs in all scheduled banks of the country.

The Task Force report submitted to the Finance Minister on Thursday feels that banning TU activities can revive discipline in the banking sector and will help check corruption and quicken reforms in the banks.

However, the Task Force has also put down a set of 'alterna-



Mostafa Golam Quddus Parishad panel sweeps BGMEA polls

BNP may opt to join current JS session

Amidst a changed political scenario in the BNP camp, the party's think-tank may change their mind in favour of returning to Parliament which will reconvene on Saturday, reports UNB.

A final decision on the crucial point is expected to be taken at the adjourned meeting of the BNP parliamentary party that resumes on Saturday.

The BNP parliamentary party began its emergency meeting on February 20, the day Begum Khaleda Zia returned from Saudi Arabia after a medical check-up.

It discussed the situation caused by the highly controversial action of two BNP MPs Dr

3 burnt alive, 500 shanties gutted in city

By Staff Correspondent

At least three persons — two women and a child — were burnt alive and 30 people injured as a devastating fire razed through a slum at Rayer Bazar in the city yesterday afternoon.

Police identified two of the dead as Shumi, 3, and Anwara Begum, 50. The other woman could not be identified as the body was charred.

The fire gutted about 500 shanties, leaving several thousand people of the Poolpar slum homeless. The cause of the fire could not be known.

At least 200 other huts in the slum were damaged as fire

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(With effect from 25th February, 1998)

Old Numbers	New Numbers
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500092	866772
500093	866773
500094	866774

Card phone booths being abused in 16 N districts

From M A Ali

NATORE, Feb 24: Card phone booths are being abused in the 16 northern districts including Natore by some unscrupulous telephone traders in collusion with a section of BTB employees, compelling the card phone users to pay more but causing huge revenue loss to the government.

The dishonest BTB employees create artificial crisis

JCD march towards BTV Bhaban

Clash with police: 12 hurt, 5 arrested

By Staff Correspondent

At least 12 people were injured in a clash with police yesterday when JCD activists marched towards the BTV Bhaban in a bid to gherao the state television building for what they said, telecasting lies.

Police also arrested at least five JCD activists as processionists ran desperately to escape from police tear gas and lathi charge at a police barricade on Rampura DIT Avenue.

Since 11 am some 3,000 processionists from different colleges started to arrive at the Siddheswari Boys' High School ground near the Mouchak intersection, with banners and placards.

"We want to protest the lies BTV is telling the people about what had happened on the 21 February," said Sajal, a BA first year Economics student of Jagannath University College. Sajal, however, said all successive

School teacher shot dead in Ctg

From Staff Correspondent CHITTAGONG, Feb 25: Armed terrorists shot dead a school teacher at Banikpara Road in Lohagara thana, 30 miles off the city last night, police said.

Ridoy Ranjan Dhar, 50, headmaster of Amirabad Jonokalyan High School, came under attack by armed terrorists on his way back home from Amirabad Bazar at around 8 pm, police said. The terrorists

Chetia's extradition SC to hear appeal today

The Appellate Division of the Supreme Court takes up a petition concerning ULFA leader Anup Chetia for hearing today, reports UNB.

Bangladesh Human Rights Commission (BHRC) filed the petition yesterday challenging the High Court's rejection of a writ petition against the reported move of the government to hand over Chetia to India.

Toxic waste polluting vast wet lands in Gazipur

By Morshed Ali Khan

Vast wet lands and water bodies surrounding the BSCIC industrial zone at Konabari in Gazipur are being polluted by toxic waste released by the 86 industrial units in the zone, according to a report of the Department of Environment (DOE).

The vast wet lands are rapidly becoming barren. The DOE report said, once rich in pisciculture, these wet lands,

Correction

In our news item headlined "PM, ministers, AL leaders meet briefly" published yesterday, it was mentioned inaccurately that Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and senior AL leaders attended the 'Akika' ceremony of the grandson of Commerce and Industries Minister Tofael Ahmed.

The event in Tofael Ahmed's house was not an Akika ceremony but a social get-together of Awami League leaders which the Prime Minister also attended.

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'Delay in finalising bids may affect interest of int'l oil cos'

By Staff Correspondent

The British Deputy High Commissioner yesterday said that delay in finalising the second round block bidding for oil and gas exploration in Bangladesh may affect the interest of the international oil companies to invest in the country's energy sector.

"We have been patiently watching the outcome of the block bidding," said Miriam McIntosh at a press conference yesterday on the visit of the British Trade Mission on Gas Sector.

"The outcome of the bids, as promised by Bangladesh at the London and Houston Roundtables last year, was supposed to

Interest to work in Bangladesh

"Bangladesh should get the decisions right to attract more foreign companies," she added.

The trade mission which came to Bangladesh on a six day visit on Saturday, found tremendous prospect for investment and involvement in the country's gas sector covering exploration to distribution and in gas-based industries.

Focusing on large-scale investment in the country's gas sector, specially by oil giant Shell and its partner Cairn, Miriam McIntosh said that billion dollar investment in

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