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Tel # 9714336**PM will lay foundation of Rooppur N-Plant in November**

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina is expected to lay the foundation of Rooppur Nuclear Power Plant (RNPP) at Iswardi in November this year, reports UNB.

A decision to this effect came from a cabinet committee meeting on the RNPP chaired by the Prime Minister at her office yesterday noon.

The plant is expected to generate 600-mw electricity to meet the growing demand of power at home.

The meeting endorsed in principle formation of a Nuclear Power Council headed by the PM. Under the council, a new authority will be instituted to expedite implementation of the nuclear power project.

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**Rape case: 2 get life term in Bagerhat**

BAGERHAT, July 23: A court here today sentenced two people, in absentia, to life term imprisonment in a rape case, reports UNB.

The convicts are Mostafa Morol and Alamgir Hossain of Hogaidanga village in Fakirhat upazila.

According to prosecution: Mostafa and Alamgir entered the house of one Renu Khatun, 20, of the same village and raped her on January 8, 1997.

Later, the victim filed a case with the police.

The Judge of Women and Children Repression Prevention Court M Aftabuddin handed down the punishment acquitting two other accused.



Sangbad Editor Bazlur Rahman addressing a citizens' meeting at Jessore yesterday condemning the killing of journalist Shamsur Rahman. — Star photo

**SA team arrives soon to discuss NAM Summit preparations**

By Diplomatic Correspondent

A high-powered South African delegation will be here in early next month to discuss and review the preparations for the 13 NAM Summit scheduled to be held in Dhaka in next September.

The team will come with their portfolio of experiences gathered when South Africa hosted the last NAM Summit, said Foreign Minister Abdus Samad Azad while addressing a press conference at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs yester-

day.

South Africa is the current chairman of the NAM troika which includes Columbia as the past chairman and Bangladesh as the incoming chairman.

Azad said he had discussions on several matters including the NAM during the meeting with the foreign ministers of the NAM troika and the G-8 countries in the Japanese city of Miyazaki, the venue of the meeting of G-8 Foreign Minis-

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**BB allows renaming of Grindlays**

By Inam Ahmed

The Bangladesh Bank has allowed ANZ Grindlays to be named Standard Chartered Grindlays Bank following its acquisition by Standard Chartered Bank (SCB).

In a recently given permission, the BB said that SCB would acquire all the shares and liabilities of Grindlays.

SCB will then apply to Bangladesh Bank for final approval pledging unequivocally that the new Standard Chartered Grindlays will take over all the liabilities of ANZ Grind-

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**Minister tells TUs  
Biman employees will rather gain from privatisation**

By Special Correspondent

Minister for Civil Aviation and Tourism Mosharrif Hossain yesterday assured Bangladesh Biman employees that they have nothing to lose but to gain after conversion of the airline into a Public Limited Company (PLC) as part of a privatisation programme.

"There will be no job cut. None will be declared surplus if we convert Biman into a PLC. Your interests will be protected. You have more to benefit from a tie-up with a strategic partner", he told a meeting with trade unions leaders of Biman.

Leaders of five trades unions and employees' associations attended the meeting, held at Biman head office. The meeting continued for about three hours from 3:30 pm.

The trade unions earlier formed a Steering Committee by CBA President Mohiuddin Ahmed to launch programme protesting privatisation of the state owned airline.

A Biman official who assisted the minister in the meeting later told newsmen that there was detailed discussion on privatisation and conversion of the airline into a PLC to off-load 49 per cent shares.

As per the plan prepared by consultants from Citibank Group, New York, 40 per cent share will be offered to a strategic partner and nine percent to Biman staff. The Biman is being privatised under a two million dollar World Bank aided programme.

The consultants submitted its report to the authorities last month, which sparked off protests by the employees. Biman, with 13 aircraft and 5550 employees, incurred a loss of Tk 59 crore last year.

Mosharrif Hossain told the union leaders that laws would be enacted to convert the airline into a PLC to attract a strategic partner, according to the Biman official. "None will be interested if Biman is not commercialised. We want commercialisation so that Biman turns profitable with a strategic partner", the minister told the meeting.

The minister urged the union leaders to consult legal advisers. Turning Biman into a PLC is the best option to make it profitable, he said and assured them that jobs, facilities, pension and gratuity of all employees would remain intact.

These will be guaranteed in the agreement with a strategic partner, the minister was quoted as telling the union leaders. There will be amendment to the Company Act, he added.

After the meeting, Mohiuddin Ahmed, convenor of the Steering Committee, told newsmen that the talks were not fruitful. "But we will talk again if the authorities want".

Another CBA leader said they will go for "tough action programme" to resist the move.

Before the meeting with the minister, the trade union leaders addressing a rally at Biman head office vowed to continue their movement. Mohiuddin announced at the rally that there would be 'gate meetings' at the Engineering Hangar on Tuesday and at Balaka (Biman head office) on Thursday.

After the rally, the employees brought out a procession which terminated at Biman's Engineering Department at the Zia International Airport.

**20 hurt during hartal in Ctg**

From Staff Correspondent

CHITTAGONG, July 23: At least 20 people were injured in a clash between police and pickets at Nur Ahmed road near BNP office during hartal hours today, witnesses said.

The injured were taken to different private clinics for treatment.

Police arrested 16 pickets during the trouble that took place at about 6 pm today.

APAC sources said police without any provocation attacked a procession of opposition supporters at Nur Ahmed road while it was heading towards BNP office from Laldighi area.

Police sources said the clash began after some processionists exploded cocktails at Nur Ahmed road.

Police then swung into action by firing teargas shells and resorting to lathicharge to disperse the agitating opposition activists.

The processionists also pelted stones at the police and at one stage fled the scene.

A large number of police were deployed around the BNP office after the incident.

**Suspected killer of Jessore journalist remanded**

From Staff Correspondent

KHULNA, July 23: The Chief Metropolitan Magistrate (CMM) has placed Rafiq, one of the suspects in journalist Shamsur Rahman Murder Case, on six-day remand with effect from today.

Rafiq, a professional killer, was arrested on Wednesday by Khulna thana police.

He was one of the members of the 'killing squad' which went to Jessore last year to kill Shamsur Rahman.

All efforts to influence both KMP and judiciary for cancelling remand prayer proved futile when CMM granted it for six days after hearing today.

CID will start interrogating Rafiq tomorrow.

CID did not rule out the possibility of sending Rafiq to Joint Interrogation Cell (JRC) for quizzing him about the murder that has already evoked widespread condemnation.

Some of the journalists of Khulna and Jessore are receiving death threats over phone for writing against murder of Journalist Shamsur Rahman.

**DSE price index crosses 600 pts**

Star Report

After a week long depression prices at Dhaka Stock Exchange rallied yesterday, pushing the price index over 600-point a mark.

Sources attributed the surge to institutional buying, mainly by the Investment Corporation of Bangladesh (ICB).

The price index had been

witnessing massive fluctuation

recently, hitting a recent high of 745.48 from 561.83 points

within a span of just seven days.


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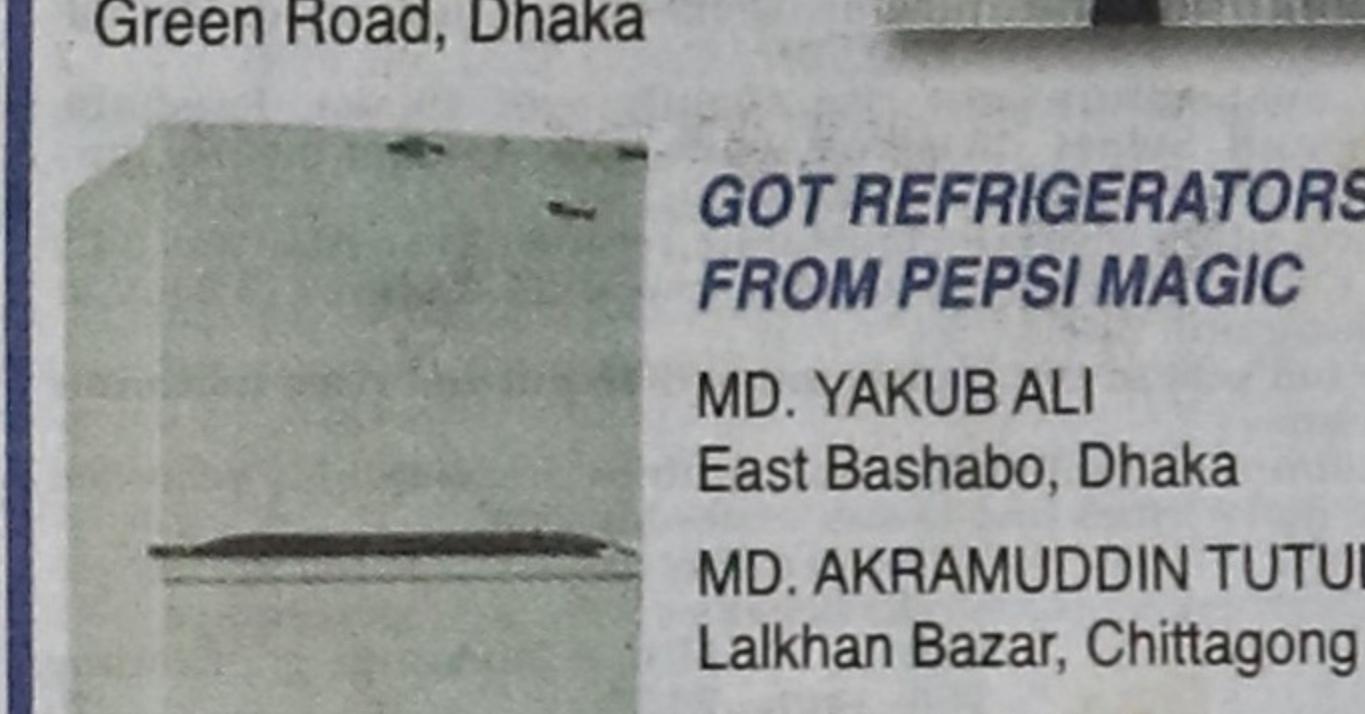


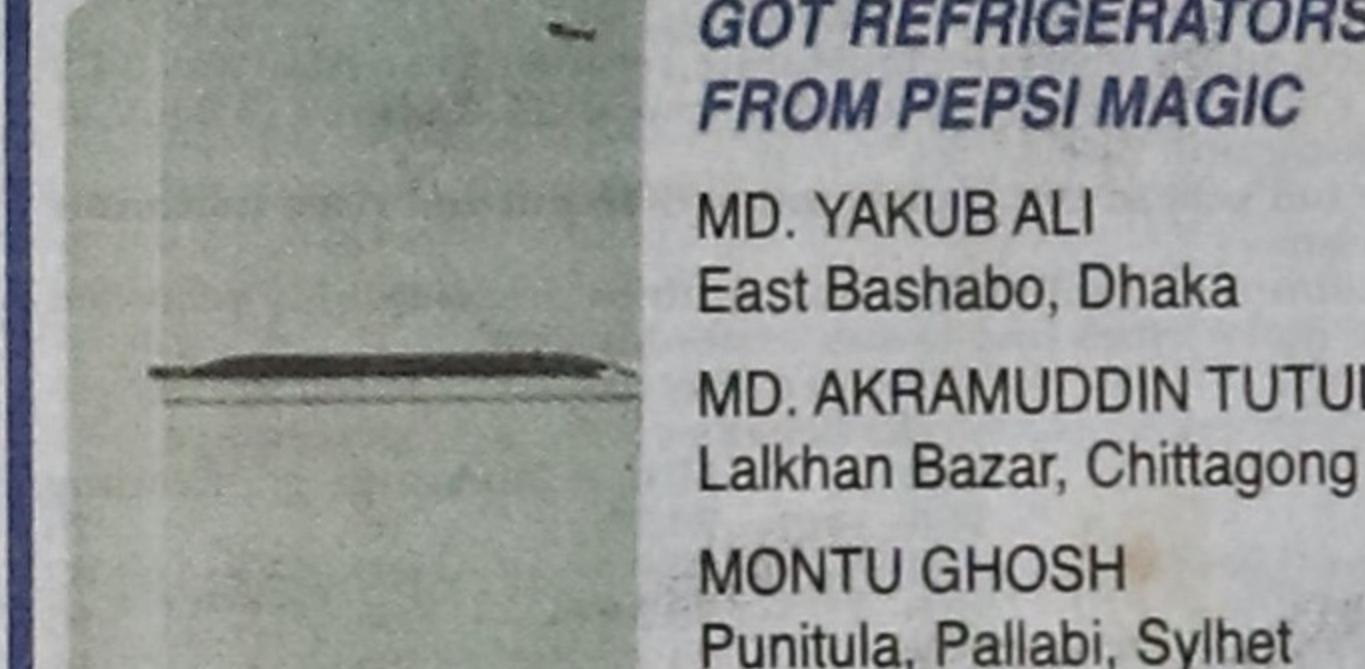
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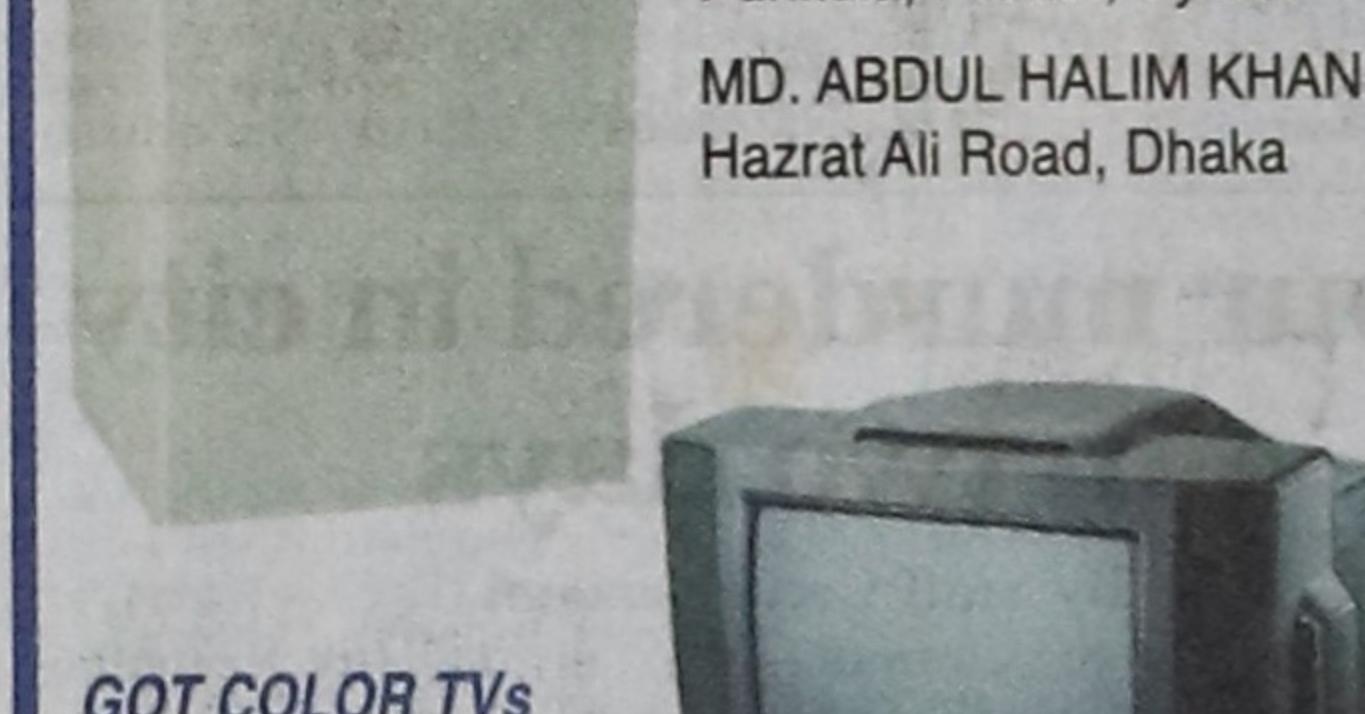


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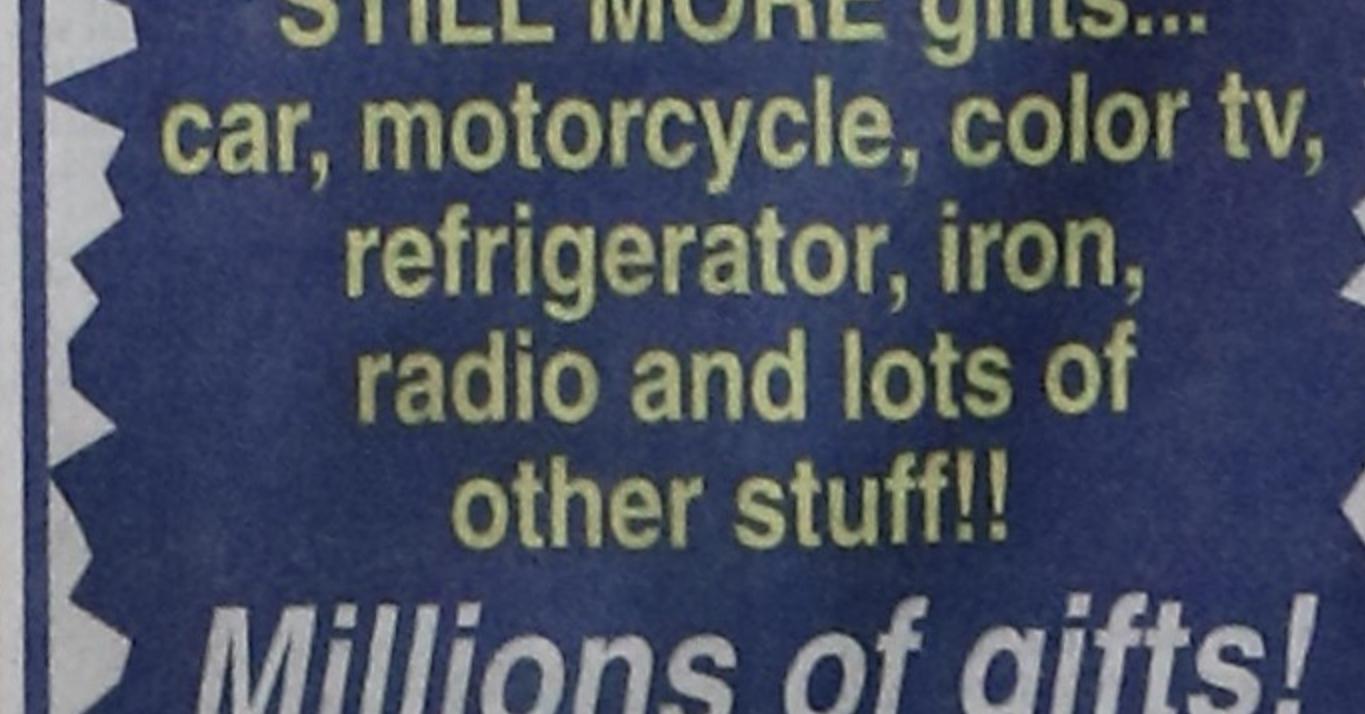


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