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Govt to assess Tata's plan with donor help

Gas pricing, supply crucial issues

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government will evaluate with donors' help the pricing and supply of gas for Tata Group's \$2 billion planned power, steel and fertiliser plants in Bangladesh.

Technical know-how is needed to evaluate such investment proposals. Finance and Planning Minister M Saifur Rahman told reporters after a meeting with visiting Tata Group Chairman Ratan N Tata at his planning ministry office yesterday.

The WB has already offered technical support for this and the government will evaluate the proposals with the help of WB experts.

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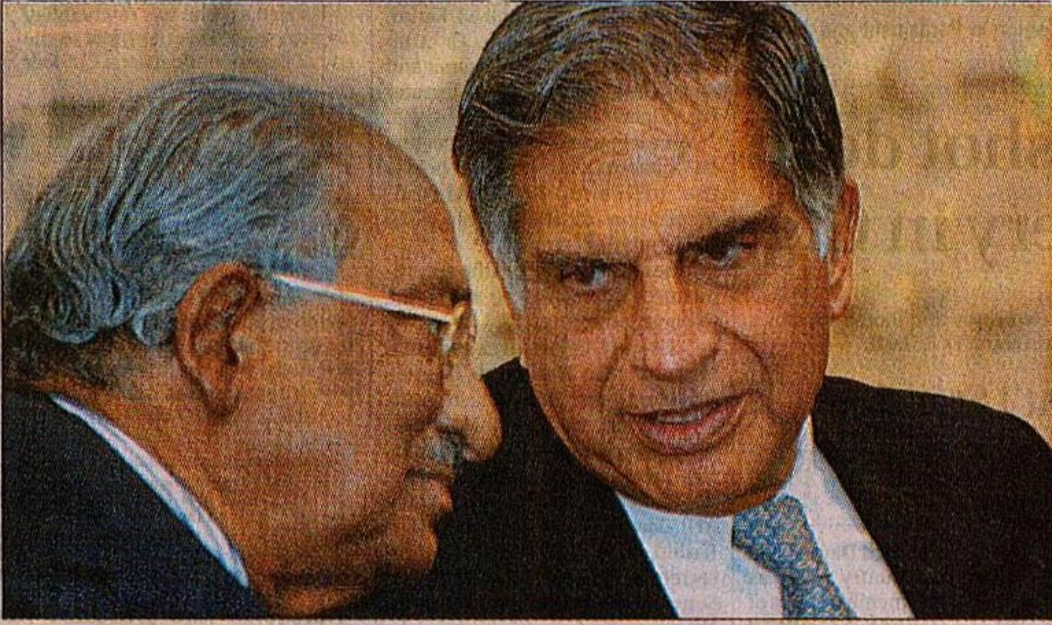


PHOTO: STAR

Finance Minister M Saifur Rahman listens to Tata Group Chairman Ratan N Tata before signing an expression of interest on the Indian business giant's \$2b investment proposal at Bangladesh-China Friendship Conference Centre last night.

Rab to swing into action in all 64 districts

UNB, Dhaka

The home ministry yesterday directed the Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) to launch anticrime operations in all 64 districts.

After a marathon meeting at the ministry to review the Rab performance, State Minister for Home Affairs, Lutfozzaman Babar gave the instruction for countrywide operations ahead of Ramadan, Eid and Durga Puja.

He praised the Rab anticrime activities and dispelled criticism of

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Another low over Bay

UNB, Dhaka

A low has again formed over the Bay of Myanmar coast, prompting the met office to advise the seaports to hoist cautionary signals.

The low over east-central Bay and adjoining northeast Bay off Myanmar coast moved slightly north-northwestwards into northeast Bay and adjoining area and intensified into a well-marked low.

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Rab accused of extra-judicial killings, violation of constitution

Rights groups demand trial of law enforcers

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Rights groups yesterday accused the Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) of violating the constitution, laws to deal with crimes and human rights through extra-judicial killings in custody and 'crossfire'.

They also put forward a five-point demand to ensure trial of the killings by the law-enforcement agencies and put an end to their human-rights violation.

At a press conference in Dhaka yesterday, leaders of the organisations alleged the amendments to the Armed Police Battalion Ordinance 1979 created a scope for making political gains.

The amendments empowered Rab to conduct intelligence opera-

tions on crimes and incidents related to crimes and investigate any case when the government orders, the rights bodies said. But the amendments did not give the elite anticrime force authority to investigate any case; instead, the force is to probe only the government-assigned cases, they stressed.

The groups include Ain O Salish Kendra (ASK), Bangladesh Legal Aid and Services Trust (BLAST), Nijera Kori, Karmajibi Nari, Jatiya Ainjibi Parishad and Naripakkhya.

Rab is not only violating the constitution, Code of Criminal Procedure (CrPC) and police ordinance but also human rights through extra-judicial killings either in custody or in 'crossfire' in most of

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Hasina trashes PM's conspiracy theory

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Awami League (AL) President Sheikh Hasina yesterday rubbished the conspiracy theory of Prime Minister about the opposition's going into power.

Hasina, also leader of the opposition, said the AL does not believe in conspiracy or look for support of foreign forces to capture power.

On Tuesday, Khaleda told a public meeting that the opposition party has lost popular support and is trying to go to power with foreign assistance.

It is the BNP-Jamaat-led alliance

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CARETAKER GOVT BNP rejects AL demand for reforms

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Policymakers of ruling BNP yesterday rejected outright the main opposition Awami League's demand for bringing reforms in the formation of caretaker government and termed it 'unfortunate and a

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WORLD ECONOMIC FORUM REPORT Bangladesh loses out in growth, business competitiveness

STAR REPORT

Bangladesh's growth and business competitiveness have suffered further this year ranking it among the lowest rungs of the ladder.

In the Growth Competitiveness Index (GCI), it ranked 102 of 104 countries assessed by the World Economic Forum. The Forum released its global report today.

In the Business Competitiveness Index (BCI), it stood 95th from last year's position of 91st.

The regional countries outpaced Bangladesh by a wide margin, and

the two most important Asian states considered to be the country's main competitor in readymade garments, China and Vietnam, showed much firmer improvements in key areas.

The GCI is composed of three pillars, all of which are widely accepted as being critical to economic growth: the quality of the macroeconomic environment, the state of a country's public institutions, and, given the increasing importance of technology in the development process, a country's technological readiness.

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CNG 3-WHEELERS Huda admits irregularities in licensing

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Communications Minister Nazmul Huda yesterday admitted irregularities in granting autorickshaw licences, which prompted a parliamentary body to ask BRTA, the licensing authority, to identify the three-wheeler plying with fake licences.

At least 25,000 CNG autorickshaws are in abundance in Dhaka, although the government's target was to allow maximum of only 13,000, the minister told a meeting of the parliamentary standing committee on communications ministry, sources said.

More than one CNG (compressed natural gas) autorickshaws are using the same registration

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Traffic nightmare bogs city down

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Severe traffic tailbacks continued making Dhaka's commuters suffer heavily, as there was no sign of any improvement until yesterday, the fifth day of ongoing TrafficWeek.

Rush-hour traffic blocked the main roads and intersections in almost all busy areas in the capital bringing the traffic virtually to a standstill.

Although the government has taken some steps to ease the traffic problems, Communications Minister Nazmul Huda yesterday at a parliamentary body meeting expressed frustration over the stagnancy in implementing the steps, sources said.

Commuters yesterday witnessed unbearable traffic gridlock in the bustling Motijheel, Paltan, Bijoynagar, Gullistan, Naya Paltan, New Market, Elephant Road, Gullistan, Moghbazar and Malibagh areas from 8:30am until afternoon.

Vehicles remained almost static on two major roads -- Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue and Mirpur Road stretching from Kalabagan to New Market -- during the rush-hour.

"I had to wait for about an hour at Karwanbazar to find an autorickshaw to go home at Moghbazar, hardly two kilometres from my office," said Monwara Begum who works in a private firm.

"At last I managed one with almost

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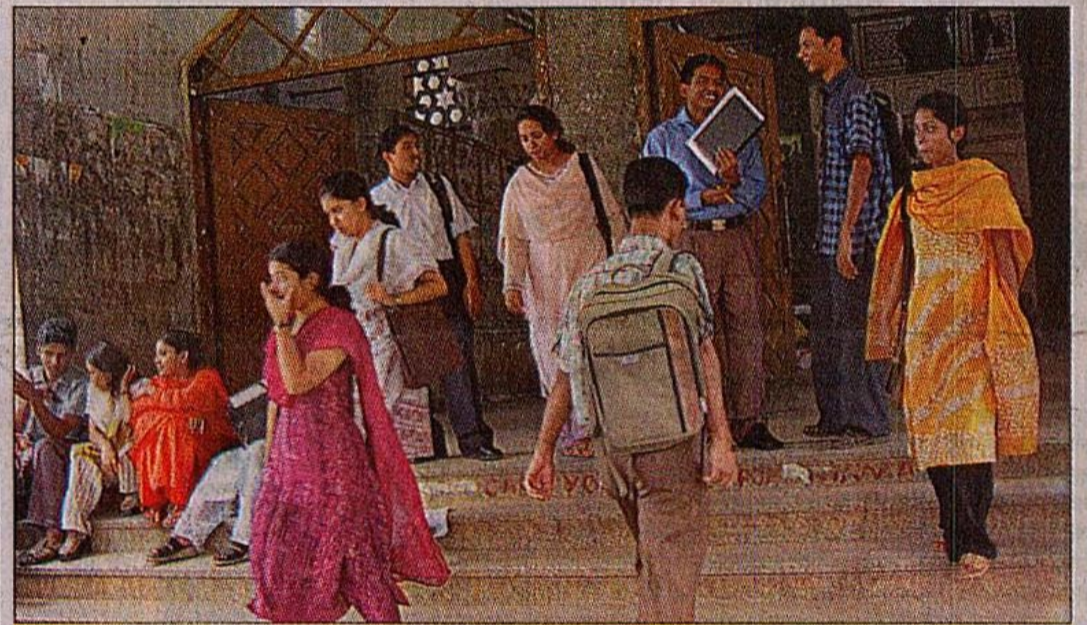


PHOTO: STAR

Academic activities at Dhaka University get back on track yesterday, 29 days after an unscheduled closure due to a strike enforced by six opposition students' organisations.

CNG ইঞ্জিন নিয়ে ভাবছেন?
ExxonMobil নিয়ে এলো পরিপূর্ণ সমাধান



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- গরম কিংবা ঠাণ্ডা যে কোন তাপমাত্রায় কার্যকারিতা অক্ষুণ্ণ থাকে।
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- উচ্চ চাপ ও তাপে গুণাগুণ অক্ষুণ্ণ থাকায় ইঞ্জিনকে দেয় সর্বোত্তম সুরক্ষা।
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