



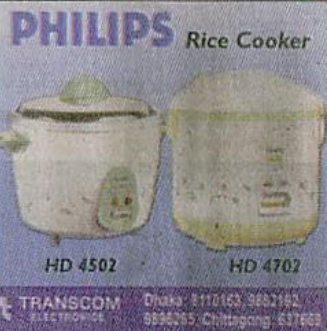
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## 5 trawlers sink in Bay, 27 missing

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barisal

Five trawlers with 56 fishermen and crew, caught in a sudden storm in the Bay of Bengal, capsized about 150 kilometres from the Kuakata coast on Saturday morning.

Three other fishing boats rescued 29 of the fishermen and crew while the rest 27 remained missing till filing of this report.

FB Miraz, FB Sahera, FB Allar Daan, FB Sabuj Pakhi and FB Nayontara with 56 people on board left Mohipur and Alipur fishing ports in Kalapara coast under Patuakhali district on Thursday for deep-sea fishing, sources said.

Meanwhile, the trawler owners sent rescue parties in the rough sea to search for the missing people who hail from Kalapara and Galachipa upazilas of Patuakhali district.

## Graft cases against top shots see no light

300 cases await disposal; stay orders, stalled probe, quashing and withdrawal of cases seen in last 14 years

ZAYADUL AHSAN

About 300 corruption cases filed against top politicians, bureaucrats, businessmen and other VIPs during the last 14 years stand pending before court.

The High Court has stayed about 100 of them and there is no example of the government ever trying to vacate these stay orders.

Charge-sheets have been submitted in 239 cases, a few cases have been withdrawn and a few others

quashed by court. Corruption charges in 57 cases are under investigation.

Of the 51 cases awaiting submission of charge-sheet, enquiry of nine remains stayed. Investigation of 15 cases now awaits the nod of the Prime Minister's Office for further action.

The Registrar of the Supreme Court, lower courts, Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC), the now-defunct Bureau of Anti-Corruption (Bac) and the Attorney

General's office have no coordination in dealing with these cases.

The government established the ACC in November last year but the corruption scenario has worsened further. Eight months into its formation, the ACC is yet to initiate any investigation as it is struggling to come out of internal problems.

About the long-pending cases, Deputy Attorney General Helaluddin Mollah who is responsible for dealing with corruption cases

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## Niko starts drilling observation well

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

Instead of the second relief well, Canadian company Niko Resources yesterday began drilling an observation well at Tengatilla gas field to get a clear picture of the well structure and its reservoir.

Although Niko was preparing for the second relief well, drilling an observation well was a must, sources said.

The target of drilling has been fixed at 650 metre, an official of Niko said, adding that it may take about three weeks to complete the work.

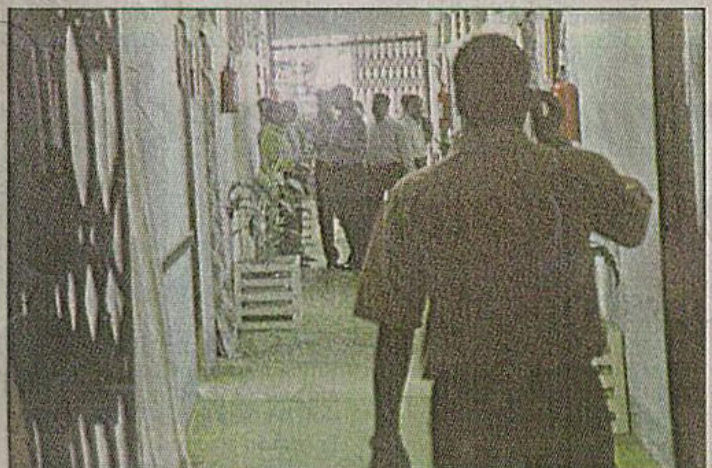
Century, an Australian company, has been entrusted with the task, the official said.

Niko is trying to be much more cautious and accurate than before

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## JCD cadres rule tender

Force intending bidders to a negotiation at secretariat



The picture snapped yesterday shows ruling party cadres guarding a corridor at the jute ministry to obstruct submission of tender papers by intending bidders for purchasing jute corporation property.

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A group of ruling party cadres from Jamalpur and Netrakona yesterday barred others from dropping tenders at the jute ministry in Dhaka for purchasing land and property of the now-defunct Bangladesh Jute Corporation (BJC) in those districts.

Around 25 cadres stood guard in the corridor and in front of the secretariat room where the tender box was kept. They stayed there until the time for dropping tender ended.

They created pressure on the intending bidders to negotiate with them and reach an understanding on the price so that they can buy the government property at lower prices.

Some of the cadres even called intending bidders to other rooms

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## Bigots attack Jamalpur Ahmadiyyas

BDNEWS, Dhaka

Ahmadiyya community at a village in Sharishabari of Jamalpur district came under attack on Friday night.

Sources said bigots attacked the Ahmadiyyas at midnight when they gathered at the house of their local ameer at Baushi Ijarapara village near Sharishabari Bazar to watch the live TV broadcast of International Ahmadiyya Convention from London.

The attackers allegedly led by Ismail Master and Ishaq ransacked some Ahmadiyya houses. On information, police rushed to the spot and dispersed the attackers, charging batons.

Ameer of Sharishabari Ahmadiyya Jamaat Shamsuddin Master told the news agency over

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## NON-ECONOMIC ISSUES

## Rift in donor camp on tagging reforms to aid

REJAUL KARIM BYRON

Sharp differences of opinion have surfaced recently in the local consultant group (LCG) of donors on justification of tying non-economic issues, including electoral reforms and governance, to development aid.

The chief protagonists of the dispute are the World Bank (WB) on one side and some of the European Union (EU) countries on the other.

The government early this year sent copies of a draft Poverty Reduction Strategic Paper (PRSP) to the donors seeking their opinion. The LCG sat on various occasions to

discuss the draft PRSP and the disagreements surfaced between the EU donors and the WB, LCG sources said.

The EU countries, specially the Scandinavian ones, demanded of the LCG to ask the government to outline in the PRSP its plan for reforming the caretaker government system, Election Commission, electoral law and law enforcement, specially regarding the 'crossfire' deaths.

They also suggested setting the reform agenda as condition for Bangladesh to get donors' support as well as the development support

credit of the WB for implementing the PRSP.

The EU donors observed that elections are at the heart of poor political governance. If elections are not held in a free and fair manner, it generates political instability and shocks, and may seriously hamper development. In such a situation, they felt a comprehensive strategy for promoting good governance has to be incorporated in the PRSP to ensure its effective implementation.

The EU countries also blamed the WB for taking a soft stance on these issues.

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## PRIVATE MEMBERS' BILL Sircar accused of 'making JS body dysfunctional'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Parliamentary Standing Committee on Private Members' Bills and Resolutions yesterday accused Speaker Jamiruddin Sircar of "making the committee dysfunctional" by not allowing the lawmakers to place private members' bills in parliament.

The parliamentary standing committee yesterday decided to meet the speaker after its next meeting and ask him to initiate steps allowing the lawmakers to place a number of bills finalised by it.

"We will consider resigning from the committee if the speaker does

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## Pardon to any convict at military court okay

Maintains Moudud, refutes his resignation rumour

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Rumours ran rife yesterday that Law Minister Moudud Ahmed had resigned for his role in "manoeuvring" presidential pardon to double-murder convict Mohiuddin Ahmed Jhinto while Moudud maintained his ministry would recommend pardon for anyone tried by a martial law court.

The speculations were fuelled especially after a reported meeting between the law minister and the prime minister (PM) yesterday.

Dismissing outright the rumours, Moudud told reporters yesterday that he was not at all contemplating resignation. He also denied that he had any meeting with the PM yesterday.

The law minister yesterday yet again defended the presidential

mercy granted to Jhinto, who along with three others were sentenced to death by a martial law court in 1982 for a double-murder in Demra.

"The president's granting pardon to Jhinto as well as the government's role in the process were legal and just. The president pardoned him in line with the constitution," he told the reporters, who went to his office for his reaction to the rumours yesterday.

"If anyone who has been awarded punishment by the martial law court though his name was not in the first information report (FIR) or there were no witness against him, the law ministry will recommend for his pardon if he comes to us," he said.

Describing martial law court as Kangaroo court, Moudud said:

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## Fire at gas pipeline in N'ganj

OUR CORRESPONDENT, N'ganj

A large quantity of gas was lost due to a fire at the national gas pipeline at Sirajuddowla Road in the town on Friday night.

Locals panicked at the pipeline blast that occurred at around 10:00pm and had 10-12 feet high flames. The local mosque authorities had to pacify them, using loud speakers.

The fire service rushed to the spot and brought the flame under control at around 12:00midnight but they failed to stop the gas emission from the pipeline. The locals informed the regional offices of Bangladesh Telegraph and Telephone Board (BTB) and Titas Gas at Chashara, but found no officials to stop the emission. A large quantity of gas was already lost before the officials of Titas Gas Dhaka region could arrive and stop the emission.

Authorities concerned said an electric spark from the nearby electric cable might have caused the fire where a drainage system of the Narayanganj Municipality was under construction.

## Tk 285cr surface water project for city okayed

UNB, Dhaka

The Executive Committee of National Economic Council (Ecne) at a meeting yesterday okayed eight projects involving Tk 1,713 crore.

A major one among the projects has been undertaken to resolve the long-felt water crisis in the densely populated capital, under which water will be fetched from two major rivers.

The scheme, entitled Developing the Water Supply System and Rehabilitation Project (revised), costs Tk 284.50 crore.

Under the revised water-supply system, water will be pumped into Dhaka City from the rivers Padma and Meghna, because of the fact that the surface water in nearby water-bodies got polluted while water table under the ground subsided.

Emerging from the meeting, the finance minister told reporters that the project is aimed at mitigating the scarcity of safe drinking water in the capital.

"Level of groundwater in the city is sliding down sharply...but people are increasing," Saifur said.

He said the implementation of the project will help slash dependence on the groundwater, as river water will be supplied to the city-dwellers.

"Study has already been done on pumping water from the river Padma and Meghna into the capital city," the finance and planning minister apprised the journalists.

Four of the projects will be implemented with the government funds, while the rest will be financed jointly by the government and donor countries and agencies, including Unicef, China, IDB and Danida.

The projects to be implemented with internal resources are developing the water supply system and rehabilitation project, Comilla-Palpara-Burichang-Mirpur road development, construction of upazila parishad complex building (2nd revised), and transforming the

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Fire Service and Civil Defence personnel with the help of locals fight a fire that burnt 30 tin-roofed houses and 14 shops at Karwan Bazar kitchen market in the capital yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR



### এইডস কী? বাঁচতে হলে জানতে হবে

বিশ্বে প্রতিদিন ১৪০০০ মহিলা ও পুরুষ এইচআইভি/এইডস-এ আক্রান্ত হচ্ছে যার অধেকই যুবসমাজ যাদের বয়স ১৫ থেকে ২৪-এর মধ্যে

এইডস প্রতিরোধে সচেতনতা জীবাণুমুক্ত সুই ও সিরিঞ্জ ব্যবহার করা জীবাণুমুক্ত রক্ত গ্রহণ নিরাপদ শারীরিক সম্পর্ক

আমরা সচেতন প্রতিদিন আমরা নিরাপদ বাঁকিহীন



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