

# The Daily Star

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People's Right to Know

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BRAC OFFICE BLAST CASE  
Galib, 18 others  
acquitted

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Gaibandha

Ahle Hadith Andolon Bangladesh (Ahab) chief Asadullah Al Galib and 18 others were relieved yesterday from the charges in the Mohimaganj Brac office bomb blast case.

The court of Public Prosecutor Jahangir Alam Jinnah framed charges under Explosive Substances Act 1908 against two of the 21 chargesheeted accused--Abu Sajjat alias Raju Sarder and Habibur Rahman alias Jubayer--in the case.

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BSF kills 2,  
injures 10

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Satkhira

Two Bangladeshi nationals were gunned down and 10 others injured as the Border Security Force (BSF) of India opened fire on them at Khalsi under North 24 Parganas of West Bengal, India, on Monday night.

Sources said the Bangladeshis entered the India crossing the Kushkhali border of Satkhira at

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## Bomber admits Aug 17 role

### DCs asked to up watch on courts

STAR REPORT

One of the two bombers caught during Chandpur blast on Monday has admitted to having exploded bombs in the district on August 17, the day near-simultaneous explosions rocked the entire country.

Abul Kalam, 22, who has been involved with Jama'atul Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB) for about two years, also confessed that he had met Jagrata Muslim Janata, Bangladesh (JMJB) operations commander Siddiqui Islam alias Bangla Bhai in Bagmara at the beginning of this year.

Special security measures have been taken at the courthouses across the country following Monday's terrorist attacks. Some of the court building kept doors and windows shut yesterday for fear of renewed attacks.

Two of the three bombers caught on the Chittagong court premises admitted to being members of Shaheed Nasrullah Al Arafat Brigade (Snab), the newly formed military

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PHOTO: STAR

Policemen stand guard at the Speedy Trial Tribunal-1, Dhaka, yesterday as part of special security measures following fresh bomb attacks on three district courts on Monday.

Plan for motivation  
campaign to  
counter militants'  
propaganda

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

In addition to taking legal actions against Islamist militants, the government has decided to launch country-wide motivation campaign to counter militant organisations' brainwashing of innocent youths exploiting their religious sentiment.

"A kind of education" is motivating these youths to ultimately join

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Ramadan starts  
tomorrow

UNB, Dhaka

The holy month of Ramadan begins tomorrow as the new moon was not sighted anywhere in the country yesterday, according to the National Moon sighting Committee.

The committee announced this at a meeting at the Islamic Foundation auditorium in the evening after reviewing the information about sighting of the Ramadan moon.

On the occasion, the president, the prime minister and the leader of

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## Govt, Tata agree on tax, duty structure

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government and the Tata Group yesterday agreed on several issues concerning tax and duty structure and acquiring land as the third round negotiations continued for the third consecutive day for Tata's \$2.5 billion investment plan.

The National Board of Revenue (NBR) officials informed the Tata representatives about the government's decision of not providing tax-holiday facility to the group for more than six years for its proposed fertiliser and steel plants, and 15 years for the power plant.

The Tata officials agreed in principle to the points, meeting sources said.

The Indian industrial giant had earlier demanded 20 years' tax-holiday facility for all of their proposed industries.

Meanwhile, the finance minister said the government would not pro-

vide any special advantage to the Tata Group so that other investors do not have to engage in an uneven competition. But he said Tata as a big investor might get some extra incentives.

The government also took a firm stance on maintaining the existing policy of tax exemption for the foreign investors for three years, turning down the group's demand for tax exemption for an indefinite period.

NBR officials also informed the representatives that the government can not provide the export processing zone (EPZ) facility to Tata.

"If Tata is allowed EPZ facility, all other local and foreign investors would place the same demand to the government," an NBR official said preferring anonymity.

NBR Member (Income Tax) AS Zahir Mohammad and Tata Group Executive Director Arun Gandhi led

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## Hannan discloses more alliance links

### Khulna cops hunt for JMB leader Arif

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Mufti Hannan, detained Bangladesh chapter chief of international militant outfit Harkatul Jihad, yesterday provided interrogators with significant information on his connections with some leaders of the ruling four-party alliance, sources said.

The sources said Hannan named some leaders of the ruling alliance components with whom he used to maintain connections.

The investigators, however, did not disclose the names as per instructions

from the government high-ups, which felt a jolt after Hannan told newsmen that he did not leave the country following assurance of "no fear" from former home minister Altaf Hossain Choudhury.

Altaf, now the commerce minister, however, denied the claim.

Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) officials, who are now quizzing Hannan, meanwhile, said Hannan gave some significant information, but those will not be disclosed for

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DU appoints  
five teachers  
depriving better  
candidates

HASAN JAHD TUSHER

Dhaka University (DU) authorities have recruited five lecturers to the Department of Islamic Studies dropping candidates with better academic records.

Meanwhile, protesting the recent "political appointment" of an assistant professor to the Department of Public Administration, the department Chairman Prof Mahabubur Rahman resigned from the chairmanship and also from the post of provost of Kabi Jashim Uddin Hall.

The appointment of an assistant

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WORLD TEACHERS DAY

## Daunting job, miserable pay for primary teachers

SURANJIT DEBNATH

As the nation observes the World Teachers Day today, at least 10 thousand community primary school teachers serving the underprivileged rural children remain stuck in miserable living conditions with a monthly salary of Tk 750.

Employed to teach 10 lakh students across rural Bangladesh, they also do not get their salaries regularly whereas the education sector always gets the highest allocation in the national budget.

"We are given our salaries most of the time three months after the salary dates," said Hafizur Rahman, president of Bangladesh Community Primary Teachers Association.

The teachers said they have long been trying to call the government's attention to their plight but to no effect. Though the ministers on numerous occasions had assured them of bringing an end to their distress, in reality they never even seemed interested in taking steps to this end, they added.

Local Government Rural

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## Poles of fortune

### REB abandons proven wooden poles to let a politically powerful lobby make crores of taka

SHARIER KHAN

When the Rural Electrification Board (REB) launched operation in 1977, it was designed to install a power distribution system using imported but cheap, durable and easily transportable wooden poles. Modelled after the American rural electrification system, the REB had its own timber department replete with specialists, as purchasing poles is a big job involving hundreds of crores of taka.

After nearly three decades, REB no

longer prefers wooden poles. But not because wooden poles have become obsolete, costlier or less efficient.

Now the REB purchases only locally manufactured concrete poles which are costlier, less durable and less transportable than the wooden poles. The change is due to relentless pressure from a section of politically powerful businessmen, say well-placed REB sources.

As a result, the REB is spending three times more than necessary to expand its power distribution net-

work.

According to an investigation by The Daily Star, 13 concrete pole manufacturers control REB's pole purchases using political and other types of influence. Their pressure has prevented the REB from purchasing any wooden poles for the last two years, barring one small exception.

These concrete pole manufacturers also influenced the REB to double the purchase of poles in these two years making the REB

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