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RANGS BUILDING  
Rescue work  
yet to start  
for risk fear

Rajuk to give Tk 1 lakh to  
family of each dead

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Rajdhani Unnayan Kartipakkha (Rajuk) yesterday could not start rescue operations at the collapsed Rangs Bhaban in the capital fearing the vulnerable structure that remains standing could tumble down endangering rescuers.

Rajuk yesterday announced that it would give Tk 1 lakh to the families of each dead and bear the treatment costs of the injured.

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VGF card anomalies  
mar Patuakhali relief

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Patuakhali

The VGF (Vulnerable Group Feeding) card programme for the affected people in the cyclone-torn areas in the district is in disarray as the card distribution process is riddled with massive irregularities.

Soon after Cyclone Sidr lashed the southern coast of the country, the government declared to bring all the affected populace of the region under the net of VGF.

However, the programme, under which one person from a family is eligible to receive a feed-

ing card, is yet to bear any fruit. A large number of the residents alleged that they did not receive any card yet while multiple members from some of the families have received the cards.

Most people are pointing their finger at the local union parishad (UP) members who they claim are collecting money in exchange for inserting ineligible people's names on the list of VGF card recipients.

The locals also alleged that the UP members are manipulating the list to include the names of their near ones.

On Sunday, during a field visit to Taherpur village under Nilganj Union Parishad in Kalapara upazila, this correspondent came across at least 50 villagers who claimed that they did not get any VGF card. Rice distribution to VGF cardholders was going on at that time on the premises of the union parishad.

Khalil Sarder, 52, a resident of the village, said, "I didn't get a VGF card although my house has been totally destroyed."

Rashid Mollah, 70, from the

SEE PAGE 15 COL 1

Ex-PSC member  
Prof Mahfuzur  
gets 8yrs for  
tax evasion

UNB, Mymensingh

A court here yesterday awarded eight years' rigorous imprisonment to Prof Mahfuzur Rahman, former member of the Public Service Commission (PSC), in a tax evasion case.

The court also fined Mahfuzur Rahman, also professor of Bangladesh Agriculture University, Tk 58 lakh, in default, he is to suffer another year in jail. The former PSC member was tried in absentia.

Judge Anisuzzaman of the Special Judge's Court pronounced

SEE PAGE 15 COL 6

Pak election race  
picks up speed

Sharif drops polls boycott threat

AFP, Islamabad

Pakistan's election race picked up speed yesterday as the party backing President Pervez Musharraf launched its manifesto promising to focus on human rights in the emergency-ruled country.

The move, one day after former premier Nawaz Sharif dropped his threat to boycott the January 8 vote, means the nation's main political parties are now all in the fray.

Pakistan's other main opposi-

tion party, led by another ex-premier Benazir Bhutto, had said late last month that it would contest the election.

The pro-Musharraf Pakistan Muslim League-Quaid (PML-Q), which was in power from 2002 until last month, welcomed the decision by Sharif -- the man ousted by Musharraf in a bloodless 1999 coup.

"This is a very good step that they have decided to participate in

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JAMAAT LEADERS  
Complainant  
of sedition  
case gets  
death threat

COURT CORRESPONDENT

Fazlur Rahman, complainant of the sedition case against two prominent Jamaat politicians and an ex-chairman of Islami bank, yesterday told reporters that unknown people were threatening to kill him unless he withdrew the case.

Bangladesh Tarikat Federation organised the press conference at the Dhaka Bar Association auditorium yesterday, where Fazlur told reporters that he was being

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PHOTO: STAR

A vehicle reduced to twisted scrap metal as its CNG cylinder exploded at a refuelling station on Joy Kali Mandir Road in the capital yesterday. Other cars nearby were also damaged. Story on page 1.

VICTORY DAY  
AL won't join  
president's  
programme

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Awami League would not attend the Victory Day programme hosted by President Iajuddin Ahmed on the grounds that war criminals and anti-Liberation War

SEE PAGE 15 COL 7

Climate change could  
lead to conflict,  
instability: UN

AFP, Nusa Dua

Global warming could lead to internal conflict, regional unrest and war, with North Africa, the Sahel and South Asia among the hotspots, a report issued at a global climate change forum said yesterday.

The warning by the UN Environment Programme (Unep) came just hours ahead of ceremonies in Oslo to award the 2007 Nobel Peace Prize to US climate campaigner Al Gore and the UN's top scientific panel on the greenhouse-gas problem.

Unep called for a twin-pronged approach, tackling the carbon

emissions that stoke global warming and helping vulnerable countries shore up defences against its impacts.

"If global warming is not confined, fragile, vulnerable states which have already now fairly bad governance might implode under the pressure of global warming and then send shock waves to other countries so that you will have spillover effects," said one of the authors, Hans Schnellhuber, a professor at the Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research near Berlin, Germany.

If warming rose by five degrees Celsius (nine degrees Fahrenheit)

SEE PAGE 15 COL 4

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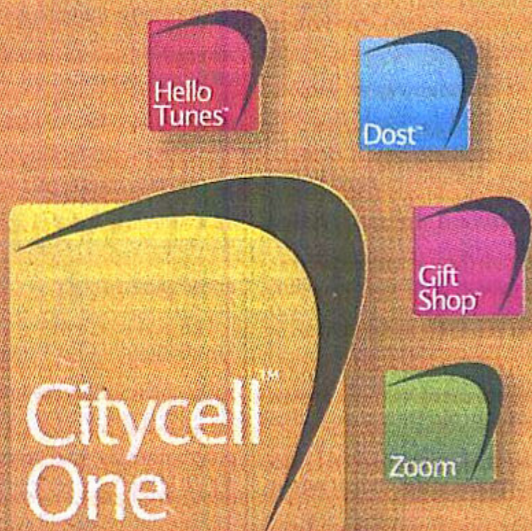
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Prayer Timing		
December 11		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	5-15	5-50
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	3-45	4-00
Maghrib	5-19	5-22
Esha	7-00	7-30

Source: Islamic Foundation



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