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Japan to include Padma Bridge project in next year's aid plan

UNB, Dhaka
 Foreign Affairs Adviser Iftakhar Ahmed Chowdhury yesterday said Japan would include the US\$ 1.2 billion Padma Bridge project in its rolling plan next year.
 Talking to reporters on the outcome of his three-day official visit to Tokyo, he said the feasibility study of the proposed bridge has been completed. The bridge will be constructed with joint financing of Japan, the World Bank and the ADB.
 Iftakhar said the Japanese government and the business world see great potential of Bangladesh and acknowledge its immense possibility of transforming into yet another Asian economic power-house.
 The adviser had gone to Japan to

CAMPAIGN FOR WAR CRIMINALS' TRIAL
DU teachers, students join sector commanders

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Several hundred students and teachers of Dhaka University (DU) yesterday expressed solidarity with the demand of trial of war criminals.
 The students and teachers attending a discussion at Teachers and Students Centre (TSC) took a vow to resist the anti-Liberation War elements and war criminals.
 They also expressed their commitment to work with Sector Commanders Forum and build opinion against the war criminals and anti-Liberation War forces among students and teachers of other universities.

The discussion titled 'International Crime and Trial' was organised by the students and teachers of DU.

Leaders of the Sector Commanders Forum addressing a packed audience at the TSC auditorium said the nation is united in seeking the trial of the war criminals.

They urged all to boycott the anti-Liberation War elements and the war criminals socially and refrain from establishing any relations with them.

Dr Mizanur Rahman, Prof of Dhaka University, presided the meeting where Air Vice Marshal (ret'd) AK Khandker Bir Uttam,

deputy chief of the Liberation War and president of Sector Commanders Forum, Justice Ghulam Rabbani, former army chief Maj Gen (ret'd) KM Shafiullah Bir Uttam, Lt Gen (ret'd) M Harun-Rashid Bir Protik, Sheikh Hafizur Rahman Karzon, assistant professor of Dhaka University, also spoke.

Dr Shah Alam, professor of Chittagong University, presented the keynote paper.

Responding to a question, Air Vice Marshal (ret'd) AK Khandker Bir Uttam said then president Ziaur Rahman will have to be held accountable for the killings of two

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First Bangladeshi to get into Interpol

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

For the first time a senior police official from the country will be posted to Interpol's general secretariat in Lyon of France.

Besides, three analysts from the Criminal Investigation Department (CID) and a Special Branch (SB) officer will receive advanced analytical training there.

Visiting Interpol Secretary General Ronald K Noble spoke to the reporters about the decisions after a meeting with Home Adviser Major General (ret'd) MA Matin yesterday.

The move to send a senior official to Lyon and send four other officials for training came under an agreement signed between Inspector General of Police (IGP) Nur Mohammad and the Interpol boss yesterday, says a press release.

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FROM LEFT... Army chief Gen Moeen U Ahmed, Election Commissioner Sohul Hussain, UNDP Representative Renata Dessalieu, Chief Election Commissioner ATM Shamsul Huda and Election Commissioner Sakhawat Hossain at a programme at a city hotel yesterday to celebrate the halfway mark of voter registration.

HASINA'S GRAFT CASE Charge-framing hearing resumes today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

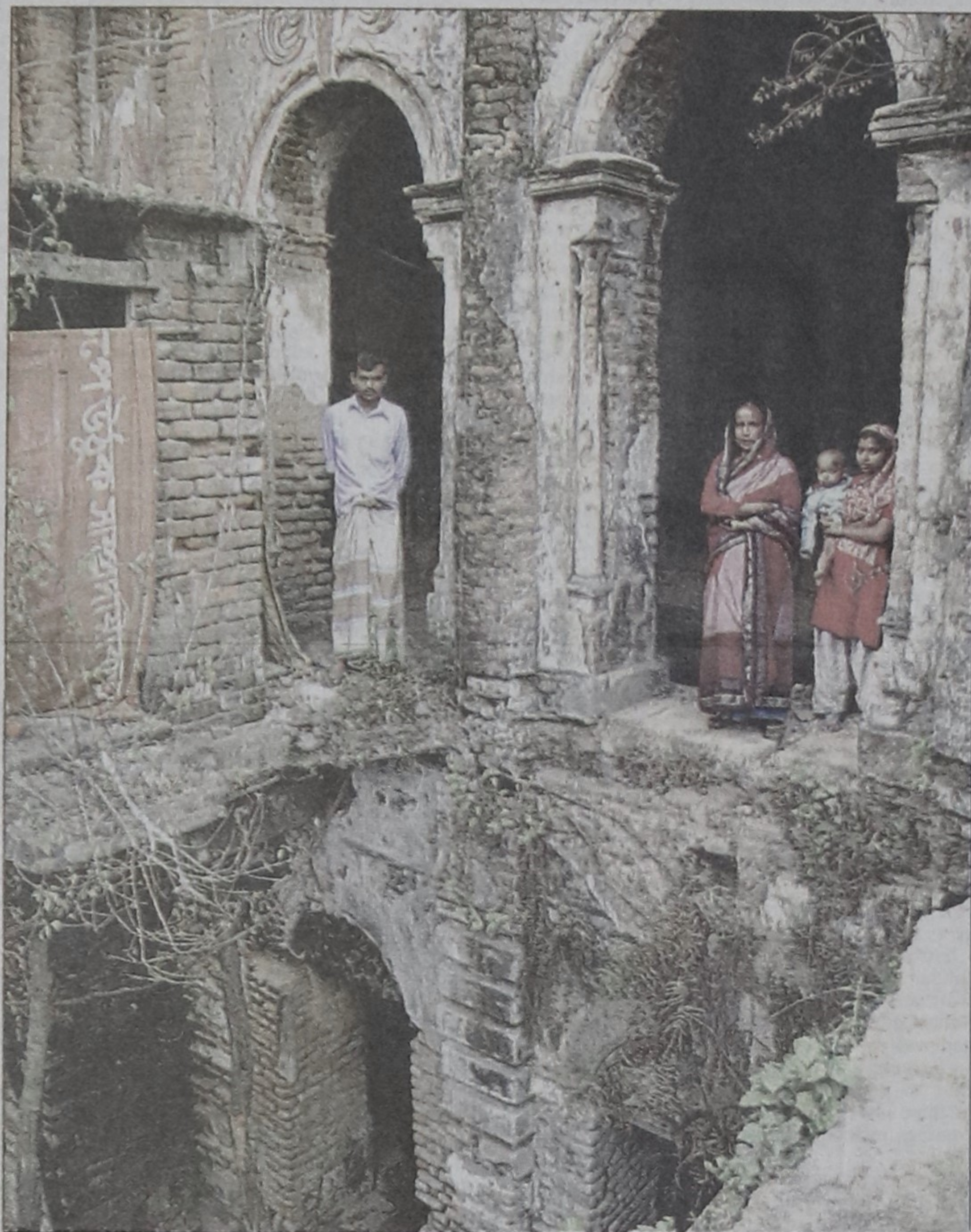
The hearing on charge framing against Awami League (AL) President Sheikh Hasina and seven other people in the Tk 3 crore barge-mount power plant corruption case is set to resume today after being postponed five times.

Judge Firoz Alam of Special Court-1 last adjourned the hearing on February 26 as senior defence lawyers failed to appear before the court. They were engaged in dealing with another graft case against Hasina in the Supreme Court.

The special court, set up at MP hostel on the Jatiya Sangsad Bhaban premises, also rejected the bail prayer of Hasina in the power plant graft case on the same day.

Earlier, the special court

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Kumartuli-8 DMP barracks near Kotowali Police Station in the capital remains in a ramshackle condition. Several cop families risking their lives stay in the building abandoned around 25 years ago.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

POLLS IN 90 DAYS Hearing on HC rule against EC March 19

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A High Court division bench yesterday fixed March 19 for hearing on a rule to the Election Commission (EC) regarding its failure to hold parliament election within 90 days of the dissolution of parliament in October 2006.

The bench of Justice Shah Abu Nayeem Mominur Rahman and Justice Shahidul Islam fixed the date following a prayer from writ petitioner Masood R Sobhan for early hearing of the rule.

The court issued the rule on January 27 in response to a writ petition filed and moved by Supreme Court lawyer barrister Masood R Sobhan.

The HC in its rule ordered the EC to explain within four weeks why the EC shall not be directed to hold the general election within the next 90 days.

It also asked the Commission to show cause why its failure to hold the election within 90 days of the dissolution of parliament in

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Prayer Timing		
March 3		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	5-10	5-45
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	4-30	4-45
Maghrib	6-07	6-11
Esha	7-30	8-00

Source: Islamic Foundation

40 killed as bomber strikes Pak tribal meet

AP, AFP, Peshawar

A suicide bomber blew himself up yesterday at a large meeting called by tribal elders pushing for peace in northwestern Pakistan, killing at least 40 people and injuring more than 100, witnesses and officials said.

It was the third suicide bombing in as many days in the volatile northwest, where security forces were battling pro-Taliban Islamic militants.

Thousands of people were at the meeting in Darra Adam Khel in

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Proteas pace too much for Tigers

BISHWAJIT ROY from Chittagong

Bangladesh batsmen appeared helpless against the fiery South African pace attack as they all but confirmed another innings defeat after the third day of the second and final Test at the Chittagong Divisional Stadium yesterday.

In reality, the South Africans, who lead the series 1-0, will need to do the simple job of taking four more wickets on the fourth morning when Tigers, who still require 271 runs to avoid an innings defeat and a miracle to evade complete humiliation, resume their second innings on 54 for five.

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TALKS WITH BNP Hearing resumes today on EC's letter dispute

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Hearing on a High Court (HC) rule regarding Election Commission's invitation letter to BNP for holding dialogue with the commission on electoral reforms will resume today in an HC division bench.

An HC bench issued the ruling on the commission, BNP acting Secretary General Maj (ret'd) Hafiz Uddin Ahmed, six standing committee members of the party and the government on November 18 asking them to reply why the EC's invitation letter should not be declared illegal.

Hearing on the much-talked ruling began on February 27. During the hearing, BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia's counsel claimed that the BNP's standing

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ATTEMPT ON HASINA'S LIFE Jail authorities asked to explain failure to produce 3 accused

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court issued a show cause notice asking the jail authorities to explain why they failed to produce three accused before it yesterday in connection with the case for making an attempt on former premier Sheikh Hasina's life in August, 1989.

Speedy Trial Tribunal-4 Judge Mohammad Israil Hossain passed the order after the jail authorities failed to produce detained Lt Col (dismissed) Syed Faruk Rahman, Lt

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CA for ending disparity in education system

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Chief Adviser Fakhruddin Ahmed yesterday called for removing disparity in the education system, especially between urban and rural educational institutions.

"We have to overcome segmentations and divisions in the education system at primary and secondary levels that create a divided society," he said at a conference on education in the city.

"The emergence of a widening difference in the quality of education between urban and rural schools is a serious problem. Over the last several decades the problem has become worst. We have to find out the solution to the prob-

lem as soon as possible," the chief adviser observed.

Inaugurating the three-day conference on 'Governance in Education: Transparency, Accountability and Effectiveness' at the International Conference Centre at the Chief Adviser's Office, he emphasised increasing public sector allocation for education to achieve educational and development goals.

The conference was organised by Unesco and Bangladesh National Commission for Unesco in cooperation with the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Primary and Mass Education.

"Bangladesh devotes a little over two-percent of GDP as public

sector allocation for education, which is quite low. The ratio needs to double within the next decade and the share of government budget for education needs to increase proportionately from the present level of under 15 percent," the chief adviser told the conference.

He said the country's educational goals and development aspirations cannot be realised without increasing investment, especially allocation of budget.

"But increased spending is not enough; good governance in education must ensure that the resources are used efficiently and effectively," he mentioned.

Stressing the importance of the

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Purchase committee okays rental power plant at Ashuganj

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The advisers' committee on public purchase yesterday approved a bid for the 50 MW Ashuganj rental power project to be awarded to local Green Power Ltd.

With this approval, the total number of rental power projects undertaken by the caretaker government stands at seven with a total generation capacity of 250 MW.

The tenders for eight rental power schemes were floated late

last year with a view to minimise the power crisis in the upcoming lean period in April. Six had been approved till yesterday, most of which were given to Hosaf. The seventh one was approved yesterday after a second round of tender. The eighth scheme, one for Fenchuganj, remains to be awarded.

Green Power has offered a rental of 4.78 US cents per kilowatt hour (Kwh) in this bid. The other bidder Energy Prima of Hosaf group had

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Form national alliance to try war criminals

Discussants call at int'l conference

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Demanding trial of war criminals, speakers at an international conference on genocide, truth and justice stressed the need for forming a national alliance in this regard.

On the second day of the conference yesterday, the speakers also said international contacts should be increased in this regard and at the same time genocide should be

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Justice Badrul retires early

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Justice AK Badrul Haque, a High Court Division judge of the Supreme Court, yesterday resigned citing 'personal ground'.

Sources said he submitted his resignation letter to the president last afternoon through registrar of the Supreme Court, praying for voluntary retirement six months before time. President Iajuddin Ahmed was also quick to accept his letter, prompting speculation over his prompt retirement.

Justice Badrul was to retire on September 26 this year, said a SC source, adding that he was superseded more than once when his juniors were elevated to the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court.

Burned housewife succumbs after 9 days' struggle

SHAHEEN MOLLAH

A housewife died of burns at Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) in the early hours yesterday, nine days after her husband and in-laws allegedly set her on fire as her family refused to give dowry.

Rupa Begum, 22, wife of Manik Bepari, a mason at Shariatpur, and daughter of Abdul Mobin Bepari of Keraniganj, Dhaka, breathed her last at 12:30am. Doctors said ninety percent of Rupa's body was burnt.

Quoting neighbours, her elder brother Mohammad Shahin

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Rupa Begum

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