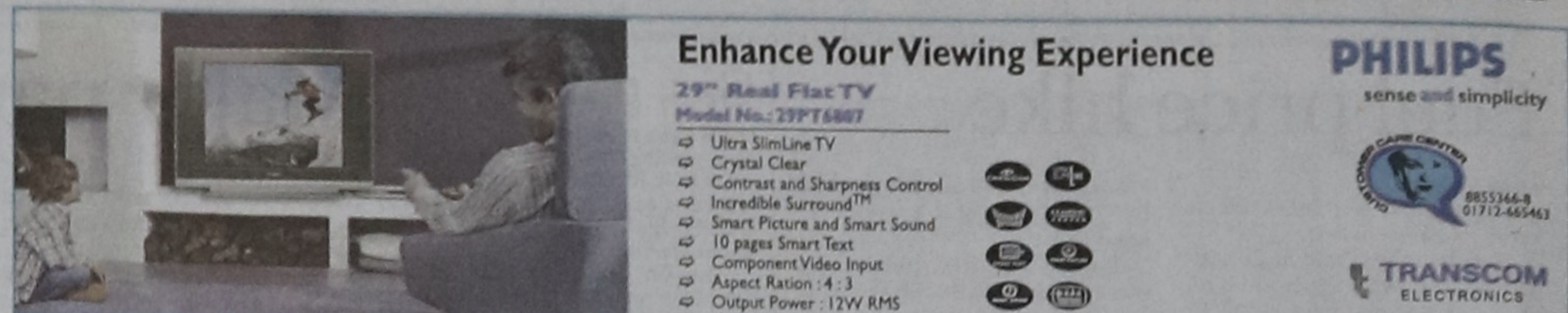


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WB okays \$50m for Sidr victims

UNB, Dhaka

The World Bank on Tuesday approved two new projects to benefit poor families affected by last year's cyclone Sidr, vulnerable children in urban slums, and people with disabilities in Bangladesh.

An amount of \$50 million in additional financing for the Social Investment Programme Project (SIPP) is designed to help restore assets, and livelihoods for families affected by cyclone Sidr.

The cyclone caused extensive damage to lives, property, livestock, and crops, with total damage and losses estimated at \$1.7 billion.

SIPP, which has already benefited over 1,000 villages across Bangladesh, was identified as the best instrument for quickly channeling funds to support livelihoods restoration at the community level, according to a message received in Dhaka yesterday.

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CITY CORPORATION ELECTIONS

Major party leaders file nomination today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Local level leaders of major political parties including Awami League (AL) and BNP will file applications today for candidacies in the August 4 polls to four city corporations and nine municipalities.

A total of 122 persons collected application forms for the mayoral posts, 1,300 for the posts of councillors, and 225 for the seats reserved for women in the four city corporations.

July 13 is the deadline for withdrawal of candidacies.

Although, AL formally decided to take part in the polls, BNP has yet to acquiesce. BNP's local level leaders however collected application forms, while AL-led 14-party

coalition yesterday said it will announce its nominees by July 12.

Meanwhile, Khulna city unit of BNP yesterday announced a boycott of the poll to the city corporation there.

In Rajshahi 42 persons collected forms for the mayoral post, 495 for the posts of councillors, and 84 for the reserved seats for women.

In Sylhet 48 persons collected forms for the mayoral post, 366 for the posts of councillors, and 60 for the reserved seats for women.

In Khulna 17 persons collected forms for the posts of councillors, and 45 for the seats reserved for women.

In Barisal 15 persons collected forms for the mayoral post, 191 for the posts of councillors, and 36 for

the seats reserved for women.

RAJSHAH

Our Rajshahi correspondent reported that following a decision of the city unit of BNP to take part in the city corporation election, at least five local leaders of the party including its President Azizur Rahman collected application forms for the post of mayor yesterday.

The decision was taken in a meeting of the city unit of BNP that also formed a 41-member committee headed by Kabir Hossain for monitoring the city corporation poll there. In the meeting most of the leaders said BNP should not let AL and other parties go unchallenged in the poll.

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BIMAN FLIGHT DELAY

Passengers stranded in Riyadh

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

About 314 passengers of Biman Bangladesh Airlines Ltd remain stranded at the Riyadh International Airport as a Dhaka-bound flight of the airline from Riyadh has been delayed for about 48 hours due to technical glitches.

The Biman authorities said they had already sent engineers and spare parts of hydraulic pipe from Dhaka yesterday to fix the technical glitches. They hoped that the aircraft would leave for Dhaka today.

The Dhaka-bound DC10-30 flight was scheduled to take off at 3:00pm (Bangladesh time) on Tuesday but it remained stuck at Riyadh due to technical problems, Biman sources said.

"The aircraft was scheduled to leave Riyadh for Dhaka at 3:00pm on Tuesday but it could not take off

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UNDER-PRICING OF BRAZILIAN SUGAR

PSI company slapped with Tk 12 crore fine

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Cg

Customs authorities have slapped a fine of Tk 12 crore on Bureau Veritas, a France-based PSI (pre-shipment inspection) company for showing less CRF (clean report findings) value for 34,200 tonnes sugar imported from Brazil in 2005.

Sources said an official circular in this regard was issued on Tuesday on completion of an investigation into the scam, which caused a huge loss to the government's revenue income.

Customs sources said three importing firms -- Abul Khaer Condensed and Beverage Ltd, M/s AK Corporation and M/s Supreme Food Industries Ltd -- in November 2005 imported 34,200 tonnes of sugar from Brazil on board MV

Sarim.

Of the importers, Abul Khaer Ltd imported 22,700 tonnes, AK Corporation 6,500 tonnes and Supreme Ltd 5,000 tonnes. The supplier of the sugar was ED & F Min Sugar Ltd (England) of Brazil, the sources added.

Bureau Veritas had issued the CRF for the imported sugar of Abul Khaer and they showed CRF value at \$367 per tonne.

On the other hand, UK-based PSI company ITS issued CRF for the other two firms certifying the CRF value at only \$262 per tonne.

Although the sugar was imported from the same supplier, difference of price against per tonne was surprisingly \$105. The customs officials concerned could not find any reason to this discrepancy.

Meanwhile, a team of task force while digging deep into the matter has recently detected some stunning information, sources say.

They say the freight charges of the imported sugar was supposed to be \$80-\$90 per tonne, but the importer had showed it at only \$30-\$40 depriving the government of huge revenue.

The sources say the PSI company was ordered to pay the fine within 10 days of the issuance of the order.

Different trade bodies in the country have long been demanding that the government rescind the PSI system. They allege five companies -- Bureau Veritas, ITS, BSI, Cotecna and SGS -- were

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A vendor runs his tea stall on a boat on the Buriganga as the authorities do not allow them to crowd the riverside in the area. The picture was taken from Jinjira area.

Another SC judge retires

Appellate Division facing shortage of judges

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Appellate Division of the Supreme Court (SC) will now face a shortage of two judges as Justice Md Hassan Ameen retired yesterday.

Another Appellate Division Judge Md Ruhul Amin retired from the post of chief justice on May 31 this year.

The division has now five judges against seven posts.

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EXTORTION CASE

Court ruling on July 13 about Hasina's petition for exemption

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A special court yesterday set July 13 to give its decision on a petition seeking exemption for Awami League President Sheikh Hasina from appearing at court hearings in person in a Tk 2.99 crore extortion case.

Judge M Ashraf Hossain of the

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JUVENILE CRIME 3

Low rights awareness leads to child abuse

SHARIFUL ISLAM

Lack of awareness about child rights and existing laws both lead to the violation of rights of children in conflict with the law, starting from their arrest and lasting through their custody and trial.

Children and juveniles are not given rights that ought to be guaranteed to them according to the Children Act 1974, an act that experts say remains back dated compared to the Convention on Rights of the Child, which Bangladesh ratified in 1990.

A glaring example of how police and magistrates lack knowledge about child rights was the arrest of an eight-year-old child by Dakkhinkhan police on April 28 this year in a mugging incident.

The Chief Metropolitan Magistrate Court, instead of releasing the young child, sent him to the Juvenile Development Centre at Tongi though he was under the age of nine, which is the minimum age of criminal responsibility according to the law.

The boy was released following a petition filed by a lawyer from Aparajeyo-Bangladesh.

The officer-in-charge of a police station could have also released the child on bail by a provision allowed him by the Children Act, applicable even for a non-bailable offence.

Though this provision gives a broad scope to the police to prevent children from being detained, it is often not used as in the case of Dakkhinkhan police arrest.

In another example, on April 24 an eight-year-old girl arrested on charge of drug peddling was released from Khulna district jail after an appeal by a rights organisation challenging the validity of her arrest and the charges framed against her.

The state of child rights in the country has improved in recent times as awareness among government officials -- particularly police,

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Tk 21 CR BRIBERY

Hearing on charge framing against Tarique, Babar deferred again

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A special court yesterday again deferred to July 6 the hearing on charge framing in the Tk 21 crore bribery case against detained BNP Senior Joint Secretary General Tarique Rahman, former state minister for home Lutfuzzaman Babar and six others.

Judge Shahed Noor Uddin of Special Court-3 set up on the Jatiya Sangsad Bhaban premises fixed the date as Tarique and Babar did not appear before the court because of "illness".

As the court went into session around 11:30am defence counsels told the court that the hearing on charge framing should not go on as their clients were absent.

The prosecution submitted before the court the jail authority's medical reports on the health condition of Tarique, the eldest son of detained former premier and BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia, and Babar.

Following a brief hearing, the judge set July 6 for the next date of hearing.

Earlier on June 25, the court

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S Asian nations miss business opportunities worth \$8b a year

Non-cooperation is the reason, says Saarc secretary general

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The South Asian nations miss business opportunities worth \$8 billion a year because of non-cooperation, said Saarc Secretary General Dr Sheel Kant Sharma yesterday.

"A recent study said the opportunity cost of non-cooperation (among the South Asian nations) is \$8 billion," Sharma said at a roundtable styled "Saarc: Short Window of Opportunity" organised by Bangladesh Enterprise

Institute (BEI) at its auditorium in the capital.

If "unofficial" businesses in the region could be checked, business opportunities worth three to four times the amount would have been created, he said.

He, however, expressed optimism that the Saarc processes, which appear to be moving like a locomotive, are steady and will surely witness success.

Termining the present situation in the Saarc region "unprecedented",

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Any attack to provoke fierce reaction: Iran

AP, Madrid

An attack on Iran would provoke a fierce response, the country's oil minister warned yesterday at the World Petroleum Congress in Madrid.

Minister Gholam Hossein Nozari, however, said Tehran would not cut oil deliveries and would continue supplying the market even if struck by Israel or the United States.

Tehran "is not going to be quiet," if attacked, Nozari told reporters. It's "going to react fiercely, and nobody can imagine what would be the reaction of Iran," he added.

Nozari spoke outside the 19th World Petroleum Congress after a presentation on Iran's oil and gas industry to a packed audience,

including representatives of European and US energy companies.

Tehran is under UN, US and European sanctions because it has defied UN Security Council demands to suspend its uranium enrichment program. But with oil supplies tight and prices at unprecedented levels, the energy industry remains tempted by the possibilities of investing in Iran, Opec's second largest oil producer and No. 2 in terms of the world's natural gas reserves.

President Bush has repeatedly said that a military strike on Tehran is possible as a last-resort if Iran continues to pursue uranium enrichment and fails to heed other Security Council demands. Israel too has warned that it is ready to hit

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PHOTO SHAFIUL ALAM

Dhaka Wasa authorities have dug this road in Rayerbazar to restore a canal on which the city corporation had built the road "illegally." The road has been left in such condition for the past six months, much to the sufferings of the locals.

29 killed in fresh Lanka fighting

AP, AFP, Colombo

New fighting between government forces and Tamil Tiger rebels along Sri Lanka's northern front lines killed 27 rebels and two soldiers, the military said yesterday.

Fighting erupted Tuesday in the

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Prayer Timing		
July 3		
Fajr	Azan	Jamaat
4:10	4:45	
Zohr	12:45	1:15
Asr	5:00	5:15
Maghrib	6:55	7:00
Esha	8:17	8:45

Source: Islamic Foundation

ASIA CUP CRICKET

Younis ton takes Pakistan home

AGENCIES, Karachi

Younis Khan smashed an unbeaten 123 to steer Pakistan to a brilliant eight-wicket victory over India in their Asia Cup Super League match at the Karachi National Stadium last night.

Pakistan reached 309 in 45.3 overs to give themselves a slim chance to make it to the final. Earlier, India won the toss and batted first to score 308-7.

The experienced right-hander struck eleven boundaries and a six during his 117-ball knock. Younis added 144 runs for the unbroken third wicket with stand-in captain Misbahul Haq, who was not out on

70, for the third wicket. Misbah hit seven fours and a six in his 62-ball knock. The winning runs came from Misbah's bat when he drilled Praveen Kumar through mid-on amid ecstatic scenes.

But it was the opening pair of Salman Butt (36) and Nasir Jamshed (53) who gave Pakistan a solid start in the chase as they added 65 for the first wicket, ending when Salman was run out in the eighth over.

Later though, Nasir suffered from cramps and was carried off the ground after reaching his half-century which he made with the help of nine boundaries.

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3 killed in Jerusalem bulldozer rampage

AFP, Jerusalem

A Palestinian man killed at least three people and wounded 30 more when he rammed a bulldozer into a bus and cars in central Jerusalem yesterday before being shot dead, medics and police said.

Israel police spokesman Micky Rosenfeld described the rampage as a "terrorist" attack by a 30-year-old man from occupied east Jerusalem who was working at a construction site alongside the busy road where it took place.

Chaos erupted as the man drove the heavy vehicle along Jaffa Road in the heart of west Jerusalem, ploughing into a crowded public

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Hospital staffs held for raping patient's wife

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Two medical technicians of the National Institute of Cardiovascular Diseases (NICVD) in the capital were arrested yesterday for raping a patient's wife the night before.

Police hauled up Delwar Hossain, the prime accused and an NICVD staff, from his Humayun Road house at Mohammadpur in early hours yesterday after the victim and her husband filed a case with Teigaon Police Station at around 3:00 in the morning. The police also apprehended Delwar's partner-in-crime and co-worker Mohammad Haque from Mohammadpur area.

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