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MINE SUBSIDENCE PM asks for rehabilitation of victims

UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has directed the authorities concerned to make a list of the families whose homes have been affected by the subsidence of Barapukuria coal-mine site.

Hasina made the directives when the affected families' representatives called on her at her parliament office yesterday.

The PM became surprised

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CLIMATE CHANGE Adaptation main challenge

Says visiting Danish minister

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Adaptation to climate change is one of the biggest challenges for Bangladesh right now, and it is already making efforts to face this challenge and should share its knowledge and experience in this field with other countries.

Visiting Danish Minister for Climate and Energy Connie Hedegaard said this at a

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Transit, Tifa await cabinet approval

BSS, Dhaka

Proposals for the 'Trade and Investment Framework Agreement (Tifa)' with the US and transit with India are lying before the cabinet for approval.

"The cabinet will take decisions on the issues considering whether these will serve the best interest of people or not," said Commerce Minister Faruq Khan at the monthly meeting of the

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WTO TALKS FM calls for protecting LDC interests

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Foreign Minister Dipu Moni said the current round of WTO negotiations must ensure duty- and quota-free market access for the products of Least Developed Countries (LDCs).

The minister made the comment during her meeting with Pascal Lamy, director general of the World Trade Organisation (WTO), according to a message received here from Geneva yesterday.

Dipu Moni stressed the need for an early outcome of the negotiations specifically addressing the concerns of the

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CHANGES IN ARMY DGFI, infantry divisions under new chiefs

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The authorities have brought some changes in the top echelons of Bangladesh Army including the heads of DGFI and infantry divisions, said highly placed sources.

Brigadier General Fazle Akbar, director of artillery at the Army Headquarters, has been promoted to major general and made director

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Prayer Timing		
February 4		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	5-30	6-05
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	4-15	4-30
Maghrib	5-52	5-56
Esha	7-15	7-45

Source: Islamic Foundation

Only 3 confessed graft on their own

States Tac in its report to govt; portrays widespread corruption in utility departments

EMRAN HOSSAIN

Only two to three government officials out of the 452 graft-accused sought clemency at the now-defunct Truth and Accountability Commission (Tac) on their own after amassing ill-gotten wealth.

The Tac in its report submitted to the government says those who sought clemency are mostly from the utility service departments where task forces conducted drive against corruption.

The report identifies the Roads and Highways Department (RHD), BIWTA, sub-registrar's office, forest department,

Titas Gas and BRTA as the most corruption-riddled public service institutions. Most of the clemency seekers are from these institutions.

Graft-accused from BITB, LGRD and city corporations also faced Tac for making voluntary disclosures.

Though the report claims the graft-accused were repentant, statistics show that most of them were accused in different cases or going to be accused or served with notices to submit wealth statements to the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC).

Based on the clemency seekers statements, the report says rampant corrup-

tion at public service institutions has so intensified that even government officials cannot carry out duties smoothly without being involved in graft, even if they are against it.

"The working atmosphere at their [government officials] departments and institutions has become so corrupt that even illegal acts and irregularities are generally considered as normal," reads the report submitted to the government on Monday.

The report observes, "They [the government officials] don't even think illegally realising money was against ethics."

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Multiple diggers are working in the Begunbari-Hatirjheel integrated development project in the capital as authorities are trying to expedite its implementation.

PHOTO: STAR

60,000 Mros made gypsies of the hills

Ranglai tells The Daily Star how his community was made to suffer over decades

PINAKI ROY

He grew up chasing wild boars and working in the jhum filed. Walking for hours in the hilly paths was part of his usual but hard life. But that son of the hills, Ranglai Mro, is so weak now--his face is so pale--that he cannot talk for more than a few minutes at a stretch.

"This is not only about our land, not even violation of our rights. Our ancestors were cremated on that land and we preserve their ash at a certain place to pay homage. That is why we did not want to leave our village," Ranglai says. He stops to take a deep breath.

Ranglai Mro is a leader of the Mro, the fourth largest indigenous community in the country--after the Chakma, Marma and Tipra--with a population of 60,000 mostly living in Bandarban.

"People used to describe the Mro as 'half-naked' and



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UZ results delayed for incorrect info from ROs: CEC

UNB, Dhaka

The publication of upazila election results is getting delayed due to incorrect and incomplete result sheets sent by returning officers, Chief Election Commissioner ATM Shamsul Huda said yesterday.

"After scrutiny, it was found that the results announced by the returning officers at night had no similarity with the

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Priyanka meets PM

UNB, Dhaka

Priyanka Gandhi, daughter of Indian National Congress President Sonia Gandhi and late Indian premier Rajiv Gandhi, met Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at Sudha Sadan Tuesday night.

Sheikh Hasina's daughter Saima Wazed Putil, her husband Mashrur Hossain, their daughters Amrin and Aliza and son Zaief received Priyanka with a bouquet as she reached Sudha Sadan.

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MORE STORIES ON PAGE 12

Sahara admits slide in law and order

UNB, Dhaka

Home Minister Sahara Khatun admitted that criminals, extortionists and militants have raised their heads once again.

"Law and order situation has been deteriorating after the December 29 parliament elections," she told the inaugural ceremony of the first senior police executive management course at the Police Staff College in Mirpur yesterday.

The home minister urged the police to make concerted effort to maintain peace across the country.

Inspector General of Police (IGP) Nur Mohammad, present in the occasion, said that the police already had gone on a special drive and hoped that

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Govt to speed up Hatirjheel project

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

State Minister for Housing and Public Works Abdul Mannan has directed the authorities concerned to expedite implementation of Begunbari-Hatirjheel integrated development project in the capital for its completion as soon as possible.

He gave the directive at a meeting on the Tk 1480.98 crore project held at the ministry yesterday.

The government attaches priority to the project scheduled to be completed by June next year, and the prime minister has shown keen interest in its speedy execution, the state minister said.

On the BGMEA Bhaban situated in the middle of Begunbari Khal, he said, "We will take a decision in this regard after examining all necessary documents, and discussing the matter with people at different levels and owners of the Bhaban."

The project will not only expand the capital's road network but also increase recreational facilities including boat journey, Mannan mentioned.

About the people to be affected by this project, he said the project would greatly benefit the city dwellers, and the authorities would try to ensure that the number of affected people is as small as possible.

Prof Mujibur Rahman of BUET, who heads the team that

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CCC backtracks on school demolition Commercial set-up omitted in revised plan

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

In the wake of strong protest, the Chittagong City Corporation (CCC) has decided to scrap its plans for a 16-storey multi-purpose commercial building on the land of two schools in Chittagong.

"In the revised plan we are now planning to construct a six-storey building only for the academic purpose and infrastructural development of the two girls' schools," said CCC Chief Education Officer Prof Rawshan Akhter Hanif.

The schools are Aparana Charan City Corporation Girls' High School and Krishna Kumari City Corporation Girls' High School.

The previous plan had put the two schools on the 3rd, 4th and 5th floor of the proposed building while the rest of the structure was to be used for commercial purpose.

Though the education ministry is known to have sent a letter

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Myanmar migrants set adrift by Thais

Say about 200 men rescued by Indonesian navy from sea

AFP, Idi Rayeuk, Indonesia

Myanmar boat people found off Indonesia said yesterday they had been towed out to sea and set adrift by Thai forces, fuelling allegations which have severely embarrassed Bangkok.

About 200 men from Myanmar's minority Muslim Rohingya community were found huddled in a boat marooned off the northern tip of Indonesia's Sumatra island on Monday, Indonesian navy officer Tedi Sutardi told AFP.

They said they had spent three weeks adrift after the Thais beat them and dumped as many as 10 wooden boats far out to sea with no motors and hardly any provisions after seeking

refuge in Thailand.

Human rights groups have said nearly 1,000 Rohingya landed on Thai shores late last year, before being towed out to sea in separate batches with few supplies in mid and late December.

Speaking at a hospital in East Aceh district, one of the survivors told AFP about 20 people had died during the journey from the same boat.

"We were caught by the Thai military along with 1,000 other Rohingya people. We were brought to an island and stayed there for two months before being thrown out to sea on

SEE PAGE 15 COL 1

Food rationing mulled for poor JS told

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government is actively considering reintroduction of food rationing system for the low income group of the population, following its imposition of a ban on rice export till May 5 of this year.

The moves were initiated in an effort to increase supply of the nation's staple to the domestic market, Commerce Minister Faruk Khan, and Food and Disaster Management Minister Abdur Razzak told the parliament yesterday in response to lawmakers' queries.

Contacted by The Daily Star, the food minister said government officials are now working on the reintroduction of the system, while Razzak said, "We're trying to reintroduce the system as soon as possible."

The food rationing system was in place earlier to feed the destitute and low income group people.

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52 killed in fresh Lanka fighting

Troops take LTTE chief's bunker

AFP, Colombo

Sri Lanka's army said yesterday it had captured an elaborate underground bunker complex believed to have been the home of the leader of the Tamil Tigers, as well as the rebels' last jungle airstrip.

Soldiers seized the facilities as fighting escalated in the northeast of the island, where government troops are pressing on with an all-out assault on the remaining patch of jungle held by the guerrillas.

The renewed clashes came as the government said the battle against the cornered Tigers was at a "decisive stage" and that it could not guarantee the security of tens of thousands of civilians trapped in rebel-held territory.

The captured two-storey-deep bunker had sound-proof electricity generators, air conditioning and medical supplies, and was hidden in a coconut grove in Mullaitivu district, the

defence ministry said.

It described the site as the "main LTTE (Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam) hideout" and "a major residential site" of rebel leader Velupillai Prabhakaran.

Pictures released by the defence ministry purported to show that Prabhakaran had left behind a stuffed Tiger, a paintball gun and a bottle of cognac.

At least 20 guerrillas were killed trying to defend the facility and another 32 died in fighting on Monday, the ministry said.

The whereabouts of Prabhakaran, 54, are uncertain, but Sri Lanka's military has said he may have already fled the island by boat.

Also captured was what is believed to be the last of several jungle airstrips used by the Tamil Tigers to launch air strikes across the island, the defence ministry said.

The two-kilometre (1.25-mile) long runway

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TEXTBOOK CRISIS Intelligence to identify culprits

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Intelligence agencies have been asked to identify people who are responsible for creating the artificial crisis of textbooks for secondary level students.

"Stern actions must be taken against those who are trying to create the textbook crisis. We have assigned intelligence agencies to identify the real culprits," Education Minister Nurul Islam Nahid said after a meeting with the representatives of publishers, distributors and booksellers at the Secretariat yesterday.

He said 24 types of textbooks for secondary level students will be available in the markets on Saturday

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Mentally and physically challenged Imtiaz Hasan Abir, a student of class-III, looks at books as his mother took him to Amar Ekushey Boi Mela yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

Boi Mela sees 78 new books on third day

RAKIB AHAMMED and AMENA KHATUN

A total of 78 new books from 30 publications arrived at the Amar Ekushey Boi Mela on the third day of the fair yesterday.

However, only a few stalls, which brought books by some popular writers, drew the crowd of readers.

Ounnyapokash, Pearl Publications, Anupam Publications, Shikha Prokashoni, Kakali Prokashoni, Charulipi Prokashan, Afsar Brothers, Ityadi Grontho Prokash brought titles by Humayun Ahmed, Muhammad Zafar Iqbal, Imdadul Haq Milon, Rabeya Khatun, Anisul Haq.

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