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Tk 135cr misused by Gram Sarkar in 4yrs

JS body asks ministry to investigate the graft during BNP rule

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The parliamentary standing committee on local government yesterday alleged that members of the now-defunct Gram Sarkar units misused and embezzled Tk 135 crore during the last BNP-led government.

It asked the LGRD and Cooperatives Ministry to investigate the wastage of public money and submit a detailed report on the allocation of money at the committee's next meeting.

Now scrutinising the Local

Government (city corporation) Bill, the members of the committee proposed two deputy mayor posts, one exclusively for women, for each city corporation, meeting sources said.

In consultation with Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, the committee will finalise its recommendations to this effect, the sources added.

On the allegation of embezzlement of public money, committee Chairman Rahmat Ali said there were many incidents of conflict over sharing the embezzled money.

"I had to experience such conflicts in my own constituency," he told reporters after the meeting at the Jatiya Sangsad Bhaban.

The BNP-led alliance government introduced the Gram Sarkar system in 2003 saying the units will assist the union parishes. But the system became controversial as the Gram Sarkar units consisted of the local individuals, most of them loyal to the then ruling BNP.

The then BNP government allocated Tk 181 crore for Gram Sarkar in four fiscal

SEE PAGE 15 COL 6

CANTT HOUSE
Khaleda vows legal fight with govt
STAR REPORT

BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia said a deep-rooted conspiracy is on to evict her from the cantonment house and vowed to wage a legal battle against it.

Khaleda, through teleconference from Dhaka, said this to the BNP men demonstrating in front of the Bangladesh High Commission in London on April 15, ANA, a news agency, reports from London.

SEE PAGE 15 COL 6

Ashraf warns of 'danger' if upazila debate turns worse

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

LGRD and Cooperatives Minister Syed Ashraful Islam yesterday alleged that some sections of the media have been stoking the opposition to the recently passed upazila parishad law.

He said this kind of provocation might lead to a dangerous situation. If parliament deems that upazila parishes

SEE PAGE 15 COL 5

WAR CRIME TRIAL
Probe agency appointment by Monday

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Home Minister Sahara Khatun yesterday said the investigation agency to probe into war crimes would be formed by next Sunday or Monday.

"We will start the investigation soon. Members of the investigation agency will not be more than five," she told reporters after a workshop at the auditorium of Bangladesh Institute of Law and International Affairs (BILIA) in the capital.

SEE PAGE 7 COL 1

Mujibnagar Day today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The historic Mujibnagar Day will be observed across the country today, commemorating the formation of Bangladesh's first government at Baidyanath Tola mango grove in Meherpur on this day in 1971.

The place was later renamed Mujibnagar in tribute to father of the nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, who was declared president of the government-in-exile, and supreme

SEE PAGE 15 COL 4



PHOTO: GRAMEEN BANK

US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton receives Nobel laureate Prof Muhammad Yunus at her US State Department office in Washington DC Wednesday.

HSC exams begin

45 students, four teachers expelled

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The first day of the HSC and its equivalent Alim and business management (BM) examinations passed without any major untoward incident and disorder anywhere in the country yesterday.

Four teachers were expelled from different

SEE PAGE 15 COL 3

Edible oil prices rise again

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The price of edible oil increased in the capital with its gradual rise in the international market since last month.

Price of pulse, flour and potato also went up due to inadequate supply in the city markets.

SEE PAGE 15 COL 7

7 ex-BTTB staff sued for embezzling Tk 2.88cr

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) has filed five cases against seven former officials of Bangladesh Telegraph and Telephone Board (BTTB), now Bangladesh Telecommunications Company Ltd (BTCL), in

SEE PAGE 15 COL 8

40pc railway land occupied illegally

Roundtable told

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Over 40 percent of the land belonging to Bangladesh Railway (BR) has been encroached over the years, proper use of which could make the railway a very profitable sector, speakers told a roundtable yesterday.

The railway sector has the potential to be developed as the cheapest and most convenient mass transport system of the country, they said.

The roundtable on 'Role of railway in the development of economy, communication, and budget' was organised by Rail Unnayan

Jote, Save Environment Movement (SEM) and Work for a Better Bangladesh Trust (WBB) at the National Press Club.

It was pointed out in the keynote speech that out of a total 63,127 acres, 25,456 acres of land belonging to the railway authority has been encroached.

The railway sector has been largely ignored and neglected since the independence of the country, speakers said pointing out that different organisations owe a total amount of Tk 12,000 crore to Bangladesh Railway in unpaid costs for carriage of goods.

SEE PAGE 7 COL 1

Hasina seeks Islamic leaders' help in finding out terrorists

UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday sought cooperation of Islamic leaders and scholars in finding out terrorists and troublemakers.

"Islam is a religion of peace, but a vested quarter is undermining the image of this religion," she said while exchanging views with a delegation of Kawmi madrasa and Islamic leaders at her official residence Jamuna in the evening.

The delegation members

SEE PAGE 15 COL 3



Fishing trawlers to stay put at Firingi Bazar in Chittagong yesterday after a cautionary signal was raised due to formation of cyclone Bijli over the Bay of Bengal.

PHOTO: ZOBAER HOSSAIN SIDER

Suicide car bomber kills 19 in Pakistan

AFP, Charsadda

A suicide bomber blew up a vehicle packed with explosives at a police checkpoint in northwest Pakistan, killing 19 police and civilians, officials said yesterday.

Pakistani security troops are frequent targets for extremist militants who oppose the government's alliance in the US-led "war on terror" and more than 1,500 government forces have been killed by insurgents since 2002.

The bomber blew himself up late Wednesday in Charsadda, just north of Peshawar in the North West Frontier Province.

"Police were searching a vehicle when a mini-truck came and blew up," senior police official Sefwat Ghayour told AFP.

"One more civilian succumbed to his wounds in a hospital in

SEE PAGE 15 COL 8

Shoe targets Advani this time

PTI, Katni, Madhya Pradesh

A slipper was lobbed at BJP leader LK Advani yesterday by a former functionary of the saffron party during a public meeting here, the latest in the series of such episodes involving political leaders, but it did not hit him.

The slipper was hurled by former Katni district president of BJP Pawas Agarwal, who allegedly was aggrieved at the party leadership for being "removed from his post due to groupism within the party," police said.

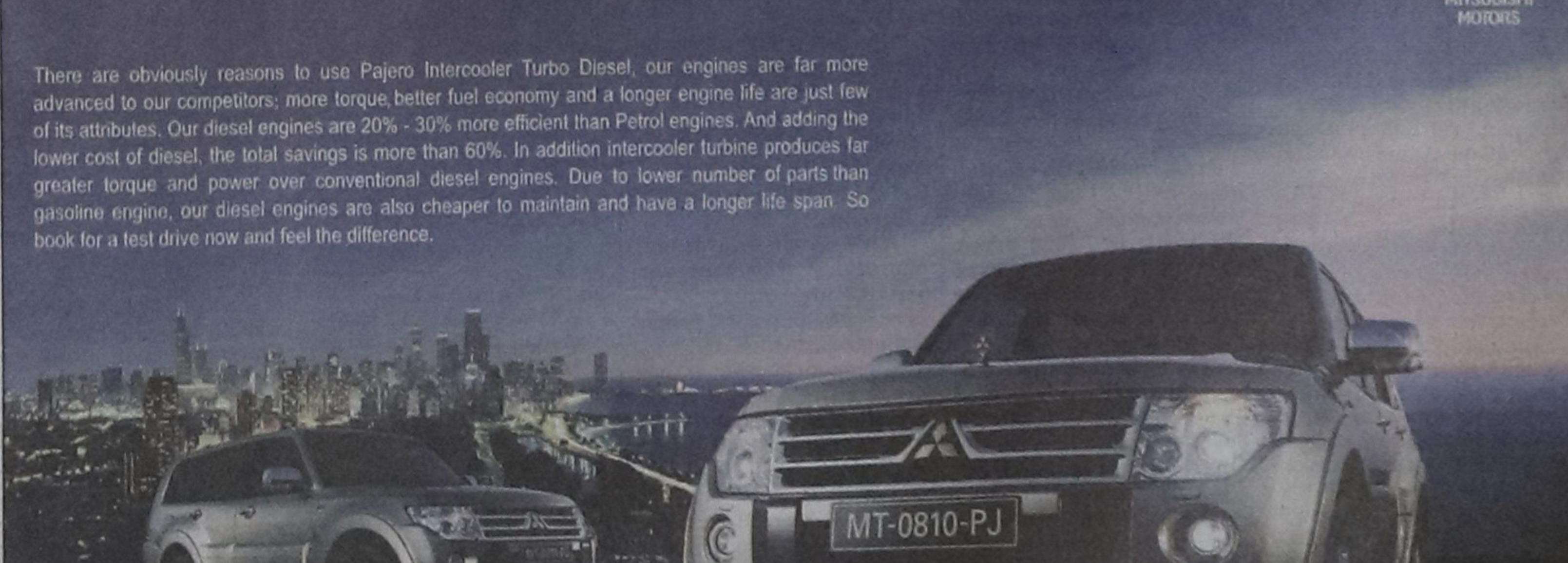
He threw the slipper

SEE PAGE 15 COL 2

Prayer Timing		
April 17	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	4-40	5-15
Juma	12-30	1-15
Asr	4-45	5-00
Maghrib	6-20	6-25
Esha	7-45	8-15

Source: Islamic Foundation

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