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Time for 'river view' university

PINAKI ROY

In a city of concrete jungle, developers with the idea of "river view" and "lake view" housing projects are making good business though most of them don't have government approval.

Now a 'river view' private university is going to join them as Uttara University has erected a signboard on the floodplain of the Turag. The signboard stands in knee- or waist-deep water seven months a year.

Amid encroachment by housing estates, private universities and refuelling stations, the tiny Turag, the major flood flow system of the capital from north to south, is being choked and reduced every day.

The river is mentioned on the papers of Water Development Board to be 218 metres in width at Mirpur point. However, years of grabbing has reduced it to less than 18 metres in width in many places.

Locals say some government officials have bought a vast swath by the river and filled it up for a housing project called Pratyasha Housing. Different other housing companies are now filling up the river elsewhere.

Uttara University has projected to buy around 20 bighas of land in Kamarpada village just beside the Tongi-Ashulia Highway and already registered 11 bighas.

This area is identified as the sub-flood flow zone in the Dhaka master plan, most of which has already been filled up as the government authorities keep a blind eye.

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The authorities of Uttara University put up signboards on the floodplain of Turag river with a plan to set up their campus on the vast wetland.

PHOTO: SYED ZAKIR HOSSAIN

Let's rally round rivers

One does not have to be a nuclear expert to identify river encroachments. It's just too obvious. But it's all the more difficult to prove as all the river-gobblers have ownership papers, thanks to our corrupt land administration and lax monitoring by river regulatory body. Powerful, rich and ruthless, these river-gobblers find no difficulty in maneuvering legal system and managing law enforcement. They have become seemingly invincible. But should we let them get away with it? Lend your hands and together we can win a war.

... The Daily Star

Defaulting Huawei forgiven

New BTCL authorities waive penalty, questions arise

MD HASAN

The new BTCL authority in a sudden move waived a penalty imposed earlier on Chinese telecom vendor Huawei Technologies for their failure to supply five power generators required for a next generation telecom network project.

Although the Tk 14.86 lakh penalty is nothing in terms of an amount to the Chinese telecom giant, BTCL's soft corner for Huawei however makes the move questionable, as the penalty had been imposed in line with the deal signed

between the two companies.

The penalty waiver was granted by the newly appointed BTCL Managing Director SM Khabiruzzaman, as no penalty imposed on any vendor can be waived without the managing director's consent.

BTCL sources said the issue of the waiver was not even discussed in any meeting of the company's board of directors.

In a letter issued on April 12 this year to Huawei, Bangladesh Telecommunications Company Ltd (BTCL) said the company itself is now taking steps to procure the five

diesel engine generators, which according to the deal Huawei was supposed to supply. And on top of that no penalty will be imposed on Huawei for its failure to supply the generators on time, the letter added.

In September 2008, BTCL issued a show cause notice to Huawei asking it to explain why the Chinese company should not be penalised, to which Huawei failed to respond satisfactorily, prompting the BTCL authority to impose the Tk 14.86 lakh penalty.

Talking to The Daily Star, a former

SEE PAGE 15 COL 4

BDR man dies of 'liver cirrhosis'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) jawan died of 'liver cirrhosis' at BDR hospital yesterday.

The dead was identified as Subedar Sheikh Habibur Rahman of 18 Rifles Battalion in Rangamati, says a BDR press release.

Habibur was admitted to Combined Military Hospital, Chittagong on October 20 last year with liver ailment. After

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Key JMB man hiding across Rajshahi border

He supplies explosive materials, confesses 'Boma' Mizan

SHARIFUL ISLAM

Zahidul Islam alias 'Boma Mizan', detained explosives expert of the banned Jama'atul Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB), have told investigators that an 'active member' of the militant outfit, who is hiding in India for long, sends explosive substances to JMB.

JMB collects most of the explosive and other materials from local market, but those not available in the country are collected from India and sent to JMB by the absconding operative, investigators grilling Mizan quoted him as saying.

"The JMB active member is hiding at a place

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Clarification, our reply

Drawing attention to The Daily Star news headlined "Tk 157cr Gas Plant: SGFL Board scraps 3rd re-tender process" published on May 16, the Sylhet Gas Field Ltd (SGFL) in a clarification said it was not aware of any powerful ruling party man playing a key role in cancellation of the re-tendering process for the gas processing plant.

SEE PAGE 15 COL 7

20 hurt as Shibir clash with cops

RU CORRESPONDENT

At least 20 policemen and Islami Chhatra Shibir activists were injured in a violent clash between them in Binodpur area near Rajshahi University (RU) campus yesterday evening.

Sources said Shibir men exploded at least 10 bombs and threw stones and bricks at police during the clash while police fired around 30 tear gas shells and five rounds of rubber bullets to disperse them.

SEE PAGE 15 COL 8

7 lawmakers decline to fly economy class

JULFIKAR ALI MANIK and SHAKHAWAT LITON

The parliament secretariat had to shell out \$7,000 to upgrade seven lawmakers' air tickets to business class after they declined to fly economy class.

Satisfied at last, the delegation

SEE PAGE 15 COL 1

Fit-again 7-yr-old pushed into coma

SHAHEEN MOLLAH

With a minor fracture in his hand, Sanjoy was admitted to a local clinic of Faridpur sadar upazila but a moment's careless treatment of a nurse put the seven-year-old boy's life in peril.

Sanjoy, a nursery student and son of Jibon Kundu of Pachhchar Bazar at Shibirchar in Madaripur, fractured one of his arms as he bumped into a tree branch while playing on May 5.

After he was taken to the Faridpur Sadar Hospital the on duty doctor bandaged his hand.

As his injury got worse the same doctor referred him to the Desh Clinic on May 11 where he underwent a minor operation the same day, said Sanjoy's uncle Shankar Kunda.

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Sanjoy

Krishna made Indian FM

AFP, New Delhi

Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh distributed key cabinet portfolios on Saturday after the Congress party's resounding victory in national elections.

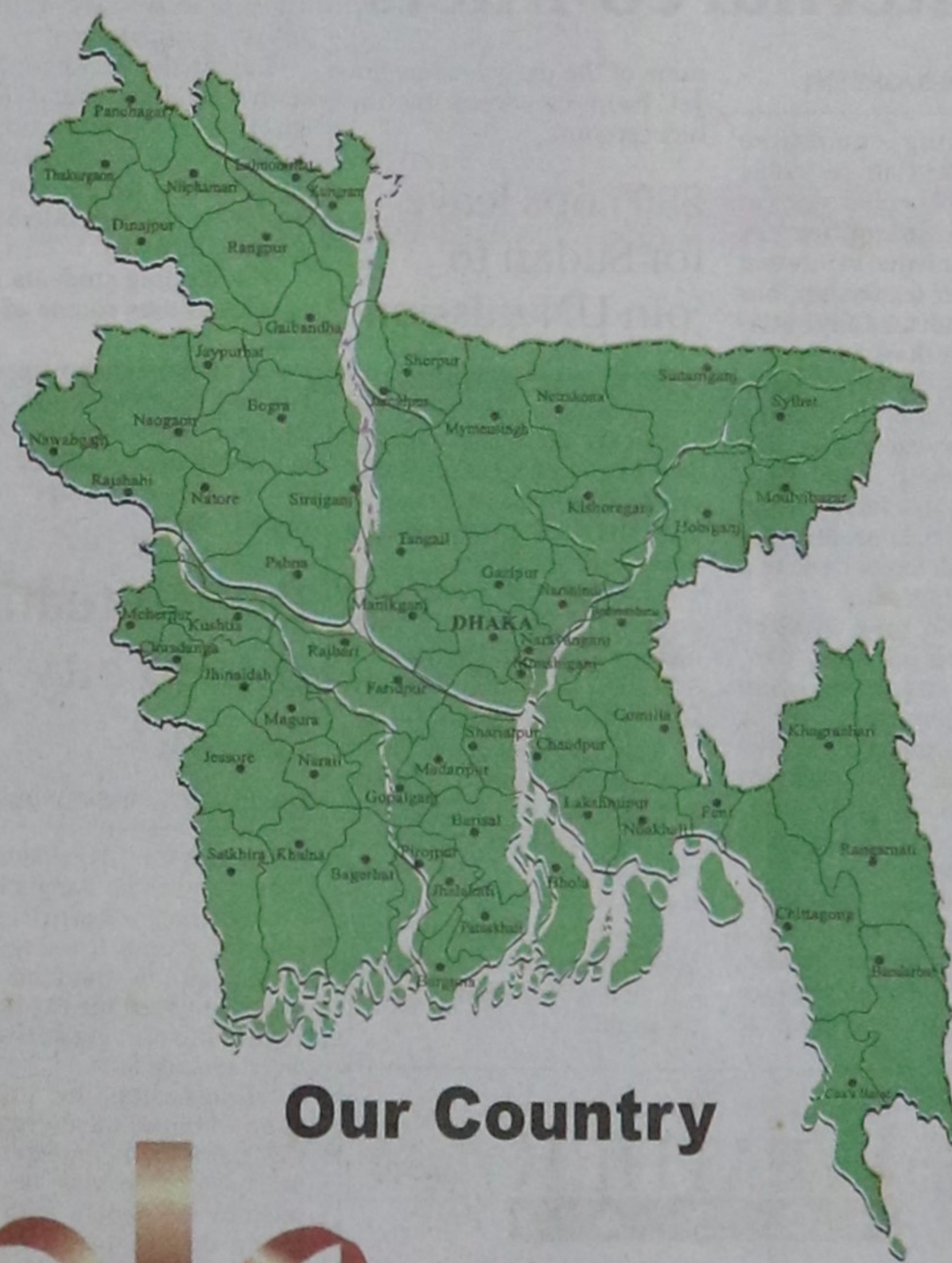
Singh named outgoing foreign minister Pranab Mukherjee, 73, regarded as one of India's canniest politicians, to the finance ministry to steer the revival of the economy, which has slowed as a result of the global financial crisis.

Singh brought in a new face to the cabinet as external affairs minister -- Somanahalli Mallaiah Krishna, 77, a former chief

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Somanahalli Mallaiah Krishna



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