

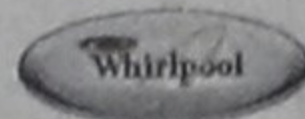


# The Daily Star

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## MCCI vows to rally for rivers

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce and Industry (MCCI), the country's leading business chamber, yesterday pledged to work for saving the rivers of the country.

An MCCI delegation, led by its president Abdul Hafiz Choudhury, came to The Daily Star office and said the chamber will make it mandatory for its members to be compliant with pollution control regulations.

The MCCI also said it would hold meetings with wider range of stakeholders of industries concerned to chalk out an action plan. It would create a win-win situation for industrial development and protection of the environment.

The chamber felt that the SEE PAGE 15 COL 3 PHOTO ON PAGE 3

## National service for youths on the cards

Post-HSC students to be trained, given jobs for two years; trial run in 3 upazilas from next fiscal year

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government will introduce 'National Service' programme at upazila level in the next fiscal year to train the HSC-passed unemployed youths and recruit them for a two-year term, Finance Minister AMA Muhith said yesterday.

Initially, the programme will be launched in three upazilas and gradually expanded to other upazilas.

Under the project, the youths who have completed HSC will be first trained for six months and then employed in agriculture, social welfare, and housing and public works ministries for one and a half years, Muhith told a press briefing at the National Economic Council (NEC) auditorium.

He said the upcoming budget will have an allocation for the scheme.

The finance minister said the programme has been taken in line with Awami League's election manifesto.

He said the youths would be trained mainly in military education, agriculture and housing works.

Their jobs would be secured as the ministries would not recruit anyone to the posts meant to be filled by the youths, he said.

After two years, they would decide on whether to go for higher education or continue in their current jobs.

The finance minister said the military training would not be compulsory.

Finance ministry sources said the labour ministry's district bureaus would coordinate the efforts in this regard. They will register the unemployed youths.

Yesterday's press briefing was organised to inform journalists about the outcome of the Islamic Development Bank (IDB) conference that the finance minister attended in Turkmenistan last week.

Replying to a question on hike in duties on vehicles, Muhith said, "Everybody knows taxes on cars would go up in the next budget."

He said AL is a people's party that takes populist actions. Since common people cannot afford cars, taxes on the vehicles would rise.

SEE PAGE 15 COL 7

## Touhid hid killings in talks with PM

Confesses to have led BDR carnage

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Deputy Assistant Director (DAD) Touhidul Alam yesterday confessed before magistrate of a Dhaka court to have led the planning of the BDR mutiny and all operations during the carnage.

Terming the confession a big step forward, sources in the CID said Touhid, prime accused in the BDR carnage case, admitted that he had taken the leadership as rebel Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) jawans gave him the responsibility.

Sources in the CID, which is investigating the case, said in the three-hour-long confession Touhid said he had led a team of 14 BDR mutineers to the talks with the prime minister at her residence Jamuna on February 25 to get general amnesty. He said he knew that the army officers were already killed but he did not reveal the information during the talks with prime minister and other government representatives.

Detained Sepoy Habib also made a statement yesterday admitting that he and Sepoy Muhit shot and killed director general of BDR Maj Gen Shakil Ahmed and other senior officers at Darbar Hall in Pilkhana soon after the revolt sparked.



SEE PAGE 15 COL 6

## Culprits to get stern punishment

Reiterates PM at ALCWC meeting

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday reiterated her government's commitment to handing down exemplary punishment to the perpetrators of the massacre at the Pilkhana BDR headquarters.

"Persons involved in the massacre will be given exemplary punishment. The trial will begin soon," AL spokesperson and LGRD and Cooperatives Minister Syed Ashrafur Islam told reporters quoting Hasina after the Awami League (AL) Central Working Committee meeting at the premier's political office in the city's Dhanmondi.

The meeting with Hasina in the chair decided to ensure SEE PAGE 15 COL 4

## ILLEGAL STRUCTURES ON TURAG

## Demolition goes on, not the restoration

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Officials involved in the ongoing government drive for demolishing illegal structures in the Turag river, yesterday expressed an urgent need for excavators to remove the debris, for recovering the river's encroached upon channel.

Abul Bashar Md Amir Uddin, the on-duty magistrate from Gazipur district administration, who is helping Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Authority (BIWTA) in the drive, told The Daily Star that they need another team, which will work with an excavator and some other modern equipment to remove the debris following demolitions.

The huge volume of debris generated during a demolition must immediately be removed to render the recovered land and the portion of the river unencumbered.

"Whenever the crane or labourers demolish a structure, debris fall into the river or on its shore keeping the land still encumbered," he added explaining the urgency of an additional team with an excavator.

The demolition team, comprising officials from both Gazipur district administration and

BIWTA and about 50 labourers, yesterday pulled down nearly 15 light and heavy illegal constructions consisting of about 60 structures on the banks of the Turag, at Tongi Sarak Bridge, Bazar Launch Ghat, Pagar Mouza, and Rail Bridge areas.

Hundreds of onlookers stood along the riverbanks witnessing the drive to free the Turag of encroachments.

Officials present at the sites said the whole demolition process has been painstaking and time consuming, as they had to mainly depend on manual labour for demolition.

"Large BIWTA tug boats can't enter the Turag due to a lack of required draft in its channel. Moreover, since there are many low bridges under which those powerful tug boats cannot pass, we are completely dependant on a small tug boat and manual labour," said Assistant Engineer of BIWTA Shahjadur Rahman, who is supervising the drive.

Another official expressed the urgent need for establishing coordination among the High Court administration, the offices of lawyers of alleged encroachers, and district administrations -- for on-the-spot crosschecking of SEE PAGE 15 COL 4



PHOTO: SHAFIQU ALAM

Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Authority during a drive against river encroachers tears down illegal structures erected on the Turag near Tongi Bazar area yesterday.

## Historic

June 7

today

UNB, Dhaka

Awami League (AL) observes the historic 7th June today to commemorate the six-point movement it launched 42 years ago demanding autonomy of erstwhile East Pakistan.

The six-point movement, marked by the supreme sacrifice of Sramik League leader Manu Mia, Shafiq and Shamsul Haq, paved the way for the Bengalees' final struggle for independence in 1971.

SEE PAGE 15 COL 3

## Another low over Bay

UNB, Dhaka

The monsoon low over north-west Bay and adjoining areas intensified into a well-marked low over the same area, said a Met Office bulletin yesterday.

"It is likely to intensify SEE PAGE 15 COL 3



PHOTO: STAR

A large number of headmasters and English teachers of schools in Dhaka zone attend the inauguration of English in Schools, a joint initiative of The Daily Star and AKTEL, at Emmanuelle's Convention Centre of Rifles Square yesterday. (Another photo on page 3)

## Unique bid to spread English in schools

Star - AKTEL initiative launched to help students learn English; over 1,000 schools across country to get the newspaper for free

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

English in Schools (EIS), a joint initiative by The Daily Star and AKTEL, will help the students learn English and prepare themselves for global challenges, educationists and policymakers said yesterday.

This will also enable the school children to develop a reading habit and broaden their knowledge base, they observed at an EIS orientation session for school teachers.

At least 376 headmasters and English teachers from 189 schools under Dhaka zone participated in the event at Emmanuelle's Convention Centre in the capital's Rifles Square.

Under EIS, around 1,000 schools across the country will get three copies of The Daily Star five days a week for free. The distribution begins on Tuesday and will be carried out in phases. Gradually, more schools will come under the scheme.

Every week, an extra full-page with English language-learning materials will be brought out.

The venture, aimed at promoting English learning at secondary schools, also includes organising contests on spelling, vocabulary and book reading, among others.

Participating teachers lauded the initiative by the mobile operator and the SEE PAGE 15 COL 1

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