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The Ericsson Globe is the national indoor arena of Sweden and is currently the largest hemispherical building in the world. Shaped like a large golf ball, it has a diameter of 361ft and an inner height of 279ft.



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DCC polls in May if HC okays area demarcation
Says CEC
DU CORRESPONDENT
The Dhaka City Corporation elections would be held late in May if the High Court approves demarcation of the areas under DCC, said Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) ATM Shamsul Huda.
Talking to reporters at the Election Commission he, said the city dwellers are being deprived of various facilities, as the DCC polls is pending for two-and-a-half years, reported private television channel ATN Bangla yesterday.
The CEC said the EC is interested in demarcating the city corporation areas after holding the elections.
"We have asked the local

Revival plan for 4 Dhaka rivers

WDB finalises Tk 1,000cr scheme to ensure round-the-year water flow

MORSHED ALI KHAN
The Water Development Board has finalised a Tk 1,000 crore project for ensuring round-the-year flow of the river system around the capital.
Experts at the WDB and Institute of Water Modelling said the project, Rehabilitation of the Buriganga-Turag-Shitalakkhya River System and Augmentation of Dry Season Flow, is indispensable for the survival of the river system around the capital.
It has been classified as a top priority project in the government's current initiative to save the river systems in the country.
However, it could not be ascertained from where the fund will come--the government's fund for save-the-river initiative or other sources.
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PHOTO STAR
CRUISING RED & GREEN
Korata, a French youth, in red and green, reached Kuakata seabeach in Patuakhali Tuesday evening by a sailboat made in Bangladesh. Starting from the Bangshi near Savar in Dhaka a few days back, Korata crossed different rivers including the Buriganga, Dhaleshwari and Meghna. He will sail to France via Sri Lanka, Oman and other Gulf countries.



Abed conferred knighthood
STAR REPORT
Brac founder and chairperson Fazle Hasan Abed was knighted on Tuesday in a special ceremony at Buckingham Palace in London for his contribution in

Korean Caltex joins Chevron in Block 7

Preparation begins this month for drilling exploratory gas well in Patuakhali

STAR REPORT
South Korean oil company GS Caltex has purchased 45 percent interest of oil and gas block 7 from US oil giant Chevron where primary preparation for drilling one exploratory well begins this month.
The government approved the purchase earlier this month, Chevron confirmed.
Under this deal, GS Caltex--the first Korean oil company to work in a block in Bangladesh--would share exploration and development cost with Chevron in the block.
Bangladesh Petroleum Exploration and Production Company (Bapex) is 10 percent carried over partner in this block. Chevron remains the operator here.
Forty-year-old GS Caltex has been operating in the oil and gas blocks of Cambodia, Thailand and Vietnam.
The three companies are set to drill a well in Patuakhali of Block 7 in search of oil and gas between September next and July 2011 at a cost
SEE PAGE 15 COL 7

CITY BNP OFFICE Govt to probe its 'illegal occupancy'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
The government will investigate legality of the city unit BNP office at 80 Nayapaltn, State Minister for Housing Abdul Mannan Khan told the House yesterday.
"The house built on 5.05 acres of land including roads was given allocation to Bhasani Memorial Sangsad in 1990. There is no scope to rent out any portion of the house to anybody," he said in a scripted
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Tornado kills kid Ravages 22 villages in Jhenidah

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Jhenidah
A tornado lashed 22 villages of Moheshpur upazila yesterday that left one child dead and about 150 people injured, two of them critically.
At least 1,200 houses and crops on over 1,300 bighas of land in Bashbaria and Kazirber unions of the upazila were damaged by the tornado that hit at 8:15 am and lasted for only one minute, local sources said.
The dead was identified as Sathi, 10, daughter of Saidur Rahman of Chunnirite village.
Condition of Saira Khatun, 30, wife of Abul Kalam of Kulbaria village and Kural Mondol, 30, son of Ershad Ali of Pakrail village, was stated to be critical, sources said.
Mahatab Sheikh, an elderly person of Pakrail village, said he has never seen such devastation caused by any tornado in his life. Many trees and houses and crops on vast tracts of land were damaged by it in the twinkling of an eye, he observed.
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PM for greater regional connectivity

UNB, Dhaka
Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday emphasised further strengthening regional cooperation and connectivity for poverty reduction and accelerated development.
She expressed the opinion when Sultan Hafeez Rahman, director-general of the South Asian Department of Asian Development Bank, called on the PM at her official residence and discussed various development plans.
Hasina and the ADB director-general, among other issues, also discussed the
SEE PAGE 15 COL 2

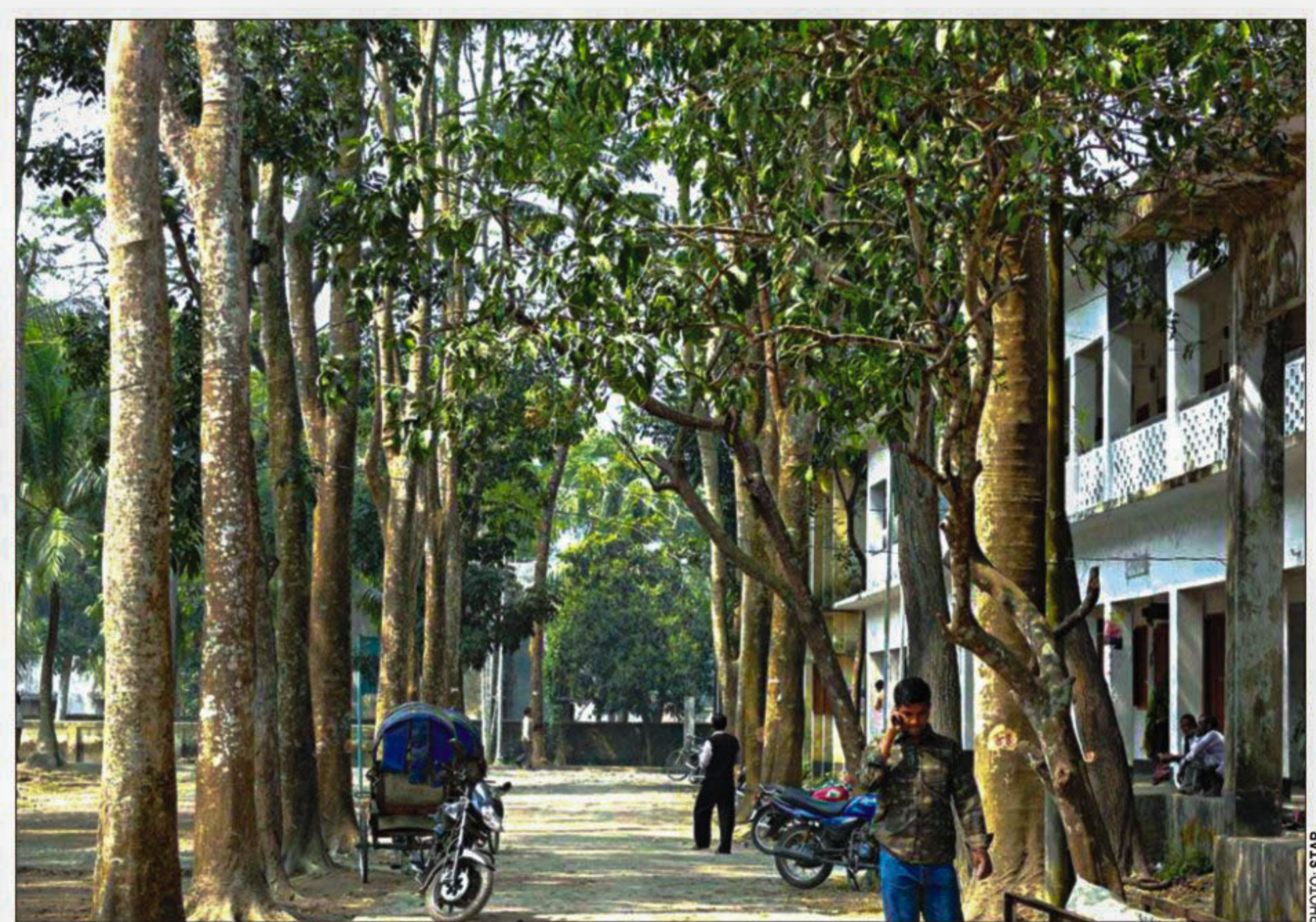


PHOTO STAR
Baufal upazila parishad in Patuakhali has recently decided to fell these trees on its premises.

BAUFAL UPAZILA 134 old trees marked for cutting down

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Patuakhali
Baufal upazila parishad in Patuakhali has recently marked some 134 of 977 local varieties of trees on its premises to cut them down, without bothering about the environment or natural beauty of the area.
Of the marked trees, there are 47 Mahogany, 50 rain trees, 22 Chambol, three Karai and many other local varieties including Akashmoni, Shishu and Babla.
The decision on felling trees first came in a meeting on October 28 last year with parishad's Chairman Mojibur Rahman in the chair.
In the meeting, the parishad formed a 5-member committee to be headed by Jasim Farazee, chairman of
SEE PAGE 15 COL 7

Reality-check for rice procurement Market price higher than govt's price

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
The government is failing to procure aman rice because of high prices in market, Food Minister Abdur Razzaque said yesterday.
"Market price of aman rice is higher than the price set by the government. But, we are not concerned about it. We have adequate rice stock and are importing wheat as well, which will be more than enough to manage food until the boro is yielded," he told reporters after inaugurating a regional seminar on climate change in the city.
The government on December 7 last year started procuring 3 lakh tonnes of aman rice at Tk 22 per kg and is supposed to continue it till February 28. But officials in the food ministry said they could buy only several thousand to tonnes of rice so far due to high price.
The coarse rice now sells at Tk 26 to Tk 28 per kg, while medium and fine rice sell at Tk 36 to Tk 45 per kg.
Food Minister Abdur Razzaque said there are over 8 lakh
SEE PAGE 15 COL 7



HAMILTON TEST Riyad the bright spot
SPORTS REPORTER
All-rounder Mahmudullah Riyad scored his maiden century as Bangladesh avoided follow-on on the third day of the one-off Test yesterday, posting 408 in their first innings, in reply to New Zealand's mammoth total of 553 for 7 declared.
SEE PAGE 15 COL 8

OnlinePoll
Do you think the way parliamentarians are debating over late president Zia's body and grave is acceptable?
No (69.2%)
Yes (29.2%)
No Comments (1.6%)
Total votes: 915
TODAY'S POLL
Do you think introduction of Agri-input Assistance Card and Cash Assistance programme will benefit the farmers?
Please cast your vote at www.thedailystar.net

Prayer Timing
February 18
Fajr 5-20 5-55
Zohr 12-45 1-15
Asr 4-30 4-45
Maghrib 6-03 6-07
Esha 7-30 8-00
Source: Islamic Foundation

Thai princess welcomed in Gaibandha

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Gaibandha
The Princess of Thailand Maha Chakri Sirindhorn expressed her deep pleasure for the heartfelt welcome from the people of Gaibandha yesterday.
Thousands of people
SEE PAGE 15 COL 7

Bill on raising MPs' perks likely to be placed soon
STAFF CORRESPONDENT
A bill on increasing lawmakers' perk is likely to be placed in the current session of the parliament.
Speaker Abdul Hamid
SEE PAGE 15 COL 3

Rome meet vows to win global war against poverty

REAZ AHMAD, from Rome, Italy
The governing council meeting of the specialised UN organisation International Fund for Agriculture Development in Rome vowed to win the global war against poverty focusing on small-holding farmers.
World leaders from across the globe gathered in Rome to attend the meeting.
Over 500 million smallholding farms feed 80 percent of the developing world's population and 85 percent of all farmland in the world are smallholdings, with less than an average of two hectares of land apiece.
Italian President Giorgio Napolitano delivered a spirited welcome speech at the two-day 33rd Governing Council of IFAD that began around 3:00pm (BST) Wednesday. Rome is the home to three UN agencies that deal with food and agriculture issues--Food and Agriculture Organisation, World Food Programme and IFAD.
The inaugural function, held at spacious IFAD headquarters, also heard a message sent out by the UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon, speeches delivered by the Tanzanian Prime Minister Mizengo Peter Pinda and IFAD President Kanayo F Nwanze.
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Remarkable presence of children

DU CORRESPONDENT
Colourful bookstalls at the children's corner at Amar Ekushey Boi Mela yesterday witnessed vibrant presence of a large number of children.
Booksellers said they are getting good response from children and their parents. Most children are interested in buying books on comic and cartoon characters, fairytale and ghost stories while many parents purchase books on folktales and liberation war for their kids.
The authorities for the first time decided to have a corner dedicated to children at the book fair. A total of 76 children books have so far hit the book fair.
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ঃ বিআরটিএ'র সতর্কীকরণ বিজ্ঞপ্তি ঃ
এতদ্বারা সর্ব সাধারণের অবগতির জন্য জানানো যাচ্ছে যে, বিআরটিএ ড্রাইভিং কম্পিউটিং টেস্ট বোর্ড এর মাধ্যমে পরীক্ষা গ্রহণ করে কৃতকার্য প্রার্থীদেরকেই কেবল ড্রাইভিং লাইসেন্স প্রদান করে থাকে। কেউ যদি এ পরীক্ষায় অংশগ্রহণ ও কৃতকার্য হওয়া ব্যতীত অন্য কোন অবৈধ পন্থায় জাল বা ভূয়া ড্রাইভিং লাইসেন্স সংগ্রহ করেন উহার দায় দায়িত্ব বিআরটিএ বহন করবেন। এ ধরনের জাল বা ভূয়া ড্রাইভিং লাইসেন্সধারী অদক্ষ ড্রাইভার কর্তৃক গাড়ি চালানোর ফলে মর্মান্তিক সড়ক দুর্ঘটনা বৃদ্ধি পাচ্ছে। এতে জনসাধারণের জান-মালের ব্যাপক ক্ষতি সাধন হচ্ছে। এ অবস্থায়, গাড়ির মালিকগণকে ড্রাইভার নিয়োগের সময় ড্রাইভিং লাইসেন্সের সঠিকতা ভালোভাবে যাচাই করে দক্ষ ড্রাইভার নিয়োগ প্রদানের জন্য বিশেষভাবে অনুরোধ করা হলো। ড্রাইভিং লাইসেন্স যাচাইয়ের বিষয়ে বিআরটিএ সর্বাঙ্গিক সহযোগিতা প্রদান করবে।
উল্লেখ্য, এ ধরনের জাল বা ভূয়া ড্রাইভিং লাইসেন্সধারীদের বিরুদ্ধে আইন প্রয়োগকারী সংস্থা ও বিআরটিএ'র মোবাইল কোর্ট আইনানুগ ব্যবস্থা গ্রহণ করছে।
জিডি-৮০৫
বিআরটিএ