



The Daily Star

SECOND EDITION

Plus Rising Stars



COMMITTED TO People's Right to Know

REGD. NO. DA 781

VOL. XX No. 56

DHAKA THURSDAY MARCH 11, 2010

www.thedailystar.net

FALGUN 27, 1416 BS

RABIUL AWAL 24, 1431 HIJRI

28 PAGES PLUS RISING STARS PRICE: Tk 10.00

Govt tightens control on cellphone crimes

Under-18 persons barred from buying SIM cards; national ID numbers mandatory to subscribe mobiles

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government yesterday introduced some fresh measures tightening the registration process of SIM (subscriber identity module) and RUIM (removable user identity module) cards, following a rise in cellphone use for criminal activities.

Persons under the age of 18 will no more be able to buy SIM or RUIM cards,

and persons 18 years of age and above must put their national identity numbers on registration forms to become subscribers. Before the new measures were put in place, any ID card would suffice for getting a registered SIM or RUIM card. Subscribers from now on also must provide a name of an introducer along with the introducer's address, and a contact number on the registration forms.

Restrictions were also slapped on getting authorised certificates for selling the cards. Applicants for the certificates from service providers, must have secondary school certificates, and must go through police verification.

The decisions were made at a meeting at the home ministry with Home Minister Sahara Khatun in the chair. State Minister

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BDR CARNAGE PROBE CID asked to submit report by April 21

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday asked the Criminal Investigation Department to submit by April 21 the probe report of a case filed in connection with the carnage at Bangladesh Rifles headquarters in Pikhana February last year.

Chief Metropolitan Magistrate AKM Enamul Haque passed the order after the CID's Special Superintendent of Police Abdul Kahar Akand, also the

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Disorder in JS again

Lawmakers squabble over time allocation for Moudud

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A number of treasury and opposition bench lawmakers yesterday engaged in a squabble again sending the House in disorder for over five minutes.

The squabble was for how much time BNP lawmaker Moudud Ahmed would be allowed to speak during the discussion on the thanksgiving motion on the president's speech.

Without microphones, some Awami League and BNP lawmakers pointed fingers and showed sneering gestures at each other. They also shouted "shut up". A few of them stood on their

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REMARKS ON ZIA BNP lawmakers walk out twice

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The BNP-led opposition lawmakers yesterday stormed out of the Jatiya Sangsad twice in protest at the remarks made by a minister and a senior ruling party lawmaker on late president Ziaur Rahman.

The opposition lawmakers flew into a rage as Shipping Minister Shahjahan Khan in the evening reiterated Awami League MP Sheikh Fazlul Karim Selim's comment on the late president's body.

Shahjahan said, "Let's prove Selim wrong by examining whether Ziaur Rahman's

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Workers at Sinha Textile Group in Kanchpur, Dhaka hang around yesterday afternoon on the factory floor, as the factory machinery remain closed due to gas shortage since morning. A director of the group said in the last 16 days they counted loss amid scarce gas supply.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

AL, BNP start district tours this month

AL to gear up grassroots, BNP to prepare for anti-govt movement

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Both the ruling Awami League and the main opposition BNP will begin countrywide tours this month.

The former will seek to gauge public feelings towards the government's performance and their expectations. It also aims to have the party geared up to see off the opposition challenge on the streets.

BNP, on the other hand, plans to mobilise public opinions against the AL-led grand alliance government. It also wants to prepare the organisation down to the grassroots level for an anti-government campaign over issues like the recent disturbances in the hill tracts and deals with India.

AL'S TOURS START MAR 18 Ruling Awami League will seek to know about people's aspirations, demands and suggestions

for the government during its month-long countrywide tour starting from March 18 and place those demands to the prime minister to look into it.

"We will list the demands of the people at the grassroots level and place those demands to the government," AL Joint General Secretary Mahbulul Alam Hanif said after a meeting at party president's political office in Dhanmondi.

With AL presidium member Syeda Sajeda Chowdhury in the chair, the departmental secretary-level meeting finalised the district tour programmes with a view to strengthening its organisational activities at the grassroots level.

A total of 16 central teams led by mostly the AL presidium members will visit all the districts.

The meeting also decided to focus on the

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Plan to bring Jamuna water to Buriganga

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government has taken a project of Tk 998.26 crore to bring water from Jamuna River for increasing flow of water in the Buriganga River in the dry season, Water Resources Minister Ramesh Chandra Sen told the House yesterday.

"The project styled Buriganga River Restoration is now under process for approval," he said in a scripted answer to a query of Awami League lawmaker Talukder Md Touhid Jong (Murad).

He said 180km waterways of the new Dhaleshwari, Pungli, Bongshi, Turag and Buriganga rivers will be dredged under the project.

"Navigability of the Turag

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KIBRIA KILLING CASE Huji operative Mithu placed on remand

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

The judicial magistrate court in Habiganj yesterday granted seven days' remand for Huji operative Shah Mizanur Rahman Mithu, an accused in Kibria killing case.

Judicial Magistrate Shamsul Islam granted the remand prayer after CID's ASP Rafiqul Islam, also the investigation officer of the case, prayed for ten days' remand on Tuesday.

Rafiqul told The Daily Star, "Mithu might be taken out of the Habiganj jail any time today for quizzing."

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DAHAGRAM-ANGORPOTA PEOPLE 24-hr access to mainland to be arranged: PM

UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday said that her government will arrange round the clock movement for the inhabitants of the Dahagram-Angorpota enclaves to the mainland.

She also pledged that electricity would be provided for the people who live there.

"As this piece of land is isolated from the main land, we have greater responsibility to the people of the area," Hasina said while inaugurating free healthcare service of the Bangabandhu Memorial Trust at Dahagram-Angorpota through video conferencing from her official residence Ganobhaban.

Hasina said though the country is suffering from power shortage, her government would provide electricity connection at Dahagram-Angorpota.

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SUBSIDENCE IN COAL MINE Thousands start fast-unto-death for compensation

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

Thousands of people of 15 villages around Barapukuria Coal Mining Company Ltd (BCMCL) yesterday sat on hunger strike until death demanding rehabilitation and compensation for subsidence due to underground mining.

With banners and white cloths symbolising shroud, villagers of all ages started gathering at the entrance of BCMCL since morning. Around noon they took position on a road about 100 metres from the BCMCL gate on strike.

With a magistrate in-charge, a large number of police were deployed in and around the BCMCL area to thwart violence.

Since a memorandum of understanding (MoU) signed last May, no progress had been made for meeting their demands, said affected villagers. Their demands include permanent

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Withdrawal of 2,903 cases recommended

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The home ministry has recommended withdrawal of 2,903 cases including two filed against BNP leaders Moudud Ahmed and Tarique Rahman, Law Minister Shafique Ahmed told the House yesterday.

"Most of the cases recommended withdrawal were filed against supporters and leaders of Awami League," he said in a scripted answer to a query of BNP lawmaker Lutfar Rahman.

He said of the 2,903 cases the central committee formed at the home ministry recommended for complete withdrawal of 2,353 cases and

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Service now extends to the land of Shampan

Our **44th** branch starts operation from **today** at the port city's Kamal Bazar, Kalurghat




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