



COMMITTED TO
People's Right to Know
www.thedailystar.net

Plus Star Campus

REGD. NO. DA 781 • VOL. XX No. 59 • DHAKA SUNDAY MARCH 14, 2010 • FALGUN 30, 1416 BS • RABIUL AWAL 27, 1431 HIJRI • 24 PAGES PLUS STAR CAMPUS PRICE: Tk 10.00

Green light to cut 4,000 trees

Over 100 trees already chopped down after HC directive; ethnic people, environmentalists protest

TAFIQUÉ ALI
A timber trader chopped down over 100 trees and destroyed two betel leaf enclosures at Kailin Punji near Nahar Tea Garden in Srimangal yesterday after the High Court gave the go-ahead to cut down 4,000 trees. Earlier, 1,200 trees were already felled in 2008. The HC bench comprising Justice Md Mamtaz Uddin Ahmed and Justice Naima Haider in the go-ahead on February 22 allowed the garden owner to cut the trees. Indigenous people of neighbouring Khasia Punjis (villages) and environmentalist group Bangladesh Paribesh Andolon

(Bapa) apprehend displacement of indigenous people from their ancestral homesteads, loss of traditional livelihood and environmental degradation as a consequence of the wholesale tree felling. The Ministry of Environment and Forest dubiously issued a permit on June 30, 2008 in favour of Nahar Tea Garden in Moulvibazar allowing it to chop down a total of 4,000 trees in exchange for Tk 47.51 lakh as royalty to the public treasury. Nahar Tea Garden, however, made a deal with M/s Salim Timber and Traders to sell the 4,000 trees in October, 2006, two years prior to obtaining the permit. The deal involved Tk 1.5 crore.

SEE PAGE 15 COL 1



The felled trees at Kailin Punji in Srimangal.

PHOTO: STAR

Govt urged to challenge directive

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
Bangladesh Paribesh Andolon yesterday demanded that the government appeal against the High Court directive permitting tea garden owners to cut 3,550 trees in Kailin and Aslam Punji near Nahar Tea Garden in Srimangal. Bapa made the demand at a press conference at the Dhaka Reporters Unity in the capital. It said indiscriminate felling of trees in tea gardens and grabbing of land by their owners must be stopped immediately. Bapa General Secretary Dr M Abdul Motin in a written statement said the information placed before the HC was incomplete and one-sided. Felling of trees in the area

SEE PAGE 15 COL 6

BSF digs 25 bunkers inside Bangladesh

Retreats after 19 hours following border talks

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

Indian Border Security Force dug 25 bunkers following an overnight intrusion into Bangladesh territory through Padua-Protappur border in Gowainghat upazila of Sylhet and retreated yesterday afternoon after 19 hours. The BSF's retreat from about 100-yard inside the international border came after an emergency flag meeting with Bangladesh Rifles from 1:30pm to 3:30pm on 'no man's land' at Padua-Protappur amidst tension prevailing since Friday night. Lt Colonel Zahurul Alam, commanding officer of 21 Battalion of BDR, Sylhet, who led the BDR team at the meeting, told The Daily Star at 5:40pm yesterday, "BSF started retreating from the position they took inside Bangladesh territory on Friday. They had already left the bunkers." BSF commanding officer of Battalion-1, Shillong, S Shekhor led the Indian side at the meeting. A sector commander-level flag meeting between the BDR and BSF would be held soon to settle the ongoing trouble on Jaintapur, Tamabil and Padua borders, Zahurul said. Earlier, around 9:00pm on Friday BSF trespassed into Bangladesh territory through border pillars No 1270 and 1271 and dug 25 bunkers while BDR took position in the nearby area and dug eight bunkers.

SEE PAGE 15 COL 3

STAFF SACKING Al-Arafah's MD faces minister's wrath

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

State Minister for Water Resources Mahbubur Rahman yesterday allegedly threatened a managing director of a private bank with dire consequences unless he retains a bank official to be discharged today in line with an official notice. The state minister had a conversation with MA Samad Sheikh, MD of Al-Arafah Islami Bank, over the phone and later sent five people, including gunmen, to pick him up from the bank's Dilkusha office in the capital at around 12:00 noon, said officials at the bank. But the henchmen changed their mind seeing a large number of bank employees there, they said. "I never experienced anything like this in my 40 years' banking career," 65-year-old Samad told journalists at his office.

SEE PAGE 15 COL 6

Steps contradict anti-graft pledge

Says Transparency amid move to clip ACC wings

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The recent cabinet committee proposals to reform the Anti-Corruption Commission are not consistent with the government's commitment to ensure sovereignty and effectiveness of the commission, Transparency International Bangladesh said expressing concern over the move. TIB Executive Director Iftekharuzzaman yesterday in a statement said, "Corruption in all sectors -- political, administrative, corporate, NGOs, and individual -- should be treated on equal footing and must be within the jurisdiction of the ACC." He added, "Exclusion of any particular sector, especially the

SEE PAGE 15 COL 8

Opportunities wasted

SHAKHAWAT LITON

The marathon parliamentary 'debate' on the president's address that ended on Thursday was marked by a series of unfortunate events. Due to frequent use of unparliamentary and aggressive words, particularly indecent and vulgar ones, the 'debate' lost its desired character and turned into squabbles between the treasury bench and opposition lawmakers. Frequent verbal attacks and counter attacks by

rival legislators created a tense situation in parliament, largely damaging the atmosphere conducive to constructive deliberations and discussions, which is an important feature of the House. Parliament debates public issues and ventilates public grievances, and thereby influences shaping of government policies and actions. The just concluded discussion on the president's address had offered lawmakers an

SEE PAGE 15 COL 7

Clash again over admission 'quota'

3 BCL, Moitree men held

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

Three activists of Chhatra League and Chhatra Moitree were detained yesterday morning during a clash with police on New Government Degree College campus over their demand for "quota" in the first year honours admission. The arrestees are BCL joint convener of the college unit Zahangir Alam Kanak and activist Nasir Hossain Rubel and Moitree activist Nayan Sarker. Police and campus sources said BCL and Moitree activists in the morning separately placed their demands before the college

SEE PAGE 15 COL 3

20 hurt as BCL factions clash in Jessore

A CORRESPONDENT, Jessore

At least 20 leaders and workers of Bangladesh Chhatra League were injured in a clash between rival factions during the organisation's district council last night. The council proceedings were suspended as the fighting began at around 8:00pm. Around 20 bombs were exploded and numerous shots fired during the clash that lasted for an hour and a half, said witnesses.

SEE PAGE 15 COL 6

Five injured in clash over storing potato

STAR REPORT

At least five farmers were injured in a clash between potato cultivators and a group of traders over storing potatoes in Chasi Cold Storage at Mohendra Nagar village under sadar upazila of Lalmonirhat district yesterday. The injured were identified as Mofazzal Hossain, 42, of Harati village, Khaleque, 38, and Montajul, 48, of Mohendra Nagar village.

SEE PAGE 15 COL 5



Your dream of sweet home is now a reality with our Home Loan

At Prime Bank, we offer you an easy-to-avail Home Loan with convenient repayment options. With maximum limit on loan amount, you also have unlimited options of choosing your home. Drop in anytime, let us help you realise your long cherished dream.

Prime Bank Limited
a bank with a difference

29 Rajuk Avenue, Dhaka-1000, Mobile: 01714 088931-2, 01714 133281-2

www.primebank.com.bd

Islami Bank My Bank

Our Heartiest

Congratulations & Good wishes

to all the National Export Trophy winning business institutions for their outstanding contribution to the Export Trade awarded by the Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh for the Fiscal Year 2005-2006, 2006-2007 & 2007-2008

Islami Bank Bangladesh Limited
Pioneer in Welfare Banking

www.islamibankbd.com

Hon'able Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, Govt. of the People's Republic of Bangladesh, hands over National Export Trophy (Silver) to **Haji Abdul Majid Mondol**, Managing Director of Mondol Fabrics Limited. For the year of 2007-2008. In recognition of excellence in export performance.

For the continuous achievements we convey our Heartiest Congratulations to the Managing Director of Mondol Fabrics Limited.

All Executives & Staffs

Mondol Group

Mondol Fabrics Limited

Nayapara, Kashimpur, Gazipur, Bangladesh.