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'Digital Bangladesh' down

Most of 250 official websites mock PM's vision for change

RIZANUZZAMAN LASKAR

While the government dreams of a "Digital Bangladesh" by 2021, most of the 250 official websites sampled in recent weeks contained outdated information, dead links and "web page under construction" signs.

The sports ministry website, for instance, features the "current news" about a triumphant return of the Bangladesh cricket team from a World Cup tour—three years ago.

The websites for the power ministry's Energy and Mineral Resources Division, as well as for the religious affairs ministry, had several cyber potholes and "under construction" signs.

The industries ministry website gives the news of Dilip Barua being sworn in as the new minister last January, 2009, as its current news. The most recent information on the site is the "daily stock position of Urea fertiliser", which is two months old.

A number of anti-virus software also warned of possible malware when accessing some government websites.

Experts say that government websites, launched 10 years ago as part of the e-governance initiative, were intended to make it easier for citizens to interact with public agencies. It meant no longer wait in queues in government offices to make complaints, pay bills or apply

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SAMPLES OF THE GOVERNMENT'S DIGITAL DEBACLE: 1. The website of Energy and Mineral Resources Division shows all linked pages under its latest news section are still under construction. 2. The current news on the industries ministry website still announcing Industries Minister Dilip Barua's joining on January 7 last year. 3. The Ministry of Religious Affairs website is also announcing expected launching "soon". 4. Logging on to the CHT affairs ministry website is not even possible.

Khaleda legalised Tk 1.33cr
Says AL

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The ruling Awami League (AL) said yesterday BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia legalised Tk 1.33 crore undisclosed money on August 6, 2007, by paying Tk 33.87 lakh in penalty and taxes on it.

"We have proofs that she (Khaleda) legalised undisclosed money, and there is no question about it," said AL Joint General Secretary Mahbulul Alam Hanif.

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Govt readies Ramadan sugar
25,000 tonnes sugar import approved

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The cabinet committee on purchase yesterday approved import of 25,000 tonnes of sugar to keep the market stable during the month of Ramadan.

The state-owned Bangladesh Sugar and Food Industries Corporation will import the sugar through Asia Commodity Limited, a local importer, at a cost of Tk 89.73 crore.

A cabinet division official said as per the agreement the importer will supply the sugar to the government by the first week of Ramadan.

Finance Minister AMA Muhith presided over the purchase committee meeting.

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SENTENCED IN ABSENTIA

Helal, wife sent to jail

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday sent lawmaker Sheikh Helaluddin, also a cousin of Sheikh Hasina, and his wife Rupa Chowdhury to jail in a graft case in which the two were tried in absentia, found guilty and sentenced.

Helal was also shown arrested yesterday in an extortion case.

Judge (in charge) Mohammad Mozammel Hossain of the Special Court-6 passed the order after Awami League leader Helal and Rupa appeared before the court and sought bail



Sheikh Helaluddin

in the corruption case.

On February 24, 2008, Judge Tanjina Ismail sentenced Helal to 13 years' imprisonment for amassing wealth illegally and concealing wealth information to the Anti-Corruption Commission while Rupa was sentenced to three years' imprisonment for abetting her husband in acquiring the wealth.

At the MP Hostel of Jatiya Sangsad Bhaban Complex, Special Court-6 also directed the government to confiscate their wealth worth over Tk 7.60 crore, which is

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ATN cameraman found dead

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A cameraman of ATN Bangla, a private TV channel, was found dead yesterday at Rustampur on the outskirts of the capital.

The body of Shafiqul Islam alias Mithu, 40, senior cameraman of ATN Bangla, was recovered from Mirpur-Uttara embankment at Rustampur at about 10:15am.

Mithu was a resident of Madhyapara in capital's Dakkhin Khan area.

His body was sent to Dhaka Medical College morgue for autopsy.



Shafiqul Islam

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Biman plane survives a scare

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

After hovering in the sky for two hours and dumping fuel in the air, a Riyadh-bound Biman aircraft landed safely at the Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport in the capital early yesterday.

"With 301 passengers on board, the DC10-30 aircraft took off from the airport at 3:30am. After some time, pilot found pneumatic problem for

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Shooting was not planned

Says outgoing BDR boss at his last press briefing

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A number of over enthusiasts triggered the mutiny of border guards last year by spreading rumours, said outgoing Director General of Bangladesh Rifles Maj Gen M Mainul Islam.

Mainul addressed his last press briefing as the DG before handing over the charge to his successor Maj Gen Rafiqul Islam at Pikhana headquarters conference room in the morning yesterday.

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60 criminal cases against Selim dropped in 4 months

CHAITANYA CHANDRA HALDER

The government has withdrawn 60 criminal cases out of 120 against former Awami League lawmaker Haji Mohammad Selim in last four months terming the charges "politically motivated and meant for harassment."

Selim is an accused of highest number of criminal cases filed against an individual in Bangladesh.

His counsel Pran Nath told The Daily Star that following Selim's instruction he had earlier filed appeals for withdrawal of the cases as the government had decided to withdraw such "politically motivated cases."

He said the government have also decided to withdraw 35 other cases and asked Additional District



standing.

Magistrate to take necessary steps in this regard. Another 25 cases have been disposed of through "mutual understanding" between the complainants and the accused.

Seventeen other cases have also been disposed of through mutual under-

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Train crushes two to death

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A woman and her brother-in-law were crushed to death by a train at Mohakhali in the capital.

The dead are Shefali Saha, 32, wife of Amit Saha of Mirzapur upazila in Tangail, and Amit's brother Alok Saha, 37. They came to Dhaka from Tangail for Amit's treatment.

Anwar Hossain, assistant sub-inspector of Government Railway Police, said they got down from a bus near

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Monday, 10 May 2010
Qulkhani of Late. Farhad Bin Mannan



We express our deepest grief & profound sorrow at the sudden demise of Mr. Farhad Bin Mannan, Director, Phoenix Insurance Company Limited, the only son of Late. Maj. Gen. Abdul Mannan Siddiqui (Retd.), the Founding Chairman of Phoenix Insurance Company Limited. On May 7, 2010, Friday, he left us for eternity (Inallah Woinna Ilaihi Rajeun) at his residence. He was 42.

A Milad & Doa Mehfil will be held today (Monday, 10 May 2010) at his residence after the Maghrib prayer. All relatives and well wishers are requested to attend and pray for the salvation of the departed soul.

The bereaved family members

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