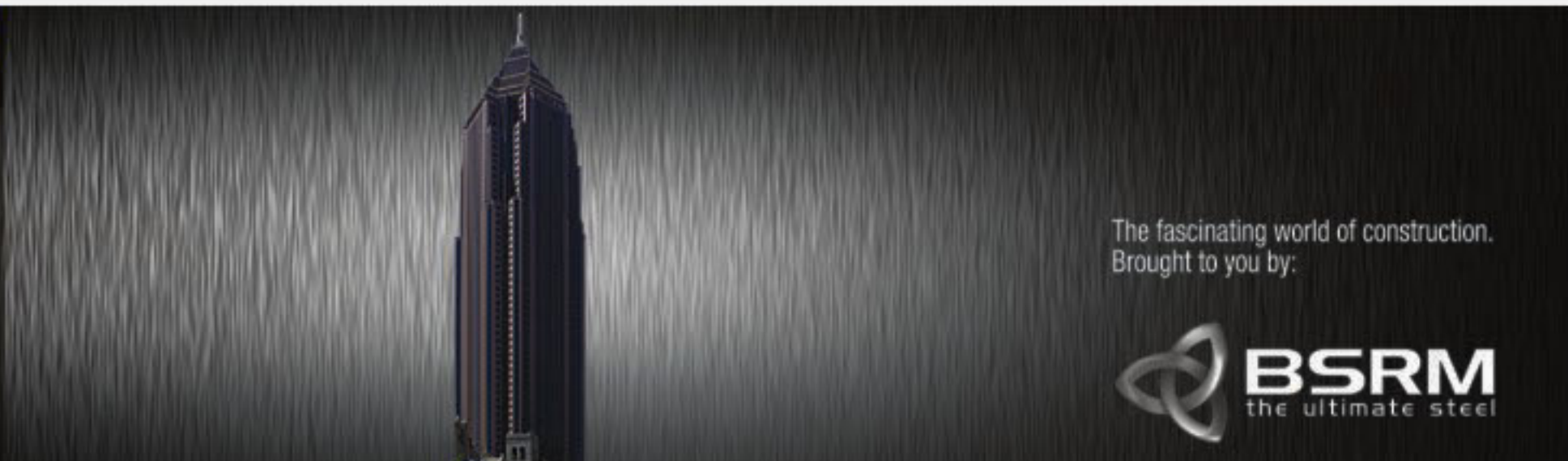


Did you know?

The Bank of America Tower at One Bryant Park is a 1,200 ft (366 m) skyscraper in the Midtown Manhattan district of New York City, in the United States. It is the second tallest building in New York City, after the Empire State Building, and the fourth tallest building in the United States.



The fascinating world of construction. Brought to you by:

BSRM the ultimate steel

World Cup THINK Big Mega Offer

32" LCD TV (3409) RSP: Tk. 75,000 World Cup Offer: 65,000

42" LCD TV (3609) RSP: Tk. 125,000 World Cup Offer: 105,000

47" LCD TV (3609) RSP: Tk. 175,000 World Cup Offer: 173,000

PHILIPS

TRANSKOM DIGITAL

think electronics... think DIGITAL

For More Information: 8855366-8, 01712 885483

# AL moves to close gap with grassroots

HASAN JAHID TUSHER

The Awami League high command has moved to end the disappointment of grassroots level leaders of the party over the gap between them and party lawmakers as well as between the party and the government.

Party chief and Prime Minister Sheikh asked many of the lawmakers in the last couple of days to forge close relations with the grassroots leaders and to involve them in local development activities of the government so that they do not feel left out, said party insiders.

Hasina's directives in this regard have also been conveyed to all those concerned from her political office at Dhanmondi in the capital, they said.

"The prime minister has already started talking to party lawmakers and leaders to diminish the gap," AL Presidium Member Matia Chowdhury told The Daily Star yesterday.

The agriculture minister further said Sheikh Hasina sincerely wants coordination between activities of the party and the government.

Moreover, AL will bring drastic changes in its grassroots leadership after Ramadan to bridge the gap between them and party lawmakers, and gear up organisational activities across the country.

To this end, party meetings will be organised in districts and upazilas after Ramadan.

Contacted, AL Joint General Secretary Mahbul Alam Hanif said, "We have decided to hold party workers' rallies in all districts and

SEE PAGE 15 COL 8

## BCL men go on rampage at Mymensingh

Demand their 'admission quota'

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Mymensingh

Activists of Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) vandalised properties on Mymensingh Polytechnic Institute (MPI) yesterday demanding an "admission quota" for their adherents.

Institute sources said a group of BCL men, led by its unit president Jagangir, went to the principal's room around 2:15 pm and demanded their quota in first year admission for this session.

MPI Principal (in-charge) Engr Md Farid Uddin turned down their demand saying he must follow instructions of the education ministry.

Frustrated at the principal's response, the BCL men

SEE PAGE 15 COL 1



Villagers yesterday barricade the Dhaka-Dinajpur rail line at Barapukuria demanding rehabilitation and compensation for land subsidence due to underground coalmining.

PHOTO: STAR

## PM for 15-year waiver of IP rights for medicines

Seeks protection of Bangladesh's patent right of jute genome

UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday urged the World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO) for another 15 years' waiver of Bangladeshi pharmaceuticals from intellectual property (IP) rights regime.

As the exemption will expire by the year 2016, she made the appeal at the inaugural ceremony of the two-day 'Regional Forum on Intellectual Property for the Policy Makers of the Least Developed Countries (LDCs) of Asia and the Pacific Region' at Sonargaon Hotel in the city.

Hasina also sought WIPO's protection of the patent right of the genome sequencing of jute by Bangladesh.

She said recently a group of Bangladeshi scientists have decoded the genome sequence of jute. This has been a monumental achievement. The golden fibre of Bangladesh will now regain its past glory with improvement in length, quality, colour, strength, high yield, resistance to saline and pest, through genetic engineering.

The programme was organised jointly by the Industries

SEE PAGE 6 COL 5

## Jamaat leaders remanded in 3 cases

COURT CORRESPONDENT

Four Jamaat-e-Islami leaders including its secretary general Ali Ahsan Mohammad Mojahid were taken yesterday on a three-day remand each in three criminal cases filed with different police stations on different charges.

The other leaders are Jamaat Naye-e-Ameer Delwar Hossain Sayedee and two assistant secretaries general Abdul Quader Molla and Muhammad Kamaruzzaman.

Metropolitan Magistrate Kamrunnahr Rumi placed Mojahid on a three-day remand in connection with a case filed for holding a "secret meeting" at a business office of detained Mahmudur Rahman in the capital's Uttara area on November 24 of 2006.

Mahmudur Rahman, acting editor of the daily Amar

SEE PAGE 15 COL 7

## JMB now runs without chief

Bhagne Shahid tells interrogators

KAILASH SARKAR

Banned Islamist outfit Jama'atul Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB) is now without a chief and sura committee, according to the statement of detained JMB leaders Bhagne Shahid and Jamaal Rafiq.

Detective Branch (DB) officials said during interrogation JMB acting chief Anwar Alam alias Bhagne Shahid claimed that the outfit has become without a chief in the face of massive drives against JMB activities.

DB officials said they had placed Shahid face-to-face with detained JMB chief Saidur Rahman during the interrogation.

"In my absence, North Bengal chief Shafiqul Islam alias Jamaal Rafiq was supposed take over as the acting chief of JMB, but he was arrested on July 13," Shahid told the DB officials, adding, "There are only two sura members left, but they cannot hold any meeting as they are now abroad."

According to Shahid, one sura member Shahed Mahmud is a teacher at Medina University in Saudi Arabia and the other Mahfuz alias Haat Kata Mahfuz is in Bashirhat, West Bengal.

Shahid informed that they had to destroy almost all the explosives kept for subversive activities in the northern part of the country.

SEE PAGE 15 COL 2

## Affected villagers besiege coal mine

Demand compensation for land subsidence in Barapukuria

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

Villagers affected by land subsidence due to underground mining besieged Barapukuria Coal Mine Company Ltd (BCMCL) for an indefinite period from yesterday as their deadline for compensation and rehabilitation expired without any progress.

Thousands of villagers also blockaded roads and railway tracks with boulders and damaged a conveyer belt of the coalmine and several makeshift structures outside BCMCL premises. The blockade has suspended rail communication between Rajshahi and Khulna and road communication between Phulbari and Parbatipur.

Meanwhile, the officials and employees of BCMCL remained confined inside the premises.

A large number of police have been deployed in and around BCMCL to avert further untoward incidents.

Jibon O Shampad Raksha Committee, a

platform of the affected villagers, submitted a memorandum to the BCMCL authorities on July 12 to meet their demands by July 15.

Ibrahim Khalil, convener of the committee, said the BCMCL authorities assured them of compensation but the process is yet to start. Earlier on March 10, people of 15 villages including Kalupara, Bolorampur, Baiddanathpur, Barapukuria and Moupukur went on hunger strike demanding resettlement and compensation. They called off the strike as the authorities concerned assured them of compensation by March 30.

These people have been holding rallies, sit-ins and other agitation programmes to press home their demands for the last two years. But no progress is made in this regard except signing of a memorandum of understanding (MoU) between Jibon O Shampad Raksha Committee and BCMCL authorities in May last year, alleged the villagers.

SEE PAGE 15 COL 6

## Barricade on Buriganga bridge for toll withdrawal

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Hundreds of agitating CNG drivers and rickshaw pullers barricaded second Buriganga bridge for three hours yesterday demanding the withdrawal of bridge toll for CNG and non-motorised vehicles.

They held a rally on the bridge suspending vehicular movement on the Dhaka-Mawa highway from 10:00am and set fire to the motorcycle of Prothom Alo official Utpal Chakraborty.

Locals including AL activists with banners also took part in the demonstration at Dakkhin Keraniganj on the southern part of the bridge.

The demonstrators withdrew the blockade at 1:00pm after local AL leaders assured them of fulfilling their demand.

Currently CNG drivers pay Tk 10 while rickshaw and rickshaw-van pullers Tk 2 and motorcycle riders Tk 5 each time they cross the bridge.

The demonstrators said local people of Keraniganj and small vehicle owners pay a huge amount as toll every day as they have to use the bridge several times.

"I cross the bridge 30 to 40 times a day and therefore I pay Tk 300 to Tk 400 as toll each day," said Rahmat Ali, a local CNG driver.

Local lawmaker Nasrul Hamid Bipu said, "I submitted a proposal to the communications minister asking to waive the bridge toll for locals and owners of small vehicles."

SEE PAGE 15 COL 4



Drivers of autorickshaws and non-motorised vehicles torch a motorbike near Babubazar in the capital. They demand toll-free usage of Second Buriganga Bridge.

PHOTO: STAR

## RANKSTEL RESUMPTION Telecom secy, BTRC chief face contempt rule

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday issued a contempt of court rule against the post and telecommunications secretary, and the chairman of Bangladesh Telecommunication Regulatory Commission (BTRC) for ignoring its order regarding resumption of operation of a land phone company, RanksTel.

The HC in May this year directed BTRC and relevant government authorities to appoint an administrator to run the company's operation, which BTRC had shut down in March on charges of running illegal Voice Over Internet Protocol (VoIP) business.

SEE PAGE 15 COL 3

## Roksana's dream shattered in fire

SHAHEEN MOLLAH

Roksana Akhter came to the capital from her village and enrolled at Government Titumir College three years ago to fulfil the dreams of her family.

Her family expected that she would put an end to their sufferings after completing higher studies.

Hailing from Bancharampur in Brahmanbaria, 20-year-old Roksana was on the right track since she scored well in her first year honours examinations from the English department a few months ago.

Like many of her classmates she wanted to be a college teacher.

But her dream came to a sudden end Saturday night when a fire killed her at a birthday party in Gulshan.

"She [Roksana] sat a little away from us as there was no empty chair on our table. But she could not come out of the restaurant when the fire broke out," said Roksana's uncle Nurul Islam Sarker, who took Roksana and his family there

SEE PAGE 15 COL 5



Roksana Akhter

## Moriarty meets Khaleda

Says US observing HR situation in Bangladesh

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

US Ambassador in Dhaka James Moriarty said his country is closely observing the human rights situation in Bangladesh.

He made the remark last night while replying to reporters' queries after a meeting with BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia at her Gulshan office.

Issues like the latest political situation, press freedom,

SEE PAGE 15 COL 2

## Pak-Afghan transit agreement signed

Pakistan allows Afghan lorries to use its land to go to India

BBC ONLINE

Afghanistan and Pakistan have signed a key trade agreement allowing Afghan lorries to use a land route through Pakistan to carry goods to India.

The deal also gives landlocked Afghanistan access to Pakistani ports to boost its trade with other nations.

Correspondents say the deal marks a real effort to ease tensions between the two neighbours.

The accord was signed during the visit to the

region by US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton.

In an interview with the BBC's Kim Ghattas in the Pakistani capital Islamabad, Mrs Clinton spoke of the need to bring the two countries closer together.

She also said Washington wanted Pakistan to do more to tackle Islamist militants.

The deal between Afghanistan and Pakistan was signed by the trade ministers at a ceremony in Islamabad.

Afghan Finance Minister Omar Zakhilwal,

SEE PAGE 15 COL 7

OnlinePoll

Do you agree with BNP that it is impossible to restore the 1972 constitution?

Yes (59.3%)

No (37.9%)

No Comments

Total votes: 1032

TODAY'S POLL

Do you think the government will be able to keep the prices of essentials stable during Ramadan?

Please cast your vote at www.thedailystar.net

Prayer Timing

July 20

	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	4-15	4-50
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	5-00	5-15
Maghrib	6-54	6-58
Esha	8-15	8-45

Source: Islamic Foundation