

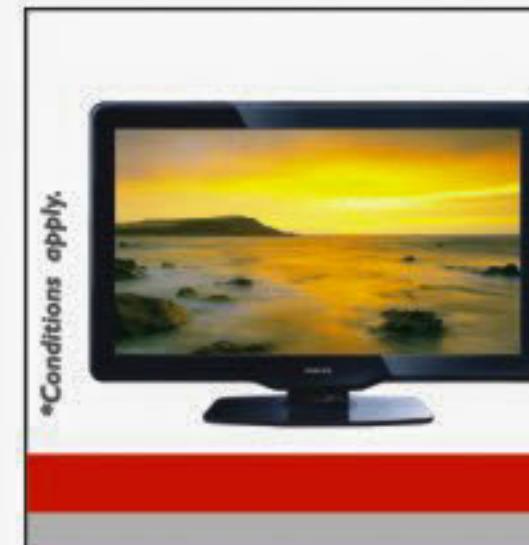
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PHILIPS

in Short

Feb 17 half-day holiday for Dhaka

UNB, Dhaka

Government has announced public holiday from 2:00pm on February 17 in the capital on the occasion of the opening ceremony of the ICC Cricket World Cup 2011.

Earlier, the holiday was announced for the whole day.

Bangladesh, which co-hosted the mega world cup cricket for the first time along with two other South Asian countries, India and Sri Lanka, will also host the prestigious opening ceremony at the Bangabandhu National Stadium.

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DAMAGING RELICS
Bogra cops asked to sue culprits

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday directed the police of Bogra to sue the persons involved in damaging the archeological site of Mahasthangarh.

The HC bench of Justice AHM Shamsuddin Chowdhury Manik and Justice Sheikh Md

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Noab hails govt for CrPC amendment

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Newspaper Owners' Association of Bangladesh (Noab) has welcomed the government for amending the Criminal Procedure Code dropping the provision of issuance of warrants to journalists and writers or others in defamatory cases.

According to the amendment the war

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FATWA VERDICT
SC appoints 10 experts as amici curiae

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Supreme Court yesterday appointed 10 senior lawyers as amici curiae (friends of court) for their expert opinion on a long pending appeal against a High Court verdict that in 2001 declared fatwa (religious edict) illegal.

They are TH Khan, Rafique-ul Huq, Mahmudul Islam, M Zahir, Rokanuddin Mahmud, AF Hasan Arif, MI Farooqui, ABM Nurul Islam, Rabia Bhuiyan and Tania Amir.

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As part of beautifying the capital for the upcoming Cricket World Cup, this boat is placed just near the Sonargaon intersection as a symbol of tradition. Some replicas of deer, inset, on the other side of the road serving the same purpose.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN



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Politics of municipalities

JS told 200 out of 311 municipalities set up on political consideration

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

People of 200 municipalities have applied to the government for turning those into union parishes again, saying they were set up by previous governments "on political consideration".

Local Government and Rural Development (LGRD) and Cooperatives Minister Syed Ashraful Islam said this in parliament yester-

day.

The government, however, will not change the status of those municipalities, he said in reply to a question.

"We want to improve the condition of those," he said.

There were 50 municipalities in 1973 when the first elections were held. There are 311 municipalities now.

The local government commis-

sion formed by the immediate past caretaker government in its report said many municipalities were set up for political reasons. The committee also recommended turning those into union parishes again.

"Municipalities were set up in those areas on political considerations without following any policy. People of those areas are not getting any municipal facilities" the LGRD

SEE PAGE 13 COL 3

Govt asked Yunus to step aside
Muhith tells BBC

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The finance minister yesterday said the government had asked Nobel laureate Muhammad Yunus to stay away from Grameen Bank as long as a review of the microlender continues.

"I suggested Mr Yunus should step aside as

SEE PAGE 13 COL 1

CONSTITUTION: SECULARISM, RELIGION
JS body moves to play safe

SHAKHAWAT LITON

The parliamentary special committee on constitution amendment is now struggling to uphold secularism while maintaining the status of Islam as state religion in the constitution, in an effort to avoid any political flare up.

In consultation with the prime minister last week, it agreed to maintain the status of Islam as state religion, as it apprehends any move to amend the status quo will allow opposition parties to wage agitation against the

SEE PAGE 6 COL 4

Dubious distinction

Only 5 out of 26 MPs show up to raise scripted questions for ministers at Sangsad

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Wholesale absence of ruling Awami League-led alliance lawmakers, who were supposed to raise their scripted questions for ministers, put a bizarre record in parliament proceedings yesterday.

Only five out of 26 MPs, who were named to raise their scripted questions for the ministers, were present in the House during question hour.

Their absence also forced Deputy Speaker Col (retd) Shawkat Ali, who was presiding over the sitting during the question hour session, to change a decision

earlier taken not to allow other MPs to raise scripted question of specific MPs by proxy.

At the beginning of the question hour, the deputy speaker called names of seven lawmakers one after another to raise their scripted questions. But all of them were absent.

He did not allow other MPs to raise the scripted questions on behalf of absentee lawmakers for being discussed in the House.

The deputy speaker finally found one MP, Murad Hasan, to raise his scripted

SEE PAGE 13 COL 3

Endangered gharial caught in Padma

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A young gharial, one of the most critically endangered reptile species, was caught from the river Padma in Kushtia on Sunday and will be released shortly at the Bangabandhu Safari Park in Gazipur.

According to a press release by the conservator of forests, Wildlife

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This Gharial was caught in fishing net in the Padma river. The endangered reptile will be brought and raised in Gharial Captive Breeding Centre in Gazipur.

PHOTO: STAR



The BIWTA and Dhaka district administration in a joint drive demolishing illegal structures on the river Buriganga in Swarighat area of the capital yesterday.

PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

Buriganga freed of 80 structures

BIWTA demolishes illegal establishments in Lalbagh area

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

About 80 illegally built structures were demolished on a 1.5-kilometre stretch of the river Buriganga in Lalbagh yesterday as part of the move to free rivers of encroachers.

A joint team comprised of the officials of Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Authority (BIWTA) and an executive magistrate of Dhaka district administration knocked down the structures which were mostly makeshift and multi-decked tin-sheds in Kamalbagh and Islambagh.

As the team started pulling down a plastic factory in Kamalbagh, its employees started throwing brickbats at them. One of eight Ansar personnel of BIWTA received a minor injury and took treatment at Mitford Hospital, said Abdol Sharif, deputy director of BIWTA and port officer of Dhaka River Port.

Moreover, the team also demolished concrete, semi concrete and portions of two three-storied buildings when they embarked on the drive with two lists of illegal

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ONLINE POLL
Do you agree with Awami League General Secretary Syed Ashraful Islam that BNP should join the house and place complaints against the government with evidence?

Yes (33.3%)

No (66.4%)

No Comments (0.3%)

TOTAL VOTES : 848

TODAY'S POLL

Do you think BNP's win in the municipal polls in North Bengal shows it is regaining strength at the grassroots level?

PLEASE CAST YOUR VOTE AT www.thedailystar.net

PRAYER TIMING February 15

Fajr 5-25 6-00

Zohr 12-45 1-15

Asr 4-30 4-45

Magrib 5-57 6-01

Esha 7-15 7-45

Source: Islamic Foundation