



## DIDI'S DILEMMA

MJ Akbar urges Mamata Banarjee to be innovative

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## ASSASSINATION LAWSUITS

Aisha Gaddafi files cases over deaths in Nato bombings

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## STORY OF HAMLET

Shakespeare modelled Ophelia on a relative

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## RESERVE FORESTS 35 illegal sawmills shut

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Tangail

A joint task force of forest division and district administration evicted 35 illegal sawmills from the Sakhipur reserve forest area in Tangail in a 24-hour drive that began on Tuesday morning. Sakhipur Upazila Nirbahi Officer Mozibor Rahman and Assistant Forest Conservator GM Kabir led the drive.

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# Problems plentiful

Muhith left to skate on thin ice, unwraps budget today

INAM AHMED

It has been an unnerving year, not only for the finance minister but for us all. Because anyone with some sense can find himself looking eye to eye with a Hydra head of thorny issues. Probably never had the economy faced so many problems at one time, each promising to grow bigger and squish its prey.

The ever growing lines in front of trucks at street corners selling cheap rice show the biggest of the problems the economy is faced with -- ever rising inflation. Suddenly people across the board -- those who queue

at the open rice sales points, and those who cannot because of their status symbol -- are feeling the pinch. Everybody is trying to charge higher -- fares are going up, non-food items are getting pricey -- to cope with the situation. Only those with fixed income find themselves in a cauldron of helplessness. It can also be the perfect situation when the society will tend to easily jump into corruption's brace.

Reasons why inflation is going up are known to all -- global price shock, taka losing ground against the back-drop of weakening foreign exchange reserves, and high expansion of credit

being the most prominent ones. We cannot do much when food and other commodities get costly on the international market. And when taka dips, imports get even costlier, fuelling imported inflation. And the simple rule is that when supply increases with credit growth, demand grows too, and so does inflation.

Now we can do little if not nothing about the global situation. But we could have tried more to improve our forex reserves. We could have tried to improve our foreign aid utilisation. We did not. We could have worked harder to tap more jobs abroad for

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## BUDGET BNP offers proposals

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Stressing the need for expansion of social safety net programmes for the poor, the BNP chairperson yesterday said power and energy, education, health and infrastructure sector should get top priority in the next fiscal year's budget.

Finance Minister AMA Muhith is scheduled to place the budget at 4:00pm in parliament today.

Placing her budget proposal for the second

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## BNP won't join EC dialogue

Mulls another hartal

RAKIB HASNET SUMAN

In a crucial meeting of party policymakers, the main opposition BNP last night decided not to join dialogue with the election commission (EC) on June 13.

Sources said the party will inform the EC of their decision through a letter.

The party high command also decided to declare an agitation programme against the

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## CONSTITUTION CHANGE 51 proposals placed in JS

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The parliamentary special committee on constitution amendment yesterday placed in the House a 51-point recommendation that includes scrapping the much-talked-about caretaker government system, posts and definition of chief adviser and advisers, and providing

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## AL lawmakers welcome tax on their salaries

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Awami League lawmakers yesterday welcomed Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's proposal for tax on legislators' salaries and allowances.

The ruling party lawmakers agreed on the

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In the scorching summer heat, mango farmers cover their heads and pedal to the market in Kansat of Chapainawabganj, the mango hub of the country. The photo was taken recently.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

## No unrest if we sit, talk

PM tells JS about BNP's agitation over caretaker system

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday said the present sizzling political situation can be resolved through discussion.

She hinted main opposition BNP is "creating political instability" over the caretaker government issue.

"No political unrest will be created if we ourselves [Hasina and Khaleda Zia] sit and discuss," Hasina, also the leader of the House, said in parliament replying to a lawmaker's query.

She said they are not creating complexities in politics, adding, they want to hand over people's power to the people by strengthening parliament through constitutional amendment. "What we can do if somebody does not like it?"

"They [BNP] can enforce hartal only. But it will only harm the country and the people, but nothing will happen.

"I don't know with what hope and by whose signal they want to create political unrest. If they have anything to say, the can come to parliament and place their proposals," she said replying to a query raised by independent lawmaker Fazlul Azim.

"They can still join parliament. But they don't," Hasina added.

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# Over 70 housing projects illegal

HC asks govt to demolish structures of those in 30 days

ASHUTOSH SARKAR

The High Court yesterday directed the government to remove or demolish 77 unauthorised housing projects in and around Dhaka within 30 days.

The court in the verdict on a writ petition also ordered the Rajdhani Unnayan Kartripakkha and the police to stop advertisement, earth-filling and sale of plots by those housing projects and remove their signboards and hoardings immediately.

The HC bench of Justice AHM Shamsuddin

Chowdhury Manik and Justice Gobinda Chandra Tagore at the same time directed Rajuk to submit a report on compliance with the directives within 40 days.

The court declared the housing projects illegal and Rajuk itself had provided the petitioners with the list of 77 illegal housing projects.

Petitioners' counsel Iqbal Kabir Lytton told The Daily Star that at least 77 unauthorised housing projects are now filling water-bodies with earth, and selling plots in and around Dhaka. They are also circulating advertise-

ments through the media despite earlier orders of the HC.

Following yesterday's directives, Rajuk has to take steps immediately in this regard taking assistance of the police, he said.

Iqbal Kabir also said many people are being cheated of their life's savings by these unauthorised housing projects.

The petition was jointly filed by five environmental and urban planner groups in July last year seeking necessary orders from the HC to stop the operations of the housing

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