



**'HISTORIC' FARM DEAL**

G20 farm ministers strike a deal to tackle high food prices

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**PACIFIC OCEAN**

An analysis of the jockeying for control between the US and China

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**US TROOPS WITHDRAWAL**

Obama announces pullout of 10,000 from Afghanistan by the end of the year

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# Koko jailed for 6yrs

*Court also fines him Tk 39cr in absentia; asks for steps to bring back Tk 20cr laundered money from Singapore*

**CHAITANYA CHANDRA HALDER**  
 Arafat Rahman Koko, younger son of BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia, was yesterday sentenced to six years' rigorous imprisonment for laundering over Tk 20 crore to Singapore.  
 The only other accused in the case, Ismail Hossain Saimon, son of former shipping minister late Akbar Hossain, was given the same sentence.  
 This is the first ever judgment in any case against a member of the Zia family. Khaleda and her two sons--Tarique Rahman and

Koko--stand accused in 22 cases. Nineteen of the cases were filed during the last caretaker government rule and three during the present government's tenure.  
 Judge Mohammad Mozammel Hossain of the Special Judge's Court-3 delivered the judgment around 12:15pm in a courtroom packed with lawyers, journalists and BNP men.  
 The convicts--both tried in absentia--were also fined Tk 38.83 crore each. The sentences will take effect on the day of their arrest or surrender.  
 "The prosecution has proved

beyond doubt the charges against the accused," the judge observed.  
 He also asked the authorities concerned to take measures to bring back the money stashed in Singapore.  
 As soon as the judge pronounced the verdict, pro-BNP lawyers burst into noisy protests in the courtroom. Later, they brought out a procession down the corridor outside.  
 The Anti-Corruption Commission filed the case against Koko on March 17, 2009.  
 According to the charges, Koko



**The charges**

**STAFF CORRESPONDENT**  
 The Anti-Corruption Commission on March 17, 2009 sued Arafat Rahman Koko for taking money illegally from Chinese firm China Harbour Engineering Company, German company Siemens, and

# Another mangrove forest destroyed

*Over 5,000 trees felled in remote char of Patuakhali*

**MORSHED ALI KHAN and SOHRAB HOSSAIN**  
 While the government vows to increase our forest areas, hundreds of locals yesterday started chopping down an entire mangrove forest and a wildlife sanctuary over an area of 2,000 acres in the remote island of Char Bestin under Galachipa upazila of Patuakhali.  
 The plundering of the mangrove forest was prompted by the Patuakhali district administration which in 2006 allocated

two-thirds of the Char Besting mangrove forest to 900 landless families. The forest department strongly opposed the move. On August 10, 2008, the Patuakhali and Bhola district administration in a meeting decided to cancel the allocation. But none of the two districts started any official procedure to declare the allocation null and void.  
 About 500 people from Galachipa, led

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# BLACK MONEY JS body wants it in stock

*Economists warn against such scope*

**STAFF CORRESPONDENT**  
 A parliamentary committee yesterday recommended that the government provide scope for investing black money in the sharemarket.  
 However, noted economists and market analysts criticised it, and said such scope would inflate the market

# Ensure justice for Rumana

*100 rights activists, professionals urge govt*

**STAFF CORRESPONDENT**  
 More than 100 women's rights activists, academics and professionals have demanded justice for Rumana Manzur, who lost her eyesight in a brutal attack by her husband.  
 In a statement

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# How's Koko?

**ABDULLAH MAMUN**  
 Arafat Rahman Koko stayed only for five weeks in a hospital in Bangkok in the last three years, and left for Malaysia in late last year violating his parole terms.  
 The younger son of

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# It's political

*Says BNP; AL counters with US-Singapore probe*

**STAFF CORRESPONDENT**  
 The main opposition BNP yesterday rejected conviction of its chairperson's younger son Arafat Rahman Koko saying no-one will accept the verdict as it was "absolutely politically motivated".

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Visiting Indian Army chief Gen Vijay Kumar Singh poses with his Bangladeshi counterpart Gen Md Abdul Mubeen after formally handing over two howitzers, used by the Indian army during the Liberation War, to the Bangladesh Army. The artillery pieces were used in the Mujib Battery unit of Sector-2. Story on page 3.

**Executive**

**6 days to go!**

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# LNG import not before a year

*Slow-paced tender process for a terminal seen as reason*

**SHARIER KHAN**  
 The government's bid to import Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) by December 2012 to boost declining gas supply is set to miss the deadline by a year to 18 months as the authorities could not complete the tender process for setting up necessary infrastructures.  
 The government aims to import LNG from Qatar at the rate of 500 million cubic feet per day, equivalent to the country's current supply deficit.  
 The gas will be unloaded at an LNG terminal in Moheshkhali from which it will be transmitted to the national grid in Chittagong through an 80-kilometre pipeline. If implemented, it would give the energy sector an alternative solution.  
 The government has floated a tender for setting up the LNG terminal but the process has been unusually slow with the project despite attributing high importance to it. For the pipeline, the government is also preparing a restricted tender limited to a few companies.  
 Petrobangla on February 9 floated the tender to pick competent bidders for the LNG terminal project with response from 10 companies.  
 Insiders say based on submitted documents on experience, technical and financial strength, the authorities have selected seven companies: Gas de France, Golar LNG Energy Management of Singapore, Teekay Shipping Canada, Vitol Singapore, Samsung South Korea, joint venture of Astra Oil (the Netherlands) and Excelebrate

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**Remit Bangladesh**  
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