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## RHD engineers seek 'protection' from ministry

Their demand comes amid ACC enquiry about projects to find graft

M ABUL KALAM AZAD

Fearful of the widening net of Anti-Corruption Commission surveillance on them, a few hundred Roads and Highways Department engineers yesterday demanded that no organisation other than the communications ministry take action against them should they make or have made any mistakes.

They also demanded that the ministry should take responsibility for their activities. They made the demand at a meeting, held at the RHD auditorium, attended by Communications Minister Obaidul Quader, Communications Secretary Monzor Hossain and Joint Secretary (development) of the Communications Ministry Farid Uddin Ahmed. The meeting was also attended by nearly 250 engineers from across the country.

However, the communications minister, having delivered a brief speech, left the meeting before the engineers

SEE PAGE 19 COL 5



Sacks used to carry chemicals are being washed in the Turag, polluting the water of a major river in the country. The photo was taken from Kamarpara Bridge in Tongi a few days ago.

PHOTO:  
SK ENAMUL HAQ

ILLEGAL PROJECT  
Realtor fined  
Tk 27 lakh

OUR CORRESPONDENT,  
Narayanganj

The Department of Environment (DoE) yesterday fined Rupayan Housing Estate Ltd Tk 27.13 lakh for setting up an unauthorised project in Narayanganj Sadar upazila and violating the environment law.

A DoE team led by Muhammad Munir Chowdhury, director (enforcement), conducted

SEE PAGE 5 COL 1

## A third of South Asians made to pay bribes

Finds Transparency Int'l survey

AFP, Kathmandu

More than one in three South Asians say they were forced to bribe officials in the last year, mainly for services they were legally entitled to, an international anti-graft watchdog said yesterday.

A survey released by Berlin-based Transparency International in the Nepalese capital Kathmandu showed bribery has become so endemic that the region is second only to sub-Saharan

Africa as the corruption hotspot of the world.

The watchdog surveyed 7,800 people in India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Nepal, Sri Lanka and the Maldives, finding 40 percent had paid backhanders over the last 12 months to public servants, with police being the largest recipients.

Two thirds of Indians, Bangladeshis and Pakistanis who dealt with the police last year said they had paid bribes to

SEE PAGE 6 COL 1

AUG 21 CASES  
Mufti Hannan  
appeals for  
discharge

COURT CORRESPONDENT

Chief of Harkatul Jihad al Islami (Huji) Mufti Abdul Hannan and another member of the banned militant outfit appealed to a Dhaka court yesterday, to discharge them from the August 21 grenade attack cases.

Mufti Hannan and Mohammad Ujjal alias

SEE PAGE 6 COL 4

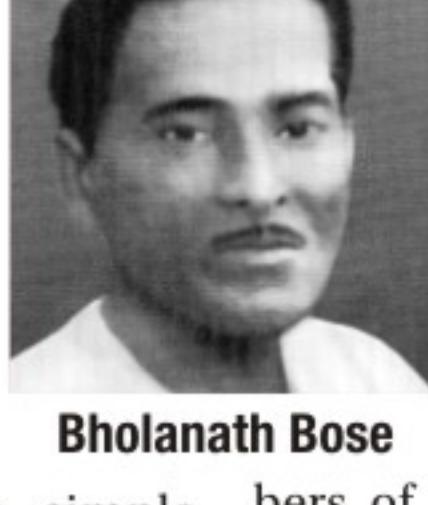
## Tragedy unwrapped

Family of a 1971 martyr releases a book on its agony

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The nightingale still singing in Bholanath's orchard was silenced by the sound of a gunshot on the morning of May 17, 1971. Two more gunshots broke the silence that had descended after the nightingale's song ended abruptly.

Finally, Bholanath Bose, a simple Hindu businessman from Bagherhat who had never compromised his principles



through leaving his ancestral land behind and had survived all the political turmoil beginning with the partition of the sub-continent in 1947 to stay back home, fell to the wrath of the demons who shot him dead.

The demons were not mem-

bers of the Pakistani occupation forces but neighbors of Bholanath led by Karim

SEE PAGE 19 COL 2

BB moves to encourage rural banking

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

To bring more rural areas under banking services, Bangladesh Bank has brought major changes to its policy of allowing the private commercial banks open new branches.

The central bank in a circular yesterday said the ratio of private bank branches in urban and rural areas will have to be 1:1 from the existing 4:1.

The decision was reached to provide banking services to the backward section of the population, added the notice.

SEE PAGE 19 COL 4

Earth has 2 moons!

ANI, London

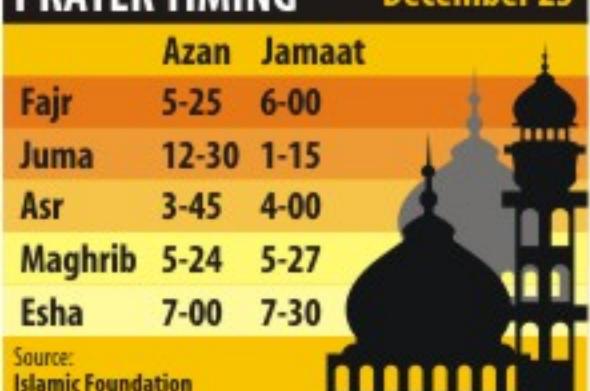
The Earth has always had a temporary second moon, new study has claimed.

When astronomers caught sight of a mysterious titanium white object circling around the Earth in 2006, they assumed it was a spent rocket.

But it was actually a small asteroid captured by the Earth's gravitational field that rotated around the Earth until June 2007.

In the new study, astrophysicists at Cornell claim that this little moon was

SEE PAGE 19 COL 7



Cars with shattered windows are parked on a street after a wave of attacks in Baghdad killed at least 57 people yesterday. The apparently coordinated blasts were the first major sign of violence in a row that has threatened Iraq's fragile political truce and heightened sectarian tensions just days after US forces completed their withdrawal.

PHOTO: AFP

## It was a mistake on both sides

Nato, US say about killing of 24 Pak troops last month

AP, Kabul

An investigation into a Nato attack that killed 24 Pakistani troops last month near the Afghan border has concluded that a combination of mistrust and bad maps led to the air strikes on two Pakistani outposts, the US Department of Defence and a Nato official said yesterday.

It's unclear whether the report, which says mistakes were made on both sides, will reduce the tension between Pakistan and the US over the incident. The Pakistani army has said its troops did nothing wrong and claimed the attack was a deliberate act of aggression.

A statement issued by the US Department of Defence did not apologise for the attack, as the Pakistanis have demanded, and instead defended the actions of American forces.

"The report says we recognise we made mistakes, and that mistakes were also made by the Pakistanis," said the Nato official, who could not be named because the Defence Department's investigation has not yet been made public.

"We have a lot of work to do to improve coordination, and we've already implemented steps to do that," the official said.

SEE PAGE 19 COL 5

WAR CRIMES TRIAL  
Sayedee's counsel blames PW for 'false' deposition

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A prosecution witness has given "false statements" against Jamaat-e-Islami leader Delawar Hossain Sayedee before the International Crimes Tribunal, said Sayedee's counsels yesterday.

One of them said Sultan Ahmed Hawlader, the fourth prosecution witness in a case filed against the Jamaat leader, had been facing several criminal cases, and to get government support to get cleared of the charges, he had submitted a false deposition against

SEE PAGE 6 COL 4

Opposition misleading people on Tipai issue

Says Suranjit

STAFF CORRESPONDENT,  
Sylhet

Railway Minister Suranjit Sengupta yesterday alleged that the BNP-Jamaat men are misleading people over Tipaimukh project with a view to spoil the friendly relation with India.

"We would resolve the

SEE PAGE 19 COL 1

## Cold-related diseases spread across country

STAR REPORT

More people succumbed to cold-related ailments yesterday as a severe cold wave with dense fog is sweeping through length and breadth of the country for more than a week.

In the last four days, at least 27 people died of cold-related afflictions in Thakurgaon, Jamalpur, Jhore, Rangpur and Satkhira, report our district correspondents.

The bone-chilling weather added to the misery of the poor and disadvantaged people in the capital and elsewhere with

the sun remaining almost invisible for the last nine days.

Thousands of the vulnerable people have been passing days miserably due to lack of warm clothes and foods as initiatives by the government and different non-government organisations are inadequate.

As people are forced to stay indoors by the cold spell, business and official activities are hampered while students' attendance in schools and colleges has become thin.

Boro farmers fear the ongoing cold

SEE PAGE 19 COL 8

The Daily Star  
Integral Energy Limited  
ONLINE POLL  
Do you think BNP should join the dialogue with president on appointing a new chief election commissioner and election commissioners unconditionally?  
Yes (47.2%)  
No (51.3%)  
No Comments (1.4%)  
TOTAL VOTES: 635

TODAY'S POLL  
Do you think the latest hike in power tariff at retail level in 10 months is justified?  
PLEASE CAST YOUR VOTE AT  
www.thedailystar.net  
YOU MAY ALSO VOTE AT  
facebook.com/dailystarnews