



# The Daily Star

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**Today's Spelling Bee words from**  
Accelerated speak and a letter from Jaipur  
Page: 12, Lifestyle  
champs21.com

## FOR A FASTER TRIP

A chord line to reduce Dhaka-Ctg rail distance

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## "WE'LL ALWAYS LOVE YOU"

Houston death clouds the 54th Grammy Awards in Los Angeles

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### TEESTA RIVER-SHARING DEAL

# India yet to tackle Mamata factor

PINAKI ROY

The prospects of an interim agreement on Teesta water sharing look grim though Bangladesh and India exchanged data on the river's water flow three days ago.

The deal could get through only if Indian officials can convince Paschim Banga Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee in line with the data that Bangladesh provided to India on February 10.

"We exchanged data on the Teesta

river at a meeting in Kolkata. Now Indian officials will sit with Mamata Banerjee and will try to convince her," said Mir Sazzad Hossain, member of the Joint Rivers Commission (JRC), Bangladesh.

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# Faridee no more

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Humayun Faridee, the legendary actor and one of the brightest silver screen stars in the country, died at his Dhanmondi residence in the capital yesterday morning. He was 60.

Faridee, a popular actor who mesmerised audiences for over two decades with his powerful versatile acting skills in theatre, television drama, and cinema, breathed his last around 10:00am.

He left behind a daughter and a

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## An appeal to fellow journalists

We are obviously deeply agonised by the murder of our two colleagues Meherun Runi and Sagar Sarowar, and we want the earliest possible solution of this case and punishment of the killers.

However, in our eagerness to cover the story and seek justice,

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## JOURNALIST COUPLE MURDER Probe needs more time

Cops claim 'substantial progress'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Three days into the killing of journalist couple, police are yet to share their findings in the investigation, although they have claimed to make "significant progress".

Inspector General of Police (IGP) Hasan Mahmood

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## Concern for Megh

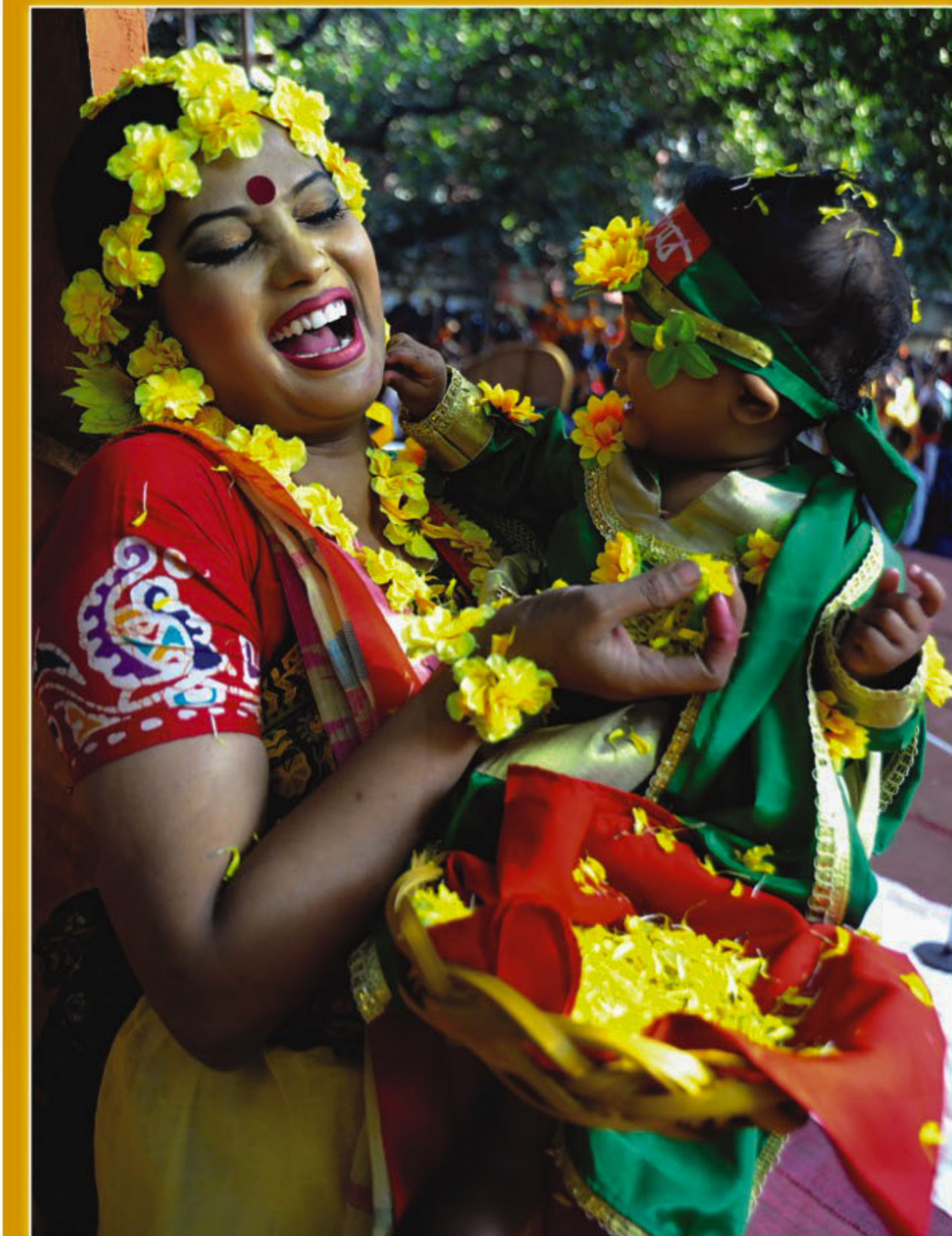
STAFF CORRESPONDENT

There was a smile in his face as he got the colour pencils and some kids' items somebody brought.

The gift pack in hand, Megh ran to another room as his grandma Nurunnahar Mirza and maternal uncles Nawshad Alam and Nawsher Alam got busy talking with news-men.

An aunt followed the five-year-old orphan. His parents, Sagar

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All hail the majestic season of seasons! The arrival of Basanta (spring), the season of colours, festivity, youth and joy, lifts the spirit of the city people. Leaving behind all worldly anxieties, they in the morning rush to the fine arts faculty of Dhaka University where the day is celebrated in a very vibrant way. A number of cultural programmes, including group choreography, songs and dance, are staged. People, mostly youths, are seen smearing each other with colours, just like the cheerful woman and child in this snap.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

## WATERWAYS PROTOCOL India agrees to double upkeep fee

Final decision at secy-level meeting

REJAUL KARIM BYRON

India has agreed to nearly double the annual maintenance fees it pays to Bangladesh for using waterways facilities under a protocol between the two countries.

Currently, India pays Tk 5.50 crore in fees. New Delhi's consent to raise the fees to Tk 10 crore came at a meeting between officials of the two sides in Dhaka yesterday.

The agreed minutes of the meeting, which began on Sunday and ended yesterday, contain this.

The decision will be finalised at the secretary-level meeting on renewal of the waterways protocol within next month.

Since 1972, India has been enjoying limited transit and transshipment facilities under the protocol, which is renewed every two years.

The existing protocol will expire in March this year.

Mohammad Alauddin, joint secretary of the shipping ministry, led the Bangladesh side while his counterpart MC Jauhari led the Indian side in the two-day Dhaka meeting.

Meeting sources said India's consent to double the fees came after hectic negotiations.

The Bangladesh side argued that the fees should be raised as navigability of the existing river routes had deteriorated. The routes from Sherpur to Zakiganj and from Ashuganj to Zakiganj are seasonally navigable.

For this, the maintenance cost including the operational and administrative expenses has increased manifold.

The Indian team was scheduled to travel to Ashuganj after the meeting yesterday. But as negotiations took up most of the day, they had to cancel the Ashuganj visit.

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## Pakistan PM charged with contempt

AFP, Islamabad

Pakistan's prime minister was charged with contempt by the country's highest court yesterday, pleading not guilty to charges that could see him jailed for six months and disqualified from office.

Summoned over the government's two-year refusal to write to authorities in Switzerland asking them to re-open corruption cases against the president, Yousuf Raza Gilani is Pakistan's first premier ever to be charged in office.

His subsequent contempt trial may be drawn out, but it will only increase political instability in the turbulent country, on the frontline of al-Qaeda and Taliban violence that many expect to face early elections within months.

President Asif Ali Zardari and his late wife, former premier Benazir Bhutto, were suspected of using Swiss accounts to launder about \$12 million in alleged bribes paid by companies seeking customs inspection contracts in the 1990s.

Gilani, who swept into court dressed in a dark suit, grey tie, white shirt and cufflinks, was charged within minutes of appearing.

Reading out the charge sheet, Judge Nasir ul-Mulk said

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Yousuf Raza Gilani

## Sit-in to remove govt

Khaleda tells Chandpur rally about peaceful programme after March 12

RAKIB HASNET SUMAN, from Chandpur

BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia said here yesterday the government will be crippled and forced to quit power through a peaceful sit-in after her party's March 12 Dhaka rally if good sense does not prevail on the government.

"A peaceful and people-based programme will be announced after March 12. You [people] have to participate in it. I will be with you," she said while addressing a mammoth

public meeting at the local stadium.

The leader of the opposition in parliament urged the people to be prepared to protest if the government obstructs the Dhaka rally.

Chandpur district unit of BNP organised the rally in protest against the killing of two party men on January 29 when police fired on a procession in the district town. Family members of the two victims -- Abul Hossain Mridha and Limon Choyial -- met her on the stage, and she consoled them.

Carrying colourful banners, placards and portraits of (founder of BNP) Ziaur Rahman, Khaleda Zia and Tarique Rahman, thousands of leaders, workers and supporters of the party attended the rally.

They chanted anti-government slogans. Hundreds of arches were built on the road to Chandpur town, about 145 km from the capital, to welcome the BNP chief. Bitterly criticising the government

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## ADDITIONAL CHARGES ON GP HC rejects telecoms regulator's claim

Clouds clear over licence renewal

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Grameenphone yesterday won a legal battle against the telecom regulator over additional spectrum fees, clearing the way for the mobile operator's licence renewal.

The High Court declared illegal a part of Bangladesh Telecommunication Regulatory



grameenphone

Commission's notice that demanded additional money for the radio frequency it had sold to Grameenphone four years ago.

The bench of Justice Farid Ahmed and Justice Sheikh Hassan Arif gave the judgment yesterday.

The verdict means GP, the country's

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## Ban on rallies, editor held

SYED BADRUL AHSAN

In the early part of February 1952, especially after the strike of February 4, the language movement picked up momentum. Students organised what they called Flag Days on February 11 and 12. On these days, they sold flags and posters in order to raise funds for what looked like a developing movement over the

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