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PHILIPS

No journo harassed by govt

PM tells IPI delegation

UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday said the present government did not file any case against journalists as it did not believe in harassing media people.

The journalists in Bangladesh were enjoying full freedom and the government never imposed any censorship on the media, she said when a delegation of the International Press Institute (IPI) met her at the Prime Minister's Office (PMO).

Executive Director of IPI Alison Bethel McKenzie led the delegation. IPI Senior Press Freedom Adviser Barbara Trionfi and Manjurul Ahsan Bubul, a member of the IPI executive board, were present.

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JOURNO COUPLE MURDER

Stop speculative reports in media

HC asks cops not to make any statement without specific progress in probe

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday asked the government to explain within two weeks why it should not be directed to find out the motive for the murder of journalist couple Sagar Sarowar and Meherun Runi and to bring the killers to justice.

The court issued the rule in response to a public interest litigation filed by Human Rights and Peace for Bangladesh (HRPB).

It also directed the authorities concerned not to make any statement to the media without any specific development in the ongoing investigation into the double murder.

The HC bench of Justice AHM Shamsuddin Chowdhury Manik and Justice Jahangir Hossain Selim also asked the information secretary to take steps within 24 hours to ensure the media do not publish any speculative news report on the incident.

Sagar, news editor at private TV station Maasranga, and his wife Runi, a senior reporter at another TV channel, ATN Bangla, were killed in the wee hours on February 11 at their rented apartment in the city's West Rajabazar.

During hearing on the petition, the court strongly

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JOB WELL DONE... The Daily Star on Sunday ran a photo of this electricity pole, which was broken after being hit by a carelessly driven truck, on the street in front of Ahsan Manzil in the capital. The authorities set an example of prompt action by repairing the damaged pole the very next day. Locals commented that the city would have been a better place had they got such quick service all the time.

PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

BNP leader shot dead

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Unidentified assailants shot a local BNP leader dead at Bhashantek of Kafrul in the capital yesterday evening.

Victim Maulana Mohammad Abdur Raqib Sheikh, 40, was the president of Ward-95 unit of BNP and an imam of local Baitullah Jam-e-Mosque at Bhashantek-4 slum. He

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New gas connections to industries by April

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government will resume giving gas connections to industrial units in a month or two, said prime minister's energy adviser Tawfiq-e-Elahi Chowdhury yesterday.

New gas connections had been stopped since June 2009 due to inadequate supply from wells. As a result, running industries have been experiencing

gas shortages while many new factories are still waiting to start operation.

"We are now able to collect 50MMcf (million cubic feet) of gas from small gas fields across the country which paved the way for increased gas supply and new industrial connections from March or April," said Tawfiq.

He was speaking as the guest of honour at the regular roundtable on the state of

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Surveyors in Kakrail note the number of vehicles on the road, signal timings and length of tailbacks on Monday for Traffic Signal Synchronisation Study supported by World Bank, aimed at analysing existing traffic conditions in Dhaka.

LOKMAN KILLING

Key accused Mobarok held in UAE

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Mobarok Hossain Moba, one of the main accused in the killing of Narsingdi municipal mayor Lokman Hossain, has been arrested in Abu Dhabi in United Arab Emirates.

Inspector General of

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FATAL ROAD ACCIDENTS

2 ministers differ on drivers' responsibility

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

While the communications minister at a function yesterday identified reckless driving as one of the major reasons behind road accidents, the shipping minister defended the drivers saying they were not solely responsible.

"Many other things, including dilapidated roads, roadside shops and movement of animals on highways are equally responsible for accidents," Shipping Minister Shajahan Khan, also executive

president of Bangladesh Sarak Paribahan Sramik Federation, said.

In the meantime, Communications Minister Obaidul Quader urged drivers to drive with maximum carefulness and responsibility, saying, "We are far behind making the highways safe for people."

Both the ministers were speaking at an oath taking ceremony of the newly-elected committee of Dhaka Zila Bus-Minibus Sarak Paribahan Sramik Union at the Mohakhali bus terminal in the city yesterday.

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Saleem to be new Saarc secretary gen

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

The Maldivian government has selected former president of the Human Rights Commission Ahmed Saleem for the post of Saarc secretary general.

The post fell vacant after the resignation of Fathimath Dhiyana Saeed on January 22.

Dhiyana, first woman Saarc secretary general who assumed office on March 1, 2011, resigned in the face of a conflict with former president Mohamed Nasheed following her criticising in public the "unconstitutional" arrest of criminal court's Chief Justice Abdulla Mohamed.

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The Daily Star

Integral Energy Limited

ONLINE POLL

Do you think clemency given by the president to convicted criminals encourage crimes?

Yes (97.8%)

No (2.0%)

No Comments (0.2%)

TOTAL VOTES: 454

TODAY'S POLL

Do you agree with BNP chief Khaleda Zia that every deal with India has to be cancelled if India does not ensure fair share of common river waters?

PLEASE CAST YOUR VOTE AT www.thedailystar.net

YOU MAY ALSO VOTE AT [facebook.com/dailystarnews](https://www.facebook.com/dailystarnews)

PRAYER TIMING February 29		
Fajr	5-15	5-50
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	4-30	4-45
Maghrib	6-05	6-10
Esha	7-30	8-00
Source: Islamic Foundation		

Unity intact

Claims 14-party, vows to complete war crimes trial

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Leaders of the ruling Awami League-led 14-party combine yesterday claimed the unity of the alliance was intact and would remain so until the war crimes trial was completed.

The claim comes in the wake of the combine's meeting last week without the AL and its observation that the next elections must be held under an interim government.

The meeting without the AL and the observations were

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CHT LAND COMMISSION

Hearing on land disputes stalled

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Khagrachhari

A hearing of the CHT Land Dispute Resolution Commission in its Khagrachhari district town office yesterday was suspended due to a quorum crisis as the representatives of hill people in the commission were absent.

Only two members, commission chairman Justice (ret'd) Khademul Islam Chowdhury and Additional Divisional Commissioner Nurul Islam were present yesterday when 43 cases were set to be heard.

Representatives of the hill people in the committee,

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DCC POLLS

Bill passed to extend time by 90 days

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Polls to bifurcated Dhaka City Corporation (DCC) will now be held within May 28 as parliament yesterday passed a bill extending the time frame for holding the polls by 90 days.

The bill also extended

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RIVER POLLUTION

DoE fines dyeing unit

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Department of Environment (DoE) yesterday realised Tk 40 lakh in fine from a dyeing factory at Simrail in Narayanganj for discharging untreated liquid waste into the river Shitalakhya.

A DoE team headed by director (enforcement) Mohammad Munir Chowdhury fined the Shah Dyeing and

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DNA reveals clues to Neanderthal extinction

BBC ONLINE

Neanderthals were already on the verge of extinction in Europe by the time modern humans arrived on the scene, a study suggests.

DNA analysis suggests most Neanderthals in Western Europe died out as early as 50,000 years ago - thousands of years before our own species appeared.

A small group of Neanderthals then recolonised parts of Europe, surviving for 10,000 years before vanishing.

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