



**Today's Spelling Bee words from**  
Western approach, Bangladeshi soul  
Sadik Ahmed talks about "The Last Thakur"  
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## WOMEN RIGHTS SPECIAL

The concept of dowry and some misconceptions about it

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## TIBET TURMOIL PLOT

China sees Dalai Lama followers behind a conspiracy

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# Buriganga second channel at stake

### Unabated encroachment, waste dumping leave it in a near-death condition

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The second channel of the Buriganga, which flows through the southwestern part of the capital, is almost dead due to wholesale encroachment by public and private organisations and also dumping of waste.

Also known as Buriganga Morarkhari, the channel was originally around six kilometres long. But it has been reduced to half that length, thanks to the grabbing by local influential people over the last few years.

As per the Environment Conservation Act 2010 (amendment), filling up wetlands without environmental clearance is a punishable offence.

Dumping of industrial and household wastes -- both solid and liquid -- has also heavily polluted its water, said leaders of Bangladesh Paribesh Andolon (Bapa) and Buriganga Riverkeeper at a press conference at the Jatiya Press Club yesterday.

According to a presentation by Bapa, water flow from the upstream has got reduced to a trickle. And that too is heavily polluted.

Sharif Jamil, founder of Buriganga Riverkeeper, presented satellite images showing how a station of the Power Development Board and buildings of

Matador Company, Panna Group, several refuelling stations and other structures stand on the channel.

"In 2008, the channel was full of water. At that time, you saw structures of Shikder Group on it. Now you see a Rab-10 signboard in the middle of the channel near Amligola, claiming the ownership of the land," he said.

In addition, the local government authorities have built a bridge encroaching on the channel at East Rasulpur, Sharif said.

Since its creation in the 1860s, the channel runs through Mohammadpur, Hazaribagh, Amligola and Lalbagh.

Our senior photojournalist Anisur Rahman yesterday visited certain stretches of the channel and talked to some locals who said the channel would be filled to the brim and trawlers would ply easily even two years ago.

But now, they add, the channel is completely blocked at six to seven points between Lalbagh and Rayerbazar.

Locals say whenever the media reports on the grabbing, the authorities rush to the spot and demolish some structures and evict the grabbers. But within a few

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PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

A portion of the Buriganga second channel at Kamrangirchar in Dhaka has been fenced by people with political clout in order to fill it up. Inset, Dumping of household and industrial waste is also ensuring the death of the water body. The photos were shot yesterday.



## MARCH 1971 'Amar Sonar Bangla' sung at Paltan

SYED BADRUL AHSAN

President Yahya Khan, taken by surprise at the ramifications of his announcement of March 1, called on Pakistan's political leaders to resolve the growing crisis through negotiations. The appeal had little effect on Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, who made it clear that unless inquiries were initiated into the killings of Bangalees over the



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## Yunus unwilling to be WB chief

### Thanks PM for proposal; says he would rather head 'World Social Business Bank' in future

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Nobel Laureate Prof Muhammad Yunus has said he is not interested in taking the helm of the World Bank, as he wants to dedicate his life to social business.

In a statement issued yesterday, he, however, thanked Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina for proposing his name for the WB presidency. He described the proposal as "an unexpected good news".

The microcredit pioneer also said the prime minister's proposal and description of his qualifications for the job made clear that the impressions she previously had about him and Grameen Bank



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## March 12 rally at Nayapaltan

### BNP leaders in talks about post-rally agitation

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The main opposition BNP will hold the March 12 grand rally at Nayapaltan, in front of the party central office, said BNP Vice-Chairman Sadeque Hossain Khoka yesterday.

It is because the authorities concerned did not allow Manik Mia Avenue or Paltan ground for the gathering, he added.

The party has also moved to place a formal proposal for restoring the caretaker government system in parliament ahead of the rally.

Party insiders said some of the senior party leaders are now working on the draft proposal for reviving the caretaker government provision while others are busy with the rally preparation.

They said the decision of returning to the House will be finalised within a couple

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## AL fears 'bid to cause violence'

### Hasina sits with party leaders, asks all to remain alert

HASAN JAHID TUSHER

The ruling Awami League yesterday claimed it had intelligence information that members of militant outfits might join the March 12 grand rally of BNP and cause violence in the city.

Party insiders said AL is worried that the anti-liberation forces would carry out destructive activities that day and put the blame on the government.

Considering this, Prime Minister and AL President Sheikh Hasina yesterday in a joint meeting at her Gono Bhaban residence directed her party leaders of Dhaka and its five adjacent districts to be prepared for any such conspiracy.

Leaders of the party's central committee and its associate bodies, and of Dhaka, Gazipur, Narayanganj, Narsingdi, Manikganj and Munshiganj districts, administrators of these district councils,

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## COUNTER-TERRORISM US special forces in Bangladesh, 4 other countries

### Home ministry official says US security team to attend workshop from March 11

STAR REPORT

US special forces are present in five South Asian countries, including Bangladesh, as part of capacity building in counter-terrorism efforts, a top Pentagon commander has said.

"We have currently special forces assist teams -- Pacific assist teams is the term -- laid down in Nepal, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Maldives, as well as India," US Pacific Commander Admiral Robert Willard told a Congressional hearing, reports BBC online.

Asked, Additional Secretary (Political) of Home Ministry Kamal Uddin Ahmed in Dhaka said the troops were not stationed in the country as media reports had

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The Dhaka Metropolitan Police celebrated its 37th founding anniversary on February 11 but a billboard set up to mark the occasion was still there yesterday, obstructing the view of drivers taking a right turn and spoiling the beauty of the fighter plane on display at the capital's Bijoy Sarani. The photos were shot recently.

PHOTO: SK ENAMUL HAQ



## BRAHMAPUTRA India now says diversion by China not true

PALLAB BHATTACHARYA, New Delhi

India yesterday said the apprehensions expressed by the Arunachal Pradesh government about a possible diversion of the Brahmaputra River by China "is not correct and devoid of facts".

The concern over drastic fall in water level of the river, locally known as Siang, "may be based on the visual impression gathered from general public perception of the river flows around Pasighat town", a central government statement said.

The Central Water Commission found no "abnormal changes" in the water level of the river Siang. This is lean season when water levels of rivers naturally drop.

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