

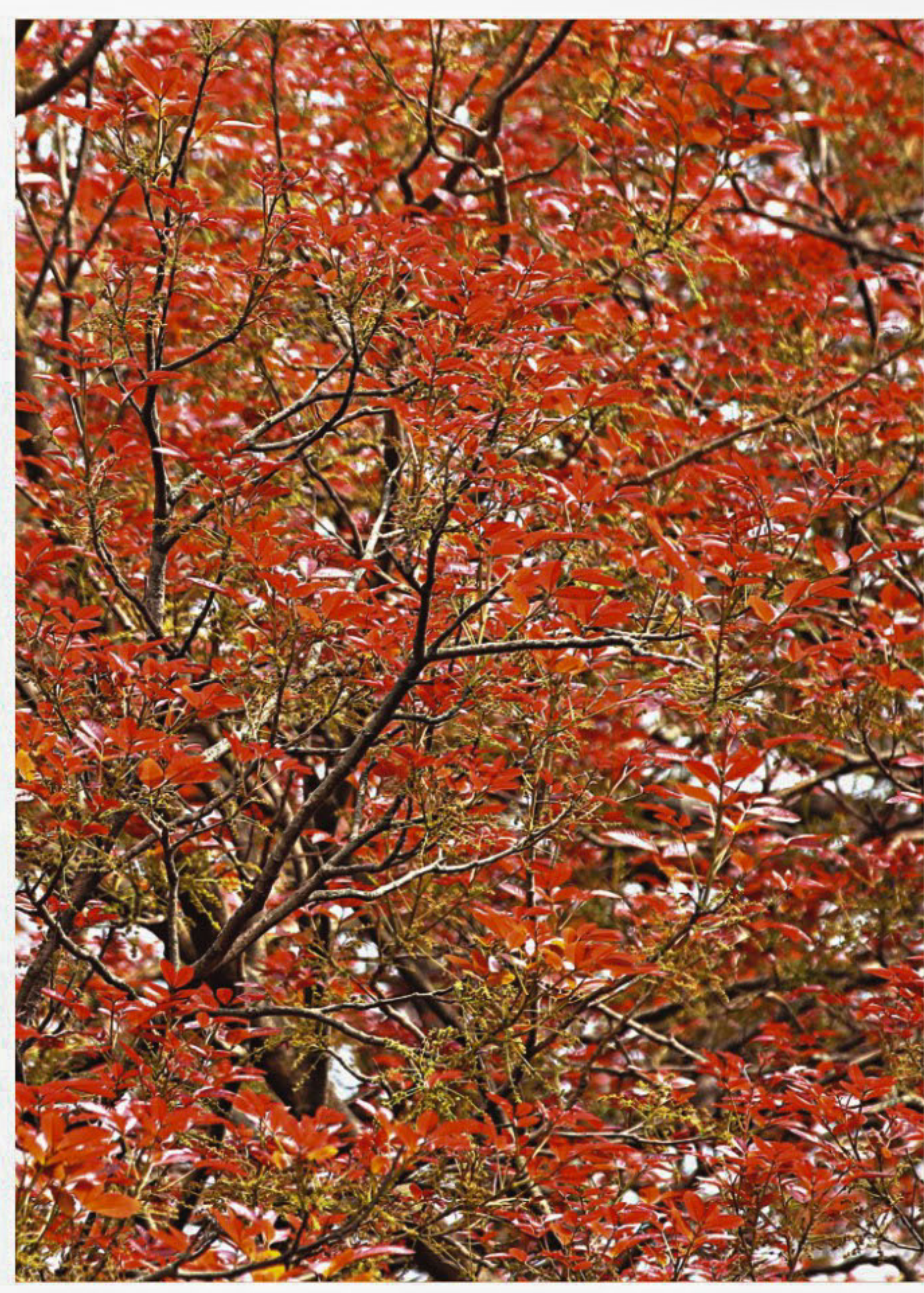
Today's Spelling Bee words from
The Runaway Coaches
Page- 24 & 25, The Star
champs21.com

ASHA IN DHAKA
The living legend performs at Army Stadium this evening
PAGE 11

THE DEFECTION BEGINS
Syrian deputy oil minister says he is switching to the opposition
PAGE 7

NEW PRIVATE BANKS
Central bank gives in to political pressure

Sends short list of 16 to PMO, finance ministry for 'green signal'
REJAUL KARIM BYRON
In the face of pressure from the government high-ups, the Bangladesh Bank is going to approve about a dozen new private banks against its will.
The central bank has sent a list of 16 proposed banks to the Prime Minister's Office and finance ministry early this week for a "green signal," officials concerned have said.
On getting the signal, the BB may give the go ahead to seven to nine banks. The number might be decided at the BB's board meeting on March 15.
When the issue came up last year, the central bank, the sole authority to approve new banks, was against the move. It said there was no need for more banks with 47 public, private and foreign banks already in operation in the country.
The BB eventually gave in to "political pressure" and sought applications for new banks in September, receiving 37 applications till November 30 last year. The BB board then unofficially decided not to approve more than three banks, the officials added.
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This Mahua tree in Ramna Park in the capital regenerates all its leaves in red at the peak of spring. The park, largely green in this super-urban city, got a touch of red as most Mahua trees there got new leaves.
PHOTO: SK ENAMUL HAQ

EMBASSY OFFICIAL KILLING
KSA wants to send probe team

Dipu Moni welcomes
DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT
Dhaka has welcomed Riyadh's proposal to send a probe team for proper investigation into Tuesday's killing of Saudi Arabian embassy official Khalaf Al-Ali.
"We welcome the offer. Our team and their team of experts will be able to work together, exchange
SEE PAGE 19 COL 8

Body flown back home
No headway in murder probe

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
The body of a Saudi embassy official, who was shot dead near his house at Gulshan in the capital on March 6, was sent to Saudi Arabia last night.
Police were yet to make any headway in the murder investigation but the Saudi ambassador said he was confident Bangladesh government would arrest the killers and ensure justice.
SEE PAGE 19 COL 2

Bird flu in 6 city markets
Govt moves to tackle it

M RAHMAN
Bird flu has hit six poultry markets in the capital.
In the last 15 days, three workers from one of the markets came down with the flu; however, they have recovered.
The Institute of Epidemiology, Disease Control and Research (IEDCR) and International Centre for
SEE PAGE 19 COL 5



Mindset of men must change

PM says on women's capability
UNB, Dhaka
Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday said participation of women in all sectors has to be ensured to make Bangladesh a hunger-free and peaceful middle-income country by 2021.
"Women can prove their worth in any sector. For this, the mindset of men has to be changed," she said.
The premier was inaugurating the programmes of International Women's Day 2012 at Bangabandhu International Conference Centre in the capital.
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Criminals eject top cop, hijack car

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
Criminals posing as law enforcers stopped a car in the capital's Mohammadpur early yesterday and robbed its passengers, including a top police official. They also took away the vehicle.
Abu Musa Md Fakhru Islam, additional deputy inspector general of police, was not in his uniform during the incident
around 3:45am.
He was returning home from Square Hospitals where his wife's brother-in-law had passed away earlier that night.
Abu Musa was in a Toyota Corolla along with the deceased's daughter and daughter-in-law and a child.
Mahmudul Islam, officer-in-charge of Mohammadpur Police Station, told The
SEE PAGE 19 COL 1

PROTHOM ALO CASES
Press Council serves notices on 2 dailies

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
Bangladesh Press Council has asked the editors and publishers of the Kaler Kantha and Bangladesh Protidin to appear before its judicial committee on March 29 in connection
SEE PAGE 6 COL 3

POWER OUTAGE
MPs blast state minister, adviser

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
A number of ruling alliance lawmakers yesterday blasted the state minister for power and the prime minister's adviser in the sector for failure to resolve power crisis as people across the country are suffering from power outage.
They also voiced 'grave' concern over the possible damage to the agriculture sector for want of power causing disorder in irrigation.
The lawmakers even said they will not accept any excuse from the ministry or the adviser on the power outage as the government is expending Tk 20,000 crore as subsidy to generate power.
"And now you [the state minister and the adviser] have to deliver service. We will react seriously if things go otherwise," Mayeen Uddin Khan Badal, MP, of Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal said in parliament on a point of order.
Ruling Awami League lawmaker
SEE PAGE 19 COL 2

MARCH 12 RALLY
Declaration of new alliance finalised

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
The BNP policymakers last night approved expansion of the four-party alliance it currently leads.
Under the leadership of BNP, the new alliance will participate in the next general polls if it is held under a non-partisan government, party sources said.
All the allies will jointly form the government if the coalition is voted to power.
BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia might declare the expansion of the four-party alliance from the March 12 rally at
SEE PAGE 19 COL 8

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Bhasani's call to divide Pakistan into two states

SYED BADRUL AHSAN
Moulana Abdul Hamid Khan Bhasani told a public meeting at Paltan Maidan in Dhaka on this day that East Pakistan/East Bengal would become an independent country soon. He demanded that President Yahya Khan divide the state of Pakistan officially into two independent states.
As the momentum toward independence took gathered pace in the province, the Awami League modified some of the directives issued by Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. An announcement to this effect was made by the party general secretary Tajuddin Ahmed. The
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অভিনন্দন

পপুলার লাইফ ইনস্যুরেন্স কোম্পানী লিমিটেড এর পরিচালক ইঞ্জিনিয়ার এম.এ. রশিদ পিপলস্ ইন্স্যুরেন্স কোম্পানী লিমিটেড এর চেয়ারম্যান নির্বাচিত হওয়ায় পপুলার লাইফ ইনস্যুরেন্স কোম্পানী লিমিটেড এর পরিচালনা পর্ষদ, কর্মকর্তা ও কর্মচারীদের পক্ষ থেকে আন্তরিক অভিনন্দন ও শুভেচ্ছা। আমরা তাঁর সার্বিক সাফল্য কামনা করছি।

জীবন বীমায় বিশ্বস্ত নাম
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