



FOR SPICE IN POLITICS

Ashfaqur Rahman promotes the idea of using wit in parliamentary debates

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BECAUSE IT'S BAISHAKH

The DU fine arts faculty is abuzz with preparation for Bangla New Year day

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SYRIA CRISIS

Regime claims end of revolution as Hillary seeks next steps

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Summer dates with power cuts

PDB lacks money to buy fuel for its electricity plants

SHARIER KHAN

The cash-strapped Power Development Board is keeping many fuel based power plants closed to save expenditure and allow load-shedding at a time when electricity demands reached new heights.

Unlike last year, the PDB now has enough power generation capacity to address the lion's share of the demand.

The power demand has reached a record 6,700 megawatts now with the

summer approaching.

The power demand has soared as farmers want 1,500MW extra power this season for irrigation to ensure boro paddy production. The dry weather demands sub-soil water to be extracted using pumps.

The PDB has been maintaining a power generation between 5,000MW and 5,200MW since November last year and had kept load shedding away for four

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Our Earth Hours!

SAJJADUR RAHMAN

While the world called for an hour of energy conservation on Earth Hour, Bangladesh, by not choice though, yesterday went for overkill and had on an average six hours of power cuts across the country.

It was not unusual for Bangladesh to "conserve"

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Rock star Ayub Bachchu plays at the Celebrating Life Swadhinata Concert at Suhrawardy Udyan in the capital yesterday. The Daily Star, supported by Standard Chartered Bank, organised the show. More on Page 9.

PHOTO: STAR

No Yunus

Muhith rules out Nobel hero-led search committee for Grameen Bank MD

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government yesterday dismissed the proposition of making Prof Muhammad Yunus the head of a committee to find the managing director for Grameen Bank.

"Some members [of the Grameen Bank board] proposed appointment of Dr Yunus as the chairman of the search committee. But we cannot accept this as a previous MD should not have

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Teesta failure has indeed hurt ties

Hasina tells Indian newspaper

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina says failing to sign the Teesta water-sharing treaty during her Indian counterpart Manmohan Singh's visit to Bangladesh in September last year has hurt the ties between the two close neighbours.

In an hour-long exclusive

interview at her office, Hasina also tells Manash Ghosh why she thinks the trip of Indian PM has not gone in vain, how the opposition is striving to undermine her government and why the constant threat of assassination doesn't deter her.

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BNP settles for 2-day agitation

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The BNP-led four-party alliance yesterday announced a two-day programme instead of a fresh date for its postponed March 29 hartal.

The opposition will organise processions and rallies in all upazilas, districts and cities on April 11 and 25 to protest the increase in electricity prices, the government's "failure to address water and gas crises" and the incidents of "forced disappearances."

"We planned our programmes for April keeping

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Concert for a cause

Star, Standard Chartered celebrate 40 years of independence

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Daily Star and Standard Chartered Bank yesterday celebrated the country's 40 years of independence with a concert echoing the spirit of freedom and what it means to the nation.

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In the scorching heat yesterday, a kite, rarely seen on the ground, has a drink from a puddle at Bangabandhu National Stadium in the capital while a crow waits its turn.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

Stick-wielding teacher hurts 2

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Two children in Chittagong were ruthlessly caned by one of their school teachers yesterday despite a High Court ban on all forms of corporal punishment at educational institutions.

The father of Syed Md Ajrin Jihad, 11, a class-V student of Saleh Johur City Corporation Kindergarten, alleged that Shirin Akter, an English teacher of the school, hit the boy with a cane around noon.

The teacher also whipped Jihad's classmate Sumit Das, 11, he said.

Saleh Jangi, the father, brought his son to the

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Syed Md Ajrin Jihad

GAS LINE LEAKAGE 4 of family badly burnt

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Four females of a family were badly burnt as a devastating fire razed 16 shanties at Jhut Patti slum in the city's Mirpur-10 yesterday.

The injured -- Ambia Khatun, 60, her daughter HSC examinee Amana Akhter Shahana, 18, granddaughters Sheuli Akter, 9, and Nitu Akhter, 11 -- were undergoing treatment at the Burns Unit of Dhaka Medical College Hospital.

About 35 to 50 per cent of their bodies have been burnt, said physicians.

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Unsafe even if not on roads

Truck ploughs into house; kills mother, 2 daughters

STAR REPORT

A mother and her two daughters died as a truck ploughed into a house in Netrakona while another mother and her daughter were killed as a covered van hit a motorcycle in Tangail early Saturday.

Shirin Akhtar, 32, and her daughters Nitu Akhtar, 13, and Khadiza Akhtar, 7, were killed in a Netrakona road crash while Jyotsna Begum, 45, and her daughter Shampa Khatun, 20, in Tangail.

In Netrakona, a sand-laden truck ploughed through the roadside house of Shirin at Gozalikanda in Purbadhala upazila around 4:00am as its driver lost control over the steering, said Azizur Rahman,

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Good step, harsh result

Cadres assault MP for his move against gambling, vulgar dance

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Sirajganj

A ruling Awami League lawmaker was assaulted by his own party activists on Friday night as he tried to stop gambling and vulgar dance show in Raiganj upazila.

Earlier, locals had filed a complaint with Ishaque Hossain Talukder, MP, of Sirajganj-3 constituency against a fair being held at Bhuiyangati and requested him to stop the show.

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