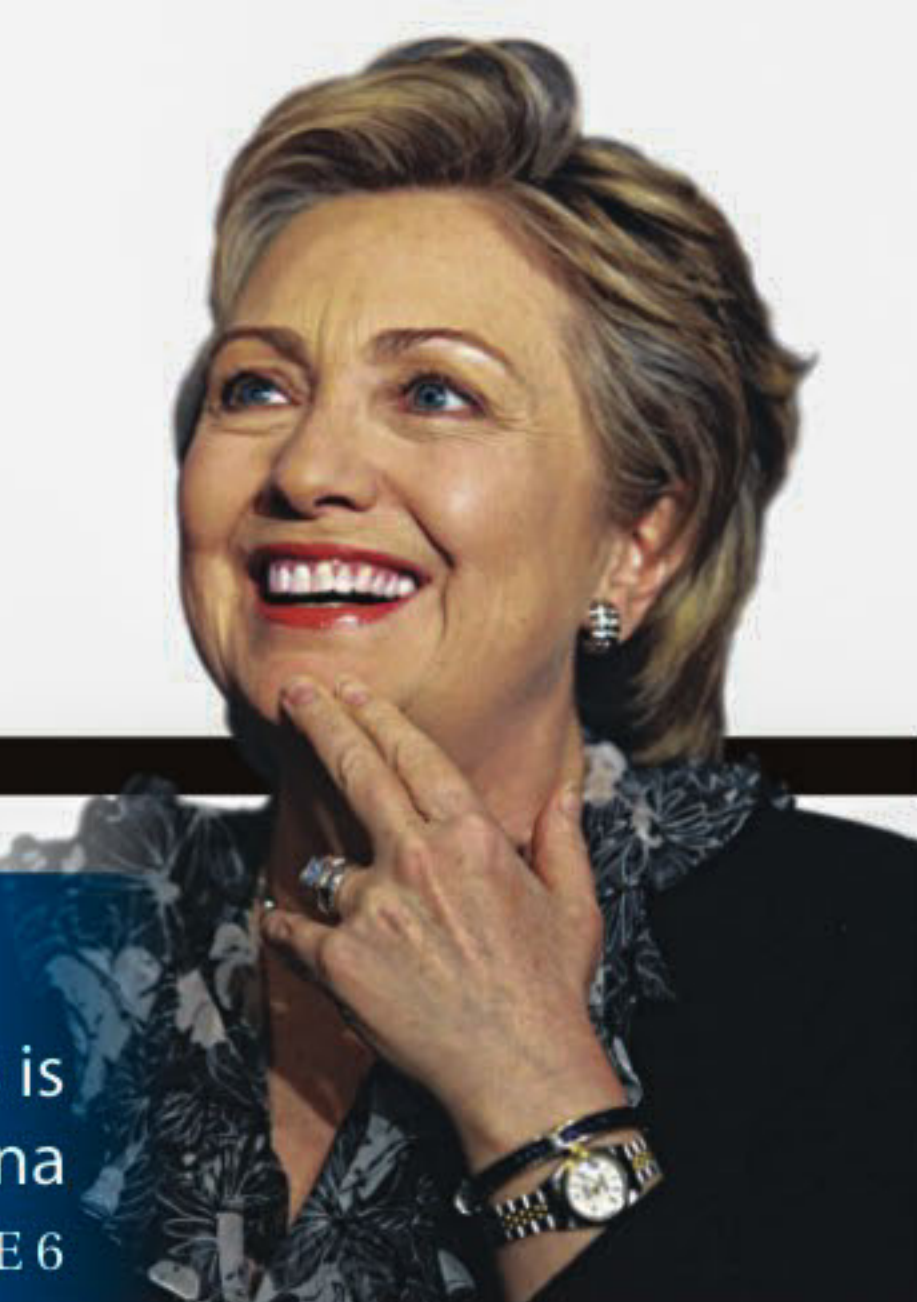




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SLOWING ECONOMY

ADB forecasts that Bangladesh's GDP may slip to 6.2 percent

PAGE B1

CROWNS FOR SANGAKKARA

Wisden names the Lankan as one of the Five Cricketers of the Year and Leading Cricketer

PAGE 17

NO 'COLD WAR' IN ASIA

Hillary Clinton says the United States is not seeking conflict with a rising China

PAGE 6

BANGLADESH JOLTED Relief after scare

STAR REPORT

Two major earthquakes and a series of strong aftershocks near Indonesia's Sumatra Island yesterday jolted various parts of the country, triggering widespread panic among people.

Immediately after the first quake, the Pacific Tsunami Warning Centre (PTWC) and Japan Meteorological Agency (JMA) issued tsunami alert for at least 20 coastal countries including Bangladesh, India, Sri Lanka and Thailand.

The warning was withdrawn hours after the alert was issued.

The first quake measuring 8.6 magnitude shook Dhaka and other parts of the country at 2:38 pm while the second

SEE PAGE 19 COL 1

'RAILWAY-GATE' SCANDAL

Suranjit comes under fire

Govt embarrassed; BNP asks minister to go; ACC to probe; Tk 70 lakh alleged to have come from recent recruitment

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Railway Minister Suranjit Sengupta received heavy flak from various quarters over the seizure of Tk 70 lakh from his assistant personal secretary's car Monday night and his handling of the matter afterwards.

The parliamentary body on railway ministry and officials of railway and other ministries alleged that Suranjit took the matter very lightly. They questioned how neutral the two probe committees, formed by the minister, would be when an officer of the same ministry is to investigate his subordinates.

Even the Anti-Corruption Commission joined the crowd yesterday. The graft watchdog said it would launch a probe into the minister's alleged involvement in the incident, reports Channeli, a private TV channel. Apparently embarrassed, the government and the ruling party leaders are now waiting

SEE PAGE 19 COL 5



We were on way to minister's residence

Says railway security official

KAILASH SARKAR

Two top railway officials, Railway Minister Suranjit Sengupta's assistant personal secretary (APS) and his driver along with Tk 70 lakh were going to the minister's Jigatola residence on Monday night, intelligence sources

SEE PAGE 19 COL 2

2 STRONG QUAKES HIT INDONESIA

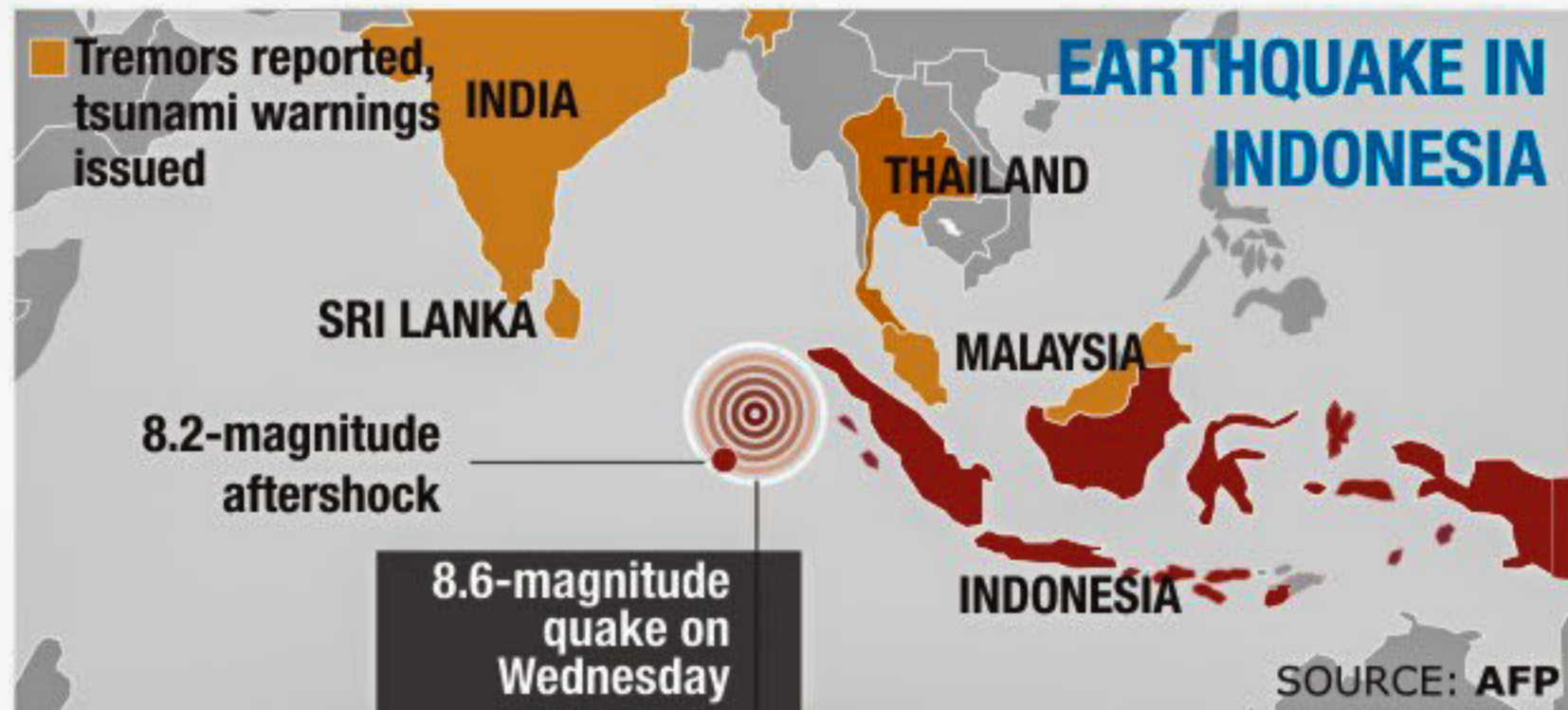
Tsunami watch lifted after hours of panic

AGENCIES

A tsunami watch declared after two major earthquakes off the coast of Indonesia's Aceh province has been cancelled, the Pacific Tsunami Warning Center (PTWC) said yesterday.

Two hours after the quakes -- one with a magnitude of 8.6, the other measuring 8.3 -- the centre said "the threat has diminished or is over for most areas".

SEE PAGE 19 COL 4



SOURCE: AFP

Rights boss smells rat in Azad's fleeing

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

War crimes suspect Abul Kalam Azad, widely known as Bachchu Razakar, fled the country with the help of those who watched him, alleged the chairman of National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) yesterday.

SEE PAGE 19 COL 8

Hotels mushroom in Chittagong

Target business, corporate visitors

SOHEL PARVEZ

New hotels and guesthouses are coming up in the country's premier port city Chittagong to tap the rising demands for comfortable accommodation and better hospitality services for businesses including foreign buyers.

A rise in industrial activities and overseas trade has recently pulled in investments for establishing hotels in Chittagong, the major business city after the capital Dhaka.

In recent years, more than 20 hotels and guesthouses launched operation in

SEE PAGE 12 COL 3

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PM reaches Turkey

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh and Turkey will ink half a dozen deals today to promote bilateral trade and investment, establish direct air link, strengthen cooperation in

SEE PAGE 12 COL 1

THOUSAND BENGALI SING to CELEBRATE Bengali New Year's Day joined by Millions & Millions

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