

DARK SHADOWS

Johnny Depp plays vampire in Tim Burton's comedic thriller

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**BIG FOR BANGLADESH**

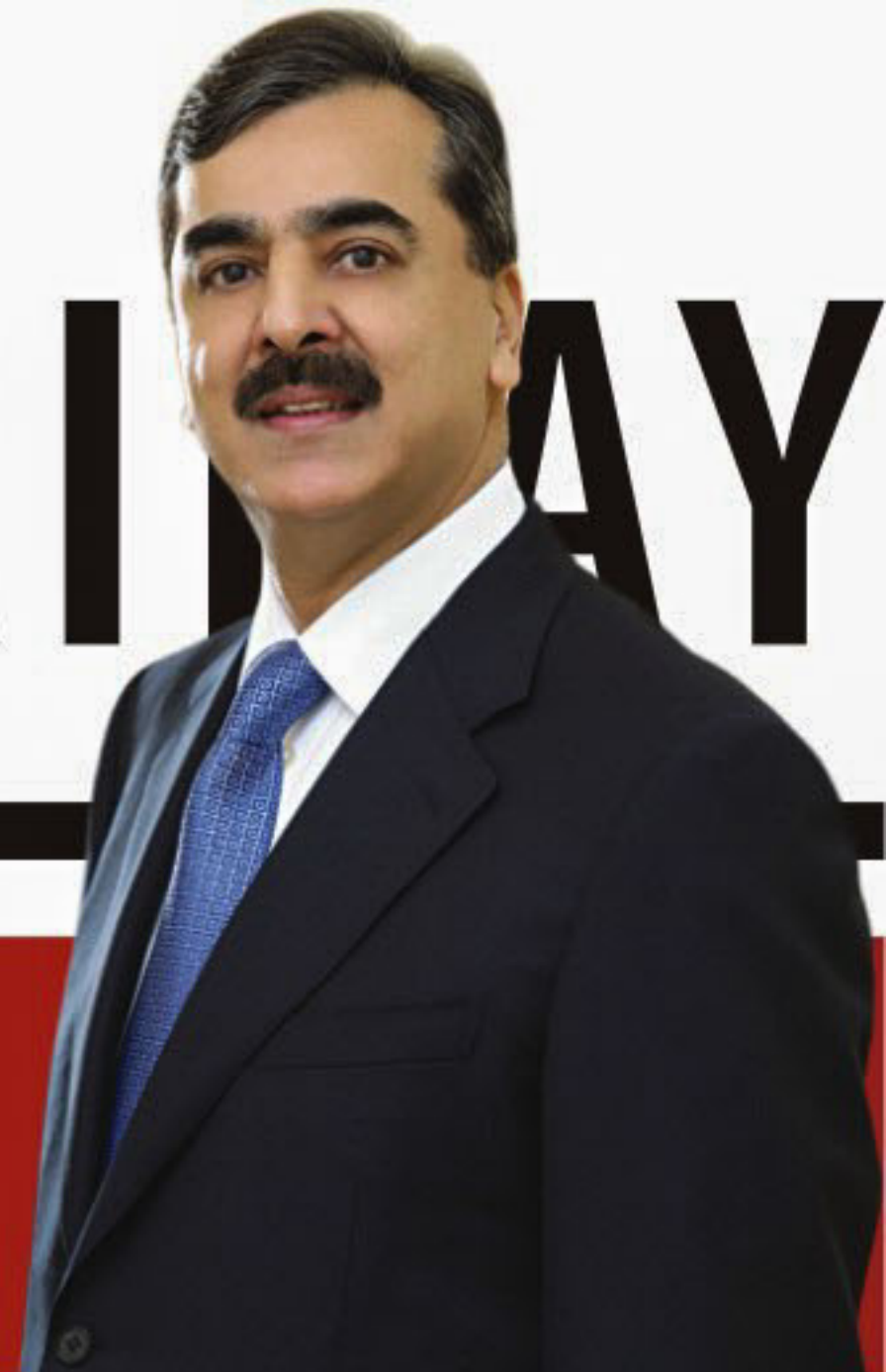
Cannon's new strategies to boost sales here

IT & TELECOM

'TRUST DEFICIT'

Yousuf Raza Gilani on strained Pak-US ties

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President, watch who you pardon

Top jurists want guidelines after HC stands against mercy to fugitive convicts

JULFIKAR ALI MANIK

A recent High Court judgment in a case involving presidential clemency to a fugitive convict has paved the way for formulating guidelines on how the president should exercise his constitutional power to pardon a convict.

Hailing the HC ruling, some eminent jurists have told The Daily Star that no convicted fugitive should get mercy from the president. The convicts who are on the run should not even have the right to seek clemency.

Delivering the judgment on April 25, the HC bench of Justice M Enayetur Rahim and Justice Sheikh Md Zakir Hossain observed that it would be a misuse of power and an arbitrary decision from the viewpoint of the rule of law if the president pardoned a fugitive convict.

The judgment and the observations came in response to a 15-year-old petition

by one Sarwar Kamal, who challenged a warrant for his arrest issued by a trial court in Cox's Bazar in 1997, four years after he was given presidential clemency while on the run.

Article 49 of the constitution empowers the president to pardon any convict. It says, "The president shall have power to grant pardons, reprieves and respites and to remit, suspend or commute any sentence passed by any court, tribunal or other authority."

The article does not mention any conditions or guidelines for granting such clemency, and has thus created room for arbitrary exercise of this power, some lawyers noted.

"I support the High Court division's judgment and observations [about the president pardoning a fugitive convict]," said Khandker Mahbub Hossain, former president of Supreme Court Bar Association.

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A bus and a truck pull out to overtake another bus on Dhaka-Aricha highway at Hemayetpur on the outskirts of Dhaka city yesterday. Reckless overtaking on highways leads to frequent accidents.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

TORCHING VEHICLE

Fakhrul among 45 charged

COURT CORRESPONDENT

Detectives yesterday pressed charges against 45 leaders and activists of BNP-led 18-party alliance, including BNP acting secretary general, for torching a vehicle near Prime Minister's Office (PMO) during April 29 shutdown.

Inspector of the Detective Branch of Police Nurul Amin, also the investigation officer (IO) of the case, submitted the charge sheet to Dhaka Chief



Mirza Fakhrul

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Ilias' mobile switched on for a while

Claims Sylhet JCD leader

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal leader in Sylhet yesterday claimed to have found the mobile phone of BNP Organising Secretary M Ilias Ali switched on for a while in the afternoon.

Md Shamsuddin Ahmed, joint convener of

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Ashraf snipes at Yunus

Ridicules his getting Nobel prize, microcredit feat

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Awami League General Secretary and LGRD Minister Syed Ashraful Islam yesterday raised questions about the justification of Grameen Bank founder Prof Muhammad Yunus getting the Nobel Peace Prize.

"His [Prof Yunus] basic subject is economics and he introduced microcredit programme, but did not get

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Teesta deal not now

Indian official tells BBC; Rizvi still hopeful

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

New Delhi will sign the much-awaited Teesta water share treaty not so soon.

The Indian government had conveyed this message to Bangladesh Foreign Minister Dipu Moni during her latest Delhi trip, BBC Bangla Service reported last

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NEWS ANALYSIS

NO TO RESIGNATION

Speaker crossed his jurisdiction

SHAKHAWAT LITON

Speaker Abdul Hamid has overstepped his jurisdiction by declining to "accept" the resignation of Awami League lawmaker Tanjim Ahmad Sohel Taj from the Jatiya Sangsad.

In his effort to justify the decision,

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Sohel Taj

INNOVATION FOR IRRIGATION



The Rural Electrification Board installed solar powered irrigation system on three Barind Tract villages in Rajshahi yesterday. The Korea International Cooperation Agency provided technical supports for the irrigation units. The villages depend solely on rain water for cultivation against the backdrop of power crisis. The photos were shot in Mirzapur, one of the villages, yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

DESTINY GROUP

Over Tk 100cr tax anomalies found

5 more bank accounts frozen

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The National Board of Revenue (NBR) has detected anomalies of over Tk 100 crore in tax and VAT dodging by two concerns of the Destiny Group, officials said.

Destiny Tree Plantation was found to have dodged tax over Tk 70 crore while Destiny 2000 Ltd evaded VAT amounting to

more than Tk 30 crore, stated NBR officials. The NBR also noticed that Destiny Multipurpose Cooperative Society Ltd violated related laws.

Officials said financial activities of all the 37 subsidiaries of the controversial multilevel marketing (MLM) organisation have been investigated.

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