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LOCKERBIE BOMBER DIES
Abdelbaset al-Megrahi, the lone convict of 1988 bombing, dies in Tripoli
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OIL PROSPECTS
Two oilfields in Sylhet can produce 55m barrels
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END OF GILLY?
Kings XI Punjab captain Adam Gilchrist says he played his last game Saturday
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Propose caretaker talks in writing

Khaleda tells govt at hunger agitation, demands release of party leaders, accuses PM, family of graft

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia said yesterday her party would sit for a dialogue with the government if it got an assurance in writing that the formation of a caretaker government would be discussed.

However, for that to happen, she said, the government must create an environment congenial to talks by formally announcing the restoration of the caretaker government system.

"We are ready to join a dialogue if the formation of a caretaker government is on the agenda. We won't go to any talks without specific agenda," she said at a mass hunger strike at the Mahanagar Natya Mancha premises in the capital's Gulistan area.

The BNP-led 18-party coalition observed the hunger strike at all divisional and district headquarters to press the government to trace missing BNP leader Ilias Ali; free the detained leaders of the opposition alliance; and restore the caretaker government system.

Addressing the prime minister, Khaleda said, "Don't try to scare us....Your time is over. Control your party men. You have to arrange elections under a neutral government or quit power."

The BNP chief hoped the government would make a formal announcement on the issue before her party's June 11 rally.

She reiterated that the BNP would not accept any election under the present

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PHOTO: STAR

Saiara, daughter of missing BNP leader Ilias Ali, gives BNP chief Khaleda Zia a glass of juice to end her seven-hour-long hunger strike protesting her father's disappearance. The photo was taken from Mahanagar Natya Mancha yesterday.

PADMA BRIDGE Govt to fund it if financiers not available

Says Quader

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Communications Minister Obaidul Quader yesterday said the Padma Multipurpose Bridge would be constructed with the government's funds if alternative funding is not available.

His comment came a day after the government allocated Tk 3,000 crore for the Padma bridge project in the Annual Development Programme (ADP).

Quader was talking to journalists after a meeting with Ashok Kumar Lahiri, executive director of ADB, SEE PAGE 19 COL 4

Padakhep rejoinder, our reply

Padakhep Manabik Unnayan Kendra has contradicted a The Daily Star report headlined, "Graft-accused NGO set to get big project", published on April 30.

In a rejoinder, Padakhep said it had been working with hundreds of donors and the government since its establishment in 1986 and had a

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Keokradong sowed her Everest dream

PANKAJ KARMAKAR

It all began on the 50th anniversary of man's Everest summit in 2003 when Nishat Majumder, first Bangladeshi woman Everest conqueror, went to the country's highest peak Keokradong to attend a programme.

The now 31-year-old accountant came back from Keokradong, all inspired to climb to the top of the world.

"She became enthusiastic about mountaineering after travelling in Bandarban," Ashura Majumder, proud

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Nishat Majumder

Buildings to store rainwater

Wasa wary of groundwater depletion, wants provision of harvesting rainwater in building code, plans to recharge natural water reservoir below the surface

HELEMUL ALAM

Dhaka Wasa is considering a plan to recharge the underground aquifers with rain water in eight areas across the capital this year to top up the rapidly depleting groundwater table.

As the city's water table is falling by 2.5 to 3.5 metres per year due to excessive extraction of groundwater

by deep tube wells, the government agency is also mulling over making water recharging facilities mandatory in the proposed national building code, said Wasa sources.

The Ministry of Housing and Public Works has prepared a draft of the building code with this provision. The building construction guideline of Rajdhani Unnayan Kartripakkha (Rajuk) also has the

same requirement.

Both the building code and construction guideline are now awaiting approval from the ministry.

Dhaka Water Supply and Sewerage Authority (Wasa) has made the move after delivering two successful water recharging pilot projects in the city's Segunbagicha and Lalmatia last year.

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The beautiful Patenga beach in Chittagong is yet to be developed for tourism, although it has been attracting thousands of visitors on a daily basis. Meanwhile, illegal makeshift eateries clutter the beach, which charge customers exorbitant prices. Staff of the eateries often harass beachgoers as well. PHOTO: ANURUP KANTI DAS

Tourism in a shambles

Beautiful Patenga beach blighted by jungle of makeshift stalls, horde of aggressive vendors

MINHAJ UDDIN, Ctg

Although Patenga beach has been attracting thousands of tourists everyday for decades, it does not yet have the suitable infrastructure to help flourish tourism.

The beautiful beach, located at the confluence of Karnaphuli River, is only 14 kilometres from the port city Chittagong.

Absence of proper tourist amenities has encouraged indiscriminate establishment of food and souvenir

shops that tend to squeeze money out of tourists rather than providing services.

The owners of the illegally built shops also formed an association to protect their interest.

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Prof Anwar takes over as JU VC

JU CORRESPONDENT

Prof Anwar Hossain finally took charge of Jahangirnagar University as its new vice-chancellor, making a vow that he would lead the institution according to the University Ordinance of 1973.

Former VC of JU Prof Shariff Enamul Kabir handed over charge formally to Prof Anwar at his office yesterday.

Prof Anwar, a teacher of

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Kazi Faruque returns

Takes control of Proshika 'forcibly'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Qazi Faruque Ahmed, the ousted chairman of Proshika, took control of the organisation's head office early yesterday morning three years after he was forced out of it, thus violating a judgement of the court.

The governing body of Proshika, one of the country's largest NGOs, removed Faruque in May 2009 on charges of massive financial and administrative irregularities, manipulating organisational strength for political gain and nepotism.



Qazi Faruque Ahmed

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Curtain falls on Safiuddin Ahmed

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Eminent painter and printmaker Safiuddin Ahmed passed away at Square Hospital in Dhaka early on Sunday. He was 90.

He had been suffering from old age complications. He was admitted to Square Hospital

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HC ON ILIAS Rule hearing deferred till May 27

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday deferred for a week the hearing on a rule issued earlier upon the

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