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# NIMTOLI FIRE 2010 Rising from the ashes

SHAHEEN MOLLAH and TUHIN SHUBHRA ADHIKARY

The family that saw its 11 members perish in the deadliest inferno in Old Dhaka two years ago has been trying to move back to life as it was before the tragedy.

Didar Hossain, a businessman in his forties, wonders whether he and his two brothers Gulzar Elahi and Mohammad Faruk were lucky to survive the fire as they were not at their residence when the fire broke out on the ground floor of their building.

In response to repeated requests from relatives, Didar, Gulzar and Faruk remarried a few months after the tragedy. They have been doing everything to shake off the memories of the horrifying incident. They have even gone to the extent of naming their newborn babies after the ones they lost in 2010.

At least 123 people, mostly women and children, were killed and more than 200 others were injured in the Nimtoli inferno on the night of June 3, 2010. In Didar's building, 44 people were burnt alive.

Fire fighters had said the blaze originated from a stove in the building that housed a combustible chemical warehouse on its ground floor. Coming in contact with the chemicals, the fire got deadlier, engulfing eight residential buildings and some 20 shops within a few minutes.



The building burned in the 2010 Nimtoli blaze comes back to life after being renovated and filled by people. The fire, one of the worst disasters in the capital, killed at least 44 residents of the building alone and many others in the old town neighbourhood.



PHOTO:  
STAR

## VANDALISM CASE 25 pro-BNP lawyers granted bail

COURT CORRESPONDENT

Twenty-five pro-BNP lawyers charged with vandalism of the metropolitan sessions and district judges' courts last month were granted bail until June 19 after they surrendered before a Dhaka court yesterday.

First Additional Chief Metropolitan Magistrate Mohammad Shahidul Islam Faruque granted them bail upon a bond of Tk 10,000 with two guarantors.

The bail petitions for 22 lawyers including Dhaka Bar Association President

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PRAYER TIMING			June 4
	Azhan	Jamaat	
Fajr	4-05	4-40	
Zohr	12-45	1-15	
Asr	5-00	5-15	
Maghrib	6-45	6-50	
Esha	8-15	8-45	
Source: Islamic Foundation			

## MPs blast Prof Sayeed

Ask him to apologise  
for comments  
on politicians

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A section of ruling alliance lawmakers in parliament yesterday slammed noted litterateur Prof Abdullah Abu Sayeed, who is also a trustee member of the TIB, for his "derogatory" remark on Saturday about lawmakers and ministers, and demanded that

SEE PAGE 19 COL 4

## Energy is the key

WB cites challenges facing Bangladesh economy, suggests bringing more private investments

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The World Bank yesterday said Bangladesh's economic outlook remained challenging and the country needed to energise the private sector to boost investment, now in decline.

The global lender came up with the observation in its economic outlook report on Bangladesh.

A persistent energy shortage presents a real threat to the country's economy and

poses as much of risk to growth as do the global uncertainties centring on the European debt crisis, it said.

"The overall shortages of energy continue to deter fresh investments and expansion of projects," read the report, released at The Westin Hotel in the capital yesterday.

It also said private investment had continued to slide due to energy crisis

SEE PAGE 19 COL 8  
MORE ON B1

## Rare transit of Venus

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Venus, the second planet from the Sun, will pass directly between the Sun and Earth on Wednesday, becoming visible against the solar disk.

After the invention of telescope, this would be eighth transit of Venus. Next such event would take place in the year 2117.

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## Absentee witnesses kept at 'safe house'

Claims Sayedee's counsel; ICT summons all staff of the house

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The defence of Jamaat-e-Islami leader Delawar Hossain Sayedee yesterday said the 15 witnesses the prosecution had claimed to be too sick or missing had actually stayed at the prosecution witness "safe house" in the capital.

The defence even submitted three logs of witnesses entering, leaving and having meals at the house.

Terming the defence claim serious, the International Crimes Tribunal-1 yesterday ordered all officers and staff of the house to appear before it on June 7.

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## JS BUDGET DISCUSSIONS Budget gets less priority

MPs spend more time talking  
on other issues: Study

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Lawmakers in parliament speak less on the proposed budget than on other topics during discussion on the budgetary proposals in the House, reveals a study.

The study also shows that lawmakers in the last three years have alarmingly lost interest in speaking about the proposed budget during discussions in the House.

Conducted by the Budget Analysis and Monitoring Unit (BAMU), a unit under the Parliament Secretariat, the study analysed the three annual budgets passed by the ninth parliament since 2009.

A number of MPs were also interviewed as part of the study.

According to the study, MPs who took part in the discussion on the proposed budget for 2009-10 fiscal year spent only 48 percent of

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A recent photo shows workers busy harvesting Boro paddy in Maligasa village of Pabna.

## Low prices dull celebration of bumper harvest

SOHEL PARVEZ

Farmers are set to bag another record harvest this year, which will cut imports further, easing pressure on the balance of payments, the country's external account.

Bangladesh's grain imports fell by 56 percent to 1.99 million tonnes in July-April this year, compared to the same period a year ago, according to data from the Directorate General of Food.

Rice production is likely to reach 33.83 million tonnes, the highest in the history of Bangladesh, in the outgoing fiscal year, thanks to favourable weather.

The total cereal output is expected to rise by 1 percent to 34.82 million tonnes in fiscal 2011-12.

In the next fiscal year, the Directorate General of Food plans to import 1.35 million tonnes of grain, which is likely to be announced in the next budget.

The government till mid-May of the current fiscal year imported around 0.96 million tonnes of rice and wheat.

However, a spike in paddy yield could not bring smiles to the majority of growers. Many are struggling to recoup their investments as prices continue to remain low.

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## PLANE CRASHES IN LAGOS 153 feared dead

AFP, Lagos

At least 153 people are feared dead after their plane plunged into a residential area in Nigeria's economic capital Lagos yesterday, officials and residents said.

Thick smoke rose from the area near the Lagos airport and flames could be seen coming from the building. Residents said the plane had been coming in low, making a loud noise, when it slammed into the residential area.

Some residents said it appeared that the plane nose-dived into the neighbourhood.

Wreckage including a detached wing could be seen in the neighbourhood as the inferno burned. The cause of the crash was not immediately clear.

"It was a Dana (airline) flight out of (the capital) Abuja

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## HIMU MURDER IN CTG Arrestee remanded

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

A Chittagong court yesterday sent Shahadat Hossain Shaju, an accused in sensational Himu murder case, to a seven-day police remand.

Metropolitan Magistrate Mahbubur Rahman passed the order after Kazi Zahir, a sub-inspector of Panchlaish Police Station and also the investigation officer of the



Himu

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## Outcry at JS over outages

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Lawmakers of the ruling grand alliance yesterday lambasted the state minister for power, energy and mineral resources in parliament for "unprecedented" power outages in their constituencies even after the irrigation season was over.

In the presence of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, several legislators warned State Minister Enamul Huq that the Awami League-led grand alliance might face dire consequences at the next general elections if his ministry did not address people's sufferings.

Responding to criticism, Enamul said this summer had been hotter than in previous years. "That's why electricity demand remains high

SEE PAGE 19 COL 1

## Only talks can resolve crisis Says Ashraf


STAFF CORRESPONDENT

LGRD Minister Syed Ashraf Islam said yesterday the ongoing political standoff over the caretaker government issue can be resolved through talks.

"Only dialogues can resolve the ongoing political standoff over the caretaker government issue," Ashraf told reporters following the

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The Daily Star



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**ONLINE POLL**

Do you agree with Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina that the media is now enjoying full freedom in the country?

Yes (13.9%)  
No (84.0%)  
No Comments (2.1%)

TOTAL VOTES: 656

**TODAY'S POLL**  
Do you agree with Suranjit Sengupta that Khaleda Zia should quit as lawmaker for her absence in parliament sessions?

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