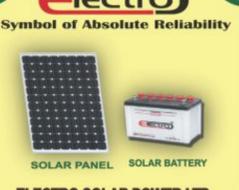


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China warns the US not to take sides as Hillary heads to Beijing
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HALL-MARK SCAM Nonsense!

Muhith ridicules media outcry; experts shocked

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Finance Minister AMA Muhith's comment yesterday on the Sonali Bank loan scam that the Tk 4,000 crore swindled was a petty amount has surprised many, including a former minister, an economist and a banker.

"Here, my banking crisis ... which is not a crisis at all," Muhith said.

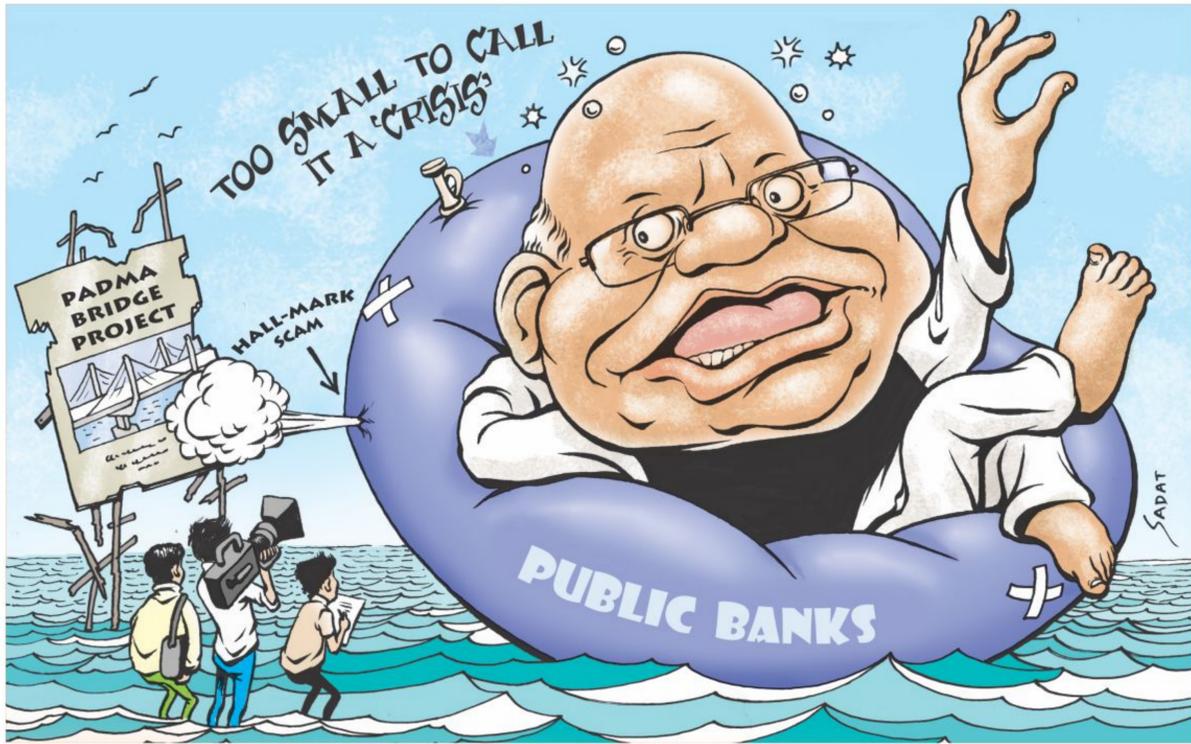
"It is a matter of Tk 3,000 or 4,000 crore. Nonsense! But you [the media] are harming the banking sector by publicising it. The sector is now confronted with questions whether all of it had crumbled down."

Criticising the media coverage of the scam, the finance minister said, "People for nothing are raising a hue and cry on the issue and tarnishing the image of the country."

"It happened because we do not function properly. Those who are responsible for surveillance have failed to detect it."

Muhith was speaking at a roundtable on "Role of Information and Communication Technology in Combating Corruption", at Ruposhi Bangla Hotel in the capital.

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RELATED STORY ON PAGE B4



Watch what you say

Speaker alerts MPs, opens children's gallery at JS

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Announcing the inauguration of a children's gallery in parliament, Speaker Abdul Hamid yesterday urged lawmakers not to utter any word that might have an adverse impact on their minds.

His suggestion came in the context of some MPs using vulgar and abusive words in parliament on several occasions.

This is the first time a gallery has been set up in parliament, from where children of all ages will be able to watch parliament's proceedings.

More than 50 students of Sher-e-Bangla Nagar

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I'm innocent

Ex-Sonali Bank MD tells media after anti-graft body grilling; 2 top bankers made OSDs



Humayun Kabir

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Anti-Corruption Commission yesterday interrogated Sonali Bank's former managing director Humayun Kabir as part of its ongoing probe into the Hall-Mark loan scandal.

A six-member team led by ACC Deputy Director Mir Md Zainul Abedin Shebly quizzed Humayun from around 9:30am to 4:30pm.

Meanwhile, two deputy managing directors of Sonali Bank -- Atiqur Rahman and Mainul Haque -- have been made officers on

SEE PAGE 6 COL 3

Oman road crash kills 4 Bangladeshis

STAR REPORT

Four Bangladeshi workers were killed and two injured when a truck carrying them lost control and hit iron barriers along a road in the Omani capital Muscat on Monday, reports the Gulf News.

The names of the dead could not be known.

Among the 12 injured,

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Remove 2 HC judges

Demand treasury bench MPs during discussion at JS over verdict on Speaker's ruling

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

In a heated discussion in parliament, a number of ruling alliance lawmakers yesterday accused two High Court judges of violating the constitution and demanded that they be removed for delivering a controversial judgment on the Speaker's June 18 ruling.

The two -- Justice Hasan Foez

Siddique and Justice ABM Altaf Hossain -- in a verdict recently said the Speaker's ruling had no legal effect and was baseless in the eye of the law.

Speaker Abdul Hamid on June 18 said Justice AHM Shamsuddin Choudhury Manik had violated the constitution by making "derogatory remarks" about the Jatiya Sangsad

and the Speaker.

Participating in yesterday's discussion, Awami League-led ruling coalition MPs called for the Supreme Judicial Council to remove the two judges for breaching the constitution and their oath of office.

They also demanded that parliament amend the constitution to

SEE PAGE 19 COL 5

Buet VC must go

Students stick to their demand as stalemate drags on

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The crisis at Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (Buet) persists as agitating students remain firm on their demand for removal of the vice-chancellor.

The education minister's assurance on Monday night of the withdrawal of Pro-VC Prof Habibur Rahman and the two cases filed

against faculty members and students was not enough to appease them. A section of teachers were satisfied though with the assurance that came in a meeting that night.

The students reiterated their demand that both VC and pro-VC should be removed and requested Education Minister Nurul Islam Nahid to come to the campus to listen

SEE PAGE 6 COL 7



VC Prof Nazrul Islam

DESTINY GROUP Proceedings of 2 cases can resume now

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court has nullified its own stay order on all proceedings of two money laundering cases against 22 officials of Destiny Group at the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's Court.

Judge Mohammad Zahirul Haque of the

SEE PAGE 6 COL 4

Riddles in Rab story

TV news shocks families of 4 arrested over 'plot to kill 3 docs'; they were picked up by Rab 19 days ago, families insist

KAILASH SARKAR and CHAITANYA CHANDRA HALDER

The Rapid Action Battalion claims to have arrested six people on Sunday on charges of plotting to kill three doctors, but the families of four of the arrestees allege they were kidnapped by the law enforcers on August 13.

The father of an arrestee even filed a case with Savar police

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Mohorom Joynal



Mithu Towfiqul



Sewage goes straight into Buriganga

Wasa disowns 70pc of total sewage in Dhaka

ASHUTOSH SARKAR

A year after the High Court directed Dhaka Wasa to seal off sewage outlets into the Buriganga, Wasa says 70 percent of the capital's sewage is illegally dumped into the Buriganga.

Dhaka Water Supply and Sewerage Authority (Wasa) said it had no sewage lines of its own that go into the river directly and that its sewage lines go to Pagla Sewage Treatment Plant and the plant dumps the water into the river after treating the sewage.

Taqsem A Khan, managing director of Dhaka Wasa, told The Daily Star that the 70 percent sewage, on which Wasa has no control of, was supposed to be treated by the clients themselves.

He said Dhaka Wasa has Storm Water Drainage Pipe Lines connected to the Buriganga for draining out rain and flood water from the capital.

He also said a section of dishonest people dump waste into those pipes and some others have made illegal sewage connections to the pipes which pollute the river.

SEE PAGE 6 COL 5

A photo taken near the second Buriganga bridge last year shows raw sewage pouring into the river, the lifeline of the capital.