

# THE DAILY Star ON FRIDAY

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SECOND EDITION

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## MADE IN RAJSHAHI

Two RU students build robot that can record and transmit sound

IT &amp; TELECOM



## THE JOURNEY GOES ON

Bill Gates tops the Forbes list of the wealthiest Americans, again

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## FOR 'CELEBRATING LIFE'

Aparna Sen to make film for The Daily Star talent hunt

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# WB positive on Padma loan

*Latest negotiations in Washington create strong possibility of revival of loan deal; Muhith expects 'good news' today*

REJAUL KARIM BYRON and HASAN JAHID TUSHER

Amid a series of hectic negotiations, the World Bank has verbally agreed to revive its \$1.2-billion loan deal for the long-expected Padma bridge project following government steps to meet the Bank's conditions.

"There will be good news about Padma bridge funding on Friday [today]," Finance Minister AMA Muhith told reporters last night.

He added a WB team would arrive in Dhaka in two to three days to talk to the government about the project's implementation and to the Anti-Corruption Commission about a WB panel working with the ACC team inquiring the alleged graft in the project.

The global leader gave the "positive signal" yesterday after the government formally disengaged the prime minister's Economic Affairs Adviser, Mashiur Rahman, from government activities to comply with the WB's last condition.

The WB would make an official announcement about the revival in a few days upon completion of necessary procedures, highly-placed government sources told The Daily Star.

The global lender's "decision" to return to the project came at a final negotiation between Bangladesh and the WB at the Bank's headquarters in Washington yesterday. Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's Foreign Affairs Adviser Gowher Rizvi led

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Fire engulfs Begunbari slum near Hatirjheel of Tejgaon, razing around 400 shanties made of tin and wood. No casualties were reported in the fire which originated yesterday morning but put the lives of around two thousand dwellers in uncertainty. Story on page 19.

PHOTO: COURTESY

## SCRAPPING CARETAKER SYSTEM Khaleda rejects full SC verdict

*Terms it distorted, politically-motivated*

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia yesterday categorically rejected the Supreme Court's full verdict declaring the caretaker government system illegal, saying her party won't accept the "illogical, contradictory [to its earlier short order] and politically motivated verdict".

She also made it clear the main opposition party won't participate in any election based on this verdict.

The full text of the verdict, released on Sunday, reflects

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## Power tariff hiked

*Retail consumers to pay 15pc higher; controversial billing system withdrawn*

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Bangladesh Energy Regulatory Commission (BERC) yesterday increased the retail power tariff by 15 percent to Tk 5.75 per unit amid opposition from consumers.

The new hike is effective from September 1.

However, the regulator withdrew its "punitive" geometric billing rate imposed in March on consumers who use electricity of more than 400 kilowatt hours (units).

This withdrawal would practically reduce bills and prevent sharp rise in bills, officials said.

BERC also increased the bulk electricity

price by 16.92 percent to Tk 4.70 per unit, mainly to cut subsidies in the power sector.

At present the per unit price of electricity at retail level is Tk 5 while the bulk price is Tk 4.02 per unit.

This is the sixth increase in power tariff by the present government since it assumed office in 2009 and the fourth in a single year.

"We have no plan to increase the power price in the next one year, unless petroleum prices go up in the international market," BERC Chairman Syed Yusuf Hossain said, as he announced the new

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## MD SEARCH PANEL 9 directors oppose GB chairman's chosen people

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The chairman of Grameen Bank yesterday formed a selection committee to pick the managing director of the microcredit organisation amid strong opposition from nine directors.

Khondaker Muzammel Huq, chairman of the board, told The Daily Star that "the board has formed the selection committee."

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## NEWS ANALYSIS

JS DISSOLUTION, CABINET SIZE

## Absolute power in PM's hands

SHAKHAWAT LITON

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's remarks regarding the president's jurisdiction over dissolving parliament and determining the size of the incumbent cabinet do not conform to the constitutional provision.

On Wednesday, in the House, she said the next parliamentary polls would not be held by retaining the current Jatiya Sangsad. "When the time comes, I will meet the president and tell him that we want election. It is the jurisdiction of the president to decide when parliament will be dissolved and whether the current cabinet will continue or its size will be reduced," Hasina said.

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## WORLD T20 Tigers' moment of truth

BISHWAJIT ROY from Kandy

Today is the day for which the Bangladesh cricket team have spent much of the last three months engaged in honing their skills in the newest and shortest form of cricket. When the Tigers take on New Zealand in their first ICC World Twenty20 Group D encounter the stakes will be very high as months of effort will be focussed on three hours of high-octane cricket.

Pakistan, the other team in the group being termed the 'group of death', is one of the strongest T20 teams, so the Tigers will be looking to pull off a win at the Pallekele International Stadium today to bolster their chances of a Super Eight spot.

The much-awaited match for cricket fans in Bangladesh will start at 4pm Bangladesh Standard Time.

Bangladesh have been

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## Anxious wait at Shahjalal airport

Biman flight debacle puts many passengers' overseas job at risk

SHARIFUL ISLAM

Expatriate Shariful Islam yesterday noon was sitting on a trolley dumb-struck with his luggage near an exit gate at Shahjalal International Airport.

If he fails to pass Jeddah Airport Immigration before the clock strikes past 12 noon today, his re-entry period will expire. Therefore, he would no longer be allowed to enter Saudi Arabia and join his job which he has been doing for the last 10 years.

And the consequence is obvious: a family of five members that depends on his earning will plunge into deep trouble, anticipates the man of forty.

He left no stones unturned. On Tuesday and Wednesday, he approached every desk of the Biman officials concerned, pleading them for his departure to Saudi Arabia in time, but to no avail.

"My flight time was at 11:45am on Tuesday. I waited at the airport the whole night, went to every Biman official and begged them to ensure that I could fly. But my appeals remained unheard," he said.

Shariful's desperation turned into anger, and gradually to frustration, as he was helpless. He even decided not to go to Jeddah and returned to his home in Kushtia on Wednesday.

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Shariful Islam is in deep trouble as he must reach Jeddah airport by this noon to save his job. But since Tuesday, his flight has been rescheduled several times. The photo was taken around yesterday noon.

PHOTO: SK ENAMUL HAQ

## Nizami, Mojaheed tortured Rumi, Altaf

*War hero Jalal testifies at war crimes tribunal*

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Jamaat leaders Nizami and Mojaheed tortured martyred freedom fighter Rumi and musician Altaf Mahmud at a camp of the Pakistani army in Nakhla para of Dhaka, said a witness before the International Crimes Tribunal-2 yesterday.

Rumi and Altaf never came home as Nizami and Mojaheed decided to have them killed, said second prosecution witness and freedom fighter Zahir Uddin Jalal in the war crimes case against Mojaheed.

Jalal was also in the camp and was bru-



tally tortured by Jamaat Ameer Motiur Rahman Nizami and Jamaat Secretary General Ali Ahsan Mohammad Mojaheed, the witness said.

Mojaheed and Nizami also tortured

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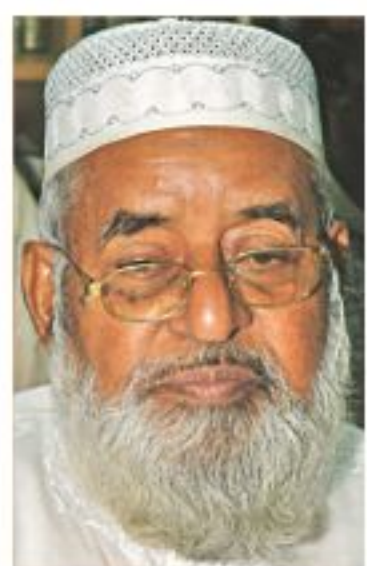
## Jamaat leader Subhan held

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Pabna

Members of an army intelligence agency yesterday arrested Jamaat-e-Islami Naye-e-Ameer Maulana Abdus Subhan at Bangabandhu Bridge toll plaza in Tangail yesterday in connection with a case of violence.

A war crimes suspect, Subhan was sent to Pabna jail after he was produced before the executive magistrate's court here around 8:00pm, said sources in police. Earlier, police had taken him from Tangail to Pabna.

"A case was filed in April this year against Subhan and 30 other BNP-Jamaat men on charges of looting, torching



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## HALL-MARK SCAM ACC quizzes Modasser

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) yesterday questioned prime minister's Health Adviser Dr Syed Modasser Ali in connection with the Hall-Mark loan scam.

Talking to newsmen at his Segunbagicha office, ACC Chairman Ghulam Rahman said the adviser might face further questioning if a case is filed against him.

He however refused to

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