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MPs express horror at the gang rape of a student on a city bus
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How Pakistanis coped with defeat in the 1971 war
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MESSI EXTENDS BARCA DEAL
The Argentine soccer star will stay at the Spanish giant until 2018
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Metro rail gets go-ahead

Japan to provide 76pc cost of Tk 21,985cr project aimed to improve Dhaka's public transport

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

In a major breakthrough following a nearly three-year hiatus, the government yesterday approved a project to set up the country's first metro rail system in Dhaka at a cost of Tk 21,985 crore.

A 20.1 kilometre elevated railway track will be built on Uttara-Motijheel route via Pallabi and Sonargaon Hotel area under the project, which will be implemented in three phases, according to a planning ministry statement.

In the first phase, 11 km of railway track will be laid from Pallabi to Sonargaon Hotel by 2019; in the second phase, 4.4 km line will be installed from Sonargaon Hotel to Bangladesh Bank at Motijheel by 2020; and in the third phase, 4.7 km track from Uttara to Pallabi will be set up by 2022.

The project will start this year and end in fiscal year 2023-24.

The Executive Committee of National Economic Council (Enec) approved the project in a meeting with



ROUTE
Uttara-Motijheel

LENGTH
20.1km

Work starts this fiscal year, completes by 2024

ROUTE MAP ON PAGE 19

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In the shivering cold of December a family including a tiny tot sleeps inside a sleeping bag they made out of used sacks. The photo was taken from the pavement close to the Karwan Bazar underpass in Dhaka around 2:00am yesterday. Story on page 19. PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

Future funding to depend on panel's report

Says WB on Padma bridge project

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The World Bank will decide on financing the Padma bridge project after getting an assessment from its external panel about the Anti-Corruption Commission's investigation into the graft case.

"Decisions by the World Bank regarding future project financing and implementation would depend on the outcome of the External Panel's assessment,"

WB's Country Director Ellen Goldstein

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GRAFT ALLEGATIONS AGAINST ABUL ACC now looks at Canadian trial

M RAHMAN

The Anti-Corruption Commission is now looking at the trial of SNC Lavalin scam in the Canadian court so that it can obtain documentary evidence of Syed Abul Hossain's alleged involvement in the Padma bridge project graft.

At the moment, the commission does not have any documents to prove that the former communications minister was involved in the scam.

The ACC hopes to get a copy of the verdict and other relevant paper and use those against Abul Hossain if the verdict goes against two SNC Lavalin officials accused in the case, commission sources say.

The two Lavalin officials -- Ramesh Shah and Mohammad Ismail -- were arrested by Canadian police on charges of offering bribe to some Bangladesh public and private officials and individuals to secure the

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UN adopts Hasina's peace model

UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's proposal for People's Empowerment has unanimously been adopted in the 67th UN General Assembly (UNGA).

The proposal was passed as a resolution with support from 193 UN member states at the general assembly in New York on Monday, according to a message received here yesterday.

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1.09cr new voters in next JS polls

Voter roll updating completes

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

More than one crore new voters across the country will be entitled to exercise their franchise in the upcoming parliamentary elections.

With them, the voters' number rose to 9.21crore from 8.12 crore of the list prepared ahead of December 29, 2008 national polls.

The final voter list would be published in January, Chief Election Commissioner Kazi Rakibuddin Ahmad yesterday said at a press briefing at the EC conference centre as country-wide field work for updating the voter list has been completed.

The Election Commission will publish a draft voter list, inviting objections and claims on it. "After resolving

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Year 2008
8.12 crore
Year 2012
9.21 crore

Peaceful hartal a surprise

Home minister thanks organisers

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A countrywide dawn-to-dusk hartal was enforced yesterday by two left-leaning parties and an alliance apparently with the support of law enforcement agencies and pro-government transport organisations.

The shutdown passed off with no incident of vandalism, setting fire to vehicles, violent picketing and clashes with the law enforcers, which were common features of hartals enforced in the country in the past.

Communist Party of Bangladesh (CPB), Bangladesh Samajtantrik Dal (BSD) and Gonotantrik Baam Morcha GBM), an alliance of seven left-leaning parties had earlier called the hartal to press home their demands for ban on religion-based political parties, speedy war crimes trial and punishment to the owner and staff concerned of Tazreen Fashions for deaths due to their gross negligence.

In the capital, movement of passenger buses and other vehicles was thin and inter-district bus

SEE PAGE 19 COL 1



People use rickshaw-vans at Farmgate in the capital yesterday morning to get to work. The hartal called by the Left parties demanding quick trial of war criminals of 1971 led to this suffering. PHOTO: SK ENAMUL HAQ

BISHWAJIT MURDER



Autopsy report finds one severe stab mark

Excessive bleeding caused his death

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bishwajit Das, according to his autopsy, died of excessive bleeding from a single stab injury under the right arm.

Inspector Tajul Islam, investigation officer of the Detective Branch of police, on Monday received the autopsy report from Sir Salimullah Medical College (SSMC) morgue. He said the body bore one stab injury and some other marks of

beating in different parts.

The 24-year-old was attacked on December 9 near Bahadur Shah Park in Old Dhaka by a group of pro-Awami League student body Chhatra League, who mistook him for a pro-blockade activist. He succumbed to his injuries at Mitford Hospital in the capital that day.

Maksudur Rahman of the

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Cost of being a minister

Rules bar Home boss from holding top post in new bank

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Home Minister Muhiuddin Khan Alamgir may lose the chairmanship of the proposed Farmers' Bank, as rules do not permit a minister to hold a position in a profit-making venture.

Present and former officials of the central bank gave examples of past incidents when two ministers had to resign from the posts of chairman and adviser of banks before taking the charges as ministers.

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Negligence a big factor

Govt probe report blames Tazreen management staff

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Apart from blaming the owner, the government probe team has held responsible mid-level managers of Tazreen Fashions for their "unforgivable negligence," causing last month's fire that killed at least 112 workers.

The probe report, submitted to the home ministry on Monday after a three-week inquiry, said mid-level managers locked the collapsible gates and fled for safer places when workers tried to get out of the factory after fire alarm was set off. The blaze took about 30 minutes to

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TAZREEN FIRE DISASTER

Sabotage, really?

Rights activists, worker leaders reject govt probe findings

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Rights activists and worker leaders yesterday rejected the sabotage theory of a government probe committee on the Tazreen fire and termed its report incomplete and contradictory.

They demanded a fair probe by an independent body so that the culprits cannot go scot-free like in the past.

The four-member probe team, headed by Additional Secretary

Main Uddin Khandaker, submitted a 214-page report to the home ministry Monday evening.

The report, which made five final recommendations, came about three weeks after the deadly blaze killed 112 people at Tazreen Fashions Ltd in Ashulia on November 24.

The committee said the incident was an act of sabotage and further probe was needed to find the motives and masterminds.

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