

'WHERE WILL THE FLOWERS GO?'

Syed Badrul Ahsan is delighted with fragrance in Parveen Shakir's poetry

PAGE 21

EXHIBITION ON WATER

A four-day show features works of Bangladeshi master painters

RHETORIC DISMISSED

Thatcher was ready to bend on Falklands amid US pressure

PAGE 7

TIB SURVEY ON SERVICE SECTOR Graft declines 28pc in 2 yrs

Awareness, digitisation lead to the reduction, but bribe rates double due to high inflation

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Except for health sector, corruption in other public and private service sectors has come down by 28.4 percent in the last two years although bribe rate has doubled during the same period, a TIB survey shows.

The bi-annual survey report of the anti-graft watchdog attributed this significant fall in corruption rate to public awareness, digitisation of some public offices and anti-corruption training for government officials.

Bribe rate, on the other hand, has gone up mainly because of high inflation, which hovered around 8-11 percent over the last two years.

The Transparency International Bangladesh published the report at a press conference at Cirdap auditorium in the capital yesterday where TIB Chairperson Sultana Kamal and Executive Director Iftekharuzzaman were present, among others.

In public and private service sectors, 84.2 percent service seekers, who were surveyed by the TIB in 2010, fell victim to corruption. The number dropped to 55.8

SEE PAGE 19 COL 5

WINTER DELIGHTS

With the country shivering in biting cold, these mouthwatering *pithas* (cakes) along with varieties of *bhartas* have become a means of brisk business for roadside vendors. The *pithas* represent the heritage of rural Bangladesh. The photos were taken on Green Road in the capital.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN



AL NATIONAL COUNCIL TODAY

Changes unlikely in top leadership

SHAKHAWAT LITON and HASAN JAHID TUSHER



The ruling Awami League goes to national council today with little prospect of seeing changes in the top brass.

Prime Minister and AL President Sheikh Hasina will inaugurate the triennial event, joined by 6,000 councillors and as many delegates, at the historic Shuhrawardy Udyana this morning.

The councillors are supposed to elect leaders, including a treasurer, 13 members of presidium, the highest policy-making body of the party; 31 secretaries, including three joint general secretaries and seven organisational secretaries, according to the party charter.

And as a political party registered with the Representation of the

No alternative to Hasina

Leads party for 32 years of its 63-year history

SHAKHAWAT LITON and HASAN JAHID TUSHER



After setting a record of leading her party for almost 32 years, Awami League president Sheikh Hasina is still looking certain to remain at the helm of the party for at least another three years through today's national council.

Since the inception of the party in 1949, about 63 years ago, none of the previous leaders including her father Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman

SEE PAGE 19 COL 5

Misdeeds at BASIC Bank

Top auditor finds anomalies cost the state bank Tk 100cr

MD FAZLUR RAHMAN

The BASIC Bank rules did not allow a branch manager to create any temporary overdraft (TOD) opportunity in favour of current account holders without approval from the head office.

But that is exactly what the bank's Gulshan branch manager did in 2005.

The manager made more funds available to a client, PC Avenue, than its existing credit facility permitted. The client borrowed Tk 2.6 crore from 2005 to 2008.

The head office set PC Avenue a deadline to clear the debt, but the client failed to do so.

Even after that, instead of blocking PC Avenue's accounts, the branch went ahead to let it enjoy more TOD privileges, which the Office of Comptroller and Auditor General (OCAG) viewed as misappropriation.

PC Avenue's case was not an isolated incident, though; the branch did the same for Titan Apparels in 2009, lending Tk 20 lakh more than the client's credit limit.

The branch then provided a short-term loan of Tk 36 lakh to Titan Apparels without taking any permission from the head office.

Furthermore, without adjusting that liability, the branch approved

another short-term loan of Tk 2.4 crore for the client. The client then failed to export goods against back-to-back letters of credit, so a forced loan of Tk 1.03 crore was created.

The loans and interests accumulated to a Tk 5.99 crore fund for Titan Apparels due to the branch's transgressions.

Such illegal action in both the clients' cases created liabilities amounting to Tk 13.6 crore, which, in other words, were misappropriation of the bank's money.

And this is only a part of the Tk 100.42 crore the state-run bank lost due to anomalies.

SEE PAGE 6 COL 4



Suruj Mia, 50, a rickshaw puller, lies on a van on the premises of Mirpur Police Station in the capital. Locals brought him here to file a case after he was badly beaten up by two alleged drug peddlers at Dakkhin Paikpara yesterday morning. They waited for five long hours since 10:00am, but police refused to record a case and asked them to leave. Contacted, Inspector Monirul Islam later said they were busy praying when Suruj came and that they asked him to come later.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

Hall-Mark men attempt to grab govt land again

Tanvir's brother-in-law held

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Brother-in-law of Hall-Mark Managing Director Tanvir Mahmud was arrested yesterday while allegedly trying to grab a piece of government land in Savar that had been recovered from the possession of the group on Thursday.

Police arrested Abdur Razzak, brother-in-law of Tanvir Mahmud, who is now in jail in connection with the Sonali Bank loan scam, from the spot around 10:30am, when he and some officials of Hall-Mark Group were reconstructing a concrete wall on the recovered government land.

A case has been filed with Savar police against Razzak in connection with violating government order. Police said Razzak would be produced before a court today.

On Thursday, a team of Dhaka district administration

SEE PAGE 19 COL 8

TEESTA DEAL
Mamata govt expresses reservations

OUR CORRESPONDENT, New Delhi

The Mamata Banerjee-led government in West Bengal yesterday once again expressed its reservations about the proposed Teesta water-sharing treaty with Bangladesh.

"National interest cannot be kept paramount by sacrificing the interest of a particular state, notably West Bengal," a statement issued by West Bengal government quoted the state's Irrigation and Waterways Minister Rajib Banerjee as saying at a

SEE PAGE 19 COL 1

Waste remains a concern

1,700 tonnes of solid waste left uncollected every day in Dhaka city; DCC's poor monitoring and lack of capacity blamed

HELEMUL ALAM

Hundreds of tonnes of waste that lies uncollected on the capital's streets every day in absence of proper waste management programme exposes the city dwellers to greater health risks and environmental hazards.

Around 1,700 tonnes of solid waste remains uncollected every

day due to poor monitoring and logistic supports and negligence of the field-level corporation workers, officials of Dhaka north and south city corporations said.

Though around 100 new garbage vehicles, including 35 trash compactors and arm-roll containers were added to the waste management wings of the city corpora-

tions in the last two years, efficient waste management still remains a far cry.

Piles of uncollected waste being dumped into the rivers and low lying areas or left on the roadsides, not only blocking the city's drainage links but also creating an unhealthy and stinking environment.

The city dwellers are also found

lacking the knowledge of waste management as some of them do not dump their household trash in the designated bins rather leave those in drains, the officials added.

Abu Naser Khan, chairman of Bangladesh Paribesh Bachao Andolon, said most of the medical waste from hospitals and clinics in the city remains uncollected and

SEE PAGE 19 COL 5

The Daily Star

now in your ANDROID Device

To download the app visit:
www.thedailystar.net/android

Available now:



Scan this QR code to download the app



Technical Support: MCC Ltd.