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BANGABANDHU BRIDGE

Run, looked after poorly

M ABUL KALAM AZAD, back from Bangabandhu Bridge

Poor maintenance and operation has exposed the vital Bangabandhu Multipurpose Bridge to various dangers, investigation reveals.

All 49 aircraft warning lights have been out of order for many years, which might lead to a chopper crash at night. Chopper disaster may occur also at daytime due to foggy weather in winter. Many of the 152 sodium lights and 198 navigation lights don't work. All these lights are crucial for safety of both the bridge and the traffic crossing it.

As many as 59,000 elastic clips on the rail bridge keep the tracks firmly attached to the concrete surface. Of these, 530 clips have broken down and 20,000 others rusted. This may also cause a train disaster anytime.

"These clips should be replaced immediately to avert an accident," said Prof Jamilur Reza Choudhury, who detected the poor state of the rail bridge during an inspection in November last year.

He said absence or sufficient aircraft warning system, navigation and sodium lights may also cause an accident anytime. "Choppers flying in the bridge area can be a victim of not having the aircraft warning system," he told The Daily Star.

No maintenance work of the rail bridge was conducted since train service started 14 years ago.

However, railway's Chief Engineer (West) Kazi Rafiqul Alam said they were going to float a tender to replace all the broken and rusted clips.

There is also no surveillance of the bridge, save the toll plazas. Anyone with ill motives can easily capitalise on

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This photo taken recently shows that none of the aircraft-warning lights on the 49 electric poles at Bangabandhu Multipurpose Bridge actually work. The 14-year-old bridge is in desperate need of proper maintenance and repair.

PHOTO:
RASHED SHUMON

Govt has no failure

Claims AL

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Awami League-led grand alliance government had no failure in the last four years except that it could not publicise its successes properly, a party leader said yesterday.

Highlighting various successes of the

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PRAYER TIMING January 23		
Fajr	Azhan	Jamaat
5:30	5:30	6:05
Zohr	12:45	1:15
Asr	4:15	4:30
Maghrib	5:43	5:47
Esha	7:15	7:45

Source: Islamic Foundation

4 Indian teams to visit Dhaka by Feb

Few crucial deals expected to be signed

REZAUL KARIM

Dhaka will host several Indian ministers and secretaries in a span of three weeks starting from January 28 to ink some crucial deals in areas of visa, extradition and power generation.

Foreign ministry officials said the ensuing visits would provide a useful opportunity to review the last four years' progress in bilateral relations and further strengthen cooperation in a wide spectrum of areas.

During the visits, Dhaka will take up several important issues including killing along the border, signing of Teesta water

sharing treaty, ratification of land boundary agreement, Tipaimukh project, power, and trade and investment for discussion with the ministers, while India's main agenda would be striking an extradition treaty, security and transit.

Officials said Indian External Affairs Minister Salman Khurshid, Home Minister Sushil Kumar Sambhajirao Shinde, Foreign Secretary Ranjan Mathai and Power Secretary P Uma Shankar will pay separate visits to Dhaka from January 28 to February 18.

Sushil Kumar will be in Dhaka on January 28 on a three-day trip. He will meet

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MEDAL TO HARUN

Assault on Farroque considred

Says home boss

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Home Minister Muhiuddin Khan Alamgir yesterday said the beating of Opposition Chief Whip Zainul Abdin Farroque by police official Harun-ur-Rashid had been taken into consideration in awarding Harun the President Police Medal.

Replying to a query, the minister said Harun, now Lalbagh division deputy commissioner of police,

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JAIL KILLING HEARING TOLD

Zia did nothing to punish killers

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Maj Gen Ziaur Rahman did not punish those who killed our four national leaders inside the Dhaka Central Jail in November 1975 though he knew well of the incident, a state counsel told the Supreme Court yesterday.

Ziaur Rahman, who became army chief about a week after the tragic assassinations of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and his family members on August 15 that year, did not even try to bring back the chain of command in the army to prevent the jail killing, said Anisul Huq, principal state counsel in the jail killing case.

Syed Nazrul Islam, Tajuddin Ahmed, M Mansoor Ali and AHM Quamruzzaman -- all close associates of Bangabandhu -- were killed on November 3, 1975 at a time when the whole nation was reeling from the shock of the August 15 coup.

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WAR CRIMES TRIAL

Sayedee's counsel wraps up argument

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

War crimes accused Delawar Hossain Sayedee's counsel yesterday placed his closing argument before International Crimes Tribunal-1.

Counsel Mizanul Islam countered three out of 20 charges brought against Sayedee in a war crimes case at the tribunal during the daylong session.

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5 city schools lock horns

SHAHNOOR RABBANI

The Daily Star Spelling Bee yesterday brought 15 divisional round qualifiers by visiting five schools in Dhaka -- Rayhan School, two branches of Viqarunnessa Noon School, Motijheel Govt Boys' School and Motijheel Ideal School.

In Barisal, champs21.com visited three schools, Oxford Mission School, Baptist Mission School and Barisal Zilla School and came up with 10 divisional round qualifiers.

Qualifiers from Rayhan School are Din Islam Robin

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Trial of only opposition leaders not acceptable

Says BNP

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP coordinator Tariqul Islam yesterday said people would not accept if the government only tries "some identified" opposition leaders in connection with crimes against humanity to implement a specific party's agenda.

"There will be no

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Body recovered in Dhaka hotel

Victim, an Ashulia hotelier, kidnapped 3 days ago

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Police found the decomposed body of a kidnapped restaurant owner at a residential hotel in the capital's Moghbazar yesterday afternoon.

Chan Miah, 38, ran a restaurant near Ashulia Registry Office on the outskirts of the capital. He was also involved in land trading and brokering.

He went missing after he had left his house at Jamgara of Ashulia for the city Saturday morning, saying he had landed a good deal. Nobody had answered the calls to his

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It's time for smart fridge

REUTERS, Toronto

Refrigerators are getting smart. A new model released earlier this month runs apps to help users browse recipes, create shopping lists and manage the expiration dates of items like yogurt and milk.

The T9000 refrigerator by electronics

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A new way to save humanity!

THE GUARDIAN ONLINE

If you're a young, single and adventurous female human and wondering what to do with the womb you have just lying around inside you collecting dust, an opportunity has arisen. You can bear a Neanderthal baby.

This is a once in an aeon chance to have your

SEE PAGE 6 COL 4



The Daily Star



Integral Energy Limited
ONLINE POLL

Do you think the government's decision on long-distance bus fare hike, 17 days after increasing fuel prices, is justified?

Yes

(20%)

No

(78%)

No Comments

(2%)

TOTAL VOTES: 270

TODAY'S POLL

Do you think it was justified for opposition Chief Whip Zainul Abedin Farroque to allege that the government is harassing the BNP leaders by filing false cases to bar the opposition from joining parliament?

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