

## GRAPH SEARCH IMPACTS

The search engine makes Facebook members an entirely new proposition

PAGE IT &amp; TELECOM

## THE SWORN ENEMIES

N Korea's nuke test and rocket launches now target the US

PAGE 7

## PATA CHITRA STORIES

Shambhu Acharya's exhibition features a traditional art form of rural Bengal

PAGE 10

BLANKET PRIMARY NATIONALISATION

# Govt in for a tall task

WASIM BIN HABIB

The recent nationalisation of 26,193 non-government primary schools has elevated the socioeconomic status of around one lakh teachers, but improving the teaching quality at those institutions now poses a serious challenge to the government.

There hangs a question mark over the academic and professional competence of a large number of the teachers at the schools nationalised this month.

As many of them were not recruited as per government rules, there is a qualitative difference between them and the teachers of public schools.

Educationists, however, appreciate the nationalisation, saying the government has fulfilled its commitment to improving primary education. They say this will end the long-standing discrimination in salary, perks and other benefits of government and non-government schoolteachers.

They stress the need for training these teachers to improve their quality. Many might have acquired a certain level of efficiency by teaching children for a long

SEE PAGE 19 COL 5



Top and right, clouds of silica dust fill the air at a stone crushing factory at Patgram in Lalmonirhat.

Left, Raju Ahmed got consumptive lungs from inhaling such dust for over three years.

PHOTO: STAR



PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

An exhausted teacher with his placard next to him takes a nap during their demonstration demanding nationalization of their jobs in front of the Jatiya Press Club yesterday.

# Living at cost of lungs

Workers oblivious of silicosis danger at limestone grinding factories

AKRAM HOSEN

Raju Ahmed has a lung of sand.

Every day, he fed hundreds of kilograms of limestone into a giant crushing machine. And every day, he inhaled volumes of silica dust that the ear-piercing

machine emitted. In three years of this hazardous job, the 25-year-old inhaled enough silica that gave him consumptive lungs. Doctors call him a silicosis patient.

Silicosis is an incurable lung disease caused by inhalation of silica dust. Silica is the main element of sand, and an intense

exposure to silica dust can cause silicosis in a few years or even months, depending on the lung condition of the patient.

"I always feel shortness of breath. It intensifies when the temperature falls in winter or whenever I try to do any

SEE PAGE 19 COL 1

PM pointer to Star's 'ill motive' and our humble reply

It is embarrassing to have to point out factual errors in what a Prime Minister says. It is more embarrassing when the PM herself, while making the error, hints of wrongdoing by this newspaper in the press conference on Wednesday "as to how a particular daily

SEE PAGE 6 COL 1

# Navy to get sub

Says PM, commissions maiden warship

HASAN JAHD TUSHER from Khulna

Bangladesh Navy would soon have a submarine and other modern warfare and patrol craft to safeguard the Bay of Bengal, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina said yesterday.

"To make the navy a deterrent force, a submarine with base facilities will be added," she said at Khulna Naval Base Titumir while commissioning first Bangladeshi warship BNS Padma made here with technological assistance from China.

The rising presence of India, Myanmar

and China's commercial ships in the Bay increased its economic and strategic importance, she said, which was why a strong naval force had become mandatory for protection of the sea.

A process in on to modernise the force, Hasina said. Two maritime patrol aircraft will be available by April. Also underway are construction of navy's own air base at the harbour, berths for ships, new bases, training schools and accommodations for naval officers and soldiers.

Besides, two helicopters and missiles

SEE PAGE 7 COL 1

GP DIVIDENDS  
Grameen Telecom  
trashes GB  
chair's claims

MD FAZLUR RAHMAN

Grameen Telecom yesterday said its dividends from Grameenphone are much less than the figures the Grameen Bank chairman claimed.

"We strongly deny the statements made by Mr Mozammel Haque as they are not correct," said

SEE PAGE 19 COL 5

# Fakhrul sent back to jail

Bail plea rejected in 'cop assault' case

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday sent BNP acting secretary general Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir back to jail for the third time after rejecting his remand and bail petitions in a case.

Kalabagan police filed the case for assaulting police and preventing them from discharging their duties in front of Padma General Hospital on Sonargaon Road in the city during the opposition's December 9 road blockade.

SEE PAGE 19 COL 8

MPs to resign if caretaker not restored  
Threatens BNP

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP yesterday threatened that its lawmakers would quit parliament if the government did not restore the caretaker government system.

The threat came following the recent comment by Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina that the next general election would be

SEE PAGE 6 COL 1

# Brac ranked top NGO in world

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

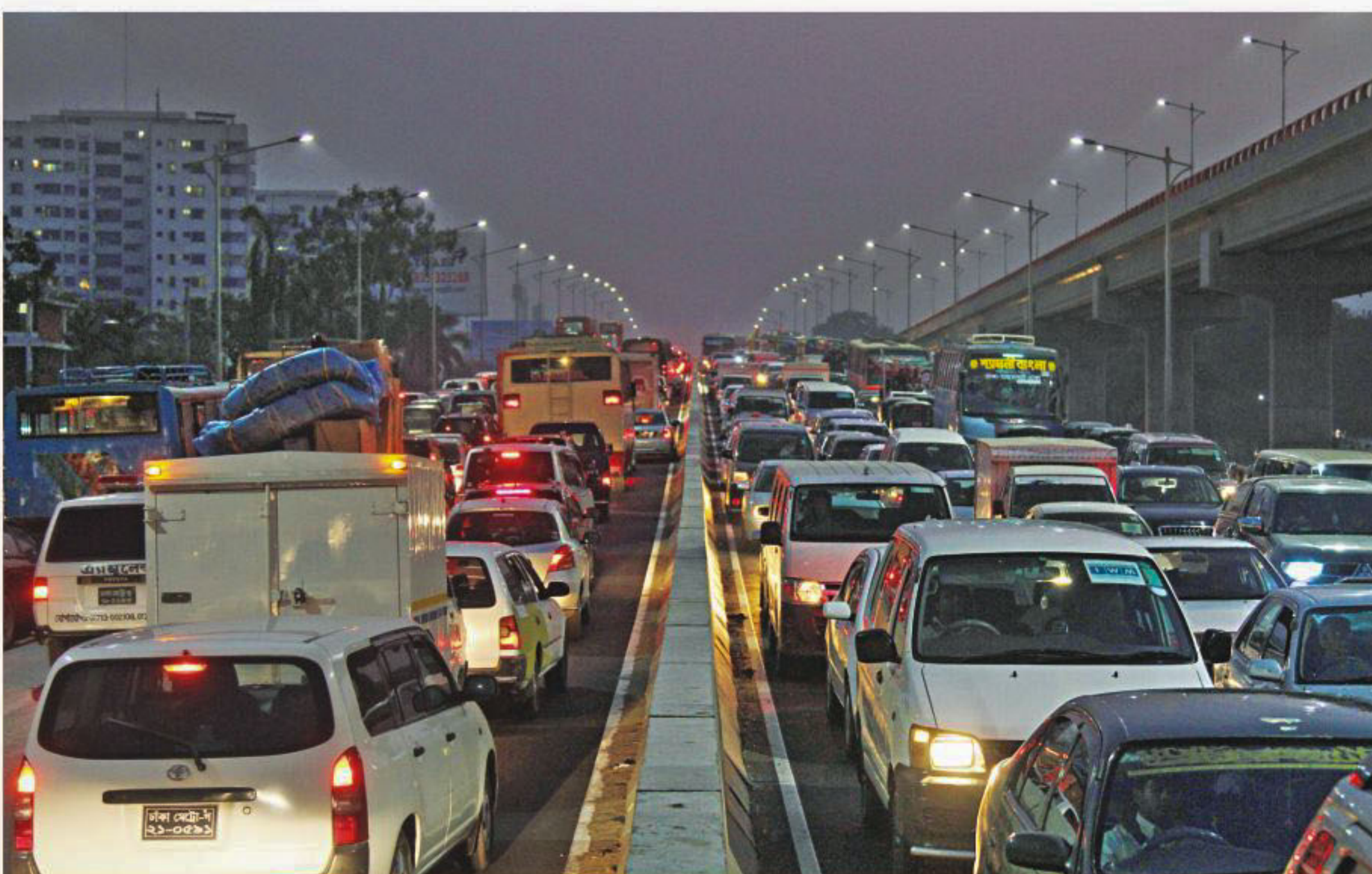
Brac has been ranked as the top non-governmental organisation in The Global Journal's list of 100 best NGOs in the world this year.

The Switzerland-based magazine considered approximately 450 NGOs that were evaluated on three criteria -- impact, innovation and sustainability, according to a press release yesterday.

Brac, the only NGO from Asia to have made it to top 10, rose from its previous rank of fourth place last year.

In its special edition,

SEE PAGE 19 COL 4



The Banani overpass in the capital was built to ease congestion at the level crossing there. Vehicles do not have to sit around for trains to pass anymore but they still have to sit in jams on the overpass as seen in the photo taken yesterday evening.

PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN

# Greedy driver and lady luck

KAILASH SARKAR

Anwar Hossain drove covered vans of SA Paribahan for about a year and dreamed two twisted dreams. He would marry a second time and own a bus.

Call it a luck if you may, the 37-year-old found a shortcut to riches, with a little help from his buddy Ali Hossain.

On the night of December 11 last year, he was assigned to drive a courier van from the transport company's branch office at Mirpur to its head office at Kakrail in the capital. A few kilometres down the road, he picked up his colleague Ali, aged about 32.

The two then looted Tk 38 lakh, two tolas of gold and two cell phones from the van and abandoned the vehicle near Farmgate around 9:30pm.

This done, it was about time to realise the dreams. On December 13, Anwar married a girl about half his age



Anwar Hossain

SEE PAGE 19 COL 3

# Rejoinder, our reply

Sikder Real Estate Ltd, the local partner of Dong AH-ASCON-Sikder JV, issued a rejoinder to a report published in The Daily Star on January 15 with the headline "Rajuk boss resigns, retracts a day after. Reason learnt to be row with state minister over contract of Uttara apartment project".

Contradicting with the story's information that said Sikder Real Estate lacked experience to undertake a big job like building the Uttara apartment project, the rejoinder claimed that the company had been in real estate business for 62 years in Bangladesh and abroad.

SEE PAGE 19 COL 3