



BANK BORROWING

The amount may go up 24pc in the outgoing fiscal year

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THINK.EAT.SAVE

World Environment Day today calls for action against food loss

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JIAH FOUND DEAD

Police are yet to determine whether the Bollywood actress committed suicide

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Ashraful breaks down in tears while talking to journalists at his Banashree residence yesterday.

PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

Forgive me

Tearful Ashraful apologises to nation over match-fixing; BCB suspends him till ICC's anti-graft unit submits report

SPORTS REPORTER

A repentant Mohammad Ashraful may have sounded the death-knell on his cricketer career when he confessed his wrongdoings over a 12-year career to the local media yesterday. Bangladesh cricket's first superstar broke his silence to beg forgiveness from his fans and the cricket-loving public barely an hour after the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) announced a temporary suspension on the cricketer who had confessed his involvement in match-fixing.

The 28-year-old had personally invited local journalists to his Banashree home, which over his career

he had created with great pride and care. His home has been a well-known location for sports journalists over the years, and it was there that yesterday they waited for what everyone suspected would be unsavoury news. Ashraful met the journalists at the ground floor after a short wait, and his initial demeanour did not betray much about his inner turmoil -- he greeted everyone as he always does with 'Assalaamu Alaikum', and shook their hands as usual. Dressed in his favourite grey-white shirt, a five-o'clock shadow and his glistening eyes spoke of the turmoil he had been undergoing.

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Polls, Padma, reality

Muhith readies budget mixture for tomorrow

REJAUL KARIM BYRON

Finance Minister AMA Muhith will cross the budget landmark he set four years ago, by doubling the outlay for the next fiscal year.

The 80-year-old politician carved out a milestone by rolling out Tk 113,819 crore for the FY 2009-10, the first budget of the incumbent government.

In tomorrow's budget rollout, which will probably be his last, Muhith will announce Tk 222,490 crore for fiscal 2013-14.

To many, this is not as big as it seems since the increase keeps with the trend of the previous years. The new budget will be 17.51 percent higher year-on-year.

In his first budget for Hasina administration, Muhith expanded the budget size by 20.9 percent in 2009 from the previous year.

The finance minister will present the budget targeting the voters for the upcoming parliamentary election, keeping it within the External Credit Facility programme of International Monetary Fund (IMF) and mobilising funds for stalled Padma bridge project.

A finance ministry official said the budget might offer some populist measures, as the election was due for the middle of the next FY.

The finance minister will describe the implementation status of the commitments made in the last four budgets in line with the election pledges. Likewise, he will also give explanation why he could not realise the rest of the pledges.

Muhith is also expected to give a detailed speech on the Padma bridge project, as the country's largest ever infrastructure project was a major promise in his party's election manifesto.

In the Annual Development Programme (ADP) of the next FY, the bridge will come out as a single largest project, as the finance minister plans to provide it with half the allocation going to the transport sector.

However, despite higher allocation, much uncertainty still looms whether the implementation of the Padma bridge project could be started in the remaining tenure of the current government.

Muhith and former Economic Relations Division secretary M Musharraf Hossain Bhuiyan, now the cabinet secretary, had mobilised external funds for the mega and complex project within the quickest possible time. But the project became uncertain due to high-profile corruption charge against the implementing ministry.

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Opposition returns to JS

Khaleda absent

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP-led opposition lawmakers, with the exception of their leader Khaleda Zia, returned to parliament yesterday, a day after they had walked out of the House protesting an unofficial ban on rallies and meetings in the capital.

They participated in all proceedings, including the question-answer session, breathing life into parliament yesterday.

No lawmakers from the treasury or the opposition bench used any abusive words against each other.

However, speaking on a point of order, BNP lawmaker Shahiduddin Chowdhury Anee blasted the government for arresting acting editor of Amar Desh Mahmudur Rahman, closure of the newspaper and shutdown of Digonto and Islamic Television.

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KL ELECTIONS

Dhaka bins phantom vote claim

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladeshi nationals in Malaysia run the risk of being abused if the false allegation that they have voted in Malaysia's 13th general elections continues to exist.

"After the elections in early May, some people taken to be Bangladeshis were manhandled. They were actually Malaysians," Bangladesh High Commissioner to Kuala Lumpur AKM Atiqur Rahman told The Daily Star.

Leaders of Malaysia's opposition alliance Pakatan Rakyat and various individuals on social media

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NEWS ANALYSIS

POLLS-TIME GOVT

Not honest to the cause

SHAKHAWAT LITON

A mere discussion in parliament on an adjournment motion seeking restoration of the election-time non-partisan caretaker government will not make any breakthrough in the growing political crisis centring on the upcoming parliamentary polls.

The reason is pretty clear. Any discussion, if finally held, will not produce any decision on this crucial issue. As per the rules of procedure of the Jatiya Sangsad, the discussion, even if it continues hour after hour, will come to an end without any motion being put to a vote to decide its fate.

The Speaker will normally end the discussion if it continues for more than two hours. And if the discussion is over within two hours, she will seek consent of the House to adjourn its sitting for the day.

This is the truth.

But the way the ruling Awami League and the main

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UK minister for fair polls

UNB, Dhaka

The visiting UK Minister of State for International Development Alan Duncan yesterday laid emphasis on holding a credible election in Bangladesh.

"Clearly, this is an important period for Bangladesh as it looks to hold national elections... it's critically important for Bangladesh's reputation that the parliamentary elections are judged to be free, fair and credible," he said.

He urged all parties to restrain from violence or excessive use of force, and called on them to recognise

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NIMTOLI FIRE TRAGEDY

Shattered yet proud



This is the only photo in which all of them are together -- Shamsunnahar, her husband Ripon and their two kids. Now that Ripon is no more, this photograph remains one of the greatest treasures of the family.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

TAMANNA KHAN

The memorial at Nimtoli, Nabab Katra, is not only a reminder of great loss for Rimi, 3, and Samia, 14, but a source of pride because it tells the story of their father's heroic deeds.

Their father Ripon, a small businessman, who sold bubble-toys in front of schools in Dhanmondi, sacrificed his life trying to save others from the devastating Nimtoli fire on June 3, 2010.

"When the fire started around 7:30pm, my husband started receiving mobile phone calls from his friend Haider's mother. Ripon told me that she sought his help to rescue them from the fire as Haider himself was out of town," said Shamsunnahar, 27, relating the story of the ill-fated day that changed her life.

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CONGRATULATIONS

Heartiest Congratulations to DBL Group on being awarded DHL - The Daily Star 13th Bangladesh Business Awards under the 'Enterprise of the Year 2012' category.



Mohammed Abdur Rahim (Feroz), Vice-Chairman of DBL Group receives the 'Enterprise of The Year 2012' Award from Mr. AMA Muhith, MP, Honorable Minister of Finance, Government of The People's Republic of Bangladesh.

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