

INTEREST RATES

Surplus funds push banks to cut lending, deposit rates

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"IF MORE USEFUL"

Dalai Lama said his successor could be a woman

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TODAY'S WIDE ANGLE

Look into different aspects of cricket corruption in Bangladesh

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Hunger halved well before MDG time

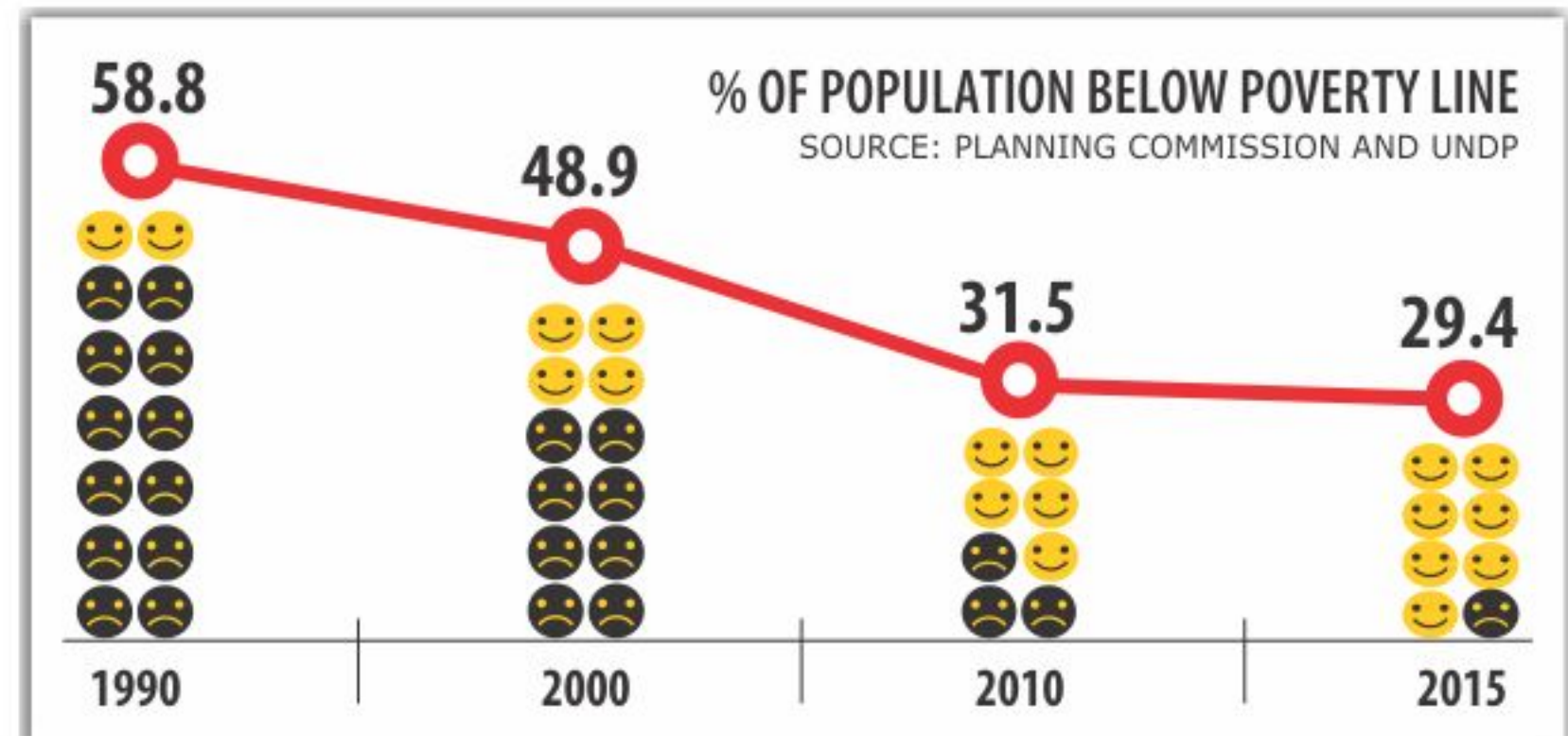
UN to recognise Bangladesh's feat

REAZ AHMAD

Bangladesh is set to get UN recognition as one of the first countries that have achieved the most fundamental millennium development goal (MDG) -- halving the incidence of hunger -- well ahead of the target year 2015.

To hail this feat, Director General of the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) Jose Graziano da Silva has invited Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina to receive a "Diploma Award".

The population below the poverty line dropped from over 58 percent in 1990 (the MDG base year) to 31.50 percent in 2010. And on Wednesday, FAO declared that Bangladesh succeeded in halving hunger, in other



words, the population below the poverty line has further dropped to around 29 percent.

Food Minister Mohammad Abdur Razzaque told The Daily Star yesterday

that on behalf of the prime minister he is going to Italy to receive the award at the UN body's headquarters in Rome on June 16.

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BNP sceptic about fair elections

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The main opposition BNP yesterday expressed concerns over holding fair elections to four city corporations.

"The government is trying to influence the local administration to hold a partisan election in the four city corporations," alleged Abdul Moin Khan, a member of the BNP standing committee.

He said they had urged the Election Commission to handle the situation in a tougher hand.

The BNP leader was

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Politics may dent economic growth

Forecasts WB report

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

Political obstacles to passing and implementing reform legislation by Bangladesh and other South Asian countries pose downside risks to the economic growth outlook, according to a report by the World Bank released yesterday.

Infrastructure constraints including electricity and roads and weaker than expected monsoon rains also pose a threat for these economies, said the report.

In this situation, the Washington-based global lender projected Bangladesh's gross domestic product growth at 5.8 percent for

the outgoing fiscal year, down by 0.23 percentage points than the estimate by Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics.

"In countries either exiting (Pakistan) or entering electoral cycles (Bangladesh, India, Nepal), spending pressures associated with elections could boost fiscal expenditure, adding to inflationary pressures and both internal and external imbalances," said the Global Economic Prospects (GEP) report of the WB.

GEP is a biannual report carried out by the WB on different countries across the world.

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PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

Alleged activists of Hefajat-e Islam campaign for the BNP-backed mayoral candidate in Khulna yesterday.

BNP, allies count on Hefajat clout

Plot to forge partnership, exploit religion in JS polls

JULFIKAR ALI MANIK

The BNP-Jamaat-led 18-party opposition wants Qawmi madrasa-based Hefajat-e Islam as an ally at the next general elections in order to exploit religion and win as many votes as possible capitalising on the people's Islamic sentiment.

The alliance has minimised distances with the Hefajat in the course of the last four months' programmes against Shahbagh youths, labelling them anti-Islamic and atheists.

"Now we want to make further progress based on recent understandings," said a source in the alliance. "We want to wipe out all differences with the Hefajat to make them our ally in the upcoming elections."

The opposition's goal of allying itself with the Hefajat is to bag the votes of its followers across the country and get them in its polls campaigns, bringing to the fore the "anti-Islam atheist" issue, the source added.

Harun Izhar Chowdhury, research and training secretary of Hefajat, told

The Daily Star Wednesday, "Our movement is against anti-Islam atheists."

"If our movement influences the upcoming national elections, we have nothing to do."

He added if the present government doesn't meet the Hefajat's 13-point demand, definitely the "atheist" issue will remain a subject for discussion at polls time.

"We have no specific plan yet for the elections. We will not ask voters to vote for the BNP or the 18-party

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MERCURY GOES UP IN 4 CITIES

Electioneering in the four city corporations, which ended last night, saw last-minute frantic efforts from mayoral and councilor aspirants to woo voters. The cities will be calm today after two weeks of a hectic election campaign. Now, all have to wait till tomorrow morning when voters cast their ballots to decide the fate of the candidates.



Staff at the Sylhet divisional office of Election Commission yesterday prepare ballot books and other materials necessary for tomorrow's city corporation polls.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

Khulna No-one cares about bike ban

PANKAJ KARMAKAR and ZAHID HOSSAIN, from Khulna

Supporters of mayoral aspirants in Khulna city did the last-minute electioneering, travelling on motorbikes yesterday though the two-wheelers were not allowed since the early hours of the day.

The home ministry in a circular on security arrangement said motorbikes were prohibited until the midnight of June 15, the day of the city corporation elections.

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Barisal Outsiders defy EC

AL, BNP stalwarts violate code of conduct on last day of campaign

HASAN JAHID TUSHER and SUSHANTA GHOSH, from Barisal

Flouting an Election Commission (EC) directive, some stalwarts of ruling and main opposition parties yesterday stayed back in Barisal city and campaigned for their party-backed mayoral candidates.

The EC in an order issued on June 10 had asked non-residents and non-voters to leave the city corporation areas two days before the voting there and sent copies of the order

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Sylhet MPs, ex-MPs flout rules

M RAHMAN and IQBAL SIDDIQUEE, from Sylhet

Outsider campaign workers of the two leading mayor hopefuls campaigned in the city yesterday flouting the deadline set by the Election Commission.

Returning Officer of Sylhet SM Ezharul Haque said they had asked all outsiders to refrain from campaigning beyond Wednesday night.

The Awami League-led 14-party alliance

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World's largest

Hair Replacement company is looking for Business Partner in Bangladesh for world's one of the fastest growing industry

Advanced Hair Studio is world's largest Hair Replacement company having prestigious clientele list spread across the globe. It's prestigious clientele list features Hollywood celebrities, Pop Stars, Sport legends, leading politicians and businessmen, among the others. Advanced Hair Studio applies world's best procedures for Hair Replacement & Hair Re-growth that gives 100% guarantee to give full head of hair to clients. With successful studio operations spanning from New Zealand to America, its Indian Operations have also met with tremendous Success.

As a part of expansion drive in Asia, World largest company in one of the fastest growing industry wants to set up the services in Bangladesh. For this PE Tradelink is looking for a prestigious business partnership with entrepreneur having sharp business acumen and strong financial background.



Shane Warne
Cricket Legend

Interested people must send their company profile & credentials before 30th June to: business@advancedhairstudioindia.com