



LIGHTS GOING OUT

Article discusses why Kemal Ataturk is still relevant

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AFGHANISTAN'S TRANSITION

Afghan forces take over security for the whole country from Nato

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TRANSFORMING TV PLAYS

Star reprints interview with Atiqul Haque Chowdhury

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WB UPLOADS PADMA REPORT

No legal reasons to exclude Abul

REJAUL KARIM BYRON

The World Bank's external panel has expressed dissatisfaction over the exclusion of former communications minister Abul Hossain by the Anti-Corruption Commission in a high-profile graft case despite evidence of his involvement.

"The panel maintains that there were no legal reasons to exclude the name of the former communications minister from the initial list of persons under investigation," said the panel in its final report.

The panel also stood by the Washington-based lender's move to refer the corruption case to the governments of Bangladesh and Canada to prevent corruption in the bridge project.



The Bangladesh government has repeatedly claimed that no corruption had taken place in the project.

In the report, uploaded on the WB website yesterday, the panel asked the WB to learn lessons from the Padma bridge case.

"In order to take lessons from the Padma bridge case and avoid misperceptions and damage to the lender's reputation, a proper communication of the case should be implemented, including to WB staff, the relevant national and multinational organisations, the government of Bangladesh and the companies involved."

The report outlined why the name of the

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FULL TEXT ONLINE



DEATH IN UAE ROAD CRASH

Driver found guilty

Court asks him to pay Tk 42 lakh to each of 19 Bangladeshi families

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A court of Abu Dhabi in the UAE has ordered a lorry driver to pay blood money of 200,000 dirham (Tk 42 lakh) to the family of each person killed in a February road accident.

Twenty-one migrant workers including 19 Bangladeshis were killed in the accident on Al Ain-Abu Dhabi lorry road in the United Arab Emirates on February 3.

The driver, who was found guilty of manslaughter, was also fined 52,000 dirham and sentenced to a year in prison, reported The National, a newspaper from Abu Dhabi, on June 17.

Latiful Haq Kazmi, labour counsellor of the Bangladesh embassy in Abu Dhabi, told The Daily Star that they would soon file a compensation case on behalf of eight out of 19 Bangladeshis killed in the accident.

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Scrap newsprint duty hike

Editors' Council urges govt

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Editors' Council yesterday demanded withdrawal of the proposed 25 percent import duty on newsprint.

The council made the call at a meeting at Dhaka Club, saying the newspaper industry would face a severe crisis if the duty hike took effect.

In the proposed budget placed in the Jatiya Sangsad on June 6, the import duty on newsprint was increased to 25 percent from 3 percent.

Chairman of the organisation Golam Sarwar presided over the meeting attended by Mahbulul Alam, Anwar

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GRAMEEN BANK REFORM

Worst awaits the best?

Top economists decry recommendations of commission

MD FAZLUR RAHMAN

A government commission's plan to recommend breaking up the Nobel-winning Grameen Bank into at least 19 zones evoked strong criticism from anti-poverty campaigners and analysts.

The recommendations by the Grameen Bank Inquiry Commission are seen as the culmination of a well-orchestrated attempt to take control of an organisation that has flourished into a success story over the last three decades.

If the proposal is implemented, it will set the country's best-known

organisation on the path of destruction, warned a number of experts, who have closely followed the developments.

"The government has taken the step to destroy the bank. It is totally a political decision," said Akbar Ali Khan, former adviser to a caretaker government.

The commission is set to recommend restructuring Grameen Bank in the shape of the erstwhile Bangladesh Shilpa Bank (BSB) or Rural Electrification Board (REB) in order to give the government absolute control over the microcredit organisation.

The recommendations will be

unveiled at a workshop, "Future Structure of Grameen Bank: Some Options", at the Biam auditorium in the capital on July 2.

The move comes at a time when the successful microcredit model of Grameen Bank that won the Nobel Peace Prize in 2006 is being replicated not only in the developing world, but also in developed economies.

Other respected experts joined Akbar in criticising the commission's suggestions.

Mirza AB Azizul Islam, former finance adviser to a caretaker government, said the recommendations

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Mothers wait for the admission of their babies, affected by diarrhoea, at the International Centre for Diarrhoeal Disease Research, Bangladesh (ICDDR,B) yesterday. The centre has seen a surge in patients amid hot weather over the last few days.

PHOTO: SK ENAMUL HAQ

DHAKA ELEVATED EXPRESSWAY

Work begins in Aug

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Construction work of the Dhaka Elevated Expressway is going to start in August to ease the perennial traffic gridlock in the city, Communications Minister Obaidul Quader said yesterday.

According to a revised plan, the length of the expressway will be 40 kilometres. In the first phase, an eight-kilometre route from Shahjalal International Airport to Tejgaon

will be constructed, he stated.

The minister was talking to journalists at his secretariat office after holding a meeting on traffic management in the capital ahead of Eid-ul-Fitr.

An eight-kilometre route from Tejgaon to Kamalapur and a seven-kilometre from Kamalapur to Kutubkhali of Shanirakhra will be built in the second and third phases respectively.

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Internet for rural people

Govt okays project to bring all upazilas under optical fibre network

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government yesterday approved a Tk 499 crore project to bring all the upazilas under the optical fibre cable network to give rural people easy access to the internet.

At a meeting, the Executive Committee of the National Economic Council (Ecne) approved the "Upazila level optical fibre cable network development project" under which information and communication technology will be provided to 290 out of the 486 upazilas in the country.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina presided over the Ecne meeting at the National Economic Council conference

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Imran Sarkar says he is not in hiding

Refutes Guardian report

STAR REPORT

Imran H Sarker, convener of Gonojagoron Mancha, yesterday refuted a report of The Guardian that claimed he was now in hiding.

"I come to Shahbagh every day and oversee the activities of our grassroots campaign," said Imran at a press conference at Shahbagh to protest parts of the article, headlined, "Violence and protests could derail Bangladesh elections".

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GAZIPUR CITY POLLS

Candidates get election symbols

A CORRESPONDENT, Gazipur

Election symbols were assigned to the candidates in the Gazipur City Corporation polls yesterday.

In the polls scheduled for July 6, seven candidates are vying for the mayoral position, 466 for the councillor positions and 126 for those of reserved for women.

Ajmat Ullah Khan, backed by the Awami League-led 14-party alliance, was given "pen and inkpot" while MA Mannan, backed by the BNP-led 18-party alliance, "television".

Rebel AL candidate Jahangir Alam got "pineapple" whereas Mezbah Uddin Sarker "duck". Independent candidates Aman Ullah, Rina Sultana and Nazim Uddin Ahmed got "lock", "butterfly", and "horse" symbols respectively.

Gazipur Returning Officer Motiar Rahman assigned the symbols, except the one for Nazim, in his office around 11:30am. Nazim's symbol was assigned by the Election Commission (EC).

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Congratulations Mr. M.A. Hashem

City Bank heartily congratulates one of its illustrious founders and former chairman Mr. M.A. Hashem on being elected as the new Chairman of the Board of Directors of United Commercial Bank Limited.

Mr. Hashem is a renowned industrialist and philanthropist of the country. He is a former Member of Parliament, Chairman of Partex Group and Chairman and Lifetime member of North South University trustee board.

Under his leadership, we trust that United Commercial Bank Limited will reach further heights.

