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IT MARKETING FORUM

Analysts join the event to show ways
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Girija Devi, the only living legend of her
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LIU ZHIJUN'S TRIAL

China's ex-railways minister gets death
sentence on graft charges

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SCHOOLS, COLLEGES
Vacation cut
in Ramadan

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Ramadan vacation for schools and colleges would be reduced to make up for the lost time during shut-downs in recent months, the education minister told The Daily Star yesterday.

Nurul Islam Nahid also said that the frequent shut-downs seriously disrupted the academic activities, forcing reduction of the number of classes in schools. "Besides, we had to stop many classes while holding Secondary School Certificate and Higher Secondary Certificate examinations postponed by hartals."

An order will be issued today to this effect, said officials of the education ministry.

They said the schools and colleges may have to hold classes till July 20, despite the Ramadan break coming off on July 11 according to the educational calendar.

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Moon ride on
Dhaka roadsRepairs kept in wait for rain; untimely
road-digging results in terrible tailbacks

HELEMUL ALAM

Commuting in the capital is now a real hassle, as many roads lie potholed for months in the absence of timely repair. Rain and waterlogging in recent weeks have worsened the situation, adding to the plight of city dwellers.

The city corporations say they will not take on any major repair job before August as the rain will hinder the work. They, however, see no problem in the construction of footpaths and drains, making the roads narrower only to compound the nagging traffic congestion.

Jahangir Alam, chief engineer of Dhaka South City Corporation (DSCC), has said due to a fund crisis, the authorities do their work in order of priority.

The DSCC sought Tk 400 crore for road maintenance and traffic management in this fiscal year but received an allocation of Tk 178 crore. In the previous fiscal year, it got Tk 134.8 crore after seeking Tk 500 crore, officials said.

The Dhaka North City Corporation (DNCC) got allocation of Tk 236 crore against a demand of around Tk 500 crore in this fiscal year.

Asked about the construction of footpaths and drainage when massive repairs should get priority, Jahangir said, "These are emergency works to drain rainwater from roads into the storm sewer system."

He also said the ongoing repairs were also being delayed as contractors take time to compact roads in a proper manner.

According to Jahangir Alam, the roads that are supposed to last at least three years turn shabby within six months because of waterlogging. He blamed unplanned urbanisation for the situation.

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The two-kilometre road from Shyambazar to Kamrangirchar iron bridge has been in battered conditions for almost a year. Inset, as DCC progresses with drainage work by digging the footpaths from Panthapath intersection to Farmgate in the capital, people go through huge sufferings while negotiating the road on foot or in vehicles. The photos were taken yesterday.

EU outlines
action planSpurs all stakeholders
to help Bangladesh

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The European Union yesterday launched a major global agreement for Bangladesh to improve labour rights, working conditions and factory safety in the country's readymade garment industry.

During the launch of the Global Sustainability Compact at a press conference of the delegation of the European Union in Geneva, the 27-nation bloc also reiterated its

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SEE FULL TEXT OF JOINT STATEMENT ONLINE

GARMENT SAFETY IN BANGLADESH

Factories under scanner

70 top retailers to inspect all factories within 9 months

REFAYET ULLAH MIRDHA

A mostly European forum of 70 international retailers and brands has agreed to inspect all garment-supplying factories in Bangladesh in nine months to ensure fire and building safety.

The steering committee on the Accord on Fire and Building Safety in Bangladesh announced its action plan in the Swiss city of Geneva yesterday.

Atiqul Islam, president of Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA), welcomed the move from IndustriALL Global Union, a consortium of mostly European retailers and brands.

"If retailers do something positive, our indus-

tries will be immensely benefited. But if they impose harsh terms and conditions, we will not be able to implement those, and eventually it will have negative impact on industries," said Atiqul.

The signatories have agreed to provide funds for renovation of any factory if the inspection teams find it risky.

The teams with local and international experts will focus on faults in procedures and emergency infrastructure, including fire exit and evacuation, and fundamental flaws that could lead to a partial or total structural failure of a factory building.

Some European companies signed the accord, initiated by IndustriALL and UNI Global Union,

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ACTION PLAN

Seventy brands, retailers to
sign accordWal-Mart, Gap, Target did not
come upNames of factories for
inspection to be published on
July 15Inspection will identify grave
hazards and need for urgent
repairsPreliminary inspection in
9 monthsWorkers will be paid when
the factories will remain
closed for repair

AMINBAZAR KILLING

60 indicted

Victims' families want speedy trial

CHAITANYA CHANDRA HALDER and SUBIR DAS

A Dhaka court yesterday framed charges against all the 60 people investigators found involved in the killing of six students at Aminbazar on the outskirts of the capital two years ago.

However, the mob that beat them to death was made up of about 15 people not 60, said Al-Amin, the sole survivor of the incident and a friend of the students.

Families of the victims yesterday told The Daily Star that the high number of people indicted might prolong the case proceedings.

They demanded that the case be transferred to a speedy trial tribunal for quick disposal.

They expressed surprise that no policemen were indicted

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GRAMEEN BANK-SPLIT PROPOSAL

What sort of mind
works behind this?

Asks Nobel hero Yunus at AmCham meeting

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Nobel laureate Prof Muhammad Yunus yesterday came down heavily on Grameen Bank Commission's recommendations to change the structure of the bank.

Changing the structure to



match Shilpa Bank or Palli Bidyut Samity conjures up an "ugly kind of picture" and "a heinous attempt" to destroy the self-reliant organisation, said Yunus.

Grameen Bank is an organisation owned especially by poor

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WORKERS' SUDDEN ILLNESS

It's psychological

Test finds food, water not poisonous

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

An investigation conducted by the Institute of Epidemiology, Disease Control and Research found large numbers of garment workers fell ill due to mass psychogenic illness, rather than from consuming 'poisonous' food or water.

The study concluded that the fire in Tazreen Fashions garment factory last November and the collapse of Rana Plaza in April this year may have contributed to the mental stress of the workers resulting in sickness.

"We have identified and investigated five outbreaks and found that they are suffering from mass psychogenic

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Azhar 'committed'
9 types of crimesInvestigation agency submits formal
charges to war crimes prosecution

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The investigation agency designated to probe war crimes has found "evidence" about Jamaat-e-Islami leader ATM Azharul Islam's "involvement" in nine types of war crimes committed during the Liberation War.



Azhar, the alleged Al-Badr commander of Rangpur, was "involved" in at least six incidents of war crimes, which left over 1,200 people dead between April 3 and December 16, 1971.

The probe body revealed the information before the media

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The Department of Archaeology is restoring the Mughal-era eidgah in the capital's Dhanmondi, Inset. But the remains of a demolished old mosque stand as an eyesore to the view.

PHOTO:
AMRAN HOSSAINMughal era Eidgah
choked by illegal
structures

MORSHED ALI KHAN

Illegal structures are hampering restoration work of the historic Eidgah at Dhanmondi in the capital.

Set up in 1640 by Mughal ruler Subedar Shah Shuja Dewan Bin Abdul Kashim, the Eidgah is one of the only two Mughal congregation sites in the sub-continent, the other being in Delhi, according to historians.

The arched main entrance to the Eidgah has an inscription on it in Persian language.

Neglect and lack of supervision over the years have led to encroachments upon the Mughal legacy. A complaint centre of Dhaka Power Distribution Company Ltd, a pump house of the Wasa and a private Islamic research centre have the largest unauthorised structures at the Eidgah, obscuring it from public view.

An encroachment that comes as an eyesore is on the eastern side of the Eidgah -- remnant of a demolished old mosque. A newly built four-storey mosque-cum-madrassa is now in place close to it. But the mosque committee is dilly-dallying over its removal.

Asked about this, committee sources said some influential local people want that the remnant be kept as a "souvenir".

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