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THE VIOLIN MAN OF 71

Star talks to the musician who inspired comrades by playing violin

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'KEEP IT SIMPLE'

Criticising predecessor, Pope says the church forgot simple words

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5 banks swindled

Terry towel maker siphons off over Tk 1,250cr, opens businesses in Dubai

M RAHMAN

Controversial Bismillah Group, a producer of terry towel, has siphoned off around Tk 1,255 crore from five commercial banks, and its owner allegedly launched hotels and other businesses abroad with the laundered money, according to an Anti-Corruption Commission enquiry.

During interrogation, several bank officials involved in the scam told the ACC that Bismillah Group Managing Director Khaza Solaiman Anwar Chowdhury became a partner in a five-star hotel and four casinos, and built a house in Dubai with the laundered money.

"The bankers involved in the scam told the commission that Khaza Solaiman laundered the money to several countries, mainly to the United Arab Emirates to launch businesses there," said an ACC enquiry officer, wishing anonymity.

They told the ACC that Solaiman transferred money to the UAE bypassing the

banking system. And he is believed to be hiding there now.

"We will file a case against the swindlers, and then seek help from the UAE authorities through MLAR [mutual legal assistance request] to conduct investigation there," said the officer.

The Group swindled the money with the help of some bank officials between June 2011 and July last year mostly through LTR [Loan against Trust Receipt] using names of fake foreign buyers and forged documents, found the enquiry.

Borrowers usually don't need to put their property as collateral to get loans from banks through LTR, as such loans are given on trust, provided that some documents are maintained, said ACC investigators.

In its report on the scam, Bangladesh Bank's Financial Integrity and Customer Services Department said, "The institutions [Bismillah Group and its sister concerns] in collaboration with bank officials prepared

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The Daily Star Spelling Bee Champion Sunjack Jesun, right, first runner-up Sakib Aleem, left, and second runner-up Arshiyam Alam spend sometime with President Abdul Hamid yesterday at the Bangabhaban. They got the opportunity to meet the head of state by securing the top three positions in this year's contest held for school goers of class-VI to class-X. Another photo on page 5.

The Daily Star



winners meet the president

STAR REPORT

The Daily Star Spelling Bee Competition winners met President Abdul Hamid yesterday in Bangabhaban.

The president spent some time with this year's champion Sunjack Jesun from Saint Joseph's Higher Secondary School, Dhaka, first runner-up Sakib Aleem from Academia, Dhaka, and second runner-up Arshiyam Alam from Sunnydale, Dhaka.

The winning students were accompanied by their parents, the Editor of The Daily Star Mahfuz Anam, Channel i Head of News

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EC chooses to be toothless

SHAKHAWAT LITON

In a surprise move, the Election Commission yesterday decided not to retain its sweeping authority to cancel one's candidature in parliamentary polls for violation of electoral laws.

In line with the decision, the EC asked its secretariat to send a proposal to the law ministry for taking steps to scrap the authority by amending the Representation of the People Order, EC sources said.

Talking to journalists at his office, Election Commissioner Abu Hafiz confirmed this.

The EC took the decision just two days after it sent a set of proposals to the law ministry for bringing changes in the RPO.

In one proposal, the EC had sought amendments to its authority to cancel candidature. It sought that if only one candidate remained in the polls race in a constituency following cancellation of a candidature or

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PM stresses need for media policy

UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday underscored the need for putting in place a policy for both print and electronic media to ensure their accountability.

"There should be a policy ... it's urgent ... such a policy is there everywhere in the world," she said while addressing journalists at a function at her office.

The function was

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DCC elections not possible this year

PANKAJ KARMAKAR

The long overdue elections to the bifurcated Dhaka city corporations will not be held before the upcoming parliamentary polls.

The Local Government Division needs six more months to complete the demarcation and inclusion of new areas in the city corporations, LGD Secretary Abu Alam Md Shahid Khan told The Daily Star on Saturday.

This means the LGD will take the rest of the year to complete the process. The parliamentary election, on the other side, is supposed to be held at the end of 2013.

The Election Commission now cannot move as per its plan to go ahead after Ramadan for holding the DCC polls. The last election to the undivided DCC was held in 2002.

Four Supreme Court lawyers have meanwhile filed two writ petitions

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NEWS ANALYSIS

Little bite left for Hasina's trip

PALLAB BHATTACHARYA, New Delhi

The apparent lack of tangible progress on the issue of a Teesta water-sharing deal and speculation about the fate of the land boundary agreement in the Indian parliament have characterized Bangladesh Foreign Minister Dipu Moni's latest visit here. The rather fruitless visit has raised question marks over Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's proposed trip to India sometime later this year.

Dipu Moni, during her interaction with the media after her talks with Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and Leader of the Opposition in the Rajya Sabha Arun Jaitley,

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PHOTO: STAR

This photo taken last month shows highway policemen stopping a truck on the Rajshahi-Pabna highway. Truckers have alleged that police stop their vehicles to extort money from them while pretending to check their documents. The trickle-down effect of the alleged extortion is high prices of essentials.

Extortionists shoot student

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A private university student was shot by local extortionists in Mohakhali yesterday for not paying Tk 2 lakh.

Mahamadullah, 19, a first year student of South East University, was shot in the right arm and left leg at his uncle Kawser Ali's under construction building. He was taken to Dhaka Medical College Hospital for treatment.

Police said Mahamadullah often stayed over in the building's first floor as he looked after the construction work for his uncle. Some of the other flats were rented out as dormitories to university going students.

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HIGHWAY BRIBERY BY COPS

Govt asked to act

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday directed the government to take immediate steps to stop extortion in the transport sector, as highway bribery is largely blamed for rising essential prices.

In a suo moto rule, the court ordered the authorities to prevent extortion by any person or organisation from any vehicles carrying commodities or passengers across the country.

It also asked the secretary of the Bridges Division and the inspector general of police to submit a report within 72 hours about the action taken in this regard.

The court sought an explanation from government officials concerned in two weeks as to why they should not be directed to stop such extortions immediately.

An HC bench of Justice Quazi Reza-Ul

Hoque and Justice ABM Altaf Hossain came up with the order, following two reports published in the daily Prothom Alo on Saturday on highway extortion by various quarters, including police.

One of the reports said a 10-tonne truck had to pay Tk 22,000 in bribe to different groups on its 439km way from Mahasthangarh in Bogra to Riazuddin Bazar in Chittagong, with police topping the list of collectors.

According to Rustom Ali Khan, general secretary of Bangladesh Truck Covered Van Owners' Association, at least 30 incidents of mugging of trucks and vans take place on the Dhaka-Chittagong highway every month. The garment sector is the victim of 90 per cent of these incidents.

"Incidents of extortion on the highway are increasing day by day as hardly any accused

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Mobile Banking and Fraudulent Activities

Recently there have been articles relating to criminal activities perpetuating on mobile banking services. It is being reported that criminals use this service for their transactions.

In this regard, Dutch-Bangla Bank (DBBL) wants to clarify that from the very start of this mobile banking service, DBBL has introduced mobile banking from a banking standpoint based on ethical principles. DBBL's services are fully compliant as if it was a full bank account adhering to the most stringent rules, principles and ethics.

Because of our principles, even today with large presence of our mobile banking services, the level of fraud and criminal activities on the Dutch-Bangla Bank network is non-existent. From the very start, Dutch-Bangla Bank is ensuring the following while conducting Mobile Banking operations:

- 1) DBBL personally and individually verifies each and every client, KYC and forms;
- 2) DBBL does not allow withdrawal of money from the account before verification of the account;
- 3) DBBL does not allow hundreds of deposits and withdrawals in day involving millions of taka through a single mobile banking account; as per the mobile financial services guideline, such activities must be reported to the Bangladesh Bank as suspicious transaction report (STR);
- 4) Ensuring transaction limit of 5 transactions per day with Tk.20,000/- per transaction, prevents anonymous transactions on anyone's behalf by using any agent's "personal account" for sending money from a non-account-holder to another non-account-holder, thus eliminates risk of extortion through our system;
- 5) For sending money DBBL ensures that both the sender and receiver have mobile banking account so that they can be identified by the regulators, law enforcing agencies and bank when required;
- 6) DBBL does not promote or ignore any unintended uses of mobile banking.

Ensuring the above policies, DBBL does not promote, aid and encourage money laundering and criminal activities. And for the sake of quick profitability, DBBL does not allow fraudulent activities through its mobile banking system.

Dutch-Bangla Bank Mobile Banking is a banking service that involves many stakeholders and partners ranging from regulators to telecom companies. DBBL will always preserve the reputation and security of all those involved in this ecosystem.

Dutch-Bangla Bank

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