



FALL OF JUTE

Middle-East crisis, rupee slide take toll on exports

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THE BENGALI ETHOS

Book reflects on 1971 roles of Dhaka and Calcutta universities

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WAR NEVER AGAIN

Pope invites people of all faiths to join him in prayer for Syria

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Police won't be free of influence

Draft police act retains govt control over the force

M RAHMAN

At the fag end of its tenure, the government has prepared a draft police act apparently to retain political influence over the force and further encourage impunity in it.

Prepared by the police headquarters early this year, the draft brought no changes in the government's authority over recruitment, promotion and posting of the police chief and other top officials, although the force has long longed for this change to free itself from political clutches.

A top official at the police headquarters said they were not satisfied with the draft, particularly because the appointment of the police chief and the posting and transfer of other high officials are not in the force's hands.

The official, who spoke on condition of anonymity, however, said they were happy at the recent government move to upgrade the post of police inspector and sub-inspector to the rank of class-I and class-II officers.

The home ministry received the draft in the second week of April, a ministry source told The Daily Star yesterday. A six-member

committee headed by Home Joint Secretary Humayan Kabir was formed about a month ago to evaluate the draft.

The committee was asked to submit its report to the home secretary within two months, added the source.

Under the draft, the police boss will be called Chief of Police, and will enjoy the rank equivalent to that of a senior secretary.

At present, the top cop is called Inspector General of Police. But under the draft, there will be several inspector generals, and from among them the government will unilaterally pick one as the Chief of Police.

Appointments, promotions and postings of other officers of the rank of superintendent and above will be done by the government or by the police chief. Under the existing law, it is done solely by the government.

If passed, the law will further encourage the already existing culture of impunity in the force, as no one will then be able to file a case against members of the force without government permission.

Also, the case will have to be filed within six months of the offence committed by the

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MONSOON MOMENT: As nature showers its blessings on a city of concrete, the child, all smiles on her way home from school with her father, does not seem to mind getting drenched. The photo was taken in front of Jatiya Press Club in the capital around 11:30am yesterday.

PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

ACID ATTACK VICTIM Plastic surgery is her hope

SHAHEEN MOLLAH

Right after the acid attack by her stalker cousin last week, 18-year-old Syeda Mahbuba Akhter Mukta became mentally devastated.

But now she is recovering fast as hope has begun to glimmer after doctors of the Burn Unit of Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) have told her that 60 percent of her injuries can be brought back to the previous state.

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Biman's remarkable recovery

Airline slashes its loss by \$50m in a year

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

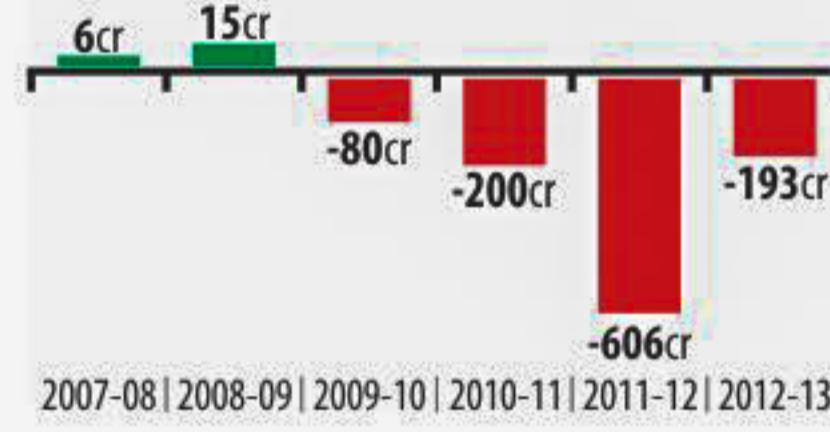
Biman Bangladesh Airlines yesterday claimed that it has cut its loss by around \$50 million (around Tk 387 crore) in the 2012-13 fiscal year.

Biman had lost around \$75 million (around Tk 606 crore) in 2011-12 fiscal year.

Managing Director Kevin Steele of Biman yesterday in a press conference at Biman's head office Balaka said, "The results for 2012-13 show that losses have come down to around \$25 million [around Tk 193 crore]."

He, however, said the figures were

BIMAN'S PROFIT OR LOSS FIGURE IN CRORES OF TAKA



provisional, un-audited and not approved by the Biman Board and the government.

Steele expressed hope that in the current fiscal year, ending in June, 2014,

Biman would be able to bring its losses down to around Tk 77 crore and go into profit in the following year.

Biman has been in the reds since 2008-09.

He said despite the fact that Biman lost its passenger carrying capacity by around 30 percent this year, causing revenue drop, its running cost had also fallen.

Steele, who took over the helm of the national carrier in March as the MD and Chief Executive Officer (CEO), took a number of cost cutting measures.

He kept Biman's gas guzzlers, the

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Mandela out of hospital

AFP, Johannesburg

South Africa's anti-apartheid icon Nelson Mandela was discharged from hospital yesterday where he has been treated since June 8 for a recurring respiratory illness, the presidency said.

Despite his release, questions remain about the health of the 95-year-old Nobel laureate who has been in and out of hospital for a year and who, the presidency said, remains in "critical" condition.

"Former President Nelson Mandela has this morning, 1 September 2013, been discharged from the Pretoria hospital where he has been receiving treatment,"

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Mandela



Bikers plough through the footpath by Ramna Park in the capital yesterday, without bothering about the sufferings their act might cause pedestrians. Despite a media outcry and even a High Court ruling, motorcycles on pavements are an everyday visual in the capital these days. No one in authority appears troubled.

PHOTO: SK ENAMUL HAQ

RALLIES AT 'GOVT EXPENSE'

PM violating polls code

Alleges Fakhru; EC clarifies

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP acting secretary general Mirza Fakhru Islam Alamgir yesterday alleged that Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina had violated the electoral code of conduct by holding public

rallies and campaigning for votes at the government's expense.

"From the rallies, she is asking people to vote for her party. And it is a violation of the electoral rules," he said, after paying tribute

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Syria hails US retreat

Congress battle looms; rebels slam US hesitation

AGENCIES

Syria hailed an "historic American retreat" yesterday, mockingly accusing President Barack Obama of hesitation and confusion after he delayed a military strike to consult Congress.

As Obama stepped back from the brink, France said it could not act alone in punishing President Bashar al-Assad over a chemical weapons attack, making it the last remaining top Western ally to hesitate about bombing Syria.

And in Cairo, Saudi Foreign Minister Saud al-Faisal urged Arab countries to back calls by the Syrian opposition for military action against the Damascus regime.

"Obama announced yesterday, directly or through implication, the beginning of the historic American retreat," Syria's official al-Thawra newspaper said in a front-page editorial.

The US president said on Saturday he would seek

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