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ABOVE THE LAW?

With the national flag hoisted, a car of a VIP travels on the wrong side of the road putting itself and motorists on the correct side of the road at risk. The photo was taken near Ruposhi Bangla hotel where traffic was as heavy as most places in Dhaka yesterday. After a 60-hour hartal, many city dwellers got out yesterday to get things done resulting in gridlocks, as seen in the photo, right, taken from Farmgate on Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue.



PHOTO: SK ENAMUL HAQ/AMRAN HOSSAIN

'Clear edge over PM'

BNP policymakers praise Khaleda over phone talks

SHAKHAWAT LITON

BNP's policymakers believe Khaleda Zia had comprehensively beaten Sheikh Hasina on some critical issues in the telephone conversation the two leaders had on Saturday.

BNP's national standing committee members at a meeting on Tuesday night lauded BNP chief Khaleda and said her clear edge over Prime Minister Hasina during the conversation had boosted morale of opposition activists.

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KHALEDA'S HARSH COMMENTS PM 'did not react for people's sake'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday said she had to hear many "humiliating" words from Khaleda Zia during phone conversations with the opposition leader on Saturday, but she (Hasina) did not react to those words for the sake of the welfare of the people.

"There are answers to all of her [Khaleda] words. But I wanted to reach a consensus. I wanted to resolve the prevailing political crisis through a dialogue. But she put forward several conditions," the premier told a views-exchange meeting with AL leaders and lawmakers at Gono Bhaban.

"Many issues of the conversation were published in newspapers by the BNP. After partial publication of the conversation, it is good for the people to listen to the full conversation," she mentioned.

Speaking at the meeting, Awami League General Secretary Syed Ashrafur Islam said the prime minister's dialogue offer to the opposition leader is still valid and she could visit Gono Bhaban on the invitation any time.

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Ashraf, Fakhru meet Mozena

Discuss polls, dialogue

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP acting secretary general Mirza Fakhru Islam Alamgir and Awami League General Secretary Syed Ashrafur Islam called on US Ambassador to Bangladesh Dan W Mozena at the latter's residence in the city yesterday.

In separate meetings with the US envoy, the two leaders discussed different issues, including the next general election.

AL and BNP sources said Fakhru and Ashraf talked about their parties' latest stance on polls-time government and a probable

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17pc Bangladeshi girls get married before 15

Says population expert at launching of World Population Report 2013

UNB, Dhaka

Eliminating child marriage could reduce 7.5 lakh births in the country every year, said a population expert yesterday.

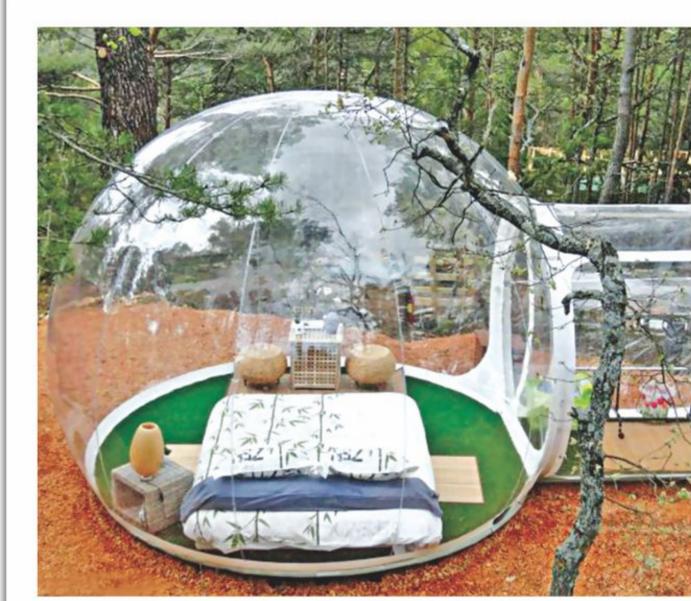
"In Bangladesh, around 17 percent girls get married before becoming 15 while most of them are with two children before reaching 18," said country director of Population Council Ubaidur Rob.

He shared the view during his presentation marking the launching of State of World Population Report 2013. The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), Bangladesh organised the ceremony in the capital's Sonargaon Hotel.

This year the report focuses an important and emerging global concern -- "Motherhood in Childhood: Facing the challenges of adolescent pregnancy".

Secretary of the health and family welfare ministry MM Neaz Uddin and officer-in-charge of UNFPA Bangladesh Pornchai Suchitta also spoke on the occasion.

About 58 percent of adolescents begin childbearing by the age of 19, Ubaidur said, adding that in Bangladesh, about 194 mothers in every one lakh pregnant die giving birth. Most of them are adolescents.



Bed in a bottle

MAIL ONLINE

Guests at this hotel really are living in their own bubble as hotel rooms are contained in huge plastic globes.

French designers have created the otherworldly spheres deep in the heart of woodland just ten miles north of Marseille.

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Verdict in BDR carnage case now on Nov 5

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The verdict in the BDR carnage case, which was scheduled for yesterday, will now be delivered on November 5.

The court dealing with the case yesterday set the new date since it could not prepare the judgement.

"It's a massive case which I took up on September 16. It requires me some more time to prepare the judgement after reading around 10,000 pages containing depositions of 654 witnesses and their cross-examinations," said judge Md

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FOREIGN WORKERS Oman to halt recruitment for next 6 months

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Oman, the largest labour importer for Bangladesh, will halt recruitment of foreign workers for construction and cleaning jobs for the next six months beginning from tomorrow.

"In a bid to clamp down on illegal foreign workers, Oman's manpower ministry has decided not to allow small construction and cleaning companies to recruit expatriate workers," said Major AKM Rabiul Islam, labour counsellor of the Bangladeshi embassy in Oman.

He added, "We have received the message and informed our government."

The Middle Eastern country hires per month around 10,000 workers from Bangladesh on average, according to

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Permanent pay commission by Nov 15

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Finance Minister AMA Muhith yesterday said a permanent pay commission would be formed by November 15, which would formulate the new pay structure for the government staff within six months.

The government would also prepare separate pay

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PRAYER TIMING		October 31
Fajr	4:50	5:25
Zohr	12:45	1:15
Asr	4:00	4:15
Maghrib	5:32	5:35
Esha	7:15	7:45

Source: Islamic Foundation

The Daily Star

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ONLINE POLL

Do you think it was justified for the ruling party to get the Representation of the People (amendment) Bill, 2013 passed in absence of opposition members in parliament?

Yes (24%)
No (76%)

TOTAL VOTES: 302

TODAY'S POLL

Do you think that the dialogue on polls-time government is a dead issue now?

PLEASE CAST YOUR VOTE AT www.thedailystar.net

CTG ARMS HAUL CASE Babar, four others protest innocence

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Former DGFI director Maj Gen (ret) Rezzakul Haider, an accused in the sensational 10-truck arms haul cases, yesterday told a Chittagong court that he was implicated in trumped-up cases.

Rezzakul, who had earlier claimed his innocence, told this as the court allowed him to say something on the charges brought against him.

Meanwhile, five more accused, including former state minister for home Lutfozzaman Babar, yesterday claimed their

innocence in the two cases in connection with the arms haul at the CUFL jetty in the wee hours of April 2, 2004.

The four others -- former NSI officials Brig Gen (ret) Abdur Rahim, Wing Commander (ret) Shahab Uddin, Maj (ret) Liakat Hossain, and civilian Osman Mistri -- said they would not produce any witness to prove their innocence.

Babar, however, yesterday filed a petition with the court seeking postponement of his examination by the prosecution as he has

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