



NO MORE TURNING AWAY
For a fresh start, the govt must set priorities,
writes Syed Badrul Ahsan

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DHAKA ART SUMMIT
The 2nd edition of the bi-annual art
festival begins on February 7

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BHARAT RATNA FOR SACHIN
The cricket legend is presented with
India's highest civilian award

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DHAKA-CTG HIGHWAY

Contractor delays 4-lane project

Chinese firm asks for Tk 500cr more to complete its job; project cost goes up

M ABUL KALAM AZAD

Instead of blacklisting a Chinese company for breaching contract and refusing to complete the expansion of Dhaka-Chittagong highway, the communications ministry has opted to persuade it into doing the job within the terms of the contract.

But its efforts to that end for two years now have yet to yield any result, as the company keeps dragging its feet, saying it would not finish the work unless the allocation is increased.

In January 2010, Sinohydro Corporation won the contract for expanding around 140 kilometres of the 192km highway into a dual carriageway by December 2013. So far, it has completed only 30 percent of the work, according to the progress report on the Dhaka-Chittagong four-lane project.

The company has on many occasions informally told the government that it got the job at a lower rate and so the budget for the project must be raised.

Officials of the ministry said Sinohydro had been

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Sinohydro awarded job at

Tk **1,152** crore

Completion deadline

Dec **2013**

Deadline extended to

Dec **2014**

Project progress till Dec '13

only **30**pc



Though the barrier is lowered down to block the lane as a train is about to pass by, bikers use the wrong side to ride through the level crossing in the capital's Moghbazar. The photo was taken recently.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

'Killer force' in action

Khaleda claims 300 opposition men fell victims of killing, forced disappearance in one month

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia has alleged that the government has destroyed the moral strength of law enforcement agencies and turned them into "a killing force" through politicisation.

"Intelligence agencies are being used to oppress democratic forces and eliminate opposition parties at the directives from outside [the country]," she said at a press conference at



Hotel Westin in the capital yesterday.

Khaleda mentioned reports of local and international human rights groups and the media about oppression on activists of the BNP-led 19-party alliance, and human rights violation in Bangladesh.

In her 45-minute speech, the BNP chief drew attention of all intentional organisations, including the United Nations, for taking initiatives to stop "killings" in Bangladesh.

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10-TRUCK ARMS SMUGGLING

Hawa Bhaban link to be probed: PM

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday announced her government will open a fresh inquiry into the 10-truck arms haul cases as the names of Hawa Bhaban and BNP chief Khaleda Zia have emerged during the probe and trial in the sensational cases.

"The trial has been completed. But an inquiry is required to identify those involved in the arms smuggling conspiracy. And we'll do it,"



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It was designed to boost Ulfa

Says court, surprised at the role of high-ups of the then govt, intelligence agencies

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The 10 truckloads of arms and ammunition seized in Chittagong in 2004 had been smuggled in to reinforce Indian separatist group Ulfa with a motive for ruining the relationship with India, said a Chittagong court.

The Chittagong Metropolitan Special Tribunal-1 yesterday released the 516-page full text of the judgements in the two cases filed in connection with the arms haul. The Daily Star has obtained the summary of the court observation.

There, the court said the smuggling of such a huge volume of weapons and ammunition was not possible without government support.

It found the role of the then prime minister Khaleda Zia mysterious, as instead of reacting sharply she had remained silent despite being informed of such a big incident.

The court also expressed shock with the facts that some top-ranking officials of two intelligence agencies -- the DGFI and NSI -- were involved in the country's largest ever arms smuggling and kept close contact with Ulfa leader Paresh Barua.

"... They [the intelligence officials] were involved in the conspiracy to destroy the entire nation by pushing the country's existence at stake," said Judge SM Mojibul Rahman of Chittagong Metropolitan Special Tribunal-1 in the full text of verdicts.

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A mother cries her eyes out yesterday for her son who went missing as a boat caught fire and sank in the river Surma in Sunamganj on Monday night.

PHOTO: STAR

BOAT CATCHES FIRE IN SURMA

11 die, 30 missing

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Moulvibazar

At least 11 people, including three women and five children, died and 30 others went missing when a boat caught fire and sank in the Surma river in Sunamganj Monday night.

The Netrakona-bound boat from Companiganj was ferrying around 100 labourers home from a stone quarry in Chhatak upazila.

"Around 8:30pm, a fire originated from a kerosene stove engulfed the vessel when it was crossing Setura and Protapur villages at Duarabazar upazila.

"The passengers jumped into the river in panic," Harun-ur-Rashid, superintendent of police (SP) of Sunamganj, told The Daily Star.

Md Tareque, sub-station officer of Chhatak Fire Service and Civil

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Dutch-Bangla Bank wins The Asian Banker's Award for the strongest Bank Balance Sheet in Bangladesh, 2013

The Asian Banker, a Singapore based provider of strategic intelligence on the financial services industry has assessed Dutch-Bangla Bank (DBBL) the winner of the strongest bank balance sheet in Bangladesh for 2013.

- Largest retail bank in Bangladesh with over 3 million clients
- Largest customer card base in the country
- Largest cash management operations
- Largest number of ATMs with over 2,500 ATMs in operation
- Over 250 Fast Track service centers
- Operates 136 full fledged branches
- The first fully automated bank in Bangladesh
- The first Mobile Financial Services/Mobile Banking provider in Bangladesh, that gives banking services to the rural and unbanked population
- Largest corporate donor in Bangladesh
- Established and maintains Bangladesh's largest scholarship program with an annual involvement of Tk 1.02 billion
 - 30,000 scholarships awarded every year
 - 90% of total scholarships in rural areas and 50% female awardees
 - Scholarship targets meritorious students in need of financial aid
 - Scholarship commitment is for the entire educational life of the student upto PhD



Dutch-Bangla Bank
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