



GDP GROWTH

BBS is confident it will cross 6pc this fiscal year

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HIGHER EDUCATION

Syllabus in Bangladesh must change, argues German educationist Dr Klotz

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AMERICAN RACISM

Singer Nat King Cole suffered abuse by white neighbours: New documentary

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River up for grabbing?

UNO claims 3 acres of 'land' in Sandhya river; local AL lawmaker gives consent

PINAKI ROY with JAHIRUL ISLAM JEWEL

The upazila nirbahi officer of Banaripara in Barisal has planted a signboard in the middle of the Sandhya river, marking out three acres of land for a "project".

The UNO, Syeed AZ Morshed Ali, did not try to hide what he was doing. "I have erected an enclosure in the river of my own accord as a char is emerging there and land grabbers might take it," he told The Daily Star.

However, no char (shoal) is seen there.

The UNO, who is responsible for protecting the rivers from being encroached upon, said he has not allocated "the land" to people as, he thinks, they would not be able to use it properly.

The signboard reads: "Senior citizens' park, rest house, recreation centre, food court, and a mosque and a temple".

The river seems to have been encroached upon with at least the consent of the local Awami League lawmaker.

"I have informed the DC [deputy commissioner] about the enclosure and also talked to the local MP about taking up a project and having it okayed by the government. The MP has agreed to it," UNO Syeed said, adding that the municipality would be able to do the job quickly.

The MP, Talukder Md Yunus of Barisal-2, told The Daily Star over the phone that the UNO had showed him the river stretch while they were crossing the

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PHOTO: ARIFUR RAHMAN

None other than the Banaripara upazila nirbahi officer places a signboard in the middle of the Sandhya river in Barisal claiming three acres of land.

PM, Khaleda call Modi

Hasina invites him to Bangladesh

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday telephoned Indian PM-elect Narendra Modi and congratulated him on his victory in Lok Sabha elections, wishing that the relations between the two countries will be strengthened further.

Inviting him to visit Bangladesh at his earliest convenience, she congratulated Modi on behalf of the people and the government of Bangladesh and the ruling Awami League, said Mahbubul Hoque Shakil, special assistant to the PM.

Meanwhile, BNP chief Khaleda Zia last night called Modi and congratulated him on BJP's landslide victory in the polls.

"The two leaders spoke for over five minutes from 10:15pm. Both the leaders hoped that the relations between Bangladesh and

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Target stronger ties with India

Dhaka to send team to Delhi to talk with new govt

REZAUL KARIM

To forge relations with Narendra Modi-led BJP government, Dhaka will send a high-powered delegation to New Delhi as a move to infuse momentum in India-Bangladesh ties.

Diplomatic sources said the delegation led by Foreign Minister AH Mahmood Ali and Gowher Rizvi, international affairs adviser to the prime minister, is expected to pay a two-day visit soon after the installation of Modi's cabinet.

The delegation will convey Dhaka's firm stance to address India's security concerns and irritants that stood in the way of maintaining friendly relations between the two countries.

Dhaka hopes for a quick resolution of outstanding issues like the Teesta water-sharing and land boundary agreements with the new government of India.

A bill to ratify the Land Boundary Agreement (LBA) remains pending in the Rajya Sabha, the upper house of Indian parliament, with a proposed deal on Teesta water-sharing still to be inked.

During the visit, the delegation will press the BJP-led government for resolving the issues including the LBA and Teesta water-sharing deal at the earliest.

The foreign ministry sources said Bangladesh wanted to be the first country to invite Modi to visit Bangladesh.

The Bangladesh delegation, during its probable visit to New Delhi early next month, will handover a formal invitation

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COMMENTS ON JUDICIARY Ex-CEC Huda summoned

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday asked former chief election commissioner ATM Shamsul Huda to appear before it on June 3 to explain his "derogatory" comments about the judiciary.

"All constitutional bodies, including the Election Commission and Public Service Commission, as well as the judiciary have been politicised, and incompetent people are getting important posts there," Huda said at a seminar on political parties and democracy in Bangladesh organised by the Centre for Policy Dialogue in the capital.

The HC bench of Justice Quazi Reza-Ul Hoque and Justice ABM Altaf Hossain also issued a contempt of court rule on him.

In the suo moto rule, it asked Huda, who had led the EC in holding a widely acceptable national

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'ABDUCTION' OF 2 BNP LEADERS Tareque Sayeed faces case in Comilla

Court asks why 2 ex-Rab men won't be charged with N'ganj murders; Rana remanded

STAR REPORT

Lt Col Tareque Sayeed Mohammad, one of the three ex-Rab officials arrested for their alleged involvement in the seven murders in Narayanganj, was sued yesterday for abducting two BNP leaders in Comilla.

Saiful Islam alias Hiru, former lawmaker and president of Laksham upazila BNP, and Humayun Kabir Parvez, president of Laksham municipal BNP, went missing on November 27 last year.

Four other Rab men were also accused in the case filed by Humayun's father Rangu Mia with the Senior Judicial Magistrate's Court in Comilla.

They are Rab-11 Comilla Company Commander Maj Shahed Hasan Raji, Rab Deputy Assistant Director Shahjahan Ali, and sub-inspectors Kazi Sultan Ahmed and Ashit Kumar Roy.

Family members of the missing BNP leaders claimed that the Rab personnel led by Tareque had abducted the two for "money".

At the court premises yesterday, Saiful's wife Farida Islam said she along with her daughter Mashrufa Islam and other family members met Tareque in Narayanganj a day after her husband went missing.



Tareque Sayeed

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Body found 9 days after abduction

Cops-abductors gunfight during body recovery

STAR REPORT

Police yesterday recovered the bullet-hit body of a businessman in Cox's Bazar, nine days after his abduction allegedly by a local criminal gang.

In another incident, a schoolboy of Dhaka was rescued by locals in Madaripur on Saturday evening while his abductors were allegedly trying to kill him for kidneys.

Mahfuzur Rahman, officer-in-charge of Cox's Bazar Sadar Police Station, told The Daily Star that Azizul Haque Arzu was abducted on May 9 from Pahartoli area, where he runs a restaurant. The same day, Azizul's brother Mujibul Haque filed a case with the police station accusing a local gang known as "Shifat Bahini" of the abduction. Victim's family alleged that Shifat runs a local crime ring, which abducts people for ransoms.

They believed the gang abducted and killed Azizul, 35, on suspicion that he had been working as a source of the law enforcement agencies.

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