



WITH TODAY'S ISSUE

A Weekly Publication of The Daily Star

the STAR

stories behind the news

ALSO A MUSICIAN'S SOUL

Colleagues reminisce about late writer Humayun Ahmed's musical creations

PAGE 10

RIGHT TO CHOOSE DEATH

Backing the bill on assisted dying, Hawking says he once tried to commit suicide

PAGE 9

Malaysian plane 'shot down'

All 295 people on board feared dead as jet crashes in Ukraine; pro-Russia rebels blamed

AGENCIES

A Malaysian airliner was "brought down" over eastern Ukraine yesterday, reportedly killing all 295 people aboard and sharply raising the stakes in a conflict between Kiev and pro-Moscow rebels in which Russia and the West back opposing sides.

Ukraine accused "terrorists" -- militants fighting to unite eastern Ukraine with Russia -- of shooting down the Malaysia Airlines Boeing 777 with a heavy, Soviet-era SA-11 ground-to-air missile as it flew from Amsterdam to Kuala Lumpur.

Leaders of the rebel Donetsk People's Republic denied any involvement, although around the same time their military commander said his forces had downed a much smaller Ukrainian transport plane. It would be their third such kill this week.

There was no sign of survivors at the crash site near the rebel-held town of Shaktarsk in the Donetsk region, where an AFP reporter saw dozens of severely mutilated corpses strewn through the smouldering wreck of the decimated airliner.

Debris stretched for kilometres in the area near the Russian border, with the jet's tail marked with the Malaysian Airlines insignia laying in a corn field, and insurgent fighters and fire trucks nearby.

Russian news agency Itar-Tass cited a Ukrainian aviation official as saying no one had survived.

Malaysia Airlines announced on Twitter the loss of the Boeing 777 carrying 280 passengers and 15 crew, which had been expected in the Malaysian capital around 6:00am on Friday (2200 GMT Thursday).

The Independent wrote: nine Britons, 23 US citizens and 80 children were reportedly among those killed when the passenger jet crashed. AFP added that four French nationals and several Dutch were confirmed to have been on board the doomed flight.

The disaster comes just months after Malaysia's Flight MH370 disappeared on March 8 with 239 on board. The plane diverted from its Kuala Lumpur to

SEE PAGE 17 COL 2



An emergencies ministry member walks at a site of a Malaysia Airlines Boeing 777 plane crash near the settlement of Grabovo in Donetsk region of Ukraine yesterday. Inset, a part of the wreckage of the passenger jet. PHOTO: REUTERS

Swindled by bankers

Anti-graft body to sue 11 Prime Bank officials around Tk 93cr embezzlement

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Eleven officials of Prime Bank swindled Tk 92.65 crore out of depositors, creating fake loan recipients, in yet another blow for the country's under-pressure banking sector.

The scam surfaced as the Anti-Corruption Commission yesterday approved a charge sheet against the now suspended 11 officials, including its vice-president HM Zakir Hossain, and 19 traders in this connection.

A top ACC official said the swindlers, in connivance with the traders, misappropriated the money from the bank's Islamic banking division at the capital's Dilkusha between 2006 and 2012.

Quoting the case statement, the ACC official said the bankers arranged the loans in the name of fake loan recipients and later withdrew the money by using the bank accounts of the traders.

The latest disclosure highlights the lack of monitoring in the banking sector, which has recently been hit by several high profile scandals.

However, the financial felony has so far

SEE PAGE 17 COL 4



Ex-chairman in thick of things

Finds central bank probe into BASIC Bank plundering

REJAUL KARIM BYRON and MD FAZLUR RAHMAN

Former BASIC Bank chairman Abdul Hye Bacchu illegally influenced all activities of the state-owned lender, leaving the once-sound bank in a rickety state, revealed a report of Bangladesh Bank.

The central bank report, which also contains the findings of the observer deployed at the bank for stopping gross irregularities, outlined how the

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1



A job well done

BNP's criticism of it is pathetic

MAHFUZ ANAM

When a government indulges in habitual cacophony of self praise on anything and everything it does, it runs the risk of failing to be lauded when something praise worthy happens. A case in point is the latest judgment by the Netherlands-based Permanent Court of Arbitration (PCA) on demarcating our maritime boundary vis a vis our by far the more significant neighbour of the two that we have. Once again the significance of this very important judgment is being lost to the public in the drumbeat of exaggerated, meaningless, highly rhetorical and sycophantic praise mainly directed at the PM just to gain her favour, not to serve, we are afraid, any national purpose.

The irony is that there is a lot to praise the government for, and yet not enough serious comments have been forthcoming other than some articles in a select number of newspapers. This has happened simply because people have no patience for the ruling party's propaganda and the expert observers are loath to say anything where the government's noise-machine takes centre stage.

And yet it would be a disservice to the

SEE PAGE 14



A Jewish man takes part in a demonstration in front of the White House in Washington, DC on Wednesday to protest Israel's deadly bombing of Gaza. PHOTO: AFP

Kids killed while playing

First-hand account of Gaza port strike discloses massacre

THE GUARDIAN ONLINE

The first projectile hit the sea wall of Gaza City's little harbour just after four o'clock. As the smoke from the explosion thinned, four figures could be seen running, ragged silhouettes, legs pumping furiously along the wall. Even from a distance of 200 metres, it was obvious that three of them were children.

Jumping off the harbour wall, they turned on to the beach, attempting to cross the short distance to the safety of the Al-Deira hotel, base for many of the journalists covering the Gaza conflict.

They waved and shouted at the watching journalists as they passed a little collection of brightly coloured beach tents, used by bathers in peacetime.

It was there that the second shell hit the beach, those firing apparently adjusting their fire to target the fleeing survivors. As it exploded, journalists standing by the terrace wall shouted: "They are only children."

In the space of 40 seconds, four boys who had been playing hide and seek among fishermen's shacks on the wall were dead. They were aged between seven and 11; two were named Mohammad, one Zakaria and the youngest Ahd. All were members of the extended Bakr family.

Three others who were injured made it to the hotel: Hamad Bakr, SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

ISRAEL LAUNCHES GROUND ASSAULT -- PAGE 9

Credit Rating of MBL AA-

Credit Rating Information and Services Limited (CRISL) has reaffirmed the Long Term rating of Mercantile Bank Limited to 'AA-' (pronounced as double A minus) and Short Term rating to 'ST-2' based on financials up to December 31, 2013 and other relevant qualitative and quantitative information.

Surveillance rating 2013	Surveillance rating 2012	Remarks/definition
Long Term : AA-	Long Term : AA-	The Long Term Rating ('AA-') implies that Banks rated in this category are adjudged to be of high quality, offer higher safety and have high credit quality. This level of rating indicates a corporate entity with a sound credit profile and without significant problems. Risks are modest and may vary slightly from time to time because of economic conditions.
Short Term : ST-2	Short Term : ST-2	The Short Term rating ('ST-2') indicates high certainty of timely repayment. Liquidity factors are strong and supported by good fundamental protection factors. Risk factors are very small. CRISL also placed the Bank with 'Stable Outlook' in surveillance rating 2013.

MBL thanks its all valued stakeholders for making it happen. We are upbeat of further upswing of rating in future.

বাংলা ব্যাংক
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