



WITH TODAY'S ISSUE

LIFE style



HIS 'MADDEST' DREAMS

Shah Rukh Khan wants to make a film that the world would be proud of

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MALIKI 'FORCED OUT'

Iraq's embattled PM looks to have lost job as president asks a rival to form govt

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Shady houses along highway

Touts, unscrupulous land officials out to make most of acquisition money for Dhaka-Tangail road widening project

MIRZA SHAKIL, Tangail

The undulating views along the Dhaka-Tangail highway are usually blocked by various small factories. But the recently added tin-sheds here and there prove to be no less damaging to a landscape of soothing green.

Long but crammed rows of small tin-sheds have sprung up, mushroom-like, erratically on croplands and water bodies along the road that stretches from Chandra of Gazipur to Elenga of Tangail.

The construction materials are cheap and the hastily built rooms are too stuffy and small for anyone to live in. One cannot but wonder why there are such constructions galore on lands that have already been earmarked for acquisition by the government.

The Roads and Highways Department (RHD) has taken up the Joydevpur-Chandra-Tangail-Elenga highway project in April 2013 to widen the existing 70-kilometre stretch of the road into a four-lane highway primarily to improve communication between Tangail and Gazipur districts and the rest of the country. Under the project the government will acquire 35.433 hectares of land from Mirzapur upazila in Tangail and Kaliakair upazila in Gazipur.

As the land acquisition process for the project has got underway, a section of landowners and brokers has taken to building these redundant structures only to realise undue compensation from the government, said Rana Priyo Barua, executive engineer of RHD in Tangail.

"As the government pays compensation separately for a piece of land and dwelling houses in it, people hastily build whatever structure they can to claim more compensation than they really deserve," said Barua.

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People have built rows of corrugated iron sheet houses on the edge of the Dhaka-Tangail highway in the hope of getting compensation before work on the expansion of the highway begins. Some have even rented land to build such structures. The photo was taken at Dherua of Mirzapur. Another photo on page 2.

PHOTO: MIRZA SHAKIL

BROADCAST POLICY

Inu plays down concerns

Clarifies what broadcasters can and can't do

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The electronic media can broadcast incidents of chaos, mutiny and unlawful acts of any member of the armed forces or law enforcement agencies without instigating violence or demeaning the entire force, Information Minister Hasanul Haq Inu said yesterday.

Defending the new broadcast policy, Inu said it had been formulated to help the electronic media flourish on its own and reduce government's control over it.

"The broadcast policy is a guideline ... It is not authoritarian. It is not a law and it does not have any provision for punishment. The claim that the policy intends to strangle the media is completely baseless and imaginary," he said at a crowded press conference at the PID conference room.

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Advertisers also wary of policy

HASAN JAHID TUSHER

Amid serious concerns from media professionals over the National Broadcast Policy-2014, advertising agencies fear the sector will be badly affected if the policy is implemented.

The policy for the electronic media has at least 31 do's and don'ts for the advertisers, detailed in the fourth chapter, which bans any ads by companies not having clearance certificates from the authorities concerned. Advertisers must also have permission to use any copyrighted song in advertisements.

Nationally important monuments and establishments such as the Shaheed Minar, the National Mausoleum and Parliament cannot be displayed in advertising any product.

"We have numbers of objections against the policy that we want to discuss with the independent commission after it is formed," said Ramendu Majumder, president of Advertising Agencies Association of Bangladesh.

Most of the association's suggestions have been left out in the policy, he told The Daily Star.

Under the policy, television and radio stations cannot incorporate, directly or indirectly, any image of or reference to Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and other national leaders, the Liberation War, the Language Movement, the mass upsurge and the Independence Day in any commercial advertisement.

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RMG export fell in July

Last year's political unrest, industrial disasters key factors

REFAYET ULLAH MIRDHA

The country's garment exports fell in July from a year earlier mainly due to the lack of retailer confidence following political crises and industrial disasters last year.

In the first month of the current fiscal year, the export of woven items declined by 4.14 percent to \$1.21 billion compared with the same month last year, according to data from Export Promotion Bureau (EPB).

Bangladesh's garment industry performed well even in the global financial crisis in 2007 and 2008 with higher exports of basic garment items worldwide.

But in August 2012, exports of woven items declined by 12 percent and knitwear products by 24 percent.

The declining trend is the impact of last year's prolonged political unrest and industrial disasters that dented the

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NEWS ANALYSIS

INDIGENOUS PEOPLE

War role ignored, now the existence

SHAKHAWAT LITON

Our constitution is a product of the historic War of Liberation in 1971. Alongside Bangalees, indigenous people living in the plains and hills had actively participated in the war.

Unfortunately, their contribution was not recognised in the constitution framed in 1972. The constitution had glorified the unity and solidarity of only the Bangalee nation in the nine-month long bloody war in order to promote Bangalee nationalism. It had no mention of indigenous people.

About Bangalee nationalism, Article 9 of the 1972 constitution said: "The unity and solidarity of the Bangalee nation, which, deriving its identity from its language and culture, attained sovereign and independent Bangladesh through a united and determined struggle in the war of independence, shall be the basis of Bangladeshi nationalism."

The provision on Bangalee nationalism was, however, deleted from the constitution when the country's first military ruler Ziaur Rahman replaced it with Bangladeshi nationalism in 1978 following the violent change of government in August 1975.

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NEW TRUCE HOLDS

Life stirs in Gaza

AFP, Gaza City

Israel and Hamas yesterday stuck to a 72-hour ceasefire in Gaza as Egyptian mediators launched fresh talks with negotiators aimed at securing a permanent cessation of hostilities.

Quiet returned to the enclave from midnight (2100 GMT on Sunday), the fruit of days of Egyptian-brokered mediation to stem violence which has killed 1,939 Palestinians and 67 on the Israeli side since July 8.

More than 12 hours into the truce, there were no reports of violations on either side and signs of life emerged on the streets of the war-torn coastal enclave which is home to 1.8 million Palestinians.

Shops and businesses opened their doors and

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FRESH AGITATION

BNP now for issue based programmes

RASHIDUL HASAN

BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia has opted for going soft on the government for now, according to sources in her party.

Instead of a tough anti-government movement for a fresh election under a non-party administration, the party will wage issue-based movements as its various tiers are still weak and many leaders and activists are facing criminal cases or behind bars.

After meetings with the BNP national standing committee on Sunday and chiefs of the party-led 20-party alliance last night, Khaleda finalised two programmes on Israeli offensive on Gaza and the national broadcast policy.

The opposition alliance will stage a silent procession carrying black flags across the country on August 16 condemning the killing of Palestinians and a

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The strong current of the Padma flows over a steel drum. Locals anchored the drum and a buoy to mark the spot where many earlier suspected Pinak-6 had come to rest under water. Inset, the shore at Mawa devoid of the crowd that had been there for over a week to see salvage operations.

PHOTO: STAR

Pinak-6 search abandoned

Families of people missing in launch disaster disappointed

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Pinak-6 is apparently lost forever. After an eight-day search, the rescuers yesterday packed up and left, disappointing families of the missing.

Declaring the search operation abandoned, Saiful Hasan Badal, deputy commissioner of Munshiganj, told reporters, "We have done everything we could but we could not find the sunken launch."

"We think there is no further scope for continuing the search operation. We have decided to call off the operation considering all aspects, including bad weather," said the DC at press briefing at Mawa Rest House around 11:00pm.

He said scouring the surrounding districts would continue for the victims who the authorities now assume dead. Police forces in all downstream districts and the coast guard have been asked to be on the lookout for bodies, he said.

At least 62 people are still missing. The number of the missing was fixed based on relatives' claims before the information centre set up by the district administration at Mawa.

Shipping Minister Shajahan Khan told BBC Bangla service that they had abandoned the search since there was no chance of finding identifiable bodies. "We are calling it off. If we pull it [the launch] out now, there might be some bodies inside but they would not be identifiable," he said.

He said the purpose of the salvage operations was to provide the families with the bodies of their loved ones but that situation has changed.

The bodies that would have been recovered would be

RELATED STORY ON PAGE 16

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