

## 'THE PIANIST' OF SYRIA

In starving Yarmuk camp, a pianist lifts hope amid devastation

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## FIGHTING EBOLA

Preparedness is the key to prevent the virus from spreading

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## ADIVASIS AND OF CONSTITUTION

An argument on why we need to make space in our charter for indigenous people

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# Target a complete electricity hub

## Govt approves largest ever investment proposal for coal-based project near Maheshkhali

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government yesterday approved the country's biggest ever investment project of \$4.5 billion to set up a coal-fired power plant on Matarbari island near Maheshkhali.

The 1,200-megawatt power project is by far the costliest of its kind in the world, according to experts.

While around \$3 billion will be spent on the construction of the plant, the remaining funds will be needed for setting up a deep-sea terminal to facilitate import of coal; developing local infrastructure and township; installing a high voltage power line; and land resettlement, etc.

Japan International Cooperation Agency (Jica) will provide \$3.8 billion as soft loan for the project.

"The Ecneec today (yesterday) approved the single biggest project in the history of Bangladesh which includes a deep-sea port 30 feet above sea level,"

Planning Minister AHM Mustafa Kamal told reporters after a meeting of the Executive Committee of the National Economic Council (Ecneec) at the NEC auditorium.

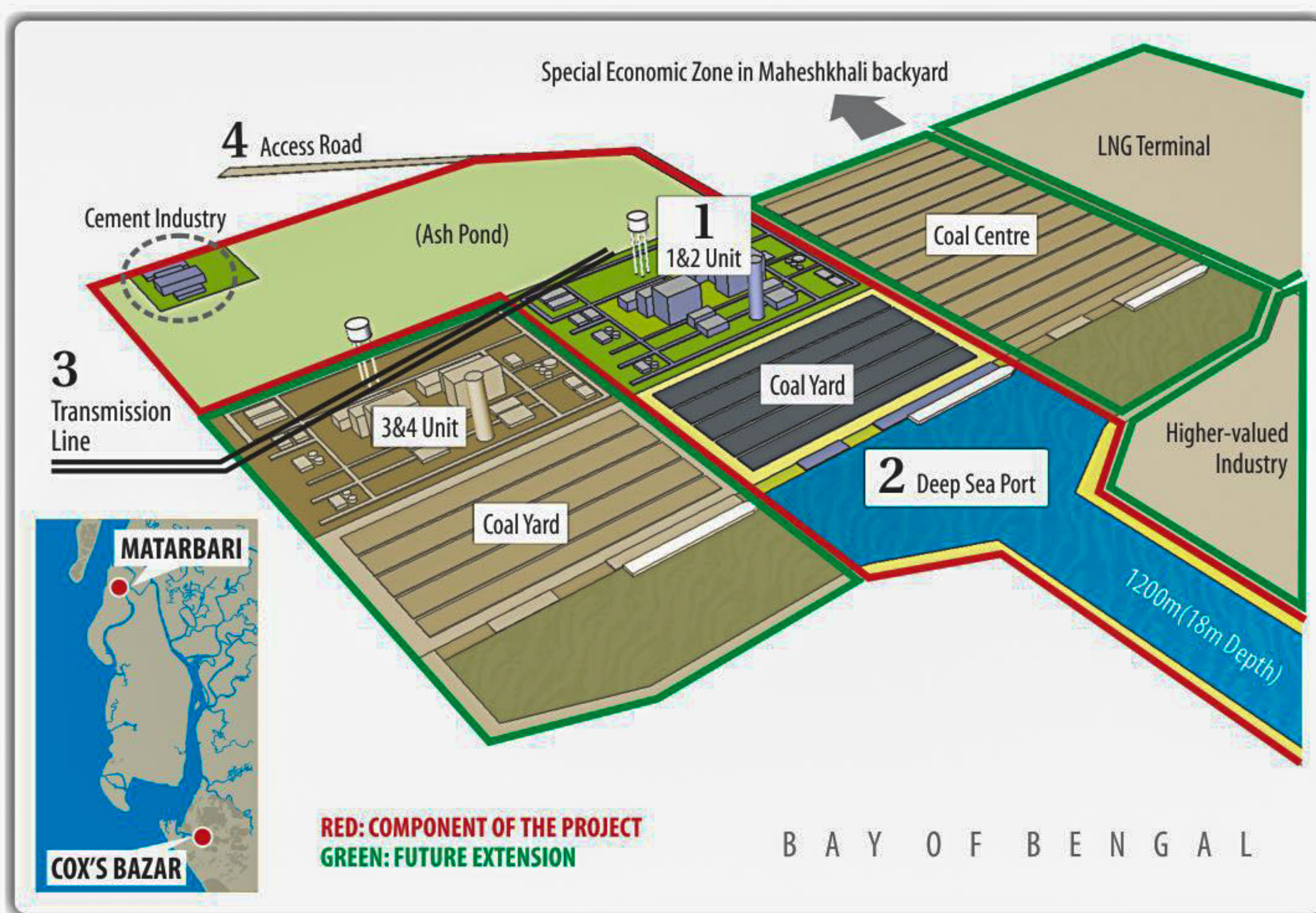
Though it will take till 2023 for full installation of the power plant, the planning minister hoped the plant would be able to start generating 600MW electricity by 2018.

Power from this plant is projected to cost nearly Tk 7 per kilowatt-hour when it begins commercial production in 2023. The cost is considered high in the present context.

Mustafa Kamal said it would be a comprehensive project with two units, each having 600MW generation capacity, and a township will be built with residential and non-residential facilities.

The minister said a buffer zone would be built in the deep-sea port for keeping imported coal. After

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## A close shave

### United Airways flight averts mid-air collision in Kolkata

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

An apparent mistake by an air traffic controller in Kolkata almost led to a mid-air collision between a United Airways Bangladesh aircraft and a Saudi Arabian Airlines plane in Kolkata on Monday.

Captain Ariful Islam of the United Airways aircraft said his plane came within the "visual distance" of the other aircraft. He had 148 passengers on board his MD 83 flying to Dhaka from Muscat.

"When my plane was about 270 miles off Dhaka and flying at an altitude of 33,000 feet in Kolkata airspace, the Kolkata Air Traffic Control told me to descend to 29,000 feet," the pilot told this newspaper yesterday.

As he started complying with the directive, the aircraft's TCAS (Traffic Collision Avoidance System) went off and alerted him. The sky was clear and he could see a plane approaching his aircraft just to his left.

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## Ashraf terms BNP a platform of evil forces

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP is not a political party, rather it is a platform of evil forces, Syed Ashrafur Islam, general secretary of the ruling Awami League and also the LGRD minister, said yesterday.

"We all have to resist this evil force to save the existence of Bangladesh and there will be no compromise on the issue," he said while addressing a discussion in front of Institution of Engineers in the capital.

Jubo League, youth wing of AL, organised the programme yesterday to mark the upcoming National Mourning Day.

Syed Ashraf also lambasted BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia for celebrating what he called a fake birthday on a day when

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## No action before enactment of law

### High-powered committee in a month to draft law for implementing nat'l broadcast policy, says Inu

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Information Minister Hasanul Haq Inu yesterday said the newly formulated National Broadcast Policy gave his ministry "no administrative jurisdiction" to take action against the electronic media.

"This is a guideline, not an act. So, it does not have legal effectiveness. A policy is needed to enact a law and form a commission for its execution," he told journalists following a meeting with the leaders of the Association of Television Channel Owners (Atco) at the information ministry.

He announced that a "high-powered" committee comprising representatives of all stakeholders would be formed in a month to prepare a draft of the national broadcast law.

A search committee, which too will consist of all the stakeholders, will be formed soon to select chairman and members of an independent commission, Inu said. "The act and the commission will regulate the electronic media, not the information ministry."

Atco, an organisation of private television and radio stations, expressed concern over some points of the policy and urged the minister to remove those. It also urged the minister not to implement the policy without first forming an independent commission with "qualified, neutral and non-partisan persons".

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## 7-MURDER IN N'GANJ

### Ivy's friend knows better

#### Shamim Osman tells media after his testimony

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Awami League lawmaker Shamim Osman yesterday claimed that the quizzing of a friend of Narayanganj Mayor Selina Hayat Ivy would unravel facts about the seven murders.

"Fifteen days before the incident, Ivy had a heated argument with Nazrul [slain Narayanganj city councillor] over awarding a city corporation work to Abu Sufian, a friend of Ivy. Nazrul strongly protested it," said Narayanganj-4 AL lawmaker Shamim, a staunch political rival of Ivy.

He was talking to journalists at the Secretariat after his deposition to a government-formed committee probing the seven murders committed in Narayanganj more than three months back.

Shamim's statement came a day after Ivy told reporters

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## Appeal for GAZA

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Multimedia organisation Drik will organise a fund-raising event for the Gaza people through sales of paintings, photographs and other items in an effort to stand by the victims of the Israeli attacks.

Titled "Appeal for Gaza", the event will be

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## Drug custodian was careless

### Full verdict on toxic Paracetamol syrup also observes law to be incomplete, soft

CHAITANYA CHANDRA HALDER and EMRAN HOSSAIN

Many lives could have been saved had the Directorate General of Drug Administration acted efficiently in 1991, said the verdict in a drug adulteration trial.

The Daily Star has got a copy of the full judgment in which an owner and two employees of Adflame Pharmaceuticals were jailed last month for producing tainted Paracetamol syrup.

This is the first-ever conviction for drug adulteration in the country.

A study by Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University (BSMMU) suggests as many as 2,700 children died from adulterated Paracetamol syrup between 1982 and 1992.

But it is difficult to determine how many lives were lost between 1991 and 1992, thanks to an unavailability of documents. The newspaper has traced about a dozen families which lost children in 1992.

In July 1991, the then DGDA drug superintendent, Abul Khair Chowdhury, had collected samples of several syrup brands from Shishu Hospital, and had them tested at the Mohakhali government laboratory the same month. One of the tested samples was Adflame-produced Flammadol of batch No 06090. The test found nothing suspicious.

But in another test a year later, Flammadol of the same batch was proven tainted with toxic diethylene glycol.

Regarding the 1991 test, the then Shishu Hospital Director Brig Moksul Hossain Chowdhury was quoted in the judgment as saying, "Toxicity of the medicine was not examined."

The drug was not tested for determining whether it contained the substance causing deaths, he added.

The 1991 test had come after child kidney specialist Dr Mohammad Hanif rang the alarm over adulterated drugs.

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