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WITH TODAY'S ISSUE
LIFE
style

TOFAIL ON TICFA
It's "meaningless" without duty-free access for Bangladeshi items to the US
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'RED LIGHTS FLASHING'
David Cameron warns of looming second global crash
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Navy rescues 600 fortune seekers

Boat carrying Myanmar flag seized off St Martin's island while trafficking them to Malaysia; 14 held

MOHAMMAD ALI ZINNAT, from Cox's Bazar

From a large trawler adrift in the Bay of Bengal, Bangladesh Navy yesterday rescued over 600 overseas job seekers, believed to have been lured by human traffickers into a sea voyage to Malaysia, according to the navy.

Acting on a tip-off, navy ship Durjoy intercepted the trawler 50 nautical miles southeast of St Martin's Island around 2:30pm, said Lt Commander Mostafa Kamal, who is in charge of the island's naval base and was on board Durjoy.

The 600, including 20 women and children, were of Bangladesh and Myanmar nationalities, Lt Commander Kamal said.

Identities of the rescued could not be known immediately.

The navy also detained 14 crew members of the wooden boat that was carrying the Myanmar flag.

"We expect to reach the shore in the early morning tomorrow [Tuesday] and the rescued will be handed over to Teknaf police so that they could be

sent home," said Lt Commander Kamal.

Mukhter Hossain, officer-in-charge of Teknaf Police Station, told The Daily Star last night that the rescued persons will be handed over to Patenga Police Station of Chittagong today.

This appears to be the largest number of people rescued from the hands of traffickers in the Bay.

As many as 313 fortune seekers were rescued from another boat far away from the St Martin's Island by the navy in June this year.

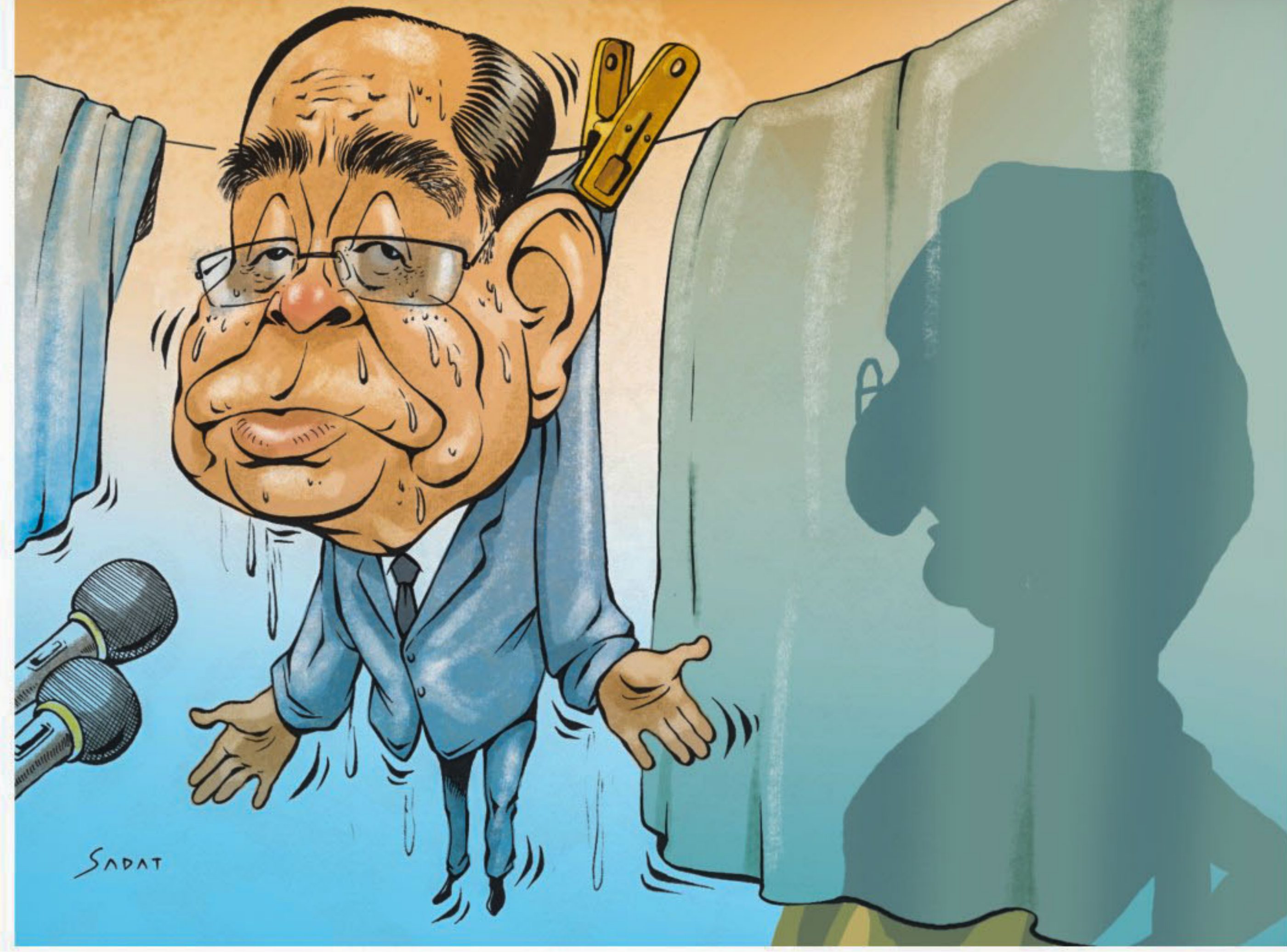
During a raid on houses in the island, 220 people were rescued by police earlier this year.

There have also been reports that traffickers kidnap people and put them on Malaysia-bound boats. Teknaf police rescued two school-going kids last Saturday.

The fortune seekers are often held captive in Thai jungles and are released only after their families pay a ransom between Tk 2 lakh and Tk 2.5 lakh.

It takes about a week to reach Thailand from Bangladesh coast, according to victims rescued

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PM's adviser lies

Blames media to defend his bloopers

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Prime Minister's Political Affairs Adviser HT Imam once again misinformed the media yesterday when he claimed that he took the premier's consent to hold a press conference to "clarify" his recent controversial statement.

Just when he was briefing reporters in the morning, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at a meeting with her cabinet colleagues said Imam didn't take her consent.

Several cabinet members told The Daily Star that Hasina made the comment when some ministers sought her views on Imam's recent remarks at a Chhatra League programme where he assured the activists of help once they overcame the hurdle of written test at BCS exams.

His other comments at the programme four days

ago also drew sharp reactions from different quarters.

In his 50-minute speech, he narrated how the Awami League used the administration to hold the January-5 polls.

The Daily Star has an audio copy of his speech.

Since making the bloopers, Imam tried to contact Hasina but failed. He even went to the Gono Bhaban, but an irked Hasina didn't grant him an audience, said sources in the AL and the Prime Minister's Office.

Imam yesterday blamed a section of the media for publishing "partial" and "distorted" version of his speech to undermine him and mislead people.

But his explanations were full of contradiction. He tried to justify his November 12 statement, saying he had advised BCL men to study hard for BCS exams.

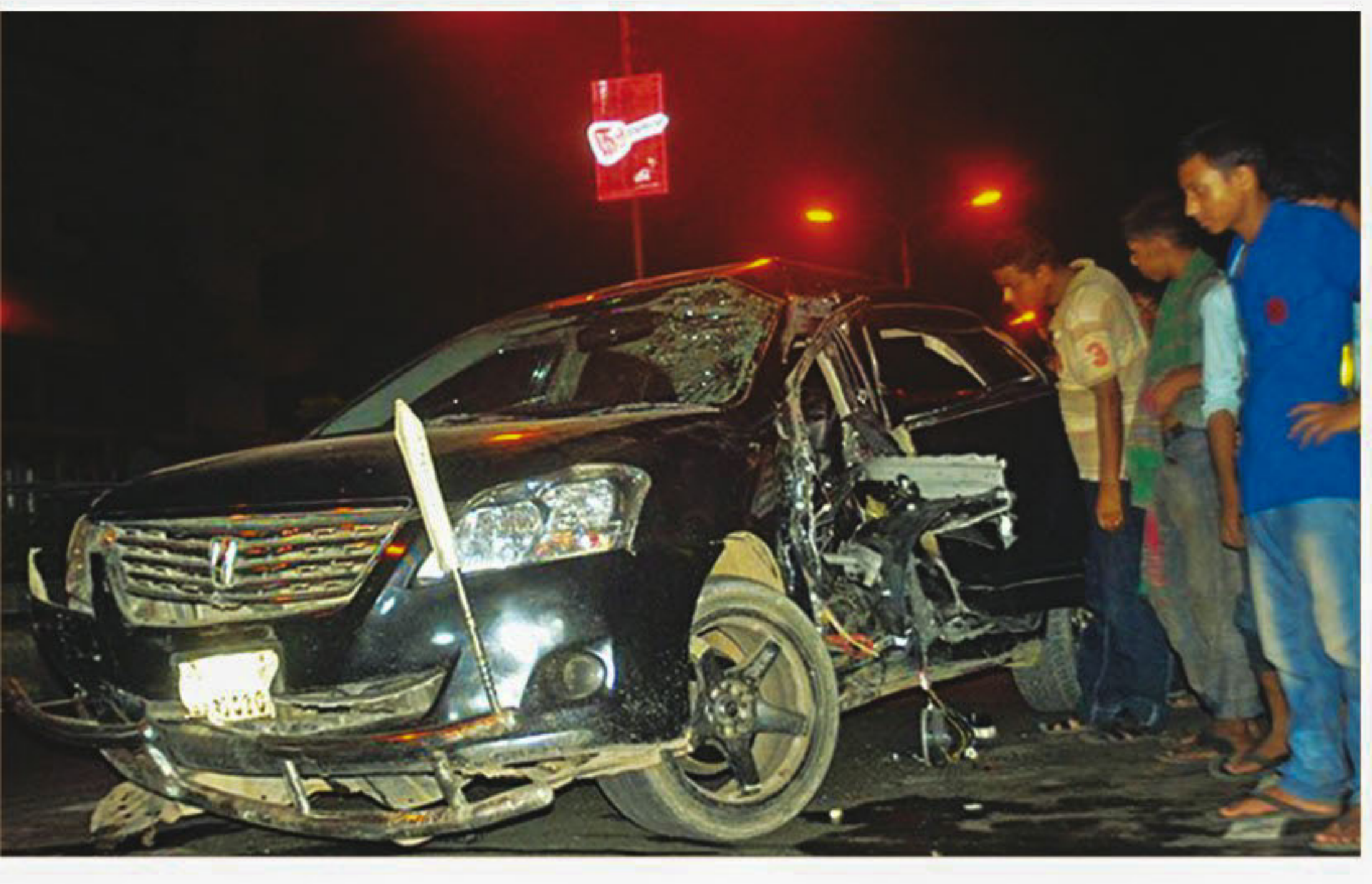
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CABINET MEETING
HT Imam comes under fire
HASAN JAHID TUSHER

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and many of her cabinet colleagues yesterday came down hard on HT Imam for his recent controversial comment that the government used the administration for holding the January 5 polls.

In a cabinet meeting at the secretariat, the PM was furious that Imam was using her name to clarify his position on the comment, said meeting sources.

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The smashed car Jannati Hossain was driving near the Mohakhali flyover in the capital. The accident on July 11 claimed the life of her friend and business partner Mostamsir Ashraf. Jannati, now accused in a murder case, has been behind bars for the last four months.

Accident turns 'murder'

Case changes course as family of car crash victim includes heavyweight witnesses; businesswoman denied bail for 4 months

JAMIL MAHMUD

She had a passion for cars since childhood. Now 23, she owns an automobile modification company and four other business houses.

Ironically, the event that turned the young entrepreneur's life upside down was also related to a car.

Jannati Hossain landed in jail in July after the car she was driving slammed into a parked police van near Mohakhali flyover. The accident killed her business partner and friend Mostamsir Ashraf, who was sitting next to her.

Police sued her for reckless driving.

Ten days later, Mostamsir's family lodged a murder case against Jannati, her brothers Jubair and Junaid, father Delwar Hossain and husband Raymen Siddique.

The allegation was serious -- the five had murdered Mostamsir in a planned

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Jannati Hossain

BURDWAN BLAST NIA hands over list of suspects

M ABUL KALAM AZAD and M RAHMAN

Visiting Indian investigators yesterday handed over to intelligence agencies in Dhaka a list of suspected Bangladeshi militants believed to be behind the October 2 Burdwan blast.

They also sought Bangladesh's help in capturing the suspects.

"We will work in a coordinated manner so that no militant outfit can emerge and carry out organised activities on either side of the border," Joint Commissioner of Dhaka Metropolitan Police Monirul Islam told journalists after meeting with Indian National Investigation Agency (NIA) officials at

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"City Bank – Best Consumer Internet Bank in Bangladesh"

HELD IN MALAYSIA 21 Bangladeshis remanded for illegal entry

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Malaysian authorities yesterday remanded 24 foreigners, including 21 Bangladeshis, for trying to enter the country illegally.

Officials at Malaysian Maritime Enforcement Agency (MMEA) on Saturday night detained 21 Bangladeshis, two Indonesians and an Afghan from near the country's southern Tanjung Sepat area under Selenagor province, Malaysian English Daily The Star reported yesterday.

The detainees were entering the country by a tugboat from Indonesia.

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Water lilies are in full bloom on the Shaplar Beel in Agailjhara upazila of Barisal. The national flower is seen miles across the lake, which attracts tourists from nearby districts. Some collect the flower to sell in markets. The photo was taken yesterday.

Dhaka Boat Club Limited extends its hearty felicitations to City Bank and its Chairman Mr. Rubel Aziz on this occasion. It's a testament to City Bank's embracing technology as the key differentiator.

We believe Internet Banking is the future of banking. We thank Mr. Rubel Aziz for envisioning that and for bringing the future to the present.

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