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'CHOOSE BEAUTIFUL'

The perception of beauty today discussed at a roundtable organised by The Daily Star and Dove

PAGE 20

FOLLOW-ON ON THE CARDS

Bangladesh struggle at 107/5 in first innings in reply to Pakistan's mammoth 557/8 declared

PAGE 18

All clear for land swap

Lok Sabha passes bill to ratify land boundary agreement; Modi phones Hasina to greet her

PALLAB BHATTACHARYA and REZAUL KARIM

Seeking to settle decades-old border issues with Bangladesh, the Indian Parliament yesterday unanimously passed a historic bill to operationalise the 1974 Land Boundary Agreement and its 2011 protocol.

Minutes after the bill's passage, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi spoke to Bangladesh PM Sheikh Hasina and described the bill's passage as a "historic milestone" in bilateral ties between the two countries.

"Spoke to Bangladesh PM Sheikh Hasina and conveyed my greetings to the people of Bangladesh on this landmark occasion," the

Indian PM said in a post on social networking site Twitter.

Earlier, showing rare unanimity, all 331 members present in the 542-strong Lok Sabha, the Lower House of parliament, voted for the bill.

As the bill got through, Modi walked up to the Opposition benches to thank leaders, including Congress Chief Sonia Gandhi and its leader in the Lok Sabha Mallikarjun Kharge, for their support.

Speaking on the bill, Indian External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj, who moved it, said the only issue yet to be settled with Bangladesh was water-sharing, primarily

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People of Garati enclave in Panchagarh Sadar upazila march in a joyful procession to the accompaniment of music and traditional Lathi Khela hailing the passage of LBA amendment bill in Indian parliament.

PHOTO: STAR



TOP QUOTE

"We will not be stateless any more... We will have our own

ABU BAKAR SIDDIQUE
AN ELDERLY INHABITANT OF AN INDIAN ENCLAVE IN NILPHAMARI, TOLD THE DAILY STAR YESTERDAY

A milestone in Indo-Bangla ties

PM hails India's ratification of land boundary deal

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday termed the passage of Land Boundary Agreement bill by Indian parliament a new milestone in the long-standing relationship between

SEE PAGE 17 COL 1



Modi's maiden visit likely next month

Officials in Dhaka, Delhi working on visit schedule

REZAUL KARIM

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi is likely to make his first official visit to Bangladesh in the first week of June, a highly placed diplomatic source in New Delhi told The Daily Star yesterday.

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Dream comes true

After decades of deprivation, enclave people getting their rights back through land deal implementation

STAR REPORT

They were the nowhere people -- men, women and children without a country, without a national identity.

They were the dwellers of enclaves -- pieces of land belonging to India but surrounded by Bangladeshi territory on all sides -- dotted along the India-

Bangladesh border in Kurigram, Lalmonirhat, Nilphamari and Panchagarh districts.

Trapped in the enclaves, locally known as Chhitmahals, for more than six decades, they had been denied of basic facilities like health, water, electricity, schooling and roads. Neither of the governments of the two countries

would take responsibilities for them. They had no voting rights and no legal support from any of the governments.

The parents had to forge documents to get their children admitted to local schools. They did not have birth, marriage or land registrations due to their

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Litchis, one of the much-awaited summer fruits, have hit the market in the capital. In this photo taken on Wednesday, a vendor sits near Baitul Mukarram Mosque with the fruit, bought from producers in Sonargaon of Naryanganj. He was selling a hundred litchis at Tk 800.

PHOTO: SK ENAMUL HAQ

CRIMINAL CHARGES Rajshahi city mayor suspended

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government yesterday suspended Rajshahi City Corporation

Bulbul Hossain Bulbul as he was charged in court with several criminal cases.

The Local Government Division of the LGRD ministry issued a circular on his suspension yesterday afternoon and sent it to the chief executive officer of the RCC.

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'Offence' same, action different

PARTHA PRATIM BHATTACHARJEE

"Equality before law" is recognised by the country's constitution as one of the fundamental rights of a citizen. But the Local Government Division under the LGRD ministry seems oblivious to it.

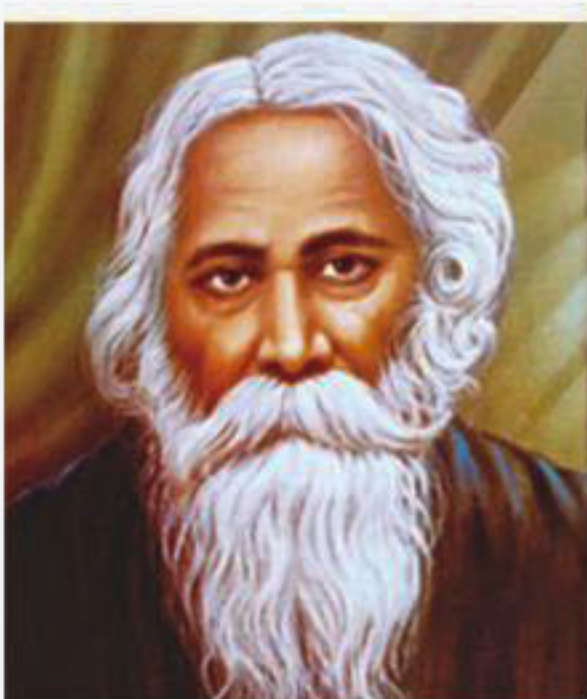
While enforcing the Local Government (City Corporation) Act, 2009, the division has all along been strict about the elected representatives backed by the BNP and Jamaat.

But things are different for the ruling Awami League-blessed representatives.

Yesterday, the Local Government Division suspended Mosaddek Hossain Bulbul from the mayoral post of Rajshahi City Corporation. He is charged in three cases, including that for the murder of police constable Siddhartha Sarker.

But Nur Hossain, the main accused in the sensational seven-murder case, is still the councillor of Ward 4 of Narayanganj City Corporation even after being charge-sheeted on April 8.

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Kabiguru's birthday today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The self-expression of God is in the variedness of creation; and our attitude towards the Infinite must in its expression also have variedness of individuality, ceaseless and unending. When a religion develops the ambition of imposing its doctrine on all mankind, it degrades itself into a tyranny and becomes a form of imperialism. This is why we find a ruthless method of fascism in religious matters prevailing in most parts of the world, trampling flat the expansion of the spirit of man under its insensitive heels.

This is an excerpt from Rabindranath Tagore's address at the Sri Ramakrishna Centenary Parliament of Religions, in March 1937.

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30 more graves found

Suspected to be of migrants; Thai PM seeks 3-nation talks on human trafficking; 50 police officers transferred

THE NATION/ANN

Another 30 graves suspected to be those of Rohingya migrants were found yesterday in an abandoned Muslim graveyard in Songkhla's Hat Yai district in Thailand.

Inspection of these graves is underway to find out whether there are bodies buried or if any of them belongs to the Rohingya people. A campsite suspected of holding

Rohingya people during transit before being trafficked was also found yesterday in Rattaphum district.

Meanwhile, Thai Prime Minister Prayut Chan-o-cha said his country is seeking a talk with the countries involved in the human trafficking -- including Malaysia and Myanmar.

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MORE STORIES ON PAGE 8
TRADE SLAVE THEN & NOW -- PAGE 16

WATCH OUT for PART V TOMORROW
Due to space constraints, today we are not running the part V of our special investigative series on human trafficking. We'll resume the series tomorrow.

Britain votes in high-stake polls

Outcome may define future of EU, Scotland

REUTERS, London

Britons yesterday voted in the tightest election for decades; one that could cause government gridlock, push the world's fifth-largest economy closer to leaving the European Union and stoke a second

attempt by Scotland to break away.

Final opinion polls showed Prime Minister David Cameron's Conservatives and Ed Miliband's opposition Labour Party almost in a dead heat, indicating neither will win enough seats for an outright

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I'M NOT PLASTIC
I'm more...