



THE ADIVASI QUESTION

Land is priceless but
lives are not

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GIRL SUMMIT ANNIVERSARY

There's a lot to be done to tackle
girl rights violation in Bangladesh

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ARE WE ALONE?

Hawking believes there's no
bigger question in science

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Extortion again?

AL has 'no fund' to observe National
Mourning Day at grassroots level

PARTHA PRATIM BHATTACHARJEE

Disaster Management and Relief Minister Mofazzal Hossain Chowdhury Maya yesterday opposed a proposal to stop extortion by party men in the name of observing the National Mourning Day programmes, sources said.

Maya, also general secretary of the Dhaka city Awami League, even sought to know where the party activists would get the money to observe the programme if the party didn't contribute.

He also said if party men were barred from extorting money, they would have to come to party leaders for it, added the sources.

The issue of extortion was raised at a joint meeting between AL's city unit and its associate bodies at party chief Sheikh Hasina's Dhanmondi office to chalk out the programmes to mark the 40th death anniversary of Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman on August 15.

AL General Secretary Syed Ashraf Islam yesterday convened the meeting that decided to observe the occasion with 40 days' programmes.

In recent years, banners, festoons, posters and archways popped up all over the city ahead of August 15 to promote party men who spent money on them, rather than mourning Bangabandhu, who was assassinated with most of his family members on that day in 1975.

Besides, distributing food among poor people on the day has become a norm.

A day's programme in a city ward costs about Tk 10 lakh. There are 49 thana, 103 ward and 17 union units under the city AL and each of these units holds several programmes on the occasion.

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TIGER'S WHISKERS: Bangladesh's boy wonder Mustafizur Rahman is the toast of his teammates on the opening day of the first Test at Zahur Ahmed Chowdhury Stadium in Chittagong yesterday. The 19-year-old pace bowler marked his Test debut with a four-wicket burst as the Tigers bowled the visitors out for 248, an achievement in itself for a team languishing near the bottom of the Test table.

PHOTO:
ANURUP KANTI DAS

Rony charged

Son of AL lawmaker lone accused in Eskaton
double murder; driver dropped from charge sheet

COURT CORRESPONDENT

Detectives yesterday pressed murder charges against Bakhtiar Alam Rony, son of an Awami League lawmaker, for shooting dead two persons in the capital on April 15.

The name of Rony's driver Imran Fakir was dropped from the charge sheet as his involvement in the killing was not found.

Sub-inspector of the Detective Branch of Police Dipak Kumar Das, also investigation officer in the case, submitted the charge sheet to the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's Court, Dhaka.

He prayed to the court to relieve Imran of the charges and consider his confessional statement as testimony.



Bakhtiar Alam Rony

The court will give its decision on August 13 if it will accept the charges. If the charges are accepted and proved, Rony might face capital punishment.

Rony, son of AL lawmaker and acting Mohila AL general secretary Pinu Khan, fired random shots in the air from his sport utility vehicle for "being frustrated over post-midnight traffic" on April 15, leaving a rickshaw puller and an auto-rickshaw driver dead on New Eskaton Road.

The incident didn't draw much attention at first. But as the media ran reports on Rony's involvement in the incident, it created a huge public outcry.

The victims' families were doubtful about getting justice. They thought that

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NEWS ANALYSIS

PM won; an opportunity lost?

SHAKHAWAT LITON

A few days back Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina demonstrated her political sagacity by rethinking her decision of making Syed Ashraf Islam a minister without portfolio. A week into removing him from the LGRD ministry, the premier gave Ashraf the public administration portfolio last Thursday.

Her decision to make Ashraf – the general secretary of the ruling Awami League – a minister without portfolio had triggered muted commotion and discomfort in and outside her camp. But Hasina has successfully reined in the situation from deteriorating further.

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Mustafiz show on

Tigers bowl out South Africa for 248

NAIMUL KARIM, from Chittagong

In the backdrop of a series of amazing ODI victories, Bangladesh's performance in Chittagong yesterday might not have left everyone at the edge of their seats.

But let's pause for a bit and try to grasp the intensity of the scenario.

Here was a side that had been repeatedly criticised and thwarted for their bowling attack in Test cricket. In fact, the last time Bangladesh bundled out a top-eight ranked side for a score below 250 was way back in October 2011, when the West Indies gave in for 244.

After that, the performance graph witnessed a downward trend with teams almost regularly posting scores above 500 against Bangladesh.

And so, when the most highly rated Test team in the world surrendered for a paltry 248 at the Zahur Ahmed Chowdhury Stadium yesterday, it was a sight to behold.

The most encouraging aspect for the hosts yesterday was perhaps the fact that there was no particular hero that could be credited for Bangladesh's

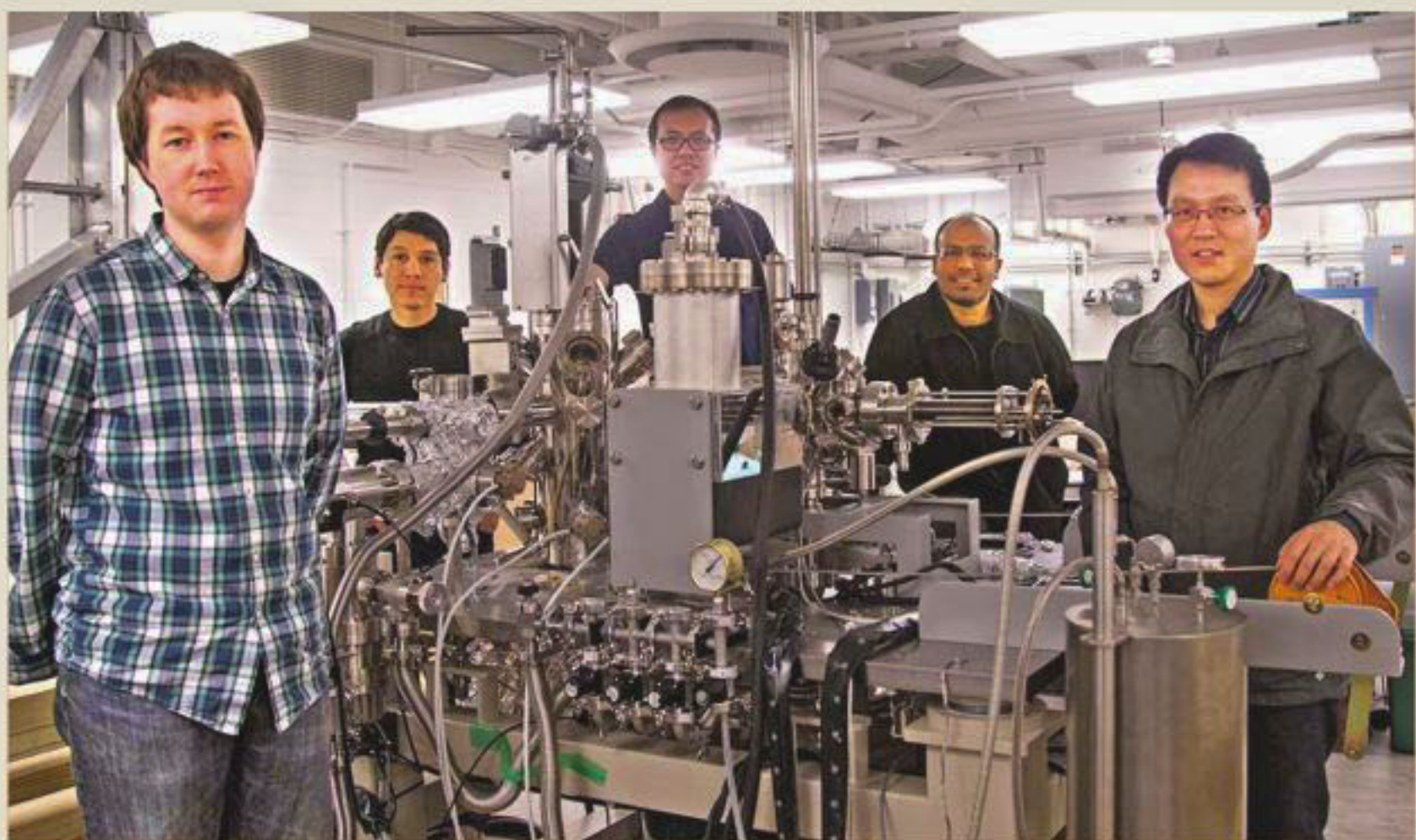
emphatic display. Yes, the wonder boy from the quiet corner of Satkhira, Mustafizur Rahman – who became the 78th player to don Bangladesh Test cap – did mesmerise everyone again with a brilliant four-wicket haul, but that effort would have gone down the drain without the pressure created from his pace-partner Mohammad Shahid.

The bowler bowled nine maidens in 17 overs and checked the run-flow at one end. His figures would have been much better had Imrul Kayes caught both the opportunities that came off his bowling in the slip cordon.

And then there was Jubair Hossain, whose loopy turners made life difficult for the visitors. His three wickets might have just included the tail, but ask the top-order batsmen and they will probably tell you that they were sweating bullets while facing the leg-spinner.

The Proteas just couldn't carry on with their partnerships; that was the story of the day. Apart from two half-century stands for the first two wickets, their batsmen couldn't do much on the slow and low Chittagong track.

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From left ... Ilya Belopolski, Daniel Sanchez, Guang Bian, corresponding author and team leader M Zahid Hasan, and Hao Zheng.

PHOTO: PRINCETON.EDU

Stunning DISCOVERY

Bangladeshi scientist leads research
that found massless particle

STAR REPORT

A Bangladeshi physicist of Princeton University led an international team to the discovery of an elusive massless particle theorised 85 years ago.

The particle could give rise to faster and more efficient electronics because

of its unusual ability to behave as matter and antimatter inside a crystal, said a news report published on the university website on the new research.

Proposed by the mathematician and physicist Hermann Weyl in 1929, Weyl fermions have been long sought by

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Death trap on highway

Second accident in 3
days on same spot in
Sirajganj; 5 killed

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Pabna

Five people, including three of a family, died early yesterday in yet another horror crash as bloodletting continues unabated on the west side of Bangabandhu Bridge.

A Chapainawabganj-bound bus collided head-on with an auto-rickshaw at Mulibari level crossing around 1:00 am, leaving all passengers and driver of the three-wheeler dead on the spot.

The deceased were identified as Razzak, 65, his daughter Rozina, 30, wife Momtaz, 45, Anwar Hossain, 25, and auto-rickshaw driver Arman, 30.

They hailed from different villages in Belkuchi upazila of Sirajganj.

Jakir Hossain, 37, a bus passenger, sustained injury in the accident, said Md Helal Uddin, OC of Bangabandhu Bridge West Zone Police Station.

He was taken to Sirajganj General Hospital, the OC added.

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INDIA'S RIVER-LINKING PROJECT

Concern over major rivers of Bangladesh

PINAKI ROY

Bangladeshi river experts and environmentalists expressed concern over India's fresh move to implement the controversial river linking project that will connect trans-boundary rivers and divert water to southern Indian states.

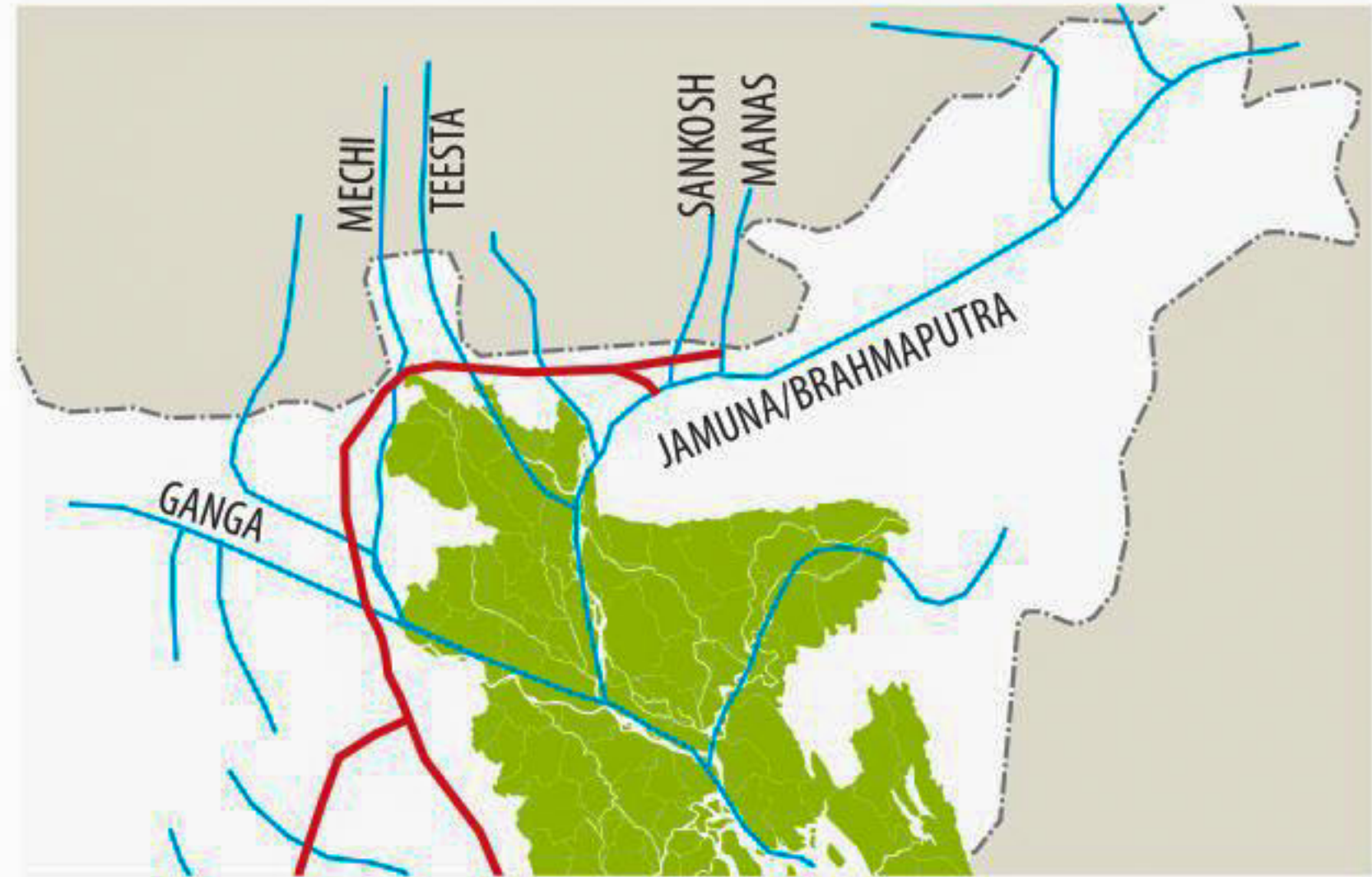
The project, if implemented, will diminish the water flow in Bangladesh's rivers like the Teesta, Jamuna and the Padma and affect the country's environment and economy, they say.

The issue came up again as different Indian media published reports, signalling Indian government's intent to go ahead with a grand plan of linking rivers across the country connecting Teesta-Ganga-Manas-Sankosh covering three Indian states – West Bengal, Assam and Bihar.

"Definitely it will reduce the water flow if they divert water from our common rivers," said Prof Ainun Nishat, hydrologists and former member of joint river commission.

Though Bangladesh and India share 54 common rivers, the upstream India is yet to communicate the matter with downstream Bangladesh.

PROPOSED INTER-BASIN WATER TRANSFER LINKS MANAS-SANKOSH-TEESTA-GANGA



Asked, Water Resources Minister Anisul Islam Mahmud said India has not communicated Bangladesh regarding the matter yet.

"I am yet to see the [media] report. But if it is true, we will send a letter asking them to explain the matter," he told The Daily Star last Wednesday.

Over the years, India has assured Bangladesh that it will not take any project that may be harmful for Bangladesh, the minister said.

Referring to media reports, Mir Sazzad Hossain, member of Bangladesh-India Joint Rivers

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