

**PROUD CONSTRUCTION PARTNER OF PADMA BRIDGE**



**SHAH CEMENT**

**AWARDED**

ASIA RESPONSIBLE ENTREPRENEURSHIP AWARD 2015

www.shahcement.com

**ORPHANAGE GRAFT SC clears way for trial of Khaleda**

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Supreme Court yesterday upheld a High Court order that had cleared the way for a lower court to continue trial proceedings of Zia Orphanage Trust corruption case against BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia.

A five-member bench of the Appellate Division of the SC headed by Chief Justice Surendra Kumar Sinha dismissed a petition filed by the BNP chief.

In the appeal, Khaleda challenged the HC order that rejected another plea, seeking to expunge the complainant's deposition from the case.

There is no legal bar to proceed with the trial of the BNP chief in the case at the lower court following the SC order, Anti-Corruption Commission lawyer Khurshid Alam Khan told The Daily Star.

SEE PAGE 11 COL 1



**A DIFFERENT DAY**

Visually-impaired children have a joyous day at Foy's Lake Amusement Park in Chittagong yesterday. To spread love everywhere, Srot, a youth-based voluntary organisation working with visually-impaired people, took 110 such children, who were mostly students, to the park on Valentine's Day.

PHOTO: ANURUP KANTI DAS



**Lord Avebury passes away**

ANSAR AHMED ULLAH

Lord Avebury, a strong advocate of war crimes trial in Bangladesh and co-chair of the Chittagong Hill Tracts Commission, passed away yesterday.

He was 87. Avebury, born Eric Reginald Lubbock, died peacefully in his south London home with his wife Lindsay and other family members by his side.

The longest-serving Liberal Democrat member of the House of Lords and veteran human rights campaigner had been suffering from blood cancer for more than a year.

Avebury, born on September 29, 1928, served as the Liberal Member of Parliament from 1962 to 1970, and served in the House of Lords, having inherited the title of Baron Avebury in 1971.

In 1999, when most hereditary peers were removed from the House of Lords, he was elected by his fellow Liberal Democrats to remain.

Throughout his time in politics he was at the forefront of human rights activism, both in and beyond parliament. In 1976, he founded the Parliamentary Human Rights Group, which he chaired for the next 21 years. He continued to be its vice-chair until his death.

He had also established the International Bangladesh Foundation in

SEE PAGE 11 COL 3

**SEDITION CASE SC upholds HC bail for Mahmudur**

Clears way for his release

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Supreme Court yesterday upheld a High Court bail granted to Mahmudur Rahman, acting editor of Bangla daily Amar Desh, in a sedition case.

A five-member bench of the Appellate Division of the SC, led by Chief Justice Surendra Kumar Sinha, dismissed a petition filed by the government seeking a stay on the HC order granting him bail.

The apex court upheld

SEE PAGE 11 COL 4

**ARSON, VANDALISM IN JAN LAST YEAR Fakhurul, 52 others charged in 2 cases**

COURT CORRESPONDENT

Police have pressed charges against BNP acting secretary general Mirza Fakhurul Islam Alamgir and 52 other political leaders and activities in two cases filed in connection with vandalising and torching vehicles in January last year.

Paltan police yesterday pressed two separate charge sheets before the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's Court of Dhaka and the investigators appealed to the court to issue arrest warrants against the "fugitives".

This is the first charge sheet against Fakhurul in cases filed in connection with last year's violence in the capital.

At least 95 people were killed and hundreds were injured, mostly in mindless arson attacks on public transports in the first three months of 2015 when BNP-led 20-party alliances enforced an indefinite blockade.

Around 400 cases had been filed against 20-party alliance leaders and activists for last year's violence in Dhaka, Joynal Abedin Meshbah, a lawyer of the BNP leaders told The Daily Star.

He said seven cases were filed in Dhaka against Fakhurul in this connection while 50 cases against alliance leader Rafiqul Islam Mia, 60 against Shamsur Rahman Shimul Biswas, 50 against Amanullah Aman, and 48 cases against Barkatullah Bulu.

In the first of the two cases in which charges were pressed, Sub-Inspector Abdul Jalil of Paltan Police Station, also the investigation officer of the case, pressed charges against Fakhurul and 39 other party men for damaging and torching a vehicle in front of Azad Products Ltd on January 4 last year.

Of the accused, Fakhurul and 19 others are now on bail while BNP leaders -- Rafiqul Islam Mia, Shamsur Rahman Shimul

SEE PAGE 11 COL 1

**'Robber' killed in 'gunfight'**

UNB, Brahmanbaria

An alleged robber was killed in a "gunfight" between his cohorts and police in Baddapara village of Sarail upazila early yesterday.

The dead is Ratan Miah, 30, of Chunta village of the upazila.

Ali Arshad, officer-in-charge of Sarail Police Station, said acting on a tip-off that a gang of robbers were taking preparation to commit a robbery in the area, a police team conducted a drive there around 4:10am.

Sensing the presence of police, the robbers opened fire and hurled brick chips at them, forcing the law enforcers to return fire, triggering the "gunfight", the police official added.

At one stage, Ratan was caught in the line of fire,

SEE PAGE 11 COL 1

**Happy birthday gaffe!**



BBC ONLINE

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi has wished Afghan President Ashraf Ghani a happy birthday -- only for Ghani to explain he had got the wrong day.

Modi tweeted his best wishes to Ghani, writing: "Praying for your long life & exceptional health and a joyful journey ahead", leading Ghani to gently point out his birthday is, in fact, on 19 May.

Ghani's profile on Google lists his birthday as being on 12 February, which may explain the mistake.

It is not known if Modi himself wrote the erroneous tweet. His posts are reportedly written by his social media manager, Hiren Joshi.

And it is unlikely Ghani, who is at Munich Security Conference, wrote the polite reply, as any

SEE PAGE 11 COL 1

**Abbas thanks Bangladesh**

Expresses gratitude for supporting Palestinians

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Terming Bangladesh an unflinching proponent of his people's just causes, Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas has expressed his gratitude to Bangladesh for its continued support for his country.

He made a nearly two-hour stopover at Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport in Dhaka early yesterday while continuing his tour of three other Asian countries, including Japan.

Bangladesh Foreign Minister AH Mahmood Ali welcomed Abbas at the VVIP terminal after he landed around 12:35am, said a press release of the Palestine embassy in Dhaka.

They had a meeting in the airport lounge later.

Abbas briefed Ali on the updates on the Israeli atrocities against Palestinian people and land as well as the long-standing impasse regarding the peace process.

SEE PAGE 11 COL 4



Foreign Minister AH Mahmood Ali, right, meets Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas in the VVIP lounge of Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport in Dhaka early yesterday. Abbas made a nearly two-hour stopover in Bangladesh on his tour of three other Asian countries. PHOTO: PTI

**Russia will 'fail to save' Assad**

Saudi FM says US-led coalition to decide on any troops deployment in Syria; Iran warns against intervention

AGENCIES

Saudi Foreign Minister Adel al-Jubeir yesterday said that Russia's efforts to support Syrian President Bashar al-Assad will not succeed in keeping him in power.

He also said that any move to deploy Saudi special forces into Syria would depend on a decision by the US-led coalition fighting Islamic State insurgents.

US Defense Secretary Ash Carter said on Friday he expected both Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates to send special operations forces to Syria to help local opposition fighters in their campaign to retake the city of Raqqa, Islamic State's de facto capital in Syria.

Saudi Arabia on Saturday confirmed it had sent aircraft to Nato-member Turkey's Incirlik air base for the fight against Islamic State militants.

"The Kingdom's readiness to provide special forces to any ground operations in Syria is linked to a decision to have a ground component to this coalition against Daesh (Islamic State) in Syria - this US-led coalition - so the timing is not up to us," Saudi Foreign Minister Adel al-Jubeir told a news conference with his Swiss counterpart in Riyadh.

"With regards to timing of the mission or size of troops, this has yet to be worked out," he added.

Despite the territorial advances made in recent weeks by Assad's forces, backed by Russian air strikes and military assistance by Iran, Jubeir said he did not believe the Syrian president would survive.

SEE PAGE 11 COL 5