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FURY OF THE PADMA

People take away materials from their homes being devoured by the Padma. Some 250 families in Madhur Char, Banipur and Malikanda areas in Dohar of Dhaka have already lost their houses to the river this year due to erosion. Heavy monsoon rain and water from upstream are causing the erosion, which has also destroyed local farmland and mosques. The photos were taken yesterday.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

Stay alert to check militancy
 Urges prime minister

UNB, Dhaka
 Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday urged all to remain alert so that no one gets involved in militancy. "We'll have to remain vigilant so that anyone cannot get involved in this social menace. We all will have to be careful," she said. The PM was speaking at a cheque handover ceremony at the Gono Bhaban. Thirty-one private banks and six organisations handed over cheques of financial assistance for the PM's Relief and Welfare Fund at the programme. Hasina renewed her government's resolve to



Russia, Turkey agree to reset strained ties

Putin, Erdogan meet in Moscow amid tension with the West
 AFP, Saint Petersburg
 Russian President Vladimir Putin and Turkish counterpart Recep Tayyip Erdogan yesterday pledged to reinvigorate ties after their first meeting since Ankara shot down a Russian warplane last November. Erdogan's visit to Putin's hometown of Saint Petersburg is also his first foreign trip since the failed coup against him last month that sparked a purge of opponents and cast a shadow over Turkey's relations with the West. "We lived through a very complicated moment in the relations between our states and we very much want, and I feel our Turkish friends want, to overcome the difficulties," Putin told journalists at a joint press conference. He insisted it would take "painstaking work" and "some time" to return to previous trade levels as Russia rolls back punishing economic sanctions against Ankara, but both sides said they wanted to restart major energy projects hit by the crisis. Erdogan said he hoped relations would become "more robust" and stressed how important it was that Putin offered his support after the coup. "We will bring our relations back to the old level and even beyond," he said. The shooting down of a Russian fighter jet by a Turkish F-16 on the Syrian border last November saw Putin slap sanctions on Turkey and launch a blistering war of words that dealt serious damage to burgeoning ties. But in a shock reversal late June, Putin accepted a letter from Erdogan expressing regret over the incident as an apology. He quickly rolled back a ban on the sale of package holidays to Turkey and signalled Moscow would end measures against Turkish food imports and construction firms.

12 get death penalty for 2 murders

STAR REPORT
 A Chittagong court yesterday awarded death penalty to six people for killing Krishak League leader Oli Ullah in Chandpur in 2014. Besides, a Gazipur court yesterday sentenced six people to death and three others to life term imprisonment for killing a schoolboy in 2001. The six convicts in Chittagong are Md Abdul Hamid, Md Mehedi Hasan alias Shakil, Md Gourab, Md Harun Mridha, Md Abdul Kader Mridha and Nazmul Hasan alias Sharfin. The convicts were also fined Tk 5,000 each. All six men are fugitives at the moment, reports our Chittagong correspondent. The court also acquitted four other accused -- Md Aktar Hossain, Md Muazzem Hossain, Abu Taher and Md Jakir Hossain -- as the allegations brought against them were not proved, said court sources. Of them, Abu Taher is still in jail custody. Fifteen witnesses testified in the trial before the Speedy Trial Tribunal Judge

Spiritual help sought to reduce accidents

AFP, Colombo
 Sri Lanka's police sought spiritual help from Buddhist clergy Monday to bless an accident-prone highway in a country that has some of the world's most dangerous roads. Police at Mawathagama, about 100 kilometres north-east of Colombo, directed three saffron-robed monks to bless a spot where there had been five fatal accidents in a month, a police official said. "Traffic constables sat by the roadside while monks chanted sacred texts to bless a dangerous double bend," the official told AFP confirming reports of the unusual traffic management effort. Sri Lanka's police deal with about seven road fatalities each day. The official, who declined to be named, said it



Delhi to stand by Dhaka in fight against terrorism

Indian envoy tells Khaleda
 STAFF CORRESPONDENT
 Indian High Commissioner to Bangladesh Harsh Vardhan Shringla last night said his country stands firmly with Bangladesh in its fight against terrorism. He conveyed this to BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia when he called on her at the latter's Gulshan office. The envoy said terrorism and extremism are major impediments to peace and development in the region, according to a release of the Indian High Commission. "India condemns terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, and there can be no justification for senseless acts of violence," the release quoted the diplomat as saying. Shringla informed

Ensure equal rights, dignity

Adivasi Forum rally also calls for constitutional recognition for indigenous people
 STAFF CORRESPONDENT
 It was their day. They gathered, joined hands and spoke up to draw the government's attention to their demands for their rights and constitutional recognition as "indigenous" people. Wearing colourful traditional dresses, several hundred, who are considered ethnic minorities in the constitution, lined up at the Central Shaheed Minar in the capital to mark International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples yesterday. In their hands were placards, banners and leaflets, which read "We demand land rights now", "our forest is our life", "We demand equal rights to education" etc. "Despite being citizens of the country, we are deprived of equal rights and dignity. We want such discrimination to end," said Symon Ritchil, an indigenous youth and student of Dhaka University. Indigenous people are frequently being evicted from their ancestral land by influential quarters showing different excuses, and even by government bodies. "We demand our rights to land," Ananta Dhamai, an indigenous youth, told The Daily Star. At the rally organised by Bangladesh Adivasi Forum, the demonstrators stood even when it started raining and chanted slogans. Addressing the function, the forum's President



Pedestrians help a rickshaw van puller and his assistant lift the van that tipped to its side after hitting a pothole on Jatrabari-Demra road in the capital yesterday. Such accidents have become an everyday occurrence in the area as the road has been in a very bad state for months.

Mir Quasem's son 'picked up'

Claims his family
 STAFF CORRESPONDENT
 Ahmed Bin Quasem, son of top Jamaat leader and convicted war criminal Mir Quasem Ali, was allegedly picked up by some unidentified men last night from his Mirpur DOHS home in the capital. "Five people rang our doorbell around 10:50pm. As I opened the door, they wanted to know whether

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 Social Islami Bank Limited
 PRAYER TIMING AUGUST 10
 Fazr Zohr Asr Maghrib Esha
 AZAN 4-25 12-45 4-45 6-41 8-00
 JAMAAT 5-00 1-15 5-00 6-44 8-30
 SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN