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## Bribe comments won't tarnish govt image

*Says Ctg mayor as ministry asks him to explain comment*

ARUN BIKASH DEY and SHAHADAT HOSSAIN, Chittagong

Mayor of Chittagong City Corporation (CCC) AJM Nasir Uddin yesterday said his comment over demanding "bribe" by some ministry officials did not tarnish the image of the government.

Talking to The Daily Star over phone yesterday, Nasir said he did not bring an allegation against the ministry officials in general but against one or two specific officials.

"Why my comment would tarnish the image of the government as I did not bring allegations against [all] the officials in general?" he said in reply to a question of The Daily Star, adding, "Is there no corrupt official [in the ministry]?"

"Why the image of all will be tarnished for one or two [corrupt] persons?" he asked.

Earlier at a dialogue held at the Theatre Institute Chittagong (TIC) on Wednesday, the mayor alleged the city corporation did not get adequate allocation as he refused to give 5 percent in commission.

Mayor Nasir further alleged as he refused to give the commission, he had got only Tk 80 crore allocation, which would have been Tk 300-350 crore if he had agreed.

A joint secretary gave assurance of cooperation in the works of CCC a few days ago but demanded a Pajero jeep in exchange, the mayor alleged.



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A farmer works on a floating seedbed made from water hyacinth at Baithakata in Pirojpur. From late July to October every year, farmers in Baithakata of Pirojpur and Bisarkandi of Barisal grow vegetables, especially bottle gourd, brinjal and chillies, in wetland applying this age-old method locally known as "dhab". The photo was taken recently.

PHOTO: ARIFUR RAHMAN

Jamaat men  
snatch party  
activist from  
cop custody

OUR CORRESPONDENT,  
Nilphamari

A Jamaat activist, who was convicted in an arson case eight months ago, is still avoiding arrest successfully.

Yesterday, when police were trying to arrest Abdul Kadim, an active member of Jamaat-e-Islami of Jaldhaka upazila unit, his party men resisted arrest and snatched him from the policemen.

This incident happened at Dakkhin Deshibai Bazar in Jaldhaka upazila after Juma prayers. Jaldhaka is a Jamaat-Shibir stronghold.

Son of Motiar Rahman of Dakkhin Deshibai village, Kadim was jailed for three years by a Nilphamari court in January this year for setting fire to the house of a ruling Awami League leader of Jaldhaka upazila unit in October 2011.

He also stands accused in half a dozen cases filed in connection with different criminal activities, including attacking police, setting fire to polling centres and felling roadside trees during the BNP-led alliance's

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## Death came too early

ANWAR ALI, Rajshahi



Siam

He had stood 11th and fifth on the merit lists of his board for the SSC and HSC examinations, and then got admitted to Buet's Mechanical Engineering department.

And lately, the brilliant student, Moshiur Rahman Siam, had been dreaming about going abroad for study.

This dream, however, would never be fulfilled now.

Siam and his friend Saeed Latif, also a first-year student at the same department, drowned while taking bath in a water body at Bichanakandi tourist spot in Sylhet's Gowainghat upazila on Thursday.

"He [Siam] was looking for a scholarship to study abroad. I told him it would

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## Cut Trump funding

*Urge more than 70 influential Republicans*

AFP, Washington

More than 70 influential Republicans have signed a letter urging the party to stop spending money on Donald Trump's presidential campaign and direct it instead to November's congressional races, a news report said yesterday.

"We believe that Donald Trump's divisiveness, recklessness, incompetence, and record-breaking unpopularity risk turning this election into a Democratic landslide," read a draft text of the letter to Republican National Committee Chairman Reince Priebus, which was obtained by the Politico newspaper.

It called for an "immediate shift" of party funding to Senate and House races, to aid down-ballot Republicans whose own election prospects have been harmed by Trump's unpopularity.

"This should not be a difficult decision, as Donald Trump's chances of being elected president are evaporating by the day," the letter said.

The letter cited various actions by Trump that the signers said have "alienated millions of voters of all parties."

"Those recent outrages have built on his campaign of anger and exclusion, during which he has mocked and offended millions of voters, including the disabled, women, Muslims, immigrants, and minorities," the letter said, according to Politico.

"He also has shown dangerous authoritarian tendencies, including threats to ban an entire religion from entering the country, order the military to break the law by torturing prisoners, kill the families of suspected terrorists, track law-abiding Muslim citizens in databases, and use executive orders to implement other illegal and unconstitutional measures."

So far, the letter has been signed by a number of key former party staff members and officials. Politico reported that it began circulating this week and is expected to be sent to Priebus next week.

Meanwhile, Politico reported in a separate article that a meeting is planned between Trump advisors and Republican Party officials at the request of the nominee's campaign,



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Ragib Ali fled to India to avoid arrest

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

Businessman Ragib Ali fled to India through Zakiganj border in Sylhet on Wednesday with his son to avoid arrest, said police.

Earlier in the day, a Sylhet court issued arrest warrants for six people, including Ragib and three of his family members, in a case filed for forging the land ministry's official documents to grab the land of Tarapura Tea Estate, which is an endowment property.

Sugyan Chakma, additional superintendent of Sylhet district police, confirmed this yesterday after visiting Zakiganj Customs House and Police Station.

Contacted, the ASP told The Daily Star that Ragib, his son Abdul Hai and four others entered India through Zakiganj border around 5:00pm on Wednesday. No female

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## Giant rats helping to sniff out TB

AFP, Morogoro

They have proven their worth in detecting landmines but Africa's giant pouched rats have a lesser-known but equally critical vocation - saving lives by speeding up tuberculosis detection.

It's all in the nose, says the Belgian non-governmental organisation APOPO. Its founders, in 1997, saw potential for these abundant rodents with a sense of smell as keen as a dog's but dismissed as pesty vermin -- or a potential meal.

"The biggest obstacle has been the negative perception that people have of the rat," said APOPO director Christophe Cox, whose NGO has been based in Morogoro in Tanzania's eastern highlands since 2000.

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Messi will return

AFP, Buenos Aires

Star striker Lionel Messi will return to play for the Argentine national team for "love" of his country, despite earlier vowing to retire in frustration, he said on Friday.

The 29-year-old Barcelona superstar abruptly announced his international retirement in tears after Argentina lost the Copa America final to Chile on June 26.

"A lot of things went through my mind on the night of the final and I gave serious thought to quitting, but my love for my country and this shirt is too great,"

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## Payra seaport opens today

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Patuakhali

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina formally inaugurates the operational activities of the third seaport at Payra in Patuakhali today.

Through video conferencing, she would open the seaport at 11:00am from the Gono Bhaban, said Captain Saidur Rahman, acting chairman of Payra Port Authority (PPA).

In presence of Shipping Minister Shahjahan Khan, the PPA will receive its first ocean vessel MV Fortune Bird coming from China with 53,300 tonnes of crushed black stones for the Padma bridge project, PPA sources said.

Major (retd) Rafiqul Islam, chairman of the parliamentary standing committee on shipping ministry, Navy chief Rear Admiral Mohammad Nizamuddin Ahmed, local lawmaker Mahbubur Rahman, NBR Chairman Nojibur Rahman, Foreign Secretary Shahidul Haque, Local Government Division Secretary Abdul Malek, Senior Secretary to Finance Division Mahbub Ahmed and Senior Secretary of Commerce Ministry Hedayat Ullah Al Mamun would be present at the Payra port on the occasion.

PPA acting chairman Saidur Rahman would deliver the welcome speech.

The Payra port started its experimental operations on August 1 by unloading stones for the Padma bridge project from the first ocean vessel MV Fortune Bird coming from China.

The stones were imported by Jalal Uddin Traders of Sylhet, PPA sources said.

Around 60 percent of the imported stones would be sent to the Padma bridge site by a lighter ship, and the rest would

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Stranded elephant gets name

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Jamalpur

The rescued elephant has been named Bangabahadur for its perilous journey across nearly 1,000 kilometres of submerged areas after it entered Bangladesh from India.

The 17-member rescue team of Bangladesh Forest Department has adorned the mighty creature with the

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PRAYER TIMING AUGUST 13

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



This bridge collapsed after one of its pillars was hit by a sand-laden cargo vessel at Sirajdikhan upazila of Munshiganj around midnight on Thursday. Thousands of people who now have no option but to cross the canal by boat are eagerly waiting for its repair.

PHOTO: FARHANA MIRZA