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dried-up JAMUNA hits livelihood

Boats are anchored on the shore as vast chars appear in the Jamuna in Fulchhari upazila of Gaibandha. Once a mighty river, the Jamuna dries up at most of the places in winter. It not only hampers navigation but also deprives local fishermen of good catches and farmers of water for irrigation. Traders find themselves in trouble too. Some of them walk miles carrying goods to the markets. Others hire horse-drawn carts, locally known as "Charer Gari". Renting the carts, however, raises costs and cuts their small profits. The char people face similar sufferings. The photos were taken last month.



PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN



'TREE MAN SYNDROME' Shahana to go under the knife within a week

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A medical board yesterday decided to operate within a week on Shahana Khatun, possibly the country's first woman with "tree-man syndrome". Medical examinations, including blood tests and biopsy, have already been done. Shahana might need two surgeries initially, said Samanta Lal Sen, national coordinator of burn services in Bangladesh. "Hopefully, the first surgery will be conducted within a week." Doctors are planning to remove bark-like warts from her ear, face and knee.

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Tigers begin warm-up today

SPORTS REPORTER

The Bangladesh national cricket team will begin their tour of India with a two-day warm-up game against India A at the Gymkhana Ground in Hyderabad today. The visitors will want to utilise this opportunity to the fullest considering that they played their cricket in bouncy and windy conditions in New Zealand in the last month. While the conditions in Hyderabad will no doubt be similar to those of Bangladesh, they will still need to work on readjusting to a subcontinental pitch following their month-long New Zealand tour. Aside from the 15 chosen players in the team, Bangladesh have taken along with them an extra pacer, Abu Jayed, to play the warm-up game. It seems like the Bangladesh team management does not want to disclose their pacers to the Indian team prior to the one-off Test which is scheduled to begin on February 9. There is a good possibility that the team management will rest two pacers in this practice match and play them directly in the Test in order to maintain the element of surprise. However, it remains uncertain who those two pacers will be. As of now, there are four pacers in the team -- Taskin Ahmed, Shubhashis Roy, Shafiul Islam and Kamrul Islam Rabbi. Going by Kamrul's good performance in New Zealand, it is almost a certainty that he is going to find a place for the Hyderabad Test. As far as the batting order is concerned, it will not be a surprise if the team management gives all their main batters

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'MOLESTING HOTEL INTERN' Saudi diplomat faces caning in Singapore

INDEPENDENT.CO.UK

A Saudi diplomat has been sentenced to a caning by a judge in Singapore for allegedly molesting a hotel intern. Bander Yahya A Alzahrani, who works for the Saudi Arabia Embassy in Beijing, faces four strokes of the stick after being found guilty of groping the 20-year-old woman in an en-suite bathroom. Caning is legal in Singapore for sexual abuse, vandalism and rioting offenders, as well as for foreigners who have overstayed visas by more than 90 days. The same corporal punishment can be dished out for convicts in Alzahrani's native Saudi Arabia. According to the Straits Times, the court heard the father of three was on holiday with his family when he started kissing the intern on her neck and face in a Sentosa hotel on 14 August last year. The popular island resort attracts around 20m people each year and boasts a 2km-long sheltered beach, two golf courses, 14 hotels and a Universal Studios theme park.

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'Lost continent' discovered

CNN ONLINE

Found -- one lost continent, hiding underneath a tropical holiday destination. It might sound implausible, but deep at the bottom of the Indian Ocean, a research team, led by South Africa's University of the Witwatersrand, has found pieces of an ancient continent. The lava-covered piece of continent, dubbed 'Mauritia,' was found under the popular island of Mauritius. According to the report published this week in the journal Nature Communications, the piece of crust is left over from the breakup of Gondwanaland, a super-continent that existed more than 200 million years ago.

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Sensible PM reschedules programme so SSC examinees face no hassles

BSS, Dhaka

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has rescheduled a programme of hers today for the convenience of SSC examinees. The PM was scheduled to join the "E-9 Ministerial Meeting on Education" at Radisson Blu Dhaka at 10:00am, but the timing coincided with the start of the day's Secondary School Certificate (SSC) exam. "For the convenience of the SSC examinees' movement, the prime minister has pushed back the schedule by half an hour," PM's Deputy Press Secretary Ashrafal Alam Khokan told BSS. The function will now begin at 10:30am, and the PM will start for the venue from the Gono Bhaban at 10:20am, he added.

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Suranjit on life support

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Veteran Awami League leader Suranjit Sengupta was put on life support at the city's Labaid hospital around 9:00pm yesterday. His condition was "very critical", Dr Saifur Rahman Lenin, assistant general manager (corporate communications) of the hospital, told The Daily Star around 12:10am today. The brain of Suranjit, a cancer patient, was not

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Charging mobile phones is his business! This innovative idea is helping Abul Kashem run his family of eight. He says many villagers who do not have electricity connection to their home come to his shop in Kurigram town and give him Tk 5 for charging a phone.

Abul Kashem 'recharges' his life!

ABDUL WAHED, Kurigram

A little bit of creative thinking has allowed Abul Kashem to earn a steady livelihood from a business he set up at Roumari upazila Bazar in Kurigram. Kashem set up an outlet at the local bazar to provide mobile phone recharging services to people from nearby villages who do not have power supplies in their homes. He sits in an open space of the banana market area in the bazar from 10:00am to 11:00pm every day providing this service. Every day, an average of 90 people charge their mobile phones at Kashem's outlet where he can provide up to 250 charging points at the same time. Each mobile phone takes around two to three hours to fully charge its battery and Kashem charges Tk 5 per phone for this service. This way he earns around Tk 350 to Tk 450 every day. "I set up my outlet by using power from the electricity supply connection at Badol Shah's shop in the banana market. I pay him Tk 50 daily for this service," said Kashem. Abul Kashem, 35, son of late Elahi Bakash of Naodapara village in Roumari upazila used to run a grocery store before he came up with this idea to earn more money. Rural people who have no electricity power supply in their houses are his main customers. They charge their phones once every two days or so. "This business is now the only source of my income and I can maintain my family of eight -- my mother, wife, five children and myself -- with my earnings," he said. Kashem recently talked to The Daily Star when he set up a shop temporarily in Kurigram town for four days. He set up his outlet near a mini Tablighi Ijtema held in Kurigram Government College ground late last year.

PHOTO: STAR

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SIBL
Social Islami Bank Limited
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PRAYER TIMING FEBRUARY 5
Fazr Zohr Asr Maghrib Esha
AZAN 5:30 12:45 4:15 5:52 7:15
JAMAAT 6:05 1:15 4:30 5:56 7:45
SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION