



Mushy leads resistance

NAIMUL KARIM from Hyderabad

"What if..." These two words have been relentlessly used by Bangladesh's fans at the end of every day's play in the one-off Test between Bangladesh and India so far as they ponder innumerable missed opportunities.

What if Mehedi Hasan Miraz had successfully run out Murali Vijay? What if Mushfiqur Rahim had prodded an inch further and stumped Wriddhiman Saha? What if Tamim Iqbal did not have a mix-up yesterday and Bangladesh's top order played with a bit more responsibility?

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A bird stops by a Palash tree in full bloom at Dhaka University's Curzon Hall a couple of days ago. The bright orange flame-like flowers symbolise the arrival of spring. The celebration of Pahela Falgun, the first day of the season in the Bangla calendar, is tomorrow.

PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

A thorn in the flesh

Govt, rights group remain at odds over 'special circumstances' clause in soon-to-be child marriage law

REAZ AHMAD

As the Child Marriage Restraint Act is about to be passed in parliament, the government and rights bodies continue to be at loggerheads over a provision that permits wedlock prior to one reaching the minimum marriageable age.

When the cabinet-approved Child Marriage Restraint Act-2016 was placed in Jatiya Sangsad in December and sent to the relevant parliamentary body for scrutiny, it had a provision allowing girls under 18 to be married under "special circumstances".

On Thursday, the parliamentary standing com-

mittee on women and children affairs placed its scrutiny report recommending the same provision for boys as well. This means boys below 21 could get married under "special circumstances".

Bangladesh Mahila Parishad President Ayesha Khanom fears the law, if passed in its present state, would cause more injustice towards women and people would abuse the provision.

Rebeka Momin, the lawmaker who leads the Jatiya Sangsad body that scrutinised the act, told The Daily Star yesterday, "We have to keep certain provisions in the upcoming law considering current socio-economic condition in the country."

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DMCH wakes up as fake test report scam busted

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A "fraudster" had been taking money from patients in Dhaka Medical College Hospital promising them of having their pathological tests done and results delivered.

Shahid, "the cheat", took samples from patients and delivered "fake" test reports. A visiting doctor found out his "fraudulent activity" on Thursday.

Tofazzel Haque Chayan, the doctor, went to visit a child patient he knows at the hospital's burn unit. When he looked at the medical test reports of the patient, he found that those were unclear and did

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Acquittal sparks call for apology

Canada court finds no proof of Padma bridge corruption conspiracy

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Three former senior executives of SNC-Lavalin Group in Canada were acquitted in the Padma bridge corruption conspiracy case, a development that prompted calls for apology from those who were vocal against the alleged graft attempt.

On Friday, Justice Ian Nordheimer of the Ontario Superior Court in Canada ruled that he had serious concerns about three applications the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) filed in 2011 to get court approval for using wiretaps as the case evidence.

The RCMP had sought the approval as it probed allegations that SNC staff planned to bribe officials in Bangladesh to try to win a \$50 million contract to supervise construction of the country's Padma bridge project.

"Reduced to its essentials, the informa-



“
The verdict of the Canadian court proved that the allegation made by the World Bank against me is a complete lie.
”

SYED ABUL HOSSAIN
FORMER COMMUNICATIONS MINISTER

tion provided in the [wiretap applications] was nothing more than speculation, gossip and rumour," Judge Nordheimer concluded, reports the Globe and Mail newspaper.

"Nothing that could fairly be referred to as direct factual evidence, to support the rumour and speculation, was provided or investigated. The information provided by the tipsters was hearsay (or worse) added to other hearsay."

A number of government high-ups in Bangladesh were charged and later acquitted by a Bangladesh court and the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) in the corruption attempt case relating to the bridge project.

Syed Abul Hossain, one of the key accused, who had to resign as communications minister amid the corruption scandal, said: "The verdict of the Canadian court proved that the

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