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Villagers unite to create a 'dream village'

Self-motivated locals take initiatives to solve social, infrastructural problems of Tangail village

MIRZA SHAKIL with ANDREW EAGLE

Unity is strength. The self-motivated young people of Bharra union's ward number six in Tangail's Nagarpur upazila, a community of 6,500 people, are proving the old adage true. They are striving to overcome longstanding social and infrastructure problems to create a modern "dream village."

About a year ago when police assistant sub-inspector Saidur Rahman Sumon returned home to the ward's Pachasaratia village for a visit, he faced the usual rough, dirt roads. He brought his laptop but could not open it. There is no electricity. He saw youths involved in vices such as stalking, gambling and drug addiction. "Law enforcers hardly reach here," he says, "due to the road conditions."

It upset Saidur to see his village in such a state. One day he shared his thoughts with a friend, Ashadur Rahman Sweet, an employee of a private firm. "I felt I should do something," Saidur recalls. "My friend encouraged me. We found two others, multinational employee Zakir Hossain Munna and university student Robiul Islam, keen to help."

They couldn't imagine where such simple conversations would lead.

CHANGE MAKER



Volunteers of Sopner Gram (Dream Village) repairing a road in Nagarpur upazila of Tangail. The youths of the area formed the Sopner Gram organisation, inset, at Choubaria Panchsaratia Bazar to overcome social and infrastructure problems.

PHOTO: STAR

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Teesta deal should be first priority

Says Fakhru

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhru Islam Alamgir yesterday said any other deal with India would be "meaningless" if the Teesta water sharing treaty is not signed during Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's upcoming visit to India, scheduled for April 7-10.

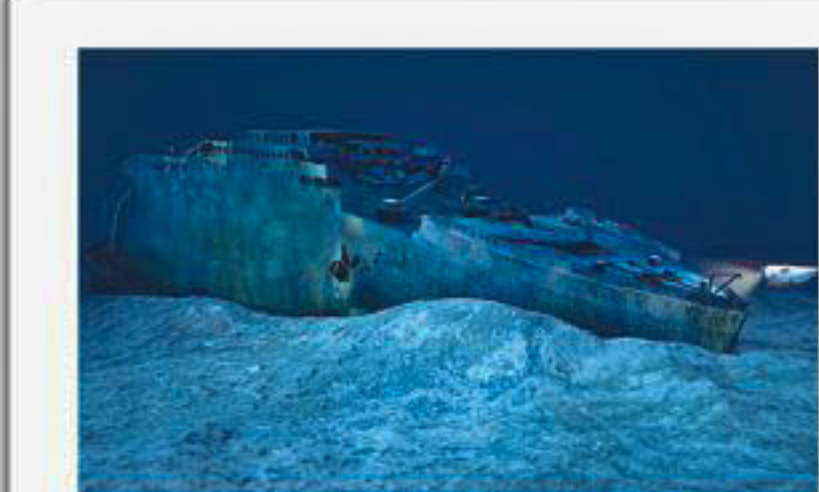
"The prime minister will have to resolve the outstanding problems with India, mainly water-related ones, to make her India tour a success. The Teesta deal should get the first priority," he said.

Fakhru was talking to reporters after placing wreaths at BNP founder Ziaur Rahman's grave in the capital's Sher-e-Bangla Nagar to mark the founding anniversary of Zia Parishad.

He also said people would not accept any deal if it is inked "sacrificing the country's interests and independence".

The BNP leader said people had long been

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Tours of Titanic wreck in 2018

CNN, ONLINE

In 1912, a trip on board the Titanic was the ultimate in luxury travel.

More than a century later, it still is.

Deep-pocketed tourists will once again get the chance to glide along the Titanic's deck when London-based travel company Blue Marble Private begins dives to the wreck site in May 2018.

Interest in the 20th century's most famous maritime disaster has remained high since Robert Ballard

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World moving away from coal power

Report reveals 62pc fall in number of new power plants

INDEPENDENT.CO.UK

As Donald Trump pledges to put coal miners back to work in the United States, the rest of the world appears to have suddenly started moving in the opposite direction, abandoning the dirtiest of fossil fuels after 10 years of expansion, according to a new analysis.

Boom and Bust 2017, compiled by US environmental group the Sierra Club, Greenpeace and research group CoalSwarm, reported a 62 per cent fall in the number of new coal-fired power stations being built worldwide in 2016 and a 48 per cent drop in "pre-construction activity".

Such a dramatic slowdown, they argued, meant that the world could now hope to keep global warming to within two degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels, the point at which climate change is thought would become particularly dangerous.

And the more ambitious target of 1.5C, agreed at the Paris climate summit, "remains possible but would require much faster retirement" of existing coal plants.

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Govt urged to relocate Rampal plant

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Two academicians have suggested that the government should shift the proposed coal-fired power plant 30 kilometres east to Arpangachhia in Barguna from Rampal to save the Sundarbans.

"Arpangachhia appears to be the safest place for establishing the power plant," said Prof Abdul Aziz, of the botany department of Dhaka University, yesterday at a discussion in the capital's Jatiya Press Club organised by the National Committee to Save Sundarbans.

Winds blowing in

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N Korea behind BB reserve heist

Says US spy agency

FOREIGN POLICY MAGAZINE

A senior US National Security Agency official appeared to confirm that North Korean computer hackers were behind a multi-million dollar heist targeting Bangladesh's central bank last year.

Computer hackers attempted to steal \$951 million, but only got away with \$81 million, some of which was later recovered.

After the theft, security firms quickly pointed the finger at North Korea. Other experts disputed that finding. But on Tuesday, NSA Deputy Director Rick Ledgett appeared to say North Korea was the culprit during a cryptic exchange at a

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CELL TOWER RADIATION Experts for capping, monitoring

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Radiation from a carrier's cell tower was found over the limit set by a World Health Organisation guideline, an expert committee said in a report submitted to the High Court yesterday.

The committee recommended directing Bangladesh Telecommunication Regulatory Commission (BTRC) to take steps to reduce the excessive radiation from the Base Transceiver Stations [mobile towers] set up by the six mobile phone operators across the country.

It recommended asking the BTRC to monitor the radiation of all cell towers on a regular basis and instructing the ministry of post and telecommunication and the BTRC to formulate a policy or guideline for controlling the radiation.

According to the WHO, excessive radiation from cell towers harms public health and the environment.

Prof Shafiqul Islam, chairman of the department of nuclear engineering in Dhaka University, said, "Long term exposure to radiation can cause rash, itching, bloodshot eyes, loss of sight and even loss of limbs."

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Defying government bans, a brick kiln burns logs to make bricks at Kagojikhola in Naikkhangchhari of Bandarban and uses chimneys that are shorter than the minimum height set by the government. Inset, stockpile of illegally felled forest trees for making the bricks.

PHOTO: SANJOY KUMAR BARUA

SIBL Social Islami Bank Limited
PRAYER TIMING MARCH 23
Fazr Zohr Asr Maghrib Esha
AZAN 4-55 12-45 4-45 6-16 7-45
JAMAAT 5-30 1-15 5-00 6-20 8-15
SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

LAPTOP, TAB BAN ON FLIGHTS FROM MIDDLE EAST, TURKEY UK follows US restrictions

AFP, London

Britain tightened airline security on flights from Turkey, the Middle East and North Africa on late Tuesday, banning laptops and tablet computers from the plane cabin following a US security warning.

Passengers flying directly to Britain from Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia, Tunisia and Turkey will be required to place those devices and large phones into hold luggage, a government spokesman said.

"The additional security measures may cause some disruption for passen-

gers and flights, and we understand the frustration that will cause, but our top priority will always be to maintain the safety of British nationals," he said in a statement.

The move came hours after the US government warned that extremists plan to target passenger jets with bombs hidden in electronic devices, and banned carrying them in cabins on flights from 10 airports in eight countries.

The British ban only involves six countries, two of which -- Lebanon and Tunisia -- do not feature on the US list. Kuwait, Morocco, Qatar and

United Arab Emirates are on the US list, but not the British one.

"We have been in close touch with the Americans to fully understand their position," the spokesman said.

Prime Minister Theresa May has chaired a number of meetings on aviation security over the last few weeks, including on Tuesday morning, where the new measures were agreed, he said.

"Decisions to make changes to our aviation security regime are never taken lightly," he added.

"We will not hesitate to act in order

SEE PAGE 10 COL 4

Contract signing ceremony for design/supply of equipment/project management/supervision/erection & commissioning of LPG Terminal Plant and Bottling Facilities Agreement

BETWEEN
PARLYM & UNITEX LP GAS LIMITED

MR. OLIVIER TAHON Managing Director
MR. BELAL AHMED Managing Director

An agreement signing for design / supply of equipment / project management / supervision / erection and commissioning of liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) Terminal Plant and Bottling Facilities between **UNITEX LP Gas Limited** and **PARLYM International**, a French company was held on March 22, 2017 in the capital.

Mr. Olivier Tahon, Managing Director of PARLYM & Mr. Belal Ahmed, Managing Director of UNITEX LP Gas Limited signed the agreement on behalf of their respective organizations.

Among others Mr. Md. Zobaiddul Islam Chowdhury, Director (Operation), Unitex Group, Mr. Philippe Bechtel, Country Director of PARLYM & other high officials of both organizations were also present at the signing ceremony.