



# The Daily Star

SECOND EDITION

**SYRIA REGIME CHANGE**  
 US envoy to UN  
 Nikki Haley hints at  
 US policy U-turn



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REGD. NO. DA 781 | VOL. XXVII No. 87 | CHAITRA 27, 1423 BS | **Your Right to Know** | RAJAB 12, 1438 HJRI | 20 PAGES PRICE : Tk 12.00

## It's no fault of Teesta

### India blocked, diverted, dammed the int'l river as northern Bangladesh left dry

REAZ AHMAD and SHAKHAWAT LITON

West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee is right in proclaiming that the Teesta does not have much water to share with Bangladesh. And she explained why -- many a dam and hydropower plant has been built in the upstream state of Sikkim where the river originates.

What she did not say, however, is that in her own state, the government built the Gajoldoba barrage near Shiliguri in the late 1990s to tap the Teesta water for irrigation and power generation.

It is no wonder, then, the average flow of the Teesta in the last 10 days of March, the peak of the lean period, dropped to 315-550 cusecs over the last few years. It used to be over 6,000 cusecs back in the 70s and 80s, when there were no dams or power units, according to Bangladesh government data.

Due to such withdrawal and diversion of water in the upstream, the transboundary river runs dry as it reaches Bangladesh, forcing Dhaka to abandon the planned second phase of Teesta barrage project meant to help irrigation. The impact on farming and the livelihoods of the people in northern districts has been huge.

Protracted talks over the Teesta water sharing between India and Bangladesh have failed to yield any concrete results.

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Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina calls on Indian President Pranab Mukherjee at the Rashtrapati Bhavan in New Delhi yesterday.

PHOTO: PMO

## Indian parties have common stance on Bangladesh

Sonia tells Hasina

PALLAB BHATTACHARYA and REZAUL KARIM, from New Delhi

Congress President Sonia Gandhi yesterday conveyed to Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina that there is a bipartisan approach in India towards consolidating relations with Bangladesh.

Sonia made the remarks when she paid a courtesy call on Hasina. She was accompanied by former prime minister Manmohan Singh and Congress Vice-President Rahul Gandhi.

"We may have political differences among us but when it comes to consolidating ties with Bangladesh, we set aside differences and adopt a common stand," Sonia told Hasina, according to a senior Congress leader.

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## Mufti Hannan's mercy plea rejected

### Home boss says preparation for execution underway

BSS, Dhaka



Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan yesterday said preparations were underway to execute the death penalty of Mufti Hannan and his two associates according to the jail code as their petitions for presidential clemency were rejected.

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## IS blasts in two Egypt churches kill 44

### 118 injured as Coptic Christians gather in Palm Sunday service; Pope prays for victims

AFP, Tanta

The Islamic State group claimed responsibility for bombing two Egyptian churches as worshippers gathered to mark Palm Sunday yesterday, killing at least 44 people in the deadliest attacks on the Coptic Christian minority in recent memory.

The attacks followed a Cairo church bombing in December and came weeks before a planned visit by Catholic Pope Francis intended to show support for Egypt's Christian minority.

The first bombing at the Mar Girgis church in Tanta city north of Cairo

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**TOP!**  
QUOTE

"Mass media and democracy are interrelated. ... Mass media expands when democracy flourishes in a country."

PRESIDENT ABDUL HAMID  
AT AN AWARD-GIVING CEREMONY IN THE CAPITAL

## Give the youths a voice, confidence

### 100 million are prepared to do something for others, Nobel laureate Kailash Satyarthi tells The Daily Star

PORIMOL PALMA

At the age of five, Kailash Satyarthi was deeply disturbed to see another small boy polishing shoes at the school gate. He asked his teacher why that boy was not going to school. Kailash could not understand why some children were different from him.

As he kept looking for the answer, he understood the stark contrast between his life and that of the cobbler's son.

So he started questioning the caste system that maintains social hierarchy.

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Kailash Satyarthi



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