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WITH TODAY'S ISSUE

SHOUT



BB CYBER HEIST

Cybercriminal gang Lazarus carried out the \$81m heist, Kaspersky official tells The Daily Star

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NAWAZ SHARIF IN TROUBLE

The Supreme Court could disqualify the Pakistan PM over graft allegations

PAGE 8

Heart patients at high risk

Surgeries stop as stent suppliers enforce wildcat strike over govt move to fix exorbitant pricing

HASAN JAHD TUSHER and PORIMOL PALMA

Cardiologists during their angioplasty and stent implant procedures on patients yesterday learnt stent suppliers went on an undeclared "strike", putting heart patients' lives at stake and holding them hostage.

The situation initially stunned and then angered doctors, patients and their relatives.

Patients and their relatives said patients were taken to catheterisation laboratories and surgeons were about to start the process of implanting the stents, a spring-like metal device used to prop open blocked artery of the heart, when they learnt the stents were not delivered.

Hospitals, especially public hospitals, do not keep stents in stock as they are expensive and hospitals are unable to preserve them. Stents are usually ordered and delivered on demand.

Faruqul Islam, 65, a cardiac patient from Magura admitted to the Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University (BSMMU) for four days, was scheduled to have a stent implanted yesterday.

His son Sabbir Ahmed told The Daily Star, "My father was taken to the operation theatre in the morning. We wished him the best for the surgery, but after some time we

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Duck carcasses float on the Hakaluki Haor in Sylhet's Fenchuganj yesterday. Fisheries officials claim that the water had turned acidic. A fisheries official is seen pouring limewater into the haor to mitigate the problem, inset.

PHOTO: MINTU DESHWARA

HAKALUKI HAOR Not only fish, ducks too dying

REAZ AHMAD with MINTU DESHWARA

Farmers living in and around Hakaluki Haor have been dealt a triple blow with the death of hundreds of ducks they have been farming for their livelihood for years.

First, their dream of a good harvest was shattered as the early flashflood, caused by last month's incessant rain and onrush of water from upstream rivers, completely destroyed Boro crops in over one lakh hectares of haor land in Sunamganj, Sylhet, Moulvibazar, Netrakona and Kishoreganj.

Fishermen and farmers of some parts of the affected region then complained of fish dying due to water contamination.

With the death of ducks, people in the haor area now feel devastated.

"Dead ducks are floating in the water everywhere. I lost all my 150 ducks," said Kalimuddin of Maizbagh area in Sylhet's Fenchuganj.

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BABRI MASJID DEMOLITION

BJP bigwigs face trial

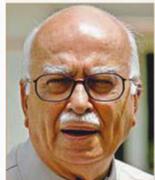
Indian SC reinstates criminal conspiracy charge against Advani, Joshi, Uma; verdict to be delivered in 2 years

AGENCIES

In a major blow to senior BJP leaders, including LK Advani, MM Joshi and Uma Bharti, the Indian Supreme Court yesterday revived conspiracy charges against them in the Babri Masjid demolition case.

The apex court allowed the plea of the CBI challenging trial court and Allahabad HC orders that dropped conspiracy charges against 21 people, including the BJP leaders.

The bench of Justice PC Ghose and Justice RF Nariman directed the trial court to proceed expeditiously in the case, and said the court should not grant unnecessary adjourn-



LK Advani



M M Joshi

ments in the trial proceeding. It also ordered daily hearings to ensure a verdict is delivered within two years.

However, the SC clarified that Kalyan Singh, being governor of Rajasthan, will not be tried due to constitutional immunity unless he ceases to be in that post. In effect, his trial will begin after his term as governor ends. He was chief minister of Uttar Pradesh when the mosque was demolished.

Advani, Joshi and six other BJP leaders were originally charged with making inflammatory speeches that motivated lakhs of right-wing volunteers or karsevaks to pull

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24-YEAR-OLD DEFENCE PURCHASE SCAM

Ershad, two other accused acquitted

CHAITANYA CHANDRA HALDER and MOHAMMAD AL-MASUM MOLLA

A Dhaka court yesterday acquitted Jatiya Party Chairman HM Ershad and two others in a 24-year-old defence purchase scam case as it found the prosecution could not prove the charges brought against the accused.

Delivering the verdict, Judge Kamrul Hossain Mollah of the Metropolitan Senior Special Judge's Court said the Anti-Corruption Commission failed to prove the charges of abuse of power

and embezzlement of Tk 64.04 crore in purchasing two radars for the Air Force.

The judge said Ershad only approved the purchase proposal. The radars were not bought for anyone's personal interest, but in the national interest, he added.

Two others acquitted in the case are former air chiefs Sultan Mahmud and Mamtazuddin Ahmed.

Another accused AKM Musa, one of the directors of United Traders Ltd, had been absconding since the filing of the case.

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TOP QUOTE

"No one has the right to play with someone's life."

ACTOR SABBIR AHMED WHOSE FATHER COULDN'T BE OPERATED ON YESTERDAY DUE TO STENT SUPPLIERS' STRIKE



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Mr. Dilip Kumar Agarwala, Director-FBCCI, Managing Director-Diamond World Ltd & General Secretary-Bangladesh Jewellers Samity, is rewarded with prestigious Mother Teresa International Award because of his significant contribution in Trade & Commerce. We hope he will sustain his triumph of Glory and Victory. May he live long with sound mind and body to lead us and keep magnificent milestone in national economy!

Best Regards



DIAMOND WORLD LTD. (Sister Concern of Union Group)

Ensure support for autistic people

PM Hasina calls upon all govts at int'l conference

UNB, Thimphu, Bhutan

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday said everybody should take the responsibility for ensuring adequate social and medical support for people with autism and neurodevelopmental disorders.

"Governments should make policies and programmes to ensure that no individual is neglected. They deserve to have the opportunity to participate in their countries' economic growth," she said.

The PM was addressing the opening ceremony of the

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Raudha's second autopsy delayed

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

The second autopsy of Raudha will be delayed by several days as a team of forensic experts needed for the task is not available in Rajshahi yet.

Bringing forensic experts from another district will take a few days, said Rajshahi Medical College Principal Prof Anwar Habib.

"Three experts, available here, performed the first

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