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BOOST FOR STEEL MARKET

China's Kunming Steel is in talks with local BSRM to invest \$2.2b

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TIGERS' FINAL WARM-UP TODAY

Bangladesh will play their last warm-up game today before the Ireland tri-series

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JAKARTA GOVERNOR JAILED

Basuki Tjahaja Purnama is sentenced to two years' imprisonment for blasphemy

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\$16b plan to up education quality

Biggest-ever education sector programme to be financed by govt, WB and ADB; the two donors to give \$500m each for the 5-year scheme

WASIM BIN HABIB and REJAU KARIM BYRON

The government plans to take up a massive \$16 billion programme for secondary education to transform the sector by improving the quality of education and developing employability skills of secondary graduates.

The "Secondary Education Development Programme" will be the biggest-ever project in the country's education sector after the Tk 22,196-crore "Third Primary Education Development Programme" launched in 2011.

The five-year programme will be financed by the government, the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank, a top education ministry official told The Daily Star, wishing not to be named.

"The entire secondary education sector will be overhauled under it," the official said.

The World Bank and ADB would provide \$500 million each and the government will bear the rest. The amount to be given by the donor agencies is likely to be increased in future, he said, adding Unesco, Unicef and British Council will provide technical assistance.

Contacted, Chowdhury Mufad Ahmed, additional secretary of the education ministry, said Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has already given approval in principle for the programme.

The government initially plans to implement the programme from January next year, he told The Daily Star.

The programme would cover grade VI to XII, annually supporting more than 1.2 crore students and 300,000 teachers from over 20,000 schools, 10,000 madrasas and 1,000 school-based vocational/technical institutions across the country, said officials of the ministry.

Recently, the education and finance ministers held a formal meeting to discuss the plan in the presence of representatives of donor agencies. The programme is likely to get approval from the World Bank board in next fiscal year.

Secondary education is fragmented across projects. A total of 13 development projects involving around Tk 25,000 crore are now being implemented in this sector,

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Polluting smoke and stench spread across Islambagh in Old Dhaka yesterday as a pile of garbage burns on the wayside of Sadarghat-Gabtolli Road on the Buriganga. Number of patients with different chest and respiratory diseases are on the rise in the city due to air pollutants, doctors say.

PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

TOP QUOTE

"If the rule of law doesn't exist, whims and caprice of the authorities would prevail leading to serious violation of people's rights..."

CHIEF JUSTICE SK SINHA AT A PROGRAMME IN THE CAPITAL

16TH AMENDMENT HEARING

Chief justice, AG trade heated words

ASHUTOSH SARKAR

Chief Justice Surendra Kumar Sinha and Attorney General Mahubey Alam had a heated exchange yesterday during a hearing on the appeal against the High Court verdict that scrapped the 16th amendment of the constitution.

At one stage, the attorney general said he had no confidence in the chief justice in relation to the case.

"I will be compelled to place a no-confidence petition and will withdraw myself from the case if all the seven judges of the Appellate Division are not involved in hearing the appeal because it is related to the constitution."

The 16th amendment had empowered parliament to remove judges for incapacity or misbehaviour. Following a writ petition filed by nine Supreme Court lawyers, the HC on May 5 last year declared the amendment illegal.

The government filed the appeal against the verdict on January 4 this year.

The attorney general made the comments yesterday since a five-member bench of the Appellate Division headed by the chief justice refused to adjourn the hearing of the appeal for two weeks as the top law officer requested.

The five judges included Justice Md Abdul Wahhab Miah, Justice Muhammad Imman Ali, Justice Hasan Foez Siddique and Justice Mirza Hussain Haider.

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Govt slated for 'compromise with radicals'

408 noted citizens issue joint statement

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government "compromised and surrendered to fundamentalist groups" by bringing changes in textbooks, limiting Pahela Baishakh celebrations and recognising the Dawra degree of Qawmi madrasa as equivalent to Master's degree, said a joint statement from 408 noted personalities.

The incidents hurt and frustrated the secular people of the country, said the statement, signed by Kamal Lohani, on Monday.

Such an ominous competition to have the communal and fundamentalist forces by side and using religion to go to or stay in power would push the

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11 months old, dead man accused in case!

Included in charge sheet in theft, vandalism case after police probe; court orders IO to explain

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Rubel was just a newborn in June last year when there was an incident of unlawful gathering and theft in his Mirpur neighbourhood.

But on February 27 this year, Mirpur police, after an eight-month-long probe, saw it fit to charge Rubel with vandalising a house, and stealing Tk 25,000, two gold chains and a mobile phone.

Rubel is now 11 months old.

As if this was not absurd enough, Sub-Inspector Maruful Islam, investigation officer in the case, also pressed charges against a dead person.

Arifur Rahman had died three years prior to the incident and he was named in the charge sheet along with 21 others.



explain why and how he included Rubel and Arifur in the charge sheet.

The IO was supposed to show up before the court yesterday and explain but he submitted a 10-day time petition instead

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AHMADIYYA IMAM Attacker claims he's no link to any group

STAR REPORT

The arrested attacker of the Mymensingh Ahmadiyya mosque imam yesterday claimed the attackers had no link with any political party and that no party or organisation helped them in carrying out the attack.

Arrestee Abdul Ahad Mohammad, 20, was talking to reporters at Mymensingh Medical College Hospital where he was undergoing treatment.

Hailing from Charia village in Netrakona's Kalmakanda upazila, Ahad is a student of Sunnah Jamia Jaforia Madrasa in Ishwarganj of Mymensingh. He was caught by locals moments after he hacked the imam, Mustafizur Rahman, on Monday night.

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Students sit for exams on veranda

A Gaibandha school locked for a week over land dispute

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Gaibandha

Students of a primary school in Gaibandha took their first terminal examination on the veranda of the educational institution yesterday on being locked out by the alleged land-owner.

Talking to The Daily Star, Enamul Huq admitted to have kept Palanpara Government Primary School in Sadullapur upazila locked since May 2.

He claimed that he had verbally asked the school authorities to move based on a recent Supreme Court verdict affirming his ownership of the land.

Local sources say one Profulla Chandra Shill allegedly donated the land in 1990 for the school to be established but the verdict stated that nine bighas of land, including the school premises,

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Children sit for an exam on the veranda of Palanpara Government Primary School in Gaibandha's Sadullapur yesterday. A local, who claimed that the school was built on his land, had padlocked the school on May 2.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

BANANI RAPE

Prime accused spotted in Sylhet

Claim local hotelier, staff; NHRC boss blasts police for negligence

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Police were yet to arrest any of the five accused in the Banani double rape case but an owner and employees of a hotel claimed they saw prime suspect Ahmed Shafat in Sylhet city on Monday.

"Five youths came to our hotel and looked for a room around 2:00pm. But we didn't give them that as they refused to show us their national ID cards," Mobarak Hossain, who works at Regent Park Resort, told The Daily Star over phone yesterday.

After the five left, the hotel employees checked newspapers and discovered that one of the youths was Shafat, he said.

Meanwhile, Kazi Reazul Hoque, chairman of the National Human Rights Commission, yesterday alleged that police showed negligence in taking timely action against the accused.

Shafat, son of one of the owners of Apan Jewellers, is the main accused in the case filed for raping two private university students in a posh hotel in the capital's Banani on March 28.

His friend Nayem Ashraf, victims' friend Shadman Sakif, who introduced the girls to the "rapists" early March, Shafat's driver Billal and body guard Azad are the other accused in the case filed with Banani Police Station.

Asked, a top police official, preferring anonymity, told The Daily Star they had information that some of the accused visited Sylhet after the case was filed. A team from Dhaka along with the local police was trying to arrest them, he said.

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