



WITH TODAY'S ISSUE

Star Showbiz

AL, BNP PREPARE FOR NEXT POLLS

## Searching for new members

*None of the two parties has membership database; AL focuses on women, young ones; BNP targets 1 crore new members*

SHAKHAWAT LITON, PARTHA PRATIM BHATTACHARJEE and MOHAMMAD AL-MASUM MOLLA

Two years ago, BJP, the ruling party in India, claimed to be the world's largest political party with 8.8 crore members, surpassing the Communist Party of China, which has 8.6 crore.

This goes to show that even the largest parties in the world were able to keep records of their members.

Things are, however, different in the Awami League and the BNP, even though they are quite small compared to the BJP. The leaders of the parties only say "a few millions", when asked how many members they have.

The two parties are now on a mission to recruit new members ahead of the next general elections.

On May 20, AL President Sheikh Hasina inaugurated the party's drive to recruit new members and renew existing memberships while BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia did the same for her party on July 1.

However, neither AL, nor BNP has records of their existing members, who pay membership fees that go into the party coffers.

The parties' constitutions say the records are required. In the absence of records, the processes of renewal of memberships and disciplining unruly members become faulty.

Even though membership fees are small (Tk 20 every three years for AL and Tk 10 every year for BNP), the records should be important for the parties.

Records of memberships indicate the places where a party is strong and where it is weak, which helps top leaders decide on strategies and deploy resources as needed.

For example, when the BJP leaders claimed in March 2015 that it was the largest party in the world, they said they had gained a huge number of members in Uttar Pradesh where it had not been in power for 15 years.

This allowed the BJP to aim at forming the state government on its own by winning 2017 state assembly elections. It eventually won 312 of the 403 seats.

But major parties of Bangladesh are more interested in recruiting new

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Exposing the poor drainage system, torrential rains have triggered waterlogging in the capital's DND embankment area. Grabbing and filling up of nearby canals have largely contributed to the problem causing immense sufferings to people. The photos were taken yesterday.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN



## Country's first nano satellite in orbit

*Made by Brac University students, Brac Onnesha starts orbiting the earth*

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Brac Onnesha, the country's first nano-satellite developed by three Brac University students with the use of Japanese technology, began orbiting the earth yesterday.

The joyous moment came when a robotic arm at the International Space Station (ISS) deployed the nanosat, a cube measuring 10cm along its edge and weighing around one kilogramme, into the orbit at an altitude of around 410km at 3:10pm Bangladesh time.

Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency and Kyushu Institute of Technology (Kyutech) connected to the ISS in space



and created opportunity for everyone on the Brac campus to see the event live.

"Today, we are reaping the rewards of taking risks," Brac University Vice-chancellor Syed Saad Andaleeb said while addressing a programme organised at the university auditorium to celebrate the occasion.

Four years ago, the university authorities had to think twice before going for the nanosat technology which is comparatively new in space science, he said.

Taking 90 minutes to complete one orbit, Brac Onnesha would take high resolution photographs from which

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RAMPAL POWER PLANT

## Govt to comply with Unesco conditions

*Say two ministers; Unesco decisions to be released likely after July 12; green groups to continue movement*

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government would fulfil the conditions set by Unesco for implementing the Rampal power plant project near the Sundarbans, two ministers told The Daily Star yesterday.

Unesco retreated from its earlier position that the plant cannot be built at Rampal and gave Bangladesh some conditions regarding its construction, said State Minister for Power Nasrul Hamid Bipu.

"We will meet the conditions," he told this correspondent.

When asked about those, he said Unesco urged the Bangladesh delegation at the ongoing 41st session of its World Heritage Committee in Poland to carry out Strategic Environmental Assessment of the country's south-western region including the Sundarbans.

"We will do so," he said, adding that the government would complete it by December next year.

Contacted, Environment and Forest Minister Anwar Hossain Manju said they would be able to do the

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## Top court faces acute shortage of judges

*SC Appellate Division now has only 6 judges; govt moves to fill up vacant posts by promoting from HC*

ASHUTOSH SARKAR

The number of apex court judges has come down to six from 11 in 2009 after the retirement of Justice Nazmun Ara Sultana, the first-ever female judge of the Supreme Court.

The High Court has also been facing a similar shortage of judges following retirement and death of some judges in the last couple of months.

The number of HC judge now stands at 86, which was 100 in June 2012.

The crisis of judges at the Appellate and HC divisions has caused a huge backlog of pending cases resulting in severe sufferings to the justice seekers.

The six Appellate Division judges are dealing with more than 13,000 cases. On



the other side, 86 HC judges are dealing with more than 4.31 lakh cases.

In the lower courts, there are only 1,268 judges who are hearing a huge backlog of more than 27 lakh cases.

Considering the situation, the government plans to promote some HC judges to the

Appellate Division and appoint some new judges to the HC.

"Certainly, the government has a plan to promote some High Court Division judges to the Appellate Division. Besides, recruitment of some new judges to the High Court Division is underway," Law Minister Anisul Huq told The Daily Star yesterday.

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Trump and Putin shake hands during the G20 Summit in Hamburg, Germany, in an image taken from video yesterday.

PHOTO: REUTERS

## Finally, they meet

*Trump meets Putin for first time at G20 summit, presses the Russian president on interference in US election*

REUTERS, Hamburg

US President Donald Trump pressed Vladimir Putin at their first meeting on Friday about Russian interference in the 2016 presidential election, US Secretary of State Rex Tillerson said.

The Russian president has denied any meddling in the US democratic process last year and Moscow has asked for proof that it took place.

Trump promised a rapprochement with Moscow during his campaign for the

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### তোমার প্রেরণায় বিন্দু গড়বে আগামীরা সিন্ধু

তোমায় ছাড়া আমরা ছিলাম ছড়িয়ে থাকা অর্থহীন বিন্দুর মতো। তুমি বিন্দুগুলোকে একত্রিত করে অর্থবহ করলে। তোমার দেখানো পথে নিষ্ঠা, প্রচেষ্টা আর অধ্যবসায় দিয়ে সকল বাঁধা জয় করা সত্যিকারের এক মানবিক গল্পের অংশ হয়ে উঠলাম।

প্রাণ-আরএফএল গ্রুপের প্রতিষ্ঠাতা, আজ তোমার দ্বিতীয় মৃত্যুবার্ষিকীর এই দিনে গভীর শ্রদ্ধা ও ভালোবাসায় স্মরণ করছি তোমাকে। তুমি আমাদের আগামীর পথচলার সত্য অনুপ্রেরণা।

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