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People with clout engage in corruption

Says Muhith, urges use of technology to check graft

UNB, Dhaka

Observing that everybody is indirectly involved in graft, Finance Minister AMA Muhith yesterday stressed the need for applying modern technologies to check graft in the country as technologies create a lot of scope for preventing the social menace.

"The optimum use of technologies will help reduce corruption ... there's a big scope to minimise corruption in different sectors, including public procurement, by using technologies," he said while addressing the inaugural session of the Anti-Corruption Commission's hotline service at its head office in the capital.

Mentioning that the people who have power are involved in corruption, the finance minister said everybody is indirectly involved in graft. "Corruption is in our blood ... we've got bogged down in this menace."

Noting that people often are forced to get involved in corruption, Muhith said, "There was no culture of corruption in Bangladesh in the past. Once it used to take place in secret...it was a matter of shame. But, now it happens openly."

He said a former ACC chairman had announced crusade against corruption, but failed to bring any change. "Well, you must investigate but don't be a jihadist as it destroys the

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British Council's Director in Bangladesh Barbara Wickham, left, and Chief Executive Sir Ciarán Devane inaugurating a memorial in honour of eight Bangladeshi police guards who died protecting the council's premises during the crackdown in March 1971.

PHOTO:
PRABIR DAS

Honouring 8 martyrs

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

British Council yesterday unveiled a memorial on its premises in the capital in honour of eight Bangladeshi police guards who died protecting it in 1971.

The council in London had recently found out about the eight policemen from old documents in its archive and research cell, Barbara Wickham, director of the council in Bangladesh, said at a press conference at her office.

She, however, could not provide any details about the policemen.

"We just came to know that such an incident had taken place," she said.

"Through the unveiling of this memorial, we wish to express sincere gratitude to the eight brave guards who gave their lives to protect the British Council in March 1971," she added.

Nahin Idris, head of arts at British Council in Dhaka told The Daily Star that they already had contacted Bangladesh police to know

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Elderly couple found dead in Tangail house

No clue yet on motive behind gruesome killings

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Tangail:

Police found the bodies of an elderly couple, tied to a sack of bricks, at the bottom of a drainage well beside the septic tank at their house at Rasulpur village in Tangail Sadar upazila, yesterday noon.

The victims were Anil Kumar Das, 70, a retired teacher of Rasulpur Bachhirunnechha High School and his wife Kalpana Rani Das, 55.

The couple lived alone in the ground floor of a three-storey under-construction building in the village. Their only son, Nirmol Kumar Das works as a senior officer at the head office of Bank Asia in Dhaka and their daughter, Anjana Rani Das, lives in USA.

Construction workers went to the house in the morning and found it empty, said Ananda Mohan Sarkar, Anil's cousin.

They informed the matter to his relatives and the relatives called the local union parishad (UP) chairman, he said. Rajkumar Sarkar, chairman of Gala UP,

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REAPING DEMOGRAPHIC DIVIDEND

Technical education for youth holds key

Say speakers at int'l conference in city

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh would be able to reap the full benefits of demographic dividend when it equips the large young population with technical education and skill, panellists said at an international conference yesterday.

When a country has more people of working age than non-working, it is known as demographic dividend.

With the two-thirds of working-age population, Bangladesh has to invest a lot more in vocational training and technical education to transform the vast human resources into a skilled workforce, they said.

The enrolment rate of students in technical education is around 14 percent, and the rate has to be increased rapidly if the country wants to capitalise on the opportunities created by the demographic dividend, they said, stressing the need for creating a link between educational institutions and industries.

Institution of Diploma Engineers, Bangladesh, and Colombo Plan Staff College, in association with the Ministry of Education of Bangladesh, organised the three-day conference titled "Skills for the future world of work and TVET for global competitiveness" at IDEB in the capital.

Researchers, practitioners, educationists, entrepreneurs, industrialists and policymakers from home and abroad attended the conference and several parallel sessions were held yesterday.

The speakers said although Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) is crucial to industrial growth and national development of the country, there is a social stigma attached to the TVET that only the

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Stronger police support to run mobile courts

Home minister assures DCs

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan yesterday assured the deputy commissioners of stronger police support for mobile courts.

He gave the assurance when the deputy commissioner of Chandpur asked for at least 10 law enforcers, including a sub-inspector, for running each mobile court during a meeting between the ministry and the DCs.

"DCs will be provided with policemen whenever they ask for them for operating mobile courts. They will have Ansar personnel as well," Asaduzzaman told reporters after the meeting.

The annual DC conference that began on Tuesday ended yesterday. During that time, the DCs met

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Editing of human genes done in US



REUTERS, Oregon

Technology that allows alteration of genes in a human embryo has been used for the first time in the United States, according to Oregon Health and Science University (OHSU) in Portland, which carried out the research.

The OHSU research is believed to have broken new ground both in the number of embryos experimented upon and by demonstrating it is possible to safely and efficiently correct defective genes that cause inherited diseases, according to Technology Review, which first reported the news.

None of the embryos were allowed to develop for more than a few days, according to the report.

Some countries have signed a convention prohibiting the practice on concerns it could be used

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Siddiquir flown to Chennai

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Titumir college student Siddiquir Rahman, whose eyes were damaged in "police action" during a demonstration at Shahbagh on July 20, was taken to India for better treatment yesterday.

The flight carrying him left Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport at 1:00pm, Nayeb Ali, Siddiquir's elder brother, told The Daily Star.

Nayeb and Zahidul Ahsan Menon, an assistant professor at the National Institute of Ophthalmology

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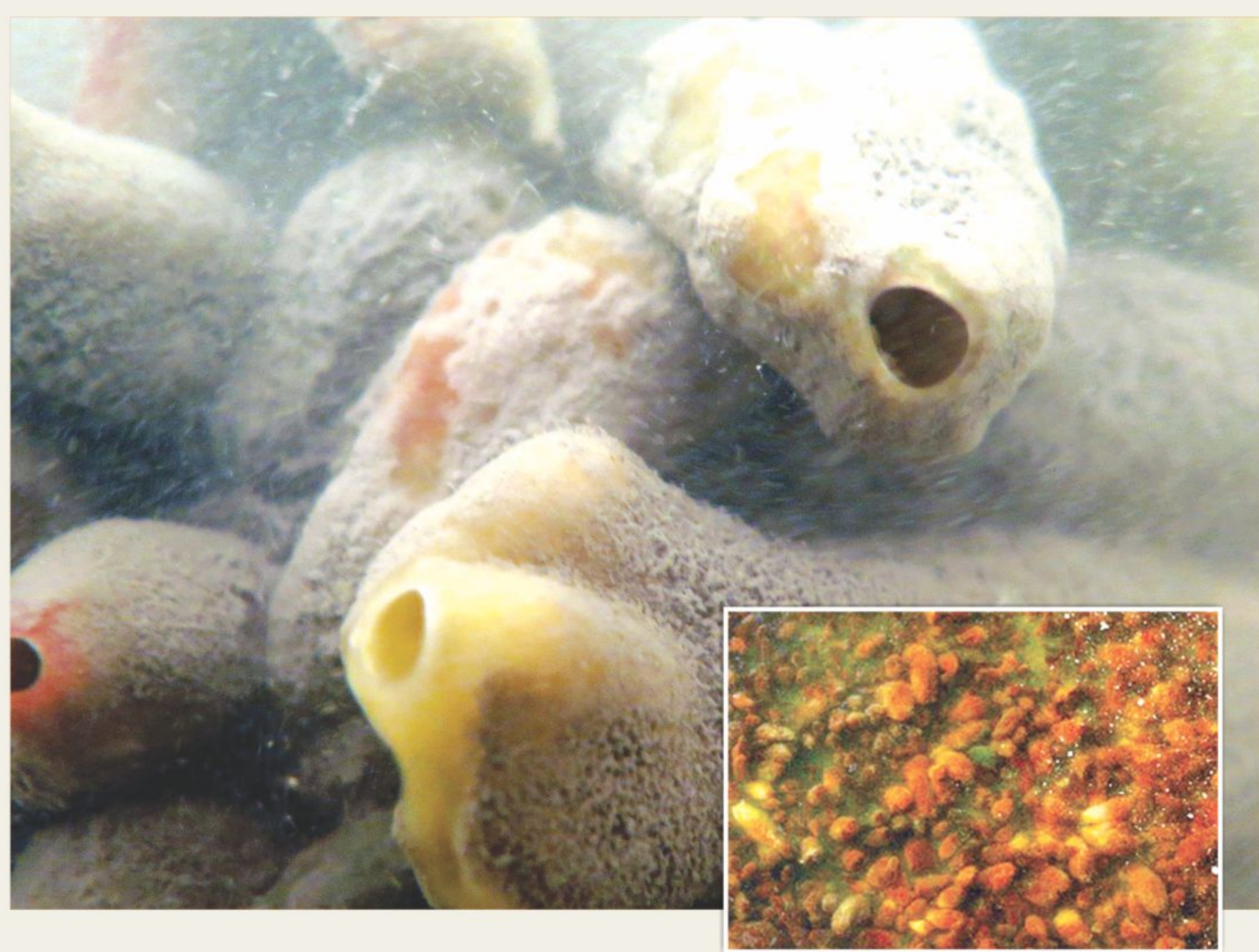
SIBL Foundation Hospital
& Diagnostic Center


PRAYER TIMING JULY 28

Fazr Juma Asr Maghrib Esha

AZAN	4-20	12-30	5-00	6-50	8-15
JAMAAT	4-55	1-15	5-15	6-55	8-45

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION





NATURE QUEST

SOFT CORALS OF SONADIA

Conducting an ecological study of Sonadia Island, experts SMA Rashid and Anisuzzaman Khan, observed a bed of brilliant red blooms, right at the sandy bottom. From a distance, it seemed like a field of flowers but closer inspection revealed it to be a new species of coelenterate. Experts and a follow-up research team suspect it to be a colony of sponges belonging to the Phylum Porifera (meaning pole bearer) owing to their bodies full of pores and channels.

PHOTO: SMA RASHID AND SHARIF SARWAR

NEWS ANALYSIS

INDIAN POLITICS

Nitish Kumar upends opposition equations

PALLAB BHATTACHARYA, New Delhi

In politics, there are no permanent friends but only permanent interests. This adage proved true once again as Nitish Kumar yesterday took fresh oath as chief minister of India's politically key state Bihar. His party Janata Dal (United) formed a government in alliance with Bharatiya Janata Party.

Before yesterday's reunion, Kumar and Narendra Modi were bitter political foes for the last four years. A couple of years ago, Kumar had spearheaded a campaign in Bihar state assembly polls against Modi projecting the electoral battle between a "Bihari" and "Bahari" (outsider). Modi had extensively campaigned for BJP in that election. Kumar came out triumphant in that battle in alliance with Lalu Prasad Yadav's Rashtriya Janata Dal and Congress party.

The revived political friendship between BJP and Kumar-led Janata Dal (U) has thus come full circle four years after the two parties had parted ways over Kumar's strident opposition to the saffron party projecting Narendra Modi as its prime ministerial face in 2014 parliamentary polls and opened the gates for a major realignment of forces that could boost BJP in its efforts for retaining the mandate to rule India after next parliamentary polls.

It also came a day after snapping ties with Lalu Prasad Yadav-led Rashtriya Janata Dal and Congress party in a move that could hurt the opposition's bid for a united front against Modi-led BJP in fresh general elections in 2019.

There were early indications about Nitish Kumar's bonhomie with BJP: his open support for Modi government's

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