



BANK LAW CHANGING
Amendments to strengthen grip of families on private banks
PAGE B1

NORTH KOREA TENSION
Global pressure mounts, as Beijing urges Pyongyang to make 'smart decision'
PAGE 8

BROTHER INSPIRED
Mahmudullah Riyad speaks to The Daily Star in an exclusive interview
PAGE 14

BISHWAJIT MURDER VERDICT

HC orders probe against SI, doc

Asks authorities to find out if there were lapses in inquest, autopsy



Death stays for two of eight condemned killers; sentence of four reduced to life term; two acquitted

ASHUTOSH SARKAR
The High Court yesterday upheld the death sentence of two BCL men, commuted that of four to life term and acquitted two in the case over the gruesome killing of Bishwajit Das.
All the eight were handed down capital punishment by a lower court on December 18, 2013.
The HC acquitted two others who were given life imprisonment.
It was a cold winter morning in 2012

when Bishwajit's life was cut short by the savagery of some Bangladesh Chhatra League activists during a countrywide blockade enforced by the opposition.
The killing, much of which was filmed by journalists at the scene, shook the nation to its core as the clips and pictures appeared on the news.
The HC came up with the verdict yesterday after hearing the death reference and appeals of the convicted accused challenging the trial court judgment.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 2

THE GRISLY KILLING IN OLD DHAKA



Bishwajit's parents in tears at his bust in front of their village home in Shariatpur.

BISHWAJIT WAS MURDERED
Dec 9, 2012

LOWER COURT VERDICT
Dec 18, 2013

HC VERDICT
Aug 6, 2017

DEATH PENALTY
Lower court 8
High Court 2

LIFE TERM
Lower court 11
High Court 15

HC Acquitted 4
(Lower court death sentence 2, life term 2)

PHOTO: STAR

DEATH PENALTY UPHELD



Rafiqul

Rajon

DEATH PENALTY COMMUTED TO LIFE TERM



Noor

Shaon

Mahfuz

Emdad

Protect the four rivers of Dhaka

PM orders authorities; approves renaming environment ministry

UNB, Dhaka
Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday asked the authorities concerned to strengthen their efforts to keep the four rivers surrounding the capital free from pollution.
"These four rivers will die if those are not freed from waste and pollution," she said while speaking at the fourth meeting of the National Committee on Environment held at the Prime Minister's Office.
A proposal to rename the Ministry of Environment and Forests to the Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate



SEE PAGE 2 COL 4

BTRC moves to adjust mobile call rates

MUHAMMAD ZAHIDUL ISLAM

Bangladesh Telecommunication Regulatory Commission (BTRC) has made a surprise move to adjust mobile call rates which, if implemented, will increase consumers' call expenditure by about 10 percent.

At a Commission meeting on July 24, the regulator decided to propose a 40 percent hike in the minimum voice call rate within the same operator (on-net) and a 25 percent cut in the minimum call rate for other network (off-net), according to meeting documents.

The BTRC, which sent the proposal to the posts and telecommunications ministry last week, says the move will reduce the gap between on-net and off-net call charges like in other developed countries.

Private mobile phone operators welcomed the move though they did not place any proposal before the telecom regulator or the government in this regard.

The adjustment will fetch the three private operators -- Grameenphone, Robi

	EXISTING	PROPOSED
Lowest rate in same network	Tk 0.25	Tk 0.35
Lowest rate in other network	Tk 0.60	Tk 0.45
Highest rate in any network	Tk 2.00	Tk 1.50

and Banglalink -- Tk 121 crore in additional monthly revenue, but state-owned Teletalk will lose Tk 4 crore a month, business insiders said.

Last month, the telecom regulator sent a separate proposal to the posts and telecommunications division for increasing the tariff of broadband internet, which is yet to be approved. In the current budget, the

SEE PAGE 11 COL 2

Drug tests to pick leaders!

Ex-MP wants to 'ensure no addicts are in local JCD leadership'

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Faridpur

In an unprecedented move, several Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal workers of an upazila unit had to undergo urine test to prove to be 'fit' for top positions of the local unit.

This news received attention in some local and international media. The JCD high command reacted sharply to the process of selecting leadership.

The incident took place at Faridpur's Boalmari Upazila, some 150km away from the capital.

Shah Mohammad Abu Zafar, former MP of Faridpur-1 (Boalmari-Modhukhali-Alfadanga) initiated the move at his Hashamdia village house in Boalmari upazila yesterday.

"I arranged this [urine test] to ensure that no drug addicts can be Chhatra Dal leaders in the upazila," he said.

SEE PAGE 11 COL 4

BOGRA 'RAPE' VICTIM IN HOSPITAL

Time to go home but fear stalks

A CORRESPONDENT, Bogra

The teenage girl, allegedly raped and tortured by Sramik League leader Tufan Sarker, is now concerned over her safety as doctors said she and her mother can go home from the hospital.

Sonatan Chakrabarty, additional superintendent of police in Bogra, however, told The Daily Star that the court will decide where the victim and her mother will live considering the issue of security.

The victims are supposed to appear before a Bogra court today, he informed.

"They are still haunted by the memory of torture while the bruises from torture are yet to heal.

"I lose my mind and break down whenever the memories flash across my mind," the girl told The Daily Star at the hospital yesterday.

Noting that there were adequate securities at the hospital, she said she was scared to go outside. "I don't know what will happen when we return home."

The victim, who passed SSC this year and had been seeking college admission, now wants to focus on her future and continue her studies.

"I want to concentrate on my main goal: studies," she

SEE PAGE 11 COL 1

'ABT man' arrested in India

STAR REPORT

A Bangladeshi, believed to be a member of banned militant outfit Ansarullah Bangla Team (ABT), was detained in Muzaffarnagar district of India's Uttar Pradesh yesterday.

A team of Anti-Terror Squad (ATS) of India arrested Abdullah Al Mamon, 26, at Kutesara in Charthawal area following a tip-off, our New Delhi correspondent reports quoting Asim Arun, inspector general of state police in Lucknow, capital of Uttar Pradesh.

Police in Bangladesh said Abdullah, of Tarakandi upazila in Mymensingh, left for India in 2009.

Counter Terrorism and Transnational Crime (CTTC) unit officials said Abdullah was not on their list of wanted militants but they were sharing information with their Indian counterparts.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 4



Abdullah



Members of the Bede community make a living out of finding precious things people lose in water bodies. They dive, use rakes and scoops to find lost gold and silver ornaments. The photos were taken from Signboard and Rugganj areas of Narayanganj recently.

PHOTO: KHALID HUSSAIN AYON

Diving for a living

ANANTA YUSUF

Would you believe that some people still make a living out of diving in ponds and water bodies to recover jewellery or precious possessions lost by bathers?

You don't even have to go far to find such people. In fact, the bede community in Narayanganj have a few people who make a living doing exactly that. Diving into ponds to recover precious ornaments in exchange for a small amount of money, the *Duburi* (Diver) or *PukurIharani*, as they are known, have been doing so for years.

"The bede people were never used to usual jobs, so we would do works such as hunting birds and catching snakes," said Sohel Sardar *Duburi* while talking to The Daily Star at his home in Narayanganj's Rugganj. "But the forests have long disappeared and we no longer earn our bread and butter from such works. Then our forefathers taught us the art of finding precious jewellery by diving."

Divers like him can currently be seen in two bede communities at Signboard and Rugganj areas of Narayanganj.

Once, when most people used ponds to take baths, the divers were in high demand. Today, most ponds have disappeared and thus the number of divers has also dropped drastically.

But that is not the only problem for the divers.

"People do not wear as much gold as they used to do," noted Sohel Sardar, explaining why they are not in high demand like yesteryears.

There was a time, when most of the bedes would visit

SEE PAGE 2 COL 4

SCAN THE QR CODE TO WATCH VIDEO
TO USE QR CODE ON YOUR SMARTPHONE, INSTALL FREE QR READER SOFTWARE FROM GOOGLE PLAYSTORE OR APPLE STORE. TURN ON THE SOFTWARE AND HOLD THE PHONE CAMERA OVER THE QR CODE TO GET THE VIDEO LINK.