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CABLE INDUSTRY RIDING HIGH ON GROWTH MOMENTUM
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WITH TODAY'S ISSUE
SHOUT

EXPORTS RISE
Earnings increased 26.54pc
year-on-year to \$3.2b in July
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MANAFORT'S HOME RAIDED
FBI searches house of Trump's ex-campaign
manager as part of Russia probe
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Dredger purchase beats snail's pace

Project not completed though deadline ended five years ago; project director changed eight times in seven years



KEY POINTS
Bangladesh's river system carries almost a fifth of the world's annual silt flow
The country needs 3cr cubic metres of dredging a year
Has capacity to dredge only 50 lakh cubic metres
In 2010, BWDB undertook a project to buy 21 dredgers by 2012 and make rivers navigable in 10 years
After 5-year overrun, it could buy only 5 dredgers and is asking 3 more years to get the rest

REAZ AHMAD and REJAHIL KARIM BYRON
This is a classic case of inertia, a case that clearly shows how things move in government offices.
In 2010, the government planned to dredge and make the country's vast waterways navigable in 10 years.
Accordingly, Bangladesh Water Development Board (BWDB) was given the mandate and the money to buy 21 dredgers, nine tug boats, two inspection boats and other dredging equipment by 2012.

The Tk 1,309-crore project has already overrun by five years, but the implementing agency could not complete the procurement. Keeping the silted up rivers navigable should have been a priority for Bangladesh, whose river system carries almost a fifth of the world's yearly sediments.
But after three extensions since the original project deadline ended in 2012, the BWDB has so far managed to procure only five dredgers, and nothing more. It is now seeking a three-year extension to buy the rest.

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Anticipating a further reduction in import duty, importers delay unloading rice-laden trucks from India at Hill Land Port in Dinajpur. Some 4,500 tonnes of rice are on the trucks and importers expect to save a lot of money. The photo was taken a few days ago.

PHOTO: COLLECTOR

FULL JUDGMENT ON 16TH AMENDMENT

Justice Khairul terms verdict immature

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
Law Commission Chairman ABM Khairul Haque yesterday strongly criticised the Supreme Court verdict in the case over the 16th amendment, terming it misconceived, irrelevant and immature.
The SC made its observations overlooking "the main issue of the case", he told a press conference at his office in the capital.
Some constitutional provisions were misinterpreted in the verdict, noted Khairul, also a former chief justice.
The constitution needs to be amended for restoring the Supreme Judicial Council (SJC), as the provision of the SJC was not



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BNP out to make AL judiciary's opponent

Alleges ruling party; Tofail says no room for questioning legitimacy of current JS

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
The Awami League yesterday alleged that the BNP with ill intentions was trying to make it an opponent of the judiciary.
"None should do politics over the Supreme Court verdict. The judiciary should be kept above party and opinion. The judiciary is the last resort of people. So there should not be any politics or difference over it, but they [BNP] are doing it," AL Presidium Member Abdul Matin Khasru said at a press conference at the party's Dhanmondi office in the capital.
"Supreme Court is not our opponent, it's the BNP. I read a statement today [yesterday] and watched TV and found that the party with ill intentions was trying to make us opponent of the judiciary," he added.
The apex court on August 1 released the full text of its verdict, scarping the 16th amendment to the constitution that had given parliament the power to remove SC judges for misconduct or incapacity.
Eight days after the release of the full verdict, the AL yesterday came up with its formal reaction.

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Govt considers the judiciary its rival: Fakhru

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhru Islam Alamgir yesterday alleged that the government took the judiciary as its opponent following the release of the full verdict in the 16th constitutional amendment case.
"It has become clear through the statements of the finance minister and the health minister that the government has taken the judiciary as its opponent," he said.
The BNP leader was addressing a discussion organised by Jatiyatabadi Anjibhi Forum in Old Dhaka.

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Govt to further slash duty on rice import

Goes for deal with Thailand to buy the staple

REAZ AHMAD
In a desperate bid to stabilise rice price, the government has decided to further reduce the duty on import of the staple and strike a deal with Thailand to buy rice.
Meanwhile, private importers, anticipating the duty slash, are delaying in having the already imported rice released at the country's two main land ports - Hill in Dinajpur and Benapole in Jessore.
Over 200 trucks loaded with some 7,000 tonnes of rice were standing still at the ports yesterday.
As rice prices continue to remain high, the food ministry on July 25 proposed to allow import of the staple on zero tariffs.
On Tuesday, the commerce ministry informed the parliamentary standing committee concerned that the government would have the import duty from 10 percent.
Bahauddin Nasim, a member of the parliamentary body on the ministry, told The Daily Star yesterday although the food ministry insisted on lifting the duty altogether, the government would keep a five percent duty on rice import.
Till last night, the National Board of Revenue, however, did not receive any communications in this regard.
But speculation over an imminent duty cut prompted private importers to go slow with the release of already imported rice consignments from India.
On June 20, the government reduced duty on rice import from 28 percent to 10 percent. As a result, the country witnessed over 2.4 lakh tonnes of rice import in the last one and a half months. This volume is almost double the entire volume of rice imported by private traders in the last financial year.
Mamunur Rashid, an importer, told our Dinajpur correspondent Kongkon

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FLIRTING WITH DEATH



People scramble to safety as a train rumbles through an illegal kitchen market set up along the train tracks in Jurain of Old Dhaka yesterday. In a cat-and-mouse game, sellers return and set up shops along the tracks every time they are evicted. They move their shops barely out of the way moments before trains arrive.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

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