

WITH TODAY'S ISSUE

STAR
WEEKEND

LALON'S DEATH ANNIVERSARY

Bauls congregate at the mystic bard's shrine in Kushtia

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'GREAT, WISE'

With tears and songs, China hails Xi Jinping

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Tax trouble for landlords

Dhaka's house owners worried about big hike in holding tax; tenants to bear the brunt in the end

General tax on holdings being reassessed after 28 years	Tax being fixed manifold the current amount	City corporations say move to rationalise tax amount on properties	375,000 holdings in Dhaka city
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TAWFIQUE ALI

Already grappled with soaring prices of essentials, tenants in the capital are likely to find themselves in more trouble as the authorities are increasing the tax on holdings manifold.

Although the building owners are to pay the tax, the tenants fear they will have to bear the brunt in the end. They say the landlords will realise a major part of the revised amount from them.

The ongoing general tax assessment in the capital began after 28 years mid last year. As the move, due every five years, came so late, the tax on many of the around 375,000 holdings in the two city corporation areas have been reassessed at three to five times the present amount.

And now, both the house owners and the tenants are worried over the sudden hike in the tax money.

"I am not saying it's illegal but the authorities shouldn't have increased the holding tax so much at a time," said Mostafa Ahmmed, owner of a six-storey building in West Dhannomdi area.

For his building on a three-katha plot, Mostafa has already paid the Dhaka South City Corporation Tk 45,350 as the tax for the current tax year 2017-2018. Following the reassessment, he should be paying Tk 2,14,200 now.

"The tax on my house was reassessed just four years ago and now it has

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Rohingya refugees, who crossed the Myanmar border two days ago, walk after they received permission from the Bangladesh Army to continue on to the refugee camps in Cox's Bazar yesterday. Inset, A BGB official carries an elderly Rohingya woman near the no man's land in Palongkhali.

PHOTO: REUTERS/AFP

Graft charges false: Khaleda

BNP chief gets bail in 2 cases; court bars her from travelling abroad without permission

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday granted bail to BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia, recalling the warrant for her arrest in two graft cases tied to Zia Orphanage Trust and a Charitable Trust, and instructed her to take court's permission next time for leaving the country.

The BNP chief was present during the hearing on her bail petitions, a day after she returned home from London living with her elder son Tarique Rahmat in three months.

Granted bail, Khaleda was given permission by Judge Md Akhtuzzaman, of the Special Court-5, to speak in self-defence when she claimed the cases were "imaginary."

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Back to 'rat theory'

Minister Anisul again blames locals, rats for the damage of haor dams; CPD says govt's flood response was timely but inadequate

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Over three months after the Anti-Corruption Commission sued 61 people for mismanagement and corruption in the construction of dams in the country's haor areas, the water resources minister once again held rats accountable for the destruction of embankments.

But he did not rule out possible corruption in the projects.

"I won't say there won't be any looting [of public money]. We won't be able to stop it. The Water Development Board [WDB] is not an isolated organisation; it's not an isolated society. It [WDB] too is part of the total system where corruption exists," said Anisul Islam Mahumud.

He was addressing a dialogue on "Flood 2017: Situation and Way Forward" organised by the Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD) at the Centre on Integrated Rural Development for Asia and Pacific

CPD FINDINGS	
FLASH FLOOD In haor, low-lying areas (6 dists)	MONSOON FLOOD (32 dists)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 46.7 lakh people affected Boro production loss 15.8 lakh tonnes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 82 lakh people affected

(Cirdap) in the capital.

On July 2, the ACC filed a case against 61 people, including contractors and WDB's suspended Superintendent Engineer Nurul Islam, Additional Chief Engineer Abdul Hai and 12 other officials.

The anti-graft body lodged the case after investigators "found evidence of irregularities" in the construction and maintenance of the dams.

Speaking at the programme, eminent water expert Anun Nishat expressed concerns that there

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Shift Rohingyas from tourist town

Cox's Bazar civil society members call upon govt amid ecological, economical concerns

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Cox's Bazar

Representatives from Cox's Bazar's Civil Society and non-government organisations yesterday formed a forum demanding the shifting of Rohingyas from the tourist town, protecting local environment and upholding human rights of the Rohingyas.

The call was made at a press conference held at Cox's Bazar press club. The forum further demanded the formation of a cell by the government to conduct research of the possible threats on the livelihood of local people by the large influx of Rohingyas from Myanmar.

It further demanded the restoration of the ecological and economical balance of the area. They suggested that the cell conduct research on short and long term losses on the natural resources, economy, health and tourism of Cox's Bazar.

Chief Executive of Coast Trust Rezaul Karim, Cox's Bazar Civil Society president Abu Morshed Chowdhury Khoka and IPSA chief executive Arifur Rahman

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PayPal Xoom launched in Bangladesh

UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister's ICT Adviser Sajeeb Wazed Joy yesterday said the time to bring in money from abroad through hundi and corruption was almost over with the launching of the PayPal's Xoom service in the country.

He inaugurated the global online payment system at a function titled "PayPal+Xoom service and freelancer conference" in the city's Bangabandhu International Conference Centre.

Addressing the programme, he said around 1.8 million Bangladeshi expatriates sent around \$13 billion to the country in the last fiscal year. There was, however, no estimation of how much money entered Bangladesh through hundi.

Joy hoped that expatriates would no longer resort to hundi but to speedy transfer of money with

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A Wassa excavator on a barge cleaning up the DND Canal in the city's Jatrabari. The canal has become clogged with rubbish, obstructing the water flow. Dhaka Wassa has 65km of such canals under its supervision.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

TALKS WITH EC

Most parties want army deployment during election

Demand dissolution of JS before polls, neutral election-time administration

MOHAMMAD AL-MASUM MOLLA

During the polls talks with the Election Commission, most political parties wanted the deployment of the army and dissolution of parliament before the next general elections.

A majority of the registered political parties also demanded the next polls be held under a neutral election-time administration.

However, not all the parties agree on what sort of power the army should have during the elections which is likely to be held in December 2018. Some want it deployed with magistracy power while others want it as a strike force in case an untoward situation developed.

At least 25 out of 40 parties that talked with the EC since August 25 demanded army deployment. Six others left it to the commission to decide whether such a deployment was necessary. Three parties opposed the idea of army deployment while the rest did not say anything about it.

The ruling Awami League and its alliance partners have either opposed it or have suggested that the army only be deployed without magistracy power and only if required.

The BNP and some of its alliance partners demanded

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