



AGGRESSIVE LENDING

Bangladesh Bank blocks funds of ONE Bank and Premier Bank

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BANGLADESH IN FINAL

Hosts defeat Bhutan 3-0 to set up final against India in SAFF U-15 Women's Championship

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'JOLT TO MODI'

Rahul Gandhi says Gujarat polls show BJP propaganda not working

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STARTING ROHINGYA REPATRIATION

Lot to do in just one month

Bangladesh, Myanmar form joint working group; Rakhine situation may hamper repatriation process

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Amid uncertainty, continued fleeing of Rohingyas, and fire and destruction in Muslim minority villages in Rakhine, Bangladesh and Myanmar yesterday set up a high-powered Joint Working Group (JWG) to start "safe and voluntary" repatriation of Rohingyas refugees within one month.

The Terms of Reference (ToR) of the JWG, signed after a foreign secretary-level meeting in Dhaka yesterday, reiterated starting the repatriation process of hundreds of thousands Myanmar nationals now sheltered in Bangladesh within the January 23 timeframe.

"The JWG shall ensure commencement of repatriation within two months of the signing of the "Arrangement" [signed on Nov 23], said the ToR, which was originally scheduled to be signed on December 14.

In the November 23 deal, Myanmar had agreed to halt the outflow of its residents to Bangladesh, restore normalcy in Northern Rakhine and to encourage those who had left Myanmar to return voluntarily and safely to their own households or safe and secure places of their choice.

But latest analysis of satellite images of Human Rights Watch reveals new destruction of Rohingya villages even after the bilateral arrangement.

Asked to comment on the latest development, foreign affairs and migration experts in Dhaka said the two countries may miss the deadline as situation in Rakhine remains almost unchanged. And this may seriously hamper the "safe and voluntary" repatriation.

They also pointed to some stringent conditions set in the agreement regarding the verification process, which may create complexities for a smooth repatriation.

In all, Bangladesh now hosts about 1 million Rohingyas.

As many as 6,55,000 of this minority people fled to Bangladesh since violence broke out in Rakhine on August 25, following an attack by Rohingya insurgents on police and army check posts. Earlier in October last year, at least 87,000 Rohingyas similarly fled Myanmar in the wake of violence.

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TURKEY SEEKS ROHINGYA SOLUTION - PAGE 2



Fifteen-year-old Ontora calling passengers to board a Mirpur-bound BRTC bus in the city's Farmgate area. She took the job of a helper around six months ago. Working from 8:00am to 5:00pm, she makes Tk 150 daily. Many commuters look at her in disbelief as the risky job is usually taken up by men. She also faces many challenges in the job. Inset, a hawker harasses the girl as she refused to allow him on board at Farmgate around 3:15pm yesterday.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

Politics now a game of the rich

Says Rehman Sobhan

STAR DESK

Eminent economist Rehman Sobhan has said politics has now turned out to be an extended part of business and money paves the way for winning an election.

He was delivering Nurjahan Murshid and Professor Khan Sarwar Murshid Trust Fund lecture

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Crucial for all, but reasons different

MOHAMMAD AL-MASUM MOLLA and KONGKON KARMAKER from Rangpur

The electoral battle for Rangpur mayor is crucial for the Awami League, BNP and Jatiya Party as they see the polls from different perspectives.

The city is going to witness the battle of ballots between the mayor hopefuls from the three major political parties as the election will be held tomorrow in a partisan manner.

Electioneering for the vote came to an end at midnight last night. All the mayor and councilor candidates passed a busy



RANGPUR CITY CORPORATION POLLS

day yesterday making pledges to develop the city.

A total of 393,994 voters are expected to exercise their franchise to elect their representatives. Local political leaders and experts said there are around 70,000 voters from religious minority communities and about 36,000 new voters.

Sharfuddin Ahmed Jhantu, Kawsar Zaman Babla and Mostafizur Rahman Mostafa have been contesting the mayoral polls from the AL, BNP and Jatiya Party respectively.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 3

Bacchu must face quizzing

ACC rejects his plea for absence due to 'illness'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Anti-Corruption Commission has rejected the petition of former BASIC Bank chairman Sheikh Abdul Hye Bacchu for delaying his interrogation on health grounds after talking to the hospital concerned.

The commission will take legal steps against Bacchu if he continued to skip interrogation, said an ACC high up wishing not to be named.

On Sunday, ACC summoned Bacchu for interrogation in connection with 47 of the 56 cases filed over the misappropriation of Tk 2,036 crore of the bank.

Instead of appearing before the commission, Bacchu sent a letter to the ACC seeking one-month time. He said he was physically unwell and was taking treatment at a hospital.



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Farmers Bank MD dismissed

'Failure to protect depositors' interests cited as main reason

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh Bank has sacked Farmers Bank Managing Director AKM Shameem for his failure to protect the depositors' interests and manage liquidity.

The central bank sent a letter to the Farmers Bank authorities yesterday morning for Shameem's removal. The order took effect immediately, BB Executive Director and spokesperson Subhankar Saha told The Daily Star.

In its letter, the banking regulator mentioned that Shameem has been removed from the bank in line with the Banking Company Act 1991, and he cannot be MD of any bank in the next three years.

Shameem joined Farmers Bank as additional managing director in 2013. He was made MD last year, and his stint was supposed to end on December 28.

Earlier on November 27, Muhiuddin Khan Alamgir, chairman of Farmers Bank, and Md Mahabubul Haque Chisty, chairman of its audit committee, were made to resign from the bank's board of directors for their alleged involvement in loan irregularities.

Experts say the restructuring of the board alone is not enough to save



AKM Shameem

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Turkey to help Rohingyas in Bangladesh

Hasina, Turkish PM meet; 2 MoUs signed

UNB, Dhaka

Visiting Turkish Prime Minister Binali Yildirim yesterday expressed his country's intention to further improve the existing strong trade and economic relations with Bangladesh, and assured Bangladesh of its continuing support to Rohingyas living in Bangladesh.

"We've discussed what we can do to improve our

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Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina receives her Turkish counterpart Binali Yildirim at her office in the capital yesterday.

PHOTO: PMO

Missing journo Utpal found in Narayanganj

STAR REPORT

Utpal Das, a senior reporter of an online news portal who had been missing since October, was found in Narayanganj last night.

A black microbus dropped him off in front of Shahjalal filling station in Aduria of Bhulta around midnight, said Mostafizur Rahman, additional police superintendent of Narayanganj.

As of 2:00am today, he was in the custody of Bhulta police outpost, said Shahidul Alam, an inspector there.

Contacted through the mobile number of Shahidul, Utpal said he was blindfolded when he was dropped off so he could not see anyone.

Asked about his captivity,

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