

AMID REFUGEE CRISIS

What are the environmental challenges in Cox's Bazar

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JANATA BANK LOAN SCAM

Whole bank was in it

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

When one applies for a loan at Janata Bank, the application goes through at least five layers of scrutiny. But in case of AnonTex Group, none of these processes seemed to have been followed.

If they were, the apparel exporter should not have been able to take out loans amounting to Tk 5,504 crore -- despite failing to pay back its previous loans.

Not only that, Janata's loans to AnonTex Group accounted for more than 25 percent of the state-owned bank's capital base, which was in violation of the single borrower exposure limit set in the Bank Company Act 1991.

The group, which has an annual turnover of \$150 million, has failed to make regular instalment payments, leaving Janata with a massive hole in its capital base.

The loans were disbursed between 2010 and 2015 from the state-owned bank's Janata Bhaban Corporate branch.

Md Abdus Salam Azad, Janata's current managing director, was the general manager of the branch from November 2011 to August 2013 -- when AnonTex got most of the loans. Prior to that, Azad served as the deputy GM of the branch for two years.

Typically, when a credit proposal is received, the branch manager has to verify whether the company has the capacity to repay the loan. The branch then submits the proposal to the credit committee, which is usually headed by the deputy GM.

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Huge pressure on Bangladesh

Says Swiss president about Rohingya crisis while visiting refugee camp



DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Visiting the Rohingya refugees in Cox's Bazar, Swiss President Alain Berset yesterday said a refugee crisis of this scale put Bangladesh and the international community under enormous pressure to provide shelter and the most urgent services to more than 650,000 people.

He said his country was working closely with Bangladesh, UN agencies and other development partners.

Berset was talking to reporters during his visit to Kutupalong Rohingya camp in Ukhia of Cox's Bazar.

Putting emphasis on the voluntary, safe and dignified return of the people to their places of origin, he expressed concern about the outlook for the younger generation and the situation of the women and children who need increased protection.

He said Switzerland calls for the full implementation of the report of the Advisory Commission on Rakhine State, chaired by Kofi Annan, former secretary-general of the UN.

Berset met Rohingya refugees in Kutupalong and visited the Cox's Bazar Sadar Hospital which received Swiss contributions.

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Hamid awaits second term as president

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Abdul Hamid will remain the country's president for a second consecutive term as no one else is running in the upcoming presidential election.

Monday was the last day to submit nomination papers for the post of the president. Only the ruling Awami League submitted the nomination papers for Hamid.

AL General Secretary Obaidul Quader on Monday submitted Hamid's nomination papers to Chief Election Commissioner KM Nurul Huda.

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DHAKA ART SUMMIT

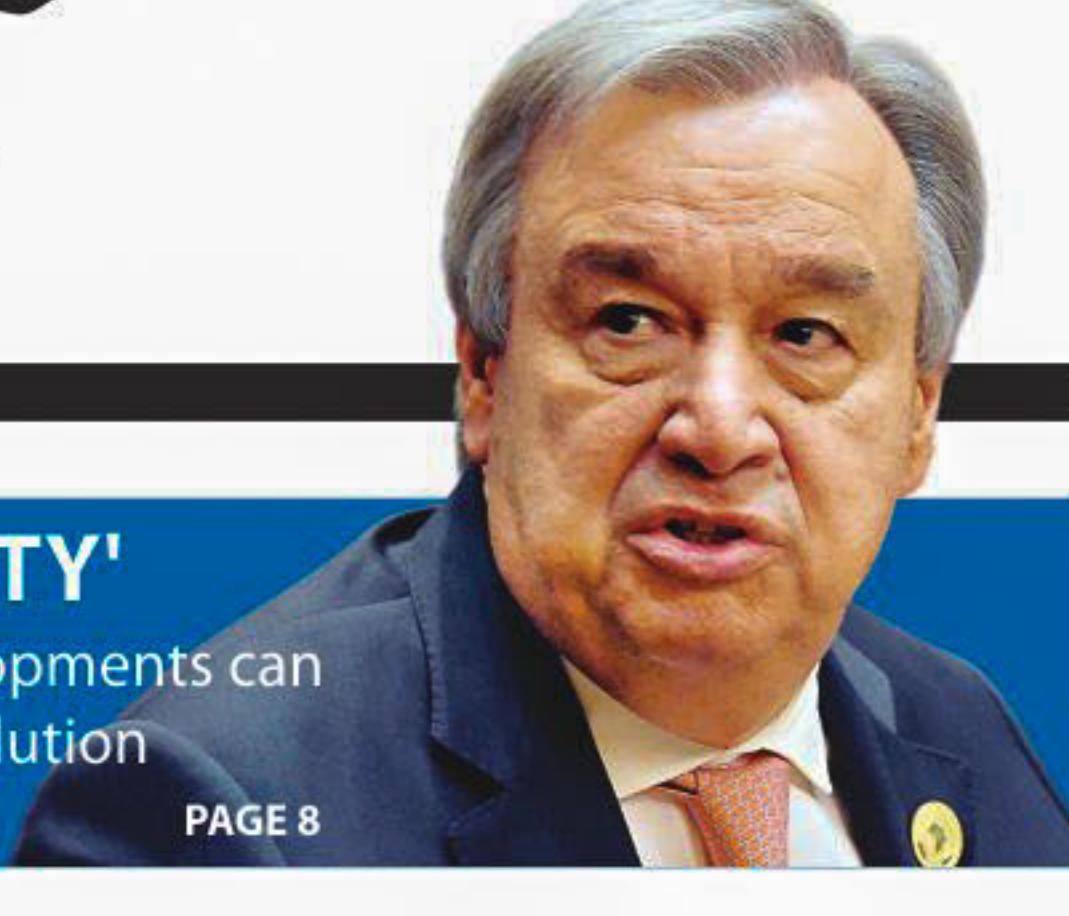
First-ever book on Bangla grammar and one on Zainul Abedin launched

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'ONE-STATE REALITY'

UN chief warns recent developments can lead to burial of two-state solution

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DIGITAL SECURITY ACT
Editors demand discussions with stakeholders

Urge govt not to finalise it hastily

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Shampadak Parishad has voiced deep concern over the inclusion of the controversial Section-57 of the ICT Act and some strict provisions in the draft of the Digital Security Act 2018.

Terming the draft law a harsher one, the Parishad, an organisation of editors of the country's national dailies, has demanded that the government drop all controversial sections from the draft act.

The Parishad also demanded that the draft be finalised following discussions among all stakeholders, saying the law should not be enacted hastily.

The nature of crime and the provision of punishment for "digital spying" mentioned in Section-32 of the proposed law will hurt freedom of speech and the fundamental spirit of democracy. It will also create

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A cop enquires a passenger from Rangpur about the reason for his visit to the capital near the Gabtoli Bus Terminal around 10:30am yesterday. The government has put the law enforcers on high alert ahead of the delivery of the verdict in the Zia Orphanage Trust graft case against BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia tomorrow.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN, AMRAN HOSSAIN

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FEB 8: VERDICT IN KHALEDA'S GRAFT CASE

Dhaka to be delinked

Cops lay down control plan to keep BNP at bay



STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Law enforcers have taken a series of measures to prevent BNP supporters from entering the capital so they cannot gather on the streets centring on tomorrow's expected verdict in a corruption case against Khaleda Zia.

As part of the move, police have already set up additional checkpoints at all the eight entry points to the capital. Also, law enforcers may cut off the capital from the rest of the country to prevent BNP men from coming to the city

police sources said.

The DMP imposed a ban on procession, effective from 4:00am tomorrow until further notice, said a DMP release yesterday, adding it had intelligence about possible subversive activities.

Most of the 35,000-strong forces of the Dhaka Metropolitan Police will be deployed on the streets. Normally, some 8,000 police members are deployed every day.

"We will be on the hard line. No one will be allowed to gather or bring out processions on

the street," a deputy commissioner of DMP told The Daily Star.

The ruling Awami League has also announced that its leaders and activists will be on the streets to prevent BNP men from carrying out any attack.

An owner of a private bus service on Dhaka-Satkhira route said police instructed them not to rent out any bus for reserve passengers and take steps so that fewer buses ply tonight.

An official of Shyamoli Paribahan, one of

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Khaleda to meet press today

MOHAMMAD AL-MASUM MOLLA

BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia will today call all the political parties to forge a national consensus to "restore democracy" in the country through an inclusive parliamentary election, a senior BNP leader has said.

She would address a press conference at her Gulshan office at 4:00pm, confirmed Rizvi Ahmed, senior joint secretary general of BNP.

The 72-year-old former premier will talk to journalists just a day before the delivery of the verdict in the Zia Orphanage Trust graft case against her.

At the press conference, she will also elaborate on the cases filed against her and the party's future course of action.

She would hold a meeting with senior party leaders

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Over 100 households and 60 shops have been lit up with solar power in Munnia Char of Jamalpur's Islampur upazila. Solar panels were set up in this isolated char by a private company in December last year. On average, a household using the solar power will have to pay around Tk 360 per month. The photo was taken recently.

Let there be light!

Jamalpur shoal community benefits from local solar power grid

ABM AMINUL ISLAM with ANDREW EAGLE

Modernity doesn't come easily to Jamalpur's Jamuna shoals. In places like Munnia Char in Islampur upazila, residents know well what it means to live in relative isolation from the mainland. Traditional ways persist. Far from the national grid, they could hardly anticipate that they would have access to electricity, but thanks to an innovative solar power project, they now do.

"Life used to be dark and dull here," says local farmer Ismail Hossain, 50. "We were cut off from the country and the globe, before we got electricity. Now we can easily complete household chores of an evening. We watch television and it's no problem to charge our mobile phones. My family is really happy about it."

Ismail has been running three solar lights and a television for around a month, at a cost of Tk 223, which is affordable, he says.

Local students like Gaziur Rahman and Ziaul Haque, both of whom study in class-X at Munnia High School, have likewise benefited. "We have sufficient light to study without disruption," says Gaziur. "We watch the news on television, which keeps us up-to-date."

"Electricity is a boost for a whole range of activities, from farming to business to education," says the chairman of the local council, Abdul Malek. "Ultimately local incomes and living standards will rise."

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