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স্বপ্নের সেতু

বিশ্ব বলেছিলো- পদ্মা সেতু 'সম্ভব না'

একজন প্রধানমন্ত্রী আর ১৬ কোটি বাঙালি বলেছিলো- 'কেন না!'

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HIGHEST SELLING

CEMENT

for more than

12 years

SHAH

CEMENT

AL or BNP?

Loyal to both

PARTHA PRATIM BHATTACHARJEE

All along he had been a diehard BNP activist. To prove his loyalty to the party, he, according to party insiders, did whatever necessary -- broke framed photographs of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and even "ransacked" some Hindu houses in Netrakona.

Apparently, these acts bore fruit. Blessed by some BNP high-ups, he held a top party post in Mohanganj, became a union parishad chairman and went on to be a vice president of the BNP in the upazila.

But in a dramatic turn of events, he has recently got nomination from the Awami League -- the archrival of the BNP -- to vie for the chairman post in a union parishad election scheduled for March 29.

The man, Abul Kalam Azad, was still holding the vice-president's post when he secured the AL nomination for the by-elections in Tentaulia union.

It is not clear how exactly Azad had performed the "political somersault".

The AL Local Government Nomination Board, at a meeting with party President Sheikh Hasina in the chair on February 26, nominated Azad for the chairman post.

Two days later, the BNP expelled him

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MARCH 16, 1971

Yahya's blunder

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and General Yahya Khan held a closed-door meeting on this day in 1971 at the President's House, now Bangabhaban, for nearly an hour without their aides.

It was the first time that the two men were meeting since late December when Yahya had visited Dhaka.

Following the meeting, Bangabandhu, also Awami League chief, briefed his senior party colleagues on the contents of the discussion.

At the beginning of the

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Blow for BJP

in by-polls

The ruling party loses in UP, Bihar

OUR CORRESPONDENT, New Delhi

India's ruling Bharatiya Janata Party on Wednesday suffered a stunning setback in three high-stake parliamentary by-elections losing to joint opposition candidates in politically key states of Uttar Pradesh and Bihar.

The result has set off alarm bells for Prime Minister Narendra Modi ahead of the next national elections in 2019.

Led by former Uttar Pradesh chief minister Akhilesh Yadav, Samajwadi Party (SP) wrested the two Lok Sabha seats of Gorakhpur and Phulpur from the BJP in Uttar Pradesh with the support of its arch-rival Mayawati-headed Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP), which did not put up its own candidate against the SP nominees to ensure there is no split in anti-BJP votes.

In the 2014 parliamentary elections, the BJP had won both the seats by a margin of more than three lakh votes in the absence of unity among its rivals, particularly the SP and BSP. But this time, the SP and BSP brushed aside their long mutual hostility and joined hands to defeat the BJP in Gorakhpur and Phulpur.

In Bihar, Rashtriya Janata Dal, led by Lalu Prasad Yadav, who is in jail following his conviction in three corruption cases, retained Araria parliamentary seat in a united battle

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Bangabandhu Chair inaugurated at AIT

Bangladesh govt endows it to the renowned institute in Bangkok

REZAUL KARIM, from Bangkok

The first-ever Bangabandhu Chair was inaugurated yesterday at the Asian Institute of Technology (AIT) in Bangkok to promote research on "Sustainable and Integrated Smart Energy Modelling" in the context of Bangladesh and other developing countries.

Foreign Minister AH Mahmood Ali and his Thai counterpart Don Pramudwinai jointly unveiled the commemorative plaque of the Bangabandhu Chair at the renowned technology institute.

Speaking at a programme on the occasion, Mahmood said Bangladesh would be fostering advanced research on applied technologies and innovations in sustainable, affordable and clean energy under the Bangabandhu Chair at AIT.

The Thai foreign minister said they considered the Bangabandhu Chair to be a symbol of the warm bond of friendship and cooperation between Thailand and Bangladesh.

He expressed optimism that the Chair would lead to advance in research and innovation in the field of sustainable and affordable energy.

"I hope it will also deepen our common aspirations under the BIMSTEC and the ACD [Asia Cooperation Dialogue] for greater regional economic cooperation and energy connectivity."

The Bangladesh government provided an endowment fund of \$800,000 (23.7 million baht) for the Bangabandhu Chair Professorship and Doctoral Research Fellowship at AIT. It will support the professorship for four years.

Under the endowment assurance, a researcher will be working on his/her

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Kids sleeping less, grown-ups more

Study finds in Bangladesh; World Sleep Day today

MOHAMMAD AL-MASUM MOLLA

Let's paint a picture -- a family of three, both working parents, and one school going child. When the mother and father wake up, they wake their child up at the same time. They freshen up together, eat breakfast together, and the child gets dropped off at school, while the parents go to their respective offices.

Once school is over, the child then goes to one coaching after the other, until it's night, after which the parents pick the child up to come back home. They eat dinner and watch television, child

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False alarm panics people on board Biman flight

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

An alert regarding extremist threat and explosives in a Biman flight from London sparked panic at Sylhet Osmani International Airport yesterday morning.

Passengers waited more than three hours as security officials thoroughly searched the aircraft, went through passengers' details and the cargo before ruling

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SIBL Foundation Hospital & Diagnostic Center

PRAYER TIMING MARCH 16

Fazr Juma Asr Maghrib Esha

AZAN 5-00 12-30 4-30 6-14 7-45

JAMAAT 5-35 1-15 4-45 6-18 8-15

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

NATURE QUEST

Liliums blooming in Bangladesh

AZIBOR RAHMAN, Jhenidah

The first batch of Lilium flowers has been commercially farmed in two locations in Bangladesh -- Jhenidah and Dhaka.

The scented flower of bright, vibrant hues was cultivated on four bighas of land at Trilochonpur village under Kaliganj upazila in Jhenidah and two bighas at Mauna in Gazipur, Dhaka.

Four farmers -- Tipu Sultan from Kaliganj, Jhenidah; Nur-Mohammad of Gadkhali, Jessore; and Nasir Uddin and Delwar Hossain from Gazipur, Dhaka -- jointly undertook this initiative, due to high cost of production.

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PHOTO: STAR

Lilium flowers grown in a field in Jhenidah's Trilochonpur village. The photo was taken recently.

ROW OVER EX-SPY POISONING

West calls upon Russia to explain toxin attack

Moscow vows retaliation for UK's expulsion of diplomats

REUTERS, London

Britain, the United States, Germany and France jointly called on Russia yesterday to explain a military-grade nerve toxin attack on a former Russian double agent in England which they said threatened Western security.

After the first known offensive use of such a nerve agent on European soil since World War Two, Britain has pinned the blame on Russia and has given 23 Russians it said were spies working under diplomatic cover at the embassy in London a week to leave.

Russia has denied any involvement in the poisoning. Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov accused London of behaving in a "boorish" way and suggested this was partly due to the problems Britain faces over its planned exit from the European Union next year.

Russia has refused Britain's demands to explain how Novichok, a nerve agent first developed by the Soviet military, was used to strike down Sergei Skripal and his daughter Yulia in the southern English city of Salisbury.

"We call on Russia to address all questions related to the attack," US President Donald Trump, German Chancellor Angela Merkel, French President Emmanuel Macron and British Prime Minister Theresa May said in their joint statement.

"It is an assault on UK sovereignty," the leaders said. "It threatens the security of us all."

While the statement signals a more coordinated response from Britain's closest allies, it lacked any details about specific measures the West would take if Russia failed to comply.

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EDITOR & PUBLISHER : MAHFUZ ANAM. Printed by him from Transcraft Ltd, 229, Tejgaon Industrial Area, Dhaka-1208 on behalf of Mediaworld Ltd, 52, Motijheel C/A, Dhaka-1000. Editorial, News & Commercial Offices: 64-65, Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue, Dhaka-1215, Tel: 09610222222, 9144330 & 58156305, Fax: 9144332, 58156307, 58156306, GPO Box No: 3257, e-mail: editor@thedailystar.net,reporting@thedailystar.net

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