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# CONSTRUCTION OF HAOR DYKES ACC to charge 33 with graft

They include 14 govt officials

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Anti-Corruption Commission yesterday approved charge sheet against 33 people over the allegations of corruption and irregularities in the construction of haor embankments that aggravated the flash flood situation in the region in March and April 2017.

Among them, 14 are officials of the Bangladesh Water Development Board (BWDB) and 19 are contractors who were involved in the construction and maintenance of the dams, said ACC sources.

They have been shown accused in a case filed in this connection with Sunamganj Model Police Station on July 2, 2017.

The list of accused includes BWDB's Executive Engineer Afsar Uddin, Assistant Engineer Khalilur Rahman and deputy assistant engineers Md Shahidulla, Ibrahim Khalil Ullah Khan, Khandakar Ali Reza, Shah Alam and Md Mosaddek.

However, the names of BWDB's Superintendent Engineer Nurul Islam and Additional Chief Engineer Abdul Hai, who were suspended and made accused in the case earlier, have been dropped from the list, said ACC sources.

Besides, the ACC found involvement of five BWDB officials who were not named earlier in the case. They are Deputy Divisional Engineer Ranjan Kumar Das, assistant engineers Linkon Sarkar and Anik Saha and deputy assistant engineers Imran Hossain and Nihar Ranjan Das.

The charge sheet reads that an ACC investigation found

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A few depots and shops line the rail tracks from Tejgaon station to the FDC level crossing, which has once again been encroached upon. Inset, this file photo of the same rail tracks last year shows the rubble of illegal structures and shanties demolished for the construction of an elevated expressway. With no oversight after the eviction, things are back to the way they were.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

## GP named as SMP operator

The telecom regulator has declared Grameenphone



as the operator with the Significant Market Power in a move that can shake up the country's mobile telephony landscape.

As a result, GP might be charged additionally alongside regular taxes for customer acquisition.

The regulator plans to apply different prices to GP's charges and call rates and the benchmark for it might be different from other operators when it comes to quality of services.

GP said it wants the regulator to follow international best practices on the issue.

The SMP is a regulation that imposes restrictions on an operator once it corners 40 percent of the subscribers, revenues and spectrum.

DETAILS ON B1



## SAGAR-RUNI MURDER No headway in probe even after 7 years

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Investigators have not made any headway in solving the sensational murders of journalist couple Sagar and Runi in seven years.

The investigation has been shifted from one agency to another while the authorities made hollow promises. The deadline for submitting a progress report of the investigation has been extended 62 times.

"The case sees no progress due to the government's unwillingness. The case has been buried in a preplanned manner,"

Saleha Munir, mother of slain journalist

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## A school with a difference

AMANUR AMAN from Kushtia

A "smart school" in Pirpur village of Chuadanga has created quite a buzz within two months of being transformed.

Pirpur Government Primary School is attracting a good number of students with its modern classrooms and trained teachers.

With funds from the government, Upazila Nirbahi Officer Washimul Bari in November last year installed computers with internet access, display monitors, and sound systems in three classrooms after giving them coats of colourful paint.

Back up for power failures was installed along with solar panels on the roof.

The renovation was done with Tk 500,000 granted under project "Local Government Support (LGS)" funded by the World Bank, said Washimul.

It was done to make the learning process interesting and enjoyable.

Over 380 students got enrolled following the renovation, the UNO said, which is 114 more than the year before. "We are now thinking about launching a second shift," he told this paper.

Three out of the seven teachers received intensive training on the usage of multimedia in classrooms. The Primary Teachers' Training Institute organised the trainings in Khulna and Dhaka.

"The entire schooling system has changed. Both students and guardians

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## SSC timetable rescheduled for Ijtema

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Secondary School Certificate and its equivalent examinations originally scheduled for February 16, 17 and 18 will be held on February 26, 27 and March 2 due to Biswa Ijtema.

"Exams of all boards have been deferred due to Biswa Ijtema. Time of the exams will remain unchanged," Tapan Kumar Sarkar, convener of a sub-committee of exam controllers, told The Daily Star last night.

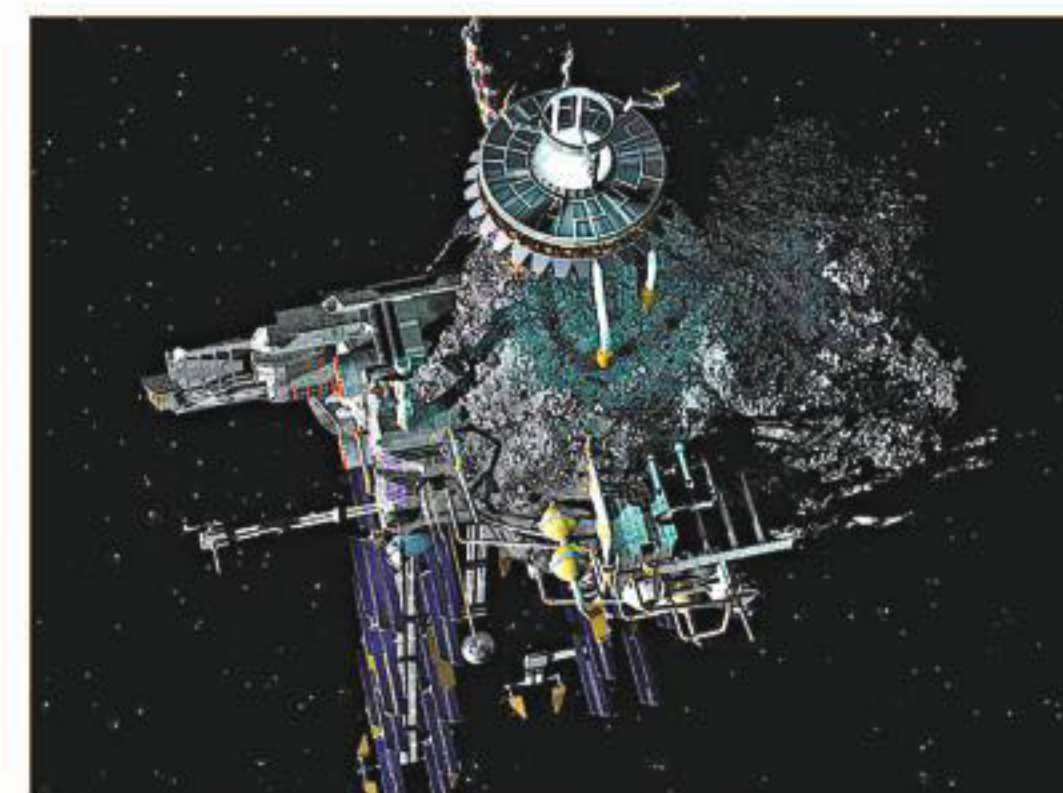
Exams of three subjects were scheduled for February 16, thirteen on February 17 and two on February 18. Nine exams of madrasa students have also been rescheduled.

The SSC exams began in 10 education boards across the country on February 2. A total of 21,35,333 students -- 10,70,441 boys and

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## Scientists plan to build space station inside asteroid

MAIL ONLINE



Space stations of the future may be built inside distant asteroids, scientists claim.

One team of researchers found it would be possible to bore into the middle of a distant space rock, erect a space station and mine valuable minerals from within.

They proved it would be mathematically possible, with the right asteroid, to put a cylindrical space station inside a rock several hundred feet wide.

Experts say the logistical possibilities of this concept remains an issue and that it is at least

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## Three land in jail over gang rape of girl

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Jhenidah

A Jhenidah court yesterday sent three men to jail on charges of gang-raping a 14-year-old mute and deaf girl in the district's Kaliganj upazila.

The accused are Selim Patuari, 32, Sayed Hossain, 28, and Rakib Hossain, 22.

Police arrested the three around 4:00pm on Saturday and placed them before the court yesterday.

Younus Ali, officer-in-charge of Kaliganj Police Station said the three men

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PRAYER TIMING FEBRUARY 11

Fazr Zohr Asr Maghrib Esha

AZAN 5-30 12-45 4-15 5-52 7-15

JAMAAT 6-05 1-15 4-30 5-56 7-45

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

## 3 college boys killed as bus rams bike

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Gazipur

Three teenagers were killed after a bus rammed into their motorbike on Dhaka-Tangail highway in Gazipur's Konabari area yesterday.

The dead are Raja Babu, 18, Johnny, 17, and Shakib, 17, class-XII students of Prof Shahjahan Ali College in Kaliakoir upazila of the district.

Muktar Hossain, officer-in-charge of Bason Police Station, said a Gazipur-Kaliakoir bus of Palash Paribahan hit the motorbike around 10:00am, leaving Johnny and Shakib dead on the spot and Raja Babu severely injured.

Later Raja Babu was taken to a local clinic where doctors declared him dead, the OC added.

The OC further said that the three were going to college riding the motorbike but no driving licence was recovered from the spot.

Although there were

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The banks of the Shitala, a tributary of the Shondi river, are full of logs brought from nearby areas. This is one of the country's biggest log markets set up on khasland in Pirojpur's Swarupkathi upazila.

PHOTO: TITU DAS

## Anti-IS battle rocks Syria

US-backed forces launch offensive to oust jihadists from last scrap of territory; 20,000 civilians evacuated

AFP, Hasakeh

US-backed forces were locked in fierce fighting yesterday as they pressed the battle against the last shred of the Islamic State group's "caliphate" in eastern Syria.

The jihadists overran large parts of the country and neighbouring Iraq in 2014, but various military offensives have since reduced that territory to a patch on the Iraqi border.

The Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF), supported by a US-led coalition, announced a final push to retake the jihadist pocket late Saturday, after a pause of more than a week to allow civilians to flee.

An SDF field commander said his fighters were battling their way forwards yesterday morning.

"There are heavy clashes at the moment. We have launched an assault and the fighters are advancing," he told AFP.

The Syrian Observatory for Human Rights monitor group said coalition planes and artillery bombarded jihadist positions.

"The battle is ongoing. There were heavy clashes this morning, with landmines going off," said Rami Abdel Rahman, the head of the Britain-based Observatory.

The SDF launched an offensive to expel IS from the oil-rich eastern province of Deir Ezzor in September.

The Kurdish-led alliance has since whittled down jihadist-held territory to a scrap of just four square kilometres (one square mile) between the Euphrates and the Iraqi border.

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