

The criticisms shouldn't be aimed at Asean. They should be aimed at the junta. Retno Marsudi, foreign

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A BPC concern robs state coffers of Tk 472.7cr

Finds CAG compliance report

REJAUL KARIM BYRON and MOHAMMAD SUMAN

The government has been deprived of Tk 472.7 crore for 21 counts of irregularities by Standard Asiatic Oil Company, a subsidiary of the Bangladesh Petroleum Corporation,

The disclosure comes after the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) pored over the company's books from fiscal 2012-13 to 2019-20 and made field visits.

Standard Asiatic Oil Company (SAOCL), which is a 50-50 joint venture between the BPC and the Asiatic Industries, is involved in the blending and marketing of engine oil and lubricating oil for vehicles; the marketing of diesel oil; the marketing and distribution of bitumen, liquefied petroleum gas and furnace oil; and supplying jet fuel to aircraft at Cox's Bazar International Airport

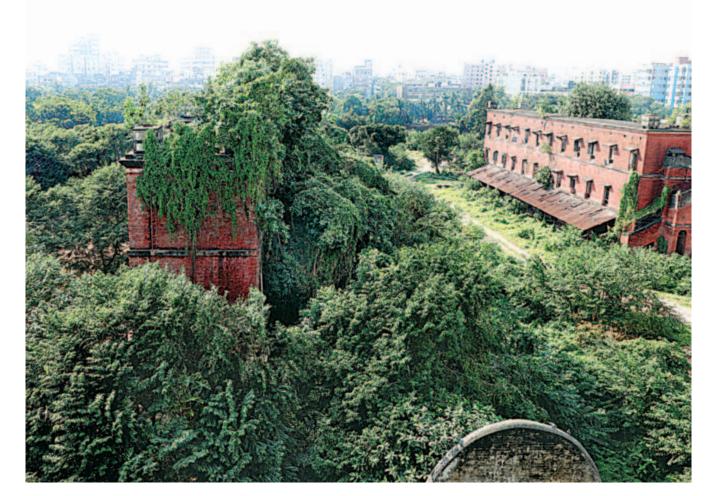
The anomalies include embezzlement by top officials, high rates, overtime, missing funds, irregularities in payment of litigation fees and violation of the Income Tax Ordinance and VAT Rules.

Moinuddin Ahmed, one of its five directors and the president of its management advisory committee, was found to be involved in the irregularities, according to the report.

For instance, the company has Tk 194.7 crore missing thanks to non-payment of dues for lubricating oil sold by SAOCL to Asiatic Oil Company, which is owned by Ahmed, from fiscals 2011-12 to 2013-14.

SACOL's books would show that AOCL had furnished cheques against the invoice amount but the cheques were not deposited in its bank accounts.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1



NATURE RECLAIMS Due to a lack of care, plants colonise the buildings inside Old Dhaka Central Jail. These structures remain unoccupied since July 2016 when inmates from the 200-year-old jail on the capital's Nazimuddin Road were moved to the newly built central jail in Keraniganj. The photo was taken on Wednesday.

Rape victim's character can no longer be questioned

JS passes watershed bill

RASHIDUL HASAN and NILIMA JAHAN

The much talked about Evidence Act (Amendment) Bill 2022 incorporating the admissibility of digital evidence by the court was passed unanimously in parliament yesterday.

The proposed law also said that in a trial for an offence of rape or attempt to rape, no questions can be asked in the cross-examination regarding the victim's character or previous sexual encounters.

It also mentioned that such questions can only be asked with the permission of the court, and only if it is necessary for the sake of justice. The passage of this amendment will repeal the existing section 155(4) of the archaic Evidence Act-1872. The section states that when a person is accused of rape or sexual violence, it can be shown that the accuser has an "immoral character".

Law Minister Anisul Huq placed the bill, which was passed unanimously by a voice

Opposition Jatiya Party and BNP MPs thanked the government for placing the bill, saying that through its passage, the provision so humiliating for women in the Evidence Act has been repealed.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

Khaleda will be back in jail if BNP does excess: PM

STAR REPORT

BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia will be sent back to jail

if her party does excesses, said Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday. "Suspending

[jail] sentence, have given her [Khaleda]

scope to stay at home on humanitarian grounds. II the BNP does excesses, we will send her back to jail," she said.

She made the statements while addressing a programme arranged by the Awami League at the Bangabandhu International Conference Centre on the occasion of Jail Killing Day, reported

The day is observed to remember four national leaders -- Syed Nazrul Islam, Tajuddin Ahmad, Captain M Mansur Ali and AHM Quamaruzzaman -- who were assassinated inside Dhaka Central Jail on November 3 in 1975.

Talking at another event, the prime SEE PAGE 5 COL 4

Imran survives attempt on life

The ex-Pak PM shot in the shin while leading a long march demanding early polls; attacker arrested

REUTERS, Lahore

Former Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan was shot in the shin yesterday when his antigovernment protest convoy came under attack in the east of the country in what his aides said was a clear assassination attempt.

Khan, ousted as prime minister in a parliamentary confidence vote in April, was six days into a protest procession bound for Islamabad, standing and waving to thousands of cheering supporters from the roof of a container truck when the shots



the attack. PHOTO: REUTERS

Several in his convoy were wounded in the attack in Wazirabad, nearly 200 km (120 miles) from the capital. Information Minister Marriyum

Aurangzeb said a suspect had been arrested. "It was a clear assassination attempt. Khan was hit but he's stable.

There was a lot of bleeding," Fawad Chaudhry, a spokesperson for Khan's Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) party, told Reuters. "If the shooter had not been stopped by people there, the entire PTI leadership would have been wiped out."

In a statement, the military called the shooting "highly condemnable". Khan, 70, had accused the military of backing the plan to oust him from power. Last week, the military held a news conference to deny the claims. SEE PAGE 5 COL 6

Barishal city almost cut off ahead of BNP rally

SUSHANTA GHOSH, Barishal

Barishal is now almost cut off from the other districts as two-day transport strikes begin today ahead of the BNP's rally in the divisional city tomorrow.

Bus owners said they enforced the strike demanding removal of unauthorised three-wheelers from roads. Transport workers of three-wheelers, however, went on strike demanding an end to harassment by bus owners.

Launch operators said vessels continued operations on Dhaka-Barishal route till last night, but the services may be suspended anytime today without any announcement beforehand.

Launch services on Barishal-Bhola remained suspended since Wednesday night after the Awami League and BNP men clashed at Bhola's Bheduria launch terminal.

The BNP claimed a party activist suffered bullet injuries in the incident. Police, however, denied the claim.

Microbuses were also taken off roads from midnight last night for two days, Farid, a member of Microbus Drivers Association in Barishal, told journalists.

SEE PAGE 6 COL 1

Let Article 7 guide us in every way

Dr Kamal Hossain, chairman of the Constitution drafting committee, talks to The Daily Star's Ashutosh Sarkar on the occasion of Bangladesh Constitution Day. This year marks 50 years of adoption of the Constitution by then Constituent Assembly of Bangladesh in 1972.

ARTICLE 7(1): All powers in the Republic belong to the people, and their exercise on behalf of the people shall be effected only under, and by the authority of, this Constitution.



TDS: While working on the committee, we were clear draft of the Constitution, about upholding four what were the philosophies, fundamental principles and objectives that you sought to implement secularism, and democracy. through the Constitution?

nationalism, socialism, This was because we dreamed SEE PAGE 2 COL 4

Dr Kamal: In the drafting READ AN INTERVIEW WITH SHAHDEEN MALIK TOMORROW



Don't miss today's 8-page special **50 YEARS OF OUR CONSTITUTION:** ORIGINAL IDEALS VS REALITY



Pakistan pacer Shaheen Afridi and player-of-the-match Shadab Khan celebrate the key dismissal of Heinrich Klaasen (R) during their T20 World Cup Super 12 match against South Africa. Gutsy Pakistan kept their slim hopes alive with a 33-run win (D/L method) in a dramatic rain-affected match in Sydney yesterday. Story on page 15.





British International Investment

(the UK's development finance institution and impact investor) has signed a USD 50 Million Loan Agreement

with

Pubali Bank Limited

(a leading Private Commercial Bank in Bangladesh)

The loan will facilitate for climate mitigation projects across Bangladesh.

