

Rampal power price almost doubles

High cost of coal, devaluation of taka against USD cited as reasons



UNB, Dhaka

The cost of power generation at the 1,320MW Rampal Power Plant is now estimated to be Tk 14-15 per unit, instead of Tk 7-8 per unit estimated when the project was taken up.

"The recent hike in coal prices in the global market has pushed up the generation cost. If the coal prices decline, the generation cost will come down rationally," said Subhash Chandra Pandey, the project director of the Bangladesh-India Friendship Power Company Ltd (BIFPCL).

The BIFPCL, a joint venture of Indian state-owned NTPC and Bangladesh Power Development Board (BPDB), is the owner and operator of the Rampal power plant.

BPDB officials said escalated dollar prices also played a major role in increasing power generation costs at all power plants.

"The coal price was almost half [of the current price] when the power generation cost of Rampal was calculated at the time of implementation agreement," said a BPDB official.

This seems to be a common problem for BPDB, which doesn't seem to recognise the inherent volatility of international energy markets when making big decisions or entering into agreements.

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Smoke billows from plastic waste dumped beside a road in the capital's Mirpur Beribadh area. Local underprivileged youths set the waste on fire to melt the plastic and sell it to factories. This smoke not only pollutes the environment, but also puts public health at risk.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

2 BCL leaders expelled over extortion

DU CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh Chhatra League yesterday expelled two of its DU unit leaders, who were earlier sent to jail for extorting people while posing as police officials at the Ekushey Book Fair in the capital's Suhrawardy Udyan.

Mohaimenul Islam Emon, vice-president of Surja Sen Hall BCL, and

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UNAUTHORISED CLINIC Woman pregnant with twins dies during surgery

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Mymensingh

A woman pregnant with twins died when doctors were removing her kidney stone at an unlicensed hospital in Mymensingh city on Friday.

Civil Surgeon Nazrul Islam yesterday formed a four-member probe committee to find the cause of 25 years old Rekha Akhter's death at Patient Care Hospital in the city's Brahmapalli area.

Officials locked the facility on

Friday as it was operating illegally, said Nazrul.

Legal action will be taken against the hospital authorities and the doctors if the probe finds them guilty, added the civil surgeon.

The probe body headed by Abdul Quddus, deputy director of the divisional health office, was asked to submit its report in seven work days, he said.

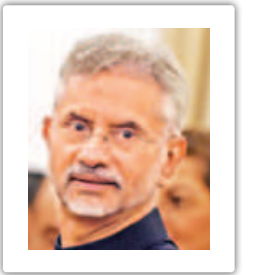
Grieving family members said

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India lashes out at critics after BBC raids

AFP, Sydney

Indian Foreign Minister S Jaishankar yesterday hit out at "scaremongering" critics who claim the country's democracy is being corroded, singling out billionaire George Soros -- a popular target for right-wing ire.



S Jaishankar

At an event in Sydney, Jaishankar rejected accusations that multiple raids on the BBC's India offices showed Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his government were veering toward authoritarianism.

Jaishankar defended the prime minister, painting detractors as "scaremongering", holding an antiquated "Euro-Atlantic view" of democracy and failing to respect the Indian people's democratic choice.

"There are still people in the world who believe

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Microsoft's Bing chatbot mimicking humans: experts

AFP, San Francisco



Microsoft's nascent Bing chatbot turning testy or even threatening is likely because it essentially mimics what it learned from online conversations, analysts and academics have said.

Tales of disturbing exchanges with the artificial intelligence (AI) chatbot -- including it issuing threats and speaking of desires to steal nuclear code,

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Ronny had worked as a tea seller in the capital's Karwan Bazar area for over a decade. With the money he had earned from the long stint, he opened up his own tea store in Keraniganj's Ati Bazar area, which he has named "Ronny's collection", where he sells a variety of "rong chaa". To attract customers, he has decorated it with not only vintage but also natural products -- from old televisions to empty nests of weaverbirds and even palm tree stumps as seats -- which he collects himself. A father of two, he now runs his family with whatever he earns from his own store, which is frequented by young tea lovers from around the locality.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

WE MOURN

A. Rouf Chowdhury
(22 September 1937 - 18 February 2023)
Innalillahi Wainna Ilaihi Rajioun

Our deepest condolences and heartfelt sympathy on the passing away of eminent entrepreneur Mr. A. Rouf Chowdhury, Rangs Group Founding Chairman, also one of the founding directors of Mediaworld Limited, the parent company of The Daily Star and one of the sponsor directors of Bank Asia Ltd. Allah in His infinite mercy forgives him and grants him the best of Jannah.

Allah be kind and merciful to the bereaved family and gives them the strength to bear this loss with fortitude.

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Bangladeshi shot dead by BSF

UNB, Hili (Dinajpur)

India's Border Security Force (BSF) shot dead a Bangladeshi youth in their territory along the Hili land port in Dinajpur Friday night, locals on the Bangladesh side said.

The deceased -- Shahabul Hossain Babu, 24 -- was from Dharanda village under Hakimpur upazila.

Md Rafiqul Islam, a ward councillor of Hakimpur municipality, said Babu accompanied by others had crossed into the Indian territory along the Hili border on Friday night.

WE MOURN

A. Rouf Chowdhury
(1937 - 2023)

Lead Sponsor and Founder Chairman of Bank Asia Limited A. Rouf Chowdhury breathed his last at his Gulshan residence on 18th February 2023 (Inna lillahi wa inna ilayhi raji'un). He was 85 years.

A. Rouf Chowdhury was an eminent businessperson and industrialist of the country. He was the Chairman of Rangs Group and Sea Resources Group. He was also a Director of The Daily Star, the highest circulated English daily in the country. As a successful entrepreneur, he has established reputed organizations transport, pharmaceuticals, real estate, IT, banking, deep sea fishing and in other economic sectors of the country that have been contributing immensely to the country's employment generation and development. He was actively associated with many social, sports and philanthropic activities throughout his life.

We, Bank Asia Family, are deeply shocked at the demise of our Founder Chairman. We pray for the salvation of his departed soul and for giving enough strength and patience to the bereaved family members to deal with the irreparable loss.