



PHOTO: STAR

Children visit a robot show organised by the Institute of Life Skills and Information Technology at the ILIT premises at Circuit House Road in Dhaka yesterday.

AL hartal

FROM PAGE 1
The AL sources said the government cleared 53,405 alleged criminals of charges, putting life at risk. People are helpless, as the government failed to provide security to people and murder and rape have become prevalent, the AL deplored.

The shutdown has come at a time when the AL lawmakers decided to hold off participating in the sittings of the budget session.

AL President Sheikh Hasina is scheduled to return home from abroad on June 14 and chair a meeting of the AL Parliamentary Party to decide whether or not to join the rest of the budget session of the Jatiya Sangsad.

Market raid

FROM PAGE 1
drive was launched in an unplanned way. "He assured us that no drive would be conducted in the future in such an unplanned manner," he said.

The meeting, held at the conference room of the home ministry, was, among others, attended by leaders of Dhaka City Shop Owners' Association, Moulavi Bazar Traders' Association, Bangladesh Jewellers' Association and Rajjaxmi Market Shop Owners' Association.

Discontent

FROM PAGE 1
express their views in parliamentary party meetings.

They mentioned that although it is not mandatory to hold parliamentary party meetings before each session of the House, such meetings are usually held to inform the MPs about the government's plans as well as to hear from them.

Talking to The Daily Star, a cabinet minister however said holding of parliamentary party meetings depends on the leader of the house. So, it is absurd for any lawmaker to raise the issue.

Another leader said the BNP has also failed to appoint a deputy leader of the house since AQM Badruddoza Chowdhury was elected president in November 2001.

The post is lying vacant due to indecision of the leader of the house, causing various problems. Lack of quorum during parliamentary sessions is greatly due to lack of a deputy leader and not holding of parliamentary party meetings, he thought.

However, a top BNP leader said there is no constitutional binding to fill up the vacancy.

About parliamentary party meetings, he said the chief whip calls such meetings at the instruction of the leader of the house. "The parliamentary party usually meets on emergency issues, but there was no such urgency to hold its meetings in the last one year."

Regular holding of parliamentary party meetings is needed for the opposition, he added.

Bid to deposit fake notes with bank in Barisal: 3 arrested

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barisal

Three people including two staff of a local NGO and their client were arrested here yesterday on charge of attempting to deposit forged bank notes at the Barisal Janata Bank Corporate Branch, police and bank sources said.

Bank officials detained field worker MA Rob and accounts officer Zahurul Islam of Jubo Karmasangs-than Society (Jubok), and their microcredit client DHL employee Nurul Alam, after detecting 169 forged notes of 500 taka denomination received from the three men.

The counterfeit notes were slipped inside the bundles of cash worth Tk four lakh intended for deposit into Jubok's account with the bank.

Six of the seven bundles containing the forged notes had labels of Bangladesh Bank, Khulna branch, around them with the declaration that the notes have been counted and checked, although the usual official seal was missing. The other bundle had a label of the Dutch Bangla Bank.

The three men, who were later handed over to police, however said they were totally unaware of the counterfeit notes.

UN HR body

FROM PAGE 12
"Concern has been expressed that this new force might have excessive authority leading to widespread abuse of power," she said.

Meanwhile, the Amnesty International (AI) in a separate letter to the foreign minister has also expressed concern over growing incidents of violation of human rights.

AI official Lothar Kilan raised issues regarding abuse of the Special Powers Act that include arbitrary detention for periods of time without charge.

"The Joint Drive Indemnity Act is yet another piece of legislation that blocks judicial proceedings against perpetrators of human rights violations," he said.

Several factors like corrupt practices in law enforcement contribute to human rights violations in Bangladesh, Kilan said.

He emphasised proper training and monitoring of law enforcement personnel so that they do not violate human rights.

Lothar Kilan also urged for an independent, impartial and competent body to investigate incidents of human rights violation.

Although the government imposed restrictions on overseas employment of unskilled female workers in 1997, their illegal migration is still going unchecked, said IOM officials.

Proper management of migrant workers can lend economic boost to the developing nations, said the report.

Ferdous Ara Begum, joint secretary of the Ministry of Women and Children Affairs, spoke at the press conference at the Jatiya Press Club as special guest.

Road digging

FROM PAGE 1
saying many times that no such work would be undertaken during the rainy season.

"All projects are not funded by the government of Bangladesh. Sometimes the donors threaten to withdraw the funds and we cannot maintain our own time schedule," said the mayor.

The DCC has also made it mandatory for the road diggers to finish their work within 15 days. Only WASA would get 21 days for laying sewerage and water lines.

Under the new provision, road diggers would have to deposit security money with the DCC before they begin work. And the DCC would impose a fine if the work is not finished in time, DCC sources said.

"They have to clear and repair the roads as soon as the work is over. Else, they would be fined," said a DCC official.

Sutrapur double murder convict Nazrul gives in

BSS, Dhaka

Nazrul Islam, a convict in the sensational Sutrapur double murder case, surrendered to the Speedy Trial Tribunal-1, Dhaka, yesterday.

Judge Shahed Nur Uddin sent him to the Dhaka Central Jail.

Nazrul had been absconding since the double murder on September 15, 2000. He has been awarded death penalty in the case.

Mohammad Mohsin, 18, and Mohammad Sayem, 19, of Sharat Kumar Das Lane of Sutrapur were brutally killed by a gang led by Nazrul and others on the day.

The gang slashed their bodies into 12 pieces and dumped those into a manhole at Murgitola. Police recovered the pieces from the manhole the following day.

Attack on Mujib part of govt blueprint to eliminate AL: Hasina

UNB, Dhaka

Awami League President and Leader of the Opposition in Parliament Sheikh Hasina yesterday came down heavily on the government in connection with the attack on the party's Comilla district organising secretary advocate Mujibul Haq Mujib.

In a statement, she strongly condemned and protested the attack on advocate Mujib, a former Whip of the Jatiya Sangsad.

Mujib was critically injured in an armed attack in Comilla on Monday midnight.

Hasina alleged that the BNP-Jamaat alliance government was now engaged in a "heinous conspiracy" to destroy the Awami League through killing its popular leaders. The attack on Mujib was part of that "blueprint," she said.

"The days are numbered when the people of Bangladesh will ensure the fall of the anti-independent and anti-people BNP-Jamaat alliance government," she said in the statement.

5,000 Bangladeshis

FROM PAGE 12
cent of them females, the report added.

Although the government imposed restrictions on overseas employment of unskilled female workers in 1997, their illegal migration is still going unchecked, said IOM officials.

Proper management of migrant workers can lend economic boost to the developing nations, said the report.

Ferdous Ara Begum, joint secretary of the Ministry of Women and Children Affairs, spoke at the press conference at the Jatiya Press Club as special guest.

The group of six, accused in more than five murders and a number of dacoity and terrorism cases, had tea several times at the bazar. And at around 8:30pm, Shamim, Sujan, Faruk, Alam, Babu and Moti rode away on two motorbikes.

Minutes after, Arif and Aynal also left the bazar on another motorcycle.

And then, 15 minutes after Aslam talked on his cell phone, three unknown persons reached the bazar on a motorcycle.

At around 9:30pm, Aslam, Aynal and Mithu, allegedly a BNP worker, were seen near North Bengal Sugar Mill road, the way Mamtaz was returning home later with two companions.

Sometime between 10pm and 10:15pm, Aslam rang Arif to tell about the location of Arif's former member of parliament. Arif later positioned near a bush at Darpara where Mamtaz came under attack first.

Mamta, also the vice president of the district AL, was chased and later stabbed to death at around 10:20pm.

Hearing the groan of Mamtaz, some villagers rushed to the spot and caught Arif with a mobile phone. But the villagers let go of Arif when he fooled them saying that the miscreants also waylaid him and

5 killed, 100 hurt as storm lashes three districts

UNB, Dhaka

Five people were killed and over 100 injured as storm lashed Patuakhali, Satkhira and Chandpur yesterday morning.

In Patuakhali, two persons were killed and 150 kutcha houses damaged by the storm that hit Kalapara upazila at about 7am.

The dead were identified as Jinnat Ali, 45 of Mombipara village near Kuakata and Mahinur, 25, of Dakua village.

A fishing trawler capsized in the Bay during the storm but its crews swam ashore. Another trawler loaded with CI sheets capsized in Bishkhali river at 7:30am.

In Satkhira, two persons were killed and 20 others injured by the storm that lashed 20 villages of Shyampur upazila.

Maulana Amirul Islam, Imam of Boskhali mosque struck by lightning at about 4-30am. Khukmoni, 13, of village Govindpur died in house collapse. He died on the spot.

In Chandpur, Saleh Ahmed, 40, of Sundardia village in sadar upazila was killed in lightning while returning home from Sundaria bazar.

Witnesses said a violent storm swept Chandra bazar in Faridganj upazila at 7am, injuring at least 30 people. Forty shops in the bazar were razed to the ground or blown away.

The injured were admitted to local health complex and clinics.

Budget session begins

FROM PAGE 1
resumes at 3.00pm tomorrow.

Opposition AL, that started abstaining from the parliament since the last session in May protesting the chair's 'refusal' to allow the opposition to speak, has already made it clear that its MPs would not join the House on the budget day. The decision on joining the rest of the budget session would come when the AL holds its parliamentary party meeting upon the return of the party chief Sheikh Hasina from abroad. She is scheduled to return on June 14.

Before the session went into motion, a meeting of the parliament's Business Advisory Committee (BAC), held at Sangsad Bhaban, decided to run the current budget session up to July 15. The AL MPs did not attend the meeting of the BAC chaired by the deputy speaker in the absence of Speaker Jamiruddin Sircar. Sircar is undergoing treatment in London.

BAC meeting sources said 40 hours would be allocated for the lawmakers to take part in general discussion on the budget. The general discussion would begin on

June 18 while the budget would be passed by the parliament on June 30, the meeting decided.

Once the budget is placed on Thursday, the session would resume on Sunday next after a two-day recess. After discussion on the supplementary budget for three consecutive days on June 15, 16 and 17, the supplementary budget will be passed on June 17.

Other than the budget day, sittings of the current session would start at 4.00pm and continue till 9:30pm. Questions would be tabled till the budget is passed and there would be no private members' day either. There would be sittings on Saturdays too till passage of the budget. The budget session would see 25 working days in all.

Leader of the House Prime Minister Khaleda Zia, Finance Minister M Saifur Rahman, LGRD and Cooperatives Minister Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan, Oli Ahmed, MP, Chief Whip Khandakar Delwar Hossain, Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs Minister Moudud Ahmed, Agriculture Minister MK Anwar, Prime Minister's Parliamentary Affairs Advisor

Salauddin Qader Chowdhury, KM Obaidur Rahman, MP, Industries Minister Motiur Rahman Nizami of Jamaat-e-Islami and Roushan Ershad, MP, of Jatiya Party, took part in the BAC meeting.

The first day of the eighth session witnessed the lawmakers observing a minute's silence and offering monazat, seeking divine blessings for the departed souls of late MP Nurul Amin Talukdar, former MPs Mamtaz Uddin Ahmed and Nazimuddin Ahmed, legislative assembly member Nawab Ali, and former advisor to the caretaker government AKM Musa.

Earlier, 10 lawmakers took part in a discussion on a condolence resolution on the death of MP Nurul Amin Talukdar. The discussants were LGRD and Cooperatives Minister Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan, Whip Rezaul Bari Dina, Jainal Abedin Faruq, Abdul Karim Abbasi, Industries Minister Motiur Rahman Nizami, Roushan Ershad and Tajul Islam Chowdhury, Anwar Hossain Manju of Jatiya Party, Kader Siddiqui of Krishak Sramik Janata League and independent lawmaker MM Shahin.

3 get lifeterm for killing college student in Rajshahi

BSS, Rajshahi

Three persons have been sentenced to life imprisonment for killing a college student in Puthiya upazila of the district about four years ago.

Additional District and Sessions Judge-2, Rajshahi, Muhammad Shafiqullah pronounced the judgement yesterday.

The convicts are Abdus Sattar, Ghazi and Sanowar Hossain. The court also fined Tk 5,000 each, in default, they have to suffer six more months in jail.

Three of the six chargesheeted accused were acquitted of the murder charge. They are Shaheed Towhid and Ismail.

According to the prosecution, the accused stormed into the house of Ismail Hossain at Dhananjoy village under Puthiya upazila on June 24, 1999 and beat his son Idrish Ali, a college student. Idrish was taken to local health complex and then shifted to Rajshahi Medical College Hospital where he succumbed to his injuries the following day.

Victim's father filed a case with Puthiya police station. After investigation police submitted a chargesheet to the court on August 30, 1999 against six people.

The court recorded dispositions of 19 prosecution witnesses during the trial.

Cook confesses killing Panni

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The cook at the residence of Sultana Khan Panni, in his confessional statement before a magistrate, yesterday said he did not plan to kill the landlady but eventually did so when she caught them stealing.

Alauddin, the cook, told the magistrate that he had masterminded the theft a week before the incident.

He and medical attendant Mamun discussed and decided to hire two more people, Nasir and Emdad. Both of them were friends of Mamun, Alauddin said.

Nasir, Emdad and Alauddin entered Sultana's room at around 12:00am and found her watching television. Mamun was posted at the door.

As they were stealing valuables, Sultana suddenly saw them. That's when they decided to kill her to hide their crime.

Varsity student

FROM PAGE 12
rated, doctors again referred him to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH).

At DMCH, He died at 2:00am. Shajahan Ahmed said Rony went out of their Senpara Parbata residence with some classmates at around 10:30pm. His final examination was scheduled to begin in two months.

His father received his body from the DMCH morgue yesterday noon.

Six Natore killers

FROM PAGE 12
Chandigachha bazar, intelligence sources detailed the event to this correspondent.

The group of six, accused in more than five murders and a number of dacoity and terrorism cases, had tea several times at the bazar. And at around 8:30pm, Shamim, Sujan, Faruk, Alam, Babu and Moti rode away on two motorbikes.

Minutes after, Arif and Aynal also left the bazar on another motorcycle.

And then, 15 minutes after Aslam talked on his cell phone, three unknown persons reached the bazar on a motorcycle.

At around 9:30pm, Aslam, Aynal and Mithu, allegedly a BNP worker, were seen near North Bengal Sugar Mill road, the way Mamtaz was returning home later with two companions.

Sometime between 10pm and 10:15pm, Aslam rang Arif to tell about the location of Arif's former member of parliament. Arif later positioned near a bush at Darpara where Mamtaz came under attack first.

Mamta, also the vice president of the district AL, was chased and later stabbed to death at around 10:20pm.

Hearing the groan of Mamtaz, some villagers rushed to the spot and caught Arif with a mobile phone. But the villagers let go of Arif when he fooled them saying that the miscreants also waylaid him and



PHOTO: PID

Prime Minister Khaleda Zia shakes hand with outgoing US Ambassador Mary Ann Peters who called on the premier at her offices yesterday.

Bar Council Order

FROM PAGE 12
The charter of demands includes a stop to abuse of the Special Powers Act, Public Safety Act and Speedy Tribunal Act and cancellation of all anti-human rights laws.

Earlier, lawyers from different platforms carried placards in a procession, protesting the government's defiance to recommendations by the chief justice for appointment of additional judges.

Police intercepted the procession to the Jatiya Sangsad and the lawyers immediately staged a sit-in to protest what they called the violation of people's right to procession.

Prior to it, the lawyers under the banner of Six-Point Demand Implementation Council staged a rally at the Supreme Court Bar Association office at 2:00pm. The rally declared the government has no right to intervene in the Bar council, as it is an autonomous body.

They blamed the government for trying to exert pressure on the Bar

council 'in its continuity of politicisation' after coming to power in 2001.

Amir-ul Islam said the parliament should run democratically and cannot formulate a law at dead of night without discussing with the affected people for whom it is enacted.

"We will continue agitating for freedom of parliament and will not let it become the hostage to the prime minister and cabinet ministers," said the lawyer.

The lawyers' programmes include rallies, interactive meetings with civil society, social workers and NGOs to shape public opinion and meetings with lawmakers and political leaders to spell out the rationale of their demands.

The Bar association at the rally decided to form human chains in front of the association's office on Wednesdays.

Presided over by Advocate Subrata Chowdhury, the rally was addressed by lawyers Shawkat Ali Khan, Abdul Baset Majumdar, Ozaer Faruq, Rahamat Ali, Sahara Khatun, M Israfil, Shudangshu Shekhar Halder and Ziad Al Malum, among others.

Husband gets lifeterm for killing wife

UNB, Nilphamari

The Additional Sessions Judge Court here on Monday sentenced a man to life imprisonment for killing his wife.

The court also fined the convict, Rafiqul Islam, Tk 5,000, in default, he would have to serve six more months of rigorous imprisonment.

According to the prosecution, Rafiqul tortured his wife Fatema Begum Kalpana to death for dowry at Sonakur village in Kishoreganj upazila on September 9, 1997.

After examining the records and witnesses, the judge found him guilty and handed down the punishment acquitting six others.

Prime accused in Chhabi Rani rape case surrenders

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

Rampal thana BNP leader Abul Bashar Kazi, the prime accused in Awami League leader Chhabi Rani Mandol rape case, surrendered to the Women and Child Repression Prevention Ordinance Tribunal on Monday.

Judge Mohammad Kader Newaz rejected the bail petition and sent Bashar to Bagerhat jail.

Twelve out of 15 chargesheeted accused in this case are still absconding. The trial of the case will begin on June 24.

Revenue

FROM PAGE 1
Foreign financing of the budget saw a drastic fall this fiscal by Tk 917 crore till February against the same period of last fiscal. Last fiscal, Tk 2335.07 crore was available in foreign financing during the July-February period. But during the same period of this fiscal, Tk 1,418.55 crore was available.

Agriculture as a priority sector will get Tk 300 crore in subsidy in the new budget against this year's Tk 200 crore. Agro-based industries will get some tax exemption facilities too. Another Tk 1,000 crore allocation will be provided for golden handshake programme of the state employees.

On top of these, a Tk 1,600 crore block allocation including Tk 600 crore to Tk 700 crore will also be set aside.

On the fiscal side, the ceiling of taxable income may be stretched to Tk 90,000 from the existing Tk 75,000 crore.

Meantime, during the July-March period of this fiscal, domestic credit recorded an 8.05 per cent increase compared to 8.63 per cent increase during the same period last fiscal. This fiscal's credit expansion was due to 11.46 per cent increase in credit to the private sector.

Sundarbans

FROM PAGE 1
survey. But Shell said it would drill outside the mangrove forest, only if there is any prospect of finding gas or oil.

However, if Shell does not see enough market opportunity, it would refrain from exploration activities five years after the contract ends.

Phone bills

FROM PAGE 1
has not paid his dues even after eight notices. Assistant Private Secretary to the Deputy Speaker Akhtar Hasan Siddiqui has Tk 6,664 pending for five months. He was served five notices.

Private Secretary to the Leader of Opposition Nazrul Islam Khan was reminded seven times to pay his seven months' arrears of Tk 2,602. And Assistant Private Secretary to the Leader of Opposition Alauddin Ahmed Chowdhury was reminded twice to pay his 14 months' arrears worth Tk 15,389.

Mashuk Mia, private secretary to Whip Fazlul Haq, has nine months' arrears of Tk 9,842 and was served with six notices. Whip Syed Wahidul Alam's Private Secretary Nazrul Islam has one month's dues of Tk 1,106.

Whip Alam's Assistant Private Secretary Shahjahan Khan was reminded six times to pay his seven months' due of Tk 1,804. Kamrul Islam, private secretary to Whip Ashraf Hossain, was reminded once to pay his one-month arrear of Tk 909.

Whip Zahed Ali Chowdhury's Private Secretary Shamim Talukdar was not reminded to pay his two months' arrears of Tk 581.

Former chief secretary of the parliament secretariat MM Musa's outstanding phone bills stood at Tk

11,225 in nine months and was reminded six times. Deputy Secretary Abdul Baki's two months' due stood at Tk 622 and was served once for payment.

Senior Assistant Secretary Ruhul Amin was reminded once to pay his four months' arrears of Tk 603. Flight Lieutenant Parvez MR Khan, deputy sergeant-at-arms, was reminded twice to pay one month's due of Tk 507, and Assistant Secretary Mohammad Abdur Rouf was reminded to pay his two months' due of Tk 424.

The other officials yet to pay their arrears include deputy secretaries Mevis Jesmin and Abu Ahmed, Captain M Faruk, senior assistant secretaries Mahbubur Rahman and Dobir Uddin Ahmed, Director (reporting) Mizanur Rahman, Assistant Director (reporting) Rehana Akhtar and Senior Legislative Draftsman Monsur Alam.

Iran challenges

FROM PAGE 12
"eliminate the discrimination against Iran and ensure the equal treatment of member states."

And he also took a swipe at Israel.

"It should be asked from which country Israel gained the technology for a nuclear arsenal? Who has given this technology to a country that has been responsible for so many crisis in the region over the past decades?"

DHAKA TODAY

Photography exhibition

The inaugural ceremony of a photography exhibition titled 'Cry of the Forest' of Philip Gain will be held with Prof Serajul Islam Chowdhury as chief guest. Venue: DRIK Gallery, Dhanmondi. Time: 4.00pm.

Building material fair

The inaugural ceremony of a three-day building material fair, organised by the Architecture Department of BUET, will be held with Housing and Public Works Minister Mirza Abbas as chief guest. Venue: Hotel Sheraton. Time: 11.00am.

Movie show

Academy Film Society will screen an American film titled 'A Farewell to Arms'. Venue: 21/C, Jigatola. Time: 6.30pm.

Launching ceremony

The launching ceremony of VSAT for advanced learning in ICT education by East West University will be held with Science, Information and Communication Technology Minister Dr Abdul Moeen Khan as chief guest. Venue: University auditorium. Time: 11.00am.

Workshop

The opening session of a national workshop on 'Media, Democracy and Human Rights