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Sangasd goes into session September 11

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Parliament is to go for its ninth session on September 11.

President Iajuddin Ahmed yesterday summoned the session by an official announcement.

Main opposition Awami League (AL), currently in boycott, has not yet decided whether or not it will be present at the session that begins at 5:30pm.

"The decision to join or not will be taken at a meeting on September 10 or 11," said Abdul Hamid, deputy leader of the opposition, yesterday.

The last session was the budget session that began on June 10 and ended on July 15. The AL joined the session after the placing of the budget and boycotted on June 25 in protest at a remark made by a state minister against the opposition leader.

US envoy urges govt to decide on gas export soon

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

US Ambassador to Bangladesh Harry K Thomas Jr. yesterday urged the government to decide on export-gas.

Though it depends on the government, the US expects Bangladesh will take a decision on it soon, the US envoy said at a meeting with Finance Minister M Saifur Rahman held at the latter's office.

There was a discussion on gas export but declined to elaborate, the ambassador told newsmen after the meeting.

Ban on sugar import goes

UNB, Dhaka

The Commerce Ministry has withdrawn the embargo on opening LC (Letter of Credit) for sugar import, giving effect to a government decision allowing free import of the essential item in the private sector.

The ministry had imposed the restriction on March 17 this year following allegations of unabated sugar import hindering sale of the produce of the state-run mills.

But sugar prices recently shot up by Tk 4 to 5 per kg, prompting the government to decide to allow open.

Announcement

Today's edition of The Daily Star carries the "State of Literacy 2002" on page 19 in the Star City section.

Dhaka rejects Cancun draft

Letter sent to WTO urging it to protect LDCs' interest

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh has rejected the draft declaration of the upcoming Cancun ministerial meeting, saying it did not reflect the interest of the least developed countries (LDCs).

Commerce Minister Amir Khosru Mahmud Chowdhury yesterday said Dhaka sent a message to

the general council of the World Trade Organisation (WTO) stating that Dhaka wanted to see the interest of the LDCs protected in the final draft.

Most nations of the world will participate in the Cancun meeting which is expected to bring about a new economic world order.

Many poor countries have

already raised allegations that the developed countries will try to reap maximum benefit sidelining the poorer nations through the order.

The fifth WTO ministerial meeting will open on September 10 in Cancun, Mexico, and the host country will chair the meet. Three vice-chairpersons have been nominated

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Govt knows now Jamal's whereabouts

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Home Minister Altaf Hossain Chowdhury yesterday said they now knew the whereabouts of abducted billionaire businessman Jamal Uddin Ahmed Chowdhury and the joint forces would soon start a rescue operation.

Talking to the press, the home minister said he had come to know that Jamal was alive.

"We don't want to say anything in detail because that would alert the culprits," he added.

Asked to comment on the assurance by the inspector general of police (IGP) on Saturday that Jamal would be rescued in 48 hours, the home minister said, "What the IG said was based on information his network had gathered."

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Crime trend belies JS body observation

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Parliamentary Standing Committee on the Ministry of Home Affairs at a meeting Saturday found the law and order tolerable and stable, sources said.

But reports say at least four persons were killed on that day and there has been a surge in criminal activities over the last 15 days.

An unidentified youth shot a woman dead at her residence at Kalabagan in Dhanmondi Saturday and retreating robbers gunned down a young man in Shyampur.

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AL flays Altaf for militant claim

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The main opposition Awami League (AL) yesterday flayed Home Minister Altaf Hossain Chowdhury's recent comment that there was nothing to be worried about the activities of Islamic militants.

A meeting of the AL presidium at the party's Dhanmondi office with President Sheikh Hasina in the chair yesterday said such a comment was nothing but a government effort to 'patronise Islamic militants'.

It also criticised the coalition government for 'pursuing a policy of protecting armed militants', saying it fuelled spread of terrorism like cancer in Bangladesh.

"Through the speech, the government has diverted people's attention from the deep-rooted

SEE PAGE 11 COL 7



TOO LITTLE, TOO LATE: Pakistan's record-breaking batsman Yasir Hameed looks back at the stumps having been castled by Bangladesh spinner Mohammad Rafique (not in picture) on the fifth and final day of the first Test at Karachi yesterday.

Shazneen case verdict Sept 2

COURT CORRESPONDENT

The second Special Tribunal for Prevention of Women and Children Repression, Dhaka, yesterday fixed September 2 for delivering the judgement in the Shazneen rape case.

Judge Kazi Rahamat Ullah fixed the date on completion of argument by the two sides.

The defence lawyers of the six accused finished their argument in four hours and maintained that the accused Shahid, Hasan, Badal, Shanir, Minu and Parvin were innocent and prayed for their acquittal of the rape charge.

Earlier, the tribunal recorded the statements of 22 out of the 74 prosecution witnesses in the case.

The trial of the case began on July 9, 2000 and was complete in 126 working days.

Shazneen Tasnim Rahman, 15, the youngest daughter of Latifur Rahman, chairman of Transcom Ltd., was raped and murdered at their Gulshan residence in the city on April 23, 1998.

Latifur Rahman filed a murder case with Gulshan Police Station

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Shazneen Tasnim Rahman

A tragic tale

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Shazneen Tasnim Rahman was raped and murdered at their Gulshan residence between 10:00pm and 10:30pm on April 23, 1998.

She was 15 and a student of Class IX at Scholastica School. On the night of the incident she was found dead, lying in a pool of blood in her bedroom.

She had been stabbed at least 20 times. A three-inch deep wound was

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Business barons face off today

Reform fails to stop extravagant electioneering for FBCCI polls

M SHAMSUR RAHMAN

Apex trade body, the Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industries (FBCCI), goes into polls today with a changed electoral process aimed to reduce costly election campaigns and put brakes on dirty publicity.

The election, which was stuck in a long-drawn legal tangle, will this year have two tiers. In the first phase, the directors will be elected and in the second, the elected directors themselves will elect one president and two vice-presidents for a two-year term.

Under the reformed electoral process, 24 directors will be elected to office through direct balloting. Fourteen others -- seven each from Chamber and Association groups -- have already been nominated as directors by the government.

Two groups alternately share the presidency and this year it is the Association group's turn.

But the changes have failed to curb such expensive electioneering even in the very first year although two of the presidential runners Abdul Awal Mintoo and M A Awal have already been made directors thanks to the changed system.

The other two candidates, whose fate hinges on direct balloting, are former director A Rouf Chowdhury and industrialist Abdul Matlub Ahmad. Both candidates along with Mintoo are 'spearheading' three panels entailing representatives from an array of trade bodies.

A total of 64 candidates -- 39 from the Association group and 25 from the Chamber -- are in the run for directorship. A total of 1,193 voters -- 257 from the Chamber group and 936 from the Association group are scheduled to elect a new leadership.

Businessmen in general see this year's election as a crucial one as the new leadership will be steering them

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Hameed hammers historic hundred as hosts coast home

HASAN MASOOD from Karachi

Debutant Yasir Hameed smashed his second century in successive innings to steer Pakistan to a convincing seven-wicket win against Bangladesh on the last day of the first Super Asia Test at Karachi National Stadium yesterday.

The 25-year old from Peshawar, who smashed 170 in the first innings, added another 105 in the second to propel the hosts home just before lunch after they had resumed the day on 112 for one, chasing 217.

The lanky right hander became only the second batsman in Test history to score tons in both innings on debut after West Indies great

Lawrence Rowe, who achieved the rare feat against New Zealand in Kingston, Jamaica in 1971.

Hameed began the day on 68 and did not show any nerves as he got to the three-figure mark in the 17th over of the morning by flicking left arm spinner Mohammad Rafique to mid-wicket for two. He was eventually bowled by Rafique in the spinner's next over for 105. Hameed's 228-minute stay at the wicket produced 14 boundaries.

Opener Mohammad Hafeez, with whom Hameed had shared a decisive 134-run second wicket stand, was the first man to go in the morning when he was also bowled

SEE PAGE 11 COL 6

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