

WB, govt agree on police reforms

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The World Bank (WB) and the government reached a consensus yesterday on reforming the police.

The issue was discussed yesterday between World Bank Country Director in Bangladesh Christine I Wallich and State Minister for Home Affairs Lutfozzaman Babar in a meeting in the latter's his office.

The WB country director said police reform was the most vital issue for Bangladesh and so it should aim at raising the efficiency of its police force. "I wish it was the first priority of the government."

Expressing satisfaction with the proposed police reform programme, Wallich said the Work

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OPPOSITION STREET AGITATION

BNP bigwigs for soft stance

REZAUL KARIM

As the home ministry prepares for a massive crackdown on the opposition to stem anti-government street agitation, six top ministers suggested Prime Minister Khaleda Zia not to go hard on the opposition on the issue.

In the wake of opposition's threat to dislodge the government by March-April, the six ministers at

a two-hour meeting with the prime minister Saturday said the government has enough time, in terms of its tenure, to ward off the opposition pressure.

Insiders said the meeting was convened apparently to adopt a strategy to handle the Awami League's threat to topple the government and its showdown in the city on January 10, the day the AL will announce its next course of action.

Finance and Planning Minister M Saifur Rahman, BNP Secretary General and LGRD (Local Government and Rural Development) and Cooperatives Minister Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan, Health and Family Welfare Minister Khandaker Mosharraf Hossain, Information Minister Tariqul Islam, Agriculture Minister M K A n w a r a n d

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Azadi editor passes away

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Veteran journalist and renowned Editor of the daily Azadi Prof Muhammad Khaled expired at a city clinic yesterday morning.

Khaled, former lawmaker of the first Jatiya Sangsad after independence and a venerable personality in

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Polls losses

Congress leaders resign en masse

AFP, New Delhi

A top decision-making body of India's main opposition Congress party resigned en masse yesterday following heavy losses in regional elections ahead of national polls next year.

"All the office bearers of the All India Congress Committee have resigned from their posts to pave the way for the party chief (Sonia Gandhi) to restructure ... ahead of polls," a committee member told the Press Trust of India news agency.

The committee meets each year and selects the party's top executive body, the 12-person Congress Working Committee, from which three members also resigned Sunday.

The Congress, which had boasted administering half of India's 28 states, was routed in December 1 provincial elections in Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan.

The polls were a shot in the arm for Prime Minister Atal Behari

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Good governance must for progress: seminar says

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Like most governments, the Bangladesh government too has a long tradition of operating in secrecy, and surveys show that the public has but very low expectations from it, said Supreme Court Advocate Sigma Huda at a seminar yesterday.

According to available statistics, in the last few years, around Tk 15,000 crore have been misappropriated by 24 ministries and government agencies, she stated in her keynote paper.

The Institute of Business Administration (IBA) Alumni Association of Dhaka University organised the seminar titled 'Good Governance, Transparency,

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Poacher or saviour?

Sitesh Babu's activities draw flak from conservationists



PHOTO: SYED ZAKIR HOSSAIN (TOP L & R), KHOSRU CHOWDHURY (BOTTOM L & R)

Sitesh Babu's prizes include (clockwise) a pied hornbill, an albino fishing cat, a Malayan Sun Bear and a leopard cat, all caged without lawful authority.

PINAKI ROY, back from Srimangol

A strange official silence blankets the activities of Shitesh Ranjan Dev, Srimanga's most famous poacher.

It is easier to find certain endangered animals at his home than in the wild. They have often been captured in the Shatchhari forest, Hakaluki and Haila haor.

In a recent visit to Shitesh Ranjan's house in Srimangol, this correspondent found a python, a Himalayan palm civet, three slow loris, an albino cat, two golden tortoises, an Indian black bear, a rhesus monkey, two fishing cats, a Malayan giant squirrel, five leopard cats, a monitor lizard and a barking deer.

There were also caged birds, including five hilly Mayna, three pied hornbills, 14 bronze winged doves, a pair of kaliz, a pair of quail, a few lorikeets, three green pigeons, and about three dozen purple moorhen, sandpipers, snipe, lesser and greater whistling teal, pintails, ruddy shelduck, ruff and ruff.

A leading international conservation organisation has designated many of these species as "critically endangered".

Local people complain that "Shitesh bab" also shoots a lot of

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PM opens RU golden jubilee celebrations

BSS, Rajshahi

Prime Minister Khaleda Zia yesterday inaugurated the golden jubilee celebration programmes of Rajshahi University (RU).

Khaleda hoisted national flag and Vice-chancellor Prof Faisal Islam Faruqi raised university flag to begin the three-day celebration programmes. The PM also released balloons and pigeons on the occasion.

She opened a Golden Jubilee Tower on the campus to mark the historic occasion. Later, she laid the foundation stone for the fifth f e m a l e

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Unmet condition

IMF suspends anti-poverty loan tranche

REZAUL KARIM BYRON

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) has suspended the second installment of loans for poverty reduction growth facilities (PRGF) this month as the government failed to introduce market-based interest rate on savings certificates.

The IMF was earlier upbeat about the government's reform programmes and fulfilment of its conditions. Bangladesh so far fulfilled nine major IMF conditions to qualify for the second installment

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Road transport bodies under Huda heat

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Communications Minister Nazmul Huda has blasted officials of Bangladesh Road Transport Authority (BRTA) and Bangladesh Road Transport Corporation (BRTC) for 'corruption and poor performances'.

The minister asked BRTA officials to put an end to 'ill reputation' of the organisation and set up mobile courts assisted by police to detect vehicles plying without licence or with false ones sources said.

Presiding over a meeting last

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RU function turns into Shibir's jubilation

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

The inaugural session of the golden jubilee celebrations of Rajshahi University (RU) yesterday put on a distinct political colour due mainly to hyper activism of the assembled Islami Chhatra Shibir (ICS) activists, sources said.

The function was also marred by the boycott of a significant number of teachers and students.

Activists of the ICS, the student wing of the ruling alliance partner

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PM to give medals to meritorious DU students today

Opposing student bodies plan to show black flag

DU CORRESPONDENT

Prime Minister Khaleda Zia will distribute gold medals to 46 outstanding students of Dhaka University today despite protest from different students' organisations.

The Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD), student wing of the ruling BNP, is however warning up to welcome Khaleda on the campus. The JCD held rallies on the campus yesterday in favour of the prime

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Prayer Timings

December 22		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	5-30	6-00
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	3-40	4-00
Maghrib	5-23	5-28
Esha	7-00	7-30

Source: Islamic Foundation