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COMMITTEE TO
People's Right to Know

Conjoined twins die

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The conjoined twins, who were born on July 3, died at Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) early yesterday.

"The twins died at around 3:00am due to respiratory troubles," said Prof Kabirul Islam, head of the Department of Paediatric Surgery at the DMCH.

A 27-year-old mother gave birth to the female twins who were joined at their chest and abdomen at the DMCH.

The twins weighing four kilograms had separate heads, three legs and four hands, but single anus and genital.

The ultrasonography test of the newborns reveals that they had one liver, one rectum, two kidneys instead of four and one urinal bag instead of two.

Prof Kabirul said the conjoined twins, who had been fed through pipe for the last three days, were improving and it seemed that they would grow up normally.

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EC finally to go door to door to update voter list

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Election Commission (EC) has finally decided to go door to door to update the existing voter list.

After a long debate and resentment from both ruling and opposition parties and different quarters, the EC took the decision yesterday.

The chief election commissioner (CEC) and the two election commissioners were rigid on their stance not to go door to door to update the voter list.

Irked by the commissioners'

rigid position, the government on July 3 appointed Abdur Rashid Sarkar secretary to the EC secretariat. Immediately after his appointment, the new secretary started differing with the EC on its procedure for updating the list.

The EC started a month-long campaign to update the voter list through city corporations' ward and election offices across the country on July 1. The EC's evoked controversy and legal experts said it was contrary to the Supreme Court (SC) order.

The EC secretariat issued a press release notifying its decision yesterday and said various political parties, social organisations and individuals from different professions observed that the voter list update would be successful if it could be carried out by door-to-door visits.

EC said it has relaxed the Rule 20(1) of the Electoral Roll Rules 1982 and added a new provision to it through an amendment on July 6 that allows the EC to take the decision to go door to door alongside

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HEROIN SMUGGLING Probe team likely to fly to UK for evidence

SHARIFUL ISLAM

A seven-member investigation team is likely to fly to the United Kingdom (UK) in 15 days to collect evidence on the heroin smuggling to that country allegedly by BD Foods Limited and two other companies.

The foreign ministry has already written to the British High Commission in Dhaka requesting it to take steps regarding the Bangladesh investigators' trip to the UK.

"We're expecting to get a nod from the UK government in a day or two in this regard," said a source in the home ministry seeking anonymity. The source said it would take a week or a little more to send the investigation team to the UK after that.

The foreign ministry wrote to the British High Commission following a home ministry request that came after the CID-led probe committee wrote to the home

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CONFUSION OVER NEW BUILDING RULE Rajuk staff cash in on mad rush for plan approval

MORSHED ALI KHAN and TAWFIQUE ALI

Taking advantage of the recent government decision to delay implementation of the new Building Construction Rules, Rajuk keeps approving thousands of building plans under the 'grossly inadequate' existing rules, which experts fear would cause an 'urban nightmare' in the construction sector.

The government decision to defer enforcement of the new rules gazetted on April 16 until

December 31 this year has resulted in an unprecedented rush at Rajuk with up to 5,000 new applications for approval of building plans every day, sources said.

Experts have always blamed inadequate construction rules for unplanned urbanisation in Dhaka. The new rules aim to check growing irregularities in the sector.

"Landowners are rushing to get their building plans approved before the new rules come into force because they have been wrongly informed that these would force them to leave a large portion

of their plots as open space," said Architect Iqbal Habib, member-secretary of Urbanisation and Governance wing of Bangladesh Paribesh Andolon (Bapa), and also member of the monitoring body for construction rules.

Rajuk sources said that a section of their officials deliberately created panic among landowners spreading misleading information about the new rules. The rush of plot owners in Rajuk has created scope for these unscrupulous officials to make huge amounts of

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Commentary

Welcome back, Mr President PM makes a wise U-turn

MAHFUZ ANAM

In this column, a few days ago we urged the Prime Minister not to change the President. Today we thank her for wisely reversing her

decision that would have created a new political crisis, dragging the highest constitutional post into the muck racking of party politics. The nation heaves a sigh of relief that a move that would have brought untold harm to Bangladesh's young tradition of parliamentary democracy has been defeated. Whether this dangerous move has

been permanently set aside or has only been temporarily postponed due to public pressure is something we'll have to keep a keen watch on.

In all humility the media can claim a modicum of credit for protecting the Presidency and serving a national purpose by creating sufficient public awareness and consequent pressure against the behind-the-scenes move to remove the President. Constant vigilance by the media on every move by the ruling party and numerous editorials and columns

in most newspapers finally dissuaded Begum Khaleda Zia against a decision that could have proven fatal to her political career and very damaging to our international image which she urges us all to uphold. Television channel ATN Bangla's expose of the recommendations of the Singaporean doctors, who operated on the President, laid bare the smokescreen of half truths and exaggerations of routine advice by doctors for caution deviously woven to create grounds for the

SEE PAGE 4 COL 5



Displaced people take shelter on a high road in Khagrachhari as most low-lying areas of the Sadar upazila went under water yesterday. A flash flood followed overflowing of three hill rivers due to daylong downpour. (Story on page 6)

Bashundhara director was murdered: IO GD turns into murder case

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The investigators now suspect that Bashundhara Telecommunication Limited Director Humayun Kabir Sabbir was murdered and believe the killers tried to cover up the killing by making it appear as a suicide.

Gulshan police yesterday turned Sabbir's brother-in-law AFM Asif's general diary (GD) into a murder case.

Sabbir's body was found stuck on the boundary wall of a building at Road 104, Gulshan in the capital early Wednesday.

"Probing the matter, we came to the conclusion that he was murdered," said investigation officer

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Prepare CHT voter list in light of peace accord

Larma tells regional dialogue in Rangamati

RAFIQ HASAN and SHANTIMOY CHAKMA, from Rangamati

The speakers at the sixth regional dialogue in hill town Rangamati yesterday demanded withdrawal of what they said was unofficial martial law, full implementation of the peace accord, and land rights for the indigenous people.

Speaking at the discussion organised jointly by the Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD), The Daily Star, Prothom Alo and Channel i, they said the army rule has yet to end in the three hill districts although a peace accord was signed between the government

and the main insurgent groups in 1997.

Stressing the need for reforms in the political system and a co-ordinated development process, the discussants said the people in the hill districts are still deprived of many civil rights.

Citing as an example of discrimination, they said the area has been kept out of the mobile phone network on the pretext of maintaining security. They called for the hill districts to be brought under the network.

Many of the participants sought co-operation of the national leaders in bringing an end to their

miseries. Neither the prime minister nor the leader of the opposition has visited the hill tracts in the last four and a half years, they complained.

They demanded a guarantee that the minority communities will not be subjected to torture after general elections.

Eminent academics and professionals, development and cultural activists, public representatives and political leaders and other civil society representatives of the district took part in the dialogue held as part of a series of dialogues on 'National Election 2007: Civil

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Pro-AL teachers, employees join strike today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The continued indefinite strike of pro-BNP teachers and employees of non-government high schools, colleges and madrasas across the country will get a fillip as pro-Awami League (AL) teachers and employees of these institutions also join the strike today.

About 1.5 crore students across the country will suffer as Jatiya Shikshak-Karmachari Front, a platform of 11 AL-backed organisations of teachers and employees of these non-government educational institutions will join the indefinite strike by the pro-BNP Shikshak-Karmachari Oikya Jote from Thursday.

About five lakh teachers and employees of more than 30,000

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Clash for third place today



German goalkeeper Jens Lehmann (in the background) fights for the ball with forward Mike Hanke during a training session in Berlin yesterday, on the eve of today's clash with Portugal for the third place.

AGENCIES, Berlin

Hosts Germany and World Cup dark-horse Portugal will try and put aside their frustration of failing to make it to the final when they clash in the third-place play-off today in Berlin.

The teams will also prepare to give fitting farewell to their golden boys, Portugal's Luis Figo and Germany's Oliver Kahn, who are all set to bring end to their illustrious careers.

The third-place match is often criticised as a lame duck but the contenders and FIFA have all put on a brave face before the game and a sell-out crowd will ensure a vibrant atmosphere.

FIFA defends the third-place fixture's existence at every World Cup and spokesman Markus Sieglar was clearly prepared when, inevitably, he was questioned about it.

"I believe there is still a high value in this match," he said. "For the players it matters whether they come in third or fourth."

"Especially with Germany playing in the match I think the interest will be high. It is a prestige thing. It's about knowing where the teams finished on the field of play."

Away from Stuttgart, France coach Raymond Domenech and his Italian counterpart Marcello Lippi were both gathering their troops on Friday for one last effort

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who will score the winning goal?

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Star Insight is out today!

The much-awaited Star Insight, The Daily Star's special fortnightly publication for members of its Readers' Club is being distributed today along with our regular issue. This publication, dedicated to scholars from outside Dhaka will, we hope, help to bring to public attention many new writers in English from all over the country. Don't miss this exceptional publication. Write to us with your comments.

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True to Life, True to Dreams

Regional dialogue in Ctg today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD), Prothom Alo, The Daily Star and Channel i are jointly organising their seventh Regional Dialogue on 'National Election 2007: Civil Society Initiative for Accountable Development' to be held today at 9:00am in Chittagong.

Eminent academics and professionals, development and cultural activists, public representatives and political leaders and other civil society representatives of Chittagong will speak at the dialogue.

The distinguished members of the 'Nagorik Committee 2006' who are preparing a Vision Paper for Bangladesh will also be present in the meeting to receive public feedback.

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