



The Daily Star

SECOND EDITION

Today's issue 24 pages



COMMITTED TO
People's Right to Know

REGD. NO. DA 781

VOL. XVI NO. 245

DHAKA WEDNESDAY SEPTEMBER 20, 2006

ASHWIN 5, 1413 BS

SABAN 26, 1427 HURI

24 PAGES PRICE: Tk 7.00

www.thedailystar.net

IMPASSE OVER POLLS Butenis again presses for political talks

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

US Ambassador in Dhaka Patricia A Butenis yesterday reiterated her call for talks and said the people in the country crave for a dialogue between the political parties to break the impasse over the upcoming national election.

She said she hopes that at the end of the day, the political leaders will work out a resolution of the ongoing dispute in the interest of the country.

Butenis lauded the business community for their efforts to have the political parties smoothing out the differences over the election and discussing the proposals for reforms.

Speaking to the journalists after a meeting with the board members of Dhaka Stock Exchange (DSE), she however observed that the

SEE PAGE 15 COL 3

Country reels from outage onslaught

50 hurt in police action as people attack Narsingdi Palli Bidyut office; 5-minute work abstention at Munshiganj

RASHIDUL HASAN

Life has become virtually impossible in the capital and elsewhere in the country as continuing severe power crisis has affected the nation with all consequences.

City dwellers have been suffering from frequent load shedding for long periods while industrial production has also dropped due to power failure.

The worst victims in the capital are the electronics markets, engineering workshops and the cyber cafes.

Meanwhile, at least 50 textile workers were injured in Narsingdi

as police charged baton on them for attacking the Palli Bidyut Samiti office at Choala in the town yesterday demanding uninterrupted power supply.

People of Munshiganj observed a five-minute work abstention yesterday morning protesting severe power outage in the district.

SCENARIO IN CAPITAL
Frequent outages for several hours a day have made life immensely difficult for most households in Dhaka.

"We are used to load shedding," said Happy, a resident of Mirpur, "but now the situation has become absurd and unbearable."

"Milk and other food items in the refrigerator go stale due to load shedding. My children and elderly mother cannot sleep at night. I have never experienced such load shedding in my life," Happy told The Daily Star in anger and exasperation.

Students are also severely affected as load shedding in most areas generally takes place in the evening.

Besides, the load shedding has affected the daily supply of water to households and industries.

Habibur Rahman of Bangladesh Engineering, a workshop at

SEE PAGE 15 COL 4

Opposition enforcing hartal, blockade to disrupt peace

Says Khaleda

UNB, Mymensingh

Prime Minister Khaleda Zia has termed the opposition's grand rally in Dhaka a flop, saying that it has proved people do not support their designs to create chaos and disrupt democratic process.

"Being frustrated with the failed rally, they have again announced blockade and hartal programmes to disrupt peace and democracy," she told a public meeting at Mymensingh Circuit House ground yesterday.

Khaleda, also the chairperson of the ruling BNP, urged people to

SEE PAGE 15 COL 3



As the city experiences persisting power outages, people queue up at a filling station at Mohakhali in the capital to buy diesel to operate generators.

PHOTO: STAR

Israel to quit Lebanon by Friday

AFP, Jerusalem

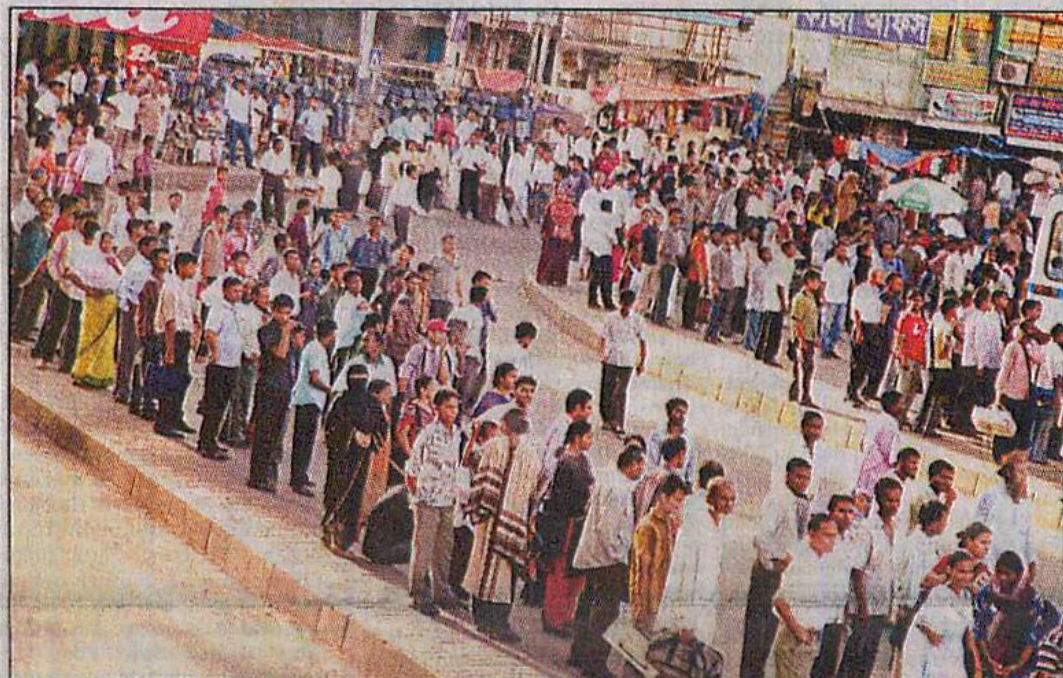
Israeli forces will leave southern Lebanon by Friday in time for the Jewish New Year, army chief Dan Halutz told parliament's foreign affairs and defence committee yesterday.

Halutz said "he hoped the last troops will leave southern Lebanon by the eve of Rosh Hashana (which takes place on Saturday)," a member of the panel said.

Israeli forces have remained in Lebanon after the month-long war against Hezbollah ended on August 14, and have been gradually withdrawing as international forces and the Lebanese army assume control.

Halutz was also quoted as saying that officers planned to meet UN representatives in southern Lebanon on Tuesday to discuss the

SEE PAGE 15 COL 8



Commuters wait for bus in long queues at Farmgate in the capital during rush hours yesterday as autorickshaw drivers went on a strike demanding reduction of their daily deposit to Tk 300 from around Tk 500.

PHOTO: STAR

Thai govt ousted in army coup

Martial law declared

REUTERS, Bangkok

The Thai armed forces dismissed the government and revoked the country's 1997 constitution yesterday after a coup to oust Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra.

A coup spokesman, Retired Lieutenant-General Prapart Sakuntanak, announced the dis-

missal in a televised address after the army took control of Bangkok without a shot being fired and announced a commission to reform the constitution. The prime minister declared a state of emergency from New York, while the army declared martial law.

A government spokesman with

SEE PAGE 15 COL 7

14-party's countrywide bid to blockade capital today

Govt takes massive preparation to resist

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The 14-party opposition coalition enforces today a six-hour dawn to midday countrywide blockade of highways, railways and river routes to isolate the capital from the rest of the country while the home minis-

try directed law enforcers to take stern actions to thwart the programme.

"We have directed the opposition leaders and activists to enforce the blockade strictly. No vehicle will be allowed to enter the capital

SEE PAGE 15 COL 4

JRC meets in Dhaka today

UNB, Dhaka

Indo-Bangla Joint Rivers Commission (JRC) meets here today to resolve the longstanding disputes concerning the common rivers.

Water Resources Minister Hafizuddin Ahmed and his Indian counterpart Prof Saifuddin Soz will lead their respective sides at the talks at Sonargaon Hotel.

The meeting is being held following comprehensive spadework, including joint visits to the sites of dispute between the two next-door

SEE PAGE 15 COL 3

DARK POWER SECTOR SECENARIO

Hefty investment carrot for unsolicited deals

Yet another dubious foreign company seeks coal mining licence

SHARIEF KHAN

In the last two years, Bangladesh received a number of mammoth investment proposals for the energy sector from foreign companies but barring the reputed Tata, all the company profile is as obscure as their actual intentions.

This trend continues with the recent revival of an inactive one-year old memorandum of understanding (MoU) with obscure South Korean company Luxon Global. This company wants to invest \$ 1 billion in the energy sector and seeks a coal mining licence in the context of the

Phulbari mining incident.

Based on the success of incompetent Canadian oil company Niko Resources in bagging an energy sector deal through an opaque process in 2004, a number of unknown companies suddenly appeared in Bangladesh with

SEE PAGE 2 COL 5

MONEY-LAUNDERING

Lax drive, stalled probe into 45 cases worry US

REHAUL KARIM BYRON

To revive the government's bid to check financial crimes and money laundering, a secret meeting took place between the US Department of Justice (DOJ) and Bangladesh side recently.

A DOJ delegation met with high officials of the ministries of finance and home, National Board of Revenue, Bangladesh Bank (BB), Attorney General's Office and Criminal Intelligence Department

(CID) at Cox's Bazar.

Bangladeshi officials appraised the DOJ officials of the status of the 45 money laundering cases, and discussed the investigation process and how punitive measures could be taken against those who would be found guilty of financial crimes.

The US side at the September 7-9 meeting expressed their government's desire to participate in Dhaka's plan to check financial crimes, the sources added.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

JS sees debate on Justice KM Hasan's 'political affiliation'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The parliament experienced an unscheduled debate yesterday between the ruling BNP and main opposition Awami League (AL) on the 'political affiliation' of former chief justice KM Hasan and the reform proposal on caretaker government system.

Both the BNP and AL lawmakers blamed each other during the

debate that also included amendment of the constitution, military rule, opposition's grand rally, Election Commission's preparation for the next general election, and recent speeches of the prime minister and the opposition leader.

Branding KM Hasan as an "absolutely BNP man", the AL lawmakers said no election will be held without reforms.

SEE PAGE 15 COL 1

19th Branch at CDA Avenue Chittagong
Formally Opens on **20 09 2006**

Trust Bank Limited: CDA Avenue Branch, Elite House, Holding no. 1837, CDA Avenue, Chittagong

Trust Bank Limited
ট্রাস্ট ব্যাংক লিমিটেড

limitless banking horizon
unlocking @ moghbazar from today

Enjoy the fast and smooth banking experience at our 31st branch. Our wide network offers SMS, ATM, iBanking & Online Banking for your convenience.
Wherever, whenever always stay with your Bank.

Moghbazar Branch:
70 Outer Circular Road (1st floor), Boro Moghbazar, Dhaka 1217
Tel: 8331945-7, Fax: 88 02 8331948, E-mail: moghbazar@dhakabank.com.bd

DHAKABANK
LIMITED
EXCELLENCE IN BANKING

www.dhakabankltd.com