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Inside Today

Magazine

Conversation



A K N Ahmed, a former Governor of Bangladesh Bank, talks to The Daily Star on reforms in the country's banking sector, problems of bad loans, threat of inflation and other issues
Page 10

Article

Crusading 'crackpot' puts himself up for FAO top job
Page 4

Business

Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce and Industry (MCCI) welcomes the Value Added Tax (VAT) for its long run beneficial effects
Page 8

International



Islamabad may axe Prime Minister of Azad Kashmir, Mumtaz Rathore, and instal an interim government
Page 5

Metropolitan

Dhaka Day by Day

The dance-cum-martial arts display ensures that the commercials scare the wits out of potential buyers
Page 3

Parliament proceedings

Page 6

NEWS BRIEFS

VAT panic in Narayanganj

NARAYANGANJ, July 4: Imposition of Value Added Tax (VAT) has triggered panic in the local market forcing the trading activities to slide down by 50 per cent, traders alleged, reports UNB.

Iran to recruit professionals

Iran will soon recruit professionals and technical experts in the fields of agriculture, fisheries and livestock from Bangladesh. The Rural Construction Minister of Iran informed this to Labour and Manpower Minister Barrister Rafiqul Islam Miah in Tehran on Wednesday, reports UNB.

Gayoom to visit Dhaka

President Mamooun Abdul Gayoom of the Maldives is expected to pay a two-day visit to Bangladesh in the third week of July, officials said in Dhaka on Thursday. He will undertake the visit as the current Chairman of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC), reports UNB.

Crops over 2 lakh acres submerged

SIRAJGANJ, July 4: Nearly 2 lakh acres of standing crops in Sirajganj, mostly in low areas, have been submerged amid heavy downpour in the last three days. Communication between the district headquarters and Kasipur upazila has snapped reports UNB.

'Bismillah', changed basic state principles remain untouched AL moves amendment bill

By Staff Correspondent

The Constitution Amendment Bill initiated by Abdus Samad Azad, Deputy Leader of the Opposition, was unanimously introduced in the Jatiya Sangsad (Parliament) on Thursday.

The bill seeks reversion to a parliamentary form of government and the making of a transitional provision to allow Justice Shahabuddin Ahmed, the Acting President, go back to the Supreme Court Bench. MPs belonging to the Awami League, BKSAL, National Awami Party and Jatiya Party, however, staged a walkout under the leadership

of Sheikh Hasina protesting a ruling from the chair that the bill would carry no number.

The bill proposes to insert or omit provisions in a total of 30 Articles of the Constitution to the extent that the 1972 Constitution gets revived.

The exception is that it retains 'Bismillah' at the start of the preamble, the changed Article 8 containing the basic principles of state policy, and amended Article 2 which states that Islam is the state religion.

The bill also seeks to abolish the requirement of referendum for amending the

preamble and six Articles of the Constitution.

It proposes to add a sentence under Article 11 of the existing Constitution stating that effective participation by the people through their elected representatives in administration at all levels shall be ensured.

The bill substitutes Article 48 of the Constitution relating to the President and Vice-President with the provision of the 1972 Constitution that the President shall be elected by Parliament and that he will act on the advice of the Prime Minister. It thus seeks to

eliminate the post of Vice-President.

Similarly it proposes to change Articles 49, 50, 51, 52, 53 and 54 turning the powers and functions of the President to the provisions of the 1972 Constitution.

The AL bill seeks to change Articles 55, 56, 57 and 58 of the Constitution relative to formation of cabinet, powers and functions of the Prime Minister and other ministers.

Here also it amounts to restoration of the provisions of the 1972 Constitution which makes the Prime Minister the

Menon tables 4 bills

By Staff Correspondent

Four bills proposing amendment to some provisions of the Constitution were introduced in the Jatiya Sangsad (Parliament) Thursday by Workers Party leader Rashed Khan Menon. There was no objection from any side during the introduction of the bills.

In his first bill, Menon proposed amendment to Article 11 of the Constitution to ensure participation of people in all strata of the state machinery.

In the statement of objects and reasons of this bill Menon said that even after 20 years of emergence of Bangladesh as an independent country, bureaucratic control still existed in all strata of the administration and the people had no participation.

See Page 12 Col. 7

Navy, Airforce suffer Tk 227 cr loss in cyclone

By Staff Correspondent

Bangladesh Navy and Airforce suffered a loss of about Taka 227 crore in the April 29 cyclone and tidal surge.

Maj Gen (Rtd) Majidul Haq Minister in charge of Defence in the Jatiya Sangsad told Parliament that the Navy suffered loss of Taka 182,75,14,000 and the Air Force about Taka 44 crore.

He told Advocate Fazle Rabbi (JP-Gaibandha), that the final report on the total damage caused to the Navy was yet to be assessed. A high-level committee of the Bangladesh Navy has been assessing the total loss, he added.

Replying to a question from Shah Muhammad Ruhul Qudus (Jamaat-Khulna), Majidul Haq, who is also in charge of the Ministry of agriculture said that 38 damaged fighter planes and helicopters could be repaired while the rest were destroyed fully and

could not be repaired. He said, one 1-5 fighter plane without engine sank in water but it was repairable.

Besides, four MI-17 helicopters were slightly damaged. They are being repaired.

The Minister further said that three MI-8 helicopters in complete dismantled conditions and packed in crates were ready for sending abroad for repair. They were damaged as water entered them, he said.

Haq said, one Bell-212 helicopter anchored at the hangar was also damaged. Its repair works is also going on, he added.

He said, besides the aircraft, the buildings, hangar and other materials at the base were also damaged.

The Minister told the Sangsad that necessary actions had already been taken against those responsible for such damage on the basis of the recommendations of an inquiry committee formed earlier.

Replying to another question from Dr A K M Asjad (Jamaat-Rajbari) the Minister said 13 naval crafts belonging to the navy were also badly damaged earlier when a Japanese merchant ship 'Eagle Breeze' hit the naval base at Patenga in October 1989.

He said, the government filed an admiralty suit against it under international law and claimed Taka 192,47,25,000 as compensation.

He said, under a verdict of the High Court Division of the Bangladesh Supreme Court,

See Page 12 Col. 8

Textile, Yarn industries exempted from VAT

The government has exempted textiles and yarn industries and cold storage from Value Added Tax (VAT), reports UNB.

The decision was taken on consideration that the textile sector can contribute direct and indirectly in the export of garments by supplying raw materials, National Board of Revenue (NBR) sources said Thursday.

Exempted from VAT are domestic production of 'karpas'

See Page 12 Col. 8

ROK keen to invest more, PM told

South Korea wants to invest more in Bangladesh and employ Bangladeshis workforce in Korean projects in the Gulf countries, reports UNB.

This was stated by the visiting special envoy of South Korea, Ambassador Kim Ei Myung, when he called on Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia at her Sugandha office Thursday evening.

The envoy said Korean private companies were interested in investing in Bangladesh due to high wages in their country. An increasing number of entrepreneurs is trying to come up to invest here, he added.

There are eight Korean ventures in the Export Processing Zone in Chittagong.

The Prime Minister said her democratic government

See Page 12 Col. 6

Flood control talks : China's team arrives

A nine-member Chinese delegation led by Wang Shouqiang, Vice Minister for Water Resources arrived, Dhaka on Thursday to attend the three-day Bangladesh-China high level meeting on flood control and river training of the Brahmaputra in Bangladesh, reports BSS.

The members of the delegation were received at Zia International Airport by MA Malik, Secretary, Ministry of Irrigation, Water Development and Flood Control and other senior officials.

During the meeting, the study report on the Brah-

See Page 12 Col. 2

ECNEC okays Tk 1604 crore projects

The Executive Committee of National Economic Council (ECNEC) at a meeting on Thursday approved five projects with the estimated cost of Taka 1604 crore 74 lakh including the foreign exchange component of Taka 939 crore 69 lakh, according to an official press release, reports BSS.

The Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia, presided over the meeting, held at the NEC Bhawan in Dhaka.

Of the five projects, one is of Post and Telecommunication Ministry while four others are of the Power, Energy and Mineral Resources Ministry.

The projects are: Greater Dhaka Telecommunication Network Expansion Project 60,000 Digital telephone lines (2nd phase), Seven Transmission Line, 210 Magawar Ghorashal 6th Unit Power Centre Project, Rehabilitation, Renovation and Augmentation of Greed System Project and Area Coverage Rural Electrification Project (4th phase).



LET THE SMILE LAST ON THE CAMPUS : The Dhaka University Academic Atmosphere Council met yesterday amidst fears that violence may recur with the reopening of the university tomorrow. — Star photo

DU classes resume tomorrow No rally, procession in first seven days

By DU Correspondent

As classes resume tomorrow, the Dhaka University Educational Atmosphere Council (DUEAC) decided yesterday that no rally or procession would be held on the campus in the first week of the reopening of the university without prior permission of the proctor.

The decision was taken at a meeting of the DUEAC with Prof Manruzzaman Miah, Vice-Chancellor of the university in the chair.

The university reopens tomorrow (Saturday) after a 14 days' closure due to Eid-ul-Azha, and prompted by an armed violence on the campus. The university halls will be open to residential students today.

The dates of reopening of the university and the residen-

tial halls were originally June 28 and July 2 respectively which were later deferred to ensure adequate preparations for checking recurrence of violence.

A large number of students has already been in Dhaka as the shifting of dates was announced only one day before reopening of the residential halls.

The residents of the halls will be required to show their identity cards to the hall authorities at the hall gates before their entrance.

The halls were vacated on June 21 when a student leader, Mahbubur Rahman, was killed in a gunbattle between the supporters of Awami League-backed Chhatra League (A-A) and JSD (Inu)-backed Chhatra League (N-S).
See Page 12 Col. 8

Jagannath College gunfight victim dies

By Staff Correspondent

Abdur Rahim (10), a victim of Wednesday's gunfight in Jagannath College, succumbed to his bullet injuries Thursday at the Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH).

Rahim was wounded in the crossfire between the activists of BNP-backed Jatiyatadabi Chhatra Dal (JCD) and the pro-Awami League Chhatra League (S-A) in the college area.

Meanwhile, an uneasy calm prevailed in the Jagannath College area Thursday with contingents of police vigilant against eruption of fresh violence.

Police forces were deployed in the Dr Milton Hall and its adjoining areas, where activists of JCD and BCL (S-A) fought a 15-hour gunbattle Wednesday leaving at least 30 people injured.

No sound of firing was heard from the area since police flushed out JCD activists
See Page 12 Col. 6



Dolly Ibrahim commits suicide

By Staff Correspondent

Renowned film and television actress Dolly Ibrahim allegedly committed suicide in her residence at Jigatola Wednesday night. She was 43.

Police said that she reported took an over-dose of sleeping-pills.

Abdur Rahim, husband of
See Page 12 Col. 2

12 injured as JCD, BCL fight gunbattle in Pabna

PABNA, July 4: Over a dozen people were injured, mostly with bullet, in a gunbattle between pro-Awami League Chhatra League and Jatiyatadabi Chhatra Dal activists here tonight, reports UNB.

Police said the clash erupted when a cracker was lobbed into the residence of a local leader of, ruling BNP, Siddiq Hossain, at about 10 pm. Five inmates were slightly injured in the blast.

The JCD leaders blamed BCL for the attack on the
See Page 12 Col. 6

CPB welcomes BNP bill

By Staff Correspondent

The Communist Party of Bangladesh (CPB) Thursday congratulated the ruling party for introducing the twelfth Constitution amendment bill proposing reversion to the parliamentary form of government in the Jatiya Sangsad.

The first session of a four-day central committee meeting of the party also termed the move as an important step to institutionalise democracy in the country and achieve the long cherished goal of the people's struggle.

Chaired by central committee member Rathin Chakravarty, the meeting
See Page 12 Col. 6

Y'slav presidency orders Slovenia to pull back defence units



Stipe Mesic addresses the meeting of the collection Yugoslav leadership. — AFP photo

BELGRADE, July 4: The Yugoslav state presidency ordered the republic of Slovenia today to pull all its territorial defence units back to base and release all federal army prisoners by midnight (2200 GMT), reports Reuter.

The collective eight-man presidency, the highest state body and supreme commander of the army, issued the order after a meeting in Belgrade which followed almost a week of fighting in the breakaway territory.

It did not say what would happen if Slovenia ignored the order. Slovenia and neighbouring Croatia declared indepen-

dence on June 25.

Croatia said today Yugoslav army troops and Serbian nationalist fighters had crossed into the breakaway republic.

Information Minister Hrvoje Hitrec said most of the troops who poured north from Belgrade on Wednesday did not enter Croatia. But 10 armoured personnel carriers accompanied by Chetniks (Radical nationalists) took up station in the Baranja region near the Hungarian border.

They planned to attack Croatian forces and claim Baranja for Serbia as a region with a predominantly Serbian
See Page 12 Col. 5

Delhi plans to deport LTTE members

NEW DELHI, July 4: India's new government plans to deport members of a powerful Sri Lankan Tamil rebel group suspected of assassinating former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi, a federal minister announced today, reports AFP.

Minister of State for Home MM Jacob said in the southern city of Kochi that the government would first take the 'necessary steps' to identify activists of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) in India.

He said the rebels had

mixed with the thousands of Sri Lankan Tamil who have taken refuge in India, mainly in the southern coastal state of Tamil Nadu, where Gandhi was killed by a suicide bomber May 21.

The Press Trust of India (PTI) quoted Jacob as saying the LTTE guerrillas would first be identified, and then deported.

An estimated 200,000 Sri Lankan Tamils live in Tamil Nadu, a majority of them in refugee camps, but Jacob did not say how many were be-

lieved to be LTTE members or sympathisers.

The guerrillas, who are fighting for a separate Tamil homeland in northeast Sri Lanka, are known to smuggle men and material between the island nation and Tamil Nadu, which are separated only by a narrow strip of sea the Palk Strait.

The LTTE and other Sri Lankan Tamil militant groups once enjoyed the patronage of New Delhi and had training camps in Tamil Nadu, home to 55 million Indian Tamils.

Jacob added that both the central and Tamil Nadu governments held similar views on the subject. But he gave no details of the proposed deportation measures.

The announcement came as Indian Defence Minister Sharad Pawar held talks with Tamil Nadu officials on increased patrols in the Palk Strait to guard against the infiltration of LTTE rebels.

PTI said in a report from Madras the Tamil Nadu capital that Pawar also discussed measures "to strengthen the

surveillance in the coastal areas of the state."

AFP from Colombo said Sri Lanka's most wanted man, suspected of organising a Tamil guerilla bomb attack on the military nerve centre here, committed suicide just before police captured him, officials said today.

Nadarajah Varathan, the 32-year-old explosives expert of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), swallowed cyanide when police raided his hideout in central Nuwara Eliya district late Wednesday.

এখনই গাছ লাগানোর উপযুক্ত সময়।
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তা সংরক্ষণে যত্নবান হউন।

বন অধিদপ্তর

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