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NEWS BRIEFS

BNPPP meet July 5

BNP Parliamentary Party will hold a meeting on July 5 to discuss the prevailing political situation and matters concerning the current budget session. Leader of the House Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia will chair the meeting to be held at Room No 932 of Sangsad Bhaban at 3 pm, reports BSS.

Dr Kamal leaves for Colombo

Awami League leader Dr Kamal Hossain Thursday left for Colombo to attend a regional meeting of legal experts on "Economic Liberalisation and Law Reforms." He will deliver the annual lecture at the Law and Society Trust on "Democracy and Development in South Asia: The Challenge of Sustainability," reports UNI3.

Dr Yusuf meets Douglas Hurd

Bangladesh High Commissioner to the United Kingdom, Dr A F M Yusuf, called on Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs Douglas Hurd Tuesday, according to a message received in Dhaka Thursday. During the meeting they discussed matters of common interest and the Rohingya refugee issue, reports BSS.

Rly eastern zone earns Tk 3.71 cr

CHITTAGONG, July 2: Bangladesh Railway eastern zone earned Taka 3.71 crore by carrying 8,636 containers, in Chittagong-Dhaka section during the last fiscal year. The earnings were Taka 1.22 crore more than the previous year, reports BSS.

Rumour leads to mob attack on Chinese Embassy

By Inam Ahmed

A big mob attacked and partially damaged the Chinese Embassy in Dhaka at Baridhara last night.

The incident occurred after rumours that human skulls were found inside the embassy.

Police and embassy officials, however, denied the allegation. Police suspect the rumour was spread with ill motives.

Several thousand angry people attacked the embassy complex at around 7 pm with iron rods and started pelting stones.

Breaking two of the three main gates of the embassy, the mob made entry into the premises. It also caused extensive damage to the windows and glass doors of the embassy buildings. The embassy was shifted to its present location only recently, and is situated

next to the American Embassy. On receiving information, police immediately rushed to the spot.

Police went round the embassy buildings to verify the allegation. Then police came out and tried to pacify the mob. Police also asked the agitators to form a team of ten people to come inside the building and see for themselves that it was all rumour.

However, the mob refused to pay heed to the request and alleged that police were hiding facts.

As pelting started, the embassy staff and the police first holed up inside the buildings. At one stage, police came out and lobbed teargas. A man in plain clothes was seen shooting in the air from a pistol inside the embassy premises.

Police lathicharged the demonstrators, chased them up to the Asian Highway and also lobbed teargas shells on the road.

Some of the agitators claimed that they heard some human skulls were found inside the embassy.

On hearing the rumour, the people became agitated from noon. When another rumour spread that a boy who worked in the embassy was missing and his clothes were found abandoned inside, they attacked the embassy.

Two persons including a photographer of The Daily Star were injured in police action. They were given first aid at the Dhaka Medical College Hospital.

The situation became normal after about two hours.

Over a dozen cars cordoned off the embassy and huge contingent of armed police have been deployed.

As the situation became normal, the embassy officials came out of the building, some of them in shorts and t-shirts. They seemed shaken by the incident.

The embassy compound was strewn with glass splinters and brick.

"This was all rumour," an official of the embassy told The Daily Star in broken Bengali. "We do not know why this happened. You better talk to the police." The official refused to identify himself.

"This can be politically motivated," a senior police official told The Daily Star on condition of anonymity, but he refused to say more.



One of the gates of Chinese Embassy damaged by the mob.

— Star photo by Enamul Huq

Antiques worth Tk 1 cr seized from a Dane

The members of Air Freight Surveillance team and customs officials of Dhaka Customs House Thursday seized electronic goods worth Tk 41.52 lakh at Zia International Airport which were illegally imported from Singapore, reports BSS.

They also seized antiques of different types and sizes worth about Tk one crore from the personal belongings of a Dane who was attempting to smuggle those out of the country Wednesday.

An airport customs press release said in Dhaka last night that the electronic goods were seized from 13 cartons belonging to A K Enterprise which declared them as school bags

and brief cases. The seized items were 215 pieces of VCRs, 45 pieces of VCRs, one cordless intercom and one electric typewriter and adaptor.

In the Wednesday's catch, the officials discovered 38 different types and sizes of antiques from the personal belongings of Geogen Emile Angel, an employee of Hifab International Bangladesh, the antiques include stone statue of Krishna, Shiva's carrier Nandi, Ganesh, plates and bowls made of stone, Shiva Linga, Mithun statue, metals coins of 11th and 12th century and oil paintings, the press release said.

See Page 12 Col 8

TCB asked to cut down operations

By S Y Bakht

The Trading Corporation of Bangladesh (TCB) has been advised by the government to restructure its operations and reduce establishment costs because of a sharp decline in business in recent years.

The "restructuring and rationalisation" advisory came from the Ministry of Commerce, which also asked TCB to become more "vigorous and active," informed a Ministry official.

Referring to the poor performance of the public sector corporations recently at the post-budget press conference, Finance Minister M Saifur Rahman noted that the national import business share of TCB had declined to less than half per cent in recent years.

A high-level TCB official said that a moratorium on all new recruitments and appointments for replacements

had been in force since the past one year.

The idea was to go for "gradual depletion" of the workforce which presently stood at 1254 employees, he added. He said that other cost-cutting measures were also being contemplated.

The official noted, as an example, that out of the five existing posts for directors two can be easily eliminated by merging the export and import departments and by eliminating the post of the director, administration, as it could be managed by the corporate secretary.

"What is summarily needed is to cut down the original structure of TCB," he added.

Headquartered in the capital, the TCB has regional offices in Chittagong, Rajshahi and Khulna and branch offices

See Page 12 Col 4

Jamaat returns to parliament, JP abstaining

By Staff Correspondent

The Jamaat MPs returned to the House yesterday at eight in the evening.

The members of the Jamaat-e-Islami Bangladesh staged a walkout Wednesday protesting a recent accord signed between the Treasury Bench and Awami League (AL) led opposition that amended a resolution adopted in parliament earlier.

When Mairur Rahman Nizami entered the House with 19 of his party colleagues in parliament. The members of the Treasury Bench welcomed them by thumping the benches.

Later, Badruddoza Chowdhury, Deputy Leader of the House congratulated them for coming back to the House and expressed his hope that the boycotting Jatiya Party MPs would also be back soon and effectively cooperate for normal functioning of parliament.

Privileges of MPs to be reviewed

By Staff Correspondent

A bill seeking the annulment of the pension for Parliament Members and their privilege to import duty free cars will soon be scrutinised by the Parliamentary Standing Committee on private members bill.

It was revealed in parliament yesterday when Abdur Rab Chowdhury of the ruling party who submitted the bill to the parliament secretariat earlier wanted to know the fate of the bill.

At this stage Rahamat Ali MP of Awami League (AL) took the floor and supported the move of the Treasury Bench MP. He, however, added that the provision for monthly remuneration for the MPs should also be annulled.

Both the MPs argued that the MPs were being humiliated for enacting the law in parliament for their own benefits.

The Speaker informed the MPs that he had already

See Page 12 Col 6

Hearing of UZ Parishad case Repeal Ordinance promulgated depriving parliament : Dr Kamal

The hearing of the appeal against the verdict of the High Court division on the promulgation of dissolution of the Upazila Parishad continued Thursday before the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court, reports BSS.

Dr Kamal Hossain, appearing on behalf of the petitioners, submitted that the Constitution has laid down the basic features of democracy which is to function under the Constitution. The design and structure of the democracy spelt out in the preamble in Article 7 and in Part I and II of the Constitution.

Particularly in Article 9, 11, and 59 the Constitution provides for a comprehensive democratic framework with a sovereign parliament at the top and elective bodies at other levels of administration formed with elected representatives, he said.

On that aspect Dr Kamal

cited a quotation from "The American Constitution" — "nothing has more contributed to give strength and flexibility to the government of USA or to train message of people to work their democratic institution and the existence everywhere in the northern states of self-governing administrative unit, such as townships, small enough to enlist the personal interest and the subject to the personal watchfulness and control of the ordinary citizen. Nevertheless the system of local government as a whole has been not merely beneficial, but indispensable."

Dr Kamal stated that thus our Constitution did not contemplate establishing a centralised parliamentary dictatorship. It contemplates true parliamentary democracy. Thus the ordinance by which the elective bodies at the thana (upazila level) is inconsistent with the expressed provisions

of Article 9, 11 and 59. Where there is such inconsistency, Article 7 says such an ordinance is void, he added.

Dr Kamal also said the court has thus both the power and the duty under Article 7 of the Constitution to declare this ordinance unconstitutional and void.

The petitioners counsel further said such a change, which effected all 460 thanas and the entire population of the country, could be made by an ordinance under Article 93 of the Constitution. Ordinance making power is limited and it is only available when parliament is not in session.

Dr Kamal said in the present case no circumstances could be shown why immediate legislature is necessary. The Ordinance was promulgated depriving parliament, which was to meet a week later. Making an organic law, See Page 12 Col 8

Mostafiz to visit Islamabad to finalise PM's tour programme

By Toufique Imrose Khalidi

Foreign Minister A S M Mostafizur Rahman will travel to Islamabad in the second week of this month in preparation of Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia's planned visit to Pakistan, official sources said yesterday.

The Prime Minister's three-day state visit to Pakistan is so far scheduled to start from August 8 at the invitation of her Pakistani counterpart Nawaz Sharif. But the programme is likely to be finalised during the Foreign Minister's July 10-11 trip to Pakistan during which he will hold talks with the government leaders and officials.

Mostafiz will go to Islamabad from Colombo after attending the July 8-9 SAARC Foreign Ministers' conference in the Sri Lankan capital. He is scheduled to leave for Colombo See Page 12 Col 2

Recommendations for protecting sick industries

By Sohail Manzur

A high-powered body on the sick industries has decided Wednesday to request the Finance Minister to take measures for protecting the entrepreneurs of about 1500 identified sick industries from legal actions being taken by the banks and financial institutions, according to sources concerned.

The body has in the meantime finalised all the recommendations for rehabilitating the sick industries and an inter-ministerial meeting on the report of the body will be held soon to review the recommendations, the sources say.

The Sick Industries Revival and Rehabilitation Cell at a meeting chaired by Industries Secretary Dr Ekram Hossain Wednesday approved of all the recommendations of the ten sub-cells of the body.

The report will be submitted to the Industries Minister Shamsul Islam Khan and he is likely to request the Finance Minister to stop legal actions

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Time for use of Tinbigha extended

Bangladesh and India Thursday agreed to extend the time for use of Tinbigha corridor by the Bangladeshis with effect from tomorrow Saturday, according to Khalilur Rahman, Deputy Commissioner of Lalmonirhat, reached over phone from here Thursday evening, reports BSS.

It was decided at the four-hour meeting between the Deputy Commissioner, Lalmonirhat and the district magistrate of Coochbehar Gopal Krishna at Chengabanda border outpost, Coochbehar, that with effect from Saturday the corridor would remain open for four hours as against three hours at present, Rahman said.

The Deputy Commissioner said the new arrangements would continue till August 3, See Page 12 Col 6

Rathajatra celebrated

The members of the Hindu community Thursday celebrated 'Rathajatra Utsab' (chariot festival) of Lord Jagannath throughout the country with due religious fervour, reports BSS.

Drawing the chariot, carrying the idols of Lord Jagannath, Subhadra and Balabhadra, were the main features of this traditional festival that marked the nine-day annual sojourn of Lord Jagannath.

Lord Jagannath, according to Hindu mythology, rode on a chariot on the day in Puri (India) for showering blessings to mankind.

The customary rituals of the day began with 'mangal' shankhadhwani' and 'ushakirtan'. The other rites included 'bhakti' geet', puppet show, etc were the attractions of the Rathajatra festival.

See Page 12 Col 7



Rathajatra festival in Dhamrai yesterday.

— Star photo

Special Notice by Titas Gas Company
 Extension of the special opportunity to pay Gas bills without interest/surcharge

At the request of its respectable customers the Company has decided to extend the special opportunity to pay gas bills without interest/surcharge up to 15th July '92. Therefore, no interest or surcharge will have to be paid if all the bills up to May, 1992 (including arrears) are paid by 15th July '92. This opportunity is applicable to industrial, commercial and domestic customers whether operative, disconnected or litigated.

It may be mentioned that bills have, as usual, been sent to the customers concerned. Those who might not have received the bills, may arrange to pay after collecting duplicate bills from the concerned office of the Company.

It has also been decided that residents of Government/Semi-Government Colonies/Quarters who at present do not possess the required bill books may obtain the same from our concerned Zone/Regional office on production of allotment/possession letters and avail themselves of this last opportunity by paying gas bills from the date of their possession of the quarters.

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