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Inside Today

Article

Delinking Politics from Violence
 by Nilratan Halder
 Page 4

International

LTTE's surprise attack leaves 19 police commandos dead

Palestinians warn of moving US embassy into Jerusalem
 Page 5

Business

Steps suggested to bring down Ctg WASA's system loss to 25 pc
Tk 3876.4m spent on CHT uplift activities
 Page 6

STOCK MARKET

DSE Index 784.09 (-0.27%)
 Market capitalisation Tk 45.25 billion
 Turnover in volume 79855
 Turnover in value Tk 17.83 billion

Feature

Environment

How will the Earth Support Such Large Numbers? Holding Ground: The Gaudal Forests; The White Tiger
 Page 8

Supplement

Special supplement on 9 May Europe Day
 Page 7

Prospectus

Today's issue of The Daily Star contains a four-page prospectus of Reliance Insurance Limited
 Page 13-16

Massive security during Hajj

MAKKAH, May 8: Nearly two million Muslims began the annual pilgrimage today amid massive Saudi security aimed at preventing political rallies demanded by Iran.

An AFP Correspondent said thousands of security forces watched as pilgrims took 20,000 buses and other vehicles authorities provided for the five-kilometre trip from Makkah to Mina.

Police deployed in strength around the Iranian tents set up in the vast encampment, spread across Mina valley where they also mingled with crowds, dressed in the same white garb as the pilgrims.

Elite forces patrolled the area in jeeps mounted with machineguns.

Saudi civil defence workers had replaced around 1,000 tents damaged or destroyed by fires Sunday which killed two people. Police detained several

people amid an investigation into the fires' cause.

Under a harsh sun with temperatures climbing to 41 degrees Celsius (106 Fahrenheit) in Mina, the pilgrims shaded themselves with umbrellas, drank water or congregated in their tents where they would stay through the night.

The pilgrimage or hajj culminates Tuesday at nearby Mount Arafat, where Prophet Muhammad (SM) gave his last sermon, and ends Wednesday with Eid ul-Azha prayers and the slaughter of sheep to commemorate the sacrifice of Abraham.

Saudi television and radio said it has reserved three satellites to broadcast the events to as many of the world's 1.2 billion Muslims as possible.

An Iranian delegate said today that Iranians will hold anti-US rallies in their camps if they fail to make Saudi authori-

ties lift a ban on demonstrations.

"We are sticking to our decision to protest, but if it's impossible, nobody can prevent us from fulfilling this duty in the camps," set aside for the 69,000 Iranian pilgrims, Iran's Sheikh Mohammad Ali Taskhiri told AFP.

Iran insists the demonstration to denounce 'pagans' is a duty, while Saudi religious leaders have backed the government's ban saying a rally during the pilgrimage would be heretical.

The Iranian delegate said he hoped an agreement would be reached with Saudi officials to hold the rally.

"I can guarantee that no harm will be done to the ritual," if there is an agreement, said Sheikh Taskhiri, an aide to the head of the Iranian delegation, Sheikh Mohammad Mohammadi Reyshaori.
 See Page 12 Col 8

LCs for 16 lakh MT foodgrains opened so far

By Staff Correspondent

Letters of Credit were opened for importing 9.95 lakh metric ton of rice and 5.82 lakh MT of wheat during the first nine and half months of the current fiscal.

According to a statement released by the Bangladesh Bank yesterday, L/C valued over 254.7 million US dollars and over 106 million US dollars were opened for the import of rice and wheat respectively during July 1 last year to April 13 last.

Import payments bill for cereals was 29.54 million US dollars in the last financial year (1993-94) and 52.91 million US dollars in 1992-93 fiscal, according to the Bank's Statistics Department.

A prolonged drought in the northern zone of the country during the last Aman reaping season resulted in a severe shortfall in food production.

Cereals production in the country faced another set back during the current boro paddy season as peasants

See Page 12 Col 7



Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia admiring a bust of Rabindranath Tagore after inaugurating the three-day programmes marking the 134th birth anniversary of the poet at the Shilpakala Academy in the city yesterday.

Tagore's works encouraged Liberation War: PM

Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia yesterday urged all including artists, litterateurs and cultural activists to uphold and promote Bangladeshi culture and to help maintain the distinctive characteristics of the nation, reports BSS.

The main source of our culture is our soil and its people and that is called Bangladeshi culture," the Prime Minister said while inaugurating the three-day national level programmes in observance of the birth anniversary of poet Rabindranath Tagore at the Shilpakala Academy in the city.

Underlining the need for infusing new momentum in our language and literature, the Prime Minister said the independent culture of Bangladesh should be more clearly reflected in our poetry, literature, music and fine arts to uphold our own characteristics as a nation.

Presided over by State
 See Page 12 Col 5

ID cards may not be ready before next polls: CEC

By Staff Correspondent

Chief Election Commissioner Justice AKM Sadeque yesterday indicated that changes may be necessary in the law which compels the Election Commission to provide voters with identity (ID) cards before holding of the next general elections.

"We are trying hard to provide ID cards to all voters. But I am not sure whether we can complete the task before the scheduled elections. And, if not, then necessary changes would be required in the law," Justice Sadeque told a press conference at his office.

Following the passage of the EC Bill by Parliament last year, individual voter's registration and providing the voters with ID cards have been made mandatory before holding of the next general elections.

Justice Sadeque, who was appointed CEC on April 27, said, "I see three major tasks before me, such as delimitation of the constituencies, registration of individual voters and issuance of ID cards, and holding of parliamentary elections."

"If we cannot prepare ID

Cards for all the voters because of the time constraint, we will at least be able to register all the voters," he said. "And if the registration is done correctly, there would be fairer elections than ever before," he said.

Preparation of a voters' list through fresh registration of every individual voter would cost about Tk 70 crore, the draft voters' list would be published on June 25.

As many as 3,20,939 enumerators would collect detailed data about each and every eligible voter from May 25 to 31. Another 5,047 Assistant Registration officers would oversee their activities. Supervisors would also be appointed for every four enumerators.

Tough actions, such as imposition of fines upto Tk 5,000 or one year's imprisonment or both, would be taken if any enumerator resorts to any intentional wrongdoing during data collection.

The CEC told a questioner that the EC's first preference was to hold elections with ID cards. "But we cannot avoid

See Page 12 Col 1



Justice AKM Sadeque

Procurement prices for IRRI-Boro

The cabinet has approved the IRRI Boro procurement policy for 1994-95, reports BSS.

The procurement prices for IRRI-Boro paddy and rice have been fixed at Taka 7.15 (seven taka fifteen paisa) and Taka 11.25 (eleven taka twenty-five paisa) per kilogram respectively.

The regular weekly cabinet meeting held at the Bangabhaban yesterday with Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia in the chair also approved the proposal to restructure the Bangladesh Shilpa Rin Sangstha (BSRS) to resume functioning as a development financing institution (DFI).

Transport fares up as people rush home

By Reaz Ahmad

With only two days left for the Eid-ul-Azha, the capital is witnessing a virtual mass exodus of people to their village homes to celebrate the Eid with their near and dear ones.

Around two million people out of the 7.2 million population of the city go back to their villages on the occasion of the Eid, a rough estimate said.

While there will be a three-day public holiday in connection with the Eid, many of the city dwellers began their journey home yesterday, two days ahead of the scheduled holidays, just to avert the rush and have a place in one or the other

See Page 12 Col 7

AL to gherao CEC's office May 20

The Awami League will gherao the Chief Election Commissioner's office in Dhaka and voters registration offices at district and thana level on May 20 to protest the appointments of some people for preparing the voter lists, reports UNB.

A meeting of the party's central working committee protested the order to "include some people" for collecting information about voters and for their registration.

"By taking advantage of it the BNP will appoint its own men to rig election and for that a mechanism has been made... They are involved in a

conspiracy to snatch people's voting rights," a resolution of the meeting said.

On the appointment of the Chief Election Commissioner (CEC), the resolution said the government party gave the appointment unilaterally without consulting the parties which had representation in parliament.

"Such motivated appointment will obstruct holding of free and fair voting. Hence Awami League will not accept this appointment of the CEC," according to the resolution.

The meeting observed that the Prime Minister was sticking to the power despite the resignation of majority of the elected MPs and their demand for immediate election under a neutral caretaker government.

It alleged that Begum Zia has politicised the entire administration and has been propagating "lies" through state owned media to confuse the people.

Referring to establishment of Parliamentary democracy, the meeting said Awami League had fought for this system for long and made a lot of sacrifices. After the 1991

See Page 12 Col 3

JP to gear up efforts to free Ershad

By Special Correspondent

The Jatiya Party plans to intensify its agitation to secure the release of party chief, deposed president Hussain Muhammad Ershad, from Jail.

The JP's planned campaign soon after Eid-ul-Azha, will be initiated through public meetings at the five divisional headquarters followed by a grand rally in the capital, party sources said.

The JP leaders were quick to add that the anti-government agitation, in consent with the other opposition parties, for holding elections un-

See Page 12 Col 7

Govt to increase non-govt pry teachers' benefit

The government has decided to increase the teachers' benefit for registered non-government primary schools and pay the money through banks, an official announcement said here yesterday, reports BSS.

Earlier, thana education officers disbursed the money among the teachers after dra-

See Page 12 Col 8

NEWS BRIEFS

Enamul Huq IU VC

Dr Mohammad Enamul Huq, Professor of Islamic History and Culture of the Chittagong University has been appointed the Vice Chancellor of the Islamic University, Enamul Huq has succeeded Prof M A Hamid, reports BSS.

City BNP meets today

An emergency meeting of the presidents, general secretaries and organising secretaries of all Thana units of the Dhaka Metropolitan BNP will be held today at 7 pm at the Senakalyan Bhaban office of Salahuddin Ahmed, MP who is the general secretary of the metropolitan unit of the party, reports BSS.

969 more Rohingyas go home

From Our Correspondent

COX'S BAZAR, May 8: Another 969 Rohingyas refugees of 71 families today returned to Myanmar as their repatriation has resumed after a gap four days.

48 to be released

The government will release 48 prisoners on the occasion of holy Eid-ul-Azha. The prisoners, arrested on charge of minor offences, will be released under special consideration, said an official handout last night, reports UNB.

Three killed

From Our Correspondent

NOAKHALI, May 8: At least three people were killed and 10 others injured in a collision between a auto tempo and a minibus on the Begumganj-Sonaimuri Road here today.



The weeping family members of Jinnah Miah (inset) who was killed by muggers in the city yesterday after being robbed of Tk 8 lakh.

Muggers stab city trader to death

By DMCH Correspondent

Muggers stabbed to death a businessman, injured two others and snatched Taka eight lakh from them near the Curzon Hall area of Dhaka University yesterday afternoon.

Leather trader Md Jinnah Miah, 45, succumbed to his injuries at the Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) at about 5:30 pm.

Jinnah, son of late Yusuf Ali, resided at Raj Narayan Dhar road near Killar Mor at Lalbagh.

Besides, the gang of three armed muggers also stabbed Jinnah's son Dipu, 15, and his business partner Shamsuddin Miah, 55, according to police and DMCH sources.

The muggers, carrying fire arms and daggers, followed the

Maid's death: DB to seek fresh remand today

By Staff Correspondent

The two women detained in connection with the mysterious death of their maid will be produced in the court of the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate (CMM), Dhaka, today.

Detective police took over the case from Ramna thana yesterday and is likely to seek remand from the court to secure confessional statements from the detainees, who are the only suspects so far, according to sources.

Monowara Begum, 35, who was a maid in a flat at Concord Tower in the Bangla Motors area in the city, died after an apparent fall from the fifth floor of the 15-storied building Friday.

Ramna police took Roksana Chowdhury, 45, mistress of

See Page 12 Col 1

Business at city cattle markets dull

By Staff Correspondent

Business at the sacrificial animal markets in the city was dull on the first day yesterday with only a small number of buyers turning up in the markets and most of them roaming around just to know the prices.

Supply of animals in the 17 temporary cattle markets is adequate this year. But, on the opening day the turn up of buyers is poor and sale is very limited," said a cattle trader.

This year, in addition to the permanent cattle market at

See Page 12 Col 3

City experiences light rain

By Staff Correspondent

After a continuous hot spell, the city as well as some other parts of the country, experienced light rainfall yesterday.

The shower brought some relief to the city dwellers in the evening due to a slight fall in temperature.

Two mm rainfall was recorded in the city, 5 mm in Ishardi, one mm in Chuadanga while Faridpur and Jessore experienced drizzles.

Met office yesterday forecast rain or thundershower accompanied by temporary gusty or squally wind is likely at one or two places in the Dhaka, Barisal, Rajshahi and Khulna divisions and regions of Comilla and Sylhet today.

No appreciable change in day temperature was predicted for today.

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