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Inside Today

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Learn from the Past, Shape the Future

by Qazi Khaliquzzaman Ahmed

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Focus

Asian century: Has it begun already? Making health care more humane; and Not women alone

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International

Cabinet room of the Bangladesh Secretariat.

Chief Adviser asks govt officials Stay neutral, work without fear

Chief Adviser Mohammad Habibur Rahman yesterday asked the government officials to discharge their duties with complete impartiality regardless of any threat or intimidation, reports UNB.

He was addressing the Secretaries, Secretaries in-charge, members of Planning Commission and Secretaries working in different government organisations at the

Editorial on Page 4

Habibur Rahman said the virtue of democracy lies in giving due importance to the opinion of the minority and in protecting their rights and privileges. He said these virtues should be reflected in the working of the administration.

The Chief Adviser said it is the imperative duty of the officials to maintain the continuity of the administrations in accordance with the constitutions and existing laws of the land. They must also perform their duties under the authority of the legally elected government.

He made it clear that the government officials have no

Chief Adviser meets President

Chief Adviser Muhammad Habibur Rahman made a courtesy call on President Abdur Rahman Biswas at Bangabhaban yesterday evening.

He also reminded the Heads of the administrations of their historic role in conducting the affairs of the state.

Military actions on in Chechnya, says Dudayev

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Business

Dhaka to get Tk 80cr EU grant for coastal embankment project

World economy may get boost in coming years

OECD

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DSE MARKET

DSE price index	816.40 (+0.30%)
Market capital Tk	5319.75 cr
Transactions in volume	470190
Transactions in value Tk	6.99 cr

Live from the Internet

What we need is a strict ruler; Bangladeshis: Political turmoil threatens economic gains; and Junkies and dummies get lost in cyberspace

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Dhaka Day by Day



When Pets are Troublesome

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NEWS BRIEFS

Hasina to exchange views tomorrow

Awami League chief Sheikh Hasina will exchange views with the representatives of different professional groups tomorrow at 11 am in the Engineers' Institution auditorium in the city, the party sources said yesterday. reports BSS.

Boat sinks with fertiliser

SIRAJGANJ, Apr 2: Three boats, two carrying wheat and another fertiliser, capsized near Kaukhola char in the Jamuna river on Monday night. No casualty was reported. However, goods worth Tk 10 lakh, including two motorbikes, were sunk. The boats coming to Sirajganj Ghat from Jagannathganj Ghat were caught by a storm. Passengers and boatmen managed to swim ashore, reports UNB.

Urs of Shahjalal Apr 8, 9

From Staff Correspondent

SYLHET, Apr 2: The annual Urs at the mazar of great saint Hazrat Shahjalal (RA) will be held on April 8 and 9 here. The two-day programmes includes placing of Gilaf in the Major, Qurani khwan, fateha khwan, milad mahfil, jikr-ajker. The occasion will be ended with Akheri Munajat in the early hours on the concluding day. Thousands of devotees both Muslim and others attend the annual occasion every year.

EC yet to get any advice regarding polls

By Staff Correspondent

The government is yet to issue any communiqué to the Election Commission (EC) relating to holding of parliamentary polls even after three days of dissolution of the sixth parliament, according to EC sources here yesterday.

"We have not heard anything from the government regarding the polls although the countdown for the next general election has already started," said a top official of the EC on condition of anonymity. The EC is waiting for a formal communiqué from the government to conduct the polls, he said. Fresh parliamentary election must be held within 90 days after the dissolution of parliament on March 30.

It was learnt from other sources that the Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) sought a meeting with the Chief Adviser of the caretaker government and the meeting was scheduled at 12:30 pm yesterday. But the Chief Adviser's office cancelled the meeting saying that it would be held at a later date.

"For the EC, every day is very important now because there is so much to be done for the polls," an official said.

Seven posts of Assistant Secretaries out of 18 are still vacant while the EC Secretary has not been in office for more than two months.

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AL, JP, Jamaat demand Probe 'corruptions' by BNP leaders

By Staff Correspondent

Awami League, Jatiya Party and Jamaat-e-Islami in a joint meeting yesterday urged the caretaker government to arrest and try those involved in corruption practices.

Held at the city residence of AL presidium member Abdus Samad Azad, the meeting was attended by AL leaders Abdus Samad Azad, Tofael Ahmed, Mohammad Nasim, Mozaffar Hussain Paltu and Suranjit Sengupta. JP leaders Moudud Ahmed and Kazi Zafar Ahmed and Jamaat leaders Ali Ahsan Mohammad Mujahid, Kamruzzaman and Sheikh Asrar Ali, said a press release last night.

Citing various allegations of corruption during the BNP

AL to build up public opinion against BNP statements

By Staff Correspondent

The Awami League is planning mass mobilisation to create public opinion against the recent "vitriolic" statements made by the BNP leadership against their political opponents, party sources indicated last night.

The programme would be finalised shortly after discussions between the AL central leaders and leaders of the district units, they said.

See Page 12 Col 2

US hopes for a democratic, peaceful solution

The United States has welcomed the political development in Bangladesh, saying it offers an opportunity for all political parties to look beyond their past differences and find a democratic solution to its long running stalemate, reports UNB.

A spokesman of the State Department told newsmen in Washington on Monday that it had paid close attention to recent developments in Bangladesh which he hoped would lead to a democratic and peaceful solution of the deadlock.

Replies to a question at a State Department briefing, acting spokesman Glyn Davies mentioned that on March 30 the President dissolved parliament and prime minister Begum Khaleda Zia handed over power to a non-party caretaker administration that will oversee fresh general elections.

The United States welcomes this development very much and believes that it offers a concrete opportunity for

See Page 12 Col 1

Police raid six DU halls: Arms recovered, 23 held

By DU Correspondent

Police raided six residential halls of the Dhaka University yesterday and recovered 14 firearms, 397 rounds of bullet and some explosives.

Twenty-three people were arrested during the raids, police said.

A huge contingent of police wearing bullet-proof vests, supported by members of the Detective Branch of Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP) raided the halls in two phases, one in the early morning and another in the afternoon.

Police closed all roads leading to the university and did not allow any person to come out of the halls during the raids.

Police started the raid at Shahidullah hall at about 4:30 am which continued till 8 am. One pistol, one revolver, two cut-rifles and some 90 rounds of bullet were recovered from the extension building of the hall and 11 people were picked up.

In the second phase police conducted raids in JCD-dominated Surja Sen hall, Sir A F Rahman Hall and BCL-dominated Jagannath and

See Page 12 Col 4

Police recovered huge arms and ammunition from six halls of the Dhaka University yesterday.

— Star photo

Interim budget now seems inevitable

With the current fiscal expiring in less than three months, preparation of the national budget for the next year is seriously lagging behind schedule, reports UNB.

Sources at the Ministry of Finance said the budget exercise was, in fact, yet to take off. Officials concerned attributed the unprecedented delay to uncertainty over the policy direction in the next budget.

"Policy direction is essential in a national budget. We are still in the dark about that direction," said an official seeking anonymity.

The ministry has not yet started even the routine part of the budget exercise which could have proceeded pending the policy factors.

There are strong indications from the official circle

that the caretaker administration might go for an interim budget, as India did this year, since a political government in Bangladesh is unlikely before June.

"Interim budget seems inevitable this year," said an official at the National Board of Revenue (NBR). "We're now awaiting appointment of the adviser-in-charge of the Ministry of Finance to take the final decision."

An interim budget is a short-lived fiscal document based on existing measures and without any policy goals.

At a meeting last month over the budgetary situation, immediate past Finance Minister M Saifur Rahman reportedly advised the officials to work for an interim budget.

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BNP demands White Paper

Take action against 'terrorists, looters'

By Staff Correspondent

Former prime minister and BNP chairperson yesterday demanded of the caretaker government "action" against those who "destroyed public property, the killed people and unleashed terrorism in the name of movement".

Terrorism was unleashed, government properties destroyed, people killed, banks looted and national economy ruined in the name of movement" she alleged.

She also demanded a White Paper on the losses caused during the movement.

"My party will initiate such a step if the present government fails to do so (publish a white paper)," she said while talking to newsmen at her party head office at Naya Paltan in the city.

The BNP chief also alleged that her party activists are being "unnecessarily harassed" in the name of recovery of illegal arms. She said her party will be left with no option but to go for agitation if this is not stopped immediately.

She however, said that she welcomed the recovery of unauthorised arms.

"We want the arms recovery drive to continue. But in the name of arms recovery and nabbing the terrorists, the student activists of BNP have been arrested from the Dhaka

University today. Besides, our workers are being arrested and cases being filed against them at many places. Moreover, houses of the BNP men are being attacked," she said. "These acts of injustice must be stopped".

"BNP can not sit idle if such injustice go on. Then we would be compelled to go for agitation", said Begum Zia. "We don't believe in the politics of arms" she alleged.

She also demanded a White Paper on the losses caused during the movement.

Replies to a question as regards the BNP's 72-hour ultimatum, See Page 12 Col 7

3 Rajshahi BNP leaders held

From Our Correspondent

RAJSHAHI, Apr 2: Police last night arrested three leaders of the BNP and Jubo Dal on charges of creating law and order situation in the metropolitan area. They also attacked a victory procession of the Awami League on March 31.

They are, Nazrul Huda, senior vice president of the BNP city unit and Eltan Ali and Mamun of Jubo Dal, local unit. They were produced in the court today. The city Magistrate, Golzar Hossain, rejected their bail petitions.

See Page 12 Col 3

Business leaders apprise Chief Adviser of their problems

The business leaders met Chief Adviser Mohammad Habibur Rahman at the International Conference Centre (ICC) yesterday and urged him to take measures to maintain law and order for confidence-building among the business community, reports BSS.

The leaders apprised the Chief Adviser of the losses incurred by the various sectors of trade, commerce and industry during the political movement. They put forward some suggestions aimed at resolving the problems.

They stressed the need for taking effective measures for recovering illegal arms from all parts of the country.

The business leaders requested the Chief Adviser to take immediate steps for removing the congestion at Chittagong Port, Zia International Airport and Benapole land port.

They discussed the financial difficulties being faced by them because of the political turmoil.

Habibur Rahman gave a patient hearing and asked the business leaders to apprise the ministry concerned about their problems in detail.

The Chief Adviser said he was aware of the prevailing law and order situation and added that the government has taken up some measures which have started giving positive results.

See Page 12 Col 1

Free Ershad for fair polls: Mizan

Mizanur Rahman Chowdhury, acting chairman of the Jatiya Party, yesterday called for implementing the party recommendations put forward to ensure free and fair elections in the country, reports BSS.

In a statement, Chowdhury said unless Ershad was released, illegal arms recovered, terrorists arrested, Election Commission reconstituted and BNP appointments in the administration cancelled, congenial atmosphere for free and fair elections would not be created.

Chowdhury said the people of the country expect justice from a non-party neutral government. We cannot accept a situation where chiefs of all parties will be in the field to campaign for their respective parties, but JP, which is a major party, will have its chief in jail.

Ershad should be released

See Page 12 Col 8

Kuakata, Madhabkunda being developed as tourist spots

By Govinda Shil

Bangladesh Parijata Corporation (BPC) has started work on building motels at Kuakata, Barisal and Madhabkunda, Maulvibazar, while necessary lands have been acquired for motels in three other districts, according to officials of the corporation.

The motels are being built under a 10-year Tk 640 crore master plan prepared by UNDP and the World Tourism Organisation in 1990.

A study is also underway to select three typical villages near Dhaka city to show foreign tourists the rural life of the country, the officials said.

Dr A Mubin, chairman of the BPC, told The Daily Star that a move was being taken by BPC to ease the entrance formalities for foreigners into the Chittagong Hill

recent years. The earning was Tk 64.70 crore in 1985 while it stood at Tk 75.94 crore in 1994.

The proposed Sonadia resort would be the first of its kind and it will maintain an international standard to serve foreign tourists," said another BPC official.

It was impossible for the government to invest unilaterally in this sector, he said. "It was also discouraging that the government stopped financing any project since 1984," added another BPC official.

The largest delta in the world, the country has the longest sea beach (75 miles), the largest mangrove and tidal forests and evergreen tropical plantations. But due to absence of proper initiatives the

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BTB prepares for Sharjah show

Sports Reporter

Bangladesh Television is making necessary preparations to