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Changes in composition of Judicial Commission

Star Report
The composition of the Judicial Commission suggested in the Separation of Judiciary Bill drafted by a government appointed expert committee was changed yesterday, according to an authoritative source at the Ministry of Law and Justice.

As per the suggested change the Judicial Commission will now be composed of six members instead of five proposed earlier and the name of chairman of the Public Service Commission as a member has been dropped.

The changes in the composition of the Judicial Commission was brought about following a meeting between the President and the Minister of Law.

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Convener of the National Committee on CHT Chief Whip of Parliament Abul Hasnat Abdullah (R) and Chief of the PCJSS Jyotipriyo Bodhipriyo Larma alias Shantu Larma (L) talking to newsmen after talks at the State Guest House Meghna in the city yesterday.

— Star photo

Admission test for MBBS April 4

By Ripon Baig
Admission test for the MBBS course at the 13 government medical colleges of the country will be held on April 4, said senior official of the Directorate of Health.

A circular to this effect is likely to be published within this week, Prof AKM Nurul Anwar, Additional Director General of the Directorate told The Daily Star last night.

The tentative last date for submission of applications is February 23, he added.

Earlier, the authorities changed some of the rules for the admission test. According to the changed rules, the viva voce examination, which carried 10 marks earlier, has been dropped. However, distribution of marks for the written examination will remain unchanged. Out of the 100 marks, 30 each will be for physics, chemistry and biology. The remaining 10 marks will be for English.

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First day of CHT peace talks Govt, PCJSS hopeful of a solution

By Special Correspondent
Talks between the government and the Parbatya Chattagram Jana Sanghati Samity (PCJSS) for peace in the troubled Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) began in the city yesterday.

"We are hopeful of arriving at a solution," Jyotipriyo Bodhipriyo Larma alias Shantu Larma, leader of the four-member PCJSS delegation told newsmen after nearly four hours of talks with the National Committee on CHT at the state guest house Meghna. The National Committee comprises some members of parliament and officials.

Shantu Larma evaded a direct reply when asked how he found the differences between the peace talks now and during BNP's time.

"It's better for you to judge," Larma replied.

He also expressed the hope to meet Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina. "I cannot say now whether it will take place. But it can happen if there is a need," Larma added.

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Shantu Larma, sporting a well-cut dark ash coloured safari suit, looked frail, but denying that he needed treatment in Dhaka, observed that he is pinning his hopes on the "cordiality and sincerity" extended by the government side in finding a solution.

Nodding in approval a beaming Abul Hasnat Abdullah, Chief Whip (CW) of the Jatiya Sangsad, who led the government side said, that he too was hopeful of ending the conflict in the CHT.

It was the tenth round of talks, the first in the capital, since a ceasefire on August 1992 halted nearly two decades of bush-war by the armed wing of the PCJSS, the Shantibahini in the area. It was worked out in the backdrop of failed negotiations in the early, middle and late Eighties when six rounds of talks were held to bring peace in the jungle clad hills of Chittagong.

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The Daily Star Roundtable 'Make JS bodies effective, uphold democratic spirit'

By Staff Correspondent
Jatiya Sangsad members belonging to both Treasury and Opposition benches, academicians and some eminent citizens yesterday strongly pleaded for effective functioning of the parliamentary committees to strengthen parliamentary democracy in the country.

They also called for bringing about a radical change in the present political culture that fails to uphold the democratic spirit of accommodating opposing views.

These observations were made at a round table on 'Strengthening Parliament', organised by The Daily Star at Hotel Sheraton in the city. Some speakers attending the round table underlined the need for a sound electoral system, free from the influence of black money and muscle power, to pave the way for the true representatives of the people being elected to Parliament.

However, almost all of them, including leaders of both the Awami League and BNP, agreed that things could be improved even under the present circumstances provided that there was a political will of the parties concerned to do so.

The round table was attended by, among others, Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs Minister Abdul Matin Khasru, Industries and Commerce Minister Tofael Ahmed, Telecommunications Minister Mohammad Nasim, Secretary General of the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan, Chief Whip of the Opposition in Parliament Khandaker Delwar Hossain, BNP lawmaker Barrister Nazmul Huda, Workers Party leader Rashed Khan Menon, former adviser to the caretaker government Manzur Elahi, former adviser to the caretaker government Nazma Chowdhury, Vice Chancellor of Dhaka University Dr AK Azad Chowdhury, Vice Chancellor of Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology Dr Iqbal Mahmud, Barrister Amirul Islam, Nazim

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The Daily Star Roundtable on Strengthening the Parliament 25 January, 1997



(From R-L) Post and Telecommunications Minister Mohammad Nasim, Industries and Commerce Minister Tofael Ahmed, BNP Secretary General Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan and Chief Whip of the Opposition in Parliament Khandaker Delwar Hossain participating in The Daily Star Roundtable on 'Strengthening the Parliament' at Hotel Sheraton yesterday.

— Star photo

Fire kills 3 in city slum

At least three people, including a woman and a child, were killed in a fire that raged through a slum in the city's Khilgaon area last night, reports UNB.

Witnesses and fire brigade sources said the fire originated from a gas oven of a house at about 10:20 pm and gutted all the shanties.

Fire fighters recovered the mutilated bodies of Monnaf Ali, 22, and Anna, 20. The body of three-month-old Anwar could not be found yet.

About a dozen people were wounded in the blaze which was extinguished by firemen shortly before midnight.

A rickshawpuller said some of the injured were sent to hospitals. Rescue operation was going on till filling of this report.

Home Minister Rafiqul Islam visited the spot.

Boy burnt alive in Ctg fire

From Staff Correspondent
CHITTAGONG, Jan 25: A three-year old boy died and four houses were gutted in two incidents of fire in the city today, Fire Brigade sources said.

A big house was gutted and a minor boy died when a fire broke out at Jalalabad colony in Nasirabad area at 4:30 pm.

Earlier in the morning, three houses were damaged in a fire in the north side of the Oxygen crossing.

The causes of the fires and the extent of damage were not known.

Demolition of faulty bldgs: Pvt firms yet to get go-ahead

By Staff Correspondent
The Rajuk is yet to approve a plan allowing private firms to detect and demolish 'faulty' structures in the city.

Following collapse of a seven storied building at Kalabagan in the city in September last, the Rajuk Chairman had announced that private firms would soon be engaged to detect the faulty structures and those built deviating from the original plans. He had also declared that a task force would be formed to oversee the operation.

Rajuk officials told this correspondent that the plan to engage private firms could not be implemented earlier because of administrative complications. "But eight firms have already been selected to do the job." The Rajuk Chairman said.

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No NLFT hideout in Bangladesh!

AGARTALA, Jan 25: The National Liberation Front of Tripura (NLFT) has denied any existence of its hideouts in Bangladesh, reports PTI.

The self-styled major of Borok army, NLFT, D Yam-borok in a press statement issued here today said that the news about the outfit's hideout in Bangladesh as reported in a section of the press was completely false.

Meanwhile, the deadline set by the Tripura government for surrender of insurgents in Tripura would expire tomorrow.

Stern action would be taken against the ultras after the expiry of the deadline, state Home Minister Samar Choudhury said.

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Today's 16-page issue of The Daily Star contains a 3-page supplement on 'Indian Republic Day' on Pages 13-15 and One page supplement on 'Australian National Day' on Page 16

Sehri, Iftar timings

Ramadan	Jan	Sehri	Iftar
16	26	—	5:44
17	27	5:19	5:45
18	28	5:19	5:46

Govt-donors review meet next month

Star Report
The donors are expected to meet with government officials sometime at the end of next month to review the progress in implementing the commitments made during the Paris Aid Club meeting in September last.

Administrative reforms, privatisation and macro-economic management are likely to figure prominently at the meeting, finance ministry sources said.

"This is an opportunity for the government to brief the donors on the reform programmes and plans for the next six months," said Pierre Landell-Mills, resident chief of the World Bank, while talking to The Daily Star yesterday.

"Donors will be interested to hear about the developments from the Finance Minister."

Macro-economic management of the government is likely to be discussed at the meeting against the backdrop of a dwindling foreign exchange reserve, poor revenue collection and a slowdown in export earnings.

The continued increase in government borrowing will also come up for discussion and the donors are likely to press the government to harness its spending specially in the loss-making public sector enterprises, the sources said.

At the meeting, the government will highlight its measures in 'successfully' containing credit and monetary expansions. It will also unfold its future plans for increasing revenue collection.

"We appreciate very much the government's attitude towards the proposals contained in the Bank's document government That Works. We are interested in what intentions it has to implement these," said Mills.

The issue of good governance will also be discussed.

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Situation still tense 3 more KAFCO employees sacked

From Staff Correspondent
CHITTAGONG, Jan 25: Production in KAFCO is going on in full swing despite a tense situation, sources at the factory said.

Meanwhile, three other employees, including two technicians, were sacked today. Police are still deployed around the fertiliser factory to foil any attempt of violence by the workers.

The workers held a rally outside the factory today to protest the termination of services of the operators and technicians and arrest of two employees.

The KAFCO authorities sacked 15 employees for their unruly behavior on January 19.

The unruly workers, led by the CBA of KAFCO, gheraoed the rooms of senior officials and forced the management to sign an order for payment of the profit participation to the workers.

RUTA deadline to govt

From RU Correspondent
RAJSHAHI, Jan 25: The Rajshahi University Teachers' Association (RUTA) at an emergency meeting this morning decided that they would go on a hunger strike after Eid-ul-Fitre if the government did not remove the Vice-Chancellor Prof M Yousuf Ali by February 6.

RUTA president Prof M Shahidul Islam presided over the meeting.

UNB adds: The meeting also demanded cancellation of the ad hoc appointments given in different departments and administrative posts by the VC.

The RUTA members have been abstaining from duties since January 9, demanding removal of the Vice-Chancellor of alleged corruption.

Besides, the all-party students' unity of the university is also continuing its strike demanding resignation of the VC.

PM leaves for Delhi Feb 13

By Staff Correspondent
Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina is likely to visit the Indian capital New Delhi on February 13 to inaugurate the Inter-Parliamentary Union Conference scheduled to begin on February 14, according to sources concerned.

Details of her visit to India, which is also likely to include bilateral meetings with her Indian counterpart H D Deve Gowda are being worked out.

Hasina earlier paid a state visit to India from December 10 to 12 during which the historic Ganges water sharing agreement was signed between the two countries.

Ctg Port dock workers withdraw go-slow programme

CHITTAGONG, Jan 25: The go-slow programme of the dock workers in the Chittagong Port has been withdrawn following understanding reached between port officials and dock workers here last night, reports BSS.

According to a port press release today, the meeting held at port rest house was chaired by port Chairman Capt Zahuruddin Mahmud.

The meeting decided that the bonus scheme of the dock workers would be effective from July 1. A five-member committee to this effect was also formed with Director (Traffic) of the port as its chief.

Leaders of three registered trade unions, vice chairman of the dock workers management board, chairman of the Master Stevedores Association also attended the meeting which started at around 10 last night.

The dock workers went on go-slow on January 1 to press home their demands including enhancement of their salaries.

Amnesty order of 1996 1000 prisoners made ineligible for release

By Mizan Ali
At least 1000 prisoners who were eligible for amnesty granted by the then caretaker government of Justice Shahabuddin Ahmed in 1991, were made ineligible for release after it was amended by another amnesty order issued by the caretaker government of Justice Habibur Rahman in 1996, according to sources in the Home Ministry.

However, a file regarding remission of sentences of those affected by the later order is now lying with the Prime Minister's Office, the sources added.

A total of 9000 prisoners were benefited by the amnesty granted by Justice Shahabuddin Ahmed's government, the sources said.

The caretaker government of Justice Habibur Rahman announced remission of sentences of some categories of prisoners with effect from March 31, 1996, the day the government started functioning.

"Prisoners who had already served half of their jail terms of March 31, 1996 were eligible for release," the order issued by Justice Habibur Rahman's government said adding, "Prisoners who will complete half of their prison terms in future will also be eligible for remission of their sentences."

The order said, "the privilege will however, not be applicable to those convicted for murder, dacoity, abduction, rape, violation of modesty of women, acid throwing, oppression on women and children, anti-state activities, possession and use of unauthorised arms and explosives and for those arrested un-

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Free country from poverty: PM

TUNGIPARA, (Gopalganj), Jan 25: Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina today said her government would utilise every moment for building "Sonar Bangla", a happy and prosperous abode of the people, by ensuring their long-cherished economic freedom, reports UNB.

"Our every step is for the economic progress of the people," she told a meeting at Tungipara Thana premises this morning.

She said the country need to be freed from the vicious cycle of poverty to advance on the path of progress for achieving the target of establishing 'Sonar Bangla' dream by father of the nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.

The Prime Minister identified illiteracy as the main cause of poverty under which the people are reeling and said the present government had waged a movement against illiteracy and set a target to remove illiteracy from the country within next ten years.

The government is taking steps for creating jobs and other economic activities to change the lot of common people, she said.

The Prime Minister, who went to her ancestral home on Thursday, delivered an emotional speech in the meeting after laying the foundation stone of Tungipara Thana Bhaban.

This thana was established by Bangabandhu after the independence and activities of the police station were being per-

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Traffic jam in the city's Purana Paltan area yesterday.

— Star photo

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Hingis lifts Aussie Open singles title
MELBOURNE, Jan 25: Martina Hingis claimed her first Grand Slam championship as it was her birthday, becoming the youngest winner of a major title in 110 years by thrashing Mary Pierce 6-2, 6-2 Saturday in the Australian Open final, reports AP.

Displaying a dazzling array

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