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ADP may be trimmed today

The current ADP may be trimmed today as an alternative measure to manage a deficit in post-flood rehabilitation funds, reports UNB.

Official sources said the Cabinet in its weekly meeting today will take up the task of restructuring and reallocating funds for projects under the Annual Development Programme.

However, according to Finance Ministry sources, the size of the ADP will not be changed while reallocating the funds. Priority will be given to projects for post-flood rehabilitation.

"We are hopeful about mobilising the deficit without imposing any tax or cuts in the size of the ADP," State Minister for Planning Dr Mohiuddin Khan Alamgir told the agency last night. "It will be done re-prioritising the projects."

The sources said important projects involved in the post-flood rehabilitation programme will be given priority in re-adjusting the ADP funds.

The shortfall in funds for post-flood rehabilitation projects is US\$ 27.66 crore, after emergency foreign aid and contributions from the exchequer.

The total post-flood rehabilitation needs were fixed at US\$ 94.14 crore. Donors made commitments for US\$ 62.02 crore, the World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF) pledging US\$ 33.00 crore. The government will provide US\$ 4.45 crore for the programme.

Earlier, the ECNEC in a meeting had diverted Tk 419 crore of the ADP funds for post-flood rehabilitation work.

The government recently imposed taxes and surcharges amounting to Tk 300 crore to raise funds for rehabilitation work.

Dhanmondi to be declared 'silent zone'

As part of a drive to free the residential areas from sound and air pollution, the Dhanmondi residential area will be declared a 'silent zone' in the first phase, reports UNB.

This was stated at a meeting of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Environment and Forest Ministry in the city yesterday.

The meeting was informed that to check pollution, the polythene production in the country will be stopped in phases by the year 2002 and no further permission will be given for setting up new polythene factory.

It also discussed the activities of the Environment Directorate and its role in freeing the country from pollution.

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Prayer Timings

	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	5-17	5-22
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	4-00	4-15
Maghrib	5-27	5-29
Esha	7-00	7-15

Source: Islamic Foundation

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Sehri, Ifar timings

Ramadan	Jan	Sehri	Ifar
15	—	—	5-28
16	5	5-18	5-29
17	6	5-18	5-30

Blast kills 4 in Lahore : 3 MQM men held

Sharif escapes attempt on life



Nawaz Sharif

LAHORE, Dec 3: Four people died when a time bomb exploded on a bridge in central Pakistan today shortly before Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif was to pass over it, said police, who described the attack as an assassination attempt, reports AP.

The bridge, 3 kilometres from Sharif's private residence in Raiwind, was destroyed in the explosion, which occurred at around 0500 GMT. Sharif and his family were to have passed the bridge at that time on their way to Raiwind from Lahore.

Their departure was delayed and they were at home in Lahore at the time of the blast. The family later flew from to Raiwind by helicopter.

Three civilians and a police officer died in the explosion, and three policemen have been wounded, doctors and police officers in Lahore said.

Earlier Assistant Superintendent of Police Munir Sheikh had said three policemen and one police officer died in the blast.

"We have sent special bomb disposal squad experts for investigations," he said.

Witnesses said police stopped traffic on the Lahore-Raiwind Road after the blast, which was heard for miles around. Raiwind is a small town 22 kilometres from Lahore.

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Manju leads Mizan, 12 JP MPs to PM's house

By Special Correspondent

The feud between Jatiya Party chief General HM Ershad and Anwar Hossain Manju took a new turn as the latter led a dozen JP MPs and party leader Mizanur Rahman Chowdhury to an hour-long meeting with Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at Ganobhavan yesterday.

Sources close to the communication minister told the Star that the MPs mainly discussed post-flood rehabilitation programmes in their constituencies.

Asked, Mizan Chowdhury however denied having visited the Prime Minister's official residence though the sources confirmed his presence in the meeting.

Chowdhury told The Daily Star that he was trying to bring the JP house in order and that he was hopeful about a reconciliation.

The JP MPs included two lady MPs, whose names were not immediately available. They were elected from reserved seats for women, source said.

Apart from Manju, eight of the other nine MPs were from greater Rangpur region, the heartland of the former general's power base.

Their presence along with JP top gun Mizanur Rahman Chowdhury is likely to dampen

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Indian N-test a real political mistake : Sen

NEW DELHI, Jan 3: Nobel Economics Laureate Amartya Sen today described as "real political mistake" India's decision to explode nuclear weapons in May, reports AFP.

"I don't think I ever thought that it (the tests) was worth it," he told a private television channel here.

The 64-year-old Sen, however, said he understood the frustrations of successive Indian governments because their views on nuclear weapons were ignored by the West.

"All these frustrations understand," he said.

"But I think the response was morally wrong and more importantly in the political level it is a real political mistake."

City corporation polls

No atmosphere to participate: BNP

By Staff Correspondent

BNP secretary general Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan said his party wants to participate in the paurashava and the city corporation elections but a favourable situation for holding polls does not exist in the country.

"Presently, there is not even the minimum congenial atmosphere for holding any election in the country. Neither there is any democratic atmosphere in some districts," he told newsmen after the BNP national standing committee's meeting yesterday.

Chaired by party chief and Leader of the Opposition Khaleda Zia at her official residence, the two-and-a-quarter-hour meeting was also attended by 12 out of 14 members of the committee.

Bhuiyan said, "In the prevailing situation, no one can expect fair polls."

Besides, he said, no election held under this government and the present Election Commission was at all free and fair. All elections were rigged with direct or indirect support of the EC.

Moreover, the ruling Awami League used government officials in the past elections as activists of the party, he added.

The BNP secretary general alleged, the government has already started luring opposition leaders and activists, elite and influential people. In case of

failure, the ruling party is threatening and filing false cases against the Opposition leaders, activists and influential people ahead of the local government polls.

Besides, the government has prepared a blueprint to rig the paurashava and city corporation elections by any means. A large number of BNP men have been arrested and hundreds implicated in false cases.

Mentioning some incidents, the BNP leader said the ruling party backed by police created anarchy and was launching 'Pakistan army style attacks' on people in different parts of the country, including Feni, Barisal, Laxmipur, Langkolk and Narayanganj.

He demanded the government create a favourable atmosphere for holding the local government elections before the polls schedule is announced.

Bhuiyan also said the BNP and its allies will sit together soon to discuss the overall situation and different aspects of the ensuing polls.

Replying to a question, he said the party may take tough decisions like boycott of the polls if a favourable atmosphere is not created and the government continued its repression and oppression on the Opposition.

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Cold spell may sweep country this month

By Special Correspondent

A medium to severe cold spell is likely to blow over the north-eastern and north-western region of the country in two phases this month, Meteorological Department said yesterday.

Mercury may come down to 5-8 degree Celsius during the cold wave.

Elsewhere in the country, there will be a mild to medium cold spell, with minimum temperature ranging between 8 to 10 degree Celsius, the Met Office said in its long-range forecast for this month.

A western disturbance in upper atmosphere currently hanging over Pakistan would make the temperature a bit warmer for couple days. The cold spell will sweep the country, director of the Meteorological Department Ershad Hossain told The Daily Star last night.

The cold spell will continue for the whole month and temperature will start getting warm early next month.

He said temperature has already started falling with the arrival of northern wind from the Himalayas.

Srinagar had the coldest day so far with 8.5 degree Celsius minimum temperature recorded by the met office yesterday.

Sitakundu was the warmest place yesterday with a maximum temperature of 30.2C.

In Dhaka, the minimum temperature was 12.1 degree Celsius, Chittagong 14.7 C, Khulna 14.6 C, Barisal 12 C, Rajshahi 12.8 C, Sylhet 14.4 C.

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What to write ... what went wrong ... what's happening
As many as 4000 sat for the test, toughest in their life as life is yet to begin for these kids. (Top left) The two seem at a loss what to write. (Top right) The little girl failed to write and so faces the angry mother. (Above) As the little angels battle with the pen and paper inside the huge hall, parents in their thousands wait outside. Our chief photographer A K M Mohsin came with these photos from Vigarunnisa Noon School yesterday complaining that it was too much for the Class One admission seekers vying for a few seats. "How do you judge their merit at this stage?" he asked. Is he right?
— Star photo

Charges of lies, deception and fake transactions

By Staff Correspondent

Doha in the dock

A K M Shamsuddoha of Doha Securities has been charged with "fake and imaginary" transactions and resorting to "lies and deceptive means" which allured members of the public to buy certain stocks in 1996 at high prices.

"While trading in shares of Beximco Group companies including Shineeupkur Holding Ltd, you manipulated the share market through means which are unlawful and in violation of rules ... did fake and imaginary transactions ... resorted to lies and deceptive means to induce share prices making them (transactions) appear real and active trading ... allured the members of the public to buy these shares at high prices," according to the charge sheet in one of the sensational share scam cases.

Mia Mohammad Sharif, the First Additional Sessions Judge, Dhaka, yesterday heard lively arguments from lawyers in the first of the cases against 15 companies charged with manipulating the share market in 1996.

Accused A K M Shamsuddoha stood in the dock for two hours as prosecution framed the charges against him and the defence lawyer called the charges "groundless".

The hearing began at 2 pm and was adjourned at 3:45pm to resume today.

Charges will be framed today

tion lawyers. Dr M Zahir appeared for SEC.

Eminent criminal lawyer Serajul Haque appeared for defence.

SEC filed the case against Doha Securities and AKM Shamsuddoha under section 265(D) of the CrPc.

According to the charges, during July 1996 to December 1996, AKM Shamsuddoha of Doha Securities traded Shineeupkur shares in a manner that was not lawful.

The prosecution also said that Doha Securities, during the period, "showed" transactions worth Tk 124.66 crore of which Tk 37.72 crore was through delivery versus payment (DVP) transactions both inside and outside the DSE.

The prosecution said that

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Joint monitoring of Ganges water flow begins

PABNA, Jan 3: Officials of Bangladesh and India started joint monitoring of the Ganges flow at Hardinge Bridge point in Ishwardi thana today, two days after the commencement of current lean period, reports APB.

The two sides, official sources said, would observe the flow of the Padma at six places near Hardinge Bridge point as stipulated in the 30-year Indo-Bangladesh Ganges Water-sharing Treaty signed in December, 1996.

Sources said on the first day of the joint monitoring, the water flow of Ganges (Padma) at the point was 129,211 cusecs compared to 157,517 cusecs on the same day in 1998 and 79,460 cusecs in 1997.

Under the long-term Ganges water-sharing formula, Bangladesh is to get 67,516 cusecs (cubic foot per second) of water during the first 10-day cycle from January 1.

A two-member Indian team led by Deputy Director of Central Indian Water Commission K K Singh and a three-member home team headed by Sub-Divisional Engineer of Hydrology Department Mohammad Anisur Rahman are taking part in the joint monitoring.

Bangladeshi found dead in New Delhi airport

An unidentified Bangladeshi youngman apparently flying in the wheel carriage of a British Airways flight was found dead in New Delhi airport. Civil Aviation sources said in Dhaka yesterday, reports BSS.

They said the body was found on the runway when the London-bound British Airways flight landed at the Indira Gandhi Airport after leaving Dhaka on Saturday afternoon.

Bangladesh Civil Aviation officials said according to information received in Dhaka the body fell on the runway soon after the plane opened its wheel carriage during the landing.

We have asked the British Airways authorities to give us the photograph of the man and details of the incident for identifying the victim," Air Commodore Mohammad Zearat Ali, Chairman of the Civil Aviation Authority said.

A four-member committee was formed yesterday to investigate the incident.

20 vehicles damaged

Transport workers go on rampage on Dhaka-Aricha road

MANIKGANJ, Jan 3: Some 20 vehicles were damaged on Dhaka-Aricha highway as the transport workers, who enforced a road barricade programme here and Aricha ghat today, went on rampage, reports APB.

The programme was observed protesting toll collection from the goods-carrying trucks at different points on the highway.

Manikganj Truck Owners and Workers' Interest Protection Committee called the programme to realise its 6-point demands.

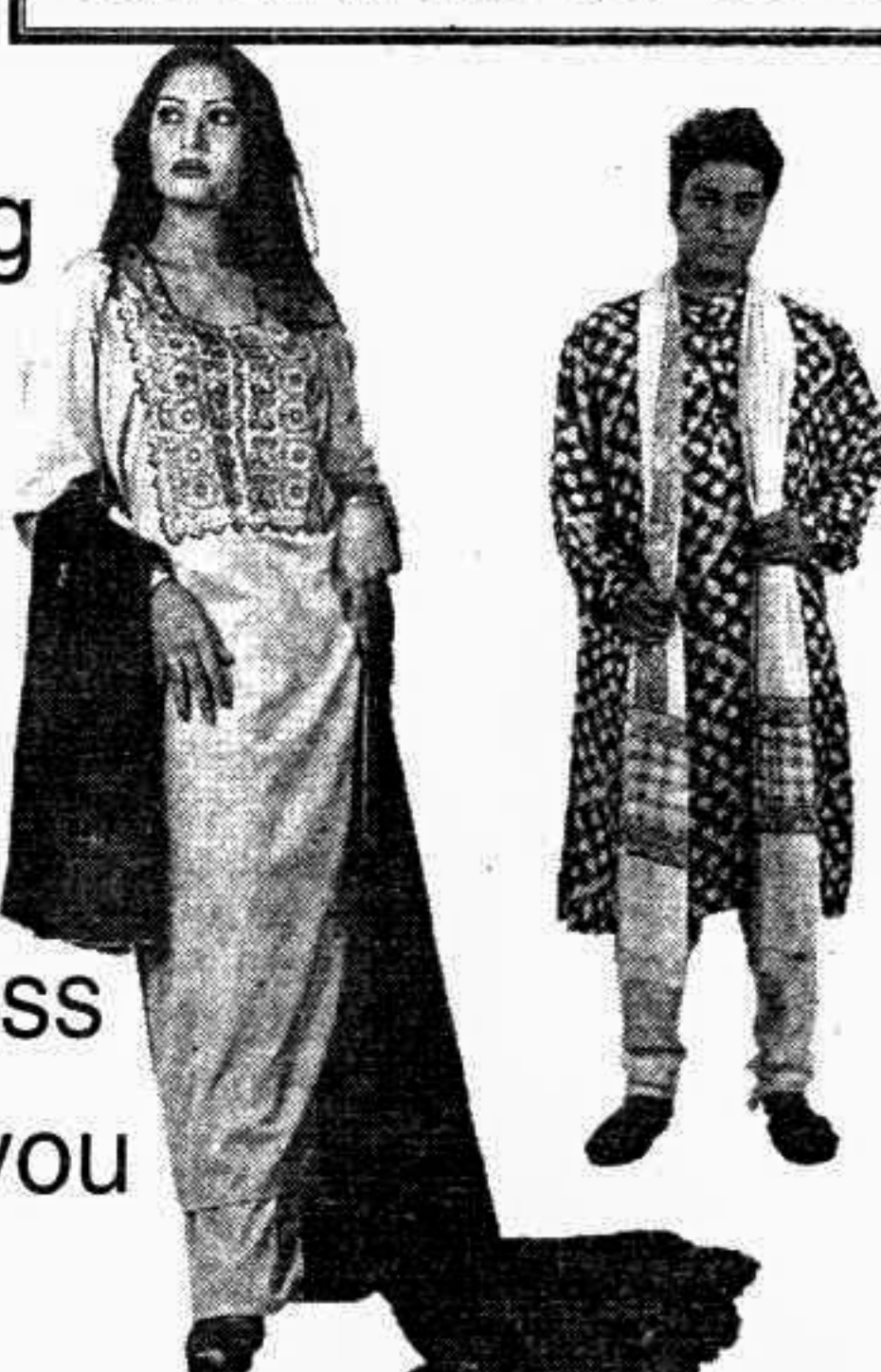
Police and local sources said earlier on Saturday a half-day

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Hitting Newsstands in the first week of January

The Daily Star

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Municipal elections likely on Feb 23-25

By Staff Correspondent

The Election Commission has decided to hold municipal elections "tentatively" in the last week of next month and will announce the schedules in the middle of this month.

The decision was taken yesterday at a meeting of the three-member Commission headed by Mohammad Abu Hena.

The Commission also decided that the mayor elections in the four city corporations in the country would be held at the end of March or early in April. It, however, did not fix any specific date for the polls.

The EC is legally obliged to hold elections in 139 municipalities out of the 182 by March 19 and mayor polls in Khulna City Corporation by April 3 this year.

"We have decided to hold elections in the country's 139 municipalities tentatively on February 23, 24 and 25," said Chief Election Commissioner Mohammad Abu Hena.

"We shall announce the elec-

tion schedules in the middle of this month. If necessary, we will slightly change the dates while announcing the schedules," he added.

The polls will not be held in 43 municipalities because of litigations pending with courts in 25 municipalities and border disputes in 18.

On the mayoral polls, the CEC told The Daily Star that the commission planned to hold the city corporation polls shortly after the municipal elections.

"But we have now some other factors to consider including the D-8 Summit scheduled for March 1 and 2 in Dhaka. For the summit, delegates will start arriving from February 26. Besides, the SSC examinations across the country will begin on March 4 and continue for two weeks," said the CEC. "So, we are now planning to hold elections in all the four city corporations at the end of March or early in April."

'Varsity teachers should have code of conduct'

By DU Correspondent

Some eminent citizens, teachers and professionals at an open discussion here yesterday expressed solidarity with the six-point demand of Dhaka University students protesting alleged sexual harassment of some female students by their teachers at the university.

They also stressed the need for a code of conduct for regulating the behaviour of teachers at the university. They also supported the view of DU students that a cell be set up for receiving complaints of sexual harassment at the university.

Students' Protecting Sexual Harassment (SPSH), a group of mostly non-political female students of DU, organised the discussion on "The Movement Against Sexual Harassment in Dhaka University and Our Six-Point Demand", held at the Teachers' Students Centre of the university.

The SPSH and Bangladesh Mahila Parishad presented separate suggestions regarding the proposed code of conduct

and setting up of a cell so that female students can lodge their complaint fearlessly.

Presided over by Prof. Sirajul Islam Chowdhury, the discussion was participated by, among others, Prof. Mozaffar Ahmed, Maleka Begum, Dr. Masuduzzaman, Advocate Muhammad Quamrul Islam, Aysa Khanom, Rehnama Ahmed, Mahmudur Rahman, Aib Chowdhury, Manoh Chowdhury, Moni and Bonni. Teachers, students, intellectuals and social workers attended the discussion.

Prof. Sirajul Islam Chowdhury said, the movement against alleged sexual harassment by teachers is justified and the participants should be appreciated for their role. He also supported setting up of a cell to receive complaints.

Prof. Mozaffar Ahmed said, "The Dhaka University Order, 1973 has given the teachers the power to rule themselves. But the teachers have not framed