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Budget on Thursday

The budget session of the Jatiya Sangsad begins tomorrow at 9:30 am, reports BSS.

This will be 18th session of the seventh parliament. Finance Minister Shah A M S Kibria will place the budget for fiscal 2000-2001 at 3 pm on Thursday.

The JS Business Advisory Committee will meet this morning. Speaker Humayun Rasheed Chowdhury will chair the meeting.

Sangsad sources said the budget session is expected to run for over 40 days. Several new bills, including the District Council Bill, are expected to be introduced in the budget session.

Meanwhile, 14 bills, which were introduced in the House in earlier sessions, are also expected to be disposed of in the session.

The House during the session will scrutinise the revised budget for the current year.

Opposition lays siege to CE office today

By Staff Correspondent

The 4-party opposition alliance will lay siege to the Election Commission offices across the country today to protest unilateral appointment of the Chief Election Commissioner. The siege programme is also aimed at warning the government and the EC not to hold any elections before the next parliamentary polls and to force CEC M A Syed to resign immediately.

Meanwhile, the government has imposed a 12-hour ban on gatherings, processions and demonstrations from 6 am today around the EC Secretariat.

The restricted areas stretch from Bangla Motor crossing to Mohakhali rail crossing, western parts of Bangla Motor Link Road to SAARC fountain on Sonargon Road, eastern point of Panthapath to Green Road connecting point to Firm Gate, Shyamoli Cinema Hall to Dhanmondi Road No 27. Agor.

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Four lawyers mugged in city

By Staff Correspondent

Muggers took away Tk 37,000 from four lawyers at Tikatuli in the city yesterday morning.

The gang waylaid the rich-shaws carrying the lawyers at Tikatuli at around 8-15 am and snatched away Tk 37,000 from them.

The muggers also stabbed one of the four lawyers as he tried to resist them.

The lawyer, identified as Mubt, was admitted to a city clinic with stab injuries.

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by Muzaffer Ahmad

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DSE, CSE price quotations

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June	Sun Rises	Sun Sets
4		6-44pm
5	5-11 am	

Prayer Timings

June 4

	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	4-15	4-45
Zohr	12-45	1-30
Asr	5-00	5-15
Maghrib	6-45	6-48
Esha	8-15	8-45

Source: Islamic Foundation

Absence of guidelines for high-rises threat to Dhaka's growth

REHAB roundtable in city told

By Staff Correspondent

Dhaka has to grow vertically and a policy regarding high-rise buildings must be formulated to ensure healthy growth of the metropolis, experts observed at a Roundtable in the city yesterday.

The Real Estate and Housing Association of Bangladesh (REHAB) organised the Roundtable on "Residential and Commercial High-rise buildings: How essential is it for the Megacity Dhaka?"

Speakers including architects, engineers, town planners, top government officials and real estate developers said that the policy must be framed immediately to face the pressure of an estimated 20 million people in the capital in 2020.

Although utility services are now grossly inadequate in the city, top officials from WASA,

DESA and PDB said there is no alternative to high-rise buildings in Dhaka. Projects have been undertaken to improve utility services and with proper coordination and planning, problems of water, electricity and other services could be solved greatly.

Prof Jamilur Reza Chowdhury of BUET said according to internationally accepted definition, any building higher than nine-storey is considered high-rise.

He also said the Dhaka

Metropolitan Development Plan (DMDP) must be revised and made more reader friendly. High-rise buildings should be planned along the projected Eastern Bypass which would not only help solve housing problem but also contribute to construction of the bypass.

State Minister for Environment and Forest Ashkur Rahman in his speech as chief guest said that high-rise buildings should only be built in a planned way considering all aspects.

Chairman of Rajuk M Azizul Haque said they have to restrict building height in the densely populated areas of the city. "In these densely populated areas, we are unable to provide water, electricity and other services.

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Five-year tax holiday for new units under 16 sectors likely

Income tax net may be expanded in new budget

Income tax net is likely to be expanded in the upcoming national budget for 2000-2001 fiscal year by making individuals pay their taxes at source, reports UNB.

However, the ceiling of tax-free income may be raised to Tk 1,00,000 from the existing limit of Tk 75,000, sources at National Board of Revenue (NBR) hinted.

There are a lot of scope to include individuals in the income tax net, a senior official told the news agency.

Fresh tax may be imposed on the buyers of car, houses and flats, sources said.

The budget will be placed in Parliament by Finance Minister Shah A M S Kibria on June 8.

Sources said the new budget is likely to propose extension of tax holiday for 5 years for new industries under 16 thrust sec-

tors to be set up by the year 2005.

The existing tax holiday facility provided in 1995 expires this month.

The sectors eligible for the tax holiday include computer software, data entry, agro-processing industries, education, frozen food and composite textiles.

The industries with a paid up capital of over Tk 10 lakh or 100 per cent foreign investment will be eligible for tax holiday, they said.

The industries of Dhaka and Chittagong will get seven years of tax holiday while those of Barisal, Sylhet and Rajshahi divisions and three hill districts will get eight years, sources said, adding that the tax holiday will be up to 80 per cent.

The facility of tax holiday will not be applicable for expansion of any existing industries, but 25 per cent of the ex-

penditure may be deducted from income as investment rebate, they added.

Officials said the coming budget will also propose steps to reduce import duties on industrial raw materials.

"Both the tax holiday and duty reduction on industrial raw materials are intended to speed up industrialisation in the country," said a senior official.

Sources said real estate companies will be brought under direct tax net while tax on motor vehicles may be raised.

The import duty on all sorts of synthetic and branded yarn may be withdrawn to help establish backward linkage industry in the country, officials said.

They said duty and Value Added Tax (VAT) on essential commodities are unlikely to be raised in the budget.

2 gunned down, bodies of 2 maids recovered

By Staff Correspondent

Two persons were gunned down and bodies of two women were recovered in the city yesterday.

The dead were identified as Sibly Sadeque Hossain, 28, son of Shamsier Ali of 52 North Circular Road and Asaduzzaman Khan, 35, owner of Metro Hotel at Fakirapool in the city.

Sadeque was shot at about 1 pm when Sujon group and Eskey group were locked in a clash in front of Compath near Hatirpool Bazar over supremacy in the area.

Police said Sadeque was an active member of Sujon group.

He was rushed to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital where doctor declared him dead.

The victim's brother filed a case with Dhanmondi police in this connection.

In the other incident, businessman Asaduzzaman Khan, and his friend Sabuj were shot by unidentified gunmen at Topkhana when they were boarding a car at about 8:30 pm.

Asaduzzaman is a resident of Khilgaon. Asaduzzaman's driver Fazlul Huq took them to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital where doctors declared him dead. Condition of Sabuj is stated to be critical, hospital sources said. The gunmen sprayed about 40 bullets into Asaduzzaman's body.

The body was sent to the DMCH morgue for autopsy. The reason behind the killing could not be known immediately.

Meanwhile, body of maid Rehana 15, daughter of one Ab-

dur Rahman of Sher-e-Bangla Road at Rayer Bazar, was recovered by police yesterday morning.

The body was found hanging from a ceiling at 55 Al-Madina Lane in the area at about 10 am yesterday. Police sent the body to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital for autopsy.

Meanwhile, Mollahmadpur police recovered the body of Feroza Akhter Feru, 40, from the rooftop of a house at Zakir Hossain road in the city yesterday.

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Today's match

Today is a rest day

Tomorrow

Sri Lanka vs Pakistan (2-30 pm)

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Kabir was confined for 6 months, says HR body

By Staff Correspondent

A 12-year-old boy was confined at the residence of an army officer at Banani in the city for about six months before he was arrested by Gulshan police on May 25, a human rights organisation said yesterday.

The boy named Kabir Hossain, a domestic help, was arrested on charges of raping and killing Kamrunnahar Ruma, 25, wife of Major Ashraf Haider, on December 6 last year, leaders of Bangladesh Mahabidhkar Bastabayan Sangstha told a press conference at the Jatiya Press Club.

The body of Ruma was found hanging from the ceiling of bed room at their flat at the army staff quarters at Banani.

Kabir gave a confessional statement to police that he raped Ruma, killed her and hanged the body with the ceiling fan. But he denied it when pro-

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Sutrapur most densely populated area in the world

By Staff Correspondent

With 3,48,000 inhabitants per square kilometre, Dhaka's Sutrapur is the most densely populated area in the world, BUET Professor Shahidul Ameen said at a Roundtable in the city yesterday.

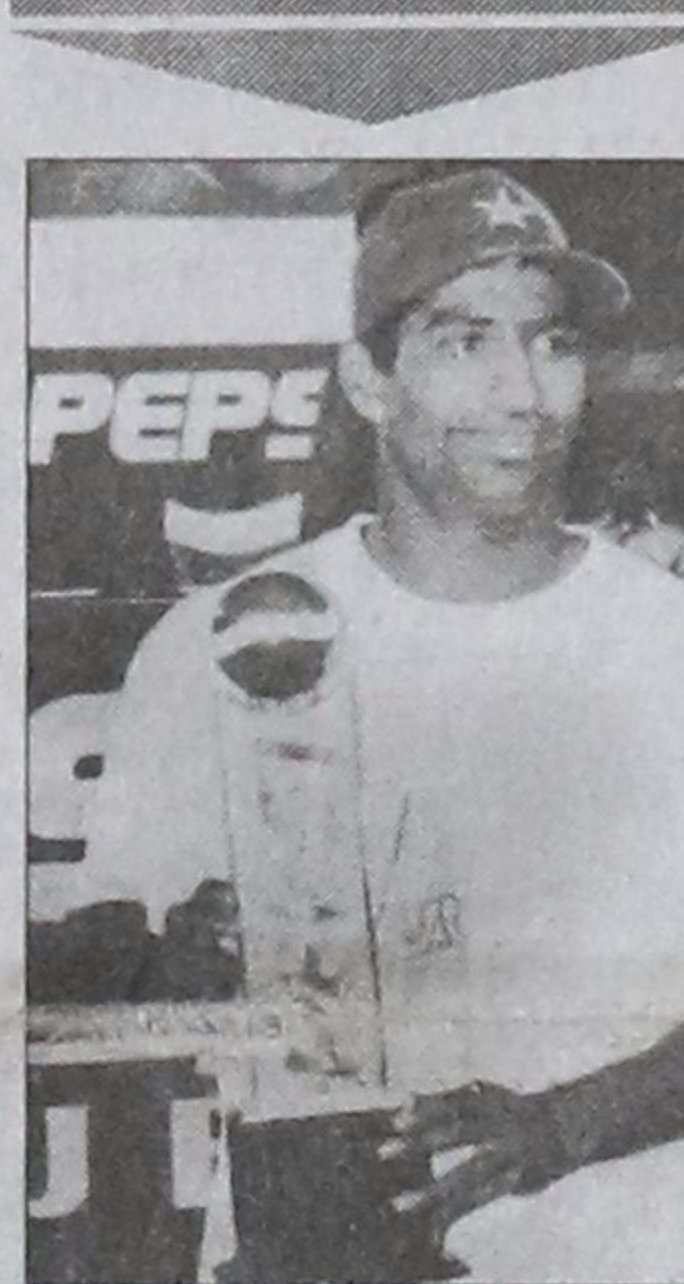
In the Kotwali area of the city, 2,63,000 people live in one square kilometre, making it

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A lofty expectation: Yousuf Youhana, closely follows the flightpath of the ball, with his heart in his mouth. The last ball sixer fetched him his coveted ton. — Star photo by A K M Mohsin

Man of the Match



Yousuf Youhana of Pakistan

Every Run Counts



every second counts

View from the Gully

Youhana's classic ton

By Tawfiq Aziz Khan

When a player like Azhar Mahmood or Abdur Razzaq comes in to bat at number nine, if that team must be very strong in that department, India, who beat a sad retreat from the Pepsi Asia Cup on Saturday, had mostly their inept bowling to blame. How could a team of India's repute be sent with a couple of rookies and a mediocre medium pacer? The freakish move might be a mat-

ter of anybody's guess, but it surely did make Saurav Ganguly the unhappiest of a soul. If the Indian selectors decided to experiment with beginners against teams like Pakistan and Sri Lanka in such a prestigious tournament, then one can very well question the sanity of the selectors. Any India-Pakistan cricket match, anywhere and anytime in the world, al-

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Beyond the Boundary

Of mice and men

By Shakil Kasem

Around the same time Mir Shahidullah and yours truly were assisting Musa at the Samarkand the previous night, to plan and plot the progress for his immediate future, one suspects Kapil Dev and Saurav Ganguly may well have been doing the same for India's cause in this competition. By late afternoon yesterday, it was however obviously and blatantly clear,

Musa had more chances of success in his chosen pursuit than did India. Having chosen to bat, Pakistan immediately had got down to brass tacks, namely punishing a disjointed opening attack to every part of the ground and beyond. It is amazing that India has even dared to contemplate playing a tourna-

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Ministry favours talks with Niko for joint exploration in 3 'abandoned' fields

By Sharier Khan

negotiate a PSC.

Niko representatives at the meeting maintained that if it has to sign a joint venture agreement with BAPEX and a PSC with Petrobranga, it will not be profitable for the company. They suggested reduction of the 40 per cent equity share for BAPEX, proposed by the company earlier.

Niko and BAPEX officials will meet again today to decide

the equity.

Niko Resources, which was found disqualified by the government in the Second Round Bidding in 1997, earlier submitted a joint venture proposal to BAPEX to develop the three 'abandoned' gas fields.

BAPEX had entered an agreement with Niko last year to conduct a 'joint study' of the fields. But there was practically no modality through which

BAPEX could initiate negotiations for joint venture.

After reviewing Niko's proposals, BAPEX felt that the company was actually seeking a comprehensive deal outlining both production sharing and gas purchase-sales agreement.

Under the Second Round Block Bidding, the government is following a policy of not signing any gas purchase-sales agreement (GPSA).

BAPEX is not empowered to hold talks for joint venture with any company. But Petrobranga, as a parent entity, can decide for it as regards joint venture in gas fields. As a result, the proposals were placed before the Petrobranga Board.

Petrobranga declined Niko's PSC proposal saying that it grossly clashed with the Model PSC and sent it back to BAPEX.

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