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Cabinet condemns attempt on life of Prime Minister

The Cabinet strongly condemned yesterday the heinous attempt on the life of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at Kotlipara recently, reports UNB.

A regular meeting of the Cabinet at the Prime Minister's Office with Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina in the chair expressed deep gratitude to Almighty Allah for foiling the heinous move and prayed for long life and good health of the prime minister.

The meeting approved the proposals to amend the Rangamati Parbatya Zilla Parishad Act, 1989; the Khagrachhari Parbatya Zilla Parishad Act, 1989; and the Bandarban Parbatya Zilla Parishad Act, 1989.

The Cabinet also approved a proposal to formulate the metropolitan, divisional city and district playground, open space, park and natural water-bodies preservation bill 2000.

Mass killing case

Huda ordered shooting, say two PWs

CHITTAGONG, July 24: Two prosecution witnesses in the Chittagong Mass Killing Case today told the court that police officer Mirza Rakibul Huda ordered over wireless the petrol inspector of police on January 24, 1988 to open fire on the procession, reports UNB.

Mohammad Ali and Iftekhar Ahmed, constables on duty at that time, further told the court that departmental action was taken against those police who failed to obey the order.

They deposed before the court when the third phase of hearing in the case began today.

Former police commissioner Rakibul Huda, enlarged on bail and six cops who are in custody were on the dock. Another accused J C Mondol, patrol inspector of police at that time, is absconding.

New check-in rule at ZIA

The Civil Aviation Authority of Bangladesh (CAAB) will allow only one accompanying person with each international passenger up to check-in counter in the concourse hall of Zia International Airport from August 1, 2000, a CAAB release said yesterday, reports BSS.

"The accompanying person of the international passenger should pay Taka 250 as entry fee up to check-in-counter (in the concourse hall)," added the release.

Meanwhile, the entry fee for the arrival lounge has been increased from Tk 20 to Tk 50, it further added.

Correction

It was mistakenly written in a report on "BB allows renaming of Grindlays" published yesterday that a declaration regarding the group chief executive will soon be done. The error is regretted.


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Killings by BSF Dhaka lodges protest with Delhi

Bangladesh lodged protest with the Indian government for the killing of Bangladesh nationals by the BSF personnel, reports UNB.

The Foreign Ministry sent a note of verbal about the matter to the Indian High Commission in Dhaka on Sunday.

On July 10 and 11, three Bangladesh nationals were killed by Indian Border Security Force (BSF).

On July 10, BSF men opened fire on four Bangladeshis while they were picking stone from the river near Sripur BOP 150 yards inside the zero-line, killing one M Sirajul Islam, son of Sukal Mian, of village Kendura in Jaintiapur upazila of Sylhet district.

In another incident on July 11, two brothers, Sogir Ahmed and Ekramul Haque, sons of Alzal Hossain of Khalisha Kot village of Fulbari upazila in Kurigram district, died on the spot when the BSF personnel of Natkbari camp fired on them while they were tilling their land inside Bangladesh territory.

Fiji: New PM likely today

From Syed Fahim Munaim

NADI (Fiji), July 24: Fiji's political situation seems to be getting more complex.

Over the weekend there were intense discussions between members of George Speight group and government officials over naming the new Prime Minister.

The rebel group was pushing for BAU chief Adi Samanumu Cakobau Talakuli while the other candidate is current caretaker Prime Minister Laisenia Qarase, according to a report published in the 131-year old newspaper of Fiji "The Fiji Times."

The report further added that President Ratu Josefa Iloilo may announce his preferred prime minister as early as tomorrow.

Meanwhile, attempts to contact Great Council of Chiefs Chairman Sitiveni Rabuka were futile, the report stated.

Ironically the Fiji nation marks the constitution day today — its third in 27 years of independence. Under happier circumstances it would have been a day of celebration but events of the past three months make a mockery of the day.

However, the day was observed as a public holiday. No trouble was reported in Nadi and the western part of the country seems to be absolutely normal. However, a 10pm-5am curfew is imposed at Suva, the capital city of Fiji.

Mauritius and the Maldives.

He further stated that countries like Fiji, Maldives and other South Pacific islands may go under water in case of one metre sea-level rise.

Dr Jenny in her keynote speech said that there are conflicts over water or "hydro politics" and debates on "Eco-violence" involving question of human security.

She added that Clean Development Management Mechanisms should be introduced in the developing countries as a mitigation measure to face the climate change problems.

Enayetullah Khan emphasized the role of journalists in sensitizing politicians and decision makers to pursue the Green Agenda.

Syed Fahim Munaim pointed out that the importance of media's role in making people aware of the grave consequences of the global climate change.

He further said that it should be the responsibility of both electronic and print media journalists to play their watchdog role on environment issues.

Global climate change

Developing states should introduce Clean Dev Management Mechanism

From Syed Fahim Munaim

NADI, Fiji, July 24: In this picturesque tourist resort town, about 210 km off capital Suva, the inaugural session of the four-day Joint Congress of Asia-Pacific Forum of Environmental Journalists (AFEFJ) and Commonwealth Environmental Journalists Association (CEJA) began today with representatives of 21 countries which included 60 environmental journalists.

CEJA Chairman and AFEJ Secretary-general Quamrul Islam Chowdhury inaugurated the congress while Dr Jenny Bryant-Tokala, Senior Advisor and Head of GES Unit, UNDP (Suva), AFEJ Chairman Dhaman Wickremaratne, PIMA President William Parkinson and Secretary-general Nina Ratulele, WRI Director Adlai Anor, Holiday Editor-in-Chief Enayetullah Khan, The Daily Star Managing Editor Syed Fahim Munaim and UNEP's Tim Higham spoke.

Quamrul pointed out that the problem of climate change is now threatening the whole world especially coastal and island countries like Bangladesh, Fiji, Sri Lanka,

VHP threatens Vajpayee govt

Build Ram temple or face confrontation

AGRA, July 23: Vishwa Hindu Parishad today said a confrontation with the centre over delay in construction of Ram Temple at Ayodhya was possible and asked the government to take immediate steps to resolve the issue, reports PTL.

The patience of VHP over delay in construction of Ram Temple had exhausted because of which a confrontation could result with the government sometime next year, VHP international president Vishu Hari Dalmyia told reporters here.

The government should take immediate steps for resolving the issue either through talks or with the help of law courts, he said, adding it was for the government to create an atmosphere to avoid confrontation.

Dalmyia said the two-day meeting of VHP's governing body which ended here last night passed three resolutions calling for speeding up of construction of Ram Temple, action against church-sponsored terrorism in the north-east, and effective steps for cow protection.

VHP also warned the centre of confrontation if it went ahead with construction of Tehri Dam.

Dalmyia said the construction of Tehri Dam would pollute the holiness of Ganga water.

On Shiv Sena Supremo Bal Thackeray's arrest, Dalmyia said VHP would like the Vajpayee government to prevent his arrest and to protect Hindu interests.

Bank accounts of Sharif, 15 others seized

ISLAMABAD, July 24: Pakistan's military regime has directed all the commercial banks in the country to seize accounts of ousted Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif and his family members besides some others, a local news agency has reported, says PTL.

A circular has been served to all the commercial banks to seize the bank accounts, including foreign currency, of about 15 influential persons of the previous governments, the NNI news agency reported yesterday.

The names mentioned in the circular include Nawaz Sharif, his brother and deposed chief minister of Punjab Shahbaz Sharif and their family members and former Accountability Bureau Chief Saifur Rahman.

The State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) has sent the circular to all the branches of nationalised and private sector banks.

The commercial banks have been asked to report back about the details of these account holders to the SBP as well as the National Accountability Bureau (NAB).

Bangabandhu Murder Case

Defence counsel claims Shahriar's innocence

The counsel for convicted former lieutenant colonel Sultan Shahriar Rashid Khan yesterday claimed his client's innocence under the prosecution charges, saying the evidences of the Bangabandhu Murder Case did not support his involvement in the killing process, reports BSS.

There is no evidence which proved that Shahriar was involved in the conspiracy under Article 34 of the Bangladesh Penal Code, Advocate Abdur Rezzak Khan said as the appeal hearing of the case entered its 17th days in the High Court.

Khan, who continued his appeal argument for the fourth day yesterday, said the charge of "common intention" of killing under the Article 34 was not applicable to Shahriar as he was not found present at the place of occurrence which was required to sentence on under the law.

Article 34 of the Bangladesh Penal Code (BPC) refers to conspiracy to kill someone with common intention. The 15 convicts of the case were sentenced under the BPC's Articles 34 and 302, which refer to murder.

Earlier, the court comprising Justice Mohammad Rulul Amin and Justice ABM Khairul Haque rejected outright a petition by the lawyer of another convict former major Bazul

Huda, refusing to entertain the prayer challenging the procedure of his trial.

Advocate Mahbubur Rahman MP, the lawyer of Huda, said his client was not an accused during the trial process as projected by the prosecution.

Rezzak Khan said only two of the 19 prosecution witnesses from the army named his client during their testimony while these two persons too saw Shahriar only twice — first on August 15, 1975 and later on the day of their testimonies in the trial court.

Yet, there were contradictions in their testimonies and the statement of the IO

BAI to become university

The government has decided to upgrade Bangladesh Agriculture Institute (BAI) to a university in a bid to expand agri-education in the country, reports UNB.

The decision was taken at a meeting of 'Sher-e-Bangla Agriculture University Implementation Committee' at the institute in the capital on Saturday.

Set up in 1938 by Sher-e-Bangla A K Fazlul Huque, the institute meets all the requirements to become a university.

(Investigation Officer) of the case, he said.

Khan argued that even Shahriar himself did not admit his involvement in the murder plot in his confessional statement, even though the statement too was not 'valid' in the eyes of law.

He said the magistrate, who recorded Shahriar's confessional statement, did not say in his deposition as a witness in the trial court or certified in the prescribed form that the confession was "voluntary" as required by law.

Khan said none of the witnesses, who were present at the said plotters' briefing at Balurghat (where Shahriar too was present) ahead of the August 15 massacre, had claimed that there was any clear indication in the briefing that Bangabandhu would be killed along with his family members.

"Rather the briefing was told that the government must be toppled, but no charges were brought in this case for toppling the government," he said.

Rezzak Khan rejected the testimony of witness Prof Khorshed Alam who alleged that Shahriar was involved in the conspiracy of the assassination. He claimed that Prof Alam was an "interested witness" because

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Hussain to face trial for painting 'nude' goddesses

NEW DELHI, July 24: Noted painter M F Hussain, who shot into controversy by painting 'nude' portraits of some Hindu goddesses four years ago, will face trial in a Delhi court for allegedly disturbing communal harmony, reports PTL.

All the nine cases filed against him in various parts of the country, which were earlier transferred to the court of chief metropolitan magistrate (CMM), will now be heard by Additional chief metropolitan magistrate (ACMM), Patiala House.

Pursuant to a Delhi High Court order, the CMM has sent the files to the ACMM concerned who would hear the matter on July 28.

Earlier, the Supreme Court had on a petition by Hussain ordered transfer of all the cases to the CMM's court here on February 11.

Nine cases were filed against Hussain at Dhanbad, Swain, Danapur and Ranchi in Bihar, Bhopal, Raipur and Jabalpur in Madhya Pradesh, Chiplun and Mumbai in Maharashtra after his paintings depicting Hindu Goddesses Durga, Saraswati and Mahabharata Character Draupadi in nude were published in 1996.

The complainants alleged Hussain's paintings hurt Hindu sentiments, promoted enmity between different religious groups and were against the dignity of women.

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DCC launches clean city programme

By Staff Correspondent

The Dhaka City Corporation (DCC) launched a 'crash programme' yesterday to clean the city's lanes and by-lanes.

The drive began soon after Mayor Mohammad Hanif's meeting with high officials of DCC against the backdrop of outbreak of dengue fever in the city.

"We have sent instructions to relevant officials for immediate action. The Mayor has said the DCC is ready to allocate extra money for this emergency programme," Dr M Ashraf Uddin, DCC's Chief Health Officer told The Daily Star.

Dr Ashraf added, "The meeting also decided to set up special mobile courts in Gulshan, Banani and Uttara to punish those found throwing garbage on streets or at places other than garbage bins."

The Mayor told The Daily Star on Sunday that he would contain mosquito growth in the city in two weeks.



Sex workers evicted from Tanbazar and Nimali brothels staging a demonstration in the city yesterday demanding rehabilitation.

— Star photo

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