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Govt to allow over 10MW power plant in pvt sector

To encourage private sector investment in small electricity-generation schemes, the government amended the existing policy allowing installation of over 10mw power plants under private venture, reports UNB.

The Cabinet yesterday approved two amendment proposals for the power laws striking harmony in tariffs of PDB, REB and of private power companies.

In its weekly meeting, with Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina in the chair, the Cabinet approved an amendment to the policy guideline for small power plant (SPP) in private sector and another to the Rural Electrification Board Ordinance 1977.

The Cabinet at the PM's office also approved Hajj Policy 2001.

Speaker urged to declare JS seat of Akhter vacant

By Staff Correspondent

BNP has requested Speaker Humayun Rasheed Chowdhury to declare the Kishoreganj-2 parliamentary seat of expelled MP Maj. (Retd) Akhteruzzaman vacant.

Chief Whip of the Opposition Khandakar Delwar Hossain made the request in a letter to the Speaker on Sunday.

Parliament sources said the Speaker will take necessary steps in this regard after returning from the United Kingdom where he is now attending the conference of Commonwealth Parliament Association (CPA). His is expected to return early next month. The Speaker is supposed to refer the issue to the Election Commission.

Khandakar Delwar in his letter said that Akhteruzzaman was elected to parliament on BNP ticket, but he joined the parliament session defying the party decision.

Quoting the BNP constitution, he said Akhter's action is tantamount to his resignation from the party. Besides, he added, Akhter has meantime been expelled from BNP.

Therefore, the chief whip argued, parliament membership of Akhter has already been cancelled as per provisions in article 74(1) of the Constitution and the BNP constitution as well.

BNP expelled Akhteruzzaman from the party on September 15 after he attended the last session of parliament defying the party's decision to continue the boycott that began 13 months ago.

Major Akhter told The Daily Star last night that he did not know of the letter sent to the Speaker.

"I have been expelled from the party. Now, it is entirely an affair of BNP."

He, however, said issuance of such letter cannot strip of someone's membership of parliament.

Coalition govt, if elected

Opposition to contest election jointly, announces Khaleda

By Staff Correspondent

MYMENSINGH, Sept 25: BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia today called upon the people to vote for four-party alliance candidates in the next national election for formation of a 'nationalist government' to ensure peace, stability and development.

"We are determined to maintain the unity of the alliance at any cost. We will contest the next election and form the future government jointly," she said.

The Leader of the Opposition in Parliament was addressing a mammoth public meeting at the

local circuit house ground, organised by the district unit of All Party Action Council.

Jatiya Party Chairman HM Ershad, Jamaat-e-Islami Amier

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BNP Chairperson and Leader of the Opposition in Parliament Khaleda Zia addressing a huge public meeting at the circuit house ground in Mymensingh town yesterday.

BB now feels a chunk of loans should be written off

By Inam Ahmed

As classified loans increased to an unsustainable level, the Bangladesh Bank (BB) now feels that a chunk of the loans, which has little or no chance of being recovered, should be written off after making 'full provision' against those in the balance sheets of banks.

The loans which were given till 1980 and which do not have any collateral against those should be written off to relieve the banks of bad burden while making their balance sheets more realistic, sources concerned said.

The BB has suggested that the existing laws should be amended to allow such loan write-off. Janata Bank has already undertaken an exercise to reduce its 'false earnings' from 'never to be realised' loans.

The BB served notices on 139 bank directors for insider lending between 1995 and June 2000. Some 58 of them have repaid their defaulted loans, 19 are still holding their posts by

having stay orders from courts while posts of 47 directors have been vacated.

Meantime, the BB has also called upon the government to play a special role to realise the defaulted loans of different government and autonomous bodies to reduce the risk of depositors.

The BB has also proposed that the NCBs should give incentives to efficient officials and employees, and their salaries should also be fixed on market terms.

But at the same time, inefficient employees should be penalised by setting a new criterion for promotion based on efficiency and productivity. Inefficient manpower should be allowed to retire.

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Diplomat dies abroad due to negligence?

By Staff Correspondent

The First Secretary of Bangladesh mission in Colombo died due to the mission chief's negligence in treatment, the victim's family members alleged at a press conference in the city yesterday.

Pirote Hayat, First Secretary of Bangladesh High Commission in Colombo died of a brain disease in January 10 at a hospital in Singapore.

Pirote's family allege that he died due to negligence of the High Commissioner in taking appropriate steps for proper treatment at the right time.

Instead of sending Pirote to

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Freeman makes history, Johnson adds a chapter

SYDNEY, Sept 25: The Sydney Olympics dished up a night to remember today with emotions running high and the world's top athletes duelling down the home straight, but the drug scandals which have bedevilled the Games refused to go away, reports AFP.

Cathy Freeman and Michael Johnson both carved out places in Olympic history. Freeman surging to an emotional victory in the women's 400m to become the first a Aboriginal athlete to win an individual Olympic title.

America's Johnson added another chapter to his Olympic legend, becoming the first man to successfully defend his 400m title. He swept home in 43.84 sec, and although the chilly breeze put paid to his ambition of breaking through the 43-second barrier, distance runners flourished in the cool evening.

Halle Gebrselassie of Ethiopia won one of the greatest 10,000m races in Olympic history, overhauling Kenyan Paul Tergat in the final 20 strides, with bronze going to Ethiopian Assefa Mezgebu.

The women's 5000m was another thriller as Romania's Gabriela Szabo fended off a challenge from Ireland's Sonia O'Sullivan for the victory.

Maria Mutola captured Mozambique's first ever Olympic gold when she surged to victory in the 800m, pushing to the front in the final 20 metres to edge Austrian Stephanie Graf and Briton Kelly Holmes, who had led entering the home straight.

The shining performances almost eclipsed the latest drug scandal brewing with C.J. Hunter, husband of US sprint star Marion Jones, at its center.

The International Amateur Athletic Federation confirmed that Hunter, the shot put world champion, tested positive for a banned drug in Oslo on July 28.

The revelation had US athletics officials scrambling to deny a wide-ranging cover-up.

But Australian athletics fans only had eyes and ears for Freeman.

"I couldn't wait to cross the line to end four years of expectation," Freeman said after she clocked 49.11 sec to beat back silver medalist Lorraine Graham of Jamaica and bronze medalist Katharine Merry of Britain. "I am glad it is over."

After crossing the finish line she dropped to her knees and let the sound of the cheering wash over her, then a barefoot Freeman took her victory lap wrapped in both the Australian and Aboriginal flags.

World record-holder Stacy Dragila of the United States won the first Olympic women's

pole vault gold ever awarded, ahead of Australian Tatiana Grigorieva, with Iceland's Vala Flosadottir taking bronze.

But there was nothing new in Russian gymnast Alexei Nemov's gold in the horizontal bar.

Nemov, the all-around champion, captured his fifth and sixth medals of the Games - he added a bronze in the parallel bars on Monday - to give him the most of any Olympic

competitor for the second Games in a row.

Gervasio Deferr, 19, earned Spain's first ever gymnastics medal, winning the vault to break up the Russian-Chinese stranglehold on gymnastics gold.

In other apparatus finals, Elena Zamolodtchikova edged Russian teammate Svetlana Khorkina for the floor exercise

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Cathy Freeman of Australia waves to the crowd, holding the Australian and aboriginal flags, after winning the Olympic gold in the 400m final yesterday at the Sydney Olympic Games.

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	Sun Rises	Sun Sets
Sept 26		5:51 pm
Sept 27	5:49 am	

Prayer Timings		
September 26		
Fajr	4:45	5:15
Zohr	12:45	1:15
Asr	4:30	4:45
Maghrib	5:56	6:01
Esha	7:45	8:15

Source: Islamic Foundation

Transparency International report Govt loses Tk 11535 cr in 6 months due to corruption

By Staff Correspondent

The law enforcing agency is the most corrupt sector in Bangladesh, according to the News Scan Database Report of Transparency International (TI).

Two hundred and eleven incidents of corruption caused Tk 11,534.98 crore loss to the government during the first six months of 2000, TIB said.

The report is based on 1345 incidents of corruption reported in nine national dailies of the country from January to June this year.

Renowned economist Prof Muzaffar Ahmed, who is a member of the TIB trustee board presented the report at a

press conference at Jatiya Press Club yesterday. TIB executive director Manzoor Hasan, among others, was also present.

Corruption in the country has increased in the last three years, the report said.

A total of 38 sectors, divisions, departments and directorates were covered by the report. Local government, education and health sectors were identified as the second, third and fourth most corrupt ones.

Political parties ranked 14th, judiciary 27th and defence sector 32nd as regards corruption.

Corruption in education sector caused maximum financial

loss to the government - Tk 2305.48 crore - and that in local government sector Tk 2111.23 crore. Public sector banks were at the top in terms of corruption in financial sector, TIB said.

The city's Ramna and Uttara police stations are the most and second most corrupt among the 496 police stations in the country. Corruption prevailed in 480 police stations, the report said. It did not say anything about the rest 16.

It mentioned 278 incidents of corruption by law enforcing agencies with police involved for 254 of those and BDR and VDP

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Forget 'traumatic' events of '71, build friendly ties Pak foreign minister urges Bangladesh

ISLAMABAD, Sept 25: Pakistani Foreign Minister Abdul Sattar today urged the Bangladesh leadership to forget the 'traumatic' events during its 1971 independence war and build friendly bilateral ties, reports AFP.

"We have sent a communication to Bangladesh expressing our view that the vents of 1971 were traumatic enough even without exaggeration and one-sided interpretations," Sattar told newsmen.

He recalled a statement in 1974 by late Bangladesh independence hero Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, father of the current Bangladesh prime minister, calling on his people to 'forget the past and take a fresh start.' "We are surprised that the daughter appears to be ignoring

the advice expressed by her father 26 years ago," Sattar said.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has demanded that Pakistanis involved in war crimes in the 1971 independence war be brought to trial.

"Pakistan must seek forgiveness for their atrocities and this is not only our demand, but the world conscience," she said on September 14.

Bangladesh, former East Pakistan, gained independence after a nine-month bloody war during which Dhaka says three million people were killed and some 200,000 women dishonoured.

Hasina's comments came a week after ties between the two countries were apparently strained when Pakistani ruler

General Pervez Musharraf postponed a meeting with Bangladesh's leader at the UN.

Sattar said the meeting had to be postponed because "we were saddened" by some of the remarks made by Sheikh Hasina in her speech, during which she criticised military regimes.

The Chief Executive (Musharraf) looks forward to another opportunity when the atmosphere may be conducive for positive and forward looking discussion," the foreign minister said, adding: "We have no resentment of any kind."

Polls in Chandpur municipality held peacefully

From Our Correspondent
CHANDPUR, Sept 25: Election in Chandpur Municipality was held today peacefully.

Polling began at 8 am and continued till 4 pm amid tight security and without any break.

Today was a public holiday in the municipal area.

Counting of votes in different

BNP leader Shafiqur Rahman was unofficially elected chairman of Chandpur Pourasava yesterday. He bagged a total of 14,584 votes while his nearest rival Yusuf Gazi, the incumbent chairman and a Jubo League leader who was expelled by Awami League, got 9,737. Awami League backed candidate Abu Nayeem Dulal Patwary trailed far behind polling 3,228, reports UNB.

polling centres was continuing till filling of this report at 6 pm.

According to District Election Commission office sources, about 70 per cent voters cast their votes in the election.

The total number of voters in

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GrameenPhone men abducted, beaten up for toll in Kushtia

From Our Staff Correspondent

Kushtia, Sept 25: A gang of extortionists in Barabazar area of Kushtia town has refused to allow the GrameenPhone (GP) to construct its transmission tower unless its builder (contractor) pays a toll of Tk 60,000, sources said.

The gang known as Shahidul and Mohidul group asked the builder to keep construction work suspended till payment of the toll.

When the builder refused to pay, the gang members numbering about 30 abducted several of his employees from the site, beat them severely and

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Flood situation in eight dists worsens further

By Staff Correspondent

Flood situation in eight districts worsened further yesterday.

At least one lakh people have been marooned in Jharkhata, Meherpur, Chuadanga, Jhenaidah, Rajshahi, Sirajganj, Netrakona and Chapainawabganj, according to our correspondents.

Army troops yesterday began evacuating the marooned villagers from flood-hit areas where four more people died.

The overall flood situation deteriorated in the frontier district with fresh inundation of 20 villages in three upazilas overnight with water rolling down the common rivers from across the border.

With the latest flood-related

deaths reported yesterday the death toll rose to eight since Saturday.

The latest victims were identified as Bill Mollani, 75, and Rahela, 65, of Thakurpur village and Hafizur Rahman, 38, of Pratappur village in Damurhuda upazila and Mohabbat Ali, 75, of Hatikata village in Sadar upazila.

The most affected villages are Santoshpur, Rangbaripota, Singnagar and Utholi of Jibannagar, Uzipur, Loknathpur, Akandabaria, Kurhulgachhi, Carpasdanga, Chandpur, Dharsana Hothatpara, Mukterpur, Patanchura and Chandpur in Damurhuda and Zhoragachha, Bhairampur, Dusta, Hijongarhi, Khudakhali and

Chandipur in sadar upazila. Chuadanga-Khulna and Chuadanga-Meherpur road links snapped yesterday as the floodwater inundated some points.

Meanwhile, about 300 flood-hit families from Maldah, India have crossed over to Meherpur and took shelter in border villages.

They came from Patharghata, Maltha, Ridoypur and Paraniapur villages of Maldah.

In Chuadanga flood has inundated fresh areas in Jibannagar upazila and Darshana potraslabha Municipal areas in Darshana is under four to five feet water.

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malaysia AIRLINES

REPLY TO PUBLIC NOTICE

With reference to the Public Notice published in the daily newspapers by Vantage Aviation Services Ltd. (Vantage), Malaysia Airlines Systems Berhad (MAS) wishes to advise the public that the order of Status Quo passed by the Honourable Courts on MAS does not prohibit MAS from operating its own office in Bangladesh. We have all regards and respect for the Court's order. There is no necessity for any validation of MAS Passenger Tickets and Airway Bill by Vantage.

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