



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 law, 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 plants (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. (Reid) 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 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 7(1) of the Constitution and the BNP's 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.

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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

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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 'na-

tionalist government to ensure peace, stability and development.'

We are determined to maintain the unity of the alliance at any cost. We will con-

test the next election and form the future government unit-

edly,' she said.

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

local circuit house ground, or-

ganised by the district unit of All Party Action Council.

Jatiya Party Chairman HJM Ershad, Jamaat-e-Islami Ameen

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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.

Freeman makes history, Johnson adds a chapter

SYDNEY, Sept 25: The Sydney Olympics dashed 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 earned out places in Olympic history. Freeman surging to an emotional victory in the women's 400m to become the first 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 two 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 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 Katherine 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 Tatjana Grigorjeva, with Iceland's Vala Flosadottir taking bronze.

But there was nothing new in Russian gymnast Alexei 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 De Ferr, 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 Zaitoldchikova edged Russian teammate Svetlana Khorikova 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.

- AFP photo

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'

through such write-off, the sources pointed out.

According to BB figures, 39.70 per cent of outstanding loans of all banks are now classified. Giving large loans without properly evaluating projects, insider lending and weak loan management by banks resulted in the piling up of classified loans. The situation is even worse in the nationalised commercial banks (NCBs) and specialised banks with 44.62 per cent and 63.14 per cent of their outstanding loans becoming classified.

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 governments 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.

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.

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

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

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the hospital in Colombo, the BB called upon the government to play a special role to realise the defaulted loans of different governments and autonomous bodies to reduce the risk of depositors.

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.

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

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

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