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'Vested Property Act will be annulled after proper scrutiny'

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday said the Vested Property Act would be annulled after proper scrutiny and called upon all to remain alert so that the vested quarters could not create confusion by spreading falsehood, reports BSS.

Addressing a big congregation of the members of the Hindu community on the occasion of Durga Puja at Dhakeshwari temple premises, the Prime Minister said the cabinet has already decided to annul the Vested Property Act.

It involves a lot of process, she told the Hindu leaders and urged them not to be misled by the propaganda of any vested quarters.

Extending her greetings to the members of the Hindu community on the occasion of their greatest religious festival, the Prime Minister said Bangladesh is a land of communal harmony where people of all religions live together.

The prime minister said there is no room for communalism in Bangladesh.

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BNP leader abduction Laxmipur poura chairman denies involvement

LAXMIPUR, Oct 7: MA Taher, district Awami League secretary and chairman of pourasava, today denied his involvement in the abduction of BNP leader Nurul Islam and refuted reports published in a section of the newspapers against him, reports UNB.

Addressing a press conference at the pourasava office this afternoon Taher said the allegations and the press reports were "baseless and fabricated."

He said he was in Dhaka on September 18 when advocate Nurul Islam was abducted.

Taher told a questioner that the main complainant in the case, wife of advocate Islam, did not file any case against him or his sons.

"I heard that Deputy Leader of the Opposition in Parliament Dr Badruddoza Chowdhury along with some BNP leaders submitted an application to the DC/SP on September 28 accusing us," he said.

Asked about the assault of a staff reporter of the Prothom Alo, Taher said the reporter had a quarrel with the owner of the fax phone shop and at one stage he was beaten up by the owner. He was in no way involved in the incident.

Meanwhile, Taher on Friday filed a general diary with the police against the district BNP leaders including Khairul Anam MP, Barrister Moudud Ahmed, Nurul Amin Bhuiyan, advocate Abdur Rab Chowdhury and advocate Shamsul Alam. In his petition he said the BNP leaders might kidnap him and members of his family or kill them anytime.

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	Sun Rises	Sun Sets
Oct 8		5.39 pm
Oct 9	5:53 am	

Prayer Timings		
October 8		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	4:45	5:15
Zohr	12:45	1:15
Asr	4:15	4:30
Maghrib	5:50	6:55
Esha	7:45	8:15

Source: Islamic Foundation

The Daily Star honours 'the nation builders of tomorrow'

By Staff Correspondent

In a unique ceremony entitled "Honouring the Nation Builders of Tomorrow" and amidst loud cheers of hundreds of students and their emotion-charged parents, The Daily Star yesterday honoured 144 students of the country for their outstanding results in the O-level and A-level examinations of the June 99 to June 2000 sessions.

Education Minister ASHK Sadique attended the function as the Chief Guest while Prof Abdul Bayes, Vice Chancellor of Jahangirnagar University, was the Special Guest. Held at the Osmany Auditorium in the city, the function was sponsored by Apteck Computer Education and attended by nearly one thousand teachers, parents and students from about twenty English medium schools in Dhaka and Chittagong.

The students achieved outstanding results in the O-level and A-level examinations held under the Cambridge University and the University of London. The Daily Star gave out 'Certificate of Excellence' to all students who received more than six 'A's' in the O-level examinations and three 'A's' in the A-level examinations. Special prizes were given to students receiving highest marks in each subject. Grand prizes were also given to those getting 10 and 11 'A's' in the O-level examinations.

This was the second such endeavour in which brilliant students in O-level and A-level examinations were honoured by a national daily. The function was presided over by The Daily Star Editor

Mahfuz Anam.

The Education Minister called upon the achievers to come forward to serve the country by acquiring knowledge comparable to that anywhere else in the world.

"We need to develop our education system so that people with talent and commitment would serve the country with their merit and brilliance," the Minister said.

He stressed the need for training of teachers and noted that it is the teachers who play the most important role in producing the best students in schools. He called upon the parents to be more attentive to the needs of their children to enable the latter to develop their full potential.

Terming the achievers 'the leaders of tomorrow' he said the standard of education should be raised with the contribution of the brilliant students. "Otherwise the nation would not be benefited from their talent."

He pointed out that the government recently approved the country's education policy for the benefit of the future generation.

Prof Bayes in his brief speech said technology always used to be pro-rich. But the recent development showed that it could also be pro-poor. In this regard, he cited the example of GrameenPhone that brought cellular phones to the poor women in Bangladesh.

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The Daily Star awarded the "Nation Builders of Tomorrow" for their outstanding results in the GCE O & A Level examinations in the June 1999-June 2000 period at a unique function at the Osmany Auditorium yesterday. Picture shows students who have obtained 8 A's and above in their O level and 3 A's and above in their A level examinations with Education Minister ASHK Sadek (5th from L) and Vice Chancellor of Jahangirnagar University Prof Abdul Bayes (5th from R). -Star photo

Saifur doubts holding of peaceful polls

By Staff Correspondent

BNP leader M Saifur Rahman MP has expressed doubt about holding of the next general election peacefully because of deteriorating of law and order.

"If an elected government can not ensure a minimum law and order in four years how a caretaker government will be able to restore it in 90 days and hold election? There is total insecurity. People are not safe even on court premises," he said.

"I do not feel that a caretaker government will be able to address so many problems," the former finance minister said.

He was speaking on "State of Politics in Bangladesh" during a 'Meet the Reporters' programme at the office of Dhaka Reporters' Unit (DRU) here yesterday. DRU President M Anwarul Haq chaired the meeting while its General Secretary Monowarul Islam delivered the address of welcome.

The BNP Standing Committee member said the country is now under the grip of terrorists and toll collectors. The parliament has been made ineffective. Corruption has become widespread due to lack of good governance and politicisation of the administration.

"There is no sign of good governance and rule of law because the Awami League government is not behaving in a civilised manner. You will not find such a situation in any of our neighbouring countries."

He referred to the kidnapping of BNP leader Nurul Islam at Laxmipur. The statements of the



Saifur Rahman

'Only press is upholding democracy'

By Staff Correspondent

BNP leader M Saifur Rahman MP has praised the print media and journalists, saying only newspapers are now reflecting the hopes and frustrations of the people.

"Today, courage of reporters is much more than that of politicians. Politicians and parties have failed to highlight the prevailing situation in the country."

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DC and the SP in this regard prove that the district administration has collapsed and terrorists are controlling everything, he added. The situation in Feni, Barisal and Laxmipur depicts the real picture of the country now."

Ruling party activists attacked a Grameen Phone centre at Barisal and snapped its optical fiber line at Feni, he mentioned. "No foreign or local investor will invest in such a law and order situation. It will not be possible for Kibria, me or anybody to do anything for development if the current situation prevails," he added.

No institution can work properly due to lack of good governance. "Godfathers string-pull everything," he said. Saifur however said there is still time for the government to check terrorism and toll extortion and improve the law and order situation so that the next election can be held peacefully.

Replying to a question he said BNP has been forced to abstain from attending parliament sessions. He however said personally, he is against boycott of parliament.

"BNP is more democratic than any other political party. We can give our opinion because it is not a communist party or BKSAL," Saifur said.

He admitted that the opposition failed to build an effective movement against the AL government's "misdeeds and corruption."

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Confusion over gas reserve

Much of exploration activities by IOCs produced nothing, govt experts say

By Sharier Khan

Contrary to the standpoint of some oil companies and foreign experts that Bangladesh is floating on gas, government experts are saying that much of the exploration activities of the oil companies in the country have so far yielded negative results.

"Except in Sangu and Bibiana, the oil companies have found no new gasfield in Bangladesh in the last five years. The other operating gasfield Jalalabad was actually discovered by Petrobangla long ago and it can not be considered as a new discovery," said a high official.

Facts show that Unocal failed to find anything in Kafra, Ratna and Jalalabad-5. Shell-Cairn failed to strike anything in Sonadia or Sandwip. Okland failed in Reju, the official said. "None of these is unusual. But if we were floating on gas, where is it then?"

He said US oil company Unocal has formally abandoned blocks

13 and 14, keeping only the discovered gasfields. This proves it has no hope of finding any more gas resources in the two blocks.

Another official said, in recent times, there were confusing press reports about gas reserve in the country. "We have seen a number of figures (on gas reserve) in newspapers. Shell oil said we have 38 trillion cubic feet (tcf) of gas. Unocal thinks it is over 50 tcf. Newspapers even quoted the

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Many areas in Satkhira town under knee-deep water

From Our Correspondent

Flood water entered Satkhira town and fresh areas in Sadar, Debhata, Tala and Assasuni upazilas of the district today.

Several areas of the town have gone under knee-deep water and residents have taken shelter on rooftops and upper floors of buildings.

Some 30 more villages in four upazilas have been inundated and road link between the district headquarters and the affected areas snapped.

Of the affected villages, 14 are

under Sadar upazila, seven under Debhata upazila, six under Assasuni upazila and the rest are under Tala upazila.

Hundreds of volunteers are struggling to repair breaches developed in an embankment along the eastern part of the town.

Khulna-Jessore road link may be snapped tomorrow as flood water is rolling down the highway at Gopinathpur point.

The flood shelters in the district are crammed with people as

thousands more are leaving their inundated houses with their belongings for shelter.

The affected people in several camps are facing acute scarcity of pure drinking water and food.

Finding no other alternative they are drinking flood water and using it for cooking food. As a result, intestinal diseases have broken out.

The Flood Forecasting and Warning Centre official said the flood situation in Satkhira dis

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Aussies sunk by inspired India

NAIROBI, Oct 7 (Internet report): India knocked off the 1999 World Cup champions off their perch with a memorable 20-run victory over Australia in their ICC Knockout quarter-final today.

Set a target of 266 to win, the tournament favourites faltered

after looking all set to seal the match when Michael Bevan and Ricky Ponting were scoring freely. But the game turned when Robin Singh pulled off a sensational one-handed diving catch to dismiss Ponting when the Australians were 159 for three.

India earlier made 265 for nine thanks to an accomplished debut batting performance from teenage all-rounder Yuvraj Singh.

The 18-year-old left hander scored 84, displaying a superb array of fluent strokes on both sides of the wicket, showing experience and maturity of a player beyond his tender years.

Yuvraj was given a lifeline when the normally infallible Mark Waugh completely missed a straightforward slip catch off Glenn McGrath when he was on 41.

Robin also batted intelligently, finding the gaps to give his dominant partner the majority of the strike.

Australia put the Indians into bat and the openers immediately outlined their attacking intentions as Sachin Tendulkar brought the crowd to their feet with an explosive start, hitting

three sixes off McGrath's opening spell.

They put on a stand of 66 before Tendulkar was caught by Damien Martyn for 38 after slashing wildly outside off-stump to a Brett Lee delivery.

He was soon followed by captain Saurav Ganguly, who edged a leg-side delivery from Jason Gillespie into the hands of Adam Gilchrist for 24.

The normally reliable Rahul Dravid fell innocuously and then

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Today's Match

Pakistan v Sri Lanka

Tomorrow's match

Zimbabwe v New Zealand

BTV and ESPN will show the matches from 12:45 PM (BST)

Sec 54 of CrPC widely abused by police

Odhikar presents probe report

By Staff Correspondent

Speakers at a discussion meeting in the city yesterday expressed the view that Section 54 of the Code of Criminal Procedure (CrPC) is widely abused by police.

Police are engaged in widespread extortion from 'vulnerable groups' by abusing Section 54. It is also being abused for political and other purposes, they said.

The discussion on 'Section 54: Its use and abuse' was organised by Odhikar, a coalition of human rights bodies.

The organisation also presented a probe report on people arrested under Section 54 from July to September this year in four police stations in the city, Narayanganj and Munshiganj.

The report said Mirpur police arrested 15 people in July, 26 in August and five in September. Motijheel police arrested 34, 47 and 34 people in the three months, Minshiganj police arrested 3, 6 and 5 people and Narayanganj police arrested 15, 36 and 8 people.

In many cases, "Police arrested a person under Section 54 and then included his name in a criminal case although his name was not found in the First Information Report."

The report mentioned that seven per cent of the children in Dhaka Central Jail, arrested under Section 54, have been confined for more

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Khaleda starts talks with dist, thana level leaders

Leader of the Opposition in Parliament Khaleda Zia began talks with her party's district and thana level leaders at her Banani office yesterday to know organisational situation, reports UNB.

Kicking off the move yesterday evening the BNP chief talked to Mirza Alamgir from Thakurgaon Sadar, advocate Nazmul Huda of Gouripur thana and Pourasava and Mohammad Sultan of Gaffarganj thana in Mymensingh district and Sultan Babu of Islampur thana and Pourasava in Jamalpur district.

"She has taken seriously the matter of shoring up organisational strengths down to grassroots level," BNP assistant office secretary Zahiruddin Swapan said last night.

The former prime minister has already almost finished her another move of one-to-one talk with her party MPs and the nominees defeated in the last elections and probable candidates for the coming polls.

She began the exclusive talks on June 28 and consulted about 275 party leaders and representatives.

BNP secretary general Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan and joint secretary general Haris Chowdhury were present during yesterday's meeting with thana leaders.

Kalaroa incident PM's statement misleading: Mannan Bhuiyan

By Staff Correspondent

BNP Secretary General Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan yesterday said Prime Minister's statement regarding the October 5 incident involving the Leader of the Opposition at Kalaroa in Satkhira was fabricated and misleading.

He also urged the head of the government and her cabinet colleagues to refrain from giving such statements. Mannan Bhuiyan was briefing the newsmen at 29 Minto Road residence of the opposition leader in the evening.

Khaleda Zia was barred from visiting flood-hit Kalaroa by police and BDR personnel due to PM's scheduled visit there at that time.

Sheikh Hasina in her addresses in the flood hit districts termed Khaleda's move as "drama" in the name of visiting flood affected districts.

"Thousands of BNP activists are leaving Kalaroa because of police harassment there," Bhuiyan said.

He said the Officer-in-Charge of Kalaroa thana filed a case under the Public Safety Act

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Civil service JS body revises decision on age-limit for retirement

By Staff Correspondent

To the frustration of top bureaucrats, the Parliamentary Committee on Petition has revised its previous suggestion for extension of the age limit for retirement from government service.

Sources concerned said the committee has now decided that the proposed extension of age limit to 60 years from 57 years should be applicable to the new entrants only.

However, the committee at a meeting on Thursday retained its earlier recommendation that the age limit for entry into government service be raised to 33 years from 30 years on an experimental basis for five years.

The committee's earlier recommendation

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Biman flight delayed

By Staff Correspondent

Bangladesh Biman's Calcutta to Dhaka flight scheduled to arrive in the city at 5:30pm yesterday was delayed due to technical reasons, an official of Biman Operations told Daily Star last night.

The flight is expected to reach Dhaka between 10:00 to 11:00 am today, he added. He advised relatives of incoming passengers to enquire about its arrival in the morning again.

Relatives waiting at the arrival lounge of the airport however alleged that no announcement was made regarding delay of the flight.

ICC Knock Out Kenya 2000

GrameenPhone