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People's Right to Know

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Ban on student politics planned

The government plans a blanket moratorium on student politics at all government and private colleges to stop campus violence and restore congenial

Education Minister Osman Farruk yesterday said the proposed move is being discussed at the highest level of the government. The ban on campus politics at the Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (BUET) has encouraged the government to go for such a blanket morato-

Farruk said the ban would be first imposed on government and private colleges and later on different universities through discussion.

"The policymakers are discussing the matter to frame the modalities in

this regard," the minister told the Channel i television in an interview

"We want the educational institutions themselves to impose moratorium as BUET did," Farruk said.

After coming to power in October, Prime Minister Khaleda Zia made a radical announcement at the parliament that her party, the BNP, would not hesitate to impose a moratorium on student politics to stop campus violence.

An expert committee on education reform last week recommended keeping educational institutions totally free from politics. The committee said involvement of teachers and students in politics should be declared

The report also suggested some amendments to the University Act of 1973 which ensures autonomy for public universities

The 51-member committee led by former vice-chancellor Dr MA Bari, and comprising vice-chancellors of all public universities recommended

Gray areas in new Ctg port order reserves soar to \$2b

NURUL ALAM, Chittagong

The decision to declare essential the services of the Chittagong port may not benefit the country's shipping -unless the huge number of private workers there are also compelled to abide by the rules and regulations.

Port users, officials, employees and workers vesterday felt the government did not clarify whether the 20,000 private workers involved in 18 to 20 different levels of activities at the port would come under the purview of essential service rules.

A senior official of the Chittagong port on condition of anonymity said, private workers who include truck labours, merchant workers, dockers and the C&F workers, were not covered by the declaration. "It will be difficult to reign in the private workers. This will be effective for SEE PAGE 11 COL 4

said yesterday The country's current foreign exchange reserve is still fragile at productive purpose," he said.

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

cancelled the July 20 elections to

the Sandwip municipality and

decided that fresh polls will soon be

the constitutional body also

resolved that candidates, who filed

their nominations as per the 1999

election schedule, will vie for the

posts of the chairman and nine ward

after talks with the candidates at the

EC conference room at 10:30am on

July 29, according to sources. Ten

chairman and 44 ward commis-

sioner candidates have all been

staying away from Sandwip in the

The commission will fix the date

commissioners.

At a review meeting yesterday,

held under 'military' supervision.

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

the exchange rate by mid November

reserves cross US\$ 2 billion by then.

no central bank indicative rates for

banks will fix the rates on a demand-

have to do it. If everything goes well,

all control on exchange rate will go

by mid-November," Finance and

Planning Minister M Saifur Rahman

supply basis.

This will mean that there will be

\$1.6 billion. The reserves have to be above \$2 billion before the control is withdrawn, Saifur told a workshop.

Free-float rate if forex

The government plans to free-float The finance minister inaugurated provided the foreign exchange a daylong workshop on 'Treasury Products and Services' organised by the Citibank, NA as chief guest at the Sonargaon Hotel in the city buying and selling of dollar. The

Saifur sets mid-November target

Saifur criticised the immediate past government for what he said "Free-floating of the foreign leaving the financial sector in a exchange rate is very risky, but we

"They signed agreements for supplier's credit one after another and flagged off some big deals like that of the MiG-29s and frigate that have burdened the country financially. Such purchases have no

Sandwip polls cancelled

Fresh voting soon under military supervision: EC

government is facing difficulties in opening exchange houses in some

Citing an example, he said the exchange house in Italy was closed down due to problems created by some money launders. After coming to power, the present government took initiatives to reopen the house

from next Monday. "Besides, steps have been taken to open exchange houses in the USA, South Korea and some other important places to increase remit-

tance inflow. This would help me SEE PAGE 11 COL 2

DCC wakes up to fix pockmarked city roads

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Dhaka City Corporation (DCC) starts a massive road repair work for the next six nights beginning tomorrow in the city as most of the roads have become unfit for use.

Some 200 DCC staff led by Mayor Sadeque Hossain Khoka will start the temporary repair on every night from July 25 to 30.

The DCC mayor disclosed the plans at a press conference at the Nagar Bhaban yesterday. He said priority has been attached to four specific roads, namely Malibagh-Mouchak road, Hatkhola road and Khilgaon-to-Syedabad road and Green Road as conditions of these roads have for long been the worst.

Besides, repairs would also take



Potholes on the road from Tejgaon to the Gulshan Shooting Club have narrowed down the thoroughfare almost to half leading to frequent traffic congestion. The situation is the same with many other roads as well.

Two killed More innings ignominy

Curtains on Colombo Test in 3 days

CRICKET

HASAN MASOOD from Colombo

Bangladesh lost vet another Test match inside three days when hosts Sri Lanka handed them an innings and 196 run defeat in the first of the two Test series at the P Sara Stadium in Colombo yesterday.

The visitors, facing a daunting task of scoring 380 runs to make Sri Lanka bat again, were bundled out for 184 with Muttaiah Muralitharan taking his second five-wicket haul in the match

The Bangladesh innings folded SEE PAGE 11 COL 4

Heads roll after Sandwip muck-up

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The zero-turnout election to the Sandwip municipality could have been avoided had the local administration timely apprised the Election Commission (EC) of the ground reality in the offshore island.

'The local administration completely floundered on its responsibility by not informing the EC of the sense of insecurity prevailing among the electorate prior to the polls," said an election commissioner, who would not be named. SEE PAGE 11 COL 1

face of constant threats and intimidation, reportedly unleashed by The Election Commission (EC) has Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP)

and Jamaat-e-Islami Bangladesh leaders and activists. There has never been deployment of troops for municipal polls

before and army personnel will be

stationed in the offshore island for at least a week from two or three days prior to the polls, the sources said. Chief Election Commissioner MA Syed listened to explanations from officials, who were in charge of the now-nullified elections, during the

hour-long meeting at his office. The officials cited many reasons for zero turnout in the election, including a sense of insecurity prevailing among the electorate. However, they did not single out any

political party or leader for having vitiated the election atmosphere.

"We are not happy with the role

that the administration played (on July 20)," the CEC was quoted by a meeting source as saying. The EC meeting asked law

enforcers to look into the matter, identify the criminals and bring them "We need to collect detailed information on Saturday's polls

before taking action against anyone." Election Commissioner M Munsef Ali told newsmen after the meeting. The election commissioner

abruptly ended the news briefing after receiving a phone call and asked the reporters to go to the EC SEE PAGE 11 COL 3

in city

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

An employee of the Nagar Unnavan Directorate and a painter were murdered in the city yesterday. A gang of four shot Saiful Islam

alias Badal Hawlader, 28, the employee of the Nagar Unnayan Directorate, in front of his east Rampura residence at 11:30pm Monday. He died in the early hours of yesterday.

The body was sent to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) for autopsy.

Badal's brother Rafiqul Islam said the killing might have taken SEE PAGE 11 COL 4

Students stall JCD bid to oust DU hall provost

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

General students of Shamsunnahar Hall of Dhaka University (DU) yesterday foiled an attempt by the Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) to oust the incumbent hall provost Prof. Sultana Shafi before expiry of her tenure.

Resident students said a group of activists belonging to the hall unit of the JCD locked the office room of the provost in presence of some house tutors at around 11:00am. Provost Prof. Sultana Shafi was not present at her office at that time.

As the news broke, several hundreds of students came out of their rooms and rushed to the hall gate. They got furious seeing the office room of the provost locked and started demonstrating inside the hall. At one stage they broke the

They chased the JCD activists and the house tutors out of the hall and locked the main entrance to the hall to resist their reentry.

The agitated students brought out a procession in the hall chanting various slogans against the undemocratic move to oust the hall provost. Later, they came out of the hall with festoons and placards, and paraded the campus streets.

The procession of the angry students went to the office of vice SEE PAGE 11 COL 6