



Take opinion before fuel price hike

PM instructs energy ministry

STAR REPORT

The government has decided to discuss the issue with the representatives of different sectors, including industry and transport before increasing the fuel prices.

Prime Minister Khaleda Zia yesterday asked the State Minister for Petroleum and Mineral Resources AKM Mosharraf Hossain to consult representatives of all the sectors that might be affected by the hike, according to sources.

Mosharraf Hossain yesterday submitted a proposal to the prime minister her office yesterday, seeking increase in fuel prices. State Minister for Power Iqbal Hassan Mahmood and Political Secretary to the Prime Minister MA Harris Chowdhury were also present.

The energy ministry prepared the proposal seeking around 20 per cent hike in fuel prices to 'minimise the

losses due to price rise in the international market' and also 'to check smuggling of fuel to a neighbouring country'.

The government last increased fuel prices by around 10 per cent in December 2001 citing almost the similar reasons.

"As per prime minister's directive we will discuss the issue with the business chambers, representatives of transport sector and other relevant people and then make a decision," Mosharraf Hossain told The Daily Star yesterday when contacted.

Asked when the price hike may be in force, he said, "I don't think it would take effect before Eid."

According to sources, the state minister yesterday briefed the PM that crude oil price in the international market has shot up to US\$35 a barrel from \$22.50 in the

SEE PAGE 11 COL 3

Laden hails terror attacks in tape

AFP, Doha

Osama bin Laden hailed the spate of terror attacks in the Arab world and Asia as well as last month's Moscow hostage-taking, and threatened US allies, in an audiotape attributed to him and broadcast by Al-Jazeera TV late Tuesday.

The speaker lashed out at US President George W. Bush, calling him the "pharaoh of the century," and at his key allies, whom he called "murderers."

"As you assassinate, so will you be (assassinated), and as you bomb so will you likewise be," the tape said, against the background of a photograph of the al-Qaida terror network's leader, in turban and khaki jacket, a rifle at his side.

In the message to "the peoples of countries allied to the United States," he warned them against the "alliance between their governments and the United States to attack us in Afghanistan."

He cited "Britain, France, Italy,

SEE PAGE 11 COL 7

AL accuses govt of jeopardising Hasina's life

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Opposition Awami League yesterday alleged that the government of Prime Minister Khaleda Zia has put the life of AL chief and Leader of the Opposition in Parliament Sheikh Hasina at risk.

The AL Secretariat at a meeting here condemned the government's rejection of Hasina's petition for exempting her from surrendering

SEE PAGE 11 COL 1

Sutrapur double murder Charges against AL leader's son, 33 others framed

COURT CORRESPONDENT

The Third Additional Metropolitan Sessions Judge's Court, Dhaka, yesterday framed charges against Rahid Hasan Suman, son of Nasibun Ahmed, president of Dhaka city Mahila Awami League and 33 others in the sensational Sutrapur double murder case.

Judge Molla Mostafa Kamal fixed January 12 for trial of the case.

The 33 others are Suman's father Sultanuddin Ahmed, his brother Sajit Hasan Sujan, Ripon, Nadim, Nahid, Muktar, Mohammad Sharif, Ramzan, Azizur Rahman, Liton, Chhoto Ramzan, Chhoto Suman, Bashirul Islam alias Biddut, Sirajul Islam alias Tutul, Angul Kata Suman, Anisur Rahman Alias Anis, Sanaullah Alias Sanwar Hossain, Minto, Sankar Rashkit, Nazrul, Subal Das, Muktar (2), Atiquzzaman alias Ramzan, Aziz Alias Rickshaw Aziz, Chacha Anwar alias Anu, Nazrul Islam alias Kashu, Monirul, Islam alias Monir, Zahangir, Raza,

Khalil alias Khaliullah, Titu, Babul alias Raju and Munna Kasai.

Of the accused, Suman, Sultan, Sujan and Ripon are now on bail while fifteen are in jail custody. They are Nadim, Nahid, Muktar, Azizur Rahman, Bashirul Islam, Ramzan, Chhoto Ramzan, Liton, Chhoto Suman, Sirajul Islam, Angul Kata Suman, Anisur Rahman, Sanaullah, Sharif and Munna Kasai.

Those who are on bail and in jail custody pleaded not guilty and demanded justice before the court after the charges were read out by the court.

Fifteen others are absconding. They are Sankar, Nazrul, Subal Das, Mintu, Muktar-2 Atiquzzaman, Chacha Anwar, Aziz, Nazrul Islam alias Kashu, Monir, Zahangir, Raja, Khalil, Titu and Babul. Charges were framed against them in absentia.

The court framed charges against the absconders under Section 365 of

SEE PAGE 11 COL 1

DCC tender scam Probe body formed: Report in 10 days

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development (LGRD) and Cooperatives yesterday formed a five-member inquiry committee to investigate into alleged irregularities in collection of tender schedules of the Dhaka City Corporation (DCC) road repairs project.

The committee, headed by the joint secretary (administration) to the ministry, Fazlul Haq, has been asked to submit its report within the next 10 days, official sources said.

Other members of the committee are Chief Executive Officer of the DCC AZM Shafiqul Islam, Superintendent Engineer of the Local Government and Engineering Department (LGED) Abdul Gaffar, Superintendent Engineer of Dhaka WASA Shamsul Alam and Deputy Secretary of the Local Government Division (LGD) Rashidul Hye.

Earlier, DCC Mayor and Minister

for Fisheries and Livestock Sadeque Hossain Khoka handed over a letter to the LGRD and Cooperatives Minister Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan, describing the incident.

Bhuiyan then sent the letter to the LGED secretary, AYBI Siddiqi, who later formed the committee.

The DCC on October 12 invited tender worth over Tk 93 crore for road repairs with October 28 as the deadline for submission of schedules.

But several DCC enlisted contractors could not collect schedules because a section of people, allegedly with the blessings of some ward commissioners, manipulated the entire process.

The mayor was on an overseas trip when the incident took place. On his return, he took up the matter and told a press briefing on Sunday that a committee would be formed the next day.



PHOTO: STAR

A girl with goods on her head wades through stagnated rainwater on a road in the city's Moghbazar, an area of clogged drains that do not let water out.

'Judicial probe could end UMMCH confusion'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Member-Secretary and Academic Director of the Medical Health and Welfare Trust Professor AM Mujibul Haq said yesterday a judicial inquiry into alleged irregularities at the Uttara Mahila Medical College and Hospital (UMMCH) could end all confusion in this regard.

In a statement, Mujibul Haq, who is also immediate past principal of the medical college, which is run by the trust, said there was no financial irregularity or nepotism in the college.

Allegations about this by a section of students are baseless, he added.

Haq said financial transactions of the college were duly audited every year. He also refuted the allegation of nepotism brought against him.

He mentioned that as principal, he had taken steps against private coaching and use of notebooks and tried his best for development of the college.

Many patients had to suffer due to strike and hunger strike at the college and hospital, Haq said.

It may be recalled that students and intern doctors of the college and hospital went on a strike from November 9 protesting alleged nepotism and financial irregularities.

Viqarunnisa stand-off Varsity authorities may sue school governing body

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Viqarunnisa University stand-off turns two-pronged with 133 students and their guardians' agitation and the university authorities' move to file cases against the governing body of the Viqarunnisa Noon School and College (VNSC).

The demonstrators will begin their programme at 1:30pm Sunday in front of the VNSC premises, demanding reopening of the university and the university authorities will file two cases with a judge's court against the VNSC governing body today.

Registrar of the university Abdus Sattar told The Daily Star yesterday that one case would be filed for contempt of court and the other for a mandatory injunction against the governing body.

"We want a mandatory injunction so that the VNSC authorities cannot further bar the students, teachers and officials from entering the university," the registrar added.

On November 9, the registrar filed a general diary after the governing body obstructed the univer-

sity students, teachers and officials to enter the compound.

Meanwhile, the students and guardians have threatened a fast-unto-death if the government does not take any step to reopen the university in a week.

"Although the VNSC authorities have asked us not to turn up there for anything related to the university, we will demonstrate in favour of our sons and daughters," said Nazmul Haq, a guardian.

Later, the demonstrators will lead a procession to the Prime Minister's Office to submit a memorandum seeking her intervention, he added.

The VNSC Guardians' Forum will also join the demonstration as they have expressed solidarity with the agitating students and guardians.

The university closed on September 13 in the wake of alleged irregularities in transferring land and funds of the VNSC for establishment of the university.

No headway in Pubali Bank robbery investigations

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Two days after the daylight robbery at a Pubali Bank branch in the city, police could neither arrest any of the robbers nor recover the money looted.

Meanwhile, the Detective Branch took over investigations into the robbery from the Tejgaon police on Tuesday.

The four officials and the security guard of the bank, detained on suspicion immediately after the robbery and shown arrested on Tuesday, were also put in DB custody. The five are now being interrogated at the DB headquarters.

They would be released once their innocence is proved, sources said.

Also Tuesday, Assistant Deputy Commissioner Ruhul Amin, who is leading the interrogation, summoned the manager and an official of the Satrasta Crossing Branch of Pubali Bank to the DB headquarters.

The two - Kazi Tofail Hossain and Liton - were interrogated late into the night.

However, till last night, the DB made no headway in the investiga-

SEE PAGE 11 COL 1

Saber's detention declared illegal

UNB, Dhaka

The High Court yesterday declared the detention of Awami League leader Saber Hossain Chowdhury illegal, terming the order vague.

The Court ordered release of Chowdhury if not wanted in any other case.

Saber, political secretary to AL president Sheikh Hasina, was arrested on October 20 from Zia International Airport prior to his departure for London.

Bail petitions of Khaleque, Suja rejected

BSS, Khulna

The District and Sessions Judge's Court, Khulna yesterday rejected bail petitions of former state minister Talukder Abdul Khaleque and former Whip Mostafa Rashidi Suja.

Khaleque, general secretary of Khulna city Awami League, and Suja, general secretary of Khulna district AL, were shown arrested in two murder cases.

Judge Didar Ali Fakir rejected the bail petitions in the two cases after hearing both sides.

In one case, the petitions of Khaleque, Suja and his two brothers were moved by city AL president Advocate Manjurul Imam, Advocate Mostafa Yunus and others.

In the other case, the bail petitions of Suja and his two brothers were moved by district AL vice-president Advocate Mujibur Rahman and Advocate Mostafa Yunus.

	Sun Rises	Sun Sets
Nov 14		5-13 pm
Nov 15	6-13 am	

Prayer Timings		
Nov 14		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	4-51	6-00
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	4-00	4-15
Maghrib	5-17	5-27
Esha	7-30	7-45

Source: Islamic Foundation