

Arms deposit deadline stretched to Nov 21

All licences stand cancelled after the time limit

REZAUL KARIM

The government yesterday extended the deadline for depositing licensed firearms by five more days and warned of stern actions against anyone for failing to surrender weapons by November 21.

Firearm licences of those who will fail to deposit their weapons by the new deadline will be cancelled.

The time extension came as only about 30,000 out of a total 189,265 licensed firearms were deposited till Friday, the original deadline. In the capital, 11,291 arms were deposited.

On November 5, the government ordered licensed arms holders to deposit their weapons within 15 days.

Talking to The Daily Star, State Minister for Home Lutfuzzaman Babar said the new deadline will not be extend anymore and violators of the order will be severely punished as possessors of illegal weapons.

He said the government will review whether arms holders really have any need for weapons or not. Besides, he said, it will also be checked whether proper procedures were followed in issuing licences.

Babar said the home ministry would soon open a special cell and form a team to recover licensed arms which will not be deposited.

The home ministry believes that many licensed weapons, which cannot be traced now, are used for criminal purposes.

"We have already found that hundreds of licences were issued against fake addresses and the law enforcing agencies are trying to find out those arms holders," said a senior home ministry official.

He said arms would be returned to those who obtained licences by following proper procedures and those who really need weapons.

The official said the previous Awami League government before completion of its tenure issued 3,636 licences for different types of arms from January 1, 2001 to July 15, 2001.

On the other hand, the incumbent government issued 48 licences for pistols and revolvers in last one year.

SEE PAGE 11 COL 8



Anniversary of Bhasani's death today

UNB, Dhaka

The 26th anniversary of death of Maulana Abdul Hamid Khan Bhasani, the leader of the downtrodden, will be observed today.

President Iajuddin Ahmed, Prime Minister Khaleda Zia and Leader of the Opposition in parliament Sheikh Hasina in separate messages on the occasion paid rich tributes to the great leader.

The president in his message said the countrymen would forever remember with gratitude Maulana Bhasani's love for the people and his simple lifestyle.

He said Maulana Bhasani had always fought for establishing social, economic and political rights of the deprived people and was vocal against all sorts of repression and deprivation.

Prime Minister Khaleda Zia in her message recalled Maulana Bhasani's leading role in all movements including anti-British movement and Liberation War of 1971.

The main objective of Maulana Bhasani's politics was to establish an exploitation-free democratic society and his ideals still remain a source of our inspiration.

SEE PAGE 11 COL 8

Musharraf sworn in under a self-amended constitution

REUTERS, Islamabad

Pakistan's military ruler, General Pervez Musharraf, was sworn in for a new five-year term as president yesterday as the country's divided parliament met for the first time in three years.

Musharraf, a key ally in the US-led war on terror, suspended the constitution after he overthrew elected prime minister Nawaz Sharif in a bloodless coup in October 1999.

He has since revived it with changes that give the president more power, including the right to dismiss parliament, and bestow on the military a role in overseeing the work of government.

A 342-member assembly elected on October 10 convened shortly after Musharraf was sworn in and looked set for a stormy session as rival parties were split over who should lead the government and over Musharraf's constitutional changes.

Musharraf secured his fresh term through an April referendum that analysts say was heavily rigged in his favour.

Dressed in a traditional long coat, or sherwani, rather than his more usual military uniform,

SEE PAGE 11 COL 5



PHOTO: AFP

Pakistani Chief Justice Riaz Sheikh (R) administers the oath to General Pervez Musharraf as the country's ninth president during a ceremony in Islamabad yesterday.

AL boycotts PM's iftar party

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Awami League (AL) boycotted an iftar party hosted by Prime Minister Khaleda Zia at the Prodhamontri Bhaban in the city yesterday.

None of the AL leaders or lawmakers attended the iftar hosted in honour of politicians.

AL Presidium member Abdul Jalil said there was no official reason for the boycott. "The lawmakers were busy otherwise," he told The Daily Star last night.

Another MP of the opposition party said they would also boycott the iftar party to be hosted by the

SEE PAGE 11 COL 4

Petition seeking ban on Hasina's tour abroad

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A petition was submitted to the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's Court Dhaka yesterday seeking restriction on former prime minister Sheikh Hasina's tour abroad till investigation of a murder case against her.

After hearing, Magistrate Emdadul Haq directed the OC of Ramna thana to "take legal action against Hasina in this regard".

In the petition, complainant advocate Rabiul Islam Sagar, assistant public prosecutor at the District Judge's Court, Dhaka said he filed the murder case against Sheikh Hasina and two others with the CMM's court on March 14.

Ramna thana is investigating the case as per the court directive.

The complainant said he recently came to know from newspaper reports that Hasina would visit Thailand and India this month. She may not return home, the complainant said and prayed for a restriction on her going abroad till the investigation report is submitted.

The two others accused in the murder case are former SP Hafizur Rahman Laskar and Motiur Rahman Rentu, writer and publisher of a book "Amar Fanshi Chai (I want to be hanged)".

In the case it was alleged that in

SEE PAGE 11 COL 4

Dacoity in Ctg in guise of army

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Armed robbers disguised as army personnel looted goods worth Tk 3 lakh including 30 tolas of gold ornaments from four houses at Udalia village under Hathazari thana in the district here in the early hours of yesterday.

Witnesses said some eight robbers, one of them masked and all carrying firearms and wearing army uniform, came to Udalia at around 1:00am.

Introducing themselves as army troops, they entered the houses of Ali Akber Chowdhury, Jamal Uddin, Abdul Qader and Abdul Rashid and looted valuables at gunpoint. The looted goods included gold ornaments, electric appliances and cash.

Local people suspect the robbers are Shibir cadres who went into hiding in the Fatikchhari border area adjoining Udalia Tea Garden, some 10 km off Hathazari headquarters, to escape arrest in the nationwide crackdown on crime.

Govt to investigate cases of issuance of multiple arms against 1 licence

BSS, Dhaka

The Home Ministry will look into the cases of issuance of several arms under one licence, a senior official of the ministry said here yesterday.

"The Home Ministry will also investigate to find out from which shops the licence holders bought the arms and ammunition," he told BSS.

The Home Ministry will proceed with the issue after receiving the final report on deposit of arms, the official said, adding the final report is expected to be available within two to three days.

Compared to the 1,85,581 arms licence holders, the number of arms deposited so far is far too small. The ministry, despite the government directive, will also probe the causes behind the deposit of such a small number of arms, the official said.

The wife and two sons of former home minister Mohammad Nasim were issued two licences each and the minister's servant was issued one licence. Nasim's sons and servant didn't even fulfill the age

SEE PAGE 11 COL 3

Minister moves to save Gulshan lake

Demarcation with pillars kept an option

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Minister for Environment and Forest Shajahan Siraj yesterday started an anti-encroachment and anti-pollution movement involving public participation to protect the Gulshan-Banani-Baridhara Lake from further destruction.

He was speaking as chief guest yesterday at a seminar on 'The Lakes of Dhaka City-An Analytical Overview of a Critical Component of

Our Urban Resources' at the BRAC Centre Inn in the city.

The minister however said if necessary his ministry would erect demarcation pillars along the lake embankment, as the Rajuk had failed to demarcate the lake ignoring people's demand as well as prime ministerial instructions.

'Remains Business and Professional Forum' a body of the ex-students of the Residential Model School and College organ-

ised the seminar to explore ways to protect the lake.

"Only public awareness and intervention can protect the city's residential areas like Gulshan, Banani and Baridhara," the minister added.

He however criticised the WASA for not developing adequate sewerage system in Baridhara area. All the sewerage outlets are into the lake.

Presided over by Shamsur Mobin

SEE PAGE 11 COL 5

JCD leader murder case Six get 30-yr RI in Rajshahi

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

Six persons have been awarded rigorous imprisonment for 30 years (life term) in the JCD leader Emran Hossain Masum murder case.

The First Additional District and Sessions Judge's Court delivered the judgement yesterday, three years and two days after the sensational murder.

Judge Nasir Uddin Mahmud

pronounced the verdict in a crowded courtroom.

The six convicts are Palash, Sanu, Boro Kajol, Uzzal, Khokon and Choto Kajol. All of them were JCD cadres.

The court also fined them Tk 10,000 each. In default, they have to be in prison for six months more.

The main accused in the case -- Palash and Khokon -- have been

SEE PAGE 11 COL 6

300 fall sick after taking food at Buddhist temple

UNB, Khagrachhari

More than 300 people fell sick after taking poisonous food served at "Kathin Chibor Dan" festival at Kamukesra Buddhist Temple at Dighinala on Friday.

Of them, 45 were admitted to Dighinala health complex in a critical condition.

Civil Surgeon Dr Subhash Das admitted widespread diarrhoea among the villagers who took food at the festival.

Army opened a temporary medical centre at Kamukesra primary

SEE PAGE 11 COL 7

	Sun Rises	Sun Sets
Nov 17		5-12 pm
Nov 18	5-15 am	

Prayer Timings		
Nov 17		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	4-52	6-00
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	4-00	4-15
Maghrib	5-16	5-27
Esha	7-30	7-45

Source: Islamic Foundation