

Curb on rowdy bank unionism planned

Defaulted loan definition set to get strict; only district judge's court to have power to issue injunction on any bank case

REJAUL KARIM BYRON
The government is amending the Bank Company Act to keep a tight rein on unruly trade unionism in the central bank and the state-owned banks and stop abuse of bank property as well. The amendments also aim to restrict lower court injunctions against cases under the Act. Injunction is a popular way for bank law violators to stay beyond the reach of the law and keep work-

ing against the interest of the banks. Only the district judge's court can consider such an injunction if the proposed changes are approved. The government will also add eight more clauses to the Act to ease banking reforms and bank operations. These include more stringent punishment for bank law violators and measures to ensure that such punishments are given to the guilty.

Cabinet Division sources said the cabinet is likely to approve the amendments in a meeting on Monday. "If the cabinet approves the amendments, we will table these in the current parliament session for approval," a finance ministry official said, wishing anonymity. One amendment to the first sub-clause of Clause 57 of the Act prohibits trade union leaders from using bank vehicles and telephones for carrying out trade

union activities. If any trade union activist handles any bank official, he/she will be subject to maximum three years' imprisonment with a Tk 1 lakh fine. If the guilty delays paying up the fine, he/she will pay another Tk 500 for every day until the fine is paid in full. Clause 109 of the current Act dictates a maximum penalty of Tk 20,000 for unlicensed banking, fabricated balanced sheet, submits

Kushtia ASP shifted over abduction frenzy

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kushtia
The police administration yesterday transferred Additional Superintendent of Police Bashir Ahmad from Kushtia to Rangamati amid rampant abductions and killings in the western district. The latest transfer order came three days after transfers of the officers-in-charge of Kushtia Sadar and Islami University police stations. Seventy-six people were abducted in Kushtia in the last five months, with 11 of them this month alone. Abductors killed nine of the 76 in captivity, as their families could not pay ransom. A man was shot dead and another injured in an armed attack, while a third was abducted for ransom in two incidents in the district on Wednesday night.

SP Baten's bail prayer rejected

COURT CORRESPONDENT
A Dhaka court yesterday rejected the bail for Special Superintendent of Police (SP) Abdul Baten, arrested on charge of offering bribe to State Minister for Home Lutfozzaman Babar. The Court of Dhaka Metropolitan Sessions Judge Motiur Rahman passed the order following a criminal revision against the bail rejection order of a lower court on June 6. According to home ministry, the SP went to meet the state minister at his office on June 3 and requested Babar to cancel his transfer order to Khagrachhari. A Police Headquarters press release, issued on the same night, said the state minister had informed Home Secretary Omar Farooq and Inspector General of Police on June 6. **SEE PAGE 11 COL 3**



Not Spielberg's giant shark
It looks like Spielberg's fierce shark, the Jaws, but it is only an African catfish, the fearsome all-devouring species introduced to Bangladesh in the late 1980s. This fish, weighing about 20kg, somehow managed its way into the storm sewer of Panthapath and was caught by sweepers during a clean-up yesterday.

New pay body in July

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
Finance and Planning Minister M Saifur Rahman yesterday said the new National Pay Commission (NPC) would be formed on the first week of July. The NPC will submit its report within October. In the following two months, the Prime Minister's Office will scrutinise the report and finalise the enhanced pay scale for government employees, he added. Government staff will start getting increased salaries in January, Saifur told union leaders of Bangladesh Secretariat employees. The finance minister said, "The pay commission will be formed just after approval of the budget on June 30. It will be given three months' time with a maximum one month grace period to file its report. The employees urged Saifur to reduce the gap between high and low scale of salaries. The minister assured them of consideration. The employees suggested the government could deduct power usage bills of government staff from their wages to check theft and misappropriation of electricity bills. **SEE PAGE 11 COL 3**

BNP, AL MPs trade extortion allegations

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
Two lawmakers belonging to the ruling BNP and the main opposition Awami League (AL) yesterday traded allegations of extortion against each other, triggering a brief spell of heat in parliament. Rising on a point of order, AL lawmaker Shajahan Khan, who is also a transport workers' leader, protested Minister for Communications Nazmul Huda's remarks about him on Wednesday while the supplementary budget was being passed. Shajahan said the minister accused him of extortion although he had tried to check this crime in the transport sector. The prime minister had also formed a committee to stop extortion but it did not stop, he said. "The reason why extortion has **SEE PAGE 11 COL 2**

Saifur's no to newsprint tariff cuts

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
Finance Minister M Saifur Rahman yesterday rejected the demand of the Newspaper Owners Association (Noab) and Bangladesh Sangbadpatri Parisad (BSP) to reduce tariff on newsprint. "We have not increased any tariff," Saifur told the press at the secretariat. "We have changed the tariff structure reducing it from four tiers to three tiers. What they call an enhanced tariff is an outcome of the adjustment." "It is not possible to reduce the tariff. To do that, we have to revert to the four tiers structure and we are not doing that," Saifur said. **SEE PAGE 11 COL 8**

Army must for free Dhaka-10 by-polls

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) MA Syed yesterday said it will not be possible to hold the Dhaka-10 by-election free and fair without deploying army in each of the polling centres. While talking to reporters at his office he said, "If our suggestions are implemented, it will be possible to ensure a free and fair by-election." Meanwhile, LGRD Minister Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan at a press briefing yesterday said the government would remain neutral in conducting the by-election of July 1. Mannan Bhuiyan, also the secretary general of ruling Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) said, "There were a number of elections, including city corporations polls, held under our rule. BNP candidates either won or lost, but we never allowed anyone to hamper the atmosphere for holding a free and fair election." The press briefing was held at the party's city office. The CEC on Tuesday sent a letter to Prime Minister Khaleda Zia requesting her to deploy at least five army personnel in each of the 103 polling stations in line with the Election Commission's (EC) decision to ensure tight security in the upcoming by-election. The EC secretariat in a separate letter sent to the Armed Forces Division also conveyed the EC's request for army deployment. The CEC did not yet get any response to his letter from the prime minister. He is, however, still optimistic about getting the nod. Two seats of the Jatiya Sangsad fell vacant following the resignation of Abdul Mannan and Mahi B Chowdhury from the ruling BNP as well as the parliament. Both of them later joined Bikalpa Dhara Bangladesh (BDB). **SEE PAGE 11 COL 2**

Opposition part of govt in democracy

UNB, Dhaka
Prime Minister Khaleda Zia yesterday hoped that the opposition would play a responsible role in parliament and make constructive criticism to ensure socioeconomic progress of the country and the people. "Criticism should not be only for the sake of criticism. In parliamentary democracy, the opposition is part of the government," she said while talking to the chairmen of five parliamentary standing committees at the Prime Minister's Office yesterday. Expressing her satisfaction with the return of Awami League (AL) to the parliament, the Leader of the House said the main opposition party would continue to play a positive role in making parliamentary democracy effective. The prime minister's comment came a day after the main opposition party in parliament let out a salvo of harsh criticism over the Bangladesh candidate's defeat in election to the OIC secretary general post. Dwelling on the country's foreign policy, the prime minister told the heads of the parliamentary watchdog bodies that Bangladesh had already been "internationally appreciated as a moderate Muslim democratic country". She emphasised maintaining the image always. She said Bangladesh might go **SEE PAGE 11 COL 6**

Dengue strikes back with monsoon

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
Dengue and dengue hemorrhagic fever caused by one of four closely related but distinct viruses have staged a come back in the capital with the onset of monsoon. Four city hospitals have already reported of admitting 10 confirmed dengue cases in the last one month. Dhaka Shishu Hospital admitted three children with dengue fever on May 24 and 25 and another on June 2 last. Holy Family Red Crescent Hospital admitting three dengue cases in the last five days - the first on June 13, another on June 14 and the last on Wednesday. Al-Raji Hospital and Central Hospital on Green Road in Dhanmandi took in two dengue patients each in the last week. Experts fear dengue infection in the city may go out of control in absence of any surveillance this year. Two years ago, Dhaka City Corporation (DCC) had launched a scientific study by country's leading entomologists to confirm existence of eggs of Aedes mosquito that carries and transmits the viruses. The study team drew up a clear city map on the density of Aedes population and its larvae or egg. Based on that, the DCC planned and carried out a larvaicide spraying to check growth of Aedes population. Relatives received Bhulu's body at about 1:30pm. He was buried at Azimpur Graveyard after namaj-e-janaza at the Arambagh club premises. Police could not arrest anyone in this connection till yesterday. They suspect the operatives of **SEE PAGE 11 COL 4**



A woman carries a bucket of water in lowlands of Rayerbazar, swamped by hours of driving rains that brought city life to a standstill on Wednesday.

Bombers kill 41 in twin strikes on Iraqi forces

REUTERS, Baghdad
Bombers killed 41 people in two strikes on Iraq's fledgling security forces yesterday, stepping up a bloody drive to sabotage plans for US-led occupation to give way to Iraqi rule on June 30. A suicide bomber blew up his white four-wheel-drive car at an army recruiting base in Baghdad, killing 35 people and wounding 138, in Iraq's deadliest single bombing since a suicide attack on the same target killed 47 in February. Another car bomb in the afternoon killed six paramilitary civil defence guards and wounded four near the town of Balad, north of the Iraqi capital, the US military said. Insurgents, thought to include

Workers Party faces split

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
The Workers Party of Bangladesh (WPB) is apparently facing a split as five 'rebel' party leaders, including a politburo member, are in conflict with the party leadership on its decision to join the main opposition Awami League's (AL) out-government movements, sources said. They consider the decision a clear deviation from the ideology and strategy of the WPB. The five leaders are Saiful Haq, politburo member, and central committee leaders Khandakar Ali Abbas, Paresh Chandra Saha, Nasiruddin Ahmed Nashu and Mohammad Zaman. WPB President Rashed Khan Menon however ruled out any party split. "The activities of five people cannot be called a split in the party. They have violated the constitution of the party," Menon told The Daily Star last night. Saiful said the party's 6th con **SEE PAGE 11 COL 1**

CAPITAL MARKET LOAN ADB finds its own conditions flawed

M SHAMSUR RAHMAN
Report to ADB top brasses in Manila. Soon after the 1996 share market scam, the ADB had approved the capital market development loan, disbursed in two tranches -- the first in February 1998 and the second in December 2000. The team observed the measures of replacing part-time members of the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) with full-timers, separation of dealership from brokerage operation, and segregation of merchant banking, portfolio management and stock brokerage were wrong to do, for which the mission found no reason to support. "The full-time member requirement was aimed at infusing dynamism and efficiency at SEC, but **SEE PAGE 11 COL 4**