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Laurel for business leaders

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Bangladesh Business Awards 2004 were presented yesterday to honour the businesspersons and enterprises for their outstanding performance last year.

Incepta Pharmaceuticals Ltd received the Enterprise of the Year 2004 Award while Selina Quader received the award for Outstanding Woman in Business of the Year 2004.

Unilever Bangladesh Limited got the Special Achievement Award 2004 and Kazi Zahedul Hasan was adjudged the Business Person of the Year 2004.

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Jointly introduced by The Daily Star and DHL Worldwide Express five years ago, the awards are given every year in recognition of excellence of enterprises and individuals in different fields of business to felicitate and inspire them.

British High Commissioner in Dhaka Anwar Choudhury announced the name of the Enterprise of the Year while Rokia A Rahman, former adviser to the caretaker government and president of Women Entrepreneurs' Association, Bangladesh, named the Outstanding Woman in Business.

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From left, Managing Director Abdul Muktaadir of Incepta Pharmaceuticals, Enterprise of the Year 2004, Agroconcern Proprietor Selina Quader, Outstanding Woman in Business, Chairman and MD Sanjiv Mehta of Special Achievement Award winner Unilever Bangladesh and Business Person of the Year Kazi Zahedul Hasan, MD of Kazi Farms Group, seen with the crests at the Bangladesh Business Awards 2004 presentation ceremony at Sonargang Hotel ballroom yesterday. The Daily Star and DHL Worldwide Express give the awards every year in recognition of outstanding performance of business enterprises and entrepreneurs.

CTG ARMS HAUL Yakub placed on 8-day remand

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday put Mohammad Yakub, one of the five prime accused in the April 2, 2004 Chittagong arms and ammunition haul case, on an eight-day remand.

Sub-Inspector Ramiz Uddin of Mirpur Police Station produced Yakub before the court of Chief Metropolitan Magistrate, Dhaka with a 10-day remand prayer.

With the permission from Criminal Investigation Department (CID), Chittagong, who are in charge of investigating the case, and Chittagong police, Mirpur police submitted the remand prayer for interrogating Yakub in the Chittagong arms haul case and two other cases filed against him with a Chittagong police station.

Mirpur police arrested Yakub from a house at Lalkuthi in Mirpur on Thursday.

Yakub, vice-president of the Bangladesh Road Transport Federation, allegedly supplied the trucks used in the smuggling of the arms and ammunition and was absconding since the largest ever ammo haul in the country in April last year from Chittagong Urea Fertiliser Limited area.

Police sources hinted that Yakub will be interrogated by the Joint Interrogation Cell.

Our Chittagong correspondent

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SECURITY, TECHNO GLITCHES EC voter list and databases can be manipulated

SHAKHAWAT LITON

The Office of the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) has found some technical and management glitches in the Election Commission's (EC) computer system including the program that maintains the voters database.

The EC has no effective security mechanism to protect the database from manipulation, said the CAG office in a report.

According to the report, factors like lack of a policy on computer use, scarcity of passwords and the software concerned having no tolerance test make the database vulnerable.

"These loopholes make the districts' databases vulnerable to manipulation any time," it mentioned and recommended initiating measures to address the weaknesses.

"There is an apprehension also about the efficacy of the EC's management system due to the shortcomings in the existing computer system," it said.

The EC spent Tk 5.3 crore to set up its computer system. The expenditure was met from a UNDP-funded project named Strengthening the Election Commission for Improvement in the Electoral Process.

Before the 2001 general elections, the EC decided to go for development and updating of a website, Central Database System (CDS), District Database System (DDS), Election Result Updating System (ERUS), EC Administrative System (ECAS), Union Parishad Election Information System (UPEIS) and Personal Management Information System (PMIS) using the information technology. It appointed seven consultants to complete the tasks.

But only the DDS, ERUS, UPEIS and the website were developed and their operations have not been satisfactory, the CAG office pointed out.

Meanwhile, a foreign and two local experts have left the project.

Quoting the project authorities, the report said the experts assigned did not complete the CDS, ECAS and PMIS. Records preserved by the authorities showed Tk 97.26 lakh was spent on IT hardware and software, Tk 2.66 crore for foreign experts and Tk 1.49 crore for local experts.

LAW MINISTER ON CARETAKER SYSTEM REFORM Constitution should not be changed frequently

BDNEWS, Dhaka

Law Minister Moudud Ahmed dismissed the opposition demand for amendment to the caretaker government law, saying the constitution is a sacred document and should not be changed too often.

The barrister turned statesman also denied the opposition allegation that increasing the retirement age of judges was aimed at getting a judge of the government's choice to head the next caretaker govern-

ment.

"Raising the retirement age of judges has nothing to do with the interim government. It's to strengthen the judiciary. In two years time, 21 judges will retire and there would be a total vacuum in the judiciary, which is a vital organ. We need experienced, competent and matured judges to deliver justice to people," said Moudud defending the government's move.

In an exclusive interview with BDNEWS, the law minister said: The

Bangladesh to become a friendless state Says AL terming PM speech a ploy to trouble the next elected govt

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Awami League Central Working Committee (ALCWC) at a meeting yesterday rejected the prime minister's recent speech in parliament and alleged the ruling coalition is trying to make Bangladesh a friendless state.

"Prime Minister Khaleda Zia and Finance Minister Saifur Rahman are plotting against the country so that development partners stop aid to Bangladesh," said AL General Secretary Abdul Jalil, emerging from

Cairn, ONGC may swap equities for jt exploration

PALLAB BHATTACHARYA, New Delhi

British energy major Cairn and India's state-owned Oil and Natural Gas Corporation are likely to go for swapping of equities for joint exploration in India, Bangladesh and Nepal.

While the Indian company will sell part of its exploration rights to Cairn Energy in some of its existing oil blocks within India, Cairn will take ONGC as a partner in areas where it has exploration rights. Cairn has interests in both Bangladesh and Nepal.

SEE PAGE 15 COL 5

ABANDONED A DECADE AGO Graft-ridden Rajuk resumes audit

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

Rajdhani Unnayan Karttripakkha (Rajuk) has initiated an 'internal audit' aborted 10 years ago by an office order, sources said.

The internal audit 'abandoned for mysterious reasons' is set to provide unprecedented insight into the massive financial irregularities that have gripped the semi-autonomous city planners.

Rajuk's responsibilities include overall development of city planning, as well as zoning, approving building plans, monitoring and governance.

Inside sources said Rajuk has

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Kolkata Test nicely balanced

AFP, Kolkata

Indian batsmen Sachin Tendulkar and Rahul Dravid built on Anil Kumble's effort with half-centuries to put the second Test against Pakistan in an intriguing position here on Friday.

Tendulkar scored a solid 52 before falling to a dubious decision and Dravid hit an unbeaten 54 as India recovered from a shaky 23-2 to reach 133-3 at stumps on the third day of fluctuating fortunes for an overall lead of 147.

Skipper Sourav Ganguly (four) kept Dravid company when bad light stopped play 11 minutes before the scheduled close.

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Tendulkar was given out caught behind off seamer Abdul Razzaq by West Indies umpire Steve Bucknor, standing in a record 100th Test.

TV replays later suggested that the ball had missed the bat. The umpiring decision angered a section of the 35,000-strong crowd which jeered Bucknor.

Leg-spinner Kumble earlier claimed three scalps in seven overs during a Pakistani collapse which saw the tourists lose their last eight wickets for 112 runs on a slow-turning Eden Gardens pitch.

Pakistan looked set to gain a big lead after being strongly pinned at 281-2 in reply to India's first-innings



People cross a makeshift bamboo-bridge over the shallow Balu river at Trimohoni on the outskirts of the city. Once a wide stream, the river now dwindles to a mere stagnant waterbody during the dry season due to siltation and lack of waterflow from the upstream.

Save the dying rivers

Turag, Buriganga and Balu won't survive if water flow from Jamuna not restored in dry season

MORSHED ALI KHAN and RAFIQ HASAN

All rivers around the city face 'certain death' if water flow from the Jamuna is not restored during the dry season when 'not a single drop of water' comes from the upstream, water specialists said.

Otherwise, they warned, the Turag, the Buriganga and the Balu are set to turn into 'seasonal rivers' like many others in the region, before dying off completely.

It is only in the monsoon that these rivers now flow. The rest of the

year they are reduced to stagnant waters, making only slight movements with the high and low tides in the downstream and an insignificant amount of 'base flow' from the Mymensingh hills, according to Moludul Islam, a senior water specialist at the Institute of Water Modelling (IWM).

Islam, a member of a team studying ways to augment the water flow in the Buriganga, the Turag and the Balu, said the main 'feeder' to the city rivers, the Jamuna, remains totally cut off from the end of October until June.

Heavy siltation at various points - including the Chatal Canal near Bahadurabad Ghat, the Chatal South near Jagannathganj Ghat, the New Dhaleswari 1.8 km downstream from the Jamuna bridge, the Dhaleswari South, the Makar Canal and the Ghior Khal -- has resulted in a closure of the river mouths from the very onset of the dry season.

Islam said the findings by the IWM, which were submitted to the Water Development Board (WDB), recommend immediate restoration of water flow in the three rivers

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