

Faizee takes bench amid protests

SCBA stages sit-in today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Additional Judge of the High Court Justice Faisal Mahmud Faizee took the bench yesterday, 160 days after he had stayed off the judicial work amid a boycott by a large section of Supreme Court lawyers.

Pro-government lawyers joined his court, but Supreme Court Bar Association (SCBA) continued its boycott that began on October 30 last year to protest the judge's alleged tampering with his LLB exam results.

Chief Justice (CJ) Syed JR Mudassar Husain has convened a meeting of SCBA presidents, both sitting and former, at 2:00pm today after a delegation of senior lawyers led by SCBA President Advocate Mahbub Alam met and asked him yesterday not to allow Faizee to take the bench.

The SCBA will stage a sit-in today in front of Faizee's court in protest.

Two major dailies Prothom Alo and Bhorer Kagoj on October 30 first ran reports on Justice Faizee's alleged tampering with the

SEE PAGE 15 COL 1

Call for all-party talks on caretaker reforms

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Convenor of the Jatiya Oikya Mancha Dr Kamal Hossain yesterday asked the government to invite all political parties to a roundtable on reforms of the caretaker government system and strengthening the Election Commission.

"The government will have to respond to public demand for electoral reforms, otherwise people will force it to fulfil the demands," Dr Kamal said at a rally at Paltan Maidan in the capital organised by Jatiya Oikya Mancha.

"You will not be able to cling to power if you act at your will," added Dr Kamal, also president of Gono Forum, underscoring the need for the much talked about reforms for holding the next general elections in a credible manner.

Making their appearance for the first time in any programme of the Oikya Mancha, the leaders of the main opposition Awami League (AL) from the rally urged people to wage a vigorous movement against the four-party alliance government.

SEE PAGE 15 COL 1



PHOTO: STAR

Awami League General Secretary Abdul Jalil shakes hands with Bikalpa Dhara Bangladesh chief Badruddoza Chowdhury as Convenor of Jatiya Oikya Mancha Dr Kamal Hossain gestures at a rally at Paltan Maidan yesterday.

CCC Polls Nomination filing today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

BNP led 4-party alliance and Awami League-backed Chittagong Nagarik Committee are staging huge show-downs as their mayoral candidates - Mir Mohammad Nasir Uddin and ABM Mohiuddin Chowdhury will submit nomination papers today ahead of May 9 Chittagong City Corporation (CCC) elections.

The alliance gathering will be held at the Outer Stadium while that

SEE PAGE 15 COL 2

IOJ splits as Mufti Izharul forms faction

BDNEWS, Dhaka

Islami Oikyo Jote (IOJ), partner of the ruling four-party alliance, split formally yesterday with the formation of a faction led by Mufti Izharul Islam Chowdhury.

Leaders of the newly formed faction of IOJ said the evil force, engaged against Islam across the world, holds sway over Bangladesh

SEE PAGE 15 COL 3

Ahmadiyyas seek govt protection

Bigots' leaflets ask the community to leave Satkhira

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Salkhira

Leaders of the Ahmadiyya Jamaat in Munshiganj union in Shyamnagar upazila in the district yesterday have sought the administration's protection after receiving an eviction threat from the International Khatame Nabuat Movement (IKNM).

Addressing a press conference at Sundarban Bazar in Shyamnagar, Ahmadiyya leaders said over 4,000 members of their community are now panic-stricken following the distribution of the leaflets in which IKNM asked them to leave the area and urged the government to declare them non-Muslim.

The leaflet distribution followed the formation of a 21-member IKNM committee there during a visit by one of its central leaders, Noor Hossain Noorani, on March 18.

The Ahmadiyya community members have been threatened

since then, its leader GM Mobarak Ahmed said in a written statement read out at the press conference.

Shyamnagar Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO) Solaiman Mondol visited the area yesterday and assured them of all possible measures to protect them.

At a press conference held in Khulna on April 7, the Khulna district unit of IKNM threatened 'dire consequences' if the Ahmadiyyas are not declared non-Muslim.

It also announced a series of programmes as part of their agitation in Salkhira and other districts, including a rally, mass contact, a procession and laying siege to Ahmadiyya establishments.

As per the programme, Khatme Nabuat men will bring out truck and motorbike processions following their mahfil (congregation) at Harinagar High School grounds on April 16, and will then lay a siege to

SEE PAGE 15 COL 5

DRUG TRADE AT DHAKA JAIL Shift 600 inmates to Kashimpur

Recommends probe body

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Incidences of irregularities, disorder, and a thriving drug trade inside the Dhaka Central Jail has prompted a probe body to suggest shifting 600 inmates to the Kashimpur jail to stop such activities.

The eight-member committee,

formed on March 24, revealed in a report that the drug trade flourishes inside the jail walls due to a nexus between a section of jail officials, staff and criminals. The officials recommended transferring jail staff more frequently to prevent the build up of such a nexus, a source close to

SEE PAGE 15 COL 4

JS body asks for list of power thieves

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A parliamentary body yesterday asked the power ministry to send a list of the individuals, industries and organisations accused of power theft, a major reason for the financial losses of the state-owned electricity distribution authorities.

The parliamentary standing committee on public undertakings at a meeting also blasted the officials of the Dhaka Electric Supply Authority (Desa) for systems loss, mismanagement and irregularities.

Meeting sources said State Minister for Power Iqbal Hassan Mahmood came down heavily on the Desa for its mismanagement.

"Desa could not reduce its systems loss and improve management. Its systems loss is now 22.59 percent," Committee Chairman Abdul Alim told reporters after the meeting.

"A small percentage of the systems loss is due to technical reasons. But pilfering is the main cause for the huge amount of losses," he added.

However, the officials of Dhaka

Electricity Supply Company (Desco) told the meeting that they have initiated action against power pilferage. The Desco already fined a number of companies for power pilferage, the committee chairman said quoting the Desco officials.

The committee asked the Power Division under the Ministry of Power, Energy and Mineral Resources to submit a list of people or companies involved in power thefts at its next meeting on April 25.

Both the committee members and the Desa officials at the meeting said meter readers do not prepare bills properly creating scopes for evading electricity bills. A number of companies use a large amount of power but do not pay the actual tariff, they said.

In an exclusive interview with The Daily Star last December, the state minister for power said Desa was groaning under the burden of a huge financial mismatch of Tk 2,500 crore due to decade-long thefts by its officials and employees.

He said Desa owes Tk 4,000 crore to Power Development Board

SEE PAGE 15 COL 5

Prof Yunus to help BGMEA get duty-free access to US

STAR REPORT

Professor Muhammad Yunus, managing director of Grameen Bank, has agreed to facilitate the move of the Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA) in getting duty-free access to the US market.

Yunus will use his influence and contacts in the US and meet politically influential persons, media, representatives of buyers, financial institutions in New York on April 27 and in Washington DC on April 28, business sources said.

Lawmakers of the US Senate and Congress will also attend the Washington meeting.

A BGMEA team led by Annisul Huq will be with Professor Yunus during these meetings. Bangladesh missions in New York and Washington are also cooperating with the BGMEA to make these meetings successful.

Confirming the move, Annisul Huq, president of the BGMEA, said, "We are very grateful to Professor Yunus as he has agreed to help us in

SEE PAGE 15 COL 8

200 wounded as cops, workers clash at Savar

UNB, Savar

Some 200 people were wounded, 20 of them took bullets, as police clubbed and fired shots to quell a violent demonstration by the workers of a garment factory at Dhaka Export Processing Zone in Savar yesterday.

Witnesses said the massive trouble broke out at about 10:30am following a dispute over the ownership of Honorway Textiles and

Apparels factory.

Twenty-five of the injured were sent to hospitals and clinics in Dhaka and Savar.

Police and witnesses said some 1,700 workers of the factory co-owned by Sri Lankan and Hong Kong entrepreneurs found their factory under lock and key yesterday morning. They went to the office of the

SEE PAGE 15 COL 3

Ward commissioner killed in 'crossfire'

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kushtia

A municipal ward commissioner was killed in 'crossfire' between police and his accomplices in Kushtia early yesterday while police in Chudanga recovered body a former union parishad (UP) member.

Three police including a Sub-Inspector (SI) were also injured in

the Kushtia shootout.

Rifat-Ul-Karim Dolon, 37, a ward commissioner of Khoksa municipality, allegedly belonged to outlawed New Biplobi Communist Party (NBCP). He had long been evading arrest, said police.

Police said Dolon's associates in a bid to snatch him from police opened fire on them as they reached

SEE PAGE 15 COL 4

Ctg Jubo League leader arrested

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Kotwali police yesterday arrested Mashiur Rahman, general secretary of Chittagong city unit Jubo League, from his Kazi Nazrul Islam Road residence in Firingee Bazar of the port city.

A team of Kotwali police led by Sub-Inspector Ohiduzzaman went to the residence of Mashiur at around 12:30pm and arrested him, sources said.

A duty officer of Kotwali Police Station said Mashiur, who also owns garment and fisheries businesses, is a criminal listed with the Chittagong Metropolitan Police (CMP). But he could not say if there is any case against him.

SEE PAGE 15 COL 3

Prayer Timing		
April 11		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fair	4-35	5-10
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	4-45	5-00
Maghrib	6-24	6-28
Esha	7-45	8-15

Source: Islamic Foundation