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## DC-10 rescue work goes into a spin

Int'l flight operations still uncertain

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

The DC-10 aircraft that crash-landed at Chittagong airport Friday could not be salvaged even yesterday, with sources blaming lack of logistics and poor co-ordination among Biman, civil aviation authorities and army.

The delay has thrown into a spin the resumption of international flight operations at Shah Amanat International Airport till, sources said.

Biman Bangladesh Airline's BG-048 flight from Dubai with 215 passengers on board skidded off the runway after it was forced to make a belly-landing "due to technical faults".

However, Civil Aviation Authority of Bangladesh (Caab) Chairman

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## Akbar decision sees Ctg port lose Tk 14cr

JS body slams shipping minister's waving penal charge, sits further to find irregularities

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The shipping ministry and its parliamentary watchdog were at loggerheads yesterday over exemption of Tk 14.69 crore penal charges against different importers by the minister himself.

Shipping Minister Akbar Hossain told a meeting of the standing committee on his ministry that he had exempted the penal charges applying his special power.

"But it is necessary to discuss the matter here (at the parliamentary

body meeting) when I, as being the minister, have exempted the charges in my special jurisdiction," Akbar told the committee members at the Jatiya Sangsad Bhaban, according to a member of the committee.

The committee members, however, were far from being convinced with the explanation and decided to discuss the issue further at its next meeting.

Earlier, Chittagong Port Chairman AMM Shahadat Hossain placed a report before the meeting

that stated a number of importers were exempted from paying about Tk 14.69 crore in penal charges in between July 2002 and May this year.

The exemption, ranging from 50-100 percent of the penal charges, was offered for quick release of containers in a bid to resolve the container and cargo congestion at the port, the report said.

When a member wanted to know more about the move, both shipping secretary and port chairman tried to come up with 'explanations'. But

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PHOTO: STAR

Gas and petroleum bubbling up here and there from beneath the ground since the June 24 Tengratila blowout have poisoned the entire vicinity, ruining waters, forests, soil and jeopardising every living being.

## Teachers beat schoolboy to death

Parents allege

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Teachers beat a 12-year-old schoolboy to death in city's Moghbazar area, his parents and locals alleged yesterday.

Dipu Islam, a student of class IV of Nayatola Government Primary School who was beaten up by his teachers, died at Ad-Deen Hospital in Moghbazar on Tuesday.

His parents and classmates alleged that the teachers of the school beat up Dipu mercilessly on Saturday during school hours as he did not prepare his homework.

"He had high fever after he came home," said his father Nur Islam, guard of a rickshaw garage. As his condition did not improve, his parents admitted him to Ad-Deen Hospital on Monday, where he died on Tuesday evening.

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## 27 more courts in Dhaka soon to ease logjam

Machine-readable passport from January

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government plans to constitute at least another 27 metropolitan magistrate's court in Dhaka in addition to the existing 23 in a bid to break case logjam.

Besides, it is also going to set up courthouses in the northern and southern Dhaka to facilitate court-goers.

A high-level meeting of Ministry

of Home Affairs was also told that the government would start distribution of machine-readable passport (MRP) from January next year to prevent passport forgery.

"Dhaka is a city of about 1.4 crore people but the number of magistrate's court is only 23. We are planning to constitute at least 50 courts," State Minister for Home Affairs Lutfozzaman Babar told reporters yesterday.

He said the people of Dhaka now have to rush from one corner of the city to another for any court-related work.

"We're planning to set up another courthouse in the northern part to facilitate the court-goers. One CMM (chief metropolitan magistrate) and two additional CMMs will be there and the additional CMMs will be responsible for

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## Overcrowding forces Mirpur zoo to put big cats on the pill

AFP, Dhaka

The national zoo at Mirpur is set to introduce birth control after a series of unplanned births resulted in 36 tigers and lions living in an enclosure meant for only 16 animals, officials said yesterday.

"The number of lions and tigers has been proliferating for some years now," said Mafizur Rahman, head of the zoo.

"Now we've decided to introduce birth control measures for them as we don't have any more room left to

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## TENGRATILA BLOWOUT Niko rekindles fire to stop lethal emission

Rig for new relief well arrives today

STAR REPORT

The fire situation at Tengratila took a new turn Tuesday night with repeated explosions and heavy emission of foul smelling gas and black smoke, sparking panic among the nearby villagers.

The blaze stopped at 8:30pm on Tuesday, sources said, but stinking gases gushing out of the relief well caused heavy breathing problem to

the locals within a radius of some two kilometres.

Fearing a human disaster by the poisonous emission, the field authorities again set fire to the well three hours later. "I saw two gas field officials throwing burning cloths at the well head to torch it at 11:30pm," said Suman, a security guard.

He said the subsequent explosions also made large cracks at many

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## Trial of Ctg arms haul case begins

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Trial of the sensational Chittagong arms haul case began at the Chittagong Metropolitan Sessions Judge's Court here yesterday.

The first investigating officer (IO) of the case Ahadur Rahman, also the then Officer-in-Charge (OC) of Karnaphuli Police Station, gave his deposition before Judge Anwar Hossain.

During the hearing, nine firearms and ammunitions, recovered on April 2 last year, were produced as evidence before the court for the first time yesterday.

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## Questions ring over Mahmud's executive power

Law minister to brief PM on the issue

STAR REPORT

Policymakers of the government yesterday delegated Law Minister Moudud Ahmed to inform the prime minister (PM) about the legality of government advisors exercising executive power.

The issue surfaced following a press report that the constitution

does not allow the government advisors to exercise any executive power. The question came to the fore following the activities of the newly-appointed adviser to the energy ministry, Mahmudur Rahman.

LGRD and Cooperatives Minister Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan, Moudud,

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## Terrorist camp busted in CHT

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Bandarban

Security forces yesterday raided a den of terrorists in the bordering Naikhongchari area of Bandarban and arrested a gang member along with explosives and bullets.

Acting on a tip-off, a joint team of army and BDR started operation Tuesday evening and reached the terrorists' den in deep forest at Tengramurong, 30-km from Naikhongchari, yesterday morning.

They recovered two cartons of TNT explosives, 199 bullets of AK47 rifle, 91 bullets of pistol and arrested a terrorist, dressed in military uniform, from the den. The other members of

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## Shady Bac high officials wait for ACC jobs

JULFIKAR ALI MANIK

Eleven high officials of the now-defunct Bureau of Anti-Corruption (Bac) who are to be screened for absorption into the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) had earned the Bac jobs through fraudulence and seven of them were punished for it.

They were appointed district anti-corruption officers (Daco) in 1984 and promoted to the rank of deputy director (DD) during 1993-95. They had led the Bac activities for

more than a decade until its abolishment last year.

None of the 11 DDs lost their job for the irregularities. The seven officials were found guilty of fraudulence in 1997 but they got minor punishment. The authorities did not even launch any enquiry into the allegations against the rest four.

The officials are sitting idle after the government declared them "reserved employees" amid a controversy over their absorption into the ACC formed in November last year.

On completion of screening the first and second class officials of the Bac, the ACC is now working on screening the 14 BacDDs.

Sources said the ACC members are in a serious disagreement over the absorption of the DDs. One view is to appoint them in the ACC and the other is against their absorption since their recruitment in the Bac was not done lawfully.

A director general (DG), five directors and 14 DDs were working

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## Taskforce, DCC to monitor prices

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The national taskforce on reviewing essential price at a meeting yesterday decided to take stern action against hoarding of any imported food items and asked Dhaka City Corporation (DCC) to initiate a drive to control prices of essentials.

The taskforce also recommended relaxing all sorts of restrictions on opening letters of credit (L/Cs) for importing food items as a

contingency measure to keep the market stable.

The high-profile taskforce assigned to help keep prices of essentials stable will soon make an exclusive call on Finance Minister M Saifur Rahman to request him to take the step for liberalising food import.

With Commerce Minister Altaf Hossain Chowdhury in the chair, the meeting also decided to reactivate the Trading Corporation of

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