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High-profile litigation drew rare congress of star jurists

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The public interest litigation on Modhumoti Model Town project, which the High Court yesterday declared illegal, saw an uncommonly large array of top-ranking jurists appearing for and against the developer, Metro Makers Ltd.

Darting arguments and counter-arguments from virtually all members of the legal stardom marked the passage of the long-drawn-out legal battle between an environmentalist

SEE PAGE 15 COL 8

Modhumoti Model Town project illegal

HC rules in favour of public interest litigation; orders not to affect plot buyers

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday declared the controversial Modhumoti Model Town project of Metro Makers Ltd at Aminbazar on the outskirts of Dhaka unauthorised, illegal and against public interest.

The project located in a sub-flood-flow zone is contrary to the Dhaka City master plan and not approved by the city planners, Rajdhani Unnayan Kartripakkha (Rajuk), adjudged the HC division bench of Justice MA Matin and Justice AFM Abdur Rahman.

However, since people have already purchased some plots of the 'model town', the HC bench directed that the third party interest of the buyers should not be affected by this order.

The ruling came on a public

SEE PAGE 15 COL 1

Tuesday Group terms Morshed remark 'a little bit strange'

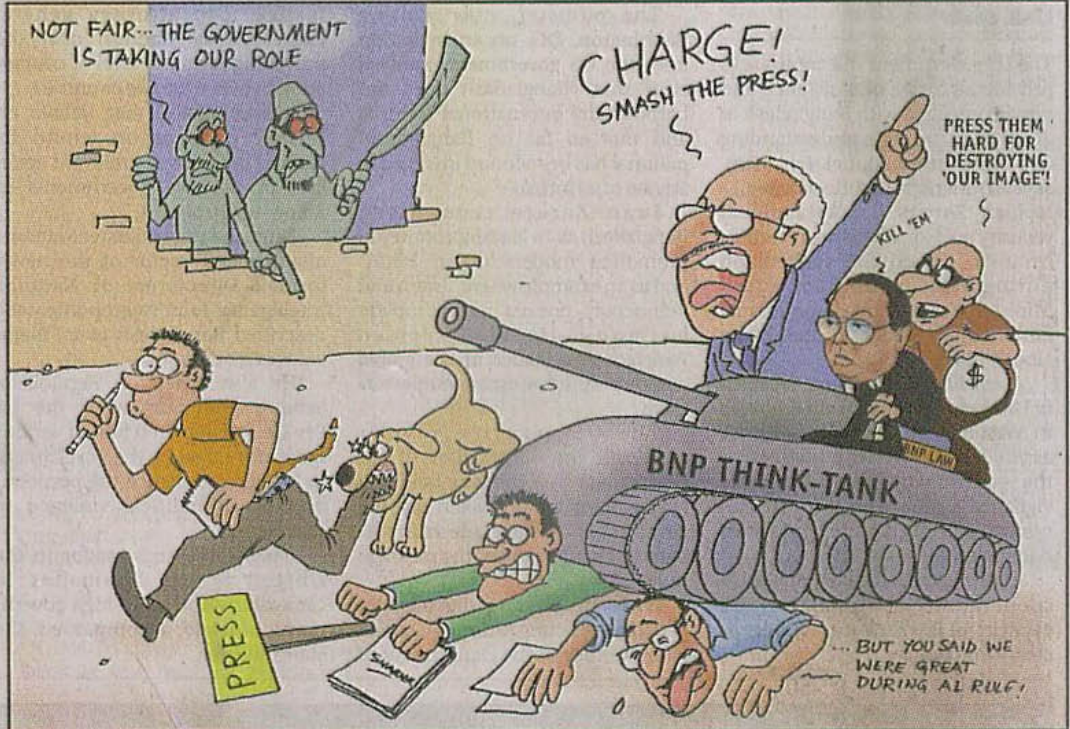
STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Ambassador of the Netherlands Kees Beemsterboer yesterday, in response to Foreign Minister M Morshed Khan's comment on the Tuesday Group's move to hold an international conference in Dhaka, said, "We have no intention to interfere in domestic politics here, but to help Bangladesh."

Terming the foreign minister's comment "a little bit strange," the Dutch ambassador said, "Free and fair election is very crucial for Bangladesh and we want to help in the process."

The foreign diplomats want to see a free and fair election and that's why we are interested in this subject," he added while addressing a roundtable discussion at city's Biam

SEE PAGE 15 COL 3



Banks to fix dollar rates to stabilise market

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

In a bid to stabilise dollar price, the Association of Banks Bangladesh (ABB) has decided to exchange the greenback at a rate acceptable to all banks from next Monday.

The banks will fix the buying and selling rates of dollar between Tk 65 and Tk 66 in the inter-bank foreign exchange market, sources said.

Meanwhile, dollar price in the inter-bank market further rose yesterday to Tk 65 from Tuesday's Tk 64.95. The price of dollar for import hit Tk 67, increasing by Tk 0.30 in a day.

After a meeting yesterday, ABB President Aminuzzaman told

SEE PAGE 15 COL 6



SCBA Secretary M Enayetur Rahim yesterday holds a page of a magazine containing the photo of Law Minister Moudud Ahmed accompanied by Mohiuddin Ahmed Jhantu, a convict of double murder who received presidential clemency.

PHOTO: STAR

CROSS-BORDER India discloses plans to stop cross-border migration

OUR CORRESPONDENT, New Delhi

India on Tuesday announced a series of steps including completion of fencing the border with Bangladesh by next year and floating border outposts in riverine areas to check illegal cross-border migration.

Indian Home Minister Shivraj Patil said the government will also issue multi-purpose identity cards

SEE PAGE 15 COL 8

LAW MISINTERPRETATION

Fate of fresh voter list in doubt

SHAKHAWAT LITON

The Election Commission (EC) appears to be in a quandary about preparing a fresh voter list for the next parliamentary election.

The EC finds 'misinterpretation of law' in the preparation of the last four voter lists and is itself confused about the provisions of two laws regarding the voter list that put the making of a fresh list in doubt.

The EC prepared fresh voter lists in 1983, 1990, 1995 and 2000 without amending the Electoral Rolls Ordinance 1982 which Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) MA Aziz said were not done lawfully, but following a convention.

The EC is yet to decide about making a fresh voter list or revising the existing one. EC officials now believe if they have to make a fresh

SEE PAGE 15 COL 4

Major parties boycott second day's EC talks

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Only 11 parties, out of 38 invited, joined the second day's dialogue of Election Commission (EC) on voter list while the mainstream opposition parties, except Jatiya Party (Ershad), boycotted it as per their earlier decision.

Apart from the major parties, a number of small parties also kept away from the meeting, showing lack of interest in the issue. The two sessions with poor participation

SEE PAGE 15 COL 8

PRESIDENTIAL MERCY

Enayetur granted anticipatory bail

Lawyers protest 'false' case, release Moudud's photos with Jhantu

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Supreme Court Bar Association (SCBA) Secretary Enayetur Rahim yesterday secured anticipatory bail from the High Court in a defamation suit filed by Law Minister Moudud Ahmed.

Advocate Rahim surrendered before the High Court yesterday, a day after the court of Chief

Metropolitan Magistrate, Dhaka issued warrant of arrest against him following Moudud's filing of the suit for making "false statement" about him on the issue of presidential amnesty granted to Mohiuddin Ahmed Jhantu, the much-talked-about convict of capital punishment.

Meanwhile, lawyers yesterday

SEE PAGE 15 COL 1

Study shows voter list grossly flawed

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Two former advisers of the caretaker government yesterday described the Chief Election Commissioner's (CEC) holding dialogue with all political parties on the voter list as 'unnecessary'.

They said the Election Commission (EC) should instead discharge its constitutional duty to prepare a correct voter list.

Addressing a roundtable discussion in the city, Professor Wahiduddin Mahmud and M Hafizuddin Khan, who served the caretaker governments of 1996 and 2001 as advisers, said the caretaker

government system is not the sole condition for free and fair elections, rather a strong and independent EC is a must for credible elections.

At the end of the day, it is the EC that conducts the elections, and so, it should be strengthened and given complete independence, they said.

Brotee and Fema, two election observer groups, organised the roundtable at the Biam conference centre. During the programme, they placed reports on municipal and parliamentary by-elections held in 2004.

Professor Khan Sarwar Murshid chaired the discussion attended by

SEE PAGE 15 COL 7

British cops net four in failed blasts
40 Afghans deported

AP, AFP, London/Paris

British police investigating a series of failed bomb attacks in London said yesterday they had arrested four men in the city of Birmingham, and explosives experts were examining a suspect package found during the searches.

Police said they could not confirm reports that one of the four was a suspected attacker from July 21, when four bombs planted on London Underground trains and a bus failed to fully detonate.

A spokesman for the metropolitan police said one man was

SEE PAGE 15 COL 3



LIFE AFTER BLASTS

INAM AHMED, FROM LONDON

Attacks change face of business

Londoners, in fear of more attacks, are avoiding the Underground. That should be good news for the cabbies. Not for all. Salam is contemplating to wrap up his business.

A few hundred metres from his Brick Lane attic office, Shane, a white cabbie at Commercial Road at Lime House, is contemplating to buy another car, because he thinks business will continue to boom, as it is now, for him.

Both Salam and Shane are waiting for a few more weeks to take the final decision, depending on the way the future unfolds.

As London is riding a wave of apprehension and uncertainty, things are turning out in different ways for different communities. Salam, a Bangladeshi running a taxi cab company called Eastern Executive Cars, finds his drivers are

SEE PAGE 15 COL 4

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