

AL questions Moudud's talking against military courts

Awami League (AL) yesterday said Law Minister Moudud Ahmed's comments questioning the legality of martial law courts run counter to the constitution as the fifth and seventh amendments have legitimised the country's two martial law regimes.

"In fact, this very person [Moudud] piloted the two amendments to the constitution and thus helped Zia and Ershad legitimise their military power. Now, he is shifting the blame on martial laws to disown his responsibility in manoeuvring presidential amnesty to a killer," Suranjit Sengupta, a senior AL leader, said.

Suranjit along with other senior leaders of the party was addressing a press conference at party's Dhanmondi office.

He said if martial law is a 'jungle rule' as described by the law minister, SEE PAGE 15 COL 7

Dollar gets dearer as banks fail to fix rates

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh Foreign Exchange Dealers Association (Bafeda) yesterday failed to reach a decision to fix the exchange rates of dollar in inter-bank transactions, while the greenback continued becoming dearer.

The inter-bank exchange rate of dollar rose by 0.68 percent from Monday's to Tk 65.70 yesterday and the nationalised commercial banks (NCBs) increased it by 0.93 percent or Tk 0.60 for export, import and remittance for customers.

The Bafeda meeting at its office intended to fix the dollar price saw strong opposition from all the foreign and some private banks, who argued it would be quite contradictory to the market based exchange rate system, meeting sources said. The meeting ended without any decision made.

The opposition said, if the rate is fixed, it would only create more

cartels in the market. They also wanted to know who would supply dollars in the market in a fixed price regime.

A meeting source quoted the representatives of the foreign and local private banks as pointing out that if Bangladesh Bank (BB) wants the exchange rates of dollar to be fixed then it should issue a circular towards that end. "Bafeda can't impose any fixed rate in the free-float market," the source quoted them as saying.

"Many disagreed with the idea, saying no one should fix the rates in the market based exchange rate system," Bafeda President and Sonali Bank Managing Director M Tahmilur Rahman told newsmen after the meeting.

As we could not make any unanimous decision, he said, "We will sit again next Tuesday to discuss the issue and hopefully we will strike an accord."

Sources said the meeting also

deliberated on ways to keep the forex market stabilised without any direct interference of the Bafeda.

However, the bankers at the meeting agreed to try to keep the highest selling rate of dollar at Tk 66 in inter-bank transactions and Tk 65 in remittance for the next one week from today. They also will try to keep the dollar price difference between the banks within Tk 0.50.

The Bafeda today will send the minutes of the meeting to the treasury heads of all commercial banks.

Since January 1 to yesterday, the local currency has depreciated by 7.59 percent against dollar, making the government and the central bank worried over its adverse impact on inflation.

In face of the nagging dollar crisis, the country's foreign exchange reserve is also depleting fast. From \$2.9 billion on July 16 the SEE PAGE 15 COL 5

Importers cheat Islami Bank out of Tk 12 crore

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Bogra

A clique of local importers in collusion with bank officials has swindled Islami Bank Bogra Branch out of some Tk 12 crore using fake letters of credit, as has been detected recently.

The bank has filed a case against the importers, namely Md Rajanur Rahman, his mother Jarina Khatun, AFM Jakaria and Begum Fazilatunnesa, and also sacked their accomplices Ershad Ali and Sarwar Hossain, senior officials of the branch, bank sources said.

According to the sources, a few years ago Islami Bank Bogra Branch lent Tk 4 crore to Rajanur, with which he opened a number of LCs to import rice, wheat and others food-grains. Later, he opened some more LCs over-drawing Tk 90 lakh with the help of the two bank officials. He then sold the imported goods in the open market without informing the bank authorities as required.

Rajanur did not stop there. He next opened at least 17 fake LCs for SEE PAGE 15 COL 2

JAMALUDDIN'S ABDUCTION

Haunted family still hopes against hope

MORSHED ALI KHAN

On the first-floor rented flat of Chandgaon residential area, Jamluddin's 85-year-old mother, Almas Khatun, moves from room to room. At times she murmurs words to herself, drifting in the house as if she is looking for someone.

"They took my son. I want to face that man and tell him please return my Jamal, I know you have abducted my Jamal," she tells any stranger she faces in her residence. Her grandson, a sad look on his young face, asks grandmother to sit quietly.

The house has been a tale of sadness ever since two years ago. On July 24, 2003 the family's bread-earner and a popular businessman, Jamaluddin Ahmed Chowdhury, was abducted. The family awaits his return till date, although soon after the abduction the police mediated a payment of Tk 25 lakh as ransom for his return. The abductors' smartness was reflected in the way they communicated with the family using SEE PAGE 15 COL 7



Jamaluddin's octogenarian mother weeps to look at her abducted son's photograph.

It's all because of a guava

SHAHEEN MOLLAH

An eight-year-old girl has become the victim of extreme cruelty after a woman threw her into an electric pole connected to high voltage wires for attempting to steal a guava.

The girl, Morsheda Akhter, narrowly escaped death but suffered serious burns and amputation after she was electrocuted near a house at north Sater Para in Narsingdi town last Thursday.

The daughter of a poor powerloom worker, Morsheda is now undergoing treatment at Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH), where SEE PAGE 15 COL 6



With burn injuries and an amputated hand, eight-year-old Morsheda Akhter Mili on DMCH bed.

Unite to be freed from godfathers, misrule

Kamal urges countrymen

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Gono Forum President Dr Kamal Hossain has urged the people to be united and start house to house campaign to save the country from the grip of criminals and black money holders.

"We can not leave this country with a few god fathers and criminals who have been plundering money and destroying the country's image abroad," Dr Kamal said while addressing as the chief guest at a discussion of Dhaka city unit of the Forum at the Jatiya Press Club auditorium yesterday.

"People have to be united to be SEE PAGE 15 COL 4

LIFE AFTER BLASTS

INAM AHMED, FROM LONDON

Britain at racial crossroads

Nilmoni Singh's experience in London is not counted among the 1,200. One warm night, while he was standing by the road waiting for a bus, a car slowed down, and somebody threw an ice cream on him, although it did not hit him. Before the car pulled away, the youngsters in it yelled: "Go back you Paki." Nilmoni, a Manipuri Bangladeshi, did not bother to report it to the police.

But Mohammad Mahmood's experience in Cambridge is recorded among the 1,200 race and faith hate incidents reported to the police since the 7/7 bombings. On the day of July 7, his neighbour, a white man, came out and started threatening him with dire consequences.

"He came to my shop and threw

abuses at me," said Mahmood, who runs a supermarket, Nasreen Dar on Histon Road. "He approached me in a threatening way. He might have hit me if I had not locked the door." Later, police arrested the white man.

Things like this have been happening, in ones or twos, in Britain since the day everything changed and the Asian and Muslim communities feel a deep sense of insecurity.

A new announcement yesterday by the transport police that they will target 'specific ethnic groups' in hunt for terrorists have further fuelled their anxiety. The race relationship in this country of multiculturalism today stands at a crossroad. Once the racists used to use "Paki" as an abuse, now they use "Muslim."

Asians say they feel uneasy while

travelling on the tube as they often find somebody giving a cold stare, an unlikely behaviour for London tube travellers, who would pull out a book and start reading to avoid eye contacts with others.

But then at Euston station yesterday, a white young man lent his hand to an old Pakistani woman trying to carry a trolley too heavy for her frail health. The man carried the trolley all the way outside the station, put it down and politely said: "Have a nice time, cheers," before walking away, carrying with him the strength of London.

But the Euston incident does not get circulated in the media. It is the news of abuses and attacks that get SEE PAGE 15 COL 1

ZIAUL MURDER CASE

2 Bangla Bhai men dropped from charge sheet

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

The police dropped two top associates of Bangla Bhai from the Ziaul Haque Zia murder case of Raninagar as the charge sheet was submitted to a Naogaon court yesterday.

Bangla Bhai's Bheli camp in-charge Shariatullah Simar and his deputy Mustafizur Rahman Khwaza were the top accused in the case.

Sub-inspector Entaz Ali submitted the charge sheet accusing 20 SEE PAGE 15 COL 3

Morshed waits for candid talks with Natwar

UNB, Dhaka

Bangladesh wants to discuss all bilateral issues with India with an open and candid mind, in keeping with the spirit of the time, as Indian External Affairs Minister Natwar Singh comes to Dhaka on August 6.

"We're very close friends. We will have frank and candid discussions on all issues. We will not discuss only negative issues, but we have also SEE PAGE 15 COL 6

Unified SSC course from 2006

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government has decided to introduce an untrack education system instead of the existing multi-track system in the Secondary School Certificate (SSC) course from the academic year 2006.

There will be no group-wise division such as Science, Commerce and Humanities in the first SSC examination to be held under the new system in 2008.

The system has been planned according to a recommendation by the latest education commission headed by Prof Moniruzzaman Miah.

Under the new system, students

will answer "structured" questions that will ask for several items of information on a single topic.

Instead of 50 marks for the existing essay-type questions, there will be 60 marks for structured questions to be prepared as per the untrack curriculum suggestions, an education ministry circular said, adding that there will be 40 marks for multiple-choice questions, instead of the existing 50 marks.

The new format, however, will not apply in case of General mathematics, higher mathematics, two papers of English and Bangla 2nd paper.

Examinees will be given 40 SEE PAGE 15 COL 3

Prices of essentials up 90pc in 5 yrs

Says study

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The prices of essentials have risen by 90 percent from 2001 to 2005, with an average increase of 18 percent a year, a study by Prof Abul Barkat said.

As the prices of different kinds of rice shot up by 75 percent, about three crore families in the country had to spend about an additional Tk 76,000 crore, the study mentioned.

Prof Barkat, also the general secretary of Bangladesh Economic Association (BEA), revealed the study findings at a roundtable on "Way out to check price hike of essentials and adulterated foods," organised by Bangladesh Consumer Society.

He said due to the price hike of essentials, the quality of living standard has gone down.

"Food consumption has lowered by 10-18 percent while people now have to spend more money to buy foods, curtailing their expenditure on education, health and housing," Prof Barkat mentioned in his paper.

The statistics of Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics, the finance ministry and Bangladesh Bank do not reflect the true picture of the SEE PAGE 15 COL 3

SC Bar demands withdrawal of mercy order

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Supreme Court Bar Association (SCBA) yesterday demanded withdrawal of the presidential amnesty for Mohiuddin Ahmed Jhinto, a convict of double murder, and resignation of all involved in the clemency process.

The SCBA leaders at an emergency general meeting asked the government to explain the reasons for the mercy and make public all documents of the amnesty process and all information about Jhinto's passport within August 7.

The SCBA decided to stage demonstration on August 8 to protest the presidential amnesty to Jhinto, w h o SEE PAGE 15 COL 8

Developers violating environmental norms

Allege urban planners at seminar

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Economists and urban planners at a discussion yesterday blamed real estate developers for wearing a stern commercial attitude, violating environment norms especially by filling up lowlands, and not considering the issues of parking space and convenience of neighbours during building construction.

This unplanned urbanisation is making Dhaka city vulnerable to hazards like waterlogging, traffic jam and environment degradation, they said at the discussion on "Planned Urbanisation and Housing Industry" organised jointly by the Shaptahik 2000 and Shah Cement at the Jatiya Press Club.

Noted economist Prof Muzaffer Ahmad questioned the source of income of the buyers of expensive apartments, citing an example that the Rehab (Real Estate Housing Association of Bangladesh) officials and apartment owners did not once agree to provide his students with information for a survey on the status of the apartment buyers.

He also questioned the role of the media running a huge number of apartment advertisements, which SEE PAGE 15 COL 1

Notice  
See full results of the 26th BCS (Special) Examinations, 2004 on page-2

Prayer Timing		
August 3		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	4-20	4-55
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	5-00	5-15
Maghrib	6-47	6-50
Esha	8-15	8-45

Source: Islamic Foundation

