

JS body finally to discuss Aug 21 carnage

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The parliamentary standing committee on home ministry has finally decided to discuss the grenade attack on the Awami League (AL) rally on August 21 last year at its next meeting, sources said.

The committee chairman agreed to hold a discussion on the heinous attack, that killed 22 people and injured over 200, following repeated pressures from the AL lawmakers, who are also the members of the committee.

The chairman yesterday convened the meeting on September 13 and asked the officials concerned to circulate notices among the committee members, sources at the parliament secretariat told The Daily Star.

This will be the first time that AL lawmakers will participate in a discussion inside the parliament after the August 21 grenade attack, if the meeting is held.

The party last year demanded

WB mulls \$700m aid

But disbursement to depend on conditions

REJAUL KARIM BYRON

If the government fulfils certain World Bank (WB)-set conditions, the WB will disburse a \$700 million aid to Bangladesh that it plans to commit for the current fiscal year (FY).

Of the sum, \$300 million is policy support lending, comprising \$200 million as the third Development Support Credit (DSC) and the \$100 million second Programmatic Education Sector Adjustment Credit (ESAC), a WB source said.

He said the remaining \$400 million is earmarked for projects to promote private sector participation in developing infrastructure, agricultural technology and power sector, and to reform the road sector and the tax and customs administration.

The WB did not release the third tranche of the DSC by the scheduled deadline of July as the government had failed to fulfil some of its 14 principal and a few sub-conditions. A finance ministry source said they hope the matter might be tabled at the WB board

meeting due next month. However, to get the issue placed at the meeting, the government will have to adjust the fuel prices to those on the global market in line with one of the conditions. An energy ministry source said they are going to take a decision in this regard very soon.

Another condition is for enacting a procurement law by parliament. A draft procurement law has already been sent to the Cabinet Division to get the cabinet's approval.

Besides, the government will have to draft a financial reporting act, making the corporate bodies accountable to parliament. A consultant has been appointed to draft the bill, a finance ministry source said.

In line with another WB condition, the government lowered the import tariffs on more than 3,000 items in mid-August, just one month after the current budget's passage through the Jatiya Sangsad. A source at the Economic Relations Division said, only after all these conditions are met, the WB board

will discuss the issue of third DSC disbursement at its September meeting.

The government also has to fulfil a dozen other WB conditions to avail of the \$100 million ESAC. A WB preliminary evaluation mission on the ESAC has already visited Bangladesh. The evaluation is expected to be completed by January next and based on its findings the WB will decide whether to release the credit or not.

One major condition for the ESAC wants the government to work out a plan to scale up teachers' pay at the well-performing schools and to improve performance of the schools, who are lagging behind, by two years.

The government also has to come up with attractive remuneration packages in order to attract qualified people to the teaching profession.

A WB source said, the bank in FY05 committed a total of \$601 million aid for Bangladesh, of which



Members of a mobile court unearthing a fake noodles factory during a drive in Rahmatganj in Old Dhaka yesterday. The factory markets substandard noodles in popular brands.

PHOTO: STAR



Activists of Islami Oikya Jote erect a stage on the road near Dainik Bangla intersection in the capital yesterday. The part of the road was blocked from 2:00pm to 6:00pm, causing severe troubles to public transport.

PHOTO: STAR

All set for Faridpur-1 by-polls

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Faridpur-1 parliamentary by-election slated for tomorrow seems set to be a contest between the ruling alliance candidates in absence of all the opposition parties.

Shaikhul Hadith Azizul Haque-led faction of Islami Oikya Jote (IOJ), a component of the ruling alliance, has already thrown its weight behind Mufi Sharafat Hossain, an independent candidate. Mufi Sharafat has emerged as a serious challenge to BNP candidate Shah

Saarc officials' meet begins in Kathmandu

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Senior officials of the Saarc countries began a meeting in Kathmandu yesterday to finalise the agenda to be endorsed by the fifth meeting of the Saarc information ministers scheduled to start today.

Nepal King Gyanendra is scheduled to inaugurate the two-day

Jamal Uddin's skeleton samples brought to Dhaka for DNA test

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Forensic tests were done yesterday on the skeleton believed to be of abducted Chittagong businessman Jamal Uddin Ahmed Chowdhury to identify it while some samples of hair and bones were sent to Dhaka for chemical and DNA tests.

A four-member medical board led by Prof Dr Hasanuzzaman Bhuiyan, head of forensic department at the Chittagong Medical College Hospital (CMCH), conducted the tests in the morning.

The board did not find any marks of injury on the skeleton recovered from remote hill of Kanchan Nagar union under Fatikchhari in the district on August 24 night, sources said.

Later, an X-ray examination of

the skeleton was done at the CMCH radiology department to determine its age.

The board sent some samples of hair and bones from the skeleton's rib, femur and vertebrae, and earth of the place where it was buried to Dhaka for chemical analysis and other tests.

The board also handed samples of hair, two teeth and two bones—femur and humerus—to the Criminal Investigation Department (CID) that is investigating the sensational abduction case. A CID official yesterday took the samples to Dhaka for DNA tests, sources said.

Dr Hasanuzzaman said the medical board, also comprising Assistant Prof Dr Mohib Ullah and Dr Pradip Kumar Chowdhury of

the forensic department and Assistant Prof Dr Anisul Moula of the radiology department, will be able to make a primary report within three days and complete it within a week.

Meanwhile, Kala Mahub, one of the five accused in the murder of Jamal Uddin, was placed on another two-day CID remand yesterday.

The Court of Metropolitan Magistrate Moksedur Rahman granted the remand prayer placed by CID Inspector Anwar Hossain, also the investigation officer (IO) of the case.

Kala Mahub and Shahid Chairman — another prime suspect-

Substandard noodles in popular brands

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Popular noodle brands sold in shops throughout the city could be fake, as some adulterators have been producing substandard noodles and marketing them under famous brand names.

A mobile court yesterday raided a fake noodle factory in the Rahmatganj of Chawk Bazar area in the city. They found that the factory cheats consumers by packaging fake 'Maggi noodles', 'Captain egg noodles', 'Shanghai egg noodles', 'Remond egg noodles' and also 'Prime grind spices'.

It has also been learned from workers that the factory produces all the noodles in the factory and packages them for sale in the market. The factory does not have any license from the Bangladesh Standard and Testing Institute (BSTI), a source present with the court said.

Md. Farukh, the owner of the factory, fled away after sensing the mobile court's arrival. The court arrested Md. Jamal Uddin, the manager of the factory, and sent him to jail for one month.

The police filed two cases and

City kitchen markets in unhygienic state

MORSHED ALI KHAN

Fish, chicken and meat shops at kitchen markets in the capital operate under extremely unhygienic conditions, posing serious health hazards.

Fish sellers slice fishes on dirty floors infested with rotten leftovers and swarmed by flies at the major kitchen markets including the ones at New Market, Karwan Bazar, Mohammadpur, Thatarai Bazar and Rayer Bazar. Improper drainage and lack of regular waste disposal in these markets create environmental pollution in the areas.

Shops selling and dressing chickens give an appalling look. They use the same boiled water throughout the day for dressing chickens, making it too dirty. Swarmed by flies and insects, floors of the shops are littered with chicken wastes emitting stinking odour.

Many of the shops use the footpaths

in front of them to dress chickens. In Mohammadpur, some shops were seen yesterday retrieving chicken parts like liver, heart, feet and skin from a pile of rubbish near a dustbin at the market and reselling them later.

Meat sellers do not follow any hygiene code from slaughter of animals to sale of meat. Defying laws, butchers slaughter cows and goats in the early morning every day on the road or footpath near the kitchen markets without any medical check-up of the livestock.

The meat is then taken to shops in dirty wheelbarrows and rickshaw vans. The shops do not have fridge to preserve meat and it remains uncovered throughout the day. These shops are another source of bad odour with stains of animal blood on the walls and floors.

Some sellers at New Market admitted that the ice they buy to preserve fish is made of dirty water.

On Friday, one seller at the crowded fish market showed an ice slab that looked slightly purple and murky, indicating it was made of contaminated water. "Sometimes, we find dead flies and insects frozen in the ice that we use for preserving fishes," he said.

In most cases, lack of sellers' awareness about hygiene is the main cause of such situation in the kitchen markets. Moreover, Dhaka City Corporation (DCC) has never looked into the problems of hygiene in the kitchen markets.

"We are never told how to maintain hygiene in our shops," said a shop owner at Karwan Bazar.

Magistrate Nurul Alam of the DCC said kitchen markets should also be included in the drive against adulterated and unhygienic foods. "We might visit some of these markets soon."

Tk 3.5-crore touchstone statue recovered

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Manikganj

Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) recovered a 70kg touchstone statue worth about Tk 3.5 crore from Nali Purba Para village under Shibhaloy Police Station in the district on Saturday night.

A special team of Rab-4 led by Assistant Police Superintendent (ASP) Zalal Ahmed recovered the statue of Shiva's phallus from the house of Kalipada Chakravarty at about 10:00pm, Rab said, adding that Kalipada was not found during the raid.

Earlier Rab members visited the house in the guise of purchasers and negotiated the price of the statue.

Rab-4 recovered three touchstone statues since June 26 in Manikganj district, sources said.



Staff of a broiler chicken shop dress birds in a dirty and unhygienic environment at Kalmilata City Corporation Market in Tejgaon in the city yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

Iraqi constitution panel signs draft charter

AP, AFP, Baghdad

The Iraqi parliament received the new draft constitution yesterday over the objections of Sunnis on the committee that wrote it, but lawmakers adjourned without voting on it. The Sunni Arab speaker was not present.

A final version of Iraq's draft constitution was signed yesterday by an overwhelming majority of the panel, committee members said.

"The final version has been signed," Munther al-Fadhil, a Kurdish-allied parliamentist told AFP. "An overwhelming majority has

signed the draft constitution... A few amendments have been done," he said.

Khudair al-Khozai, a Shia member of the drafting panel, said "the draft has been agreed upon in the panel and was presented Sunday to the assembly with few amendments related to the demands of the Sunni Arab brothers."

But he pointed out that "the changes are minor and do not affect the core" of the current draft.

Latter Iraqi leaders presented the final draft of a new constitution to parliament, ending weeks of tortuous negotiation despite persistent

objections to the wording from the disgruntled Sunni Arab minority.

Negotiators agreed 11th-hour changes to the text in a bid to win endorsement from the alienated former elite which has driven the anti-US insurgency but the changes appeared to have failed to bring Sunni representatives on board.

"The constitution is a gift to the Iraqi people," deputy parliament speaker Hussein al-Shahrastani said after the entire text of the charter

Terrorism, drug trafficking to top Indo-Pak talks

AFP, New Delhi

Top Indian and Pakistani officials will discuss drug trafficking and terrorism and review the status of nationals jailed in each other's countries during talks starting today, Pakistani Home Secretary Syed Kamal Shah said yesterday.

Shah is leading an 11-member delegation to the talks while the Indian team is headed by Home Secretary (top interior ministry official) V.K. Duggal.

"Usually the agenda is terrorism and drug trafficking but this time we have requested that we would like to discuss the issue of prisoners held in both countries," Shah told reporters.

FIGHTING CRIME, VIOLENCE Dr Kamal for unity of progressive forces

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Gono Forum President Dr Kamal Hossain yesterday urged all progressive forces as well as democratic political parties to be united to fight against all types of violence and criminal activities in the country.

"Unity of progressive forces has been achieved to an extent in the recent days, but we need a concrete unity of all peace loving people like the times of Liberation War in 1971 and Language Movement of 1952," Dr Kamal said.

The eminent lawyer was speaking at the prize giving ceremony on

DCC undertakes month-long drive to check dengue

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka City Corporation (DCC) has undertaken a month-long drive to destroy larvae of aedes mosquito, responsible for the deadly dengue fever in some dengue-prone areas of the capital.

DCC under its health, conservancy and public relations departments will run the programme from September 15 to October 14 especially in the dengue-affected Dhanmondi, Kolabagan and Gulshan areas.

This was disclosed by the DCC

Prayer Timing		
August 29		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	4-30	5-05
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	4-45	5-00
Maghrib	6-33	6-36
Esha	8-00	8-30