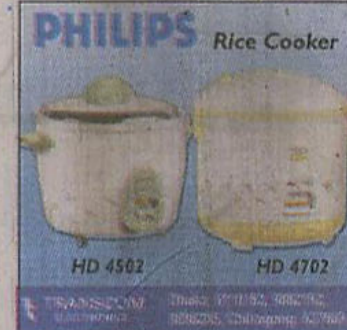




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INCOME TAX RETURN Submission date may be deferred by one month

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The deadline for submitting income tax return may be deferred by one month from the earlier fixed September 30 as the newly introduced elaborate tax return system becomes effective from this fiscal year.

The final decision regarding the deadline, however, will be made after Finance Minister M Saifur Rahman, who is now on an official visit in Washington, returns home on September 29.

From this year on, one will have to submit detailed information on one's lifestyle and wealth statement

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Myanmar minister arrives in city

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Myanmar Commerce Minister Major General Tin Naing Thein arrived in Dhaka yesterday on a three-day official visit to Bangladesh.

He came as an advanced member of a 31-member high-powered military delegation led by General Thura Shwe Mann, a member of the Myanmar State Peace and Development Council (SPDC). It will be the first time for Shwe Mann, also the third most powerful leader in Myanmar, to visit Bangladesh.

The Myanmar commerce minister is due to hold official talks with his Bangladeshi counterpart Altaf Hossain Choudhury today on ways of enhancing bilateral trade between the two neighbouring countries.

Official sources said the two-way trade now accounts for only around \$30 million a year compared to a

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Force govt to accept reforms for fair polls

Hasina urges people

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Leader of the Opposition and Awami League (AL) President Sheikh Hasina yesterday called upon the countrymen to be strongly united for compelling the government to accept the opposition's electoral reforms proposal to hold a free and fair election.

"The government does not want to pay heed to the electoral reforms proposal, sensing that it

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Austerity measures cosmetic, won't work

Economists observe

REJAUL KARIM BYRON

The finance ministry's austerity measures, if carried out successfully, will save the government Tk 37 crore from its current revenue expenditure, which constitutes only .09 percent of the total revenue budget.

Economists are also of the opinion that it is very much possible to shed expenditure by at least Tk 1,000 crore from the current revenue budget. But the government will not

be able to attain much in bringing down the expenditure, as the measures it has taken so far are 'merely cosmetic', they observed.

In a bid to maintain the country's macroeconomic stability especially by containing the alarming rise in inflation in the wake of oil price hike in the global market, the finance division took some austerity measures early this month.

The measures include 10 percent cut in the budgetary allocation for

petrol and lubricant as well as "other expenditures". Besides, per head entertainment allowance for the government employees has also been halved.

The current revenue expenditure stands at Tk 39,110 crore. An analysis of the budgetary documents shows that Tk 208 crore has been earmarked for petrol and lubricant usage by all ministries and departments and 10 percent cut from this

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PHOTO: STAR

Local children pose with dead fish that they had just gathered from the city's Gulshan Lake yesterday. Earlier the fish had bloated and rose to the surface of the lake water polluted with toxic wastes.

SEMINAR ADOPTS DECLARATION

Dhaka can take leadership in upholding 'real' Islam

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Islamic scholars from South and Southeast Asia yesterday said Bangladesh can take the leadership role of the Muslim countries for being a model state of the Islamic world and a moderate nation with functional democracy.

They said Bangladesh is also a model of communal harmony as its

constitution recognises all citizens as equal and there is no hatred amongst its people.

The people of Bangladesh are moving ahead by upholding Islamic values and this country certainly does not suffer from the image of having kept women indoors, they told a seminar.

Women are being treated as equal partners of development, a

rare case in most of the Muslim countries, they added.

The Islamic scholars and thinkers were speaking on the concluding day of the three-day regional seminar titled "Islam: Religion of Peace, Progress and Harmony; Bangladesh: Model of a Moderate Muslim Nation."

Organised by Dhaka-based

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VOTER LIST

No decision yet to engage Gram Sarkar, EC says

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

An Election Commission (EC) press release yesterday said it has not taken any decision to engage the Gram Sarkar heads to prepare the voter list.

Denying media reports about engaging the Gram Sarkar heads to prepare the new voter list, the press release said, "The voter list is being prepared according to the procedures similar to the previous years."

Chief Election Commissioner MA Aziz, however, told journalists on Thursday that the EC would engage the Gram Sarkar heads, who are also members of Union

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Morshed calls for finding root causes of terrorism

UNB, Dhaka

Foreign Minister M Morshed Khan has said the menace of terrorism cannot be countered by military means alone and stressed the need for looking into its root causes.

"We need to adopt a holistic approach that will address its underlying causes," he told a ministerial meeting of the Organisation of Islamic Conference (OIC) held in New York on Friday on the sidelines of the 60th session of the UN General Assembly (UNGA), said a news release in Dhaka yesterday.

The foreign minister, who is leading the Bangladesh delegation to the UNGA session in New York, said the OIC has a "special responsibility" to translate into action the commitments its leaders have made.

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AL likely to ask Hanif to explain his remarks

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Awami League (AL) is likely to ask its Dhaka city unit President Mohammad Hanif to explain his recent statement on dropping secularism from party policy.

The AL Central Working Committee at its September 27 meeting will discuss the matter, party sources said.

It will also discuss the recent recruitment of student leaders of ruling BNP and Jamaat-e-Islami as

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Dhaka got a bad name despite good records

Saifur laments at Washington meet

UNB, Dhaka

Finance Minister M Saifur Rahman highlighted at a Washington meet Bangladesh's good record in economic growth, poverty reduction and human development, brushing aside adverse criticisms by some quarters against the country.

He questioned how these achievements were possible even with dwindling external aid and after regular servicing of all foreign debts if there have been so many

things gone wrong in the country.

The minister lamented that despite such good performances, some organisations labelled Bangladesh as 'most corrupt country'.

Delivering the keynote speech at an international roundtable on 'Aid Effectiveness' in the US capital on Friday, he pointed out that these achievements have been recognised worldwide, including by development partners of the country.

Some 300 participants represent-

ing various countries, the media, NGOs, civil-society groups and officials from the World Bank and the IMF attended the roundtable organised by the two Bretton Woods institutions. Sebastian Mallaby, member of the editorial board of the Washington Post moderated the session.

"Bangladesh has its own commitment and programme to further improve governance," Saifur told his audience, adding that no amount of

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Khulna 'mastermind' freed on farcical condition

STAR REPORT

Police on Friday released the school-teacher they arrested as the 'mastermind' behind the August 17 blasts in Khulna on condition that he will help them arrest six local bombers.

The police arrested Abdul Hakim Gazi, a senior teacher of Saint Joseph High School, at his house in Batiaghata on Thursday night.

The six Jama'atul Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB) cadres reportedly manufactured around 60 bombs at their rented house of Hakim, carried out blasts in Khulna and went into hiding, reports our Khulna staff correspondent.

"Though Hakim is released on a condition, he has been asked not to leave his house without permission," said the officer-in-charge of

Batiaghata Police Station.

He will be under continuous police watch and would be taken into custody at any time for necessary legal action, the OIC added.

Police seized some paper cartons, cotton yarn, electric wire, some power explosives, jagged fragments of marble and JMB booklets from his house.

Besides, detectives picked up Dr Liakat Ali, medical officer of Mongla Port Hospital, twice in the last three weeks suspecting his connection with the blasts, sources in the Detective Branch (DB) of police said.

Some books written by Ali, Hakim's neighbour, on religion were also seized.

JOYPUKHAT
BDNEWS adds: Police yesterday

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One wounded in BSF firing on Jessore border

4 missing

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Jessore

One person was seriously injured and four people were reportedly missing after the Border Security Force (BSF) of India opened fire on the Borna border in Jessore in the early hours yesterday.

The injured, Dalim, 20, a night guard of Kulia village in Chowgacha upazila, was rushed to Jessore General Hospital in a critical condition.

The four people, who are missing since the shooting incident, were Alim, Uzzal, Idris and Asadul of the same village.

Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) and police sources said night guards Dalim, Tabibur and Ali Kader were on duty at Kuliabara near Borna border on Friday night. At dawn yesterday the

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NEWS ANALYSIS

JS ignores burning issues

SHAKHAWAT LITON

The parliament session that was prorogued on Wednesday once again proved that important issues are not addressed in the House, it rather sits mainly to meet the constitutional obligation and pass some government bills.

When the session began on September 8, a number of burning issues like the August 17 serial bomb blasts across the country, price hike of fuel and essentials were expected

to be discussed in the House. The opposition lawmakers submitted 28 notices demanding discussion on the issues, adjourning the other business of the House.

But none of the demands was met, and no discussion was held on any issue of significance. The speaker, as he had done in the past, rejected all the notices because the ruling alliance did not want any issue to be discussed in the House.

In the absence of the main opposition Awami League, the ruling

alliance lawmakers did not raise any important issue in the House though they participated in different businesses of the sittings like question answer session, call attention notices.

Even, none of the lawmakers raised any burning issue during the PM's question time for half an hour on last Wednesday.

The ministers answered a total of 794 questions, both starred and unstarred. Lawmakers submitted

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