

Bar body won't meet SC judges if Faizee is present

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Supreme Court Bar Association (SCBA) will boycott a conventional courtesy call on the Supreme Court judges today if controversial judge Faisal Mahmud Faizee remains present there.

The court opens today after 44 days of annual vacation. According to a long-standing tradition, the SCBA leaders and members meet the chief justice and all other judges of the Supreme Court and its High Court division.

The SCBA leaders said at a press briefing yesterday that they want to uphold the tradition. "We urge the chief justice and other judges to keep Faizee out of this courtesy call, so that we can maintain this tradition," SCBA president Advocate Mahbubey Alam said.

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Meeting on gas rationing today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A high-level working committee sits again today to make a decision on introduction of a gas rationing system in a bid to meet the existing energy crisis after a failed meeting on Thursday.

The five-member working committee, which was formed on Thursday for chalking out a plan for the rationing system, is likely to submit its report today, sources said.

Power development sources said the power ministry did not agree with the proposal for introducing the rationing system, fearing power crisis might increase.

Earlier, Energy Adviser Mahmudur Rahman told reporters, "If the report of the working committee gets the prime minister's nod on Sunday (yesterday), the rationing system of gas distribution will be introduced from Monday (today)."

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Strike at Ctg port ends

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

The agitating owners and workers of lighter vessels withdrew the indefinite strike enforced in the early hours of Friday and resumed work yesterday at the Chittagong Port.

They called off the strike after the Chittagong Customs Authority and Chittagong Port Authority (CPA) agreed, in a meeting with them, to release the wheat laden 24 lighter vessels detained since February 27.

The eight-hour long meeting initiated by Chittagong Chamber of Commerce and Industry (CCCI) and the port users started in the CCCI auditorium at 3:30pm. In the meeting, the customs and port authorities came under fire of the port users for allowing the unloading of wheat from the vessel MV Sheltec to the 24 vessels.

The meeting unanimously agreed to the 11-point recommendations taken earlier to resolve the ongoing stalemate. The meeting also decided to unload the wheat to the Central Storage Depots (CSD) of Department of Food or at any other warehouse outside the port area.

The meeting decided that the

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Sehri-Iftar

Ramadan	Oct	Sehri	Iftar
12	17		5-34
13	18	4-37	5-33



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Prayer Timing

October 17		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fair	4-37	4-43
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	4-00	4-15
Maghrib	5-34	5-49
Esha	7-30	8-00

Source: Islamic Foundation

NEC okays PRSP

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The National Economic Council (NEC) yesterday approved the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) entitled "Unlocking the Potential: National Strategy for Accelerated Poverty Reduction" at the eighth meeting of the council presided over by Prime Minister Khaleda Zia at the NEC conference room in the capital.

The 400-page PRSP worked out indicators for monitoring and evaluation of poverty reduction strategy.

The PRSP also featured a policy matrix of the government's future programmes including complete separation of the judiciary from the executive, establishment of a human rights commission, reconsidering setting up a central bonded warehouse, hiring talented people for top level public administrative positions from outside the government by 2007.

Out of 14 percent resources of the

GDP a year that is needed for the implementation of the programmes under the PRSP, ten percent will be mobilised internally while the rest four percent will be managed from external sources, Planning and Finance Minister M Saifur Rahman told the reporters after the NEC meeting.

The government in March 2003 formulated an interim PRSP in line with suggestions of the donors that has subsequently resulted in the formulation of the full-fledged PRSP.

Meanwhile, of the three-year tenure (from Fiscal Year 04-05 to FY 06-07) of the PRSP, nearly one and a half years have already passed by.

Hossain Zillur Rahman, an economist associated with the PRSP design, said there will be an annual review of the outcome on the basis of the indicators suggested in the PRSP and the first review will be done in the next month.

In the PRSP, the government commits to put in a mechanism to attract talents for senior government positions from within and outside the government.

The PRSP also makes a number of other pledges including introduction of online tendering process, holding upazila and zila parishad elections, providing extra ADP budgetary support to better performing union councilsetc.

The World Bank's funding in the PRSP will be conditional on the government's implementing the commitments under it.

The PRSP document shows projected expenses for some of the programmes, such as, \$12.12 billion for primary school programme, Tk 161 billion for school lunch programme and \$343.8 million for sanitation programme during 11 years from 2005 to 2015.

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As winter approaches, a farmer nurtures plants at his garden in Rampal in Munshiganj yesterday, aspiring to make a healthy profit by selling seasonal vegetables.

Blacks march in US amid anger over Katrina response

AFP, Washington

Tens of thousands of African-Americans rallied on Saturday against lingering inequalities in the United States, cheering speakers who accused the US government of "negligence" in its response to Hurricane Katrina.

One of the organisers of the march, Nation of Islam leader Louis Farrakhan, said the federal government had failed to help the mainly African-American residents of New Orleans after Hurricane Katrina hit the southern US coast on August 29.

"I firmly believe if the people on those rooftops had blond hair and blue eyes and pale skin, something would have been done in a more timely manner," said Farrakhan.

"We charge America with criminal neglect."

Farrakhan suggested a lawsuit should be brought against federal agencies for failing to fulfil their duties in the aftermath of the storm, which

claimed more than a thousand lives along the Gulf of Mexico coast.

Dozens of other speakers throughout the day referred to the crisis following Hurricane Katrina as a symbol of the injustice and poverty faced by the country's African-American community.

Reverend Jesse Jackson, leader of the National Rainbow/PUSH Coalition and a former presidential candidate, said the images of blacks stranded in New Orleans flood waters should provide an impetus for organizing political action to improve the plight of African-Americans and the poor.

The "Millions More Movement" rally was designed to create a national movement with the goal of "transforming American society and eliminating poverty and injustice," organisers said.

The event was organised by a broad coalition, including Farrakhan, Jackson, the National

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Old city dwellers protest water crisis

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Residents of the city's old town area took to the street yesterday protesting frequent disruptions of water supply for last two months.

Residents of Suritola, Lutfur Rahman Lane and Tekerhat of the old town area demonstrated on the North South Road at 12:00 noon and hindered traffic movements resulting in a traffic jam that lasted until 12:45pm.

The police, being informed, rushed to the spot and brought the situation under control. No untoward incidents occurred during the demonstration.

Reju Begum, a resident of Suritola and a local BNP leader, said, "We are facing the water crisis for the last two months. Our sufferings have intensified during the month of Ramadan." She said many of the well off locals purchase water from far away and

t r a n s p o r t

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Residents of Old Dhaka take to the street with pitchers on North South Road yesterday to protest against scant water supply for the last two months.

15 hurt as JCD, BCL clash with Shibir at DUET

BDNEWS, Gazipur

At least 15 Islami Chhatra Shibir (ICS) leaders and activists were injured in a clash between the ICS and Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) and Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) at Dhaka University of Engineering and Technology (DUET) yesterday.

The injured were DUET unit ICS president Abul Kashem, general secretary Moshak, organising secretary Mizan, activists Jobaer, Tipu, Akib, Imran, Belal and Merin.

The injured were admitted to the DUET medical centre and Gazipur Sadar Hospital.

Campus sources said the clash erupted when the JCD, the student wing of the ruling BNP, protested the invitation of some outsiders to a Shibir iftar party and brought out a procession on the campus.

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Prisoners to get only 3 newspapers

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

From today, prisoners will not be allowed to read or carry any newspaper other than three dailies -- the Amar Desh, the Manabzamin and the New Age, a senior jail official told The Daily Star yesterday.

"We have already got the order verbally from the higher officials and it has been conveyed to all the prisons across the country. Official notice in this regard is likely to be issued within a couple of days," a source in the jail directorate said.

"No newspaper which criticises the government will be served to the prisoners," the source said quoting the verbal order.

Alongside the opportunity to read the newspapers provided by the authorities, a p r i s o n e r w a s s o

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AUG 17 BLAST CASES

All cases go to speedy court by month-end

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

All the cases filed in August 17 country-wide blasts will be brought under the Speedy Trial Tribunal within this month and trials should begin in a week, state minister for home told the press yesterday.

"We hope the result will come within the next three months," said Lutfozzaman Babar, emerging from a ministry meeting on law and order.

He also mentioned the ministry made a draft of the anti-terrorism act, which was placed with the prime minister's office. The act is awaiting the prime minister's nod, the state minister said.

The meeting discussed different types of crime that occur during Ramadan, including carjacking, mugging, drug-peddling and robbery in the night coaches, and directed the law enforcers to take actions to prevent these.

About Friday's tragic accident in Savar, the meeting expressed its condolences and directed police to investigate whether any vested quarters were involved in the ransack of two garments factories.

MUGGING

Rab submitted a report after making an investigation into muggings during Ramadan, which mentioned several

vulnerable spots, including Farmgate, Sheraton, Sonargaon and Sonir Akhra crossings, in front of Sutpur and Kotwali Police Stations and several other places in old Dhaka.

The muggers make their attempt to snatch when people are on their way home from marketing.

The meeting directed Rab to remain vigilant in those areas along with police and to take necessary actions to prevent mugging.

CARJACKING

The meeting observed that rampant carjackings take place in the city, especially in Motijheel and its surrounding areas, at the middle

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Rice gives London total support over Iran

AFP, London

US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice yesterday gave full backing to Washington's key ally London over its handling of Iran, accused of developing nuclear weapons and involvement in insurgent attacks on British troops in Iraq.

"The British, the French -- you heard: the French -- the EU-3 absolutely are clear" in their refusal to see Iran acquire nuclear weapons, Rice said Sunday.

Rice arrived in London on Saturday from Russia, where Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov clashed with Rice by defending Tehran's right to enrich uranium for atomic energy.

France and Germany (the EU-3) broke down in August, when Iran rejected a deal that offered trade and other incentives for a full cessation of fuel cycle work, the focus of fears that Iran could acquire nuclear weapons.

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Talks between Iran and Britain,

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One killed in 'crossfire'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A criminal was killed in a 'crossfire' between the Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) and a gang of robbers early yesterday.

The alleged criminal, Badsha, 35, along with his accomplice, Nurul Islam, was captured from Lalkuthi of Mirpur on Saturday at around 8:30pm, a press release of Rab said.

He was killed on the Dhaka-Paturia highway near Amin Bazar.

Based on his confessions, Rab took Badsha to a hideout of his gang. Sensing their presence, the gang opened fired and Rab fired back.

At that time Badsha tried to escape and was shot six times in the 'crossfire'. He succumbed to his injuries on the spot.

Badsha was accused in six murder cases, a number of robbery

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