

MEET WITH COMMERCE MINISTER

Rise of religious extremism to hit economy adversely

FBCCI leaders warn govt

BDNEWS, Dhaka
The Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FBCCI) yesterday warned the government against the rise of religious extremism saying it could take the economy to a critical situation.

inflation, price hike of essential commodities and erosion of purchasing capacity, calling on the government to address the problems.
The FBCCI leaders admitted that the oil price hike in the international market put pressure on the macroeconomic balance, but said the government should carry on subsidising oil for smooth operation of industrial and business activities.

monitoring cell to observe price situation. The cell can quarterly review the price and take necessary steps," the FBCCI president said.
The FBCCI leaders also emphasised strong negotiating capacity to protect the national interest in trade talks at regional and global levels.

(Safta) to safeguard the interest of the nation," the FBCCI President said.
The FBCCI leaders urged the government to increase resources for capacity building of the tariff commission officials for strong negotiation capacity.
Altaf Hossain assured the leaders of protecting the national interest in WTO talks through pressing issues, such as market access and movement of natural persons under Mode-4 of the General Agreement on Trade in Services (Gats).

KIBRIA KILLING Habiganj residents demand int'l investigation

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Residents of Habiganj district formed a human chain in Dhaka yesterday to press home their demand for an international investigation into the killing of former finance minister Shah AMS Kibria and exemplary punishment to the killers.



PHOTO: STAR

Residents of Habiganj district form a human chain in front of the Supreme Court in the city yesterday demanding an international investigation into the killing of former finance minister Shah AMS Kibria.

Dissolve inactive parliament, hold fresh election Speakers demand at AL seminar

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a seminar yesterday demanded dissolution of the 'inactive' parliament and fresh election under reformed election commission and caretaker government.
They said the country is being run under a 'parliamentary autocracy' where the prime minister, her cabinet and family members have become the sources of all powers.

Defending opposition's boycott of parliament, he said there is no reason to sit in the House where even assassination attempt on the leader of the opposition was not discussed.
Suranjit said the Speaker did not entertain any of the 2256 notices of the opposition lawmakers for discussion in parliament while the prime minister did not respond any of 921 questions.
He alleged that despite parliamentary democracy in the country, the prime minister, her cabinet and family members have grabbed all powers.

become a place of arrogant speeches and shameless flattery of the ministers and treasury bench lawmakers.
He told the seminar that the main opposition lawmakers participated in the deliberations of only 87 days out of total 297 working days in the current parliament.
The AL leader said the existing parliament has failed to hold debate on crucial national issues and making the government accountable.

Death anniversary

Today is the 10th death anniversary of Alhaj Jahurul Islam, an industrialist and founder of the Islam Group, says a press release.

Milad and doa mahfil will be held at the mosque adjacent to his graveyard, his business units and different educational institutions at Bhagalpur in Bajitpur at 11:00am.

Relatives, friends and well-wishers and members of the Islam group are requested to attend the milad and pray for the salvation of the departed soul.

All the establishments of Islam group will remain closed today to pay homage to the departed soul.

Heroin worth Tk 3.20 cr seized

UNB, Nature

Members of Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) seized 3.2 kgs of heroin worth Tk 3.20 crore from an inter-city train at local railway station on Monday night and arrested one person in this connection.

Acting on a tip-off, Rab men raided Rajshahi-bound "Titumir Express" at about 9:00pm and recovered the heroin.

They also arrested one Tajul Islam of village Shikerchar in Matlab upazila of Chandpur district in this connection.
A case was filed.

WEATHER TODAY Thundershowers likely UNB, Dhaka
Rain or thundershowers accompanied by gusty wind is likely at many places over all the six divisions of the country with moderately heavy falls till 6:00pm today.

CHAOS IN BUSINESS

Cable operators seek govt intervention

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Cable Operators' Association of Bangladesh (COAB) demanded of the government to help end the prevailing chaos in the cable business yesterday at a press briefing at the Dhaka Reporters Unity auditorium.

Speakers said MGH Infocom Ltd became the new Indian distributor of STAR Group in July 2004 and since then disputes started among the distributors of the country.

MGH stopped the signals of all STAR TV channels after UCS, a local distributor, allegedly stopped paying to the Indian distributor and still some areas of the city cannot see those channels, they said.

"The cable business has been continuing since 1991 without any cooperation of the government. But the present condition demands government's urgent intervention," said Nizam Uddin Masud, general secretary of COAB.

Competition among the distributors led the business into destruction. If the government fails to solve the problem, COAB will take firm steps of its own, he added.

S M Anwar Parvez, president, Md Din Islam, additional general secretary, Md Selim Sarwar, finance secretary of the association were also present at the briefing.



PHOTO: STAR

Bikalpa Dhara Bangladesh (BDB) President Badruddoza Chowdhury speaks at an Iftar party at Sundarban Hotel in the city yesterday. Sitting from right are Jatiya Oikay Mancha convenor Dr Kamal Hossain, BDB Secretary General Major (Retd) Abdul Mannan, Awami League presidium member Tofail Ahmed and Workers' Party President Rashed Khan Menon. The BDB organised the Iftar party.

'Unite to form national govt to root out corruption'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Leaders of the opposition parties yesterday strongly criticised the government for rampant corruption, which once again earned the country the label of the most corrupt nation in the world.

The BNP-led four-party alliance government, not the people of the country, is totally responsible for such a disgrace, they said at an Iftar party organised by the Bikalpa Dhara Bangladesh (BDB) at a city hotel.

They also called on the countrymen to unite to form a national government comprising pro-liberation and patriotic forces to protect the country from the grip of the alliance government, which they said is patronising terrorism and corruption.

"Only a few people are engaged in corruption and they are BNP and

Jamaat loyalists," said eminent jurist Dr Kamal Hossain, convenor of the Jatiya Oikay Mancha.

Only a national government can save the nation from this disgrace, he added.

"How can it be possible to stamp out corruption when ministers, legislators and officials engaged to fight the menace are themselves corrupt," said Dr Kamal, also the president of the Gono Forum.

Terming the ruling alliance a failed government, he said that the alliance government has tarnished the image of the country abroad by failing miserably to curb corruption.

BDB President Badruddoza Chowdhury said that 95 percent of people of the country are not involved in any kind of corruption, but only a few people who are aligned with the alliance govern-

ment have brought such a disgrace.

He said that the nation now needs competent leaders to lead it on the right track and that only a national government can save the country from this disgrace.

Awami League leader Tofail Ahmed said misrule, nepotism and politicisation by the alliance government have earned the nation the label of the most corrupt country.

He called on all progressive forces to come forward to launch a massive movement against the government for the greater interest of the country.

Krishak Sramik Janata League chief Kader Siddiqui MP, BDB Secretary General Abdul Mannan, JSD President Hasanul Huq Inu, Workers Party President Rashed Khan Menon and CPB General Secretary Mujahidul Islam Selim also spoke.



PHOTO: STAR

Prof Mozaffar Ahmed, treasurer and a trustee of Transparency International Bangladesh (TIB), speaks at the launching ceremony of the Berlin-based Transparency International (TI)'s corruption perception index (CPI) at the Jatiya Press Club in the city yesterday.

RCDS team concludes weeklong visit

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A student delegation of the Royal College of Defence Studies (RCDS), an internationally renowned institution and component of the United Kingdom's National Defence Academy, concluded its weeklong visit to Bangladesh yesterday.

As part of their study tour, the students also visited Pakistan and India before coming to Bangladesh. During their stay here, they travelled to several places and had meetings with government and NGO officials and the mediapersons.

Led by Senior Directing Staff (Air) of RCDS Air Vice-Marshal S Chisnall, the delegation yesterday exchanged views with a select group of diplomatic correspondents.

Briefing the journalists, S Chisnall said the mission of the Royal College is to prepare senior officers and officials of the United Kingdom and other countries as well as future leaders in the private and public sectors through enhancing their analytical power, knowledge of defence and international security and strategic vision.

The college runs one course every year -- from January to December -- and each course is attended by a maximum of 88 members, one-third

of them from the UK and the rest from overseas.

Military officers of Colonel/Brigadier or equivalent rank make up 75 percent of the students. The remaining 25 percent are civil servants, diplomats, police officers and representatives from the private sector.

The main part of the curriculum focuses on defence and international security at the grand strategic level. These studies are set against a backdrop of international affairs and conducted over four terms.

The aims of the terms are to examine the principal influences upon, and potential sources of, global instability and conflict, and how conflict might best be prevented or resolved.

1,692 more held

UNB, Dhaka

Police arrested 1,692 people on various charges from different parts of the country in last 24 hours ending at 6:00pm yesterday.

During the period, police also recovered six firearms, 16 bullets, two home-made bombs and explosives, says a police headquarters press release.

CTG ARMS HAUL

Charge-sheeted accused held

UNB, Ctg

A charge-sheeted accused in Chittagong arms haul case was arrested in the city's Char Bandar area at midnight on Monday.

Police arrested Bodoni Begum, a union parishad (UP) member of Anwara, in a number of robbery cases. She was arrested in 2004 in the arms haul case and released on bail in the middle of this year.

Police produced Bodoni before the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's Court yesterday noon. The court rejected her bail prayer and sent her to jail.

Three people, arrested in the robbery cases last week, mentioned the name of Bodoni in their confessional statements.

Police and coastguards seized 10 truckloads of arms and ammunition from Chittagong Urea Fertiliser Ltd (CUFL) jetty on April 1, 2004. Charges in the arms haul case will be framed on October 24, police said.

Obituary

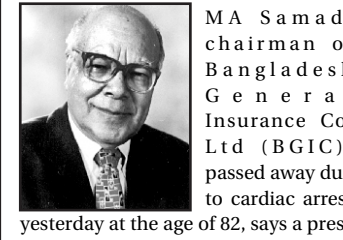


PHOTO: STAR

MA Samad, chairman of Bangladesh General Insurance Co. Ltd (BGIC), passed away due to cardiac arrest yesterday at the age of 82, says a press release.

He left behind his wife, Begum Fawzia Samad, president of Dhaka Ladies Club, one son and three daughters.

His namaz-e-janaza will be held at Gulshan Azad Mosque in the city after Jumma prayers on Friday.

He was born at Kulaura in Moulvibazar in 1923.

AH Ziauddin Ahmed

AH Ziauddin Ahmed, former deputy managing director of Pubali Bank Ltd, passed away due to cardiac arrest in Dhaka on Sunday at the age of 65, says a press release.
He left behind his wife, son and daughter.
His namaz-e-janaza will be held at the mosque adjacent to the Ramna Police Station in the city after Zohr prayers today.
Friends, relatives and admirers have been requested to attend the namaz-e-janaza.