#### MEET WITH COMMERCE MINISTER

# Rise of religious extremism to hit economy adversely

### FBCCI leaders warn govt

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

Newly elected President of the  $FBCCI\,Mir\,Nasir\,Hossain\,referring\,to\,the$ August 17 nationwide serial bombings, carried out by Islamic extremists, said, "This would cast a negative impact on

He said if such incident continues and the culprits remain out of justice, the country's image would be at stake and it would affect the economy adversely.

Mir Nasir's comments came when the newly elected FBCCI leaders made a courtesy call on Commerce Minister Altaf Hossain Choudhury at his secretariat office in the city

Barkatullah Bhulu, adviser to the ministry and Alamgir Faruk Siddique, commerce secretary, were also present

KIBRIA KILLING

Habiganj

residents

demand int'l

investigation

Residents of Habiganj district formed

a human chain in Dhaka vesterday to

press home their demand for an

international investigation into the

killing of former finance minister Shah

AMS Kibria and exemplary punish-

Carrying placards and banners, the

demonstrators gathered in front of the

Supreme Court under the banner of

Shah AMS Kibria and Shah Monjur

be denied if the murder case is sent to

trial on the basis of an incomplete

Kibria, Habiganj District AL leaders

Syed Kamrul Hasan, Ali Ahmed Khan,

Shahiduddin Chowdhury and Babul

Adhikari, Sylhet Division

Development Action Council leader Mokhlesur Rahman and Prof Abidur

The foundation was set up in memory of Shah AMS Kibria, also an

Shah Monjur Huda who were killed in

a grenade attack on a rally at Boidyer

Bazar in Habiganj on January 27 this

Death anniversary

Today is the 10th death anniversary of

Alhaj Jahurul Islam, an industrialist

and founder of the Islam Group, says a

the mosque adjacent to his graveyard,

his business units and different educa-

tional institutions at Bhagalpur in

and members of the Islam group are

requested to attend the milad and pray

group will remain closed today to pay

homage to the departed soul.

Heroin worth

Tk 3.20 cr seized

Members of Rapid Action Battalion

(Rab) seized 3.2 kgs of heroin worth Tk

for the salvation of the departed soul.

Relatives, friends and well-wishers

All the establishments of Islam

Milad and doa mahfil will be held at

press release.

Bajitpur at 11:00am.

Rahman joined the human chain.

They feared that the justice might

The nation will not accept such a

Asma Kibria, widow of Shah ASM

Huda Memorial Foundation.

the speedy trial tribunal.

investigation, they said.

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

ment to the killers.

Mir Nasir also referred to rising

inflation, price hike of essential commodities and erosion of purchasing capacity, calling on the government to dress the problems

The FBCCI leaders admitted that the oil price hike in the international market put pressure on the macroeconomic halance, but said the government should carry on subsidising oil for smooth operation of industrial and business activities.

They also said the increase in exchange rate of US dollar against Taka raised the prices of imported goods leading to rise in inflation rate. All these had a negative impact on the overall economy, they added.

The FBCCI leaders welcomed the government steps, such as open market sale (OMS) of rice and called for expansion of such programmes to prevent the price spiral of the commodities.

 $of a \, section \, of \, business men \, in \, raising \, the \,$ prices of essentials, but advised the vernment to set up a monitoring cell. "The government can set up a

However, they underplayed the role

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.

They also demanded restriction on importing some of the goods to protect the local industries.

"High registration charges and other barriers can be imposed on the entry of other countries' commodities to save our local industries," SM Shafiuzzaman, president of the Aushad Shilpa Samity, said at the meeting.

FBCCI Director Abdur Rouf Chowdhury said: "We have informed the ministry of our concerns about the WTO Ministerial Conference in Hong Kong, However, the ministry is yet to talk with us on its preparation for the meet-

"Acceleration of public-private partnership is needed in trade talks like South Asian Free Trade Agreement

(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).

He also said the demand of the business leaders, including separate land for a new FBCCI building and land for setting up laboratory for pharmaceuticals will be met.

Admitting the price spiral, Commerce Ministry Adviser Barkatullah Bhulu said the prices would be brought down to a reasonable level within the next three

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.

The seminar on 'Inactive parliament: Jeopardised democracy' was organised by the main opposition Awami League at the National Press Club marking the four years of BNP-Jamaat-led coalition in

Presided over by Deputy Leader of the Opposition Abdul Hamid, the seminar was addressed by top ranking opposition leaders and academics.

AL presidium member Suranjit Sengupta in a keynote paper said, "The prime minister has established an autocratic rule in the country through her office by keeping parliament totally non-functional and gagging opposition

cities and towns yesterday were:

voices.' 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.

"Parliament is now being used as a place for admiring the government party leaders and making provocative statements against the opposition members," he added.

"It's a one party parliament where opposition's voice is totally kept mum...Parliament is being used as the rubberstamp of the prime minister," Suranjit said, adding, "Any responsible opposition can't give legality to such parliament by its mere presence."

He observed that parliament has

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

The AL leader said the existing parliament has failed to hold debate on crucial national issues and making the government accountable. He said there was no discussion in

the House on the crucial national issues including price spiral of essentials, deteriorating law and order, bomb blasts, grenade attacks, foreign policy, and killing of sitting lawmakers. "The present government feels

comfort to issue presidential ordinances rather than enacting laws in parliament," he added. Suranjit called for making a provision

to select the Speaker and the Deputy Speaker from the treasury and the opposition benches respectively so that they can discharge their duties neutrally. AL leader Mizanur Rahman

Chowdhury said the country has got rid of autocratic ruler, but not of autocratic

He criticised the present Speaker for violating some rules and traditions of parliament.

AL presidium member Tofail Ahmed termed the present parliament as the worst in country's history and said opposition members were barred from speaking for the people.

entire country is inactive under the alliance rule," he said. Workers' Party President Rashed Khan Menon said the current parlia-

"Not only parliament, but also the

ment is valueless to people as it failed to discuss national issues "Parliaments even under the military regimes had some scopes for the

opposition to speak, which is not present in the current parliament," he said. Prof Borhanuddin Khan Jahangir said the Speaker has failed to maintain

his neutrality due to intervention from the leader of the House. Prof Harun-or-Rashid of Dhaka University also suggested dissolution of the current parliament.

AL leaders Motia Chowdhury Obaidul Quader, Dr SA Malek, opposition chief whip Abdus Shahid and Editor of the daily Jugantor Abed Khan also addressed the seminar

CHAOS IN BUSINESS

#### Cable operators seek govt intervention

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

Competition among the distributors led the business into destruction. It 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 pres-

#### HC hears petition to reinvestigate Kibria murder

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The hearing of a petition challenging a lower court verdict rejecting any further investigation into the Shah AMS Kibria killing case began in the High Court yesterday.

The Habigani Sessions Judge gave the verdict on May 10 last, affirming a magistrate's order given on April 30 rejecting an application seeking reinvestigation into the sensational murder case before its trial.

A High Court division bench adjourned the hearing until November 12 and is likely to pass order the same

Former finance minister and frontline Awami League (AL) leader Kibria was killed in a grenade attack on a party rally at Baidderbazar in Habiganj district on January 27 this

Advocate Abdul Mazid Khan, Habiganj district AL organising secretary, filed two cases in the connection -- one for Kibria's killing and another under the explosive substance

Following investigations, the law enforcers submitted the charge sheet in the Kibria murder case on March 20

In April the complainant, Abdul Mazid Khan, filed an application with the magistrate concerned of Habiganj, seeking reinvestigation into the murder case before the trial, claiming "the investigation was not properly done." The magistrate on April 30 rejected the application.

The complainant then filed a review petition with the Habigani Sessions Judge's Court against the magistrate's order, but the Judge on May 10 upheld the order.

Khan then moved on to the High Court seeking remedy against the lower courts' rejection of his appeals The High Court on May 25 issued a rule upon the government to explain why the actions of the lower courts should not be quashed and staved the trial process pending in the Sessions Judge's court until disposal of the rule.

Dr Kamal Hossain assisted by Advocate Mahbubey Alam represented the complainant in the High Court yesterday, while Additional Attorney General Abdur Razzak Khan stood for the state.

CTG ARMS HAUL

#### Charge-sheeted accused held

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 vesterday 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 confes-Police and coastguards seized 10

be framed on October 24, police said.

and strategic vision. truckloads of arms and ammunition from Chittagong Urea Fertiliser Ltd (CUFL) jetty on April 1, 2004. Charges in the arms haul case will

and each course is attended by a maximum of 88 members, one-third



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 vesterday strongly criticised the government for rampant corruption, which once again earned the country the label of the most corrupt nation 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 country-

men to unite to form a national government comprising proliberation 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 Jativa Oikva 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

the image of the country abroad by failing miserably to curb corrup-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-

alliance government has tarnished

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.



MA Samad,

chairman of

Bangladesh

General

Insurance Co.

Ltd (BGIC),

passed away due

to cardiac arrest

AH Ziauddin

Ahmed, former

yesterday at the age of 82, says a press

He left behind his wife, Begum

His namaz-e-janaza will be held at

He was born at Kulaura in

Gulshan Azad Mosque in the city after

Jumma prayers on Friday.

AH Ziauddin Ahmed

Moulvibazar in 1923.

Fawzia Samad, president of Dhaka

Ladies Club, one son and three daugh-

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

### RCDS team concludes Obituary 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.

Jativa Press Club in the city 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

The college runs one course every year -- from January to December --

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

deputy managing director of Pubali Bank Ltd, passed away due to cardiac arrest in Dhaka

press release.

He left behind his wife, son and daughter. His namaz-e-janaza will be held at

on Sunday at the age of 65, says a

the mosque adjacent to the Ramna Police Station in the city after Zohr prayers today.

home-made bombs and explosives. Friends, relatives and admirers says a police headquarters press have been requested to attend the namaz-e-janaza.

### A case was filed.

#### 3.20 crore from an inter-city train at local railway station on Monday night and arrested one person in this con-Acting on a tip-off, Rab men raided

Raishahi-bound "Titumir Express" at about 9:00pm and recovered the They also arrested one Tajul Islam of village Shikerchar in Matlab upazila

of Chandpur district in this connec

# Thundershowers likely Rain or thundershowers accompanied by gusty wind is likely at many places

Day temperature may remain nearly unchanged during the period, Met Highest temperature 35.2 degree Celsius was recorded vesterday at

over all the six divisions of the country with moderately heavy falls till 6:00pm

Sitakundu and lowest 22.3 degree Celsius at Chuadanga The sun sets in the capital at 5:29pm today and rises at 5:58am tomor-

Highest and lowest temperature and humidity recorded in some major

City/Town	Temperature in Celsius		Humidity in percentage	
	Max	Min	Morning	Evening
Dhaka	29.0	23.7	89	91
Chittagong	34.5	25.3	69	74
Rajshahi	27.6	23.2	96	91
Khulna	28.2	23.5	92	92
Barisal	31.4	24.8		91
Sylhet	31.0	24.6	87	95
Cox's Bazar	33.5	25.0	67	83