

14-party movement to focus on graft, communal politics

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
The 14-party opposition alliance's common national programme will focus on fighting communal politics, corruption, violence and price spiral of essentials.
The common programme and fresh agitation against the four-party coalition government will be declared from a grand rally at Paltan Maidan on November 22.
The opposition subcommittee tasked with preparing a draft of the programme yesterday discussed the issues and decided to meet again after the Eid-ul-Fitr.
Chaired by Rashed Khan Menon, president of the Workers Party of Bangladesh and convenor of the subcommittee, the meeting suggested that the 14-party would strengthen the progressive

Power sector in mess for weak political leadership

CPD dialogue told

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
Lack of proper political leadership has driven the country's power sector into a messy situation, speakers said at a dialogue in the city yesterday.
They stressed that the situation can be improved if there is political will, non-interference from outside and transparency in the sector.
The dialogue on 'Current Crisis in the Power Sector: Nature of the Problem and the Way Forward', was attended by leading power experts, economists, bureaucrats, parliamentarians, donors, businessmen and

State Minister for Power Iqbal Hasan Mahmud.
Fund shortage, policy inadequacies or lack of coordination are only second to leadership crisis in the sector, the participants said at the dialogue organised by the Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD).
Energy secretary during the previous Awami League (AL) rule Dr Towfiq e Elahi Chowdhury cited how non-interference of the AL government improved the power sector within a short period back in 1996-97. Before that time, power crisis was similar to that obtaining now.

"The government was serious. There was no politicisation of the sector. Sheikh Hasina (the then prime minister) deeply focussed on the problem. She never interfered with us. This gave confidence to people who were trying to solve the power crisis... We worked as a team with Petrobangla, Power Development Board (PDB) and the ministry," he said at the dialogue chaired by former finance minister M Saizuzzaman.
"We went for tenders after making sure that there will be no re-tendering," he said.

'Hawa Bhaban' clout questioned

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
Awami League (AL) lawmaker Sheikh Fazlul Karim Selim at a seminar, focusing on the problems of leadership, yesterday raised the question who gave the power to the 'Hawa Bhaban' to overrule directives of the prime minister to different ministries.
Naming one 'Mamun' for interfering with the power ministry's affairs, Selim pointed out that while Iqbal Hassan Mahmood was the state minister, and the prime minister is the full minister, it is the principal secretary to the prime minister who has been vested with the power to direct the sector.
The Hawa Bhaban's ignoring the chain of command has stagnated the sector, he said at the seminar organised by the Centre for Policy Dialogue.



A mobile court slaps a fine of Tk 80,000 on three-star Hotel Purbani in the capital for unhygienic condition in its kitchen yesterday.



Environment unfriendly three-wheelers stand parked on the China-Bangladesh Friendship Bridge, posing risk to traffic, as the army recently evicted the stand for the vehicles on the east side of the Buriganga.

302 die in 'crossfire' in 10 months

States rights body report

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
As many as 349 people were killed, of them 302 in "crossfire", by law enforcers across the country during January to October, 2005, a report by Bangladesh Human Rights Commission said.
Of them, 238 people were killed by police, 88 by the Rapid Action Battalion (Rab), three by Cheetah and Cobra, 20 by other law enforcement agencies during the 10 months, said the report based on information published in newspapers and other sources.
Bangladesh Human Rights Commission report also stressed

DELHI BOMBINGS

Massive manhunt for attackers

AFP, New Delhi
Police yesterday stepped up what they called one of the biggest ever manhunts in the Indian capital, which was cloaked in tight security after a weekend attack claimed by Islamic militants.
As another victim succumbed to his injuries from Saturday's coordinated explosions, bringing the death toll to 62, investigators said they hoped mobile phone records could lead to a breakthrough in the case.
The city overnight brought in 2,600

security personnel to bolster New Delhi's 71,000-member police force and invited out-of-town forensic experts to help speed up investigations, a senior police official said.
"We are using all our resources, which includes spotters, informers and even known hoodlums, to crack this case as early as possible," she told AFP.
Three nearly simultaneous blasts tore through a bus and two crowded markets on Saturday in an attack claimed by the Islamic Revolutionary Group, believed to have ties to a

leading militant group fighting Indian rule in Kashmir.
The carnage cast a pall on the capital ahead of Tuesday's holiday of Diwali, the festival of lights. Some markets were emptier than usual as nervous residents stayed away after the blasts, which also injured 210 people.
A police commissioner who asked not to be named said detectives were sifting through millions of mobile telephone call records, trying to uncover who carried out the attacks.

Hotel Purbani fined again for unhygienic condition

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
A mobile court yesterday fined Hotel Purbani of the city Tk 80,000 for not maintaining required hygiene standards. Another court had fined the hotel Tk 1 lakh last July for the same reason.
The mobile court led by Magistrate Tapan Kumar Biswas yesterday found the kitchen of the hotel very unhygienic and without

SUMMIT SECURITY Foreign travellers to be under watch

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
The government has instructed the authorities concerned at home and abroad to monitor the foreigners travelling to the country and to keep keen eyes on whether they leave on time. The directive has been issued to ensure security of the Saarc Summit.
"The initiative was taken to tighten the loose ends of the summit security," said a high official engaged in providing security during the summit. Local authorities

6 GIs, Iraqi VP's brother killed in attacks

AFP, AP, Baghdad
Six US soldiers were killed in two separate bomb explosions yesterday in Iraq while rebel attacks Sunday killed the brother of one of Iraq's two vice presidents, the military said.
Four died when their patrol struck an improvised explosive device in the Yusufiyah district, in southwest Baghdad.
And two were killed in an explosion while on patrol near Anaconda base, on the outskirts of Balad, 75 kilometres

(45 miles) north of the capital.
Their death bring to at least 2,020 the number of US military personnel killed in the Iraq operation since the March 2003 invasion, according to an AFP tally.
Rebel attacks Sunday killed the brother of one of Iraq's two vice presidents and wounded a deputy minister, as the US military announced the death of an American marine in a roadside bombing. The marine died

\$1.8b ADB loans proposed for three years

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
The Asian Development Bank (ADB) proposes to lend \$1.8 billion for 15 projects over three years from 2006 under its Country Strategy and Program (CSP) for 2006-2010.
An ADB press release yesterday half the fund will be from the bank's concessional lending instrument, the Asian Development Fund. This will be supported by a technical

BID TO BOLSTER MANPOWER EXPORT Labour wings of missions abroad to be beefed up

RAFIQ HASAN
The government is going to fill the vacant labour wing posts in the Bangladesh embassies to boost manpower export that has seen a sharp decline this year.
Out of the 12 labour departments in the Bangladesh embassies, four posts of counsellor in Riyadh, Kuala Lumpur, Tripoli and Singapore have

been lying vacant while another two will fall vacant very soon, according to sources in the Ministry of Expatriate Welfare and Overseas Employment.
The ministry has already selected eight deputy secretary level officials for the four posts and the list and profiles of the officials have been sent to the prime minister for approval.
Meanwhile, the post in Jeddah

7 die in Ctg landslide, road crash

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg
At least seven people, including children and women, were killed in separate incidents of landslide and road accident in the city's Bayezid Bostami and Doublemooring areas yesterday.
Police said a huge chunk of earth fell on three children while they were playing at the hill-bed in East Shantinagar area under Bayezid Bostami thana at around 10:00am.

Table with 4 columns: Ramadan, Nov, Sehri, Iftar. Rows show dates and times for 27 and 28.



Prayer Timing table for November 1 with columns for Azan and Jamaat. Rows include Fajr, Zohr, Asr, Maghrib, and Esha.