

Secretariat on top alert

Even ministers must go through security check

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Everyone even the ministers will have to go through security checking at the entrance to the Bangladesh Secretariat as the government has decided to make it fully secure in the wake of rising apprehension of bomb attacks and the movement of militants.

Explosive detectors, closed-circuit television and scanner will be installed and dog squad will be deployed at the Secretariat, the government's administrative headquarters. Several explosive detector archways have already been set up there.

The rush of visitors to the Secretariat will be controlled and no one will be allowed to enter the Secretariat with entry pass, an emergency meeting of secretaries decided yesterday, apart from taking other decisions to tighten security.

The meeting was convened in

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Security men examine bags with a scanner installed at the main entrance to Bangladesh Secretariat as part of beefed up security measures yesterday.

Bush, Hu wrestle over trade, rights

AFP, Beijing

Chinese President Hu Jintao yesterday rebuffed US President George W. Bush's calls to allow greater religious and political freedom but promised to show more flexibility on Sino-US economic disputes.

On day two of his Beijing visit, Bush took his human rights pitch

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JOURNALIST BELAL KILLING

Jamaat leader, 5 outlaws involved

Charge sheet submitted

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

from a church service near Tiananmen Square to a public appearance with Hu, a meeting with Premier Wen Jiabao, and finally to an impromptu exchange with reporters.

"I talked about both political and religious freedom," the US president told reporters, adding that he had raised the issue with Hu

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the Court of Chief Metropolitan Magistrate (CMM) here yesterday.

Dhira has been named prime accused in the charge sheet. He is absconding.

The other accused are extremists

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JS SESSION BEGINS
Rules violated to greet PM as Saarc chair

AL continues boycott

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Ignoring the rules of procedure, the 19th session of parliament that began yesterday spent about half an hour congratulating prime minister on her being elected the Saarc chairperson.

Speaker Jamiruddin Sircar instead of going into the day's business allowed the unscheduled congratulatory discussion to take place at the beginning of the sitting. Whereas the question-answer session should have been held first as the rules of procedure of Jatiya Sangsad says unless the speaker otherwise directs, the first hour of

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JMJB raised its head during AL regime

Says BNP lawmaker Nadim Mostafa

BDNEWS, Rajshahi

BNP lawmaker Nadim Mostafa yesterday said the present government is not responsible for the rise of Jagrata Muslim Janata Bangladesh (JMJB), rather the Islamist militants raised their heads during the previous Awami League rule.

Exchanging views with journalists at his residence in Rajshahi, the ruling party lawmaker from Rajshahi-4 constituency said some ambitious and over-enthusiastic administrative officials are responsible for the rise of the JMJB.

Nadim said the militants would threaten to blow up Chittagong Railway Station.

Meanwhile, three JMB operatives arrested in Panchagarh Saturday were remanded yesterday.

Senior Assistant Judge of Jhalakathi MA Awal, who avoided being another casualty in the November 14 suicide bomb attack,

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Foreign airlines decline to carry pilgrims at \$1,050

REAZ AHMAD

The aircraft crisis continued to haunt thousands of intending Hajj pilgrims as six foreign airlines yesterday declined to fly Bangladeshi pilgrims to Saudi Arabia at Biman's revised fare of \$1,050.

The officials of Qatar Airways, Saudi Arabian Airlines, Kuwait Airways, Emirates, Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) and Gulf Air held a joint meeting at the Emirates' Gulshan office yesterday, all disapproving of the new fare.

With its dwindling fleet-size, the national flag carrier, Biman

Airlines, has already expressed its inability to fly more than 18,000 of the 60,000 intending Hajj pilgrims to Saudi Arabia.

Now, the foreign airlines "no" to the decreased fare, fixed two days ago by the Biman to the satisfaction of the agitating Hajj Agencies Association of Bangladesh (HAAB), came as another blow to the agencies.

HAAB President Abdus Shakur and General Secretary Jinnur Ahmed Chowdhury Dipu told The Daily Star yesterday that their representatives will discuss the matter with all concerned at the inter-ministerial meeting on Hajj

to be held at the religious affairs ministry today.

Qatar Airways Area Manager in Bangladesh Shamshad Ahsan told The Daily Star yesterday evening, "Our head offices fixed the Hajj flight fare at \$1,300. But upon the request of the host country's government, all of us-except the Saudi Arabian Airlines-agreed to slash the fare down to \$1,150. The Saudi airlines kept its fare static at \$1,300."

The foreign airliners will not be able to lower the fare any further, Ahsan added.

The foreign airliners' meeting

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JMB threatens to blow up Ctg railway station

Jhalakathi judge gets death threat

STAR REPORT

A Jhalakathi judge who narrowly escaped death on November 14 received death threats yesterday while an anonymous caller claiming to be a Jama'atul Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB) operative threatened to blow up Chittagong Railway Station.

Meanwhile, three JMB operatives arrested in Panchagarh Saturday were remanded yesterday.

Senior Assistant Judge of Jhalakathi MA Awal, who avoided being another casualty in the November 14 suicide bomb attack,

received a letter containing the threat yesterday, UNB reports. The blast left his colleagues Sohel Ahmed and Jagannath Pandey dead and three others injured.

Badshah Mia using the address 14, College Road, Rajshahi sent the letter to the already perturbed judge.

The letter accused Awal of committing acts of injustice and indulging in wrongful activities. It was posted from the secretariat post office in Dhaka two days after the killing of two judges.

Terrified on receipt of the letter, the judge immediately informed

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State minister allegedly assaults reporter

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

State Minister for Housing and Public Works Alamgir Kabir allegedly assaulted a reporter yesterday at his Secretariat office.

The reporters present at the Secretariat immediately met the minister and protested the incident.

When contacted for his comment, Kabir categorically denied to The Daily Star of assaulting any journalist.

"A journalist from the daily Janakantha entered my chamber without permission and began asking all sorts of ill-motivated baseless questions," the minister said, terming the incident "pre-planned and conspiratorial".

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Armed Forces Day today

UNB, Dhaka

The Armed Forces Day is being observed today to mark the counteroffensive against the Pakistani occupation army during the Bangladesh Liberation War.

On this day in 1971, the army, navy and the air force jointly attacked the Pakistani forces and their combined counteroffensive quickened the nation's victory.

President Iajuddin Ahmed and Prime Minister Khaleda Zia gave separate messages greeting the members of the armed forces on this occasion.

The president said, "Armed forces are symbol of dignity for a nation."

The president prayed for the salvation of the departed souls of the martyrs who laid down their lives for the country's independence and sovereignty and also

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Bangladesh Shines in Colors

368 Thanas of 61 Districts

NEW THANAS

Gabtoli, Bogra
Charghat, Rajshahi
Raninagar, Naogaon
Sadullapur, Gaibanda
Shariakandi, Bogra
Sujanagar, Pabna
Taraganj, Rangpur

AKTEL

CLEARLY AHEAD



Members of Rapid Action Battalion inspect Paltan Maidan, venue of the 14-party opposition combine's rally tomorrow, with trained dogs yesterday.

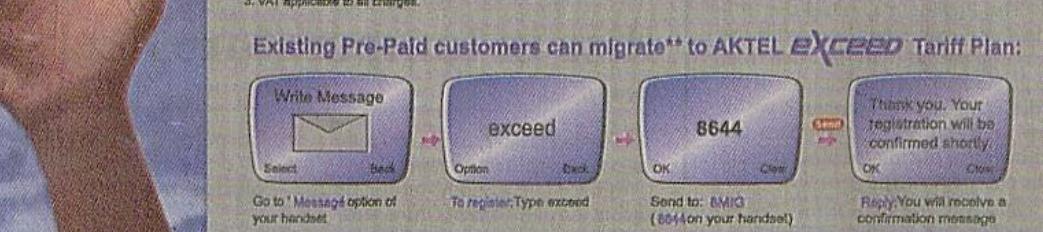
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OUTGOING (b per min)			
To AKTEL	1.90	1.60	1.50
To AKTEL FnF	1.50	1.50	1.50
To other Operators	2.50	2.50	1.60
To BTTB (Local/NWD/DDD)	2.50 + BTTB	2.50 + BTTB	1.60 + BTTB
INCOMING (b per min)			
Mobile	FREE	FREE	FREE
BTTB	1st min FREE & then 2.00/min	1st min FREE & then 1.50/min	1st min FREE & then 1.00/min
PULSE	10 sec from first minute		

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AKTEL - other operator: Tk.2.00
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To BTTB (Local/NWD/DDD)

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