

Rules promulgated to curb political activity

Guidelines for media

The Emergency Power Rule 2007 under the Emergency Powers Ordinance 2007 spelled out some guidelines for the media on publication and broadcast of news. It restricted publication and broadcast of news reports, editorials, post-editorials, articles, features, caricatures, cartoons, talk shows or discussions on

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UNB, Dhaka

The government has banned political and trade union activities and restricted provocative news, including talk show, in print and electronic media under the Emergency Powers Rules 2007.

The government has restricted processions, demonstrations, hartals, strikes and lockouts across the country to ensure security of the state and people, and maintain discipline in public life.

It has also banned student-teacher politics and politics by government employees and professional bodies.

In case of violation of the restric-

tions, the offenders will have to suffer a maximum of five years or a minimum of two years rigorous imprisonment along with fines.

The ban has been made effective from January 12, 2007 through a gazette notification Thursday under the Emergency Powers Rules 2007. The gazette notification was made public last night.

The gazette notification, however, exempted rallies, processions and functions relating to religious, social and state affairs from the restrictions.

Under the notification, the government can ban any meeting, procession, siege, demonstration,

speech, statement, any harmful news or information in the interest of government, state or public security and peace.

The government can also restrict any publication or transmission of any anti-government news, editorial, post editorial, article, feature, cartoon, talk show or discussion in print or electronic media and any mass media, including the internet.

Wall writing has also been banned as long as the state of emergency will remain in force.

The government will be able to proscribe any newspaper, book, document, printing press or

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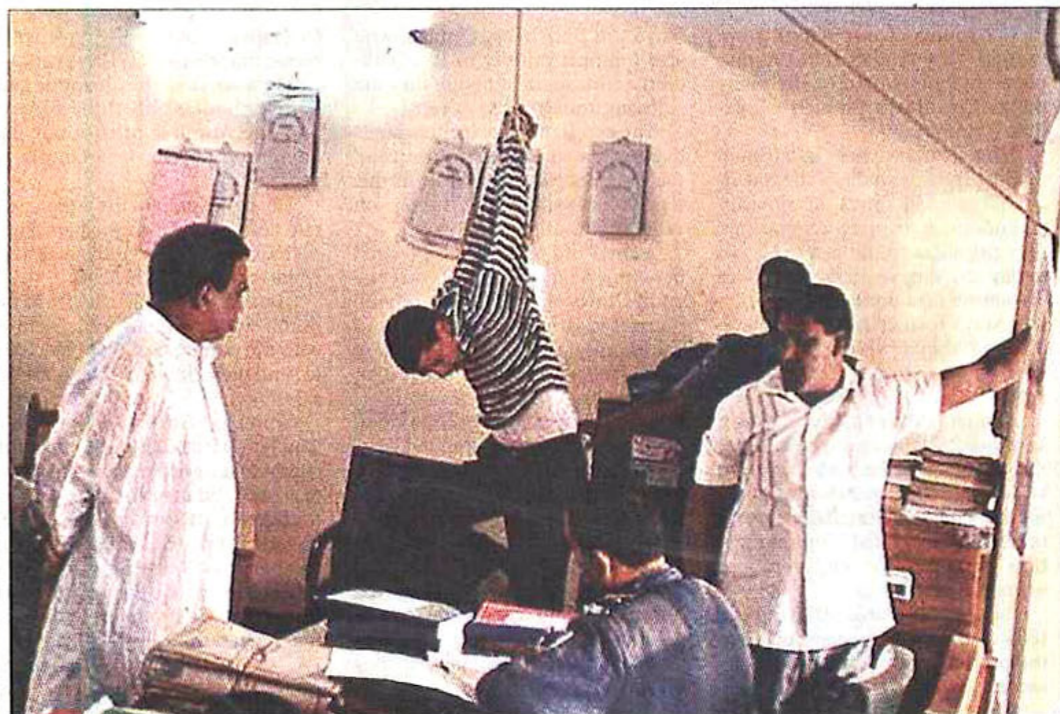


PHOTO: STAR

POLICE BRUTALITY: Picked up on allegation of stealing, Ratan is hung from the ceiling in the duty officer's room at Bogra Sadar Police Station Thursday. Police, however, showed him arrested yesterday.

Joint forces arrest 1,799 more

STAR REPORT

The army-led joint forces yesterday arrested the Sylhet district general secretary of Juba League during their ongoing countryside drive which also resulted in arrest of 1,799 persons on various charges and recovery of 14 firearms.

A contingent of the army and police detained Azadur Rahman Azad, general secretary of Sylhet unit Juba League, who is also the commissioner of ward 20 of Sylhet City Corporation, around 3:00am raiding his house at Tilagarh in the city.

The army also arrested a union parishad (UP) chairman for his reported involvement in criminal activities, and recovered a worn out revolver from his possession. They also seized two firearms in Chittagong during a drive. Police and Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) detained 1,751

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Equipment from another VoIP centre seized

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) members seized Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) equipment worth about Tk 15 lakh raiding one more illegal business office at Jigatala in Dhanmondi early yesterday.

Tipped off, Rab-2 raided the house of Rafiqul Islam alias Babul at around 1:30am. They held him and seized the VoIP equipment.

The seized equipment include 65 teller devices, 62 mobile SIM cards, one computer monitor and its CPU and 65 adapters, Rab officials said.

Earlier on Thursday night, Rab intelligence unit busted the third floor of the four-storey Nur Villa at

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CID takes case against Orion Group chief

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Criminal Investigation Department (CID) yesterday took over the criminal case filed against Orion Group chief Obaidul Karim, and 23 former and incumbent officials of the Oriental Bank for misappropriating Tk 596.44 crore.

Assistant Superintendent of Police (CID) Momin Hossain collected the case docket from Sub-Inspector (SI) of Tejgaon Police

Station Monirul Islam last evening. The case was filed on Thursday.

Meanwhile, the police raided the houses of the accused in the early hours yesterday, but found none.

"Thirteen special teams comprising forces drawn from 13 police stations raided the houses of all the 24 accused," SI Monirul told The Daily Star yesterday.

The Bangladesh Bank on

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BDR, BSF trade fire in Satkhira

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Satkhira

Indian Border Security Force (BSF) and Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) traded gunfire across Gazipur border in Debhata upazila of the district early yesterday.

The BSF of Pakirdanga camp under Basirhat Police Station of 24 Parganas district fired five bullets, targeting the Gazipur BDR camp at about 2:00am, forcing the Bangladesh paramilitary troops to retaliate by firing shots.

No casualty was, however, reported.

Immediately after the incident, the Indian border guards reinforced its strength at all border outposts and increased patrols.

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Fertiliser hoarders to face stern action, warns govt

Arrests, recovery of urea continue

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

Agriculture Adviser to the caretaker government Chowdhury Sajjadul Karim yesterday warned that legal steps would be taken against fertiliser traders who are creating artificial crisis by hoarding the agriculture input in the northern region.

The adviser was visiting Natore to assess field-level fertiliser distribution situation. He started a two-day tour of three northern districts yesterday.

Addressing the district officials

in the deputy commissioner's conference room, the adviser directed them to ensure smooth distribution of fertiliser among the farmers. He also warned of legal action against the people concerned if any wrongful activity is detected in fertiliser management.

"There is sufficient stock of fertiliser in the country... If anyone is found to have been creating artificial crisis, stern action will be taken against him," he warned.

Later, the adviser went to Sherkol fertiliser market in Shingra

upazila. He talked to the farmers and sanctioned additional 1000 metric tons of fertiliser for the upazila.

He also visited fertiliser stores at Madrasa crossing and Narayanpur in Natore town and expressed satisfaction over the distribution system. The adviser will visit fertiliser distribution in Rajshahi and Sirajganj today.

Meanwhile, the joint forces seized 3,714 sacks of fertiliser from Tangail, Gaibandha and Brahmanbaria

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EC failed to hold polls within stipulated time

Dr Kamal says

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Eminent jurist Dr Kamal Hossain yesterday said the present caretaker government will be considered a legal government until handing over power to an elected government.

In an interview with a private television channel, he urged the caretaker government to have talks with people from all walks of life with a view to holding a meaningful election and bringing qualitative change in politics.

The deviation from the

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Kibria's second anniversary of death today

DU CORRESPONDENT

Elaborate programmes have been scheduled for today and the next couple of days to observe the second death anniversary of Awami League (AL) leader and former finance minister Shah AMS Kibria.

Family members, different socio-cultural and political organisations will place floral wreaths at the grave of the late leader at

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Don't lose heart, face situation bravely, BNP men advised

RAKIB HASNET SUMAN

In the wake of anti-crime drives that have seen a huge number of BNP loyalists held across the country, the party high command is now seeking to dispel fear among its ranks.

The BNP high-ups are worried that the ongoing drives, if continued for long, would weaken the organisation and can bring in an

election debacle for it, said insiders.

They added that anxieties are creeping into the minds of its leaders and workers alike due to repeated raids and captures, and as a result the organisational strength might as well be on the wane soon.

Many of its leaders from the top echelons to the grassroots level have gone underground as the law enforcement agencies and the armed forces continue raiding their houses.

Against this backdrop, BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia met the leaders of different front organisations and called on them to strengthen the organisation braving the adverse situation.

Secretary General Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan too has been in contact with the field-level leaders. He has been inspiring them not to lose heart.

At a meeting with the leaders of Jatiyatabadi Samik Dal on Thursday, the BNP chairperson said none but the people's repre-

sentatives would govern the country and those days are not far off. The immediate past prime minister advised her followers to stay prepared to play their part as an organised force.

Earlier, she talked to the leaders of Jatiyatabadi Juba Dal and Jatiyatabadi Samajik Sangskritik Sangstha about what should be their role in the prevailing conditions.

"The party chief has asked us to keep close contact with the grassroots level leaders so that they don't get demoralised in the changed situation," a Juba Dal leader told The Daily Star in return for anonymity.

Besides, Tarique Rahman, senior joint secretary general of the BNP, met the leaders and workers at Hawa Bhaban on several occasions in the last few days. He is trying to keep in touch with the district level leaders in a bid to steady their nerves, said the sources.

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