

Oil prices may be adjusted up to int'l rates

UNB, Dhaka

The caretaker government considers adjusting petroleum prices up to international market rates and cutbacks in duties on fuel imports to bail out the loss-incurring Bangladesh Petroleum Corporation (BPC).

In a meeting yesterday, the council of advisers discussed the measures, and also ways of stopping reported oil smuggling.

The meeting, chaired by Chief Adviser Fakhruddin Ahmed, discussed the ways of making the state-owned BPC, now incurring losses, a financially profitable public concern.

During the meeting, a number of proposals were discussed to rescue the BPC from under the growing burden of losses.

The meeting was informed that BPC now needs at least Tk 1500 crore to import fuels to meet

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No corrupt politicians, businessmen, civil servants to be spared

Says army chief; rules out 'existence' of martial law

UNB, Bogura

Army chief Lt Gen Moeen U Ahmed yesterday said the armed forces are assisting the government in its crusade against corruption that has eaten up the vitals of the nation.

Addressing a cross section of people at Bogura Circuit House, he made it clear that the civil government is ruling the country. "No martial law exists. The president has declared emergency under a compelling situation."

"The armed forces are only assisting the civil administration...we all in the civil administration

and the army is carrying out our respective responsibility," he added.

About corruption that had bedeviled the nation, the army chief said, "Corruption had engulfed every sphere of life. This cannot be allowed to continue. Number of corrupt elements is not many but 95 percent of the country's population suffered from the pangs caused by corruption."

Lashing at dishonest politicians without naming anyone Gen Moeen said, "It is not possible to count by calculator the enormous wealth they have accumulated. Their irresistible lust for wealth led them to gobble up

the CI sheets allotted by the government for distribution as relief among the poor."

"Corrupt whoever he is - politician, business magnet or bureaucrat - will not be spared," the general assured his audience. "List of corrupt elements has been prepared and the process will continue in future."

He said the present caretaker government has already taken certain significant steps. The judiciary has been separated from the executive. Election Commission has been reformed. Drive against adulteration, hoarding and land

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Joint forces seek info on Salman's investment in stock market

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The joint forces have approached the Dhaka Stock Exchange (DSE) for information about Salman F Rahman's investment in the capital market.

Sources said a team of the joint forces has visited the stock exchange recently to enquire about Salman, the detained vice-chairman of Beximco Group and leader of Awami League (AL).

"We have requested them [joint forces] to come with official or written documents so that we can ask the brokerage houses to provide information on his investment," said a high official of the DSE.

Also an adviser to AL President Sheikh Hasina, Salman was held on February 4 as part of a move against the political bigwigs accused of

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Prof Yunus to run in next election

He will decide party flotation in a month, quit Grameen Bank once in politics

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Nobel laureate Prof Muhammad Yunus yesterday said he would take part in the next parliamentary elections even as an independent candidate in case he fails to complete the process of launching his party before the election.

Reaffirming his plan to enter politics and form a new party, he said he would take decision about floating a political party with a new vision within this month.

Prof Yunus also said he is ready to terminate his connection with Grameen Bank in the interest of the people.

"If I join politics, I will no doubt



Prof Muhammad Yunus

leave the bank, because politics and Grameen Bank cannot go together," the microcredit trailblazer told reporters at the Zia International Airport on returning from Kolkata.

Earlier on Sunday, Yunus wrote an open letter to the people, seeking views on his idea of forming a party with a goal to present the people of the country with a fresh democratic political culture replacing the outmoded one.

"I have got tremendous support from the people for launching a new political party and I will announce 'yes' or 'no' within this month," he said.

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Major shake-up in police admin

Rab DG made OSD; 9 DIGs, 65 SPs transferred

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government yesterday made the director general (DG) of Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) OSD (officer on special duty) and in a major reshuffle transferred nine deputy inspectors general (DIGs) and 65 superintendents of police (SPs).

DIG of Police (Dhaka range) Baharul Alam has replaced SM Mizanur Rahman as the Rab DG.

Before his posting to the elite crime busters unit, Mizan had served two days as the chief of the Criminal Investigation Department (CID). Before that, he was the commissioner of the Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP) till October 31.

Inspector General of Police (IGP) Nur Mohammad said the changes would bring dynamism in the police administration. "I think these will ensure better performance of our officers," said the police boss.

According to an establishment ministry circular, DIG (the police headquarters) Sheikh Sazzad Ali was transferred to Dhaka range.

Additional Commissioner of the Barisal Metropolitan Police (BMP)

Mahbub Muhasin was made additional DIG of Rajshahi range while DMP Joint Commissioner Manjur Kader Khan was transferred to the Sylhet Metropolitan Police (SMP).

Joint Commissioner of the Detective Branch (DB-Dhaka police) Shahidul Islam was made commandant of Noakhali Police Training College (PTC) while Additional DIG of Khulna range Abdul Jalil and Khulna PTC Commandant Humayun Kabir were made joint commissioners of the DMP.

Rajshahi range Additional DIG Abdullah Al Azad Chowdhury was made commandant of Khulna PTC while Noakhali PTC commandant Asaduzzaman Miah was made additional DIG of Khulna.

Kohinoor Mia, the controversial police officer who was attached to the headquarters as an SP, was made OSD for Rajshahi range.

Dhaka SP Abdur Rahman Khan was transferred to Sardah Police Academy, Meer Rezaul Alam was shifted to the DMP as a deputy commissioner (DC) from Narayanganj, and Manikganj

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PHOTO: STAR

A mobile court confiscates several sacks of refined sugar with fake BSTI seals while being transported in a rickshaw-van on Dhaka-Narayanganj Link Road yesterday.

FORGING BSTI SEAL FOR SUGAR

Arrest warrant against Partex Group chief Hashem, family

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A mobile court yesterday realised Tk 750,000 in fines and issued arrest warrants against former BNP lawmaker and chairman of Partex Group MA Hashem, his wife and three sons as their company Partex Sugar Ltd sold and distributed sugar in the market forging the BSTI (Bangladesh Standards and Testing Institution) seal.

BSTI sources said Rapid Action

Battalion (Rab) members recently found sacks of sugar refined by Partex Ltd with forged BSTI seals imprinted on those in Narayanganj market. Being informed about Partex Sugar's not having licence from BSTI, a Rab team cordoned off Partex Sugar Ltd factory at Hatabo of Rugganj in Narayanganj since Tuesday night.

A mobile court led by magistrate Manzarul Mannan of Narayanganj along with BSTI officials raided the

factory yesterday and found many sacks full of sugar with BSTI seals.

"They did not get the BSTI licence. It's clear forgery," said a BSTI official who accompanied the mobile court.

Partex Sugar Ltd so far distributed 10,000 metric tons of sugar in the market without testing the standard of sugar at BSTI.

BSTI sources said, recently formed Partex Sugar Ltd was

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Relief goods found in raid on Tarique's 'Bogra residence'

EX-BNP lawmaker Lalu arrested in Bogra; grenades, arms recovered also during anti-crime drive

STAR REPORT

The army-led joint forces last night arrested former BNP lawmaker Helaluzzaman Talukder Lalu from his house in the Bogra town on charge of corruption and then raided a nearby house, reportedly owned by BNP's Senior Joint Secretary General Tarique Rahman.

Sources said security personnel hemmed in Lalu's Sutrapur residence at around 11:00pm. After a brief interrogation, the team took him out at 12:30am to conduct a search on the residence of Tarique Rahman, eldest son of the immediate past prime minister Khaleda Zia. Lalu gifted Tarique the piece of land for setting up a residence for his leader, said locals and sources.

A good amount of relief materials including quilts and pipes from the prime minister's relief fund was found in the search that was going on till filing of this report at 1:00am today.

Elected from the Bogra 7

(Gabtoli) constituency, Lalu exploited well his close links with the Zia family to become the most powerful political figure in the district.

Lalu was found at the middle of Bogra wheat scandal in August, 2002. He put pressure on the food department officials at that time to purchase rotten wheat, for which the then prime minister let him off the hook by only scolding him.

Lalu is also accused of swindling off around Tk 12 crore from the Shaptapadi branch of Janata Bank. A case was filed against him in this connection.

During a countrywide drive, the crack forces also picked up at least 1,623 people and recovered two hand grenades, 10 firearms and six homemade bombs yesterday.

Meanwhile, Azad Siddiqui, younger brother of Krishak Sramik Janata League (KSJL) President Abdul Kader Siddiqui, was placed on a four-day police remand

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Brig Sakhawat made election commissioner

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Brigadier General (retd) M Sakhawat Hossain was appointed as an election commissioner yesterday.

President Iajuddin Ahmed made the appointment completing reconstitution of the Election Commission (EC) as the caretaker government had said the new commission would comprise three members. The president on February 4 appointed former bureaucrat ATM Shamsul Huda as the chief election commissioner (CEC), and Sohul Hossain as an election commissioner.

With the former military bureaucrat's swearing into the office today, the EC for the first time

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Mashud left out of WC cricket team

SPORTS REPORTER

The axe fell on long-serving wicketkeeper Khaled Mashud when Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) announced a 15-member World Cup squad yesterday.

The selection panel, led by Faruque Ahmed, made three changes from the squad that played in the recently concluded

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Tk 87 lakh looted from 2 houses

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Armed raiders looted cash, jewelry and other valuables worth an estimated Tk 87.5 lakh from two houses in the city's Dhanmondi and Lalbagh areas yesterday.

A pedestrian was injured while a suspected robber was caught by the mob in one of the incidents.

In Dhanmondi, a band of seven robbers entered the 2nd floor flat

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