

AIRPORT PROCESSION

Jalil pledges to defend sued AL men

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Awami League (AL) General Secretary Abdul Jalil yesterday said his party will take all necessary legal steps to defend party workers if the police bring charges against them for gathering to greet Sheikh Hasina.

He made the comment while talking to journalists at his office in Motijheel as police started filing cases against several thousand people who gathered to cheer the AL chief on her homecoming on May 07. The cases were filed for breaching state of emergency restrictions.

Abdul Jalil told journalists that the AL had not organised any reception programme for the party chief. Rather, the public had welcomed her spontaneously.

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New boss vows to restore PSC image

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Public Service Commission (PSC) Chairman Saadat Hussain yesterday vowed to take stern action against politicisation of the PSC and restore its image.

"I always oppose politicisation. I have witnessed how politicisation destroys an organisation and ruins the image of a nation. As chairman, I will try to restore the image of the PSC," Former cabinet secretary Saadat Hussain said while talking

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Govt committed to enact right to information act

Says Mainul

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Law Adviser Mainul Hossain yesterday said the caretaker government is fully committed to enact the Right to Information Act.

He also laid emphasis on reviewing and analysing similar acts of other countries including the US and the UK.

The adviser made the comments when a five-member delegation of a core group met him and

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Prayer Timing		
May 10		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	4-10	4-45
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	5-00	5-15
Maghrib	6-36	6-40
Esha	8-00	8-30
Source: Islamic Foundation		

Sonadia best place for deep-sea port

Finds Japanese firm's survey

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A Japanese consultant firm in its first phase survey report submitted to the Ministry of Shipping yesterday recommended Sonadia Island in Cox's Bazar district as the most suitable place for setting up a deep-sea port in the country.

Tk 42,000 crore would be spent for the port to be completed in three phases by the year 2055.

The Japanese firm, Pacific Consultant International, also made a presentation about the findings of the site selection survey.

Kutubdia Channel in the same

district was mentioned as the second most suitable place in the recommendations for the multi-billion dollar port

The Sonadia Island, located between Cox's Bazar town and Moheshkhali Island in the Bay of Bengal, is isolated from the mainland by a river and it could be connected with bridges and tunnels, and road and railway lines could also be established for cargo carrying, the report said.

There will be hardly any need to evict people as the place is now almost a barren land where only a few thousand fishermen go to live during peak season of fishing in the

sea.

The deep-sea port will have 58 jetties with a total of 11-kilometre length.

The shipping ministry has formed a ten-member committee to examine the Japanese firm's report and finalise the recommendation in next 15 days. The committee includes representatives from the private sector.

The recommendations would be sent to the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs for final approval, sources said.

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PHOTO: STAR

Garbage covers a major part of the only space allocated for children's playing at Shishu Academy in the capital, thanks to the negligence of authorities.

Student leaders at DU in arrest panic

KAMRUL HASAN KHAN

Leaders and activists of Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) and Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL), even general resident students of 12 halls of Dhaka University (DU) are passing days amid arrest panic.

The arrest panic gripped them as the law enforcement agencies raided different dormitories three times in a week of this month to hunt down 'listed' activists of JCD and BCL who violated the state of emergency by taking part in processions or holding meetings.

Students alleged that police in their latest May 8 raids on eight dormitories arrested at least four students who do not have any political involvement and they do not know why they were arrested.

During the raids, law enforcers arrested 12 people including nine students and three outsiders. Of them 10 were produced before the court and sent to jail without framing any charges. They were freed on bail yesterday.

Shahbagh Police said they found the names of 10 of those 12

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Yunus to testify at Senate on duty-free access

UNB, Dhaka

Nobel laureate Professor Muhammad Yunus will testify at Senate hearing on duty-free access of Bangladeshi textile products to the United States.

The micro-credit pioneer has been invited by US Senator Max Baucus, chairman of the Senate Finance Committee, to testify on May 16.

Yunus, who left Dhaka on Sunday on a 22-day visit to the United States, Venezuela and Germany, will make a presentation in favour of Bangladesh's longstanding case at the hearing.

He is scheduled to return home on May 24.

ACC files cases against Mamun, Hafiz

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) filed two graft cases against controversial businessman Giasuddin Al Mamun, his elder brother and former BNP lawmaker Hafiz Ibrahim and their wives on Tuesday night.

Assistant Director of the ACC, Mohammad Ibrahim, filed the cases with Cantonment and Gulshan police stations.

In the First Information Report (FIR) filed against Mamun and his wife Shahina Yasmin with Cantonment Police Station, the ACC assistant director said that Mamun with the connivance of his wife amassed movable and immovable properties worth over Tk 62.21 crore illegally.

The case was filed under Section 27 (1) of the ACC Act 2004, Section

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HSC exams begin today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Higher Secondary Certificate (HSC) and its equivalent Alim and Business Management examinations begin today under nine education boards of the country.

As many as 5,41,817 students will sit for the exams this year under Dhaka, Rajshahi, Comilla, Jessore, Chittagong, Barisal, Sylhet, Madrasa and Technical education boards.

Of them, 1,29,179 will appear in the exams under Dhaka Education Board, 1,04,394 under Rajshahi, 46,573 under Comilla, 80,535 under Jessore, 37,764 under Chittagong, 24,599 under Barisal and 17,204 under Sylhet education boards from 1007 centres.

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Passport offices live in ancient age

SHARIFUL ISLAM

When developed countries have already introduced biometric passports, citizens of Bangladesh continue to carry passports filled out manually and prepared with primitive technologies.

Besides, people seeking passports have been facing untold ordeals as the severely understaffed Directorate of Immigration and Passport (DIP) and 15 passport offices across the country have been failing to cope with the growing demand for passports everyday due to absence of modern technologies.

Introduction of modern technologies will also lead to curbing of

corruption in the passport offices, experts said.

"An increase in manpower, opening of more offices, creation of a database and introduction of machine-readable passports are necessary for smooth functioning of the passport offices, and for curbing corruption and other passport related forgeries," ex-director general of DIP M Waheedul Haque told The Daily Star.

He also suggested employing licensed passport agents who will work as a go-between for the department and the clients in exchange for a government fixed fee for each passport.

A Transparency International

Bangladesh (TIB) study in October last year termed having a passport a citizen's right, and suggested elimination of bureaucratic tangles, modernisation of the department with technologies, an enhanced budget and trained manpower to curb corruption and harassment in the process of issuing passports.

The report also revealed that the police, middlemen and a section of government officials illegally collect Tk 21 crore a year from citizens as a tremendous level of corruption has gripped the process of issuing passports.

According to the organisational charter of duties, a passport writer

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Bank details of 7 politicians sought

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Bangladesh Bank (BB) yesterday asked commercial banks for all banking information of six politicians and a former bureaucrat by last night.

They are detained former home minister and Awami League (AL) leader Md Nasim, former AL law-makers Joynal Hazari, Haji Selim and Haji Maqbul, detained adviser to AL chief and businessman Salman F Rahman, detained former bureaucrat ANH Akhtar Hossain and ward commissioner Abdul Quaiyum.

Sources said the National

Coordination Committee on Combating Corruption and Crime has sought the information from the central bank.

As per the directive, banks will have to submit detailed information on transactions made through personal accounts, joint accounts, current accounts, foreign currency accounts, savings accounts, credit accounts and credit cards.

Earlier on April 25, the central bank directed the banks to submit information of the bank accounts of two former premiers-- Khaleda Zia and Sheikh Hasina.

The banks have already met the

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Salman gets bail in fraud case

COURT CORRESPONDENT

Beximco Group Vice-Chairman Salman F Rahman, one of the corruption suspects in the first list of Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC), yesterday obtained bail in a cheating case.

Metropolitan Magistrate Mohammad Shafiqul Islam granted the bail upon a bond of Tk 5,000 with two guarantors after complainant Mosharraf Hossain Ahmed appeared before the court and submitted a non-prosecution petition.

Moving the bail petition, the defence lawyers said their client's company has already paid Tk 2.35

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