

Lightning kills 16

STAR REPORT

Sixteen people were killed by lightning across the country in the last two days during heavy rain and thunderstorms. In Cox's Bazar, seven people died yesterday in separate incidents of lightning strikes, reports our correspondent there.

Some 10, hurt by lightning, were admitted to Cox's Bazar General Hospital.

Mohammed Tozal, 32, of Napitkhali village in Pekiya upazila was killed when lightning struck him at around 12:30pm as he was working on a shrimp farm near

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SSC results today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Secondary School Certificate (SSC) examination results under seven education boards will be published in the afternoon today.

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Prayer Timing		
June 12		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	4-05	4-40
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	5-00	5-15
Maghrib	6-50	6-55
Esha	8-15	8-45
Source: Islamic Foundation		

PARTIES' POLLS CAMPAIGN

EC moves to stop foreign funding

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Election Commission (EC) has made a move to impose a ban on receiving funds from foreign sources to run political parties or their election campaigns.

"No political party shall receive any donation or funding from any foreign country or organisation or a

person who is not of Bangladesh origin," the EC said in its draft proposal. The proposal was recently drafted as part of its ongoing initiative for electoral reforms to ensure financial transparency in the activities of political parties.

Major political parties including Awami League, BNP, Jatiya Party and Jamaat-e-Islami have report-

edly been collecting funds from foreign sources for a long time particularly to run their election campaigns.

A number of AL and BNP leaders detained on charge of corruption have allegedly admitted to taking money from foreign sources to run their party's election campaigns.

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Conditional duty-cut on capital machinery

REJAUL KARIM BYRON

The National Board of Revenue (NBR) will impose five percent import duty, instead of the 10 outlined in the budget, on some types of capital machinery used in leather, textile and pharmaceuticals industries.

The NBR will also bring 65 more goods, services and organisations under its value added tax (VAT) net. But 200 items including raw materi-

als, life saving drugs and essentials may be kept out of VAT net at import and production stages.

The NBR already has prepared a draft SRO (Statutory Regulatory Order) to recast the tariff structure, and it will be announced next month after the proposed budget is finalised.

To get the facility of five percent duty in importing machinery, importers will have to export at least 80 percent of the items produced with

these machinery within three years.

If anyone fails to export goods within the deadline after importing machinery with at lower duty, he or she will have to pay additional 10 percent taxes with the total applicable taxes.

The items that may be exempted from VAT at import level include rock lobster and sea craw fish, shrimps and prawn live fry,

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'Govt to probe graft allegations against Khaleda, Hasina'

UNB, Dhaka

The government will look into the allegations of corruption revealed by the detained BNP and Awami League leaders against their party chiefs--Khaleda Zia and Sheikh Hasina.

"We knew that corruption involving thousands of crores of taka took place ...Nobody is above the law...As heads of the government, no one can avoid the responsibilities of corruption in their

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China concerned at developments in Bangladesh

UNB, Dhaka

China has vented deep concern over the developments in Bangladesh and expressed the hope that peace, stability and development of the country could be safeguarded in people's interest.

"As the friendly close neighbour of Bangladesh, China is very much concerned about the developments in Bangladesh," said new Chinese Ambassador Zheng Qingdian, who sees a lot of potential of this country to develop.

In an interview with the news

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PHOTO: STAR

Traffic crawls to a standstill on both sides of the Sonargaon Road in the capital during yesterday's drizzle.

448 Biman staff resign voluntarily

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

With 170 more Biman officials and employees responding to the Voluntary Retirement Scheme (VRS) yesterday, the number of total staff accepting the offer rose to 448, Biman sources said.

On June 5, Biman Bangladesh Airlines offered the VRS in order to trim its staff to 3,400 by axing about 1,500 current employees.

The scheme is part of the government plan to turn the national flag carrier into a public limited company (PLC) and therefore to

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BCIC to import 75,000 tonnes of fertiliser

Govt okays proposal

UNB, Dhaka

The government has approved import of 75,000 tonnes of fertiliser by the state-run Bangladesh Chemical Industries Corporation (BCIC).

The approval was given at a meeting of the Advisory Committee on Public Purchase in its meeting at the Cabinet Division yesterday.

The committee also approved the procurement of 1crore jute bags, each costing Tk 48.05, for the

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PHOTO: STAR

Marks of beating on Mahbub Alam Liton at Samorita Hospital in the capital.

Man 'beaten up' in camp over personal dispute

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

An army captain allegedly beat up a man inside an army camp in the city yesterday following a personal dispute.

The badly injured victim Mahbub Alam Liton, 35, is the owner of a sawmill in Dhaka Cantonment area.

Liton told The Daily Star that five people in army uniform and two in plain clothes, including captain Shibli, took

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Mittal to go for feasibility study

Signs MoU for \$2.9b investment

STAR CORRESPONDENT

Managing director of India's Ispat Industries, Vinod Mittal, yesterday signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with the Board of Investment (BoI) to conduct a feasibility study of US\$ 2.9 billion investment plan in Bangladesh.

Vinod Mittal, younger brother of steel tycoon Lakshmi Mittal, made the agreement on behalf of Global Oil & Energy Ltd UK, the offshore investment wing of Ispat Industries.

The company expressed its interest to invest \$1.5 billion in the petrochemical sector, \$500 million in power plants, \$500 million in NGL/LNG production, \$300 million in coal mine development and \$100 million in oil exploration and production.

Mittal said this figure of investment plan is based on a rough estimate and the total investment plan may increase or decrease after getting details of the feasibility study.

After signing the MoU, Vinod Mittal said they are expecting to start the feasibility study within the next three months.

"We are first considering exploration in coal and gas as Bangladesh has a good reserve of the two natural resources. Then we will start our other operations," he added.

About the experience of Tata Group's investment in Bangladesh, Mittal said, "I do not want to compare our project with Tata's. We are working on the potentials. We are exploring with our own ways, style and culture."

The group wants to start investment activity on a fast track, he said.

Asked whether the company feels any hesitation to make the huge investment plan during the interim government's tenure, he said the company is working with the BoI that is providing full support for it.

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