

CHT district councils restructured

SHANTIMOY CHAKMA,

from Rangamati

The caretaker government has made changes in the three interim Hill District Councils (HDC) formed by the past four-party alliance government during its regime, sources in the CHT affairs ministry said yesterday.

The newly selected chairmen and councillors of the district councils are to take oath and take over their charges within a couple of days, added the sources.

However, the Rangamati, Bandarban and Khagrachhari district councils did not receive official orders as of yesterday, officials of the HDCs said. Fax messages from the ministry regarding the changes are being expected by today or tomorrow.

Rangamati and Bandarban district councils have been dissolved entirely while Khagrachhari district councillors have been replaced and its chairman retained, a source in the CHT affairs ministry said.

SEE PAGE 5 COL 4

Farmers need insurance coverage for flood damage

Experts suggest

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Development experts at a seminar yesterday suggested introduction of flood insurance schemes for the farmers living in the flood-prone areas to cope with the devastating effects of this natural disaster.

The administrative cost for operating the insurance, however, should be minimised and mass awareness should be created to make people interested in such schemes, which should also be commercially viable, they noted.

The views came at the seminar on prospects for a flood insurance market in Bangladesh organised by Poverty Reduction and Environment Management (PREM) Bangladesh and International Network of Alternative Financial Institutions (INAFI) at Spectra Convention Centre in the city.

The speakers said that such a scheme would require farmers to pay a fixed amount of money for the next five years on a regular basis and the farmers would be compensated for any losses caused by floods.

Speaking as the chief guest, Palli

SEE PAGE 15 COL 4

Admission of 81 more 'fake' DU students cancelled

DU CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka University (DU) Syndicate has cancelled admission of 81 more students enrolled through fraudulent means, raising the number of such cancellation cases to 158 so far.

Of the fake students, 75 were from international relations (IR) department, three from the

Institute of Social Welfare and Research and one each from management department, chemistry department and political science department, syndicate sources said.

The syndicate decided to cancel their admission after serving show-cause notices on 84 students following findings of a probe committee. Among them, 28 responded to the show-cause notice, but they could not give proof of the legality of their admission.

The syndicate yesterday also directed the authorities to send show-cause notices to nine more fresh students of IR department identified as fake, asking proof of legality of their admission, sources said.

Their fate will be decided in

SEE PAGE 15 COL 3

Prayer Timing

July 4		
	Azam	Jamaat
Fajr	4-10	4-45
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	5-00	5-15
Maghrib	6-55	7-00
Esha	8-17	8-45

Source: Islamic Foundation

LONDON MONEY TRANSFER SCAM

BB asks banks to find ways to pay clients

REJAUL KARIM BYRON

Bangladesh Bank (BB) yesterday advised local banks having partnership with London-based money transfer agency First Solution Money Transfer Ltd to examine ways to use its security deposits to pay clients who are yet to receive money sent by their relatives.

Five private banks have pending orders for transferring Tk 15.31 crore sent by Bangladeshi expatriates in London through First Solution to their clients. The agency sent invoice letters against the amount but is yet to deposit the money with the banks' foreign currency accounts abroad.

First Solution recently stopped business and applied to the authorities in London to declare it bankrupt, which created panic among clients both in London and

Bangladesh. The owners of the agency went into hiding after stopping business on June 27.

BB Governor Dr Salehuddin Ahmed yesterday said the central bank sent a letter to the Bangladesh High Commission in London to investigate the matter.

The BB is also going to investigate if any other money exchange houses abroad are involved in such activities, he said.

In the last couple of days the BB held meetings with the local private banks that have agreement with First Solution to find ways to resolve the crisis.

BB officials, however, said they have little to do to compel the agency to pay the clients as it is authorised by the British government, not by Bangladesh Bank.

"We have advised the partners of First Solution here to consult their

lawyers in London as well as the authorities that gave the agency permission to do the business," said a BB official after yesterday's meeting.

Eight private banks in Bangladesh are the local partners for distributing remittances sent from London through First Solution. The banks are South East Bank, National Credit and Commerce Bank Ltd (NCC), Prime Bank, Brac Bank, Uttara Bank, Eastern Bank, Mutual Trust Bank, and Janata Bank.

South East Bank alone has received invoice letters from First Solution for paying Tk 14 crore to its clients. The agency has \$50,000 (around Tk 35 lakh) as security money with South East Bank.

BB sources said the NCC bank

SEE PAGE 15 COL 7

Dhaka-Kolkata train's trial run July 8

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Dhaka-Kolkata train service will get its first trial run on July 8.

An Indian delegation will arrive here on the train for talks during its two-day stay to finalise details of the service.

"We are hoping to start the train service by the end of this month, but it will depend on the outcome of the meetings," Bangladesh Railways Director General Belayet Hossain told The Daily Star last night.

Sources, however, said the Indian side also expects the train service to start by the end of this month and may be as early as the third week of July, which is Dhaka's target period after a number of false starts.

Indian media had earlier reported that the train service would open on April 14, but New Delhi retreated from its position, saying the logistics were incomplete.

In the talks, the two sides will

SEE PAGE 15 COL 2



PHOTO: PID
Army chief General Moeen U Ahmed meets President Iajuddin Ahmed at Bangabhaban yesterday, seeking his continued assistance for the development of the army.



PHOTO: STAR
Policemen push start a prison van carrying controversial businessman Giasuddin Al Mamun in front of Dhaka Judge's Court yesterday. Prison vans often have to be started in this way.

9 killed in Pak mosque battle

AFP, Islamabad

Pakistani security forces fought fierce gunbattles with students at a pro-Taliban mosque in Islamabad yesterday after a lengthy standoff exploded into violence, leaving nine dead and 140 hurt.

Clerics at the radical Lal Masjid, or Red Mosque, threatened suicide attacks to avenge the "blood of martyrs" after the day-long clashes, which killed a soldier, four students, a journalist and three bystanders.

The shootout followed months of tension over the mosque's increasingly brazen challenges to the authority of President Pervez Musharraf, most recently by kidnapping seven Chinese citizens it accused of running a brothel.

"The deaths of nine people have been confirmed so far and more than 140 wounded," deputy interior

Doctors rounded up over UK bomb plot

AFP, London

Police held up to six doctors in connection with the failed bombings in London and Glasgow after an Indian physician was detained yesterday in Australia, officials and reports said.

A Jordanian neurosurgeon and an Iraqi doctor were also among the eight suspects now under questioning as the investigation spread around the world.

With Britain still on top alert for a new al-Qaeda style attack, police carried out a controlled explosion on a car near a Glasgow mosque early Tuesday. A British security source told AFP that the group had a bomb factory in the Scottish city.

The source also said all of the people implicated in the plot so far were working in the British state health system and that all the suspects were from Middle East countries.

SEE PAGE 15 COL 7

SEE PAGE 15 COL 7

US kills 23 insurgents in Iraq battle

Helicopter shot down

AFP, Baghdad

US and Iraqi forces waged a two-day battle against insurgents south of the former insurgent bastion of Ramadi, killing 23 alleged militants, the military said yesterday.

The battle began on Saturday night when two truckloads of gunmen opened fire on a US position near Donkey Island on the Euphrates River in the restive western province of Anbar.

US forces returned fire and, supported with aircraft, pursued the gunmen into the night.

"Helicopters killed at least one insurgent and wounded another, and destroyed the two trucks, later determined to be loaded with weapons,"

ons, ammunition and explosives," a military statement said.

Insurgents shot down a US military helicopter south of Baghdad but its pilots escaped with only mild injuries, the military reported Tuesday.

"An AH-64 Apache helicopter rescued two Task Force Marine pilots after enemy fire brought down their O-58D Kiowa Attack Helicopter south of Baghdad" on Monday, the military said.

The downed helicopter was later destroyed with two 500-pound (227 kilograms) laser-guided bombs, the military said.

At the height of the battle an Apache attack helicopter was ordered to evacuate a critically

wounded soldier, a separate statement said.

A co-pilot "helped load the injured soldier into the front seat without further injury," it said.

"Despite the heavy small arms fire and surface-to-air fire events in the area, the co-pilot/gunner strapped himself on to the left side of the aircraft and hunkered down on the wing" outside the narrow fuselage.

The soldier was flown to a nearby US base -- in what a US marines spokesman described as "an amazing act of heroism" -- and is now in stable condition, the statement said.

Troops searching the area on

SEE PAGE 15 COL 6



PHOTO: STAR
Sand traders are running business by piling up sand on the north side of Rayerbazar killing field in the capital, dis- honouring the historic site and destroying the environment of the area.

Army chief meets president

UNB, Dhaka

Army Chief General Moeen U Ahmed called on President Iajuddin Ahmed at Bangabhaban yesterday.

General Moeen appraised the president, also the supreme commander of the Armed Forces, relevant issues and sought his continued assistance for the development of the army, said a handout.

The president gave the army chief a patient hearing and assured him of all-out cooperation.

President's Military Secretary Major General M Aminul Karim and Secretary of the President's Office M Sirajul Islam were present.

Hill plunderers' list likely to be sent to forest ministry today

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Department of Environment (DoE) that is now finalising a list of hill plunderers in Chittagong Division is likely to send it to the Ministry of Environment and Forests today for proper action.

The list is based on a week-long field survey by seven DoE teams in Chittagong, Cox's Bazar and the three hill districts of Rangamati, Khagrachhari and Bandarban.

The DoE primarily identified over 200 individuals, organisations and business groups as plunderers of hills in 155 hilly areas in Chittagong Division that were subjected to illegal hill cutting over the last two decades.

Newly appointed DoE Director Nazmul Hoque said it is a tough job but they are trying hard to make a flawless list of those who devoured hills, and specify the areas where they did that.

Meanwhile, Chief Adviser Fakhruddin Ahmed during his visit here following the June 11

SEE PAGE 15 COL 2