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Army chief comes to 85-yr-old's rescue from loan shackles

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Nilphamari

Eighty-five year old Manoranjan Roy, who had been sent to jail as he failed to repay a loan taken from the Krishni Unnayan Bank, was released yesterday as Chief of Army Staff General Moeen U Ahmed cleared the poor man's debt.

The army chief took the move following a report of the daily

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Arrest warrant issued against Bashundhara Group chief's son

Interpol help might be sought to arrest him

STAR REPORT

A Dhaka court yesterday issued arrest warrant against Shafiyat Sobhan Sanbir, son of Bashundhara Group Chairman Ahmed Akbar Sobhan, in connection with the killing of Humayun Kabir Sabir and directed the authorities concerned to send the warrant through Interpol to take

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Banks asked to furnish account info of Moudud, his family

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The taskforce under the national coordination committee for grave offences yesterday asked different commercial banks to submit account information of 15 individuals and organisations including former law minister Moudud Ahmed, his wife and children.

The other people and organisations listed in the task force letter are Moudud's relatives, the people who had worked with him.

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It's not always possible to go by constitution

Says Mainul

UNB, Dhaka

Law and Information Adviser Mainul Hossain yesterday said the country is not running in line with the normal rule of law because of the prevailing state of emergency under which it's not always possible to go by the constitution.

He made the observations while talking to reporters at his information ministry office about the achievements made by the caretaker

SEE PAGE 15 COL 2

SAVING BURIGANGA

Plan to pipe in water from Jamuna

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government yesterday decided to lift the water level in the Buriganga by piping in water from the Jamuna and ensure increased water supply to the city dwellers.

At a meeting of the local government and rural development (LGRD) ministry with Adviser Anwarul Iqbal in the chair, it also directed the Directorate of Environment (DoE) to take necessary measures to stop pollution in the Buriganga, Turag, Balu and Shitalakhya, all flowing around the capital.

Estimated to cost Tk 616.88 crore from the public purse, a project has already been planned in view of the importance of higher

river levels in water supply.

If implemented, it would increase water level and decrease pollution in the rivers surrounding Dhaka. It all would enable the Water and Sewerage Authority (Wasa) to come up with more drinking water to meet the growing demand in the city, meeting sources said.

Besides, the project would make effective the circular waterways that have long been lying idle.

According to the project proposal, the authorities plan to bring in water to the Buriganga and Turag through pipelines from the Jamuna at Nagarpur in Tangail. The work would be done only in the dry season, as the water levels are usually high during the monsoon.

Under the inter-ministerial project, the river beds too will be dug to increase the navigability of the Buriganga, Turag, Balu and Shitalakhya.

The Wasa, which is responsible for water supply and sewerage network in Dhaka city, is now having difficulties setting up new treatment plants as the underground water level has gone down too far. Once the project is completed, it would solve that problem, the meeting sources added.

Currently, the authority has four treatment plants and can supply every day 31 crore litres of water to the city dwellers, whereas the demand remains much higher.

At yesterday's meeting, the DoE

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Roadmap for polls Sunday

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Election Commission (EC) on Sunday will announce a tentative date for holding the stalled ninth parliamentary elections and declare the roadmap to the polls in which the date for completing the voter list with photographs would be mentioned.

Sources said the chief election commissioner (CEC) on Sunday would make the roadmap public in a press conference at the EC Secretariat.

Meanwhile, the CEC and two other election commissioners yesterday afternoon met Chief Adviser to the Caretaker Government Fakhrudin Ahmed at his office and discussed various issues regarding the stalled ninth parliamentary polls, the EC's roadmap to polls and plans for electoral reforms.

Election Commissioner Brig Gen (retd) M Sakhawat Hossain told The Daily Star that the EC would announce its complete plan

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Construction work of Gulistan-Jatrabari flyover remains stalled for over a year as Dhaka City Corporation advisory committee on flyovers detected flaws in its design. The photo was taken from Gulistan end of the flyover.

2 lakh acres of reserved forest still in dispute

SHAKHAWAT LITON

Declaration of more than 2 lakh acres of forestland as reserved in seven districts of Dhaka division has been stymied for the last 50 years due to stalling settlement of claims over the lands.

During the period however only 71,369 acres of forestlands in the districts of Dhaka, Gazipur, Mymensingh, Sherpur, Netrakona, Jamalpur and Tangail have been declared as reserved while 1.05 lakh acres of forests in Dhaka, Mymensingh and Tangail districts are still under the control of land grabbers.

"We are facing difficulties in establishing our absolute right over the forestlands since those forests are yet to be declared as reserved due to a huge number of pending cases of claims. In addition to that some crooked forest officials helped land grabbers to encroach

upon those forestlands, using fake documents," a senior forest official told The Daily Star on condition of anonymity.

Talking to The Daily Star yesterday AKM Shamsuddin, who is now the acting chief conservator of forest, said the remaining forestlands, slated to be declared as reserved, should be declared as such soon by settling the cases of claims to protect those from land grabbers.

"We continue urging the settlement officers to settle the claims as soon as possible to clear the way for declaring the slated forestlands as reserved. The ongoing problem will become acute if the process is delayed anymore," Shamsuddin said.

Once a forestland is declared reserved, the forest department is fully authorised according to the Forest Act 1927 to take legal actions against any damage done to a

reserved forest, observed forest officials.

The process of declaring the forestlands as reserved began in 1956, which got stymied mainly due to indifference of the settlement officers, whose task it is to settle the cases of claims filed in connection with the lands.

According to the Forest Act 1927, the slated forests were supposed to be declared as reserved within a maximum of a year and a half since the issuance of the notification marking those for preservation.

In a report placed to a high level meeting recently on the status of the slated forestlands, the forest department said there are a total of 2.50 lakh acres of such forestlands in the seven districts.

Once upon a time, those forests were properties of mainly the Zamindars [large-scale landlords].

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Replacing age-old fleet must for saving Biman

RASHIDUL HASAN

Biman Bangladesh Airlines' planes get frequently grounded for technical reasons due to its aging fleet which has only old generation aircraft aged between 17 to 29 years, except only two.

Such grounding of aircraft is wreaking havoc on Biman's flight schedule chipping away at its market share.

No other international airline uses such antiquated aircraft which end up incurring a very high operating cost, Biman insiders said. They also identified the high operating cost as one of the main reasons for the national flag carrier's turning into a losing concern.

Usually reputed international airlines use only new aircraft for six to seven years before replacing them with the latest ones, according to Biman sources.

Biman presently owns three types of aircraft -- four DC10-30s, four F-28s, and three A310-300s. Production of DC10-30s and F-28s has been discontinued because of their lack of viability in business.

Biman's current market share of passengers plummeted to approximately 32 percent from 57 percent in 1991, the planning department of Biman disclosed to The Daily Star.

Due to a pre-eminence of bureaucratic red tape and for a vested interest group, Biman could not buy new generation aircraft so far, the airline sources said.

In 2005-06, Biman carried only about 14 lakh passengers out of the 30 lakh that boarded different airlines at Zia International Airport, the sources added.

Out of a total of 11 aircraft of the Biman fleet, only six are operating now while the rest are grounded

due to technical malfunctions.

Out of the four DC10-30s three are 29 years old while the other is 17 years old, the four F-28s are 31 years old, and two of the A310-300s are 11 years old while the other is 7 years old.

On Saturday, some 200 Abudhabi bound passengers of Biman got stuck at Zia for 35 hours because the flight was delayed due to a technical glitch on the antiquated aircraft, the sources said.

In another incident on Sunday, a DC10-30 of Biman had to hover over Zia for half an hour before it could make a landing, due to a trouble with its wheels. The aircraft is yet to be ready for flying, the sources said.

"Antiquated aircraft of Biman impose high operating cost because they are fuel guzzlers," said a high official of Biman wishing anonymity.

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Held politicians crowd hospitals

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Ten out of the 62 political leaders who are considered important prisoners and have been granted divisions in jail remain admitted to hospitals for different medical conditions.

Some of them continue to stay in the hospitals just to avoid jail. They are living a life quite luxurious when in the first place they are not sick enough to be there, said sources.

General Secretary of Awami League (AL) Abdul Jalil, AL president members Sheikh Fazlul Karim Selim and Kazi Zafrullah, AL Joint General Secretary Obaidul Quader, Chittagong City Corporation Mayor Mohiuddin Chowdhury, former BNP lawmaker Saleuddin Quader Chowdhury, former housing and public works minister Mirza Abbas, ex-state minister for home Lutfozzaman Babar, former BNP lawmakers Abu Taher and Nasiruddin Ahmed Pintu are the ones undergoing treatment, said prison sources.

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Bhuiyan's men take a counter swipe at Khaleda

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Following Khaleda Zia's strong criticism of BNP's reformist faction led by Secretary General Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan on Sunday, leaders of that faction took their turn yesterday in coming down hard on their chairperson.

They said they do not want to split the party rather they want to make it stronger.

Alluding to Khaleda, BNP's reformist leaders of Mannan faction alleged that people who are

talking about a possible split in the party themselves probably want to break it up.

The pro-Mannan leaders also decided to discuss with district level leaders their party reform proposal to make the initiative a success through getting that adopted by a party council.

The dissident leaders during a meeting with Mannan Bhuiyan in his residence yesterday blasted Khaleda for her accusations against them and their leader of reforms.

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Matin denies govt role in making or breaking parties

UNB, Dhaka

Communications Adviser Major General (retd) MA Matin yesterday said the government was not aware of the basis of Awami League chief Sheikh Hasina's allegation that military intelligence is engaged in making and breaking political parties.

"I don't know about its basis... The government does not know anything about it, and this is the reality," he said while talking to reporters at his ministry.

Matin again rejected the

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Made Possible By: The Daily Star

ILL-GOTTEN WEALTH Charges framed against Ex-BNP lawmaker Munshi, his family

Falu, wife sued for submitting false wealth report

STAR REPORT

A special court yesterday framed charges against former lawmaker Monjurul Ahsan Munshi, his wife Sajeda Ahsan and two sons Rijwanul Ahsan and Rijviul Ahsan for illegally accumulating wealth and concealing information about their assets in the statement submitted to the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC).

A case was filed against BNP leader and former lawmaker from Dhaka-10 constituency Mosaddik Ali Falu and his wife on Sunday night on charges of submitting

false wealth statements to the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) and concealing information about their wealth.

Police yesterday submitted charge sheet to a Gazipur court against detained BNP leader Brig Gen (retd) ASM Hamman Shah, his son Rezaul Hamman and five others in connection with an extortion case.

The ACC yesterday sought a seven-day remand to interrogate detained former BNP lawmaker M Naser Rahman in connection with a graft case while a Dhaka court allowed ACC to interrogate Sonali

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Bank Asia LIMITED

CREDIT RATING REPORT (Entity Rating)

Long Term	AA ₂
Short Term	ST ₂
Date of Rating	7 th June, 2007
Based on Financials	31 st December, 2006

Credit Rating Agency of Bangladesh Limited (CRAB) has assigned AA₂ (Pronounced Double A Two) rating in the Long Term and ST₂ rating in the Short Term to Bank Asia Limited (BAL).

Commercial Banks rated AA₂ in the Long Term are adjudged to be very strong banks, characterized by very good financials, healthy and sustainable franchises, and a first rate operating environment. This level of rating indicates strong capacity for timely payment of financial commitments, with very low likelihood of being adversely affected by foreseeable events.

Commercial Banks rated ST₂ in the Short Term are considered to have strong capacity for timely repayment. Banks rated in this category are characterised with commendable position in terms of liquidity, internal fund generation, and access to alternative sources of funds is outstanding.