

DRAFT POLICY

Provision for coal export takes beating

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Energy experts and academics at a roundtable yesterday said provision for coal export in the proposed coal policy will go against national interest while participant politicians said the policy should be discussed in parliament before its finalisation.

Instead of allowing coal export, coal policy must focus more on national interest and be in line with energy policy, which will formulate a strategy to supply coal for power generation in the country, the speakers said.

The roundtable on 'National coal

policy : present context' was organised by the Saptahik 2000 and held at The Daily Star office in the capital.

The sixth draft coal policy was supposed to be the final one but one more draft policy was prepared in June this year, said Nuruddin Mahmud Kamal, former chairman of Power Development Board (PDB) in his keynote presentation.

"This draft is yet to be reached to the recently formed committee for scrutiny though it (committee) is scheduled to hold its first meeting on July 22 (today). This is how the 'energy bureaucrats' are working

secretly to hand over our mineral resources to foreign companies," he said.

Referring to Phulbari coal mine, Nuruddin said people think open pit mining goes against their interest. "So, for whose interest the bureaucrats are encouraging the present government to take the risk of coal production there under open pit method?"

The most important task of the government is to assess the coal reserve, conduct technical and financial studies on mining by

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Rab foils kidnap attempt, rescues 4 children

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) arrested a member of a human trafficking gang and rescued four children when the trafficker was trying to kidnap them from the city's Khilgaon area on Friday.

The trafficker, Abul Shikder, confessed to the interrogators that he has so far kidnapped about 50 children from different parts of the capital since he got involved in the profession five years back.

The rescued children are Akash, 7, Irin, 9, Taslima, 10, and Rozina, 7.

Acting on a tip-off, a patrol team of the elite force arrested Shikder from beside Chhapra Mosque at 7:30pm.

Rab sources claimed that Shikder has been trying to

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Senior ASP Enamul Haque, *right picture*, moderates the inaugural ceremony of Police Service Delivery Centre and Police Open Day in Panchlaish Model Police Station in Chittagong yesterday as part of Police Reform Project. In the left picture, however, he is seen delivering his choice of police service by pummelling journalists on April 16, 2006 at Chittagong Divisional Stadium during a cricket match, for which he was widely rebuked.

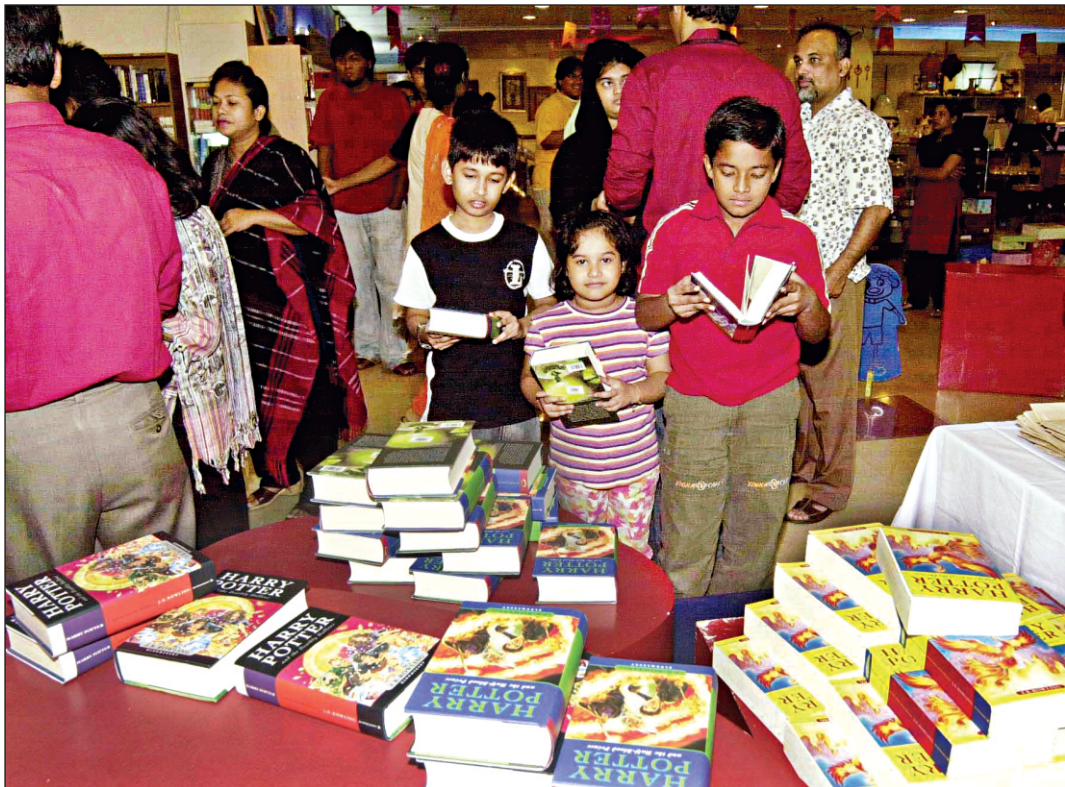


PHOTO: STAR

Children grab copies of the final book of Harry Potter series at the Etc outlet at Dhanmondi in the capital yesterday following its worldwide release.

Potter swansong sweeps Bangladesh

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The launching of the seventh and last book of the world famous Harry Potter series, "Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows", was held in the capital yesterday simultaneously with other countries in the world.

Etcetera Bangladesh (Pvt) Ltd launched the book at its Dhanmondi outlet.

Etc Kids Club organised a "Grand Potter Party" marking the launching of the book where schoolchildren aged between five and twelve took part in different game shows.

Syada Madiha Morshed, executive director, and Wasima Parvin, deputy chairman of Scholastica Pvt Ltd, attended the function as chief and special guests and gave away prizes to the winners.

Etc has brought the original UK edition of the final book of Harry Potter series published by

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Taliban say they killed two abducted Germans

ROK president urges militants to free Koreans, promises to pull out troops

AFP, Kandahar

Afghanistan's Taliban said it had killed two German hostages yesterday, as South Korea's president urged the militant group to free 18 of his nationals also abducted this week.

The Islamist rebels have demanded that both countries pull their troops out of the war-torn country where the Germans serve under Nato and the Koreans under

US-led command, a spokesman said.

Taliban spokesman Yousuf Ahmadi, speaking by telephone from an undisclosed location, also said the group welcomed South Korea's decision to pull its troops out of the country by the end of the year, a previously planned withdrawal reiterated in Seoul Saturday.

"We'll decide the fate of the South Koreans later," he said. "But we welcome their government's

decision to pull out of our country. I hope their (hostage) problem is solved peacefully."

Earlier in the morning, the Taliban spokesman issued two tight deadlines, threatening the killings of the Germans if the group received no calls from the governments in Berlin or Kabul.

He later announced the killings, which could not be independently verified.

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The Economist on Bangladesh

[The following article on Bangladesh headlined "A curious democratic roadmap" was published in The Economist on July 19.]

In most countries, ambitious generals and unelected governments have a poor track record of delivering democracy. But this is still the promise to Bangladesh made by the generals who assumed emergency powers in January and the pliable administration they installed. This week the election commission published a roadmap to parliamentary elections to be held before the end of 2008. But the government was silent on when the state of emergency will be lifted.

The next day the government reminded people of one reason why their constitutional rights

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Sabina responds well to therapy

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The condition of ailing Sabina Yasmin, now undergoing treatment at Singapore General Hospital, has improved significantly, a close relative of the renowned singer said yesterday.

"Sabina has overcome the first cycle of chemotherapy and immunotherapy very well with no nausea or vomiting and with very insignificant side effects," her brother-in-law Mobarak Hossain Khan said quoting a message from a doctor at the Singapore hospital.

She is under the treatment of Dr Toh Han Chong of National Cancer Centre at the hospital.

Sabina does not have fever now and her liver function is particularly improving. "We have taken off all intravenous hydration and she is eating well," said the doctor in his message.

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3 of a family crushed under tree

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Jhenidah

Three members of a family were killed and another was injured when a tree collapsed on their shanty in the district town on Friday night.

The dead are Chand Mia, 60, and his daughters Shafi, 12, and Chadni, 2.

Police said a pine tree fell on the shanty adjacent to the district jail during heavy rain at around 11:30pm, killing Chand Mia and his two daughters on the spot and injuring his wife Jaberunnessa Khatun, 40. They all were asleep during the incident.

Seriously injured Jaberunnessa was admitted to Jhenidah Sadar Hospita. Police recovered the bodies and sent them to the hospital for autopsy.

Prayer Timing		
July 22		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	4-15	4-50
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	5-00	5-15
Maghrib	6-54	6-58
Esha	8-15	8-45
Source: Islamic Foundation		

New party launched amid ban on politics

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The ongoing state of emergency saw the launching of yet another political party as Ferdous Ahmed Qureshi yesterday floated Progressive Democratic Party (PDP) despite a ban on all kinds of political activities.

A few Jatiya Party (Ershad) lawmakers, a BNP lawmaker and a few other political leaders left their parties and floated the new party, ignoring criticisms over formation of new political parties with reported blessings of the administration during the state of emergency.

Asked if his party has the blessings of the government, Qureshi said, "It is a blessing for those who want to form new parties. Of course, we are taking the opportunity."

Qureshi's PDP is the second party to have been launched this month after former Jatiya Party

(JP) leader Shawkat Hossain Nilu floated National People's Party on July 19. Police, however, barred Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) from holding a views-exchange meeting on reforms on the same day.

Former JP leaders Kazi Firoz Rashid, Tajul Islam Chowdhury, Moshir Rahman Ranga and Shamsunnahar Begum, former BNP lawmaker Nurul Islam Moni, former general secretary of Krishak Sramik Janata League Advocate Fazlur Rahman, LDP vice-president and former Jamaat-e-Islami leader Moulana Sakawat Hossain are among others who joined the PDP.

Qureshi started his political career as a leader of Bangladesh Chhatra League, student wing of the Awami League (AL), and later became a founder joint secretary of the BNP.

He was among the political

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3 suspects held for NSI man murder

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Police yesterday arrested three people from Kafrul area in the capital on suspicion of their involvement in the killing of National Security Intelligence (NSI) official Sheikh Atiar Rahman.

The three arrested are believed to be members of a gang popularly known as the 'Malam Party' -- who rub in stinging balm into their victims' eyes.

On Thursday night, the unconscious body of Sheikh Atiar Rahman, 55, deputy assistant director of NSI, was recovered by police from the Kafrul area. Atiar was declared dead after he was sent to National Heart Foundation hospital at Mirpur.

The three arrestees were identified as Raqibul Hasan Rakib, Munir Hossain and Bhutto alias Paltu.

A Dhaka court granted two-days' remand for each after the police produced them before it seeking seven-day remand, said

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Bomb plot foiled in Pakistan

AFP, Karachi

Pakistani police said yesterday they had defused a bomb outside a packed shopping centre where the latest Harry Potter book was scheduled to be launched.

The man behind what police called an "immature" bomb plot phoned police after having an apparent change of heart because of the many children at the site, said Karachi police investigation chief Manzoor Mughal.

"Police have foiled an attempt to blow up a car bomb by remote control outside the Pak Towers and defused 10 kilograms of explosives in a stolen car," he said. "Had it exploded it would have caused a huge loss of lives."

"There were several hundred people inside Pak Towers at the time we received the call from an unknown person that a bomb was about to explode," Mughal said.

The warning prompted the

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