

## DU VIOLENCE

### Judicial probe body wants to talk to 2 detained DU teachers

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The one-member judicial probe commission of Justice Habibur Rahman Khan is to ask authorities concerned to produce the two detained Dhaka University (DU) professors before it to record their accounts of the recent student violence on DU campus.

"I would ask authorities to produce them [the detained professors] before the commission," said Justice Habibur Rahman Khan while talking to journalists at his Central Circuit House office yesterday.

The teachers are Prof Anwar Hossain, dean of Life Science faculty and general secretary of Dhaka University Teachers Association (DUTA) and Prof Harun-or-Rashid, dean of Social Science faculty.

Prof Nazmul Ahsan Kalimullah, chairman of the department of SEE PAGE 15 COL 3

## EC opens electoral reform talks Sept 12

Starts inviting political parties from today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Following an assurance from the caretaker government that the ban on indoor politics will be lifted, the Election Commission (EC) yesterday announced that it will kick off dialogues with political parties on September 12 which will continue till the end of November.

The EC Secretariat is scheduled to start sending invitations and copies of draft proposals for electoral reforms to 15 selected political parties today, so they can discuss the proposals in their party forums before going to the talks.

Announcing the schedule for holding the talks with the parties, Chief Election Commissioner

(CEC) ATM Shamsul Huda said the EC firmly believes that the ban on indoor politics will be relaxed before the dialogues start to create an environment conducive to the talks on electoral reforms.

"The Election Commission is a constitutional body. The government must accept our demand and must assist us according to the constitution," Huda said at a news briefing in the EC Secretariat responding to a number of questions on whether the ban on indoor politics will be lifted for the talks.

"We want to have discussions with the parties. The government must create a pro-dialogue environment. It depends on the government whether that [the oppor-

tunity] will be conditional or not," said CEC Huda, accompanied by the other two election commissioners --- Md Sohul Hossain and Brig Gen (ret'd) M Sakawat Hossain.

Referring to his last Tuesday's meeting with Chief Adviser Fakhruddin Ahmed, the CEC said he did not get any indication that might suggest that the ban on indoor politics will not be lifted.

Major political parties earlier announced that they will not sit with the EC to discuss the draft proposals for electoral reforms until the ban on indoor politics is lifted, allowing them to discuss the proposals in their party forums.

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## Political parties want ban to go before talks

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Different political parties including Awami League (AL) and BNP yesterday said the caretaker government should lift at least the ban on indoor politics for them to take part in the Election Commission's (EC) dialogue.

Talking to The Daily Star yesterday, a number of leaders representing parties to be invited to the talks said it would be hard for them to decide to join the dialogue without having a discussion at party forum.

Earlier in the day, the EC announced that it would begin the much-awaited dialogue on its proposals for electoral reforms with 15 political parties on September 12.

AL Presidium Member Motia Chowdhury said it is not possible for them to sit with the EC as long as indoor politics remains banned.

"How will we take part in the discussions if the ban is still in place?"

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## Galloping garment sector goes downhill

Fails to reach EPB export target for first time; majority of RMG units lacks orders up to October

SYED ASHFAQUL HAQUE

Growth in the readymade garment industry, the powerhouse of the country's export economy, has slowed with the sector for the first time failing to reach export targets and facing a sharp decline in new orders.

The RMG sector, which accounts for more than 75 percent of Bangladesh's export earnings, fell behind the export target of the EPB (Export Promotion Bureau) for the first time in history, notching a negative growth of 6.03 percent in knitwear products and barely edging past with 0.16 percent rise in woven items during the last fiscal year.

"Yes, we passed a rare disap-

GROWTH AGAINST EPB TARGET			
	(July-June) 2006-07	2005-06	2004-05
Woven	+ 0.16%	+14.05%	+13.50
Knit	- 6.03	+19.30%	+35.38

pointing year," Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA) President Anwar-Ul-Alam Chowdhury told The Daily Star, adding that garment manufacturers missed out on about \$1.5 billion more exports due to orders being moved to other countries.

The grim export statistics followed growths of over 19 percent in knitwear and 14 percent in

wovenwears beyond the EPB projection in 2005-06. Bangladesh even showed promise to stake a bigger claim on the \$500 billion apparel market when its knitwear manufacturers made light work of quota-free concern in the post-MFA era, posting a record 35 percent export growth in 2004-05 fiscal year.

The manufacturing sector has

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## Rajshahi voters given national ID cards

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

Distribution of National Identity (NID) cards among the listed voters began in Rajshahi yesterday.

Brig Gen AKM Mahfuzul Haque, regional chief coordinator for preparing NIDs and voter list with photograph, inaugurated the distribution programme by giving identity cards to 30 people at a function.

Mahfuz said measures have been taken to ensure listing all eligible voters and preparing their identity cards.

He said preparation of voter list and NIDs would begin at Paba upazila of the district on September 11.

Each NID carries voter's name, parents' name, date of birth, NID number, photo, signature, address and blood group, Mahfuz said, adding that each card also contains a bar code to check duplication.

"There are systems in computer servers for detecting persons, who will try to register twice," Mahfuz added.

Rajshahi Divisional Commissioner Shafiqul Alam, Deputy Commissioner Khalilur

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Many patients in neuro-surgery ward at Dhaka Medical College Hospital have to sleep on the floor due to shortage of beds with the authorities turning a blind eye to this persisting problem.

## Moeen dismisses Mainul's view of government

UNB, Gazipur

Army Chief General Moeen U Ahmed yesterday said the present government is a caretaker government, not an army-backed national government.

His comment came a day after Law adviser Mainul Hossain termed the present government a military-backed national government.

"I don't think so. Government is here and it's a caretaker government," General Moeen said when reporters sought his comment on the law adviser's remarks to chiefs of news sections of the electronic media on Monday.

General Moeen further said: "Army is always with the government like police and civil administration. It can't remain isolated from any government. It will remain with the government as it has been in the past."

Earlier, the army chief inaugu-

rated the Footwear and Leather Products Ltd at the army-run Bangladesh Machine Tools Factory here.

He said the inauguration of the factory is an attempt to break business syndicate and urged all to come forward according to their ability to break the syndicate.

Naval Chief Vice Admiral Sarwar Jahan Nizam, Air Chief Marshal SM Ziaur Rahman, Principal Staff Officer of the Armed Forces Division Lt Gen Masud Uddin Chowdhury and senior military and civil officials were present at the function.

The Footwear and Leather Products Ltd., which created employment opportunity for 300 workers, will produce shoes for sale in the local market at lower price and also for export.

After the inaugural programme, General Moeen went round different sections of the factory.

## Shab-e-Barat tonight

UNB, Dhaka

The holy Shab-e-Barat will be observed across the country tonight with due religious fervour.

Muslim devotees will offer special prayers and recite the holy Quran, seeking divine blessings for peace and happiness for themselves and for the Muslim Ummah.

They will also visit the graveyards of their relatives and Muslim saints overnight and distribute sweets and homemade foods among the poor, their neighbours, friends and relatives.

On the occasion, Islamic Foundation and other religious and socio-cultural organisations will hold Qurankhwan, millad mahfil and discussions.

President Iajuddin Ahmed, Chief Adviser Fakhruddin Ahmed and former prime minister Khaleda Zia gave separate

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## Holiday Notice

The Daily Star offices will remain closed today on account of holy Shab-e-Barat. Therefore, there will be no issue of the newspaper tomorrow. There will be no issue of Rising Stars this week due to Shab-e-Barat holiday.

## Bijoy Sarani link road, 7 other projects okayed

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Executive Committee of National Economic Council (Ecneec) yesterday approved eight projects involving Tk 4,039 crore.

The approved projects include the much talked about road extension project stretching from Bijoy Sarani to the east of Tejgaon industrial area. The project will be completed in two years time with an estimated cost of Tk 122 crore.

The approval was given at the meeting with Chief Adviser Fakhruddin Ahmed in the chair.

To construct the 1km road, the government has to acquire about four acres of land. Only Tk 3 crore would be utilised for constructing the road, while the rest amount

would be spent for acquiring land, demolishing structures and compensating the legal owners.

"There are 14 legal and 49 illegal structures on the project site and only the legal owners would receive compensation," the project documents says.

Besides, the Ecneec approved the construction of Haripur 360MW Combined Cycle Power Plant & Associated Sub-Station project.

The cost of the Haripur Power Plant project has been estimated at Tk 3,507 crore, of which Japan Bank of International Cooperation will provide Tk 2,509 crore as soft loan.

The six other projects that got approval from the Ecneec includes a 150-bed modern hospital for government workers with an

estimated expenditure of Tk 42 crore, developing digital mapping system of the Directorate of Survey Bangladesh with an estimated expenditure of Tk 115 crore to be provided by the donors, renovation project of BWTC's six ro-ro ferries, two k-type ferries and six pontoons with an estimated expenditure of Tk 58 crore, renovation project of Dhaka-Narayanganj Railway line (16 km) with estimated expenditure Tk 24 crore, remodelling work of Khulna Railway Station and yard and improvement work of the operational facilities of Benapole Railway Station with Tk 49 crore and supply of pure drinking water from deep tube wells (irrigation) with Tk 122 crore.

## HC grants petitions for winding up Dinkal Ltd

### Stays case proceedings against Khaleda

UNB, Dhaka

Staying proceedings of the case against BNP Chairperson and former prime minister Khaleda Zia and others, the High Court yesterday granted two petitions for winding up Dinkal Publications Limited.

"The stay will continue until further order," says the court order stalling the trial proceedings of the Dinkal case pending with the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's Court, Dhaka.

Delivering the judgment following two separate petitions filed by two directors for the company that publishes the Bangla daily, Dinkal,

Justice Syed Refaat Ahmed also ordered the authorities to appoint in 60 days an official liquidator for the company.

The High Court asked all the directors of the company to donate altogether Tk 5 lakh to the Chief Adviser's Relief and Welfare Fund for the flood victims and Tk 1 lakh to the Supreme Court Employees' Welfare Trust.

On June 12, Khaleda Zia, her elder son Tarique Rahman and 12 other BNP leaders, who are all directors of the Dinkal Publications Limited, were sued for not submitting service return since its formation in 1999.

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## Saarc transport ministers meet in Delhi Aug 31

REZAUL KARIM

Communication ministers of Saarc countries will meet in New Delhi on August 31 to discuss ways and means to strengthen connectivity among eight of its member states.

The emphasis of the meet would be on greater connectivity of the member countries through road networks, officials sources said.

As per the decision of the 14th Saarc Summit, which put emphasis on connectivity among the member states, communication and transport ministers of Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri

Lanka will attend the meeting, said officials.

Delegations from each country will comprise officials from ministries of foreign affairs, civil aviation, communication and shipping. Communication Adviser Major Gen (Ret'd) MA Matin will lead the Bangladesh delegation at the meet, official sources said yesterday.

India as the current chair of the Saarc will be hosting this first-ever Saarc communication ministers' meet and it has already prepared a draft of Saarc Regional Motor Vehicle Agreement that is to be

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## ACC making further enquiry into Tarique's wealth report

UNB, Dhaka

The Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) is conducting further inquiry into the wealth statement of detained BNP Senior Joint Secretary General Tarique Rahman, as it appears the commission does not have enough evidence to file any case against him.

"It'll take more time to file case. The commission is looking into it," ACC Secretary Mokhelesur Rahman told reporters yesterday afternoon replying to a query about filing a case against Tarique.

On July 21, ACC Deputy Director Zahirul Huda submitted the inquiry report on Tarique's wealth statement to the commission

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## Dhaka to sign duty free RMG export deal with Delhi

UNB, Dhaka

Dhaka will sign a deal with New Delhi on duty-free export of eight million pieces of Bangladeshi readymade garments to India annually.

Chaired by Chief Adviser Fakhruddin Ahmed, a meeting of the Council of Advisers yesterday approved a proposal for signing the MoU on duty-free import of the RMG products by the Indian government through Tariff Rate Quota (TRQ) system under the purview of Safta agreement.

The meeting also approved the draft of the Bank Companies

(Amendment) Ordinance 2007 updating the Bank Companies Act 1991 in order to streamline the banking sector.

Under the new Bank Companies Ordinance, the definition of 'bank' has been specified so that except for the Bank Companies no other company can use the term 'bank' to mislead people.

The paid-up capital of bank has been doubled to Tk 200 crore from earlier Tk 100 crore.

"Bangladesh Bank, in consultation with the government, if necessary, can change the amount through government gazette

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Financing of BDT 1,230,000,000 for

BRAC post flood loan program in rural Bangladesh

Manager

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Dhaka, August 2007

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