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Keep patience for next 15 months for a fair election
Prof Yunus urges all

UNB, Dhaka

Nobel laureate Prof Muhammad Yunus on Wednesday urged all to have patience for the next 15 months to have a free, fair and acceptable general election to consolidate democracy.

Yunus, also the managing director of Grameen Bank, made the remarks to newsmen after a brief function marking the release of a commemorative stamp published by Bangladesh Postal Department on him and his Grameen Bank for

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Banks told to freeze accounts of Khaleda

Also of Koko, 9 others of Khaleda family on the list

STAR REPORT

The National Board of Revenue (NBR) Wednesday asked all banks to freeze the accounts of former prime minister Khaleda Zia, her son Arafat Rahman Koko and nine others of her family.

Sources in the law enforcement agencies said the government is ready to file at least three graft cases

against Khaleda and her family members.

Besides, the government is preparing a case over Khaleda's wealth statement. The wealth statement she submitted to the Anti Corruption Commission (ACC) has some gross anomalies, the sources added.

Under the Income Tax Ordinance, 1984, the Central

Intelligence Cell (CIC) of the NBR had earlier asked the banks to provide it with banking information about Khaleda and 10 of her family members.

Early this month, the NBR had frozen bank accounts of former premier Sheikh Hasina and her relatives. She was arrested in mid-June.

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Shab-e-Barat observed

UNB, Dhaka

The holy Shab-e-Barat was observed across the country on Wednesday night with due religious fervour.

Muslim devotees offered special prayers at mosques and homes and recited the holy Quran, seeking divine blessings for peace and happiness for themselves and for the Muslim Ummah.

Photo on back page

They also visited the graveyards of their relatives and Muslim saints and distributed sweets and home-made foods among the poor, their neighbours, friends and relatives.

President Iajuddin Ahmed and Chief Adviser Fakhruddin Ahmed gave separate messages on the

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TAX EVASION

Shajahan Siraj, wife, son jailed for 8 years

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Fourth Special Court on Wednesday sentenced former jute and textiles minister Shajahan Siraj, his wife Rabeya Siraj and their son Rajib Siraj to eight years' imprisonment each in connection with two offences of tax evasion.

Meanwhile, Metropolitan Special Tribunal-12 sentenced detained Dhaka City Corporation Ward Commissioner Chowdhury

Alam to 10 years' rigorous imprisonment in connection with extorting Tk 20 lakh from a market owner in August 2003.

The court fined Shajahan Siraj and his son Rajib Tk 2 lakh each, in default of which they would have to stay in jail one more year. Rabeya Siraj was fined Tk 1 lakh, in default of which she would have to serve an additional six months in jail.

Shajahan Siraj and his family members were handed down the

sentences under section 165 and 166 of Income Tax Ordinance, 1984 for concealing information and giving false information about their properties and wealth to National Board of Revenue (NBR) in different tax years.

Judge Shamsunnahar's special court, set up at the MP hostel on the Jaijai Sangsad Bhaban premises, sentenced Shajahan and his son to eight years' rigorous imprisonment

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CA for starting FTA talks with Pakistan

UNB, Dhaka

Chief Adviser (CA) Fakhruddin Ahmed has stressed the need for starting negotiations on Bangladesh-Pakistan Free Trade Agreement (FTA).

He said Bangladesh definitely supports the initiative of FTA negotiation for the mutual benefit.

The CA made the remarks when Pakistan Foreign Secretary Riaz Mohammad Khan called on him at his office on Wednesday.

He said the trade volume between Bangladesh and Pakistan could be increased to a higher level through private sector efforts, including holding of single-country trade fairs and exchange of visits.

The Pakistan foreign secretary apprised the CA of the potentials for increasing bilateral trade to \$

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Chief Adviser Fakhruddin Ahmed yesterday releases special commemorative postal stamps on Grameen Bank and Nobel laureate Prof Muhammad Yunus, left, as he and Finance Adviser Mirza Azizul Islam, right, look on.

Govt's highest level to decide lifting of politics ban

UNB, Dhaka

Law and Information Adviser Mainul Hossain on Wednesday said the decision on lifting the ban on indoor politics would be taken at the highest level of the government.

"Had there been no incident at Dhaka University, the government had a plan to lift the ban... Now it'll be decided at the highest level of the government," he told reporters after presiding over a meeting of the Advisory Committee on Law and Order at the home ministry.

Mainul said the Dhaka University incident took place

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Two DU teachers remanded again

COURT CORRESPONDENT

The two detained Dhaka University (DU) teachers yesterday told a court that they were subjected to mental torture during interrogation over the past seven days.

Blindfolded, they were taken to different places where other detainees were beaten up in front of them.

Metropolitan Magistrate Muhammad Saleh Uddin however declined to record what General Secretary of Dhaka University Teachers Association (Duta) Professor Anwar Hossain and Social Science Dean Prof Harunor-Rashid said describing their days in confinement.

In response to a police prayer, he ordered the professors in detention to be shown arrested in another case and placed each of them on remand for four more days.

Earlier on August 24, security personnel hauled them in from their campus residences. They took them to an unspecified place for questioning about the recent student unrest that prompted the interim administration to clamp an indefinite curfew on the capital and five other divisional headquarters.

Shahbagh police yesterday produced Anwar and Harun before the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's

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Prof Anwar says sorry to army

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The detained general secretary of Dhaka University Teachers Association (Duta) yesterday apologised to the army for the attack on them during the recent campus violence.

Also the dean of bioscience, Anwar Hossain made the public apology before the newsmen while being taken to the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's Court, Dhaka.

"As general secretary of the teachers association and a guardian of the students I regret the incident that must have caused pain and hurt to every single member of the ranks ranging from a

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Government mulls forming campus police

UNB, Dhaka

The government is thinking about forming campus police for maintaining internal security of the country's higher educational institutions, as the recent violence at Dhaka University and backlash on other campuses worried the authorities.

The plan was discussed at the 10th meeting of the Advisory Committee on Law and Order at the home ministry on Wednesday.

"Unwarranted incidents on the Dhaka University campus on August 20 and the August 21-22 incidents at places of other universities and colleges were discussed at the meeting," says an official announcement.

The meeting was informed that a total of 74 policemen, including high officials, were injured during the three-day violence triggered by an August 20 incident on the DU campus.

Taking stock of the situation, the meeting expressed satisfaction at

the utmost tolerance shown by police during the August 20-22 campus violence.

The fast-spreading agitation prompted government to close all universities as well as colleges in divisional cities for an indefinite period.

The meeting also discussed if industrial police could be introduced for maintaining law and order in the apparel factories.

It was told on behalf of the police that country's law and order situation has improved except for the August 20-22 incidents.

The meeting also examined an option for setting up hawkers' market on a limited scale in several areas of the city during Ramadan and Eid-ul-Fitr, without hampering movement of the pedestrians.

Chaired by Information and Law Adviser Mainul Hossain, the meeting was attended by Education Adviser Ayub Qaudri, the home secretary, IGP DGs of Rab and Ansar and other high officials concerned.

No seats for 1.2 lakh after HSC results

SURANIITH DEARBATH

Around 1.2 lakh of the students who passed Higher Secondary Certificate (HSC) examinations this year will be denied admission to the public and private universities and other institutions due to shortage of seats.

Besides, many students getting the highest grade -- GPA-5 -- both in Secondary School Certificate (SSC) and HSC examinations will not be able to get admitted to their first-choice institutions among the 26 public universities and 13 medical colleges as their number is much more than the number of seats.

A tough competition awaits aspirants for admission to these public institutions that include Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (BUET), Dhaka Medical College and Dhaka University (DU).

"In spite of their eagerness, at least 1.2 lakh HSC passed students will be deprived of higher education mainly for shortage of seats in the universities," said Ahsan Abdullah, director of Bangladesh Bureau of Educational Information

and Statistics (BANBEIS).

About 3.5 lakh students passed HSC examinations this year.

Ahsan said public and private universities have 1.75 lakh seats, some 30,000 students will go for vocational and technical courses or go abroad for education and some 25,000 will involve in different professional work.

According to the BANBEIS, there are about 20,000 seats in the 26 public universities (except National University-NU), 11,000 in the 54 private universities, 4,000 seats in public and private medical colleges, 55,000 in NU-affiliated 61 colleges with honours courses, 80,000 in NU-affiliated 1,069 colleges with degree (pass) courses and around 5,000 seats in private engineering and technical institutes.

University Grants Commission (UGC) Chairman Prof Nazrul Islam said number of seats in the universities will have to be increased as number of HSC passed students is increasing.

"No doubt time has come to take steps for this. But we have to maintain the quality of education,

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UK gives \$20m for voter list scheme

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

In support of Bangladesh's effort to hold a credible, safe and fair election, the UK has contributed \$20 million, equivalent to Tk 140 crore, towards 'Preparation of Electoral Roll with Photographs (PERP)' project, says a DFID press release.

Chris Austin, country representative of the UK's Department for International Development (DFID) said, "As a friend of Bangladesh we believe in the potential of this country and its people and we share the view that timely, credible elections are essential to Bangladesh's democracy, stability and security."

"A comprehensive and accurate voter list which protects against electoral fraud is a pre-condition for a free, fair and open election. We are therefore pleased to be able to

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মাহুলি বেনিফিট ডিপোজিট স্কীম

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