

JUDICIARY SEPARATION
Govt gets 6 more weeks to complete process

UNB, Dhaka

The Supreme Court yesterday gave government another six weeks' time for making appointments to the newly created posts of judicial magistrate and their support staff with office accommodation in subordinate courts to complete the process of judiciary separation.

The apex court order came after perusing the progress report submitted by the government as asked by it earlier with regard to implementation of the process of separating the judiciary from the executive control.

A six-member full bench of the Supreme Court, headed by Chief Justice M Ruhul Amin, passed the orders and adjourned until October 31 the hearings on the

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IMF agrees it's not right time for govt to sign PSI deal

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The visiting mission of International Monetary Fund (IMF) yesterday agreed with the government stance of not signing the Policy Support Instrument (PSI) and said it is not the right time for Bangladesh to sign the deal.

"The government has indicated that they are not interested in signing the deal now. So we, the both sides agreed that it is not the best instrument or mechanism for the IMF in Bangladesh in the present situation," said Thomas

Rumbaugh, head of the visiting IMF mission.

At a news briefing held in the IMF resident mission in Dhaka, Rumbaugh, adviser to the Asia Pacific Department of IMF said, "The PSI is an instrument that has been used in several IMF member countries. It's not an instrument that we are suggesting that Bangladesh should be using at this time."

People don't have the right information about PSI, he said suggesting the journalists to check the real facts.

"I don't think our country mission office ever received a phone call from journalists verifying the facts although a huge number of reports regarding the IMF are published every day," he said.

Rumbaugh said the IMF stands ready to support the government's efforts through an ongoing technical assistance programme that aims at capacity building in the area of macroeconomic management.

This can be complemented either through a new Poverty

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ASSAULT OF LEADERS
2 AL leaders give statement to probe body

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Two Awami League (AL) leaders yesterday submitted written statements to the party probe body as witnesses to the incident of abuse of four senior party leaders.

AL presidium member Syeda Sajeda Chowdhury, sole member of the probe committee, received the written statements of AL central leader Latif Siddiqui and Mohammad Ershad, vice president of Haragachh municipality unit of AL, Rangpur.

The probe body also interviewed five other witnesses including teashop owner, guard and employees of the shops adjacent to the AL office yesterdays.

Sajeda will continue taking interviews at AL Dhanmondi office from 10:00am to 12:00noon today

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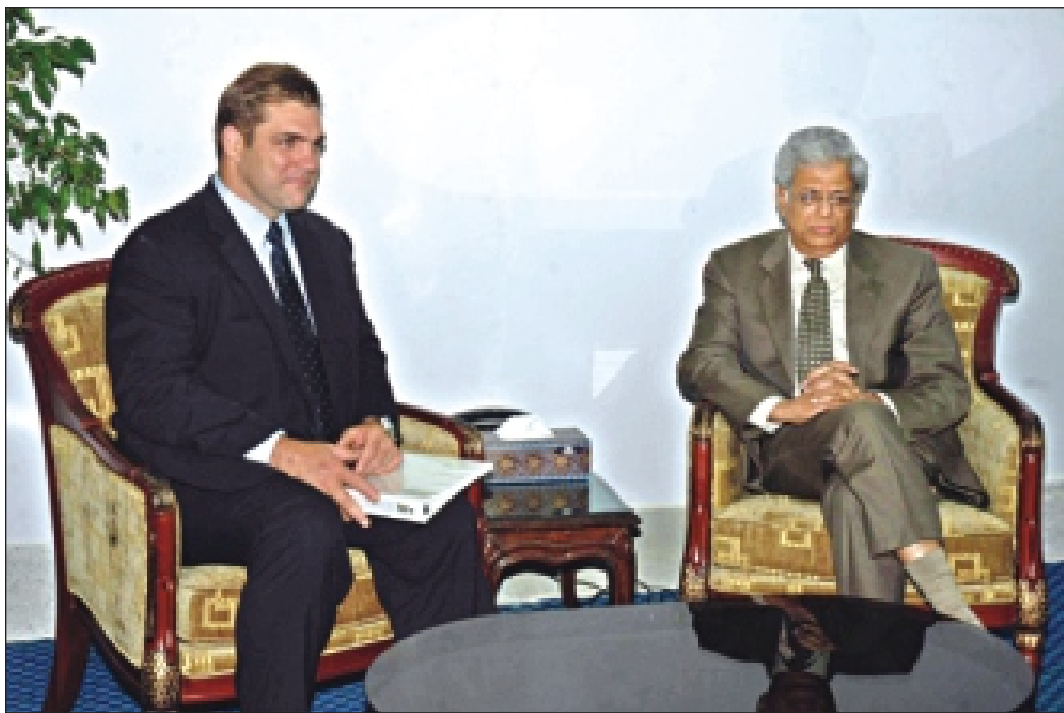


PHOTO: STAR

US Deputy Assistant Secretary of State John Gastright meets Chief Election Commissioner ATM Shamsul Huda at his office in the capital yesterday. Story on page 1.



PHOTO: STAR

A span of Kalarpul bridge over Shikalbaha canal in Patiya upazila of Chittagong collapsed yesterday as two vessels bumped into its columns.

Bridge collapses in Chittagong as vessels hit

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

A large section of a bridge constructed during the British era over the Shikalbaha canal at Patiya upazila in Chittagong collapsed yesterday after two vessels bumped into the columns of the bridge.

Sources said the bridge collapsed around 1:30pm when two loaded vessels carrying steel sheets from nearby S Alam Cold Rolled Steel Factory bumped into two out of the five columns of the 200-foot-long Kalarpul bridge.

A rickshaw-van carrying two passengers fell into the canal as a section of the bridge collapsed. No one was seriously injured.

Locals stopped one vessel while the other one managed to flee. Locals alleged that vessels of the factory quite often brush against the columns while passing under the bridge causing damage to it.

Road communication between Chittagong and West Patiya, Shikalbaha, and a large section of Boalkhali upazila snapped following the collapse.

The bridge was damaged during the Liberation War and was repaired a few years later, sources said.

Ex-BNP MP Shafi Chy sent to jail

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

Former BNP lawmaker Shafi Ahmed Chowdhury was sent to jail yesterday after he surrendered before the Speedy Trial Magistrate's Court.

Shafi, who was accused of misappropriating relief materials, had been absconding.

Third Additional District and Sessions Judge Binoy Kumar Majumder will pronounce the verdict of the case today.

Dakshin Surma police filed a case against Shafi Ahmed and Selim Ahmed, an employee of Pubali Bank, after joint forces seized relief materials from his ancestral home on February 17 this year.

Selim was arrested earlier and put in jail.

Ctg Chhatra Union leader held for campus violence

CU CORRESPONDENT

Police yesterday arrested the president of Bangladesh Chhatra Union, Chittagong University unit, on charge of her involvement in the August 22 vandalism on the campus.

Monti Boishnob is an MA student of oriental language.

Sources said forces from Hathazari Police Station arrested Monti at her Bohoddar Hat house in the city around 5:30pm. She has been taken to the police station.

Officer-in-Charge Faruk Ahmed said they arrested Monti after finding her involvement in the campus violence.

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DU VIOLENCE

Probe body gets 20 days more

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government yesterday extended tenure of one-member probe commission of Justice Habibur Rahman Khan, formed to investigate the recent violence in Dhaka University (DU), by 20 days.

The commission received an official letter from the home ministry in this regard yesterday, sources said.

Earlier, the commission appealed to the government seeking extension for comprehensive investigation.

The commission was given fifteen working days to submit the probe report.

Meanwhile, the army chief might meet the commission chairman today, sources said.

On the 15th working day yesterday, officers-in-charge of Sutrapur, Kotwali, Dhanmondi and Ramna

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Musharraf to quit army if re-elected
Says lawyer

AFP, Islamabad

Pakistani President Pervez Musharraf will step down as army chief if he wins re-election, his lawyer said yesterday, paving the way for civilian rule in the country after eight turbulent years.

The party of self-exiled opposition leader Benazir Bhutto dismissed the plan as undemocratic and unconstitutional, but did not say if it would affect a proposed power-sharing deal between her and Musharraf.

Musharraf, a key US ally in the "war on terror", plans to seek a new five-year mandate in October. He seized power in a 1999 coup and has faced mass street protests

since trying to sack the country's chief judge.

"If elected for a second term as president, General Pervez Musharraf shall relinquish charge of the office of chief of army staff soon after elections and before taking the oath of president for the second term," Sharfuddin Pirzada told the Supreme Court.

The lawyer, a close aide to Musharraf, was speaking during a hearing into legal challenges by the opposition against the Pakistani leader's rule.

Musharraf is seeking re-election by the outgoing parliament in a vote that is due before October 15. If he wins he is expected to take the oath within a month, as the government

says his current term expires on November 15.

"The time has come for Musharraf to shed his military uniform," deputy information minister Tariq Azeem told AFP. "It is a matter of days and not weeks now."

Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz "congratulated" Musharraf on the "momentous" decision, an official statement said.

Musharraf, a former commando, had strongly resisted moves to make him quit the military -- which is the main source of his power and whose loyalty in the fight against al-Qaeda militants has kept Washington onside.

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Receive Iftaar & Sehri timings everyday this Ramadan
Type "YES" and send an SMS to 9999
WARID

Sehri, Iftar timing

Ramadan	Sep	Sehri	Iftar
6	19	6-02	
7	20	4-27	6-00
8	21	4-27	5-59

Prayer Timing

September 19		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	4-26	4-36
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	4-30	4-45
Maghrib	6-02	6-17
Esha	7-45	8-15
Source: Islamic Foundation		

DMP empowered to allow over 50 in indoor party meeting

UNB, Dhaka

The home ministry yesterday empowered the Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP) Commissioner to allow more than 50 members in an indoor political party meeting.

But it will require permission of the DMP Commissioner 48 hours before such meeting, said a home ministry notification.

The relaxation under the Emergency Power Rules came following the demands raised by the political parties.

The relaxation came into effect on September 9.

Maoists quit Nepal government

Plan mass protest

AP, Kathmandu

Nepal's former rebels quit the government yesterday and threatened widespread protests, sparking a political crisis that threatened to undermine this Himalayan nation's peace process.

The one-time rebels, known as the Maoists, say they have no plans to renew their armed revolt.

They were planning a mass gathering in central Kathmandu later Tuesday where they were expected to detail their plans for protests against the government, which they say has been too slow to

declare Nepal a republic and meet their other demands.

The withdrawal from the government was confirmed by senior minister Ram Chandra Poudel, who is a member of the Nepali Congress, the largest party in the administration.

"The Maoist ministers gave their resignation and left. In the notice, they have alleged that the coalition government has failed to function in the spirit of the agreements reached earlier and have not been able to prepare for upcoming elections," Poudel told The

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