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NBR gets new chief, 4 more secretaries transferred

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

In a major reshuffle in the administration, the government yesterday transferred five secretaries including National Board of Revenue (NBR) Chairman Badiur Rahman and Energy and Mineral Resources Division Secretary AMM Nasiruddin.

Planning Commission member Mohammad Abdul Mazid replaced Badiur, NBR chief and secretary of the Internal Resources Division, SEE PAGE 19 COL 3

Govt not yet decided about consultants

Say 3 advisers

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government is yet to take any decision on appointment of consultants with the status of ministers to speed up its activities, three advisers said yesterday.

The issue surfaced once again as army chief Gen Moeen U Ahmed recently said appointment of consultants is being considered to make the caretaker government more dynamic.

Meanwhile, there were speculations that the government might appoint deputy advisers or consultants as only 11 advisers are burdened with the tasks of so many ministries.

"So far I know, there was no such SEE PAGE 19 COL 6

CLAIM OVER BNP

EC pours cold water on Bhuiyan's plea

Decides to invite Delwar for electoral talks

SHAKHAWAT LITON

The Election Commission (EC) has decided to invite the new BNP secretary general to the ongoing talks on electoral reforms, rejecting Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan-led pro-reform group's claim that they

represent the mainstream BNP.

"We have examined the party constitution and concluded that Khandaker Delwar Hossain deserves the invitation," Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) ATM Shamsul Huda yesterday told The Daily Star.

Officials at the EC Secretariat said they would send the invitation in the first week of next month. The talks between the two sides are scheduled for November 22.

The EC's decision is likely to put an end to the battle between the SEE PAGE 19 COL 4

SAARC HOME MINISTERS' MEET

Dhaka to ask Delhi to turn in criminals in hiding

STAR REPORT

Bangladesh will request India at the second annual meeting of the Saarc home ministers in New Delhi next week to hand over Bangladeshi criminals believed to be hiding in that country.

A treaty on mutual legal assis-

tance in criminal matters, formation of a regional police forum and a comprehensive mechanism for tackling terror, money laundering and drug and human trafficking are going to figure high in the four-day meeting beginning on October 23.

"Bilateral discussions are SEE PAGE 19 COL 7

BNP, AL helped each other in corruption

Gen Moeen talks of 'unbelievable' proof of it

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Chief of Army Staff Gen Moeen U Ahmed yesterday said they have "unbelievable" proof that the two major political parties of the country, despite being archrivals politically, helped each other in resorting to corruption.

New York-based news agency News World reported that Moeen said they will unveil the proof

before the nation when time comes.

Addressing a gathering of Bangladeshi expatriates at a restaurant on the outskirts of New York, the army chief said corruption is the main enemy of the country's democracy and that is why the present caretaker government has taken a bold stand against it.

"If the government had not SEE PAGE 19 COL 1

CURRENT FISCAL YEAR

Export dips 21pc in first month

SARWAR A CHOWDHURY

Export earnings of the country set off with a bad start in the first month of the current fiscal year (FY 2007-08) as the earnings in July plunged by 21.08 percent.

As opposed to \$ 1.14 billion in export earnings in July in previous FY 2006-07, the country earned only \$ 902.33 million in the same month of FY 2007-08, according to Export Promotion Bureau (EPB) statistics released yesterday officially.

The decline in export has resulted mainly from the decline in export of readymade garment (RMG) -- which accounts for 75

percent of the country's total export, said experts.

According to the EPB data, earnings from the RMG sector have declined by 24 percent on average while frozen foods, the second largest earner of the country, also witnessed a downturn with a decline of 11.55 percent.

Fazlul Hoque, president of Bangladesh Knitwear Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BKMEA), told The Daily Star, "The export performance is frustrating and the downturn in export may continue for another month."

"However, the export will be SEE PAGE 19 COL 7

Sobbing Benazir returns to cheers

AFP, Karachi

Former Pakistani prime minister Benazir Bhutto returned home yesterday after eight years in exile, defying al-Qaeda death threats to receive a jubilant welcome from hundreds of thousands of supporters.

Bhutto sobbed as she descended from her plane in Karachi, coming back to her native country from exile for the second time in a storied political career as at least a quarter-million people thronged the streets awaiting her return.

The 54-year-old flew home from Dubai vowing to lead her party in elections aimed at restoring Pakistan to civilian rule, and making no mention of a mooted power-sharing deal with embattled military president Pervez Musharraf.

"I am much older, I have learned SEE PAGE 19 COL 4



Former Pakistan prime minister Benazir Bhutto waves as she gets down from a plane at the Karachi international airport. Benazir returned to Pakistan after eight years of self-exile.

President may visit US this month

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

President Iajuddin Ahmed is likely to fly to the United States on October 30, which will be the highest official tour of the US of a flurry of visits by government officials there in recent weeks.

The reasons for the president's visit, however, remain unknown as there has been no official announcement yet.

Finance Adviser Mirza Azizul Islam and Chief of Army Staff General Moeen U Ahmed are already in the US on official visits, which come hot on the heels of state visits by Chief Adviser Fakhruddin Ahmed and Foreign Affairs Adviser Iftekhar Ahmed Chowdhury who last month flew to New York to attend the 62nd session of the UN SEE PAGE 19 COL 2

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