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Purchase rules relaxed to ease rice import

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Advisory Committee on Economic Affairs yesterday decided to relax some provisions of the Public Procurement Regulation (PPR) 2003 to facilitate quick import of rice on an urgent basis.

The PPR fixes 42 days for bid submission, while yesterday's decision gives a bidder 15 days to

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Ex-MP Zafarullah freed, held again from jail premises

UNB, *Dhaka*

Awami League (AL) presidium member Kazi Zafarullah was released from Dhaka Central Jail but arrested again while walking to freedom yesterday evening, police said.

A former lawmaker and close

SEE PAGE 15 COL 4

Plea against making public poll candidates' info rejected

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Supreme Court (SC) yesterday rejected the controversial appeal against the High Court (HC) directives for the Election Commission (EC) to collect and publish certain personal information about the aspirants to parliament.

The full bench Appellate Division headed by Chief Justice Mohammad Ruhul Amin in its ruling said the petition did not qualify as an appeal as it was filed on the basis of false and fabricated documents.

The judgment means now there is no bar to disclosure of eight-point details including academic qualification, profession, source of income, wealth accounts and criminal records (if any) of the candidates.

The HC passed the landmark order on May 24, 2005 following a writ petition filed as a public interest litigation by three lawyers--Abdul Momen Chowdhury, KM Zabir and Zahurul Islam.

Appearing for the original petitioners, Dr Kamal Hossain called for an investigation into how the HC verdict had been stayed in response to an appeal grounded in fabrication.

The SC in its judgment observed that "there has been no appeal in the eye of law" and the petition could not be considered an appeal since it "had been filed by fabricating papers."

Expressing annoyance over the manner in which the appeal was filed, the chief justice said almost every sector has been ruined and dishonest people are now trying to destroy the top court too, said KM Zabir.

Despite the SC orders, Abu Safa, the appellant, was not present at the court while Nawab Ali, advocate-on-record for him, placed an affidavit explaining the absence.

The bench asked the advocate-on-record why Safa failed to appear in person. It also wanted to know whether he had ever met Safa.

The SC concluded that the reasons cited in the affidavit for the

SEE PAGE 15 COL 7

Mainul against unconditional release of DU teachers

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Law Adviser Mainul Hosein does not see the justification for the demand for unconditional release of detained Dhaka University (DU) teachers before their conviction.

"How do they demand unconditional release before conviction? The Rajshahi University teachers could demand it because they were already convicted," he told reporters when asked about DU teachers' demand.

Legal experts, however, did not agree with the law adviser and said

SEE PAGE 15 COL 3

Family members reject bail proposal

DU CORRESPONDENT

In a development late last night, a proposal for filing a petition seeking bail for the detained Dhaka University (DU) teachers was communicated to their family members but they turned it down.

"Vice Chancellor Prof SMA Faiz told us that there is room for the teachers' release through bail if we

SEE PAGE 15 COL 1

Court orders trial of 4 DU teachers

Verdict today in case against RU teachers for torching DGFI vehicle

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday framed charges against four teachers and 15 students of Dhaka University for breaching emergency power rules (EPR) and a Rajshahi court today will deliver verdict in a case against two Rajshahi University teachers and 12 others for torching a vehicle of the DGFI.

Additional Chief Metropolitan Magistrate Golam Rabbani framed the charges against the Dhaka University (DU) teachers and students.

He rejected the discharge petitions of the defence lawyers of the four DU teachers and a student now in jail custody.

The court fixed December 17 for the trial of the case at a time when the government assured the teachers on Saturday of releasing the detainees in two weeks.

It summoned the complainant and other witnesses to appear before the court on the scheduled date for giving their statements.

Law Adviser Mainul Hosein, however, said there is no justification in the teachers' demand for unconditional release of the accused before conviction.

Hearing about the framing of charges, DU teachers, who had suspended their protest programmes on Sunday for two weeks following assurance from the government, expressed frustration.

The case was filed against some 6,000 unnamed students, teachers and outsiders for vandalising public and private properties, obstructing the work of the police, and pelting the law enforcers with stones on DU campus on August 22.

CHARGE-FRAMING

Dhaka University Teachers' Association (Duta) President Prof Sadrul Amin, General Secretary Prof Anwar Hossain, Science Faculty Dean Prof Harun-or-Rashid, Applied Physics Department Chairman Prof Neem

SEE PAGE 2 COL 5

Freed RU teachers to go ahead with appeal against conviction

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, *Rajshahi*

The lawyers of four Rajshahi University teachers yesterday decided to go ahead with appeal proceedings against their clients' convictions even though the government freed the academics two days ago amid mounting public demand.

The defence lodged the appeals with the District and Sessions Judge's court on December 9, one

SEE PAGE 15 COL 4

CHARGE-FRAMING

DU braces for backlash

DU CORRESPONDENT

All the detained Dhaka University teachers and students must be released in the interest of a congenial academic atmosphere on the campus, senior DU teachers said yesterday.

Former president of Dhaka University Teachers Association (Duta) Prof AAMS Arefin Siddique said it would have been the best if the government withdrew the cases in connection with the

SEE PAGE 15 COL 2

Birshreshtha Hamidur laid to rest at home

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Birshreshtha Hamidur Rahman was finally laid to eternal rest in his homeland yesterday with the highest state honours, 36 years after he embraced martyrdom during a battle with Pakistan occupation forces.

Before the burial, the nation paid homage to the Liberation War hero as the coffin with his remains reached the National Parade Square in the capital in the morning.

His coffin was brought back to his beloved motherland from Tripura in India on Monday.

Later, Hamidur was reburied beside Birshreshtha Matiur Rahman at the reserved graveyard for eminent freedom fighters at Mirpur Martyred Intellectual's Graveyard.

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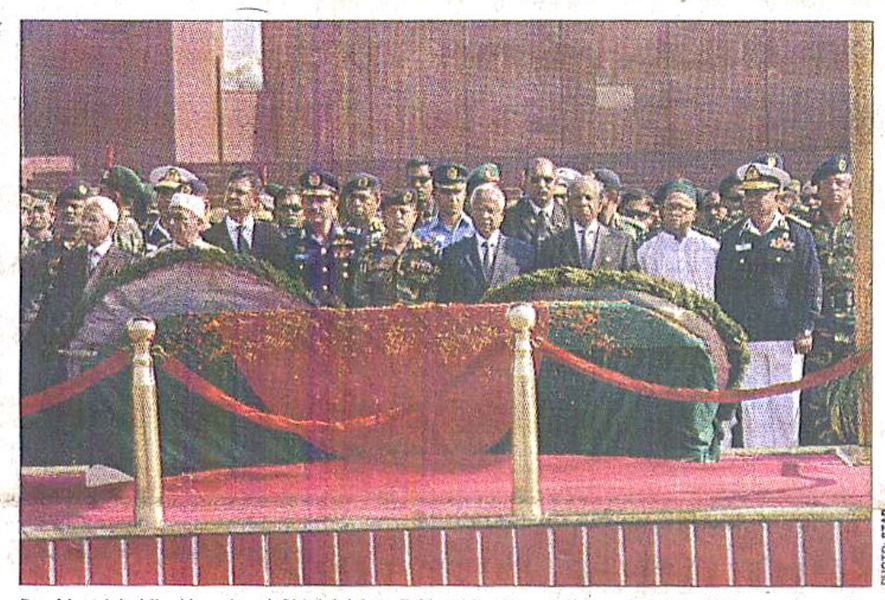

PHOTO: STAR

President Iajuddin Ahmed and Chief Adviser Fakhruddin Ahmed along with other VIPs pay respect to Birshreshtha Hamidur Rahman at the National Parade Square yesterday before the burial of the war hero's remains at the Martyred Intellectuals' Graveyard in Mirpur.

Rejoinder, our reply

Desh Energy Limited in a rejoinder contested some parts of The Daily Star news headlined "Rental Power Plant Tender: Govt considers unfit bidders' striking offer" published December 6.

The rejoinder said that Desh Energy Limited and its consortium partners--Bangla Trac Limited and Green Power Limited--are in no ways connected with the Lotus Kamal Group as was described in the report. Bangla Trac is the local Caterpillar representative/full distribution and service partner in

SEE PAGE 2 COL 5

7th ICAB National Awards for
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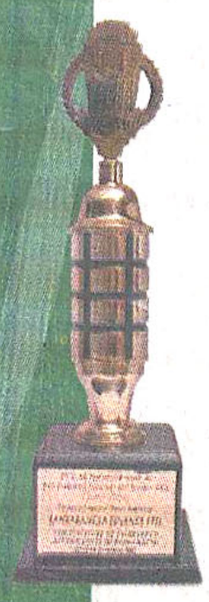
Mr. Mafizuddin Sarker, Managing Director of LankaBangla Finance Ltd. receiving the award from Dr. A B Mirza Aziz, the Honorable Adviser of Finance, Planning, Commerce, Post & Telecommunication



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LankaBangla FINANCE

Japan to lend $324m for Haripur power plant, 2 schemes

UNB, *Dhaka*

Japan will provide $ 324 million in loan assistance for New Haripur Power Plant and two other projects in the country.

An agreement to this effect was signed between the governments of Japan and Bangladesh in the capital yesterday.

Japanese Ambassador to Bangladesh Masayuki Inoue and Secretary, Economic Relations Division, M Aminul Islam Bhuiyan signed the exchange of notes on behalf of their respective governments.

Following the signing of the notes, Chief Representative of Japan Bank for International Cooperation (JBIC) in Dhaka Yasuo Fujita and ERD Additional Secretary M Mejbahuddin signed the loan agreements.

The government of Japan will provide the loan to the Bangladesh government through JBIC for implementation of the three projects.

Of the total, $ 160 million will be provided for implementing the New Haripur Power Plant (360 MW) Development Project (Part I), $ 116 million for Dhaka-Chittagong Railway Development Project and $ 48 million for Small Scale Water Resources Development Project.

The interest rate is 0.01 percent per annum and the repayment period is 40 years inclusive of 10-year grace period for the three loans.

"The new loan package reflects Japan's strong intention to support Bangladesh to alleviate the recent serious power shortages by newly constructing a 360MW power plant near Dhaka," says a release from the Japanese embassy.

In addition, some useful technical assistance will be introduced under the projects, such as capacity building for the new power plant operation and management reform of the Bangladesh Railways, which the Bangladesh government is implementing now under policy and institutional reforms.

Man put behind bars for offence of his brother

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Even though a police investigation found out that Mohammad Alam is not the real accused in a human trafficking case, he is still serving jail term for the offence apparently committed by his brother.

Family members of Mohammad Alam fear that it would take a long time for him to be released, as the High Court (HC) is yet to get the

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Eid-ul-Azha on Dec 21

UNB, *Dhaka*

The holy Eid-ul-Azha, one of the biggest religious festivals of the Muslims, will be celebrated across the country on December 21 as the moon of Arabic Zilhajj month was sighted yesterday.

The decision was taken at a meeting of the National Moon Sighting Committee in the Islamic Foundation conference room yesterday evening with Religious Affairs Adviser Maj Gen (Retd)

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62 killed in twin Algiers blasts

Ten Algerian UN staff among the dead

AFP, *Algiers*

Two bomb attacks rocked the Algerian capital yesterday -- one on the UN refugee agency -- killing at least 62 people with foreigners among the casualties, hospital sources and officials said.

One bomb tore apart the front of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) building. A second blew apart a bus packed with university students outside the Supreme Court.

Ten UN staff, all Algerians, were among the dead from an attack on a UN refugee agency building in Algiers on Tuesday, a senior UN official said.

All were in the offices of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees and neighbouring UN Development Programme (UNDP) when the bomb went off, said the official, speaking on condition of anonymity.

Several injured were still trapped in the debris several hours after the attack, according to journalists at the scene.

Algeria has been hit by a number of bomb attacks this year -- in which scores of people have been killed -- and most have been claimed by al-Qaeda.

Interior Minister Yazid Zerhouni said a suicide bomber triggered the explosion outside the Algiers office of the UNHCR.

The front of the red brick building was badly damaged and the UNHCR said staff were among the casualties.

In the second near-simultaneous attack, a car bomb was detonated outside the Supreme Court as a bus packed with university students passed by, heading for a nearby law faculty.

Security sources said the bus took the full force of the blast and

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