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Protest for release of teachers, students at DU, RU

DU CORRESPONDENT

Students of Dhaka University (DU) yesterday formed a human chain on the campus demanding immediate release of the detained university teachers and a student.

Students against repression, formed by the left-leaning student organisations, organised the and 6.2 percent. programme which began at 11:20am.

The organisation will hold different programmes including boycotting classes for two hours from 11:00am to 1:00pm tomorrow, wearing black badges and hoisting black flags atop the buildings on the campus to press home their demand for the release of the detained teachers and the student.

About 1,000 students joined | percent hands to form the human chain stretching from Aparajeyo Bangla to Curzon Hall. General students along with the activists of Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL), and other organisations took part in it spontaneously.

Meanwhile, a group of BCL leaders and activists, led by its DU SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

BB projects 6.2pc growth this year

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh Bank (BB) yesterday said GDP growth in the current fiscal year would range between 6 next six months inflation rate will

At the beginning of 2007-08, the growth target was set at 7 percent. The central bank has come up with the revised projection in its

monetary policy statement released yesterday. It also made an upward adjustment to the inflation rate for the second half of the year, and said 2007-08 would see the rate of inflation moving between 8 and 8.2

year began, inflation was projected to be between 6.5 and 7 percent.

(BBS) data shows that inflation in November 2007 was already running at 8.61 percent. Prices of both food and non-food items have been showing a rising trend and it will affect the inflation rate, say

economists.

Presenting the monetary policy at a press briefing, BB Governor Salehuddin Ahmed said, "In the show a reducing trend because supply chain of commodities will be improved and at the same time there will be less demand."

Asked about 5.5 percent GDP growth forecast by World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF), he said, "They [World Bank and IMF] don't run the country."

He said donors made the projection in consultation with a few people in Dhaka. "We are dealing with real situation and have revised In July last year when the fiscal the targets in light of the present circumstances," he added.

The BB governor said the policy Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics stance has been revised in the wake of unexpected domestic shocks generation. and unfavourable international developments.

> Strong inflationary pressures emanating from both domestic and external sources led the infla-

tion to overshoot the target which is 6.5 to 7 percent.

Besides, low investment and sluggish economic activity result ing from natural disasters and eroding business confidence had

pressures on the economy. Excess liquidity and relatively high spread between deposit and lending rates in the banking sector as well as disruption in normal economic activity due to back-toback floods and cyclone were major challenges for the first half of the fiscal year, the policy statement

The BB governor said they have drafted a flexible monetary policy for the second half, which will be revised on demand. To achieve the targets, he stressed on stability of prices of essentials and income

Quoting from the policy statement, he said efforts would be there to rev up economic activities by encouraging adequate credit SEE PAGE 19 COL 6

DU VIOLENCE HEARING Cop says nothing against teachers, students

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A policeman giving statement to a Dhaka court yesterday did not say anything against the Dhaka University (DU) teachers and students accused in the case for breaching Emergency Power Rules (EPR) in August last year.

The additional chief metropolitan magistrate recorded the deposition of Constable Syed Morshedul Haq and fixed January 14 for next hearing.

In his statement, Morshed told the court that he had taken some photographs of a procession brought out by university teachers SEE PAGE 19 COL 6

Geeta Pasi sees right direction forpolls

UNB, Dhaka

US Charge d' Affaires Geeta Pasi yesterday said things are moving in right direction towards holding general elections in Bangladesh before the end of this year.

"We continue to urge the caretaker government to restore democracy in Bangladesh," she said while talking to reporters at G4S headquarters in the capital.

The envoy commended the voter-registration process, saying that 23 to 25 million voters have already been registered and hoped that the process would be acceler-

SEE PAGE 19 COL 2

Rab man injured in gunfight with drug dealers

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A member of Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) and a drug peddler were injured during a gunfight between the law enforcers and a gang of drug dealers in the city's Badda area last night. The Rab arrested the wounded

criminal with 200 Yaba tablets and a revolver with four bullets.

Major Haider of Rab-1 was bullet-hit during the gunfight and SEE PAGE 19 COL 1

NY confce on investment opportunities in Bangladesh

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

A major conference on investment opportunities in Bangladesh, organised by the Asia Society and sponsored by the financial services group JPMorgan, will be held in New York later this month with the country being described as "one of the world's most exciting investment opportunities."

The conference titled 'Updated Investment Opportunities in Bangladesh' is being held at a time when foreign investment in the country's stock exchanges has been rising. In 2007, net foreign or portfolio investment on the Dhaka Stock Exchange surged 830 per cent to TK8.9 billion. FULL STORY STAR BUSINESS PAGE 8

7 RHD engineers held while 'sharing' bribes

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The task forces held seven engineers of the Roads and Highways Department (RHD) and an official of a construction firm from a coffee tion provided by Reza shop in the city on Tuesday night while the engineers were allegedly distributing bribes among them-

recovered Tk 13,99,000 from their possession.

The arrested officials are RHD additional chief engineers Mozammel Huq (Dhaka Division), Mominul Huq (Comilla Division), Md Rafiqul Islam (Planning, Comilla Division) and Abdullahel Kafi (Rangpur), Executive Engineer Md Ali Masud Haider, superintendent engineers AHM Mainul Islam Chowdhury and Tapas Kumar Paul, and Project Coordinator of Reza Construction Mamtaj Uddin.

Sources said acting on informa-Construction Director Mahbub Kabir, the task force members caught the RHD officials "redhanded" while they were sharing Members of the task forces also bribe money at Coffee World on Satmasjid Road around midnight.

Reza Construction got the lease of toll collection at Rupsha Bridge and Mahbub offered the bribe to the RHD officials for extending the

lease period. According to sources, the RHD officials had demanded Tk 14 lakh from Reza Construction.

SEE PAGE 19 COL 4



HASINA WEALTH STATEMENT CASE

ACC gets SC nod to appeal against

The Supreme Court (SC) yesterday

granted the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) permission to

appeal and extended the stay order on the High Court (HC) judgment

that had declared illegal the ACC

notice served on detained former

prime minister Sheikh Hasina

asking her to submit wealth state-

The court fixed February 12 for

hearing on the appeal filed by the

anti-corruption watchdog. The

court also asked the ACC not to

proceed further with any activities

regarding the issue of Hasina's

wealth statement until the matter

Hasina's counsel Barrister

HC order

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Students look at the broken "hate post" on the Dhaka University campus yesterday afternoon. Unidentified persons broke the structure which symbolises hatred for the war criminals.

KHULNA POWER PLANT

ACC presses graft charges against Hasina

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) yesterday pressed charges against detained former premiere and Awami League (AL) chief Sheikh Hasina and seven others in connection with Tk 3 crore graft case during the setting up of 100MW barge-mount power plant in Khulna.

approved the filing of first information report (FIR) against eight persons including former state Dhaka Chief Metropolitan minister for Home Affairs Magistrate's Court. In addition to Lutfozzaman Babar, former health the seven persons accused in the minister Khandaker Mosharraf FIR earlier, name of Bangabandhu Hossain and former Awami League

(AL) lawmaker Mirza Azam on charges of amassing illegal wealth and concealing information of their wealth.

ACC director general Col Hani Iqbal during a regular press briefing at the ACC headquarters confirmed journalists about the approval of the charge sheet and the filing of the FIR.

Morshed Alam, deputy director The ACC yesterday also of the ACC and the investigation officer (IO) of the Tk 3-crore graft case, submitted the charge sheet to SEE PAGE 19 COL 1

tion over the SC order saying, "We are happy with the order of the apex court as the order is given in

Rafique-ul Huq expressed satisfac-

SEE PAGE 19 COL 5

Koko tells ACC about his Tk 6cr wealth

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia's younger son Arafat Rahman Koko vesterday submitted his wealth statement worth about Tk 6 crore to Anti-Corruption Commission

Koko's lawyer Ahmed Azam Khan yesterday confirmed that the wealth statement was submitted to the commission yesterday afternoon through the jail authority.

Ahmed Azam informed that Koko in his statement of wealth showed 40 decimal of land worth Tk 4.48 lakh at Ukhia in Cox'sbazar in his own name, 34 decimal land worth Tk 1 lakh in Gazipur in his name, two plots measuring 20 kathas worth Tk 9.90lakh in SEE PAGE 19 COL 7

Editor, publisher of Prothom Alo discharged from Pintu's case

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday discharged the editor and the publisher of the daily Prothom Alo from a defamation case filed by detained former BNP lawmaker Nasiruddin Ahmed Pintu in June 2006.

After a long hearing from the prosecution and the defence, Additional Chief Metropolitan Magistrate Golam Rabbani issued the order finding no elements to frame charges against the defendants -- editor Matiur Rahman and publisher Mahfuz Anam.

The case was filed on June 25, 2006 with the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's Court claiming that the editor and the publisher of the daily Prothom Alo ran a series of defamatory news items implicating the former lawmaker.

Moving the discharge petition, defence lawyers argued that the SEE PAGE 19 COL 7

Dhaka University students form a human chain on the campus yesterday, demanding release of the detained teachers and a student.

AL again demands early polls

STAFF CORRESPONDENT Awami League (AL) yesterday

reiterated its demand for general elections by the middle of this year and handover of power to an elected government to resolve the persisting crises in the country.

"If you [government] want to put an end to the current crises, hold the elections by June-July instead of implementing the earlier announced electoral roadmap and handing over power (by the year end) to an elected government," said acting AL President Zillur Rahman.

Speaking at a discussion in the city to mark the Homecoming Day of Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, Zillur said, "Resignation or inclusion of advisers will bring no solution to the present crises. The only way to solve the problems is to hand over power to people's representatives by holding elections Quickly," he added.

Demanding immediate release of detained AL President Sheikh SEE PAGE 19 COL 8

January 11		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	5-30	6-05
Juma	12-30	1-15
Asr	4-00	4-15
Maghrib	5-36	5-40
Esha	7-00	7-30

Tamil Tigers want truce, Norwegian peace role

Lankan fighting kills 29 rebels, 1 soldier

said yesterday.

AFP, AP, Colombo

Tamil Tiger rebels said yesterday they were ready to revive a dying ceasefire abandoned by Sri Lanka's government and urged Norway to maintain its role as peace broker as figliting claimed 29 insurgents and a soldier in the north.

In its first public reaction to the Sri Lankan withdrawal from the 2002 truce earlier this month, the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) expressed willingness to salvage the ceasefire, the basis of a moribund peace process.

"The LTTE wishes to state that even at this juncture, it is ready to implement every clause of the CFA (ceasefire) agreement and respect it 100 percent," a statement from the rebels said.

"We also request that Norway should continue with its facilitation role with the support of the international community," it said. Sri Lanka's government last week signalled that it wanted Norway's

role to end. There was no immediate reaction from Norway, which together with the European Union, the United States and Japan, has expressed concern over Colombo's move to quit the truce and warned there could be more bloodshed. Meanwhile in fresh fighting

along the front lines in the districts of Vavuniya and Mannar bordering rebel-held areas on Wednesday, said a Defense Ministry official. At least 24 rebels and one soldier

Tamil rebels across Sri Lanka's

embattled north left 29 insurgents

and one soldier dead, the military

Troops clashed with guerrillas

were killed, the official said on condition of anonymity because he is not authorised to speak to the media. Another two soldiers were wounded. Five other rebels were killed Wednesday in gunbattles in the

northern Jaffna peninsula, military spokesman Brig. Udaya chiefLars Solveberg. Nanayakkara said, for comment. Each side routinely

and plays down its own. Also Wednesday, police commandos fatally shot a senior rebel leader identified as Shankar who was hiding among civilians in the east, Nanayakkara said. Shankar was the insurgents' top leader in eastern Sri Lanka, a region the government said it liberated from

Tamil Tiger control in July. Late Tuesday, army troops out of the truce. backed by artillery and mortar fire seized about a square kilometer stance in November, when the (0.4 square mile) of territory near

Mannar, near the rebels' northern headquarters, Nanayakkara said. The LTTE -- listed as a "terrorist'

PHOTO: STAR

organisation by the US and the EU-- has also appealed to the international community to reconsider its ban and for recognition of the group's struggle for freedom.

The organisation wants the global community to "accept the just aspirations of the Tamil people, and recognise the right of the Tamil people to live with selfdetermination in their homeland.

The statement came after the head of the LTTE's political wing, B. Nadesan, met with the outgoing Sri Lanka Monitoring Mission (SLMM) The Tigers also sent a letter to

The rebels could not be reached the Norwegian government through Solveberg during their exaggerates the other's casualties meeting in the rebel-held political capital of Kilinochchi in the island's north. The government has prevented

> heavy fighting claims a daily death toll according to the two sides. The Tigers said they were "shocked" and "disappointed" with Colombo's decision to pull

This is in stark contrast to its group's supremo, Velupillai SEE PAGE 19 COL 3



Law enforcers browse through the mess at the residence of actress Shabnam Parvin at Uttara in the capital after robbers looted the house yesterday.

between troops and separatist the village of Parappaankandal in EDITOR: MAHFUZ ANAM-Published by the Editor from Transcraft Ltd., 229 Tejgaon Industrial Area, Dhaka-1208 on behalf of Mediaworld Ltd. 52 Motijheel C.A., Dhak