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EC launches website to correct voter list info

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Election Commission (EC) launched a website yesterday to get help from voters in Dhaka City Corporation (DCC) area to correct mistakes in recording their particulars for the voter list with photographs.

The webpage www.voterlist.gov.bd contains details of voters who are already registered and they can check their particulars there. If a voter finds

SEE PAGE 19 COL 6

People urged to forge greater unity against war criminals

Sector commanders visit Khulna

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

The sector commanders of the Liberation War yesterday called on the people, particularly the freedom fighters, to forge greater unity against the anti-liberation forces and prepare for a movement to demand trial of war criminals.

They were addressing a view exchange meeting of freedom fighters from Khulna division in the

SEE PAGE 19 COL 4

ACC okays bribery charges against ex-BRTC boss Taimur

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) yesterday approved pressing charges against former BRTC chairman Taimur Alam Khandaker in connection with two bribe cases.

The ACC also decided to issue a notice upon Nurul Amin Talukder, assistant engineer of National Sports Council, for his wealth statement.

Director General (Admin) Col Hanif Iqbal at a routine press briefing yesterday confirmed

SEE PAGE 19 COL 6

Prayer Timing
January 18

	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	5-30	6-05
Juma	12-30	1-15
Asr	4-15	4-30
Maghrib	5-40	5-44
Esha	7-00	7-30

Source: Islamic Foundation

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EC looks for ways to resume stalled talks with parties

SHAKHAWAT LITON and HASAN JAHD TUSHER

Already one and a half months behind schedule, the Election Commission (EC) is still searching ways to resume dialogue with political parties that got stalled under a court order when it invited Saifur-led BNP faction to take part in the talks but pro-Khaledda faction challenged this.

In the prevailing situation, the EC cannot initiate steps for the second round talks with the parties to finalise its electoral reform proposals which are to be made

laws since it is yet to complete the first round talks by sitting with the BNP due to legal complexities.

The EC cannot say now when it will be able to wrap up the reform talks with parties that began on September 12 last year and was supposed to end in November.

Senior leaders of Awami League (AL) and other political parties who already with the EC said they could not go for reforms within their parties since the EC could not yet finalise electoral reform proposals considering the suggestions placed by them at the talks.

Meanwhile, the caretaker gov-

ernment's much-talked-about dialogue with political parties is yet to begin as it depends on the EC's completion of talks with them.

Contacted yesterday, AL acting General Secretary Syed Ashraful Islam said the reform process has come to a halt as the second round talks between the EC and political parties have not taken place since it (EC) is still to sit with the BNP.

"The commission is engaged in a lot of tasks but it could not yet complete any of those including drafting of a voter list. This has given rise to apprehension about

SEE PAGE 19 COL 7

Dhaka-Kolkata train service in 3 months

Says adviser Quader

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Communications Adviser Maj Gen (ret'd) Ghulam Quader yesterday said the Dhaka-Kolkata train service will certainly start within three months.

"We are ready, India is also ready, all preparations are complete now," Quader told reporters after Indian High Commissioner Pinak Ranjan Chakravarty met him at his office at the Bangladesh Secretariat.

The much-awaited train service, scheduled to start late last year, stumbled due to the Indian demand for barbed-wire fencing on the no-man's land near Chuadanga border.

Quader, who took over the communications ministry two

SEE PAGE 19 COL 3

Rice prices fall on wholesale market

Retail prices unchanged despite joint force monitoring

SHAHEEN MOLLAH

Rice prices on retail markets of the capital did not drop despite the fall of prices on wholesale markets yesterday following market monitoring drives by joint forces.

The wholesale price yesterday came down by Tk 20 to Tk 50 per maund (37.32 kg) -- a total decrease of Tk 30 to Tk 75 per maund in last couple of days. Each maund of coarse rice was selling at Tk 940 to Tk 1000 whereas the same was sold for Tk 970 to Tk 1020 on Wednesday.

However, the price of fine rice, that reached its peak three weeks back, was stable.

The retailers in the city markets

said they are expecting a fall in prices of all sorts of rice on the retail markets if the price continues its falling trend on the wholesale markets for couple more days.

At the retail markets yesterday, a kg of coarse rice was selling at Tk 30 to Tk 31, while fine rice was Tk 36 to Tk 44.

Wholesalers at Babubazar and Badamtoli said the joint forces took written statements from most of the wholesalers about the rice in stock and the current and previous rates of purchase and sale.

Supply of rice from the rice-producing northern districts continued to come in throughout

SEE PAGE 19 COL 2

Bogra martyr's son sues 10 'collaborators'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Bogra

The son of a Liberation War martyr filed a case against 10 alleged collaborators in connection with the murder of his father at Narchi Fakirpara of Sariakandi upazila in Bogra on December 15, 1971.

Martyr Doulatuzzaman Akhand's son Arzad Hossain filed the case with the additional chief judicial magistrate's court yesterday.

Magistrate Saifuzzaman Hero

SEE PAGE 19 COL 8

Ostrich dies at Dhaka Zoo

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The female out of the lone pair of ostriches at Dhaka National Zoo died yesterday, after suffering from an "unknown disease" for seven days.

Qazi Fazlul Haque, curator of the zoo confirmed the death of the ostrich, a large flightless bird native to Africa. He however could not name the disease or condition from which the bird was suffering.

A zoo source however said that the bird had not died from any illness but from an internal injury suffered in an accident.

SEE PAGE 19 COL 7

Abdus Salam Pintu held again

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Criminal Investigation Department (CID) last night arrested former deputy education minister Abdus Salam Pintu at his wife's residence in Motijheel.

Pintu's brother Sultan Salauddin Tuku told The Daily Star that Pintu went out around 11:30pm after someone called him out.

When The Daily Star tried to contact Pintu over telephone, Pintu's wife Bikis Begum Baby

SEE PAGE 19 COL 7



The wreckage of a bus that collided head on with another bus at Rajendrapur of Keraniganj on Dhaka-Mawa highway yesterday killing nine people. Story on page 1

Suicide attack kills 8 in Pak mosque

Troops abandon border post after threat

AFP, AP, Peshawar Islamabad

A suicide attacker blew himself up at a Shia Muslim mosque in the northwestern Pakistani city of Peshawar yesterday, killing at least eight people and wounding 20 others, officials said.

Earlier Pakistani troops abandoned an outpost near the border with Afghanistan yesterday after receiving threats from Islamic militants who overran a nearby fort a day earlier, according to an intelligence official and a militant spokesman.

But an army spokesman denied the outpost at Saklatoi in South Waziristan had been abandoned. It was not immediately possible to reconcile the contradictory claims.

The explosion happened days before the start of the Muslim religious festival of Ashura, a traditionally tense time when minority Shias mourn the death of the Prophet Mohammed's grandson in

the seventh century.

"It was a suicide attack," interior ministry spokesman Brigadier Javed Cheema told AFP.

A witness said the attacker opened fire before detonating himself just inside the mosque while around 100 people were worshipping there.

"I saw a young man push the security men at the gate and then run in firing. Then there was a huge explosion and lots of smoke," Ghulam Abbas, an official at the mosque, told AFP.

"There were loud screams and there are body parts strewn around the gate. The electricity went out, dead bodies are inside and many people were injured," he added.

Worshippers staged angry protests outside the mosque after the blast, witnesses said.

"There were men, women and children inside, people were

SEE PAGE 19 COL 8

US pushes China on new Iran resolution

Iranian nuke negotiator in Beijing for talks

AFP, Beijing

A top US diplomat urged China yesterday to back a new UN resolution against Iran over its nuclear programme, as Tehran's top atomic negotiator arrived in Beijing to lobby against such a move.

Visiting US Deputy Secretary of State John Negroponte told reporters in Beijing he would raise the issue in a high-level meeting in southwest China's Guizhou province, which began late Thursday.

The US-China talks, which were expected to touch on a wide range

of issues including Taiwan, human rights, trade, North Korea and Sudan, Negroponte said.

"We think it is important that there be an additional Security Council resolution because Iran is out of compliance with previously passed resolutions," Negroponte said.

"That is the argument that will be presented to the Chinese authorities."

Negroponte's comments came as Iran's top nuclear negotiator Saeed Jalili arrived in Beijing.

Jalili was to meet with Chinese officials over the next two days

SEE PAGE 19 COL 8

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