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FERTILISER SMUGGLING
Law enforcers asked to keep watch on sea, river routes

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
The advisory council on law and order yesterday directed the law enforcement agencies to mount watch over sea and rivers in Cox's Bazar to stop smuggling of fertiliser to Myanmar.
The order was issued to ensure smooth supply of fertiliser for Boro cultivation as the government is desperately trying to achieve a bumper production in the wake of crop damage in last year's back to back flooding and Cyclone Sidr.
"The law enforcement agencies have identified that most smugglers use sea and river routes in Cox's Bazar to smuggle out fertiliser to Myanmar," a home ministry official said quoting the meeting of the advisory council.
Bangladesh Army, Navy,
SEE PAGE 15 COL 6

Allow indoor politics across the country

Discussants urge govt at Shujan roundtable

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
The caretaker government should immediately relax emergency rules and allow indoor politics across the country creating scopes for the parties to consult their grassroots leaders to speed up political reforms.
Prescribed or imposed reforms, instead of those made on the basis of consensus within political parties, would not bring desired qualitative changes in democracy in the country.
Political leaders and civil society members expressed these views at a roundtable on "Political Party Reforms for Effective Democracy" in the capital yesterday.
Some of them however said

parties should proactively approach the government with their key reform proposals. Talking about rules to check corrupt practices in politics is not pressure for reforms, they noted.
"We want the general elections to be held as per the announced roadmap, but necessary reforms must be made," Gono Forum leader Dr Kamal Hossain said at the roundtable organised by Shushashoner Jonney Nagorik (Shujan) at the Jatiya Press Club.
"If necessary, we the lawyers can help draft the reforms to speed up the process. The reform proposal of the 14-party could also be incorporated in the reforms," the eminent jurist said.
Politics of corruption, extortion,

black money and loan defaulting must not go on, he emphasised.
Dr Kamal said political parties, especially those who contested elections in honest ways in the past, should be prompt in contributing to the reform process. "There is no time for unnecessary debate. We must have an effective, representational democracy."
Moderating the roundtable, Shujan Chairman Prof Muzaffer Ahmad said emergency rules should be relaxed as soon as possible for expediting the reform process.
Reforms are badly needed to make sure political parties are accountable and maintain intra-party democracy. "Reforms on"
SEE PAGE 15 COL 7

Risky well-3 of Titas finally turned off

OUR CORRESPONDENT, B'baria
The risky well no 3 of Titas Gas field has finally been turned off to save all nearby wells from a possible disaster. Jahangir Kabir, managing director of Bangladesh Gas Field Company Limited (BGFCL), said this at a press conference yesterday at the Birashar BGFC office.
The well had been showing abnormal symptoms for long, according to a BGFC handout.
SEE PAGE 15 COL 5

Young woman dies in city road accident

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
A young woman was killed and three of her family members were injured last night as the car they were in overturned near Nabisco crossing in Tejgaon area of the capital.
The deceased was identified as Ahona, 19, who had passed Higher Secondary Certificate (HSC)
SEE PAGE 15 COL 8

Inventor of Bangla computer keyboard wins legal battle

JASIM UDDIN KHAN
The inventor of the most popular Bangla computer keyboard has won a long legal battle to protect his design and software, with the government to stop pirated Bangla language keyboards from entering the country.
The move is being seen as a key step in the protection of local intellectual property rights in a country
SEE PAGE 15 COL 6
FULL STORY STAR BUSINESS PAGE 8



US Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for South and Central Asia Donald Camp calls on Chief Adviser Fakhruddin Ahmed at his office yesterday.

Suicide attack on military vehicle kills 6 in Pakistan

AP, Rawalpindi
A suicide bomber on a motorbike rammed into a minibus carrying security personnel, detonating a blast yesterday that killed at least 30 people and wounded more than 30 in the latest attack in the Pakistani garrison city of Rawalpindi, officials said.
The bus was destroyed during the blast on a road running through a bazaar near the offices of the army's National Logistics Cell, said Bisharat Abbasi, the local police chief.
A military statement said four members of the armed forces had been killed. But it did not mention civilian casualties and a security official told The Associated Press there were at least six fatalities. The Geo news channel reported that 10 people had died.
SEE PAGE 15 COL 7

Govt asks for reducing spread between loan, deposit interest rates

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
The government yesterday asked the central bank to take initiatives so that commercial banks keep the difference between deposit and loan interest rates within two-three percent to boost investments and reduce business costs.
The government also decided to relax the interest waiver policy of the state-owned banks to recover old and bad loans.
"Free market economy does not

mean that one can do anything one wishes. The central bank (Bangladesh Bank) should play the mediating role in such a situation," Finance Adviser Mirza Azizul Islam said after a meeting with the top brass of state-owned and private commercial banks.
Sources said the finance adviser in the meeting with bankers asked to lower the interest rates on lending which will ultimately reduce the difference between deposit and loan interest rates.

"The central bank has been directed to start talks with the banks immediately in this regard," a source said.
The finance adviser was talking to the reporters after the meeting. Bangladesh Bank Governor Salehuddin Ahmed was also present at the meeting held at the planning ministry.
Representatives of Bangladesh Association of Banks (BAB), an association of bank owners, and

POLICE ORDINANCE
Ministry asks police HQ for further consultations

SHARIFUL ISLAM
Promulgation of the draft 'Bangladesh Police Ordinance 2007' apparently hits a snag as the home ministry has recently asked Police Headquarters to consult stakeholders on the draft at thana, district and divisional level.
Top police officials smell a rat in the order and allege the directive is given with an intention to lapse time so that it could not be promulgated during the caretaker government rule. They also allege bureaucrats are not in favour of privileges the ordinance would provide the police with.
SEE PAGE 15 COL 4

Rejoinder, our reply

Bangladesh Association of Medical Institutes (BAMI) on Friday, January 25, issued a rejoinder to a report published in The Daily Star on January 23, Wednesday titled 'Institutions certifying medical technicians illegally.'
The statement signed by Dr MA Bashed, chairman of BAMI, said Bangladesh Medical and Dental Council (BMDC) has no role in medical technology education. BMDC is the authorised organisation for MBBS doctors and higher degree holders.
The State Medical Faculty is the authority concerned for only medical technicians, not medical technologists. The State Medical Faculty conducts different technician courses for three months, six
SEE PAGE 2 COL 5

Correction

The news headlined "CID team off to India to bring back 3 criminals" in yesterday's issue inadvertently mentioned that Indian criminal Jiban Singh was recently arrested. Jiban Singh is in fact still on the run. We regret the mistake.

Prayer Timing
February 5

	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	5-30	6-05
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	4-15	4-30
Maghrib	5-52	5-56
Esha	7-15	7-45

Source: Islamic Foundation

13 killed in fresh Lanka bombings

Lanka 'winning war' against Tamil Tigers: President

AFP, Colombo
Thirteen people were killed in two roadside bombings in Sri Lanka yesterday, as the island's president marked independence day by insisting he was winning the war against Tamil Tiger rebels.
A bomb in the northeast of the ethnically-divided island killed 12 bus passengers and wounded 17 others, the military said, adding

that a soldier was killed in a similar bomb attack against a military vehicle in the south.
The attacks, both blamed on the Tamil Tigers, came hours after an annual military parade at Colombo's seaside Galle Face promenade to mark Sri Lanka's 60th anniversary of independence from Britain.
In an address to the nation,
SEE PAGE 15 COL 7

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