

Special discount for Picnic party

Just dial **01912256723** & get the products at your step

The Daily Star

SECOND EDITION

LCD HD TV
47PFL7422
42PFL7422
37PFL7422

PHILIPS
sense and simplicity

TRANSCOM ELECTRONICS 8895366 8, 01712 695463

COMMITTED TO
People's Right to Know

REGD. NO. DA 781

Vol. XVIII No. 24

DHAKA THURSDAY FEBRUARY 7, 2008

MAGH 25, 1414 BS

MUHARRAM 28, 1429 HJRI

20 PAGES PLUS RISING STARS PRICE: Tk 10.00

www.thedailystar.net

Judgment hailed

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Awami League has said justice has won over injustice with yesterday's High Court verdict that quashed the Tk 2.99 crore extortion case against detained party chief Sheikh Hasina.

"It has been proved once again that justice prevails over injustice and truth wins over falsity. It has been unanimously established that Sheikh Hasina is completely innocent," AL Acting President Zillur Rahman said yesterday in an instant reaction to the verdict.

Zillur also demanded that Hasina be freed immediately.

The judgment has now made it clear that the AL is going to contest the polls together with Hasina, the veteran leader added as he was talking to the reporters at his Gulshan residence.

Terming the judgement "constitutional," Zillur said that the Constitution has been upheld and people's respect for the rule of law has been increased through it.

On government's appeal

SEE PAGE 2 COL 5

HC scraps Hasina case

Terms extortion lawsuit under EPR illegal; govt goes to SC to challenge verdict

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

In a landmark judgment, the High Court (HC) yesterday declared illegal the government move to bring the Tk 2.99 crore extortion case against former premier Sheikh Hasina under Emergency Power Rules (EPR) and quashed it.

An HC division bench comprising Justice Shah Abu Nayeem Mominur Rahman and Justice Shahidul Islam yesterday finished delivering the judgment around 12:05pm. Part of the judgment was delivered on Tuesday upon completion of hearing on a rule.

Following Hasina's writ petition filed on July 29 last year, HC bench of Justice Nayeem and Justice Zubayer Rahman Chowdhury issued the rule on the caretaker government, asking it to reply why its approval for bringing the case



under the EPR should not be declared illegal.

The judgment said, "Since in the rule the sanction [for bringing the case under the EPR] has been challenged and we [the judges] have found that the sanction was given without lawful authority as the offence was committed by the accused prior to promulgation of the emergency, the rule is absolute."

The proceedings already taken and are under process are without lawful authority and quashed, the court added.

Hasina's counsels said the judgment is not only their victory but also of the rule of law.

The state side, however, challenged the legality of the judgment with the Supreme Court (SC) within two hours of its delivery.

SEE PAGE 15 COL 1

Urban food inflation nears 16pc in Dec

Rice, flour prices skyrocket

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Inflation rate of food items in urban areas reached 15.77 percent and 13.91 percent in rural areas on point-to-point basis in December last year as prices of essentials, especially rice and flour, skyrocketed.

According to Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS) data, overall inflation rate in the country on point-to-point basis in December rose to 11.59 percent, which is 0.18 percent higher than that in November.

Inflation rate of food items in the country reached 14.46 percent in December. It was 0.63 higher than the rate in November that stood at 13.83 percent, the BBS figures show.

Inflation rate on non-food items

however increased only by 0.01 percentage point in December when the figure was 7.27 percent.

Although the government and Bangladesh Bank projected the average inflation rate at nine percent in the current fiscal year, it reached 9.11 percent in December, just in the middle of the year.

Inflation is rising every month, except September last year.

While inflation rate in January 2007 was 5.94 percent, it leaped by 1 to 2 percentage point every month reaching up to 11.59 percent in December, the highest in the last two decades.

Prices of essential commodities like rice, wheat, pulse and edible oil increased in the last few months contributing to the rise of food inflation rate.

The government took some

measures including open market sale (OMS) of rice and sale of commodities at fair prices at BDR-run shops to keep prices of these commodities stable.

According to Trading Corporation of Bangladesh (TCB), prices of different types of rice decreased by around 3 to 11 percent in the last one month.

But prices of rice and other essentials are still very high.

TCB data show price of coarse rice is Tk 28 to Tk 30 per kg now against Tk 18 to Tk 19 just a year back, meaning 57 percent increase during this period.

Meanwhile, price of flour is still increasing. It sold at Tk 40-41 per kg yesterday while its price was Tk 24-27 a kg one year back, meaning 60-65 percent increase in a year.

SEE PAGE 15 COL 5

TOP GRAFT SUSPECTS

Judgment may impact fate of 150 cases

SHAKHAWAT LITON and CHAITANYA CHANDRA HALDER

Fates of around 150 graft cases filed under emergency power rules (EPR) against many biggies of politics and business, in connection with corruption committed before the declaration of the state of emergency, may become uncertain yesterday following a High

Court (HC) verdict.

The HC yesterday declared illegal the trial under EPR of an extortion case filed against Sheikh Hasina, following a writ petition filed by her challenging the trial's legality.

The watershed verdict also affects all other cases that either had already been tried or are currently being tried or awaiting trials under

EPR in connection with crimes committed before the declaration of the state of emergency.

Verdicts in around 50 of such cases were already delivered by different trial courts, sentencing some former ministers, lawmakers, bureaucrats and businessmen to different terms of imprisonments, another 50 cases are

SEE PAGE 15 COL 4

Dhaka, Delhi fix rice import price at \$399 per tonne

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh and India yesterday initially fixed \$399 as the rate of one tonne of rice that the neighbouring country had agreed to export to Bangladesh following the impact of cyclone Sidr.

The decision was taken on the final day of a four-day meeting in Kolkata between a Bangladesh delegation and Indian officials, the

SEE PAGE 15 COL 8

No reason to panic, though bird flu spreading

Says Samaddar

UNB, Dhaka

Special Assistant to the Chief Adviser for Fisheries and livestock Manik Lal Samaddar yesterday said although the bird flu has been spreading, there is no reason to be panicked.

"We are trying to keep the situation under control. We have taken all-out measures to prevent spread of the avian influenza virus," he told a press briefing at his ministry.

So far 4,61,311 chickens, ducks and pigeons from 179 poultry farms in the country have been culled since March 2007.

He said the government has

SEE PAGE 15 COL 3



PHOTO: STAR

Traders in Sripur Market of Gazipur pack unsafe chickens in sacks with bare hands, for sending them to the capital, despite the country being rocked by a bird flu scare.

Shibir men run amok in Carmichael College

Ransack house of principal, set fire to house of a teacher; college closed indefinitely

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Rangpur

Rangpur Carmichael College was closed indefinitely yesterday as Islami Chhatra Shibir activists rampaged through the campus, torched the house of a teacher and a power substation, ransacked the college principal's house and vandalised several motor vehicles.

The Shibir workers roamed around the campus for nearly five hours since 10:00 in the morning and set fire to the house of Dr Hafizur Rahman, a professor of Mathematics and secretary of academic council of the college. They also ransacked the house of Dip Chandra Roy, the principal of the college, and vandalised his car.

The mob vandalised at least ten automobiles and set a power substation on fire. They also ransacked the academic building, damaged the furniture in it and destroyed official records of the college.

dormitories.

At the meeting, a number of teachers complained that a few teachers of the college have been aiding and abetting Shibir violence on the campus, said sources.

Principal Roy told The Daily Star, "Such violence on the campus is unprecedented and incidents of this sort did not take place here even during the Liberation War."

Male residents of the dormitories have been asked to leave the campus by 6:00pm yesterday while females by 8:00pm the same day, he added.

According to eyewitnesses, several hundred rioting Shibir activists led by Emdad, Abdullah Al Mamun, Rezaul Karim Rana and Mohammad Tareque brought out a procession on the campus, demanding that Rangpur Carmichael College be upgraded to university.

Police intercepted the procession at Lalbagh as it came out of the campus and headed towards the office of the deputy commissioner. The activists at this point locked in a clash with the police, injuring six

SEE PAGE 15 COL 6

চাকুরী নিয়ে বিদেশ যেতে আর্থিক সমস্যা?

NO TENSION

আমরা আছি আপনার পাশে...

অর্থনীতির প্রকল্প

কর্মসংস্থানের তাগিদে দেশ, মাটি ও মানুষের মায়া ছেড়ে আপনি যেতে চাচ্ছেন বিদেশ। আপনার কষ্টার্জিত অর্থ প্রেরণ করে দেশের অর্থনৈতিক কর্মকাণ্ডকে করবেন আরো মজবুত। কিন্তু আপনার হাতে টাকা নেই। টাকার প্রয়োজনে আপনি জমি, হালের গরু বিক্রির কথা ভাবেন অথবা ধার-দেনা করেন, এমনকি আপনার পৈত্রিক ভিটা বিক্রি করার কথাও চিন্তা করেন। কিন্তু তার আর দরকার নেই। পুবালা ব্যাংক চালু করেছে **প্রবাসী ঋণ প্রকল্প**। সহজ শর্তেই আপনি পেতে পারেন এই ঋণ। আপনার সুন্দর ভবিষ্যৎ গড়ার জন্য আমাদের এই প্রয়াস।

প্রকল্পটি ১ মার্চ ২০০৮ থেকে শুরু হতে যাচ্ছে।

বিস্তারিত জানতে দেশব্যাপী আমাদের **৩৬১** টি শাখায় যে কোনটিতে যোগাযোগ করতে সর্বনিম্ন অনুরোধ করা যাচ্ছে।

পুবালা ব্যাংক লিমিটেড
PUBALI BANK LIMITED

ঐতিহ্যের পথ বেয়ে অর্থনৈতিক অগ্রগতি

www.pubalibangla.com

- ✓ ১৯৫৯ সালে বাঙ্গালী উদ্যোগে প্রতিষ্ঠিত এদেশের প্রথম ব্যাংক
- ✓ বাংলার ঐতিহ্যে লিপিত ব্যক্তিগত সর্বমুখী সম্প্রদায়িক ব্যাংক
- ✓ ৩৬১টি শাখায় কম্পিউটারাইজড

