

DHAKA WEDNESDAY FEBRUARY 27, 2008

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FALGUN 15, 1414 BS

SAFAR 19, 1429 HIJRI

24 PAGES PRICE: TK 10.00

Pranab, discusses ways to boost ties with India

STAR REPORT

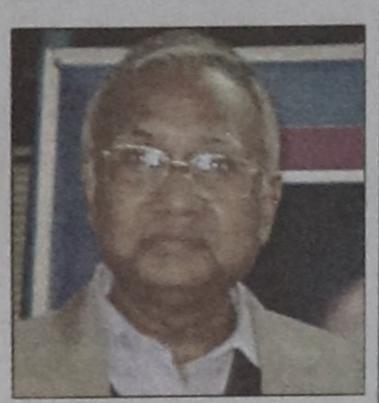
Army chief Gen Moeen U Ahmed has met India's top political and military leaders to find specific ways to boost defence, transport and trade ties between the two

Gen Moeen has also agreed for Bangladesh to finally honour Indian Army soldiers who died for Bangladesh's Liberation War in

The agreement was made during Moeen's meeting with Indian Chief of Army Staff Gen Deepak Kapoor, according to a report by Indian daily The Hindu yesterday.

He also met Indian External Affairs Minister Pranab Mukherjee on Monday, discussing ways to take bilateral relations forward for mutual benefit.

Gen Moeen is expected to call on President Pratibha Patil, Prime SEE PAGE 15 COL 7



Bazlur Rahman passes away

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bazlur Rahman, a legendary editor of the daily Sangbad and a freedom fighter, died last night from a massive heart attack.

He was rushed to Ibrahim Memorial Hospital and Cardiac Research Institute after a cardiac SEE PAGE 15 COL 7

Yunus trashes reports of crimes by Bangladeshis in Saudi Arabia

STAR REPORT

Nobel laureate Prof Muhammad Yunus, now on a visit to Saudi Arabia, has brushed aside allegations in Saudi media that a large number of Bangladeshis are breaking the law in the kingdom.

Any people can turn to crimes anywhere and so it is not fair to single out a certain nationality, he said during a reception hosted by Consulate General of Bangladesh at Al-Salam Holiday Inn in Jeddah Sunday evening, daily Saudi Gazette reported yesterday.

Dr Yunus' comments came following Saudi media reports that Bangladeshi workers are engaged in various criminal activities in the country for which Riyadh is reducing the quota for Bangladeshi workers there.

The Nobel laureate, who is SEE PAGE 15 COL 6

Gen Moeen meets | BARAPUKURIA COAL MINE

Khaleda, 10 of her ministers sued for corruption













FROM LEFT... BNP chief Khaleda Zia, top row, M Saifur Rahman, Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan, M Shamsul Islam, Khandaker Mosharraf Hossain and MK Anwar. Bottom row, Aminul Haque, AKM Mosharraf Hossain, Altaf Hossain Choudhury, Motiur Rahman Nizami and Ali Ahsan Mohammad Mojahid.

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) yesterday filed a case against detained BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia and 15 others including 10 former ministers from BNP and Jamaat-e-Islami for graft in awarding Barapukuria coal mine

Police Station, the 16 have been accused of causing a loss of over Tk 158.71 crore to the public exchequer by awarding the production, management and maintenance Moazzem Hossain. contract through abuse of power.

The accused former ministers from BNP are M Saifur Rahman, Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan, Khandaker

Islam, MK Anwar, barrister Aminul Haque, Altaf Hossain Choudhury, and AKM Mosharraf Hossain.

Ali Ahsan Mohammad Mojahid and Motiur Rahman Nizami are the accused ex-ministers from Jamaat. The others charged with the

offence are former acting secretary to energy and mineral resources operation contract to a Chinese Nazrul Islam, former Petrobangla chairman SR Osmani, former In the case filed with Shahbagh Petrobangla director Mainul Ahsan, former managing director STAR REPORT of Barapukuria Coal Mining Company Ltd (BCMCL) Sirajul Islam and Hosaf Group Chairman

Of the former ministers, nine were members of the cabinet purchase committee.

Since the military-backed care-Mosharraf Hossain, M Shamsul taker government assumed power,

this is the third case against Khaleda, also former prime minister. It is however the first case filed against Nizami and Mojahid by the anti-graft body.

The charges were brought under sections 409/406/109/419/420 of the penal code and 5 (2) of corrup-

tion prevention act of 1947. ACC Assistant Director Shamsul Alam, the complainant, said the offence took place between June 2, 2003 and June 4, 2005 at the energy

and mineral resources department. In the first information report SEE PAGE 15 COL 4

A mine of corruption

Barapukuria coal mine development project, implemented under a Chinese Supplier's Credit scheme, remains one of the significant cases of corruption by some policymakers, officials and a business house during the tenure of two governments headed by

Khaleda Zia. Instead of making profit, this coal mine project forced Bangladesh to accept about 100 percent cost escalation to Tk 1,600 crore from Tk 887 crore as well as reduction of coal production capacity to only seven lakh to one

million tonnes a year from two SEE PAGE 15 COL 4

SC stays Hasina verdict, case proceedings

Sheikh Hasina by businessman

Azam J Chowdhury was being held

and the proceedings of the extor-

Allows govt to appeal against HC judgment in extortion case

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Supreme Court (SC) yesterday stayed the High Court (HC) verdict that declared inclusion of Emergency Power Rules (EPR) in the Tk 2.99 crore extortion case filed against Sheikh Hasina illegal and quashed it.

The six-member SC bench headed by Chief Justice Mohammad Ruhul Amin also stayed all proceedings of the case in the lower court and permitted the government to file a regular appeal against the HC judgment. The HC verdict had also stalled

all proceedings of the case in the lower court.

The SC fixed March 16 for the tion case will be stayed until dis-

posal of the government appeal. hearing of the government appeal. All prosecution and defence The trial of the case filed against detained former prime minister lawyers were happy over the SC

in a Dhaka Metropolitan Sessions side are happy at the order. We are Judge's Court specially set up in happy as proceedings of the case Jatiya Sangsad Bhaban Complex. will not continue in the trial court," Hasina's chief counsel barrister The HC delivered the landmark judgment on February 6 following Rafique-Ul Huq told the press after passing of the SC order. Hasina's writ petition challenging

the legality of the government According to article 111 of the approval to bring the extortion case constitution, courts subordinate to against her under the EPR. the SC and the HC are bound to After completion of the hearing abide by the decision of the Appellate Division and the High of both sides, the Appellate Court Division of the Supreme Division of the SC yesterday passed its order, saying the HC judgment Court, he said.

> The article says, "The law SEE PAGE 2 COL 5

EC starts talks

transparent

ballot boxes

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

with Canada on

The Election Commission (EC) has

opened talks with the Canadian

government for procuring trans-

parent ballot boxes from them free

of cost for the next parliamentary

the Canadian government to have

transparent ballot boxes as a grant

from them," Chief Election

Commissioner (CEC) ATM

Shamsul Huda said yesterday at the

electoral reform talks with Jamaat-

"We are communicating with

"Both us and the government

Jamaat fires broadside against EC for 'steps beyond jurisdiction'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

At the second sitting for an electoral reform dialogue with the Election Commission (EC) yesterday, Jamaat-e-Islami embarked on a tirade against the commission accusing it of virtually stepping beyond its jurisdiction, which the ECrebutted categorically.

But the Islamist party did not specify which action of the EC constitutes stepping beyond its jurisdiction.

"The Election Commission's

recommendation to amend the laws on different issues is unwanted and tantamount to stepping beyond its jurisdiction, said Jamaat's written electoral reform proposals submitted to the commission yesterday.

In the face of a rising demand of most of the traditional parliamentary political parties taking part in the dialogues, for trying war criminals in an effort to disqualify them from contesting in any poll, the commission on the first day of the SEE PAGE 15 COL 1

e-Islami Bangladesh. SEE PAGE 15 COL 6



Overwhelmed with price hike of essentials, people stand in long queues before a BDR truck selling rice at moderate prices at Shanir Akhra in the capital yesterday.

Babar blames Khaleda, Tarique for his downfall

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

"The all-powerful mother and son" are to be blamed for his present state and "inhuman life in prison", claimed Lutfozzaman Babar, detained former state minister for home affairs, during CID interrogation on Monday.

Sidestepping his responsibility, Babar told the CID (Criminal Investigation Department) interrogators in a prison cell at Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University (BSMMU) hospital that he had tried to do good things for the country, but he has become controversial due to the influence of former premier Rahman.

prison, he also said. "I made some wrong political decisions. If I get a chance in the in an open meeting," a source

quoted Babar as telling the CID

Babar made the remarks spontaneously as the three-member CID team went to his BSMMU prison cell to interrogate him over Sabbir murder case, added the

At one point the former home ministry boss even addressed the CID investigators as "sir" and claimed innocence, said the source adding that Babar regretted his criticism by police officials despite his personal efforts to modernise the police force during his tenure.

Responding to queries over taking bribe in exchange for dropping Bashundhara Group chair-Khaleda Zia and her son Tarique man's son Safiat Sobhan Sanbeer's name from the Sabbir murder case, Khaleda and Tarique are Babar said that the transaction was responsible for his inhuman life in made as per the directive of Tarique Rahman, said the source.

Although the CID team did not ask him anything about the August future, I would disclose everything 21 grenade attack on an Awami

69,862 more fowls culled in 3 districts

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Another 69,862 fowls were culled and 2,35,408 eggs destroyed in the last two days in districts of Mymensingh, Pabna and Chittagong due to infection of Avian influenza virus.

Livestock department personnel culled 58,130 chickens including 37,000 chicks and destroyed 2,26,813 eggs from one single poultry farm in Mymensingh.

at the farm, Keari Hatchery Process Ltd, in Trishal on February 23, said bird flu control room sources.

Since February last year, 10,58,778 fowls have been culled and 14,56,551 eggs destroyed in 44 districts of the country, according to the sources.

Chittagong, a team of livestock

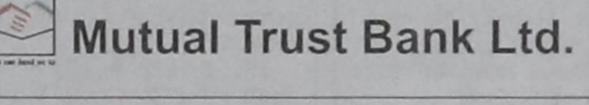
department culled 2,333 chickens,

owned by Shahidul Islam. The team also destroyed 140 eggs from neighbouring houses, the bird flu control room sources added.

A correspondent from Pabna reports, 2,804 fowls and 8,455 eggs were destroyed from a farm in Atghoria upazila and 300 ducks, pigeons and other domestic fowls were culled from nearby houses on Monday.

Following the death of over 100 chickens in Khorshed Alam's farm. Avian flu infection was detected local livestock officer on Saturday sent specimen to Livestock Research institute in Joypurhat. Following the detection of Avian flu in the specimen, the livestock department sent out a team to cull the fowls in the farm.

The district livestock office sources said it was the third inci-In Boalkhali upazila of dentofbirdfluattackinthedistrict. Local administration has been put on alert after the recent bird flu SEE PAGE 15 COL 3 pigeons and ducks from a farm detection, said official sources.





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Agreement for Installation of Co-Branded ATM at the Premises of MTB







Mutual Trust Bank has decided to install co-branded MTB-DBBL ATMS at its branches. Because of MTB's initiative, MTB clients will have unparallel ATM service at MTB branches as well as DBBL's 250 Nationwide ATM Network (largest in Bangladesh).

To make this possible, MTB has signed an agreement with DBBL. Mr. Kazi Md. Shafiqur Rahman, Managing Director of MTB and Mr. Md. Yeasin Ali, Managing Director of DBBL signed the agreement on behalf of their respective Banks. Mr. Quamrul Islam Chowdhury, Deputy Managing Director, Mr. A.K.M. Shameem, Executive Vice President, Mr. Md. Nurul Islam, Executive Vice President, Mr. Md. Shah Alam Patwary, Sr. Assistant Vice President and Mr. M. Ahsan Ullah Khan, Assistant Vice President of MTB, and Senior Executives of DBBL were present on the occasion.

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