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CA reaffirms support to One China policy

UNB, Dhaka

Visiting Chinese Foreign Minister Yang Jiechi yesterday met Chief Adviser Fakhruddin Ahmed and invited him to visit China at the latter half of this year.

The Chinese foreign minister called on Fakhruddin Ahmed at his office in the evening and conveyed the best wishes of the prime minister of China.

The chief adviser greeted China through its foreign minister for hosting the Olympics this year and

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AL accuses govt of dillydallying over polls

UNB, Dhaka

Awami League leaders yesterday accused the government of resorting to dillydallying tactics over the stalled parliamentary polls to hold an election of conspiracy.

"The government wants to hold an election of conspiracy to legitimise all its misdeeds. We can't participate in such elections," AL Presidium Member Motia Chowdhury said.

Amir Hossain Amu said the caretaker government will have the way out only after handing over

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**RAILWAY PROBE REPORT
Gateman, drivers responsible for train-truck collision**

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Tangail

Five persons including the gateman and drivers of the train and the passenger bus were responsible for the tragic accident occurred at a level crossing in Tangail on April 16, said the Bangladesh Railway probe body in its report.

The four-member probe committee led by additional COPS (West/Rajshahi) M Abdul Awal Bhuyan submitted its report to the

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3 SCBs to have own higher pay scale

REJAUL KARIM BYRON

Three state-owned commercial banks (SCB) are going to introduce pay scales of their own to enhance staff salaries in line with the private commercial banks so that they can compete with the private banks with skilled human resources.

The government has already given a green signal in favour of the move to introduce new pay scales for the three banks—Sonali, Agrani and Janata, suggesting working out the pay scale under a common policy, sources said.

Meanwhile, the three banks are planning to announce 30 percent dearness allowance and two incre-

ments to all their staffs before implementing the new pay scale.

A seven-member committee headed by Deputy Managing Director of Sonali Bank Humayun Kabir is working on the new pay scale. Representatives from Agrani and Janata banks are also on the committee, which was formed last week and is supposed to submit its report within next three weeks.

High officials of the three banks said they are losing skilled manpower because of the existing poor salary structure while the private and foreign commercial banks pay their staff even five times the salaries at the state-owned banks, which follow the government pay

scale.

The new pay scale will be implemented in phases, said a high official of Sonali Bank, adding, "The staffs will first get basic salaries as per the new pay scale. The arrears against other benefits will be paid in phases."

Sonali, Agrani and Janata banks were turned into public limited companies recently, empowering their boards of directors to fix their own pay structure.

Janata Bank Managing Director SM Aminur Rahman told The Daily Star that they are considering introduction of their own pay scale to compete with the private banks.

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8 killed as trucks collide in Sirajganj

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Sirajganj

At least eight people were killed and 13 others injured in a fatal road accident on the Dhaka-Bogra Highway in Raiganj upazila of Sirajganj on Wednesday night.

The accident occurred at around 11.00pm at Ghurkabelola Kolar Bridge area when a Dhaka-bound truck carrying tomatoes hit another truck loaded with straw from behind, causing both the trucks to plunge into the roadside ditch, police and eyewitnesses said.

Injured Koser Ali, the helper of the tomato-laden truck, told The Daily Star that the truck driver fell asleep leading to the tragic accident.

Seven people aboard the trucks

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Cherie Blair, wife of former British premier Tony Blair, holds newborn Nayan in her arms at the city's Brac Delivery Centre in Manik Nagar during a visit yesterday.

Bapex for hiking gas tariff over 3 times

Briefs CA about how to make it self-reliant

SHARIER KHAN

Bangladesh Petroleum Exploration Company (Bapex) Tuesday during a presentation before the chief adviser sought a gas sale tariff of Tk 25 per thousand cubic metre of gas for the next two years instead of a measly Tk 7 to help the company achieve break even.

The 90-minute presentation focussed on Bapex's financial problems and how Bapex could become a self-reliant exploration and production company through immediate and mid-term support from the government.

Sources said following the presentation, Chief Adviser Fakhruddin Ahmed asked the finance and energy secretaries to jointly identify what kind of support could be given to Bapex in the next fiscal year. Special assistant to the chief adviser on energy and the secretaries for energy and finance were present at the presentation.

Since its inception in 1989, Bapex was hardly given any project to help it grow. Due to sparse and irregular approval of exploration and development projects, Bapex only has a couple of gas producing wells which supply only 31 million cubic feet of gas a day.

At different times, different governments had made big promises about investing in Bapex but in reality, none of those investments were made. Approved projects were never given funds on time due to lack of political commitment in the matter.

"In reality many policymakers do not understand that domestic gas production is keeping the economy alive. For instance, last year's total gas production was equivalent to 14 million tonnes of oil. In today's oil price of over 100 dollars per tonne, this gas saved the country oil import of about a stunning 10 billion US dollars," said a

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Saline price spikes on diarrhoea spurt

MAHBUBA ZANNAT

Short supply and price rise of oral rehydration saline while diarrhoea is spreading over the last few days have added to sufferings of people attacked with the disease.

Oral saline of Social Marketing Company (SMC), which produces about 60 percent of the country's requirement, as well as those of around 15 other companies are now selling at higher prices. And SMC's saline is also not available in some areas, a field visit showed.

Wholesalers at Mitford, the capital's major drug market, were

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8-yr-old girl arrested for drug peddling freed from jail

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

The eight-year old girl, arrested on charge of drug peddling, was released from Khulna district jail at noon yesterday after an appeal by a rights organisation challenged the validity of the charges framed against her, and her arrest.

The Chief Metropolitan Magistrate handed over the custody of Arifa to Bangladesh National Women Lawyers' Association (BNWLA) following an appeal by the organisation.

Earlier on Tuesday, the High

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Structured questions in SSC exam partially from 2010

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The much-talked-about Structured Question (SQ) system, a new type of question pattern, will be partially introduced from the Secondary School Certificate (SSC) examination 2010 due to lack of preparedness of the government.

However, it will be applied fully for all subjects from the SSC examination 2011 and from class six to nine next year.

The SQ review committee yesterday submitted its 11 recommendations to the Education Adviser Dr Hossain Zillur Rahman at the education ministry.

The adviser told the reporters that the recommendations will be implemented and the ministry will issue a circular to the authorities concerned on Sunday.

Examinations on only two subjects -- Bangla 1st paper and Religious Studies -- will be held under the SQ method from SSC examination-2010 as the government is not prepared to provide certain required facilities including arrangement of training for teachers and fresh textbooks for students, the committee members said yesterday.

Besides, the new question

pattern will also be introduced in madrasahs and technical education institutions from 2012, the committee added.

The education ministry recently formed the seven-member SQ review committee following strong protest from teachers, students and guardians against introduction of SQ method from SSC examination-2010.

The committee comprises renowned academicians Prof Abdullah Abu Sayeed, Prof Jafar Iqbal, Prof Maniruzzaman Miah, Dr M Ibrahim, Manzur Ahmed Khandakar, Shakhawat Ali and Joint Secretary for education Nazrul Islam Khan.

ELEVEN RECOMMENDATIONS
The committee's 11 recommendations include using the name 'Creative Question (CQ)' method instead of Structured Question (SQ), holding the SSC examination under the CQ pattern from 2011, introduction of the CQ pattern from class six to nine from 2009, taking necessary measures to introduce CQ in class eight this year to give the students enough time to cope with the new question pattern in class nine next year.

The other recommendations

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Huji man Sumon visited S Africa to meet Aug 21 mastermind

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Arif Hasan Sumon, arrested suspect of the August 21, 2004 grenade attack on an Awami League rally, last year visited South Africa where Maulana Tajuddin, one of the alleged masterminds of the attack, is believed to have been hiding.

A leader of Harkatul Jihad al Islami, Bangladesh (Huji), Sumon left the country fearing capture after a number of Huji leaders and activists were arrested. He, however, returned as he knew that investigators failed to get detailed information about him, sources said.

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Maoists vow swift exit for Nepali king

AFP, Kathmandu

Nepal's Maoists pledged yesterday that the world's last Hindu monarchy will be abolished swiftly after final results from landmark polls gave the ultra-leftists a resounding victory.

"The first meeting of the constituent assembly will definitely end the monarchy and there will not be

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Eminent citizens for implementing women's policy

Demand punishment for violence

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Eminent citizens yesterday said the government should implement the National Women Development Policy (NWDP), 2008 for the empowerment of women and punish the people who are guilty of the violence on the National Mosque premises demonstrating against the policy on April 11.

Academicians, female journalists and eminent citizens said this at a views-exchange meeting on "Equal Rights of Men and Women: An Unavoidable Condition for Civilisation" at the Jatiya Press Club in the city.

A number of the speakers at the meeting, jointly organised by Nari Sangbadik Kendra and Progressive

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GRAFT CASES

ACC okays charge sheets against Mirza Abbas, Shamim Osman

Kazi Zafarullah to be sued

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Anti-corruption Commission (ACC) yesterday approved the submission of four charge sheets in four corruption cases filed against high-profile people.

The accused in the cases are former BNP minister Mirza Abbas, former Awami League lawmaker Shamim Osman, former managing

director of Sonali Bank Muhammad Tahmilur Rahman and Munshiganj Awami League President Mohammad Mohiuddin.

The commission also approved the filing of three corruption cases against three people including Awami League presidium member Kazi Zafarullah.

Col Hanif Iqbal, director general

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Prayer Timing		
April 25		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	4-20	4-55
Juma	12-30	1-15
Asr	4-45	5-00
Maghrib	6-29	6-34
Esha	8-00	8-30

Source: Islamic Foundation

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We Mourn

Jamila Khatun, mother of one of sponsor Directors of Green Delta Insurance Co. Ltd. A.Z. Mohammad Hossain passed away on April 24, 2008 in Dhaka (Innalillahi O Inna Elahe Rajeun). She was 82.

We mourn her death and express our deep condolence and sympathy to the bereaved family and pray to the Almighty Allah to grant the departed soul eternal peace in the best of the Heavens.

The Board of Directors & The Management of Green Delta Insurance Co. Ltd.

Pak al-Qaeda chief orders end to attacks

AFP, AP, Peshawar

An al-Qaeda-linked Pakistani warlord accused of masterminding the slaying of Benazir Bhutto has issued a letter ordering an end to attacks on security forces, witnesses said yesterday.

Baitullah Mehsud, who was named by Pakistan's Taliban movement last year as its chieftain and was alleged by the government to

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