

Commerce ministry

FROM PAGE 1
The DU chemistry department had confirmed that in its tests excessive melamine was found in the eight popular brands of powdered milk—Nido fortified instant, Red Cow, Yashili 1 (China), Sweet Baby (China), Diploma, Anline, Yashili 2 (China) and Dano.

But testing four brands, Plasma Plus found the toxic element in one of them and the BSTI, which also conducted the tests separately, confirmed that it was Yashili 1.

After the nearly two-hour long meeting, Firoze Ahmed said they could not give orders to stop sales of these brands because there are still confusions over the laboratory tests of the deciding factor of melamine's presence in these products.

He said a five-member committee has been formed with representatives from the ministries of commerce, industries and health, the BSTI and the powdered milk companies in question and they will collect samples of the same batches of these brands tested earlier for the further testing.

Another 12-member experts committee was formed yesterday to oversee the tests at the laboratories of Bangladesh Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (BCSIR) and Bangladesh Atomic Energy Commission (BAEC) and in an accredited laboratory abroad.

The committee comprised of experts from the DU chemistry department, BAEC, BCSIR, Plasma Plus, BSTI and the health ministry will give their opinions on the basis of the tests and then the government will take the final decision in this regard.

The committee will check if melamine is really existent in powdered milk of these brands and, if it is there, the level of its presence—whether tolerable or harmful for human health.

Asked if the government can trust the results of the DU tests, Firoze said, "It is not a question of trust. In two tests, melamine was found only in one brand while it was found in all the eight brands in another test. So, obviously all parties have their say."

He said yesterday's meeting also decided to gradually conduct tests of other brands of powdered milk.

Meanwhile, parents and consumers' rights activists said the government was playing foul with the people by trying to avoid responsibilities. Consumers Association of Bangladesh Senior Programme Officer Emdad Hossain Malek said the government cannot avoid the responsibility for two reasons: first, it is the state's duty to protect its citizens and second, confusion has arisen surrounding products approved by the BSTI which controls the standards of all products.

The government must take a clear decision on the issue. As toxic element has been found in a few brands, it may suggest other brands for the time being, he said.

Sabrina Rahman, a housewife from Mirpur, said she had serious trouble with her two-year-old child as she could not find any safe baby formula.

"I have heard that traders mix toxic chemicals in pasteurised and raw milk too. Please ask the government to arrange import of milk from other countries where it is not tainted," she said, "Or ask the government to provide us with poison and kill us."

Rukhsana Yasmin, a mother from Gendaria, said it is the BSTI that allowed marketing of these eight brands of powdered milk. "Stringent actions should be taken against the officials responsible for it," she said.

UK pledges

FROM PAGE 16
above flood levels to ensure people can eat when the waters rise.

Over half of the new CLP funding will go directly to ultra-poor households, many of them women, to help them buy cows, other animals and seeds for food crops.

A further amount will go into social protection cash stipends for the very poorest to ensure that they can survive in the period before their plants and animals produce food.

The rest will go into (i) veterinary support and food for the animals (ii) community groups that bring poor women villagers together to share ideas, resources and knowledge (iii) a scheme that provides cash for earth-lifting employment to raise the homes and possessions of people on the chars.

Re-demarcation

FROM PAGE 1
The redemarcation is not vacated, the announcement of the schedule for the upcoming parliamentary election will be delayed," he said adding that the HC stay order should be vacated immediately.

The same HC bench was scheduled to hear a petition challenging the redemarcation yesterday, but did not hear it since the item was at the bottom of the day's caseload.

Dr Shahdeen Malik said the writ petition was item no 176 on the caseload.

"If the situation continues like this, at least six months will be needed to get the matter adjudicated," he added.

Former BNP state minister Abdul Mannan filed the writ petition on August 6 challenging the legality of the EC's gazette notification finalising the fresh redemarcation of the constituencies.

The next day, the HC bench of Justice Khademul Islam Chowdhury and Justice Mashuque Hossain Ahmed stayed the effectiveness of the notification for three months, and directed the government and the EC to explain within two weeks why the notification should not be declared unconstitutional and illegal.

The HC bench of Justice Mir Hasmat Ali and Justice Shamim Hossain on October 13 fixed yesterday for hearing the matter.

Mamun's bail

FROM PAGE 1
Assistant Attorney General Khalequzzaman moved three separate petitions at the court of the chamber judge seeking a stay on the HC orders that granted bail to Mamun and stayed the proceedings of the three cases filed against him with the Gulshan Police Station last year.

CASE AGAINST MOHIUDDIN
After hearing a writ petition filed by Mohiuddin, an HC bench of justices ABM Khairul Haque and Md Abdul Hye stayed the proceedings of the case and issued a ruling upon the government to explain why the initiation and continuation of the case should not be declared illegal.

NBR Additional Assistant Tax Commissioner AKM Shahadat Hossain on September 21 filed a case with the Metropolitan Sessions Judge's Court against Alamgir on charge of evading Tk 53.44 lakh in income tax from 2002 to 2007.

In his complaint, the plaintiff mentioned that Alamgir had concealed information about his wealth worth Tk 21,258,602 from the NBR department and evaded Tk 5,344,671 in income tax from 2002 to 2007.

Alamgir, accused in a number of cases, recently filed a writ petition with the HC challenging the legality of the case proceedings against him.

Govt directive

FROM PAGE 1
The meeting also asked all educational institutions to round off their examinations by December 4 so that election centres could be set up at those institutions in due time and upcoming parliamentary polls could be conducted properly.

In a bid to ease traffic congestion and ensure smooth traffic management in the capital, the government last week asked all educational institutions to start their classes at 7:30am instead of 8:30am.

Soon after the announcement of the government order, students, guardians and teachers expressed their annoyance and utter dissatisfactions over the issue especially ahead of the final examinations and approaching winter season.

Following the sharp reaction from guardians and teachers the education ministry yesterday shifted away from their earlier position and relaxed the class starting time.

As many as 12 vigilance teams were also formed with 36 officials led by 12 deputy secretaries at the behest of the education ministry to help implement the government decision.

The teams were supposed to make separate visits to the educational institutions and submit their reports to the ministry.

Uniform test charges

Test	DMCH	Mitford	NIMH	Suhrawardy
Haemoglobin	5.50	11	20	---
TC	5.50	11	20	---
DC	5.50	11	20	---
ESR	5.50	11	20	---
TC, DC, ESR, Hb	22	44	50	50
BT-CT	11	22	40	30
Malaria Parasite	5.50	11	20	---
S Creatinine	14	40	60	60
Blood Sugar	11	33	40	40
Stool R/E, M/E	5.50	16.50	20	20
Urine R/E, M/E	5.50	16.50	20	20

All charges in taka

FROM PAGE 1
haemoglobin (Hb) test of blood and Tk 22 for the four combined.

The Mitford Hospital and National Institute of Cardiovascular Diseases (NICVD) charge Tk 11 each for TC and DC tests and Tk 44 for the two combined.

Charges at the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) are higher: Tk 20 each for TC, DC, Hb and ESR tests. The NIMH and Shaheed Suhrawardy Hospital charge Tk 50 for the four tests done all at once.

Some staffers at the National Institute of Traumatology and Orthopaedic Rehabilitation told The Daily Star preferring anonymity that they did not charge for tests before photocopying the Mitford Hospital.

"We pointed to the Mitford Hospital after the in-charge of the clinical pathology department asked us what charges to introduce for diagnostic tests," one staffer said.

Asked about the differences at different hospitals, NIMH Director Prof AHM Firoze claimed that his hospital acted according to the government norm.

Brig Gen M Shahidul Haque Mollick, director at the Mitford

Hospital, said, "There's no room for taking more than the government-fixed costs."

Akhter Hossain, director at the health directorate, said, "We've looked into such utterances but did not find the letters under reference at the ministry. The charts shown at the hospitals are their own."

Dr MA Jalil, deputy secretary at the health ministry, added that there is no government-fixed chart of charges for diagnostics tests at the moment.

"In 2006, the ministry pencilled in the charges for only a few tests but it never got the approval. Some hospitals then photocopied the draft and started charging patients accordingly," he said.

At present, the government gets 50 percent of the proceeds from the tests done at public hospitals, doctors get 30 percent. Staffers get the rest.

The new draft recommended 25 percent of the proceeds for maintenance purposes and 25 percent to the government fund. The rest would go to the doctors and staffers.

"Some changes will be made to exclude the proceeds from the sale of admission forms and tickets," said a health-ministry official.

Shakib bowls, bats

FROM PAGE 1
The Tigers however were coming apart and barring the wicket of Zunaed Siddiqui, all the top-order batsmen got out to impulsive strokeplay. Rajin Saleh (6) played back to a Jeevan Patel delivery that turned and hit him plumb in front and Mohammad Ashraful (0) did his team no favours by giving Aaron Redmond a catch at cover while trying to job Daniel Vettori over covers. First-innings hero Mehrab Hossain (6) was guilty of swiping at a good length delivery, holing out to Kyle Mills at mid-on. Shakib entered with the game titling towards the visitors' way at 71 for five when Tamim Iqbal gave Vettori a simple return catch.

But the game remained Shakib's as he cut, drove and swept his way to a fine 71 off 151 deliveries that included twelve boundaries. In one Patel over, Shakib struck three fours in a row as Bangladesh put one foot on the door to an unlikely victory. When he reached his half-century off 105 balls, Shakib displaced Mohammad Rafique (69 and 5-65 against Zimbabwe) as the top all-round performer in a Test match.

He added 56 for the seventh wicket with Mushfiqur Rahim, who batted for nearly three hours to score 32 with four attractive boundaries. The young wicketkeeper-batsman backed away at times, cutting past point

and short third-man or stirred the small crowd with his lofts over mid-on.

Nayem Islam also did a Mushfiqur, hanging around for 19 in an hour and a half as Bangladesh pushed their lead past the 200-mark.

But both fell in quick succession to put the hosts in a spot of bother, quickly resuscitated when Mashrafe Bin Mortaza struck Jacob Oram for a boundary in the final over of the day.

Earlier, Shakib began the third day's play like he ended the second: leading the team out. He took seven wickets for 36 runs, beating the previous best of 7 for 95 by Enamul Haque in the Zimbabwe win at the same ground three years ago. Vettori, too, remained well in contention of a record as he struck a fifty and so far has taken nine wickets in the match.

AL

FROM PAGE 1
"Everything including the government's attitude and demarcation of the parliamentary constituencies shows that there is conspiracy centring the national elections," he said.

In the rally, AL set October 30 the deadline for the government to give assurance of releasing Hasina. Zillur said the AL will not start its election activities unless it is assured of Hasina's release.

Saying that conspiracies are being hatched by different quarters to foil the December 18 elections, AL presidium member Abdur Razzak directed his party workers to prepare to resist the conspiracies. He said the government would be responsible if the elections are not held on time.

AL Presidium member Toifal Ahmed said the state of emergency is an obstacle to political parties willing to take part in the December 18 elections.

AL leader Matia Chowdhury said ethically, politically and from the perspective of accountability to the people, they are bound to go for a movement to free Hasina. Giving assurance of ratifying, if and when in power, all the good activities of the incumbent government, she asked the government to seek apology to the countrymen for its misdeeds.

AL acting General Secretary Syed Ashraf Islam said a free, fair and credible election with the participation of all political parties is only possible with the release and active participation of Hasina.

Asserting that there is no alternative to elections, he said the country would plunge into darkness if the elections are not held on time and nobody knows what would be the solution then. He demanded the state of emergency be lifted.

AL Joint General Secretary Mukul Bose, however, categorically accused two countries of South Asia and the Middle East of conspiring to foil the national elections with the help of BNP and Jamaat-e-Islami.

AL leaders Mahmudur Rahman Manna, Abdul Mannan, Sultan Mohammad Mansur Ahmed, Abdur Rahman, MA Aziz and Qamrul Islam also spoke at the rally.

Dr Harunur Rashid

FROM PAGE 1
"But if the parliamentary elections are not held on December 18 or there is any kind of manipulation in the elections or people cannot exercise their right to choose representatives, all these reforms will be counter-productive," he noted.

He said political leaders must learn from the 1/11 changeover and the disagreements among them which led to the stepping in of people "whose intervention we do not want". Such intervention will recur if there is no understanding among the political leaders on the "norms, values and rules of the game", he added.

Terming the "minus-two" formula a major blunder of the caretaker government, he said, "The two leaders have emerged from the country's two main political streams and cannot just be written off. Without realising the political and social reality, the (caretaker) government wanted to change everything using force. If it could be done, Ayub Khan, Yahya Khan and post-independent army rulers could have succeeded."

He said the Awami League and the BNP represent two conflicting political streams and it is unlikely that the confrontational politics would come to an end and political culture would see a major change soon after the election.

Demanding withdrawal of the state of emergency during the upcoming parliamentary election, Dr Harun said it can be imposed again if the situation demands.

He stressed the need for auditing to ensure transparency in the funding and expenditure of political parties.

Talking on the meeting between the chiefs of the BNP and Awami League, he said the two leaders would have initiated the process themselves if they had realised the need. "We hope it will not be futile like the meeting between Mannan Bhuiyan and Abdul Jalil," said Dr Harun.

Arrest warrant

FROM PAGE 1
upon his income of Tk 70,99,851 for the years 2002 to 2006.

After hearing the case, Judge Mohammad Azizul Haque recorded the statement of the complainant, took into cognisance, and issued an arrest warrant against the accused.

The court also fixed October 23 for the hearing of the case.

The judge said he passed the order as the charges brought against Bulu under the Income Tax Ordinance, 1984 were found to be true. In his complaint, Mortuza mentioned that Bulu has evaded paying a total of Tk 18.29 lakh in income tax.

Bulu repeatedly gave false information to the income tax department about his real income and expenditure, the complainant stated.

Earlier on August 25, Bulu and family members were charged with amassing wealth worth Tk 3.23 crore illegally and concealing information about their wealth.

The ACC filed the graft case against the three with Ramna Police Station on January 7 this year.

Bulu, also the president of Jatiyatabadi Bulu Dal, in his wealth statement submitted to the ACC on July 30 last, declared owning wealth worth Tk 1.2 crore, while his wife Shamima Akhter was shown owning Tk 1.23 crore and son Tk 49.41 lakh only.

CASE AGAINST ALAMGIR'S SONS
ACC Assistant Director Towfiqul Islam, also the investigation officer (IO) of the cases, submitted the charge sheets against Jalal Alamgir and Joy Alamgir, to the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's Court of Dhaka.

The IO prayed for issuance of arrest warrants against them and the order to attach their properties, as they have been absconding since the cases were filed.

On June 11 this year, the ACC filed the cases with Gulshan Police Station against the two brothers, as they failed to submit their wealth statements to the commission.

The commission on April 27 this year issued notices asking Jalal and Joy to submit their wealth statements by May 6. But they did not comply with the order.

Aug 21 case

FROM PAGE 16
adjournment of the hearings as they were not in a position to hear the charges brought against the accused of the case.

On the other hand, defence lawyers did not submit any petitions for adjournment of the hearing on charge framing against the accused.

After hearing both the sides, the judge granted the petition submitted by the lawyers of the victims of the case.

On June 11, Assistant Superintendent of the Criminal Investigation Department (CID) Fazlul Kabir, also investigation officer of the cases, submitted charge sheets to the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's Court in Dhaka showing 412 people as prosecution witnesses.

Of the accused, Pintu, Mufti Hannan, his brother Mohibullah, alias Mafizur Rahman, and 11 others are now in jail. They were brought from different dungeons to be produced before the court yesterday.

Moulana Tajuddin, Pintu's brother, Liton, Anisul Mursalin, Mahibul Muttakin, Iqbal, Moulana Abu Bakar, alias Selim Howlader, Jahangir Alam Badar and Khalilur Rahman have been on the run since the indictment.

Obama wins

FROM PAGE 16
The extravagance of giving enabled Obama to demolish his previous one-month record of 66 million dollars in August, which had already set him fair to hit McCain hard with a nationwide advertising blitz in the closing stages.

The Republican Powell, on NBC program "Meet the Press," said Obama had "met the standard" to be commander-in-chief "because of his ability to inspire" Americans of all ages and ethnic and political stripes.

"I think he would be a transformational president. For that reason I will be voting for Senator Barack Obama," said Powell, who was the first African-American to serve as chairman of the joint chiefs of staff.

Should the mixed-race Obama win in just over two weeks, "all Americans should be proud, not just African-Americans," he added.

"It would not just electrify our country, it would electrify the world."

It was a stinging rebuff to McCain, the former Vietnam War prisoner and national security veteran whose White House hopes have dimmed as economic crisis has stalked the United States.

Speaking on Fox television, McCain said he had "always admired and respected General Powell."

"We're long-time friends. This doesn't come as a surprise," the Arizona senator said, while touting his endorsement by other former secretaries of state including Henry Kissinger, James Baker and Lawrence Eagleburger.

Powell had harsh words about the rightward lurch the Republican Party has taken in recent years and extended under McCain and his running mate Sarah Palin—who he said was not ready to be president.

McCain's shifting positions on the crisis did not reflect well on his calm under fire, and his choice of the Alaska governor as vice presidential nominee "raised in my mind some question as to the judgment that Senator McCain made."

Powell said that Obama, in contrast, had come out of recent weeks looking presidential.

"He displayed a steadiness, an intellectual curiosity, a depth of knowledge and an approach to

Taliban massacre

FROM PAGE 16
Officials offered varying death tolls from the attack, which occurred in an area of Afghanistan that government forces cannot safely travel to without heavy military protection. That may explain why news of the Thursday hijacking did not emerge until Sunday.

The Afghan Defence Ministry spokesman, Gen. Mohammad Zahir Azimi, said 31 people were killed. Six of the dead were beheaded in a separate area of Maiwand from where the other 25 bodies were found, he said.

Khan offered a higher toll, saying around 40 civilians were killed. He said his information came from "local sources."

It was not possible to reconcile the differing figures. The spokesman for Kandahar's provincial governor said officials would hold a news conference later Sunday.

Azimi dismissed the Taliban claim that 27 soldiers had been killed. "Our soldiers travel by military convoy, not in civilian buses. And we have military air transportation," Azimi said.

Taliban spokesman Qari Yousef Ahmadi said militants looked at the documents of those travelling on the bus, released all the civilians and killed 27 soldiers. Taliban spokespersons often exaggerate their claims but occasionally their information matches up with the government version of events.

Khan said two buses had been travelling together and that the militants tried to stop the first one but failed. He said the insurgents fired at the first bus and killed one child on board.

Taliban attacks have become increasingly lethal this year as the militia has gained power and surged throughout southern and eastern Afghanistan. Violence in Afghanistan this year has killed more than 5,100 people, mostly militants, according to an Associated Press count of figures from Afghan and Western officials.

Cut-off tree

FROM PAGE 16
instructions so that the bases are not visible. The workers started their work around 9:00am and finished before noon.

The authorities sold the trees but the immature deodar trees were seen still standing there yesterday even though those trees were just next to the ones chopped down.

3 children die

FROM PAGE 16
Sources said Hossain along with his family members came to Brahmanbaria in search of work.

On Saturday night, Hossain gave the three children syrup he bought at Nikli village eight months ago for treatment of worms.

They were found dead yesterday morning. On information, police rushed to the spot and recovered the bodies.

They also seized the bottle of syrup. But the name of the syrup or the manufacturing company could not be confirmed as the label had already been removed from the bottle.

A three-member probe body headed by Dr SM Musa Khan, residential medical officer of Brahmanbaria Hospital, was formed to investigate the incident.

Autopsies of the bodies were completed at the Brahmanbaria Hospital. But details of the autopsy reports could not be known immediately.

looking at (economic) problems like this, and picking a vice president (Joseph Biden) that I think is ready to be president on day one."

There was no immediate comment from the Obama campaign to the endorsement from Powell, who was tarnished by his role in promoting the US invasion of Iraq but remains a respected figure among moderates in both parties.

The Democrat's campaign was crowding over its September fundraising record, after added 632,000 new donors for a total of more than 3.1 million, as Obama pursued an audacious hunt for votes in Republican states like North Carolina.

"Because of your great generosity we had a record-breaking September," Obama's campaign manager David Plouffe said as he prepared to file the month's fundraising figures with the Federal Election Commission.

"We are going to report tomorrow to the FEC that we raised over 150 million dollars in September, which has allowed us to run such a strong campaign in all of these battleground states," he said in a video message to supporters.

BCL groups clash

FROM PAGE 16
BCL sources said the clash occurred between hall unit BCL activist Reazuddin Sumon and Samsul Kabir Rahat and their supporters over a post in the party's hall unit committee.

Sources said at one point, Sumon group—with help from BCL activists of other DU dormitories—forced Rahat and his supporters out from the hall compound at around 3:00pm.

About an hour later, Rahat group returned to the hall compound through a back door, and with help from Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) activists of the same hall, ousted Sumon group from the premises.

Hall sources said that Rahat group then took up position at the hall gate to prevent Sumon's group from re-entering the hall.

As Sumon and his group tried to force their way into the hall several times after this, the two groups clashed with each other several times.

Activists from both groups engaged in the clashes with iron rods, sticks and brick-pieces.

Hall sources said that police reached the spot at around 4:30pm but did not take any action against the demonstrators. They also said that the general students were not able to leave the hall during the period.

Talking to The Daily Star, hall provost Prof Zahidul Islam said, "I repeatedly asked police to go for some action, but they did not. They just observed the situation."

The OC of Shahbagh police station Rezaul Karim however refuted this claim. He said that the DU authorities asked the police not to take any action against the students. The police team had since left the troubled spot.

Meanwhile, the hall provost Prof Islam told The Daily Star last night that since both groups had still not left their positions at the hall, he apprehended further clashes during the night.

Prof Islam said he has informed the university proctor and Vice-Chancellor Prof SMA Faiz about the situation.

Meanwhile, a tense situation is prevailing at the hall.

At the time of filing of this report at about 10:00pm last night, chases and counter chases were continuing between the two groups at the hall.

Earlier, in the afternoon BCL leaders and activists staged a demonstration on the university campus demanding unconditional release of Awami League President Sheikh Hasina.

Tamil Tigers

FROM PAGE 16
stepped up attacks, the ministry said.

"Troops also suffered casualties during those confrontations and were being evacuated for treatment," the statement said.

Government soldiers fell victim to booby-trapped devices, anti-personnel mines and mortar fire, the ministry said.

Battlefield sources confirmed that the terrorists suffered significant attrition in terms of men and material," the ministry said.

Claiming that the LTTE was on