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Tk 26cr gobbled up by CBA men in BTTB

Workshop stopped production 8yrs back but money drawn against conveyance, maintenance

EMRAN HOSSAIN

Bangladesh Telecommunications Company Ltd (BTCL), former BTTB, stopped production in its workshop eight years' back but the authorities' failure to formally announce closure of the workshop has caused a loss of about Tk 26 crore to the state over these years.

A special investigation team of the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) revealed that the money was misappropriated in the name of repair and maintenance of the workshop and conveyance expenses of officials since fiscal 2000-2001.

Of the Tk 26 crore, about Tk 9 crore was shown as repair and maintenance expenditure and around Tk 17 crore as conveyance expenses.

The workshop under the Telegraph Store and Workshop Directorate of the then BTTB went out of production as telecommunication technology gradually developed into wireless system.

The ACC probe detected that financial corruption and irregularities rose

ally developed into wireless system.

ABTCL official seeking anonymity told The Daily Star yesterday, "The then BTTB authorities did not dare to officially announce closure of the workshop situated at Tejgaon in the capital due to 'political reasons' as employees and workers were involved in CBA (collective bargaining agent) politics."

The ACC probe detected that financial corruption and irregularities rose

SEE PAGE 15 COL 1

Hasina fears 'election engineering'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Awami League (AL) President Sheikh Hasina yesterday feared election engineering in the upcoming national polls and asked all to remain vigilant to foil such an attempt.

"We launched the movement for holding a free and fair election, but despite that we do not know whether election engineering will take place or the election result will be changed. Doubts are yet to be removed completely," said Hasina.

The AL chief was addressing the newly-elected office

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A live pond heron is put in a cage and displayed on Dhaka University campus as an election symbol during the Dhaka University Karigari Karmachari Samity elections yesterday. Capturing and keeping this bird in a cage is prohibited under the Wildlife Act, 1974.

PHOTO: STAR

Suspending rights thru' emergency challenged

HC rule on govt

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court (HC) yesterday issued a rule upon the government to explain why the provisions of the constitution empowering the president to suspend the fundamental rights of the people during the state emergency should not be declared void.

Upon a writ petition, the HC bench comprising Justice Syed Mahmud Hossain and Justice Quamrul Islam Siddiqui also asked the government to explain why the president's proclamation of emergency, suspending the fundamental rights on January 11, 2007, should not be declared unconstitutional.

The law secretary, president's secretary and home

SEE PAGE 15 COL 3



Young men wear T-shirts with the names of 50 war criminals. Gouraber Muktijuddha Sangathan launched the shirts at the Liberation War Museum in the city yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

Tk 3,324cr housing plan gets govt nod

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government is going to construct 4,256 flats in the capital under a joint venture with private developers and will give 40 percent of those to its employees at a low price.

The flats will be built at Mohakhali and Mirpur at an estimated cost of Tk 3,324 crore.

The Executive Committee of National Economic Council (Ecne) at a meeting yesterday approved eight projects involving Tk 4,281 crore, including the one for building flats. Chief Adviser Fakhruddin Ahmed chaired the meeting.

Government employees will buy 1,700 flats while the developers will sell the rest to private buyers at commercial rates. The project is the first such joint venture with the government providing the land and developers bearing construction cost of the flats.

Talking to reporters after the Ecne meeting, Finance and

SEE PAGE 2 COL 3

Thai anti-govt protesters paralyse Bangkok

Surround PM's offices

AFP, Bangkok

Thousands of Thai protesters forced parliament to close and surrounded the prime minister's makeshift offices at an old airport yesterday, upping the stakes in a six-month standoff with the government.

A sea of demonstrators wearing yellow to symbolise their loyalty to the king spread out through the streets of Bangkok, with armed activists even hijacking four passenger buses to use as roadblocks against the police.

Protesters streamed out of premier Somchai Wongsawat's cabinet offices at Government House -- which activists have occupied since

August -- and briefly blockaded parliament and several key state buildings.

Lawmakers postponed an important joint parliamentary session concerning legislation for a major regional summit being held in Thailand in December, as police carrying shields took a low-key approach to avoid violence.

About 2,000 members of the People's Alliance for Democracy (PAD) later set up camp outside Somchai's new, temporary premises in a disused terminal at Bangkok's old Don Mueang international airport, AFP reporters said.

SEE PAGE 15 COL 7

Khaleda ready to be voter

Nomination paper collected on her behalf

UNB, Dhaka

BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia will become a voter today or tomorrow, her close aide told the news agency yesterday.

Khaleda had refused to be a voter while he was in a makeshift jail at parliament building complex.

Election officials said aspiring candidates for the upcoming parliamentary election can be enrolled as voter before filing of nomination papers under a special arrangement.

SEE PAGE 15 COL 2

KIBRIA MURDER

Mufti Hannan, 3 other Huji men remanded

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

A Sylhet court yesterday placed Huji leader Mufti Abdul Hannan and his three accomplices on a 7-day remand in connection with the Shah AMS Kibria murder case.

Habiganj Additional Chief Judicial Magistrate Md Helal Uddin granted their 7-day remand after ASP of Criminal Investigation Department (CID) Rafiqul Islam, also the investigation officer (IO) of the

SEE PAGE 15 COL 6

Prayer Timing		
November 25		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	5-10	5-45
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	3-45	4-00
Maghrib	5-19	5-22
Esha	7-00	7-30

Source: Islamic Foundation

Ctg Medical College shut as JCD, Shibir activists clash

25 hurt; 100 hostel rooms vandalised

CU CORRESPONDENT

At least 25 students were injured in a clash between the activists of Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) and Islami Chhatra Shibir (ICS) on the Chittagong Medical College (CMC) campus.

After the clash, the CMC authorities suspended all academic activities indefinitely and asked the male students to vacate hostels by 8:00pm yesterday and female students by 8:00am today.

Around 100 rooms at the college's main hostel on Chatteshwari Road were vandalised and five were set on fire during the clash.

Sources said the clash ensued on the campus after Shibir activist Nazmul got into a scuffle with JCD activists Sounam and Upal over talking an admission seeker into their student organisations at around 2:30pm.

When the news spread, a group of Shibir activists with iron rods and hockey sticks attacked JCD activists leaving 25 activists of both the student organisations injured.

Later, Shibir activists reportedly along with some outsiders entered the CMC main hostel and vandalised the rooms of the JCD activists.

When the Shibir activists left the hostel, JCD men entered the hostel and ransacked the rooms of the Shibir activists.

They also set fire to five rooms on the first floor of the four-storey hostel.

There have been allegations that the policemen present there remained quiet during the clash.

SEE PAGE 15 COL 6

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147 killed in fierce Lanka fighting

AFP, Colombo

At least 27 soldiers and 120 Tamil Tiger rebels were killed as government forces battled their way to the outskirts of the rebels' political headquarters, the defence ministry said yesterday.

Heavy fighting raged along three fronts as troops closed in on the town of Kilinochchi, the ministry said. But it added that the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) were putting up stiff resistance.

"Twenty-seven soldiers have made their ultimate sacrifice for the motherland while 70 others suffered injuries during the battle. A few other soldiers have not been able to join with their units so far," a ministry statement said.

It said intercepted radio transmissions of the Tigers indicated that they had also suffered heavy casualties.

"Over 120 LTTE cadres have been killed and 80 others injured in the Kilinochchi area since Sunday morning," the ministry said.

The ministry statement came as the Tigers announced through the pro-rebel Tamilnet.com website that 43 government troops had been killed and 70 more were wounded in a confrontation northwest of Kilinochchi.

Another 35 soldiers were killed in fighting on Friday and Saturday along the southern defenses of Kilinochchi, Tamilnet said.

Sri Lanka's government, which pulled out of a Norwegian-brokered truce in January, has vowed to take the Tiger political capital and dismantle the LTTE's mini-state.

SEE PAGE 15 COL 7

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