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TCB to be revitalised
 STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has asked the ministries concerned to take immediate measures to activate the Trading Corporation of Bangladesh (TCB) and expand its activities to keep the market stable.

The premier issued the directive for ministries including the commerce, food, finance and industries after Monday's cabinet meeting to activate the state-owned TCB to curb prices of basic commodities in local market.

Food and Disaster Management Minister Abdur Razzak unveiled this to reporters after UNDP Resident Coordinator in Bangladesh Renata Lok Dessalieu met him at his office yesterday.

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Hectic lobbying for university posts

SURANJITH DEABNATH

Pro-Awami League (AL) teachers of different public universities are now lobbying hard with new government high-ups to get appointment as vice chancellor (VC), pro-vice chancellor (pro-VC) and other top vital posts after the political change-over.

On Thursday, Mass Communication and Journalism Department Professor and Dhaka University Teachers' Association (DUTA) former president AAMS Arefin Siddique was appointed as VC of Dhaka University (DU) in the place of Prof SMA Faiz. The new VC Siddique is a prominent and popular teacher from pro-AL teachers' group 'Blue panel' while

outgoing VC Faiz was a member of pro-BNP 'White panel' of teachers.

As part of removing pro-BNP top officials from public universities, the new government will re-constitute the 'Search Committee' which was formed during army-backed caretaker government to make recommendations to the president for appointment of the public university's VC, pro-VC and treasurer on the basis of teaching experience, seniority and quality, education ministry sources said.

Honest, progressive and well-accomplished academicians will be given priority for appointment various vital posts of the universities, including VCs, after evaluating their roles during the army-backed caretaker government,

according to the source.

University Grant Commission (UGC) chairman Nazrul Islam Khan said education ministry usually deals with the appointment of VCs or other top official posts of the universities.

"The idea of 'Search Committee' for selecting honest and competent teachers as VCs is a good concept but its existence or its re-constitution will fully depend on the new government," the UGC chairman said.

"Now we have to face different types of request as every day many pro-AL teachers come to the education ministry to meet its minister and other top officials," said a top official of the ministry on the

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UN chief visits war-torn Gaza
Israeli troops remain there as truce holds

AFP, Gaza City

UN chief Ban Ki-moon paid a first visit to the war-battered Gaza Strip yesterday where Israeli troops remain deployed on the third day of a ceasefire.

Hours before the inauguration of US president-elect Barack Obama, the army said a total troop pullout from Gaza was not under discussion.

"For the moment, no one is talking about the total withdrawal of troops," said army spokeswoman Avital Liebovich.

However the ceasefire appeared to be holding.

But Israeli soldiers shot dead a Palestinian farmer in the north of the strip on Tuesday, doctors said.

An Israeli army spokesman said she could not confirm the report that the man had been killed near the town of Jabailya by shots fired by troops close to Gaza's border with Israel.

And two Palestinian children died in Gaza City when an Israeli shell they had been playing with exploded, doctors said.

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Mosharraf's stashed wealth vexes BNP
Party embarrassed

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The BNP leadership is annoyed with party standing committee member also former minister Khandaker Mosharraf Hossain, due to the recent media expose of a huge amount of wealth allegedly stashed by him in the UK, suggesting his involvement in money laundering.

Party insiders said the top brass of the organisation are already convinced about the authenticity of the expose about Mosharraf, who had been arrested on March 7, 2007 during an anti-corruption crackdown and

SEE PAGE 15 COL 3



As wearing of colourful campaign pins is allowed under electoral rules, a street vendor sells pins with poll symbols on Bangabandhu Avenue in the capital ahead of the upazila polls tomorrow.

Tough action if law enforcers fail to deliver
 STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Directing law enforcement agencies to work without fear or favour in ensuring peace and law and order in the country, the home ministry yesterday warned them of punitive measures if they are found to be negligent in their duties.

"Work professionally, we can assure you that the government will not try to influence you," Home Minister Sahara Khatun said.

State minister Tanjim

SEE PAGE 2 COL 4

GP loses legal battle over SIM cards
Court asks it to pay Tk 24cr to distributor

MD HASAN

After a two-year legal battle, an arbitration tribunal recently ordered Grameenphone to pay more than Tk 24 crore to Communic Park Ltd, a local distributor of Grameenphone subscriber identification module (SIM) cards.

The verdict was in response to a Tk 45.30 crore lawsuit filed by Communic, alleging that Grameenphone had been refusing to pay the SIM distributor its due commission for sales of the cards.

The amount the court ordered Grameen to pay Communic, comprises Tk 12.18 crore commission for sales of 1.66 lakh

SEE PAGE 2 COL 5

Chief whip, 6 whips appointed

BSS, Dhaka

President Iajuddin Ahmed yesterday appointed Abdus Shahid as chief whip of the Jatiya Sangsad.

The president also appointed six whips, Secretary to the President's Office Md Sirajul Islam told the news agency.

The newly appointed whips are ASM Feroz (Patuakhali-2), Nur-e-Alam Chowdhury (Madaripur-1), Mujibul Hoque Mujib (Comilla-11), Mirza Azam (Jamalpur-3), Segupta Yasmin Emily (Munshiganj-2) and Sheikh Abdul Wahab (Jessore-6).

MOBILE PROJECT BTCL asked to report on Siemens deal
 STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The telecommunication ministry yesterday asked Bangladesh Telecommunication Company Ltd (BTCL) to make a report for the ministry detailing Siemens' contract for the government mobile phone project (TeleTalk) so that it (govt) can go for legal action.

The move came at a meeting between Telecom Minister Rajiuddin Ahmed Raju and BTCL high officials at the Secretariat.

Sources said BTCL, formerly BTTB (Bangladesh

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POST-POLL BCL Internal clashes cease, tension persists

RAKIB AHAMMED

A tense situation still prevails in many educational institutions although post-polls clashes involving Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) in several institutions have come to a halt, said BCL sources.

The feuding BCL leaders exercise restraint for the time being under pressure from Awami League (AL) high-ups, sources said.

Fresh intra-BCL clashes might occur anytime at Jahangirnagar University (JU), Jagannath University, Rajshahi University and Shahjahan University of Science and Technology (SUST) if the existing problems in the student organisation are not solved immediately.

The crisis in JU BCL unit is yet to be settled although the central committee has already suspended its organisational activities for a month.

Sources said the unit's leaders did not attend the meeting between the leaders of central committee and BCL units yesterday, aiming at stopping the internal clashes in educational institutions.

"Many BCL leaders, who remained inactive during the tenure of BNP-Jamaat alliance government, returned to institution campuses after the parliamentary polls. They are now causing troubles and must be driven out of the campuses immediately," said a central BCL leader wishing anonymity.

SEE PAGE 15 COL 7

Do-or-die for Tigers against Zimbabwe
 SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh are in a must-win situation against Zimbabwe in the second one-day of the three-match series at the Sher-e-Bangla Stadium in Mirpur today.

The match will be telecast live on Bangladesh Television from 9.00am.

Zimbabwe beat the Tigers in a tense encounter by two

SEE PAGE 15 COL 4

ADB pledges to help attain middle-income nation status by 2021
Visiting VP meets PM

UNB, Dhaka

Asian Development Bank (ADB) will help Bangladesh make progress toward the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and turn it into a middle-income country by 2021 as pledged by the government of Sheikh Hasina.

The assurance was given by visiting ADB Vice-President Xiaoyu Zhao during his meeting with Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at her office yesterday.

The ADB senior executive also assured the prime minister of the bank's support to address the adverse effects of global financial crisis, infrastructure development and promote regional cooperation, particularly in sub-regional energy cooperation, transport connectivity and tourism development.

"We look forward to working more closely with the new government to secure further development of the country and help realise its vision," he told the prime minister, according to a statement issued by the ADB's Bangladesh resident mission.

Zhao said ADB stands ready to support the government to overcome any adverse effects of the global financial crisis and

SEE PAGE 15 COL 3

309 frozen accounts to be opened in phases
 STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government is going to take decisions on restoring 309 bank accounts frozen under the existing laws on a case by case basis.

The accounts were frozen during the tenure of the caretaker government on charges of tax dodging.

Now NBR is categorising these accounts. After putting them into different categories, the list of accounts may be sent to the cabinet meeting for a decision on the matter, sources said.

After a meeting with the ADB vice president yesterday, Finance minister AMA Muhith told reporters, "The funds

SEE PAGE 15 COL 5

CONGRATULATIONS

Iftekharul Islam
Vice-Chairman
Uttara Bank Limited

Iftekharul Islam, Managing Director of Aftab Group has been elected the Vice-Chairman of Uttara Bank Limited. We congratulate him for his success.

Members of Aftab Group

Prayer Timing
 January 21

	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	5-30	6-05
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	4-15	4-30
Maghrib	5-43	5-47
Esha	7-15	7-45

Source: Islamic Foundation