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Zillur pays homage to Bangabandhu

UNB, Tungipara

President Zillur Rahman yesterday paid homage to Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman at Tungipara in Gopalganj.

Zillur Rahman, who was sworn in as Bangladesh's 19th President Thursday, placed wreaths at the mazar of Bangabandhu at about 11:58 am and offered fateha.

A smartly turned out contingent drawn from army, navy and air force gave a guard of honour as a mark of respect when military bugle was played to its last post.

The president stood in solemn silence for some time to pay respect to the memory of Bangabandhu.

Later, he signed the visitor book kept on the mazar premises.

The chiefs of the three services, senior military and civil officials, Bangabandhu's younger daughter Sheikh SEE PAGE 15 COL 1

Time runs out fast for ratification

Not a single ordinance tabled as bill, most of stipulated days already passed

SHAKHAWAT LITON

The House might have to race against time to ratify the ordinances placed on January 25 as two-thirds of the constitution-stipulated 30 days have already passed without a single one tabled as bill.

As many as 122 ordinances promulgated during the immediate past caretaker government's tenure will cease to have effect on February 24 if not ratified by the legislature.

Till yesterday, Jatiya Sangsad Secretariat did not receive notice from any minister of plans to introduce an ordinance as bill.

Even if a minister moves today, he will not be able to pilot his bill before February 22 unless the speaker suspends the rules of procedure provision that requires a seven days' notice before introducing a government bill.

The speaker can allow a motion to be made on a shorter notice if he deems there are sufficient reasons to do so.

After placement in the House, the bills will be sent for scrutiny by the special parliamentary committee and standing committees on finance and law ministry. Again, for time constraints,

the committees might not be able to examine the bills thoroughly, said JS Secretariat officials.

Earlier, a special committee formed on January 28 has tentatively selected for ratification 53 out of the 122 ordinances.

The House might have to rush ratification of the ordinances as there remains only eight workdays including today.

In that case, proceedings like one-hour question-answer session, disposal of call attention notices and discussions on the president's address might be put on the

backburner.

If the BNP-led opposition lawmakers, who have submitted a huge number of notices for resolutions disapproving the ordinances, return to parliament, the speaker must allow time for disposal of their notices.

According to decisions by the Business Advisory Committee (Bac), the House starts the day's business at 4:45pm every day five days a week.

Meanwhile, the special committee meets today to discuss the ordinances again. It is likely to finalise the list of SEE PAGE 15 COL 8

Corrupt unionism starts to creep up

AL MP, pro-BNP union backing opportunist group in Titas

WASIM BIN HABIB

Unruly trade unionism that systematically drained out thousands of crore taka in the past few decades and protected plunderers of national resources is creeping back into Titas Gas Transmission and Distribution Company Ltd (TGTDC) as the new government took office last month.

Awami League lawmaker Israfil Alam, who once used to be a meter reader, is allegedly patronising a group of 30-40 people who are staging showdowns at Titas Bhaban in Karwan Bazar every day since last month, sending a wave of chill among TGTDC officials and employees.

Intriguingly, this "pro-AL" group is being backed by one of the three pro-BNP trade unions in Titas. Sources say the group identifying themselves as the leaders of 'Titas Gas Samik League', which is a convener committee of Jatiya Samik League, is gathering at Titas

premises to show off strength though it doesn't belong to any Titas trade unions.

This convener committee was formed on June 23, 2005.

This group is trying to establish supremacy over Titas management so that it can resume illegal activities including transfer and posting of the employees it could not do in the last two years, sources say.

The group is serving the purpose of the pro-BNP Titas Gas Jatiyatabadi Samik Karmachari Union that does not want any election to Collective Bargaining Agent (CBA) in fear of possible defeat. The election has been stalled for 20 years.

This trade union is allegedly the main protector of corrupt meter readers and other staffs. The leaders of this group would help out a corrupt meter reader or staff even if he belongs to some AL banner and thus protect their personal interests.

SEE PAGE 12 COL 5

India restarts Tipaimukh barrage work

UNB, Bikanibazar

India has started construction of Tipaimukh barrage barely one kilometer away from Jakiganj border threatening to dry up the flow of the Surma and Kushiara rivers during the winter.

The barrage on the Barak River at Churachandpur district in Assam will render barren vast arable lands in north-east of Bangladesh, change ecology and climate in the region.

Officials of the Water Development Board (WDB) told UNB yesterday that work on the barrage was started in March 2007 but postponed in SEE PAGE 15 COL 1



PHOTO: STAR

Child workers work alongside others to bind secondary school textbooks at a factory on North Brook Hall Road in Old Dhaka yesterday.

Drug addict kills 2 sisters

UNB, Comilla

A drug addict youth along with his accomplice killed his two sisters at Surjapur village in Deviduar upazila early yesterday.

The deceased were identified as Tuhin, 11, and Sharmin, 8, daughters of late Mojammel Hossain of the village.

Police and locals said drug addict Younus, 18, and his friend Shafullah, 18, slaughtered Tuhin and strangled Sharmin to death when they were asleep at about 4:00am.

After the killing, the killers started shouting uttering 'dacoit'.

Hearing their scream, the locals rushed to the spot and SEE PAGE 15 COL 1

Little care in hasty textbook publishing

Low quality books come out with lots of errors as printers work round the clock

SURANJITH DEABNATH

Most of the textbooks for secondary level students are coming to the market with low quality printing and binding as publishers are doing their work haphazardly amid tremendous pressure by the taskforce on textbooks.

Apart from low quality printing and binding, missing of pages in many books makes it tough for the students to

read the books properly, according to market sources and guardians.

"Many pages of my home economics book are missing while some pages have been printed twice. I can't open my religion book properly due to poor binding. The print quality of my Bengali book is also poor," said Sadia Hossain Adrita, a class-VI student of Vigarunnisa Noon School and College.

Publishers said these types of problems remain in the new textbooks in the third phase of publishing books, as they have to do the work of printing and binding books round-the-clock due to pressure and do not get sufficient time to check the books again.

Binding textbooks is a long, lengthy and complicated process because publishers have to do the work manually.

SEE PAGE 15 COL 3

BSMMU, Dhaka Medical made smoking free

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University (BSMMU) and Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) premises have been formally announced "smoking free zone" yesterday as a part of massive campaign to create awareness against smoking.

Adviser to the Prime Minister Syed Modasser Ali made the official announcement in two separate programmes at BSMMU in the morning and DMCH in the afternoon, organised by Madakdrabbo O Nesha Nirodh Sangstha (MANAS) in association with World Health Organisation.

Modasser Ali handed over a billboard reading "Smoking is prohibited" to the Vice Chancellor of BSMMU Prof Nazrul Islam at the seminar. Pro Vice-chancellor of BSMMU Chowdhury Ali Kawser was also present along with the faculty.

"As the apex medical institution in the country BSMMU should set an example to SEE PAGE 15 COL 5

WOMEN'S RESERVED SEATS IN JS Direct election next time

188 collect AL nomination forms

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government will amend the constitution to stage direct election to reserved seats for women in the House from the next parliamentary polls, LGRD and Cooperatives Minister Syed Ashrafur Islam said yesterday.

"We shall amend the constitution to allow women to come to the House through direct election from the next parliamentary polls," said Ashrafur, also the Awami League (AL) spokesperson, after inaugurating the distribution of party nomination forms SEE PAGE 15 COL 6

SSC exams start today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Secondary School Certificate (SSC), Dakhil and SSC vocational examinations under 10 education boards across the country will start today amid strict measures to prevent students from adopting unfair means.

The examinations will commence at 10:00 am with the English First Paper.

A total of 10,63,484 regular and irregular students will take the SSC and equivalent SEE PAGE 12 COL 8

Love lost, yet it goes on

STAR REPORT

One of her son is a doctor and the other an architect, one of her daughter's live in the US and the other is married to a wealthy man.

Sixty-year-old Selina Majumder should have been a happy and contented mother.

Instead, she lay desolate in a bed in a corner of a ward of an old people's home in city's SEE PAGE 15 COL 4



PHOTO: STAR

Selina Majumder lives a lonely life in an old home at Agargaon in the capital despite having several children at high places.

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