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122 outfits involved in terrorism Says law minister

Law Minister Shafigue Ahmed yesterday said as many as 122 organisations are involved in terror activities in the country. Addressing a workshop on 'Anti-Terrorism Act 2009' he said Qawmi madrasas are turning into breeding grounds of religion-based terrorism. "They are not following the Quran, the Shari'ah and even laws of the land," he said adding that religious militancy goes against the spirit of religion and Islam. "The education ministry is conducting a survey on madrasas and it is rational to bring all madrasas under SEE PAGE 7 COL 4

NUCLEAR POWER TALKS WITH MOSCOW Dhaka seeks to build two 1,000MW plants

M ABUL KALAM AZAD

The government is likely to submit a proposal to the visiting Russian delegation today for setting up of two 1,000MW nuclear power plants in the country. Dhaka and Moscow also hope to reach an understanding regarding this today, the last day of the three-day talks with the two-member Russian delegation led by Vladimir Averkiev, head of international cooperation of Russian State Atomic Energy Corporation. "We will discuss some important issues with the Russian delegation today, including estimated cost of a nuclear power unit," said MM Neazuddin, joint secretary to the Ministry of Science, Information and Communication

Technology.

Neazuddin is leading the Bangladesh side at the talks. Terming today's meeting very crucial, he told The Daily Star that everything would be settled within the next few days.

With little hope for quick improvement of the existing severe power crisis, the government aims to sign primary agreements in this regard this month with Russia, which has shown enthusiasm to help Bangladesh with nuclear power technology.

France, China and South Korea have also shown interest in helping Bangladesh develop nuclear power plant while Bangladesh has bilateral agreements on nuclear cooperation with the United States, France and China.

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By-polls in 6 constituencies today

STAR REPORT

The Election Commission (EC) has taken all preparations to hold the parliamentary by-elections in six constituencies today.

The by-elections will be held in Kurigram-2, Bogra-6, Bogra-7, Rangpur-3, Rangpur-6 and Kishoreganj-6 constituencies vacated by President Zillur Rahman, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, Jatiya Party Chairman HM Ershad and BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia, reported UNB.

Zillur vacated Kishoreganj-6 while Hasina Rangpur-6, Ershad Rangpur-3 and Kurigram-2, and Khaleda Zia

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WB sees major dip in GDP growth

Projects 4.5pc for Bangladesh in current fiscal year amid global meltdown

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The World Bank has said the GDP growth in Bangladesh in the current fiscal year will be 4.5 percent, which is much lower than what the government and other donors projected.

The growth will further drop to 4 percent next fiscal year, according to the World Bank's Global Economic Prospect (GEP) 2009 released Tuesday.

In November last year, the WB forecast Bangladesh's GDP growth at 5.7 percent this fiscal year and 6.2 percent next.

However, both Bangladesh Bank and Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics project the

GDP growth in the current fiscal at 6 percent.

The Asian Development Bank in its outlook published Tuesday has projected the growth at 5.6 percent for this year and said it will come down to 5.2 percent next year.

Talking to The Daily Star Senior Economist Zahid Hossain of World Bank Dhaka Office yesterday said, "The central message here is that economic uncertainties have deepened with a perceived increase in downside risks. This increase in uncertainties makes it very difficult to project a point estimate of growth for FY09."

"We think growth in Bangladesh in FY09

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RELATED STORY IN STAR BUSINESS

EC looks into JP lawmaker's loan default allegation

SHAKHAWAT LITON

The Election Commission (EC) has received information from authorities concerned that Jatiya Party (JP) lawmaker of Tangail-5 Abul Kashem remained a loan and telephone bill defaulter during the ninth parliamentary polls.

If the commission finds him guilty of defaulting on loans or telephone bill, it might write to the Speaker to declare his seat vacant, said a senior EC official wishing anonymity.

The EC is also facing difficulties in probing the

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Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina takes a moment off from formalities at her office to cuddle the child of Maj Maqsoodul Hakim who was killed during the BDR carnage. She was handing over cheques to the families of army officers who lost their lives in the incident. Story on page 16. PHOTO: STAR

Khaleda's cantonment house allocated flouting rules

PM says in JS, requests BNP chief to leave the house

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday said the 6 Shaheed Mainul Road house in Dhaka Cantonment was allocated to Khaleda Zia violating the Cantonment Board's rules and her cabinet would decide about cancellation of the allocation.

"She [Leader of the Opposition Khaleda Zia] should not keep the house ignoring the law. She should leave the house willingly," Hasina, also leader of the House, said in parliament.

The premier said if Khaleda returns the house the government would construct apartment buildings on that 2.72-acre land and allocate two apartments for each of the families of army officers, who were brutally killed in the BDR carnage.

"Each of the family can live in one flat and rent another. She [Khaleda] should give the house to the martyrs' families."

In reply to a query of AL lawmaker Nazrul Islam Babu, the PM

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PM discloses list of 456 people seeking Tac clemency

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday revealed in parliament a list of 456 people, mostly government officials, who were exempted from corruption charges on their confessions before now-defunct Truth and Accountability Commission (Tac).

The immediate past caretaker government formed Tac headed by Justice Habibur Rahman Khan, promulgating an ordinance for the corrupt to avoid trial by confessing the offences they had committed.

The Tac also confiscated the wealth they accumulated through corruption but kept their identities secret as per the law.

In reply to Awami League lawmaker Muhibur Rahman Manik, the premier revealed the written list.

According to the list, most of the corrupt belong to the Roads and Highway Department under the communications ministry, Titas Gas Transmission and Distribution Company Limited, Dhaka Electricity Supply Authority (Desa) and the Department of Forest.

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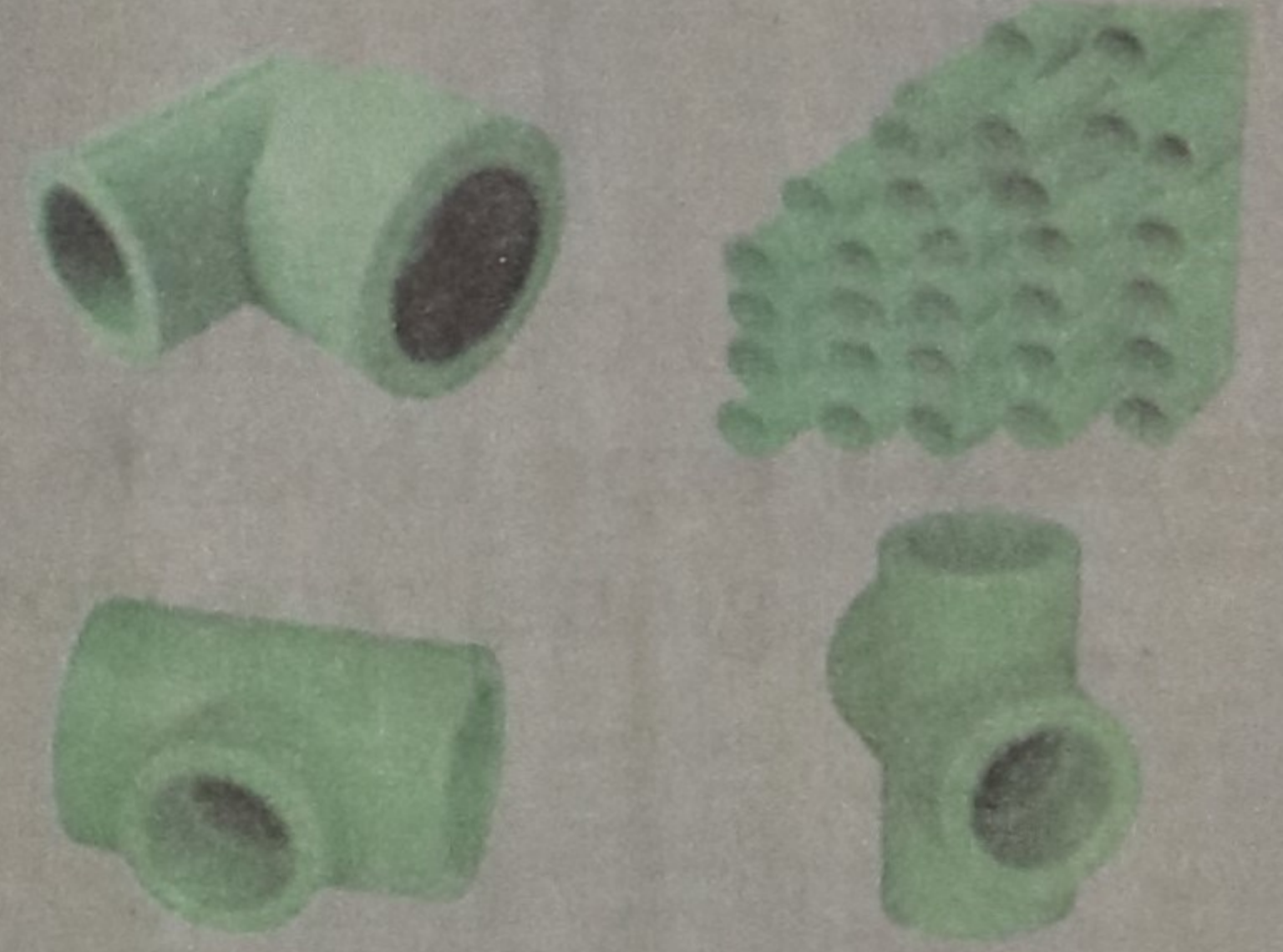
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