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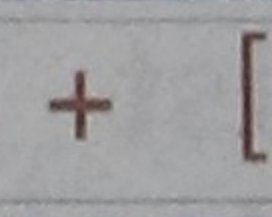


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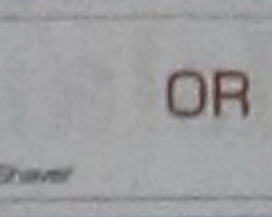
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EXPERTS ON HIGH-RISE BUILDING FIRE

Strict enforcement of rules a must for safety

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Strict enforcement of fire safety rules and compliance with Bangladesh National Building Code (BNBC) in construction of high-rise buildings must be ensured to protect them from fire, experts told a discussion yesterday.

Speaking at the discussion, State Minister for Housing and Public Works Abdul Mannan Khan said the government will take action against 'errant practice' in building construction in the city.

He was speaking at the discussion on Fire Safety in High-Rise Buildings and Provisions of BNBC, organised by Institution of Engineers, Bangladesh (IEB) with IEB Dhaka Centre Chairman Md Nurul Huda in the chair.

The BNBC addresses all the provisions on fire safety measures, Prof M Azadur Rahman, a noted civil engineer of Buet, said in his keynote paper.

Rahman urged the government to take initiatives for ensuring compliance with the fire fighting measures at the existing

buildings and for protecting the city's water bodies from grabbing and destruction immediately.

He mentioned that the BNBC requires regular fire drills by all the building's occupants, unobstructed means of escaping, fire lift, minimum width of 4.5 metres of any aisle, fire-rating (resistant) building materials and fire zoning in the cities and towns and open space.

Prof Jamilur Reza Chowdhury, civil engineer and vice-chancellor of Brac

SEE PAGE 15 COL 3

Outsiders beat up medical officer at BSMMU

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A group of doctors from outside yesterday beat up and seriously injured a medical officer at Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University (BSMMU).

The victim, Dr Nazrul Islam, works at urology department.

He is a member of BSMMU unit pro-BNP Doctors Association of Bangladesh (DAB) while his attackers are former leaders and workers of Chhatra League, student wing of ruling Awami League.

SEE PAGE 15 COL 6

Bus tickets getting digitalised

Azimpur-Uttara to be first route under new scheme starting April 14

SHAHNAZ PARVEEN

The country's first-ever bus route franchise (BRF) with digital ticketing system is likely to be launched for the city's Uttara-Azimpur route on April 14, the first day of Bangla calendar.

"Under the franchise system, all existing bus companies with valid permit to operate on this route will run under one company," said Abu Bakkar Md Shahjahan, executive director of the project's supervising agency Dhaka Transport Coordination Board (DTCB).

He hoped this will bring down the street races among buses of various companies for passengers.

The route will cover around 30 kilometres from Uttara sector 12 (Khalpar) to Plassey (Azimpur) via Sobhanbag, Manik Mia Avenue, Bijoy Sarani, Mohakhali, Khilkhet, Airport and Azampur. A total of 27 up and down stoppages have been selected, he said.

Digital ticketing system replacing manual paper tickets would be introduced. A prepaid

SEE PAGE 15 COL 4

KHALEDA'S HOUSE Sahara defends govt decision

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Home Minister Sahara Khatun yesterday said the government has legally and rightfully cancelled the allotment of the cantonment house of Khaleda Zia.

Any sort of anarchy centering cancellation of allotment of the cantonment house of BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia would be handled with an iron hand, she said.

People have appreciated the government's decision but BNP men are trying to create anarchy in the country following the decision, she said adding, "If Khaleda Zia leaves the house for the sake of army officers the government will congratulate her."

She was speaking at a function at the auditorium of the Engineers' Institute of Bangladesh yesterday organised by Peshajibi Samannay Parishad with its convener Prof SM Nazrul Islam in the chair.

A number of ministers,

SEE PAGE 15 COL 4

Hasina visits ailing Wazed

UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday visited her ailing husband nuclear scientist Dr Wazed Mia at Square Hospital in the city and inquired about his treatment.

Hasina stayed beside him for an hour from 11:00 am.

Dr Wazed was admitted to the hospital last Tuesday as part of his regular check-up. He has been suffering from heart ailments.

Recently, he went to Singapore for treatment.



North-South Jubo League unit of Dhaka city holds a rally blocking half of the street near Muktangan yesterday welcoming the cabinet move to cancel the allotment of BNP chief's cantonment house and creating traffic jams on the already congested streets of downtown area.

PHOTO: STAR

Suicide bomber kills 9 Sunni fighters in Iraq

AP, Baghdad

A suicide bomber mingled into a crowd of US-allied Sunni paramilitaries in Iraq on Saturday and detonated his explosives belt, killing nine and wounding 30 others waiting in line for their salaries, Iraqi police said.

The 11 am explosion took place outside the military headquarters in the town of Jbala, about 50km south of Baghdad, said police spokesman Maj. Muthana Khalid. The bomber

walked into the group of about 250 Awakening Council members and blew himself up.

The recent spate of attacks, which this week killed at least 53 people in Baghdad alone, will likely raise concerns about the readiness of Iraqi forces to take over security of their country as the Obama administration prepares to remove all combat troops from Iraq by the end of August 2010.

The decision of tens of thousands of Sunni

SEE PAGE 15 COL 7

Somali pirates capture US tug after hostage drama

AFP, Mogadishu

Somali pirates have captured a US tug and its 16-strong crew, a Kenyan official reported yesterday, hours after another group holding a US captain hostage warned against any attempt to free him.

French Defence Minister Herve Morin meanwhile defended Friday's marine raid on a French yacht in the region that left one hostage and two pirates dead.

Somali pirates captured the Italian-flagged tug, and its 16-strong crew on Saturday at around 11:00 am, Andrew Mwangura of Kenya's East African Seafarers Assistance Programme told AFP.

"The 16 crew members are all safe," he added. But he did not know the name of the boat.

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REMARKS ON MADRASA Amini demands law minister's resignation

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Islami Oikya Jote (IOJ) leader Mufti Fazlul Haque Amini yesterday demanded that Law Minister Shafique Ahmed step down for making remarks 'against' Kawmi madrasas.

By the same token, he said, Islamic Foundation's Director General Shamim Mohammad Afzal too should quit.

Amini, chief of an IOJ faction, called for the resignations at a press conference organised by Islamic Law Implementation Committee at the Jatiya Press Club.

Recently, the law minister said Kawmi madrasas were a breeding ground for militancy and the government was considering bringing them under the education ministry.

"His [Shafique] comments go against Islam. And so he should resign immediately," Amini said.

SEE PAGE 12 COL 4

Indian Maoists kill 10 policemen

AFP, Raipur

Indian Maoists on Friday ambushed and shot dead 10 policemen in central India, police said, as fighting continued in Chhattisgarh state.

The attack occurred in the Dantewada district, a police spokesman said in the state capital, Raipur.

"Three Naxalite (Maoist) terrorists are also dead," the official said, adding the fighting was ongoing.

India's Maoist insurgency, which grew out of a peasant uprising in 1967, has hit more than half of the country's 29 states.

SEE PAGE 15 COL 3

Four held with Yaba

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) personnel yesterday arrested four Yaba traders, including a university student, along with 277 Yaba tablets in the capital.

Acting on a tip off, a team of Rab-1 led by ASP Mohammad Zahirul Islam arrested Mahbubul Haque Titu, 30, Abul bashar Manik, 31, Popy, 32 and recovered 70 Yaba

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