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Tight security for Pahela Baishakh celebration

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A three-tier security measures has been taken for Pahela Baishakh, the first day of Bangla New Year on April 14, deploying around 10,000 Rab and police men in and around the Ramna Park, the main venue of the traditional celebration.

Rab and DMP sources yesterday said, they would

PM flies to Saudi Arabia on April 20

UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina will leave for Saudi Arabia on a four-day official visit on April 20 when she will meet Saudi King Abdullah Bin Abdul Aziz Al-Saud and perform Umrah Hajj, officials said here yesterday.

Earlier, Hasina had to postpone her Saudi Arabia

SEE PAGE 15 COL 3

CANTONMENT HOUSE None can evict Khaleda, says Delwar

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

None will be able to evict Khaleda Zia from her cantonment residence, said BNP Secretary General Khandaker Delwar Hossain yesterday

SEE PAGE 15 COL 1

No fresh deadlines for rental power firms

Defaulter plants face cancellation of contracts

SHARIEF KHAN

The power ministry has decided in principle not to extend deadlines for four rental power projects totalling 155 MW capacity for their repeated failure to launch commercial operation and would ask the Power Development Board (PDB) to take action as per contracts.

It means contracts of these projects would face cancellation and penalty, sources say. The cancellation would pave the way for new decisions regarding future rental power projects, which are a temporary fast-paced power solution.

These power projects are the gas-fired Fenchuganj 50MW plant and Bogra

20MW of Energy Prima, 34.5MW Bhola plant of Venture Energy and 50MW Ashuganj plant of Precision Energy.

All of these were supposed to come into operation last year, within 120 days of signing the contracts, but failed.

All of them were inexperienced local companies that had ventured into this rental power project without having any plant equipment in their inventory.

The success of rental power plants, which should be installed quickly as a short-term or mid-term facility charging higher power tariff, depends on having equipment ready for installation.

Sensing that the ministry and PDB were set to take stern action this time, the

rental power contractors have taken into partnership some pro-Awami League businesspersons in their projects and mount pressure on the government to refrain from taking any actions, the sources add.

The sources say both the Fenchuganj and Bhola plants, which were supposed to come into operation in mid-May last year, were given two deadlines. But these failed to achieve the Commercial Operation Date (COD). The last deadline for both of these plants expired on February 28.

As per the agreements, neither Energy Prima nor Venture Energy gave PDB any

SEE PAGE 15 COL 6

Sonadia best site for deep-sea port

Consultant firm says at workshop on feasibility study

STAR REPORT

An international consultant for the proposed deep-sea port project said the Sonadia-Moheshkhali point is the best site for the project.

Following a feasibility study, Japan's Pacific Consultant International (PCI) observed that establishment of a deep-sea port is feasible as it will be economically beneficial for the country due to its capacity to handle more sea-borne traffic in line with the future growth of the economy.

The study was done as medium and large vessels cannot enter any of the country's two seaports--Chittagong and Mongla--due to relatively low water levels in the Karnaphuli and Passur channel. This force exporters and importers to depend on feeder vessels to carry out their overseas trade.

The study findings were revealed yesterday at a workshop on techno-economic feasibility study of a deep-sea port in Bangladesh at the

SEE PAGE 15 COL 7
RELATED STORY IN STAR BUSINESS

10-yr-old girl found dead, hanging from ceiling fan

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A 10-year-old schoolgirl was found hanging from a ceiling fan in her sister's house in Darussalam in city's Mirpur area yesterday.

The mysterious death sparked protests by locals in the area who alleged that the landlord of the house killed her.

The deceased was identified as Tania Akhter, daughter of Mohammad Enamul Huque of Diabari in the same area. She was a student of class II.

SEE PAGE 15 COL 6

Private car of Nanak's PS hijacked Driver shot

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A gang of muggers shot and wounded the private car driver of State Minister for LGRD and Co-operatives Jahangir Kabir Nanak's private secretary (PS)-2 and snatched

SEE PAGE 15 COL 3

20 hurt as AL factions clash in N'ganj

OUR CORRESPONDENT, N'ganj

A clash between supporters of an Awami League (AL) lawmaker and an AL-backed upazila chairman in Sonargaon, Narayanganj, yesterday left at least 20 people,

SEE PAGE 15 COL 3



PHOTO: STAR

Rescue of a rare primate

Wildlife Trust of Bangladesh crew revisited Mahadebtula of Harinchhara Tea Estate in Srimangal area to investigate the habitat of the rare bird Silver-breasted Broadbill. This time they spent three days but couldn't locate any Broadbill. However, they were able to rescue a rare primate: Slow Loris (Lajjaboti Banor in Bangla). WTB member Enam Ul Haque and researcher Samiul Mohsanin bought it for Tk 500 and released it at the same place where a local had captured the primate the night before they arrived. We feel that a countrywide campaign against capturing and killing of our threatened wildlife need to be seriously addressed. Slow Loris is globally vulnerable and it is critically endangered in Bangladesh, that is at the verge of extinction.



Eight JMB militants arrested by Rapid Action Battalion with bomb detonators, batteries, and books and CDs on jihad in their possession, being produced at a news briefing in Rab-1 HQ in Uttara of the capital yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

COUNTER-TERRORISM Govt decides to form jt working group with UK

HASAN JAHD TUSHER

The government yesterday decided in principle to form a Joint Working Group (JWG) on counter terrorism with the UK next month for exchanging information and training on counter-terrorism.

The decision came at an inter-ministerial meeting between Foreign Minister Dipu Moni, state ministers and high-ups of foreign and home ministries.

A memorandum of understanding (MoU) will be signed between the two countries during UK Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State (Security and Counter-terrorism) Lord West of Spithead's visit to Bangladesh next month, said government sources.

State Minister for foreign affairs Dr Hasan Mahmud and State Minister for home Tanjim Ahmed Sohel Taj, Home Secretary Abdus Sobhan Sikder and Foreign Secretary Md Touhid Hossain attended the meeting at the foreign ministry.

SEE PAGE 15 COL 1

Nestle denies allegation of 'repacking'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Nestle Bangladesh has denied the allegation of repacking of its fortified milk in order to extend the product's expiry date saying "There was no repacking and no attempt to extend the shelf life of the product."

On April 7, police arrested five officials of the food company and recovered 1,425 packs of milk powder allegedly for repackaging the fortified milk.

A press release of the company yesterday said all stocks of NIDO Fortified sold are in compliance with BSTI standard BDS 860 and bear BSTI certification.

"Nestle Bangladesh routinely withdraws stock from the market that is close to

SEE PAGE 15 COL 3

BDR men who fled during mutiny taken back to HQ

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Bangladesh Rifles authorities have started taking back the border guards, who fled from the headquarters during the mutiny and later joined different camps across the country.

Sources say 150 jawans have so far been taken back, while return of around 200 more is underway.

The move came after the headquarters had asked all the camps to send the jawans to Pikhana, the sources add.

Meanwhile, the Criminal

SEE PAGE 15 COL 1

BPC goes for costly diesel purchase

ABDULLAH AL MAHMUD, Ctg

Import of diesel at higher premium is costing Bangladesh Petroleum Corporation (BPC) dearly in this quarter--April to June, 2009.

The BPC is now importing 1.5 lakh tonnes of diesel every month from Malaysian Petronas Trading Corporation (Petco) at \$5.98 per barrel premium--for freight, insurance and other charges in addition to the fuel price.

Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC) in price negotiations with BPC early last month had offered \$5.25 per barrel premium. The BPC is now importing diesel with 0.73 cents more premium per barrel.

The BPC had also agreed to a two-year deal with KPC to buy eight lakh tonnes of fuel annually including 1.30 lakh tonnes of diesel to be supplied in this quarter.

The deal is yet to be signed. BPC Chairman Anwarul Karim said KPC relaxed the conditions of opening Letter of Credit (L/C) with international banks and brought down premium to below \$5.30 from \$6.60 per barrel in early March negotiations.

"At the final stage of the process of signing the agreement, KPC proposed to raise the age limit of its tankers [that would supply the fuel to Bangladesh] to 25 years," he said.

"Usually such tankers are between 15 years and 20 years old.

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Garment makers fear labour unrest

Shutdown of factories, deferred payment may spark instability

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Garment makers fear widespread labour unrest because of shutdown of some factories and deferred payment to workers as fallout from global recession bites Bangladesh.

They said at least seven factories have already been shut down and some are in a critical situation as the number of orders from international buyers declined significantly.

The manufacturers and the leaders of the Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA) were speaking at a meeting with the editors, chairmen and managing directors of print and electronic media at Sonargaon Hotel last night.

At the meeting, BGMEA President Abdus Salam Murshedy said many people had earlier thought that Bangladesh would remain immune to the recession as the country mainly produces basic garment items.

But the country is now losing out the market of basic items to competing countries such as China, India and Pakistan, Murshedy said. Referring to a string of measures taken by different countries, the BGMEA chief said China has been giving a 17 percent tax rebate to exporters, which makes the country more competitive than before.

Similarly, India, Pakistan and Vietnam are giving bailout packages to the garment sector, he said.

Anwar-ul-Alam Chowdhury Parvez, the immediate past

SEE PAGE 15 COL 5


Prayer Timing

April 13

	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	4-40	5-15
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	4-45	5-00
Maghrib	6-20	6-25
Esha	7-45	8-15

Source: Islamic Foundation

অভিনন্দন



পপুলার লাইফ ইনস্যুরেন্স কোম্পানী লিমিটেড এর উদ্যোক্তা পরিচালক ও মাননীয় ভাইস চেয়ারম্যান জনাব গোলাম ফারুক আহমেদ মার্কেটাইল ব্যাংক লিঃ এর ভাইস চেয়ারম্যান মনোনীত হওয়ায় পপুলার লাইফ ইনস্যুরেন্স কোম্পানী লিমিটেড এর পরিচালনা পর্ষদ, কর্মকর্তা/কর্মচারীদের পক্ষ থেকে অভিনন্দন।

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