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Dhaka metro govt proposed

JS body members for combining Gazipur, N'ganj with capital giving them city corporation status

RASHIDUL HASAN

Members of the parliamentary standing committee on the local government ministry at a meeting yesterday discussed forming Dhaka metropolitan government combining Gazipur and Narayanganj to improve city life.

Members of the parliamentary body suggested that Dhaka City Corporation should be divided into two parts each having a mayor to better city life.

The committee members also suggested upgrading Gazipur and Narayanganj to City Corporation.

The committee at the meeting held at the parliament building decided to scrutinise Poursava Bill keeping the provision of law-makers' advice mandatory for poursava mayors.

The body recommended creating posts of two deputy mayors including one for woman.

"Most of the committee members at the meeting called upon the government to form Dhaka metropolitan city as well as the metropolitan government combining Gazipur and Narayanganj after upgrading them to city corporation," Advocate M Rahmat Ali, chairman of the committee told reporters after the meeting.

"The committee, however, did not make any decision or recommendation in this regard," he added.

"We need to talk with the government, experts, mayors and councillors of all city corporations about the issue before taking any decision," Rahmat said.

"We need to discuss how the utility services will be integrated and how they will function once the metropolitan government is formed," he said.

"We will fix a date to talk on this issue with all mayors and councillors after getting the nod from the government," he added.

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Commuters yesterday suffered a heavy gridlock in the city's Paltan area as Jamaat-e-Islami held a rally at Paltan Maidan protesting construction of the Tipaimukh dam upstream India.

PHOTO: SHAWKAT JAMIL

Bhutan hosts Saarc summit for first time next year

REZAUL KARIM

The Himalayan kingdom of Bhutan will seize world's attention once again in April 2010 when it hosts the 16th summit of South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (Saarc) for the first time since the organisation came into being in 1985.

Bhutan will host the two-day regional conference where eight heads of state and government from Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, the Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka will take part.

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JS body for tax holiday

Recommends expanding tax net at upazila-union level; Muhith still against continuing tax holiday

RASHIDUL HASAN

The parliamentary standing committee on finance ministry has recommended continuing the existing tax holiday facility with some conditions in the budget for next fiscal year.

It also recommended expanding the tax net at upazila and union levels by involving local lawmakers and other public representatives in identifying prospective taxpayers including small grocers. And it suggested cutting the rate of taxes in the next budget.

The standing committee made the recommendations after discussing all aspects, its Chairman AHM Mostafa Kamal told reporters following a committee meeting at the Jatiya Bhaban yesterday.

The House body came up with these suggestions while Finance Minister AMA Muhith

yesterday told journalists, "In my opinion, tax holiday facility should not be continued. Now, the cabinet is to decide on this."

Mostafa Kamal said, "Tax holiday should continue in view of the global meltdown, and consequent pressure on the national economy."

Replying to a question, he said the House committee suggested tax holiday for some priority sectors like agriculture, IT and service sector.

"We can also ask new entrepreneurs to invest in less developed areas by offering them tax holiday facility," he added.

The committee chief said they also suggested continuing the opportunity of whitening black money subject to some conditions.

The House body favoured raising the limit of tax-free income to Tk 2 lakh.

"A small grocer at union level can pay Tk

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Haji Selim, Saifur's son sent to jail

COURT CORRESPONDENT

Former Awami League lawmaker Haji Mohammad Selim and former finance minister M Saifur Rahman's younger son Shafiqur Rahman Babu were sent to jail after they surrendered before two Dhaka courts yesterday in connection with graft cases.

The two were earlier convicted for 13 years' imprisonment each in absentia in the cases filed against them for amassing wealth illegally and concealing wealth statements submitted to the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC).

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BNP REFORMS

District units see rat race for posts

RAKIB HASNET SUMAN

District-level leaders of BNP are now busy with last-minute lobbying to get included in the district convening committees to be announced in a day or two.

Party leaders said the district-level leaders have become desperate to secure posts in the convening committees. Even a number of senior leaders are vying for the posts of convener and joint conveners of the new committees to have control over district leadership.

Many grassroots-level leaders are now in the capital to persuade the policy makers to include them in the convening committees.

The National Standing Committee (NSC) of BNP has already finalised the names of conven-

ers and a few joint conveners for district convening committees that will be assigned to reorganise the party from union to district levels by holding council.

However, the party's policy makers said they would not make any decision on its Dhaka city unit right now.

"The standing committee approved the convening committees for all districts and city units except for Dhaka as we are yet to decide on it," BNP standing committee member Dr Khandaker Mosharraf Hossain told The Daily Star last evening.

He said the new convening committees with a convener and a few joint conveners would be announced by this week.

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Another child dies in Dhamrai

Pesticides poisoning blamed

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A seven-year-old girl Shibli Akhter died at Naogakait village in Dhamrai upazila yesterday allegedly due to poisoning from overuse of pesticides.

With the death of Shibli, a total of four children lost their lives while 13 others fell sick in Naogakait and Malancha villages in last 45 days.

All the children who survived from the same sickness were treated with injection of poison contamination.

In a primary investigation,

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Safety net to get boost in budget

Says finance minister

UNB, Dhaka

The government will give massive increases in budgetary allocation for safety net, employment and food security, Finance Minister AMA Muhith said yesterday while unveiling some salient features of the next national budget.

He said the 100-day employment generation programme, designed for helping the jobless poor during lean period, would also be restructured with an

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Dhaka Water Supply and Sewerage Authority (Wasa) is setting up sewerage pipes near Panthakunja Park blocking one lane of CR Dutta Road to the suffering of city dwellers.

PHOTO: STAR

Congress invited to form new govt

Manmohan's oath tomorrow

PALLAB BHATTACHARYA, New Delhi

A Congress-led coalition government headed by Prime Minister Manmohan Singh will be sworn in New Delhi tomorrow following the triumph of the United Progressive Alliance (UPA) in the Indian parliamentary poll.

"The president has invited me to form the government and proposes that I take oath of office and secrecy on May 22", 76-year-old Manmohan told journalists after meeting President Pratibha Patil.

He said the Congress-led coalition has the support of 322 members in the 545-member Lok Sabha, well past the majority mark of 272.

Manmohan, a leading economist and architect of India's economic reforms, said Congress and pre-poll allies make up for

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Kabirul held for 'killing' brother

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A son of former Jatiya Party lawmaker Karimuddin Vorosha was arrested from a rehabilitation centre for drug addicts in the city's Uttarkhan area yesterday on charge of killing his younger brother.

Police arrested Kabirul Islam Vorosha from "Hope and Life" at around 12:00 noon.

Kabirul gunned down his younger brother Khairul Islam Vorosha at later's office at Bijoynagar on April 27. Later, a murder case was filed.

Kabirul told newsmen at Paltan Police Station that on

SEE PAGE 15 COL 2

Sri Lanka celebrates victory over LTTE

8 fugitive rebels shot

AFP, Colombo

Sri Lanka celebrated victory over the Tamil Tigers with a national holiday yesterday as the army hunted down fugitive rebels, shooting dead eight thought to have escaped from the final battle.

Hundreds of troops were deployed in the Muliyaawaik area where the corpse of Tiger leader Velupillai Prabhakaran was found after the fighting ended with a showdown in the jungle on Monday, defence officials said.

"They are doing clearing operations," defence spokesman Lakshman Hulgalle said as more bodies were gathered for identification.

The eight rebels were shot more than 130 kilometres south of where the Tigers made their last stand in the far northeast, the army said.

The killings were the first since the government claimed victory over the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), and police stepped up security across the island to guard against revenge attacks from surviving guerrillas.

More than 400 dead rebels, including several female fighters, have been recovered from the battlefield where Prabhakaran died, according to military officials.

Prabhakaran's eldest son, Charles Anthony, was among those killed in the area, but the

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49 Rohingya intruders held at Teknaf

A CORRESPONDENT, Cox's Bazar

Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) jawans yesterday arrested 49 Rohingya intruders at Teknaf bus terminal and surrounding areas of the upazila during an eight-hour drive.

Crossing the river Naf, the arrested Rohingyas entered Teknaf from Arakan province of Myanmar a few days ago.

Operations Officer of Teknaf 42 Rifles Battalion Major Helal Muhammad Khan said the Rohingyas were arrested during the drive from 9:00am to 5:00pm at the bus terminal and adjacent areas. The drive to nab Rohingyas would continue, he added.

Major Helal said the arrested Rohingyas would be pushed back to Myanmar in

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Prayer Timing		
May 21		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	4-05	4-40
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	5-00	5-15
Maghrib	6-40	6-45
Esha	8-00	8-30

Source: Islamic Foundation

OnlinePoll ✓

Pakistan has urged Bangladesh to let bygones be bygones with regard to atrocities committed by the Pakistani army in 1971. Do you support?

Yes (31.32%)
 No (66.55%)
 No Comments (2.13%)

Total votes: 846

TODAY'S POLL

Do you think an international assessment on the impact of the Tipaimukh dam on Bangladesh should be conducted?

Please cast your vote at www.thedailystar.net