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BNP to return to House if 2 more front-row seats given

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The BNP-led opposition yesterday said they would return to the ongoing parliament session if they are given two more seats in the front row on the left side of the speaker's podium.

Opposition Chief Whip Zainul Abidin Faroque placed their demand at a meeting with Speaker Abdul Hamid at the latter's office in parliament yesterday in the presence of Chief Whip of the

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EXTORTION CASE Mamun seeks to withdraw confessional statement

COURT CORRESPONDENT

Detained businessman Gausuddin Al Mamun yesterday appealed to a Dhaka court for withdrawal of his earlier confessional statement in connection with an extortion case filed against him in March 2007.

In his petition, Mamun told the court that he was tortured

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CTG ARMS HAUL CASE

Liakat may make confession today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Former director general of National Security Intelligence (NSI) Maj Gen (ret'd) Rezaul Haider and former deputy director Maj (ret'd) Liakat Hossain were brought back to Chittagong on completion of their six-day remands yesterday.

The former NSI officials

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A brick kiln owner has built this road across Atir Khal (canal) at Waaspur in Basila on the outskirts of Dhaka and completely blocked the channel. The road (inset) is used for transporting bricks manufactured at the kiln.

PHOTO: SYED ZAKIR HOSSAIN

Buriganga artery blocked

Syndicate of 50 claims land in Atir Khal, set to fill it up, sell as plots

MORSHED ALI KHAN

Defying the wetland protection act and a prime ministerial order, a real estate developer has embarked on a project to fill up Atir Khal, one of the busiest canals till today, connected with the river Buriganga, and serving thousands of farmers, traders, and commuters of at least a dozen places of Keraniganj.

Waaspur Garden City, a syndicate of about 50 individuals, has now demarcated the canal that also

includes an area below a 300 feet long bridge connecting Looter Char with Ghatar Char.

According to local residents, each member of the syndicate paid Tk 5 lakh to form the company, which 'owns' some land there. The idea is to fill up the canal and create plots for sale, and 'force' other 'land owners' who claim ownership of the canal bed, to pay for the earthfilling and become a member of the housing company for a fee.

With dredging pipes and volgates

(pumps) at the site, officials of the company said they will start filling up the canal within a week. They also said the canal in fact belongs to private owners with documents 'authenticated' by British, Pakistani and Bangladeshi surveys.

Age-old Atir Khal originates from the Buriganga at Waaspur and winds its way to Kholamora, where it meets the river again in the north through important trading centres of Looter Char, Ghatar Char, Emargaon, Joynagar, Atir Bazar, Panchdona,

and Balurchar.

The canal also serves one of the largest communities of private dairy milk producers, who every day for decades have been transporting their produce to wholesale markets in the old part of the capital via landing stations by the river Buriganga in Sadarghat and Showarighat areas.

In addition to the threat from the real estate developer, another big challenge Atir Khal faces is also at Waaspur end, where a brick kiln

owner built a road across the canal, totally blocking its passage. The road in fact had been built two years ago, but in the face of protests from local farmers and commuters, the owner of the road had been forced to keep a small culvert like opening for water transports to pass through. This year the culvert was replaced by concrete and bricks, indicating that Atir Khal has been blocked for ever. The kiln owner, Latt Mia, however displays 'valid ownership documents' for the canal.

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Low in Bay to cause tidal surge in coast

UNB, Dhaka

A well-marked monsoon low persists over north Bay and adjoining areas yesterday, a latest Met office bulletin said.

"It is likely to intensify further. Monsoon is moderate to strong elsewhere over north Bay," it said.

Under its influence steep

SEE PAGE 15 COL 2

WAR CRIME TRIAL Shafique slates Pak official's remark

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Law Minister Shafique Ahmed said yesterday the reported comment of a Pakistani official on Bangladesh's planned trial of war criminals is beyond diplomatic norms.

Pakistan's Additional Secretary for Asia-Pacific Masood Khalid reportedly told some Bangladeshi journalists in Islamabad, on Saturday that relation between Bangladesh and

SEE PAGE 15 COL 2

WORLD TWENTY20 Tigers must win today

England beat Pakistan

SPORTS REPORTER

After a 25-run defeat against favourites India in the first Group A match, Bangladesh take on Ireland today in a tricky clash at Trent Bridge as anything other than a win will confirm their early exit from the ICC World Twenty20.

England are through to the Super Eights with easy win over Pakistan by 48 runs at The Oval in the World Twenty20.

The Tigers must ensure

SEE PAGE 15 COL 6

Health sector jobs grossly politicised

Transfers, promotions dictated by pro-AL doctors' body

MAHBUBA ZANNAT

Massive transfers and promotions in the country's health sector have given rise to strong allegations that politicisation of the health sector is in full swing.

It is alleged that only Awami League-affiliated doctors are being given lucrative posts while skilled doctors are being removed from responsible posts or transferred to remote regions because of their

affiliation with other political parties.

Experts and observers say leaders of Swadhinata Chikitsak Parishad (SCP)--a pro-AL doctors' wing--is going down the same path of oppression and manipulation followed by the pro-BNP doctors' wing Doctors' Association of Bangladesh (DAB) during the tenure of the last political government.

Leaders of SCP are said to be creating pressure on the government for undue

advantages.

Many are also pointing at Health Minister AFM Ruhul Haque, who is the present president of SCP, as the person pulling strings in the organisation's favour.

A huge round of transfers and promotions has taken place at hospitals, medical colleges and other medical institutions. More than 800 supporters of the pro-BNP DAB have been transferred

SEE PAGE 7 COL 1



Federer wins French Open finally

AP, Paris

Roger Federer beat Robin Soderling, tied Pete Sampras and won the French Open at last.

Undeterred by an on-court intruder, Federer beat surprise

SEE PAGE 15 COL 1

Expat experts invited to dissect coal policy

MPs, academics to join brainstorming on its draft from June 15

STAR REPORT

Expatriate and local energy experts, parliamentarians and energy sector officials will examine the draft coal policy at a four-day exclusive brainstorming session, jointly organised by the energy ministry and Petrobangla.

The session begins on June 15 at Jamuna Resort near the Jamuna Bridge, sources said.

Eight expatriate experts due to attend the session are expected to arrive in the city this

week from US and Australia.

Energy adviser Dr Tawfiq-e-Elahi Chowdhury, five parliamentarians from northern Bangladesh, representatives from the parliamentary standing committee on energy and secretaries of the ministries of power and energy would be present at the event financed by Petrobangla.

The chairmen of Petrobangla and Power Development Board (PDB), officials from the

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Photo show on river pollution at Ramna Park today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Daily Star and Channel i will jointly hold a two-day-long photo exhibition on river pollution and encroachment at Shatayu Angan of the Ramna Park from today to create awareness among people about river degradation surrounding Dhaka.

The campaign titled "Save River, Save Dhaka" is part of a series of photography exhibition launched jointly by The Daily Star and Channel i.

The open-air exhibition starts at 3:00pm and ends at 6:00pm.

President of Bangladesh Poribesh Andolon (Bapa) Prof Muzaffer Ahmad will inaugurate the exhibition.

The campaign began on

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Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Authority (BIWTA) and Dhaka district administration officials yesterday knocked down the illegally built structure of Monjil Paribahan Private Limited by the Ashulia Road yesterday as part of the ongoing eviction drive.

PHOTO: STAR

EVICION ON TURAG, CANAL More structures knocked down

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

As part of the ongoing eviction drive Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Authority (BIWTA) and Dhaka district administration yesterday knocked down five more structures illegally built on the river Turag.

Meanwhile, Dhaka Water Supply and Sewerage Authority (Wasa) yesterday demolished 10 structures constructed illegally on the Katashur canal as part of its canal recovery drive.

Yesterday's drive was conducted on the Dhaka end of the river Turag where a total of 69 large factories and makeshift structures were built on the river.

The eviction team led by Executive Magistrate Muhammad Mokbul Hossain pulled down structures built illegally by Monjil Paribahan Private Limited and Uttara Homeopathy Hospital by the Ashulia road at Ranabholha at 11:00 a.m.

Three such sheds of a wholesale fish market to the west of Tongi Bridge and two makeshift structures adjacent to Baitun Noor Jame Masjid were also dismantled.

"We spared the mosque as it is a matter of religious sensitivity," said BIWTA Deputy Director Saiful Islam.

BIWTA was supposed to resume demolition of the Bengal Indigo textile factory but it was postponed as the factory owner

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OnlinePoll

Do you think government's ongoing drive against encroachment on rivers will be successful?

Yes (35.53%)
No (60.22%)
No Comments (3.65%)

Total votes: 684

TODAY'S POLL

The govt is likely to allow people to whiten undisclosed money with a flat 10 percent tax. Would you endorse this move?

Please cast your vote at www.thedailystar.net

Prayer Timing

June 8		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	4:05	4:40
Zohr	12:45	1:15
Asr	5:00	5:15
Maghrib	6:45	6:50
Esha	8:15	8:45

Source: Islamic Foundation