

## Clock time goes 1-hr forward

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh forwarded the clock an hour at 11:00pm last night in a bid to save electricity by utilising the daylight better.

With the clock running an hour ahead, Bangladesh today became Greenwich Mean Time plus seven hours (GMT+7) from GMT+6.

Different offices, schools and other institutions starts and closes today on their scheduled times, which is actually an hour early, under the daylight saving time (DST).

However, prayer times for Muslims have been moved forward by an hour.

Shops and malls that remain open till 8:00pm

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# MPs to make local development plans

## No block allocation for them from next fiscal year; LGED to implement the projects

SHAKHAWAT LITON

Lawmakers are likely to get huge authority over implementing local development projects in their constituencies through the LGRD ministry in the coming fiscal year.

They will prepare development projects for their constituencies and send those to the Local Government Engineering Department (LGED) of the LGRD ministry for implementation.

The government decided on this new step after cancelling its earlier plan for

giving block allocations directly to MPs for development activities as the system has recently been mired in deep controversy in India.

"We cancelled the plan for making block allocation to MPs. Now MPs can prepare development projects and forward those to the LGED for implementation," LGRD Minister Syed Ashraf Islam told The Daily Star on Wednesday.

The LGED will implement projects with the money allocated to the LGRD ministry in the next fiscal year, he said.

Lawmakers will also be able to exercise

their sweeping authority over city corporations, upazila parishads and municipalities to control the development projects.

Upazila parishads are now obliged to seek suggestions from their lawmakers on its activities after MPs were recently made advisers to these local bodies.

A bill on making MPs advisers to municipalities in their constituencies will also be passed soon in the current parliament session. The parliamentary standing committee on the LGRD ministry,

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## Tipaimukh data received from India

Says foreign minister

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

India has sent information to water resources ministry about the 'controversial' Tipaimukh Dam responding to requests from Bangladesh, said Foreign Minister Dipu Moni yesterday.

"The Indian government has provided data to the water resources ministry and Joint Rivers Commission (JRC)," she told journalists after inaugurating a fair at state guest-house Padma organised by the Foreign Office Wives' Association (FOWA).

She said a parliamentary delegation would soon visit the project site in the Indian

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# First swine flu case detected

## Identity of 19-yr-old student who travelled to USA kept secret; govt asks people not to panic

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The first case of swine flu infection in the country was detected on June 18.

A 19-year-old male, who recently travelled to the USA, was found infected with the H1N1 virus responsible for swine flu, a pandemic of which has so far killed 171 persons and infected 43,312 in 74 countries in the last two months.

Talking to The Daily Star on the matter, Health and Family Welfare Minister AFM Ruhul Haque said, "Do not panic—only one case has been detected so far and the case was imported."

The young patient is a student of an English medium school in the city's Gulshan area. He went to the US on an academic tour and came back three days ago after staying two weeks in areas that already had records of at least 44 deaths from swine flu and 17,855 confirmed cases of infection.

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## Criminals gun down city BNP leader

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A BNP ward leader was shot dead by unidentified criminals early yesterday in the city's Mohammadpur area.

Family members of deceased Manzur Morshed Shipu, BNP joint convenor of ward-44, said members of law enforcement agencies might have killed Shipu.

Shipu was the owner of a beauty parlour 'Rup' at Adabar, they added.

Mohammadpur police, however, denied the allegation and said they did not know who had killed him.

Quoting a security guard Alamgir Morshed Tutul, elder brother of Shipu, said five to six people whisked Shipu on a white-coloured microbus from the parking of his residence soon after he got out of

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The overwhelming heat of the day forces a tiger and a bear to take a dip in their pools inside Dhaka Zoo.



PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

## RMG factory fire kills 1 in Savar

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A person was burnt alive and at least 15 others were injured in a devastating fire that gutted valuable machinery and goods of a readymade garment factory in Savar yesterday.

Sources said the fire originated on the 2nd floor of the six-storey building of Intraco Sweaters Ltd at Ganukbari under Ashulia police station around 5:00am and spread to the entire 2nd and 3rd floors.

The deceased was identified as Mamunur Rashid, 40, assistant manager (purchase) of the factory.

Witnesses said traffic movement on Dhaka-Tangail highway was suspended for over three hours from 5:00am as the law enforcers put barricade on the route to facilitate quick arrival of the fire fighters

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# BNP reformists active again at all levels

## Process on to accommodate all despite hardliners' opposition

RAKIB HASNET SUMAN

Despite strong opposition from influential sections of BNP, the so-called reformist leaders of the party have started to become active again in the organisation's central and grassroots level, since they were allowed to come back into the party's mainstream by Chairperson Khaleda Zia.

But the party's former secretary general Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan, who is known as the architect of the failed 'reform initiative', and Joint Secretary General Ashraf Hossain have no chance of returning to the party before a party council, which might be held by the year-end, said party insiders. Both of them were expelled from the party by the chairperson for 'violating discipline'.

Many 'reformist' leaders however are remaining silent in the face of the opposition since they believe they will be restored in the party automatically in time as the current belligerence against them is destined to dissipate. They also think some leaders, who were jailed or convicted during the immediate past emergency regime, are stoking the hostility against them, as those leaders are fearful of losing their positions in the party, the insiders said.

Party Standing Committee Member Lt Gen (ret'd) Mahbubur Rahman told The Daily Star yesterday that although the tug of war between the factions has yet to come to a definitive conclusion, a process is on to accommodate all.

"The situation is gradually normalising, and

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## Over 50 injured as two groups clash in city

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Over 50 people were injured last night during a clash between supporters of Dewanbagh pir and locals of Kachukhet.

A youth named Mohammad Milon, 18, died centring the incident.

Locals claimed that Milon, a supporter of the pir, was electrocuted while fleeing the place.

Supporters of the Dewanbagh pir ransacked the Noor Mosque as its imam had been allegedly delivering speeches against the pir.

Supporters of the imam of Noor Mosque also attacked the Khanka Sharif of the Dewanbagh pir.

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# Iran's supreme leader warns against violence

## Protests should end as right man won: Khamenei

AFP, Tehran

Iran's supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei called yesterday for an end to street protests over last week's disputed presidential election, siding with declared winner Mahmoud Ahmadinejad.

Making his first public appearance after daily protests over the official results, Khamenei ruled out any major fraud in the conduct of the poll and warned that the defeated candidates would be held to account over any renewed violence on the streets.

"The people have chosen whom they wanted," the supreme leader said in his sermon at the main weekly prayers in Tehran, which was broadcast live across the nation after a week of unrest that has unnerved the regime.

"I see some people more suitable for serving



the country than others but the people made their choice," he said to cheers from the massed ranks of the faithful who included the victorious hardline incumbent Mahmoud Ahmadinejad.

"What I want was not told to the people -- the president's opinion is closer to my opinion."

Khamenei insisted that despite the 646 complaints of poll violations registered by the three defeated candidates with electoral watchdog the Guardians Council, there could be no doubting Ahmadinejad's re-election to a second four-year term given his margin of victory.

"The legal mechanisms in our country do not allow cheating. How can one cheat with a margin of 11 million votes?" he asked.

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## HISTORY DISTORTION Faruk warns of legal steps

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Commerce Minister Faruk Khan yesterday said the government will take legal steps against those who had distorted the history of liberation war.

The minister said this while addressing as the chief guest the inaugural session of a two-day Children's Cultural Festival at the Shishu Academy in the capital.

The nation would not have got independence if Bangabandhu had left the people, he said.

Faruk urged the children to grow up as talented and courageous as Bangabandhu.

The model of Bangabandhu encouraged the nation to stand with its head up before the world, he said.

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# Environmentalists oppose coal export, open-pit method

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government's coal policy should not provide for coal export and open-mining method, experts and environmentalists said yesterday.

The policy should be drawn up in consultation with experts and others concerned, they added.

The suggestions came at a press conference on an 'environment-friendly, pro-people' coal policy at the Jatiya Press Club in the city.

Bangladesh Paribesh Andolon (Bapa) and Bangladesh Environment Network jointly organised the event presided over by Bapa President Professor Muzaffer Ahmad.

At the press conference, Dr Khalequzzaman, a non-resident Bangladeshi coal expert, said open mining is not ecologically viable for Bangladesh, a country with a very high population density.

He said the mining method should be selected in light of geological conditions, possible environment and social impact and preference of the locals.

Khalequzzaman, also a member of the Environment Network, said Bangladesh should not export coal until the internal energy situation permits.

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Thousands from across the country hold banners end to end containing pledge for change on Cox's Bazar beach yesterday that stretched over six kilometres. Prothom Alo and its Bandhusava's campaign "Bodle Jao, Bodle Dao" came to an end with this exhibition. (More photos on page 5)

# Changes a must

## Thousands gather on Cox's Bazar beach with pledge for changes

DWAIPAYAN BARUA, from Cox's Bazar

The usual summer-time calm of the world's longest beach was broken yesterday with the vibrant gathering of thousands of youths pledging to make the country a developed Bangladesh.

With the Bay of Bengal in front, they pledged to materialise the vision of a prosperous Bangladesh for which the heroic sons of the soil laid down their lives in crucial times like 1952, 1971 and 1990.

The month-long campaign "Bodle Jao Bodle Dao" (change yourself, change the society) of Bangla daily Prothom Alo came to an end on the Cox's Bazar beach yesterday with a unique exhibition of around 2,500 banners held end to end, stretching six kilometres, and containing around 2 lakh pledges of people across the country.

Prothom Alo and its Bandhusabha (Prothom Alo friends' club) organised the one-and-a-half-hour-long exhibition that began around 3:30pm.

Following the national anthem at 4:30pm, a short programme was held where former chief adviser to a caretaker government Justice Muhammad Habibur Rahman spoke.

"We have been trying to change the society and the country over the last 50 years. But we have failed to meet expectations of people in the last 38 years. I came here to welcome and congratulate those who have promised to meet the expectations," he said.

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