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Scrap flawed land leases in CHT

JS body asks authorities

RASHIDUL HASAN

A parliamentary standing committee yesterday asked the authorities concerned to scrap lease of about 27,250 acres of land in three hill districts for violating the lease contract given to 545 organisations and individuals.

The parliamentary standing committee on Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) affairs ministry also asked the ministry officials to ensure accountability and transparency of non-government organisations working in the hill areas.

"The committee in its meeting asked the deputy commissioner of Bandarban, Khagrachhari and Rangamati to take necessary steps to cancel lease of the hill

lands allocated to as many as 545 individuals and organisations," Bir Bahadur Ushwe Sing, a member of the committee, said.

The CHT affairs ministry informed the committee that an inter-ministerial meeting will be held in the current week to this end.

Talking to The Daily Star, Bir Bahadur, also a ruling Awami League lawmaker, said, "The committee also asked the deputy commissioners to identify other organisations and individuals who have failed to meet lease conditions and cancel their lease."

About 50 acres of land were allocated to each of the individuals and organisations upon the condition that they will plant trees on those lands, he said, adding

that the said organisations did not plant any tree on the lands though those were allocated 10 years back.

About transparency of the NGOs working in the hill areas, Capt Ghyas Uddin Ahmed, another member of the committee, said the committee has asked the ministry concerned to prepare a complete list of NGOs working in the three hill districts.

"We don't know how many NGOs are there and what they are doing. So, the committee asked the CHT affairs ministry to prepare a complete list for bringing transparency and accountability in their works," Ghyas Uddin, also a ruling Awami League lawmaker, told The Daily Star.

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Muggers shoot security guard, loot Tk 20 lakh

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A group of muggers yesterday snatched Tk 20 lakh from officials of knitex Dresses Limited on Asad Avenue in the city.

A security guard of the company, Ruhul Amin, got bullet wounds while he was chasing the assailants.

Police said the muggers, riding on two motorbikes, attacked the officials and snatched the money at gun-point near the knitex office on Asad Avenue at around 3:00pm.

The knitex men were returning from a bank at Motijheel after drawing the money.

Ruhul Amin started chasing them but the muggers managed to escape leaving him bullet hit. Later, he was admitted to Pangu Hospital.

No case was filed as of 9:30pm.

Khaleda upset over party reform pace

BNP fails to hold councils nationwide

RAKIB HASNET SUMAN

The chaos over BNP's ongoing reorganisation process got on its chairperson's nerves, as the party has not yet been able to hold councils across the country, said insiders.

A report on the party's reorganisation process submitted to the chairperson last week showed that the party even could not complete formation of convening committees for upazila units by now.

Formation of the convening committees from district to ward levels of union parishad is very crucial as these committees were supposed to organise councils to form full-fledged committees by November 25.

Party's central office sources said the party has about 1,23,545 organisational units. They include 70,000 villages, 45,000 wards, 4,500 union, 361 municipalities, 70 thanas, 381 upazilas and 75 organisational districts includ-

ing six city units.

But the report says the convening committees were formed only in about 1000 unions, 250 municipalities, 300 upazilas and 72 districts. The process of forming convening committees in ward level could not start as these units failed to complete membership recruitment drive.

Asked about the present situation party standing committee member Lt Gen (ret'd) Mahbubur Rahman acknowledged that the content of the report was correct.

He, however, said the party would make all-out efforts to complete the reorganisation process, as the chairperson is very much serious about holding the councils timely.

Party insiders said Chairperson Khaleda Zia had recently asked the leaders to submit the latest picture of the ongoing reorganisation process across the country. The central office

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SQ Chy faces arrest warrant

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Thakurgaon

A Thakurgaon court yesterday issued an arrest warrant for BNP leader and lawmaker Salauddin Quader Chowdhury who made derogatory comments on the killings of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and his family members.

Chief Judicial Magistrate Ashequr Rahman issued the warrant in line with a case filed by Thakurgaon Nagarik

Myanmar militant held in Bandarban

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Bandarban

A member of Democratic Party of Arakan, a militant group of Myanmar, was arrested in Ruma upazila in Bandarban yesterday.

He was identified as Kew Ba Mong, 35.

Sources said local people caught Kew at Banchar Dai indigenous village near Ruma upazila sadar on late Saturday and handed him over to the army yesterday.



Shykh Seraj wins FAO award

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Director (News) of Channel i Shykh Seraj has won a UN Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) award for 2008-09.

Seraj along with French journalist Laetitia Clavreul clinched the prestigious AH Boerma Award, declared at the FAO headquarters in Rome on Friday, the World Food Day, FAO Representative in Bangladesh Ad Spijkers said yesterday.

Seraj will receive the award on November 18 from the director general of FAO during the opening session of the FAO conference, Spijkers told a press conference at the Dhaka office of FAO.

Since 1979, FAO has presented this award every two years to journalists, who have helped focus public attention on important aspects of the



Students who purchased admission forms of different public universities from Source Admission Consultant at Farmgate blockade Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue yesterday after police seized fake forms worth around Tk 84,000 from the centre.

PHOTO: SHAFIQUIL ALAM

Pak forces kill 60 militants; Taliban resist onslaught

AFP, Peshawar

Pakistan pounded Taliban bases from the air and bore down on their leader's hometown yesterday, intensifying a major offensive against the Islamists and claiming to have killed 60 militants.

More than 100,000 people have fled South Waziristan, part of the tribal belt on the Afghan border that US officials call the most dangerous place on earth, staying with relatives or renting accommodation to escape the fighting.

Thousands of al-Qaeda-linked fighters, heavily armed and well-trained, are holed up in the tribal belt, where the army

says the offensive is concentrated on strongholds of the Tehreek-e-Taliban (TTP) movement.

On the second day of the offensive, Taliban armed with rockets and heavy weapons put up strong resistance at Sharwari, an area of impenetrable forest high in the mountains as fighter jets bombed positions, officials said.

The military said 60 Taliban followers had been killed, although the region is cut off from the outside world and information on militant casualties is impossible to verify independently.

"In last 24 hours, reportedly 60 terrorists have been killed in operation Rah-e-

Nijat," the military said in a statement.

"Casualties of security forces are five soldiers (dead) and 11 are injured."

Ground forces launched the three-pronged push on Saturday, starting a much-anticipated assault in a bid to crush networks blamed for some of the worst attacks that have killed more than 2,250 people over the past two years.

"The resistance is not as stiff as we were expecting, maybe because we are still moving and not yet reached the strongholds of the Taliban like Kotkia, Makin, Ladha and Kanigurram," one military official told AFP.

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NEGLIGENCE IN TREATMENT 6 doctors indicted for Manna's death

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court framed charges against six physicians of negligence in treatment that allegedly led to the death of popular film actor Manna on February 17 last year.

Earlier, the doctors, who work at United Hospital Limited, submitted petitions for dismissal of the case.

Judge Firoz Alam of the Special Judge's Court-1 said the case should go to trial based on the documents submitted by the prosecution and the defence.

The trial will begin from November 1, he added.

The accused are Zahiruddin Mahmud Elias, Mohammad Enayet Hossain, Momenuzzaman, Khandaker Mahbub

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Explain legality of proceedings against Tarique HC asks govt, ACC in Zia orphanage case

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court (HC) yesterday issued a rule upon the government and Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) to explain why the proceedings against Tarique Rahman, elder son of BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia, in Zia Orphanage Trust embezzlement case should not be quashed.

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4 die drinking toxic liquor

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Bogra

Four people died and nine others fell sick after drinking toxic, homebrewed alcohol in Mahasthangarh area of Shibganj upazila early yesterday.

The deceased were identified as former member of Rai Nagar union parishad under the upazila Babu Miah, 60, bread vendor Azizar Rahman, 50, trader Madhu Miah, 45, and sweeper Lalu Prasad.

Uttam Prasad, Tota Miah, Abdul Jobbar, Anisar Rahman, Faruk Miah and Faruk Hossain were undergoing treatment at local hospital and clinics.

Officer-in-Charge of the police station ABM Zahideul Islam said they bought cheap alcohol from Shibganj Bazar area and drank it together.

He said there are some illegal liquor shops in Mahasthangarh area run by some local people. Raids against the drug peddlers would start soon, he said.

Fallen ill by taking the contaminated liquor, they

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Prayer Timing		
October 19		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	5-50	6-25
Zohr	1-45	2-15
Asr	5-00	5-15
Maghrib	6-38	6-41
Esha	8-15	8-45
Source: Islamic Foundation		

Changes to stop misuse of rules PM tells of amendment to anti-graft laws

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday asked top bureaucrats to discharge duties fearlessly, assuring them that no rules of the Anti-Corruption Commission would be misused against them.

"In recent past, some innocent officials and politicians were harassed because of some activities of the Anti-Corruption Commission which created apprehension among government officials and hampered implementation of different government development projects," she said.

Addressing the second meeting with secretaries of different ministries and divisions at the secretariat, Hasina said her government has taken an initiative to amend the ACC laws to prevent misuse of the rules.

"We want an independent Anti-Corruption Commission carrying out its duties to ensure that civil servants can work fearlessly and establish a corruption-free society and rule of law in the country," she said in her inaugural address.

Hasina said the government has amended the public procurement policy to implement different development projects. She instructed the secretaries to take effective measures to

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OnlinePoll

Do you think the government should work for making the Regulatory Reforms Commission (RRC) effective?

☒ Yes (63.9%)
 ☐ No (34.6%)
 ☐ No Comments (1.5%)

Total votes: 919

TODAY'S POLL

Do you think NBR will be able to take action against the MPs who are not paying their income tax?

Please cast your vote at www.thedailystar.net