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SHIP-BREAKING YARD

Minister, MP differ on forest gobbling

Lawmaker terms it media propaganda as minister warns of stern action

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Shipping Minister Shahjahan Khan yesterday blasted plunderers of forest on Sitakunda coast for setting up ship-breaking yards and warned of stern action, whereas lawmaker ABM Abul Kashem Master termed it "media propaganda".

Both the minister and the ruling Awami League MP were addressing a views-exchange meeting with local AL leaders, activists and government officials after visiting BBCS Shipyard in Kumira.

The minister in his speech said: "Plundering of trees for establishing ship-

breaking yards in the coastal areas of Sitakunda will not be allowed.

"People engaged in felling of trees cannot be friends of the government and they would be punished," he warned.

"Why trees should be felled when there remains huge open space in Sitakunda for setting up shipyards?" the minister asked.

As Shahjahan finished his speech, ruling Awami League (AL) lawmaker Abul Kashem in his address to the meeting opposed the shipping minister's statement.

The MP said no incident of plundering trees has happened in Sitakunda and no shipyard has been grabbed at all.

"It's only media propaganda and we

are victims of the media violence," he claimed.

However, at least six cases were filed in connection with plundering of greens on the Sitakunda coast since December last year. But the people involved in illegal felling of trees reportedly to clear space for setting up ship-breaking yards escaped law and justice every time.

Sources in the Department of Forest say the office filed four cases accusing Abdullah Al Mamun, son of lawmaker Abul Kashem Master, Md Alauddin, Md Ezahar, Jahangir Alam, Badshah Miah and Sirajuddin for razing the government forest belt of Sitakunda and setting

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The Sonaichhari green belt at Sitakunda is now just a memory to the inhabitants of the area as the son of a ruling party leader and his accomplices plundered all the trees in phases for setting up ship-breaking yards. This photo was taken on November 30 this year. FILE PHOTO



Nitin BJP president

PALLAB BHATTACHARYA, New Delhi

In the second and final phase of generational change of the top brass of India's main opposition BJP, Nitin Gadkari was yesterday appointed the party's president. He would be the youngest person to head the outfit.

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Trader shot dead in capital

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A gang of three armed criminals gunned down a readymade garment shop owner at his South Dania residence in the capital's Kadamtali area yesterday.

The deceased was identified as Harun-or-Rashid, 36, owner of Meem-Rim Fashion at Setu Market of Shyampur.

However, police or family members could not ascertain the cause behind the killing.

The victim's wife Ruma Begum said the criminals entered the house around 4:00am, fired two shots in the victim's chest and left.

Harun was rushed to Dhaka Medical College Hospital where the doctors declared him dead.

Family sources said Harun had no enmity with anyone or none demanded any extortion

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Judiciary upset by 'crossfire'

SC judge tells a meeting

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Extra-judicial killings and the process of police remand are disturbing for the judiciary and suicidal for the nation, a Supreme Court (SC) judge said yesterday.

"These are two disturbing factors for the judiciary, and it is suicidal for the society, the nation and the country to leave with the law enforcement agencies to decide who should be killed on criminal charges," said Justice Nazrul Islam Chowdhury.

Justice Nazrul was speaking as a special guest at the 'national advocacy meeting on repression on media and political violence: state responsibility and democratic culture' in the capital, organised by rights body Odhikar.

"Extra-judicial killing must be stopped," he said, adding that the apex court judges have to take oath to protect and preserve fundamental rights of the citizens.

"No further killing in crossfire" he said, "Bring anyone to

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BNP warns govt again against ZIA renaming

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Main opposition BNP yesterday threatened to launch a movement if the government does not refrain from deleting the name of late president Ziaur Rahman from different establishments and maligning the image of Tarique Rahman.

"We observe with deep concern that a certain quarter with the help of local and foreign conspirators are spreading propaganda against late president Ziaur Rahman, BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia and Senior Vice Chairman

SEE PAGE 15 COL 5

Dhaka pushes job renewal of 6,000

Dipu Moni goes to Mauritius tomorrow

PORIMOL PALMA

Bangladesh will request Mauritius to renew job contracts of around 6000 Bangladeshis in the African country.

Foreign Minister Dipu Moni, now in Copenhagen, is scheduled to arrive in Mauritius tomorrow via Dubai to make the request to the Mauritius government on behalf of the workers in the textile sector of the country.

In July, the government in Mauritius announced that they would send around 6000 Bangladeshi male workers back by the end of this year. Global meltdown, which also crippled the economy in Mauritius, entails termination of the contracts, the Mauritius government

said.

Sources, however, said some "unwanted" activities by the workers brought down the decision on them.

Five officials of the ministries of home, foreign, expatriates' welfare and National Board of Revenue left for Mauritius yesterday night for a two-day visit. During their visit, the delegation members will meet the foreign affairs and interior ministers of Mauritius, officials concerned said.

Bangladesh has been concerned about the return of thousands of migrant workers to Bangladesh mainly from Singapore, Dubai and Malaysia in the wake of worldwide economic recession.

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Third BDR trial today

A CORRESPONDENT, Feni

The third trial in connection with the BDR mutiny on February 25-26 will begin in Feni today.

The BDR Special Court-3 would hold the trial of 62 soldiers of 19 Rifle Battalion under the Comilla Sector of Bangladesh Rifles for their alleged involvement in the mutiny.

Sources said a three-member BDR court headed by Director General Maj Gen Mainul Islam would conduct the trial at 19 Rifle Battalion headquarters in Jailaskar of Daganbhuian upazila.

On November 24, BDR started the trial across the country on charges of the

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Jahangirnagar University student Falguni Shampa cries out after being mugged at the city's Shantinagar intersection yesterday morning while going to Jatiya Press Club to get on her university bus. Story on page 2.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

REJECTION OF GRAFT AMNESTY Rattled Zardari holds crisis talks

AGENCY, Islamabad

President Asif Ali Zardari yesterday chaired a crisis talks with Pakistan's ruling party on how to prevent his government unravelling after a court scrapped an amnesty on corruption charges.

The ruling party grappled Saturday with fallout from a court decision that stripped the US-allied president and other leaders of amnesty from past corruption cases, but a party spokeswoman insisted affected Cabinet ministers would not be forced to quit.

The central leadership of the Pakistan People's Party met in the afternoon to review the Supreme Court ruling, which has already prompted travel bans, court summonses and other law enforcement moves against politicians who face revived graft and other charges.

In a bid to head off what could be the worst political crisis of his troubled 15 months in power, the president convened the central executive committee of the PPP in the capital Islamabad.

Wednesday's ruling has deepened the political turmoil in Pakistan just as Washington has increased pressure on Islamabad to stay focused and do more to aid the war effort in neighbouring Afghanistan.

President Zardari enjoys constitutional immunity from prosecution, but his opponents say they now intend to challenge his very eligibility for the post. He has defied the

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OnlinePoll

Do you think declaring four rivers surrounding the capital ecologically critical will refrain encroachers from encroaching on and polluting the rivers?

☐ Yes (24.4%)
☐ No (74.8%)
☐ No Comments (0.8%)

Total votes: 680

TODAY'S POLL

Do you agree with Khaleda Zia that PM's call for compensation from the developed countries to tackle the adverse effect of the global climate change caused by them is equivalent to plea for alms?

Please cast your vote at www.thedailystar.net

Prayer Timing

December 20

	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	6-25	7-00
Zohr	1-45	2-15
Asr	4-45	5-00
Maghrib	6-24	6-27
Esha	8-00	8-30

Source: Islamic Foundation

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মোস্তফাপুর, মৌলভীবাজার সদর

মৌলভীবাজার

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