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WAR CRIME SUSPECTS Concern grows within BNP

RAKIB HASNET SUMAN

The BNP ranks are worried that some of their leaders might be arrested on charges of war crimes in 1971.

To add to their worries, the party high command has yet to decide what steps to take if any leader is detained, said BNP insiders.

Mirza Fakhru Islam Alamgir, senior joint secretary general, said the central executive committee will meet on July 31 to discuss, among others, the war crimes issue and draw up a policy guideline.

Chairperson Khaleda Zia will preside over the meeting, first since the party's national council in December last year.

Asked what they will do if any leader is arrested like five top Jamaat leaders, he said though the standing committee, highest decision-making body in BNP, has not yet discussed anything in this regard, the chairperson can take any decision anytime in consultation with others.

Meanwhile, some senior leaders said since the issue is "totally political", the party will face it politically.

"There's no war criminal in our party. But if the government wants to harass our leaders in the name of trial, we will face it politically," one of them yesterday told The Daily Star in return for anonymity.

Party sources said a top-ranking BNP leader and his brother, both of whom are on the primary list of alleged war criminals, have recently met Khaleda Zia.

The sources however could not say what was discussed in that meeting.

Talking to The Daily Star, a central BNP leader said they will protest if any of their colleagues is detained. The party won't sit

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White clouds pervade blue sky in the capital, an unusual sight in peak of monsoon.

PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

ACC sues 9 RHD staff for Tk 14cr graft

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) yesterday sued nine roads and highways employees including a project director on charge of misappropriating Tk 13.90 crore from an embankment road construction project in Sirajganj and Natore.

The accused are project director Syed Shakhawat Hossain, former project engineer MM Shariful Islam, deputy team leader AHM Rafiqul Salehin, resident engineer Abdul Fattah, quality engineer Nazmul Haque Khan, pavement engineer Basir Uddin Khan, quality control Altaf Hossain Khan, and lab technicians Ruhul Saiful Islam and Johurul Islam.

The accused used locally procured low-quality earth instead of sandy soil that was originally specified in the contract to construct the Nalka-Hatikumrul-Banpara embankment road through mutual understanding and breach of trust, the first information report (FIR) said.

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OnlinePoll ✓

Do you think special parliamentary session should be called for the inclusion of BNP representative in the special committee to amend the constitution?

Yes (70.9%)
No (25.8%)
No Comments (3.3%)

Total votes: 357

TODAY'S POLL

Do you think the government will be able to implement the detailed area plan of Dhaka city?

Please cast your vote at www.thedailystar.net

Prayer Timing

July 26

	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	4-20	4-55
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	5-00	5-15
Maghrib	6-50	6-55
Esha	8-15	8-45

Source: Islamic Foundation

Pilot project on cards to tap Jamalganj coal

PM's energy adviser for keeping factories shut during peak hours in Ramadan

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government is going to undertake a pilot project to produce coal from Jamalganj coalfield using Underground Coal Gasification (UCG) and Coal Bed Methane (CBM) technologies, the prime minister's energy adviser said yesterday.

The adviser, Dr Tawfiq-e-Elahi Chowdhury, told this to journalists after attending a seminar on "Prospect of coal gasification" at Petrobangla in the capital.

Jamalganj is the deepest and largest coalfield with deposits at a depth of 500 to 1,000 metres, having a reserve of 1 billion tonnes of coal.

The presence of aquifer is a challenge to both underground and open pit mining in Bangladesh.

"We will discuss the pilot project with the experts and then take it up," Tawfiq said, adding that the government is looking for sources of

alternative energy rather than gas. The adviser also said the government would publish the coal policy within this year.

To ensure adequate gas supply to the power plants, Tawfiq urged the industrialists to shut their factories during peak hours in the month of Ramadan.

He said if the gas supply remains sound, load shedding would be in a tolerable level during the holy month.

Tawfiq said the government is thinking of load management of gas during the peak hours. Prof Badrul Imam of Dhaka University Geology Department explained the technologies presenting a keynote paper at the seminar.

He said CBM, which remains in absorbed state, is produced by lowering water pressure and by extracting water from the coal.

With UCG technology, oxygen and water are injected into coal. The coal is burnt and it produces hydrogen, methane, carbon monoxide

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RMG WORKERS JS body for pay hike, allowances

RASHIDUL HASAN

A parliamentary body has recommended that garment factories have to pay their workers transport, washing and attendance allowances on a regular basis in addition to their monthly wages.

The parliamentary standing committee on labour and employment ministry was informed at its meeting yesterday that owners of garment factories have not agreed to increase minimum wages of their workers to Tk 2,550 a month from Tk 1,662 now.

Against this backdrop, the House body came up with the recommendation for payment of the allowances to workers regularly.

Garment workers demand raising their minimum wage

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8 Bangladeshi job-seekers stranded in KL

Human traffickers deceive them with fake visas

PORIMOL PALMA

A gang of human traffickers early June abandoned eight Bangladeshi jobseekers in Malaysia with fake visas of New Zealand and conned them out of Tk 60 lakh.

The victims are Abu Al-Razin, Ruhul Amin, Santo Ghosh, Nesar Uddin, Abul Kashem, Rashed Hossain, Kamrul Islam and Abdul Rahim. Empty-handed, these people are now in Kuala Lumpur living on the money sent from home.

Meanwhile, Malaysian police have arrested one of the gang members Delwar Hossain on June 24, a day after the victims lodged a case with Dang Wangi Police Station in Kuala Lumpur in this regard.

According to the case statement, the other accomplices of Delwar are Alam, Haji Muazzem Hossain and Shikder Zakir alias Samrat. All the three are still at large.

The case statement says one Alam promised the eight jobseekers work visas for New Zealand in exchange of Tk 12 lakh

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Rule on govt over money laundering act

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court (HC) yesterday issued a rule upon the government to explain within 10 days why the "Money Laundering Prevention Act 2009" should not be declared illegal and unconstitutional.

An HC bench of Justice Mamnoon Rahman and Justice Syeda Afsar Jahan issued the rule following a writ petition filed as public interest litigation by Zahirul Islam, a Supreme Court lawyer, challenging the law.

The petitioner said the Money Laundering Prevention Act has been passed in parliament on February 24, 2009, with retrospective effect from April 15, 2008, which is against the rules of the country's constitution.

A money bill was placed in parliament for passing the

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Try 'killers' of Beauty

Co-workers demand during demonstration; PM hands over Tk 1 lakh to family

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Co-workers of Beauty Akhter staged demonstration in the factory premises of Vertex Garments Ltd at Kalwala Para in Mirpur yesterday demanding stern punishment of the 'killers'.

Beauty Akhter, 19, was allegedly murdered and thrown from the eight-storey building of the factory Friday. Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina handed over a cheque of Tk 1 lakh to the bereaved family when they met her at Gano Bhaban last night.

Meanwhile, during the agitation the workers placed a series of demands including expulsion of some mid-ranked officers of the factory and steps to prevent some officials from torturing workers over trifling matters, witnesses said.

The factory reopened yesterday after remaining closed since Friday. However, it was shut down again after a few hours as a rumour spread that the owners had freed line in-charge Jharna Begum, 32, a prime suspect, from police custody.

To clear the confusion the factory authorities accompanied around 15 of its agitating employees to Mirpur Police

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BNP holds a rally at Mukhtangon, blocking part of the busy road between Paltan intersection and Zero Point in the capital yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

Oli slates JS special committee

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Oli Ahmed, president of Liberal Democratic Party (LDP), yesterday came down heavily on the process of formation of the parliamentary special committee for constitutional amendment, terming it a ruling party-led grand alliance committee.

"[JS special committee] is not an all-party parliamentary special committee, rather it is an Awami League-led 14-party grand alliance committee," Oli Ahmed, also a lawmaker, said while talking to the journalists in his office at the Jatiya Sangsad Bhaban.

Besides, the terms of reference of the committee are not clear, he said.

The House on July 22 passed Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's proposal to form a special committee to amend the constitution led by Deputy Leader of the House Syeda Sajeda Chowdhury.

"Prime minister should place the terms of reference in the House. But she declared the committee keeping parliament in the dark about the terms of reference," Oli, also chief of the parliamentary standing committee on planning ministry, said.

"I am the lone opposition member who was joining parliament session [proposed on July 22]. They [ruling AL-led government]

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