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in Short

SC seeks fatwa views
Wants to hear opinion of 5 Islamic scholars
STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Supreme Court seeks Islamic scholars' opinion on the status and application of fatwa in the country. A six-member Appellate Division bench headed by Chief Justice ABM Khairul Haque yesterday asked Bangladesh Islamic Foundation to

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Ershad's U-turn

UNB, Dhaka

Jatiya Party Chairman HM Ershad had lunch with the ruling Awami League-led grand alliance leaders at the Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's official

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ABDUCTION, MURDER Cop jailed for neglect

3 kidnapers to die
COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday sentenced former officer-in-charge (OC) of Shyampur Police Station to five years' imprisonment for his negligence in rescuing a 10-year-old boy from abductors in 2003.

Besides, three abductors--Mohammad Hanif, Shoaib alias Sohel and

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CRISIS IN LIBYA

19,000 to fly in within week
Biman starts operating flights March 13

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Repatriation of the remaining 19,000 Bangladeshis who fled trouble-torn Libya and are now stranded in Egyptian and Tunisian borders, is expected to be completed within a week through joint operations by IOM chartered flights and Biman Bangladesh Airlines.

In a bid to speed up the repatriation, five flights of Biman will be put into operation from March 13 to bring back the Bangladeshis from Egyptian border.

Addressing a press briefing, Foreign Secretary Mijarul Quayes said that 1,928 Bangladeshis were repatriated from Egypt, Tunisia and Greece yesterday.

With this, about 11,226 Bangladeshis were repatriated from Egypt, Tunisia and Greece till date, he said.

Meanwhile, the apex trade body FBCCI yesterday declared that it would create a fund for the rehabilitation of the returnees.

"We will create a fund with contributions from different trade bodies and the government for rehabilitation of our brothers," said AK Azad, president of the Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FBCCI) at a discussion in the capital yesterday.

In the press briefing, the foreign secretary said that

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A group of kids play cricket at Hatirjheel project site at Rampura, as space for outdoor games becomes hard to find in the city.

PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

'Fast track' gas scheme falters

PM's energy adviser critical of Petrobangla performance

SHARIER KHAN

The government on Wednesday shelved a so-called "fast-track gas field development scheme" that aimed to increase the country's gas supply on an urgent basis as Petrobangla failed to have any contractor carry out the task since September 2009.

Prime Minister's Energy Adviser Dr Towfiq-e-Elahi Chowdhury Bir Bikram at a meeting expressed dissatisfaction as Petrobangla failed to carry out the government's decision to increase gas production on an urgent basis, meeting sources say.

The meeting also discussed other gas related issues including headway in the tender for installing a Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) Terminal at Maheshkhali, construction of a major pipeline from Sylhet to Ashuganj to double gas production from the three Chevron gas fields, and

activities of Bangladesh Petroleum Exploration Company (Bapex).

The meeting noted that all of these schemes were running behind schedule.

Of these, status of the fast-track scheme that aimed to quickly increase gas production by 150 million cubic feet a day (mmcf) was the worst.

High officials from the energy ministry, Petrobangla, Bapex, Gas Transmission and Distribution Company Ltd and other organisations concerned attended the meeting held at the Prime Minister's Office (PMO).

The fast-track scheme was undertaken as one of the several measures to increase gas supply. Presently, there is a demand of 2,500 million cubic feet gas per day (mmcf) against a supply of 2,000 mmcf.

Under the fast-track gas field development scheme, 25 companies from the US,

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Grameen Bank on Joy's letter

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Sajeeb Wajed Joy, son of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, has riddled Grameen Bank with allegations of tax evasion, fraud and illegal activities under its founder Muhammad Yunus, prompting the microlender to issue a firm rebuttal.

In a statement yesterday, the "Bank for the Poor" disputed Joy's letter, published in a section of the press and said the "news contains a number of inaccurate facts and appears to be misconceived".

Joy, who lives in the US, has written and signed an open letter full of rants against the Nobel-winning organisation. In the letter initially

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SERAFINA RAPE, SUICIDE Mother sues 9 'rapists'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

Nine alleged rapists of Serafina Mardi, an ethnic minority girl who committed suicide failing to stand humiliation, were sued yesterday with the first court of Women and Children Repression Prevention Tribunal here.

Tribunal Judge Afzal Hossain took cognisance of the case filed by the victim's mother Sushana Soren.

The accused -- Nirmol Soren, Porimal Soren, Rajon, Jewel, Elias, Shimon Hembrom, Simon, Julian, and Karlus Mardi -- are still free.

The tribunal asked Godagari police to probe the allegation in line with another case filed by police for provoking the girl to take her own life.

Serafina of Amtulipara in Godagari upazila committed suicide by setting herself on fire on February 20 to protest an out-of-court settlement of her rape.

A catholic priest and 12 other community leaders allegedly forced the victim and her family members to follow the agreement in order to protect their religion in the village.

After settling the gang rape incident, the rapists and community leaders forced Serafina to marry Nirmol under false pretences only to escape rape charges, alleged Sushana.

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ONLINE POLL

Do you think the BNP has decided to join the current parliament session to only save their parliament memberships?

Yes (79.2%)
No (18.8%)
No Comments (2.0%)

TOTAL VOTES : 549

TODAY'S POLL

Do you agree with BNP chief Khaleda Zia that the government wants to scrap the system of caretaker government from the constitution to stay in power forever?

PLEASE CAST YOUR VOTE AT www.thedailystar.net

PRAYER TIMING March 11

	Asan	Jamaat
Fajr	5-05	5-40
Juma	12-30	1-15
Asr	4-30	4-45
Maghrib	6-12	6-15
Esha	7-30	8-00

Source: Islamic Foundation

12th YEAR OF Saluting the Nation Builders of Tomorrow

Once again, The Daily Star is going to honour the Highest Achievers in the O & A Level examinations, to be held on Friday, 18th March, 2011, at 9.00am at the Shaheed Suhrawardy National Indoor Stadium, Mirpur, Dhaka.

The students and awardees are requested to contact their respective schools to collect the



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TORTURE IN CUSTODY JS body okays bill with harsh punishment

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A parliamentary body has recommended enactment of a bill with provisions of harsh punishment for torture and inhuman or degrading treatment by law enforcers or government officials.

The Parliamentary Standing Committee on Private Members' Bills and Resolutions in a report in parliament yesterday made the recommendation for passage of the Torture and Custodial Death (Prevention) Bill with some modifications.

Abdul Matin Khasru, chief of the parliamentary body, submitted the report after scrutinising the bill placed by Awami League lawmaker Saber Hossain Chowdhury in the House in 2009.

The bill proposes stringent punishment of life imprisonment at maximum and also fine for committing the offences.

Officials charged with the offences will not be able to justify their acts citing exceptional circumstances including a state of war or emergency, political instability or order of a superior or a public authority, according to it.

The bill was drafted in conformity with the UN convention against torture, and cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.

Bangladesh on October 5, 1998 signed the convention adopted on December 10, 1984 with a promise to create an effective legislature and take administrative, judicial

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Congratulations On Becoming CIP

On behalf of all the employees & workers of FARR Ceramics Ltd. (A Manufacturer & Exporter of Ceramic Tableware) we Congratulate our Company Chairman & Managing Director Mr. Iftakher Uddin Farhad for Awarded being as "CIP (Industry) 2010" by the Ministry of Industry, the Peoples Republic of Bangladesh.

Honorable Minister of Industry Mr. Dilip Barua handed over the CIP Card on 8th March 2011 in a gorgeous ceremony.

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