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STRUGGLE FOR WATER

Md Rashed Chowdhury talks about the rising water crisis across the globe and its implications

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FOR BETTER FUTURE

Pubali Bank is willing to sign private-public partnership

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MANUEL NORIEGA EXTRADITED

The former Panamanian dictator was taken to prison on return to his home country from France

Ghulam faces 52 charges

War crimes prosecution seeks order for his arrest

ASHUTOSH SARKAR and RIZANUZZAMAN LASKAR

The prosecution yesterday pressed 52 war crimes charges against former Jamaat-e-Islami chief Ghulam Azam.

The charges include leading the mass murder of intellectuals on December 14, 1971 and the killing of 38 prisoners of Brahmanbaria jail.

Ghulam Azam, considered by many a symbol of war crimes, was also held responsible by the prosecutors for all atrocities committed across the country from March 25 to December 16, 1971.

Chief Prosecutor Ghulam Arieff Tipoo placed the charges before the International Crimes Tribunal and sought



arrest warrant for the ex-Jamaatameer.

The prosecution prayer reflects the will of the people, Arieff said at a press briefing at his office yesterday.

The tribunal received the charges through its registrar's office and is scheduled to pass an order today on the prosecution's plea.

Earlier on Sunday, the prosecutors submitted formal charges of war crimes against top Jamaat leaders Motiur Rahman Nizami, Ali Ahsan Mohammad Mojaheed and Muhammad Kamaruzzaman.

Rana Dasgupta, one of the prosecutors, told The Daily Star yesterday they found

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Before monsoon, the river saving taskforce directed Gazipur district administration to reset all boundary pillars set up wrongly along the dry-season waterline of the river Turag. But the photo taken last month at Kamarpara, Ashulia shows a pillar is still inside the foreshore. Meanwhile, encroachers have put up a fence to grab a portion of the river.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

EC skirts split-DCC polls

Says Feb deadline not suitable for it

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Election Commission (EC) yesterday decided not to hold polls to the split Dhaka City Corporation by February next year due to time constraint.

According to the recent changes brought to the Local Government (City Corporation) Act 2009, polls to two city corporations -- DCC North and DCC South -- must be held within 90 days, a deadline that ends on February 29.

But the present EC is not getting the stipulated 90 days because the

tenure of Chief Election Commissioner ATM Shamsul Huda and Election Commissioner Sohul Hussein expires on February 4. Brig Gen (ret) M Sakhawat Hossain, the other election commissioner, will retire on February 14.

"Under this situation, we are not going to announce schedule for the DCC polls," the CEC told reporters after a meeting that made the decision.

He added the commission would send a letter to the Local Government Division (LGD) today, explaining why the EC cannot hold

the elections.

On December 4, the LGD in a letter requested the Election Commission to make necessary preparations for holding polls to the bifurcated DCC within the 90-day deadline.

"The electoral reforms we brought about for holding free and fair elections will suffer a blow if we go for holding the DCC polls hurriedly. So, we are not in favour of holding the polls in such a short time," the CEC said.

Earlier on several occasions, two

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SHARE SCAM

Govt trying to hide something

Says probe body chief at a dialogue; blasts regulators over failure

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The prime minister had to intervene in the troubled share market for the failure of the Securities and Exchange Commission and the finance ministry to play their due role, the chief of a probe body said yesterday.

"They involved the prime minister in stockmarket issues to avoid responsibility for their failure. It's a shame," said Khandker Ibrahim

Khaled, chief of a committee formed to probe a stockmarket scam.

Khaled, also chairman of Bangladesh Krishi (agriculture) Bank, said the government is trying to hide something about the stockmarket like it did in 1996 when the bubble burst in the share market.

He was speaking at a dialogue "State of the Capital Market and Recent Policy Initiatives" organised by The Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD), a civil society think tank, in

the capital.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina on November 16 held an emergency meeting at Gono Bhaban with the SEC, finance ministry and other stakeholders over the stockmarket debacle, and instructed the regulator to take steps to stabilise the market.

Khaled, also former deputy governor of Bangladesh Bank, said the government and the market regulators are only concentrating on the

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Home slow in responding to queries

Complains NHRC chief

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) Chairman Prof Mizanur Rahman yesterday said, the commission faces difficulties in dealing with allegations of human rights violations as the home ministry often delays to respond to its queries.

"Whenever we receive allegations (incidents of human rights violations), we send it to the home ministry asking it to report

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KHALEDA'S APPEAL SC wants rule by Dec 15

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Supreme Court yesterday directed the High Court to hear and dispose of by December 15 a rule issued over scrapping of the proceedings against BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia in Zia Orphanage Trust corruption case.

The HC issued the rule on October 15, 2009 asking the government and

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PHOTO: ANURUP KANTI DAS

As harvest season starts again in the country and Aman paddies become ripe, flocks of birds gather in the paddy fields to have a feast. The photo was taken at Hathazari in Chittagong yesterday.

Aman offers big smile

Harvesting halfway through; food hopes no rice import to be required

REAZ AHMAD

With over 60 percent of Aman paddy already harvested, there are signs of a bumper rice production this season, said officials of both food and agriculture ministries.

Buoyed by the prospect of an increased output in the first rice season of the current fiscal year (2011-12), the government has decided to stop rice import.

"No more rice import will be required this fiscal year. We will import only wheat as we are not able to meet the demand for it from

domestic production." Food Minister Abdur Razzaque told this correspondent on Sunday. The output of Aman is projected to well surpass the previous season's production, Additional Agriculture Secretary Anwar Faruque said when contacted.

Rain-fed Aman harvested in November-December, the first rice season out of three in a fiscal year, contributes 38 percent of the country's over 30 million tonnes of rice output. Irrigated Boro contributes 56 percent and Aus six percent.

Reached over the phone, some farmers in

Dinajpur said rice growers in the northern region reaped a very good Aman harvest this season. "We have got up to 54 maunds of rice per acre in certain areas while the average output surpassed 40 maunds per acre," said Gopal Mohanto, one of the farmers.

Meanwhile, the signs of a better harvest and last week's government decision of launching an Aman procurement drive have halted the freefall of wholesale and retail prices of rice in the market. Low prices of rice persisted from mid-October mainly due to

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Narsingdi mayor 'killer' arrested

STAR REPORT

Police on Sunday arrested four more suspects in connection with the killing of Narsingdi mayor Lokman Hossain, of whom one has admitted to have shot the mayor.

"I shot Lokman. As he stood up from his chair, I fired three more bullets to confirm that he was dead. Then we shot three bullets in the air to trigger a panic and make our escape," one of the detainees Nazmul Hasan Sharif told the media yesterday when he was brought to the office of Narsingdi superintendent of police (SP).

The other detainees are Awlad Hossain Rubel, 23, Sarwar Hossain, 31, and Mir Delwar Hossain, 35. Police also recovered from Delwar a revolver, 22 bullets and a

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Suspected killer Sharif

Human traffickers to get death

Cabinet okays max punishment in draft bill

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The cabinet yesterday approved the draft bill on human trafficking with the provision of capital punishment for the heinous offence.

The weekly cabinet meeting chaired by Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at the secretariat also okayed a list of 124 foreign nationals including politicians, artists and intellectuals, and institutions to accord them honour in recognition of their outstanding contributions in the 1971 Liberation War.

Drafts of Prime Minister's Education Assistance Trust

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