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REGD. NO. DA 781 | Vol. XXIII No. 29 | MAGH 30, 1419 BS | RABIU SANI 1, 1434 HIJRI

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Provision
for appeal
endorsed***Cabinet okays change to war crimes trial act*

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The cabinet yesterday approved proposed amendments to the International Crimes (Tribunals) Act to introduce a provision for plaintiffs to appeal to the apex court against verdicts delivered by the tribunals.

The amendment is likely to be placed in parliament and passed this week, Agriculture Minister Matia Chowdhury told The Daily Star.

An official claimed that the state would be able to appeal against the life sentence handed down to Abdul Quader Mollah, by a tribunal on February 5, as the amendment would be passed by parliament very soon.

The stipulated time for filing an appeal with the Supreme Court is 30 days from verdict delivery.

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Students of several schools and colleges joined the ongoing demonstration at Shahbagh yesterday, demanding death penalty for war criminals. A number of artists, inset, who went to express solidarity with the movement, chant slogans. More on page 3.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

**Sayedee verdict not this week**

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The verdict of the war crimes case against Jamaat leader Delawar Hossain Sayedee will not be delivered this week, said the International Crimes Tribunals' registrar AKM Nasiruddin Mahmud.

Recently, a rumour spread in different social media that the verdict would be delivered on February 14.

Against this backdrop journalists yesterday asked the registrar about it.

The registrar said Sayedee's case is kept waiting for verdict. "The tribunal will inform about it prior to the verdict delivery like the earlier two verdicts," he said.

In reply to another question, Mahmud said,

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IMPORT OF DUTY FREE CARS**All but 35 MPs did it**

SHAKHAWAT LITON

As many as 315 incumbent lawmakers have imported duty-free cars depriving the state exchequer of more than Tk 1,000 crore in taxes, according to a list placed in parliament yesterday.

This is not the first time. Without paying Tk 280 crore in taxes, 275 lawmakers of the last Jatiya Sangsad imported luxury vehicles.

The list placed by Finance Minister AMA Muhith says more than 200 MPs of the ninth Jatiya

Sangsad have imported Toyota Land Cruisers. Over 18 MPs have bought Voxwagons while the rest various other brands.

As per the list, so far each of 70 MPs has enjoyed tax exemptions of over Tk 5 crore, 55 lawmakers over Tk 4 lakh each and 16 MPs over Tk 6 crore each to import duty-free cars.

Also, 54 MPs got tax exemption of more than Tk 3 crore, 90 MPs more than Tk 2 crore each and each of around 60 MPs got tax exemption of Tk 1 crore.

However, at least 35 MPs have not

used the facility. They include Leader of the House Sheikh Hasina, Leader of the Opposition Khaleda Zia, Finance Minister AMA Muhith, Agriculture Minister Matia Chowdhury, LGRD Minister Syed Ashraf Islam, Education Minister Nurul Islam Nahid, Commerce Minister GM Quader, Social Welfare Minister Enamul Haque Mostafa Shahid and Civil Aviation Minister Farukh Khan.

Ruling AL MP Golam Gazi

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PM worries about safety of youths

HASAN JAHID TUSER

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday expressed concern over the security of the demonstrators at Shahbagh.

Expressing solidarity with the movement, she said she has absolute support for the spirit of the young generation, but she is worried about their nighttime security.

Different kinds of people throng Shahbagh at different times and who

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Stand up for 3-min*Shahbagh youths urge all for solidarity today*

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Shahbagh protesters yesterday urged people to express solidarity with the movement by holding a three-minute silence today to press home the demand for death penalty for all war criminals, including Jamaat leader Abdul Quader Mollah.

Urging all to stand in silence wherever they may be for three minutes from 4:00pm, Imran H Sarker, a key organiser of the movement, said, "All the people cannot join us in Shahbagh. We call upon them to express solidarity with us by holding the three-minute silence."

"This is a new form of protest. And we may also organise cultural and other

programmes as part of the ongoing movement."

Imran told The Daily Star that the movement will continue until their demands are met.

Like the previous days, tens of thousands of people converged on the capital's Shahbagh intersection yesterday, the seventh consecutive day of the demonstration.

The demonstrators started the protest on February 5 demanding death penalty for Jamaat Assistant Secretary General Mollah, after International Crimes Tribunal-2 sentenced Mollah to life imprisonment for war crimes in 1971.

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The demonstrators at Shahbagh in the capital have named the porta-loos after the accused war criminals being tried at the international crimes tribunals. The Dhaka South City Corporation provided the toilets for the protesters.

PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

To the young, history's torch

SYED BADRUL AHSAN

History, like the seasons, must always come back. And purveyors of falsehood, for all the faux glory they may experience over a certain period of time, will someday have their comeuppance.

Truth is the underpinning of history and those who nurture truth are greater, in number and in spirit, than those who would have us know, in all their macabre behaviour, that black sunrises are the reality.

Black was the shroud the enemy and his unashamed quislings sought to pull over us in the nine dark months of 1971. Black were the years, from 1975 to 1990, when those resurgent collaborators of a murderous alien army, through the patronage of uniformed men who fought for liberty before going out on a limb to undermine liberty, sought to inform us that liberation did not happen, that our founding fathers were wrong, that our nationalism could be twisted into a meaningless phrase, that cohorts

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**Language cannot be Islamic or Christian**

SYED BADRUL AHSAN

The report of the Basic Principles Committee seemed to inject fresh new energy into the movement for Bangla. The progressive political classes clearly felt the need to sustain the struggle. However, it was the students of Dhaka University who underscored the significance of

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'SUBVERSION PLOT' Sayedee's son held

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Police arrested war crimes suspect Delawar Hossain Sayedee's son Shamim Hossain, Huji chief Mufti Abdul Hannan's brother Anisur Rahman and three others in separate drives in the capital yesterday on charges of planning subversive activities.

The other detainees are Shamim's associates —

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YOUTHS AT SHAHBAGH BNP praises, airs concern

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

In its first formal reaction to the Shahbagh movement, the BNP last night said it had all along been giving positive statements about the emotion and enthusiasm of the youths demanding trial of the war crimes accused.

The demand "might have" some grounds, but it would have been "more meaningful" had the youths included in their agenda issues restoration of caretaker government system, graft in Padma bridge project and other corruption and border killings, said the main opposition

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Teacher murdered*Students stab him for not allowing unfair means*

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A schoolteacher was stabbed to death by an SSC candidate yesterday allegedly because the teacher obstructed him from copying during the examination the previous day at South Keraniganj on the outskirts of the capital.

The deceased, Mostafa Bhuiyan, 35, was an English teacher of Chunkutia Girls' High School in South Keraniganj.

Riyad, a secondary school certificate examinee, stabbed Mostafa in the chest



around 7:30am in his flat on the second floor of a six-storey building at east Chunkutia, Shakhawat Hossain, officer-in-charge of Keraniganj Police Station, said quoting local people.

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Pope resigns citing frailty

REUTERS, Rome

Pope Benedict shocked the world yesterday by saying he no longer had the mental and physical strength to cope with his ministry, in an announcement that will make him the first pontiff to step down since the Middle Ages.

The German-born Pope, 85, hailed as a hero by conservative Roman Catholics and viewed with suspicion by



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