



EXPORT TARGET

Govt aims to earn \$37.5b in the current fiscal year

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'THEY DO NOTHING FOR US'

Trump slams China after N Korea test fires another ICBM

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SIDDIKUR SHINES

Bangladesh's premier golfer finishes in top three of Porsche European Open

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LOWER COURT JUDGES

SC deplores draft rules

Says it won't accept rules in full as 'control still in govt hands'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Supreme Court yesterday refused to accept in full the draft rules determining the discipline of lower court judges, and said the rules were a U-turn on the top court's directives.

"And it cannot go on like this," the SC said in a stern admonishment to the law ministry, which submitted the draft last week for the SC's approval.

The court expressed its dissatisfaction with the ministry as it made the rules by making a "U-turn" on the directives given in the verdict in Masdar Hossain case, known as separation of judiciary case.

The draft states that any judicial officer facing allegations of misconduct will be attached to the law ministry. This way, the draft rules protect the ministry officials. Chief Justice Surendra Kumar Sinha, who was heading a six-member bench of the apex court, said during the hearing on the Masdar Hossain case.

He demanded to know from the attorney general the necessity of the High Court if all the authority is given to the law ministry.

Under the rules, even the chief justice has no power to take action against judicial officers.

All the lower court judges and most law ministry officials are judicial officers.

The High Court has been the authority to exercise control over the lower court judges in line with a tradition since

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People stand dangerously close to a passing intercity train inside the gate of Ashkona Level Crossing near Airport Railway Station during the morning rush hour. Pedestrians seem to care little about their safety and are too keen on saving a few minutes of their travel time. The photo was taken last week.

PHOTO:
ANISUR RAHMAN

Russia set to expel 755 US diplomats

AFP, Moscow

President Vladimir Putin said 755 US diplomats must leave Russia and warned ties with Washington could be gridlocked for a long time, in a move Sunday that followed tough new American sanctions.

The Russian foreign ministry had earlier demanded Washington cut its diplomatic presence in Russia by September to 455 - the same number Moscow has in the US.

"More than a thousand people were working and are still working" at the US embassy and consulates, Putin said in an interview with Russia-24 television.

"755 people must stop their activities in Russia."

Putin added that an upturn in Russia's relations with Washington could not be expected "anytime soon".

"We have waited long enough, hoping that the situation would perhaps change for the better," he said.

"But it seems that even if the situation is changing, it's

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RAMPAL POWER PLANT

Unesco decisions, govt version differ

Unesco says no large-scale industrial, infrastructural developments should be allowed in Sundarbans before completion of a Strategic Environmental Assessment

It asks for submission of SEA report to the World Heritage Centre as soon as it is available

Govt gets time until December 1 next year to report on the conservation of the Sundarbans

REAZ AHMAD

Unesco has made it clear that no large-scale industrial or infrastructural development should be allowed to proceed in the vicinity of the Sundarbans before Bangladesh carried out a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) for its south-west region.

In a report uploaded yesterday to its website on decisions made at the 41st session of its World Heritage Committee earlier this month, it asked for submission of the SEA report to the World Heritage Centre (WHC) as soon as it was available.

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Latest gas price hike illegal: HC

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday declared the June-1 hike of household gas price illegal.

Now, consumers would have to pay for household gas as per the price set on March 1, Tk 750 for a single burner stove and Tk 800 for a double burner, a Tk 150 hike from earlier this year.

This rate would be effective from August 1, according to the HC order.

On June 1, Bangladesh Energy Regulatory Commission had again increased the prices by Tk 150 on top of the March 1 hike.

The second gas price hike fixed the rates at Tk 900 and 950 for single and double burner stoves.

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Water tariff hike once again

REAZ AHMAD

City dwellers will have to pay more for using running water from tomorrow as Dhaka Water Supply and Sewerage Authority (Wasa) has decided to hike the price by 5 percent only eight months after the previous price increase.

Domestic consumers will pay Tk 10.50 instead of Tk 10 per unit (1,000 litres) of water while the commercial rate will be Tk 33.60 per unit from Tk 32 now.

This is the third-time price hike in the last 13 months.

Until June last year, per unit of water cost city dwellers Tk 7.71. Following a five percent price hike the next month, the cost rose to Tk 8.49. The price was hiked again in just four months by 17 percent to Tk 10.

While consumer right activists questioned such frequent increase in water tariffs, Dhaka Wasa laid out reasons defending its decision.

Consumers Association of Bangladesh (CAB) Chairman Ghulam Rahman termed the price hike arbitrary.

WATER PRICE HIKE

JULY 2016 5%

NOVEMBER 2016 17%

AUGUST 2017 5%

NEW RATE TK 10.50 PER UNIT (1,000 LITRES)

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Bogra rape sparks outcry, protests

Tufan suspended from Sramik League, remanded with 2 others; AL assigns 2 leaders to probe; 6 more arrested

STAR REPORT

Amid a firestorm of public outrage over the abduction and rape of a Bogra student and the subsequent torture to keep her quiet, Sramik League leader Tufan Sarker, the main accused, and his two cohorts were placed on a three-day remand yesterday.

Police also arrested six more people in this connection yesterday raising the total number of arrestees to 10.

Chief Judicial Magistrate of Bogra Shyam Sundar Roy rejected the bail petition of Tufan, also an accused in several drug-related cases, and his aides -- Ali Azam of Chakstrapur Khaipatti of the town and Rupom of Kalitala -- when police produced them before the court with a seven-day remand prayer for each.

However, police did not seek remand for another arrestee Atikur Rahman as he gave a confessional statement before a magistrate.

Police arrested the four on Friday night.

The victim's mother had filed a rape and torture case against 10 people, including Tufan, Ali Azam, Rupom, Tufan's wife Asha Sarkar and her elder

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UPCOMING POLLS
EC begins talks with civil society today

MOHAMMAD AL-MASUM MOLLA

The Election Commission begins a dialogue today on upcoming parliamentary elections with the civil society representatives who would stress a level-playing field for all political parties.

The civil society representatives are likely to recommend that the EC bring some changes to the RPO, introduce the provision of "no vote" and include the armed forces as a regular force in the definition of law-enforcement agencies.

The Daily Star has contacted a dozen of 59 invitees who are scheduled to join the talks at the EC Secretariat with CEC KM Nurul Huda in the chair.

According to the EC schedule, two hours were allocated for discussion on seven agendas.

Although they welcomed the move, some expressed dissatisfaction over the timeframe as each

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People of all walks of life, and schoolgirls wearing blindfolds, stage a demonstration in Saatmatha of Bogra town yesterday protesting the abduction, rape and torture of a girl allegedly by Bogra Sramik League convener Tufan Sarker and his cohorts.

Pak parliament to elect new PM tomorrow

Abbas expected to become interim leader until Sharif's brother is eligible

AGENCIES

Pakistan's parliament will meet tomorrow to elect a new prime minister after the Supreme Court disqualified Nawaz Sharif following an investigation into corruption allegations against his family.

The ruling party named Sharif's younger brother Shahbaz as his successor over the weekend, but he must first enter parliament by contesting the seat left vacant by Sharif.

In the meantime the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N), which enjoys a majority in parliament, has nominated ex-oil minister Shahid Khaqan Abbasi as interim prime minister.

The top court ousted Sharif Friday after an investigation into corruption allegations against him and his family, bringing his historic third term in power to an unceremonious end and briefly plunging the nuclear-armed nation into political instability.

Nawaz Sharif was the 15th prime minister in Pakistan's 70-year history -- roughly half of which was under military rule -- to be ousted before completing a full term.

"The nomination papers --- shall be delivered to the Secretary, National Assembly by 2.00 pm, on Monday," said a notification by the National Assembly Secretariat and seen

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