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Govt will scrap CSA within a week

Says information adviser; all cases under the act will be withdrawn

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Cyber Security Act will be repealed within a week and all cases filed under the act will be withdrawn, Nahid Islam, adviser to the posts, telecommunications, and information technology ministry, said yesterday.

"Not only this law [CSA], but all laws that hinder freedom of expression are under review," he said.

Nahid, who is also the information adviser, said decisions on reforms will be made after consulting the stakeholders.

The adviser made the remarks during a meeting with Norway Ambassador Hakon Arald Gulbrandsen at his office at the ICT Division, said a ministry press release.

About the next parliamentary polls, Nahid, also information adviser, said an election based on national consensus will be organised after completing all necessary reforms.

"We have achieved a new Bangladesh through the student and public uprising. Over the past 16 years, the fascist government has committed numerous irregularities and corruption. The interim government has now started the work of rebuilding the country so that both the nation and its people can recover from the damage."

Nahid sought Norway's advice and cooperation in this rebuilding process. Ambassador Hakon assured the adviser of standing by the interim



Nahid Islam

SEE PAGE 10 COL 4



A group of women jostling near a TCB truck, with a long queue waiting behind them, in the capital's Kazipara area yesterday afternoon. With prices of essentials soaring, these people have no option but to purchase those from these trucks at subsidised prices. One package of essentials, containing 5kg rice, 2 litre edible oil, and 2kg lentils, are sold at Tk 470.

PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN

Work underway to ensure the voting rights of expatriates

Head of commission on polls reform tells CA

MOHIUDDIN ALAMGIR

The Election System Reform Commission is working to ensure that the expatriates can exercise their voting rights.

The Police Reform Commission wants changes to the related laws that deal with using force to control mobs.

The Anti Corruption Reform Commission seeks to set up a graft watchdog free from political influence and with neutral persons.

The heads of the three reform commissions made the comments yesterday while informing Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus about the progress of their work.

They were among the six reform commission chiefs who had a meeting with the chief adviser at his Tejgoan office.

The commission heads informed

SEE PAGE 10 COL 4

Monnujan's nephew killed in 'mob beating'

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

A nephew of Monnujan Sufian, former state minister for labour and employment, was killed allegedly in a mob beating in Khulna yesterday, said police.

The deceased is Sheikh Arifuzzaman Rupam, 34, said Md Shahidul Islam, inspector of Daulatpur Police Station.

The incident took place on Daulatpur's Anjuman Mosque Road in the city around 10:30am.

Rupam was the son of Sheikh Kamal Uddin Bachchu and Nargis Begum, the younger sister of the former state minister.

Inspector Shahidul said, "We came to know from the hospital that he [Rupam] was a victim of mob

SEE PAGE 2 COL 4

Fresh probe into Pilkhana killings soon

Says home adviser; 20 special PPs appointed for BDR mutiny case

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government will carry out a reinvestigation into the 2009 killings at the Pilkhana headquarters of the erstwhile Bangladesh Rifles, said Home Adviser Lt Gen (retd) Jahangir Alam Chowdhury.

"An investigation team will be formed soon," the adviser told reporters yesterday at the headquarters of the paramilitary force, now Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB).

He said the country's law and order situation has improved, but there is still room for improvement.

In a meeting with the senior BGB officials, Jahangir discussed the ongoing efforts to step up national security.

"We are making significant changes in the police's posts in Dhaka, but it will take time for the newly posted force members to familiarise themselves with the localities and build an effective intelligence network," he said.

Stressing the BGB's crucial role in maintaining law and order, the adviser said changes within the force are gradually yielding positive results. "We anticipate further improvements in the near future."

SEE PAGE 10 COL 1

117 women were victims of violence last month

7 killed after rape, says rights body

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

At least 117 women and girls across the country were victims of violence in October, according to the Human Rights Support Society (HRSS).

Meanwhile, eight women and girls were victims of gang rape, while seven were killed after rape.

Additionally, 11 women and girls were victims of sexual harassment, while two women were killed over dowry-related issues. A total of 37 women were killed in family disputes; two were injured; and 10 died by suicide.

In a media release issued yesterday, the rights group said that, as per its monthly human rights analysis report, 55 females were

SEE PAGE 10 COL 3

Top Hezbollah commander killed

Says Israel after launching airstrike in Lebanon; Hezbollah fires rockets at Israel's Safed

AFP, Jerusalem

The Israeli military said yesterday it had killed a top Hezbollah commander it accused of overseeing rocket and anti-tank missile attacks against Israeli forces in southern Lebanon.

Abu Ali Rida, the Hezbollah commander of the Baraachit area in southern Lebanon, was "eliminated" in an airstrike, the military said, without specifying when he was killed.

Rida "was responsible for planning and executing rocket and anti-tank missile attacks on IDF (military) troops and oversaw the terrorist activities of Hezbollah operatives in the area", the military said in a statement. Israel has continued to pound Hezbollah targets in Lebanon since the war between the two sides broke out in late September.

Lebanon's Iran-backed Hezbollah group said it fired rockets at the northern Israeli city of Safed yesterday. Hezbollah fighters launched a "big rocket salvo" at the city, the group said in a statement.

Meanwhile, Israel formally notified the United Nations of its decision to sever ties with the agency supporting Palestinian refugees, it said yesterday, after lawmakers voted to ban the organisation vital to the occupied territories.

The ban, which sparked global condemnation including from key Israeli backer the United States, should come into force in late January, with the UN Security Council warning it would have severe consequences for millions of Palestinians.

- Israel tells UN it is cutting ties with UNRWA
- Berlin calls on Israel to boost aid access to north Gaza
- Death toll in Gaza rises to 43,374

BREACH OF DISCIPLINE

Another 58 trainee SIs dismissed

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh Police Academy in Sardah, Rajshahi, yesterday discharged 58 more trainee sub-inspectors (SIs) from the 40th outside cadet batch on the grounds of "breaching discipline".

With them, 310 SIs, out of 804 who started the one-year basic training on November 5 last year, have been dismissed on charges of breaching discipline just before getting into the police service.

Earlier, 252 trainee SIs of the same batch were dismissed.

A senior official of the academy yesterday confirmed that the discharge letters were sent to the home addresses of the 58 trainees.

The police academy issued show cause notices to 49 cadets on October 24 while 10 others were notified on October 21 over creating chaos by sitting randomly in training classes.

They were asked to respond within three days of receiving the show-cause notices.

SEE PAGE 10 COL 1



US music legend Quincy Jones passes away at 91

AFP, New York

Quincy Jones, the impresario who dominated American music for decades and shaped the careers of stars including Michael Jackson, has died. He was 91 years old.

He was surrounded by family at his home in the Los Angeles neighbourhood of Bel Air at the time of his death on Sunday, his publicist Arnold Robinson said in a statement, without specifying a cause.

"Tonight, with full but broken hearts, we must share the news of our father and brother Quincy Jones' passing," his family said, according to the statement.

"And although this is an incredible loss for our family, we celebrate the great life that he lived and know there will never be another like him."



Smoke rises from the site of an Israeli airstrike that targeted the southern Lebanese village of Zawtar el Charkiyeh yesterday, amid the ongoing war between Israel and Hezbollah. Inset, a man walks above the rubble following an Israeli strike in the village of Douris in the Baalbeck district of eastern Lebanon's Bekaa valley.

PHOTO: AFP

Advertorial

A. O. Smith Acquires Pureit Business in Bangladesh

Dhaka, Bangladesh—Global water technology company A. O. Smith Corporation (the "Company") (NYSE: AOS) today announced it has completed its acquisition of Pureit, a Unilever PLC business. Pureit offers a broad range of residential water purification solutions in South Asia, including a leading market position in Bangladesh.

"Pureit complements our premium brands in the market and their strength in e-commerce will allow us to expand our presence in that channel," said Kevin J. Wheeler, the Company's chairman and chief executive officer. "This acquisition aligns with our strategy of adding scale and enhances our premium water treatment product portfolio and distribution footprint."

Pureit was first launched in 2004 in Chennai, India, to provide accessible and safe drinking water to the fast-growing populations of South Asia, and beyond. Today Pureit is a leading water purification business operating in India, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Vietnam and Mexico, among other markets, with a diversified product offering across devices, filters and spares.

"We are excited to welcome Pureit to the A. O. Smith family. Pureit's history of providing effective water purification solutions has made them a leader in the water industry," said Parag Kulkarni, president of A. O. Smith Indian Water Products Private Limited. "Our cultures align closely, emphasizing innovation, best-in-class customer service and premium products. Together, we will

elevate our brand and expand our reach and impact across South Asia."

"We are thrilled to join forces with A. O. Smith, a global leader in water technology, to bring enhanced water purification solutions to Bangladesh. This acquisition marks an exciting chapter for Pureit in Bangladesh as we leverage A. O. Smith's expertise to further our commitment to providing safe and pure drinking water to our customers," added Sarifuddin Nawroz Ahmed, Pureit's head of business in Bangladesh. "Together, we aim to elevate standards in water purification, delivering innovative and reliable solutions to meet the growing needs of our community."

The agreement to acquire Pureit was announced earlier this year, and the acquisition will not have a material impact on the Company's earnings in the first year.

About A. O. Smith

Celebrating its 150th year of business, A. O. Smith Corporation, with headquarters in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, is a global leader applying innovative technology and energy-efficient solutions to products manufactured and marketed worldwide. Listed on the New York Stock Exchange (NYSE: AOS), the Company is one of the world's leading manufacturers of residential and commercial water heating equipment and boilers, as well as water treatment products. For more information, visit www.aosmith.com.

SOURCE: A. O. Smith Corporation