



Medicine prices won't rise after LDC graduation

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Saudi makes cricket foray with IPL auction

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Israeli strikes kill 120 in 48 hours

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61pc want polls within a year, 65.9pc prefer reforms: survey

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CROWD CONTROL Police seek to stop use of lethal weapon

Recommendations to be submitted to IGP, ministry

SHARIFUL ISLAM and RAFIUL ISLAM

The police may stop using lethal weapons and lead pellets for crowd control as their widespread use during the July mass uprising led to massive casualties and global criticism.

The process is underway to make time-befitting regulations on the use of firearms, said Enamul Haque Sagor, assistant inspector general (media) at the Police Headquarters.

The Police Headquarters has already formed a committee, led by a deputy inspector general, to recommend non-lethal methods for controlling crowds and unlawful assemblies.

"We have been discussing banning the use of long barrel firearms even in case of rowdy protests," said an additional inspector general seeking anonymity.

The Police Headquarters has already formed a committee, led by a deputy inspector general, to recommend non-lethal methods for controlling crowds and unlawful assemblies.

Police will use small arms like in developed countries in extreme cases of necessity in line with the UN guidelines to which Bangladesh is a signatory, he added.

The committee's recommendations will be given to the IGP for review and then to the ministry for finalisation, said a committee member.

Around 1,500 people lost their lives during the July uprising, while 19,931 others got injured, said Chief Adviser Muhammad Yunus while addressing the nation on the completion of 100 days of the interim government on November 17.

Members of the police, Rab, Border Guard Bangladesh and other forces fired on the protesters during demonstrations that began on July 14. Many victims suffered permanent disabilities, with more than 400 losing eyesight due to lead pellet injuries.

The Daily Star analysed the pattern of injuries of 204 people who died as of August 1 and found that almost 95 percent of them were killed by bullets, including live rounds and shotgun pellets.

Of them, 113 were shot in the head, chest, stomach and abdomen.

Lawyers for Energy, Environment and Development analysed 100 cases filed with 22 police stations in Dhaka and Chattogram.

The analysis showed that lethal weapons like 7.62mm semi-automatic rifles, submachine guns, BD08 assault rifles, Taurus 9mm revolvers and Type 54 pistols had been used.

The law enforcement agencies gave priority to using lethal weapons over other methods of riot control, the analysis showed.

During the 1971 Liberation War, the police put up resistance against the Pakistan Army at Rajarbagh Police Lines with .303 rifles.

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Dublar Char of the Sundarbans hosts one of the largest dried fish markets in the country -- Shutki Palli. Dried fish worth around Tk 300 crore is sent all over the country from this market. Local fishermen are allowed to catch and dry fish for six months every year, and over 35 thousand people are involved in the process of making shutki, which takes around three to five days. Wholesalers buy the dried fish from here at Tk 500-550 per kg. The photo was taken recently.

PHOTO: HABIBUR RAHMAN

Election delay could lead to more conspiracies

Says Tarique Rahman



STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP acting chairman Tarique Rahman has said that a delay in holding the next general election will lead to "more conspiracies".

"The autocracy that was overthrown through a popular uprising is not sitting idle. They are continuously conspiring with their local and foreign masters," said Tarique, virtually addressing a programme held at Chuadanga town football field yesterday.

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Doing business gets harder for gas, power shortage

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Insufficient gas and power supply, increased fuel prices and inflation have escalated production costs in Bangladesh, making doing business here harder, said top business leaders at a discussion yesterday.

Though the industrial sector pays the highest utility tariffs, it has been getting less than half of its demand for gas.

The energy sector was one of the pillars of criminalisation of the previous government, said Commerce Adviser Sheikh Bashir Uddin at a discussion titled "Ways of Mitigating Energy Crisis in the Industrial Sectors" organised by the Bangladesh Chamber of Industries (BCI).

"I had to stand in the rain in front of the residence of the former state minister for power, energy and mineral resources [Nasrul Hamid] to get a gas connection to my industry with my own expenses," said Bashir, the managing director of Akij Bashir Group, which has concerns in ceramics, glass, steel and polymers.

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"I had to pay a bribe of Tk 20 crore to the road authorities for digging up the road to lay the 40km gas pipeline."

SHEIKH BASHIR UDDIN, commerce adviser

BB's leniency to blame for ailing banking sector

Single-borrower exposure limit disregarded in last 16 years

MD MEHEDI HASAN

Banking rules and regulations stipulate a single borrower exposure limit but the banking regulator itself disregarded the rule routinely in the last 16 years.

Bangladesh Bank always allowed the limit to be exceeded on special consideration, which put the state-run banks in an ailing condition.

Banks are not allowed to lend more than 25 percent of their paid-up capital to a single party, as per the act.

But the surprising move is that some lenders provided more than 500 percent as loans of their paid-up capital.

For instance, state-run Janata Bank's loan exposure to Beximco Group stood at Tk 25,000 crore, which is about 950 percent of the lenders' paid-up capital.

As much as Tk 19,000 crore of the Beximco loans has become defaulted.

The sprawling conglomerate took the huge amount of loans as the central bank allowed Janata to breach the limit.

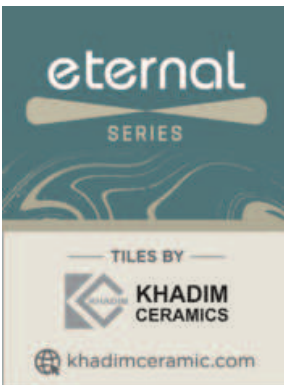
In August last year, the banking regulator gave a no-objection certificate to extend loans amounting to Tk 479 crore to Beximco although the amount violated Janata's single borrower exposure limit.

Despite objections from the Department of Off-Site Supervision, the central bank wing responsible for monitoring and regulating banks, then governor Abdur Rouf Talukder gave the exemption to Beximco.

Not only the case of Beximco, the BB allowed state-run banks to exceed the exposure limit for so many conglomerates including S Alam Group, Orion Group and Bashundhara Group.

The controversial S Alam Group took out a huge amount of loans from Islami Bank. The Chattogram-based

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10 die of dengue in a day

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

At least 10 more people died of dengue in the 24 hours preceding 8:00am yesterday, according to the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS).

Another 886 patients were hospitalised with dengue across the country during the same period.

Hospitals in Dhaka Division reported eight deaths, including four in the capital. Barishal and Chattogram divisions each recorded one death.

With the latest deaths and hospitalisations, the death toll this year has reached 448, and the total number of cases stands at 85,712, said a DGHS press release.

A total of 3,808 dengue patients were undergoing treatment at hospitals nationwide at 8:00am yesterday.

Besides, 81,456 dengue patients have been discharged till yesterday.



Traders and their employees blocked the Pragati Sarani in front of the capital's Jamuna Future Park yesterday morning to protest the recent thefts at several shops in the mall. The protest led to a severe traffic congestion on the road.

PHOTO: STAR

Picnic trip turns fatal for three univ students

They die from electrocution as bus drives into electrical wire



Mahin



Naeem



Shakib

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Gazipur

What was supposed to be a joyous trip to a picnic turned into a tragedy when three university students were electrocuted to death in a bus in Gazipur yesterday.

The dead are identified as Mozammel Hossain Naeem, 24; Mostakim Rahman Mahin, 22; and Jobair Alam Shakib, 22, of Islamic University of Technology (IUT) in the district's Boardbazar area.

At least 15 other students were also injured from electrocution, said police.

According to law enforcers and witnesses, around 400 students of IUT left the campus in the morning and were on their way to Matir Maya Eco Resort in Gazipur's Sreepur upazila.

They were traveling in six BRTC double-decker buses and three minibuses, all of which passed through a regional road in front of the Udaykhali China Project in

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