



Need strategic leadership to address nat'l challenges

Says army chief  
STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Chief of Army Staff General Waker-Uz Zaman yesterday stressed the need for strategic, reform-oriented leadership to address complex national challenges and improve institutional effectiveness. He made the remarks while speaking as the chief guest at the certificate distribution ceremony of the Capstone Course at the National Defence College (NDC).

Reflecting on past  
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A woman tries to step over the divider on a highway to get to the other side while her family members wait beside her. This dangerous act could lead to an accident at any moment. The photo was taken from the Dhaka-Mawa Expressway yesterday.

PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN

COURT CORNER

Confiscate Dubai flat of Benazir's daughter: court

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday ordered the relevant authorities to confiscate a flat in Dubai owned by Tahseen Raisa Binte Benazir, daughter of former IGP Benazir Ahmed, in a case filed over amassing illegal wealth in December last year. Judge Md Zakir Hossain passed the order after investigation officer Muhammad Jaynal Abedin, also an ACC deputy director, submitted an application in this regard, said Aktarul Islam, public relations officer of ACC. The court also ordered the freezing of 144,497.82 AED (Arab Emirates Dirham) owned by Tahseen. According to the ACC, the flat is located in Dubai Thunayah-3 Residential Area, and its market value is 40 lakh AED.

JULY ATROCITIES  
ICT rejects bail of Tawfiq-e-Elahi

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The International Crimes Tribunal (ICT) yesterday rejected the bail petition of Tawfiq-e-Elahi Chowdhury, former energy adviser to ousted prime minister Sheikh Hasina, in a case filed for crimes against humanity during the July mass uprising. The three-member bench led by Justice Golam Mortuza Mazumder passed the order and said, "There is no tangible grounds for bail."

RAMNA BATAMUL BLAST  
HC fixes May 13 for verdict

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday started delivering its verdict on the death references and appeals in the 2001 Ramna Batamul carnage case, which left 10 people dead during Pahela Baishakh celebrations in Dhaka. The bench of Justice Mustafa Zaman Islam and Justice Nasreen Akter began the delivery of the judgement at 11:30am and continued till 1:00pm. Later, the bench set May 13 to deliver the rest of the verdict.

SC set to deliver verdict on Azharul's appeal May 27

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Supreme Court yesterday fixed May 27 for delivering verdict on an appeal challenging the death penalty of Jamaat-e-Islami leader ATM Azharul Islam for crimes against humanity during the Liberation War. A seven-member bench headed by the chief justice set the date. Several Jamaat leaders and activists were present in the court during the proceedings. On February 27, the SC allowed Azharul to move a fresh appeal before the court challenging his death penalty. The SC had upheld Azharul's death sentence on October 31, 2019.

CLIMATE CHANGE  
1.9cr at risk of displacement by 2050: speakers

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Without effective action, around 1.9 crore people in Bangladesh could be displaced by slow-onset climate disasters by 2050, said Professor Tasneem Siddiqui at a workshop yesterday. The workshop, titled "Introduction and Stakeholder Consultation on the National Strategy on Internal Displacement due to Climate Change 2021", was organised by the Refugee and Migratory Movement Research Unit (RMMRU) at a hotel in the capital. Prof Tasneem, executive director of RMMRU, said although many action plans and strategies are formulated, they often remain unimplemented due to budget constraints. However, she noted that this particular national strategy on

climate-induced displacement is being implemented in different areas. "We want the government to allocate resources to support this strategy," she said. Participants also discussed a template that is currently being developed by Bangladesh to help Climate Vulnerable Forum (CVF) countries prepare their own national strategies for managing internal displacement. Bangladesh presented its national strategy at the United Nations Climate Conference (COP26) in 2021, when the then CVF secretary general requested Bangladesh to develop a standardised template. Nazrul Islam, secretary of the Ministry of Housing and Public Works, said, "We

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Govt aims to open 3rd terminal by December  
3 advisers visit Dhaka airport

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Three advisers yesterday visited the third terminal of Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport in Dhaka to witness the progress of the major infrastructure project. Civil Aviation Adviser Sheikh Bashir Uddin, Foreign Affairs Adviser Md Touhid Hossain, and Energy Adviser Muhammad Fauzul Kabir Khan inspected the newly built terminal and received a briefing on its development and operational readiness. Once operational, the terminal is expected to significantly improve Bangladesh's aviation sector by increasing both passenger and cargo handling capacity. In January, CAAB reaffirmed plans to inaugurate the terminal by the end of 2025. However, CAAB Chairman Bhuiyan told The Daily Star that they are now aiming to open it by December this year. The project, launched on December 28, 2019, involves an investment of Tk 21,300 crore, with Tk 5,000 crore from the government and the rest financed by the Japan International Cooperation Agency.

TALKS WITH POLITICAL PARTIES  
Finalise plan for 2nd phase without delay  
Yunus tells Consensus Commission



STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus has directed the National Consensus Commission (NCC) to finalise the action plan for the second phase of discussions with political parties without delay. Yunus, who also chairs the NCC, praised the constructive and positive stance taken by political parties during the initial round of reform discussions. He gave the directive while presiding over a meeting of the commission held at the state guest house Jamuna yesterday. The second phase of dialogue with political parties is expected to begin on May 15. The meeting reviewed the commission's overall progress, particularly the outcomes of the first phase of talks with political parties. The hour-and-a-half-long meeting was attended by the commission's Vice Chair Prof Ali Riaz and members Badiul Alam Majumdar, Iftekharuzzaman, Justice Emdadul Haque, Safar Raj Hossain, and Dr Mohammad

Ayub Miah. Among others, Law Adviser Asif Nazrul, Planning Adviser Prof Wahiduddin Mahmud, Housing and Public Works Adviser Adilur Rahman Khan, Environment Adviser Syeda Rizwana Hasan, Energy and Roads Adviser Muhammad Fauzul Kabir Khan, and Information Adviser Mahfuj Alam were present. The NCC was formed to build national consensus on reform. It officially began its work on February 15. Key recommendations from different reform commissions – such as the Constitution Reform Commission, Electoral System Reform Commission, etc. – were sent to 39 political parties, seeking specific feedback. So far, 35 parties have responded. The commission began formal discussions on March 20 to finalise recommendations from the reform commissions. Initial discussions have already been completed with 27 political parties.

Reduce corporate tax to 10% for newspapers

Proposes NOAB president at meeting with info adviser



STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government wants to see positive competition among newspapers, said Information and Broadcasting Adviser Mahfuj Alam yesterday. "There are still some negative practices in the newspaper industry that must be stopped," he said during a discussion with the Newspaper Owners' Association of Bangladesh (NOAB) at the ministry's conference room. On media reforms, the adviser said the government has already started working on implementing the recommendations of the Media Reform Commission. He expressed hope for the cooperation of all stakeholders in this process.

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Employees of The Daily Star donate blood at a programme marking World Thalassemia Day yesterday. The blood drive was organised by Bangladesh Thalassemia Foundation and was held at The Daily Star Centre in the capital. The event aimed to raise awareness about thalassemia and promote voluntary blood donation. Inset, Prof Dr Syeda Masooma Rahman, vice-chairman of the foundation, was in attendance at the programme.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

'Press freedom should not depend on political will'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The media must first prove its integrity and public value before seeking recognition in the Constitution as the fourth estate, said Amar Desh Editor Mahmudur Rahman yesterday. He made the remarks at a seminar titled "Media Reform: Problems and Solutions", jointly organised by Dhaka Reporters Unity (DRU) and the Journalist Community of Bangladesh at the DRU auditorium, marking World Press Freedom Day. Mahmudur alleged that the ousted prime minister Sheikh Hasina systematically weakened public and private institutions over the past 15 years, with journalism, the judiciary, and the police being the most affected. "Senior editors degraded journalism through flattery. When editors

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