

## IMF extends deadline on Agrani Bank management

REJAUL KARIM BYRON

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) has accepted a government request to extend by five months the deadline for appointing a skilled management to the Agrani Bank.

The condition tagged with the IMF-funded poverty reduction growth facilities (PRGF) programme suggested that the government appoint the management by October 30, 2003.

The new deadline has been fixed for March 1, 2004 in an understanding reached at a meeting between the visiting IMF mission and officials of the finance ministry and Bangladesh Bank (BB).

As per the understanding, the finance ministry will publish advertisements by September 11 in two local newspapers and an international magazine, inviting offers from interested consulting firms.

The offers should be submitted in this month to the working group

SEE PAGE 11 COL 4

## High security for seaports soon

Govt bows to developed nations' 9/11 terror scare

RAFIQ HASAN

Security at the two seaports is going to be stepped up following pressure from the developed nations in the wake of terrorist attacks on the United States on September 11, 2001.

The Chittagong and Mongla ports will have to put up security borders demarcating safe areas, install close-circuit cameras and form own security forces to ensure security and check smuggling of arms and explosives.

Besides, Bangladesh flag-carriers will have to beef up security at vulnerable spots onboard.

The special security measures are going to be adopted to comply with the International Ship and Port Security (ISPS) Code, shipping ministry sources said.

A high-powered government

committee led by Director General of the shipping department Ahsanul Azim gave the port authorities a four-month deadline to implement the code. The committee was constituted in July to monitor the progress of the code implementation.

The 'International Maritime Organisation (IMO) worked out the code for implementation by May next year under pressure from the developed countries in the aftermath of terror attacks on the World Trade Centre in the US.

"If a country does not comply with the code it will face tremendous economic pressure and the IMO member states will avoid its ports," said a high official of the ministry.

Officials at the shipping ministry told The Daily Star that the committee asked the port authorities to prepare a plan of action and take

necessary approvals from the government.

It also asked local shipping companies to update their vessels to comply with the code, the source said.

The IMO officials will visit Bangladesh to see the progress in the implementation of the code.

As part of strengthening security, the coast guard will strengthen patrol in the port areas round the clock to cut theft, piracy and other crimes.

Chittagong Port Authority has agreed to give a patrol boat to the coast guard, a shipping ministry source said.

Besides, the government has decided to install four container scanners, two each at Chittagong Port and the Inland Container Depot at Kamalapur.

SEE PAGE 11 COL 6



PHOTO: AFP

A Thai farmer stands 'crucified' with rice sheaves before the US Embassy in Bangkok yesterday, to protest against the World Trade Organisation's new round of trade liberalisation talks in Cancun, Mexico.

## Israel offers anti-terrorism tech, Phalcons to India

Vajpayee, Sharon to fight 'common threat'

AGENCIES, New Delhi

Israel yesterday offered to give 'unmost support' to India in training and materials to fight terrorism. It also held talks on a billion-dollar deal on Phalcon radar systems which would be signed within weeks.

The offers took place on the sidelines of Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon's 4-day visit to India which began yesterday.

Related stories on page 9

Sharon and his Indian counterpart Atal Behari Vajpayee vowed to fight the common threat of "terrorism" together as the Israeli prime minister arrived in New Delhi to boost fast-growing political and military ties.

Vajpayee, hosting a banquet for the Israeli leader after one-on-one talks, said an "aspect of our common experience is the menace of terrorism."

"Bilaterally and on the international plane, we are contributing to

SEE PAGE 11 COL 7



PHOTO: AFP

Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon, left, and Indian Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee shake hands during a welcome ceremony at the Presidential Palace in New Delhi yesterday.

## HC verdict on quashment of Airbus purchase case against Khaleda today

UNB, Dhaka

The High Court will deliver judgement on the petition to quash the Airbus purchase scam case against Prime Minister Khaleda Zia today.

The corruption charge against Khaleda Zia, Saifur Rahman, Abdul Mannan and seven others was brought by the Bureau of Anti-corruption during the Awami League rule.

A vacation bench comprising Justice Mohammad Joydul Abedin and Justice Tariqul Hakim yesterday heard final arguments on the petition.

SEE PAGE 11 COL 6

## Dhaka-Agartala bus Inaugural run in less than two weeks

UNB, Agartala

The Dhaka-Agartala bus service will begin any day between September 19 and 21, according to a decision taken at an official meeting here yesterday.

The operation-level joint meeting on the Agartala-Dhaka bus service at the Secretariat Building of Tripura Government finalised details of the much-awaited cross-border road transport operations.

Bangladesh Road Transport Corporation (BRTC) Chairman Taimur Alam Khondokar led the

SEE PAGE 11 COL 5

## Tigers buried under run avalanche

HASAN MASOOD from Multan

Bangladesh crashed to a 137-run defeat against Pakistan in the first of the five-match one-day international series at Multan yesterday.

Chasing a mammoth Pakistan total of 323 for three, the visitors lost way after losing opener Mohammad Ashraful in the very first over and were eventually all out for 186 in 43.2 overs.

Earlier, electing to bat first, Pakistan rode on the brilliance of makeshift opener Yasir Hameed and two quick-fire fifties from captain Inzamam-ul-Haq and Younis Khan.

Hameed, who scored 171 and 105 on debut in the first Test at Karachi, smashed 116, his first ODI hundred in six appearances, to lay the foundation for Pakistan's massive total.

In his 132-ball innings, the 25-

year-old hit a six and 14 boundaries.

He shared a crucial 120-run partnership with one-down Younis Khan after Pakistan lost their first wicket on 62. Younis was run out for 49 after fast bowler Mashrafe bin-Mortuza hit the stumps off his follow through following confusion between the batsmen.

By the time Hameed was caught by Rajin Saleh at covers off Alok Kapali, Pakistan were firmly placed on 211 in 39 overs. Inzamam and Younis then bludgeoned the Bangladesh bowling in putting 112 runs in the last eleven overs for the unbroken fourth wicket.

Younis hammered 59 off just 31 balls with three sixes and four boundaries while Inzamam scored 56 off 48 balls with seven fours and

SEE PAGE 11 COL 4

## Land-filling of Jamuna stayed for a week

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Supreme Court yesterday stayed for a week a High Court (HC) order that restrained Rajuk from obstructing Jamuna Builders Limited from filling Ashulia lowlands with earth for construction.

Justice M Hamidul Huq, chamber judge of the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court, issued the stay order upon a petition by the government and fixed September 16 for the next hearing.

The HC issued a rule on Rajuk on August 24, preventing it from halting earth-filling in Ashulia, following a writ by Nurul Islam, chairman of Jamuna Builders, a leading real estate developer.

Jamuna Builders obtained the August 24 order from the HC, although another HC bench issued

SEE PAGE 11 COL 3

## Terms served out, still 19 foreigners in prison

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Nineteen foreigners are yet to be released from Dhaka Central Jail even after serving out their prison terms, a human rights investigation report said yesterday.

Among them, 11 are from India, two from Sri Lanka, two from Nepal, and the other four from Tanzania, East Africa, Myanmar and Saudi Arabia.

A three-member investigation team of Bangladesh Society for the Enforcement of Human Rights headed by Advocate Elina Khan observed that Zerin Khan Nishu of Myanmar served out her terms on February 24, 1996, spending an extra term of seven years six months and seven days till August 31.

Indian nationals Kanaiya and Nisha Devi served out on April 9, 1998 but have not been released. Kartik Biswas, M Mahub and Shamsher Khan of India, Hasan Hameez of

SEE PAGE 11 COL 5

## Irrigation fair starts today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The two-day agricultural fair organised jointly by the International Rice Research Institute (IRRI) and Bangladesh Rice Research Institute (BRRI) begins at a city hotel today.

The fair coincides with the first ever Board of Trustees' (BoT) meeting of the Irrigation in Bangladesh.

Agriculture Minister MK Anwar would inaugurate the fair at the Dhaka Sheraton Hotel. Chairperson of the BoT Angeline S Kamba, Director General of the Irrigation Department and other trustees would be present on the occasion, an Irrigation press release said yesterday.

The fair would provide a glimpse of present technologies available for

SEE PAGE 11 COL 6

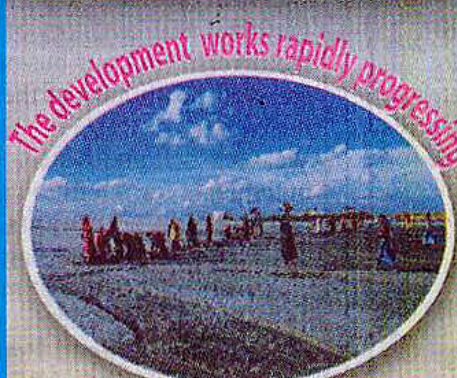
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