



PHOTO: STAR

The People's Alliance against WTO stages a rally at the Central Shaheed Minar in Dhaka yesterday in protest at the World Trade Organisation ministerial meeting being held at the Mexican resort of Cancun.

## Three industrial nations to hire Bangladeshi workers soon

RAFIQ HASAN

Three major industrial countries -- Italy, Malaysia and South Korea -- are about to start recruiting Bangladeshi workers.

"The recruitment will start as soon as we sign memorandum of understanding with these countries," said Dalil Uddin Mondal, secretary in charge of the Ministry of Expatriates Welfare and Overseas Employment.

Of the three, Europe's leading industrial giant, Italy, has decided to recruit workers for the first time from Bangladesh and seven other developing countries.

"Italy is going to recruit workers from our country despite reports on the alleged presence of a few thousand illegal Bangladeshis there," said a high official of the ministry.

The Italian parliament recently gave thumb up to a bill on international co-operation for mobility and decided to hire workers from eight developing nations, sources said.

As per the decision, Italy will hire

300 workers from Bangladesh this year. It will also recruit 1,000 workers from Albania, 600 from Tunisia, 500 from Morocco, 3,00 from Egypt, 200 from Nigeria, 300 from Sri Lanka and 200 from Moldavia.

An agreement to resuming manpower export to Malaysia is also at the final stage. The two countries have already agreed on terms and conditions, and the agreement would be signed soon, the source said.

Both Malaysia, which recruited nearly half a million workers in 1996-97, and South Korea stopped recruiting Bangladeshi workers since 1998 amid huge inflow of illegal workers.

The South Korean vice-foreign minister meanwhile arrives in Dhaka on September 18 to discuss issues including recruitment of workers.

"We hope to sign a MoU with South Korea by November," the

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## 8 killed in road mishaps

OUR CORRESPONDENTS, Pabna/ Tangail

Eight people were killed and 30 injured in separate road accidents in Tangail yesterday and Pabna Tuesday night.

Among them, four were killed and 20 injured at Gangair under Modhupur upazila in Tangail yesterday morning, while another four were killed and 10 injured at Sarail Kandi of upazila in Pabna.

Police and locals said a

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## Lawyers' black day today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Six-point Demand Implementation Committee of lawyers observes a black day today, demonstrating a boycott on the courts countrywide in protest of the interference of the government with the judiciary.

The committee yesterday at a press conference on the Supreme Court premises asked the lawyers to observe the day by wearing black badges, flying black flags and arranging meetings and rallies. The

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## Bangladesh for gene revolution to meet rising crop demand

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government stand on the much debated 'frontier research' in agriculture is that it will step into a 'gene revolution' to reap the benefits of genetic engineering in crop sector, keeping in view the rise in population and decline in arable lands in Bangladesh.

This was disclosed by Agriculture

Minister M K Anwar while inaugurating a two-day fair titled Tomorrow's Technology for Food and Nutrition Security displaying rice research and technological developments in Bangladesh at the Winter Garden of Hotel Sheraton yesterday.

The International Rice Research Institute (IRRI) and Bangladesh Rice Research Institute (BRRI) jointly

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## 'Gunrunner' held with M16

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

A suspected gunrunner was arrested with an M16 assault rifle and ammunition at the offshore upazila of Moheshkhali in Cox's Bazar during a pre-dawn police raid yesterday.

Jamir Uddin, a notorious pirate, was arrested from his house at Saraital under Materbari Union at around 6:00am. He will be produced before the court today for remand, police said.

According to his confession, police dug up the M-16 and a magazine with seven rounds of bullets from under the floor of the house.

The M-16 and the ammunition had been looted from another notorious criminal Rezaul Karim who was killed by his rivals at a shrimp enclosure in Ukhiya of Cox's Bazar on August 7, sources said.

Ukhiya police had since been looking for Jamir Uddin in connec

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## Tk 89 crore T&T bond floated

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government has floated a three-year T&T Treasury Bond-2005 worth Tk 89 crore to finance digital telephone networks of state-owned Bangladesh Telegraph and Telephone Board (BTTB), sources said.

The raised proceeds will be used to finance the BTTB's 66,000 digital telephone lines as part of the total project cost of Tk 100 crore.

The Bangladesh Bank (BB) has floated tender in this regard Tuesday, seeking proposals from the commercial banks and financial institutions. The auction is scheduled to be held on September 29.

The BB has set an interest rate of 7 per cent for the telecom bonds, an

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	Sun Rises	Sun Sets
Sept 11		6-07 pm
Sept 12	5-44 am	

Prayer Timings		
September 11		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fair	4-45	5-10
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	4-33	5-00
Maghrib	6-16	6-20
Esha	8-00	8-30

Source: Islamic Foundation

## BB to adopt new method in FDI estimation

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Bangladesh Bank (BB) has decided to adopt an internationally accepted method to calculate the exact amount of annual foreign direct investment (FDI) in light of the gross disparities in FDI calculation by the central bank and the Board of Investment (BOI).

In its recent World Investment Report 2003, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (Unctad) said FDI, a key ingredient of economic growth

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## Hasina asks for snap polls

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Main opposition Awami League (AL) President Sheikh Hasina has demanded snap polls 'to rescue people from the misrule of the coalition government'.

Talking to newsmen at her hotel yesterday evening, Hasina said, "We now want election immediately and this government must go. We will launch a massive movement with various programmes to topple this government."

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## ADB funds for Sundarbans suspended

STAR REPORT

The Asian Development Bank (ADB) has suspended its loan and two associated technical assistance grants for a conservation project in the Sundarbans.

The project encountered difficulties with its design and implementation, including lack of adequate financial management. Suspension of the loan and grants followed consultation with Bangladesh government, the ADB said in a statement yesterday.

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But, she said, the mid-term election must be free and fair. However, she did not specify any timeframe for the mid-term polls.

Hasina also pointed out that the structure of the caretaker government has to be overhauled before the election is held.

"We will make some proposals on how to improve the caretaker government system so that it can play an impartial role," the former prime minister said. "The caretaker gov