

Govt transfers 722 project staff to revenue sector

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government has taken a decision to transfer 722 employees of a project under the Ministry of Women and Children Affairs to the revenue sector following the employees' series of demonstrations for the last two weeks.

"We have taken the decision on humanitarian ground," State Minister for Women and Children Affairs Alamgir Kabir said at a press briefing at the ministry yesterday.

He said the ministry has sent a letter to the finance ministry for allocation of Tk 6 crore for paying arrears to the employees of the project named Women Suffering from Food Insecurity.

The posts of the employees, however, will not be changed, he said.

As the project completed on

# One-fourth child workers doing hazardous jobs

MD HASAN

About 22.9 percent of the country's total child workers are forced into different hazardous jobs and they come from families with financial hardship, says a recent survey report.

The survey, conducted by Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS), titled 'Baseline Survey for Determining Hazardous Child Labour Sectors in Bangladesh 2005', also revealed that the chil-

dren work at hazardous jobs as they cannot find any other better job to alleviate the financial woes of their dear ones.

About 66.8 per cent of the child workers are sent to these jobs by their parents, the survey reports.

Around 16.2 per cent child workers engage themselves in these jobs on their own and 15.4 per cent are introduced to employers through the children's friends and relatives.

BBS in collaboration with

International Labour Organisation's International Program on the Elimination of Child Labour (ILO-IPEC) worked in 45 sectors of different establishments in the country to study children working in hazardous conditions.

The survey said, "Most important reason for children to work for additional income is to help their parents burdened with debt".

The survey found that of the

Criminal killed in 'shootout' with Rab

OUR CORRESPONDENT, N'ganj

A criminal was killed in a 'shootout' between his cohorts and members of Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) at Bhuiyargh of Fatullah in Narayanganj early yesterday.

The deceased, Ruhul Amin, 29, a ruling BNP activist, was involved in criminal activities in Demra and Shyampur areas, local sources said.

Rab sources said members of Rab-11 arrested Ruhul, wanted in 21 cases including three murder cases, from Noorpur area in Shyampur on Wednesday.

Rab claimed following Ruhul's confessional statement, a Rab team took him to Bhuiyargh graveyard to arrest his accomplices and recover hidden arms.

As the Rab team reached the spot around 4:00am, Ruhul's accomplices opened fire on them in a bid to snatch Ruhul from their



Increasing number of vehicles plying the city streets leaves Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue in a regular gridlock during the daytime. The authorities are now widening Banglamotor part of the avenue.

RMG wage board meeting ends without results

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A meeting of the six-member board formed by the government to re-fix the minimum wage for the readymade garment (RMG) workers ended in Dhaka without any decision.

Present hostile situation of the RMG sector was the concern of all parties present in the meeting.

In a bid to reduce the misunderstanding between the garment owners and workers, Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA) representative Annisul Huq submitted financial accounts statements of seven factories covering two to three years and urged the other board members to check if those factories can afford the pay raise.

"The accounts I submitted in the meeting can be audited by any party including wage commission," Huq, also former president of BGMEA, told The Daily Star yesterday.

Minimum wage Tk 1,230 is being proposed for a new worker for six to nine months because a worker is usually upgraded after working this period, he explained.

The board will sit again next week to discuss the issue further.



The ancient Annik Mandir in Rajshahi, one of the three temples of Putia Jameendar Bari. The terracotta designs on the temple are being stolen and sold to art collectors, aristocrats and antique shops. The designs tell history through pictures curved on terracotta. These are being torn apart and in some cases an entire block is uprooted from the temple wall. But the authorities turned a blind eye to this theft of invaluable relics.

TEACHERS' DEMANDS Dialogue with govt uncertain

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Dialogue between the government and teachers on indefinite strike now seems uncertain as the education ministry is yet to fix the date while teachers have demanded immediate announcement and gazette notification over granting 100 per cent of their basic salary from the government coffers.

The government could not arrange dialogue with the agitating non-government teachers yesterday due to illness of Education Minister Osman Farruk and Prime Minister's Political Secretary Harris Chowdhury, officials said.

Meanwhile, all the teachers associations that support the strike yesterday urged the government to declare 100 per cent basic salary for them before holding the dialogue.

Chief coordinator and convener of National Front of Teachers and Employees said they will not call off their strike before realisation of their eight-point demand, especially ten per cent increase of salary, and decent house rent and medical allowance.

He also urged all teachers and employees to join their grand rally at the Central Shaheed Minar on July 24.

SEE PAGE 19 COL 7

ELECTORAL REFORMS

## 14-party to gear up street agitation

HASAN JAHD TUSHER

Awami League (AL) led 14-party opposition combine plans to step up agitations on the streets to force the coalition government to carry out the proposed reforms in the caretaker government and electoral systems before handover of power.

The opposition parties are now gearing up for six days' road march beginning on July 25. They will seek to mobilise thousands of people in the road marches to be held at union parishad and district levels across the country and in the capital.

The first day's march will start at Tongi at 4:00pm and end at Mohakhali in the capital. The march from Narayanganj Ring Road to Jatrabari will take place on July 26, from Nayabazar (2nd Buriganga Bridge) to Muktangan on July 29 and Amin Bazar to Russell Square in Dhanmondi on July 30.

Similar programmes will be observed at upazilas and district headquarters from July 27 to 28.

Talking to The Daily Star, some

opposition leaders said they believe the ongoing movement will escalate into a mass upsurge if the government tries to hand over power to the caretaker government without bringing about the reforms.

"We want to go to the upcoming election in a buoyant mood after forcing the government into implementing the electoral reforms," AL Joint General Secretary Obaidul Quader told The Daily Star.

The opposition alliance has been demonstrating for reforms in the caretaker government and Election Commission (EC) since last year. They had held a number of agitation programmes on the streets to press home the demands.

But the government remains indifferent despite the programmes like Dhaka siege, grand rallies, road, rail and river blockades, hartal, and laying siege to EC, Prime Minister's Office and Secretariat.

The possibility of a minimum consensus on the reforms agenda

BSF enters Bangladesh land, fires on BDR

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

Border Security Force (BSF) of India entered Bangladesh territory and attacked Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) personnel at Panchibi in Joypurhat yesterday morning raising tension in the area.

BDR sources said BSF members of 57 BSF Battalion entered Bangladesh territory around 6:00am and opened fire on a patrolling BDR team without any provocation. The BDR personnel of Ghashuria of Panchibi outpost retaliated and fired at the BSF men.

The BSF kept on provoking BDR with gunshots but the BDR men moved to safer places. However, there were no reports of casualties on either side.

Repair of fire-damaged tanker to cost Tk 25cr

Patenga dry-dock to do the job

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Bangladesh Shipping Corporation's (BSC) oil tanker Banglar Shourabh that was damaged by a fire on June 24 will be repaired at the state-run dry-dock at Patenga to keep the cost 'to a minimum'.

State Minister for Shipping Quamrul Islam announced the decision to make the state-run oil tanker operational again at a meeting at the conference room of Chittagong Port rest house yesterday afternoon.

At a press briefing after the meeting, he said they decided to repair the damaged BSC oil tanker at the state-run Patenga dry-dock while the work order for repair would be given after floating short tender that would help minimise the cost.

The minister, however, did not clearly say whether the repair would be possible within the earmarked cost of Tk 25 crore.

BSC Managing Director (MD) Zulfikar Haider Chowdhury said surveyors brought from Singapore by the concerned insurance company of BSC estimated the cost for

the repair at US\$ 5.1 million (around Tk 35 crore) but repairing the tanker locally would cost less than that.

Shipping Secretary Rafiqul Islam, BSC MD Zulfikar Haider Chowdhury, Chittagong Port Authority (CPA) Chairman AMM Shahadat Hossain and high officials of shipping ministry, BSC and related organisations were also present at the meeting.

Meanwhile, theft of valuable equipment was reported to have taken place on the damaged ship during its stay in the outer anchorage and after its beaching near Parky Beach.

Both the minister and the BSC MD, however, said the price of the stolen equipment would not be 'so much'.

Besides, all the equipment that appear as missing were not stolen, the BSC MD said, adding, "We bought some of the equipment to our store fearing further theft."

There are allegations that some equipment also went missing from the BSC store.

Departmental action is being taken against the people held

SEE PAGE 19 COL 8

Galib's bail prayer rejected

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Gaibandha

A Gaibandha court yesterday rejected Ahle Hadith Andolon Bangladesh chief Asadullah-Al-Galib's bail petition that defence lawyers submitted in connection with Takier Bazar and Mohimaganj Brac office bomb blast cases.

Along with Galib, five other charge sheeted accused -- ATM Taibur Rahman, Habibur Rahman alias Jubayer, Abu Sajjat alias Raju Sarder, Harun-ur-Rashid and Rawnakul Islam Khushi -- were also produced before the court of Additional Sessions Judge Md Mohosin Mollah undertight security.

The court accepted deposition

SEE PAGE 19 COL 1

# Iran rejects demands to freeze nuke work: UN

Russia may accept Iran sanctions

AFP, Tehran/ Moscow

Iran yesterday again rejected international demands to freeze its controversial nuclear programme and warned the UN Security Council against choosing a "path of confrontation".

In a statement read on state television, nuclear negotiator Ali Larjani also said Iran would take until August 22 to reply to an international offer of incentives in exchange for a halt of uranium enrichment.

But he also accused the United States, which has lumped Iran into

an "axis of evil", of trying to derail diplomatic efforts to resolve the crisis.

"According to the adopted plan to generate 20,000 megawatts of atomic energy over the next 20 years, the Islamic republic has decided to make some of its own nuclear fuel inside Iran," said the statement from Larjani, the head of Iran's Supreme National Security Council.

He said Tehran was "ready to find a diplomatic solution with a suitable calendar for both parties" but issued a warning to the Security

Council -- currently discussing ways to pressure Iran into freezing enrichment.

"If the path of confrontation is chosen instead of the path of dialogue, and if there is any action to limit the absolute rights of the Iranian people, the Islamic republic will have no choice but to revise its policy," the statement warned.

Iran says it only wants to enrich to the low levels needed to make reactor fuel and that this is a right under the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty.

SEE PAGE 19 COL 7

Rab arrests 4 criminals after gunfight

UNB, Kushtia

Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) arrested four suspected operatives of the infamous Panna Bahini, including its second-in-command Amirul, after a gunfight in Juniadah-Haripur area in Bheramara upazila yesterday afternoon.

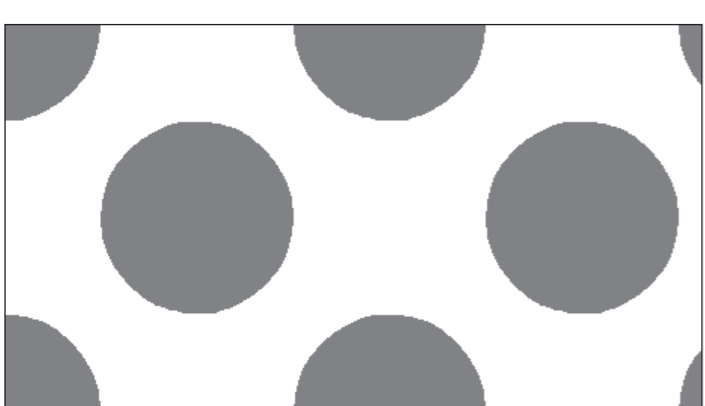
Sources said a team of Rab-5 went to the area in the guise of day-labourers to arrest the gangsters, who created a reign of terror in the villages of Char areas in Kushtia, Natore and Rajshahi districts.

Finding themselves trapped, some eight cadres of the Panna Bahini -- named after their slain

SEE PAGE 19 COL 1

Prayer Timing		
July 21		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	4-15	4-50
Juma	12-30	1-15
Asr	5-00	5-15
Maghrib	6-54	6-58
Esha	8-15	8-45

Source: Islamic Foundation



Ship-breaking worker dies

CU CORRESPONDENT

Another worker, seventh in this month, was killed yesterday at a ship-breaking yard at Sitakunda after a heavy metal plate fell on him.

The victim, Kabir Ahmed, 30, son of Bakul Mian, of Gaibandha district, was employed at Namreen Enterprise Yard at Shitalpur.

He succumbed to his injuries on the way to Chittagong Medical College Hospital.



A man ploughs land with the help of his eight-year-old son as he has no cows to pull the plough. The photo was taken from Balaghat near Buddha Bihar in Bandarban.

