METROPOLITAN/NEWS

The Daily Star

'Free, fair polls to help attract foreign investment'

EU to send 10-member pre-poll exploratory mission in Sept

UNB, Dhaka

Germany, now leading Europe as the EU chair, called for free and fair elections in Bandladesh as they think the upcoming polls would send "decisive signals" to people abroad, encouraging foreign investment in the country.

The major political parties should forge some common understanding through dialogue to ensure free and fair polls by way of making accommodation and compromise, new German Ambassador Frank Meyke said in an interview with the UNB in the city yesterday.

He said free and fair elections would be an important signal at home and abroad, not least to investors, that democracy and political stability, law and order and human rights are being strengthened in the country.

"Germany is determined to support all efforts to strengthen democracy and human rights in Bangladesh. This is our overriding objective in our relationship with Bangladesh," the envoy noted.

Meyke said the European Union would send a 10-member pre-poll exploratory mission to Dhaka on September 13

During its nine-day visit, the congenial political climate, confronmission would study the election arrangements and decide if it is useful and feasible to send an election observer mission. They existing ones would also recommend what contri-

butions the EU could make for fair

decision at the ballot box and sensi-

the ambassador also talked about

German-Bangladesh bilateral ties

trade and investment and bottle-

of transparency regarding decision-

making process, power crisis,

congested harbour of Chittagong,

and telephone communications

problems are some of the most

obvious obstacles that hold back

foreign investors from making

most important political obstacle to

foreign investment is the lack of

Besides, the envoy said, the

investment here.

necks to overseas investment.

During the hour-long interview,

tise citizens to their rights.

mentioned, the KFW was forced to withdraw 67 million Euro from The ambassador observed that Dhaka North Power Plant and 20 the Election Commission seemed to million Euro from the Rural Power be on the right track going for door-Company Ltd in Mymensingh. The funds will now be reprogrammed to to-door campaign to update the voter list. They would be able to other sectors complete the task for holding the Last year, during the governlls on time, he hoped.

ment-level negotiations, the Meyke said the EU has offered German government talked about 2.7 million Euro to support electoral million Euro of reprogrammed process with a civic awareness and new commitments, the ambasprogramme to enable the electorate sador said. in targeted areas to make informed In reply to a question, he said, "A

possible increase of commitments will be considered by the German government taking into account our own budgetary situation and good governance issues in Bangladesh. The next government-level negotiations will take place in Berlin

He pointed out that red tape, lack on October 16 to 18. Since 1971, Germany has provided bilateral technical and economic assistance amounting to 2.3

billion Euro, and since 1978, the European country has been providing grants to Bangladesh. He said trade and investment are of vital significance for economic growth, reduction of poverty and

strengthening a free and liberal society and democracy as well as human rights in Bangladesh. In two-way trade in 2004-05,

tational politics and politically motivated violence, which prevent new Bangladesh's exports to Germany investment and negatively affect the were worth USD 1353.80 million against the imports of USD 257.95 Due to lack of transparency, he million

Meyke said if congenial climate for investment is assured, German investors could make investment in textile sector, particularly RMG, IT sector and agro-based industries.

Referring to German support for Ashuganj Power Plant and financial assistance for the overhaul of blocks and 5 of the plant, he said Germany is increasingly focusing its assistance towards renewable energy (solar home systems, promotion of the use of biogas) and measures regarding energy effi-

Asked about more market access for Bangladeshi products by further relaxing the rules of origin, he said Bangladesh has been enjoying the highest possible market access through GSP and as an LDC in the bilateral relations with the EU for decades. This market access has been reassured for indefinite period under the Everything But Arms (EBA) deal 2001.

He said the EU acknowledges the difficulties associated with fulfilling rules-of-origin criteria for GSP. Accordingly, the European Commission has started working on revising the rules of origin for the generalised system of preferences. The objectives are to make the

rules simple and developmentfriendly. Because of the complexity related to the issue, the final outcome is not expected before the end of this year, the envoy said

Novera's gulkhwani held STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Qulkhwani of Novera Deepita, staff correspondent of The Daily Star, was held at her brother's residence at Dhanmondi in the city yesterday.

Relatives, friends, colleagues and admirers attended the programme and prayed for salvation of her departed soul and eternal peace.

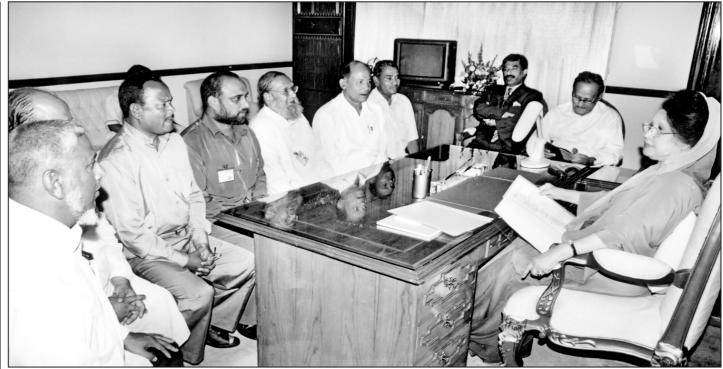
A bright journalist with shining academic records, Novera, 30, died a premature death by com-mitting suicide on July 27. She was buried at Azimpur Graveyard in the city on the following day. Novera had been working at

The Daily Star since 2003. She stood first class first in the

BA (Honours) examination from the`Department of Mass Communication and Journalism of Dhaka University in 1997.

In her midstream but impressive career, Novera had worked for a number of electronic and print media, including ATN Bangla Bangladesh Television, The Bangladesh Observer, The Independent, the daily Sangbad, ne daily Bhorer K

Ajker Kagoj, the daily Janakantha,



Prime Minster Khaleda Zia exchanges views with the leaders of Panchagar district at her office in the city yesterday as a part of her meeting with grassroots leaders.

Tributes paid to **Barrister Shawkat** STAFF CORRESPONDENT

In the fight against fundamental ism and communalism, the ideology and lifestyle of Barrister

Muhammad Shawkat Ali would act as an inspiration, said the speakers at a discussion yesterday. The memorial discussion was

organised by Ekatturer Ghatak Dalal Nirmul Committee at Women's Voluntary Association auditorium in the city.

While focusing on different aspects of Shawkat's life, acting president of the committee Shahriar Kabir said he was the epitome of non-communalism and secularism, the fundamental principles of state policy in the constitution of 1972.

"We must fight against all evil forces that are still active against the sovereignty of the country,' said Awami League Presidium Member Jahura Tajuddin.

Terming Shawkat a progressive person. Hena Das. a women's rights activist, urged the young generation to establish the spirit of liberation war for which Shawkat fought till his death.

Justice K M Sobhan, advisor of the committee, said Shawkat's arguments in a case on detention in the High Court would shine in the judicial history of Bangladesh. Prof Kabir Chowdhury said

Shawkat fought whole life to uproot all types of evils from the society. Barrister Rehan Hossain, Shawkat's grandson, Dilip Dutta

and Shyamoli Nasrin Chowdhury also spoke on the occasion.



and earthquake were taken into

account before finalising the

and its allies under the leadership

of Mayor ABM Mohiuddin

Chowdhury are trying to make the

project uncertain in the name of

suspension bridge ahead of the

next election. This is being done

with a motive to prove that the

BNP government has failed to

most of the political parties and

their leaders, including those of

Awami League and the common

people of Chittagong sincerely

want timely implementation of the

the proposed bridge would ulti-

mately be harmful for the

Chittagong port, the minister said

the government has imple-

mented and is implementing a

good number of schemes to

modernise the country's prime

support in favour of the project on

seaport involving Tk 1,300 crore.

Referring to the allegation that

In this context, Noman said

fulfill its commitment, he said.

Noman said Awami League

design," he said.

project

BSS, Chittagong

Fisheries and Livestock Minister Abdullah Al Noman yesterday called upon all not to make the Karnaphuli bridge an issue to reap political gain as he sought cooperation from all corner to help the government implement this pro-

"Please, do not capitalise on the Karnaphuli bridge issue for political gain. If anybody does so, he will virtually make hostage the people of Chittagong as the 3rd Karnaphuli bridge is a long-felt demand of this region," Noman said this while he was addressing a rally at Laldighi Maidan here.

Jatiyatabadi Jubo Dal Chittagong city unit organised the rally to protest the conspir-acy to block the work of 3rd Karnaphuli Bridge project with its President Abul Hashem Bakkar in the chair.

Sarwar Jamal Nizam MP and Dastagir Chowdhury also addressed the meeting.

Noman said the government has finalised the design of the bridge as per recommendations of the country's renowned experts, who had carried out the feasibility study and model test of this pro-

ject. "The bridge will be economically feasible, geographically and environmentally sustainable as all aspects, including possible siltation in the port channel, risk of natural calamities like cyclone

Khaleda unwraps CD on War of Liberation

BSS, Dhaka

Prime Minister Khaleda Zia formally unwrapped the cover of a multi-media CD on the history of the War of Liberation at her office in the city vesterday.

A delegation of noted intellectuals involved in making the documentary titled "Bangladesh: My Bangladesh" (Bangladesh: Amar Bangladesh) presented a copy of the CD to the PM.

The delegation included Dr Selim Al Deen, chairman of the Department of Drama and Dramatics of Jahangir Nagar University, TV personality Saleh Akram, director of the documentary Shahrul Kabir and lyricist Muniruzzaman Munir.

BNP Secretary General and LGRD and Cooperatives Minister Abdul Mannan Bhuivan, Senior Joint Secretary General Tareque Rahman and Prime Minister's Political Secretary Harris Chowdhury were present on the occasion.

The CD will be made available later to all through a launching ceremony

He urged the mayor to extend JOURNO BELAL MURDER his wholehearted support for the Trial begins smooth implementation of the bridge in the greater interest of the people of Chittagong. STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

Noman announced that a road march titled "Chalo Chalo-A Khulna court began trial of the Karnaphuli Bridge Abhimukhe Journalist Belal murder case here Chalo" (Let us move towards vesterdav Karnaphuli Bridge site) will be staged in the port city to drum up

Mashiur Rahman, Additional District and Sessions Judge (Third court), issued warrants of arrest against five prosecution witnesses as they did not appear before the court on the first day of trial for deposition.

Five prosecution witnesses are complainant of the case Sub-Inspector Aminul Islam, Md Akher Ali and Khulna Press Club emr Mohammad Ruhul Amin, Md Abul Hossain and Chand Mian. The court fixed August 28 as the next date for hearing. Charges were framed against six chargesheeted accused on June 29. Sheikh Belaluddin Ahmed, Khulna Bureau Chief of the Dainik Sangram. was severely injured in a bomb attack on the night of February 5 last year on the Khulna Press Club premises. He succumbed to his injuries on February 11 at the Combined Military Hospital in Dhaka. Two separate cases were filed with the Khulna Police Station in this connection, one under Section 302 of PBC and another explosive substances act Mohammad Iqbal, former officer-in-charge (OC) of Khulna Police Station, submitted charge sheet accusing Jamaat leader Shahabuddin Lashkar Dhira, extremists Syed Iqbal Hossain Swadhin, Mirajul Islam Miraj, Rafigul Islam, Goda Yunus and Shibir leader Ekhlasur Rahman.



PHOTO: STAR IUCN Country Representative Dr Inun Nishat speaks at a workshop on 'National Capacity Self Assessment (NCSA) for global environmental management' at Biam Multipurpose Hall in the city yesterday.

Team goes to | Bangladesh vulnerable to natural calamities Experts urged to improve technical knowledge

Malaysia to finalise manpower recruitment BSS, Dhaka

A four-member high powered delegation led by State Minister for Expatriate Welfare and Overseas Employment Lutfar Rahman Khan Azad left Dhaka yesterday morning for Malavsia to attend a meeting at Putrajaya for finalising the process of manpower recruitment.

The meeting will be held at the office of Home Minister of Malaysia Dato Seri Radzi Bin Sheikh Ahmed today, said an official handout.

Other members of the delegation are President of Bangladesh Association of International Recruiting Agencies (BAIRA) MAH Selim, MP, Secretary of the Ministry of Expatriate Welfare and Overseas Employment Ashfaque Hamid, Director General of Manpower, Employment and Training Bureau SM Wahiduzzaman.

The delegation is expected to return home tomorrow.

Rab arrests 17 brokers

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) yesterday arrested 17 brokers who used to cheat people by giving them false assurances of providing better facilities at private hospitals and clinics.

They are Sumon Mia, Hasmat Ali, Nurul Islam, Abu Sayeed, Masud, Shariful, Dablu, Kala Chand, Abdur Razzak, Suruj, Ashraf Ali, Sazzad Hossain, Tanvir, Aminul Islam, Nasir Uddin, Razzak, Polash and Chand Mia.

They were arrested in a raid at Laxmipur areas under Rajpara Police Station.

The network of brokers took away partients from government hospitals to unauthorised clinics for a long time, said a Rab press release

The process of filing a case against them is underway.

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh is extremely vulnerable to natural calamities and environmental degradation but it has little resources and technical knowledge to tackle them, speakers said yesterday

They urged the experts to work together to improve technical knowledge

They were speaking at the inaugural session of a workshop on 'National Capacity Self Assessment (NCSA) for Global Environment Management' organised by Ministry of Environment and Forest (MOEF) and IUCN- the World Conservation Union, Bangladesh, at the Biam

auditorium in the city. Jafrul Islam Chowdhury, state minister for the MOEF, attended the function as the chief quest. The minister emphasised the

UNB, Dhaka

over the country.

5:28am tomorrow.

City/Town

Dhaka

Chittagong

Cox's Bazar

Rajshahi

Khulna

Barisal

Sylhet

the weekly Ananya and also for Niriksha, a Press Institute of Bangladesh (PIB) publication. She also had a fellowship at News Network, a news agency. Novera is the daughter of Poet Rafiq Azad and Abida Bakul. obligations of Bangladesh as a

in implementing the CBD.

ment

project.

Moderately heavy falls likely

Light to moderate rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary

gusty or squally wind is likely at most places over Khulna, Barisal,

Chittagong and Sylhet divisions and at many places over Dhaka and

forecast. It said that day temperature may remain nearly unchanged

Moderately heavy falls are also likely at places, Met Office said in a

Highest temperature 35.0 degree Celsius was recorded yesterday

The sun sets in the capital at 6:43pm today and rises at

Highest and lowest temperature and humidity recorded in some

Min

26.0

25.6

26.0

25.9

25.7

25.7

25.2

Temperature

in Celsius

Rajshahi divisions in the next 12 hours until 6:00pm today.

at Sylhet and lowest 23.5 degree Celsius at Sandwip.

Max

32.3

32.4

31.5

31.5

31.5

35.0

31.5

major cities and towns yesterday were

The

secretary to MOEF.

IUCN Country Representative

Dr Inun Nishat underscored the

importance of NCSA in capacity

enhancement of the nation as a

whole in environmental manage-

NCSA Project Manager

inaugural session was

Humidity in

Morning Evening

82

74

90 82

69

81

percentage

79

88

86

85

83

83

78

Monowar Islam briefed about the

followed by a technical session

chaired by Tariq-ul-Islam, joint

signatory to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD). Results of He highlighted the achievements made so far by Bangladesh Sanskrit, Pali under the convention. He also said NCSA would enhance the capacity published

Jafar Ahmed Chowdhury, secre-BSS. Dhaka tary to the MOEF, chaired the session.

> Results of Sanskrit, Pali Addya, Madhya and Upadhi examinations of 2005 under the Bangladesh Sanskrit and Pali Education Board, Dhaka, were published yesterday.

Out of total 8.132 candidates. 7.288 came out successful. The percentage of pass was 69.63, said a press release

Of the successful candidates, 2,288 passed in first division, 3,349 in second division and 25 in third division

All Community Club executives



Club Ltd for 2006-2008, says a

press release The second bi-annual election of

the club held at the board room on July 27. The president and 20 directors

were elected unopposed. The directors are: Abu Alam Chowdhury, Md Salauddin Gazi, Md Harunur Rashid, Moazzem Hossain Moti, Abdur Rab Khan, UN Mahmudul Islam, Ashraful Haq Chowdhury, Jobaidur Rahman Milon, Md Saiful Alam, MA Baten, Emdad Hossain, Munadir Islam, Ruhul Amin Akil. Md Taherul Alam Chowdhury, Abdul Tahid Majumder, Gazi Golam Kabir Moni, Md Asad Ullah, Md Zahirul Islam, Mohammed Yousuf and Afzalul

assures reinstatement of 33 workers

BGMEA chief

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Garment Workers' Unity Forum brought out a big procession from Uttara in the city yesterday and marched towards the office of Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters' Association (BGMEA) at Karwan Bazar protesting termination of 33 workers from a garment unit and demanding implementation of their three-point demand.

When the rally was crossing Bishwa Road intersection, BGMEA President S M Fazlul Haque, who was also on his way to the office. came across the procession and wanted to know its reason. The leaders stopped the pro-

cession and presented their demands to him The BGMEA president assured

them of implementing their all demands including reinstatement of terminated workers.

He also assured them of implementing tripartite agreement signed among the government, garment owners and workers.

Later, the agitating workers returned to Uttara with the procession led by forum President Mosherefa Mishu, Shahidul Islam Sabuj, Mintoo Mian, Abdul Quddus Khan, Mehedi Hasan and Shirin Islam.

A press release of the workers unity forum claimed that the BGMEA leader has agreed to reinstall 33 retrenched workers of Hesong Garments from today and withdraw all the cases filed against them.

It said Fazlul Haque also agreed to increase BGMEA-proposed minimum wage of Tk 1230.

But the BGMEA chief told The Daily Star last night that he did not make any such commitment.

"I told them that the wage board will declare minimum wage and we are all ready to accept it," he added.

Fazlul Haque also claimed that the workers responded positively when they were asked whether they would accept the minimum wage declared by the wage board.



July 5.

PHOTO: STAR Sramik Karmachari Oikya Parishad stages a demonstration at Muktangan in the city yesterday in support of today's strike.



auditorium. Time: 4:30pm.

Seminar

6:00pm

Freshers' reception

A freshers' reception to students of BBA

12th Batch of the Department of Finance

of Dhaka University will be held. Venue:

Teacher-Student Centre. Time: 4:00pm.

Asian University of Bangladesh (AUB)

organises a seminar on 'Public key-

infrastructure and Bangladesh'. Venue

Computer Science and Engineering

auditorium, AUB Uttara campus. Time:

The first national representatives'

conference of Secular Unity

Bangladesh will be held. Venue: Xindian

A children's art competition will be held

as a part of the weeklong programme to

mark the 5th death anniversary of

eminent litterateur Ahmed Safa. Venue:

Sultan-Safa Pathshala. Time: 10:30am

restaurant, Dhanmondi. Time: 6:30pm.

Art competition

Representatives'

conference

Seminar

Inaugural ceremony

The inaugural ceremony of a meeting on 'Implementation of WHO framework convention on tobacco control organised by World Health Organisation (WHO) and Ministry of Health and Family Welfare will be held. Venue: Marble Room, Dhaka Sheraton Hotel. Time: 9:30am

Workshop

STI/ AIDS Network of Bangladesh will hold a workshop on 'Role of Media for HIV/AIDS infected and affected people' Venue: National Press Club. Time: 9:30am

Roundtable

Bhasani Somorthak Gosthi will hold a roundtable on 'Prevailing political imbalance and a way out'. Venue: National Press Club. Time: 4:00pm.

Conference

The inaugural session of the international conference on 'Japan-Saarc cooperation' will be held. Venue: Ball Room, Pan Pacific Sonargaon Hotel. Time: 10:00am.

Discussion

Nazrul Institute will organise a seminar Al-Quds Committee Bangladesh will hold a discussion on 'Israeli invasion on to mark the 100th birth anniversary of Lebanon and Palestine: Duties of poet Abdul Kadir. Venue: Nazrul Institute. Time: 11:00am Muslim Ummah.' Venue: Cirdap

Five out of six accused were present at the court.

Obituary

Afroza Begum, wife of Justice Fazlur Rahman and assistant general manager of Bangladesh Krishi Bank, passed away at Central Hospital in the city recently at the age of 49, says a press release.

She was buried at her village Osmaner Para in Gaibandha.

She left behind her husband, one son and one daughter to mourn her

Death anniversary

Today is the tenth death anniversary of Musa Ahmed, former programme manager of Bangladesh Television, says

a press release.

On the occasion, milad and doa mahfil will be held at his residence and Intellectuals' Graveyard at Mirpur in the city after Asr prayers today.

Friends, relatives and admirers have been requested to pray for salvation of the departed soul.

Musa was the youngest son of renowned folk artist Nurun Nehar and youngest brother of photojournalist Monwar Ahmed.

