

PKSF-SDF jt initiative for Monga mitigation

Social Development Foundation (SDF) and Palli Karma-Sahayak Foundation (PKSF) will launch the 2nd phase of 'Monga Mitigation Initiative Pilot Project (MMIPP)' this year to provide employment opportunities and livelihood assistance to Monga-affected families in four north-western districts, says a press release.

The four districts are Kurigram, Gaibandha, Nilphamari and Rangpur. The project will cover about 18,000 families to benefit 90,000 hard-core poor directly and 1,10,000 indirectly.

Under the MMIPP-II, the beneficiaries will be provided with training in livelihood activities that will help them to overcome the onslaught of Monga. The trained beneficiaries will be provided with a flexible micro-credit under 'Ultrapoor Programme'.

However, the most vulnerable members will be supported with

monthly allowance of Tk 600 during September-December. Moreover, 'Cash for Work' will be implemented in order to generate employment opportunities.

This programme is aimed at preventing advance sale of labour by ultrapoor/hard-core poor and ensuring food security during Monga. PKSF, SDF and PO will jointly monitor all activities under MMIPP- II. A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between PKSF and SDF was signed on August 23 in this respect.

Fakhrudin Ahmed, managing director of PKSF, Muhammad Fazlur Rahman, managing director of SDF, Mosharrif Hossain Khan, deputy managing director of PKSF and officials of the two organisations were present at the signing ceremony.

ANTI-ADULTERATION DRIVE

2 Ctg restaurant owners jailed

CU CORRESPONDENT

A mobile court in an anti-adulteration drive at the city's Sadarghat area yesterday fined two restaurants Tk two lakh and awarded imprisonment to the owners.

During the drive the court fined Café Al Munir and Shah Badar Hotel and Restaurant Tk 50000 and Tk 1.5 lakh respectively for producing, preserving and serving foods in an unhygienic condition.

Chittagong Port Authority (CPA) Magistrate Mohammad Munir Chowdhury led the anti-adulteration drive with the help of Chittagong Metropolitan Police (CMP) and officials of Bangladesh Standard Testing Institute (BSTI).

The court awarded Mohammed Yousuf, 45, owner of Café Al Munir, seven days rigorous imprisonment (RI) while Kajal Chandra Ghosh, 35, of Shah Badar Hotel and Restaurant, was awarded 15 days RI, sources said.

Both of them were sent to Chittagong Central Jail in the afternoon after realising the fines,

sources said.

The court found that Café Al Munir was producing and serving food in an unhygienic condition and preserving lower quality ghee, flour, milk and spices in its storeroom.

On the other hand, the court also found unhygienic condition in the

Shah Badar Restaurant and seized

1200 Kg of label-less tea, sugar,

salt, condensed milk, palm oil and

insect infected products including

pulse and turmeric, sources added.



The second year honours final examination 2005 under the National University begins across the country yesterday. Vice-chancellor Prof Dr. Wakil Ahmed visited some centres in the capital.

Foreign investors should up equity

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within acceptable limits, he added. Salehuddin was talking to journalists at his office after a meeting with non-bank financial institutions.

He said many foreign companies while registering with the Board of Investment (BoI) say they would operate on an equity-debt ratio of 60:40, but in practice they do the opposite, keeping the ratio at 30:70.

"We have suggested that they maintain a debt-equity ratio of 50:50," he said.

Besides, the BB has asked the foreign investors to offload a portion of their shares in the local capital market to increase the equity, added the governor.

He observed that in many countries the foreign companies take advantage of large profit repatriation in the early years of investment and offload their shares only when the profit becomes thinner.

"Eyeing a long-term benefit for the country's economic health, we are trying to persuade the companies to offload their shares in the local stock market," he said.

Regarding the BB measures, he said the central bank has already issued letters to different companies. But it is not possible to set any

rigid guidelines or force the multinationals to offload shares, he said.

"We have already asked many companies to start the process of off-loading," Dr Salehuddin said adding that some of the companies have been asked to float shares by 2007 and some by 2008.

Commenting on the external balance sheet, he said in the last fiscal, the country's balance of payments suffered a deficit due to a decline in FDI and lower aid inflow.

In FY 05-06, FDI declined by 15 per cent while foreign aid by 2 per cent, according to BB statistics.

The balance of payments in the last fiscal reported a deficit of \$ 24 million while in the preceding year it had a surplus of \$784 million.

The BB governor noted that the investment inflow into the country last year decreased because of lower fresh investment and slow-down in fresh reinvestment of the foreign companies.

"The lower external aid has also contributed to the dip in FDI," he said adding that despite the setback, the trend of FDI is still good.

Speaking on the country's previous records, he said that FDI inflow made a 'quantum jump' in FY 04-05. It rose to \$800 million from \$385 million in FY 03-04.

However, the FDI coming down

to \$675 million is not worrisome, he

noted.

Huge contraband liquor seized in Chittagong

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Narcotics control department (NCD) yesterday seized a huge quantity of contraband liquor including whisky, vodka and beer.

A special team of NCD seized the liquor in a raid at an old Ration Shop Godown at Railway Power House Colony at around 4:00pm.

The seized liquors include Mackenzie brand whisky 62 bottles, White and Mackey brand whisky 32 bottles, Pass Port Whisky 24 bottles, Smyrnak Whisky 36 bottles, Hundred Pipers Whisky 17 bottles, Teachers Whisky 6 bottles, Highland Chief Whisky 3 bottles, Alva Lopa Vodka 27 bottles, Red Bore Vodka 23 bottles, Atlas Beer 624 cans, Hanicane Beer 498 cans, Foster Beer 84 cans and Bicks Bottle Beer 420 bottles.

Opposition road march reaches Manikchhari

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Rangamati

The road march of Awami League-led 14-party opposition combine virtually turned into a pre-election campaign on its fourth day yesterday as the marchers reached Manikchhari in Rangamati from Khagrachhari.

Thousands of party leaders and activists and people from all walks of life marched down the road chanting slogans in favour of reforms to caretaker government system and the Election Commission (EC).

The five-day road march that started from Noakhali seeks to mobilise people to force the four-party alliance government to accept the opposition's reform proposals.

A large number of leaders and activists of AL and its front organisations in Rangamati district lined up along the road to welcome the marchers and also joined the march.

Speaking at a wayside rally,

Chittagong City Corporation Mayor ABM Mohiuddin Chowdhury urged the party men and people to elect the candidates nominated by opposition leader and AL President Sheikh Hasina.

He also said that the CHT peace accord would be properly implemented if the 14-party is voted to power. The indigenous people will also be given the constitutional recognition, he added.

Reiterating the demand for electoral reforms, the 14-party leaders warned that no election would be allowed unless reforms are implemented.

JSD leader Moinuddin Khan Badal, Chittagong city AL President Enamul Haque Danu and Secretary Khoreshedul Alam, Rangamati AL President Dipankar Talukder and Secretary Md Selim Chowdhury and AL Vice-President Mahabubur Rahman spoke at the rally.

KILLING OF RANA

None arrested yet

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

None has been arrested yet in Rana murder case, a college student who was beaten to death at Dhaka Dental College dormitory at Sobhanbagh for allegedly stealing a cell phone.

Jahangir Miah, the investigation officer (IO) of this case claimed that a mobile set went missing from the dormitory half an hour before the incident.

Dormitory students might have killed Rana suspecting him to be the stealer, as stealing is a frequent incident in the dormitory, he added.

"Many of our valuables went missing from the dormitory on different occasions" claimed a dormitory student.

Besides, police suspect Rana to be a drug addict who might have come to the spot to take drugs.

Family sources, however, blame Shujon, who took him to the dormitory on that day, to be allegedly involved in the murder due to previous enmity.

"Shujon deliberately killed Rana who once had beaten Shujon following some internal feuds a year back" added the family sources.

Police informed that they are yet to arrest anyone in this connection as they are not sure whether it was a pre-planned murder or mob beating.

Saiful Alam Rana, an HSC examinee, was beaten to death by Dhaka Dental College dormitory students on August 17 allegedly for stealing a mobile phone.

Four get life in Sajib murder case

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Sathkira

Four people were sentenced to life imprisonment in the sensational Sajib Murder Case yesterday.

Three others were acquitted as the prosecution failed to prove the charges brought against them.

Additional District and Session Judge Golam Morshed of the Special Tribunal Court in Sathkira delivered the verdict in presence of all but one accused in a crowded courtroom.

After examining 20 witnesses, the judge pronounced the verdict.

The convicts are Abdul Alim of village Gangnia, Akhtarul Islam Moina and Anowarul Islam Anu of village Bahera and Abdul Karim Gazi of village Alipur under Sadar upazila.

The acquitted are Shafiqul Islam Bhutto, Sakina Khatun and Anisur

Rahman.

Of the accused Abdul Alim has been absconding since the incident.

The prosecution story in brief is that victim Sajib, 7, son of Prof Manirul Islam of Bahera village under Debhata upazila was slaughtered in a nearby bush on August 30, 2002.

The victim's father had filed a case with Debhata Police Station. After investigation the Criminal Investigation Department (CID) submitted a charge sheet before a magistrate's court at Sathkira against seven people on March 26, 2003.

The investigation officer (IO) in the charge sheet said victim's father had a long standing land dispute with Anowarul Islam.

Sajib had to pay his life for witnessing a love affair of Anowarul's daughter with a local boy, the IO added.