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Inside Today
International



Americans call Clarence Thomas hearing a circus
Page 5

Article

The theme for World Food Day 1991 (today) is "Trees for Life" to remind us of their value both as providers of food and income and as protectors of the environment
Page 4

Business

A field report on JOCV activities in Khulna. More reports on Japanese aided projects in Jhenidah and Khulna will appear on Business page in the following days
Page 7

Feature

Health
Beating blindness, a world challenge
Page 8

Metropolitan

Dhaka Day by Day



Newspapers and magazines have considerably increased in quantity but not in quality. Despite this, some young and energetic talents are producing some extra-ordinary things
Page 3

NEWS BRIEFS

Biman's new MD

Star Report
Abdul Mueeed Chowdhury has replaced Mofazzal Karim as Managing Director of the Bangladesh Biman. Mofazzal Karim has been appointed Managing Director of the Jiban Bima Corporation. Additional Inspector General of Police Nasrullah Khan is likely to be appointed Chairman of the Parjatan Corporation.

World Food Day today

The "World Food Day" will be observed throughout the country today as in other countries of the world. Bangladesh government and the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) will jointly observe the day. This year's theme is "Tree For Life". reports UNB.

Revenue shortfall due to land tax cut

The shortfall in the total annual revenue due to exemption of land tax on upto 25 bighas has been estimated at Taka 40 to 45 crore. State Minister for Land Mohammad Kabir Hossain told Jatiya Sangsad Tuesday evening. No decision has yet been taken about realisation of other taxes from the owners of land upto 25 bighas. he said while replying to Mr. AM Reasat Ali, a Jamiat member from Satkhira. reports BSS.

Heated debate on sovereignty of JS

By Staff Correspondent
The Jatiya Sangsad (parliament) on Tuesday witnessed a heated debate over a recent government circular which states that the Parliament Secretariat would be put under the Ministry of Law and Justice renamed as Ministry of Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs.
The circular issued on October 13 has been given retrospective effect from September 19, the day the cabinet took oath under the parliamentary system following the 12th Amendment Act endorsed in the September 15 referendum.
The Opposition termed it as infringement of the sovereignty of parliament, while the government side said it was a transitional step as the country had switched over to a parliamentary form from the presidential system.
Speaker Sheikh Razzak Ali referred the matter to the committee on privileges giving the committee ten days' time to submit its report.
Earlier Opposition Members of Parliament who took part in the debate made a strong plea for suspension of the circular till the framing of a law under Article 79 of the Constitution.
Treasury Bench members supported the demand for the framing of a law, but suggested that putting the circular under suspension would create a vacuum. The circular was a transitional arrangement that would automatically go once a law is passed.
See Page 12 Col. 3

Over 50 per cent industrial capacity unutilised

Star Economic Report
More than 50 per cent of the available average production capacity of the country's industrial sector is unutilised. New private investments have also slowed down.
These were revealed in the latest survey conducted by the Board of Investment (BOI), a government body for investment promotion in the country.
The survey showed that capacity utilisation in most industrial sub-sectors varied between 40 per cent and 50 per cent.
The BOI, since its inception in early 1990, has approved in all 103 industrial units involving total investments of Taka 11,982.44 crore. This amount includes a foreign exchange component of Taka 1416.63 crore.
Meanwhile in the first quarter of the current fiscal year, only five projects in the private sector were approved involving total investment proposals worth Taka 3.77 crore including a foreign exchange component of Taka 75.78 lakh. BOI figures for July-September, 1991-92 showed. This figure showed less investments during the quarter compared to previous records indicating slowed down private investments.
The official sources said that two investment proposals out of the five were from local investors. One proposal was for setting up of some cold storages and the other a motor cycle manufacturing unit. The rest three were joint venture projects.
In all 28 industrial units were registered with BOI in first quarter of fiscal 1991-92. Total investments involved in such registered units stood at Taka 44.96 crores including a foreign exchange component of Taka 16.48 crores.
According to BOI figures, 13 joint venture proposals are awaiting approval now. Of them, 11 proposals are for investments in ready-made garments sector. The concerned consultative committee is yet to issue no objection certificates to them. Two more investment proposals are under processing. Total investments to be involved in all these 13 proposals are Taka 32.79 crore.

Ershad implicated in gold smuggling as an abettor



Blind boys and girls brought out a procession in the city in observance of 'White Cane Day' yesterday. — Star photo

By Staff Correspondent
Deposed President Ershad was formally charged on Tuesday in the sensational gold smuggling case involving the recovery of smuggled gold worth Tk 2.40 crore last year.
The other six accused in the case had been formally charged earlier.
Ershad has been implicated in the case as 'an abettor and a conspirator'.
The Special Tribunal No 16, framed the charges against Ershad after rejecting a petition of the Defence to acquit him from the case.
The Tribunal chaired by Judge A T M Fazle Kabir reading out the charges said that further investigation into the case showed elements of suspicion against Ershad for 'abetting and conspiring' and thereby he committed the offence under Section (D) of the Special Powers Act.
However, Ershad pleaded his innocence after hearing the charges read out by Judge Fazle Kabir.
"I direct that you be tried by the Tribunal on the same charge," the Judge said adding, "along with the others accused in the case."
Ershad kept standing in the dock with accused Moqsudur Rahman, PS to the Chairman, Ashrafuddin Sekander, former Airport Manager, Abu Taher, Airport Security Guard, Anthony Chalker — a British national and Bernard Rudgard — a German national.
Another accused in this case Commodore (ret'd) Mohtul Islam, former Chairman of the Civil Aviation Authority is still absconding.
See Page 12 Col. 7



Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia performing Umrah at the Holy Makkah Monday night. — PID photo

Khaleda arrives in Harare

Star Report
HARARE, Oct 15: Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia arrived here today to a hearty, red carpet welcome to attend the 11th Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting beginning from tomorrow, reports BSS.
Begum Zia is leading a 17-member delegation to the meeting. Zimbabwe Minister of Education and Culture Fay Chung received the Prime Minister at the Zimbabwe International Airport. Senior officials of Commonwealth were present.
Bangladesh Foreign Minister A S M Mostafizur Rahman who was already in Harare was present at the airport.
The Prime Minister then had a fifteen kilometre drive to the hotel Monomatapa where she will be staying during the CHOGM.
See Page 12 Col. 1

Foreign Ministry to get rid of some army officers

Star Report
There is a strong move to relieve all former army officers who were absorbed in the Foreign Ministry immediately after the changeover of 15th August, 1975 of their responsibilities.
A total of 15 former army officers were encadred with the Foreign Ministry after the 1975 changeover.
They are now working either at the foreign office here or at different Bangladesh missions abroad. Two officers had rejected Foreign Ministry jobs then.
Recently, the government called back many of the army officers from different Bangladesh missions. Among them, the services of Lt Gen (Ret'd) Shafiqullah has been placed under the Establishment Ministry for next posting. Major Khairuzzaman who was in Bangladesh High Commission in Britain has also been called back and posted at the administrative section.
It may be mentioned here that Awami League recently demanded removal of former army officers from the Foreign Ministry after it alleged that an attempt was made on the life of its party chief Sheikh Hasina in London.
Insiders said that the government might also repeal the Indemnity Ordinance in a bid to create a congenial atmosphere for a national consensus on all disputed issues.
However, a section of stalwarts in the government have expressed their dissent over the move and said that with the removal of the former army men from the Foreign Ministry for next posting. Major

TV plays foul

By Staff Correspondent
The unedited telecast last night of Prime Minister Begum Zia's performing of Umrah in Makkah provoked a critical response from the viewers of Bangladesh Television.
The BTB telecast the video on the Prime Minister's visit for an unusually long period of time in its 8 o'clock Bangla news bulletin. The half-hour long national news programme seemed mostly devoted to covering the Prime Minister's visit leaving the viewers appalled at its length.
The BTB authorities received numerous telephone calls, over a hundred, according to some sources and so did the national newspapers including The Daily Star, from viewers irritated at the BTB's performance.
Besides a cross-section of viewers, high-ups in the Information Ministry also demanded an explanation of the TV authorities over telephone on the conduct of the programme.
A TV source told The Daily Star that the Prime Minister's visit was telecast unedited.
This act brings to light the callousness of the TV news managers who ignore public feelings on TV performance.
The same programme was however shortened to a mere five-minute telecast in the 10 o'clock national news bulletin.
Viewers complained that a section of TV managers is showing a total disregard to the production norms.

Ferry services affected by erosion Over 3000 trucks stranded at 3 ghats

By Staff Correspondent
Over 3000 loaded trucks have remained stranded at Nagarbari, Aricha and Daulatdia ferry ghats since Sunday due to massive erosion of terminals by the rivers Jamuna and Padma.
Arrangements are being made to shift the ferry ghats to other places. Vast tracts of land have already been devoured by the rivers. The Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Authority (BIWTA) has been working round the clock to set up new terminals for quick ferrying of the stranded vehicles. An official source told The Daily Star that about 1500 trucks bound for northern districts remained stuck up at the Aricha ghat alone.
The authorities however managed to set up four terminals at the Aricha ghat. The terminals were functioning at a slower pace as there were hazards of the newly filled earth to give in.
Passenger buses and cars are being given priority in crossing the rivers. But the operation of ferry services is very slow as the erosion continues unabated.
The Daulatdia ferry terminal, badly affected due to river erosion, has been shifted about one kilometre upstream. But the terminal still remains vulnerable to erosion. It may require further shifting. About 500 vehicles have been stranded at the terminal as only one ferry out of two is functioning.
BIWTA hopes to operate normal ferry services from tomorrow.

Ronald Coase wins Nobel Economics Prize

Stockholm, Oct 15: Ronald Coase, of the University of Chicago, a British native, was awarded the Nobel Memorial Prize in Economic Science on Tuesday, reports AP.
Coase, 81, was honoured "for his discovery and clarification of the significance of transactions costs and property rights for the institutional structure and functioning of the economy," said the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences, which awarded the dirr 1 million prize.
The academy said his theories "are among the most dynamic forces behind research in economic science and jurisprudence today."
Coase "succeeded in specifying the way for the central republic to try to succeed from the Yugoslav federation."
Serbian deputies, representing the third main nationality in the ethnically-divided republic which borders both Serbia and Croatia, stormed out of the session before the vote and declared the decision illegal.
"There is no place for us in Yugoslavia," Bosnia's Muslim President Alija Izetbegovic told the parliament as the

Serb, Croat leaders in Moscow for talks

MOSCOW, Oct 15: The leaders of the warring republics of Serbia and Croatia arrived Tuesday for talks with Soviet President Mikhail S Gorbachev to seek ways to end the bloody conflict, the Tass news agency said, reports AP.
Gorbachev scheduled separate meetings with Slobodan Milosevic, the president of Serbia, and Franjo Tudjman, the president of separatist Croatia, a Gorbachev spokesman said.
Gorbachev appealed to Yugoslavia's political and military leaders last week to avoid escalating the civil war and called on them to "display maximum responsibility and restraint."
Fears have been expressed in the Soviet Union that the splintering superpower, which is beset by ethnic conflicts, could end up like Yugoslavia. Gorbachev raised such a warning in July.
Tass quoted Tudjman as saying he came to Moscow to inform Gorbachev and Russian President Boris Yeltsin "about details of the Yugoslav crisis and the war now being waged against Croatia."
He said he hoped that Moscow mediation could "help stop this bloody conflict."
Milosevic, in an interview with Tass, said he was looking forward to constructive negotiations. "We hope the mediation of Moscow, with which we have always had good relations, will be successful," he was quoted as saying.
The two leaders were to meet with Gorbachev in the Kremlin later Tuesday and with Yeltsin on Wednesday.
Reuters adds from Belgrade: The volatile Yugoslav republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina declared itself a sovereign state in decisive step towards independence today and fighting raged in Croatia, increasing fears of an all-out civil war.
Muslim and Croatian members of the Bosnian parliament in Sarajevo, in a controversial vote after a stormy debate, adopted documents that could pave the way for the central republic to try to succeed from the Yugoslav federation.

India refuses relief team's entry to enclaves

From Our Correspondent
RANGPUR, Oct 15: Relief operation in Dahagram and Angorpota enclaves could not be started as yet due to lack of transit permit from the Indian authorities.
During the recent flood both the enclaves were severely affected and heavy damages were done to crops and houses. Communication was also disrupted as roads were washed away by the flood.
In the post-flood period when the entire northern region has been brought under relief and rehabilitation programmes, the people of

US Pacific Commander arrives

The Pacific Commander-in-Chief of the United States of America Admiral Charles R Larson arrived in Dhaka Tuesday afternoon on a two-day goodwill visit, according to an ISPR press release.
He is accompanied by Mrs. Larson, one Senior Adviser of the State Department and other high officials.
During his stay in Bangladesh, the US Pacific Commander-in-Chief will pay courtesy call on President Abdur Rahman Btswas. He will also call on the Chiefs of three Services and the Defence Secretary.
On his arrival at Zia International Airport he was received by Chiefs of Staff of the three Services, their wives and the US Ambassador to Bangladesh.

AL MPs asked to visit flood-hit areas

Leader of the Opposition Sheikh Hasina Tuesday asked her party MPs to rush to the affected areas, particularly northern districts, and stand beside the suffering people during this hour of distress in the flood aftermath, reports UNB.
Hasina's call came at a meeting of the Awami League Parliamentary Party held Tuesday afternoon in the Sangsad Bhaban office of the Leader of the Opposition.
The meeting expressed

Parliamentary committee on campus formed

A 15-member all-party parliamentary committee was constituted by the Jatiya Sangsad Tuesday to chalk out measures and adopt appropriate steps to free the country's educational institutions from the prevalent violence, reports BSS.
The committee was proposed by Dr Badruddoza Chowdhury, Deputy Leader of the

Notice

In view of numerous complaints from our patrons and advertisers about not receiving their complimentary copies regularly, we have decided to suspend the service for a period of two weeks from today, 16 October 1991. Meanwhile we hope to evolve a system which will ensure proper delivery.

We regret the inconvenience and request sympathetic understanding of our valued patrons and advertisers.

—Managing Editor