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The Daily Star

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Consensus on economic issues needed for development

Participants at the Media Round Table on "LDC to NIC: Prospects for Bangladesh" Tuesday emphasised national consensus on major economic issues for development. The national consensus, the participants stressed, should cover areas like poverty alleviation, reduction of dependence on foreign aid, role of planning, role and governance of state, foreign investments, land reforms, industrial, labour and education policies, subsidies, relative roles of public and private sectors, efficient use of resources and agricultural development. Conducted by Prof. Rehman Sobhan, the round-table was

participated by Minister for Industries, Shamsul Islam Khan, Minister for Planning, A M Zahiruddin Khan, ESCAP Executive Secretary, SAMS Kibria, former Finance Minister, M Syeduzaman, Chief Whip of the Jatiya Sangsad, Delwar Hossain, Awami League central leader, Tofael Ahmed MP, Workers Party leader, Rashid Khan Menon MP, Secretary to the Prime Minister, Dr Kamal Siddiqui, Director General, Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies (BIDS), Dr. Mahbub Hossain, Prof. Wahiduddin Mahmud of the Dhaka University, President, Dhaka Chamber of Commerce and

Industry, Mahbubur Rahman, President, Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Syed Monzur Elahi, Resident Representative of the

Internal Relations Division, Enam Ahmed Chowdhury and Dr. K F Jai of the ESCAP. Participating in the discussions, Industries Minister

Thailand and Indonesia, earlier. He stressed the need for a stable industrial policy which would at the same time be capable of being adjusted to the cross-currents of national and international life. "If a healthy and stable environment can be created, Bangladesh can attract most foreign capital now looking for investment opportunities", he observed.

Planning Minister Zahiruddin Khan said that the prime thrust of development efforts should be on the generation of employment and income-earning opportunities in the rural sector. "Without rural development efforts on a vigorous scale, the growth performance of the economy cannot be accelerated", he added.

Daily Star 'Media Round Table'

The 21st Century is hardly eight years away. The future holds magnificent achievements, opening up tremendous prospects for mankind. Will Bangladesh be a part of that prosperous future or are we to live in the sidelines of the world economy and survive on doles and handouts? It is in search for an answer to that fundamental question that The Daily Star organised a Round Table bringing together a broad-based group of thinkers.

World Bank, Christopher R Willoughby, Resident Representative of the UNDP, Charles H Larsson, Secretary, Ex-

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Planning Minister AM Zahiruddin Khan Tuesday stressed on meticulous formulation of development plan, continuation of policy and proper utilisation of limited resources take-off of the national economy. Speaking at the Media Round Table on "LDC to NIC — Prospects for Bangladesh", he said we cannot afford plans to be bogged down in implementation stages.

The planning Minister said priority should be made on productive employment and developing vital sectors. The minister said unless the huge losses in the public sectors could be checked, resources could not be diverted to development projects. He said resources should be spent on sectors which yield returns. He stressed on investments in agricultural sector to increase



Govt working to attract investors

By Staff Correspondent
 Industries Minister Shamsul Islam Khan Tuesday said an industrial policy in conformity with the ups and downs of the national and international scenario was needed for growth of industries. Taking part in talks on "LDC to NIC—Prospects for Bangladesh" Khan said the government by its industrial policy was relentlessly working to attract foreign investors side by side encouraging domestic investments.

He said political stability the most important factor to ensure such investments and sought cooperation from different quarters including the opposition political parties. He said increasing number of foreign investors was being attracted. In last six months, the government had sanctioned 21 foreign investments and some 1000 others were in the process.

Under the present stable political situation, local investors were also encouraged. Government also approved 1576 local industries, he added. To gear up industrial development, Parliamentary Committees have been formed which are expected to produce worthy suggestions, he said.

Patriotic Democratic Front floated

By Staff Correspondent

Four left political parties Tuesday floated a new front, 'Patriotic Democratic Front' (PDF), with a view to unite all 'patriotic, democratic and progressive forces to carry forward the people's aspirations towards national progress. The Communist Party of Bangladesh (CPB), National Awami Party (Nap-Mozaffar), Samyabadi Dal and Gana Azadi League at a joint press conference at the National Press Club announced launching of the front.

Dilip Barua of Samyabadi Dal while announcing the front's declaration identified some issues and called for national consensus and also its own programme towards their solution. Violence in society topped the list of issues which included unemployment, illiteracy, erosion of values, weak democratic set-up and communalism.

These issues could be solved not by the government alone or a single political party but through unity of all professional groups, masses, middle class, intellectuals and the people in power, the declaration said.

Dilip Barua announced guidelines for unity on the basis of the spirit of war of independence and said talks with political forces and other groups would continue to
 See Page 12 Col. 2



Victims of Demra bus accident being rescued by local people on Tuesday. — Star photo

5 killed in Demra road accident

By Staff Correspondent

At least five persons were killed and 30 others injured when a Dhaka-bound passenger bus plunged into a roadside ditch and sank near Demra intersection, six kilometres off Dhaka Tuesday morning.

Of the persons killed, four were women and the other was the driver of the bus, Demra police and Fire Brigade said.

Of the injured, three in a critical condition were sent to Dhaka and 15 others to nearby medical centres.

The ill-fated persons were Sharafuddin the bus driver;

and passengers Faizunnesa, Shakhina Khatun and her daughter Rokeya Begum. Another passenger killed was unidentified. Demra police sent four bodies to Sir Salimullah Medical College Hospital for autopsy and the body of Rokeya Begum was taken to her village, Surulia, by her relations.

Abul Kasem, Mohammad Hossain Dulal, Shahjahan, businessman and a minor girl, Kulsum, daughter of the ill-fated Rokeya Begum were injured. Two passengers of the bus, Kawasr Hussain and Jubayer Ahmed, who managed to escape said that the 50 seats of the bus were filled and about 12 extra passengers were standing.

They said, while their bus (Dhaka-Cha-891) coming from Adamjee turned to the left near the Demra intersection, another Dhaka-bound bus, coming from Demra dashed theirs into the 10 foot deep ditch. The Dhaka-bound bus immediately escape, they said. They said, several of the passengers came out of the sunken bus.

Shakhina Khatun and Rokeya Begum were killed in the accident but Rokeya's one and a half year old daughter was saved miraculously. She received head injuries. Fire Brigade personnel from Dhaka and Demra immediately rushed to the spot and recovered the five bodies and the sunken bus.

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Proper use of resources stressed

By Staff Correspondent

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 See Page 12 Col. 1



Supportive intervention policy proposed

By Staff Correspondent

ESCAP Executive Secretary SAMS Kibria said the Bangladesh government could play significant role in promoting development by initiating 'supportive intervention policies' and not restrictive and regulatory ones.

Speaking at a media Round
 See Page 12 Col. 1

US 'block list' hits frozen food export

Imposition of 'block list' on Bangladesh's frozen food in American ports has caused setback to the exporters and decline in country's export earning. Under the 'block list' provision, all packets of frozen food from Bangladesh are tested at USA ports before marketing to ensure that those are free from germs. This restriction was imposed early May following the April 29 cyclone that devastated the coastal region. "But no germ was found in our food during any of the tests", asserted an exporter who urged the US authorities to withdraw the 'block list' immediately. The government should also take up the matter earnestly, the exporter told UNB Tuesday.

He questioned the justification of continuing the restriction since not a single packet of Bangladesh frozen food was found contaminated during the last six and a half months. A senior official in the Commerce Ministry said the
 See Page 12 Col. 8

We have to uproot terrorism : PM

Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia Tuesday called for strengthening BNP to support the rural-based development programmes of the government aimed at ensuring basic needs of the common people, reports UNB. The government and the party have to work together for successful implementation of development programmes, she told those who came to Sugandha Tuesday evening from Rajbari and Madaripur districts to join Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP). "We have to strengthen the party to ensure people's welfare and ensure their basic needs working unitedly", Begum Zia said.

"We have to uproot terrorism and start politics of production", exhorted the Prime Minister saying that the main objective of her government is to implement the 19-point programme initiated by Shaheed Ziaur Rahman, the founder of BNP. Nearly 500 people from Sadar, Baltakandi, Goulundo and Pangsha upazilas of Rajbari

district met the Prime Minister to join the ruling party. About 50 political activists of Madaripur district, including former District Awami League president Feraudus Jamadar and joint general secretary Khandker Kamrul Islam Tushu and District Sramik League president Sarder Sohrab Hossain, also met the BNP chairperson separately to join the party. They said that they decided to join BNP inspired by the uncompromising leadership of Begum Zia. Election in all tiers of the organisation (BNP) will be held soon to hand over local leadership responsibilities for assisting the government in development work, she added. "Time has come to speed up development projects and bring back discipline in all sectors", Begum Zia said referring to the setback caused by recurring natural calamities during the last few months. The Prime Minister said the government is determined to salvage the country from the 'ruins of nine years of autoterrorism'.
 See Page 12 Col. 5

Bangladeshis lose business, jobs in UK

Mostafa Kamal Majumder from London

The ethnic Bangladesh community in Britain is faced with serious hardships as many of them are running out of business or becoming jobless due to overall economic recession and some harsh measures taken against them for some time, it is learnt.

An estimated two lakh Bangladeshis who live in Britain are mostly engaged in catering business, some owning hotels, restaurants and others working as wage labourers. As bank interest rate remained as high as 20 per cent or more for some time businessmen as a whole were finding a tough time. The ethnic Bangladeshis were no exceptions. The base interest rate has been brought down recently from 17 per cent to help end economic recession, but the measure has not yet proved useful as people continue to remain wary about making investments.
 See Page 12 Col. 7

Gunshots, blasts rock DU again

By DU Correspondent

Gunshots and explosions of crackers rocked the Dhaka University campus again Tuesday.

Shots were fired during a rally of the Democratic Students Unity (DSU) forcing it to break up. The rally was organised to demand resumption of classes in university.

The shots were fired from the Mohsin Hall when the DSU was holding a demonstration in front of the office of the Vice Chancellor while crackers were blasted during the rally. According to campus sources the incident was a sequel to an internal conflict in the JSD (Inu)-becked Chhatra League (N-S), one of the components of the DSU.

Mizanur Rahman, a BCL (N-S) activist and a resident of Mohsin Hall was later assaulted in front of the Bangla Academy following the conflict. Another attempt to assault Roknuzzaman Rokon, President of the BCL (N-S) DU unit on Saturday evening in the TSC compound was, however,

foiled following the intervention by some of the supporters of the organisation. Meanwhile, the DSU after the rally submitted a memorandum to Vice-Chancellor Prof Mantruzzaman Miah about
 See Page 12 Col. 4

Last of the Vukovar defenders surrender

ZAGREB, Nov 19: The strategic Croatian town of Vukovar fell to Yugoslav army troops today, humanitarian sources told AFP, confirming an earlier report by the official Tanjug news agency. Hundreds of Croatian fighters who had defended the Danube river town for three months joined civilians leaving shelters to surrender to the Serbian-dominated army, they said. Tanjug said earlier that sporadic shooting had stopped and that the last clashes around the city hospital ceased this afternoon. All Croatian fighters defend-

ing the strategic Croatian town of Vukovar surrendered today, according to the Tanjug news agency, which earlier in the day spoke of a last pocket of resistance around the hospital. The army was mounting a guard in front of the hospital, in which there were 420 wounded and 400 civilians who had taken refuge there, the hospital's director, Vesna Bosanor, told Tanjug. An evacuation of wounded from the hospital, which has been the subject of negotiations in the presence of officials of the International Committee of the Red Cross, has been postponed until

Wednesday. According to a Tanjug correspondent on the scene, there were 33 bodies, mostly of civilians, lying in front of the hospital and other bodies in neighbouring streets. The Yugoslav army arrested Croatian fighters trying to flee Vukovar. It said a few federal army soldiers were wounded in the shooting by what the agency called "a group of Croatian extremists." Most of the members of the Croatian guard and Vukovar, policemen had surrendered to the Serb-dominated army on Monday, after nearly three

months of an army siege aimed at wresting the city from the breakaway republic. On Monday Dobroslav Paraga, leader of the extreme nationalist Croatian Party of the Right, told AFP his men would not surrender in Vukovar. The shooting in Vukovar this morning held up the planned evacuation of 450 wounded, 110 children and 100 old people from Vukovar hospital, which lies in the north of the city near the Danube river. Federal army trucks were to have carried them out of the city under the supervision of

the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and the medical aid group Medicines Sans frontiers but an ICRC spokesman in Zagreb said the operation was, postponed and on new time set. Elsewhere an Italian rescue ship, the San Marco, sailed into the Italian port of Brindisi Tuesday morning with 782 old people, women and children evacuated from the battered Adriatic port of Dubrovnik. Huge columns of smoke continued to rise above Stara Mokatca throughout the night according to Hina which said homes there had been looted and burned.

A GRAND DISPLAY

MILITARY HARDWARES
 AT
SHER-E-BANGLA NAGAR
 (North-Western Part of the Old Airport Area)
 OPEN TO MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC
 ON
THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 21
 1 PM TO 5 PM

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 22
 8 AM TO 12 NOON
 AND
 2 PM TO 5 PM
 AND
SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 23
 8 AM TO 5 PM