

BCUTA demands national payscale

By DU Correspondent
Leaders of the Bangladesh College University Teacher's Association (BCUTA) at a press conference Thursday at the TSC faculty room of Dhaka University demanded national payscale for the teachers of the private educational institutions.

Court's 'no' to Zeenat

The Appellate Division of the Supreme Court yesterday rejected Mrs Zeenat Mosharrar's petition seeking leave to appeal against the judgement of the High Court Division which had rejected the petition to quash the trial against her, reports BSS.

Meanwhile, the hearing of the two separate bail petitions of Begum Rowshan Ershad began yesterday before a High Court Division bench of the Supreme Court.

Ferries

From Page 1 Col 8
cleared at around 5.30 am. Three other ferries Keramat Ali, Shah Ali and Shah Paran also faced the same difficulty and was forced to anchor near Golopodia with about 4,000 passengers and 60 trucks.

Ferry Amanat Shah leaving Nagarbari ghat for Aricha with 20 trucks and 1000 passengers also anchored in the same spot. Meanwhile, ferry Ketuki and Kishawri leaving Daulatdia ghat for Aricha anchored at Hemsagar in mid Padma. The ferry was carrying about 1000 passengers, 5 night coaches and 18 trucks.

'Govt backed

From Page 1 Col 5
leged that the known terrorists patronised by the government in Dhaka University fired several rounds of shots and exploded bombs near TSC Sarakdip where the Chhatra League organised reunion marking the 44th founding anniversary.

Chhatra League leaders and workers showed maximum restraint in the face of firing and bomb blast near the meeting place, she said. It is unfortunate that heavy contingent of police deployed around the meeting venue remained silent onlookers. Hasina said adding that the barbarous killing could have been avoided if police could take timely steps. Hasina expressed her profound sympathy for the members of bereaved family and friends of Moniruzzaman Badal. She also prayed for the peace of the departed soul.

US policy unchanged

From Page 1 Col 7
in the 1967 Six Day War. Israel annexed East Jerusalem as part of its capital and left the future of the two territories open for negotiations.

The Arabs anticipate recovering the West Bank and Gaza for a Palestinian state with its capital in Jerusalem. The resolution appears to support their view that the territories are Palestinian.

But Margaret D Tutwiler, the State Department spokeswoman, said "our policy has not changed." Within minutes of the daily news briefing, the State Department press office distributed Pickering's statement to the Council on Monday disavowing any US support for Palestinian sovereignty.

President Bush has referred to East Jerusalem, the West Bank and Gaza as occupied territory. The Bush administration also has insisted Israel is obliged by 1967 and 1973 UN Security Council resolutions to withdraw.

At the same time, the administration does not support establishment of a Palestinian state. The result leaves the future of the territories to Israel and the Arabs to determine in negotiations.

Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir has proposed limited self-rule for the Palestinians on the West Bank and Gaza. A joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation was to arrive here Thursday to resume negotiations with Israel after a three-week interlude in the peace talks.

The delegation and negotiations from Syria and Lebanon, which are holding separate talks with Israel, had agreed to

'Bakarkhani' up again

By Masud Hasan Khan

It is no small wonder that the Bakarkhani, that travelled thousands of miles to reach Dhaka several centuries back, took decades only to cross the boundary between the old and the new part of the capital.

A few confectioners in the capital's better neighbourhoods have begun to display this crunchy biscuit-like food that still dominates the tea-time menu in the older part of the city.

However, the gourmets were least impressed with the food's debut in new Dhaka. They argued that the cellophane-wrapped Bakarkhani when put in glass showcases and kept for weeks until sold would lose the warmth they had right away from the old hearth.

A familiar picture of the older part of Dhaka is incomplete without a Bakarkhani shop at the street corner. The sooty, small shop, a round oven inside glowing with coal, snaps of the impatient buyers, quick hands of the bakers hooking Bakarkhani out of the oven — is a picture puzzle that never fits elsewhere but in old Dhaka. You rush home with Bakarkhani, oven-hot and fresh, put it on the snacks table and say — "Hey I look at the burning delight of a baker."

The old-timers of Dhaka are still unsure, of the origin of

this food. A popular myth that runs through the winding alleys of old part of the capital, says that Aga Abdul Bakar introduced Bakarkhani in the Moghul Dhaka. Some tales add that the introducer joined his name and the name of his beloved to name the food he loved.

Muntasir Mamun of the History Department in the Dhaka University says that the past of the Bakarkhani remains buried deep inside bygone times.

Aga Bakar who settled in Dhaka might have introduced the food here. Mamun says that Aga Abdul Bakar came from somewhere in northern Iran or from where are now the Muslim states of Russia. He arrived in Sylhet via Delhi in the 17th century and went far south to the edge of the Bay of Bengal.

There he cleared dense forests for a settlement that was named Bakarganj. From Bakarganj he came back to Dhaka where he lived the rest of his life.

The story among the Dhaka gourmets is that Bakarkhani arrived here following the ancient trade routes from west Asia. They say that the food could be a member of the family to which belongs "bakhlava" — a food popular in the central Asian republics.

"Lavaash", an appetizer in some Eastern European countries, also bears resemblance to our Bakarkhani, the gourmets say.

The feather weight Bakarkhani has many uses on the menu. You can have it with sweetmeats, the popular combination, or with curry. In winter, its time for Bakarkhani with mutton and cabbage. Even, you can have it plain, with every sip of tea. It is cheap taka one a piece.

The hundreds of Bakarkhani bakers in the old part of Dhaka city chorus that the oven and the hands that bake are the real secret of its taste. Baking becomes a proven success when every precarious bite on the food hastens its fragility and every chunk disappears in the mouth leaving only the feeling, "I need more."

The preparation is simple but ritualistic. For the best bake, you have to find out the finest quality of flour, butter or 'ghee' not less expensive and the cream cheese. The kneading takes hours before you stick the paste on to the domed surface of the oven buried in the earth. Extreme caution is required to maintain the temperature inside. A little more will invoke a nightmare for the amateurs. That is why only male professionals bake



Bakarkhani in the shops. My aunt, who lives in Islampur area in the older part of the capital, says "who cares who invented it or if it goes to the 'Swank' parts of the city. We only count that Bakarkhani is placed high on our menu and we'll never leave it despite changing food habits."

The Midnight File

Ukraine softens demand for control over Black Sea fleet

MOSCOW, Jan 9 : Ukraine softened its demand for control over the Black Sea Fleet and suggested today it was ready for compromise amid new warnings that disputes over the armed forces could destroy the nascent Commonwealth. "Ukraine is ready to resolve the problem of the Black Sea Fleet by way of law and negotiations," Ukrainian Defense Minister General Constantine Morozov said in remarks reported by the Russian information agency, reports AFP.

Japan's military presence is a sensitive issue : Yang

SINGAPORE, Jan 9 : Japan's military presence abroad is a "sensitive issue" that could cause concern not only in China but also in other Asian countries, visiting Chinese President Yang Shungkun said today. Yang said China hoped the Japanese government would handle the issue carefully, reports AFP.

Pak outlaws get arms like chocolates

ISLAMABAD, Jan 9 : The war in neighbouring Afghanistan has led to a huge influx of arms in Pakistan where they are sold now like chocolates, a top government leader has said. Jam Sadiq Ali, Chief Minister of southern Sindh Province, which is plagued by a worsening law and order situation, said the provincial police had frequent clashes with outlaws, who are sometimes better equipped, reports AFP.

Student leader

From Page 1 Col 5
Badal was brought to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital where he was declared dead.

Chhatra League (S-A) activists later brought the body in a procession to the National Press Club at around 7 p.m. chanting slogans.

Badal's body was again shifted to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital at around 8 p.m. Badal's brother-in-law Babul was found waiting in the Press Club at that time.

A large number of BCL (S-A) activists, leaders including Shahe Alam, President of the BCL (S-A), Kamruzzaman Ansari and many members of the public rushed to the Press Club to see the body.

A large number of police were deployed in the Press Club and the High Court areas. The roads to the Press Club were closed for a few hours until Badal's body was taken to the DMCH.

The BCL (S-A) also held a rally in front of the Press Club that was addressed by Shahe Alam and Kamruzzaman Ansari.

The BCL (S-A) has announced a three-day programme to protest the killing of Badal. The programme includes a mourning procession and Namaz-e-Janaza today (Friday), strike in all the educational institutions on Saturday and a half-day hartal in Dhaka city Sunday.

Treasury bench

From Page 1 Col 7
and took away 200 engines of the trawlers.

He added that the pirates have looted 37 passengers launches in the internal routes last year. Besides the Sunderban area, Moni said, the pirates were also active in Cox's Bazar, Patuakhali, Barisal and Sandwip areas.

He underscored the need for gearing up anti-piracy drives in the vast coastal areas as 2.5 crore people reside in the region. Of them, about 1.5 crore depend mainly on fishing activities for their livelihood.

He said that the formation of a marine police force is essential to tackle the worsening situation. While urging the independent member to withdraw his

Morgue

From Page 1 Col 6
was kept at the Dhaka Medical College Hospital morgue.

He also noted that last August when he went to collect a dead body of an acquaintance from the DMCH morgue, he found the nached body stacked atop several other bodies of men and women.

He called for setting up a separate morgue for the dead women in every hospital from this month "for the sake of religious rites and out of respect for the womenfolk of the country."

The Health Minister, while assuring the House that the process of setting up separate morgues will begin from the current fiscal year, noted that at present there is no separate arrangement in the hospital morgues in the country.

He informed the Parliament that eleven districts do not have any morgue and dead bodies from those districts are to be sent to neighbouring districts for postmortem.

He said the government is actively considering upgrading the morgues around the country soon. He, however, added that setting up separate morgues in the country will take time and will be completed in phases.

The participants, while extending their total support to the resolution, said that such an arrangement is essential to uphold the dignity of women.

Those who took part in the discussion are Advocate Dharendra Debnath Shambhu, Md. Ahmed Awal Mian, Advocate Abdul Matin Khasru, Advocate Mosharrar Hossain, Raushan Ali and Md. Rahmat Ali of Awami League, Ebadur Rahman Chowdhury of Jatiya Party and Mufti Maulana Abdus Sattar of Jamaat-e-Islami leader of the Opposition Sheikh Hasina, Deputy Leader of the Opposition Abdus Samad Azad were present at the time of discussion on the resolution.

Bush

From Page 1 Col 7
tors to Japan and to increase local content of cars built at Japanese subsidiaries in the United States.

He described the package as "significant but interim." Bush and Miyazawa also supported an appreciating yen against the dollar, which would make US goods more competitive here.

Thursday's final 30-minute meeting between the leaders ended two days of talks that seemed to represent an economic role reversal for leaders of the world's two largest economies.

DUCSU leaders condemn Badal's killing

DUCSU VP Amanullah Aman, MP and GS Khairul Kabir Khokan condemned Thursday's killing of Moniruzzaman Badal, Organising Secretary of pro-Awami League Chhatra League, reports BSS.

In a statement last night, they said Badal was killed following internal feuds of Chhatra League activists.

The leaders said Badal was kidnapped on gun point by some Chhatra League activists in a rally in front of TSC organised in observance of the founding anniversary of Chhatra League.

The armed terrorists brutally shot Badal dead in front of the Jagannath Hall house tutor's quarters, they said.

The DUCSU leaders demanded immediate arrest of those involved in the killing and exemplary punishment to the culprits.

They also urged the students, teachers and employees of Dhaka University to build up united resistance against the "Mujibbadi terrorists" and boycott them politically for bringing back congenial academic atmosphere.

Ganatantrik Chhatra Oikya (GCO) also in a statement Thursday night expressed deep grief at the killing of Moniruzzaman Badal, Organising Secretary of Bangladesh Chhatra League (S-A) by the terrorists, reports BSS.

Friday and Saturday are the Muslim and Jewish sabbaths, so the earliest the talks could be resumed is Sunday, an Israeli diplomat said.

"We are available, and we will be available on Sunday," an Amman report says, Palestinian and Jordanian negotiators left Thursday for Washington to resume peace talks with Israel.

Hanan Ashrawi, the Palestinian spokeswoman, told reporters before departure from Amman Thursday that she expected the talks to start Monday, six days behind schedule.

She said she believed the Israelis will agree to negotiate separately with the Palestinians, an issue that blocked progress in the previous round of Mideast talks held in Washington last month.

The Palestinians attended the opening of the Mideast peace talks in Madrid in October as part of a joint delegation with the Jordanians. But when the conference broke up into bilateral talks between each of the Arab delegations and Israel, they demanded they be dealt with independently.

Israel, which views the Palestinian problem as one of refugees who should be assimilated into the Arab societies, has resisted that demand.

Sab Erekat, a member of the negotiating team, said in a departure statement that after solving the issue, the Palestinians and Israelis would begin substantial negotiations on the transfer of authority in the occupied territories to the Palestinians.

Following the incident the Chhatra League activists damaged several vehicles in the city. They also set a vehicle on fire in front of the National Press Club.

The government expressed the hope that all concerned quarters will show restraint for maintaining peace in the educational institutions and refrain from violent activities to restore fair academic atmosphere.



Sheikh Hasina speaking at BCL anniversary function on DU campus yesterday. —Star photo

NGO

From Page 1 Col 7
Huq Inu of the Five-Party Alliance, Mujahidul Islam Selim of CPB and Rahmat Ali MP (Krishak League) on behalf of the politicians and Dr Md Yunus of Gramen Bank, Badrur Rahman of Palli Karma Sahayak Foundation, Khushi Kabir of Nijera Kori, Mahmud Hassan of Gano Sahajya Sangstha, Q Faruque of Proshika, and Enamul Huq of ASA on behalf of the NGOs. The sessions were chaired by SK Maksud Ali, member Planning Commission and Prof Rehman Sobhan.

Taking part in panel discussion Begum Matiya Chowdhury said there would have been nothing to complain against the NGOs if they did not receive aid from foreign donors and utilised the same according to their prescriptions.

Referring to the imposition of various models by the donors she said the people must not accept the role of the NGOs like that of the IMF or the World Bank.

Criticizing the role of the government in dealing with the problems of the landless and poor farmers Begum Matiya Chowdhury said it was no better than the rural 'mahajans' (money-lenders). Crores of taka were being misappropriated by dishonest businessmen, she added.

Defending the government Dewar Hossain, Chief Whip of the Treasury Bench in Parliament, said the time had not yet come to pass judgement about the success or failure of the government.

Pointing out various limitations of the government, he said the government did not have full control over various administrative bodies to execute its plans properly.

Related story on page 2



Firemen putting out fire of a car set ablaze by BCL activists in the city yesterday. —Star photo

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Published by S. M. Ali on behalf of Mediaworld Ltd., 52 Motijheel C/A, Dhaka-1000, and printed by him at Offset Printing Dialogue Publications Ltd., 19 Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue, Dhaka-1215. Editorial, News and Commercial Offices : 28/1, Toynebee Circular Road, Dhaka-1000. Tel : PABX: 245061-3, 246023-4. Editorial and News : 863036. Commercial : 863035. Fax No: 88-02-863035. GPO Box No: 3257. GRAM : DAILY STAR, DHAKA.