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The Daily Star

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 Of "than" clothes
 At Fabric House
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NEWS BRIEFS

Heroin recovered in city: one held

Sutrapur Thana Police last night recovered 150 grams of heroin from Lalchand Mokim Lane and arrested one Karman in this connection, a DMP press release said Thursday, reports BSS.

120 arrested on various charges

Dhaka Metropolitan Police arrested 120 people from the city during the last 24 hours for their alleged involvement in different types of crime. According to a DMP press release in Dhaka yesterday, the arrested persons were sent to court, reports BSS.

Hartal observed in Bogra

BOGRA, Mar 19: A half-day hartal was observed in Bogra at the call of Ganatantrik Chhatra Oikya (GCO) protesting the killing of student leaders Moin Hossain Raju in Dhaka and Yasser Arafat Pittu in Rajshahi, reports UNB.

New DG of National Museum

Mohammad Ismail Hussain, Officer on Special Duty in the Ministry of Establishment (Additional Inspector General of Police) has been appointed Director General of the Bangladesh National Museum on deputation, according to a PID handout in Dhaka Thursday, reports BSS.

Sheri, Iftar timings

Ramzan March	Sheri	Iftar
14	20	6.16 pm
15	21	4.42 am 6.17 pm

Hasina announces party's economic policy

Awami League bids bye to socialist economy

By Staff Correspondent

Bangladesh Awami League has announced its new economic policy based on market economy. The new policy discards socialistic economy, which the party has been following.

Sheikh Hasina, the party chief, announced the policy at an Iftar party at her official residence at Minto Road yesterday.

Releasing the draft of the policy, Sheikh Hasina said that it was adopted in keeping with the changed global economic situation.

"The policy has been formulated in consultation with leading economists of the country and representatives of the business community. It aims at meeting the needs of the people and salvaging national economy from the ruins caused by the 15-year autocratic rule," she said.

The AL chief said that the ruling party has failed to provide a sense of direction to the people for economic emancipation... rather its incompetency and inefficiency have been pushing the country towards ruin. "So, our party feels that a new sense of direction should be provided to the nation," she added.

Sheikh Hasina said that the Awami League has been watching the global changes and formulating its policies to cope with the changes.

The Iftar party was attended by the editors and senior journalists of national dailies and news agencies.

The new economic policy of AL calls for creation of a competitive economy based on efficient management, economic effectiveness and social utility. The policy contends that the role of the Government should be 'complementary rather than regulatory.'

The draft of the new policy views that there should be two objectives—poverty alleviation and gradual attainment of self sufficiency—of the development programmes in view of the 'realities of Bangladesh.'

It is imperative that we expedite the rate of economic growth to achieve these objectives, says the draft.

The draft unveiled by the Leader of the Opposition declares: "No financial institution or industrial unit will be nationalised."

UNB adds: Hasina termed See Page 12 Col 3

Govt plans legal action against Golam Azam

By Mahfuz Ullah

The Government, as a policy decision, has planned legal action against Golam Azam.

The first move will be a legal notice asking Golam Azam to explain why action will not be taken against him for illegal stay in the country, authoritative sources say.

The decision, sources say, has been worked out to 'ease tension' created by the proposed public trial of Golam Azam on March 26 at the Suhrawardy Udyan.

Policy makers of the ruling Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP), according to sources, believe such a decision will strike a balance between the feuding parties on the question. Besides, it will absolve the party from the blame of being 'inactive' on the Golam Azam issue.

Party sources say the high command, after long deliberations, found the legal action as the only way to defuse the tension. A section of the party leaders proposed imposition of restrictions like Section 144 that bars assembly of more than 5 people and others but the suggestions were ruled out in the interest of law and order.

But sources say, if situation demands, the Government will be left with no other option but to impose Section 144. The day of the trial, the Independence Day, has also caused a dilemma for the Government in considering restrictive measures.

A section of the party leaders argue that the Government should not take the responsibility for Jamaat's action—election of Golam Azam as its chief. Otherwise, they believe, the Government would be trapped in a situation of no-way-out.

Insiders say, by electing Golam Azam as Amcer, Jamaat has created 'problems for itself and for BNP. Otherwise there would not have been any demand for public trial.'

BNP leaders, sources say are also planning appraisal of their attitude to other political parties. They believe, most of their adversaries are trying to take BNP for a ride misconstruing its gentlemen's attitude for weakness.

Sources say, however, no action would be taken until the Prime Minister is back from the United States.

Dhaka to get \$45m wheat under PL-480

WASHINGTON, Mar 19: Bangladesh and the USAID signed here yesterday a PL-480 agreement under which Bangladesh will receive two lakh 68 thousand tonnes of wheat worth over 45 million US dollars, reports BSS.

The agreement was signed in presence of Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia by Ambassador Abul Ahsan on behalf of Bangladesh and by Mrs Henrietta Holmsman Fore, Assistant Administrator for the Asian Bureau of USAID on behalf of the United States. The USAID will also provide one million 65 thousand tonnes of wheat during the next three years.

A statement said "over the life of this programme, subject to the availability of funds, it is aid's intention to provide a total of 268 million dollars for commodity and related handling and transportation cost."

Under the agreement the sale proceeds of the donated wheat will be used in Food for Development Programme, improving food security reserve, agricultural development, private sector development activities, development of rural infrastructure and electrification.



Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia meets with US Senator Claiborne Pell, Chairman of the US Senate Foreign Relation Committee at Capitol Hill, Washington, Wednesday. — AFP photo

'Public trial' 80 JU teachers, 11 NGOs lend support

By Staff Correspondent

A total of 80 teachers of Jahangirnagar University have expressed their solidarity with the planned public trial of Golam Azam at the Suhrawardy Udyan on March 26.

In a joint statement Thursday, they said: "We express our solidarity with the programme of the Committee for Annihilation of the Killers and Collaborators of 1971 to try Jamaat Amcer and a lackey of Pakistan occupation forces Golam Azam."

They observed that Golam Azam should be tried in public court for inciting genocide, encouraging rape of hundreds of thousands of women and terming the freedom fighters "bastard" and "culprits" during the country's 1971 War of Independence.

The Jamaat chief had not See Page 12 Col 8

PM tells Senate body Easing of tension opens doors to better cooperation

WASHINGTON, Mar 19: Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia has renewed Bangladesh's pledge to work with the US and other friendly countries in the common commitment to a better, more peaceful and prosperous world for the benefit of all mankind, reports BSS.

Making a statement at the Senate Foreign Relations Committee at the Capitol Hill here yesterday, Begum Zia said, "Your help for the poor and the distressed around the globe has won universal admiration."

She said the devoted work done by the US Task Force during last year's cyclone in Bangladesh was still vivid in our mind.

The Prime Minister was received at the US Senate by the Chairman of Senate Committee on Foreign Relations Senator Claiborne Pell and several other senators.

Senator Pell warmly welcomed the Bangladesh leader and mentioned of their interest they had followed with the democratic practice in Bangladesh and Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia's contribution and role in this regard.

She said Bangladesh's relations with the United States in political, economic and com- See Page 12 Col 1

BEANSON & HEDGES
 WORLD CUP 1992

Pakistanis, S Africans feel relaxed

SYDNEY, Mar 19: South Africa and Pakistan go into this weekend's World Cup cricket semifinals free from pressure, reports AP.

Pakistan, face co-hosts New Zealand at Eden Park in Auckland on Saturday, while South Africa play England at the Sydney Cricket Ground on Sunday.

Pakistan defied the odds to win their final three first-round matches and take a semifinal spot ahead of the two-time champions West Indies and defending champions Australia.

South Africa's players were delighted by the result of a political referendum in their homeland. The poll approved continued political reform and See Page 12 Col 4

Teenage girl burnt alive

From Our Correspondent

GAZIPUR, Mar 19: One Rafiza Khatun (14) was allegedly burnt to death yesterday at about 8 pm by a jilted lover. Son Mia whose marriage proposal was refused by her family.

Police arrested Son Mia and his alleged associate, Sharafat Hossain immediately after the incident.

According to sources, Son Mia (25) of village Pagar under Tongi municipal area loved Rafiza since long. When her family refused his proposal, he, along with his associate, attacked Rafiza last night when she came out of her house alone.

They doused her with kerosene and burned her to death. The local people rescued her and took her immediately afterwards to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) where the doctors declared her dead.

Two killed in road mishaps

By Staff Correspondent

One person was killed and another injured Thursday when a private jeep rammed a rickshaw in front of the Lions Eye Hospital at Agargaon at about 7.30 am.

Of the victims, Hatem Ali died on the spot and his son Quamrul was taken to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) in a critical condition.

The driver of the jeep managed to escape immediately after the incident.

Hatem Ali is reportedly a night guard of PWD.

Meanwhile, Mizanur Rahman (19) of Mallbagh was killed Wednesday evening after he fell down from the roof of a two storied building. He died at the DMCH soon after his admission.

Andrew, Sarah discussing separation

LONDON, Mar 19: Prince Andrew and his wife Sarah are discussing formal separation, Buckingham Palace announced Thursday, reports AP.

In a terse formal statement, the palace said: "Last week lawyers acting for the Duke and Duchess of York initiated discussions about a formal separation between them."

"These discussions are not yet complete and nothing more will be said until they are," AP added.

"The Queen hopes that the media will spare the Duke and the Duchess of York and their children any intrusion."

Andrew, the Queen's second-oldest son, and Sarah, both 32, married on July 23, 1986. They have two daughters, Princess Beatrice, 3, and Princess Eugenie, 2.

The London Daily Mail said Wednesday that reports about a friendship between the Dutchess and wealthy Texas oilman Steve Wyatt had brought marriage strains to a head.

Amnesty asks Yangon to stop persecution of Rohingyas

LONDON, Mar 19: Amnesty International today called on Myanmar's ruling military council to halt a 'campaign of terror and violence' against the country's Muslim minority, reports AFP.

The London-based human rights watchdog said a fact-finding team which interviewed refugees in Bangladesh had confirmed reports of widespread human rights violations, including torture and killings.

It was clear that the Muslim minority in Myanmar's western Rakhine (Arakan) state was being targeted by the Myanmar army, Amnesty said.

Repression of the Muslims or Rohingyas was "part of a longstanding pattern of gross human rights violations intended to suppress all dissent in Myanmar (Burma)."

"Muslims have been rounded up in large numbers and pressed into forced labour for the military, often as porters. They are ill-fed and abused, many are reported to have been beaten to death when they became too weak to carry their loads," Amnesty said.

"Muslim woman have been gang-raped in their homes, others have been held in army barracks and repeatedly raped," the report said.

Troops had also entered Muslim villages, occupying Mosques and burning religious texts and seizing food and crops. The people of entire villages had been driven from their homes after the army issued written orders confiscating their land.

Forced labour often led to death. One refugee interviewed by Amnesty International told how he, his brother and uncle were captured by the army and forced to carry heavy loads for them as porters.

They were fed starvation rations and repeatedly beaten. His brother was hit in the face with a gun and he himself was kicked and his arm broken.

"They also beat my uncle, who collapsed unconscious," he said. "When he was lying on the ground the army burnt him with a cigarette on his legs to see if he was alive or not."

He and his brother later escaped and went back for the uncle, whom they found dead. The same witness said he saw at least 20 porters die on the trip, Amnesty said.

The human rights group also reported arrests of Muslim villagers who protested ill-treatment. Some were sentenced for up to 14 years in prison.

The New York Times reported today that UN Secretary-General Boutros-Ghali was sending a special envoy to press Myanmar's military junta to halt abuses against the country's Muslim minority.

UNHCR relief operation takes off ground

By Staff Correspondent

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees has begun to ferry relief goods to Chittagong for the Myanmar citizens who entered Bangladesh to flee repression in their homeland.

A total of 1000 bundles of reinforced plastic sheeting and 46 tons of blankets were flown in by three UNHCR aircraft since last week and the last consignment arrived in Chittagong Thursday morning, said a press release of the UN agency.

The plastic sheeting, for use as roofing, and other relief materials were being given to the distributing agencies, it added.

The UNHCR, at the invitation of the Bangladesh government, launched an emergency relief and protection operation for the Rohingya refugees a month back. The See Page 12 Col 7

BSC blamed for chartering worn-out vessel Crude crisis leads to ERL shutdown

From Staff Correspondent

CHITTAGONG, Mar 19: The chartering of a worn-out oil tanker to carry crude to the Eastern Refinery in Chittagong caused the country's lone refinery to face a shutdown, authoritative sources said.

The tanker TT Energy flying the Bahamas flag and chartered by the Bangladesh Shipping Corporation (BSC) to carry one lakh tons of crude for the Bangladesh Petroleum Corporation (BPC) has not yet arrived the Chittagong Port and the time of its arrival is yet uncertain, sources said.

The tanker, sailed from Zabaljuna port of the United Arab Emirates (UAE) February 1 and was scheduled to arrive Chittagong Port February 12. However, the tanker developed mechanical trouble at Fujiara port making its onward journey almost uncertain and compelling the Eastern Refinery authorities to shut-down its crude processing unit as its imported crude stock finished.

When contacted today the General Manager (Chartering) of the BSC told The Daily Star that repair of the oil tanker TT Energy was still going on and that some surveyors had been sent to see the condition of the tanker which may sail for Chittagong if the surveyors find it okay, the GM added.

Meanwhile in a bid to avert any possible fuel crisis in the country, the BPC procured another one lakh tons of crude from the UAE which reached here two days ago by a Malta flag carrier tanker MT Equator. The discharging of the crude has been completed and the crude processing unit See Page 12 Col 6

Japan still undecided over Jamuna bridge project

By S Y Bakht

Bangladesh should create a favourable investment environment on a national priority basis as foreign investors face serious obstacles outside the Export Processing Zone (EPZ), the Japanese Ambassador Toshio Saiki said Thursday.

He noted that the recent resolution of the problems related to the Karnaphuli Fertilizer Company (KAFCO) was a "good signal" to attract foreign investors.

"KAFCO is a chance for Bangladesh rather than a worry or a burden... if there are actually shortcomings in KAFCO, they should be improved in a positive and forward looking manner and one should not throw away the baby with the bathwater," he said.

However, he said that large scale Japanese investment in Bangladesh was 'not bright' at the moment.

Ambassador Saiki also noted that Japan's participation in the Jamuna Bridge project was yet to be decided following 'careful considerations.'

Noting that the total Japanese investment outside the EPZ as approved by the Board of Investment comes to about Taka 1.4 billion, he singled out labour issues as posing the most serious problem to foreign investors.

"In the eyes of the foreign investors, confrontational management labour relations often trigger militant moves causing great hindrances to normal and organised operations in factories and wage hikes without consideration to labour productivity," he pointed out while speaking on "Japan-Bangladesh future economic relations" in a meeting of the Lions Club of Dhaka Solidarity at the Sonargaon Hotel.

Lengthy regulatory procedures of bureaucracy which often disturb activities of private firms acting in accordance with their actual needs, Ambassador Saiki added, seem to be often pointed out as problematic by foreign investors in Bangladesh.

High and often arbitrary customs city duty structures, high corporation taxes, smuggling, tax evasion and fake trade marks also threaten legitimate interest of well-intentioned foreign manufacturers, he noted.

He identified these issues as not only hindrances to foreign investors but also as obstacles to domestic investors in making medium to long-term investment on the basis of "sound confidence on future prospects."

The government cannot tackle these problems alone, he said, as solving them requires wide participation and cooperation from people of all walks of life in the society. "In this sense, the creation of a good investment environment seems to be one of the national priorities of Bangladesh."

He said that the role of foreign private sector investment was of vital importance as the governmental assistance alone is not enough to bring about an economic take-off. "In our bilateral economic relations a desirable future aspect would be an increased in-flow of Japanese private capitals, especially large scale direct investments in productive sectors, which will not only create employment and contribute to technological transfer but will also help to activate the Bangladesh economy dynamically." See Page 12 Col 7