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Saifur off to US for pre-Paris meet WB to recommend \$2.1 b aid

The World Bank has finally decided to recommend \$2.1 billion US dollars in aid to Bangladesh for the coming fiscal at next month's Aid Consortium meeting in Paris, reports UNB.

Official sources said yesterday that the bank, in its finalised version of aid memorandum prepared for the Paris moot, is expected to recommend the donors to pledge between 1.9 and 2.1 billion US dollars for Bangladesh for 1992-93 fiscal.

Of the expected pledge, indicates the bank memo, 1.4 to 1.5 billion US dollar would be as project aid, 450 to 500 million dollar as commodity aid and 150 to 200 million dollar as food aid.

The latest pledge to be recommended is 200 million dollars up from the amount the World Bank planned in the draft memorandum prepared in early February. In the draft memo, the bank indicated the aid recommendation for next fiscal might not exceed 1.9 billion US dollars.

Officials linked World Bank's decision to raise the level of recommendation to improved trend in aid utilization in last two months.

Meanwhile, Finance Minister Saifur Rahman left Dhaka for Washington last night for pre-Paris meeting discussions with key officials of the World Bank and International Monetary Fund — the sponsoring agencies for the annual Aid Consortium meetings.

The Finance Minister is scheduled to meet World Bank President Lewis Preston, its Executive Director Moin Kureishi, Vice-Presidents Atilla Karasmanoglu and Joseph Wood and, IMF Managing Director Michael Camdessus.

On the eve of Rahman's departure, concerned officials said Bangladesh Finance Minister would try to persuade policy makers of the World Bank to maintain the Aid pledge at least at last year's level.

The Paris Consortium last year pledged 2.3 billion US dollars for fiscal 1991-92.

The bank policy makers are likely to be cautioned that any cut in aid at this moment would affect the on-going structural reform programmes in Bangladesh, officials added.

The Finance Minister, during his three-day stay in the US capital, is also likely to pursue the World Bank for relaxing its rigid terms attached to aid to help the country improve the pace of aid utilization.

Slow aid utilization is now being criticised often by the World Bank and other Western donors.

In its memorandum, the World Bank cautioned that aid recommendations in future

Myanmar refugee influx a 'great concern': Eliasson

Unabated influx of the Muslim refugees from Myanmar into Bangladesh has caused "great concern" among the international community, United Nations Secretary General Boutros Ghali's special envoy Jan Eliasson said here Monday, reports BSS.

There is a growing realisation of the gravity of the situation, Eliasson, UN Under Secretary General for Humanitarian Affairs, told newsmen upon arrival at the airport.

He said the refugee situation was 'very sad' and he was looking forward to have a close look at the problem during his three-day visit here.

Eliasson, who has been dispatched by the UN Secretary General for an on-the-spot assessment of refugee problem, will also visit Myanmar during the current swing.

Eliasson said he would have substantial talks here with the Bangladesh side on different aspects of the refugee issue and said aim of his talks in Bangladesh and Myanmar would be 'safe and voluntary' return of the refugees to their homes.

The UN Under Secretary General said he found some

PM tells Newsweek Dhaka for friendly ties with neighbours

NEW YORK, Mar 30: Bangladesh Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia has said her country would like to maintain friendly relations with its neighbours and expressed the hope that people's rule would remain effective in all the countries of South Asia, reports PTI.

Asked by American news-magazine 'Newsweek' whether she had discussed with India the issue of floods in Bangladesh caused by deforestation up the Ganges which resulted in silt being washed down and blocking the river, she said, these things we must resolve on a bilateral basis. We would like to maintain



Jahanara Imam and other members of the 'Public Trial Committee' leaving the court with lawyers and supporters after hearing of the case by a High Court Division bench on Monday. — Star photo

Newsprint price likely to be raised

The Price of newsprint may be raised again in the next budget.

Sources said that Bangladesh Chemical Industries Corporation (BCIC) had proposed to raise the price of newsprint to Taka 26,000 a ton for general use.

However, newsprint would be provided at a lower price to the newspapers. Half of the demand of the newspapers would be provided at about Taka 21,000 per ton. The rest would be provided at Taka 25,040 a ton.

Sources said that a meeting of the ministers of Industries, Finance and Information would be held soon to decide the rate of newsprint.

The proposal to raise the price was made in view of the losses the Khulna Newsprint Mills (KNM) is incurring. The aggregate loss of the KNM is about Taka 68 crore.

The mills suffered a loss of Taka 15 crore in only the first seven months (July-January) of this fiscal year.

The losses were mainly due to marketing of newsprint at a

Cabinet endorses BCCI revival

The Cabinet yesterday endorsed the Finance Ministry proposals on revitalisation and reorganisation of the Bank of Credit and Commerce International (BCCI) operations in Bangladesh, sources said.

Earlier, the Finance Division of the Ministry had prepared a brief for the Cabinet for approval, containing various recommendations including the mode of reimbursing the depositors.

The recommendations included reorganising the capital structure of the BCCI in line with the Banking Company Ordinance 1991.

At the directive of the Ministry of Finance, the Bangladesh Bank (BB) had drafted a proposal after reviewing the auditors report.

The Finance Ministry had also sought the opinion of the Law Ministry and received a positive response.

According to the BB proposal a new bank will be established under a new name with an authorised capital of Tk 100 crore out of which Tk 60 crore will be paid up. Of the paid-up capital, the government will contribute

Hasina visits camps Global intervention sought to stop persecution of Rohingyas

TEKNAP, Mar 30: Opposition Leader Sheikh Hasina Monday appealed to the international community to mount pressure on the Myanmar military junta to halt repression and hand-over power to the elected representatives there, reports UNB.

"Create international pressure and free four crore democracy-seeking people of Myanmar from the confinement of the Myanmar junta", she told a spontaneous crowd of the Rohingyas refugees at Khuniapalung Monday afternoon.

Hasina pointed out that the Myanmar military junta had taken recourse to persecution of Rohingyas Muslims and pushed them out of the country to divert world attention from the internal political problem.

With a design of not to transfer power to the elected representatives and their uncrowned leader Aung San Suu Kyi, the junta took this repressive action, the opposition leader said demanding immediate

NEWS BRIEFS

Attorney general
 By Staff Correspondent
 Attorney General Aminul Haque, yesterday tendered his resignation but the authorities did not accept it, sources said. The reason for his submitting resignation letter could not be known.

Elizabeth greets Biswas
 Queen Elizabeth has sent a message to President Abdur Rahman Biswas on the occasion of the independence and national day of Bangladesh. In a message she said, "as your excellency and the people of Bangladesh celebrate your National Day, it gives me much pleasure to send you my warm congratulations and best wishes for the prosperity of your country", reports BSS.

HC vacation bench function
 A vacation bench of the High Court division will function from April 1 to 9 for hearing important matters, an official handout said, on Monday. The one-man bench will comprise Justice Bimalendu Bikkash Roy Chowdhury, reports BSS.

Passengers robbed of Tk 1.50 lakh
 Jessore, Mar 30: Dacoits robbed cash and valuables worth about Tk 1.50 lakh from passengers of a night coach near Kaliganj in the district last night. Police said, the dacoity was committed when the coach 'Diganta Paribahan' (Dhaka Metro 1210) reached at Magura. The dacoits were traveling in the coach in guise of passengers, reports UNB.

Sheri, Iftar timings

Ramzan March/	April	6.21 pm
25	31	6.21 pm
26	1	4.30 6.21 pm

Warrants against 'Gana Adalat' members Hearing on bail continues today

The hearing of the bail petition of 24 members, organisers and witnesses of the Gana Adalat (People's Court) continues today (Tuesday) at the Division Bench of the High Court, court sources said Monday.

The Bench, comprising Justice Anwarul Huq Chowdhury and Justice Abdul Karim after hearing the defence side Monday adjourned the Court until 10 am Tuesday. The court will today hear the prosecution.

The Judges stayed the operation of the warrants until completion of the hearing.

The Court is adjourned until 10 am tomorrow (Tuesday) and they (24 accused) shall not be arrested till then," Justice Anwarul Huq Chowdhury told the crowded court after an hour of hearing.

Barrister Syed Istiaq Ahmed and Barrister Amirul Islam pleaded that the charges brought against the accused were "unbelievable and ridiculous."

Barrister Istiaq said that the

Arrest warrants issued as per law : CMM

The Chief Metropolitan Magistrate (CMM) of Dhaka, Azizul Huq Bhuiyan yesterday said he had issued the warrant orders against 24 persons involved in the March 26 'Gana Adalat' (People's Court) according to the law in the greater national interests.

Talking to BSS he said he did not find anything unlawful in it.

Meanwhile, no lawyer appeared before the CMM court yesterday to press the demand for withdrawal of warrant orders issued by the CMM against the 24 persons involved in the recent Gana-Adalat.

The Chief Metropolitan Magistrate said he was writing to "the higher court against violation of sanctity of the court" by a group of lawyers Sunday. These lawyers, he said could also write to the higher court against the warrant orders "instead of resorting to unlawful activities".

He said "it shows that this group of lawyers though being part of the court became part of terrorism".

The Officer-in-charge of the Ramna Police Station lodged a case charging 24 persons including the organisers, judges

Search for meeting ground on

Parliamentary Standing Committee on Works Ministry is desperately searching for a permanent place for the political parties to hold their rallies in the city.

Sources close to the committee said that the committee had taken the move as the leading political parties of the country unanimously felt that abrupt holdings of public meetings in the city caused enormous problems to the city dwellers specially by means of creating traffic jam in different city roads.

The traffic department of the Dhaka Metropolitan Police is also learnt to have been pleading for taking necessary steps to stop holding of public rallies at different crossings of the city for the sake of a smooth traffic system in the metropolis.

According to sources, the ten-member Standing Committee headed by Works Minister Barrister Rafiqul Islam Miah at a meeting on March 27 has formed a four-member sub-committee to find a piece of land suitable for holding public rallies of all the parties from the abandoned property under the City Corporation.

Free Azam or face movement : Jamaat

Acting Ameer of the Jamaat-e-Islami, Abbas Ali Khan said Monday that the government was digging its own grave by, what he said, bowing down to the sponsors of the 'Gana Adalat' (People's Court).

He demanded the immediate and unconditional release of his party Ameer.

Addressing a public meeting in the city, the Jamaat leader threatened the govern-

Govt asked to show cause in three weeks

A Division Bench of the High Court Monday issued rule on the government as to why the detention order on Prof Golam Azam will not be held illegal. The rule was returnable in three weeks, reports UNB.

The Bench, comprising of Justice Ismailuddin Sarkar and Justice Badrul Islam Chowdhury, issued the rule upon a writ filed by Golam Azam, Ameer of Jamaat-e-Islami, who

Muggings, snatchings on increase in city

Muggings and snatchings, sometimes involving threats to life, have increased alarmingly in various parts of the city in recent months and, more often than not, women are the target.

The female population, especially of the middle class, have become increasingly vulnerable. Recent newspaper and police crime reports indicate that a large percentage of mugging victims are women, and a number of them suffered serious injuries during the last few weeks.

A total of 19 cases of muggings were reported in newspapers since the beginning of the current month of which ten victims were women.

On Saturday last, when two sisters were on their way to a shopping centre through the Ram Krishna Mission road on a rickshaw, a couple of young men attempted to snatch a gold necklace from one of them. Being exceptionally brave and displaying rare courage, the sisters strongly resisted and finally managed to apprehend one of the culprits who was later handed over to the police.

On March 22, two armed muggers riding motor-cycle stopped a rickshaw near Asad Gate and robbed gold chains and bangles worth Taka 40,000 from the passenger, a housewife living nearby.

Even female police officers are not safe from the hands of criminals. On March 10, two police women in civics were travelling on a rickshaw when it was stopped by two armed motor-cycle riders near the Met office at Agargaon at around 10:30 am. The muggers snatched a gold chain off of Subinspector Rebeba while Assistant Subinspector Azizunnessa was watching helplessly.

Of the mugging incidents reported in newspapers during the period, no arrests were made relating to these cases.

However, according to the daily crime reports of the 14 police stations in the Metro area issued by the Public Relations Department of the Detective Branch of Police, about 30 arrests involving mugging incidents were made since the beginning of the current month.

The police incidentally is very much reluctant, for obvious reasons, to include mugging cases lodged with the police stations in their daily crime reports for the press unless arrests are made.

এখনই বৃক্ষ রোপনের প্রস্তুত গ্রহণের উপযুক্ত সময়। আপনার ঘরের আংগিনায়, পুকুরের পাড়ে বা খালের ধারে বৃক্ষ রোপনের প্রয়োজনীয় ব্যবস্থা গ্রহণ করেছেন কি?

কোথায় কি গাছ লাগাবেন তা চিন্তা করুন। চারা রোপনের আগেই ১'১/২ x ১'১/২ x ১'১/২ গর্ত করে তা গোবর বা জৈব সার মেশানো মাটি দিয়ে আপাততঃ ভরে রাখুন।

বৃষ্টি শুরু হলে চারা রোপন করবেন। নিকটস্থ বন বিভাগীয় নার্সারী বা উপজেলা নার্সারী থেকে পছন্দমত চারা সংগ্রহ করুন।

বৃক্ষ শুধু শোভা বর্ধন ও ছায়া দান করে না। বৃক্ষ আমাদের প্রাণরক্ষাকারী অঙ্গিভ্রমণ সরবরাহ নিশ্চিত করে। তাই ব্যাপক হারে বৃক্ষ রোপন করে তা সংরক্ষণ করুন।

ডি এফ পি (নি) ৪৬৯৮-২৪/৩
 ডি-৩৪৬
 — বন অধিদপ্তর