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The Daily Star

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 BANGLADESH EXPRESS CO. LTD.
 15, MOTUHEL, C.A. DHAKA

VOL. II NO. 132 REGD. NO. DA 781

JAISTHA 18, 1399 BS,

DHAKA MONDAY JUNE 1, 1992

ZILQAD 28, 1412 HIJRI

12 PAGES: PRICE TAKA 4.00

Inside Today

Article

Why Not Land Reform to Alleviate Poverty by Shahed Latif Page 4

International



Mojaddedi turns down demands for withdrawal of militia Page 5

Business

Security Council slaps sanctions on Serb-led Yugoslavia An interview with ADB Vice-President Page 7

Metropolitan

Dhaka Day by Day



Graphic Designing representing a Global Aesthetic Page 3

National

Chandpur: 10,000 divorces in one year Page 9

Feature

Health

Tobacco-free Workplace is Safer and Healthier by Manuara Begum Page 8

NEWS BRIEFS

Milam meets Hasina

US Ambassador in Dhaka William B Milam called on Awami League President and the Leader of the Opposition in Parliament Sheikh Hasina yesterday afternoon at her Minto Road residence. They discussed different national and international aspects, reports BSS.

MBBS admission viva June 4

Viva voce for the admission of the MBBS 1st year 1991-92 will begin in all the medical colleges June 4. Viva voce of the candidates bearing roll numbers DAM-0001 to DAM-0347 will be held at the Dhaka Medical College on June 4. Viva voce of the candidates bearing roll numbers DAM-0522 to DAM 1048 will be held on June 6, DAM - 1051 to DAM 1561 June 7, DAM - 1569 to DAM 2516 June 8, DAM - 2517 to 3130 June 9 and DAM - 3133 to DAM 3837-3580 June 10, reports UNB.

Vacation bench of HC constituted

A vacation bench of the High Court Division of the Supreme Court was constituted by the Chief Justice to carry out emergency hearings during the Supreme Court's vacation from July 1 to 16. Justice Ismail Uddin Sarkar will attend the hearing on very important issues during the vacation on July 3, 8 and 15 from 10.30 am at his chamber adjacent to the Court No 7, reports BSS.

Kamal, Mannan, Tofael voice dissent

Awami League expels Mantu

By Staff Correspondent

The Awami League (AL) has expelled Mostafa Mohsin Mantu from the party.

The decision was taken at the party's Central Working Committee meeting at around 3 Sunday morning following a heated debate on the issue among the AL leaders present, AL sources say.

According to the sources, four out of the 47 members of the Working Committee who were present until the meeting was adjourned opposed the expulsion.

The dissenters include Abdul Mannan, Dr Kamal Hossain, Tofael Ahmed MP and Sirajul Islam, the party's Working Committee sources said.

The AL Working Committee expelled Mantu, the former General Secretary of the Dhaka district unit of the party and chief of its youth front, on

charge of violation of party discipline and act of sabotage vis-a-vis activities against the party interest, a party press release said last night.

Mantu's expulsion, however, came following allegation from the activists of both the AL and its students wing BCL that he had been somehow or other involved in the killing of BCL leader on January 9 this year.

Mantu was earlier suspended from the party by its Working Committee on charge of 'anti-organisational activities' and served with a show cause notice on March 5 that asked him to explain why he should not be expelled from the party.

The AL leaders who opposed Mantu's expulsion, however, argued that the way he (Mantu) was suspended from the party last March was not

constitutionally justified, sources said.

The leaders, in a bid to prevent the party high command from expelling him, also upheld Mantu's contribution to the expansion of party activities in the past, sources added.

Mantu, with the expulsion, lost the primary membership of the party as well as the post of the Chairman of AL's youth front - Awami Jubo League.

Mantu, however, was not available for comment on his expulsion.

A close associate of Mantu, requesting anonymously told The Daily Star last night that he (Mantu) was busy in a meeting with his well-wishers in the party aimed at chalking out the next course of action.

The source, however, said that Mantu was still optimistic that some senior leaders of the

party would come forward with active support for him.

He, however, declined to mention the name of the senior leaders.

The AL Working Committee meeting, however, abstained from taking any disciplinary action against the party President member Johra Tajuddin for attending the council session of the Mantu-led faction of the Dhaka District unit of AL.

Although a section of the party leaders was in favour of taking action against her, Sheikh Hasina did not show any interest, sources say.

Johra Tajuddin was also not available yesterday for her comment on Mantu's expulsion. Her family members when contacted, told The Star last night that she was too sick to talk to the press.

See Page 12 Col 5

PM tells top ADB official

Power sector now streamlined, aid should continue

The visiting Asian Development Bank (ADB) Vice-President, William R Thompson, called on Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia at her office and discussed various matters relating to economic measures taken by the Bangladesh government, reports BSS.

Begum Zia apprised the ADB Vice-President of the government's economic policy particularly the poverty alleviation, rural development, mass education and protection of environment.

She suggested that the donor countries should continue their flow of assistance to power sector so that industrial growth was not hampered due to fall in the power supply.

Begum Zia told Thompson that her government had taken strict measures to minimise system loss and to bring about overall development. Punishment and reward have been introduced by the Power Development Board for lapses and good work, she said.

The Prime Minister suggested that ADB should lend a helping hand in the development of the private sector as well.

Begum Zia mentioned that the BNP government's programme have affinity with ADB objectives. She said the past regime had created a mess in the industrial and power sector due to mismanagement and

See Page 12 Col 5

President summons JS session June 18

President Abdur Rahman Biswas has summoned the session of the Jatiya Sangsad on June 18, Thursday at 3 pm at the Sangsad Bhavan, a Parliament Secretariat announcement said yesterday, reports BSS.

This will be the sixth session of the fifth parliament.

Janata Party to oppose transfer of Tinbigha

CALCUTTA, May 31: The national General Secretary of the Janata Party, Arvind Chaturvedi yesterday said that his party would oppose the leasing out of Tinbigha to Bangladesh and launch peaceful agitation against it, reports BSS.

Addressing a press conference here, Chaturvedi said that why should India lease out Tinbigha Corridor to Bangladesh which was providing shelter to all insurgent groups fighting against the country (India).

He said that although the Janata Party supported the BJP's stand to oppose the leasing out of the Corridor, it did not support the way BJP had given a call to the people to sacrifice their lives to stop the transfer.

India tops poors' list in Asia

By Staff Correspondent
 By head-count index, India has the highest number of poor among the Asian countries, according to the Manila-based Asian Development Bank (ADB).

Also, the country's outstanding external debt, 80,125 million US dollars, is the highest among the developing member countries of the Bank. The Bank's estimates have been incorporated in the Asian Development Outlook (ADO), the review of the economy of the member countries, published just recently.

The report says, 86 per cent of the developing world's extremely poor and 72 per cent

See Page 12 Col 6

Hasina at convention on women

'Path to politics not so smooth for women'

By Staff Correspondent

Awami League chief and Leader of the Opposition in Parliament Sheikh Hasina said Sunday that the country's women were not entering politics because of social and family obstacles.

The path to entering politics is not smooth and without a revolutionary change in society the situation will not improve, she told a convention on "Women and Politics" as chief guest at the National Museum auditorium yesterday afternoon.

Twenty-four recommendations were drawn from the three-day convention that would be placed with the ruling and opposition parties for Parliament's implementing them.

Presided over by chairperson of the research and study group "Women for Women", which organised the convention, the concluding session was also addressed by special guest R C Offenheiser, representative of the Ford

Foundation in Dhaka, guest of honour S M Ali, Editor of The Daily Star, Rasheda K Chowdhury, General Secretary of the organisation and Masuda Rashid Chowdhury, treasurer of the organisation.

Sheikh Hasina said that women were being kept away from politics in the name of Islam which was being misinterpreted by a group of politicians.

She claimed that the Awami League tried to involve more women in politics but it was not still sufficient. In future, steps would be taken to involve an increased number of women in her party, she added.

Three of the four directly elected members in Parliament are from the AL, she said adding that her party manifesto clearly mentioned women rights and implementation of the United Nations resolution on women.

The opposition leader said

See Page 12 Col 7



A city hawker enlisting his name on the first day of the 'Signature Collection Campaign' yesterday. — Star photo

Power disruption now a routine nuisance

By Staff Correspondent

Frequent power supply disruptions have become a regular feature in recent days in the city.

Residents of different city areas complained that the power supply is cut-off routinely without any prior public notice.

"Electricity supply in my neighbourhood is disrupted almost everyday and often remains cut-off for more than an hour," said a disgruntled resident of Gopfbagh, adding "I think it is because of the loadshedding in the supply system."

However, when contacted, a Power Development Board official denied that any loadshedding in power supply was taking place in the city.

Although there was a period of repeated loadshedding throughout the country upto last month, he said that currently there is loadshedding only in the Chittagong and

Comilla regions.

He pointed out that the power supply shortage, which stood at 515 MW on 13 April, has been presently brought down to 140 MW after restoration of the generating capacity of some units. There is a 100 MW loadshedding in the Chittagong region as the Kaptai Hydroelectric Plant with a capacity of 230 MW, is generating only 50 MW because of the reduced water-level at the Kaptai lake, he added, noting that there is a 40 MW loadshedding in Comilla.

He said that the situation will improve once the water level at Kaptai increases.

A Dhaka Electric Supply Authority (DESA) official, when enquired, could not provide any explanation for the recurring power supply suspensions in the city.

However, a concerned official said that overloading be-

yond capacity, old distribution lines, illegal connections and poor maintenance by DESA were the primary reasons for the "local power supply interruption" in different metropolitan areas.

Regular power supply disruptions have been reported from Dhanmondi, Mohammadpur, Shewrapara, Elcphant Road, Malibagh, Maghbazar, Purana Pallan, Motijheel and a large part of the old city areas.

There is also frequent voltage fluctuations in the city which is damaging the electrical appliances, residents complained.

Power supply interruption is also severely affecting the newspaper industries in the city. For over a week now power supply is regularly suspended at The Daily Star office in Motijheel often lasting for more than an hour.

Mass signature campaign for Azam's trial

By Staff Correspondent

Organisers of the public trial of Golam Azam Sunday launched a signature collection campaign across the country to press for implementation of the verdict against the controversial chief of Jamaat-e-Islami.

In Dhaka, the campaign got started at several parts of the city while signature collection elsewhere will begin today (Monday), according to the organisers.

Speaking at the launching of the campaign, Jahanara Imam, convenor of the National Coordinating Council for Implementation of the Spirits of the Liberation War and Resistance of the Killers, warned that any move to ignore the March 26 verdict of the 'public trial' against Golam Azam should not be tolerated.

The movement against the fascist forces of Jamaat and Shibir would continue till the end, she declared.

Explaining the objective of

See Page 12 Col 6

Big three produce 'unsafe' ice-creams

By S Y Bakht

Three major ice-cream manufacturing companies have been found guilty of producing 'sub-standard' products by a government committee set up to investigate the 'qualitative standards' of food products in the country.

In a letter to the Secretary, Ministry of Health, the committee identified the offending ice-cream companies as Milk Vita, Polar and Igloo.

The 3-member committee issued the letter, about the laboratory test findings conducted on some of the products of these companies, on August 20, 1991.

The letter revealed separate tests proved that eight out of the nine items tested had been found 'adulterated' that made the products unsafe for consumption.

The samples were collected from the manufactured products kept in refrigerators, the letter stated, "and were tested with extreme care

and secrecy by the public analyst at the Public Health Chemical Testing Laboratory at Mohakhali."

Set up in June last year following separate circulars issued by the Ministry of Health and Family Planning and the Ministry of Commerce, the convenor of the committee is a Director of the Trading Corporation of Bangladesh (TCB) while the Director of Nutrition of the Institute of Public Health and Nutrition and a member of the Board of Industries (BOI) are the two members.

A meeting between the Health Ministry officials and the representatives of the three manufacturers was held soon after the findings of the committee.

According to a Ministry source, at the meeting the Health Ministry 'requested' the producers to 'improve the standard of their products'.

See Page 12 Col 1

Mixed reaction over Prime Minister's India visit

By Staff Correspondent

A mixed reaction—of hope and despair, of criticisms and complements—has been expressed by individuals, professionals and academicians on the recent visit of the Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia to India.

The Prime Minister paid a three-day state visit to India beginning May 26, which was first at bilateral plane by her after coming to power.

During the visit, two accords, on the exchange of land for the construction of missions by the two countries in each other's capital and on cultural and academic exchange programmes for the years 1993 through 1995 were signed. India also agreed to lift restrictions on quota of Jim-

dani import.

Begum Khaleda Zia and her counterpart, Narashima Rao discussed in details the whole gamut of bilateral relations between India and Bangladesh and the regional issues.

Commenting on the outcome of the visit, Awami League leader Rahmat Ali MP, said that "it was a story of total failure."

Rahmat Ali, president of the party's peasant front, said that our most sensitive bilateral problems with India included sharing of water, transfer of Tin Bigha etc. and added that the Prime Minister returned 'empty handed'.

On top of that, the Awami League leader said that visit to India without setting any con-

crete agenda reflected the capitulationist foreign policy of the government.

Mizanur Rahman Chowdhury MP, acting chairman of the Jatiya Party of former president Ershad said that "the visit was not fruitful."

Commenting on the accords signed, Chowdhury said that those were the job of an assistant secretary and the cultural accord was nothing new as it existed there for quite long.

Matjur Rahman Nizam MP, Secretary General, Jamaat-e-Islami Bangladesh, said that without some frail hope the people did not get anything from the visit of the Prime Minister.

The people will be misled at the propaganda on the suc-

cess of the visit, he added and went on to say that 'there was no specific decision on Farakka, Talpatti and the tribal issue'.

Abul Bashar, a politburo member of the Workers Party of Bangladesh said that 'the Prime Minister returned empty handed and it was a mere ceremonial visit'.

Every year during the months of April and May the government became active to solve the outstanding problems with India but the results remained a 'big zero', he added.

Commenting on the outcome of the visit, Professor Wahiduddin Mahmud, a leading economist, said that the matter of economic cooperation between the two countries

could be given more importance.

Normally, the relationship between Bangladesh and India is discussed on a political level but there was enormous scope of cooperation and integration on the trade front, added Prof Mahmud.

He further said that 'both the countries could contribute to the growth of their respective economies by officially recognising the illegal trade going on'.

Referring to the Farakka issue, Prof Mahmud said that negotiations on sharing water should be backed by more concrete analysis of how the shortage of water affected the agricultural and economic life of Bangladesh.

The Indian economy is presently undergoing wide ranging reforms which were bound to have important effect on the external trade of Bangladesh including the border trade, he added.

Morshed Khan, President, Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce and Industry said that it was heartening to see that both sides agreed to stop illegal movement of people across the border and added that 'stopping of illegal movement was the national consensus'.

On the issue of joint economic commission, Khan said that participation of private sector was a must in such commission to make this body

See Page 12 Col 8

AJM workers clash again

From Our Correspondent

NARAYANGANJ, May 31: The two rival workers' groups clashed again at Adamjee Jute Mills today at around 1 pm.

Sramik League led by Rehan and Sramik Dal led by Kashem exploded about 50 crackers. However, none were injured.

Members of both the groups were armed with pipeguns though they did not use them. Today's incident was a sequel to yesterday's clash between the two groups which stemmed from an issue over watching VCR. A worker was killed in yesterday's clash.

Today's clash started near Kadamtoli and then spread over to the Siddhant Power House area. During the clash, traffic movement on the Narayanganj-Demra road came to a halt and shops of that area remained closed.