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Inside Today
Article
Kashmir: Back to Square One
 Column: Between the Lines by Kuldip Nayyar
Page 4

International
 Diana on sale
 Army crackdown on in Sind
Page 5

Feature
 Science and Technology
 Reinforcing cement concrete steel
Page 8

National
 Success of Tk 57 crore agri-programme in Barisal uncertain
Page 9

Metropolitan
 Dhaka Day by Day
 Locked-up tenants go thirsty
Page 3

NEWS BRIEFS
Hasina returns today
 Awami League president and leader of the opposition in parliament Sheikh Hasina returns home this morning from Saudi Arabia. Hasina along with her husband and son left for Makkah on June 5 to perform Hajj, reports UNB.

Shibir supports June 20 hartal
 Islami Chhatra Shibir Tuesday extended support to a countrywide half-day hartal on June 20, called by the Jatiya Jubo Command and the Bharatiya Dalal Protirodh Committee. The Shibir central committee at a meeting decided to extend support to the hartal call, said a press release, reports UNB.

140 held in city on various charges
 Police arrested 140 people on various charges from different areas of the city during last 24 hours ending 6 pm Tuesday, reports UNB.

3 children drowned in Jamuna
 SIRAJGANJ, June 16: Three children were drowned in the Jamuna today as the riverbank they were walking along collapsed at Kulkaincharama in Kazipur upazila.
 The victims were identified as Momtaj Khatun (8) of village Sharshia and Matlab (12) of village Boalita in Shahjadpur upazila and Ramjan Ali (10) of village Tokat in Kazipur upazila, reports UNB.

Quake jolts Myanmar
 BANGKOK, June 16: A strong earthquake shook northern Myanmar yesterday. The quake measured 6.6 on the Richter Scale, said the official radio in a broadcast monitored here today.
 Its epicentre was about 50 miles (80 kilometres) north of Katha, reports AFP.

Russia ready for shifting arms factories to India

NEW DELHI, June 16: Russia is ready to shift some of its arms factories to India and is equally eager to set up a joint space launch facility here, Russia's ambassador to New Delhi was quoted as saying today, reports AFP.
 Moscow has indicated its willingness to shift units which produce frontline aircraft, tanks, armoured cars and other military equipment for use in India and export to third countries, ambassador Anatoly Drukov said.

"Previously we only supplied equipment: planes, tanks, armoured cars," The Pioneer newspaper quoted him as saying in an interview.
 "But I think we can go further and set up joint ventures in order to produce military equipment not only for consumption (in India) but also for selling to third countries," he added. "From our side there is readiness."
 "The idea has been under discussion, but I think we have now to move from an exchange of views to the concrete deal, the contract," Drukov added.
 The former Soviet Union was India's biggest arms supplier, and relations between Moscow and New Delhi have been on a slow upswing since taking a beating following the collapse of the communist regime.
 The envoy also said Russia was interested in setting up a joint space launch facility near the Equator in India since it had lost its Baikonur cosmodrome to breakaway Kazakhstan. He did not specify if discussions had been held with India on the subject.
 There was no immediate comment in New Delhi on Drukov's offer of arms factories transfers to India or the proposal for a joint space launcher.
 Drukov said prospects of cooperation in space between his country and India were 'huge' and expressed confidence that Moscow would transfer controversial rocket technology to breakaway Kazakhstan. See Page 12 Col 5

ALPP meet today Khaleda, Samad Azad to talk before budget session

By Nurul Kabir
 The Awami League Parliamentary Party (ALPP) meets this afternoon to decide the party strategy to face the budget session of parliament beginning tomorrow.
 AL chief Sheikh Hasina, scheduled to be back home from Saudi Arabia this morning, will preside over the meeting.
 Meanwhile, the AL policymakers are learnt to have decided to meet the Prime Minister and Leader of the House Khaleda Zia before joining the budget session. Earlier, Prime Minister wished to talk to the AL policymakers in a bid to remove the strain that had developed between the opposition and the ruling party on the Golam Azam issue since the last session of Parliament, sources say.
 See Page 12 Col 7



CP expels Gorbachev
 MOSCOW, June 16: Former Soviet president Mikhail Gorbachev was expelled on Saturday from the remnant Communist Party of what was the Soviet Union for destroying the party and the state and betraying the workers, Itar-Tass reported Monday, says AFP.
 The decision, taken in a plenary meeting here held by former members of the party's central committee was published in a statement issued by the party, actions by party members have been forbidden by Russian President Boris Yeltsin.
 Itar-Tass did not say how many people attended the plenary meeting, the Soviet Communist Party was banned.
 See Page 12 Col 1

Stricter laws for non-banking bodies soon

By Inam Ahmed and Sohel Manzur
 The government will soon formulate laws for all non-banking financial institutions providing punishment of upto five years in jail and Taka five lakh as fine for operation without license.
 The Finance Ministry is now working on the law to bring such institutions under control. However, the insurance companies will be exempted from the law.
 Under the law the institutions including the non-government organisations (NGOs) will have to acquire license from the Bangladesh Bank (BB).
 In the license, the BB will impose some conditionalities and if any institution violates any of them, the institution may be fined upto Taka ten lakh.
 The punitive measures have been made strict upto the level that in addition to the Taka ten lakh fine, the institution will have to pay Taka one lakh as fine each day until the day when it can fulfil the conditions it has violated.
 The law which deals with the institutions which take deposits of upto Taka one crore or disburse loans upto the same amount will have 52 sections scrutinizing with all the operational aspects of the institutions.
 Under the law the development financing institutions (DFIs) including Bangladesh Shilpa Rin Sangstha (BSRS), Bangladesh Shilpa Bank, House Building Finance Corporation (HBFC), Investment Corporation of Bangladesh (ICB), Bangladesh Small and Cottage Industries Corporation (BSCIC) will be supervised by the BB.
 Finance Ministry sources say the measures are being chalked out to bring the institutions under control. See Page 12 Col 8



TALK-PROCESS: Finance Minister Saifur Rahman trying to drive home a point to the Deputy Leader of the Opposition Abusamad Azad who appears all ears to the minister during a pre-budget seminar at Engineers' Institution Tuesday.
 —Star photo by Mohsin

Summit opens Bush welcomes Yeltsin as new Peter the Great

WASHINGTON, June 16: President George Bush welcomed Russian President Boris Yeltsin today as a modern-day Peter the Great and said their summit marked the start of a new era in post-cold war relations, reports Reuters.
 "Mr President, like Peter the Great, you are redefining... Russia's role in the world," Bush told Yeltsin during an elaborate arrival ceremony at the White House.
 Yeltsin and his wife stepped out of their black Zil limousine to warm handshakes from Bush and his wife Barbara. A military band played each nation's national anthem and a 21-gun salute sounded.
 Yeltsin and Bush, each escorted by a soldier, proceeded to a ceremonial review of the troops in the June sunshine.
 They then gave opening statements for a two-day summit that will focus on nuclear disarmament, economic reform in Russia and Yeltsin's assertion that some American POWs from the Vietnam war may still be alive and jailed in
 See Page 12 Col 5

No region-based politics: PM

RANGPUR, June 16: Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia said today her government does not believe in region-based politics and wants to ensure balanced development of the country, reports UNB.
 "Don't think of Rangpur only, think about the country, because it's greater than all," she told the Rangpurians at a huge public meeting at the Rangpur Zila School ground this afternoon.
 In an oblique reference to last year's parliamentary election in which her BNP lost all five seats to deposed President Ershad's Jatiya Party, Begum Zia said "it matters little who voted for whom".
 She, however, hurriedly ended her speech when the crowd demanded of the Prime Minister to declare Carmichael University College as a university.
 Begum Zia assured that a commission would soon be set up for examining possibilities of turning the college into a university.
 Despite her assurance, the crowd kept shouting the demand for spot announcement.
 The Prime Minister then toughened her tone: "Everything will be done according to law as my government does not want to give false promises."
 Earlier in her speech, Begum Zia said the BNP government would not work for any particular party, person or group as "the country will be affected."
 She called upon the people of Rangpur to forget about all differences of opinion and misunderstanding and come forward to build the country.
 "Don't be misguided by propaganda that BNP is not doing anything for Rangpur, we have taken up many programmes for the district."
 Referring to fulfilment of many election promises of BNP, including agricultural loan waiver and exemption of land tax up to 25 bighas as well as various development programmes like canal digging, the Prime Minister said all these were directed towards welfare of the people.
 She assured that construction of the Jamuna bridge would start soon, and hard rock from Baropukuria would be extracted in phases.
 She underscored the need for women's participation in the development activity and referred to various programmes taken up for them.
 She also urged all to cultivate fallow land for boosting production.

Rizvee, Elias, Malek new JCD leaders

By Staff Correspondent
 A new executive body of BNP's student front, the Jatiyatrabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD), has been formed with Rizvee Ahmed, Elias Ali and Abdul Malek as the president, general secretary and organising secretary respectively.
 The body was formed at its council held yesterday at the Prime Minister's Office, Sugandha.
 BNP Secretary General Barrister Abusalam Talukdar announced the committee formally at about 10:30 pm.
 The council, held after a long five and a half hours, was earlier scheduled to be held at the BNP central office at Dhanmondi.
 But, according to sources, the venue was later shifted to the Prime Minister's office citing security reasons.
 As many as four candidates vied for the post of president while six others for general secretary. Six candidates aspired for the organising secretary post.
 The number of councillors, participated in voting, was 196. The last council of JCD was held in December, 1986.
 Chaired by district BNP president Kazi Yaheba, the meeting was addressed by State Minister for Law Barrister Aminul Haque, MP's Begum Selina Rahman, Saheda Sarkar Reba and Begum Rebeka Samad, BNP Standing Committee member Dr R A Gani, local leaders Rahim Uddin Bharsha and Rezaul Haq Sarkar Rana.
 Khaleda Zia Tuesday visited the Rangpur Medical College Hospital and saw the injured passengers who were wounded in a road accident at Kowkhali earlier in the day.
 Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia Tuesday called upon the members of the armed forces to make meaningful contributions in serving the country.
 She was addressing army officers and jawans at a darbar in Rangpur Cantonment in the afternoon.
 The people reposed their confidence on the armed forces, Begum Zia said and urged them to uphold the trust with dignity.
 "The armed forces are part of the people and you should remain unflinching in your service towards the people," she told the darbar.

Plea for consensus on economic policy

By Staff Correspondent
 In what was described by the participants as unique development, Finance Minister Saifur Rahman, Opposition leader Abusamad Azad, economists and Left politicians attended a pre-budget seminar where they all spoke of a national consensus for a sustainable economic policy framework.
 The Finance Minister endorsed most of the demands put forward by the Patriotic Democratic Front (PDF), the organisers of the seminar, saying "I am in agreement on most of the points barring one or two."
 Taking exception to "the PDF plea to subsidise agriculture which he said still provided a major portion of the GDP, the minister cited the donors' reservations about it."
 "Donors insist that we subsidise this sector with our own money and not with theirs which is logical," Saifur Rahman said calling for united efforts to raise domestic resources to accommodate such demands.
 Abusamad Azad, the deputy leader of the Opposition in parliament, contradicted Rahman's contention and offered Opposition support to any government move in meeting the agricultural subsidies bill from revenue earnings.
 Halting the Awami League's proposed policy changes once again, the Finance Minister said that an atmosphere of "relative consensus" was prevailing because "AL's policies are to a great extent convergent to the BNP's."
 Speaking before a packed audience, the Finance Minister said that the budget he would present Thursday would reflect the ruling party's ideology.
 "The whole budget exercise is in the context of 110 million people... taking into account its impact and implications on people," Rahman asserted.
 "Budget is the management of balancing of social conflicts but in totality it will certainly aim at people's welfare," he
 See Page 12 Col 7

Bail prayers of Obhi, associates rejected

Chief Metropolitan Magistrate Shahiduddin Ahmed yesterday rejected the bail prayers of Golam Farooq Obhi and his 15 associates, reports UNB.
 The court ordered filing of investigation report on their cases by this month end.
 The accused, who are now facing two cases, were not produced in the court.
 Police, in a prolonged hunt for a so-called "terror brigade", arrested Obhi and his accomplices with arms from the Jagannath Hall of Dhaka University on May 18.

Goods worth one crore taka gutted in Bogra

From Our Correspondent
 BOGRA, June 16: A devastating fire gutted electronic goods worth about Taka one crore at Najib Manston Market, Kabi Nazrul Islam Road, Bogra, Tuesday.
 Sources said that the fire broke out in a shop at around 1:30 am and soon spread to the market.
 Firemen rushed to the spot and contained the fire after a three hour gruelling struggle.
 The fire raised again at about 8 am. Fire service personnel extinguished the fire immediately.
 The cause of the fire could not be ascertained till writing of this report. However, unconfirmed sources said that the fire was caused by electric short circuit which completely gutted 16 shops and partially damaged six others.

18 killed, 114 hurt in 5 road mishaps

By Staff Correspondent
 According to Fire Service in Dhaka, the driver lost control over the vehicle as one of the front tyres of the ill-fated bus suddenly burst and plunged into the ditch about 15 feet below the highway.
 Of the dead, three persons died on the spot while another three succumbed to their injuries on way to Kurigram and Rangpur Hospitals, fire service source said.
 One of the victims was identified as a member of Bangladesh Rifle. But the fire service office in Dhaka could not confirm the identities of the others.
 Of the seriously injured, 11 people were admitted to the Rangpur Hospital while another four to the Kurigram Hospital.
 Our Gopalganj correspondent reports: One person was killed and 29 others were injured when a passenger bus bound for Tekerhat from Gopalganj plunged into a roadside ditch at around noon Tuesday.
 The bus met its fate when it swerved to avoid collision with a BRTC bus coming from the opposite direction.
 Of the victims, one Atiur Rahman died on the spot and seriously injured five other were admitted to the Gopalganj Sadar Hospital.
 Our DMCH correspondent reports: Five people were injured. See Page 12 Col 8

Food aid pledge down by 20 pc

By Staff Correspondent
 Food aid pledged by donors for the next fiscal year (1992-93) is over 20 per cent lower than the current year's disbursement of about 14 lakh metric tons, Food Minister M Shamsul Islam said Tuesday.
 Addressing a press conference on the country's food situation at the Bangladesh Secretariat, he pointed out that the actual food grain deficit for the 1991-92 fiscal year is likely to stand at 12.21 lakh metric tons.
 The minister noted that the lower food aid pledge is probably because of the urgent need for food grains in the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) and the Eastern European countries.
 He said that 200 million US dollars were pledged as food aid at the Paris Aid Club meeting in April which would help procure about 11 lakh metric tons of wheat during the next fiscal year.
 However, he added, the lower food aid pledge by donors would have no influence on internal demand and
 See Page 12 Col 2