

Inside Today

Article

SAARC Must Strive for Consensus for Economic Progress

by Kamal Hossain
 Page 4

International



Campaign takes Clinton to California

No accord yet on Y'slav no-fly zone
 Page 5

Business

Tea demand drops, prices fall

WB loans may reach a record \$35b this year
 Pages 6, 7

Feature

Science and Technology

Irresistible magic of technological change
 Page 8

National

Across the Country

Scourge of the man-eaters
 Page 9

Metropolitan

Dhaka Day by Day



The Storm and Lull in Our Environment
 Page 3

NEWS BRIEFS

'Withdraw increased newsprint price'

A meeting of the special committee of Bangladesh Sangbadpatri Parishad (BSP) and Bangladesh Editors' Council yesterday urged the government to immediately withdraw the increased price of newsprint considering the financial crisis prevailing in the country's newspaper industry, reports BSS.

Smuggled goods seized in Ctg

CHITTAGONG, Sept 16: A special team of the Detective Branch of Chittagong Metropolitan Police today seized smuggling goods worth about Taka two and a half lakh from a shop at Khatunganj trading area here today. According to CMP press release, the team in a tip off made a search on the shop and found huge quantities of smuggling goods including poppy seed, pepper sugar and turmeric. No arrest was made in this connection, reports BSS.

1 killed in Sylhet road mishap

SYLHET, Sept 16: An unidentified youngman was killed after he was run over by a speeding microbus on Sylhet-Dhaka highway today (Wednesday). The youngman, aged about 22, was crushed under the wheels of the microbus at about 3.30 pm at Tilti, 8 miles south of Sylhet town, reports UNB.

Anti-terrorism ordn promulgated

The President has promulgated the Anti-Terrorism Ordinance with the provision of speedy trial of the special type of offences by special tribunals in all the districts, according to an Extra Ordinary Gazette Notification in Dhaka, reports BSS.

The Ordinance, called The Curbing of Terrorist Activities, 1992, was promulgated by the President, Abdur Rahman Biswas under the Article 93(1) of the Constitution as the Jatiya Sangsad is not in session and it was felt necessary to suppress terrorism in the country. The Gazette was published on September 15.

The offences are extorting money, creating blockade to resist movement of all kinds of transport, causing willful damage to vehicles and other public and private property, hijacking or snatching away money, valuables or vehicles, teasing the eyes, abducting children and women, creating anarchy or intimidating people, creating obstruction in buying tender documents or dropping thereof.

Any person convicted under the Anti-Terrorism Ordinance will be sentenced to death or life imprisonment or jail term of maximum of 20

years and minimum of five years. In addition the accused will be liable to be fined.

Under the Ordinance, the government will set up a tribunal or more than one tribunal in each district headed by a retired Sessions Judge or Additional Sessions Judge. If necessary the government will assign a Sessions Judge or Additional Sessions Judge as the tribunal Judge in addition to his responsibility. All the appointments will be made by Gazette notification.

Each tribunal will be based at the district headquarters, but if directed by the govern-

ment it would be able to hold trial at any other place.

The investigation of each case under the Ordinance is to be completed within 30 days after the Ejhar is lodged. But the time limit could be extended for 15 days with the approval of the tribunal for completion of investigation for unavoidable reasons.

The tribunal will have to complete the trial within 60 days after it takes up the case. But under unavoidable circumstances if the tribunal could not complete the trial within the 60 days it could be extended by 30 more days after

the tribunal records the reasons.

The offences under the Anti-Terrorism Ordinance would be cognizable.

Irrespective of whatever provisions to the contrary might be three in the Cr PC no Magistrate, or tribunal or appellate tribunal or any other court would not enlarge on bail any one charged for offences under the Ordinance at the stage of investigation.

The trial of a case would continue everyday uninterrupted until it is disposed of by the tribunal. The trial could be adjourned for not more than

seven days if the tribunal is satisfied that the adjournment is necessary in the interest of justice.

An aggrieved person either against convictions or against release orders would be able to appeal within 30 days before the appellate tribunals.

The government, under the Ordinance will set up one or more appeal tribunals for the suppression of the terrorist offences.

The tribunal will consist of two Supreme Court Judges — either sitting or retired — and a district judge eligible to be appointed a Supreme Court Judge.



OVERCOMING BEAUTY'S OUTWARD: Giving lie to aphorism that women are frail JCD and BCL girls of Eden College are locked in a clash over Nirmul Body meeting at the college Wednesday.

Eden College girls clash : 20 hurt

Rival girl students clashed at their Eden College yesterday leaving some 20 injured, one critically, reports UNB.

Most of the injured were said to be activists of the Eden Girls College unit of pro-government Jatiyabadi Chhatra Dal. JCD blamed Ghatak Dal Nirmul Committee supporters for triggering the clash.

All the injured were sent to Dhaka Medical College Hospital, where the condition of Runu was stated to be critical. The rest were released after first aid.

Witnesses said the belligerent girls from both sides fought with hockey sticks, rods and clubs.

Police, quoting JCD leaders, however, said six JCD activists were injured when pro-Awami League student activists along with some outsiders clashed with them at the college campus at about 11-15 am.

Principal of the college said her students were injured when they were attacked by the supporters of Nirmul Committee.

She said shortly before the attack, the Nirmul Committee supporters were chanting slogans in front of her office protesting Tuesday's incidence in which they were barred by some rival students from going out in a procession.

They wanted to go to the National Press Club after a rally on the college campus but failed as the college gate was put under lock and key for a while, she added.

Yesterday's clash could also be in backlash to August 30 incident when the Nirmul Committee supporters of the college who had wanted to hold a meeting on the college campus were allegedly op-

posed by the Principal. DU Correspondent adds: Leader of different student organisations in a joint statement yesterday condemned the violent incident on the Eden College campus.

The student leaders alleged that the terrorists of the Jatiyabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) being backed by the college authorities were creating violence on the college campus.

The statement was signed among others by the president of Chhatra Union President Nasir Ud-Doza, JSD (Inu)-backed Chhatra League (M-B) President Mukhlesur Rahman, Chhatra Maitree General Secretary Rajib Ahsan Munna, Chhatra Oikya Forum GS Jayed Iqbal, Ganatantrik Chhatra Kendra Convenor Harun Ur-Rashid Mahmud and Chhatra Oikya Forum Convenor Moshrefa Mishu.

In the past, traditional programme targeted to benefit the poor, such as food-for-

work and vulnerable group-development programmes, were expanded when resources permitted; efforts to enhance the developmental effect of these programmes proved to be only marginally successful, however.

Referring to the introduction of the value added tax and other recent tax reforms, the report said: "A recent evaluation indicates that tax rev-

enues have increased as a result."

In the regional perspective, the Bank said, "... Performance was noticeably weaker in Bangladesh, Nepal, and Sri Lanka" as far as the growth of gross domestic product (GDP) is concerned.

The GDP growth averaged 4.8 per cent, with Pakistan performing an "impressive" 6.4 per cent and India's "note-

Hartal for TV station in Bogra

From Our Correspondent

BOGRA, Sept 16: Life in the town came to a standstill as a complete down-to-dusk hartal called by the Sammitiya Sagskritik Jote was observed today.

The Jote called the 12 hours hartal to press its demand for setting up of the proposed full-fledged television station at Bogra.

Several political, social and cultural organisations along with 25 other organisations extended their support to the hartal call.

All educational institutions, government and non-government offices, financial institutions did not operate.

Shops, bazars and markets, See Page 12 Col 7

AL constitution amendment

Idea of arming party chief with enhanced powers dropped

By Nurul Kabir

The Awami League sub-committee for amending the party constitution has dropped the idea of providing the party chief with the much-talked about special power to replace any Central Committee member on disciplinary grounds.

The sub-committee has also abandoned the idea of empowering the party president with the right of convening the party council on his or her own.

Opposition blasts ordn

'A tool to persecute democratic forces'

Awami League central working committee yesterday denounced the promulgation of the anti-terrorism ordinance, saying it will only push the country towards greater anarchy, reports UNB.

The ordinance was designed with political ill motive to deny the people their fundamental rights, said a resolution of the ALWC meeting held with party President and Leader of the Opposition Sheikh Hasina in the chair.

"The government will use the ordinance as tools of persecution against" the pro-liberation democratic forces, students, youth, political parties and peace-loving people.

The resolution said existing laws of the land, non-partisan activities of government party and its sincerity could be suffi-

cient to deal with terrorism.

The resolution said the ordinance was framed with a different nomenclature after the anti-terrorism bill which was rejected by the winter session of parliament and sent to the concerned parliamentary committee for scrutiny.

But, unfortunately, the ruling party, bypassing the sovereign parliament, approved the ordinance in blatant disregard to the country's constitution and parliamentary norms and practices.

Promulgation of the ordinance is nothing but a mockery of people's demand for halting terrorism, while the process of politicisation of the administration, campus, business houses and bus terminals continued, said Awami League, the largest party in the oppo-

sition.

Our Staff Correspondent adds: Five party alliance at a meeting of its steering committee adopted the resolution that the government's willingness is enough to curb terrorism.

It said the government had to prove its goodwill after withdrawing all black laws.

The party regretted that the government is instead instigating the terrorists.

The meeting further viewed that when the internal terrorism of BNP has suddenly become exposed, the government is trying to avoid its responsibilities of curbing terrorism by drafting the anti-terrorism law. It said the law is aimed at terrorising the people.

See Page 12 Col 7

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The sub-committee has also abandoned the idea of empowering the party president with the right of convening the party council on his or her own.

According to sources, the sub-committee has dropped these ideas immediately before placing its report in the Awami League working Committee (ALWC) meeting for discussion.

The ALWC meeting that began Tuesday afternoon took up the amendment proposals for discussion yesterday afternoon.

According to sub-committee sources, AL chief Sheikh Hasina herself asked the sub-committee members to drop the idea the day before.

The elder members of the constitution amendment sub-committee, however, had been

opposing the idea of giving special power to the party chief on the ground that it would hamper the present balance of power between the presidium and secretariat of the party.

With the dropping of the idea of arming the party chief with special power, the AL president will not be able to replace any central committee member without consulting the Central Working Committee of the party.

See Page 12 Col 4

Patent law a break on foreign investment

By Inam Ahmed

A backward looking and "obsolete" patent law of the country is hampering the investment of research based foreign companies, according to concerned sources.

Bangladesh still follow the Patent and Design Act of 1911 which foreign investors have identified as inadequate in protecting the designs and patents of multi-national companies.

The President of Foreign Investors Chamber of Commerce and Industry (FICCI), SH Kabir while talking to The Daily Star said the other laws protecting intellectual property are also old and outdated.

The Industrial Development Council of the government had

undertaken the task of revising the Act in 1990. All laws covering intellectual property were also rewritten and drafted.

Two meetings of the council committee were also held during 1990 with a view to okay the draft, but failed to reach a consensus sources said.

No meeting of the committee had been held since December, 1990, they said.

Sources said lack of initiative on part of the committee has now shelved the scheme.

Meanwhile, the FICCI feel that the committee should be immediately activated to scrutinize the laws and put them before the parliament for necessary enactment.

Wives of BNP leader, PM's Press Secy robbed

By Staff Correspondent

Within a span of 15 minutes yesterday, wives of the Publication Secretary of the BNP and the Press Secretary to the Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia were robbed of gold ornaments in separate incidents in the city.

Momena Begum, wife of Information and Publication Secretary of the ruling BNP, was robbed of her gold chain and bangles weighing about three-

See Page 12 Col 5

Ordn not needed, says Hasina

By Staff Correspondent

Awami League chief Sheikh Hasina Wednesday slated the move to promulgate the anti-terrorism ordinance saying that it was designed to deny people the fundamental rights.

When a similar bill was already ready pending before the Jatiya Sangsad, the government had by-passed Parliament by moving to promulgate the ordinance only after the student wing of the ruling BNP was caught in a deadly inter-secine battle, she said while inaugurating a conference of the Dhaka city unit of Awami League.

There is no need for such an ordinance to curb terrorism, as the existing laws are sufficient to deal with it, Hasina told this about noon. Later in the day the president promulgated the ordinance.

Terrorism could be more effectively dealt with, only if the government was sincere about it and allowed the police to function neutrally, Hasina told the crowded conference held at the Engineers' Institution auditorium.

See Page 12 Col 1

Dissension over evaluation of NGL plant bid make IDA credit to lapse

By Toufique Imrose Khalidi

Delay, lack of professionalism, and then difference of opinion, in the evaluation of bids for a multi-million-dollar natural gas liquids (NGL) processing plant has resulted in the non-utilisation of the IDA credit available for the project.

The NGL processing facilities at Ashuganj is part of the Second Gas Development Project (SGDP), funded by the International Development Association (IDA), the World Bank's soft lending arm.

More than a year after ten-

See Page 12 Col 6

15000 Rohingyas missing ?

From Abul Monayem Khan

COX'S BAZAAR: Thousands of Myanmar refugees known as Rohingyas may have fled from camps in the districts of Cox's Bazaar and Bandarban, officials in the area fear.

According to one official involved in the five-day census in 19 camps housing the previously-estimated 2,65,000 Rohingyas, the recount may show that more than 15,000 refugees have gone missing.

The government ordered a recount of the refugees which began September 6, after reports spoke of an exodus from the camps.

The official, who declined to be identified, said the total number of refugees living in the camps verified by the new census may be below 2,50,000.

See Page 12 Col 4

Nepalese shot dead

From Our Correspondent

NARAYANGANJ, Sept 16: A Nepalese was shot dead and a local businessman sustained two bullet injuries when armed men opened fire near Shmrail Traffic stand on the Narayanganj-Demra Road Wednesday noon.

Mano Shing Lambo, a 55-year-old Nepalese died on the spot and Abdul Matin, 35, a businessman was admitted to the Dhaka Medical College.

See Page 12 Col 4

World Bank pats Dhaka for poverty alleviation policy

Star Report

The World Bank has predicted success in Bangladesh's poverty alleviation efforts in the coming years, albeit in a cautious tone.

The International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD), popularly known as World Bank, in its Annual Report released globally yesterday said: "If growth in the economy takes place, as envisaged, poverty is likely to de-

cline in the next few years."

In its four-paragraph evaluation of this poor South Asian Nation's economic performance in the past one year, the Bank stated: "Preliminary evidence indicates that economic activity began to accelerate at the beginning of 1992. Agricultural output (mainly foodgrain) is expected to further expand, while industry in showing signs of recovery."

The report sounded somewhat critical of the "traditional" programmes of poverty alleviation, giving a sort of stamp of approval to the new initiatives: "Recent efforts aimed at reducing poverty have focused on reorienting the pattern of public spending that goes to the poor."

"In the past, traditional programme targeted to benefit the poor, such as food-for-

work and vulnerable group-development programmes, were expanded when resources permitted; efforts to enhance the developmental effect of these programmes proved to be only marginally successful, however."

Referring to the introduction of the value added tax and other recent tax reforms, the report said: "A recent evaluation indicates that tax rev-

enues have increased as a result."

In the regional perspective, the Bank said, "... Performance was noticeably weaker in Bangladesh, Nepal, and Sri Lanka" as far as the growth of gross domestic product (GDP) is concerned.

The GDP growth averaged 4.8 per cent, with Pakistan performing an "impressive" 6.4 per cent and India's "note-

worthy" 5.3 per cent.

See Page 12 Col 7