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NEWS BRIEFS

PM to inaugurate Mohananda Bridge

The 448.30 meter long Mohananda Bridge at Nababgonj will be opened to traffic today. Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia will formally inaugurate the bridge. The eleven span bridge with 9.92 meter width of the deck having 1.30 meter side-walk on each side has been constructed with the financial and technical assistance of China at a cost of 42.37 crore taka of which Bangladesh has provided 17.7 crore taka from its own resources, an official handout said, reports BSS.

ALCWC emergency meet today

An emergency meeting of the Awami League Central Working Committee will be held today at 7 pm at party office. Acting President of the party Abdus Samad Azad will chair the meeting. Awami League General Secretary Zillur Rahman has requested all concerned to attend the meeting, reports UNB.

2200 HSC examinees expelled

At least 2,200 examinees were expelled for adopting unfair means in the English second paper examination on the fourth day of the HSC Examination yesterday. There was also report of violence in Chittagong, reports UNB.

Sylhet situation unchanged Rains flood Khulna

From Our Correspondents

Most of the city roads were flooded, bringing the movement of traffic to a complete halt at some places.

Incessant rainfall in Khulna and Khalishpur compelled people to stay at home. Attendances in public and private offices were thin.

Cargo handling at Mongla Port was also affected last night.

Sylhet

Meanwhile, the overall flood situation in Sylhet remained static today, though in some places the rivers registered a slight fall. The rivers including the Surma and Kushiya were still flowing much above the danger-levels at some points.

Road communication of the district headquarters with Beanibazar, Balaganj, Jakiganj, Kanaighat and Fenchuganj thanas were still snapped. The thana headquarters of Balaganj, Companyganj and Fenchuganj were still under knee-deep water.

Eleven more persons died — in drowning, boat capsized and diarrhoea — in five thanas during the last 24 hours.

Of them, 5 died of diarrhoea in Gowainghat, one in Jagannathpur and one in Nabiganj while one drowned in Fenchuganj and one in Golapganj thana. Two persons were killed as two boats capsized in Beanibazar thana, while 7 others were still

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310 pillars to be erected along Indo-Bangla border

BRAHMANBARIA, June 22: Bangladesh and India will determine places for constructing 310 new pillars and 21 lost pillars through joint survey along their borders.

This was decided at a two-day meeting of the joint border coordination conference between the district administrations of Brahmanbaria and West Tripura which concluded here today.

Deputy Commissioner of Brahmanbaria told UNB after the conference that it was also decided that Bangladesh would repair 73 pillars and India 72 pillars by December next.

The two sides also decided to step up efforts for curbing smuggling and other cross-border crimes.

The next meeting will be held at Agartala, the capital of the Indian state of Tripura, in February, 1994.

SAARC Secy-Gen meets Khaleda

SAARC Chairperson and Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia yesterday reaffirmed her commitment to poverty alleviation programme aimed at improving the condition of the people of the region, reports UNB.

She also stressed proper implementation of the decision of the 7th SAARC summit held in Dhaka April 10-11.

Begum Zia was talking to SAARC Secretary General Ibrahim Hussain Zaki, who called on her at office in the afternoon.

Zaki, who arrived here Monday on a three-day visit, apprised her of different activities of the SAARC Secretariat.

The SAARC Chairperson said she will visit the SAARC Secretariat in Nepal and the SAARC capitals.

Ibrahim Zaki yesterday also met with Foreign Secretary Reza Rahman and discussed the progress in 13 areas of cooperation.

EC to provide troops, funds for 'safe areas' in Bosnia

COPENHAGEN, June 22: European Community leaders, struggling to patch together their battered policy on Bosnia-Herzegovina, pledged today to provide troops and money for the protection of Muslim 'safe areas', reports AFP.

The pledge came in a communique at the end of the community's two-day summit which highlighted divisions on Bosnia policy. It was inserted only after a lengthy debate among leaders of the 12 EC countries, diplomats said.

The text said that the safe areas scheme authorised by the United Nations was an indispensable contribution, to an overall settlement of the Bosnia conflict.

Audit faults accounts of 19 missions abroad

A number of irregularities and monetary losses in Bangladesh missions abroad have been revealed in the report of the Auditor General for 1988-89 fiscal.

The report was placed before Parliament Tuesday along with 19 other similar reports on different government and semi-government organisations.

Out of a total 58 missions, financial irregularities and losses have been detected in 19. The missions are located in Singapore, Kuala Lumpur, Baghdad, Geneva, Abu Dhabi, Brunei, Yangon, New Delhi, Manila, Kuwait, Brussels, Bucharest, London, Harare, Canberra, Moscow, Beijing, Jakarta and the Agartala Visa Office in India.

The audit revealed 38 types of anomalies ranging from non-realisation of immigration fees to expenditure without sanction.

The highest number of seven anomalies have been identified in the Singapore chancery where a former chief of mission drew excess salary.

44 more quit Japan's LDP Hata faction launches new party today

TOKYO, June 22: Forty-four rebel members of the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) quit the party today, accelerating an anticipated split in the party, which has dominated Japan's parliament since 1955, LDP officials said, reports AFP.

The 44 members, of a growing faction headed by former Finance Minister Tsutomu Hata, are to launch a new party Wednesday which is to participate in Lower House elections next month.

Members of the Hata faction have been moving actively to garner support of the opposition Socialist Democratic Party and other main opposition parties for Hata as Prime Minister in the July 18 elections.

The split by the Hata faction, started by behind-the-scenes power broker and former LDP Secretary-General Ichiro Ozawa, follows the formation of a separate party Sakigake (Pioneer Party) by 10 disenchanted former LDP lawmakers Monday.

Hata's group moved ahead of perennial number two, the Socialists, in the opinion poll, conducted by telephone by the Mainichi Shimbun newspaper on Sunday.

The poll, covering 1,000 eligible voters across Japan, was taken two days after Prime Minister Kiichi Miyazawa lost a no-confidence vote and was forced to dissolve Parliament.

Hata's group won a nine per cent backing from the electorate. The ratio, combined with an eight per cent support for the Socialists, surpasses the 13 per cent support won by the LDP.

Hasina attends AL's Belgium chapter confce

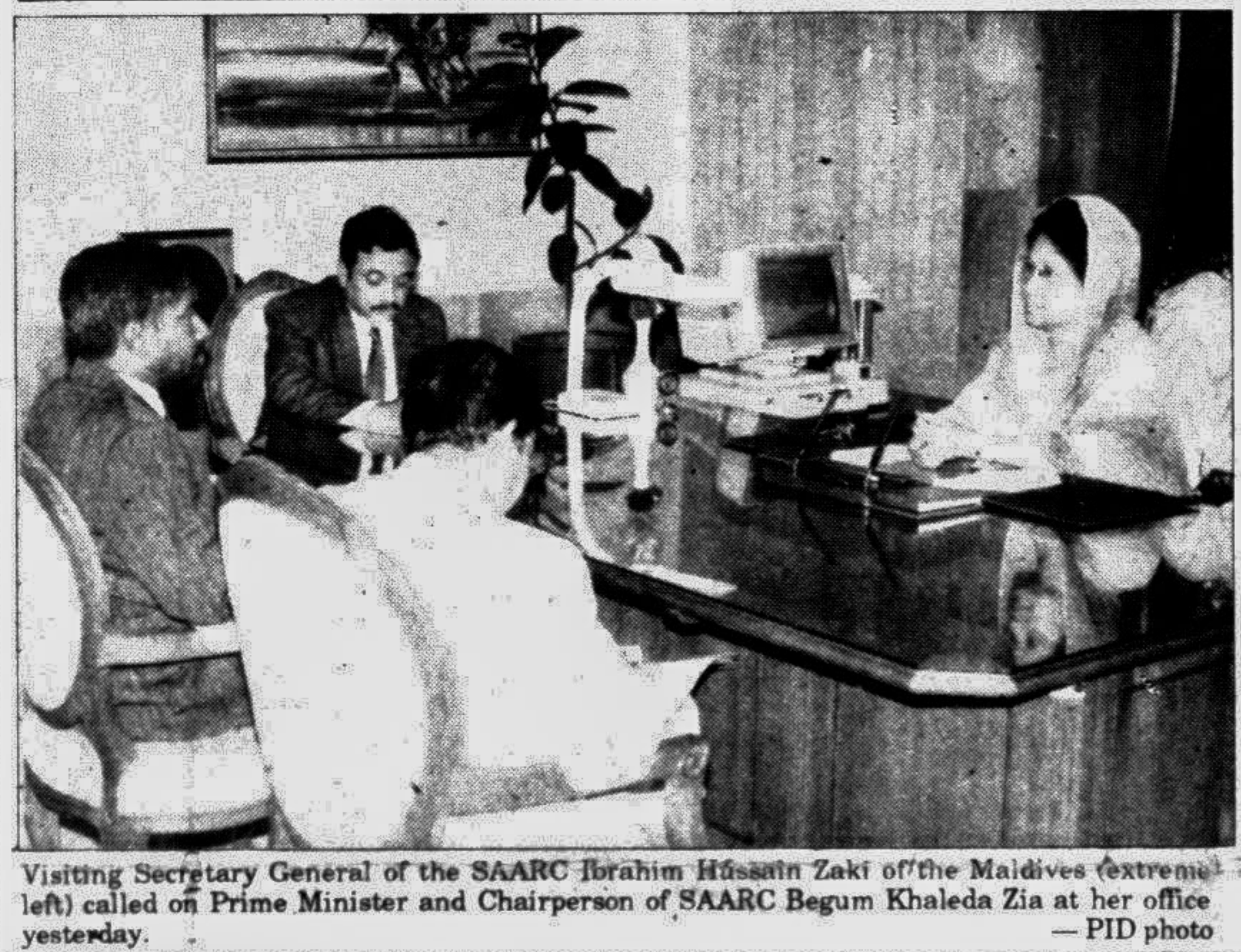
Awami League Chief Sheikh Hasina has said that the ruling party has proved its 'democratic character' in all steps.

Speaking at the annual conference of the Belgium unit of the Awami League at Brussels on June 20, she blamed the BNP of breaching its pledges made during the anti-Ershad movement, says a press release of the Awami League.

She said that the BNP was persecuting its opponents, politicising the administration and curbing the fundamental and constitutional rights of the opposition political workers.

Hasina said that only the economic programmes of Awami League could bring about the desired welfare of the people.

The conference was held at the auditorium of the Brussels Free University.



Visiting Secretary General of the SAARC Ibrahim Hussain Zaki of the Maldives (extreme left) called on Prime Minister and Chairperson of SAARC Begum Khaleda Zia at her office yesterday. — PID photo

A Star Special The stage set for a new UN office on human rights

By Staff Correspondent

Editor Mahfuz Anam, Managing Editor Tawfiq Aziz Khan, News Editor Alzal H Khan and Chief Reporter M Anwarul Haq.

In a free exchange of views, the US spokesman told The Star that the process of drafting the declaration for the Vienna was going ahead in full swing at committee levels. He further indicated that it was now very much a question of working out the implementation of the proposed plan of action.

He said, "Universal application of human rights is going to be the key consensus issue that participants will accept" and expressed his hope that the new position of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights would receive the "unanimous approval" when the draft proposal was placed before concluding plenary session.

The Professor sounded optimistic that the process would not hit any snag.

S. M. Ali asked the US official if he did not see the danger of the new UN office adding more bureaucracy to the world body.

Responding to the Editor's question, Henry agreed that there was a "mixed opinion" about the role of the proposed High Commissioner. If approved by the Vienna conference, it would be left to the UN General Assembly to identify and codify the areas of work and responsibility of this

new office.

Emphasising the positive side of the proposal which has a strong backing of the Clinton administration, Henry said that the general feeling at the conference was that the UN should have a greater role in supervising human rights across the globe.

"Then, the UN High Commissioner on Human Rights will be seen as someone who can monitor the human right situation, act quickly and carry the weight of the United Nations behind him," he added.

In this context, the US spokesman made a plea for stepping up reforms in the UN system, especially relating to human rights. He felt that there should be more UN budgetary allocation in this field, which currently commands only one per cent of the world body's budget. He believed that this allocation would be considerably increased when the new UN position was set up.

Replying to a question from Mahfuz Anam, the Professor told The Star team that the proposal for creating the new UN office had the general support of African, Asian and Latin American countries. Then, asked by Anam what kind of reforms Washington considered introducing in the UN system, the US expert said that the world body could perhaps provide expertise on con-

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JCD, BCL clash in CU

CHITTAGONG, June 22: A tokal (street urchin) was dashed and injured seriously by a bus when the activists of Awami League-backed Chhatra League and Jatyatabadi Chhatra Dal clashed at Chittagong University today (Tuesday), reports UNB.

The boy was admitted to Chittagong Medical College Hospital. Witnesses said the trouble erupted when BCL men chanted aspersive slogans on Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia during a procession on the campus.

Campus sources said JCD activists protested the slogans and urged the Leagueurs not to chant such slang.

Chhatra League brought out the procession demanding release of its Dhaka University unit leader Pankaj Devnath despite ban imposed by the parent party on political activities of the local BCL.

After the trouble, JCD leaders and workers staged a demonstration in front of the VC office demanding punishment of the BCL men.

JCD factions clash at Suhrawardy College: 8 hurt

By Staff Correspondent

At least eight students were injured when the feuding factions of Jatyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) clashed at Suhrawardy College yesterday.

Some five to six rounds of gunshots were fired and 25 crackers were exploded during the hourlong clash that started around 5:30 pm Tuesday.

Budget's tax reforms good: FBCCI chief

Star Report

President of the Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FBCCI), Mahbubur Rahman believes the tax reforms in the proposed budget for 1993-94 will inspire people to pay taxes.

The bottlenecks in income tax and strengthening of the tax administration are the commendable steps of the budget, Rahman said in an exclusive interview with The Daily Star.

The FBCCI chief observed that the budget also takes a forward step in reducing the

country's dependence on foreign aid.

"A significant step in that direction is the 33 per cent domestic resource contribution to the Annual Development Programme (ADP) for fiscal 1993-94 as envisaged in the budget," Rahman said.

He, however, urged the government to keep a block allocation for revamping the sick industries.

Rahman also said the total withdrawal of subsidy on the agriculture sector would adversely affect the farmers and said the budget should have

included some specific financial benefits for the farmers.

The FBCCI president, welcoming the government's decision to open the power and telecommunication sectors to private investment, said that revision of some existing laws, definite policies and reform of the existing institutional structure are needed to make the step a success.

Talking on tariff protection for local industries, Rahman said this is not an indispensable element for them.

"But it is necessary to suppress the inflation," he said.

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Environment: More than just trees needed

By Staff Correspondent

Bangladesh should try to become the spokesman for the least developed countries in the global discussion on environment, says Professor Md Yunus.

This was stated by Grameen Bank chief Professor Md Yunus at a discussion on priorities for environmental protection and the role of non-governmental organisations, organised by the Voluntary Health Services Society in Dhaka yesterday.

Commenting on the global perspective, Professor Yunus said that the current global environmental problems have their origin in the developed countries. Consumption levels, its pattern and wastage in the developed countries is rapidly depleting non-renewable resources, thus constraining options that are open for developing countries. Simultaneously, these are causing environmental problems which are having direct negative effect on quality of life in the LDCs.

Professor Yunus said that there is a need for clearer understanding of what should be in the focus of environment related policies and actions. The focal position of human beings is not always apparent as it should be. Environment protection activities in Bangladesh seem to be a single-minded pursuit of planting of trees. Trees are important, but environmental protection will not be served by tree planting alone, he added. He cautioned that Bangladesh's environmental policy as well as the general policy framework is unduly biased toward a single-crop (rice) economy, leading to adoption of strategies which

Showcause on Mizan, 30 others

The High Court Division of the Supreme Court has issued rule upon Mizanur Rahman Chowdhury, MP, and 30 other leaders of the Jatyta Party to show cause why an order of the Additional District and Sessions Judge, Dhaka allowing them an appeal against temporary injunction on their activities as party functionary should not be set aside, reports BSS.

Justice Syed Fazle Ahmed also stayed the operation of the impugned order of the Additional District and Sessions Judge on June 6, '93 till disposal of the rule.

Rajuk Commercial Plot Auction Notice. Most ideally located Residential-Cum-Commercial Plot Nos. 6 & 8 measuring more or less 334.62 Sqr. metre (5 Kathas) each on Road No-113A at Gulshan Residential Area, will be allotted for 99 years lease, on open auction. Applications and prescribed form with terms and conditions to be obtained from Janata Bank, Rajuk Bhaban Branch, Dhaka on payment of Tk 200/- (Taka two hundred) only in cash (non-refundable) and will be received by the Deputy Director (Estates) from the intending bidders up to 1.00 PM on 28-6-93 for Plot No-6 and up to 1.00 PM on 4-7-93 for Plot No-8. The auction will be held on 29-6-93 for Plot No-6 and on 5-7-93 for Plot No-8 in the Conference Room, 3rd floor of the Rajuk Bhaban, Dhaka at 10 AM. Chairman Rajdhaní Unnayan Kartripakkha, Dhaka. DFP (G) 10199-19/6 G-844