



In Broken Marble Tiles Brighter Home At Lesser Price
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Given Political Will, An Accountable Administration is Within Our Reach

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PM opens Feni exchange today

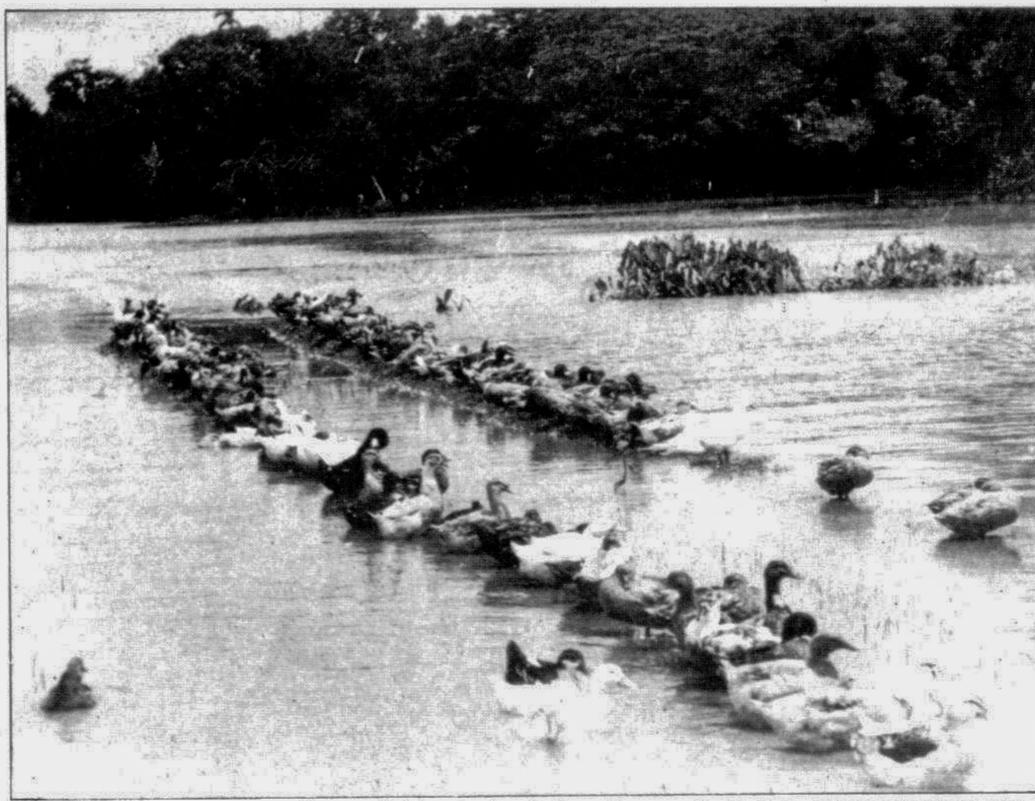
FENI, July 27: Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia inaugurates a new 500-line telephone exchange here tomorrow by making a call from capital Dhaka. Officials said she would talk to Post and Telecommunications Minister M Keramat Ali who will be here at the other end at 10 am. The capacity of the Feni telephone exchanges will stand at 1,570 with installation of the new exchange, reports UNB.

Japanese envoy calls on Hasina

Newly appointed Japanese ambassador Shigeo Takenaka made a courtesy call on Awami League President and Leader of the Opposition in Parliament Sheikh Hasina at her Sangsad Bhaban office yesterday. They exchanged views on matters of bilateral interest. Awami League General Secretary Zillur Rahman was present during the meeting, reports UNB.

Trader murdered in Sirajganj

From Our Correspondent SIRAJGANJ, July 27: A timber merchant was murdered by a group of armed men at Belkuchi union this morning. Jajnal Abedeen, 35, was travelling by a boat when he came under attack of the miscreants, numbering four to five. Jajnal was severely stabbed and shot by a sawed off rifle, witnesses said. Only two days before the murder Jajnal had informed the local police about suspicious activities of his business rivals. A case has been lodged with the Belkuchi police.



Ducks, no strangers to water, at times can feel they, too, have had more than enough of it. Here, what was only a week ago a fertile rice field in Atpara thana of Netrakona district, this flock of domestic fowls seems to have at last discovered a much sought foothold. — Star photo by A K M Mohsin

Flood situation improves further Diarrhoea taking a serious turn

By Staff Correspondent

Diarrhoea and other water-borne diseases are aggravating the woes of the flood-affected people although the waters in most parts of the country continue to recede steadily. According to reports received from the relief control room in Dhaka yesterday, the flood situation in 22 districts had improved Tuesday. But other sources said diarrhoea and other water-borne diseases had spread in the regions of Netrakona, Sylhet, Chittagong, Manikganj, Kishoreganj, Kurigram, Comilla, Sirajganj, Brahmanbaria and Jamalpur.

In many other places, the people were suffering from shortage of drinking water. Prices of essentials have also been reported to have skyrocketed in most of the flood affected areas. According to the relief control room, the flood death toll so far is 157 while as many as 62 lakh 46 thousand people have been affected. Crop on 4 lakh acres of land have been totally damaged while those on another 4.14 lakh acres have suffered partially. Seven unions of Astagram

thana under Kishoreganj district, three thanas of Naogaon and three thanas of Sirajganj have been affected by fresh floods. The government has so far sanctioned relief worth Tk 19 crore. This includes Tk 1.06 crore in cash, Tk 1 crore as house-building grants, 7,210 metric tonnes of rice and nearly 6,000 mt of wheat. Official sources said that all possible measures were being taken to fight the spread of water-borne diseases. The flood forecasting and

An unending cycle of woe

From Masud Hasan Khan

ATPARA (Netrakona), July 27: Renu Bala Devi stares pensively at the blue silhouette of the distant Garo Hills right across the border and wonders, "Will there be another flood next year?" For the 12-member family of Renu Bala, every flood means inundation of their home, fresh anxiety about their daily food and drinking water, a bad fishing season and constant look-out for the relief officials. Floods for the villagers of Guatola, where 67-year-old widow Renu Bala lives, mean building life anew out of the left-overs of the deluge — lumps of mud and debris and crops totally ruined. Guatola is a village of fishermen in Atpara thana, about nine kilometres south of the Netrakona district headquarters. See Page 12 Col 1

Rao may lose today's confidence vote

NEW DELHI, July 27: Indian Prime Minister P V Narasimha Rao's minority government suffered a major blow today when a key politician threw in his lot with an opposition sponsored no-confidence motion, reports AFP.

Ajit Singh, whose Janata Dal-A (people's party-A for Ajit) has 20 MPs in the Lower House, told reporters that his party would vote against the Rao government when parliament puts the motion to the vote tomorrow. Rao's Congress (I) Party and the opposition command virtually the same number of seats in the 545-member Lower House.

Congress (I) spokesmen have been confident of victory but had been counting on the support of at least some members of the Janata Dal-A.

"We have decided to vote in favour of the no-confidence motion," Ajit Singh announced after a party meeting here.

"Our feeling is that ... we wanted to give the Prime Minister enough time to show some willingness to fight corruption. We feel they have shown no such willingness. So we have decided to support the no-confidence motion."

The main opposition Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP, Indian people's party) called Ajit Singh's stand a "victory for the

democratic process."

"The government's position has now become precarious," said a BJP spokesman.

Meanwhile Reuter reports, India's ruling Congress Party was in turmoil today over the possibility of losing a confidence vote in parliament and politicians said Prime Minister Rao may have to resign.

"Today everybody woke up to the possibility of the government being voted out," said Congress parliamentarian Suresh Kalmadi. "The whole 'gameplan' is negotiable."

Senior Congress politicians were in contact with the leaders See Page 12 Col 7



Narasimha Rao

Transit with Myanmar resumes

From Staff Correspondent

CHITTAGONG, July 27: Transit communications between Bangladesh and Myanmar resumed today after a break of about 25 days.

The Myanmar side issued transit passes to 37 persons, who crossed into Bangladesh through the river Naaf by boat while around 12 people went to the other side with transit permission from the Bangladesh authority. The transit links were re-established as per decision reached between the two countries at the Battalion Commander level flag meeting held at the frontier town of Teknaf on Sunday.

Earlier, Myanmar unilaterally suspended transit communications after two alleged drug traffickers were arrested by Bangladesh border guards on July 1.

Both were caught by BDR from river Naaf demarcating the border between the two countries, while allegedly trafficking heroin into Bangladesh. They were jailed and would be tried in court.

Munir buried at family farmhouse

By Staff Correspondent

The body of Munir Hossain alias Suruj, hanged at the Dhaka Central Jail Monday night for the murder of his wife Sharmin Sultana Rima in 1989, was buried at his family's farmhouse in Gazipur district yesterday afternoon.

The jail authorities handed over the body to Munir's family early Tuesday morning.

An ambulance carrying the corpse weaved its way through thousands of curious onlookers near the jail gate at around 6 am. The ambulance, under police guard, went straight to the Dhanmandi Road Number 5 residence of Munir's parents Dr Abul Kasem and gynaecologist Dr Meherunnissa.

People in their hundreds thronged outside the residence, whose gates were closed and police posted to keep out the public. But some of the more eager and unruly among them tried to sneak in over the walls and even demanded that the shroud or coffin be opened to let them see if indeed it were Munir's corpse.

A rumour was spread that it See Page 12 Col 4

Edn system has to be reformed, says PM

Prime Minister Begum

Khaleda Zia said here yesterday that the existing education system has to be reformed into life-oriented and timely one to meet the demand of entire nation and link education with the production process, reports BSS.

"We have to think deeply about the education system which gives birth to terrorism, creates unemployment, causes wastage of merit and increases copying tendency," Begum Zia said. She was addressing a reception organised for the PhD degree holders of the fellowship programme of Bangladesh University Grants Commission and their guides at NEC auditorium.

The Prime Minister called upon the educationists to come forward in reforming the existing education system which would help establish a poverty-

free and science and technology based democratic society.

Underlining the need for attaining self-dependency in higher education and research the Prime Minister said opportunities to that perspective were to be created to improve the standard of education and check brain drain.

Begum Zia said all, especially the teachers, had to work for ensuring proper academic atmosphere for the students and enlighten them with the knowledge of live. Quoting Carlyle the Prime Minister said, "an ideal student community is like Aladdin's lamp. It can mould and enlighten the social structure of a national life."

The Prime Minister said the image of the universities depended on the standard of higher education in the country. See Page 12 Col 3

Asghar Khan may quit PDA

ISLAMABAD, July 27: Cracks appeared in the People's Democratic Alliance (PDA) led by Pakistan's former Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto as a component party virtually pulled out of the grouping today, reports AFP.

Tehrik-i-Istiqlal (TI) President Asghar Khan, a former Air Force chief, said the three-year-old PDA, made up of four parties, "has for all practical purposes ceased to exist."

With new elections set for October, a process of realignments currently dominates Pakistan's political scene in preparation for the electoral battle under a caretaker administration.

A government shakeup on July 18 saw the exit of President Ghulam Ishaq Khan and Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif under an army-brokered deal to end a prolonged crisis

created by their mutual power tussle. Senate Chairman Wasim Sajjad became acting President and a former World Bank senior Vice-President, Moeen Qureshi, was appointed caretaker Prime Minister to organize a fourth election in eight years.

Asghar Khan accused Bhutto and her Pakistan People's Party (PPP), the main PDA force, of violating the objectives of the four-party alliance, which was set up in August 1990.

In a letter to Bhutto, released to the press, the TI chief said his party "finds it difficult to reconcile itself to the policies" of PPP and its "political opportunism."

He cited participation of PPP in a 38-day caretaker government which was installed by Ishaq Khan after dismissing Sharif in April, a decree later

reversed by the country's Supreme Court.

The TI chief said the PPP had joined hands with "supporters" of Ishaq Khan.

Two other members of the PDA are Tehrik Nifaz-e-Fiqh-i-Jafria, a Shi'ite religious party and a splinter group of the Pakistan Muslim League (PML) party.

Leaders of PDA parties have not convened a meeting since the announcement of a new election and the PPP itself is yet to spell out its likely electoral partners.

The PML headed by Sharif decided during a meeting of its central committee here Monday not to enter into any political alliance.

But, an announcement said, the PML would contest the election on the basis of "electoral adjustments" with other like-minded groups.

Fertiliser law being formulated

Star Report

The draft of a new law on fertiliser is expected to be placed before the cabinet sometime next month.

According to an official source, the law, titled "The Fertiliser Regulation Act", is aimed at ensuring the quality of all kind of fertiliser, imported or produced locally. At present there is no definitive law regulating the import or use of fertiliser.

"Such a law is very much essential especially since the fertiliser business is now mainly in the private sector. The government should have some mechanism to ensure quality of fertiliser in the interest of the country's agriculture as well as the ecology," said the source.

An expert-level committee, authorised by the Ministry of Agriculture, started work on

formulating the law in October last year. A draft prepared by the committee has already been scrutinised and revised by the authorities concerned. The new code will lay down the rules for the specification of different kinds of fertiliser to be distributed and used by the farmers. Rules for monitoring the quality will also be incorporated.

"We have suggested a permissible level of toxic substances in the fertiliser for use in our country", said a member of the committee.

An estimate by the Ministry of Agriculture shows that 23 lakh metric tonnes of fertiliser will be required during the fiscal 1993-94. Of this, the requirement of urea will be 16 lakh tonnes which will be procured from the local factories. The country will need about

five lakh tonnes of triple super-phosphate (TSP) of which 3.75 lakh tonnes will have to be imported.

Another two lakh tonnes of MP fertiliser will also need to be imported.

Presently, there is no restriction on import of fertiliser which is totally in the private sector.

The proposed law is prompted by an incident involving the import of some 3,000 tonnes of zinc-oxo-sulphate fertiliser containing dangerous toxic wastes last year from the United States.

Imported by the Bangladesh Agriculture Development Corporation, over 1,000 tonnes of that consignment had already been distributed before the authorities were alerted and stopped its distribution. See Page 12 Col 8

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