

BGMEA can avert

From Page 1 Col 4
Organisation (ILO) conventions prohibiting various forms of child labour and individual country laws against the use of child labour.

"Bangladesh has many laws relating to the prohibition of child labour, the most important of which, Section 66 of the Factories Act of 1965, dates back to 1934 and prohibits the employment of children under 14 in any factory," he pointed out.

The Bill's enforcement mechanism would work in two ways: the US Secretary of Labour would review all countries to "identify" any industry that utilises child labour in products exported to the United States, and upon an individual petition by "any person" requesting that a particular industry in a specific country be "identified" by the Secretary of Labour as one using child labour.

"In a case when an industry is 'identified' as one using child labour, the product from that industry can no longer be exported to the US until the industry again gets a certificate that it has taken reasonable steps to ensure that child labour is not being used."

What this means for the garments industry in Bangladesh, he noted, is that an action plan to comply with the Harkin Bill must be in place and operation before August 1994 to avoid ever being "identified" under the law.

He hoped that BGMEA would cooperate in meeting this goal and emphasised that the action taken must satisfy organisations like his that there is an "accurate and objective mechanism in place to ensure that children are not working in violation of the law."

"At the same time, I must be quite direct in saying that if the industry tries to avoid rigorous and honest inspections, I will provide whatever evidence I have of the use of illegal child labour to the appropriate authorities," he warned.

He pointed out that the BGMEA must take steps to require strict compliance from all their members.

"I have no doubt in my mind that as long as the BGMEA does this, and excludes from the BGMEA any person who refuses to cooperate fully, the BGMEA will be able to establish that its members form an 'industry' that is in compliance with the law."

The ultimate goal of the Harkin Bill, he said, is to facilitate and expedite the development of programmes to provide working children with educational opportunities and the chance for a future beyond remaining relatively unskilled workers who must work long hours simply to survive.

The proposed Bill has already acted as a catalyst for

many groups, including government, industry and NGOs, to finally move the issue of child labour up their agendas, he said.

The mere introduction of the Bill, he pointed out, has resulted in groups in Bangladesh trying to figure out a way to ensure that working children can go to school.

The BGMEA has pledged to work with the AFLI and other organisations to support a programme to allow children who have been working in the garments industry to attend school," he said.

A meeting of representatives of the government, UNICEF, the ILO and other NGOs is scheduled to be held on Sunday next to formulate a plan to confront the use of child labour in all sectors of Bangladesh, Collingsworth noted.

On the misconception that the Harkin Bill is designed to damage the garments industry of Bangladesh, he said that the bill is not aimed at any particular country but is applicable to all countries and all industries which export to the US market.

To a suggestion that the Bill is designed to bring back jobs to the US, he said, "It is not even remotely conceivable that the elimination of child labour in the garments industry will somehow result in a return of jobs to the US. The US has the lowest monthly wage of 1250 dollars or more than 43 times the BGMEA quoted minimum wage of 29 dollars earned by a Bangladeshi garments factory worker."

Earlier, Collingsworth, who is also the general counsel for the International Labour Rights Education and Research Fund, was introduced at the press conference by Robert Hilton, the press information officer at the USIS.

7 Janata Dal MPs join Cong-I

NEW DELHI, Aug 2: India's ruling Congress (I) party today admitted into its fold seven opposition defectors who helped Prime Minister PV Narasimha Rao closely defeat a parliamentary no-confidence vote, reports AFP.

The seven MPs, who formerly belonged to a centrist opposition faction, have been "duly admitted" by Rao as members of the Congress (I), senior party leader Vidya Charan Shukla said.

The group broke away from the Janata Dal (people's party) faction of northern political chiefchain Ajit Singh at the eleventh hour to help Rao scrape through the opposition-sponsored no-confidence vote Wednesday.

The government staved off the bid to topple it by a slim 14-vote margin although suspense prevailed over its outcome until the last minute.

Public administration

From Page 1 Col 6
This number is large in comparison with other countries such as Sweden which has 13 ministries, Japan and Thailand which have 14 ministries each, the United Kingdom with 16 ministries, Germany with 17, Malaysia with 24 and South Korea which has only 25 ministries.

The report says that no established principles are followed in specifying the role of a ministry/division and often there are differences among ministries over work determination and extent of functional decentralisation. Each ministry/division is allocated a number of items which are broadly or vaguely listed, making it difficult for anyone to discern what they are supposed to mean.

Although inter-ministerial consultations have been prescribed by government rules, there is a tendency to bypass them or to ignore them altogether. The report also mentions that those officials who represent different ministries do not always come prepared and, therefore, the inter-ministerial consultations fail to produce positive results.

The Public Administration Study observes that Cabinet committee meetings held without the Prime Minister often fail to reach consensus because of personality clashes between ministers. At the same time, the presence of the Prime Minister may inhibit frank discussion among the ministers. The report suggests that the Prime Minister may wish to designate senior members of the Cabinet to act as committee chairpersons.

The administrative system remains largely centralised and although there are multiple layers in every ministry/division, there is a tendency among the officers below the Secretary

level to "pass the buck". The report observes that when a case is placed before an officer for his/her decision the most usual response is to provide a guarded opinion and forward the file to the next higher officer. Each higher officer follows the same pattern until the matter reaches the top and few officers risk making a decision even if the position he is occupying authorises him to do so.

The Secretariat instructions clearly specify that "Not more than two officers (excluding the Secretary) will note upon a case before its disposal", but this does not happen.

The report, after study of data, found out that 21.9 per cent cases remained undischarged in the ministries of which 67 per cent were pending for more than three months.

The Secretariat, since the British colonial days, has been pivotal in the entire public management process. The report notes that while the Secretariat was to be involved in formulation of public policy, administrative planning, policy coordination, advising and assisting ministries in their administrative responsibilities, empirically, it has been observed that the ministries in the Secretariat are often busy with administrative or regulatory work. It cited examples of issuance of license or the posting and transfer of a clerk or a peon taking considerable time, and less time spent on policy formulation and planning.

The Public Administrative Sector Study report has been prepared by the United Nations Department of Development Support and Management Services (UNDDSMS) headed by Dr ATR Rahman. Other members of the team are Sir Derek Andrews, Dr Jeanne-Marie Col, Dr Dai Young-Kim, Dr Robert LaPorte, Jr and Dr Syedur Rahman.

BACEV resents anti-NBR remarks

The Bangladesh Customs and Excise and VAT Executive Officers' Association (BACEV) yesterday expressed their resentment over the remarks made against the National Board of Revenue (NBR) by some persons at a meeting Sunday in presence of the Finance Minister.

Leaders of the association, in a joint statement, said that the VAT and Excise department had collected revenue in excess of the target in the last fiscal. It also claimed that whereas in other countries it took years to introduce the VAT system, in Bangladesh it took only a year, reflecting the efficiency of the VAT authorities.



ASM Rafiqullah, first in the combined merit list

Rafiqullah studied 12 to 16 hours a day

By Staff Correspondent

ASM Rafiqullah does what he believes in. To him, none can prosper in life without confidence, hard work and devotion.

Rafiqullah has topped the combined merit list of this year's Secondary School Certificate (SSC) Examinations under the Dhaka Board.

A student of the Government Laboratory High School, he received 925 marks with letters in Bangla, English, General Mathematics, Higher Mathematics, Geography, Islamiat and General Science subjects.

A soft-spoken boy, Rafiqullah was beaming but managed to keep his emotions under control.

Speaking to newsmen who kept calling his residence all day, he said that he had no private tutor.

His parents — Mohammad Sanaulah and Rehana Sanaulah — and his school teachers had encouraged and guided him in his studies.

He had neither any particular study hour nor followed any specific routine. He studied whenever he liked, but at least 12 to 16 hours a day everyday.

Rafiqullah's aim in life is to be a computer scientist. Humayun Ahmed is his favourite writer.

He spends his leisure by reading Nazrul and Tagore and watching movies.

Zillur wants to be a computer scientist

By Staff Correspondent

AS Mohammad Zillur Rahman wants to be a computer scientist.

Zillur stood second from the Government Laboratory High School, obtaining 922 marks and letters in seven subjects.

Son of M. Lutfar Rahman and Hosne Ara Begum, Zillur stood second all through his school life and even in the SSC examinations.

He believes that one can do better in the examination only with the help of a private tutor. Discipline, hard work and perseverance also matters, he said.

Rahman said that he studied six hours each day and spent rest of the time in reading other books, listening to music and watching videos.

He is an avid fan of Indian actors the late Uttam Kumar and Amitabh Bachchan.



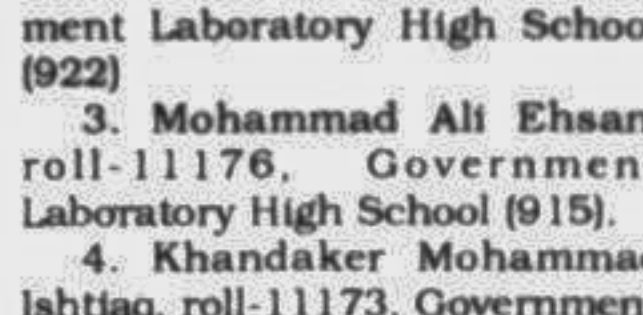
Zillur Rahman, second in the combined merit list



Mohammad Ali Ehsan, third in the combined merit list



Nadia Rawshan, first in the Social Science group



Shimlin Sultana, first among the girls in the Science group

Combined merit list

By Staff Correspondent

1. ASM Rafiqullah, roll-11172, Government Laboratory High School (925).
2. AS Mohammad Zillur Rahman, roll-11174, Government Laboratory High School (922)
3. Mohammad Ali Ehsan, roll-11176, Government Laboratory High School (915).
4. Khandaker Mohammad Ishtiaq, roll-11173, Government Laboratory High School (914).
5. Saleh Md Hasibul Hasan, roll-11177, Government Laboratory High School (912).
6. Md Zul Hasnain, roll-11179, Government Laboratory High School (911), Md Sohel Rahman, roll-Mirzapur Cadet 61278, Mirzapur Cadet College (911).
7. Sadeq Muhammad Hanif, roll-Mirzapur Cadet 61260 (910) and Dewan Mohammad Manzur Rahman, roll-Mirzapur Cadet 61277 (910), Mirzapur Cadet College.
8. Aditee Ashraf, roll-223, Motijheel Government Boys High School (909) and Nasir Ahmed, roll-11200, Government Laboratory High School (909).
9. Md Baezid Goni, roll-11180, Government Laboratory High School (908), Md Rashedul Hasan, roll-11185, Government Laboratory High School (908), and SM Sajedul Hasan, roll-11197, Government Laboratory High School (908).
10. Tanvir Hossain, roll-11175, Government Laboratory High School (907) and Shimlin Sultana, roll-MA 43215, Mymensingh Girls Cadet College (907).
11. Mohammad Ahsanul Adb, roll-11182, Govt Laboratory High School and Farhana Momtaz Papri, roll-43213, Mymensingh Girls Cadet College (906 each).
12. Mohammad Faisal Murad Hossain, roll-11188, Mohammad Ashful Alam, roll-11201, and Rafiq Hassan Chowdhury, roll-11221, Govt Laboratory High School (905 each).
13. Anupam Kumar Nath, roll-11209, Govt Laboratory High School, Kah Kasha Sawkat, roll-13231, Dhanomdi Girls High School, Mohammad Sharifullah, roll-61258, of Mirzapur Cadet College and Mohammad Reazul Karim of the same college (903 each).
14. Mohammad Luthful Arefin, roll-11199, Govt Laboratory High School, Mehedi Masud, roll-11211 Govt Laboratory High School and Nadia Nasreen, roll-43240, Mymensingh Girls Cadet College (902 each).
15. Abdullah-Al-Mahmud, roll-1, Motijheel Govt Boys High School, Ziaur Rahman, roll-11189, Govt Laboratory High School, Mohammad Rajibul Hassan Bhuyan, roll-11191, Govt Laboratory High School, Samia Ishrat Roni, roll-13394, of Agrani Girls' High School, Mohammad Abdullah-Al-Faruq, roll-61249, Mirzapur Cadet College and Shahrukh



Akbar Khan, Roll-61266, of Mirzapur Cadet College (901 each).



Farhana Kabtr, Roll-1066, Ideal School and College (900).

16. Farhana Kabtr, Roll-1066, Ideal School and College (900).
17. Mohammad Khairul Islam, Roll-11181, Govt Laboratory High School, Mohammad Saiful Islam, Roll-11183, Govt Laboratory High School, Nazmul Hassan Ferdous, Roll-11187, Govt Laboratory High School, Asadul Kabir Chowdhury, Roll-11216, Govt Laboratory High School, Khatyam Ibne Farhad, Roll-61254, of Mirzapur Cadet College and Mohammad Zabayed Ahsan, Roll-61283, Mirzapur Cadet College (899 each).
18. Nasreen Jahan, Roll-1065, Ideal School and College, Ahmed Manjurul Hasan, Roll-1242, Ideal School and College and Mohammad Monwarul Hasan, Roll-61284, Mirzapur Cadet College (898 each).
19. Mohammad Upal Mahfuz, Roll-5187, St Gregory High School, Mohammad Mahbubur Rahman Chowdhury, Roll-11212, Govt Laboratory High School, S M Muniruzzaman, Roll-61250, of Mirzapur Cadet College and Mohammad Obaidullah Ibne Bashir, Roll-61262, Mirzapur Cadet College (897 each).
20. Farhana Jasim, Roll-1064, Ideal School and College, Tareq Aziz, Roll-11184, Govt Laboratory High School, Syed Faisal Hasan, Roll-11206, Govt Laboratory High School, Mohammad Mizanur Rahman, Roll-11380, of Residential Model College and Samia Akhter, Roll-11837, Udayan School (896 each).

Merit list of Social Science

By Staff Correspondent

1. Nadia Rawshan, Rifles Public School and College (888).
2. Md Ariful Haq, Mirzapur Cadet College (865).
3. Md Zahidur Rahman, Mirzapur Cadet College (863).
4. Farhana Ahmed, Rifles Public School and College (859).
5. Farhana Ahmed Chowdhury, Vikarunnesa Noon School (856) and Umme Ruman, Engineering University School (856).
6. Mohammed Arifur Rahman, Motijheel Model High School (855).
7. Banani Biswas, Binapani Government Girls' High School (852) and Tahmina Molla, Sher-e-Bangla High School (852).
8. Hosain Israt Adib, Dhaka Residential Model College (849), and Snigdha Khandawker, Agrani Girls' School (849).
9. Md Mizanur Rahman, M D C Model Institution (848).
10. Limia Haseem, Monipur High School, (847), and Md Ali Amin, Islamia Government High School (847).

Peace a must to increase production: PM

Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia yesterday reiterated her government's resolve to go ahead with the programmes of improving the lot of the people, reports BBS.

She underlined the need for maintaining peaceful atmosphere at all levels to help continue the programmes of increasing production both in fields and factories.

Begum Zia urged the party workers, supporter and well-wishers of BNP to work with unity, discipline and faith for supplementing the government's development activities.

The Prime Minister was addressing a gathering on the occasion of the joining of several thousand leaders and workers of Awami League and other parties, labour leaders and industrial and transport workers of Demra in BNP at Sugandha.

Mayor of Dhaka Mirza Abbas MP, Mir Showkat Ali MP, Slaughter Ahmed MP, and Nabullah Nabi, Aminul Islam, Abdus Samad, Mohammad Shahidullah, Mir Hossain and Muktar Hossain were among others who addressed the function.

Legal notice served on Nasim

A legal notice was served yesterday on Mohammad Nasim, MP, and chief Whip of the Opposition in the Jatiya Sangsad for his alleged defamatory remarks against Major (Rtd) Mohammad Sayeed Eskander Majumder, reports BBS.

At a public meeting on July 11 at the Bangabandhu Avenue and also in the Jatiya Sangsad on July 8 during the budget session, Nasim allegedly accused Majumder of being the local agent of M/S Occidental Ltd, a foreign business firm.

In the legal notice on Mohammad Nasim, advocate Zulmat Ali Khan said on behalf of his client Majumder that Nasim had deliberately made "false, concocted, baseless, motivated and defamatory" remarks at the July 11 public meeting against Majumder, who is a socially established person and an honest and well-known businessman both at home and abroad."

The legal notice quoted newspaper reports of Nasim having stated that Majumder is the brother of Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia.

Advocate Zulmat Ali Khan, in his notice, said that Nasim was seeking to deliberately malign Begum Khaleda Zia, the Prime Minister, with a view to tarnishing her image both at home and abroad by involving her brother's name and making baseless and false statements.

The notice said unless Nasim makes an unconditional apology within seven days of receipt of the notice, and publishes the apology appropriately in the newspapers, civil and criminal cases would be filed against him for defamation.

JU VC

From page 1 col 7
Vice Chancellor Prof. Kazi Saleh Ahmed, charge was made over in the presence of the university Registrar Mohammad Ali, Deans of three faculties and other officials Monday afternoon.

Earlier, the resignation of Prof. Kazi Saleh Ahmed was accepted by the Chancellor of the Universities — President Abdur Rahman Biswas — on Sunday.

"My immediate priority will be the restoration of congenial atmosphere on the campus and reopening of the university," the VC told this correspondent over telephone last night.

The Jahangirnagar University was closed since die by the authorities following an attack on teachers by a group of students on Thursday last.

"Naturally, I seek cooperation from all quarters, including the teachers and officials of the university, to ensure restoration of the academic atmosphere," Prof Hossain added.

Hailing from Dhamrai, Prof. Hossain did his Masters in Economics from the Dhaka University in 1949. He joined the Jagannath College after obtaining an M Sc degree from the London School of Economics in 1960.

From 1960 to 1962 he was a teacher at the Dhaka University. He was also associated with the State Bank of Pakistan, the University of Khartoum in Sudan and the Bangladesh Bank.

From 1972 he was a Joint Secretary at the Ministry of Finance and retired in 1985 as an Additional Secretary.

The Midnight File

Rockets slam into Kabul

KABUL, Aug 2: Rockets slammed into Afghanistan's war-battered capital Monday, hitting the deserted Bulgarian embassy and ending a monthlong peace. Hospital officials said 14 people were injured. Witnesses said a dozen houses were demolished in the attack. Afghanistan's warring leadership had kept at fragile truce for nearly a month. At least 10,000 people — mostly civilians — have been killed in more than a year of fighting between rival rebel groups who ousted the Soviet-backed Marxist regime in April 1992, reports AP.

20 Tajik rebel killed

MOSCOW, Aug 2: Twenty Tajik opposition fighters were killed or wounded when they blundered into a minefield while trying to cross the border from Afghanistan into Tajikistan, Interfax news agency said today. The Moscow-based agency reported that four Tajik rebel attempts to breach the border were thwarted at the weekend by Russian border guards who opened fire on the intruders, reports Reuter.

JU teachers to continue abstention

By JU Correspondent
Teachers of the Jahangirnagar University reiterated their decision to abstain from work until punitive measures were taken against the students involved in the attack on them last Thursday.

This was disclosed at a rally held at the Social Science Faculty premises Monday morning following a silent procession brought out by the JU teachers, officials and employees.

The procession paraded the campus, devoid of students. "We are surprised at the silence of the Prime Minister," one teacher said, adding, "The PM has been sending condolence messages to other countries from time to time but this shameful attack on the teachers by the students failed to draw the attention of the head of the government," he said.

The meeting also demanded immediate arrest of the accused and expressed solidarity with the action programmes taken by the Federation of Bangladesh University Teachers' Association (FBUTA).

The teachers earlier also declared an action programme for this week.

ALCWC

From Page 1 Col 5
According to sources, neither the Dr Kamal Hossain issue nor the Golam Azam subject came up for discussion during the two-day meeting.

A secretariat member, requesting anonymity, told The Daily Star that the decision for revitalising the organisational activities would automatically affect Dr Kamal's move to attract the party activists to his forum.

UNB adds: The ALCWC has also decided to visit the mazar of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman at Tungipara in observance of the 18th death anniversary of the country's independence leader.

The members of the working committee will offer feteha and pray for the salvation of the soul of the slain leader.

A press release of the party said the Awami League president will meet today at 29 Minto road at 10 am.

Party President Sheikh Hasina will preside. A meeting of the party secretaries will also be held today at its central office at 5 pm.

Privatisation

From page 1 col 7
government could increase its annual development expenditure while actually reducing taxes — the best possible combination for private sector development. The government does not have the ability to turn around all these enterprises. Thus, the attention on privatisation.

Band-aid efforts at reducing the haemorrhage in public sector enterprises finance started from the mid-Seventies when the smaller enterprises were sold. The 1982 Industrial Policy sought to accelerate privatisation. But privatisation never really took off the ground. Since the mid-Seventies, 500 units were privatised at a constructed sales value of Tk 180 crores.

The process by which units were selected for privatisation and sold was not transparent, which led to much criticism. In the backdrop of mounting criticism from the Consortium Members about public enterprise losses, the government identified 40 enterprises for privatisation in the industrial policy for 1991. In addition to this, the government is committed to privatise 18 jute mills and 20 textile mills.

It is not yet clear as to how the newly created Privatisation Board would contribute to the process of privatisation of public enterprises.

3 policemen fired
CHITTAGOONG, Aug 2: One Sub-inspector of police (SI) and two constables of Comilla Kotwali thana were dismissed from service by the concerned department recently on charge of misuse of official power, a police source said here today, reports BBS.

SI Ram Prasad and constable Khokan Chandra Das and Abu Zahed in conjunction with some mastans snatched away Taka 1,70,000 from one Abul Kashem of Palpara, Comilla on February 25, 1993. The SI and the two constables were in civil dress and carrying rifles while committing the crime. They also threatened to arrest Abul Kashem as an accused in a false dacoity case.

Tk 1.05cr fraud
From Page 1 Col 8
persons collected some 2.68 lakh US dollars in this manner from a Bank of Tokyo branch. Soon after, the bank authorities became suspicious and formed an investigation team which unearthed the fraud. On July 27, the bank filed a case with the Motijheel thana accusing four persons for the forgery. Among the accused, one person — Nazrul Islam Mia — was the zonal officer of the GPO branch of the Janata Bank.

Export policy
From Page 1 Col 8
It also enhances the financial limit of sending samples of export goods abroad from Tk 1000 to 2000 annually and provides for creation of a separate credit line of 25 million US dollar to facilitate export to the CIS (Commonwealth of Independent States) countries. The cabinet also approved, in principle, the proposal of Roads and Road Transport Division of the Ministry of Communications for amending the Bengal Highways Act 1925 to incorporate stringent penal provisions for unauthorised construction of houses, shops and creation of other impediments on the national and regional highways under the control of Roads and Highways Department.

IWT-3 project
From page 1 col 7
Lutfullah Majid yesterday. Speaking on condition of anonymity, a high official present at the meeting, said the situation was improving and there were reasons to be hopeful about the implementation of the project. The government has changed its attitude towards the WB recommendations," he added. When contacted last night, the ERD Secretary said, "The Ministry of Shipping was opposing the WB's recommendations, but I feel the bank is on the right track." He, however, refused to say anything about the meeting with the Finance Minister yesterday. The action plans for the BIWTC, as demanded by the WB for disbursement of the credit, include organisational restructuring, fleet restructuring, manpower rationalisation and financial restructuring. The bank suggested trimming down the fleet size and withdrawing the non-profitable river transport services under the fleet restructuring plan. The Ministry of Shipping considered these conditionalities unacceptable, saying that the ministry would have to face adverse political consequences. The World Bank, on the contrary, feels the reforms are imperative if the BIWTC is to attain financial viability. Out of the total 64.2 million US dollars, the International Development Agency (IDA) has committed to provide 45 million dollars as credit, while the Finnish International Development Agency (FINNIDA) and Japan have agreed to provide 5 and 0.7 million dollars for the project respectively. The government's own contribution was fixed at 13.5 million dollars. The IWT-3 project is aimed at improving waterway safety and environmental controls, strengthening the inland water transport infrastructure, streamlining the financial and operational aspects of the BIWTC and BIWTA, and encouraging development of the country boat sector among other things.