



42 entrepreneurs apply for launching banks

By Staff Correspondent

Some 42 applications have been submitted to the Ministry of Finance seeking permission to launch private banks. Parliament was informed yesterday during the question-answer session.

In reply to a question from Shahiduzzaman (Naogaon-2), Finance Minister M Saifur Rahman said that so far, 11 private banks have been permitted to operate in the country and the government is studying the pending proposals.

The name of the proposed banks and applicants are: The Eastern Commercial Bank Ltd, S M A Mannan, House-77, Road-6, Old DOHS, Banani, Dhaka; Markentile Bank Ltd, Nurul Islam, 139, Motijheel C/A; Masud Bank, 61, Motijheel C/A; Bangladesh National Investment Bank, Abul Kashem, 18, Purana Paltan; Prime Bank Ltd, M A Khaled, Rajuk Annex building, Dhaka; Bank of South Asia, Feroz Haider, Hong Kong; Sundarban Bank, M Habibullah Bahar, 50, Alaul Avenue, Uttara; South Asian Bank, Aminul Islam, Dhannondi, Dhaka; Bangladesh Social Investment Bank, Dr M Abdul Mannan, Jeddah, Saudi Arabia; Palli Unnayan Bank, Nurul Huq Chowdhury, 65/66, Motijheel, Dhaka; The Capital Bank Ltd, Abdul Alim Khan, 29, BB Avenue; Bidesh Bangladesh Bank, Kazi Enam Uddin Ahmed, Motijheel; The Multi Credit, Dr A N M Motmaan Uddin Chowdhury, 30-31, Diluksha C/A; Bangladesh Central Cooperative Bank, M A Kabir Khan, 3, Ahsanullah Road, Dhaka; Royal Bank Ltd, Momin

Letter to Hasina not censored, JS told

Post, T and T Minister Tariqul Islam yesterday told the Jatiya Sangsad that no letter written to Leader of the Opposition Sheikh Hasina had been censored rather letter addressed to her had been delivered very promptly on the day of its receipt, reports BSS.

Replying to a question from Awami League member Mizanur Rahman Manu, Islam brushed aside the allegation that the letter of the Leader of the Opposition had been censored and said no such incident happened, and such allegation was totally false and baseless.

The minister said the Leader of the Opposition had never lodged any complaint to the ministry rather soon after the publication of such a report in the Daily Khabar on July 11, 1993, the ministry enquired into the matter finding it totally baseless and false.

Islam said the allegation of delayed delivery of letters written to Sheikh Hasina because of security checkings and censoring was ridiculous.

He said letters addressed to her Mintu Road and Dhannondi residences had been very promptly delivered to her on the day of receipt through GPO and Zigatola post offices respectively.

Islam pointed out that the Leader of the Opposition had not given the cover of the said letter for the purpose of enquiry by the Postal Department but the photocopy of the said letter preserved at the Awami League office very clearly showed that there was no stamp on it, no seal of any Bangladeshi post office or Nepalese post office though there was a sealed address of Rashtriya Prajatantra Party, Central Office, Katmandu-2028, Nepal.

3 student bodies unite against Shibir at SSMC

By SSMCH Correspondent

Three student's organisations jointly announced their resolve to prevent all activities of the Islami Chhatra Shibir (ICS) on the Sir Salimullah Medical College campus in the city yesterday.

The ruling BNP's student front the Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD), the pro-Awami League Chhatra League (M-I) and the Bangladesh Chhatra Union, at a joint meeting on the college campus, took this decision.

They also formed a nine-member steering committee to resist the activities of the pro-Shibir.

JCD, BCL continue strike in CU

CHITTAGONG, Sept 22: The first day of the indefinite strike in Chittagong University, enforced by Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) and Awami League-backed Chhatra League, passed off peacefully today, reports UNB.



Pop star Michael Jackson listening to a female Israeli officer during his visit to an army base near Tel Aviv yesterday shortly before his departure for Turkey — AFP photo

Yeltsin in control

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Foreign Economics Minister Sergei Glaziev submitted his resignation, calling Yeltsin's decree unconstitutional.

A political rival, Vice President Alexander Rutskoi, tried to grab the reins of power but appeared to be failing as military and police commanders remained loyal to Yeltsin.

The state is in danger. Resolute actions are needed. This clique is not going to go away easily because they understand they will have to answer to the people and to justice," Rutskoi told some 5,000 supporters outside Parliament on Wednesday.

The anti-Yeltsin crowd chanted, "Rutskoi be brave, drive Boris away."

But there appeared to be little public reaction to the dramatic struggle, with life in Moscow and other major cities going on normally even as the two sides broadcast duelling views on radio and TV.

Rutskoi's main hope was in some of Russia's far-flung regions, such as the vital oil-producing Tyumen district of Siberia, where his supporters threatened to strike. Late Wednesday, there was no word on the success of their efforts.

After Yeltsin's television appearance Tuesday night, about 150 lawmakers rushed to their headquarters and immediately voted to impeach Yeltsin and

What next?

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uncertain futures in a shrinking army, and ambitious regional leaders who want to wrest more authority from Moscow.

Unpredictable events, such as street violence or a crippling strike, could throw the balance either way.

Yeltsin's television address dissolving parliament Tuesday capped an 18-month power struggle with lawmakers who want to slow the transition to a free market, prop up state industries, and pursue a more nationalist foreign policy.

Vice President Alexander Rutskoi and the hard-line parliament already have set up a shadow government that will try to take power in the days and weeks ahead.

Yeltsin's prime minister promised on nationwide television that police would maintain public order, but "any use of force is ruled out." If so, the two parallel governments may coexist for some time, issuing contradictory orders and vying for legitimacy.

Ironically the result could be a worsening, at least temporarily, of the paralysis of government that Yeltsin set out to fix.

Some steps Yeltsin's opponents will take are already clear:

— They will attempt to convene the full parliament, or Congress of People's Deputies, despite Yeltsin's ban. Short of force, he has no way to stop them.

— They may try to block Yeltsin from holding elections to a new parliament in December, both by ordering regional officials not to set up polling stations and by calling for a voter boycott. They could also launch a counter offensive and call new presidential elections.

Prof. Badruddoza Chowdhury, taking the floor, reiterated his position expressed in the House two days ago and added that not only the Jamaat, any organisation destabilising the society should come under such a act.

Works Minister Barrister Rafiqul Islam Miah, at this point, rose to tell the House that the politics of the Hindu-Buddhist-Christian Oikya Parishad, along with that of the Jamaat, should also come under scrutiny.

The AL members were seen appreciating the Works minister by again thumping benches.

Enamul Huq of the Jamaat-e-Islami, Bangladesh secured the floor at this stage to protest against the MP's demand for banning his party. The Jamaat MP told the House that the demand itself was unconstitutional, especially when the preamble of the Constitution began 'In the Name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful'.

replace him with Rutskoi. Rutskoi's first decree nullified Yeltsin's action and ordered all government leaders to obey him and the parliament.

The move was not effective. Yeltsin was also buoyed by dozens of statements of international support for his political and economic reforms. US President Clinton said "I support him fully," after Yeltsin assured him that political reforms would move forward.

Other expressions of support came from Chancellor Helmut Kohl of neighbouring Germany — Russia's largest financial backer — Italy, France, Turkey and Poland.

"Now is the moment for the rest of the world to make it absolutely clear that they support the continuation of this reform process," British Prime Minister John Major said Wednesday.

Yeltsin's main opponent, parliament Speaker Ruslan Khasbulatov, looking haggard after a sleepless night, said Wednesday that 20 local governments Russia had decried Yeltsin. He appealed for a nationwide general strike.

Yeltsin made similar calls when he faced down tanks outside the White House during the 1991 coup attempt.

Assistant Sessions Judge Krishna Debnath pronounced the judgement after examining eight witnesses.



Jahanara Imam addressing a gathering of the Nirmul Committee at Bangabandhu Avenue in the city yesterday. — Star photo

Ban communal politics

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House will not be sufficient," remarked Hasan Imam, stressing on proper implementation of such a legislation.

From the hastily erected dais, the Nirmul leaders urged all to resist the Jamaat-Shibir forces in every walk of life.

Educational institutions, localities and mosques should be cleared of the Jamaat-Shibir activists, who are threats to democracy, humanity and national development, the meeting urged.

Slating the killing of student Zubayer Chowdhury Rimu at the Rajshahi University, Abdur Razzak, MP said, "Barbaric killings like this cannot be Islamic as preached by the Jamaat-e-Islam."

An extended meeting of the body's steering committee will be held at the Taher Auditorium this afternoon.



The mangled remains of the Pajero jeep which met with an accident near the Shanir Akhra in Demra, killing three of its occupants yesterday. — Star photo

AB Bank cuts lending rates

By Staff Correspondent

The Arab Bangladesh Bank Limited has reduced the interest rates on the commercial, industrial and export credits to between 10 and 15 per cent with effect from October 1, according to a press release.

The lending rates for export sector based on commodities have been refixed within the bands of 10 to 10.5 per cent, while the rates for industrial working capital will be between 11 and 14.5 per cent and for other commercial lending 15 per cent.

The decision of reducing the lending rate is being considered to be an outcome of the Bangladesh Bank's recent decision to reduce the bank rates to gear up economic activities in the country. Some other banks are also expected to take similar decisions, banking sources said.

Biman captain off-loads

By Staff Correspondent

An American instructor was off-loaded from a flight to Kathmandu yesterday, jeopardising the Safety Emergency Procedure (SEP) being conducted for the pilots and cabin crew of Biman Bangladesh Airlines, Biman officials said.

Captain Capt Ralph Kohn was invited from the US Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) to supervise the training programme but the captain of Biman's Kathmandu flight refused to take him without proper clearance.

Kohn has been given a No-sub or N-1 ticket by the Civil Aviation Authority of Bangladesh (CAAB) which permits him to travel in any of Biman's flights, the source added.

The SEP card is essential for flying in the United States and Biman is planning to start its New York flight as early as possible. Under the training, emergency landing skills of the crew members are examined.

The source said that Captain Kohn was very annoyed at the incident and lodged a complaint with the CAAB authorities to look into the matter.

Sources at the Bangladesh Airlines Pilots' Association (BAPA) told The Daily Star that the FAA instructor had no boarding card and went to the aircraft at the eleventh hour of the departure scheduled at 2:30 pm.

The captain of the F-28 aircraft was quoted by the BAPA officials as saying "No one can board an international flight without security and customs clearance."

UNICEF report

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UNDP Representative Dr Watanabe, in her speech, pointed out that the last development decade had witnessed a significant shift from economic development to social development as the key development indicator.

Development was once indicated by the wealth of the nations and now it is judged by the health of the nations, she said.

Earlier, a group of young crooners from different schools run by the NGOs rendered three songs on child rights.

Diplomats, members of Parliament, representatives of UN agencies and mediapersons attended the function.

Progress Report of Bangladesh

Region: South Asia

GNP per capita 1991: US Dollar 220

Survival

Child mortality 1991: 133 per 1000 live births

Regional average: 131 per 1000

World average: 97 per 1000

Ranking in region: 4 of 6 nations with data

Nutrition

Expected child malnutrition: 33%

Actual child malnutrition: 66%

Malnutrition difference: 33% points

Ranking in region: 4 of 5 nations with data

Health

Children vaccinated: 53%

Regional average: 79%

World average: 77%

Ranking in region: 6 of 7 nations with data

Education

Children reaching grade 5: 47%

Regional average: 50%

World average: 68%

Ranking in region: 3 of 6 nations with data

Family Planning

Average births 1991: 4.8 per woman

Regional average: 4.4 per woman

World average: 3.4 per woman

Ranking in region: 3 of 6 nations with data

Progress for Women

Maternal deaths: 600 per 100,000

Regional average: 490 per 100,000

World average: 310 per 100,000

Ranking in region: 4 of 7 nations with data

Source: The Progress of Nations, 1993

The Midnight File

Pakistan to raise Kashmir issue at UNGA

ISLAMABAD, Sept 22: Pakistan is to raise the issue of Kashmir at the UN General Assembly and highlight what it views as serious human rights violations by Indian forces in the disputed state, a Foreign Office spokesman said today. UN Secretary General Boutros Boutros-Ghali's recent remarks on the 40-year-old dispute between India and Pakistan over Kashmir reflected the international community's growing concern with the situation there, the spokesman said, reports AFP.

38 killed in US train mishap

SARALAND, Ala, Sept 22: An Amtrak train jumped the tracks on a bridge and plunged into a foggy bayou before daybreak Wednesday, trapping passengers in a submerged car and killing at least 38 people, authorities said. Fifteen others were missing, said Coast Guard Petty Officer David Schmidt, reports AP.

Georgian plane shot down

TBILISI, Georgia, Sept 22: Dozens of passengers were feared killed when a Georgian civilian plane carrying about 100 people was shot down near the besieged city of Sukhumi, presidential aides said. Georgian leader Eduard Shevardnadze's press service would only confirm that 28 people, including six crew, escaped before the burning Tu-154 airliner exploded on the runway at Sukhumi Airport, reports Reuters.