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DU supplementary exams Jan 11,12,13

The Degree (Pass and Subsidiary) supplementary examination for the candidates who got referred in the degree examination of 1992 of the University of Dhaka will be held on January 11, 12 and 13, 1994.

ANNOUNCEMENT

THE NEXT ISSUE OF MONTHLY The Daily Star COMPUTER SPECIAL WILL BE PUBLISHED TOMORROW, WEDNESDAY, 17 NOVEMBER 1993.

FORUM MEMBERS ARE REQUESTED TO SEND IN THEIR CONTRIBUTIONS INCLUDING COMPANY NEWS AND PRODUCT NEWS BY 2 PM TODAY, 16 NOVEMBER. THE PRINTING SCHEDULE COMPELS US TO INSIST THAT FORUM MEMBERS RESPECT THE DEADLINE.

Hazratbal siege: 25 more killed

Police, chief negotiator 'run out of patience'

SRINAGAR, Nov 15: The Indian army siege of the Hazratbal Mosque entered a second month today as clashes between Muslim militants and the security forces left 25 more people dead in the Kashmir valley, report AFP, AP.

A youngman fled the besieged mosque meanwhile and gave himself up to Indian troops today, officials said. He was the fifth person to leave the mosque and surrender to the authorities since Sunday.

Some 50 armed Kashmiri Muslim separatists and several dozen Muslim pilgrims have been hold up in the mosque on the outskirts of Srinagar since it was ringed by paramilitary troops on the night of October 15.

Efforts to bring about a negotiated settlement have been unsuccessful and Indian officials indicated today that their patience may be running out.

SRINAGAR, Nov 15: The authorities tonight indicated there were 'positive signals' of armed militants trapped inside the Hazratbal shrine giving them up soon. Chief official negotiator, Mehmood-ur-Rahman told PTI that negotiations had entered a 'decisive' stage.

"The militants have to come out and surrender or we will have to review our strategy," Kashmir police chief Manohar Nath Sabharwal told reporters.

Chief government negotiator Mehmood-ur-Rehman also appeared exasperated on Sunday when he warned the militants "not to tax the government's patience" and said the "time has come for you to surrender."

Srinagar and other towns in the Muslim-majority Kashmir valley were paralysed by a general strike today and troops and riot police patrolled the deserted streets to prevent protests against the Hazratbal siege.

Shops, businesses, schools and government offices were closed and police chief Sabharwal said that troops would move quickly to break up any public gatherings of more than four people.

The Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front (JKLF), the dominant militant group in Sri-

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Dhaka eligible to get fund for protecting environment

Bangladesh attained the eligibility of getting assistance to protect environment from a 240 million US dollar-fund through adoption of the London-Amendment to the Montreal Protocol of 1987 on conservation of ozone layer, reports UNB.

The international fund for protecting the environment was created through the London-Amendment 1990 to the Montreal protocol.

The cabinet yesterday approved the proposal of the Ministry of Environment and Forest for adopting the London-Amendment, entitling the country to assistance from the fund.

An official annoucement said the approval was given in the regular weekly meeting of the cabinet held at Bangabhaban with Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia in the chair.

The cabinet meeting also ap-

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New US visa chance for Bangladeshis

By Staff Correspondent

Bangladeshis who may have missed the chance of being selected in the US-OP-1 programme a couple of years ago, may try their luck for obtaining an American citizenship through the upcoming DV-1 visa programme starting in October, 1995.

As many as 3,850 Bangladeshis have the chances of availing US immigrant visas after the programme is launched early next year.

The USIS, in a press release yesterday, stated that the American Diversity Immigrant Visa Programme, known as DV-1, is intended to increase visa availability from countries from where there is less immigration and added, "Nationals of Bangladesh will qualify for consideration under this programme."

The press release said that nationals of Bangladesh would, however, not be eligible under the AA-1 programme, a similar diversity programme.

"The DV-1 programme is intended to increase visa availability for applicants from countries other than twelve or thirteen principal sources of immigrants, and to provide an alternative means of visa entitlement for persons who do not have a close relative or an employer who can petition for them," the press release stated.

Some 55,000 visas are to be provided annually to principals and dependants, subject to certain regional and per country limits under the DV-1 programme.

An official at the US embassy said the new programme would be similar to the OP-1 programme and once announced,

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Sleeping bank wakes up

By Staff Correspondent

A private sector bank which was given permission to do business in 1982 but had failed to meet the deadline regarding commencement of operation, may be given a fresh chance to open shop from next year, competent sources said.

The Sundarban Bank, sponsored by some shrimp magnets of the Khulna Division and led by one M Habibullah Bahar, is trying to get new permission for operation.

If allowed, it would be considered as a special case since it had already been granted a licence a decade ago and not as a new case. Six new banks are awaiting the government's final approval.

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CPB MP likely to join BNP today

By Nazmul Ashraf

Another Member of Parliament (MP) belonging to the Communist Party of Bangladesh (CPB) is expected to join the ruling Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP).

Mozahar Hossain, an MP from Panchagarh, is likely to formally announce his decision in the presence of Prime Minister and BNP chief Khaleda Zia during a public meeting scheduled to be held at the Sakua College ground of Boda thana under his constituency this morning, sources close to him in the city said last night.

A good number of his political followers are also expected

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Medical college students went on a rampage in the city yesterday following the death of a fellow student — Rumana Parvin — of the Sir Salimullah Medical College under the wheels of a speeding truck in front of the Dhaka Medical College Hospital in the morning. — Star photo

Final negotiations on JMBP Nov 29 likely

By Sohel Manzur

Final negotiations for the 690-million US dollar Jamuna Bridge Project are likely to begin in Washington on November 29, according to sources.

The original date for the negotiation was November 15, but since the Japanese involvement in the co-financing of the project was not confirmed, the date had to be changed.

Japan is expected to officially convey the confirmation of its participation in the project later this week to Finance Minister M Saifur Rahman, who is now on a five-day visit of Japan.

An official of the Overseas Economic Cooperation Fund (OECF) of Japan in Dhaka, when contacted yesterday, confirmed the new date for the negotiations but maintained that nothing could be said about Japanese involvement in the project until a formal announcement by Tokyo.

He also expressed ignorance about the reported Japanese government decision of agreeing to finance the Jamuna Multipurpose Bridge Project, saying that he had not received any such message.

All other sources and available indications, however, appeared to confirm the Japanese government's involvement in the project.

The World Bank and the ADB have, in the meantime, agreed to provide 200 million dollar each as credit for the project. A similar amount is expected from Japan.

Saifur Rahman, who left Dhaka Sunday for Tokyo, was accompanied, among others, by the Executive Director of the Jamuna Multipurpose Bridge Authority (JMBA) Mohammad Ali and Chairman of the Panel of Experts for the project Prof Jamilur Reza Chowdhury.

The Jamuna bridge, which will connect the eastern and western parts of the country, will be between 4.8 and 5.2 kms long. It will include provisions for a gas pipeline, electric inter-connector and a metre-guage railroad.

Mona murder trial begins

By Court Correspondent

Trial of the sensational Mona Murder Case began yesterday in the Court of the Second Additional District and Sessions Judge, Dhaka Md Akhtaqur Rahman Choudhury.

A businessman and sports organiser, Fazlur Rahman alias Mona was murdered in broad daylight in the capital on July 22 last year.

Kotwali police, after a length investigation, submitted charge-sheets on September 26 last accusing Aftabur Rahman Jongi

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Commentary

In defence of the Taka

By A Special Correspondent

The Taka, which has been made convertible for most foreign transactions, was deemed to be rather over-valued by the World Bank. As reported in The Daily Star November 11, World Bank Vice President Joseph Wood, who was in Dhaka last week, suggested that the currency be devalued by an unspecified amount. Finance Minister Saifur Rahman opposed the idea vigorously. Why is this suggestion, and how strong are the Finance Minister's arguments against it?

The World Bank's prescription of devaluation has taken many by surprise. Traditionally it is the International Monetary Fund (IMF) which is quick to point out exchange rate misalignments to governments. In case of Bangladesh the IMF has no complaint in this respect. The most recent IMF mission to Bangladesh gave a thumbs-up to the prevailing exchange rate of the Taka.

The WB is taking a different tack on this matter. Their view is that the Taka is valued correctly from a short-term perspective. But, from the longer term perspective of gaining a niche in the global market on a competitive basis, the Taka is overvalued. The reference point used by the Bank to establish this argument is the exchange rate of the Indian rupee. Rapid lowering of the inflation rate in Bangladesh in comparison to the inflation rate in India and successive devaluation of the Indian rupee have caused the Taka to appreciate in relation to the rupee. In March this year the World Bank estimated that between 1985 and 1992 the exchange rate of the Taka adjusted for price differences appreciated by 44 per cent against the rupee. In the same period the Taka appreciated 22 per cent against the Pakistan rupee.

These developments, according to the World Bank, are causing Bangladeshi products like jute and leather to lose their competitive edge in the international market. The effect of this loss in competitiveness is being compounded by two sets of factors within Bangladesh. Firstly, labour productivity is going down while wages have gone up, secondly, poor performance of infrastructure parastatals like the PDB are making many inputs more and more expensive. The only way that

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Violent protest : Truck kills SMC student

By Staff Correspondent

In a tragic road accident in the city yesterday a female student of the Salimullah Medical College was killed by a speeding truck.

Rumana Parvin, 22, a first-year student of the SMC, was crushed to death when a killer truck struck the rickshaw she was riding near the main gate of the Dhaka Medical College Hospital at around 10:15 am.

News of her death prompted immediate protests on the streets by angry medical college students. They also called for a token strike to be observed in all the 14 medical colleges throughout the country today.

Witnesses said the speeding truck hit the rickshaw from behind and when the victim fell on the road the reckless driver drove over her body. She died on the spot.

Daughter of Md Delwar Hossain, an officer on special duty with the Establishment Ministry, Parvin had gone to the Dhaka Medical College campus

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Biman's repaired DC-10 to fly again December 10

By Asiuzzaman

Nabajug, the DC-10 aircraft of Biman Bangladesh Airlines which met with an accident at ZIA on May 18 last will fly again on December 10 after completion of repair works, Biman sources said yesterday.

"It will be a test flight which will hover over the capital for a few minutes," a senior official of Biman's engineering department told The Daily Star.

"The aircraft will then be sent to Rome for D-checking," he said, adding that the Nabajug would join the fleet for full operation in early January, 1994.

The aircraft, one of the four Biman DC-10-30s, met with an accident while landing in stormy weather on a return flight from Jeddah. All 135 passengers and crew survived unhurt.

Experts and technicians of the manufacturers McDonnell Douglas (MD) Company of the United States have successfully repaired the structural damage to the aircraft and were now assembling the engines and other components, a Biman source said.

The nose-wheel of the DC-10 which was severely damaged in the accident has been repaired and replaced. All the three engines and some 80 other components were overhauled in the USA and Italy, the source said.

Some 50 MD experts have been engaged in the repair work which began on August 8. The repairs will cost 15 million US dollar, which will be paid by the insurer Lloyds of London. Biman will earn about one million dollar from MD by selling 15,000 man-hour of its own engineers and technicians.

The D-checking was earlier supposed be done at Biman's hangar at ZIA with the help of Alitalia, but the decision was revised when Alitalia demanded a higher fee for conducting the D-checking in Dhaka, which would have been the first of its kind in Dhaka.

D-checking is the most extensive checking of an aircraft, usually carried out after every 23,000 hours of flying.

Meanwhile, the committee probing the DC-10 accident will submit its report by the end of

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পলিথিন শপিং ব্যাগ উৎপাদন নিষেধাজ্ঞা প্রত্যাহারের জন্য মাননীয়া প্রধানমন্ত্রীর নিকট

আকুল আবেদন

বাংলাদেশের পলিথিন শপিং ব্যাগ একটি বিকাশমান ও সম্ভবনাময় শিল্প। এ দেশের শিল্পোন্নয়ন ও আর্থসামাজিক কল্যাণের প্রেক্ষিতে ১৯৮২ইং সন থেকে এ শিল্পটি একটি উল্লেখযোগ্য ও ক্রমবর্ধমান অবদান রেখে আসছে সংশ্লিষ্ট প্রস্তুত কারকদের সাথে কোন আলোচনা ব্যাতিরেকেই বিগত ১১ই অক্টোবর ১৯৯৩ইং তারিখে মন্ত্রী পরিষদ বাংলাদেশে পলিথিন শপিং ব্যাগ উৎপাদনের উপর নিষেধাজ্ঞা আরোপ করেছেন।

এ নিষেধাজ্ঞার স্বপক্ষে যুক্তি হল পলিথিন ব্যাগ

১। সহজে পঁচেনা ২। মাটিকে অনুর্বর করে তুলতে পারে ৩। পয়ঃ নিষ্কাশন ব্যাবস্থাকে ক্ষতিগ্রস্ত করে তোলে। ৪। পাটের বিকল্প হিসেবে ব্যবহৃত হচ্ছে ইত্যাদি। এ ব্যাপারে আপনার সহৃদয় অবগতির জন্য আমাদের বক্তব্য পেশ করছি।

১) পলিথিন ব্যাগ সহজে পঁচেনা বলেই একে বার বার রিসাইক্লিং করে ব্যবহার করা হচ্ছে।যে কোন লোক ঢাকার ইসলামবাগ, কামরাঙ্গীরচর, লালবাগসহ বিভিন্ন এলাকা সরজমিনে তদন্ত করে দেখতে পারেন তাই কাঁচা মাল আমদানির ক্ষেত্রে দুর্লভ্য বৈদেশিক মুদ্রার সাশ্রয় হচ্ছে।

২) পলিথিন ব্যাগ আমাদের দেশে মোটেও যত্রতত্র মাটিতে পড়ে থাকে না। উন্নত দেশের তুলনায় বাংলাদেশের একজন লোক অনেক কম পরিমান পলিথিন ব্যাগ ব্যবহার করেন। একটি পলিথিন ব্যাগ বা তার ভগ্নাংশ মাটিতে পড়ার সাথে সাথে ছিন্নমূল মানুষেরা তা কুড়িয়ে নিয়ে চালের দাম থেকে বেশী দামে বিক্রি করে থাকেন। তাই আমাদের দেশে পলিথিন ব্যাগ দ্বারা জমি অনুর্বর হওয়ার পরিবেশ সৃষ্টি হয়নি।

৩) আমাদের পয়ঃনিষ্কাশন ব্যবস্থার জন্য বিভিন্ন ত্রুটি এবং অব্যবস্থাই দায়ী। দশ লাখ লোকের জন্য গড়ে উঠা ঢাকা শহরে এখন ১ কোটি লোকের বেশি লোক বসবাস করছে। এদেশে যখন ১টি পলিথিন ব্যাগের কারখানাও গড়ে উঠেনি তখনও ঢাকার পয়ঃনিষ্কাশনের সমস্যা বর্তমান ব্যবস্থা থেকে কোন অংশে উন্নত ছিল না। আমাদের যা করতে হবে তা'হলো পয়ঃনিষ্কাশন ব্যবস্থার ত্রুটি সংশোধন।

৪) পলিথিন ব্যাগ পাটের বিকল্প নয় এটা হচ্ছে কাগজের ঠোংকার বিকল্প। শপিং ব্যাগ খুবই সস্তা সহজেই ব্যবহার উপযোগী এবং অদ্রতা রোধক তাই জনসাধারণের নিকট এটি প্রয়োজনীয় পণ্য হিসেবে সমাদৃত হয়েছে।

বাংলাদেশের শপিং ব্যাগ কারখানাগুলো আমদানিকৃত যন্ত্রপাতি দিয়ে এবং সরকারের যথাযথ দপ্তরের বৈধ অনুমতি নিয়ে স্থাপন করা হয়েছে। নিবন্ধনকালে কোন পূর্বাভাস দেওয়া হয় নাই যে সরকার যেকোন সময় এ শিল্প বন্ধ করে দিতে পারেন। তাহলে কেউ কষ্টার্জিত মূলধন দিয়ে, কিংবা বাড়িঘর বন্ধক রেখে অথবা ব্যাংক ঋণ নিয়ে এশিল্প স্থাপন করতো না। এ শিল্প বন্ধ করে দেয়াহলে শিল্প মালিকরা ধারদেনা ব্যাংক ঋণ কোন অবস্থায়ই পরিশোধ করিতে পারিবে না। পরিবার পরিজন নিয়ে অবর্ণনীয় দুঃখ কষ্টের সম্মুখীন হবে। প্রকাশ থাকে যে এ সমস্ত মেশিনারীজ দ্বারা পলিথিন ব্যাগ ছাড়া অন্য কোন জিনিস তৈরি সম্ভব নয়। বাংলাদেশে স্থাপিত প্রায় ২০০(দুইশত) পলিথিন শপিং ব্যাগ কারখানায় প্রায় দুইশত কোটি টাকা বিনিয়োগ করা হইয়াছে এ শিল্পের সাথে প্রত্যক্ষ এবং পরোক্ষ ভাবে কয়েক লক্ষ শ্রমিক কর্মচারী- জড়িত আছে। এ সমস্ত শিল্প বন্ধ হলে মালিক শ্রমিক কর্মচারীদের পরিবার পরিজন নিয়ে রাস্তায় দাঁড়ানো ছাড়া কোনো উপায় থাকবে না।

এখানে উল্লেখ্য যে এ শিল্পের কাঁচা মাল থেকে সরকার প্রতি বৎসরে প্রায় পঞ্চাশ কোটি টাকা রাজস্ব আয় করেন স্থানীয়ভাবে ভ্যাট কোম্পানী ও ব্যক্তিগত আয়করসহ বিরাট অংকের টাকা প্রতি বছর সরকার পাচ্ছেন।

যে মুহূর্তে সদাসয় গণতান্ত্রিক সরকার দেশের উন্নয়ন ও কর্মসংস্থান সৃষ্টিতে বিশেষ গুরুত্ব প্রদানের অংগিকার করছেন, সে মুহূর্তে পলিথিন ব্যাগ প্রস্তুতকারী শিল্প ও পুনঃব্যবহারকারী অংগ শিল্প প্রতিষ্ঠানগুলো বন্ধ করে দেয়ার বিষয়টি সরকারের সঘোষিত শিল্পোন্নয়নের অংগীকারের পরিপন্থী সর্বপরি সারা বিশ্বে পলিথিন ব্যাগ ব্যাপকহারে ব্যবহৃত হচ্ছে। কথায় বলে "CUSTOMERS HAVE NO NATION." তাদের কাছে যে পণ্য উপযোগী সেটাই তারা ব্যবহার করেন। প্রতিবেশী রাষ্ট্রসমূহ থেকে চোরাইভাবে অবাধে আমাদের বাজার ছেয়ে ফেলার আশংকাও রয়েছে। এ ব্যাপারে বিদেশী সিগারেট ও শাড়ির কথা উল্লেখ করা যেতে পারে।

এমতাবস্থায় আমাদের বিনীত সুপারীশ পলিথিন ব্যাগ উৎপাদন ও ব্যবহারের কারণে সারাদেশের নিষ্কাশন ব্যবস্থা, কৃষি জমির উর্বরতাসহ পরিবেশের উপর কি প্রভাব পড়ছে তা নিরূপনের জন্যে নিরপেক্ষ বৈজ্ঞানিক সমীক্ষা চালানো হউক এবং অবিলম্বে পলিথিন ও শপিং ব্যাগ উৎপাদনের উপর থেকে নিষেধাজ্ঞা প্রত্যাহার করা হউক।

এ ব্যাপারে আপনার সহৃদয় হস্তক্ষেপের জন্য আকুল আবেদন জানাচ্ছি।

নিবেদক

বাংলাদেশ প্লাস্টিক দ্রব্য প্রস্তুতকারক এসোসিয়েশন।