

NIRMAN TILES Broken Marble Tiles In More Shades Than The Rainbow Tel: 605957, 861985

Inside Today

Article

Ayub's Diary on Indo-China War Column: Between the Lines by Kuldip Nayyar Page 4

International

Clinton wants UN to maintain sanctions against Iraq



Indian actress Shabana Azmi kisses Nelson Mandela after presenting him with an award on behalf of a Cape Town newspaper Page 5

Business

Prices of essentials become dearer One-third global people poor, hungry: World Bank Pages 6, 7

Feature

Education

Weaving science into folk tale; Just an old-fashioned space man; Bridging the gap between home and school; and Teaching is vital Page 8

Metropolitan

Dhaka Day by Day



Delineation of Distress Page 3

NEWS BRIEFS

Hasina opens drama

Awami League President and Opposition Leader in Parliament Sheikh Hasina inaugurated 'Goar' a drama staged by the Subachan Nattya Dal, at the Public Library auditorium in the city yesterday, reports UNB.

The Awami League chief said Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman waived amusement tax from drama for its healthy growth but the tax is again imposed by the present government. The function chaired by Asaduzzaman Noor, was attended, among others, by Ramendu Majumdar, Aly Zaker, Jamaluddin Hossain and Abdul Kuddus.

BNP Cox's Bazar body dissolved

The Cox's Bazar district committee of BNP was dissolved yesterday, according to a party press release issued here last night. Khalekuzzaman has been appointed convener of the Cox's Bazar district BNP.

Rally demanding safe roads in city

Film star Ilias Kanchan, who had lost his wife in a road accident recently, will lead a procession today in the city demanding safe roads. The procession will begin from the FDC premises and end at the Jatiya Press Club, where he will address a meeting.

Banned medicine recovered

A special squad of Detective Police recovered a huge quantity of banned India-made injections worth about Tk 1,00,000 from a medicine shop in Mirford area in the city yesterday. UNB.

Japan stays away from JMB talks in Washington

By A Special Correspondent

Negotiation for the World Bank assistance for the Jamuna Bridge is currently on in Washington at the Bank headquarters. A three-member delegation led by Executive Director of Jamuna Multipurpose Bridge Authority, Mohammad Ali is representing Bangladesh in the talks.

The WB is expected to provide a 200 million dollar credit to Bangladesh toward part-financing of the Jamuna Bridge project. The Asian Development Bank (ADB) which is participating in the current Jamuna Bridge negotiations in Washington is expected to provide another 200 million dollars.

Although the Bangladesh side believes that it has assurance of Japanese assistance for the project, there is still a great

deal of uncertainty about it. The Japanese government is not taking part in the Washington negotiation despite frantic last minute efforts by Bangladesh to get them to Washington. The negotiation is taking place at the WB's invitation. At the very last moment before negotiations began the WB suggested that the Bangladesh Government should request Japan to take part in the negotiations.

Instead of going to Washington to participate in the negotiations, the Japanese are coming to Dhaka. A seven-member Japanese delegation will visit Dhaka from December 4 to December 9 to discuss the Jamuna Bridge project.

The Japanese team will be led by a senior Japanese Foreign Ministry official and will

include three experts. Sources say that the Japanese embassy in Dhaka is busy collecting information about the project for use by the Japanese delegation.

Without Japanese participation the negotiation in Washington will not constitute crossing a critical landmark in processing the Jamuna Bridge project. Informed sources say that both the WB and Bangladesh remain uncertain about the type and timing of Japanese assistance. The WB was proceeding on the assumption of joint financing which is supported by Bangladesh. But Japan has, at least once, indicated a preference for parallel financing.

Bangladesh now has a battle against time in putting the Jamuna deal together with expiry of bid validity close at hand.

Bangladesh need to have approval of the project by the WB board by mid-January.

There are more question marks about the possibility of meeting this deadline than before. Just when arrangements for negotiations between Bangladesh and WB were being finalised the Japanese Government informed that it needs to look into the priority of the project and resettlement related issues.

Both are very basic issues and observers believe that their quick resolution to permit construction to begin from next season is unlikely. That would mean a delay of at least one year with a cost increase of 200 to 300 million dollar. If that is the case, then the whole Jamuna exercise will have to start once again.

JS discusses bills on CHT polls

By Staff Correspondent

The Jatiya Sangsad (JS) yesterday began discussing three bills seeking further extension of time for holding elections to the local government bodies of Rangamati, Khagrachhari and Bandarban hill districts.

Foreign Minister A S M Mustafizur Rahman, seeking the extension of time by 365 days from January 5 next year, argued that it was necessary for facilitating a 'political solution' to the problems existing in the hill districts.

The time for elections to those local government bodies is to expire on January 5 next.

President Abdur Rahman Biswas promulgated three ordinances seeking the extension of time for the hill district local government polls earlier.

Parliament rejected, by voice vote, more than two dozens of disapproval motions of the Opposition members before taking up the bills for consideration.

Later, about a dozen members from the Opposition bench, while discussing the bills, expressed their concern over the present situation at the Chittagong Hill Tracts. They said that the problems of the hill districts, especially arising out of the Shantibahini insurgency, needed to be resolved politically. The opposition members once again suggested formation of a parliamentary committee to find a political solution to the problem. Extension of time for holding the Local Government elections was not the solution, the

House on the opening day of the current session of Parliament. Parliament rejected, by voice vote, more than two dozens of disapproval motions of the Opposition members before taking up the bills for consideration.

Foreign secretaries of 5 SAARC states in city

Foreign secretaries of several SAARC countries arrived here yesterday for taking part in the SAARC 'standing committee' meeting prior to the meeting of the Council of Ministers beginning December 4, reports BSS.

Foreign secretaries of Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Bhutan, Maldives and Nepal have arrived and they expressed the hope that the two-day meeting of the Council of Ministers, made up by the foreign ministers would provide fresh impetus to the on-going cooperative SAARC activities.

Foreign Secretary Reaz Rahman received his counterparts from the SAARC nations at the Zia International Airport. First to arrive was Pakistan's Foreign Secretary Shahryar Khan, who told newsmen at the



Awami League chief and Leader of the Opposition in Parliament Sheikh Hasina addressing a public meeting at Bangabandhu Avenue in the city yesterday. — Star photo



Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia talking to villagers during her visit to Gabtoli in Bogra yesterday. — PID photo

Hasina for future polls under care-taker govt

By Staff Correspondent

Awami League (AL) chief Sheikh Hasina yesterday reiterated that all national elections in the future should be held under a care-taker government.

The Leader of the Opposition in Parliament also said, "The Awami League will follow the concept of polls under care-taker government if voted to power."

She was addressing as chief guest at a public meeting at the Bangabandhu Avenue yesterday evening held to protest the BNP government's alleged corruption, terrorism and repression on political parties.

The rally presided over by city AL president Mohammad Hanif was addressed, among others, by Sajeda Chowdhury, Zillur Rahman, Tofael Ahmed, Mozaffar Hossain Paltu, Mozaffar Hossain Chowdhury Maya and Advocate Kamrul Islam.

care-taker government for a future election. "When one of them speaks against Parliament and we try to protest that in the Sangsad, we are not allowed to speak there," she said and added that the BNP did not respect parliamentary democratic system.

"The government wants to rule the country like a military dictator and is trying to destroy the parliamentary system," she pointed out.

Accusing the ministers of corruption, Hasina complained that the government is preventing a committee from probing into allegations of corruptions in the Irrigation and Agriculture Ministry because any progress by that committee would unearth a story of misdeeds.

She also accused the government of meddling into the affairs of the administration and the judiciary and said, the government was not cooperating in passing the Judiciary Separation Bill.

See Page 12 Col 7

36-hr hartal observed in Sylhet

From Our Correspondent

SYLHET, Nov 30 Normal life in all the four districts of the greater Sylhet region was paralysed since Monday morning as a 36-hour hartal was observed to press the demand for immediate formation of a new administrative division comprising Sunamganj, Habiganj, Moulvibazar and the Sylhet districts.

The peaceful hartal ended at 6 pm today. Called by the Sylhet Division Movement and Action Council, an all-party organisation, the programme was supported by different student, professional, business and socio-cultural organisations.

All types of vehicles remained off the roads during the hartal hours. Trains including the inter-city ones did not run to and from Sylhet.

All educational institutions, government and private offices and banks also remained closed today and yesterday.

Processions and meetings were held in Sunamganj, Moulvibazar and Habiganj district.

See Page 12 Col 8

Govt discourages children from going abroad for study

The government has decided to discourage children of 11 years of age and below from going abroad for education, reports UNB.

The government hopes that the children of 11 years and below will be educated at home so that they can acquire knowledge on country's own language, literature, culture, history, geographical location and environment and thus build up themselves as ideal citizens of the country," said a handout carrying the government instruction yesterday.

The children who belong to five-six and 11 year age group will acquire knowledge on their own country, it said.

"With this end in view, the government does not encourage these children to go abroad for education."

Make edn programme a success: Khaleda

BOGRA, Nov 30: Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia today called for making the education programme of her government a success to infuse momentum in the national development and progress, reports BSS.

Begum Zia called upon the parents to send their children to schools when she visited some remote villages under Gabtoli thana of the district.

During her day-long visit, the Prime Minister visited several villages and addressed a series of wayside meetings. She talked to the villagers and enquired about their welfare.

The Prime Minister visited different schools in the areas and talked to the students.

The Prime Minister spent over four hours in the villages of Gabtoli. Begum Zia talked to the farmers and enquired about their problems. She wanted to know about the production of rice this season. Begum Zia told the farmers that her government would do everything to

solve the problems of the farmers. When the car of the Prime Minister entered an area of a Hindu community the women welcomed her by giving 'tulsi'.

The Prime Minister went to three houses in Taturia village and talked to the women. She told them that the government was doing everything for the improvement of the condition of women. She said "you have to take up projects like poultry, farming, growing vegetables and sewing to become self-reliant. It will not work if you sit inside houses. You have to work. If you work, your families will prosper and the country will prosper in turn."

She also suggested them to plant trees.

Later, the Prime Minister addressed a big workers rally organised by local BNP at Gabtoli Pilot High School ground.

The Prime Minister asked the workers to continue to work with dedication and sincerity to strengthen the party base at

See page 12 Col 3

Hasnat arrested at Benapole

JESSORE, Nov 30: Former Minister and Mayor of Dhaka Barrister Abul Hasnat was arrested today from Benapole immigration office when he was returning home from India, reports UNB.

Hasnat, who fled the country after the fall of Ershad in December 1990, was wanted by police in connection with a corruption case.

Special Branch of police took him into custody this afternoon and soon produced before the court. The court sent him to Jessore jail.

Hasnat had joined the government at the fall of the Ershad regime. He was appointed Mayor of Dhaka and inducted in the council of ministers.

Laibagh police in Dhaka said a corruption case was filed against Hasnat on February 2, 1991. Details of the case were not immediately available.

Jessore police said Hasnat was returning home after living in exile in India for a long time.

Kashmir to be part of Pakistan in 5 yrs: Assef

ISLAMABAD, Nov 30: Pakistan's Foreign Minister Assef Ahmed Ali today expressed confidence that Kashmir would be freed within next five years and become part of Pakistan, reports AFP.

"With the grace of Almighty Allah, the struggle of the Kashmiri people and the blessing of the Pakistani nation, Kashmir will be liberated during Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto's government," Ali was quoted by the official Associated Press of Pakistan (APP) as saying in his hometown in Kasur in Punjab province.

Ali said that the Indian forces could not crush the liberation movement in Kashmir. He said India could not continue its repression in Kashmir indefinitely nor could it defeat the Mujahideen even if it increased its forces in the valley ten times.

He said if the Indian rulers failed to find a solution to Kashmir issue, India itself would break up.

Pakistan and Indian foreign secretaries are due to meet here in Islamabad on January 1-3 for talks on bilateral and Kashmir issues.

Cong leading in Madhya Pradesh

BHOPAL, Nov 30: The Congress-1 was leading in 86 constituencies and the BJP in 56, according to trends available till 2000 hours for the Madhya Pradesh Vidhan Sabha poll, reports PTI.

The Janata Dal, the BSP and others had established lead in 15 constituencies.

Former chief minister and BJP leader Sunderlal Patwa was ahead by around 3,000 votes over his nearest Congress-1 rival Ajay Singh, son of Human Resource Development Minister Arjun Singh.

Another ex-CM Kailash Joshi, also of the BJP, was trailing by 1100 votes in Bagli constituency.

The Congress-1 and the BJP had shared the two results declared so far. Onkar Prasad Tiwari (BJP) retained the Jabalpur central seat defeating his Congress-1 rival Ramnurti Mishra by nearly 6,000 votes.

Nanheal Dhyve of the See Page 12 Col 6

US co submits \$1.5b plan for industrial complex

Star Report

An American company has recently submitted a plan to the government to set up an industrial complex at a cost of 1.5 billion US dollars in Bagerhat district, according to official sources.

The New York based company, M/s Solar International Trading Corporation, signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the Board of Investment (BOI), earlier last month, to set up the industrial complex on a 300-acre plot of land to be acquired by the government in Mongla. The US company's local partner in the project is M/s Uttara Traders (Pvt) Ltd.

The Corporation proposed to set up seven industrial units, including a power station, and also accepted a set of environmental safeguards stipulated by the government.

The Corporation initially placed the proposal with the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Resources in June last. The MOU was finalised after meetings with the Energy, Industries and Environment ministries while the BOI also consulted with the Land ministry.

The US company originally sought a water-front plot of land in the Chittagong area. But after BOI offered them a choice of land in both Chittagong and Mongla, the company selected the latter following a visit to the area by its executive director.

The US company plans to set up a jute pulp plant, a waste paper sorting facility, a waste paper pulp plant, a box board plant, a 300 MW combined cycle steam co-generation facility and a rubber tyre manufacturing plant, according to the sources.

Land for the proposed project would be acquired by the government and Solar has agreed to pay the full compensation and other charges as required under the existing laws.

The company, the sources added, would separately negotiate with the Energy ministry on a purchase agreement for the proposed power plant, subject to government policy on privatisation of the energy sector.

The US company also agreed to obtain clearance certificates. See Page 12 Col 8

'No reason to believe that country is AIDS-free'

By Staff Correspondent

Deputy Leader of the Jatiya Sangsad Prof A Q M Badrud-dozza Chowdhury yesterday called upon the people to use protective measures, like condoms, against the spread of AIDS and save the country from a disaster.

Speaking at a press conference at the National Press Club yesterday on the eve of the World AIDS Day, Prof Chowdhury, who is also the chairman of the National AIDS Committee, said that there is no reason to believe that the country is free from AIDS while about two lakh people in the neighbouring countries have already fallen prey to the deadly disease.

Consciousness among the people, particularly the younger generation and women, regarding the AIDS could only help save the nation from the disease, he said.

Prof B Chowdhury, pointed out that 21 out of 250,000 people tested have been found HIV positive so far in the country.

All the HIV carriers belonged to the age group between 15 and 25 years, he said.

People of different professions including traders, students, politicians and bureaucrats who travel abroad were the most potential carriers of AIDS virus, he said.

He said other than sexual contact, indiscriminate blood transfusion was another way of the spread of AIDS and Hepatitis-B virus.

Forty per cent of the professional blood donors were suffering from different sexually transmitted diseases while 10 per cent of them were carrying Hepatitis-B virus, Prof Chowdhury informed quoting a recent survey.

He said that at present five HIV testing laboratories were in operation in the country where people could test their bloods free of cost and on an extremely confidential basis.

Chairman of the AIDS technical committee Maj. Gen M R Chowdhury, member of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Health Dr Azfar Hossain Mollah and World Health Organisation country representative Dr A N A Abeyesundere also spoke at the press conference.

New gas transmission company in the offing

By Special Correspondent

The government will set up a new company to transmit natural gas from the field to the distributing authorities.

The new company styled Gas Transmission Company (GTC), which will be a subsidiary of the Petro-Bangla, is expected to start functioning from July next year.

An authoritative source in the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Resources told this correspondent yesterday that the legal procedure for setting up the GTC as well as its registration under the Company Act is under process.

The objective of the proposed company is better management and coordination in the gas sector," said the source.

According to the plan approved by the government, the GTC will buy gas from the fields and sell to the distributing companies.

Two companies under the Petro-Bangla — Bangladesh Gas Field Ltd and Sylhet Gas Field Ltd — extract the natural gas. Three other companies — Titas Gas, Bakhrabad Gas Systems and Jalalabad Gas Systems — are responsible for dis-

tributing the fuel among the consumers. At present, these three companies are also doing the job of gas transmission.

The GTC will begin its initial operation with 214 km long transmission pipeline connecting Beanibazar and Ashuganj and another 59 km pipeline between Ashuganj and Bakhrabad. The company will gradually take over the responsibility of gas transmission from other companies.

Explaining the reasons for setting up the new company, an official of Petro-Bangla said that the existing system of maintaining both the transmission and distribution under same company creates administrative problems and overlappings.

"Keeping the responsibility of gas transmission with single company will also help reduce the system loss," said the official.

As regards manpower requirement of the new organisation, he said that there will be no fresh recruitment. The staff now engaged in transmission sector of different companies of Petro-Bangla, will be transferred. See Page 12 Col 8