### WB, donors are yet to renew lending in energy sector

Finance Minister M Saifur Rahman yesterday lamented the staggering system loss and underlined the need for increasing management efficiency for making power sector economically viable so that donors withdraw the credit freeze on it, reports UNB.

"World Bank and other donors are yet to renew lending in energy sector which they suspended in 1992 due to system loss and inefficiency." he said as chief guest at the Sixth Conference of Power Generation Officers' Association at WAPDA auditorium.

The Finance Minister feared if system loss could not be brought down to a tolerable level of at least 20 per cent, donors might not be interested again to invest in this capitalintensive sector in future.

"What shall I say in response to the donors' query regarding energy in the next board meeting of World Bank in January?" said Saifur, also Chairman of the Board of Governors of World Bank and IMF.

Terming power sector most vital for development, he urged the officials to increase revenue collection through increasing efficiency and proper coordination between power generation and distribution departments.

"Bad collection affects budget, and we are bound to cut down annual development programme. Collection should be

increased," he said and assured that the government would actively consider various financial incentives of the Power Development Board officials.

He said the government had invested maximum in this sector and would continue in future as it is considered a priority sector like education and

Energy and Mineral Resources Minister Dr Khandkar Mosharraf Hossain, Energy Sec-retary M Faizur Razzaq, PDB Chairman Kazi Golam Rahman. President and General Secretary of the association Md Ashraf Uddin and Md Abdul Mazid respectively also spoke at the

Addressing as special guest, the Energy Minister said at present 18 power stations were producing nearly 2000 megawatt power through 52 units against their installed capacity of 2650 megawatt.

#### BMA token strike begins today

The Bangladesh Medical Association (BMA) will observe a two-hour token strike for three days from today to press home their 21-point charter of demands. According to a BMA handout, the doctors will refrain from work from 11 am to 1 pm to press for their demands. The emergency sections, however, will work during the token

## Jute workers oppose MOU

From Page 1 Col 8

justment credit (JSAC) reportedly for a 3-year programme to revitalise the country's ailing jute industry.

But convenor of the action council Abul Basher told a news conference that as per conditions of the MOU, 18 jute mills of BJMC will be handed over to private owners, total jute production reduced to 180,000 metric tons from 750,000 tons. and workers and employees will face massive termination.

Talking about the 250 million dollar credit, Bashar said the jute industry had earned 2,200 crore Taka in real terms in the last fiscal year.

In the name of "nationalism and development", he said, the BNP government has completely

### Dinesh Singh

From Page 1 Col 5 the Ministry because of the mounting criticism of the latter's inability to cope with the rigours of office with his impaired health.

Dinesh has already been told to distance himself from the day-to-day affairs of the ministry and when the Prime Minister finds it convenient. he may give him another portfolio or even keep him in the cabinet without portfolio.

The Prime Minister's attention to the problem has also been aroused because of his concern over the drift in cer tain areas in the ministry's working. One instance of this has been his unhappiness with the Indian Ambassador to the US, SS Ray.

The Prime Minister has reportedly told Ray that his efforts in America were not bearing the required fruit. In a formal meeting in early December, in the presence of several senior officials, the Prime Minister expressed his dissatisfaction over the state of Indo-US relations, the reports

destroyed country's spinning and jute industries. Nearly 20 lakh people have lost their jobs in spinning, textile and jute sectors while "the markets of spinning and textile have been handed over to India," Bashar

He claimed that jute mills have earned net profit of Taka 4,500 crore during the Bangladesh period only. As per BJMC record, the amount is more than Taka five thousand crore, Bashar told reporters.

Unfortunately, he said, net profit made by the jute industries goes to elsewhere because. of "wrong industrial policy" of the government. He said there is a lot of evidences that privatisation will not save the jute mills. "It needs a dynamic industrial policy free from the control of world bank, IMF and other donor agencies to protect jute mills."

### Yeltsin greeted

From Page 1 Col 8

in holding parliamentary elec-

He hoped that friendly relations and cooperation between Bangladesh and the Russian Federation would be further strengthened.

In a similar message. Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia said "Excellency, the government and the people of Bangladesh join me in conveying to you, and through you to the government and the people of Russia, our heartiest felicitations on the successful adoption of the new constitution for the Russian Federation and on holding free and fair parliamentary elections."

Begum Khaleda Zia wished the Russian President all success in the continuing endeavours towards full democracy. national reconstruction and rapid development.

# Jamuna Bridge project

From Page 1 Col 4 technical issues about the bridge, river training, course of the river, erosion, resettlement of dislocated people, environmental issues, its economic impact on north Bengal, impact on the nation's gross domestic product (GDP) and even about the priority of the bridge in the economic planning of Bangla-

"They were provided with appropriate answers to all technical questions about the project and they did not have any further questions from the engineering point," assured a top Bangladeshi expert involved in the project. He insisted that the Japanese team members were satisfied with the clarifications provided on the technical aspects of the

project. After the wrap-up meeting with the Japanese team on December 9, although government officials confirmed that the team members expressed their satisfaction over the clarifications provided, yet diplomatic sources pointed out that a number of questions remained unresolved.

The team members, they added, questioned the premise, on which the economic 'viability of the project heavily relies on, that presently a vehicle has to wait for at least

48-hours at the Aricha Ferryghat. They, in turn, insisted that the waiting period is much shorter.

The Japanese team also argued that the money could be better spent on other priority projects, particularly in the area of human resources development, the diplomatic sources said. It is being seen by Japan as more of a political than an economically viable project.

So, going by the above accounts Japan is far from making up its mind about funding the JMB project.

However, government offi cials are insisting that they are seeing the "light at the end of the tunnel," that Japan would provide a positive indication

The diplomatic sources noted that even if Japan agrees to fund the JMB project, then other assisted projects may suffer. Japan, the largest bilateral donor, annually disburses a little over the 200 million dollars required for co-financ-

ing the bridge. Thus, Japan may be contemplating to provide the required fund in two installments, spread over two years. but at the same time reducing the annual aid disbursement accordingly, the sources add-

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Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia seen talking to some women volleyball players while visiting different sections of the National Indoor Stadium after its formal inauguration at Mirpur in the city yesterday. - PID photo

# PM opens indoor stadium, pool

Khaleda Zia yesterday inaugurated a most modern international-standard indoor stadium and swimming complex at Mirpur as countdown began for a regional sports extravaganza in capital Dhaka, reports UNB.

"The VI SAF Games is going to be held only after two days. Our sports establishments will be resounded with the footsteps of South Asia's hundreds of sportsmen. I am hopeful, the SAF Games will bring success and prestige through our united efforts," she said opening the National Indoor Stadium and Swimming Complex, constructed at a cost of Tk 46.26 crore within nine months and 22 days.

"It's now time for us to book a berth in the sports field of the globe," Begum Zia said.

She said there is a deep relation between a country's socio-economic development and development of sports and culture. "So, we have given due importance to sports and cultural sectors in our development planning."

"The swimming pool and indoor stadium have been built as part of our ongoing efforts" in this regard, Begum Zia added.

The swimming complex cost Tk 12.10 crore while the

Prime Minister Begum crore. Both were constructed Sports Sadek Hossain. State on the eve of the VI SAF Games beginning here tomor-

> The newly built indoor stadium will facilitate ten games while the swimming pool provide all the latest facilities for international-level sports

She went round the complex and stadium expressing satisfaction at the rapid and beautiful constructions of the sports establishments. She also, planted a sapling at the stadium premises.

The Prime Minister stressed the need for spreading of sports and physical exercises from grassroots to national level and informed the function that the government was interested to construct necessary infrastructure in this regard. Opportunity and scope of

private initiative are more than the government ones in this respect. Not only construction of infrastructure, it is also necessary to create mass awareness about sports and physical exercises, she said. During the visit, Finance

Minister M Saifur Rahman. Post and Telecommunications Minister Tarigul Islam, Jute Minister ASM Hannan Shah indoor stadium Tk 34.16 State Minister for Youth and

Minister for Civil Aviation and Tourism Abdul Mannan, Amanullah Aman MP, Olympic Association president Gias Kamal Chowdhury and other senior officials of the sports deportment were present.

Later the Prime Minister witnessed and enjoyed the practice of Bangladesh national women's volleyball team at the just inaugurated indoor stadium and thanked women's volleyball players for their performance.

Begum Zia asked them to further improve their perfor-

### Murtaza charged with insurgency

KARACHI (Pakistan), Dec 18: A special court today charged Murtaza Bhutto, the jailed brother of Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto, with insurgency and attempting to topple the government by force, reports Reuter.

"The prosecution has enough evidence to establish the involvement of the accused in the case," said the judge at the special court for speedy trials in the southern city of Karachi.

The 39-year-old Murtaza was arrested on November 3 on his return from Syria after 16 years of self-imposed exile

# Indigenous people demand protection of their rights

By Staff Correspondent

Professor Kabir Chowdhury,

Justice KM Sobhan, Rashed

Khan Menon MP, Abul Hasan

Chowdhury MP, Vice Principal

Abdus Shahid MP, Kalpa

Ranjan Chakma MP, Dipanka

Talukder MP, Promode Mankin

MP. Dr Niru Kumar Chakma,

Prof. Anu Muhammad, JSD

leader Hasanul Hug Inu, Father

RW Timm CSC. Reverend

Subhash Chandra Sangma and

U-Shit Moung Rakhaine also

Dr Prasanta Tripura of

Jahangirnagar university pre-

sented a paper at the function

on "The International Indige-

nous Year and the Indigenous

ment by the Foreign Minister,

who reportedly said that there

were no indigenous people in

Poet Shamsur Rahman called

for involving the country's peo-

ple in the on-going movement of

the indigenous people to protect

martial law" in the Chittagong

Hill Tracts, he said. "There can-

not be two laws in the same

upon the government to the le-

lakh indigenous and tribal peo-

sitions of the opposition politi-

cal parties were also "unclear"

gitimate demands of some 12

He pointed out that the po-

Rashed Khan Menon called

There was "an undeclared

their culture and heritage.

Speaking on the occasion,

Speakers resented a state-

spoke on the occasion.

People of Bangladesh".

Bangladesh.

country.

ple of the country.

on the tribal's issues.

Devashish Ray presided.

It was a rare show in the capital Saturday as the spacious Engineers' Institution premises turned into a melting pot of the diverse indigenous

cultures of the country. Several hundred people, belonging to some 30 plus indigenous or ethnic communities, converged for the first time in the country's history to express their solidarity with the International Year of the Indigenous People, 1993. The Engineers' Institution

buzzed with different languages spoken by the indigenous people, clad in their traditional dresses.

However, their language was common, plain Bengali, when they spoke of their rights and their cultures.

The congregation was organised by a committee composed of the members of Parliament to celebrate the UN-declared International Year of the Indigenous People.

In a declaration which came out of the function, the country's indigenous people and other ethnic minorities, better known as the tribals, demanded protection of their cultures and heritage, languages, education and socio-economic development through legislation and constitutional guarantees.

The declaration also called for setting up a separate ministry for the welfare of the country's tribal population.

Poet Shamsur Rahman attended the function as the chief guest while Chakma king

Prof. Kabir Chowdhury criticised the comment of the Foreign Minister and urged him to withdraw his remarks.

Abul Hasan Chowhury said the rights of the indigenous people should be guaranteed through necessary constitutional amendments. Prof. Niru Kumar Chakma

said the country's minority indigenous communities needed protection and more attention of the government.

Criticising the comments of the Foreign Minister, Kalpa Ranjan Chakma said minister had attempted to deny the existence of the indigenous com-

Chakma King Devashish Ray, in his speech, urged the government to recognise the existence of the indigenous people in Bangladesh. He also stressed that the

government should ratify the UN and other international protocols and conventions relating to human rights and special rights of the indigenous people. One of the main causes of

discontent among the indigenous people was the violation of their land rights, he pointed The day-long programme

was rounded off with a cultural soiree participated by several tribal groups. Earlier, the indigenous peo-

ple held a rally at the central Shaheed Minar. A colourful procession was

brought out from the Minar which ended at the Engineers' Institution.

### Khaleda goes to Gournadi today From Staff Correspondent

BARISAL, Dec 18: Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia is expected to visit Gournadi and Hizla of Barisal tomorrow.

She is schieduled to arrive in Gournadi at 11 am and address a public meeting at the Government Gournadi College ground.

She will inaugurate the Palli Biddyut Samity at Hizla and address a public meeting at the Hizla College ground.

### Ironic end to rescue mission

By Staff Correspondent

A road accident victim died when the Fire Service vehicle carrying him to the hospital met another accident at Goran on the Dhaka-Aricha highway yesterday noon.

On receipt of an information. a Fire Service vehicle from Manikganj rushed to Jaigir and picked up the victim, lying unconscious on the highway. But on its way back to Manikgani an Aricha-bound truck dashed and overturned the vehicle. killing the victim and injuring all the fireman on board.

The victim -who could not be identified - succumbed to his injuries. The injured firemen were admitted to the Manikgani Hospital in critical conditions.

### Tax lawyers

From Page 1 Col 5 or disrespectful towards the law", the secretary general said. The lawyers demanded withdrawal of the Finance Minister's

decision, terming it 'illegal'. Referring to the minister's speech on the budget in 1991. they said that the government was yet to introduce income tax for the government officials while the non-government officials were paying taxes on their incomes. The minister, in 1991, had assured that he would remove the discrimination, they

From Page 1 Col 7 but BNP rejected those," Hasina told the meeting.

spreading education, she said the Bangabandhu government had set up 11.000 primary

League will take steps to eradiset up agro-based industries to generate employment and cottage industry to employ women.

Referring to the economy. she said there is no local or foreign investment in the country as the government had failed to create congenial investment climate.

India " and local markets were also flooded with Indian goods. she said.

gathering at Umiruddin High School ground at Melandah. she criticised the government for not exempting cooperative farmers loan as had been promised by the Prime Minister.

Awami League leaders Tofael Ahmed MP, Motiya Chowdhury MP, Rashed Mosharraf MP, Abul Kalam MP, Mozaffar Hossain Paltu, Adv. Fazlur Rahman, Ashim Kumar Ukil and Sultan Md. Monsur Ahmed also spoke on the occasion.

### Chief Justice

From Page 1 Col 7

Chairman of the Bar Council, who presided over the occasion, pointed out that enforcement of the rule of law and dispensation of Justice are the preconditions for socio-economic develop-

hope that the lawyers, as a community, despite all the odds, would remain united for fostering a just society. "Our commitment to ensure equal justice for all remains a core commitment for each and every lawyer irrespective of our

Justice Mustafa Kamal Shamsul Huq Chowdhury and former chief justice Badrul Haider Chowdhury also spoke on the occasion.

After the inaugural ceremony, the guests visited the classes where the orientation course for the lawyers was

"The "Continuing of Legal Education" course has been started by the Bar Council from the realisation that the standard in the Bar is falling due to lack of importance given to legal education," Barrister Amirul Islam informed the guests.

He also stated that there were only two universities which have law faculties while there are between 30 to 35 colleges that have part-time law teachers. He said the law graduates do not have a senior in most cases to train them up

"The challenge of the new training programme is to train

# The Midnight File

### SAARC meet on disabled ends

ISLAMABAD, Dec 18: The South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) ministerial conference on disabled persons concluded here today with the adoption of Islamabad resolution. The 13-point resolution reiterated the commitment of SAARC countries to create awareness among the masses about the needs and problems of the disabled persons, reports Xinhua.

### India okays human rights body

NEW DELHI. Dec 18: The Indian parliament today gave its approval to the country's first national Human Rights Commission, with powers to probe rights violations by the security forces. The lower house passed a bill to set up the commission here and similar bodies in various state 'to meet the growing concern in the country and abroad about human rights violations," reports AFP.

#### Avalanche kills 10 Pak soldiers

ISLAMABAD, Dec 18: An avalanche on the world's highest battlefield in the disputed Himalayan region of Kashmir has killed 10 Pakistani soldiers, including an officer, an army officer said today. The troops were returning from frontline positions on the Siachin Glacier where Pakistani troops face the Indian army when they were buried by the avalanche on Thursday, he said, reports Reuter.

### \$3.15m ADB loan for water project

Bangladesh will receive 3.15 million dollar as loan assistance and a grant of 250,000 dollar from the Asian Development Bank for the Southwest Area Water Resources Development Project

of the country, reports UNB. The ADB has approved the interest-free concessiona technical assistance loan and the grant Thursday, said a

press release yesterday. The loan is expected to solve the water resource man agement problems in Bangla-

The executing agency for the technical assistance loan will be Bangladesh Water Development Board, said ADB press release.

### CEC meeting

From Page 1 Col 5 party met the CEC at 4 pm. It was decided to organise a

joint meeting of all the parties. participating in the city corporation elections, with a view to reaching a consensus on maintaining peace and helping free, fair and neutral holding of the polls.

The meetings also stressed the need for forming an all party committee to entrust it with the responsibilities of maintaining peace during the elections.

The representatives of the parties also agreed not to write graffiti on the city walls. Meanwhile, Justice Rouf is

scheduled to meet the editors of the national dailies today at 4 pm. He will discuss with the editors the issues relating to peaceful holding of the city corporation elections.

BSS adds: The Election Commission has called upon the intending candidates for the posts of mayor and commissioner of Rajshahi, Khulna and Chittagong city corporations to submit their nomination papers to the returning officers on December 21 between 10 am and 5 pm.

The returning officers will scrutinise the nomination papers on December 22 while the date of withdrawal has been fixed on December 30 upto 5 pm.

The offices of the returning officers in the three city corporations are: Deputy-election Commissioner's office, Laksmipur, Rajshahi Metro-politan area, Rajshahi, Deputy-election Commissioner's office. Nurunnahar Manzil, 216, Sher-e-Bangla Road, Khulna and Deputy- election Commissioner's office, Sagir Manzil, 35, Jamal Khan Road, Chittagong.

#### Drug co men From Page 1 Col 7

Health Ministry under Section 25C of the SPA, 1974, for adulteration of, or sale of adulterated drugs, were still pending, the source said.

According to the concerned section of the SPA, persons, if proved guilty of adulteration of medicine or food items, shall be punished with death, or with imprisonment for life, or with rigorous imprisonment for a term which may extend to fourteen years, and shall also be liable to fines.

# SAF Games

From Page 1 Col 8 ing 254 men and women. Shri Lanka will be a close second with its contingent of

Hosts Bangladesh will field 249 sports aces of the country in eleven disciplines for the 117 golds that will be up for grabs.

The contingent from the Maldives comprises 77 participants while Bhutan has ensured a place in the record books even before the shooting war by sending a 14-member contingent - obviously the smallest representative party in a kermess of about 1,200 peo-

The last rites to make the meet off the hook were completed yesterday with Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia inaugurating the two wholly new facilities for the SAF Games an indoor stadium and a swimming pool - both at Mirpur.

### Varsity officers go on strike

By DU Correspondent

Administrative officers of seven universities in the country observed a day-long strike yesterday to press home their

two-point demands. The Bangladesh Inter-University Officers' Federation earlier threatened a ten-day strike beginning yesterday demanding amendment of the down-graded pay structure and the inclusion of officers' representatives in the university Senate, Syndicate, Finance Committee and Academic

Council At the Dhaka University, all the administrative officers abstained from work yesterday. The officers of the DU Chittagong University, BUET,

nagar University, Islamic University and Agricultural University will continue their strike till December 27. BNP Sunamganj

Rajshahi University, Jahangir-

body dissolved BNP Sunamganj District Committee has been dissolved as per the decision of the National Standing Committee of the Bangladesh Nationalist

press release here last night reports BSS. The President of the Sunamganj District Committee Dewan

Party, according to a party

Shamsul Abedin has also been expelled from the party. Fazlul Haque Aspian has been appointed convenor of Sunamganj District Committee. The names of the new convening committee will be an-

### nounced later on.

Saifur

From Page 1 Col 5 by the Islamic Economics Research Bureau, the Islamic Bank Bangladesh Limited and Al-Baraka Bank Bangladesh Limited, was addressed by Industries Minister M Zahiruddin Khan, Commerce, Minister M Shamsul Islam, Chairman of the seminar committee Mohammad Ataur Rahman, Mir Quashem Alt and Mohammad

Yunus. Zahiruddin Khan said, the economies of the Muslim countries are complementary, not supplementary. So there is enormous scope for economic interaction among the Muslim

He said Bangladesh had called for the creation of a "reinsurance body" under the framework of the OIC. Billions of dollars could be saved every year'if such a body was set up.

nations, he added.

Shamsul Islam called upon the Muslim world to reduce the trade gap between the Muslim countries to accelerate economic development and said the limited resources of the Muslim countries should be used for attaining common ob-

#### ectives. Role of women

From Page 1 Col 7 greater role in economic activ-Rokia A Rahman, chairperson, BEA's national committee

for women entrepreneurship

development, in her welcome

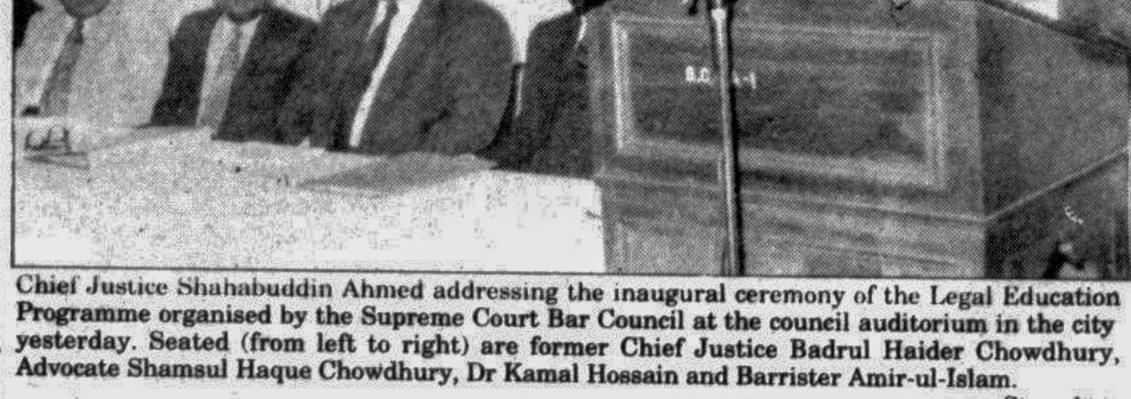
address, said the gender imbalance in trade and business needs to be supplemented by programmes specifically weighted in favour of women. "The disadvantage arises from non-implementation of the government policies, be-

cause of the inherent contradiction of attitude," she observed. "It is necessary to design and ensure supply of credit and other complementary support services for helping

women entrepreneurs," Rokia

She also appealed for the formation of a high-powered committee to review the ongoing plans and policies of the financial institutions with a view to re-orienting them for ensuring better access of

women to the credit facilities. The opening session was also addressed by the Labour and Manpower Minister Abdul Mannan Bhuiya, and Director of International Labour Organisation Werner K Blenk.



— Star photo

Hasına Stressing the need for

schools in the country. If voted to power. Awami cate illiteracy from the country within 10 years, she said. It will

BNP government has tarnished the image of the country abroad, Hasina alleged. Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia had "literally sold the country to

Earlier, addressing another

the sphere of productivity." Dr. Kamal Hossain, Vice

ment. Dr Kamal expressed the

political and other affiliations."

started at the bar premises.

as lawyers.

them up as lawyers", he said.