

Nirman Tiles

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NEWS BRIEFS

Bangla Academy books for Hasina

Leader of the Opposition in Parliament Sheikh Hasina yesterday received a complete set of books published by the Bangla Academy. Director General of Bangla Academy Prof Harun-ur-Rashid handed over the books to her at her official residence, party sources said. Receiving the books Hasina told the DG that the academy is the pride of the nation and hoped it would keep significant contribution to the nation's language and literature, reports UNB.

One killed in Sylhet clash

From Our Correspondent

SYLHET, Dec 30: One person was killed in a clash between rival groups of villagers at Dheunagar of Sheoja Union under Beanbazar thana today. The clash ensued following a quarrel between two minor boys over throwing a football to a nearby pond. Monojir Ali, 50, died on the spot when the opponent group attacked him and his neighbours with lethal weapons.

BMA observes hunger strike at Naogaon

NAOGAON, Dec 30: District unit members of Bangladesh Medical Association (BMA) observed hunger strike on Wednesday to press home their demands. The eight-hour long strike from 9 am was observed at the local Civil Surgeon office premises, reports UNB.

25 nominations for DCC mayor valid

The Election Commission (EC) yesterday found the nomination papers of 25 mayoral candidates and 894 of the commissioner candidates valid for the Dhaka City Corporation (DCC) elections, due on January 30 next.

The commission cancelled the nomination paper of Shaikh Mohammad Ali, a mayoral candidate from the Islami Biplobi Parishad, and 22 forms of commissioner candidates because of incorrect and inappropriate information in their forms.

Joint Secretary of the EC S M Zakaria announced the names of the candidates at the Divisional Commissioner's office in the evening. Returning Officer of the DCC polls Syed Ehtesham Rasul was also present during the announcement.

The reasons for cancellation of the nominations were mainly because of under-age of the candidates, inappropriate proposers and seconders, absence

Finalists in Chittagong, Rajshahi & Khulna

By Staff Correspondent

With the completion of withdrawal of nomination papers, 12 candidates in Chittagong, five in Khulna and seven in Rajshahi will now fight for the mayor posts in these three city corporation polls.

Similarly, 301 candidates in Chittagong, 178 in Khulna and 257 in Rajshahi will be in the fray for the ward commissioner's berth.

There are 41 wards in Chittagong, 31 in Khulna and 30 in Rajshahi.

The elections of all the four city corporations are scheduled

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Professionals may defer their programme

By Masud Hasan Khan

Leaders of the Prokrichi-BCS Central Action Council are considering suspending their ongoing en masse resignation in view of the government announcement Wednesday regarding their demands.

Speaking to The Daily Star yesterday, central leaders of the council indicated they might defer the programme for three to six months.

However, a final decision about postponement of their agitation would be taken at a meeting of the council members of the Prokrichi set for this evening (Friday), the leaders said.

The government, through a press note Wednesday night,

transformed 50 per cent posts of the National Pay Scale-9 to Scale-7 as selection grade and also upgraded the posts of nine cadres, including five engineering cadres, at the district level and its equivalent to Scale-5 from Scale-6.

These are two of the four demands earlier accepted by the government and part of a 17 point charter of demands put forward by the professionals of the country.

The Prokrichi-BCS Central Action Council, a platform of some 70 thousand doctors, engineers, agriculturists and non-administrative cadre mem-

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JMB project Talks with ADB after New Year vacation

By Inam Ahmed

After the Japanese government's commitment to co-finance the Jamuna Multipurpose Bridges project, Bangladesh will now hold talks with the Asian Development Bank (ADB) after the New Year's vacation in Manila, the Headquarters of the Bank, over the financing of the project.

A round of informal talks between the ADB and the government has already been held in Dhaka after Japan's confirmation of its decision to provide 200 million dollars for the Ja-

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The Chairman of the Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front (JKLF) Amanullah Khan (Centre) talks to journalists at the Karachi Airport yesterday on his arrival from Brussels. The girl is JKLF activist Nuzhat Shah. — AFP photo

Include JKLF in Indo-Pak talks: Amanullah

KARACHI, Dec 30: Militant Kashmiri leader Amanullah Khan returned to Pakistan today after 72 days in a Belgian jail and demanded a place for his people in next week's talks between Pakistan and India on Kashmir, reports Reuter.

"My arrest was an Indian conspiracy that failed, the 58-year old Chairman of the Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front (JKLF) told a small crowd of cheering supporters when he arrived at Karachi Airport.

Meanwhile, Pakistan said today it considered the forthcoming Indo-Pakistan talks on Kashmir as "decisive" and it would not hold further negotiations if they proved unproductive.

"We will find it domestically extremely difficult to continue the sterile process of dialogue" if

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Directive to T&T employees Relieve consumers of ghost bills: PM

Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia yesterday asked the workers and employees of the T&T board to provide proper service to the consumers and relieve them of ghost bills, reports UNB.

Begum Zia was addressing a gathering of T&T workers and employees who met her at Sugandha at night.

Leaders of newly elected office-bearers of CBA of the T&T Board were also present at the meeting. The Jatiyatabadi Srani Dal supported Bangladesh Telecommunications Workers' Union won a landslide victory in the recent CBA election.

The Prime Minister asked the CBA leaders to take the responsibility to avoid the ghost bills and remove sufferings of the consumers.

"T&T is an institution of the people. It is the duty of its staff to develop and increase its consumer services," she said and emphasised proper application of technology to reach the telephone facilities to the thana level.

Begum Zia said her government has expanded the telephone network by giving new connections across the country. "Our main objective should be providing service to the people," she said requesting all to work sincerely from their respective positions.

The Prime Minister stressed private entrepreneurship for rapid industrialisation of the country to speed up the pace of development and solve the unemployment problem.

Begum Zia stated that her

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Section 144 around Engineers' Institute

Authorities imposed Section-144 prohibiting gathering, meeting and procession in and around Engineers' Institute for 48 hours from Thursday midnight as students put up resistance against a planned Shibir function, reports UNB.

Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP) Sources said the restriction came following announcement of simultaneous meetings by a few student organisations at the institute premises.

Islami Chhatra Shibir, the student wing of Jamaat-e-Islami, scheduled its two-day conference for December 31 and January 1 at the venue.

Shampradayikata Brodhi Chhatra Samaj (anti-communal student group), and alliance of 14 student organisations, in their move to restrict communal politics called a meeting at the

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Fish stocking of floodplains yields poor result

By A Special Correspondent

The Fisheries and Livestock Ministry is trying to convince the World Bank that restructuring of the programme by changing the floodplain areas to be restocked may be premature now.

Ministry officials are arguing that recent experience with fish catch in the floodplains show significant incremental production. A change in species selection will further increase production from fingerling stocking.

In a recent meeting with Fisheries Ministry officials, the World Bank has said that recent estimates of incremental productions are encouraging. But, the Bank remains to be convinced that these estimates apply to the entire floodplain area covered by the project.

Experts believe that the fish stocking programme suffers from a high rate of species mortality and escapement. The

problem of escapement is a specially tricky one. A high degree of escapement indicates that the benefit of increased fish production is accruing to people outside the project area. In that case it would be difficult to ensure continued support of the people living in the area to the project. This is also a special point of concern to the government which was expecting that the project will help the poor — who comprise a majority of the population in the floodplains — most.

Sweet water fish production in Bangladesh is 7.52 lakh metric tons per year, according to official estimate. The official estimate of per capita availability of fish protein is only 20.5 grams per day. If the floodplain fish stocking programme runs into difficulty, the attempt to increase fish production will suffer a serious setback.

Bangladeshi UN peacekeeper killed in Somalia

MOGADISHU, Dec 30: A Bangladeshi UN peacekeeper was killed when the fuel truck he was guarding overturned, the first fatality among the 940-strong Bangladeshi contingent in Somalia, a UN official said Thursday, reports AP.

The soldier, 24-year-old Mohammad Akbar Hossain, was escorting a truck belonging to a private contractor that will handle most UN logistics once the US troops have withdrawn on March 31.

Another Bangladeshi guard and the Somali driver were slightly injured in the accident Wednesday night.

"We extend our sincere sympathies to the Bangladesh contingent and the soldier's family," said UN spokesman Maj. Tim McDevitt.

10 BTMC mills will be privatised

By Special Correspondent

The privatisation of ten mills belonging to the Bangladesh Textile Mills Corporation (BTMC) is being processed while sale of one such mill has already been finalised.

According to official sources, the authorities concerned have decided to sell the Bangladesh Textile Mills, located at Dhamghar, Narayanganj, to a private sector entrepreneur at a price of Tk 5.55 crore. The decision has been approved by the Council Committee recently and the mill will be handed over to the buyer soon.

Nine other mills enlisted for disinvestment are: the Noakhali Textile Mills, Madaripur Textile Mills, Kishoreganj Textile Mills, Barisal Textile Mills, Kohinor Spinning Mills, Sharmil Textile Mills, Dhaka Cotton Mills, Khulna Textile Mills and Jafan Fabrics.

Tenders were floated, but the offers from the intending

Another Shibir activist dies in hospital

By Staff Correspondent

Another Islamic Chhatra Shibir (ICS) activist, injured earlier in a bomb blast at Tongi, died at the Dhaka Medical College Hospital.

The victim, Mosharrar Hossain, succumbed to his injuries yesterday after two days of fighting with death. Earlier, his comrade, Manjurul Alam, died in the blast.

The condition of another victim was also critical, medical sources said.

On Tuesday night, some ICS activists fell victims to the bomb blast reportedly while preparing explosives in the house of a local Jamaat leader, Advocate Md Shawkat Ali.

Meanwhile, police seized a huge quantity of explosive materials from the Jamaat leader's house and arrested two students of Notre Dame College in this connection.

Shawkat Ali has been absconding after the explosion, police sources said.

Ajit Singh, 9 MPs join ruling party Cong-I now has absolute majority in Lok Sabha

NEW DELHI, Dec 30: Ten members of parliament from a centrist party joined ranks with Indian Prime Minister P V Narasimha Rao's Congress (I) today, giving the ruling party an absolute majority in the Lower House, reports AFP.

Janata Dal leader Ajit Singh said that in the interests of the country, he and nine other members of his party were joining the Congress, which headed a minority government until the surprise switch-over.

"The merger is without pre-conditions. The need of the hour is to strengthen secular forces and presently only the Congress can do the task," said Singh, son of former prime minister Charan Singh.

The announcement provided a welcome respite to the 72-year-old Rao, who has been under pressure this week to sack his high-profile Finance Minister Manmohan Singh in connection with last year's massive securities scam.

The addition of the 10 Janata Dal MPs gives the Congress 266 seats in the 544-seat Lower House. It can also count on the support of 12 other MPs.

Another Janata Dal faction has 40 MPs in parliament. The party also administers the eastern state of Bihar, and in November it formed a coalition government in Uttar Pradesh previously administered by the main opposition Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP, Indian people's party).

Ajit Singh, a former Congress ally, backed a no-confidence vote against Rao in July, but the Congress managed to wear away seven Janata Dal MPs to defeat the motion.

Meanwhile, Indian opposition MPs renewed their assault on the government today over a 1.3 billion dollar banking and securities fraud and demanded the resignation of Prime Minister P V Narasimha Rao.

Debating the stock scandal in parliament for a second day, members of the opposition said Rao should resign to take "moral responsibility" for the diversion of public funds by bankers and brokers.

They also urged Rao to accept the resignation of Finance Minister Manmohan Singh, who offered to step down following the release last week of a report by a parliamentary committee set up to look into the scandal.

"The Finance Minister has done the right thing," said Communist Party of India leader Indrajit Gupta, who accused Rao of imitating a "silent Buddha" for failing to act on the resignation.

There has been no indication from Rao as to whether he will accept or reject the resignation of Singh, the architect of India's economic reform programme.

5000 watches seized at ZIA

By Staff Correspondent

Customs Intelligence men seized some 5000 wrist-watches from an incoming passenger at Zia International Airport (ZIA) yesterday.

A Customs official, Mohammad Zakaria, challenged the passenger while he was passing through the green channel and found the watches hidden inside two hand bags, said a Customs source.

The passenger from Singapore landed at the airport by Thai Airlines flight at around 1 pm.

A departmental case was lodged and the man was released.

Resentment in Orissa over missile test

BALASORE, Dec 30: With the test launch of the prestigious medium range missile 'agni' for the third time from the interim test range (ITR) at Chandipur-on-sea in Orissa's Balasore district only days away, strong resentment is brewing among the people of the villages around the ITR, reports PTI.

Popular resistance had virtually stalled the national test range (NTR) project of the Ministry of Defence.

A movement by the people of the villages surrounding the ITR had started in 1988 under the banner of 'Pahli Surankshya Committee' with an apprehension that the NTR project might replace the ITR at Chandipur and in that event the local inhabitants would lose their homestead land.

শিল্পায়নে জনতা ব্যাংকের ঋণপ্রদান কর্মসূচী

জনতা ব্যাংক দেশের শিল্পায়ন প্রক্রিয়াকে গতিশীল ও সুদৃঢ় করার লক্ষ্যে রপ্তানীমুখী শিল্প, বস্ত্র শিল্প, আমদানী বিকল্প শিল্প, ইঞ্জিনিয়ারিং, কেমিক্যাল, খাদ্য প্রক্রিয়াকরণ শিল্পসহ কৃষিভিত্তিক শিল্প যথা দৃষ্ণ খামার, হাঁস-মুরগী খামার, মৎস্য ও আধানিবিড় চিহ্নি চাষ প্রকল্পে ঋণপ্রদান কর্মসূচী অব্যাহত রেখেছে।

জনতা ব্যাংকের ঢাকা শহরে বিভিন্ন মনোনীত শাখা ছাড়াও সকল জেলার প্রধান শাখা ও কর্পোরেট শাখাসমূহের মাধ্যমে শিল্প ঋণ প্রস্তাব গ্রহণ, প্রক্রিয়াকরণ ও মঞ্জুর করা হচ্ছে।

আগ্রহী শিল্প উদ্যোক্তাগণকে জনতা ব্যাংকের সংশ্লিষ্ট শাখাসমূহে যোগাযোগ করার জন্য অনুরোধ করা যাচ্ছে। জনতা ব্যাংক প্রধান কার্যালয়, শিল্প ঋণ বিভাগেও একটি পরামর্শ সেল কার্যরত আছে।

জনতা ব্যাংক
জনতার সেবায় নিয়োজিত