

Hamdard to set up school, college in Bangladesh

Governor of the Pakistan province of Sindh Hakim Mohammed Said, now on a visit here, yesterday called on Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia at her office, reports BSS.

Hakim Said, who is also the president of the Hamdard Foundation of Pakistan, briefed the Prime Minister on the activities of the Bangladesh chapter of the Foundation. The Hamdard Foundation has been engaged in research and development of unani and herbal medicines in the subcontinent for more than five decades.

He told the Prime Minister that the Foundation has decided to involve itself with promotion of education, particularly of the poor and orphans and to set up schools and colleges in Bangladesh.

Hakim Said informed Begum Khaleda Zia of the Hamdard plan to undertake research project on herbal medicine with a view to reaching the traditional medicare system to the common people. He referred to the popularity of herbal medicine in China, Indonesia, Pakistan, India and Bangladesh.

Referring to the similar projects taken by the Foundation in Pakistan and India, the Sindh governor said, in the first phase the Foundation would help build schools.

Begum Zia gave the assurance of cooperation by her government in this regard.

The Prime Minister emphasised the need for more research on herbal medicine and said people living in the rural areas were largely dependent on the traditional systems of medicine.

Religious Affairs Minister Keramat Ali, and Pakistan High Commissioner Anwar Kemal were also present.

Irish trade centre opens in city

Visiting Irish Minister for Defence and Marine David Andrews inaugurated the Ireland Trade Centre here yesterday, saying it would help foster relations between the two countries, reports UNB.

"This is the beginning of trade, cultural and political relations between the two countries... I think the centre will play a significant role in strengthening the growing relations," he said.

The Minister, who flew in here Friday night on a four-day private trip to Bangladesh, also opened the just-established Bangladesh-Ireland Friendship Society in the capital.

"The two countries can proceed on establishing joint venture industries in order to strengthen the existing economic cooperation between the two countries," he said.

He identified fishing, telecommunications, agriculture and powdered milk as the possible joint venture sectors in which the entrepreneurs of the two countries may come up.

Andrews, the first Irish Minister here after the liberation of Bangladesh, pointed out that Ireland was one of the countries who first recognised Bangladesh as an independent and sovereign state in 1972.

The trade relations between Ireland and Bangladesh are now very limited. Bangladesh imported powdered milk from the island-country worth about one million US dollar while it exported a small quantity of garments to that country through the buyers from the United Kingdom.

A trade centre source said there was a tremendous scope for exporting Bangladeshi garments and handicraft to Ireland, but absence of direct shipping lines hampered it.

As Ireland is a fish-rich country, Bangladesh can use its expertise and know-how in developing fish resource and fishing industry, he added.

Patron of the Bangladesh-Ireland Friendship Society, Jagur Rahman also spoke on the occasion. Wife of the visiting Minister, Annette Andrews, and some local businessmen were present at the function.

Tk 4385 cr earned thru' export in five months

Bangladesh has earned 1107.06 million US dollar, equivalent to Tk 4385.06 cr, during the first five months in the current fiscal year through export, according to an official source here, reports BSS.

It was about 10 per cent higher in terms of dollar and 12.13 per cent in terms of Taka compared to the earning of same period of last fiscal 1992-93.

This was revealed in the 73rd board meeting of the Export Promotion Bureau (EPB) held yesterday at its conference room here with Commerce Minister M Shamsul Islam in the chair.

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Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia inspecting the Police Parade at the inaugural function of the 'Police Week '94' at the Rajarbagh Police Line ground in the city yesterday. Inspector General of Police A S M Shahjahan is seen on the right of the Prime Minister.

PM: Police

From Page 1 Col 2

"The supreme sacrifice of the members of the police has remained as an inspiration for the nation," she said paying respect to the independence martyrs.

BSS adds: Abdul Matin Chowdhury yesterday urged the senior police officials to take comprehensive measures for the maintenance of law and order in the country.

He said, ensuring the overall welfare of the people is the main duty of the police personnel.

He said steps would be taken for increasing the size of the police force, procuring of transports and modern equipment, establishment of new police boxes and increasing training facilities of the police personnel.

Hill students stage longmarch to Naniarchar

From Staff Correspondent

CHITTAGONG, Jan 8: The Pahari Chhatra Parishad this morning staged a longmarch to Naniarchar from Rangamati to lay wreaths and attend a mass funeral organised in memory of the tribals who were killed in violence on November 17 last year there, local sources and law enforcing personnel said.

A large contingent of police was deployed there today to thwart any outbreak of violence.

The marchers, however, went back peacefully after observing their programmes, police said.

DU Hons

From Page 1 Col 7

The university authorities started selling the forms from December 15 last. With a view to removing session jam and to keep pace with the university's current academic calendar, the DU authorities are trying to complete admission as early as possible, sources said.

The authorities last year started giving forms on January 25. But this year, the admission tests in four units will begin on January 21.

This year, about 16,126 students, the highest number of candidates, applied in 'Gha' unit. Candidates willing to change subject or faculty have to apply through this unit.

Besides, 15,350 students have applied in 'Ka' unit (Faculty of Science). The number was 13,890 last year.

About, 12,600 candidates have applied in the 'Kha' unit (Faculty of Arts) in which only 10,166 students applied last year.

Meanwhile, some 7,907 students have applied in the 'Ga' unit (Faculty of Commerce) this year. Some 6,500 candidates applied last year in this faculty.

Around 44,400 students applied for the session 1991-92 while 43,000 students competed for a total of 3,692 seats for 1990-91 and 39,000 students for 3,500 seats for 1989-90 session, according to available statistics.

The DU authorities nominated three commercial banks in the different places in the city to sell the application forms.

Manzur

From Page 1 Col 5

GD entry is my basic right. The attitude of the police officials regarding the GD entries forces me to believe that the BNP government has already started interfering with the upcoming polls, he added.

Manzur urged the Election Commissioner to take necessary actions in order to maintain its neutrality in the election.

UNB adds: Leaders of the alliance yesterday warned of street agitation if the coming city corporation election is rigged by the ruling party.

7 killed, 52 hurt in road accidents

At least seven persons were killed and 52 injured in road accidents in Faridpur, Savar and Barisal yesterday.

UNB from Faridpur reports: Three people were killed and two injured critically as a truck hit a rickshawman and skidded off the Faridpur-Barisal highway at Goler crossing yesterday.

Two of the dead were identified as Keramat Ali, 42, of village Nurulganj in Bhanga thana and Abdul Khaleq Bepari, 50, of Nazipur in the same thana, both cloth traders, who were returning from Kumarkhali market in Kushtia. Another unidentified dead was about 45.

Khaleq Bepari expired on the way to hospital while the two others died on the spot, police said.

The vanpuler, Sheikh Abdul Khaleq, 30, and his passenger Kashimuddin, 35, were admitted to the Faridpur General Hospital where their condition was stated critical.

A Savar report says: Two persons were killed when a car and a mini bus collided near Bathali on the Dhaka-Aricha highway.

Witnesses and police said car driver Shushil Kumar

Singha, 48, died on the spot while a woman died on way to hospital. The woman who could not be identified immediately was believed travelling in the car. Shushil hails from Madhavpur in Moulavibazar.

In another incident, 40 passengers of a minibus were injured when it fell into a roadside ditch near the Telia bridge on the Dhaka-Aricha highway. Survivors said driver of the Gheor bound overloaded minibus lost control of the steering.

Of the injured, 15 were rushed to Manikganj and other hospitals.

Our Barisal Correspondent adds: Two young men were killed and 10 others injured when a microbus carrying them fell into a roadside ditch at the Barshi Kalibari crossing in Gournadi yesterday.

The microbus which was carrying a picnic party from Jessore to Barisal hit a tree on the Barisal-Faridpur highway amid thick fog at 2.30 am.

The dead were identified as Ranjiban, 18, and Tarun, 22. The injured were admitted to the Barisal Sher-e-Bangla Medical College Hospital.

Shafi refuses to lead PLO team to talks

AMMAN, Jan 8: Palestinian leader Haider Abdel Shafi said today he would not lead the Palestinian team to the next round of Middle East peace talks because he did not support an Israeli-PLO pact, reports Reuters.

"No, because I am unhappy with this (Palestinian self-rule) agreement, I decided right from the beginning to distance myself from having any role in that," he told Reuters television in an interview in Amman.

Asked whether this was his final decision, the chief Palestinian negotiator during most rounds of Arab-Israeli peace talks since the process was launched in October 1991, said "Yes... I won't (head the team)."

Like most Palestinian peace delegates, Abdel Shafi, a respected Gazan doctor, was unaware of the controversial self-rule plan worked out in secret Israeli-PLO negotiations while formal peace talks were going on in Washington.

The accord, signed in

September, gives Palestinians limited self-rule in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank town of Jericho but implementation has been delayed by disputes between the Israeli government and PLO.

Abdel Shafi is now spearheading Palestinian efforts to curb Palestine Liberation Organisation chairman Yasser Arafat's power and introduce democratic reforms to the PLO.

He arrived in Amman from Tunis on Thursday after talks with Arafat that failed to limit his power.

AFP says: Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin today did not rule out categorically a complete withdrawal from the Golan Heights in return for full peace with Syria.

Asked by military radio about his position if Syria made such an offer, Rabin replied: "I have to date spoken only of a withdrawal from the Golan, and that's my position."

Privatisation Board

From Page 1 Col 4

The World Bank, to make the Board more effective. The World Bank was dissatisfied with the slow rate of progress in the government's disinvestment drive.

In fact, while signing the 250-million dollar jute sector adjustment credit last month, under which 18 jute mills are earmarked for privatisation, the World Bank wrote in a condition that the Privatisation Board must be made more effective.

"The recent change shows that the government is keen to make the Board more effective," the Board official said.

"The Board will now be able to independently select the public sector units for divestment, analyse accounts and even restructure the debts before putting them up for open-tender sale."

Initially, the government short-listed 20 textile mills and another 40 public sector units for privatisation, but so far none of the textile mills could be privatised while only four other units have been divested.

Inadequate response from private investors is a major problem in the privatisation drive, forcing re-tenders in a number of recent initiatives.

Valuation of the units to be divested, conducted by chartered accounting firms, is said to be on a much higher level than the quoted price for individual units, the government source noted.

Another obstacle to the privatisation drive is workers' agitation in the targeted units. Recently, prospective buyers were not allowed to even enter the Bangladesh Blade Factory premises. "Total political commitment of the government and the opposition parties is needed to make the privatisation drive a success," the government source said.

Opposition from some of the line ministries to the divestment initiative is also causing problems, he added. "Some of the ministries often ask the Board to go slow; there is a lack of enthusiasm for implementing the government's policies," the official said.

However, the Privatisation Board official pointed out that at least 15 public sector units would be ready for privatisation by this month, including the Shyampr and Panchagarh Sugar Mills, Metalex Corporation, Bangladesh Cycle Industries, National Tubes, Bangladesh Blade Factory, Khulna Hardboard Mills, Lira Industries and the Sharmin, Kohinor, Kishoreganj, Barisal, Madaripur, Noakhali and Bangladesh Textile Mills.

Under the technical assistance project for the Privatisation Board, both local and foreign consultants would be retained, along with hiring additional employees and procuring office equipment.

Boycott violators of election rules: Kamal

By Staff Correspondent

Dr Kamal Hossein yesterday called upon all not to vote for the candidates who would violate election rules and the code of conduct in the forthcoming city corporation polls.

Dr Kamal, president of Gono Forum, was addressing a press conference at the party's central office at Segun Bagicha ahead of the Forum's launching a 'programme for a violence-free society'.

"It is an acid test for the government... We have seen in the past how elections were rigged," said Dr Kamal.

He alleged that the law and order situation in the country had deteriorated alarmingly and this had adversely affected the education sector and discouraged entrepreneurs form investing in Bangladesh. To improve the law and order situation in the country both the government and the opposition should work together to reach a consensus on the issue in the next session of Parliament.

The Gono Forum has collected over three lakh signatures against terrorism. A memorandum with the signatures would be submitted to Parliament on February 10 after a grand rally of the Forum to be held near the Institution of Engineers, Bangladesh (IEB) at 2 pm on the day, said Dr Kamal.

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DU teachers' strike today

By DU Correspondent

The teachers of the Dhaka University will observe a token strike for one hour from 10 am today to protest the government's reported initiative to amend the University Ordinance 1973.

However, all the examinations scheduled for today have been exempted from the strike programme, a DUTA press release said.

Meanwhile, the Ganatantrik Chhatra Oikya (GCO) protesting the move to amend the University Ordinance 1973 brought out a procession and held a rally at the Aparajeo Bangla on the DU campus yesterday morning.

The GCO will stage another demonstration in front of the Ministry of Education on January 16.

Abedi

From Page 1 Col 7

lapsed under the weight of massive fraud dealings in the summer of 1991.

The defendants have been charged with forgery, breach of trust and squandering of depositors' and shareholders' funds.

Eleven have been detained by the Abu Dhabi authorities since September 1991, and a 12th is serving a prison term in England for related charges.

Aside from criminal charges brought against them by the Al Nahyans, who owned 77.4 per cent of BCCI stakes, they have sued for damages and court charges so far totalling more than dhs 10 billion.

The defendants are either Pakistanis or holders of dual Pakistani and British nationalities.

The Al Nahyans present themselves as the main victims of the BCCI collapse with direct losses of dhs 8 billion.

BCCI, registered in Luxembourg and headquartered in Abu Dhabi, had some 400 branches in 69 countries. The Al Nahyans also have offered to pay between dhs 1.7 billion and dhs 2.2 billion to compensate 250,000 depositors around the world.

Forex dealers

From Page 1 Col 5

transitional stage of the foreign exchange market, the dealers must have a clear understanding of treasury products and market practices in dealing with such products.

He urged the dealers to find ways to eliminate the risks involved in the volatile forex market.

David T Kaveny, senior Director and General Manager of AMEX stated that the recent liberalisation in forex operation would foster competition among the banks and financial institutions. "The customers will be the ultimate beneficiaries," he observed.

Jeremy Gwee, Director and Head of Training for the Asia-Pacific region for AMEX, based in Singapore, who is conducting the seminar, maintained that because of the financial liberalisation in the Asian region, the role of the Treasury will become more important.

He observed that the role of the treasury will not be restricted to dealing in forex and money market instruments, but to managing the bank's liquidity, forex and interest rate exposures. He laid emphasis on advising the clients on how to manage forex exposures efficiently.

He said, risk management is a critical aspect of Treasury operations and in order to minimise the risks, a bank has to ensure profit earnings by the customers.

The Midnight File

Bosnia-Croatia talks today

BONN, Jan 8: Peace talks between Croatia and the Muslim-led Bosnian government will take place in Bonn on Sunday, a day later than scheduled an aide to international mediator Thorvald Stoltenberg said today. The German Foreign Ministry said earlier that heavy Bosnian Serb artillery fire had prevented Bosnia's Muslim president, Alija Izetbegovic, from leaving Sarajevo on Saturday and that all United Nations flights had been cancelled for the day, reports Reuters.

45 states recognise Cambodia

PHNOM PENH, Jan 8: Norodom Sirivudh, Vice-Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, said here today that 45 countries have now recognised the royal government of Cambodia. Among those states, he said, are five permanent members of the United Nations Security Council — Britain, China, France, Russia and the United States, reports Xinhua.

Prokrichi plans strike

From Page 1 Col 7

side at the meeting while a six-member delegation of the BMA, headed by Professor A B Bhuiyan, represented the doctors.

The BMA sources said the government, especially the Health Secretary, took a very 'discouraging approach' while discussing the issue at the meeting. The Health Minister, on the other hand, while talking to this correspondent last night, said the government was sympathetic to the BMA demands.

"The demands of the BMA are reasonable, but what the government needs to implement the demands is time," the Health Minister said, explaining that there was more than one demand which required inter-ministerial decisions before implementation. The Health Secretary was not available till late last night to make any comment on the BMA allegation against him.

However, a second round of negotiations between the parties is scheduled for 11 am today.

The coordination council of the agitating civil servants and the professionals, in an emergency meeting held last night, unanimously decided to go on a three-day strike from January 11 subject to the approval of the council session of the organisation, scheduled for 3:30 this afternoon. The decision for the strike would be announced in the evening, an influential member of the 32-man coordination council told The Daily Star.

All told a news conference during a visit to the former Soviet republic of Uzbekistan that, unless Islamabad's dispute with Delhi over Indian-held Kashmir was settled peacefully, war was possible.

"Unless the Kashmir dispute is solved peacefully on the terms of international law and United Nations resolutions, there cannot be lasting peace in South Asia and there is always a danger of a fourth war in South Asia," Ali said.

"And this time around, the concern of South Asian countries and regional countries is that if a war takes place in South Asia it might become a nuclear war."

Both India and Pakistan have, or are thought to be able to assemble quickly, nuclear weapons. Their forces face each other and occasionally shell each other's positions in Kashmir high in the Karakorum mountains bordering China.

Assets

From Page 1 Col 5

return to the returning officers. If the candidates have any other sources of fund, other than declared statement, they will have to submit a supplementary statement.

Copies of all statements have to be sent to the Election Commission with affidavits by registered mail.

If any candidate fails to submit the necessary statements within the specified time, he will be held guilty and liable to punishment.

The minimum punishment for such offence will be two years of rigorous imprisonment, while the maximum of seven years in addition to fine.

City polls

From Page 1 Col 5

commissioner candidates themselves brought out processions in different parts of the city.

The city has already started to wear a festive look with roadside camps, colourful posters, banners and wall writings seeking votes for the various candidates.

The Jatiya Party supporters paraded different city streets yesterday in support of their mayoral candidate Col (Retd) Abdul Malek.

The Left-parties' mayor nominee Manzurul Ahsan Khan, while addressing the Purana Paltan rally, pledged to resist corruption, black money and terrorism and also vowed to enhance civic amenities in the capital if elected.

"If my rivals abide by the election rules and don't use black money or the administrative machinery, it would be impossible for them to defeat me," Khan claimed.

Describing his long political career and his relentless struggle for the downtrodden, Manzur said: "I don't have any competitor in my field."

The rally was followed by a procession that marched through some city thoroughfares.

Reports received from other cities said hectic electioneering had gripped the Chittagong, Khulna and Rajshahi town with the lifting of the embargo on campaigning yesterday.

JP MPs condemn extension of Hasnat's detention

Jatiya Party MPs yesterday condemned the government for extending detention of its presidium member and former Mayor of Dhaka Barrister Abul Hasnat, reports UNB.

In a joint statement, they said the government has detained him in jail in utter disregard of a court's order for his release.

He would also make efforts to ensure proper customs check of all goods imported through the Chittagong port here so that container cargoes are not carried to Dhaka for checking.

Mohiuddin also vowed to fight any vandalism or terrorism to ensure peaceful law and order in the city.

"I want that no political leader should harbour or patronise any vandal or terrorist group," he said.