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The Daily Star

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Dhaka Day by Day

\$248m for jute sector adjustment programme

World Bank okays \$200m for Jamuna Bridge project

By Staff Correspondent

The World Bank is to give a loan of 200 million US dollars for the Jamuna Multi-purpose Bridge Project (JMBP).

The Bank will also provide Bangladesh with a credit of 248 million dollars for the jute sector adjustment programme.

The loans were approved at a meeting of the Executive Directors of the WB in Washington, on Thursday.

Both the loans are being provided at a highly concessional rate. The interest free loan for the JMBP carries only a service charge of 0.75 per cent. It is repayable in 40 years with a grace period of ten years.

With the World Bank's approval of the loan for the proposed Jamuna Bridge, the country is set to go forward with the long cherished bridge over the river Jamuna. The estimated cost of the bridge is 700 million US dollars out of which Bangladesh will give one hundred million and the rest will be provided by the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and Japan.

With the jute sector credit, Bangladesh will now start denationalising 18 government owned jute mills in the next two years. Moreover, the government's privatisation programme aims at reducing the number of excess manpower, about 20,000, in the jute sector.

The negotiations for the jute sector credit with the World Bank started after a European Commission funded jute sector restructuring study was completed in 1992.

On the other hand, the feasibility study of the JMBP was initiated in the 1970s and the project was taken up for implementation in 1991.

Japan, which raised a lot of questions concerning the viability of the project, finally agreed to co-finance the project last December.

Meanwhile, sources in the JMB authority said, the bid evaluation of all the four components of the project has been finalised. Work orders will also be issued shortly, they said.

Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia, is due to lay the foundation of the Jamuna Bridge on March 20.

200 DU students food poisoned

Star Report

At least 200 students of Dhaka University's Jagannath Hall suffered food poisoning yesterday after taking their mid-day meal at one of the hall cafeterias.

The conditions of 52 of the affected students were stated to be serious late last night. However, none of them was removed to hospital.

Hall students said that they felt discomfort and many of them started vomiting soon after they had their lunch at the October Smriti building cafeteria.

The victims suspected that out of the 500 students who had their lunch there, about 200 students were taken ill after eating the cooked cauliflower.

As the news of illness spread among the students, the cafeteria was immediately shut down by the agitating hall inmates.

During a visit to the hall cafeteria yesterday, this correspondent found heaps of unconsumed food items prepared for dinner remaining untouched at the kitchen.

All the students refused to have their dinner at the cafeteria and took their meals at the nearby restaurants.

Many students were seen bed-ridden in their rooms being attended by fellow colleagues.

Most of them had developed...

See Page 12 Col 4



Phoolan to be freed on parole



Quotations from eminent Bengali poets and writers are being written on the adjacent walls of the Central Shaheed Minar in the city prior to the Amar Ekushey on Monday. — Star photo

Bosnian Serbs pull back heavy weapons today

LUKAVICA BARRACKS, Bosnia, Feb 18: The Bosnian Serbs promised today to pull back their heavy weapons from around Sarajevo or place them under United Nations control by Saturday night, a day ahead of the NATO air strikes ultimatum.

At the same time, the UN said it planned to station armed peacekeeping troops from midday on Friday (1100 GMT) to control the sites where Serb heavy guns would be collected.

The announcements came after talks at the Serb military barracks at Lukavica, just outside besieged Sarajevo, between the leader of the Bosnian Serbs, Radovan Karadzic, and the head of the UN protection force, Yasushi Akashi.

In an attempt to head off the threat of NATO air strikes, the Bosnian Serbs have already agreed to a Russian proposal that they should pull their guns back from Sarajevo, which they have besieged for 22 months.

Karadzic's statement was the first time the Serbs have given a timetable for the pull-out, while Akashi's decision to send in troops to guard the weapons appeared designed to

allay NATO fears that the weapons would not be effectively controlled.

"We have discussed the question of control of armaments, of the Serb side as well as of the Bosnian (Muslim) side", Akashi said. "We have made progress on the question of verification."

He added: "Starting tomorrow noon the UNPROFOR armed elements will be controlling the sites where the Serb heavy arms will be grouped."

Meanwhile, Russian President Boris Yeltsin has written to leaders of the five top western nations warning that launching air strikes against Serb forces around Sarajevo could destabilise Europe, said a newspaper in Rome today.

In a letter to leaders of the United States, Britain, Germany, France and Italy, Yeltsin said that if NATO carried out air strikes against Bosnian Serbs after the Sunday midnight deadline for them to pull back heavy weapons expires, "the course of events in Europe will become unpredictable."

La Tampa reported.

The daily, which printed large sections of the letter, See Page 12 Col 8

NEW DELHI, Feb 18: The Supreme Court ordered a state Friday to grant parole to India's bandit queen, a lower-caste woman who was jailed 13 years ago for allegedly killing 18 upper-caste Hindus, but never put on trial, reports AP.

The ruling came a month after Uttar Pradesh decided to drop all charges against Phoolan Devi, who became a heroine 20 years ago by riding horses across the state dressed in Khaki fatigues and a red bandana, and carrying a double-barrelled shot gun.

Supreme Court Judges JS Verma and PB Sawant ordered that the 37-year-old woman, whose name once spelt terror in large parts of Northern India, be released on a personal bond.

The justices also said police must provide her with bodyguards in new Delhi, where she wants to remain after being freed to avoid attacks she reportedly fears in Uttar Pradesh.

Last month, Uttar Pradesh's new Chief Minister, Mulayam Singh Yadav, a lower-caste See Page 12 Col 4

BBC to set up studio in Dhaka, appoint local journalists

By Sharier Khan

The British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) will set up a studio in Dhaka and appoint local journalists for its feature services, Peter Mangold, Head of the BBC Bengali Section of the Eastern Service told The Daily Star yesterday.

The BBC has been allowed by the government to broadcast programmes for one year from May 1 using the studios at the Shahbagh office of Radio Bangladesh. The programmes will be on the air from 6 to 9:30 am and from 4 to 11:15 pm daily.

Mangold said, BBC will use the 100 metre FM band mainly for its English programmes but would also relay a one-hour 20 minute programme in Bengali daily.

The target of the BBC's Bengali programme would mainly be the youths. The news and feature will be broadcast in English. There will also be an English learning programme," he said.

The BBC will pay the government eight pounds sterling per broadcast hour plus the electricity bill.

Its programmes will be free from any sort of government restrictions, Peter Mangold pointed out.

The BBC Bengali service has the largest audience in South Asia. Out of our 45 million listeners in South Asia, seven million are in Bangladesh," he added.

The BBC started negotiating with the government in late 1991. It had initially asked for permission to broadcast in the Medium Wave (MW) which had larger audience and also a better sound reception quality than that of the FM band.

The government did not allow BBC to use the MW band but later allowed it to use the 100 metre FM band.

The BBC has already intensified the coverage of the activities in Bangladesh. Next month, it would broadcast a series of programmes on the independence movement based on interviews. The number of such programmes will further increase in the future, the BBC broadcaster said.

Presently, the broadcasting corporation is analysing the outcomes of two surveys on its Bengali listeners which will be the basis of its programmes after May 1.

The BBC broadcasts in 40 languages around the world. Transmission from Dhaka will also be its first such venture in South Asia.

Rally in city today CAMPE launches movement for mass literacy

By Staff Correspondent

The Campaign for Popular Education (CAMPE), a platform of 32 social and voluntary development organisations will hold a rally in the capital today as part of its programme to launch a social movement for mass literacy.

CAMPE Coordinator Abdullah Al-Muti Sharafuddin at a news conference at the Jatiya Press Club yesterday said the rally would be organised to drum up public support for mass education.

Dr Sharafuddin said, that to attain the ideals of the historic Ekushey there was no alternative to launching greater national movement to achieve total literacy.

He said that only 62 per cent of the total adult population of the country would be educated by the government's See Page 12 Col 7

City polls : Jamaat finds reasons for poor show

By Asiuzzaman

The Jamaat-e-Islami, Bangladesh is disappointed with the results of the city corporation polls, which they term as 'unexpected'.

"Our performance in Dhaka, Rajshahi and Khulna is very poor," one central leader who attended last week's party evaluation meeting said.

"In Chittagong, our candidate has done comparatively better by bagging expected number of votes," the Jamaat leader said adding "We cannot really understand what really happened in Dhaka."

The evaluation meeting of the Jamaat's central working council was held on February 10-12.

The leader said, the Jamaat never expected to win the election but hoped at least to get 70,000 votes in Dhaka. It got only 34,000 votes in the capital, the number is almost same, as that of the 1991 parliamentary election.

He said a large number of party workers were dropped from the voter lists weakening the position of the party in Dhaka.

"None of the family member of Abbas Ali Khan was enrolled in Dhaka's voter list," he claimed.

In reply to a question on whether the polls result lessen- See Page 12 Col 3

Businessman shot dead in city

By SSMCH Correspondent

A young businessman was shot dead in the city yesterday afternoon.

Nazrul Haque Siddiqui Rocket, 25, who suffered bullet injuries in his left chest, was declared dead shortly after admission to the Sir Salimullah Medical College Hospital (SSMCH). He was the owner of Abakash hotel and restaurant at Captain Bazar.

According to Kotwali police, some unknown gunmen attacked him at Akmal Khan Road under Kotwali police station. See Page 12 Col 4

NEWS BRIEFS

Hasina shocked

Leader of the Opposition in Parliament Sheikh Hasina expressed her shock at the death of more than 50 people in a stampede at a railway station in South China yesterday. In a message to Chinese Prime Minister Li Peng, she expressed her deep sympathy for the bereaved families and hoped that Almighty Allah would give them courage and fortitude to bear their personal loss, reports UNB.

One run over in N'ganj

From Our Correspondent

NARAYANGANJ, Feb 18: A 40-year-old woman, Habibunnessa, was run over by a truck on the Dhaka-Chittagong highway near the Sonakhali Bridge this afternoon. Police seized the truck but the driver managed to escape. A case was lodged with Sonargaon thana.

BNP Sunamganj body

The Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) has announced Sunamganj district convening committee. Advocate Fazlul Haq Aspia has been made the Convenor of the 22-member committee, reports BSS.

Shetri, Iftar timings

Rmdn	Feb	Shetri	Iftar
07	19	—	6:02 pm
08	20	5:08 am	6:03 pm
09	21	5:08 am	6:03 pm

Chinese in guise of PLA hijacks plane to Taiwan



Lin Wenqiang, 36 (in military uniform) is being taken in by the Taiwanese police yesterday. Lin diverted a Chinese Southwest Airlines Boeing 737 with 130 passengers on board to Taipei. — AFP photo

TAIPEI (Taiwan), Feb 18: A disgruntled Chinese businessman wearing a soldier's uniform and carrying a knife and fake explosives hijacked a Chinese domestic jetliner with 130 persons aboard to Taiwan Friday, police reported, reports AP.

Police said Lin Wenqiang, 35, from China's southern Fujian province, was accompanied by his wife, two sons, aged 9 and 11, and mother.

The plane returned to China four hours after it landed at Taipei's international airport. Lin's wife, sons and mother were returned home aboard the aircraft.

Vice Justice Minister Lin Shyi-hwu said the family members were returned to China because they were not involved in the hijacking and were given the same treatment as other passengers.

He said the decision would help curb hijackings. In two previous cases, family members of hijackers were allowed See Page 12 Col 1

Anwarul Islam Bobby laid to rest

By Staff Correspondent

Anwarul Islam Bobby, founding editor of The Morning Sun was buried beside his father's grave at Banani yesterday after Maghreb prayers.

Earlier, his body arrived at the Zia International Airport by Bangladesh Biman at 2pm from Dubai. The flight was delayed by nearly four hours. His wife Leena Islam, daughter Samreen Islam and son-in-law Aziz Muhammad Bhai accompanied the body.

Present at the airport to receive the body were his family members, Executive Director of The Morning Sun Hemayetuddin Ahmed, Acting Editor Atiqul Alam, staff of his paper, leaders of the Bangladesh Council of Editors and members of the journalists' community among others. State Minister for Civil Aviation and Tourism Abdul Mannan was also present.

See Page 12 Col 6

সন্মানিত হজ্জ গমনেচ্ছুদের জানাই আন্তরিক মোবারকবাদ

সিটি ব্যাংকের সকল শাখায় হজ্জের টাকা জমা নেয়া হচ্ছে।

দি সিটি ব্যাংক লিঃ

আপনার প্রগতি আমাদের অঙ্গীকার