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Inside Today

Article

Building a Literate Nation: Access to Primary Education
by Mahmood Aminul Islam
Page 4

International

Serbs quit 80pc of artillery sites around Sarajevo

Japan, Russia to resume talks on Kuril Islands
Page 9

Business

Tea export may earn Tk 200 cr this fiscal year

BJP offers alternative budget for India
Page 10

Supplement

Special Supplement on Ekushey
Pages 5, 6, 7, 8

Metropolitan

Dhaka Day by Day

Notice

The offices of *The Daily Star* will remain closed today on the occasion of the 'Ekushey February'. Therefore, there will be no issue of the newspaper tomorrow.

Amar Ekushey returns Pledge for stronger democracy



Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia placing a wreath at the Central Shaheed Minar at one minute past midnight Sunday. — Star photo

By Staff Correspondent

The nation observes the historic Ekushey February this year with a renewed pledge to strengthen the democratic institutions that have taken roots in the past three years.

The sacrifices of the language martyrs 43 years ago is being remembered as a watershed not only for the flourishing of the Bengali language but also for establishing the democratic rights of the people.

The supreme sacrifices of Salam, Rafique, Jabbar, Barkat and others on this day in 1952 were aimed at making Bangla one of the state languages of the then Pakistan.

The valiant sons of the soil embraced martyrdom while leading a procession towards the then provincial assembly in the Jagannath Hall premises demanding the national language status for the Bangla language.

Their sacrifices eventually led to an armed struggle that culminated in the emergence of a free, sovereign and independent Bangladesh.

In a message on the occasion President Abdur Rahman Biswas has called on the people to...

See Page 12 Col 4

Financial system worries donors

Star Report

The donor countries and agencies have strongly recommended speeding up the ongoing financial sector reforms as action taken so far proved to be 'insufficient' and the country's financial system 'remains a cause for concern.'

The weakness of Bangladesh's financial sector precludes it from playing its essential role in supporting private sector development and investment," the donors observed at a recent meeting with government officials.

Noting the 'gradual' progress being made in implementing the financial sector reform programme (FSRP), a World Bank report, presented at the meeting, said the financial system continues to remain in transition.

"The full effect of the liberalisation and de-regulation on private sector development will not be felt unless the financial sector is able to play its key role in mobilising savings and allocating them to efficient use," the report said.

It went on to identify the progress made in reforming the financial sector so far as: Steps to strengthen financial laws and regulations; completion of a round of recapitalisation of the NCBs to the extent of Tk 3229 crore; dealing with outstanding debts of public enterprises on a sectoral basis; and lowering the floor on savings and fixed-term deposits to 5 and 5.5 per cent.

However, the report added that the steps already initiated remain inadequate. "Action taken so far is insufficient to deal with the legacy of the past, and the condition of Bangladesh's financial system remains a cause for concern."

The legacy of the past, it said, are the problems created by many years of "misguided and rigid" government and Bangladesh Bank regulations and directives in the financial sector.

The report was critical of the 'weak institutional character of Bangladesh Bank. It recommended further strengthening of the central bank by reviewing its organisational, management and staffing policies.

The World Bank report also noted 'the government's failure' to privatise Rupali Bank, reportedly agreed during the Aid Group meeting held last April in Paris. The bank had earlier presented a separate...

See Page 12 Col 8

High-level meet resents slow pace of ADP projects

A top-level meeting chaired by Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia yesterday resented slowness in implementation of ADP projects under the Irrigation, Water Development and Flood Control Ministry, reports UNB.

The meeting reviewed progress of the ministry's 46 projects, including 43 foreign-aided ones, being implemented under the current Annual Development Programme.

Implementation of eight of the projects was noted to be at slow pace while that of two others nil.

The meeting discussed the problems responsible for the inadequate progress and decided a number of measures to overcome those.

Writ on repolling

Hearing adjourned till tomorrow

By Staff Correspondent

A division bench of the High Court yesterday adjourned the hearing of the writ petition relating to repolling in the three centres of the Dhaka City Corporation (DCC).

The Election Commission (EC) had earlier cancelled the results of three DCC polling centres on recommendations of a probe body which found massive voting irregularities.

This was disclosed by Dr Ahmed Hossain while appearing for the EC to defend its decision of cancelling results of the three centres under Ward No 57 and declaring repolling there before a division bench of the High Court yesterday.

Hearing resumed yesterday of the writ petition filed with the High Court by a commissioner candidate of the Ward, Abul Ahsan Talukder (Nomi) challenging the EC decision.

The division bench comprising Justice Abdul Jaill and Justice Ruhul Amin heard the lawyers of both the sides for nearly four hours and adjourned the hearing until 10:30 am on Tuesday.

Dr Ahmed Hossain, speaking further on the EC formed probe committee findings, said...

See Page 12 Col 1

PM distributes Ekushey Padak-93 'Economic emancipation was the martyrs' dream'

Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia yesterday made a fervent call for all-irrespective of party affiliation to work unitedly for economic emancipation to materialise the dreams of the martyrs of great Language Movement, reports UNB.

"This Language Movement was not merely a cultural struggle... Above all, achieving economic emancipation was the inner urge of this movement," she said addressing the Ekushey Padak distribution ceremony at the Osmani Memorial Hall in the morning.

Begum Zia reminded that Ekushey was not merely for festivities. "It's a day for soul-searching, a day for taking a fresh view."

The Prime Minister said the main spirit of the Language Movement was to establish an exploitation-free society. "But we could not go far ahead towards materialising this spirit in absence of democracy in the country for a long time after independence... We could not rid our people of the vicious cycle of poverty."

Terming Ekushey as the milestone towards people's cultural, political and economic freedom, the Prime Minister said the Language Movement in 42 years ago was...

See Page 12 Col 3

Shaheed Minar at zero hour

By Staff Correspondent

At the stroke of midnight Sunday, people started pouring in at the Central Shaheed Minar to pay homage to the martyrs who had laid down their lives on this day in 1952 for the cause of the Bengali language.

Thousands of barefoot people placed wreaths, bouquets and flowers turning the Central Shaheed Minar into a vast sea of humanity.

Men, women and children of all ages in solemn silence paraded to the freshly-painted premises of the minar as the loudspeakers blared 'Amar Bhaiyer Rakte Rangano Ekushey February, Ami Ki Bhullite Pari' — the tune that sparked off the quest for independence.

See Page 12 Col 3

Ekushey Padak '94 announced

The government has announced the names of the recipients of the 'Ekushey Padak' for 1994, reports UNB.

The recipients are: Prof Mohammad Noman (Education), Humayun Ahmed and late Sardar Jaiuddin (Posthumous) for literature, Hasanuzzaman Khan (Journalism), Ali Mansur (Drama), Shahadat Hossain Khan (Instrumental Music), Neema Hamid (Vocal Music) and Abu Taher (Fine Art).

Bangla Academy Award '93 declared

By Staff Correspondent

Bashir-Al-Helal and Khaleda Edib Chowdhury have been selected for the Bangla Academy Literary Award 1993.

Director General of the academy Prof Harun ur Rashid announced the names of the recipients yesterday.

JS probe body holds crucial meet Friday

By Nurul Kabir

The special parliamentary committee constituted to probe the alleged corruption in the Irrigation and Flood Control Ministry and the minister concerned is likely to meet on Friday morning to decide the fate of the committee itself, sources in the Parliament Secretariat said.

The 15-member probe body failed to begin the investigation because the members, belonging to the treasury and opposition benches have so far failed to reach an agreement on the terms of reference.

The members have till date met 13 times since the formation of the committee more than seven months ago on July 13 last and debated on the terms producing no result.

"The next meeting of the committee is likely to witness discussion on whether the probe body would start the investigation or abandon the idea for good," an annoyed Awami League member of the probe body told *The Daily Star* yesterday.

Meanwhile, the probe body prepared a 'primary report' on the issue during the last session of Parliament expressing disagreement on the terms of reference.

The disagreement on the...

See Page 12 Col 7

NEWS BRIEFS

Zerina Zaman sworn in as PSC member

Dr Zerina Zaman, Professor of Zoology of Dhaka University was sworn in yesterday as member of the Public Service Commission. Chief Justice Shahabuddin Ahmed administered the oath of office to Dr Zerina Zaman at a simple ceremony at the Supreme Court Bhaban, reports BSS.

Trade team leaves for Italy today

A nine-member delegation led by Jute Minister A S M Hannan Shah leaves Dhaka today on a six-day tour of Italy. One of the objectives of the visit is to identify fields of co-operation between the Bangladeshi entrepreneurs and the Italian industries, official sources said, reports UNB.

Time for Naniarchar probe body extended

The government has extended the time limit of the enquiry commission instituted to investigate into the incident that occurred recently at Naniarchar in Rangamati hill district upto March 31 at the request of the commission, official sources said in Dhaka yesterday, reports BSS.

There seems to be no govt in country: Hasina

DAUDKANDI (Comilla), Feb 20: Leader of the Opposition in Parliament Sheikh Hasina today said terrorism has engulfed the country as plunderers and terrorists are now in power, reports UNB.

"There seems to be no government in the country... plunderers and terrorists are at the helm of the country," the Awami League President told a gathering during her visit to the devastated Sadanandi village in the thana this afternoon.

A group of armed hoodlums set ablaze 27 semi-pucca, tinshed and kutcha houses at the village Tuesday morning rendering more than 200 homeless.

Hasina said identified criminals were involved in the attack, but the main accused were yet to be arrested.

Demanding arrest of the criminals and terrorists, she alleged the hoodlums, after committing the crime, were getting shelter from the government.

The AL chief said the ruling BNP does not believe in democracy and cited the Lalbagh killing for which she held the ruling quarters responsible.

Four arrested from AJM

From Our Correspondent

NARAYANGANG, Feb 20: Police today arrested four persons from the Adamjee Jute Mills (AJM) area today following yesterday's clash which left 65 people injured.

The arrested persons are Malek, Sobhan, Akhtar of the BNP backed Jatiyatabadi Samik Dal and Masum of Awami League backed Rehan group.

Meanwhile, BSS adds: overall situation of the Adamjee Jute Mills (AJM) Ltd was normal on Saturday except a stray incident of chase and counter-chase between two rival factions of trade unions which resulted in minor injuries to four persons, police said.

When contacted the Officer-in-Charge of Siddhirganj Police Station yesterday toled he was astonished to see a news item published in a section of newspapers that his residence was attacked and there was gunbattle between the factions of trade unions which stopped the production of the mills for few hours. He said, "The news is exaggerated and biased."

He said though some fire-crackers were blasted during the chase and counter chase.

See page 12 Col 2

Too much sex, violence in films: Loren

BERLIN, Feb 20: Sophia Loren, the voluptuous Italian film star honoured at Berlin's film festival for her life's work, said today there is far too much wanton sex and violence in contemporary films.

Loren, awarded the festival's honorary Golden Bear, said in an interview with Reuters that too many producers pack sex and violence into films simply to make money.

"I don't like producers who make films that exalt sex and violence because they think...

See Page 12 Col 1

NATO ready to strike on Serbs

with the NATO ultimatum.

British Defence Minister Malcolm Rifkind, queried about reports from Sarajevo that the Serbs would be unable to meet the removal deadline for all their heavy weapons.

The administration official said 10 cantonment areas have been established for weapons.

MOSCOW, Feb 20: Russia's Defence Minister Pavel Grachev said today he had just been told by US Defence Secretary William Perry that there would be no NATO air strikes against Bosnian Serbs on Monday. Grachev was shown by NTV independent television speaking with Perry by tele-phone, reports Reuter.

called it a fast moving situation.

"There has been some significant progress," Rifkind said.

In Washington, a senior Clinton administration official speaking on condition of anonymity said UN and NATO forces have seen hectic activity on the part of the Serbs to move weapons out of Bosnia. We are seeing weapons leaving the area.

The administration official said 10 cantonment areas have been established for weapons.

not until daylight, a further indication that air strikes might not occur immediately after the midnight GMT Sunday deadline passes.

However, Rifkind said he hoped UN officials would be able to assess the situation as quickly as possible.

Bosnian Serb Leader Radovan Karadzic said his forces have moved many of their weapons despite heavy snows and others will be under UN control. "There is no reason for any air strikes," Karadzic said on US television.

Earlier in the day, US Gen. John Shalikashvili took a harsher stance, saying NATO will accept nothing less than the removal or surrender of 100 per cent of all heavy weapons around Sarajevo by Sunday's air strike deadline.

Honourable Prime Minister, whose interest is drug control committee serving?

Antihistamine KETOTIFEN with a brand name of TOFEN has recently been heavily promoted in Bangladesh with flashy promotional materials and gifts.

New from BEXIMCO TOFEN

is also a very potent antihistamine

Tofen is a drug of choice for

ALLERGIC CONJUNCTIVITIS
ALLERGIC SKIN CONDITIONS

TOFEN
Ketotifen Tablet

TOFEN IS A STRONG ASTHMA PROPHYLACTIC

But does it really act as 'Strong Asthma Prophylactic? Or a superior antihistamine?'

Let us examine verdicts of standard medical and pharmacological sources:

British National Formulary: A joint Publication of British Medical Association & The Pharmaceutical Society of Great Britain, Vol 26, September, 1993 —

'Antihistamines are of *no value whatsoever* in the treatment of Bronchial Asthma. KETOTIFEN is an antihistamine with an action said to resemble that of sodium chromoglycate, but it *too has proved disappointing*.....'

Drug Evaluations Annual 1994 by American Medical Association —

'The results of clinical studies have been variable and conflicting, and its (Ketotifen) ultimate efficacy for the prophylaxis of asthma *remains to be established*.....'

Davidson's **Principles and Practice of Medicine** 16th edition 1991 reprinted in 1992 'Ketotifen is *less effective* than sodium chromoglycate or nedochromil sodium and has the serious *disadvantage*.....'

Clinical Pharmacology by Laurence & Bennett, 7th edition, 1992 reprinted in 1993 'Ketotifen is a histamine Hi-receptor blocker which may also have some antiasthma effects but its benefits has *not been conclusively demonstrated*.....'

Oxford Text book of Medicine, second edition 1987, reprinted in 1988 —

'Ketotifen has antihistaminic properties as well as some antiallergic activity but its performance clinically has been *disappointing*.....'

Harrison's **Principles of Internal Medicine**, Twelfth Edition, 1991 and Lange's **Current Medical Diagnosis and Treatment**, International Edition 1993, did not even consider Ketotifen worth mentioning either as prophylaxis for asthma or for the treatment of allergic conditions.

Price of common antihistamine tablet 0.11-0.20 paisa and that of each Tofen Tablet is Tk. 1.50.

Now the question arises, why did the "Drug Control Committee" (DCC) register this useless, ineffective and unnecessary drug? Whose interest is DCC serving?

TOFEN DOCTORS BEWARE

For further information on Drugs & Drug policy of Bangladesh, please contact-

Health For All
4, Green Square, Green road,
Dhaka-1205, Tel: 800383

Send us your contribution to strengthen your voice and to protect basic human right.

Schri, Iftar timings

Rmdn	Feb	Schri	Iftar
09	21	—	6:01 pm
10	22	5:06 am	6:01 pm
11	23	5:06 am	6:02 pm