

Minister's directive

'Evict slums along rly tracks in 3 days'

Communications Minister Oli Ahmed yesterday directed the railway authorities to evict the illegal occupants from both the sides of the railtrack, mainly in the Dhaka City Corporation area within next three days, reports BSS.

The valuables of those who will fail to vacate the land will be confiscated by the government, an official handout said. The minister also gave a time frame till May 30 to the railway officers to improve the condition of the railway track, repairing of railway stations and passenger coaches. Officers found responsible to show lathery, whatever he may be, will have to undergo punitive measures from June 1, the minister said.

fusely every year in the name of making up loss in railway sector?"

The Communications Minister underlined the need for augmenting income, improving the standard of services to the railway users and to make their journey comfortable by all possible ways.

Oli Ahmed said railway lines should not be used as foot track which had a multiphase affects like carrying away of stones and removal of sleepers, which make railway tracks weaker.

The minister said it would otherwise be difficult for the railway to function with the illegal occupants erecting huts beside railway lines in a mushroom fashion and create blockade in the form of some economic activities like running of kutchha bazar. He said, it endangers human life and damages property.

Oli Ahmed directed the authorities to build protective fence with rail bars gone out of use for the safety and security of railway track from Kamalapur to Cantonment station.

He urged the mayor, ward commissioners, enlightened section of the society and the members of the law enforcing agencies to help establish smooth railway communication within the city corporation area.



Awami League chief Sheikh Hasina addressing a discussion meeting on the occasion of Mujibnagar Day at the party central office yesterday. — Star photo

2 roasted alive, 500 shanties gutted in Khalishpur

From Staff Correspondent KHULNA, Apr 17: Two persons were roasted alive and 50 others injured in a fire that gutted more than 500 shanties near Khalishpur's Chitrali Cinema Hall this afternoon.

The victims — Kohinoor, 16, and Jaynal, 30, died in the fire which reportedly originated from a stove. A storm that was then lashing parts of Khulna spread the fire extensively, according to firemen.

They said, about 100 kutchha shops were also burned to ashes near the cinema hall, as winds up to 100 km per hour swept the area uprooting trees and disrupting power supplies.

Mayor Sk Tayebur Rahman and Speaker Shaikh Razzak Ali visited the spot.

Fasiul, Munir CUTA president, general secy

From Staff Correspondent CHITTAGONG, Apr 17: Professor Fasiul Alam of the pink panel and Professor Md Munir Ahmed of the white panel have been elected president and general secretary respectively of the Chittagong University Teachers' Association (CUTA) today.

Prof Alam bagged 192 votes, 18 more than his nearest rival Prof Md Mahbub Ullah of the white panel while Prof Munir secured 205 votes defeating his nearest rival Dr Alauddin of the pink panel who obtained 169 votes.

Meanwhile Prof Nasir Uddin of the pink panel won the post of vice president by securing 189 votes only four votes more than his rival Abdul Matin of the white panel.

Hot spell to continue

The current 'dry and hot spell' is likely to continue for another couple of days with a break of evening thunderstorm, known as nor'wester.

Deputy Director of the Storm Warning Centre at the Met office, Sazedur Rahman, told UNB that the bright sunshine is helpful for photosynthesis for plant which may lead to good yield of boro paddy.

But, he said, extreme high temperature may cause 'thermal stress' which may stifle vegetative growth of summer crops.

The present dryspell prevailing across the country is usual, but the maximum day temperature all over the country has crossed the normal temperature of this period, the weather expert said.

The highest temperature recorded during the current spell was 40.2 degree Celsius at Ishurdi on April 14 as against normal 32.7 degrees. The second highest temperature was 39.6 degrees at Rajshahi on April 15 against normal 34.4 degrees.

AL talks

From Page 1 Col 8 dialogue offer." Nasim said, adding: "We had no such talks with any of the BNP leaders."

Deputy Leader of the Opposition in Parliament Abdus Samad Azad also denied having received any offer for talks from the ruling party.

In reply to a question whether the BNP secretary general Abdus Salam Talukder had offered to hold talks, Samad Azad replied in the negative.

"He just made a courtesy visit and inquired about my health," Azad said.

But Salam Talukder told The Daily Star Saturday that he had had telephonic talks with a senior AL leader on the day.

"We expect to have such informal talks in the next few days," Salam had added.

"We will try our best to open a dialogue," Talukder said yesterday.

Hasina tells Mujibnagar Day rally Govt trying to shift failures on Opposition

By Staff Correspondent

Opposition leader Sheikh Hasina yesterday denied Prime Minister Khaleda Zia's claim that hartals were obstructing investments in the country and said, "Any party, while in power, will have to face democratic agitations like hartals, gheraos, etc."

The 'inefficient' BNP government was trying to shift its failures on the opposition parties, Hasina claimed while addressing a discussion at the Awami League central office in the capital. The meeting was organised to mark the founding day of provisional government at Mujibnagar in Meherpur under which the country fought the War of Liberation in 1971.

"No agitation can hamper investment, production and development under a government which is honest, accountable, has political vision, farsightedness and proper planning," the Awami League chief said.

"If our current agitation is the reason for lack of investments in the country then why was investment absent for the last three years?" she asked. In fact, she said, investors, both local and foreign, were being discouraged by the unbridled corruption and misuse of the BNP government.

Rather, government-sponsored terrorism, corruption and toll collection had forced the foreign investors to close down their businesses in the country," she added.

"We know the BNP will frequently call hartals for and without reasons when the AL goes to power," the opposition leader predicted. "But yet we'll ensure a climate for investments through proper planning," she hoped.

In a bid to justify her party's current anti-government agitation, Hasina said, "We've been forced to demand the resignation of the corrupt, inept and vote dacoit BNP government and holding the next general elections under a caretaker administration."

Our agitation will continue until the people's rights to vote, food and work are ensured," she said.

The AL chief said she did not want to capture power by any means other than elections and that her politics was aimed at bringing about economic emancipation of the

Model polls Apr 30

From Page 1 Col 8 ruption-free elections.

Dapunia Union in Kotwali thana of Mymensingh district is the birthplace of the Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Justice Abdur Rauf.

Identity (ID) cards for 19,920 voters have already been prepared and the EC officials are likely to distribute the cards among the voters, spread over 27 villages, tomorrow.

Each card contains the name of the voter, his or her father's/husband's name, profession, age, height and address including the name of the village, union, ward number, post office, thana and the district.

The laminated card also contains a super-imposed photograph of the voter and a code number. The signature of the CEC is also printed on the card.

Fifty-one candidates — 11 for the post of chairman and 40 for the nine posts of members — are contesting the polls, while polling centres are to be opened in each of the 27 villages of the union.

Twenty-seven voters' clubs, each comprising 10 male and five female voters, have been formed to look after the polling, scheduled to be held from 7 am to 12 noon. No policemen will be deployed.

Building

From Page 1 Col 2 which might have also drained out the soil under the Meghna building, leaving the site at risk.

As safety measures, Works Minister Barrister Rafiqul Islam Miah and the Rajuk Chairman, during their visit to the site yesterday, suggested the foundation site of the new building be filled with soil and sand so that the Meghna building finds some support.

The Rajuk Chairman requested Eastern Housing Ltd (EHL), which was carrying out the construction work next door, to urgently help Rajuk to do the job.

Thirty labourers of Eastern Housing as well as engineers from both the EHL and the government were carrying out the filling job immediately. The work should be finished by this morning, they expected.

Police cordoned off the whole area and stopped movement of pedestrians in the neighbourhood.

An assistant resident engineer of EHL told this correspondent yesterday that the Meghna Hotel authorities could not have built their six-storey building without the Rajuk's approval. The owner of the new building two, could not have the technical approval for a construction of such nature just within inches of another building.

"The Rajuk should be blamed for letting both the parties carry out these faulty construction jobs," he said.

Dhaka city mayor Mohammad Hanif and former mayor Mirza Abbas, MP visited the site yesterday afternoon.

Fungus in saline bag!

SSMC Correspondent Fungus was detected in a saline bag at the Mitford Hospital in city yesterday.

Assistant Registrar of the Surgery Department found the fungus inside a libot glucose 1000 ml saline prepared by the Libra Pharmaceuticals. The saline bag was produced in July 93 whose Batch No is 14008.

The doctor said he detected the contamination moments before the saline was ready for a patient who would have undergone operation.

He said the saline could be fatal for the patient.

Attendants of the patients said they purchased the saline bag from the nearby Mitford market.

Astami Snan starts today

From Our Correspondent NARAYANGANJ, Apr 17: The traditional Astami Snan of the Hindu community will start today at Langobandh here.

Thousands of devotees from home and abroad are expected to take part in the two-day bathing which is believed to cure all kinds of maladies.

Different social and religious organisations have taken elaborate arrangements for the peaceful and disciplined bathing, which will be closed at 2:50 pm Tuesday.

236 illegal foreign workers held in Malaysia

KUALA LUMPUR, Apr 17: Police looking for illegal foreign workers raided two apartment buildings and rounded up 236 people, officers said Sunday, reports AP.

Of the Indonesians, Bangladeshis and Pakistanis taken in for questioning Saturday night, 32 were detained because they did not have valid travel documents or had overstayed their visas, said Superintendent Abdul Rahim Hanafi.

Most of those taken in were working for large companies in the industrial zone in Penang, 300 kilometres northwest of Kuala Lumpur, he said.

7 Khulna JP men granted bail

KHULNA, Apr 17: Seven activists of a local unit of the Jatiya Party, charged under the Anti-Terrorism Act, were granted bail by the District and Sessions Judge court today, reports UNB.

Former MP Sheikh Abul Hossain and Khulna City Jatiya Party secretary and ex-president of Khulna Chamber of Commerce and Industry Sheikh Abul Kashem were among those granted bail.

According to the court sources, these seven JP activists were among the 18 people who were charged under the Anti-Terrorism Act with looting fruit shops in the city on November 28.

Earlier, the seven were sent to jail when they surrendered to the court on April 9.

Before the city corporation polls, the court also granted bail to five others, including S M A Rob, the principal accused in the case, who was a mayoral candidate.

Six other accused are still absconding, the court sources said.

The Midnight File

Alija asks Ghali to resign

SARAJEVO, Apr 17: Bosnia's President Alija Izetbegovic called on UN Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali to resign if the Muslim enclave of Gorazde falls to besieging Serbs. Izetbegovic said in a letter to Boutros-Ghali that Gorazde, declared a 'safe area' by the United Nations, had been abandoned to capture by the Bosnian Serbs, reports Reuter.

20 die in Indian bus plunge

PATNA, Apr 17: At least 20 people were killed when a bus plunged into the Mahne river in the eastern Indian state of Bihar today, officials said. A state official said the bus, carrying 40 people, went into the river after the driver lost control of the vehicle, reports Reuter.

Serbs withdraw tanks from Gorazde

SARAJEVO, Apr 17: Bosnian Serb tanks withdrew from the Bosnian Muslim town of Gorazde today, UN sources said, reports Reuter.

"The tanks have pulled out and there are no Serb soldiers in the town," a UN source told Reuters a few hours after UN special envoy Yasushi Akashi reported the Serbs had agreed to a ceasefire and withdrawal.

Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadzic announced the ceasefire agreement to take effect immediately in Gorazde.

Earlier, the UN commanders called in air strikes against Bosnian Serb forces around Gorazde today but weather disrupted the operation.

Provosts' concern at BCL (M-I) gherao plan

The Dhaka University Provosts' Committee yesterday (Sunday) expressed concern at the announcement of the Chhatra League (M-I) to gherao the residence of Salimullah Hall Provost today (Monday), reports UNB.

The pro-Awami League Chhatra League (M-I) has called for the gherao demanding 'security of their activists' at Salimullah Hall.

Earlier, the Chhatra League alleged that its leaders and workers at the hall were forced to leave the hall by some unruly activists of a student organisation on April 10.

Bawani Jute Mills incurs Tk 99 cr loss since '53

Latif Bawani Jute Mills has incurred a total loss of Tk 98.68 crore since the mills was launched in 1953, Jute Minister A S M Hannan Shah yesterday said, reports UNB.

The minister was talking to workers, labour leaders and employees during a visit to the mills at Demra.

Some 6,800 workers, employees and officers are employed at the 790-loom jute mills which has a target to produce 22,730 metric tons of hessian, sacking and carpet backing cloth for the current fiscal year.

The mills has produced some 14,000 metric tons jute products during the first nine months of this fiscal.

Shah was disappointed at the poor maintenance and management of the mills and directed the mills management and workers to boost production at least by seven per cent by next month.

He also directed the mills authorities to take immediate measures to dispose of some 550 metric tons of unexportable jute products lying in the mills stock through tenders.

Aid Club

From Page 1 Col 5 completed to improve the civil servants' productivity and these will soon be put into effect.

The government's slow implementation capability is also likely to come under fire. The government will try to apprise the donors of its measures like the prioritizing and pruning of projects and monitoring of project progress for future improvement of implementation.

However, the government may face some criticisms from the donors for its rising current expenditure, observers feel. The expenditure will go up from Taka 95 billion under the revised budget for fiscal 1993-94 to Taka 103.20 billion, which would neutralise much of the revenue surplus.

Mujibnagar Day

From Page 1 Col 8 Liberation War. "The inefficiency of these governments has crippled the country's economy."

She also alleged that during the period the Constitution had been infringed and history distorted.

She called for rehabilitating the Sector Commanders of the Liberation War in proper dignity.

The Awami League programmes began with the laying of wreaths at the Mujibnagar Memorial.

National and party flags were hoisted at the 'Sheikh Hasina Mancha', a permanent podium constructed on the occasion. Later, a rally was held with district AL president Hisab Uddin in the chair.

Present, among others, were local MP Prof Abdul Mannan, Kader Siddiqi, Sector Commander Col (ret) Abu Osman Chowdhury, Chuadanga district AL president Advocate Yunus Ali, Siddique Hossain and AL Women's Affairs ice president Naima Chaffry.

Coal

From Page 1 Col 7 Ministry of Energy and Mineral Resources to finalise the terms and conditions.

As per the draft agreement, BHP will be allowed to explore only in the areas marked out by the Bureau of Mineral Development (BMD), the relevant agency of the government. If any coal deposit is detected, BHP will develop the mine and start extraction.

M Muminullah, the newly-appointed director of the BMD, and KT Johnson of BHP Minerals initialled the draft and signed the MOU.

Mithun, a lucky winner

By Staff Correspondent

Winner of the 21-inch Philips Powervision TV set in the first Daily Star World Cup Quiz Contest Rubayet Mahmud Mithun is a newly-admitted student of Chemical Engineering at BUET.

Giving his immediate reactions after he was informed over telephone last night that he had won the top prize in the first of the six-part quiz, Mithun said: "I am simply excited. I was sure that I had submitted the correct answers but when I found in The Daily Star that more than 8000 correct entries had been received, I thought I simply had no chance of winning."

"I have been reading The Daily Star regularly for over a year now, and even without a prize, I must admit that I had benefited immensely. The Daily Star continues to be my daily diet. I read everything from front page stories to feature articles. I am also a regular reader of the sports section although my primary hobby now is to work on my personal computer."

Rubayet passed his HSC exam

BUET boy wins top prize

From Page 1 Col 5 were received for the first quiz, out of which 9,592 were found to be all correct. The names and addresses of all the prize-winners appear elsewhere on this page.

Information Minister Barrister Nazmul Huda graced the occasion as chief guest while State Minister for Sports Sadek Hossain attended as a special invitee.

Speaking at the first lucky draw of the six-part quiz contest, Barrister Huda observed that The Daily Star had been able to inspire the sports-lovers across the country by organising the World Cup Quiz Competition.

Huda said The Daily Star has been playing a pioneering role in highlighting national issues on diverse subjects. He particularly commended the role of the paper in organising debates on thought-provoking subjects of national interest and also carrying out dialogues and organising roundtables, thereby charting newer courses in the country's journalistic arena.

Barrister Huda said the daily, because of its non-partisan and independent character, has been able to establish itself as a truly objective newspaper.

"It has become acceptable to all, irrespective of party or political affiliation," Huda observed.

Nazmul Huda also paid tributes to the memory of late S M Ali, founder-editor of The Daily Star for setting the independent and impartial character of the paper.

State Minister for Sports Sadek Hossain appreciated the efforts of The Daily Star in promoting sports, and said that the paper was a trend-setter in this respect.

The function was addressed, among others, by

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