

# IJO sessions in city from May 12 Jute to be projected as 'environment-friendly'

By Staff Correspondent

The new opportunities for jute opened by the worldwide anxiety to protect the environment will get due emphasis at the 21st sessions of the International Jute Council and the Committee on Projects scheduled to be held in Dhaka from May 12 to 15.

The sessions organised by the International Jute Organisation (IJO) will be participated by its 28 member-countries including India, China, Pakistan, Thailand, Indonesia and host Bangladesh. IJO officials told a press briefing in the city yesterday the sessions will discuss ways and means to promote jute and jute goods in the international market as an environment-friendly product.

Due to popularity of synthetic products, which are also cheaper than jute goods, synthetic goods have replaced jute goods to a great extent over the last two decades. Jute exports to western countries have dropped to 0.7 million metric tons in '90 from 1.8 million in '70.

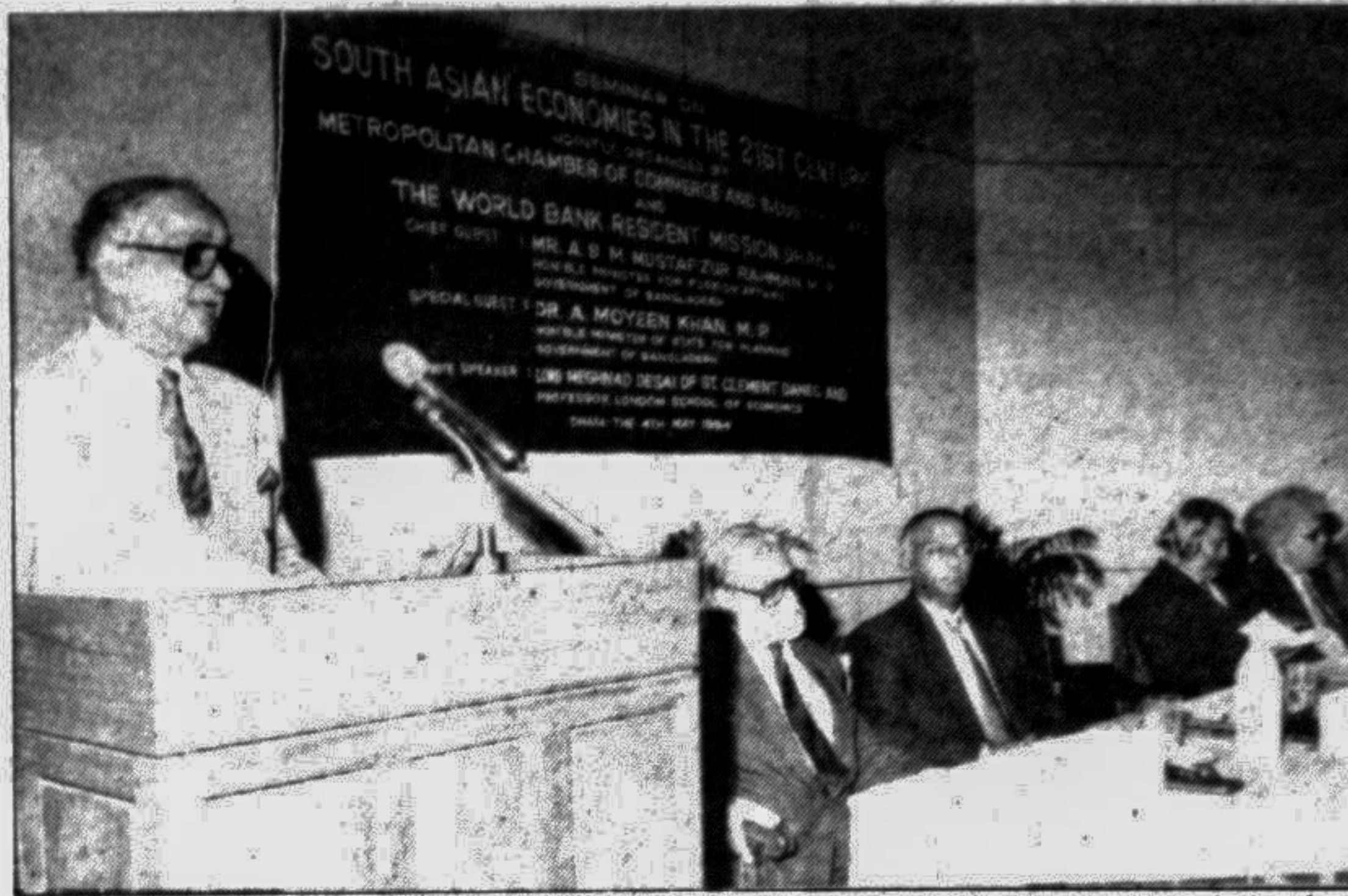
"The jute growing countries now must find better utilities of jute than synthetics to gear up jute exports to the western

countries," IJO officials said. The briefing was addressed by Executive Director of IJO K M Rabbani, Director A J Brown, senior officials Dr M Zahidul Huque and Rathindranath De and Dr S R Ranganathan.

"We see a bright future of jute market. If we stress more the environment friendliness of jute and make production of paper from jute viable — it is bound to go up in the international market," said A J Brown. Geo-textiles produced from jute has also promises of a bigger market, he added.

Since its inception in 1984, the IJO spent 5.4 million US dollars for different types of research on jute in collaboration with its member-states. It had been working on lowering the cost of production of jute, improving fibre quality, increasing per unit production, developing better jute seeds and even jute seeding machine.

The researches organised by the IJO also opened up exchange of information among the jute growing countries like Bangladesh, India, China and others for the first time, IJO officials said.



Foreign Minister A S M Mostafizur Rahman addressing a seminar organised jointly by the World Bank and the Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce and Industry (MCCI) at the NEC auditorium in the city yesterday. The Vice President and President of the MCCI Azimur Rahman and Latifur Rahman respectively, State Minister for Planning Dr A Moyeen Khan and Lard Megnad Jagadish Chandra Desai, Professor of Economics at the London School of Economics, are also seen.

## South Asian economies must integrate to face global challenge

By Staff Correspondent

Integration of the South Asian economies is the only way to face the growing challenge of the global economy, noted economist Lord Meghnad Desai at a seminar in the city yesterday.

Lord Desai, a professor at the London School of Economics and a member of the British House of Lords, said the South Asian countries are increasingly becoming less important to the rest of the world for their insignificant position in global politics and economy.

"The world is not at all worried about South Asia although the region has highly intelligent people and is unique in many ways, he said.

The Indian-born British economist was addressing a seminar on "South Asian Economies in the 21st Century" organised jointly by the World Bank Resident Mission in Dhaka and the Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce and Industry (MCCI) at the auditorium of the National Economic Council (NEC).

Foreign Minister A S M Mostafizur Rahman inaugurated the seminar while State Minister for Planning Dr A Moyeen Khan attended the inaugural session as a special guest. MCCI president Latifur Rahman, vice-president Azimur Rahman and F Kilby, chief of Industrial and Finance Division of the WB, were also present.

Meghnad Desai said the nature of poverty and the problems of the economies of South Asian countries are the same and they can face these easily by putting all their resources and strength together. France and Germany have tied up their economies with the European Community removing long enmity, he said.

"Then why are the South Asian countries not doing so by removing mere irritants, he questioned.

Referring to the economic policies, specially the structural adjustment programmes and other economic reforms, Desai said the vast majority of the poor people, specially the rural poor, are being deprived of the 'surplus' of the South Asian region. The surplus is being enjoyed by the rent-seeking people of the metropolises of the region, he

observed.

Emphasising the need for a 'pro-poor economic plan,' the British economist said the agriculture sector should be given top most priority in the economic planning of the countries of the region. Politically, the governments of the region have failed to feed the poor and develop the economy, he said, adding the poor are burdened with various types of direct and indirect taxes.

He said the only way to alleviate poverty is to give the money taken through taxation back to the then. The governments of the regions have to reduce taxation and bring down their expenditures by cutting down the size of the administration, Desai observed.

Describing the South Asian economies as the 'paradox' of foreign interference, Meghnad Desai said the reforms and structural adjustment programmes are actually being pushed by external forces and these are not the outcome of internal realisation. For this, there are a lot of suspicion and mistrust among a cross-section of people about the outcome of the reform programmes, he said and added this is not good for the implementation of the programmes. People would have to be convinced of the outcome of the reform measures before implementation of the programmes, he observed.

Foreign Minister Mostafizur Rahman emphasised the need for increased interaction between the South Asian states and said with the liberalisation of the economies and changing scenario in the global economy, the countries of the region have a lot of challenges to face. Greater regional integra-

tion is the only way to face the challenges successfully, he said.

Lord Desai termed the partition of South Asia in 1947 "a historical illogical mistake" and said the division had made the development of the region difficult.

Former Deputy Prime Minister Jamaluddin Ahmed and Pakistan High Commissioner in Dhaka Anwar Kemal, taking part in the discussion, contradicted Desai's observations regarding Partition.

Anwar Kemal said the partition of the region was inevitable for security problems. By dividing the sub-continent, the people of the three countries were able to remove that security problem and develop themselves with renewed confidence, he said, and added the three countries are now in a better position to talk about cooperation.

Jamaluddin Ahmed said the new generations of the regions have been re-evaluating their history and they would be able to understand better whether the partition was a 'mistake' or not.

The working session of the seminar was presided over by State Minister for Planning Dr A Moyeen Khan was addressed by, among others, Prof Dr Rehman Sobhan, Abul Hassan Chowdhury, MP, Prof Wahiduddin Mahmud, Editor of the weekly Holiday Enayattullah Khan, S H Kabir of Raneta Pharmaceuticals, former Finance Minister A M M Muihit, Nasrin Khandaker of Dhaka University, Pro Vice-Chancellor of the National University Prof Mahubullah and Member of the Planning Commission M I Talukder.

## Self-rule accord signed

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"We are coming closer to the day when disputes that were once inflamed by the argument of force will now be settled by the force of argument," he said.

Agreement on signing the accord came early Wednesday morning after a more than six hour meeting between Arafat and Rabin.

Palestinian chief negotiator Nabil Shaath announced an agreement was reached, but later in the morning he made clear this was achieved by putting off three of the main issues until after the signing.

These were the number of Palestinian prisoners to be freed, the exact size of Jericho and whether a uniformed Palestinian guard would stand on the bridge crossing from Jordan to the West Bank.

But the impasse apparently was broken when Israel raised to 62 square kilometers the amount of land it would withdraw from around Jericho, upping its offer of 54 square kilometers.

Shaath insisted that all 8,400 prisoners held by Israel would eventually be freed. Agreement on 5,000 has already been reached.

But Israel doesn't want to free around 450 who have murdered Israelis and some 3,000 others, most of whom Israel says are members of the radical Islamic movement Hamas that opposes the peace process.

Despite complaints that the agreement still leaves Israel too much power over their lives, Palestinians started saying it would lead to what they most want and many Israelis most fear — an independent state.

"This is the first stage for a Palestinian state," said Faisal Hussein, the main Palestinian leader in the occupied territories. "I would hope that it would be a bigger first step, but it is the beginning." The accord does call for

negotiations on a permanent settlement for the rest of the West Bank and Arab east Jerusalem.

That could end the conflict that began late in the last century, when Jews started thinking of a homeland in Palestine just as some Palestinians were dreaming of independence themselves after centuries of Ottoman Turkish rule.

From what is known of the accord, it will give the Palestinians the right to make laws, collect taxes and issue travel documents containing the word 'passport'.

But a joint committee with Israelis will have to approve the laws, and the travel document will contain the words 'laissez passer,' a French term for papers often used by those who have no passports.

The Israelis keep control of Gaza's Jewish settlements and the border crossings to Egypt and Jordan. And Israel still can move troops into the self-rule zones "in the event of the outbreak of general hostilities or imminent threat of such hostilities."

## Nazmul Huda meets Clinton

ATLANTA (USA), May 4: Information Minister Nazmul Huda paid a courtesy call on US President Bill Clinton on Wednesday evening and conveyed Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia's gratitude to the President for his concern for the cyclone victims in Bangladesh and his readiness to extend all possible help, reports BSS.

Huda met President Clinton during a recess after his (President) speech at a "Global Forum," organised by the CNN World Report at the Carter Centre here.

President Clinton expressed his sympathies with the victims of the recent cyclone and re-assured his help and assistance to Bangladesh.

## Opposition

From Page 1 Col 7

speech urged the Opposition MPs to join the current session and resolve all problems through discussion on the floor of the House.

Rejecting outright the Prime Minister's overture to the boycotting Opposition, Hasina said "Her speech is devoid to substance. So, the questions of acceptance or rejection cannot arise."

She said a free and fair election under a caretaker government is the need of the hour to save democracy, the people's voting right and the national economy.

"We want elections as soon as possible under a caretaker government... It will be good for the nation if the elections are held this year," Hasina told a questioner.

The press briefing was attended by Deputy Leader of the Opposition Abdus Samad Azad, Begum Sajeda Chowdhury and Tofael Ahmed of Awami League, Barrister Maudud Ahmed and Anwar Hossain Manju of Jatiya Party, Maulana Abdus Sobhan and Sheikh Ansar Ali of the Jamaat-Islami, Suranjit Sengupta of the Ganatantri Party and Salahuddin Qader Chowdhury of the NDP.

Earlier, leaders of different opposition parties and groups met at the Sangsad Bhaban with Sheikh Hasina in the chair and exchanged views on the Prime Minister's speech in Parliament which went into its summer session yesterday without the Opposition.

Questioning the honesty of the Prime Minister's remarks about making Parliament "effective," Hasina said the ruling party had rejected by voice vote all the bills and resolutions on various problems and important national issues.

Maudud Ahmed said the Prime Minister, in her speech in Parliament last night, had stated nothing new.

Maulana Abdus Sobhan said the Prime Minister has failed to create condition for the Opposition to return to the House. Suranjit Sengupta said the government should immediately place the caretaker government bill in the House before the nation plunges into a political crisis.

Salahuddin Qader Chowdhury said if the Prime Minister had been sincere, she would have addressed the real problem by accepting the Opposition demand for a caretaker government.

## Cyclone death

From Page 1 Col 4

in Bandarban. The district control room in Cox's Bazar had recorded 112 deaths until last night among which 84 were Rohingya refugees. But the number of Rohingya victims is different from that given by another control room set up by the Rohingya Relief and Rehabilitation Commission which says 54 refugees were killed. However, according to unofficial sources, the number of refugees killed in the storm would not be less than 86.

Meanwhile, the central control room at the Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief released a detailed account of the loss of crops and property in the cyclone-affected areas in Cox's Bazar and Bandarban.

## Bus accident

From Page 1 Col 8

posite direction. Five of the minibus passengers died on the spot, one on way to the hospital and two others after admission to the MMCH.

Police seized the truck and, the ill-fated bus. However, the drivers of both the vehicles managed to escape.

On 1 August, 1983, 23 people were killed in a road accident at the same spot.

## The Midnight File

### Pak troops raid MQM HQs

KARACHI, May 4: Pakistani troops raided the headquarters of the MQM in Karachi today and detained some activists for questioning after six days of violence that killed 32 people, police said, reports Reuter.

### UN, EC hail self-rule accord

PARIS, May 4: The United Nations and the European Community joined world leaders today in hailing the signature of the Israel-PLO accord on Palestinian self-rule and urged all parties to persevere in building a durable peace, reports AFP.

## PM inaugurates Batexpo

From Page 1 Col 8

Begum Khaleda Zia at 10:30 am.

At a press briefing at the BGMEA office yesterday, BGMEA president Redwan Ahmed, MP said, there will be 67 stalls in the fair including five stalls of local textile mills.

India will be the only other country to participate in this fair. The Indian stalls will mainly display textile goods.

Already some 75 buyers from Europe, the USA and Canada have arrived in the capital to visit the fair and the BGMEA expects more foreign buyers to arrive in the next two days.

The press conference was attended by M A Taher, Kazi Moniruzzaman, S M Fazul Haq, Zinnat Ali and Mostafa Golam Qudus.

Besides the exhibition of locally manufactured fabrics and garments, three discussion meetings will be held at Hotel Sonargaon from 3 pm to 5 pm everyday during the fair.

Giving a positive picture of the garments sector, Redwan Ahmed, MP told the press conference that the local garment industries were presently consuming 3.5 crore yards of locally produced fabrics. Only 20 lakh yards were used in 1985.

However, the garments industries annually use 163 crore yards of textiles — most of it imported, he added.

"If we cannot increase the production of cotton locally and improve its quality and reduce the price of fabrics, it will be difficult for us to compete in the world market,"

Redwan said.

The BGMEA president lauded the government efforts for increasing the production of cotton and stressed the need for taking serious measures to promote the growth of the local textiles industries.

The BATEXPO will hopefully create opportunities for the country's garments manufacturers and exporters to come in close contact with buyers of their products," Redwan pointed out.

The fair will remain open for businessmen from 9 am to 5 pm till Saturday and for the members of the public from 5 pm to 7 pm on Friday and Saturday.

During the last apparel and textile exposition, the country received spot orders worth US 5 million dollars from the foreign buyers. Business worth 26 million US dollars also came in the six months after the trade fair.

### Leghari shocked at loss of lives in cyclone

Pakistani President Farooq Ahmed Khan Leghari yesterday expressed his deep shock at the loss of lives and devastations in Monday's cyclone, reports UNB.

President Leghari talked to President Abdur Rahman Biswas over telephone and conveyed his condolences for those killed in the cyclonic storm that battered Cox's Bazar, Ukha, Teknaf, and Kutubdia, Moheshkhali and St. Martin's islands.

## OFFICE CRICKET LEAGUE

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**Editor : Mahfuz Anam**

**তিতাস গ্যাস ট্রান্সমিশন এন্ড ডিস্ট্রিবিউশন কোম্পানী লিমিটেড**  
(পেট্রোবাংলার একটি সাবসিডিয়ারী কোম্পানী)  
অভিযোগ ও কলক্রী: ফোনঃ ২০২২০০, ২০২১৭২, ২০২৪৬২, ৮১১৩০৫-৪২

নবনির্মিত শ্যামলী-মিটফোর্ড ৮ লিংক লাইনের সহিত বিদ্যমান পাইপ লাইনের আন্তঃসংযোগ কাজের জন্য সংশ্লিষ্ট এলাকায় সাময়িকভাবে গ্যাস সরবরাহ বন্ধ

**সংক্রান্ত জরুরী বিজ্ঞপ্তি**

এতদ্বারা কোম্পানীর সম্মতিত গ্রাহকবৃন্দকে জানানো যাইতেছে যে ঢাকা মহানগরীর দক্ষিণ-পশ্চিমাঞ্চলে গ্যাসের নিয়ন্ত্রণ-চাপজনিত সমস্যা নিরসনকল্পে শ্যামলী হাইট মিটফোর্ড পর্যন্ত নব নির্মিত ৮ ইঞ্চি ব্যাসের লিংক পাইপ লাইনের সহিত শ্যামলী সিনেমা হলের সম্মুখে মীরপুর সড়কে বিদ্যমান ৮ ইঞ্চি ব্যাসের বিস্তরণ পাইপ লাইনের আন্তঃসংযোগকল্পে জরুরী টাই-ইন কাজ ৫ই মে, ১৯৯৪ বৃহস্পতিবার শুরু করা হইবে।

আন্তঃসংযোগ কাজ চলাকালীন সময়ে অর্ধাৎ ৫ই মে, রোজ বৃহস্পতিবার রাতি ১০-০০ ঘটিকা হইতে ৬ই মে, শুক্রবার সকাল ৮-০০ ঘটিকা পর্যন্ত সকল ভবন ও তৎসংলগ্ন এলাকা, রাষ্ট্রীয় অতিথি ভবন করতোয়া ও তৎসংলগ্ন এলাকা, সোহরায়েদী হাসপাতাল, পঞ্চ হাসপাতাল, শিশু হাসপাতাল, শ্যামলী, আদাবর, কল্যাণপুর এবং দারুস সালাম এলাকায় গ্যাস সরবরাহ সাময়িকভাবে বন্ধ থাকিবে।

সংশ্লিষ্ট এলাকার সম্মতিত গ্রাহকবৃন্দের সাময়িক অসুবিধার জন্য অত্র কোম্পানী আন্তরিকভাবে দুঃখিত।

**"গাছ লাগান, পাহের পরিচর্যা করুন এবং পরিবেশ বাঁচান" - প্রধানমন্ত্রী**

তিতাস/জনসংযোগ-১৮/৩/৯৪  
ডি-৩২৫

**কর্তৃপক্ষ**