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## Total cost of JMB to go up by \$150m

By Staff Correspondent

The total cost of the Jamuna Multi-purpose Bridge Project has escalated by 150 million US dollars, a rise by 21.4 percent over the original estimate of 700 million dollars, according to official sources.

The Executive Committee of the National Economic Council (ECNEC), at a meeting yesterday, approved a revised project cost of Tk 3,440 crore.

Presided over by Finance Minister M Saifur Rahman the ECNEC meeting was held at the Secretariat cabinet room.

The revised project cost, against the original estimate of Tk 2,900 crore, includes an equivalent of 600 million dollars funding from Japan, the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank. The remaining amount of Tk 1,040

crore equivalent to about 250 million dollars is to be met from domestic resources and would be sanctioned under subsequent annual development programmes.

The cost escalation was primarily attributed to the rise of the dollar rate against Taka. The original estimate, made in 1989, calculated the cost at 700 million dollars with the rate of one dollar set at Tk 35.

The Finance Minister questioned the appropriateness of the original estimate, in which the dollar rate was calculated lower than the prevailing rate in 1989, sources present at the meeting said.

In addition, an emergency trust fund of Tk 40 crore for the project was also created while another Tk 67 crore was set aside for interest payments

for the loan amounts during the construction period.

Furthermore, the total resettlement cost of the project was also revised upward from Tk 88 crore to Tk 163 crore. Nearly 5,681 acres of land were acquired for the project requiring the resettlement of about one lakh people.

Construction work of the 4.8 kilometre bridge is scheduled to begin in September next. The resettlement work of the project has already been completed. The river training work has also started and the acquired land has been handed over to the contractors to begin preparatory work, the meeting was told.

About 15,000 workers, technicians, engineers and consultants are likely to work

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## Govt ready to raise grants by 5 pc

By Staff Correspondent

Education Minister Jamiruddin Sircar has said the government is ready to raise its grants for the non-government teachers from 70 per cent to 75 per cent if they call off their strike.

"We have accepted their proposal and are ready to announce a pay rise by five per cent if they resume work," Sircar told newsmen at his parliament office yesterday evening.

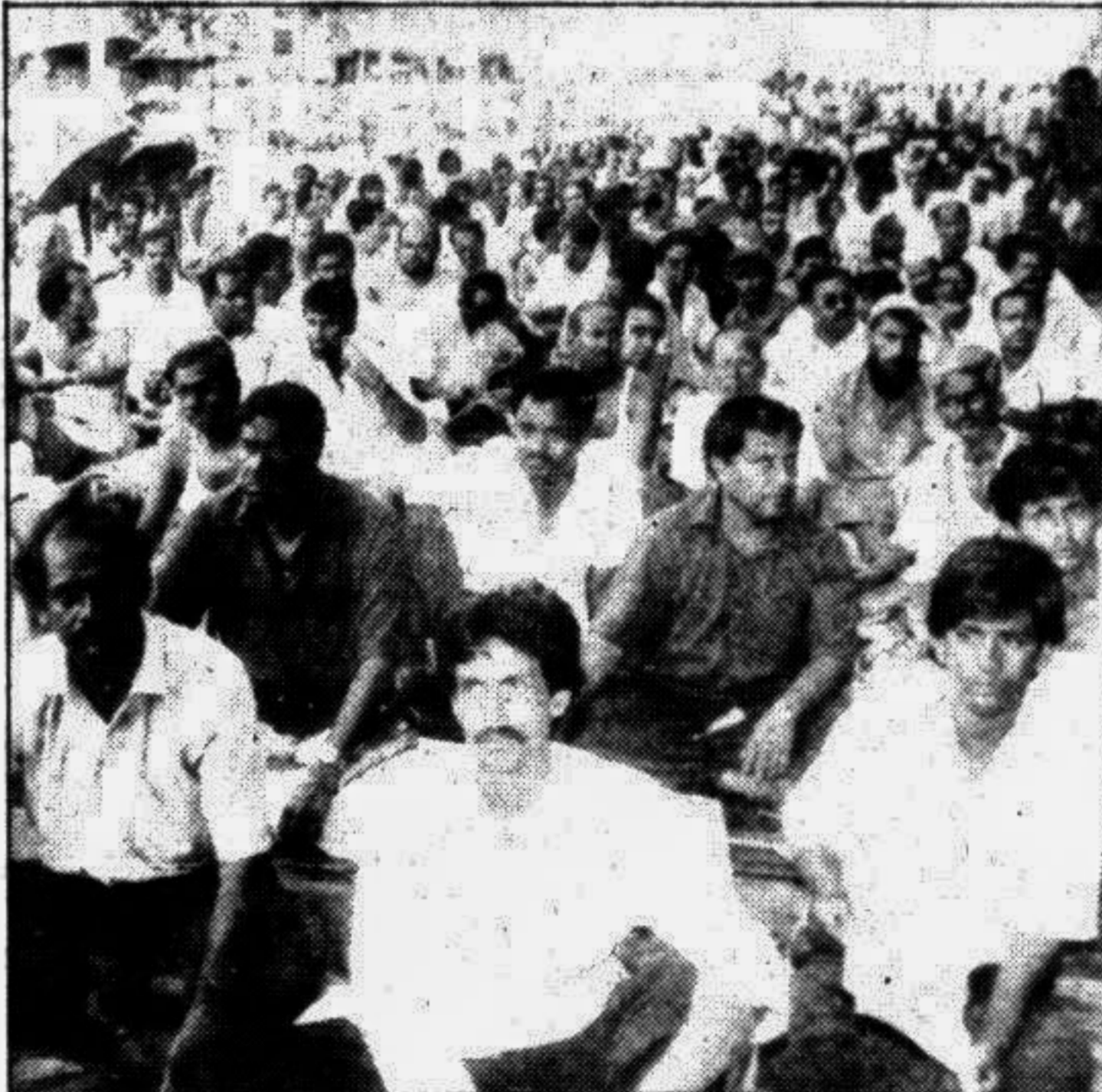
"We are also ready to discuss another five per cent rise for the next year," he said adding "their demand for raising the age limit to 70 years is unrealistic and it is impossible to accept this."

The teachers of non-government schools and colleges have been on strike since April 18 to press home their four-point demand including raising the government grant to 100 per cent from the existing 70 per cent and other benefits.

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## Teachers on 'fast unto death'

By Staff Correspondent



The striking teachers began a 'fast unto death' near the Jatiya Press Club in the city yesterday.

The striking teachers of non-government schools and colleges began a 'fast unto death' in front of the Jatiya Press Club yesterday while their sit-in at the same venue continued for the fifth day.

The teachers started an indefinite sit-in on Saturday morning to press home their four-point demand including implementation of the national pay-scale for them.

A total of 744 teachers and employees representing the 64 district participated in the 'fasting programme' yesterday, according to the Central Liaison Committee of the teachers. Besides, many others continued the sit-in on the day. Committee sources said the number of participants in the fasting and the sit-in programmes would increase today.

On the first day of the 'fasting programme' yesterday, 16 persons fell sick. Three of them were admitted to Dhaka Medical College Hospital and the others were given first aid by the members of Bangladesh

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## Plant trees to save country from ecological disaster: PM



Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia inaugurating the National Tree Plantation Campaign '94 by planting a Neem sapling at Enayetpur in Chapai Nawabganj district yesterday.

ENAYETPUR (Chapai Nawabganj), June 15: Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia today launched a nationwide tree plantation programme turning afforestation into a social campaign to maintain country's ecological balance, reports UNB.

Begum Zia formally inaugurated the National Tree Plantation Programme-94 by planting a neem sapling at this remote village in Gomstapur thana in the northwestern and Barendra region.

Addressing the inaugural function at a ground adjoining the Enayetpur High School, the Prime Minister underscored the need for massive tree plantation to protect the country from continuing degradation of ecological balance for the very survival of the nation.

"The contribution of tree is immense in keeping balance of environment. Tree is our close friend and trusted neighbour," she said and called on the people to plant at least five saplings each in their respective homes.

The Barendra region, Begum Zia pointed out, is the glaring example of what a great disaster could happen in the absence of trees. "Once famous for its 'sal' grove, this area has now become completely barren. Man-made desertification process is very much visible

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## Accept demand, or face violent agitation, Hasina warns govt

Awami League president and Leader of the Opposition in Parliament Sheikh Hasina yesterday reiterated her resolve to continue agitation to compel the ruling party to accept the Opposition demand for a caretaker government, reports UNB.

Explaining significance of the Opposition's ultimatum to the government for accepting the demand for a caretaker government by June 26, she warned that its non-compliance would trigger a violent mass agitation throughout the country to force the government to accept it.

Hasina was exchanging views with the editors of national dailies and news agencies at her Minto Road residence.

"We are struggling for a system which will allow people to exercise their right of franchise without any coercion or intimidation," said the Opposition leader while explaining the *raison d'être* of the demand for election under a caretaker government.

"Democracy cannot be institutionalised unless and until we are able to provide a built-in mechanism by means of a constitutional amendment to enable people to exercise their right to vote freely without any threat or interference."

The Awami League chief asked why should a govern-

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## Prokrichi plans series of strikes from July

By Masud Hasan Khan

The country's professionals, now observing a 72-hour work abstention, may go for a series of strikes starting from the next month to press home their demands.

Sources in the Prokrichi-BCS Central Action Council, platform of some 70 thousand professionals, indicated last night that there was a strong possibility of launching a two-hour work abstention from July 26 until July 28.

The two-hour strike would be followed by a three-hour strike for one week in August and a four-hour strike in September.

Besides, the doctors, engineers, agriculturists, teachers and 26 non-administrative BCS cadre members are likely to observe a hunger strike some-

time in September.

The professionals have planned to observe a day-long strike and hold a grand rally in the capital in October.

The possible decisions were discussed at a high-level meeting of the "core group" of the Prokrichi Action Council in Dhaka late last night.

The final announcement of the future course of campaign of the professionals would be made today (Thursday) at a grand rally at the Engineers Institution premises.

Talking to The Daily Star last night, central leaders of the Prokrichi said they discussed the possibility of socially boycotting the bureaucrats in the administration cadre.

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## Cabinet body on admin reforms sits today

By Staff Correspondent

The cabinet committee on administrative reforms in scheduled to hold a special meeting today at the Secretariat cabinet room, according to officials sources.

Headed by Communications Minister Oli Ahmed, the committee meets against the backdrop of a three-day strike by professionals at the call of Prokrichi-BCS Central Action Committee, which ends today.

The committee was formed in December last to recommend changes in the civil administration to make it 'orderly, accountable and up to date'. The other members of the committee are Commerce Minister Shamsur Islam, Education Minister Jamiruddin Sircar, Health

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**NEWS BRIEFS**

**PM to open free tuition programme**

Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia will inaugurate the formal launching of the free tuition and stipend programmes for secondary girl students at the International Conference Centre (ICC) on Saturday at 10:30 am, reports UNB.

**Hartal observed in Gaibandha**

From Our Correspondent  
GAIBANDHA, June 15: An eight-hours hartal called by the Balashi River Port Movement and Implementation Committee was observed here today peacefully demanding immediate implementation of the proposed railway ferry ghat at Balashi and setting up of railway track from Trimohani station.

**BAAS science confce begins June 22**

MYMENSINGH, June 15: A three-day science conference of the Bangladesh Association for the Advancement of Science (BAAS) will commence at the Bangladesh Agricultural University (BAU) on June 22. The science conference was scheduled to commence June 21. The date has been shifted due to the Ashura holiday, reports BSS.

**Mannan Bhuiyan returns home**

Labour and Manpower Minister Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan returned home yesterday after attending the just concluded 81st conference of the International Labour Organisation (ILO) in Geneva. The Minister led a seven member tripartite delegation at the conference, reports UNB.

**Saifur tells Parliament**

## Opposition out to grab power

By Staff Correspondent

Finance Minister M Saifur Rahman yesterday said in Parliament that the aim of the agitation of the major opposition parties was to capture power by any means.

"A big party, which was ousted from power only after three and a half years in office has now joined hands with anti-liberation and autocratic forces to capture power," Saifur Rahman told the opposition-boycotted House during his winding-up speech on the Supplementary Budget of 1993-94.

He said, the same party had killed democracy in March 1975 which expedited its downfall.

"I thought their attitude has changed, being out of power for a long time but my expecta-

tions proved wrong, the Finance Minister said.

He termed as absurd the opposition demand for a caretaker government. "It is their dream and we cannot fulfil their dream."

"I did never come across such an absurd proposition in the history of politics in the world," Saifur Rahman said.

He said, there must be some principles in politics. The party, which once fought against the anti-liberation forces, has now become their close ally, he added.

Rahman said, a two-day discussion was enough for a Supplementary Budget but it continued for six days in the hope the opposition parties would take part in the debate.

But the opposition MPs did not

discharge their duties as the public representatives, he regretted.

The Finance Minister gave a resume of the development programmes of the government and said "the opposition parties are afraid of the good performance of the BNP administration."

"If the ongoing development programmes are implemented in the next two years, the opposition will be nowhere in the country. That's why they are creating a political crisis to disrupt the development process," he said adding "the politics of words and speeches will no longer work in this country."

Saifur Rahman said, the country's exports and imports.

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## BDR-mob clash in Lalmonirhat leaves 24 hurt

LALMONIRHAT, June 15: Twenty-four people, including 18 BDR men, were injured in a fierce clash at Barbari hat in sadar thana today, reports UNB.

Five of the BDR personnel were admitted to the BDR Hospital here with serious head injuries and broken hands.

Witnesses and Bangladesh Rifles sources said local people ghaeroaed the BDR men when they were seizing 50-60 maunds of Indian salt and started beating them.

The driver of the BDR pick-up van fled the scene and informed the BDR 15 battalion. About 50-60 BDR men along with CO of the battalion Maj Imran rushed to the spot.

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## Gore praises Islam

WASHINGTON, June 15: US Vice President Albert Gore has hailed Islam as a religion of peace and tolerance and the Islamic World as seeking unity in diversity, reports PTI.

Gore, who was speaking at the Islamic Centre in Washington after prayers marking the beginning of the Islamic New Year, greeted them with words *As-Salam Alaikum* and pointed out that Islam is the fastest growing religion in the United States.

Gore described Islam as a great religion which has a great deal to teach all people, such as the need for tolerance alongside faith.

## Abu Dhabi will ask Interpol to arrest, extradite Abedi

ABU DHABI, June 15: The Abu Dhabi government will ask Interpol to arrest two former officials of the failed BCCI bank and send them to Abu Dhabi to serve prison sentences, Attorney General Mohammad Al-Dahiri said today, reports Reuter.

He said in a statement Abu Dhabi wanted Interpol to arrest the 71-year-old founder of the Bank of Credit and Commerce International (BCCI) Agha Haasan Abedi. He is reportedly in Pakistan. It also wants Ziauddin Akbar, who is serving a six-year sentence in Britain on BCCI related charges, to serve a sen-

tence in Abu Dhabi. Pakistan indicated in April it would not extradite Abedi.

Dahiri said they would soon write to Interpol asking it to extradite Abedi and Akbar. AFP says, UAE authorities are investigating offences by more former BCCI executives who have not been indicted but barred from leaving the country.

Dahiri listed seven former BCCI executives mostly Pakistanis, whom he said were released last year but barred from leaving the UAE after they found no evidence against them in charges involving fraud and other offences.

"We are now discussing reports by international experts about those persons. We hope we will soon complete investigation of cases involving other executives in the BCCI who were involved in criminal activities along with those convicted yesterday whether they are inside the UAE or outside it," he told reporters.

An Abu Dhabi criminal court on Tuesday sentenced 12 BCCI executives to between three and 14 years in prison for charges involving fraud, forgery, dissipation of funds and irregular allocation of dividend.

## বাংলাদেশ হাউস বিল্ডিং ফাইন্যান্স কর্পোরেশন

## অভিনন্দন

ঋণ রিসিডিউল করার সুবিধা কতিপয় জেলার অধিকাংশ খেলাপী গ্রহীতা গ্রহণ করেছেন বিধায় সেসব জেলার অর্থাৎ দিনাজপুর, রংপুর, যশোর, পাবনা, সিলেট, নোয়াখালী ও বগুড়া জেলার গ্রহীতাদের কর্পোরেশন অভিনন্দন জানাচ্ছে।

বিভাগি এড্বোনার লক্ষ্যে এইচবিএফসি পুনরায় জানাচ্ছে যে কর্পোরেশন সরকার নির্ধারিত পদ্ধতিতে সরল সুদ চার্জ করে। মূল ঋণের ওপর সুদ এবং মূল ঋণ (প্রিন্সিপাল) ব্যাংকের ন্যায় একত্রিত করা হয় না।

- ১.০ রিসিডিউলিং-এর সুবিধা এখনো বলবৎ আছে। ১লা জুলাই ১৯৯৪ তারিখ হতে খেলাপী গ্রহীতাদের নাম প্রকাশিত হবে। তালিকা হতে অব্যাহতি পেতে হলে ৩০ শে জুন ১৯৯৪ তারিখের মধ্যে রিসিডিউলিং-এর সুবিধা গ্রহণ করুন। এবং কর্পোরেশনের এস.আর.এম জনাব আবুল কাশেম-এর সাথে (ফোন : ২৪৪৫৭১) যোগাযোগ করুন।
- ২.০ আপনি ইনসেনটিভ লাভে ব্যর্থ হচ্ছেন কি? ১৯৯৩-৯৪ অর্থবছর হতে নিয়মিত পরিশোধকারীদের চার্জকৃত সুদের ৫% ইনসেনটিভ হিসাবে তার একাউন্টে জমা করা হবে। বাৎসরিক হিসাব বিবরণীতে (আগস্ট মাসের শেষ নাগাদ প্রস্তুত হয়ে যাবে) কোনকি ইনসেনটিভ আপনি দেখতে পাবেন। আপনার (রিসিডিউল সুবিধা গ্রহণকারীসহ) জমা কিস্তি বকেয়া থাকলে তা এখনই পরিশোধ করে ইনসেনটিভ গ্রহণ করুন।
- ৩.০ কুষ্টিয়া, ঝুলনা ও টাঙ্গাইলসহ কয়েকটি জেলার বেশ কিছুসংখ্যক খেলাপী গ্রহীতা রিসিডিউল সুবিধা এখনও গ্রহণ করেননি। তাদেরকে সত্বর রিসিডিউল সুবিধা গ্রহণ করে হিসাব নিয়মিত করার পরামর্শ দেয়া হচ্ছে।
- ৪.০ মামলা সংক্রান্ত কেইসে যারা গুটি কিস্তি জমা দিয়ে রিসিডিউলিং-এর সম্মতিপত্র দাখিল করেছেন অথচ মামলা খরচের টাকা জমা করে সোলেনামা করেননি, তাদেরকেও যথাশীঘ্র সোলেনামা করে কেইস নিষ্পত্তির জন্য পরামর্শ দেয়া হচ্ছে।
- ৫.০ ঢাকা জোন-'এ' এবং 'বি'-কে ধানাজিভিক ৪টি জোনে বিভক্ত করা হয়েছে। নবগঠিত জোন-১, ২, ৩ ও ৪-এর জন্য নির্ধারিত রঙের মেমো বই সংশ্লিষ্ট জোনাল অফিস হতে সংগ্রহ করার অনুরোধ করা যাচ্ছে।
- ৬.০ ১৪ই এপ্রিল, ১৯৯৩ হতে ২৬-৫-১৯৯৪ পর্যন্ত যারা ঋণের আবেদন করেছেন তাদের সকলের ঋণ কেইস নম্বর (০০০০১ হতে ০১৯২৫ পর্যন্ত এবং ২০০০১ হতে ২০০৪৫ পর্যন্ত) পরিবর্তিত হয়েছে। এ সকল আবেদনকারীদেরকে-তাদের নতুন ঋণ কেইস নম্বর ও মেমো বই সংগ্রহ করার জন্য অনুরোধ করা যাচ্ছে।

ঋণের কিস্তি সময়মত পরিশোধ করুন এবং অপরকে ঋণ গ্রহণের সুযোগ দিন