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NEWS BRIEFS

Mohiuddin Ahmed
radio news DG

Mohiuddin Ahmed yesterday took over charge as director general of Radio Bangladesh. Prior to his appointment, he had been working in various capacities including director of news, director of monitoring and deputy director general (news) since 1972, reports BSS.

Nurul Abedin
BIWTA Chairman

Md Nurul Abedin, an additional secretary of the government, has been appointed Chairman of the Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Authority (BIWTA), reports BSS.

Postage stamps on
WC football '94

The Bangladesh Postal Department will release a set of two postage stamps of Taka 20 denomination each on the occasion of the World Cup Football '94, reports BSS.

The Daily Star

World's biggest footballing
feast kicks off today

Sports Reporter

Less than one third of the total population in the United States knows about it and a bigger percentage gives it a damn but World Cup, the ultimate competition of football, the most global sport of the planet is only hours away from the opening of its 15th version in the American city of Chicago.

Reigning champions Germany will take on Bolivia at the Soldier Field Stadium in day's first match following the customary inaugural razzmatazz while Spain and South Korea will make a sporting assembly of continental quartet at the Cotton Bowl Stadium in Dallas couple of hours later.

Twenty-four teams — Argentina, Belgium, Bolivia, Brazil, Bulgaria, Cameroon, Colombia, Germany, Greece, Holland, Ireland, Italy, Mexico, Morocco, Nigeria, Norway, Russia, Romania, Saudi Arabia,

Spain, South Korea, Sweden, Switzerland and hosts United States are taking part in this sporting fiesta.



While Greece will be making their World Cup debut, United States will have an engendered apathy of its people towards the simplest and the most popular game to become hosts for the first time since the inception of the competition way back in 1930.

Germany, Brazil, Italy and Holland or the Netherlands are book makers' four firm favourites although the brilliant Colombians are being touted of late as the probable champions by none other than the

great Pele, one of the greatest exponents of the game.

Some experts are even tipping Nigeria, one of the three representatives from the African continent, besides Cameroon and Morocco, as the dark horses of the meet. Branded as the supereagles, Nigeria are the current African champions with tremendous potential.

Ironically, Asia which boasts a huge population almost obsessed with soccer, is not being regarded seriously. See Page 12 Col 1



Fans of the US World Cup soccer team hold banners and wave flags as they welcome the US team upon its arrival at Pontiac's airport Wednesday. The team will play its first World Cup match June 19 against Switzerland in the Pontiac Silverdome. — AFP photo.

Govt-teachers talks fail

By Staff Correspondent

A six-hour meeting between the government and the leaders of the striking teachers of non-government schools and colleges yesterday ended in failure.

During the meeting, held at the official residence of Labour and Manpower Minister Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan, the government side offered a 10 per cent increase in the government grant for private school and college teachers' salaries, to be implemented over the next two years — 5 per cent in the fiscal 1994-95 and another 5 per cent in 1995-96.

The teachers' leaders insisted on a 10 per cent increase in 1994-95. Meanwhile the Central Liaison Committee of the striking teachers stuck to their decision of continuing the strike and the 'fast unto death' programmes.

As the meeting with the government side ended at 11 last night, Telecommunications Minister Tariqul Islam told the waiting journalists that they had accepted all the demands of the teachers except the 10 per cent increase at a time. "The government is unable to implement the 10 per cent rise at a time due to its financial constraints," he added.

He said that the BNP government was sympathetic to the teachers' community and that is why it had agreed to the teachers' demand for 10 per cent hike. But the government was unable to bear the whole expenses in this regard during the coming fiscal year, the budget for which had already been proposed, he added.

"We even told the teachers' leaders we will announce the

10 per cent increase, to be implemented over the next two years, and urged them to call off their strike and withdraw the fasting programme," the minister said.

Tariqul further said that he and other ministers told the teachers' leaders to convince the striking teachers to accept the government offer.

Replying to a question, he however said the talks did not 'fail' and added they were ready for further negotiations.

Responding to another question, the minister said the government initiated the talks as it was very sympathetic to the teachers now on fast.

On the other hand, coordinator of the teachers' liaison committee Quazi Faruk Ahmed told reporters that they would

Memo to Speaker
Fresh Prokrichi
programmes

By Staff Correspondent

The country's professionals yesterday ended their three-day strike with the promise of more action programmes to press home their demands for democratisation of the bureaucracy.

Some 70 thousand members of the Prokrichi-BCS Central Action Council, platform of the professionals, urged the Speaker of the Jatiya Sangsad "to end the legacy of the colonial rule."

The call was made in a memorandum to the Speaker which was submitted in the capital yesterday.

A procession followed a grand rally at the Engineers Institution where the central leaders of the action council announced fresh programmes demanding realisation of their

MPs owe to
T&T Board
Tk 4 crore

By Staff Correspondent

The Members of Parliament owed to the T&T Board a total of Tk 4 crore as overdue bills, Post and Telecommunication Minister Tariqul Islam told the House yesterday.

In reply to a supplementary question from the treasury bench MP Abdur Rab Chowdhury on ISD phone, the minister said a consumer can convert his phone to an ISD one by paying certain charges to the board.

Rab Chowdhury asked the minister why the telephones of the MPs were not being converted to ISD.

Taking the floor again Rab Chowdhury said "I mentioned about the official phone an MP

See Page 12 Col 3

Opposition tells press
Saifur's statement in
JS unconstitutional

By Staff Correspondent

The opposition parties in Parliament have accused the Finance Minister of violating the Constitution by making a 'political statement' in Parliament on Wednesday.

"Being a technocrat minister, he cannot make such statement in the House. The Constitution only permits him to speak about his ministry," Deputy Leaders of the Opposition in Parliament

Abdus Samad Azad said at a press briefing at the Sangsad Bhavan yesterday.

"Every minister shall have the right to speak in and otherwise to take part in the proceedings of Parliament but shall not be entitled to vote or to speak on any matter not re-

lated to his ministry unless he is a member of Parliament also," Article 73(a) of the Constitution says, according to the Opposition Leader.

Samad Azad, who read out the article, said it was inserted when the 12th amendment to the Constitution was made.

Finance Minister, Saifur Rahman during his winding up speech on supplementary budget on Wednesday, reportedly said the opposition parties were creating impasse in Parliament and in the country.

Jatiya Party leaders Moudud Ahmed, Anwar Hossain and T I Fazle Rabbi Choudhury, Jamaat's Sheikh Ansar Ali, Latifur Rahman and A M Reasat

See Page 12 Col 6

Join JS to solve
problems, Salam
urges Hasina

BNP Secretary General Abdur Salam Talukder yesterday urged Awami League chief and Leader of the Opposition in the Jatiya Sangsad to solve all problems confronting the country through discussions sitting in the sovereign Parliament, reports BSS.

In a statement Talukder said our attention has been drawn to the long discourse Sheikh Hasina held with the journalists in Dhaka on Wednesday. Her statement was published on the day which was observed by the journalists of the country as a black day. On this day in 1975 one-party Baksal government was established in the country and the publication of all newspapers excepting four was stopped, he added.

Blasting the 'self-contradiction' — See Page 12 Col 4

Govt to send back US
toxic fertiliser

The government is sending back the BADC imported toxic fertiliser to the USA as per recommendation of the investigation committee headed by Vice Chancellor of the Open University Prof M Shamsur Ali, an official handout said in Dhaka yesterday, reports BSS.

Meanwhile, a US court has fined the producer of the raw materials of the fertilizer, M/s Gaston Cooper US dollars six lakh for illegally transporting the toxic materials. With this money the fertilizer could be refined or destroyed.

Bangladesh Agriculture Development Corporation imported the fertilizer 6,000 tonnes of zinc-oxi-sulphate in the beginning of 1992. After finding the fertilizer, contami-

nated by toxic lead and cadmium, its use was immediately stopped and the government formed an investigation committee in this connection.

A US enterprise, M/s Horsehead Resource Development has on principle agreed to refine the fertilizer and it has been asked to submit its plan of action before the court by the extended date of July 1 next.

For immediate settlement of the issue, a specific work plan has been adopted in a joint meeting between the Bangladesh embassy in Washington and M/s Horsehead Resource Development, the US State Department, Treasury Department, Environment Of-

See Page 12 Col 7

Tk 31.30 crore
embezzled from
NCBs, JS told

About Tk 31.30 crore was embezzled from the nationalised commercial banks during 1985-92, Finance Minister informed in Parliament yesterday, reports UNB.

In a written reply during the question hour, Saifur Rahman said 126 officials and employees of the 4 nationalised banks were sacked for the misdeed and departmental cases were instituted against 22 others.

Replying to another question, he said about Tk 6.51 crore have so far been realised from those embezzled the money. Steps were taken to realise the rest of the money.

The money embezzled from Sonali Bank was Tk 8.92 crore, See Page 12 Col 1

Thai-Bangla joint body
meets tomorrow

A two-day official-level talks between Bangladesh and Thailand concluded in Dhaka yesterday finalising the agenda for a meeting of the Joint Commission on Cooperation beginning tomorrow, reports UNB.

Three working groups on investment, trade and fisheries submitted their recommendations to the meeting.

Thai Deputy Permanent Foreign Secretary Saroj Chavanaviraj led his country's team at the meeting. Foreign Secretary Osmany headed the home side.

Thai Foreign Minister Prasong Soonsiri arrives in Dhaka to night to lead his country's delegation at the

Joint Commission meeting. The home team will be headed by Foreign Minister A S M Mostafizur Rahman.

The Thai side, which was briefed about the atmosphere congenial to foreign investment in Bangladesh, showed interest for investment in different sectors like fish meal, animal feed, fish processing, composite textile, knitting and knitted.

In this connection, Thai side invited Bangladesh to participate in a seminar on investment to be held in their country next year.

The Thai side also attached importance to marine fishing and offered joint survey of ma-

See Page 12 Col 3

Sharp rise in
phensedyl
addiction

Star Report

Phensedyl addiction in the country has sharply risen. A study of the seized quantities of drugs indicated this.

The Department of Narcotics Control (DNC) seized some 20,000 bottles of the contraband cough syrup and 3 kg of heroin in the first four months of the current year. Last year over 30,000 bottles of phensedyl and 8.4 kg of heroin were seized.

DNC officials, however, admitted that they could not detect all cases of smuggling.

There are over 1.2 lakh phensedyl addicts and about 1 lakh heroin users in the coun-

See Page 12 Col 8

'Reinforce reform measures to
boost private sector growth'

By Staff Correspondent

Minister for Commerce M Shamsul Islam yesterday emphasised the need for reinforcing the reform measures to provide the private sector with a congenial environment for steady growth.

Although the country was ahead of other South Asian economies in achieving macro-economic stability, investment had continued to remain sluggish, he said.

The minister was speaking as chief guest at a seminar on 'Bangladesh: From Stabilisation to Growth' organised jointly by the World Bank (WB) and the Federation of Bangladesh

Chambers of Commerce and Industry.

"There can be little disagreement on the matter of establishing a reasonable reform scenario that Bangladesh should have to rank ahead of other South Asian countries," he said, adding that both foreign and domestic investments fell short of the expected level.

This suggests that we need to re-invigorate our strategies, policies and reform measures to provide the private sector entrepreneurs — both domestic and foreign — with an enabling environment," the minister pointed

out.

The seminar was also addressed by, among others, chief of the resident mission of the WB Christopher R Willoughby, FBCCI President Mahbubur Rahman, Finance Secretary Nasimuddin Ahmed, Shekhar Shaha of WB, Salman F Rahman of Beximco, Board of Investment Executive Chairman Mokammel Haq, A M A Muhi, Dr Taufiq Elahi Chowdhury, S S Kabir, Mizanur Rahman Shelly, Enayetullah Khan, Jamahuddin Ahmed and Al-Hussainy.

Describing the macro-economy — See Page 12 Col 3

Dhaka to abide
by planned UN
sanctions on DPRK

Bangladesh will comply with a possible United Nations sanctions against North Korea for its refusal to allow international inspection of its nuclear programme, officials sources indicated here yesterday, reports UNB.

The United States and Japan have been seeking Security Council sanctions against the Asian communist country which rejected a move of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) to verify North Korea's nuclear capabilities.

An official said, "Dhaka will abide by the planned sanctions since Bangladesh is a signatory to the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). It's also mandatory."



WORLD CUP SPECIAL



Attention readers! Our 24-page 4-colour tabloid on World Cup '94 appears tomorrow. Don't miss it!!