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Tel: 605957, 861985
12 PAGES: PRICE TAKA 5.00

Inside Today

Article

Reinventing the United Nations

by Thalif Deen
Page 4

International

Indian opposition demands immediate withdrawal of troops from Somalia

Lankan politicians ordered to surrender illegal arms
Page 5

Business

Export earnings from shrimp sector increase by 75 pc

New Lankan govt wants to boost local industry
Pages 6, 7

Feature

Education

Every Human Being's Learning Style is as Individual as a Signature
Page 8

National

BNP believes in politics of work
Page 9

Metropolitan

Dhaka Day by Day

Ball and Point Rolled into Pen
Page 3



NEWS BRIEFS

Khaleda greets Vitaly A Masol

Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia yesterday felicitated Vitaly A Masol, Chairman of the council of ministers of Ukraine on the occasion of the independence day of Ukraine. The Prime Minister conveyed best wishes for the continued well-being, progress and prosperity of the friendly people of Ukraine, reports BSS.

Cabinet vets draft designed to raise manpower skills

Factories must take on apprentices

By Special Correspondent

The government plans to enact a new law incorporating regulations for mandatory appointment and training of apprentices at the industrial enterprises having a workforce of 50 or more.

According to the draft of the law, the employers will have to appoint apprentices at a ratio of 10 per cent of the total number of workers of such industries. The government will provide 50 per cent of the allowances of the apprentice workers.

The draft of the legislation titled "Apprenticeship Act 1994" has been approved in principle by the Cabinet and is now in the process of vetting by the Ministry of Law. The draft Act will be sent to the Jatiya Sangsad as a bill for passage to replace the existing Apprenticeship Ordinance of 1962.

Explaining the objectives of the draft, an official source said, "an up-to-date law" to provide more training facilities to workers has become imperative.

"We need a large number of skilled workers to meet the country's growing requirement and also for employment abroad," said an official of the Ministry of Labour and Manpower.

The country's fresh requirement of skilled and semi-skilled manpower now remains 40 to 50 thousand a year. But the institutional facilities now available, both in the public and private sectors, can provide training to only 10 thousand workers.

The country has 12 technical training centres, 51 vocational training institutes and some other centres under the NGOs to train workers.

The policy-makers believe that on-the-job training for workers is the best way to produce skilled manpower at low cost. "So, the government has decided for a mandatory apprenticeship programme, which would go a long way in producing trained human resources."

Since the Apprenticeship Ordinance of 1962 has proved inadequate to meet the present-day requirements, the move to formulate a new law was initiated several years ago and a draft was prepared ago. See Page 12 Col 2

'Stalemate hurting investment flow'

By Staff Correspondent

US Ambassador David N Merrill yesterday suggested the government and Opposition engage in productive dialogue to end the current political stalemate which, he said, was affecting the investment climate in Bangladesh.

He was addressing the American-Bangladesh Economic Forum monthly lunch meeting at a local hotel as the guest speaker.

Speaking on the theme "Investment Climate in Bangladesh," Ambassador Merrill said the Opposition demand for a caretaker government and its agitation on the streets were having a 'real impact' on potential foreign investors.

"The companies that have called on us recently have asked a number of hard questions about the implications of the political stalemate for long-term investment," he said.

He said that following allegations of vote rigging in a March parliamentary by-election, the Opposition has boycotted Parliament, calling for a caretaker government to hold the next general elections before it returns, and is pressing its demands in the streets. See Page 12 Col 3

Provision of broad gauge railroad on JMB under study

By Staff Correspondent

The Asian Development Bank (ADB) has been looking into the possibility of keeping the provision of a broad gauge railroad instead of the proposed metre gauge line over the Jamuna bridge.

This was disclosed by ADB Resident Representative G. Ven der Linden at a dialogue on "Bangladesh Railway: An Agenda for Reform" organised by the Centre for Policy Dialogue yesterday at Hotel Sonargaon.

Communications Minister Col (Retd) Oli Ahmed, Special Envoy of the Prime Minister M Mofaied Khan, L K Siddiqi. See Page 12 Col 6



A policeman dispersing a Jatiya Party picket near the Panthapath in the city yesterday. — Star photo

JP announces agitation programmes

The Jatiya Party yesterday announced a series of anti-government demonstrations including a "Dhaka siege" on September 10 to press for elections under an interim government and the release of former president Ershad, reports UNB.

The party's acting chairman Mizanur Rahman Chowdhury announced the programmes at a press conference at his Gulshan residence yesterday evening.

A half-day hartal (6 am to 12 noon) has been called in the capital today to protest the police action on the party's scheduled public meeting at the party's headquarters. See Page 12 Col 1

JP supporters, police clash: Many hurt

By Staff Correspondent

Several hundred militant supporters of the Jatiya Party yesterday fought pitched battles with riot police in the Kawran Bazar, Panthapath, Bangla Motor and Maghbazar areas of the city, injuring scores of people.

Police used rubber bullets, teargas and batons to disperse the agitating JP supporters who stoned the police and hurled crackers and cocktails at them.

The JP has called a half-day hartal in the city today to protest yesterday's police action, which it said, was designed to foil a scheduled rally of the party at the Panthapath. Police swung into action when the JP men turned violent and damaged more than 100 vehicles in and around the Kawran Bazar, FDC road, Panthapath, Farmgate, Green Road, Maghbazar and Bangla Motor areas. The JP supporters also damaged two trains at the Sonargaon level-crossing, Railway sources said. Police arrested 21 people from the areas during the three-hour violence which also caused traffic jams in several parts of the city. Following the incident See Page 12 Col 1

Export-based units outside EPZs may get incentives

The board of governors of the Bangladesh Export Processing Zone Authorities (BEPZA) at a meeting yesterday reviewed the overall progress in different export processing zones of the country, reports UNB.

Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia, who is also the chairperson of the board, presided over its 8th meeting at the International Conference Centre in the capital.

The meeting decided that the Board of Investment would examine the possible incentives to be provided to 100 per cent export-oriented industries outside the EPZs.

It emphasised on drawing a priority list of the types of units to be set up in the EPZs and decided to give preference to high-tech industries.

10 die in Pabna boat capsizes

PABNA, Aug 23: Ten people were killed and 30 others reported missing when a mechanised boat capsized at Trimohini, in Bera thana at the confluence of the Padma and the Jamuna Monday night, reports UNB.

The boat from Sadarpur of Faridpur district capsized on its way to Chatmohar of Pabna carrying a group of people, the deputy commissioner of Pabna said.

Five of the deceased were identified as Abdus Sattar, 35, Samad, 10, Moazzem Hossain, 40, Anisul Islam, 40, and Akhteruddin, 25.

3 JU deans elected

By Staff Correspondent

The elections of three faculty deans of the Jahangirnagar University were held at the teachers club on the campus yesterday.

Professor Nurul Islam of English Department was elected the dean of Arts Faculty by securing 30 votes while Professor M Moniruzzaman of Physics was elected for the Science Faculty securing 40 votes and Professor Abdul Bayes of Economics won the polls for the Faculty of Social Science. He secured 30 votes.

Six teachers from two panels — one led by Vice Chancellor Professor Amirul Islam Chowdhury and the other by Professor Khandaker Mustahidur Rahman — contested the polls.

Sunken launch yet to be salvaged

From Our Correspondent

CHANDPUR, Aug 23: The combined rescue and salvage operation by the Navy, IWTA and Fire Service could not locate the vessel MV Dinar-2 which capsized at the confluence of the rivers Meghna and Dakatia here Saturday afternoon.

Two more bodies of the launch-victims were recovered yesterday, raising the official death toll to 14.

The MV Dinar-2 carrying some 300 passengers sank in strong currents while taking a turn to berth at the local terminal around 2:45 Saturday afternoon. About 200 passengers were feared drowned in the mishap.

The rescue teams searched for the ill-fated launch and the victims upto the Haimchar thana area — some eight miles from Chandpur town. The rescue operation was being hampered by strong currents, whirlpools and tidal waves, according to the rescue teams.

More teams are being sent to join the operations immediately.

A Naval rescue vessel is expected to reach Chandpur from Chittagong tonight. The Fire Service and Civil Defence has sent another team of divers from Dhaka today and one of its rescue vessels from Barisal was expected to join the search tonight, according to a Fire Service spokesman in Dhaka.

Meanwhile, a UNB report said: some 60 bodies of victims were spotted Tuesday at the mouth of the Doani canal in Hajimara union in Laxmipur district.

Jalil Dewan, former member of Ibarahimpur Union Parishad who was searching his two missing nephews, reported that he had seen the bodies at the mouth of the canal, near Duanighat in See Page 12 Col 7



Benazir's belief

ISLAMABAD, Aug 23: Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto suggested on Monday that Pakistan's ties with arch-foe India might be better if New Delhi had a woman prime minister, reports Reuter.

"Indo-Pakistan tension can be removed if a woman came into power in India," the Pakistani news agency PPI quoted Benazir as saying with a smile during a chat with reporters.

Chandrika Kumaratunga became Prime Minister of Sri Lanka last week.

Bangladesh also has a woman Prime Minister, Begum Khaleda Zia.

Pakistan has N-bomb, discloses Sharif

ISLAMABAD, Aug 23: Pakistan's former Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif said today that his country has nuclear weapons, reports AFP.

Sharif, speaking at a public rally at Neela Butt in Pakistan controlled Kashmir, said he would confirm Kashmiri premier Sardar Abdul Qayyum Khan's statement that both Pakistan and India have atomic bombs.

The government's stand to date has been that Pakistan has the ability to manufacture nuclear weapons, but it has taken a policy decision not to make one — a position also voiced by Sharif during his rule.

Sharif, who was in office for two and a half years until he resigned in 1993 amid a political crisis, warned India against launching a nuclear attack against Pakistan.

The independent Pakistani news agency Pakistan Press International (PPI) quoted him as saying, "I confirm that Pakistan possesses an atom bomb."

He also disclosed that during his rule, the Pakistan government had given large sums of money to a religious political party for aiding the jihad (holy war) in the Indian-controlled southern two-thirds of Kashmir.

Reuter adds: Berlin's Justice Ministry said today it had new evidence suggesting that Pakistan may have bought contraband plutonium.

Ministry spokesman Frank Thiel said documents which lied Berlin police to suspect Islamabad had some part in the illegal plutonium trade turned out not to implicate Pakistan.

But he said police now had other evidence, which he declined to describe, that pointed that way.

Pakistan was mentioned as a possible suspect last week after Berlin police raided seven apartments and interrogated a Pakistani, two poles and a German about nuclear smuggling. See Page 12 Col 8

Proposed caning of women in Malaysia protested

KUALA LUMPUR, Aug 23: Lawyers and civil libertarians Tuesday opposed a proposal to expand Malaysia's caning law to include illegal female immigrants, terming it unfair and harsh, reports AP.

The proposed law is the government's latest effort to prevent illegal immigrants who are brought in by labour agencies to work as maids. Malaysia has an estimated 250,000 illegal immigrants, most of them from Indonesia.

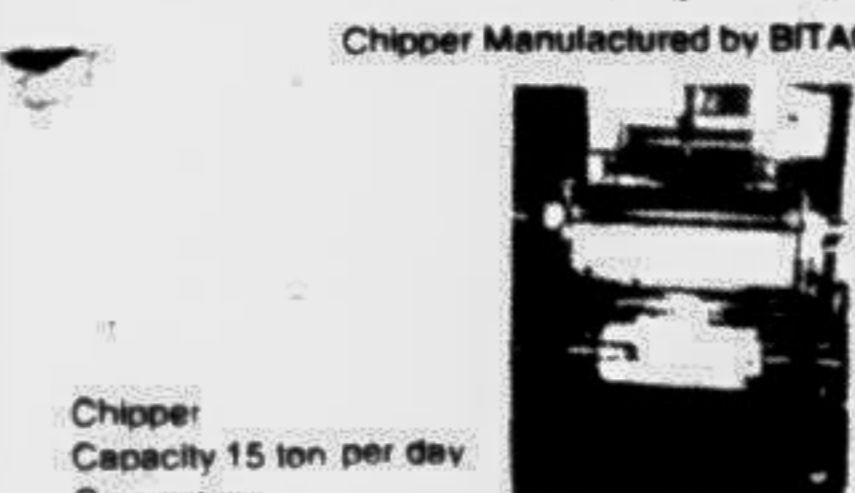

The new measures, announced Sunday by the Home Minister, once again focused attention on the caning laws in this southeast Asian region highlighted by the flogging of American teen Michael Fay in neighbouring Singapore.

Many immigrants, who come into Malaysia on tourist visas, are duped by agents into believing that their travel documents would be valid for several years, said Bar Council See Page 12 Col 8

ON THE AUSPICIOUS OCCASION OF HANDING OVER CEREMONY OF PULP MAKING MACHINERY

WE EXTEND HEARTIEST CONGRATULATION TO BANGLADESH INDUSTRIAL TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE CENTRE (BITAC) DHAKA

FOR THE SUCCESSFUL MANUFACTURE OF GEAR BOX, GREEN JUTE CHIPPER, CONVEYING SYSTEM, CHIP WASHING PLANT AND OTHER MACHINERY FOR THE FIRST TIME IN BANGLADESH FOR PROCESSING GREEN JUTE TO PRODUCE PULP & PAPER.

Chipper Capacity 15 ton per day
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PULP-MAKING MACHINERY LINE

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  Infeed Conveyor Chipper Chip Conveyor Globe Digester Gear Box Blow Tank Dump Chest
  
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Machinery fabricated locally

Legend:
 [Hatched Box] Already Manufactured
 [White Box] To be Manufactured

High Den sity Tower Screening Washing Equipment Fiberizer

Process flow chart: Pulp line of Karnaphuli Paper Mills

THIS ENGINEERING BREAKTHROUGH REPRESENTS AN EPOCH-MAKING CONTRIBUTION OF THE GOVERNMENT IN ACHIEVING OUR NATIONAL GOAL FOR ATTAINING SELF-RELIANCE IN MANUFACTURING PULP & PAPER MACHINERY WITHIN THE COUNTRY.

BANGLADESH CHEMICAL INDUSTRIES CORPORATION
BCIC BHABAN, 30-31, DILKUSHA C.A., DHAKA-1000.

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
National Board of Revenue
Dhaka
Notice

All tax-payers are hereby informed that from 1st July, 1994, Tax-payer's Identification Number (TIN) has been introduced in place of the existing GIR Number by the Taxes Department. TIN is a nation-wide unique number to be centrally allotted by the National Board of Revenue. According to this system, a new assessee shall submit to the respective income tax office a particular form (to be supplied by the circle offices) duly filled in alongwith the necessary papers in accordance with the previous procedure. On the basis of the information furnished, National Board of Revenue will allot a TIN which shall be used instead of GIR Number for all purposes. While submitting I.T. returns, the existing assessee shall mention TIN in place of GIR Number. All the assesseees are hereby earnestly requested to collect TIN from the respective income tax offices.

Syed Md. Aminul Karim
First Secretary (Taxes-4)
Telephone: 401880

DFP-2430-18/8
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