

## Flyovers, foot bridges to be built Project proposals to end traffic jam invited

Finance Minister M Saifur Rahman yesterday instructed the ministries and agencies concerned to immediately submit necessary project proposals to the Planning Commission for constructing flyovers and foot bridges and expansion and development of footpaths in the city to help reduce traffic jams, reports BSS.

The Finance Minister was presiding over an inter-ministerial meeting on 'formulation and implementation of an action plan to develop the transport and communications, end traffic jams and curb road accidents in Dhaka metropolitan city and suburbs' at the conference room of the Ministry of Finance.

Saifur underlined the need for constructing flyovers at Mohakhali and Maghbazar points in the first phase and instructed the concerned ministries and agencies to finalise (those high priority projects in consultation with the Planning

Commission within a month. The finance minister gave the assurance to provide the necessary funds for those priority projects.

A task force has also been constituted with the state minister for planning as its chairman to urgently identify and measures to be taken in this regard and for the purpose of coordination.

The task force would consider technical and financial sides and take immediate measures for the formulation of the necessary projects to end traffic jams in the city.

The meeting stressed the need for constructing another bridge over the river Sheeta-lakhya at Ruppang and a bridge over the river Balu and decided to formulate project proposals in this regard.

The meeting also decided that the Economic Relations Division (ERD) would explore the possible sources of external financing for those priority projects.



Awami League president Sheikh Hasina launched a new membership drive at the party office in the city yesterday. Party leaders Abdus Samad Azad, Abdul Jalil and Zohra Tajuddin are also seen.

### Hasina

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Siege programme, the Opposition Leader alleged that the government had resorted to various tactics to foil the programme.

"We have called for a peaceful siege. But if a single stick is used or a bullet is fired on the people, the government will not be allowed to see the end of September," she warned.

Calling on the government to accept the 'national demand' for a caretaker government, she said: "There is no shame in accepting the people's demand. Still there is time to hand over power to a caretaker government and resign. If not, we will realise our demand through agitation."

The Awami League chief asked her party workers to take all possible preparations to make the 'Dhaka Siege' a total success. She cautioned the people to remain alert against any conspiracy to disrupt the programme.

She cautioned that a confusion might be created about the siege programme through government controlled media or other means. "Don't listen to them. If necessary, we will give the direction to you."

### Kamal Yusuf

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come up with a document accepted by all in the next seven days.

Yusuf is leading the Bangladesh delegation to the UN-sponsored International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) '94 that began Monday in the Egyptian capital.

The 28-member delegation includes the Health Secretary, senior officials of the Health Ministry and representatives from a number of non-governmental organisations.

Promptly fanned by the media and fuelled by threats of disruption from the Egyptian Muslim extremists, the debate over wording of the draft came up for deliberation by the countries divided into three main groups.

Kamal Yusuf said the three groups among the ICPD discussants were the countries supporting strong fertility control programme, the countries led by the Vatican opposing such programme and the Muslim countries calling for preserving their values.

Giving a run-up to the compromise efforts, Yusuf informed this correspondent that the participants have been trying hard to unanimously reach an agreement and an agenda for specific goals for slowing the future population growth.

Pakistan Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto, while speaking at the opening function of the ICPD Monday, said that Islam does not permit abortion to be legalised while Norwegian PM Gro Harlem Brundtland called for safer abortion for the women to ensure their health.

Kamal ibne Yusuf said that Bangladesh, having one of the strongest national population programmes, does not subscribe to the ideas of those opposing family planning but does have its own reservations about the abortion issue on religious and cultural grounds.

More than eight lakh mothers die every year in the country, he pointed out, saying that an integrated health and family planning service alone could substantially change the situation.

The language of the western writers of the ICPD draft document, particularly those relating to sex education for the adolescents and reproductive rights of the women, would be replaced by words acceptable to the other countries with different cultural backgrounds, he said.

Replying to a question, the head of the Bangladesh delegation expressed the hope that the donors' allocation to Bangladesh's health sector would substantially increase with the success of the World Population Conference.

However, in future, Bangladesh has to be more cautious in planning and spending money in the health sector, he added.

## Water purifying machine designed for rural areas

By Staff Correspondent

A Belgian company has offered the government free of cost ten water purification machines for providing safe water to the rural people.

The uncommon machine, named Hydropur, is designed specially for the rural areas of the Third World countries and has a capacity of purifying two cubic metres of water per hour.

Serge E Allote, consultant for the manufacturing Altech Company's Southeast region, made a formal offer to the State Minister for Irrigation and Flood Control Mosharrif Hossain Shahjahan and Deputy Minister for Health Sirajul Huq at a function organised by the DWAMP, an NGO working on safe drinking water, yesterday at the WVA auditorium.

Chairman of the DWAMP (Drinking Water Available for Mankind Programme) A F M Azim presided over the function. The Altech consultant said it costs only Tk four to purify 1000 litres of water with the Tk 3.5 lakh worth Hydropur, made of stainless steel and food-compatible plastics. It is two metres in height, 80 cm in diameter and weighs 300kg. It is also transferable from one place to another, he said.

The apparatus can treat any raw water having physico-chemical characteristics not over those listed in the Euronorm A2 — a basic international standard — and make the water perfectly fit for human consumption.

In Mediterranean, tropical and sub-tropical countries where no water distribution network exists and where the

water supply sources are often contaminated, one single Hydropur can supply drinking water to a village of 1000 to 3000 people, a brochure distributed on the occasion claimed.

In case of disasters, when the distribution network cannot supply drinking water the Hydropur can be quickly installed in order to ensure the emergency supply of drinking water.

State Minister for Irrigation Mosharrif Hossain Shahjahan said the country should concentrate more on using surface water rather than underground water for installation of a large number of tube-wells may have adverse effects on the environment.

However, the surface water is often polluted and needs to be treated properly, he said, adding that the Hydropur could be useful for reducing the dependence on underground water.

He, however, said that the NGOs can take up the responsibility of installing the apparatus in the rural areas for ensuring safe water for the poor.

Deputy Minister for Health Sirajul Huq termed the Hydropur technology as 'a milestone' for ensuring safe drinking water and said the apparatus may be of great help for Bangladesh where the people often suffer from the water-borne diseases like diarrhoea, cholera and typhoid.

He also said that the apparatus could also be manufactured in Bangladesh by making arrangements with the Altech Company so that people can get it at a lower price.

## LDF leaders meet PM

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The LDF, during the parity, pleaded for an all-party dialogue based on specific agenda to resolve the present political crisis.

The Prime Minister is learnt to have agreed to consider the proposal.

Referring to her party's initiative for a dialogue with the parliamentary Opposition, the premier told the LDF leaders that she had no reservations about discussing anything with the 'partners in parliamentary democracy'.

Begum Zia gave a patient hearing to the LDF's 25-point recommendations for a fool-proof electoral process and observed that the recommendations deserved serious consideration, meeting sources said.

She, however, asserted that the ruling party bill seeking strengthening of the Election Commission also deserved serious thought from the Opposition in Parliament.

The state of the country's economy also came up during the discussion, but the parties concerned did accept each other's views on the subject.

"We tried to convince the prime minister by providing relevant statistics, that our entire economy had now reached a point of stagnation, that even the private sector establishments were now exposed to a process of extinction," Manzoorul Hossain Khan of the LDF told this correspondent.

"But she refused to accept our position, arguing that there was now no inflation in the country," Khan added.

"But what we felt was really alarming was the impression that the premier sincerely believes the country's economy was now advancing in a positive direction," Khan regretted.

However, the LDF leaders, despite major differences of opinion on various issues with the ruling party, assured the Prime Minister of all possible support to government steps against fundamentalism and use of black money in elections.

Meanwhile, the LDF leaders, at press conference held after the meeting yesterday afternoon, told newsmen that they were critical of the ruling Bangladesh Nationalist Party's

## British MPs witness JS proceedings

The visiting British parliamentary delegation witnessed the proceedings of the Jatiya Sangsad yesterday evening, reports BSS.

Leader of the House Prime Minister, Begum Khaleda Zia was present.

Headed by Michael Colvin, the British parliamentarians were greeted by the treasury bench members as they arrived in the House during the question-hour with Speaker Shaikh Razzak Ali in the chair.

The delegation stayed for about half an hour. The delegation, earlier in the morning, called on the Speaker at his parliament chamber and took keen interest in the functioning of the Jatiya Sangsad. The British MPs also wanted to know different aspects of working of parliament.

When the leader of the delegation, Colvin wanted to know about the boycott of parliament session by the opposition party, Speaker Razzak Ali told them that the issue was to be settled through dialogue, which he said was already in the process.

## Razzak criticises govt failure to salvage launch

By Staff Correspondent

Awami League (AL) leader Abdur Razzak, MP yesterday criticised the government for its alleged failure to salvage the sunken launch MV Dinar from the Meghna river even after 17 days.

At a press conference in the city, the MP elected from Shariatpur-3 Constituency termed the government efforts to recover the bodies from Dinar-2 'sluggish' and said the government did not take adequate measures to avoid such accidents.

Abdur Razzak noted with concern that after the accident in the Meghna, only a single decker launch was transporting passengers in the Shariatpur route.

He demanded immediate salvage of the launch, recovery of the bodies, judicial enquiry into the disaster, life insurance for launch passengers, and implementation of the IWTA safety measures.

## 5 held, firearms seized in city

By Staff Correspondent

The Detective police arrested five people and seized firearms and ammunition in a four-hour swoop on several hideouts of criminals in the capital early yesterday.

The five accused — M. Saiful Islam alias Ripon, Rabiul Awal alias Suja, Mohammad Shaqilul Alam Mirza alias Ripon, Sharif Hossain and Mohammad Nayeem alias Mithu — were detained for questioning.

A special squad of the DB raided Motijheel, Ramna and Fulbaria areas from 1 am to 5 am yesterday following a tip off, according to a police source.

Police seized three foreign made revolvers, a gun and eight bullets from the possession of the accused.

Police believe the arrested people were involved in the sale of drugs in Fulbaria's Ananda Bazar area — known as a den of heroin, ganja and contraband cough-syrup phensydyll sellers.

## 3 die in separate incidents

By DMCH Correspondent

Two people were killed in rail and road accidents while a maid committed suicide in the capital yesterday.

Arifa Begum, 20, a maid, committed suicide at a house at Road No-3, Block-A, Mirpur-2 in the morning yesterday. The cause of the suicide was not known.

An auto-rickshaw puller Jahrad, 28, was killed at Zatrahari when his vehicle collided with a truck early yesterday.

A teenage boy was run over by a train at Kamalapur station.

## Partial hartal in Ctg city

From Staff Correspondent

CHITTAGONG, Sept 6: Normal life in the city and its surrounding areas was partially disrupted today due to a 6-hour hartal enforced by the Chhatra League. The Chittagong unit of the Awami League-backed students front had called the hartal protesting the killing of two of its activists at Noapara village under Razoan thana on Saturday.

The 6 am to 12 noon hartal passed off peacefully barring some cracker blasts in the city. Most of the vehicles except a few rickshaws stayed off the roads. City markets and shopping arcades remained closed.

Most of the offices both private and public could not function normally during hartal hours due to thin attendance.

## The Midnight File

### Iran urges UN to lift embargo on Iraq

MUSCAT, Sept 6: Iran called here today for the United Nations to lift the four-year-old embargo on Iraq and said it wanted to establish good relations with its former enemy, reports AFP.

### US, Egypt sign economic pact

CAIRO, Sept 6: Egypt and the United States agreed a new economic partnership here Tuesday to improve trade and private sector links, helping the Egyptians boost their troubled economy. The deal was struck between US Vice President Al Gore and Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak during an hour-long meeting here on the sidelines of the UN Population Conference, reports AFP.

## Mistrust in Opposition

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parleys the major opposition party risks losing valuable political points."

The source alleged that the ruling party was trying to play a 'political game' with the Opposition ahead of the September 10 'Dhaka siege' programme.

Another source pointed out that when the Deputy Leader of the House Prof Badruddoza Chowdhury met his Opposition counterpart Abdus Samad Azad at the latter's residence, Samad Azad had represented all the opposition parties.

Before the meeting with Prof Chowdhury, Samad Azad had held talks with the leaders of other Opposition allies, including the Jatiya Party and the Jamaat.

"Why then did the government negotiators feel it necessary to hold a meeting with an individual party?" the source questioned, and said: "So far, the opposition parties have continued to press for their demands unitedly."

The AL source contended that the 'JP and Jamaat could have avoided separate meetings with the ruling party to demonstrate' the unity of the Opposition on the caretaker government issue.

### Mineral resources

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organisation entrusted with these activities, will be reorganised and expanded.

The meeting had a detail discussion on the aspects of discovery, exploration, development, supervision and control, leasing system and revenue collection of country's mineral resources excluding oil and gas.

It also decided to bring some amendments to the existing rules and regulations of the mineral resources development and exploration in the country.

### Poverty alleviation

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to targeted programmes while reducing support to subsidised sales.

"Poverty alleviation will be the principal component of EC's future aid programme to the country," he said.

EC, a major food aid source, currently provides about 150,000 metric tons of food items to Bangladesh a year.

Anthony, however, indicated that future food aid flow would be strictly linked to the requirement. "That [future food aid flow] depends on circumstances," he said.

Economic Reporters Forum arranged the talks with the EC official to discuss the EC-Bangladesh cooperation strategy (1993-96) at a local hotel.

According to the strategy, poverty alleviation, women in development, food security and agriculture development will be the focus of EC's future cooperation to Bangladesh.

As the EC cooperation strategy puts exclusive emphasis on poverty alleviation, VGD (Vulnerable Group Development) and FFW (Food For Work) programmes will get expanded support from the Community.

NGOs, working for poverty alleviation, will also get enhanced support, said Anthony. The strategy stipulates that the EC, apart from continuing food aid, will contribute to achieving an efficient food security system here as well as developing the production of vegetables, fruits, livestock and inland fisheries.

### One year jail

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fifteen days of the receipt of information by him from the bank regarding the return of the cheque as unpaid; and

(c) the drawer of such cheque fails to make the payment of the said amount of money to the payee or, as the case may be, to the holder in due course of the cheque, within fifteen days of the receipt of the said notice.

The Finance Minister said that the relaxation to the penal provision is to avoid too much harshness at the initial stage of the new law. The relaxation might be withdrawn in due course, he added.

Objection to the relaxation raised by Ziaur Rahman Khan Bar at Law, was however withdrawn giving the bill a smooth sail.

"There is no harm in discussing political issues with the ruling party. It would not weaken the Opposition unity."

In a post-meeting press briefing on Sunday the Jamaat's parliamentary party chief Matur Rahman Nizami said that, in fact, the Opposition unity had been strengthened.

After the BNP-Jamaat meeting the Opposition parties held talks with Abdus Samad Azad. They agreed that they would not discuss or bargain on the issue of a caretaker government separately with the BNP.

This was reflected during the BNP-JP meeting Monday when the JP leaders categorically said they would not discuss the caretaker issue at party-level discussions, another source said.

The ruling party negotiators, however, said they were sincere about a dialogue and they had only tried to read the minds of the individual components of the Opposition.

The Awami League is afraid the smaller parties may leave the Opposition camp if such bilateral talks proved beneficial to their partisan interests.

After Sunday's Jamaat-BNP meeting it was being speculated that the Jamaat would soon be joining the Parliament session, thereby effectively ending the current Opposition boycott and easing the pressure on the ruling party.

The opposition parties as of now, however, continue to stick to their stand that they would not join the JS sessions unless the ruling party placed a bill proposing a caretaker government to supervise future national elections.

According to sources, there is no possibility of any progress towards a national dialogue before September 10.

The opposition parties, mainly the AL, are busy with organising the 'Dhaka siege' programme to show their strength.

Fresh efforts at arranging a dialogue may resume after the Opposition agitation programme, sources said.

### Farakka impact

From Page 1 Col 8

tion of further ecological hazards. It will also suggest specific remedial measures.

According to the PCP, drafted by the Ministry of Irrigation, Water Development and Flood Control, the Department of Environment (DOE) will be the executing agency for the project. The DOE will engage consultants to undertake the study, to be completed in 18 months.

An inter-ministerial advisory committee will be constituted soon to finalise terms of reference of the project. The committee will also review the project activities regularly and provide guidance.

Justifying the necessity of an inter-ministerial committee, an official said this is needed because the activities of the project are multi-sectoral in nature.

"Since the commissioning of the Farakka barrage by India two decades ago, there has not been any official comprehensive study on its environmental impact on Bangladesh," said the official. The project, the first of its kind, is very important considering the country's environmental situation."

### Power sector

From Page 1 Col 5

donors were happy to learn that the PDB is planning some steps to improve its performance, according to highly-placed sources.

The PDB will set meters on its feeder lines to measure exactly the amount of electricity generation and the system loss. It will also take up a pilot programme to monitor the system loss in four cities in four PDB zones. Contracts for billing and collection will also be given out to private operators in a number of selected towns, sources said.

The donors are also ready to fund the implementation of the reform programme, sources said.

## Cairo conference

From Page 1 Col 4

ment in Cairo no matter what happens within the range of what's likely to happen," he added.

But Gore insisted the conference was already a success and had not been sidetracked by the row over the abortion issue.

The final document will have the broadest consensus ever," he added.

Meanwhile, liberal Western states faced off against Catholic and Muslim countries in a three-hour closed-door committee discussion on one of the most contentious paragraphs of the 113-page draft, tackling abortion and women's health.

Norway, which on Monday called for decriminalising abortion, urged a greater co-

### CMC hostels

From Page 1 Col 6

relled gun, two LG and one foreign-made pistol, seven cocktails and one wireless set and around 100 rounds of ammunition.

But a senior police official, on condition of anonymity, said huge arms and ammunition were recovered in a sudden crackdown on the Chittagong Medical College campus and hostels.

The police have cordoned off the campus. A tense situation was prevailing there.

The police crackdown followed an attack by a group of armed terrorists on the residence and the chamber of the principal of Chittagong Medical College, Dr Nurjahan Bhuiyan.

Talking to The Daily Star, Dr Nurjahan Bhuiyan said, a group of terrorists at first tried to storm into her residence but failed in the face of resistance by the security guards.

The terrorists then attacked her chamber by exploding cocktails, she said, adding that the panic-stricken patients and her staff there suffered minor injuries while running for safety.

The attackers ransacked her chamber and damaged furniture and glasses, the principal said.

When asked she replied, "I don't know their identities. But I have simply lodged a complaint with the Panchlaish police."

Meanwhile UNB adds: The Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) today called an indefinite strike in Chittagong Medical College demanding release of its five activists arrested during a police raid in the halls.

## OIC FMs confce

From Page 1 Col 4

Umer Farooq, the chief cleric of Muslim majority Kashmir, and senior leader Abdul Ghani Bhat had been invited to the talks, aimed at mustering support for the Muslim separatist cause in Kashmir.

Indian Foreign Ministry spokesman said the OIC invitation was unwarranted.

"India is not at all surprised that the invitation by the OIC Secretary General should be publicly announced first by a Pakistani spokesman," he said.

"India is not a member of the OIC and we do not see why the OIC Secretary General should invite Indian citizens," he added.

Another report says, Pakistan will maintain its troops in Bosnia regardless of whether the arms embargo is lifted, a senior Foreign Ministry official said today.

Pakistan has sent 3,000 troops to join the UN peace-keeping effort in Bosnia.

Editor: Mahfuz Anam