

# Twice told tale of city telephones

Star Report

For a less privileged person or someone without connections in high places, getting a telephone connection in the capital can take more than a decade or more.

For such lesser mortals, the only solution lies in greasing the palms of a section of T and T employees.

According to T and T sources, there are over one lakh pending applications for telephone connections in the capital but the authorities are unable to meet their demands due to an acute shortage of cables.

"Applicants are waiting to get their lines for years, but we are unable to give them connections," a T and T source told The Daily Star.

Yet, bribes, influence peddling and pressure from high officials often enable people to get their telephone connections within a month and, in exceptional cases, in only a couple of weeks.

When asked for comments on the situation, former chairman of the T and T Board Fazlur Rahman said, "Yes, there are people who had applied for telephones in ten years ago. They have not got their lines yet because of non-availability of lines in the areas where they want the connections."

Denying any knowledge about any under-hand dealings of a section of unscrupulous T and T employees, and their clients, the former chairman added, "Applicants in the old town are not getting any lines for a long time because there are no technical facilities there."

A businessman in Shahjahanpur applied for an analogue telephone connection in 1986. This application was shelved for long four years and in 1990, the applicant asked for a digital line as the T & T Board had just introduced digital lines.

As there was no response to application till 1993. He thus was forced to abandon all hopes of obtaining a telephone through legal channel. So he approached a T and T employee who assured him of doing the needful. Finally, in 1994, he got the line, allegedly, in exchange for a bribe of ten thousand taka.

"I condemn anyone bribing a T & T employee," the former chairman of the Board said after hearing of the matter from this correspondent over phone, adding "since such things take place privately, I am unable to do anything about them."

In another case, a person who had applied for a phone in October 1994 was at first told that he would not get the line within a year as there was a crisis of cables. But he nevertheless managed to get his telephone by mid-November last, thanks to the help of some high official.



Russian Foreign Minister Andrei Kozyrev (R) is welcomed by his Chinese counterpart Qian Qichen (L) before talks at the Diaoyutai State Guest House in Beijing yesterday. Kozyrev will travel to Japan today after meetings with Chinese President Jiang Zemin and Prime Minister Li Peng. —AFP/UNB photo

## Sexy summit

From Page One

"We have called in twice as many waitresses as usual and extra performers from Thailand, eastern Europe and England. We are also advertising in newspapers for more Danish girls," said Marianne Gro of Wonder Bar.

"It's all about offering a good mix," she told the morning newspaper Politiken.

But rigorous security measures at Copenhagen's hotels, which are all fully booked for the conference, are likely to cause practical problems for escort girls and strip-tease dancers.

"I'm perfectly willing to offer a private strip-show to men who see me dance next week. But then it is up to the customer to rent a bar or something if he cannot raise a hotel room," Russian dancer Natalia told Politiken.

## Mobs kill two dacoits

From Our Correspondent

COMILLA, Mar 1: Two dacoits were beaten to death and another eight seriously injured in Burichang and Chouddogram thanas last night.

In Burichang thana, one dacoit died on the spot and six were injured when a group of people, including some bus passengers caught hold of them and severely assaulted them. The armed robbers were trying to flee after committing a robbery on a Faridganj-bound bus from Dhaka.

The dead was identified as Abdul Karim. Details about him could not be known. The injured were handed over to police.

At Dampara village of Chouddagram thana, villagers rushed to the house of one Abdus Sattar when he shouted for help after a gang of dacoits attacked him. The villagers were able to catch three of the seven-member gang and seriously beat them up. One of the seriously injured, Saifullah, 35, died on the spot while the two others were handed over to police in critical condition.

## Electronic goods seized in Sylhet

From Staff Correspondent

SYLHET, Mar 1: Electronic goods worth about Taka seven lakh were seized by the Customs officials at the Sylhet Osmany Airport yesterday.

Officials said, five pieces of video cameras, three wrist watches, 66 cameras, forty four cassettes, 188 chains and four articles were brought yesterday in two luggages in the name of N Haque and Manjur Kamal.

Acting on a tip-off, the Deputy Commissioner of Customs, Excise and VAT Sylhet and Superintendent, seized the goods. Nobody has so far been arrested.

## Smuggled goods

From Page One

edly selling smuggled goods mainly brought from India and Thailand both by air and road.

Those smuggled items include Indian saris, three-piece suits for women, pajamas and ready-made garments, sources said.

As a consequence, locally made cloth items are facing severe competition, traders said.

## Barings knew deals?

From Page One

gates white-collar crime. He did not elaborate.

Leeson, a 28-year-old Englishman who ran the bank's Singapore futures trading desk, is said to have lost hundreds of millions of the bank's dollars by wrongly betting that the Tokyo stock market would rise.

Over the weekend Barings was placed under the British equivalent of bankruptcy protection, marking one of the most spectacular financial downturns in British investment banking.

The Eastern Express of Hong Kong quoted an unidentified source as saying Leeson faxed his Singapore office from the Thai resort of Phuket on Monday, apologizing for his actions.

A London newspaper, The Independent, said investigators believe the investment bank's London treasury department arranged up to 70 million dollars of emergency funding to allow Leeson to meet desperate margin calls — a demand for Barings cash to cover a portion of its rising losses.

It reported without attribution that Leeson wrote a month ago to confirm the arrangements. The bank's chairman, Peter Baring, has said he knew nothing of the problems before last Friday, the paper noted.

The newspaper said market professionals who phoned Barings in London as long as two weeks ago over the bank's growing stake in Tokyo stock futures contracts were told that was part of a planned strategy with clients.

In Hong Kong, the Eastern Express quoted a source as saying Leeson was given a line of credit approved by Barings in London of 700 million dollar within the past two weeks to underwrite his trades in Tokyo and Singapore.

Francis Baring, the director

## Village home

From Page One

At the Kamalapur Railway Station, the blackmakteers collected advance tickets allegedly through a section of the Railway employees and were now selling those at abnormally high rate. Intending buyers were found bargaining with the unauthorised 'ticket sellers.'

Such unauthorised ticket sellers were very active at the Gabtoli bus terminal while this practice at the two other terminals was markedly less. Tickets for the luxury coaches operating from the unauthorised bus stand at Fakirerpool were also being sold this way.

Furthermore, many passengers at those terminals were also being harassed by a section of the bus helpers and unauthorised ticket sellers.

At the Sadarghat launch terminal, the situation was the worst. Launches and steamers were sailing highly overloaded. Fifteen to 20 per cent additional fares were allegedly being realised from the passengers. The rate may further go up today.

Law enforcing agency personnel, deployed at the bus and launch terminals, seemed indifferent to the problems caused to the passengers.

The Railway and the BIWTC authorities arranged special trains and river vessels on the occasion of the Eid. But the arrangements were too inadequate to meet requirement.

# Eid likely tomorrow

From Page One

In a message, President Abdur Rahman Biswas has underlined the importance of united efforts by all to achieve economic uplift and for building a prosperous nation.

He said the Eid festival teaches us to sink differences between the rich and the poor and uphold equality and brotherhood.

Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia in her message said, "Let us make efforts to create a stable, democratic and developed society in the light of the inner message of the Eid-ul-Fitr. Let it be our pledge that we shall untidely maintain social unity and equality to face the challenges of collective development and we shall devote ourselves to the cause of others."

Awami League chief Sheikh Hasina in her message said, although the Eid means happiness to millions of people, this year the Eid could not bring even a smile because of hunger and poverty.

Sheikh Hasina will exchange Eid greetings with members of the public on Eid day at her residence at House-54, Road-5, Dhanmondi from 10 am to 1 pm.

Dhaka City Mayor Mohammad Hanif has also wished a happy Eid to all city dwellers.

On this occasion, the President and the Prime Minister have sent Eid greetings to the heads of state and government of the Muslim countries.

Meanwhile the government has taken up elaborate programmes to celebrate the Eid-ul-Fitr. The main Eid congregation will be held at the National Eidgah Maidan at the Supreme Court premises at 8 am. In case of inclement weather, it will be held at the Baitul Mukarram National Mosque at 8 am.

On the day, the national flag will be hoisted atop public and private buildings.

Some major public and private buildings will be illuminated.

Special diet will be served at hospitals, jails, children's centres, baby homes, vagrant and destitute welfare centres.

After the Eid prayers the Ministry of Information will arrange screening of films and organise cultural functions at city parks and other areas.

The Islamic Foundation, Islamic cultural centres in different districts and the Min-

## Shopkeeper shot

From Page One

demanding two pairs of shoes free of cost. When the manager refused to oblige, the youths, accompanied by two of their accomplices, went to the shop the next night and took away three pairs of shoes by force and also demanded money.

Yesterday, two of those youths visited the shop again to collect the money. When the manager refused to give in to extortion, the youths opened fire, the salesmen said.

They said the manager and eight salesmen of the shop were busy serving around 30 customers in the large shop at the time when the thugs opened indiscriminate fire and fled through the alley between Dhaka College and Teachers' Training College on the other side of the road.

Md Shahjahan Uddin Khan has two daughters and a son. He is a resident of Konapara under Demra police station.

Haji Mannan, proprietor of Roushan Garments, a shop next door to Bata, alleged that a well-identified section of armed youths have been engaged in extortion over the years, but no action has yet been taken against them ever.

While describing the misery of traders of the area who are regularly harassed by the gang, Haji Mannan at the stage broke into tears.

When contacted, Dhanmondi police said a case was registered with the thana but they could not arrest anyone till last night.

# Tamil rebels losing patience

From Page One

Confidence of the Tamil people," the statement said.

Analysts were quick to warn that corrective measures will have to be taken fast if the government wants to save the peace process. "This should be treated seriously as a very grave threat to the whole peace talks and the process. This is the first time that the LTTE has gone on record expressing grave doubts as to the government's commitment to peace. Regardless of the specifics of a peace package, it is clear that without basic trust and confidence nothing can be achieved," says Dr Paikiasothy Saravanamuttu, visiting lecturer at the Colombo University and respected newspaper columnist.

Over 30,000 people, most of them civilians, have been killed in the 12-year-old separatist war where the LTTE is fighting for a separate state for the island's minority Tamils in the north and east of the island. The government has promised substantial devolution of powers to a newly created unit in the area. "We are ready with the devolution package. If the LTTE wants to discuss a political settlement we will be ready with our package," Foreign Minister Lakshman Kadiragamar told newsmen recently.

The armed forces impose their own restrictions on various items. Whenever we point these out, the government responds by giving assurances that are never kept," the statement said.

The two hard hitting statements came as the government asks its negotiating team to stand by for the fourth round of talks with the rebels in their stronghold of Jaffna. Critics have complained that the government was showing incompetence in handling the peace talks with little attention being paid to details. The team led by the President's Secretary was expected to leave for Jaffna in the next 24 hours but the strong criticism from the LTTE may now delay their departure.

The rebels accused the government of trying to make propaganda mileage without any consideration towards the people. "We even wonder whether supplying sunshine stories to the outside world is only part of the government strategy to throw the ball into the LTTE court all the time. Trying to win foreign aid for the apparent purpose of reconstruction and rehabilitation of the war-ravaged north and east, which could again be used for war purposes is certainly not the best way to win

## Eid congregations in city

By Staff Correspondent

The main Eid-ul-Fitr congregation in the city will be held at the National Eidgah at the Supreme Court premises at 8 am. In case of inclement weather, the congregation will be held at the Baitul Mukarram National Mosque at 8 am.

There will be four Eid congregations at the Baitul Mukarram. The first one will be held at 7 am, the second at 8 am, the third at 8:45 am and the last congregation will be held at 9:30 am.

Eid congregations will also be held at different mosques and eidgahs in the capital. Timing of some of the Eid jaamaats are as follows: Azimpur Community Centre maidan at 8 am, Dhanmondi Eidgah maidan at 8 am, SOS Children's village jame mosque at 7:45 am, Dhaka University central mosque at 8 am and 9 am, Shahidullah Hall at 8 am, Zahurul Haque Hall mosque at 8 am, BUET ground at 8 am, Mohammadpur Pisciculture Housing Society jame mosque at 8 am, Asad Gate new colony mosque at 8 am, Salamgah jame mosque Rampura at 8 am, Baitul Faziq mosque Mohammadpur at 8 am, Gulshan central mosque and eidgah maidan at 8 am, Mohammadpur jame mosque complex Eidgah maidan at 8 am, Kalyanpur Housing Estate jame mosque at 8 am, Armentola maidan at 8 am, Singtola Sitara Begum jame mosque at 8 am and 9 am, Mahakhal Gausel Azam mosque at 7:30 am, 8:30 am and 9 am, Saigumbuj mosque in Mohammadpur at 8:15 am, Lalmatia Shahi Mosque complex at 8:30 am, Hakkan mosque in Sadarghat at 8:30am, and Maddhya Pirebagh Baitul Mamur jame mosque at 8:30 am.

istry of Cultural Affairs will arrange seminars on the significance of the Eid-ul-Fitr.

Children's reunion and charity football matches will also be held.

Divisional commissioners, deputy commissioners, Thana Nirbahi Officers have planned similar programmes on the occasion.

## Bee-line at Bailey Road

By Staff Correspondent

With Eid-ul-Fitr expected tomorrow, well-to-do ladies have been thronging the city's shopping centres to find "something special" for the festive occasion.

Nowhere is the mad rush more visible than at Bailey Road — a paradise for ladies who view buying a saree almost with a religious fervour.

So, what's in store for these fervent shoppers who have braved incorrigible traffic jams — peculiar to this time of the year — to check out the numerous shops selling the traditional garb?

"Exorbitant prices," observes a teenager out to buy her first saree.

"We had to increase prices to keep up with price hikes in general," explains a smug shopkeeper.

When asked about the price range in his shop, exclusively stocking local saris, he informs "We have printed cotton saris for around Taka 300, silks starting at Tk 800 and zamdanis that go upto Tk 9000."

And what's 'hot' this year?

"We have Baluchari Kota from Tangail that's new this year. And Kanjuran saris (embroidered half-silk) from Mirpur are making a comeback," said a sales-girl who seemed more knowledgeable about the latest fashions than the shop-owner.

The young are going in for cottons and softer silks like Rajshahi and Tusore while the older women are opting for Zamdanis and heavy silks," she says, revealing the customers' buying habits.

One would-be customer leaves the shop empty-handed, with a sigh.

Asked about her opinion on Eid-saree-buying mania, she says: "I didn't come to buy a saree. I only came to look at them. With my Eid bonus (she is a bank employee) I shall be buying school uniforms for my two kids."

## One gets life-term for killing wife

From Staff Correspondent

SYLHET, Mar 1: A man was sentenced for life here on charge of killing his wife.

The District and Sessions Judge Sylhet, acquitted two other accused in the case — brother-in-law and mother-in-law of the victim.

The prosecution case in brief is that, on August 30, 1991 Nuruzzaman of village Bakharpur of Golapganj informed his father-in-law that his wife Salma Khanam, 22, had committed suicide by taking pesticides.

But Salam's father disbelieved it and lodged a case. Police had submitted charge-sheet against the victim's husband Nuruzzaman and his brother and mother on completion of investigation.

Besides, one Hajj Ramjuddin, 70, hit by a motorcycle at Joidpurer yesterday afternoon, later succumbed to his injuries at the DMCH.

## Old man chopped to death in Satkhira

From Our Correspondent

SATKHIRA, Mar 1: Moksed Ali Gazi 70, was chopped to death by a group of unidentified persons at his village Baiduri under Sadar thana of the district last night.

Moksed Ali was returning home after Tarabih prayers.

The killers fled immediately.

Moksed was buried after autopsy at the Satkhira Sadar Hospital. The reason for the killing could not be known immediately.

Son of the victim, Sajjadul Islam, filed a case with Sadar thana police against six persons, including two union parishad members — Abdul Khaleq and Osle accusing them of the murder.

## Elections

From Page One

elections, if and when, is currently the main topic of political speculation.

"We will sit together after Eid and discuss the whole issue," he said, adding, "No tentative date or month has been fixed yet."

But some other BNP leaders hinted that the party is preparing for elections next winter.

Salam Talukdar said personally he felt the opposition parties would participate in the elections, even if those were held under a party government.

"No one would leave his constituency to his political opponent for long five years," he observed.

He said people are least concerned about the opposition demand and propaganda for a caretaker government. "They only know that the BNP came to power through a free and fair election with a definite mandate," he added.

The people have also witnessed the unprecedented scale of development works under the present government," he said adding that the government's performance would help the BNP to be re-elected in the next elections.

Pointing to the fresh call for talks given by the Prime Minister on February 23, Salam Talukdar said, "The opposition parties should respond positively."

# The Midnight File

## Iran tries to buy nuclear materials from Argentina

JERUSALEM, Mar 1: Iran tried to buy from Argentina centrifuges, heavy water and other components needed to start a nuclear weapons programme, a senior Israeli military official said this week. The allegation provides some of the strongest backing to date of claims Iran is planning to build a nuclear bomb, which Israel estimates could be a reality within ten years, reports AP.

## Polish PM dismissed

WARSAW, Mar 1: Parliament dismissed the prime minister today and appointed an economist as the first former communist to head Poland's government since the collapse of the Iron Curtain. The Sejm, the powerful lower chamber, voted 285 to 5, with 127 abstentions, to accept Waldemar Pawlak's resignation and give his job to Jozef Oleksy, the parliament speaker since 1993, reports AP.

# Bangladeshi troops

From Page One

Africa's east coast to Dar Es Salaam, Tanzania, where they will board chartered jets for the flight home across the Indian Ocean.

"The were all singing and having a good time when they left," said Eddie Jones of Baltimore, who has been managing the seaport for the United Nations.

Pak peacekeepers abandoned their positions around the airport at dawn today and retreated to the nearby sea port under the protective guns of US and Italian troops.

Even before the last Pakistani tanks and armoured personnel carriers had left, hundreds of looters clambered over the airport walls to cart away the few materials left behind.

More than two dozen "technicals" — civilian vehicles armed with a variety of weapons — raced through the airport's gates to force the scavengers out.

The "technicals" from one of Mogadishu's local militias were later joined by Somali police trained by the United Nations.

Rifle shots rang out through the morning. Most appeared to be meant as warnings to the looters and none appeared to be directed at the Pakistanis, or at the Italian and American troops who covered their retreat.

Earlier the US commander who took tactical control of the entire operation yesterday said the withdrawal is going well, without any of the feared violence or other hitches.

"If I had to give you a sports analogy, we've finished the first half," Marine Lt. Gen. Anthony C Zinni said.

## 18 killed

From Page One

Razzak, Alva and Kiliq — were admitted to the same hospital in critical condition.

Both the drivers managed to flee. Police, however, seized the vehicles.

In another accident at Netrakona, one person was killed and seven were injured when a bus while overtaking another, plunged into a ditch beside the Netrakona-Mohanganj road. Police seized the bus later.

Our DMCH Correspondent adds: Four persons were killed in separate incidents in the city and Gazipur yesterday.

Rafiq, 22, a worker of Karim Jute Mills, was killed when a bus knocked him near the mills in Demra area on Dhaka-Chittagong Highway in the afternoon.

Tara Mia, 70, a day labourer, who was injured in a road mishap on Tuesday morning in Dhanmondi area of the city, succumbed to his injuries at Dhaka Medical College Hospital yesterday.

Anwara Khatun, 25, of a slum in west Agargaon area of the city, hit by a minibus Tuesday evening, succumbed to her injuries at the DMCH yesterday morning.

Besides, one Hajj Ramjuddin, 70, hit by a motorcycle at Joidpurer yesterday afternoon, later succumbed to his injuries at the DMCH.

## Brunei Sultan

From Page One

frantic efforts to save Barings from collapse, that a Far East investor appeared to be prepared to take on the risk of closing the future contracts and allowing a Barings rescue.

"It looked like Father Christmas had come," one banker was quoted as saying.

However, George returned at 8.35 pm to tell the bankers, who had also expressed willingness to lend money to rescue Barings, that the investor — Sultan Sir Bolkiah Hassanali, the world's richest man — had withdrawn.

"It is not known why he withdrew," the paper said, the Bank of England subsequently put Barings under administration.

**শৈলী**

**আধুনিক পাঠকের নান্দনিক পত্রিকা**

**ঈদ সংখ্যা ১৯৯৫**

দেশ-বিদেশের বরণ্য লেখকদের গল্প-উপন্যাস

তো আছেই, আরো আছে খ্যাতিমান লেখকদের

অসামান্য ধবন্ধ-নিবন্ধ, তারকাদের ঈদের রান্না,

ঈদ ফ্যাশন, ঈদের কার্টুন, রম্য-রচনা, ভ্রমণ

কাহিনী, নির্বাচিত কবিতা এবং একজন বাঙালি

সৈনিকের স্মৃতিচারণের ওপর ভিত্তি করে আজাদ

হিন্দ ফৌজ নিয়ে একটি ব্যতিক্রমী রচনা

অসঙ্গ করাছেন দেশের

খ্যাতিমান শিল্পীগণ

মঙ্গলবার ৩০ জানুয়ারি ১৯৯৫

ঈদ সংখ্যার মূল্য

৩০ টাকা

**শৈলী**

বেঙ্গিমকো মিডিয়া লিমিটেডের পাবলিক প্রকাশনা

রহমান ম্যানশন, ৪র্থ তলা, ১৬১, মতিঝিল বা/এ, ঢাকা-১০০০

ফোন: ৮৬৩৭৬১, ৮৬৩৭৬২, ২৪৮৬০০

Editor: Mahfuz Anam

Printed & Published by A. S. Mahmud, Managing Director, on behalf of Mediaworld Ltd., 62, Motijheel C/A, Dhaka-1000, from City Publishing House Ltd., 90 Kakrail, Dhaka-1000. Editorial, News & Commercial Offices: House No: 11, Road No: 3, Dhanmondi R/A, Dhaka-1205. FAX: 500092-4, Commercial: 500091 (Direct), Fax No: 88-02-863035, GPO Box No: 3287, Cable: DAILYSTAR, DHAKA.