

President Abdur Rahman Biswas taking salute during the Independence and National Day parade held in the city Sunday

15PR photo

Independence Day celebrated

From Page One

hoisted atop public and private buildings. Important buildings were illuminated in the evening.

Radio Bangladesh and Bangladesh Television put out special programmes while newspapers published special articles highlighting the significance of the day.

important islands and street corners were decorated with miniature flags and buntings. Army, Navy, Air Force, BDR and police played bands in different parts of the

The Prime Minister visited the mazar of her late husband. President Ziaur Rahman, to pay tributes to the late leader on the occasion of the Independence Day.

Awami League chief Sheikh Hasina, accompanied by her party colleagues including Abdul Mannan, Abdur Razzak, Amir Hossain Amu, Tofael Ahmed and Zillur Rahman, visited the Smriti Shoudha and

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be held in New Delhi in May,

cent international develop-

ments of interest to the two

countries as well as South Asia.

They will also discuss re-

The visit by the Sri Lankan

leader, he said, would above

all emphasise that the

Bangladesh-Sri Lanka relations

are important to both the

countries and that the signifi-

cance of such relations go be-

Minister, Lakshman Kadir Ga

mar, will accompany President

the two leaders will be pre-

ceded by a tete-a-tete between

them at the Prime Minister's

scribed it as "a healthy devel-

opment" in South Asia that

President Kumaratunga follow-

ing her election in 1994 had

taken it as a matter of priority

to visit all the South Asian

countries to develop personal

contacts for a faster develop-

ment of relations and coopera-

tion among the countries of

important to have more inter-

actions at the highest level to

develop trade and economic

Dhaka's success in

micro credit

programme

unique: CIDA chief

International Development

Agency (CIDA), now on a visit

to Bangladesh, had words of

praise for the country's suc-

cess in micro credit pro-

grammes for the rural poor.

Canadian High Commission

yesterday afternoon, CIDA Pre-

sident Madame Huguette

Labelle attributed the

achievement to the NGOs. She

particularly lauded Grameen

dous development in micro-

enterprises ... leading to tre-

mendous empowerment of the

Body formed to

review DU hall

incident

ties yesterday formed a five-

member committee to review

ladesh Kuwait Maitri Hall over

constituted with Dean of the

Biological Science faculty Prof

committee are Proctor Nazrul

Islam, Provost of the Banga-

bandhu Hall Abul Kalam Manjur

Morshed, Mohsin Hall Provost

Abul Hashem and Student-ad-

viser Meherunnesa Chowdhury.

Other members of the

Shahadat Ali as its convenor.

the incidents in the Bang-

water crisis, reports UNB.

Dhaka University authori-

"There has been a tremen-

Bank, BRAC and Proshika.

poor." she said.

Talking to the press at the

reports UNB

The head of the Canadian

Farooq Sobhan said, "It's

The Foreign Secretary de-

The Sri Lankan Foreign

The formal talks between

yond South Asia.

Kumaratunga.

office.

the region.

the Foreign Secretary said.

he said.

placed wreaths there.

BNP leaders, including party secretary general Salam Talukder. Dr Khandaker Mosharraf Hossain, Tarigul Islam, Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan and MK Anwar visited the Smriti Shoudha and placed wreaths.

Dr Kamal Hossain, president of Gano Forum along with party leaders laid wreaths at the Smriti Shoudha. The Vice-Chanceller of Dhaka University Prof Emajuddin also placed

Leaders of the Left Democratic Front (LDF) placed wreaths at the Smriti Shoudha at 8.30 am. Front leaders Hasanul Hag Inu. Shahidullah Chowdhury, Khalequzzaman, Al-M Mahbubul Haq and Dilip Barua were present.

Workers Party leader Rashed Khan Menon along with other party leaders laid wreaths at the Smriti Shoudha in the morning. The party also held a discussion meeting in

cooperation at a faster pace."

He said that the ASEAN

experience showed that it was

important to have more fre-

quent meetings and consulta-

tions at the highest level with-

out fuss to develop coopera-

According to the official

programme released to the

press by the Ministry of For-

eign Affairs President Ku-

maratunga will fly to Savar

shortly after her arrival here to

lay wreaths at the Jatiya Smriti

Shoudha to honour the martyrs

International Airport, earlier

the Foreign Minister. ASM

Mostafizur Rahman, and his

wife Sofia Rahman will receive

will call on President Ku-

maratunga at the state guest

house Korotoa, where the Sri

Lankan leader will be staying,

Shortly afterwards Presi-

dent Kumaratunga will attend a

reception to be hosted in her

honour by the Sri Lankan High

later call on the President, Ab-

dur Rahman Biswas, at the

Bangabhaban where she will

also have dinner to be hosted

by President Biswas.

The Sri Lankan leader will,

Prime Minister Begum Zia

On her arrival at the Zia

of the Liberation War.

the Sri Lankan leader.

in the evening.

Commissioner.

the afternoon.

Lankan President due today

The newly-appointed Director General of the Bangla Academy, Prof Mansur Musa, placed wreaths at the national monument. The academy also held a cultural programme at

Mrs Lili Chowdhury, wife of martyred teacher of Dhaka University Prof Munir Chowdhury, opened a memorial plaque on the university cam-

its premises

The plaque, built near the residence of the Vice-Chancellor, bears the names of those teachers, students and employees of Dhaka University who embraced martyrdom during the Liberation War.

The Dhaka University Central Students Union (DUCSU) held an impressive cultural function at the TSC audito-

Many other political and socio-cultural organisations also placed wreaths and organised discussion meetings and cultural functions to mark the war of independence.

Apr 11-12

alise their 8-point demand, brought out a procession at SKOP hartal noon yesterday. While marching towards the deferred to Jatiya Press Club, the processionists stopped near the Diploma Nurses Institute at Bijoynagar and damaged the car

in the city yesterday.

Pakistan next

month

Khaleda Zia will visit two

SAARC countries next month

to promote regional coopera-

tion within the South Asian fo-

Secretary Farooq Sobhan said

that the upcoming visits by

Begum Zia, in her capacity as

the current SAARC chairper-

son, will take her to Pakistan

Nurses damage car

of project director

By DMCH Correspondent

aged the car of the Project Di-

rector of the Nursing Educa-

tion Department, at Bijoynagar

The Bangladesh Diploma

Nurses Association (BDNA) and

the Bangladesh Student Nurses

Union (BSNU), enforcing a

strike since March 18 to re-

CAPE TOWN, South Africa,

Mar 27: President Nelson

Mandela fired his estranged

wife, Winnie, from his gov-

ernment Wednesday following

weeks of embarrassing contro-

Cabinet of a rebellious and di-

visive figure who publicly criti-

cized his conservative eco-

nomic policies. It does not af-

fect Mrs. Mandela's standing in

the African National Congress.

where she has strong grass-

most dramatic act Mandela has

performed since coming to of-

fice almost a year ago in South

Africa's first all-race elections.

criticized the government's

approach to social reform,

made an unauthorized trip

abroad, split the ranks of the

African National Congress

Women's League, and most

seriously, been accused by po-

lice of bribe-taking and influ-

Mrs. Mandela has defiantly

Firing his wife marks the

roots support.

ence peddling.

The sacking rids Mandela's

versy and calls for her ouster.

The striking nurses dam-

Briefing newsmen Foreign

rum, reports BSS.

and Nepal.

Prime Minister Begum

of Minoti Sharma. The 48-hour countrywide hartal, called by the Sramik Karmachari Oikya Parishad Winnie ousted (SKOP), will be observed on April 11-12 instead of April 4from cabinet 5, reports UNB.

The SKOP leaders vesterday rescheduled its programme on account of Maize Bhandar Urs. said a press release.

No salt crisis, says minister

The government was determined to maintain the normal supply and price stability of all essentials including salt and ruled out any crisis of salt in the country, reports

This was expressed at a meeting held here yesterday at the Ministry of Commerce with M Shamsul Islam, Minister for Commerce and Information in the chair, a press release said.

3 die in separate incidents

By Staff Correspondent One person was killed, one

drowned and another committed suicide in the city yester-

Shahjahan, 23, a resident of Shokdi under Demra police station, was stabbed to death reportedly after a brawl with one of his neighbours over plucking flowers from a gar-

Md Parvez, 20, of Jahuri Mahalla under Mohammadpur police station, drowned while bathing in a pond inside the Botanical Garden at Mirpur.

Munna, a 14-year boy, reportedly committed suicide by taking poison at his Jigatola residence.

The cause of his committing suicide could not be known immediately.

All three bodies were sent to Dhaka Medical College Hospital morgue for autopsy.

> our view, consider raising this contentious issue with the

PM to visit Nepal, Fate of Padma-Taltala canal dredging project uncertain

By Staff Correspondent

The fate of the Padma Taltala canal dredging project in Munshiganj district lies uncertain as officials in the directorate concerned confirmed that the project was

facing financial strain. Sources in the Directorate of Dredging in Narayangani said that the dredging could not be continued after the initial funds of Taka 1.5 crore ran

"We have already informed our higher office and asked for additional funds of Tk. crore," said a senior engineer at the Narayangani dredging office on condition that he would not be named

The Padma-Taltala canal which is locally known as the "Suez Canal" for its importance as a waterway has completely dried up causing problems to the people of five thanas of Munshiganj district

The canal is the only river

route in the area for the transport of agricultural produces as well as commercial items.

It is reported that although the project was taken up eight months ago. dredging was not carried out beyond a few hundred yards.

According to officials. Tk. 75 lakh was required for dredging for every kilometre of the canal.

Denying recent press reports on alleged corruption. the official claimed that the work had slowed down since they could not locate proper site for disposing off the soil after dredging.

The Directorate of Dredging has a fleet of 27 small and large dredgers. Of those 20 were procured in 1953 Between 1971 and 1981, it procured eleven new dredgers from Denmark. France and the Netherlands with external financial assistance.

Foreign secy's briefing

From Page 1

tackle the issue bilaterally and on its own merit.

Faroog Sobhan, who was the country's high commissioner to New Delhi before taking up his new assignment, said he had followed the instructions of the government and had pursued the water issue with the Indian authorities on a regular basis.

He also said that he had raised the water issue during his farewell call with Indian Prime Minister Narasimha Rao and also the ministers for External Affairs, Water and Com-

Asked if India was linking the water issue with transit. the foreign secretary evaded a direct reply and said, "Both countries have their own position on the water issue and they were known to one another. We hope we will be able to hear from the Indian side".

Farooq Sobhan said Bangladesh had repeatedly pointed out to India the immense hardship and suffering caused by the unilateral withdrawal of water and added, "Our approach had been to find out the best possible solution."

He mentioned the last Secretary-level meeting between the two countries were held two years back. He also referred to Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia's visit to New Delhi in May 1992, when the matter was discussed.

He said the Indian Prime Minister had given an assurance to our Prime Minister when they met in New Delhi about finding a solution to on the water issue.

Replying to a question Sobhan said it was unlikely that the Indian Prime Minister would visit Dhaka shortly, or that our Prime Minister would make a trip to New Delhi prior to holding of the SAARC summit, now scheduled for early May in the Indian capital.

The foreign secretary told the newsmen that India had said they would release more water in 1994 and 1995. However, when asked about the quantum, he said it had no definite figures Sobhan said that the new

Indian high commissioner was

due to arrive in Dhaka today

and he would find out the lat est developments on the Ganges water. Meanwhile, the foreign secretary informed the news-

men present that the Foreign Ministry will from now on hold press briefing every Sunday. He requested newsmen to give their questions on Satur-

day to the Director General, External Publicity, so that the DG could reply to those at the regular briefing.

He also assured that he would try to brief the press once a month, and would also provide background briefings in small groups to newsmen.

Hasina From Page 1

for the current fertiliser crisis. price-hike of rice and other essentials, and accused it of indiscriminate killing of farmers and workers. Hasina said the Prime

Minister's claim for self-sufficiency in food had proved wrong. "On the contrary, a famine-like situation is prevailing in the northern districts due to scarcity of rice." Prices of rice varied from

Tk 16 to Tk 22 per kg while a bag of fertiliser from Tk 500 to Tk 1000, she said, alleging that farmers were shot dead when they wanted to buy fertiliser.

Hasina took the government to task for not fulfilling various accords signed with workers and employees in last four years and alleged that some 16 industrial workers were killed when agitating for their demands, including minimum wages.

"None was spared. Farmers, workers, students, businessmen and even police were killed under this government.

The Midnight Rile

EU won't mediate in dispute over Kashmir

NEW DELHI. Mar 27: The European Union has no wish to mediate in a dispute between India and Pakistan over strifetorn Kashmir, a senior European Commission official said today, Indian newspapers reported last week that Kashmiri separatist leader Shabir Shah had asked the EU and the United States to try to arbitrate an agreement ending a decades-old dispute over the Himalayan region, reports

'Dhaka siege' today

From Page One

ing of firearms, sharp weapons, explosives and even sticks in those areas during the ban.

The areas where the ban was imposed under tion 144 are: The whole area around the Secretariat, House **Building Finance Corporation** building, the southern part of the link road between the Baitul Mukarram and the GPO. rom Hotel Pritam at Bijoynagar to the UBL crossing at Topkhana Road, from Noor Hossain Square to Golap Shah Mazar, the mazar gate of the old High Court, Star Gate of the Ramna Park to Segunbagicha, Hare Road, from Maghbazar crossing to Kakrail Church and Minto Road.

We will defy the ban and go ahead with our programme. said AL General Secretary Zillur Rahman talking to The Daily Star. Such order was undemocratic and part of a conspiracy to suppress the

Clash leaves 10 hurt in BMC

From Staff Correspondent BARISAL, Mar 27: At least

10 students of the Barisal Sher-e-Bangla Medical College were injured in a clash between two rival groups on the campus today. Some 30 hand bombs were

exploded by the two groups.

S M Ali From Page 1

four decades, late S M Ali held a number of important positions in national and international newspapers and organisations. Ali made his mark in the

Asia-Pacific region, especially in Southeast Asia, where he edited several leading publications. Starting his career as a Staff Reporter of the erstwhile Pakistan Observer in the early 1950s, late Ali held important positions in almost every major English language newspaper of erstwhile Pakistan. He was also the first Asian Managing Editor of the Bangkok Post, owned by the UK-based Thompson Foundation, in the 1970s and later was also the Managing Editor of the Hong Kong Standard. He was also the Executive Director of the Manilabased Press Foundation of Asia. Later he joined as the Communications Adviser for UNESCO, based in Kuala .umpur.

After retiring from the UNESCO in 1989 he returned to Bangladesh and briefly joined the Bangladesh Observer as its Editor. He then went on to launch The Daily Star on January 14, 1991, fulfilling a long-held desire to start a quality English-language daily in his motherland.

The late, lamented S M Ali passed away in a Bangkok hospital on October 17, 1993 while undergoing treatment for lung cancer. The other recipients of the Independence Day Award-1995 are: Ferdousi Rahman (music), Abdul Karim Sahitya Bisharad (literature) Ambar Ali (education), Abdullah Al Muti Sharfuddin (science). Zakaria Pintoo (sports) and ighal Mand Banoo (Social Science).

Myanmar From Page 1

and video cameras, came to Bangladesh for eight hours on transit visas. They were handed over to Cox's Bazar police who sent them to the district jail.

Myanmar border guards. however, protested the arrest and demanded their release.

The border guard officials of Myanmar and Bangladesh are scheduled to hold a flag meeting at Mongdow tomor row to solve the problem.

Opposition's democratic cam-

paign, he told The Daily Star. Describing how they would enforce the siege, some AL sources said that procession from different areas would proceed to the party central office while activists would picket at the main points in

earlier said that their activists as well as the farmers would siege the ministers if the government failed to supply fertiliser and foods and paper for students at fair prices. The AL has also planned a

rally in the capital after the siege programme. Zillur Rahman said. Jatiya Party has also ar-

ranged a rally near the Shapla Chattar at Motificel at 3 pm

Manzur murder From Page 1

Meanwhile, two other ac-

cused in the Manzur murder case Maj. Gen (Retd) Latif and Col. (Retd) Shamsur Rahman were still in the Dhaka Central Jail. Relatives of the two were not allowed to visit them till yesterday. Jail authorities said they did not receive any order in this regard. Jail officials. however, told the relatives of Mai Gen Latif that he was well.

Foreign Secretary Faroou Sobhan vesterday dismissed press reports that two ambassadors of the country have been called back in connection with Gen Manzur murder case.

The foreign secretary said "there is no basis of the newspaper reports about his sending of letters the two envoys isking them to return home.

He said that there should be a limit to speculation and those who printed the news ought to have checked its authenticity

Farmers From Page One

A serious crisis of fertiliser has been persisting in the thana. There is no fertiliser in the local markets of the thana. the farmers said. Meanwhile, crisis of diesel

has compelled the farmers to

suspend operation of hundreds

of their shallow and deep tubewells hampering irrigation in boro fields. Another report said, farmers looted 230 bags of fer-

tiliser from a Rangpur-bound truck at Ullapara thana on Nagarbari-Bogra highway Sunday night. The truck, carrying fertiliser booked for Deputy Co-

mmissioner of Rangpur, broke

down near village East Delua of the thana. Police said, at about 10 pm, some 500 farmers from nearby village came to the spot, looted

the fertiliser and kidnapped the helper of the truck. The driver Fazlur Rahman rushed to Ullapara police sta-

tion and informed about the incident but police could not recover the looted fertiliser. Meanwhile, some agitated

farmers pelted stones at Ullapara TNO office on Sunday mid-night as the thana administration failed to give them fertiliser as per their com-

Forest fire doused in Cox's Bazar

mitment.

From Our Correspondent COX'S BAZAR: Mar 27: A wild forest fire that had been raging in parts of Maheskhali island of Cox's Bazar for three days was extinguished yesterday after frantic efforts by local officials and people.

The fire caused extensive damage to Eucalyptus and Segun trees in Shaplapur, Dinajour and Kalarmarchara

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Mob kills dacoit, burns body

From Staff Correspondent

CHITTAGONG, Mar 27: A mob doused the body of an alleged dacoit with petrol and set it alight after beating him to death at Sitakundu Saturday night, police and local people

The man was identified as Md Hossain, locally called 'Hossainna dakat.'

The mob also ransacked the Sitakundu Health Complex while snatching the victim from there. Police at this stage opened

20 rounds of fire to disperse

the unruly crowd. Several thousand people gathered at Fakirhat under Sitakundu thana when Hossain was caught at the bazar on Saturday night. Hossain allegedly let loose a reign of terror in Sitakundu area by committing various crimes that angered the local people, police

The mob also put up a barricade on the Dhaka-Chittagong highway at Sitakundu.

Tk 5.2 crore

From Page 1

The review committee was board meeting of Jamuna Multipurpose Bridge Authority (JMBA) held yesterday at the JMBA office with Communications Minister Oli Ahmad in the authority, secretaries of different ministries and divisions and the members of the panel of experts attended the meeting.

the chair. Executive director of

behalf of Mediaworld Ltd, 52, Motijheel C/A, Dhaka-1000, from City Publishing House Ltd, 90 Kakrail, Dhaka-1000. Editorial, News & Commercial Offices: House No: 11, Road No: 3, Dhanmandi R/A, Dhaka-1205. PABX: 500092-4, Commercial: 500091 (Direct), Fax No:

Editor: Mahfuz Anam

WB unhappy over system loss From Page 1 Communications Minister Oli needs, which has been in-"The World Bank should, in

MCCI. Referring to the impact of the GATT accord on developing countries. Anis Ud Dowla pointed out that new issues on labour standards are being raised, which would affect the competitiveness of least developed countries like

Bangladesh. Noting that the World Bank had already sought labour market reforms in Bangladesh, he urged organisations like the Bank and the ILO to continue to have a say on labour issues instead of leaving them to the World Trade Organisation.

Noting that it was too early to predict if the WTO would deal with the issue, Landell-Mills, however, assured that the Bank would protect the interests of the LDCs. The chamber chief also

pointed to the 'mismatch' in economic liberalisation between Bangladesh and neighbouring India resulting in India capturing the local market while Bangladeshi goods cannot find market access to that country.

Indian policy-makers at the Paris Consortium meeting," he

In response, Landell-Mills said that India is hurting itself through the protective policies, but Bangladesh should not use this as a pretext to slow down the liberalisation efforts. He suggested that Dhaka should bilaterally try to convince India to remove the distortions. Referring to the recent de-

cline in rural demand in the wake of poor crop production due to the drought, the MCCI president felt that the government would have to devise appropriate supports for demand improvement in the rural sector. However, the World Bank

official observed that the drop in rural income is only a temporary problem, but added that rural credit should be effectively expedited. Advocating harmonisation of

fiscal policies with investment

cluded in the Chamber's tax proposals, Anis Ud Dowla sought a reduction of the corporate tax rate and the continuation of the tax holiday incentive which expires in June next. Landell-Mills, however, felt that the tax holiday incentive is not an efficient way to at-

tract investment, but agreed that the corporate tax rate should be lowered. On administrative reform, the MCCI chief noted that the gap between government policies and their implementation has widened inspite of assurances of a good and efficient

government.

Landell-Mills agreed that it is important to change the role of government from a regulatory to a facilitatory one. Noting that a number of studies on administrative reform has already been done and the Bank is also undertaking a sectoral study on the subject, he pointed out that the cabinet committee on administrative reform. headed

Ahmed, is expected to complete its report soon. On the importance of hu-

man resource development raised by Anis Ud Dowla, the Bank chief noted that only 50 per cent of those completing primary education have the basic numeral literacy and emphasised the need to improve the overall quality of education in the country, in line with present day demands. Manzur Elahi, Chairman of

Apex Tannery, observed that the recent changes of rules in the capital market, particularly relating to the one -year lockin period for foreign initial public offering placements, would have a negative impact on attracting foreign portfolio investment in the country. Landell-Mills agreed that

the information cited about the situation in India was not correct, as the 5-year lock-in period for foreign institutional investors is only for private placements abroad. He suggested that a capital gains tax could be far less damaging to the image of Bangladesh.

the city. AL chief Sheikh Hasina had