

The Midnight File

Commit to cut emissions of gases: Kohl

BERLIN, Apr 5: German Chancellor Helmut Kohl today urged industrialised states attending the UN Climate Conference to commit themselves firmly to cutting emissions of the gases causing global warming. "A signal must go out from Berlin that there will be further limitation and reduction after the year 2000 of the greenhouse gases which are damaging the climate," he told delegates from some 170 nations as the conference's critical last phase began, reports Reuter.

Rao opens war council to review defeats

NEW DELHI, Apr 5: Indian Prime Minister P V Narasimha Rao's Congress (I) party opened a war council today to review its stinging defeats in a series of state elections, party officials here said. The policy-making Congress Working Committee (CWC) was to discuss ways to stem the erosion of the party's political base and forge a strategy for next year's general elections, the officials said, reports AFP.

67,500 more telephones in greater Dhaka by June '96

Some 67,500 digital telephone lines will be installed in greater Dhaka city under a project scheduled to be completed by June, 1996, reports UNB.

The project, Greater Dhaka Telecommunication Network Improvement Project (Phase III) was approved by the Executive Committee of the National Economic Council (NEC) at a meeting yesterday with Finance Minister M Saifur Rahman in the chair.

The digital lines will be distributed through Dhaka central exchange, Narayanganj, Jijira, Chowkbar, Gandaria, Basabo, and Savar exchanges, said an official here.

The project costing Tk 636 crore includes a foreign exchange component of Tk 464 crore. Of this, Tk 123 crore, including Tk 30 crore in foreign exchange, will be spent during the current year's ADP (Annual Development Programme) which will end in June.

The ECNEC meeting, held at the Secretariat Cabinet Room, also approved the Tk 124 crore Barind Rural Development Project for bringing 25 thanas in and around

One beaten to death in city

By DMCH Correspondent

A man was beaten to death and another injured in Gulshan area in the city early yesterday. Asu, 35, was caught red-handed by the local people of village Satarkul under Gulshan thana hearing the screams from the house in which he entered at 12:30 am to allegedly commit dacoity.

The angry people beat Asu to death and caught and seriously beat up his accomplice Paresh Chandra Biswas.

Earlier the dacoits stabbed the house owner Nizamuddin.

Both Nizamuddin and Paresh were admitted to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital.

FAP discussed

From Page One

tative Emi Watanabe moderated the open discussion.

The other members of the five-member review team are Dr Fasihuddin Mahtab, Prof Rounaq Jahan and Dr P Almadavillela.

Sponsored by the UNDP, the objective of the review is to give independent second professional opinion on the desirability of the FAP to Bangladesh in order to assist the government and the donors in making more informed decisions.

Besides, the review will provide an initial assessment of the FAP's relevance to Bangladesh, specially from the perspective of alleviating poverty and protecting the environment.

Dr Mahtab discussed the framework and scope for comprehensive land and water development, the issue of the Ganges and Brahmaputra barrages and the Brahmaputra Right Embankment Protection.

He observed that feasibility studies of these two barrages were needed.

Citing the problem of excess water during the monsoons and its shortage during the dry season, Dr Mahtab said that emphasis should be given not only to flood control but also on overall water management and development.

Prof Jahan discussed the issues like institutional framework for flood and water management and poverty, equity and gender.

Raising several questions, she emphasised the importance of inter-sectoral linkage, local-level structure and dissemination of information from the national to local level.

Prof Jahan, however, felt that drinking water and sanitation should get the priority.

Dr P Almadavillela, an American environmentalist and fisheries biologist, discussed the rice-fish controversy, embankments and fisheries, bio-diversity and vulnerable and exposed populations.

The review mission will submit its report to the government and the World Bank on April 15.

the Barind area into the road communications network.

The meeting also gave go-ahead signal to the Tk 107 crore Rural Development Project-12 for the greater Dinaipur, Bogra, Khulna, Barisal, Jamalpur, and Mymensingh districts.

The Bangladesh Rural Development Board (BRDB) will provide small income generating credits to the rural poor under the programme.

Another project to set up two veterinary colleges — one each at Chittagong and Sylhet — at a cost of Tk 36 crore was okayed at the meeting. The project, scheduled to be completed by 1999, will produce 100 graduates of veterinary science and animal husbandry every year.

The ECNEC also approved the Pisciculture Expansion Project for Patuakhali and Barguna districts involving Tk 24 crore, including a Danish project aid of Tk 23 crore.

The project, expected to be completed by the year 2001, aims at increasing fish production through semi-intensive fish farming in the two districts.

The ECNEC also approved the Coastal Embankment Rehabilitation and Reconstruction Project and Boral Basin Project.

Polio control

From Page One

the world's total number of reported cases.

He said, the routine programme of immunisation, which also includes prevention of polio, will continue though priority has been given to the eradication of polio in NIDs.

The WHO representative said that on the World Health Day, April 7, 18 countries in Europe and the Eastern Mediterranean would provide polio vaccine to their children simultaneously.

ASM Abdul Halim, joint secretary of the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare said, about 80 per cent of the registered children under five could be brought under the programme to eradicate polio by the first National Immunisation Day (NID) on March 16.

Some 1.58 crore children out of the target of 1.90 were immunised by that day, he said.

"We got tremendous response from the people, particularly in the rural areas, on the first NID and we shall start distributing the second dose after April 7," said Prof AK Shamsuddin Siddiquy, Director General of Health Services.

Such NIDs would also continue in the coming years to realise the WHO target, he said adding that Vitamin-A would also be served among the children on the second NID.

Dr AM Zakir Hussain, director of the Primary Health Care and Disease Control said they have enough vaccines to cover all children in the country.

Kuwati PM

From Page One

higher than the pre-war level. Bangladesh supported Kuwait when it was invaded by Iraq and also sent a large contingent of troops to assist in the liberation of Kuwait. A significant number of Bangladeshi troops are stationed in Kuwait for peacekeeping purposes.

The Crown Prince will be arriving in Dhaka after visiting China and Indonesia. It is learnt.

He will be given a state banquet. He will address a press conference before his departure.

Manzur murder

From Page One

interrogated. He said as the investigation proceeded, he had to report the progress of the case to his higher officials time to time.

He was a bit critical about press reports on the case and said most of those were unfounded. He, however, admitted that they were also partly responsible for this.

"We are maintaining top secrecy. We have to do this. We cannot hold daily press briefing which will hamper the investigation," he added.

College girl dies in elevator accident

By DMCH Correspondent

A college girl was killed in a tragic accident at a high-rise building in the city yesterday afternoon.

Farzana, 20, a degree student of the Central Women's College, and daughter of Anjad Hossain, Deputy Secretary, Ministry of Finance, sustained serious head injuries when the elevator in the eleven-storied Elyseum Building at Hatkhola Road crashed as she tried to get in around 2 pm.

She was immediately taken to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) where doctors declared her dead.

The victim was living with her parents at Flat No 911 on the ninth floor of the building which houses government officials.

Sutrapur police, when contacted, said an unnatural death case was filed in this connection.

52 hurt in bus mishap, armed attack on houses

From Our Correspondent

NARAYANGANJ, Apr 5: Fifty-two persons were injured in two separate incidents in Fatullah today.

At around 3 pm, two passenger buses collided head-on at Gabtoli on the Dhaka-Narayanganj road.

The drivers of the buses — Fazal Ali, 35, and Shafig, 38, and one passenger, Najimuddin, 60, were rushed to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital in serious conditions.

Eight others admitted to the Narayanganj General Hospital are: Narayan Chowdhury, 58, Lata, 16, Shafigul, 30, Shahida, 35, Delwar, 30, Shamsul, 22, Mohammad Alamgir, 33, and Mostafa, 15.

The other passengers were released from different clinics and hospitals after being given first aid.

A case was filed with the Fatullah thana in this connection. Both buses, badly wrecked, were seized by the police.

In another incident in the Hajiganj area of Fatullah on the previous night, 12 persons received injuries. Of them, two housewives — Runu Begum, 27, and Momtaz, 32, were admitted to local clinics with serious bullet injuries.

According to police, at around 8 last night, about one hundred armed youths attacked some houses in the area because of a long-running enmity between two families.

The youths exploded at least 50 crackers, fired eight to 10 shots and ransacked at least six houses. Police said, goods worth at least Tk 4 lakh were also looted.

The clashes continued till 1 am Wednesday.

Two separate cases were filed by Badshah Mia and Manik with the Fatualla thana. However, no one has so far been arrested in this connection.

Yarn merchants' call to withdraw Apr 9-12 hartals

From Our Correspondent

NARAYANGANJ, Apr 5: Bangladesh Yarn Merchants' Association has urged the Awami League and the SKOP to withdraw their programmes from April 9 to 12 in the interest of the business community of the country.

In a statement issued by the chairman of the organisation, Al-Haj Abdu Rashed, the yarn merchants said that the month of April was vital for the business community. If the business activities halt for a few days during this month its impact would be felt by the community for the whole Bangla year which begins from April 14.

The association noted that the withdrawal of the programmes of hartals and siege would improve the images of the AL and the SKOP.

ISPR appeal

From Page One

ding the armed forces and its affiliated organisations or persons and personalities," the ISPR in a press release said.

"Publication of such information and news is regrettable," it said.

"Patriotic and conscious people of different tiers of the society and the members of the armed forces do not expect false, fabricated and motivated news for the sake of objective journalism," the ISPR added.

"It is a request to the responsible and patriotic mass media that they should cross-check the truthfulness and reliability of their reports before publishing such information or news," the press release, issued by Assistant Information Officer Ramendra Nath Biswas, said.



Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia addressing a huge public meeting at Bhedarganj in Shariatpur district yesterday —PID photo

Capital market boom

Each issue oversubscribed five fold last year

Each issue offered during 1994 in the capital market was oversubscribed nearly 5 times on an average, reports UNB.

The trend of spectacular response of the public to the capital market was disclosed in the first meeting of the Advisory Committee of the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC), held in the city yesterday.

The meeting was informed that Tk 82.7 crore worth of shares were offered last year (1994) while the subscription amounted to Tk 482.9 crore, indicating a Tk 400 crore or 484 per cent oversubscription.

In 1991, shares worth only Tk 16.7 crore were offered, indicating a remarkable growth of the market in three years.

Finance Minister M Saifur Rahman, who inaugurated the meeting, reiterated that the government would always encourage and protect the interest of the local small investors.

The meeting, which reviewed the activities of the SEC since its inception, noted with satisfaction the speedy expansion of investment and

trading activities of the share markets during the last few years.

The daily average transaction stood at Tk 1.55 crore during 1994 as against Tk 4 lakh during 1991.

The meeting also expressed satisfaction to note that increasing numbers of local small investors are showing interest to invest in the share market.

The Finance Minister attributed the growth in capital market to "pragmatic and liberal approach and rules and regulations formulated by the government."

He said due to the government's pro-investment policies more and more reputed companies were expressing interest in floating shares.

He said the government also encouraged foreign direct portfolio investment to the extent of even 100 per cent to promote industrialisation and create employment in the country.

Making quick profit and handsome capital gain within the shortest possible time by mere paper transaction in the primary share markets is not a healthy phenomenon, he said.

PM: Essentials

From Page One

fare Fazlur Rahman, DUCSU VP Amanulla Aman, MP, Roushan Elahi MP, Alam Khan, MP, former state minister Abdul Mannan Shikdar, JASAS president Zahid Hossain Chumru and BNP central leader Moniruzzaman Monir also addressed the public meeting.

Local leaders who spoke on the occasion are Shafiqur Rahman Kiron, Chowdhury Akmal Ibne Yusuf, Iskandar Ali Miah, Jamal Hossain Hiru, Dr S. Kamaluddin, Yakub Ahmed, Anwar Miah, and union parishad chairman Nazmul Hossain Sarker.

Earlier on arrival at Bhedarganj, the Prime Minister laid the foundation stone of academic bhaban of the Habibullah College established last year by local social worker Shafiqur Rahman Kiron.

Khaleda

From Page One

officials will accompany the Prime Minister.

At the formal talks between Begum Zia and Adhikari intensification of bilateral political relations, expansion and diversification of trade, economic cooperation and other issues of common interest are expected to be the main subjects of discussion, the Foreign Affairs Ministry said.

Hasina

From Page One

ating panic by killing one and injuring many.

"We are demanding elections under the supervision of a caretaker government since the ruling BNP has established itself as a vote-dacoit."

Turning to local problems, Hasina said the present government has done nothing for the locality and assured the local people of all efforts for their overall development if her party was voted to power.

Earlier, Sheikh Hasina also addressed a number of gatherings on her way to Brahmanbaria from Dhaka. AL central leaders Zillur Rahman, Amir Hossain Amu and A T M Shamsul Haq and local leaders Ali Ashraf and others also spoke at the wayside gatherings.

2000 MW electricity can be generated by wind turbines

From Page One

Bangladesh can generate more than 2000 megawatt of electricity at a very low cost by installing wind turbines in the coastal belt, reports UNB.

For this, at least 20,000 modern wind turbines would have to be installed along the country's 724-kilometre coast line. This was told by M Fazlur Rahman, an engineer working with Bangladesh Atomic Energy Commission yesterday.

Generation of wind power can save a large amount of foreign exchange that the country spends every year for the oil-based power generation units. Bangladesh's present peak demand of electricity is some 2000 MW.

Rahman, an energy expert who conducted a study on the prospect of electricity generation from wind energy in Bangladesh for last two years, presented the findings at a seminar at the Institution of Engineers, Bangladesh yesterday afternoon.

Ebadur Rahman

From Page One

tics of destruction. When the Opposition started politics of destruction instead of strengthening democracy, I decided to join the BNP because it pursues the politics of nation building."

The joining function was also addressed by Finance Minister M Saifur Rahman, Nazir Hossain, MP, Khaleda Rabbani, MP, Hares Chowdhury, Mohammad Yusuf Ali, Kalimuddin Milon, M A Huq, Advocate Junayet Ahmed and Moniruzzaman Monir.



Awami League chief Sheikh Hasina addressing a public meeting at the Banchharampur Degree College ground in Brahmanbaria yesterday. —AL photo

Nepal won't scrap friendship treaty with India

KATHMANDU, Apr 5: Nepal's Prime Minister has said the controversial 1950 treaty with India should be reviewed but not terminated as demanded by the opposition, a weekly newspaper reported today.

Speaking to the pro-communist Dristi (vision) newspaper, Manmohan Adhikari said the scrapping of the peace and friendship treaty could "have a negative impact when we take the international aspect into consideration."

"But in the present post-cold war era, it must be reviews by both sides instead of being terminated," he told the paper.

Adhikari is leaving for India on April 10 on a five-day official visit at the invitation of his Indian counterpart P V Narasimha Rao.

He and Rao will review the treaty as well as trade and transit problems and other related matters, officials said.

"We assure India that we will not let any activities against it (India) from our homeland but that does not mean we prefer to remain under an umbrella of a foreign nation," he added.

The 1950 treaty is widely seen here as giving India political leverage over Nepal, as well as opening the floodgates of unskilled Indian immigration.

One of the key stipulations of the treaty gives nationals the right to work in both countries and travel between the two without visas.

The treaty also supposedly allows extensive cooperation between the two countries in



Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad shows in Kuala Lumpur yesterday Malaysia King Tuanku Jaafar Abdul Rahman's approval for dissolution of parliament today, to pave the way for the country's ninth general elections, six months ahead of schedule. —AFP/UNB photo

Rainy season arrangement

Private dealers to run city OMS scheme

By Staff Correspondent

The government has decided to hand over the open market sale (OMS) of foodgrain in the city to the private dealers in the coming rainy season, Minister for Food Abdul Mannan Bhuiya told The Daily Star yesterday.

The current OMS scheme was taken up by the government on January 15 as rice prices across the country soared to a record high.

Under the OMS scheme, subsidised foodgrain is sold at different points in the city from trucks rented by the Food Ministry. Officials of the ministry are also seen present at the selling points to monitor operations.

In the new shift of the OMS operations in the city, the government has decided to call in the private sectors to do the selling. Invitation for sealed bids has already gone off in the national newspapers, the food minister said.

The minister pointed out that the decision was taken because the rainy season will hamper the current method of sale from trucks. Besides, a considerable number of officials of the ministry get engaged in the process, affecting their usual tasks, he added.

The traders who would be awarded the OMS trade should meet the strict criteria imposed by the Ministry of Food, the minister stressed.

The successful bidder must

be involved in the foodgrain business with a valid trade licence and have suitable space or shop. Moreover, the trader will be allowed to carry out trade only with the foodgrain under the OMS scheme, Mannan Bhuiya said.

Replying to a query about the profit the prospective trader would make, Bhuiya said that the trader would buy rice at Tk 10.50 a kg from government godowns to sell it at a fixed price of Tk 11. Government inspectors will ensure fair trading by random and sudden visits to the shops, he added.

The minister said that elsewhere in the country OMS is being operated by private dealers. The quantity of foodgrain sold under the scheme all over the country will be increased soon.

The country has already imported 3.9 lakh tonnes of foodgrain to meet the situation.

Bhuiya stressed that considering the present fertiliser crisis and its consequences over foodgrain production, the Food Ministry is assessing the future food situation in the country.

"With the help of the Agriculture Ministry, the USAID and the Bureau of Statistics we are trying to assess the situation," he said, adding, "My office will act accordingly."

Fertiliser crisis

From Page One

The BCIC's delivery constraints also aggravated the supply problem. The daily delivery capacity of urea in the BCIC's six fertiliser factories is between 10,000-12,000 MT but the corporation reported that it can only deliver 8,000 MT.

Between November of last year and January 1995, actual urea delivery for the domestic market was only 384,000 MT, or 157,000 MT less than that during the same period of 1993-94. Till date, the local urea sales declined by nine per cent compared to the last fiscal.

Urea prices at both the wholesale and retail levels increased significantly in February this year compared to the previous year, the study found, with retail prices increasing by nine per cent despite a reduction in the ex-factory price by the same margin.

Gross margins on urea sales was also found to be excessively higher in February this year (34 per cent) than in February last year (20 per cent), with the wholesalers realising 26.5 per cent of the gross profit and the retailers getting 7.5 per cent.

During the current rabo-ro season, prices on the 'paper sale' of fertiliser allotments near some factories exceeded Tk 250 per bag as against the ex-factory price of Tk 188 and a maximum retail price (MRP) of Tk 230 per bag.

"Hence, under such situations, the bulk of the profit margin in the fertiliser trade is being realised through paper transactions that provide no function in the market place," the study noted.

"This easy access to quick profits is attracting influential non-distributors to the fertiliser business."

Another fundamental flaw revealed in the study pointed out to the lack of information exchange between the Industries Ministry and the Ministry

of Agriculture relating to the supply and demand situation of fertiliser.

"Data on BCIC production, stocks, and sales and private sector imports are not routinely available to the Ministry of Agriculture," it said.

A report based on the study recommended discontinuation of the maximum retail price on urea, suspending deliveries to the District Commissioners and reverting to the private sector marketing system, extending the ban on urea exports, implementing a variable pricing strategy for BCIC fertiliser, instituting a fertiliser regulating system and setting up of a fertiliser market information system.

Fertiliser dealer held in Sirajganj

SIRAJGANJ, Apr 5: A fertiliser dealer was arrested for selling urea at exorbitant prices at Tarashi Bazar here today, reports UNB.

Police said Bachchu Mia, 40, was caught red-handed in the morning when he was selling 50-kg bags of urea at the rate of Tk 700 against the government-fixed price of Tk 230.

He was sent to jail after the thana court had rejected his bail petition.

9 killed

From Page One

gers were killed and 30 others wounded, five of them seriously, in a road-mishap at Kamartek in Shibpur thana of Narsindi yesterday, police and hospital sources said.

Mohammad Younus Mia, 50, of Gopinathpur in Raipura thana, succumbed to his injuries on way to Sadar Hospital while another man who could not be identified immediately, died on the spot.

The incident occurred when a Dhaka-bound mini-bus was hit by a Bhairab-bound bus near Sobuz Pahar College on the Dhaka-Sylhet Highway at 12:30 pm.

Editor: Mahfuz Anam

Printed & Published by A. S. Mahmud, Managing Director, on behalf of Mediaworld Ltd, 52, Motijheel C/A, Dhaka-1000, from City Publishing House Ltd, 90 Kakrai, Dhaka-1000. Editorial, News & Commercial Offices: House No: 11, Road No: 3, Dhanmandi R/A, Dhaka-1205. PABX: 500092-4, Commercial: 500051 (Direct), Fax No: 88-02-963035, GPO Box No: 3257, Cable: DAILYSTAR, DHAKA.