

SAVE DHAKA



There are hardly any proper parking places for the city's large number of trucks, except a few designated stands. Pictured here are several trucks parked illegally at the Chankhapool area. Such scenes are common in many parts of the capital, causing great inconvenience to normal traffic flow. — Star photo

Data communication T&T Board vows to consider all objections

By Staff Correspondent
The Bangladesh Telegraph and Telephone Board (T&T) yesterday unveiled a set of proposals and policy guidelines aimed at liberalising the value added service on the data communication industry.

The Board organised a conference at its city headquarters to elicit opinions and suggestions from concerned quarters before recommending the draft to the government for finalisation of policy.

The packed audience at the Telecommunications Bhavan conference hall included nearly 50 representatives from national and international companies trading in on-line computer services.

Copies of a ten-page policy guideline called "Policy and Guidelines for Liberalizing the Value Added Services in Bangladesh" were earlier sold to the public for Tk 500 each.

In it, the Board suggests new guidelines to regulate E-mail, Voice Mail, Data communications through Very Small Aperture Terminals (VSAT), Bulletin Board, Video-Text and Video Conferencing services.

Some of the participants attending the conference vehemently opposed the Board's proposal to impose new restrictions on the emerging private sector data communications industry.

They raised questions about the true intentions of the T&T Board vis-a-vis the new proposals.

The Secretary General of the FBCCI, former Secretary SM Al-Husainy, questioned the legal framework under which the document had been drafted and its apparent contradictions; on the one hand professing to promote and liberalise the industry while on the other proposing to impose regulations.

The Board's representatives appeared to accept some of the criticisms which, they said, would enable them to better evaluate the situation.

"We shall gladly consider all written recommendations in this regard before drawing up the final document for the benefit of future users of value added data communication services," Nazmul Hassan Chowdhury, the Board's Director for Planning (International) promised.

Repairing of embankment begins

The 359 km long embankment starting from Cox's Bazar to Khulna was affected by recent tidal surge and storm, a preliminary estimate said, reports BSS.

Besides this, 36 irrigation or drainage structures were partly damaged, the Water Development Board sources said.

Sources said repairing of embankment and irrigation and drainage structures damaged by the calamity have already begun.

According to preliminary estimate, the repairing and reconstruction of the embankments and structure would entail Taka 65 crore.

Meanwhile, a centre has been set up at the WAPDA building under the supervision of a chief engineer to carry out rehabilitation in the affected areas and also to take emergency measures during calamity.

Bangladeshi garments

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but the members, in the EGM, rejected it by 311-41 majority because they were 'adamant not to sign the draft.'

"We are ready to face any propaganda against Bangladesh's garments industry," he said, adding: "Whatever decision we have taken, we will be firm on it."

He said that the BGMEA had already introduced a schooling programme for the child workers who were employed in the garments factories "only on humanitarian considerations".

Ahmed, however, welcomed any initiative by any international organisation to rehabilitate the already re-trenched child workers and assured the BGMEA's assistance in this regard.

Some 40,000 child workers were fired from the country's garments industry since 1993 after a worldwide campaign was launched to boycott products made with child labour; particularly after the Child Labour Deterrence Act, better known as the Harkin Bill after its proposer Tom Harkin, was introduced in the US Congress.

The United States is the largest buyer of Bangladesh garments, importing more than one-fourth of its total apparel exports in 1993-94 fiscal.

The Child Labour Coalition, in its letter, said it will launch a media campaign by distributing packets containing information about child labour in Bangladesh garments factories to inform the American people.

It said the boycott will remain in effect until two condi-

tions are met: an independent verification system in established acceptable to the UNICEF and for the US Ambassador to certify compliance with the BGMEA's announced ban on child labour, and a provision to made by the BGMEA to contribute 'significantly' to an education programme for the re-trenched children.

The US body warned that the boycott would last at least into November — covering the major shopping season in the States. The BGMEA, however, announced an October 31 deadline to rid its member factories of all child workers.

"After October 31st, our doors will be kept open for any international organisation. The people from the US Embassy can also inspect our factories," said Ahmed, pleading for an end to all kinds of propaganda against the Bangladesh garments industry.

He said that the BGMEA had wanted a total elimination of child labour by October 31 last year, but postponed the plan following requests from organisations like the ILO, UNICEF, AAFI and some other NGOs.

The BGMEA president informed UNB that he had requested the Commerce Secretary to convey the BGMEA decision on elimination of child labour to the buyers. The BGMEA itself is also planning to send delegations abroad to clarify its decision, he said.

Redwan Ahmed suggested that the government should take necessary steps through the commercial wings of its missions abroad to explain the BGMEA's decision in order to protect the interest of the country.

Shopkeepers on the rampage

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At least 25 people were injured in a clash between shop owners at the Stadium Market in the city and the employees of the National Sports Council (NSC) yesterday afternoon.

The offices of different sports associations and the Sports Journalists Association at the stadium and adjacent swimming pool and outer stadium were also ransacked, witnesses said.

Of the 12 injured employees of the NSC, three were admitted to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital.

A group of shop owners set fire to some ticket counters for the NSC lottery during the clash.

The trouble centred the NSC authorities orders not to

Nepal's Dhaka visit postponed

By Staff Correspondent
Deputy Prime Minister of Nepal, Madhav Kumar Nepal, who is also his country's foreign and defence affairs minister, has postponed his visit to Dhaka scheduled to take place at the end of this month.

A Foreign Office spokesman said the visit has been postponed due to domestic preoccupations.

Hasina

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her step was taken to contain terrorism," she added.

"We are determined to put an end to campus violence at any cost," she told the teachers and stressed the need for developing a mechanism to ensure that the students devoted themselves to studies and money, muscle and arms could not destroy them."

The federation delegation comprised its chief prof. Md. Mansurul Amin and other leaders Prof. Md Fasil Alam, Prof. Nasiruddin Ahmed, Prof. Abdullah Mohammad Faruque, Dr. ANM Munir Ahmed Choudhury, Prof. M Mostafa Choudhury, Dr. AAMS Arefin Siddique, Dr. Abdur Rahim, Md Zakir Hossain and Shahid Ahmed Choudhury.

AL leaders, Mohiuddin Ahmed, Zillur Rahman, Abdul Jalil, Choudhury, Abu Sayeed and Abdul Mannan were present on the occasion.

N dists tour
Another report adds: Sheikh Hasina will leave the capital tomorrow for a four-day visit to some parts of four northern districts.

She will visit Rajshahi, Naogaon, Natore and Chapainabaganj during her mass contact tour and will address a number of public meetings.

Khaleda

From Page 1
swing, she said and urged the people to cooperate with the government in carrying forward its programmes to make the country self-reliant.

The Prime Minister accused the opposition parties of not performing their due role as mandated by the people, instead of serving the people, they are engaged in destructive activities setting fire to public and private property and paralysing normal life of the people, she said.

Without mentioning any name, Begum Zia said a party now wants to establish the rights of vote and food, but this was forgotten when they were in power. "During the rule of that party, candidates even could not file their nomination papers."

If voted to power, that party would again introduce the one-party rule, snatch the voting rights of the people and would let them starve, she said.

Begum Zia said the past autocratic regime had also destroyed the country through unbridled corruption and massive looting.

Tomb of Pharaoh's 50 sons found

CAIRO, May 21: The huge newly-discovered tomb of 50 sons of the Pharaoh Ramses II may harbour proof of the existence of Moses in Egypt, experts believe.

The tomb, the largest ever found in Egypt, contains 67 chambers for 50 of the Pharaoh's 52 sons. Its discovery near the southern town of Luxor was announced last week.

"It is possible that we will find in this tomb proof confirming the theory that Ramses' reign coincides with the period when Moses was in Egypt," the head of antiquities at Giza, Zahi Hawas, told AFP.

Practically all the royal tombs in the valley of the kings have been looted, but the latest discovery has been spared.

Only the entrance to the tomb, on the west bank of the Nile, had been discovered previously by foreign amateur archaeologists in the 19th century.

They could not penetrate any further because some chamber walls had collapsed.

A team of American archaeologists discovered the rest of the tomb while restoring other monuments in the valley of the kings, 660 kilometres south of Cairo, following damage caused by torrential rain in November.

Salam waiting

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Zillur said, "Our position is clear. If the ruling party accepts in principle the formula for a caretaker government we can sit to finalise the modalities."

He, however, did not give a clear-cut answer as to whether he had had any discussion on the matter with his party chief.

"You possibly have heard our speeches in different public meetings. Our chief has made our position clear," he said.

Asked what would be his reaction if he were to receive a fresh telephone call or a written proposal from Talukdar, the AL secretary said, "Let such a proposal come."

The BNP Secretary General said last night that he was still waiting for a formal reply from Zillur Rahman.

"He told me that he would inform me after consultation with his party chief. His party chief is still in town and I think he will phone me regarding the matter," Talukdar said.

Talukdar said that he would call Zillur after Sheikh Hasina leaves for a tour of the northern districts on Tuesday.

Dhaka, Seoul to sign 3 agreements

Bangladesh and South Korea will sign three agreements, in a bid to bolster the existing bilateral cooperation, during Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia's upcoming tour, reports UNB.

One of the accords will be on scientific and technological cooperation and another on cultural cooperation, a spokesman of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs said at a weekly press briefing yesterday.

He said the two Asian countries would also sign a memorandum of understanding (MOU) for establishing a friendship hospital in Bangladesh.

The Prime Minister will pay a three-day official visit to South Korea from Thursday. The tour will take place at the invitation of President of the Republic of Korea (ROK) Kim Young Sam.

In Seoul, Begum Zia will hold talks with the Korean President, covering bilateral matters as well as regional and international issues of common concern.

The PM, who will inaugurate a seminar on 'Investment in Bangladesh' in the Korean capital on Friday, will give a thrust on huge Korean investment in Bangladesh in her meeting with President Kim and other ROK leaders.

South Korea has so far invested more than a hundred million US dollars in textile and other sectors of Bangladesh.

The Korean entrepreneurs have invested in 12 units in the Dhaka Export Processing Zone (DEPZ) and 20 units in the Chittagong Export Processing Zone (CEPZ).

Manik

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According to the provisions of the constitution, the Gano Forum will have a 16-member presidium and a 14-member Secretariat.

The central committee meeting also decided to hold the national council before September 30 this year while the district conferences will be held in August.

Nazrul dead

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Party as its general secretary from 1983 to 1988. He played an important role in the anti-autocracy movement during the Ershad regime.

In its politburo meeting yesterday, the Workers Party expressed deep shock at the death of Nazrul Islam.

The party will hold a condolence meeting at its office at 5 pm on May 25.

The Midnight File

Supreme council to promote Kashmir's independence

MUZAFARABAD, May 21: Leaders of key Kashmiri political and religious organisations at a multi-party conference here formed a supreme council to promote Kashmir's independence from India, party officials said today. A declaration adopted unanimously at the end of a two-day all-parties conference (APC) said, the council would formulate and implement a "Unified and concrete" policy for Kashmir's "liberation" from India, they said, reports AFP.

Hariri reappointed PM

BEIRUT, Lebanon, May 21: Rafik Hariri was reappointed prime minister Sunday after Syria intervened on his behalf two days after he resigned. A presidential statement said President Elias Hrawi summoned Hariri to his palace in suburban Baabda and asked him to form a new government, reports AP.

Saifur tells Indian team

Delhi should give fair access to our goods

Finance Minister Saifur Rahman yesterday urged the visiting Indian delegation to influence decision makers in Delhi to harmonise its policy at macro level with others in the region for a successful cooperation, reports UNB.

The call from the Finance Minister came while the Indian team of former ministers, intellectuals and entrepreneurs called on him at his office in the city.

Rahman argued that harmonisation of macro policies was essential for a successful regional cooperation.

During the discussion, the Finance Minister said Bangladesh had opened up its economy for a healthy competition in internal consumer market and stability in macro policy. He asserted Dhaka would continue to pursue sound economic policy in future.

He said Bangladesh exportable commodities should get a fair treatment from the Indian side.

Rahman said Bangladesh attained maturity in some industrial products and had 'tremendous' potentials in some export sectors.

"All we need is some degree of reciprocity from the other side to give a fair treatment to our commodities by

PM

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Khandakar Mosharrar Hossain, State Minister for Industries Lutfur Rahman Khan, Army Chief Lt Gen Abu Saleh Mohammad Nasim, PSO Maj Gen Subed Ali Bhuiyan and other senior army officers.

Members of the Shaheed families of the Military Police Corps were also present.

Begum Zia lauded the role of the members at times of natural disasters, Gulf War and in different UN missions.

HSC examinees go on rampage

By Staff Correspondent
At least 50 vehicles were damaged by HSC examinees who went on a rampage near the Dhaka College yesterday.

Several hundred HSC examinees from different colleges in the city damaged the vehicles around noon yesterday demanding shifting of the examination dates.

HC issues rule

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records of the case from the CMM's court, Chittagong.

The Deputy Attorney General (Crime) who was present in connection with the case was directed to be present on May 30 for the hearing.

Moving the petition Barrister A R Yusuf told the court that Major Gen (ret) Latif had not been named in the FIR either directly or indirectly.

He said that at the time of the alleged murder, the accused was not the brigadier at Chittagong Cantonment nor had he any officers and troops under his command at Chittagong Cantonment. At the time, he was brigade commander of the 203 Infantry Brigade based at Khagrachhari.

Water talks

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enquired from the Indians but have not yet received a date."

Foreign Secretary Farooq Sobhan, talking to The Daily Star, said "There was a clear understanding that the Indian Foreign Secretary would come to Dhaka. We had agreed about that in New Delhi."

He, however, said the Indian Foreign Secretary is now on a trip to the US. He added that he (Farooq Sobhan) would be away to South Korea with the Prime Minister shortly.

"I am hopeful that he (the Indian Foreign Secretary) would come," he said.

Emdad, Shams

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not only in the column of the FIR but also in its body."

The judge also said "For the present, the confessional statement of the accused petitioner is a prima facie formidable evidence of his involvement in the murder of Manzoor."

He also mentioned that the confessional statements, together with the petitions seeking retraction, would come up for consideration at the time of the trial of the case.

Imran's child?

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that Sita White openly introduces the little girl as Imran's daughter.

Imran, 42, and Gemma Goldsmith, 21, are now on honeymoon in Spain after a brief Islamic ceremony in Paris on Tuesday.

They are due to be wed at a London register office on June 20, followed by a lavish party at Sir James's Richmond, west London home.

DSE share

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the share price falls," the SEC source said, explaining one of the factors which had influenced fall in Beximco prices.

The Beximco Limited will hold its AGM on May 30. It has proposed a dividend of 25 per cent. Beximco Pharma and Beximco Infusion will both hold their AGMs on June 18. These companies have proposed dividends of 30 per cent and 10 per cent respectively. Beximco Fisheries has proposed dividend of 5 per cent and its AGM will be held June 20, the SEC source pointed out.

The share-price of Singer with a face value of Tk 100 had exceeded Tk 4000 in the secondary market last month. But its price fell by nearly Tk 1600 on May 15.

Singer proposes 60 per cent dividend plus a bonus at its upcoming AGM on May 28. One single share of Singer is a small investor's dream. But after the book closure, it's demand has sharply declined, therefore the price went down," the SEC source said.

The source further said share prices tend to fall before the AGMs which are mostly held during November-December and May-June.

"I believe the share market will improve in the months of September-October," he added.

Gias Kamal made Economic Minister in London mission

By Staff Correspondent
Senior journalist Gias Kamal Chowdhury has been appointed Economic Minister of the Bangladesh High Commission in London on contract for two years, says a PID handout.

Gias Kamal Chowdhury is now Chief Reporter and Special Correspondent of the Bangladesh Sangbad Sangstha (BSS).

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