

'Transit point at Tetulia will boost trade'

Rafiq Hasan and Govinda Shil back from Panchagarh

Local people including political leaders in Panchagarh say opening of a check post and transit point at Bangla Bandh in Tetulia would boost tourism and trade.

Such a facility there would make cross-border trade with Nepal and Bhutan easier because of its strategic location, they say.

The border with Nepal is only 18 kms away and that of Bhutan 40 kms from Bangla Bandh. Darjeeling, the famous tourist spot of India is only 52 kms from Bangla Bandh.

The correspondents, during their recent visit to Panchagarh and Tetulia talked to local political leaders, local body leaders and cross section of people including businessmen. A check post and a transit point is a long-felt demand of the people of the area, they told the correspondents.

The first proposal of a check point at Bangla Bandh was raised at the government level in 1972.

"Everybody in the area will

Aid Club to review unfinished reforms

Bangladesh Aid Group meeting scheduled to be held in Paris from July 10 will review the unfinished reform programmes affected by the domestic political turmoil. Economic Relations Division Secretary Lutfullah Majid said here yesterday.

Talking to BSS at his office, Lutfullah Majid said that the three-day Paris Aid Group meeting would review the overall achievements of the economic reforms taken so far in the country.

The ERD secretary said the meeting is also expected to deal with the issues relating to further strengthening the private sector and public administration reforms.

He pointed out that poverty alleviation drive with special emphasis on women in development would receive top attention at the meeting.

Blast kills one in city

By Staff Correspondent

One person was killed yesterday in a bomb explosion at Tejkunipara under Tejgaon thana in the city, according to police.

The victim, Ali Ashraf, 55, was critically injured when a bomb went off at a garbage dump near a boarding house at Tejkunipara at around noon.

Ashraf was immediately rushed to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital, where he succumbed to his injuries in the afternoon, hospital sources said.

8 held in Feni

From Page 1

In Daganbhutia, five people were arrested from different parts of the thana on the same charges.

Opposition activists staged violent protest, showed black flag and threw home-made bombs towards the motorcade of the Prime Minister during an electioneering tour to her home district on February 7-8.

US Congressman due

From Page 1

Ranking officials at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs said the US Congressman during the visit is expected to take keen interest in having an overview of the existing bilateral relations between the two countries which are seen by Dhaka as "very warm and friendly." It was also learnt that the visiting Congressman will have bilateral talks with government officials on economic, business and trade matters.

Bill Richardson will be visiting the Grameen Bank head office tomorrow morning to meet Prof Yunus and have an updated view of its operations.

Talking to The Daily Star, the Grameen bank chief said that Richardson had taken interest in the bank's operations for many years now. He said four other US Congressmen were also due to come together to see the workings first hand but had cancelled the trip because of the prevailing political situation.

Richardson was interested in taking field trips to see some Grameen projects and have an overnight stay at one, but these programmes had to be cancelled due to the present situation, Prof Yunus informed.

Bill Richardson has to his credit some important political trouble shooting on behalf of his government which includes a five-hour meeting with General Raul Cedras in Haiti which laid the groundwork for the restoration of the elected government of President Aristide negotiating the release of two US pilots from the custody of North Koreans and negotiating the release of two imprisoned Americans after talks in Baghdad in July last year. Besides he held a historic meeting with leading Burmese dissident Aung San Suu Kyi in February 1994.

A leading advocate of environmental causes, he has been a longtime supporter for balancing the US federal budget and is known in Washington as one of the most prolific legislators.

The US Congressman is due to leave Dhaka for London tomorrow late night.

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Panchagarh

be benefited directly or indirectly if a check post and transit point is opened," said Bangla Bandh Union Parishad chairman Naebul Islam.

Many tourists come here to cross the border because Bangla Bandh was mentioned as a check post in earlier maps, he said.

Cross-border trade with Nepal and Bhutan will be easier involving less cost and time if such a facility is opened," said Abdul Zabbar, Tetulia thana Awami League leader. "It is all the more necessary because we surrounded here by India on three sides," he added.

Bangla Bandh is 60 kms from Panchagarh and 126 kms from Dinajpur and is connected with metal roads with areas on both sides of the border, he said.

A new horizon of development will open up in the northern most area of the country if a check post is established, said Zakir Hosain, a businessman at Kait.

Everybody in the area will

Rival transport workers clash in Natore: 1 killed

From Our Correspondent

NATORE, Feb 24: A transport workers union leader was killed and about 20 others injured in clashes between two rival groups at Potua Para and Kanai Khalil areas of the town today.

The victim, Matir Rahman Mukta, 44, a former vice president of Paribahan Samik Union of Natore received knife injuries during a clash between the rival Majnu and Gazi groups at Madrasah More, Potua Para at around noon, according to witnesses.

Critically injured Mukta, an older brother of Majnu, later succumbed to his injuries at the Rajshahi Medical College Hospital.

The clash occurred as a sequel to an existing dispute over union elections.

One seriously injured Kamal, 17, who received bullet wounds, and five others were admitted to hospital.

Later, at around 7:30 pm, activists of Majnu group attacked Gazi's house at Kanai Khalil. They damaged and set ablaze several shops and houses in the area, including Gazi's during the attack, witnesses said. At least 15 persons were injured during the clash.

Meanwhile, the local Awami League has claimed Mukta as one of its activists and has blamed the BNP for his murder.

A dawn-to-dusk hartal has been called for tomorrow in the town to protest the killing.

DU teachers' call to ensure all-party polls

By Staff Correspondent

One hundred forty-four teachers of Dhaka University, in a joint statement yesterday, hoped that Parliament would ensure the participation of all political parties in the next general election through an understanding with the Opposition.

"Education is the best way to form a government and the democratic institution will be more stronger the more political parties participate in it," the statement said.

The DU teachers said that through the recent election the country has overcome a constitutional crisis which had emerged due to rejection by the opposition political parties to participate in it.

Among the prominent university teachers who signed on the statement are: Dr. Md. Asifur Rahman, Dr. Md. Saidur Rahman, Dr. Md. Mohammad Khalilur Rahman, Dr. Md. Mosleh Uddin Ahmed, Dr. Md. Munnuddin Amin, Dr. Obaidul Karim, Dr. Golam Mowla, Siddiqur Rahman Nizami, Farid Uddin Ahmed, Atiqur Rahman and Kamruzzaman Chowdhury.

World Cup

From Page 1

tomorrow's match because of flu but pace bowler Fanie de Villiers seems likely to make his World Cup debut after missing the first two matches with an ankle injury.

SA coach Bob Woolmer gave no hint whether mystery spinner Paul Adams would be picked for the first time in the tournament.

TEAMS:

England (from): Mike Atherton (capt), Alec Stewart, Neil Smith, Graeme Hick, Graham Thorpe, Neil Fairbrother, Robert Smith, Jack Russell, Dermot Reeve, Dominic Cork, Philip DeFreitas, Darren Gough, Richard Illingworth, Ian Botham, Paul Adams.

South Africa (from): Hansie Cronje (capt), Gary Kirsten, Steve Palfryman, Daryl Cullinan, Jacques Kallis, Jonty Rhodes, Brian McMillan, Shaun Pollock, Pat Symcox, Craig Matthews, Allan Donald, Fanie de Villiers, and Paul Adams.

Match umpires: Steve Randell (Australia) and Ian Robinson (Zimbabwe).

Match referee: John Reid (New Zealand).

Lars Bjorkbom, chairman of

the pollutants, reduce emissions of nitrogen compounds and related substances from cars and trucks and phase out the heavy metals lead, mercury and cadmium.

"Inuits have been advised by their organisations they cannot safely eat seal meat larger than the size of a lump of sugar per week," said ECE environment

The Daily Star



A procession in support of the opposition's non-cooperation programme in the city's Motijheel area yesterday.

— Star photo

Non-cooperation: 100 hurt

From Page 1

demanding dismissal of the "illegal government" cancellation of the "farcical" polls and holding of fresh elections within 90 days.

Under the programme, the Opposition called for country-wide suspension of rail-road-air and waterways communication, closure of courts, educational institutions, banks, insurance companies, the Secretariat and offices of other government, semi-government and autonomous organisations and Chittagong and Mongla ports.

Awami League activists held a rally on Topkhana Road, where heavy contingents of police and BDR were on guard around the Secretariat. Pickets blasted a number of cocktails at around 1:15 and a clash and a chase and counter chase with police took place.

Police lobbed tear gas shells to disperse the activists. The activists soon regrouped and made attempts at stripping some people who escaped and entered the Secretariat. Police picked up Matiha Chowdhury along with two other women leaders of AL from the Topkhana road area. At this stage police baton charged on a group of journalists who were performing their professional duties. Six journalists were injured in the incident. In an instant reaction, the journalists brought out a procession and paraded the Topkhana Road.

The clash occurred as a sequel to an existing dispute over union elections.

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100 hurt

as rivals clash in Habiganj

— Star photo

The Midnight File

Bomb attack on Faridpur DC's official residence

FARIDPUR, Feb 24: The official residence of the Deputy Commissioner of Faridpur, ASM Abdul Haq Chowdhury, came under bomb attack tonight, official sources said. They said some miscreants hurled two to three bombs on the building at around 11:30 pm and the attackers could not be identified, reports BSS.

Benazir denies obtaining N-technology from China

KARACHI, Feb 24: Pakistani Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto today denied obtaining nuclear weapons technology from China, saying the real threat to non-proliferation stemmed from India, reports AFP.

Speaking at the Pakistan Institute of International Affairs here, Benazir dismissed reported US intelligence claims that China supplied her

country with 5,000 magnet rings used in enriching uranium.

Her statement followed remarks by CIA Director John Deutch to the Senate select intelligence committee in Washington on Thursday that China was providing "inappropriate" nuclear technology to Pakistan.

"At a time when India is talking in terms of nuclear capable missiles and threatening proliferation in the South Asian region, intelligence reports are being leaked to damage Pakistan," Benazir said.

"This story about nuclear magnets from China is baseless and tendentious," she said, adding that the "actual threat" to non-proliferation "emanates from India and not Pakistan."

Benazir, reiterating Pakistan's desire to resolve the Kashmir dispute with India through talks, expressed the hope that India would be ready for a meaningful dialogue after the coming elections there.

Fire at ballast manufacturing factory in city

By Staff Correspondent

A fire broke out at a factory manufacturing tube-light ballasts in Shambagh last night, causing damage to machinery.

The fire began at around 8 pm at the Diamond Electrical Company and was brought under control within 40 minutes by the fire brigade.

The factory, situated in a tin-shed at the house of its owner, M. Shamul Haq, was closed at the time of the incident.

The cause of the fire is yet to be determined and an inquiry is underway, according to Fire Service sources. The extent of the damage could not be known immediately.

One dies as train smashes truck in Sirajganj