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UNFPA, UNICEF chiefs meet Prime Minister

NEW YORK, Oct 24: Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina had meetings with heads of different UN agencies here yesterday, reports BSS.

The Executive Director of UNFPA Dr Nafis Sadik and Executive Director of UNICEF Ms Carol Belamy called on the Prime Minister separately at her hotel suite in the morning.

Prime Minister's press secretary told newsmen later that the UNFPA Executive Director appreciated the Bangladesh government for making progress in the population control programme.

Quoting Dr Nafis Sadik he said some of the UNFPA programmes in Bangladesh would be completed by 1998. The UNFPA had already offered some technical assistance to Bangladesh in checking the population explosion.

Dr Nafis Sadik said priority should be given to bring down the rate of infant mortality in Bangladesh.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina thanked the UNFPA chief for identifying problems in the population sector. She identified poverty as the main obstacle towards development.

Hasina emphasised the need for engaging women in economic activities so that they themselves could take care of their children.

After her meeting with the Prime Minister, the Executive Director of UNICEF Carol Belamy said, "I am very happy with the deep commitment of prime minister (Sheikh Hasina) on the welfare of the children of Bangladesh."

She appreciated the programme undertaken by the Bangladesh government for the children development.

Emphasising child health, the Prime Minister said the UNICEF could undertake a programme to deworm the children twice a year.

She also urged the UNICEF to help the government in its programme to stop child labour.

PM's entourage Energy officials' reaction

By Staff Correspondent

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's meeting in New York with leading US investors in energy sector has generated adverse reaction among officials of the Energy Ministry and the Petrobangla.

They felt that the meeting ignored the role of energy experts as none of them were included in the PM's entourage, according to sources concerned.

The sources said that although the plan for holding such a meeting was conceived about a month ago, none of the experts or top officials concerned were asked to brief the PM's entourage on the energy sector in the country. On the other hand, top officials of the energy ministry voluntarily briefed the foreign ministry, they added.

The team took the energy sector investors' meeting very lightly and considered the sector to be like any other sector. But energy sector deals with natural resources of the country. It is not a matter of investment only, said one official requesting anonymity.

Some officials maintained that investment in the energy sector should not be dealt by the Board of Investment, as it has got many components which required specialised people.

They also expressed their surprise that the PM's entourage did not include the Energy Minister, the sources said.

They also questioned the involvement of Perigore, an international investment company, in organising the investors' meeting. Such a programme should have been organised by an appropriate company, which is experienced in dealing with energy sector.

Schoolboy kidnapped in Barisal

From Staff Correspondent

BARISAL, Oct 24: A schoolboy was allegedly kidnapped by some unidentified people here this morning.

According to Kotwali police, Anup Sarker, 12, a student of class eight of Barisal Zilla School, was kidnapped from the school gate at 10:30am.

Anup's father, Dr Harendra Nath Sarker, is the medical officer of Betagi thana health complex of Barguna district.

Alo Rani Sarker, Anup's mother filed a case against one Sefali Rani Bepari of Dumuria village of Jhalakathi district and five others in connection with the kidnapping of her son.

Family feud may be the cause of the kidnapping, police said. Anup is yet to be rescued.

One chopped to death

Meanwhile, a rice seller was allegedly chopped to death at Chowthamahal village under Nazirpur thana of Peropur district last night.

According to police, Ashraf Ali Mirgha, 42, was attacked in his garden by some unidentified people when he came out of his house after taking meal in the night. He was rushed to hospital in a critical condition but breathed his last on the way.

The killing might be the result of enmity over land, police said. Police arrested one woman in this connection.

Col. Rashid

From Page 1

When contacted over telephone last night she said, "As a Muslim, I cannot allow unknown men to enter my house at night in the absence of my husband." At least three truck loads of police were surrounded her house in the evening, she added.

According to her, work at the washing plant, composite textile and other industrial units owned by the family had already been affected due to intimidation from powerful quarters.

Rashid is one of the 14 accused in the case lodged with Dhanmandi thana early this month for the killing of Bangabandhu.

Rashid left the country following Awami League's return to power, according to reports.

Housewife commits suicide in city

By DMC Correspondent

A housewife reportedly committed suicide by taking insecticide in her residence at Kalyanpur in the city early yesterday, Afrina Rahman alias Dipa, 21, who got married to Kamal Ahmed a couple of months ago, fell sick Wednesday night after she reportedly took insecticide.

Rubel's body recovered from river

From Staff Correspondent

BARISAL, Oct 24: Police recovered the body of Aminul Islam Rubel from Sandhya river near Dehergati village under Babuganj thana this morning.

Rubel was killed reportedly by some local terrorists and was thrown into the river near Doarika ferryghat under Babuganj thana about 4 pm Tuesday afternoon.

BNP activists

From Page 1

give transit to India. "No transit to India, shouted the demonstrators.

Holding the government responsible for the killing of Tuhin, who was said to have committed suicide recently in police custody, the speakers at the rally also demanded punishment to the killers of Tuhin.

Tuhin's elder brother also addressed the rally.

The USA Unit President of BNP, Abdul Latif Samrat, Secretary Zahir Khan and Jurot Dal President Kamruzzaman Babu addressed the rally.

Meanwhile, a group of US Awami League gathered near the UN headquarters demanding repeal of the Indemnity Ordinance and trial of the killers of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.

Banking sector

From Page 1

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Other tasks of the committee will be to enhance the standard of services of the banks, make the central bank more effective to monitor the commercial banks and suggest important recommendations for the national interest.

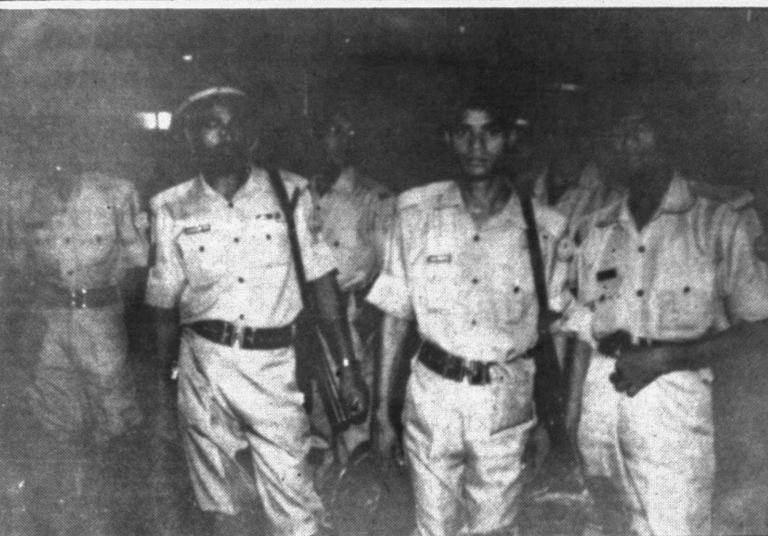
Two arrested

From Page 1

parts of the locality, police said. Four Ansars were seriously injured when a gang of local youths attacked them in front of the Ansar Camp at around 4pm on Wednesday.

The platoon commander of the camp Ahmed Ali filed a case with Motijheel thana in this connection yesterday. However, he did not name anyone in the FIR, sources said.

Meanwhile, the injured Ansar personnel who were under treatment at the DMCH Wednesday night were shifted to the Railway Hospital, sources added.



Police cordoned off the residence of Col Rashid in the city yesterday. Star photo

PM addresses UNGA

From Page 1

would encourage foreign direct investment in the country.

The PM said her government support the activities of the NGOs which supplement government's development efforts.

The Bangladesh Prime Minister vented deep concern over the declining trend of Official Development Assistance (ODA), signaling a change of priorities of the donor countries, in the developing countries as a whole and specially in the LDCs.

"We are seeking private foreign investment to inject dynamism in our growth process but there are certain sectors of the economy including the infrastructure which will continue to depend on adequate ODA flows for some years."

Sheikh Hasina said, "We in the LDCs had been unable to share fully the new growth opportunities that have emerged."

She said many of common problems facing LDCs could only be tackled through cooperative efforts with the active assistance of multilateral and bilateral donors.

Without this investment in human capital, the PM said, the LDCs will find that they are falling further behind in the new age of ideas and technology.

The repercussions of some economic activities cross national borders while the international nature of the operations of many multinational corporations and financial institutions have rendered national regulations virtually useless in many cases. "Global solutions are really necessary."

The UN represents the efforts of the peoples of the world to define and develop a framework for mutual cooperations upon which an enduring and comprehensive peace could be based, Hasina noted.

Favouring widening role by the UN, the Bangladesh Prime Minister declared in the global forum in unambiguous terms that her country supports a strong world body which would be fully equipped to deal with the tasks and responsibilities assigned to it under the Charter.

She said the UN, despite the criticism of its detractors, rendered such valuable services to humankind over the last 50 years that it remains the greatest symbol of hope for peace, stability and prosperity of the world.

Hasina called for the United Nations not only to play more active direct role in the cause of economic and social development, but also to guide and coordinate the activities of all the international development agencies.

Indicating her country's participation in the UN peace-keeping operations, she said Bangladesh had responded to the appeal for contributing forces for peace-keeping operations under the provisions of the Charter and resolutions of the UN Security Council.

She reiterated Bangladesh's readiness to respond positively whenever called upon to assist the peace process in accordance with the Charter of the UN.

The Bangladesh Prime Minister aired anxiety about conditions of the immigrants who "do not receive the benefits and protection" of the laws and conventions that apply to those fleeing political persecution.

Since many of them are also in violation of the immigration laws of their host countries, they often fall victims of exploitation and abuse, she pointed out. It is a social issue, an economic issue and also a humanitarian issue that impinges on human security.

Advocating the need of eliminating nuclear weapons once for all, she said nuclear weapons are an abomination and surely can have no place in a civilised world.

Pointing to Statue of Liberty in the US city, the Bangladesh

Solarz meets Hasina

NEW YORK, Oct 24: Stephen Solarz, the former US congressman and co-chairman of the National Democratic Institution (NDI), election observer group, called on Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at her hotel suite here yesterday afternoon, reports BSS.

They held discussions on the US-Bangladesh relations as well as on the current situation in Bangladesh.

During the discussion the Prime Minister told the former Congressman that she attaches great importance to democracy as an institution.

Foreign Minister Abdus Samad Azad, who was present in the meeting, said the present government has been taking steps to establish democracy as an institution.

Solarz told the waiting journalists that Sheikh Hasina believes very strongly that the establishment of an enduring and stable democracy is a very important factor in the economic progress of the country.

UNOCAL team to visit Dhaka to find new areas of investment

NEW YORK, Oct 24: The chairman of UNOCAL, an American enterprise for gas and power development, called on Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at her Grand Hyatt Hotel suite here yesterday afternoon, reports UNB.

They discussed implementation of an integrated project in greater Barisal district of Bangladesh. The project has three components — development of Bhola gas field and construction of gas pipeline from Bhola to Barisal, construction of a 210 megawatt power station plant at Barisal and another at Bhola.

Thanking the UNOCAL chairman for showing interest in investment in Bangladesh, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina said, "the government is giving all possible incentives to attract foreign investment in Bangladesh."

The UNOCAL chairman said that they would soon send a delegation to Dhaka to examine further possibilities to expand its activities there. He said he was impressed to see that official complexities and time killing tactics have been eased and it now takes lesser time to get decisions and things done in Bangladesh.

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Meanwhile, the injured Ansar personnel who were under treatment at the DMCH Wednesday night were shifted to the Railway Hospital, sources added.

Directive to check fertiliser smuggling

A technical committee would be constituted to frame necessary recommendations for speedy disposal of smuggling cases, reports UNB.

The decision was taken at a meeting of the National Anti-smuggling Committee in the city yesterday with Home Minister Rafiqul Islam in the chair.

The technical committee would comprise representatives of Home Ministry, Bangladesh Rifles, Police, Customs and Law Ministry, said an official handout.

The meeting directed the concerned authorities to take immediate measures for preventing smuggling of fertilizer through Kutubdia-Moheshkhali channel.

The Home Minister ordered Police, BDR and other concerned authorities to take immediate measures to stop infiltration of illegal drugs, specially Phenaidyl into the country.

Decision has also been taken at the meeting to collect more patrol vehicles for Coast Guard as early as possible.

Cabinet Secretary Syed Ahmed, Home Secretary Syed Rezaul Hayat, high officials of BDR, Police and other concerned departments attended the meeting.

Anniversary of Sher-e-Bangla's birth today

Different socio-cultural organisations have drawn up an elaborate programme to observe the 123rd birth anniversary of Sher-e-Bangla A K Fazlul Haq today, reports UNB.

Sher-e-Bangla Jatiya Gobeshona Parishad and Bangladesh Jatiya Bekitita Gobeshona Kendra will jointly organise a seminar at the mazar of the great leader at 3 pm.

Water Resources Minister Abdur Razzak will attend the function as chief guest while State Minister for Jute and Textile A K Faizul Haq will be present as special guest.

A seminar on "Politics for National Development: Sher-e-Bangla and Present Situation" will be held at the Jatiya Press Club at 4 pm.

20 hurt as JCD factions clash in Rajshahi

RAJSHAHI, Oct 24: At least 20 activists of the Jatiyatadabul Chhatra Dal (JCD) were injured in a scuffle between two rival factions who went to Rajshahi airport to accord reception to BNP Secretary General Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan and other leaders who arrived here from Dhaka this morning on way to Jaipurhat to attend party function, reports BSS.

Rajshahi City Corporation Mayor Mizanur Rahman Minu was also manhandled by rival groups, a party press release said tonight.

However, police on duty at airport brought the situation under control. JCD leaders — Sultan, Akbar, Merin and Mahfuzul Huq among others were injured in the incident, the press release said.

Meanwhile, 15 JCD leaders including Md Zillur Rahman, convenor, Rajshahi JCD and Motiur Rahman Montu, vice president, central committee of Chhatra Dal, among others, in a joint statement condemned the incident.

Nari Samaj

From Page 1

administration did their duty by simply 'closing' them, she said.

The press conference, held at the WVA auditorium, was attended among others by Maleka Begum, Rokeya Kabir, Dr Naila Khan, Shaheen Anam, Advocate Salma Ali, Elina Khan, Laila Arjuman, Advocate Khaleeda Khatun, Helen Rahman and Eva Handawker.

Yasmin Khatun, 14, was rape and killed by a group of patrol policemen at Dosh Mile near Dinajpur town in the morning of August 24 last year.

After investigation, the CID police chargesheeted six policemen in May last and hearing of the case began in a special court in Rangpur a couple of weeks ago.

The SNS also put forward a five-point demand which include, immediate steps by the government to stop repression on women, action against those responsible for delaying punishment to the culprits and necessary amendment to women prevention laws and their proper enforcement.

Policemen found guilty of such crimes should be summarily tried, the women leaders said and demanded new legislation for police, if necessary, where "there would be no room for saving the policemen in the name of seeking government approval."

The SNS leaders claimed that the government and political parties were not taking necessary steps regarding incidents of repression on women.

AB Bank

From Page 1

Salman Rahman and others of Beximco.

It also said that the bank was thinking of providing a 12 per cent cash dividend to the shareholders, but this could be materialised because of the 'provisioning pressure' of the huge Tk 170 crore loans.

However, the bank declared issuance of one bonus share for every ten shares.

It also declared that the bank earned an operating profit of Tk 38.19 crore in 1995, 15.77 per cent increase over that of 1994.

The AGM was presided over by M Moshed Khan, Chairman of AB Bank.

Moinuddin saves lives of train passengers

From Our Correspondent

RAJSHAHI, Oct 24: One Moinuddin saved the lives of train passengers by raising a piece of red cloth near Arani Railway Bridge under Bagha thana yesterday morning.

According to Railway sources, Moinuddin, son of late Mohiuddin of Arani village, while walking along the rail track saw a few sleepers broken and a portion of the track displaced at a place near the bridge.

As a local man, he knew that the Kopatakhya Express would arrive soon. He at once procured a piece of red cloth and when he saw the train coming at 7:30 am he signalled the driver to stop by raising the red cloth. The train stopped saving the lives of passengers.

Decision has also been taken at the meeting to collect more patrol vehicles for Coast Guard as early as possible.

Cabinet Secretary Syed Ahmed, Home Secretary Syed Rezaul Hayat, high officials of BDR, Police and other concerned departments attended the meeting.

Kailashtila Gas Field workers stage sit-in

From Staff Correspondent

SYLHET, Oct 24: Work in the Kailashtila Gas Field of Sylhet Gas Field a subsidiary of Petrobangla, came to a standstill due to an eight-hour 'sit-in' today. The All-party Action Committee held the demonstration for the second day today to press their six-point demand.

The demands include the setting up of the Fractionation Plant at the Kailashtila Gas Field and job opportunities for the local people.

Today's campaign will be participated by scout units from Chinhamukta scout group of Palashi, Palashi Government Primary School, Engineering University School, Motijheel Government Boys High School, Dhaka District Railway Scouts, Dhaka District Sea Scouts, Dhaka District Air Scouts, Tejjagon Government Boys School, Tejjagon Government Science College, Mirpur Siddhanta High School, Bhasantek High School, BDR High School, Bangladesh Protibondhi High School and Nakhalpara Hosain Ali High School in their respective areas.

Alleged thief jumps from 4th floor, dies

By DMC Correspondent

A suspected thief, who jumped from the fourth floor of a building at Zigatola in the city, died at the Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) yesterday.

Alam, 25, son of one Bashiruddin Sheikh, sustained fatal injuries when he tried to escape Wednesday night. However, his accomplice, Rafiq, was caught by the local people. He was later arrested by Dhanmondi police.

Weights & measures

From Page 1

This correspondent visited four jewellery shops in the city's New Market area and found that none was using weights in gram. The shopkeepers said that most of the customers were familiar with the traditional 'bhor' system and so they were using this. "But the customers can always have an option," said a shopkeeper pointing his finger at a set of weights in gram kept in a box under the shelf. It was however not possible to check whether those bore any BSTI seal but the shopkeeper admitted that he had no certificate.

The problem is not with the thousands of vendors on the streets or in the kitchen markets. It is with the big businesses where anomaly of even half a gram means lot of money," said a top official of the BSTI.

There are about 22 manufacturers of weights in the country and many of them are also involved in marketing unverified and unstamped weights contravening the law, sources at the BSTI pointed out.

As per law, an anomaly of upto 6 ml in one litre of petrol is allowable but it often runs upto 100 ml per litre, they said.

The BSTI officials also pointed out that it was illegal to use wooden balance to weight things. As per the balance must be made of metal, preferably of iron.

"You see in Islampur and elsewhere in the country, every cloth shop is using yards instead of meters as required by the law. Now we have decided to persuade the businessmen to adopt metric system which was introduced in the country in 1982 through an ordinance," said another official.

"Even with the existing manpower we could have done better if we were given transport and other resources," he said.

During 1995-1996 BSTI set up 109 mobile courts and conducted 282 raids in different parts of the country. They filed 1010 cases against unscrupulous businessmen and realised Tk 2,82,427. Most of these fined were owners of jewellery shops and petrol pumps, the sources said.

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