

Inside Today

Article

Share Market: The Tragic Magic?

Column : Beneath the
Surface
by Abdul Bayes

Looking Back— into the Past

Column: Between
the Lines
by Kuldip Nayar
Page 4

Focus

Towards a contract
with 21st century; and
Rice or rights: Whose
responsibility?

Page 5

International

Probe into mid-air collision
in India begins

Preparations for multi-
national force for Zaïre
accelerated

Page 8

Business

Dhaka likely to get
\$275m ADB loan
next year

Trading at DSE, CSE
surges over the week

Pages 6, 7

NEWS BRIEFS

BNP executive body meets today

By Staff Correspondent

The meeting of the national executive committee of the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) will be held at Hotel Sundarban in the city, instead of the party's central office at 10 am today, said a party press release last night.

Phensidyl, wine recovered in city

Detective police recovered a huge quantity of banned phensidyl syrup, foreign wine and beer from Sayedabad and Gulshan areas in the city yesterday. Acting on a tip-off, police raided Balurmath area at Sayedabad in the morning and recovered 750 bottles of Indian phensidyl. They also arrested Mohammad Sattar, 23, and Golam Sarwar alias Hiru for their involvement in the phensidyl trading. Another detective team recovered 13 cartons of foreign-made beer and one carton of wine from Gulshan area and arrested Abdul Hakim and Kabir, reports UNB.

Call for hartal at Golapganj tomorrow

From Staff Correspondent
SYLHET Nov 15: The All-Party Action Committee has called for a half-day hartal on November 17 at the thana headquarters of Golapganj to press its six-point demands. The demands include, setting up of a fractionation plant and Gas turbine power plant at Golapganj, cancellation of acquisition of lands in the name of Jalalabad Gas and jobs for the local people. A rally was held at the Hetinganj Bazar Choumuhani this afternoon with a call to make the hartal a success.

Pak National Bank president held

KARACHI Nov 15: Pakistani police today arrested M B Abbasi, President of the country's largest state-run bank, National Bank of Pakistan (NBP), police sources said. It was not immediately known if the arrest was linked with the sacking of Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto by President Farooq Leghari on November 5 on disputed charges of corruption and misuse, reports Reuters.

Shahjalal Varsity admission test

From Staff Correspondent
SYLHET Nov 15: Admission tests for the first year honours classes in the Shahjalal University of Science and Technology will be held on January 3 and 4 for 'KA' Unit (Science) will be held on January 3 and for 'KHA' unit (Arts and Commerce) on January 4, an official of the university said. Application forms for admission tests will be distributed and received from December 1 to 15, the source added.

Tokyo suggests steps for 'effective use' of grants, aid

By Inam Ahmed and Sharier Khan

Tokyo has asked Dhaka to take 'at least a dozen' specific steps for effective and efficient utilisation of its grants and technical assistance to Bangladesh, Finance Ministry sources said yesterday.

These steps were suggested by a Japanese delegation at the two-day annual consultation on Japanese grant and technical assistance to Bangladesh held in Dhaka late last month. The delegation noted that if Bangladesh did not take those steps, Japan would reconsider future grants and technical aid.

The delegation pointed out to the government that the External Resources Division (ERD) and the National Board of Revenue (NBR) usually took three to six months to clear the acceptance letter and the pass book of any expert of JICA and

JOCV of Japan. Such delay in the procedures forces many of the experts to stay in Bangladesh illegally against their will and incur unnecessary expenses.

Bangladesh should make all efforts to streamline the procedures to ensure prompt issue of an acceptance letter and a pass book, the sources, quoting the Japanese suggestions, told The Daily Star.

The delegation, which did not conceal its unhappiness in this regard at the annual consultation, noted that "ECNEC's Project Concept Paper (PCP) approval process did not have appropriate documents for timely implementation of project-type technical cooperation."

The Japanese side requested the Bangladesh authorities to promptly send new project pro-

posals to the Japan Embassy and JICA office to maximise mutual cooperation in preparing proper documents for the PCP approval.

The team said the annual list of ERD's project proposals does not include information on the priority or details of each project. Some projects even fall outside the priority sectors agreed upon in the previous annual consultation meeting. Therefore, it urged the ERD to exercise "a strong leadership in the screening and prioritisation of the project proposals and forward viable projects," one source said.

Criticising snags in Customs clearance, the delegation urged the organisations receiving Japanese equipment

See Page 12 Col 1

No fresh contacts between AL, BNP

Star Report

No fresh contacts were made between the ruling Awami League and the main opposition BNP yesterday for a dialogue to resolve the impasse due to the latter's abstention from attending Jatiya Sangsad session since Sunday last.

BNP secretary general Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan said "No fresh contacts were made from either side yesterday."

Replying to a question, he told this correspondent, "We have already made it clear to them (AL) that a congenial atmosphere must be created first for holding any sort of discussions."

BNP lawmakers started the abstention after it submitted a 10-point charter of demands to Speaker Humayun Rashid Chowdhury saying that it would not be possible for them to return to the House till the demands are met.

Later Chief Whip of the JS Abul Hasnat Abdullah and Prime Minister's Parliamentary Affairs Adviser Suranjit Sengupta, MP, contacted BNP leaders over telephone. See Page 12 Col 3

10000 face cases, 1200 held, alleges BNP

By Staff Correspondent

Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) yesterday claimed that 9000 cases were lodged against 10,000 leaders and activists of its youth front, Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD), and 1200 of them were arrested since the Awami League came to power in June last.

Over one hundred JCD leaders and workers were also murdered during the period, Ahmed Nazir press secretary to BNP Chairperson Begum Khaleda Zia claimed while briefing newsmen at Begum Zia's Minto Road official residence in the city. He was quoting from a written speech of Begum Khaleda Zia.

The briefing took place last night, two hours before Begum Zia's scheduled address to a JCD delegation. A 184-member newly-formed central committee of the JCD went to meet her at her official residence.

"Release JCD boys immediately, withdraw false cases," demanded Ahmed Nazir. He alleged that in the name

of 'capturing student halls' in colleges and universities, the party in power has created a chaotic situation in the educational institutions throughout the country.

Ahmad Nazir said: "Verdicts of student unions' elections in various educational institutions are being snatched in favour of the ruling party in a similar style as Awami League did in June 12 general elections." He said this was being done to destroy the congenial academic atmosphere and prevent the students from launching movement against 'their (ruling party) anti-people and undemocratic activities.'

He claimed that a conspiracy was being hatched to 'handover the country to a foreign country' and urged the students to 'remain ever-ready for launching movement to foil such a plot.' Anwarul Hossain, MP, JCD president Shahiduddin Chowdhury Anny and some other central and unit level leaders of the party were also present. See Page 12 Col 8



Special prayers being offered at the Baitul Mokarram Mosque on Awami League's 'Shokrana Diba' yesterday following the passage of Indemnity (Repeal) Bill. — Star photo

Sex & violence on TV: New guidelines for BBC

Neville Stack writes from London

New guidelines issued to BBC executives will curb bad language and gratuitous sex and violence on television programmes.

And this clean-up-your-acts ruling is expected to make many high-quality shows and dramas more acceptable to countries which buy only programmes suitable for the home and family.

Last week Heritage Secretary Virginia Bottomley, who is responsible for the BBC, has criticised the amount of sex and violence being depicted. And she also expressed concern about the emphasis on crime.

Now the guidelines lay down the policy approved by the director-general John Birt and the chairman, Sir Christopher Bland.

However, statistics compiled by the Independent Television Commission show that the incidence of violence on TV has decreased in recent years. Only four per cent of complaints to the BBC in the last three months related to violence, and none of these were upheld.

On violence: Producers are told not to concentrate unduly on the bloody consequences of an accident or terrorist attack, to avoid close-ups and not to show the dead unless there are compelling reasons to do so.

The guidelines say there are "almost no" circumstances which would justify showing an execution, though three years ago it was said only that there were "very few".

The booklet says: "Editing out the bloodiest scenes need not result in a sanitised version of events. A good script is vital in conveying the reality of tragedy."

On swearing: "Deep offence will be caused by profane references or disrespect, verbal or visual, directed at matters which are at the heart of various religions," pointing out that blasphemy is a criminal offence in the UK.

On sex, the guideline is "For each of us, sexual activity happens after moral decisions have been made. Its portrayal, therefore, should not be separated from the moral process."

Bottomley's letter, which was also sent to the Independent Television Commission and the Broadcasting Standards Council, called for an urgent meeting to discuss ways of

"making sure the television makers and broadcasters take full account of what is acceptable to today's viewers."

"I would also like to explore what more we can do to help protect vulnerable groups of viewers, particularly children, from unsuitable material."

Her views were echoed by Home Office minister Tim Sackville, who told the British Video Association: "We must redouble our efforts to raise standards in the media and the video industry."

And in his recent introduction to the BBC's own commitment of the Citizen's Charter code of standards, Sir Christopher Bland said: "Viewers and listeners fund the BBC through the licence fee and they have a right to know what is being planned year by year."

Among the Charter pledges is one which apparently promises that "rotweiler" interviews would no longer be tolerated from aggressive interviewers like Jeremy Paxman and John Humphreys. They would be required to ask appropriately forceful with courtesy and a consistent tone."

Soeharto assures PM of assistance for development

ROME, Nov 15: President Soeharto of Indonesia has assured support and assistance for development and economic stability of Bangladesh, reports UNB.

"We will not hesitate to take any supportive measures for Bangladesh to continue its development efforts," he said during a 45-minute talk with Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at a hotel here on Thursday night.

Referring to his country's development experience, Soeharto said a nation has to suffer, has to work hard to pave the way for its development and stability.

Both the leaders, who reached Rome earlier in the day to attend the World Food Summit, discussed issues of bilateral interest and emphasised developing economic relations between the two countries.

See Page 12 Col 2

Li identified as Taiwan's PM!

ROME, Nov 15: The UN Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) apologised to Chinese Premier Li Peng today after identifying him as leader of arch-rival Taiwan in an official document at the World Food Summit, reports Reuters.

The written journal containing the programme of speakers for today's sessions of the World Food Summit at FAO's Rome headquarters referred to Li as premier of the state council of the republic of China.

That is the official name of Taiwan, which Beijing does not recognise as an independent country.

Communist China's official name is 'the People's Republic of China'.

"We regret that this omission was made," a summit official told delegates in a special announcement.

"A new journal is now being corrected and will be distributed to you as soon as possible," the official said.

Food Summit: Restrictions on media alleged

Neeman Sobhan writes
from Rome

The general debate at the Food Summit that commenced with 48 speakers from governments and inter-governmental organisations Wednesday continued smoothly as scheduled.

At the centre of all the speechmaking was the pledge to reduce by half the number of people who suffer from chronic hunger and malnutrition by 2015.

However, things may be going a bit too smoothly for the media who are restive and full of complaints against the severe restrictions imposed on the press, confining them to areas of FAO so remote from the actual events and presence of the delegates that many are reacting with negative views of what they are now seeing as an artificial, highly orchestrated

See Page 16 Col 7

Farooq kept in condemned cell

Star Report

Some special security measures have been taken for the three detained former army officers accused in the August 15 75 killing case, according to official sources.

Col (ret'd) Syed Farooqur Rahman has now been kept in a condemned cell, while Col (ret'd) Shahriar Rashid Khan and Major (ret'd) Khairuzzaman have been kept in two other cells in the Dhaka Central Jail, the sources said, adding 'for security reasons, they were shifted from one cell to another frequently'.

The three were also charged in the November 3, 75 jail killing case when CIL took up the case in September last after a lapse of almost 21 years.

All-Party ultimatum to arrest killers of Biplob

KISHOREGANJ, Nov 15: An All-Party rally today gave an ultimatum to arrest the police personnel involved in the 'killing' of college student Biplob within a week, reports UNB.

Biplob Sarker alias Debashish, a B Com Final year student of Wali Nazim Khan College, was allegedly beaten to death by some police in the town's Rathkhola area on Monday.

The leaders of the Awami League, BNP, JP and JSD at a condolence meeting at Rothkhola this afternoon warned that they would go for an action programme if their demand was not met. Jatiya Party leader Motiur Rahman Khan presided over the meeting.

The rally was addressed, among others, by BNP MP Ma-

See Page 12 Col 3

PM invites Italian investors to avail 'best opportunity'



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina addressing Italian businessmen in Rome yesterday. — PID photo

ROME, Nov 15: Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has invited the Italian investors to invest in the country and said Bangladesh offers the best investment opportunity available anywhere in the world, reports UNB.

"Our package of fiscal and other incentives to foreign investors are more liberal and our labour is cheap even compared with the other South Asian countries," she said addressing a dinner party at a local hotel on Thursday night.

The dinner was hosted in her honour by the Honorary Consul Generals and Consul of Bangladesh.

Foreign Minister Abdus Samad Azad, Food and Agriculture Minister Matia Chowdhury, International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) president Fouzi Al-Sultan, World Food Programme (WFP) executive director Catherine Bertini, vice-ministers and senators of Italian Parliament attended the dinner.

The prime minister said that the investors would find in Bangladesh an able, willing

See Page 12 Col 4

BR plans to sell its lands now 'illegally occupied'

By Staff Correspondent

Bangladesh Railway (BR) authorities will seek approval from the government to sell its lands across the country, which are either illegally occupied by people or unused, according to official sources.

A proposal in this regard will be placed before the government soon along with a detailed chart of its salable 'abandoned lands', prepared through a survey, the sources said.

These 'abandoned lands' total 5,907.90 acres in BR's eastern and western zones while another 1,459.97 acres are under illegal occupation. Different government organisations are illegally occupying 1,040.74 acres, the sources said.

"If these organisations now approach us for purchasing the lands which they are illegally occupying for years, we will consider it," the source said requesting anonymity.

A rather small portion totalling 419.23 acres are occupied by individuals.

The BR is currently leasing out these lands to the illegal occupants on condition that they pay the arrears of five years. The lease is made on yearly basis. The BR earned Tk 4.87 crore in fiscal 1994-95 and Tk 6.80 crore in 93-94 by leasing its lands. The BR earned Tk 35 crore from 1990 to 1996 by selling some of its lands, the sources added.

"It is not possible to evict the illegal occupiers. So we are either leasing or selling the lands. This will enable the BR to build a fund of its own which can be spent for different development purposes," another source said.

The BR has a total of 61,839.31 acres of land in its eastern and western zones out of which 36,673 acres are under use for tracks, stations, staff quarters, rest houses, offices and all other facilities.

The BR proposal says that 272.46 acres could be used for commercial purposes.

See Page 12 Col 4

Abducted student rescued from DU hall : 4 arrested

Police yesterday rescued a Dhaka University student-cum-businessman from the Surya Sen Hall, reports UNB.

Police said a group of armed youths kidnapped Rabiul Islam Rabi from Bakushah Market at Nilkhet at about 6 pm on Thursday and demanded Tk 1.5 lakh as ransom.

The law enforcing personnel launched a massive hunt soon after the kidnapping.

Rabi, a second year student of the Sociology Department, has printing business in the market, adjacent to the university.

At one stage police raided Surya Sen Hall at about 11:30 pm Thursday and rescued Rabi from room number 168 of the Hall.

They arrested four activists of the Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD), including its Jangam Hall Organising Secretary Joyanta Das, from the Hall.

Of the arrested, Sharif and Joyanta are Dhaka University students while the rest two — Enamul Hasan Tutul and Prince — are outsiders.

See Page 12 Col 4

Showcause notice on JCD leader for 'misconduct'

By JU Correspondent

The Disciplinary Committee of Jahangirnagar University (JU) has decided to serve a showcause notice on a Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) leader, Shawkat Ali Tutul, for his 'misconduct' with the provic and Proctor and ransacking the offices of the JU Registrar and PS to the VC.

The decision has been taken at a meeting of the Committee on Thursday with Vice-Chancellor Prof Amirul Islam Chowdhury in the chair.

The showcause notice has asked Shawkat Ali to reply by November 30.

See Page 16 Col 7

3 held for allegedly taking hostage share trader

By Staff Correspondent

Three persons were arrested for allegedly taking hostage a share trader and snatching share certificates worth about Tk 1.22 lakh from him yesterday, police said.

The three middle-aged men, identified as Nasiruddin, Kashem and Nasar Hossain, reportedly took one Bahar Ahmed Chowdhury from Motihel area to a sixth floor apartment at Elephant Road at about 9:30 pm Thursday, saying they would buy shares certificates from him. But they snatched share certificates worth about Tk 1.22 lakh from him and released him at about 4 am yesterday, police said.

Bahar, who resides in the city's Kachukhet area, rushed to the Dhankundi thana yesterday morning and filed a case. Police raided the house, arrested the three and recovered share certificates worth about Tk 38,000, police said.

Kidnapped man rescued

By Staff Correspondent

The Detective Branch (DB) police in the city early yesterday rescued one Yusuf Ali who was reportedly kidnapped by a gang on Thursday.

The gang kept him in an under construction building in Jhilpara area under Shabubagh thana and demanded a ransom of Tk two lakh for his release, police said.

Police arrested one person during the raid on the building. The arrested was identified as Shahadat Shahin alias Bandhan.

What's wrong, says Phoolan

Miss World show to go on despite all protests

BOMBAY, Nov 15: The Miss World show will go on in India despite the suicide of a man who set himself ablaze in protest against the beauty pageant, organisers said today, reports Reuters.

The 89 beauty queen contestants awoke in their Bangalore hotel today guarded by around 100 policemen inside and another 100 outside.

Later, they were bused to a cricket ground for rehearsal, flanked by jeeps of armed police who accompany them everywhere in Bangalore.

"We are very saddened by what has happened but the show will go on," Sanjay Gupta, chief executive officer of Amitabh Bachchan Corp Ltd, the company organising the event, told Reuters from Bangalore.

Some 20 groups have campaigned vociferously to stop the event coming to India for the first time in its 45-year history. They say the pageant degrades women and contaminates Indian culture.

The organisers hope a court will rule later today to allow Karnataka state government to call in crack paramilitary teams to back up 12,000 local police already deployed.

Opponents of the show have challenged the use of government forces to protect a private event.

Miss World will be crowned in southern Bangalore's Chinnaswamy Cricket Stadium on November 23.

Meanwhile, India's 'bandit queen', Phoolan Devi has spoken out in favour of the Miss World show.

See Page 12 Col 8

Fire: 200 shops gutted in Khulna, 50 in Sirajganj

From Staff Correspondent

KHULNA, Nov 15: At least two hundred shops at Station Road and part of Khulna Bazar were gutted and ten persons injured in a devastating fire tonight.

The fire reportedly originated from electric short circuit at a shop at Station Road at 9 pm and quickly spread to the part of Khulna Bazar.

Some godowns, hotels, rice shops and poultry shops were gutted.

The fire also damaged electric wires and poles plunging the area into darkness.

The total loss caused by fire was yet to be ascertained but unofficial reports have primarily put the figure at about five crore Taka.

Local people are trying to put down the blaze till filing of this report.

UNB adds: Some 50 shops including several godowns were gutted and 24 people injured in a fire at Nimgachhihat in Riaganj thana on Thursday night.

Fire Brigade sources said the fire originated from electric short circuit at a shop at midnight. Firefighters from Sadar and Ullapara rushed the spot and doused the fire after two hours.

Our Staff Correspondent from Barisal reports: Three persons received serious burn injuries in a fire incident that originated from the leakage of a LPG cylinder at Hatkhola in Barisal town this noon.

Witnesses said, Delwar Hossain, 35, his wife Nurat Jahan, 30, and daughter Masuda Begum, 18, were injured in the fire that broke out during cooking in their tin shed kitchen.

The victims were admitted to the Barisal Sher-e-Bangla Medical College Hospital. The condition of Nurat Jahan is stated to be critical, hospital sources said.

Demonstration in front of thana