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Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina addressing a seminar on 'Governance and Development: South Asia in the 21st Century' organised by the Bangladesh Institute of International and Strategic Studies at its conference room in the city yesterday. — PID photo

PM: Regional cooperation

From Page 1

Development efforts, she said, are devoid of any meaning without spontaneous participation of the people.

"It is unfortunate that the spirit of democracy is not yet firmly woven in the fabric of our society. Development will take its own roots only when we can make politics revolve around development."

The prime minister said although her government assumed power only six months ago, but had adopted courses of action for ensuring good governance and economic growth.

Ghali welcomes water treaty

UN Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali has welcomed the Ganges water sharing treaty signed between India and Bangladesh on December 12 in New Delhi, reports UNB.

A statement issued by his spokesman said Ghali pays tribute to the Prime Minister of India and Bangladesh on their statesmanship and the spirit of friendship and good neighbourliness that they had displayed in signing the important treaty.

The UN Secretary-General expressed his sincere hope that the treaty would be implemented in the spirit in which it was concluded to the benefit of the peoples of the two countries.

said a PID handout.

Truce in CHT

From Page 1

an AL MP.

The two BNP MPs in the Committee Amir Khosru Mahmud Chowdhury and Wahidul Alam were absent from the dialogue.

The five-member PCJSS leaders were flown to the circuit house by helicopter from Dudukchhari bordering village at 10:15 am.

They were flown back to their destination at 3:30 pm by the same helicopter.

Abul Hasnat Abdulla and other members of the National Committee gave a hearty send-off to the PCJSS leaders.

The PCJSS leaders were seen waving hands cheerfully while boarding the helicopter, witnesses said.

The last dialogue was held under the previous government on October 25, 1995.

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh Directorate of Primary Education Bangladesh, Dhaka Notice

Like every year, the programme of free distribution of text books among primary school students has started also for 1997 academic year. These books will have the words "for free distribution" printed on them. Printed on superior quality paper at a very high cost these books are suitable for long time use. It has been observed through experience that these books after being used by students, remain quite in good condition at the end of the year. So, like other years, the policy to distribute old books alongside the new ones has been taken up for the year 1997 too. This time one old book each to the students of Class I & II and two old books each to the student of classes III, IV & V will be distributed. The new & old books distribution policy has already been sent to the officers & headmasters concerned.

Students of such educational institutions as not deemed eligible to get free text books, can purchase the books on cash payment from National Curriculum & Text Book Board, Motijheel, Dhaka and Board appointed agents/dealers at district level. These books will have the sale price printed on them.

Illegal collection, hoarding a sale of free text books are prohibited by law & punishable offence. Book selling libraries are cautioned to refrain from collection & sale of books with the words "for free distribution" printed on them. All concerned are requested to keep a vigil in this regard.

Assistant Director

Directorate of Primary Education

Bangladesh, Dhaka

DFP-29272-17/12

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The Daily Star

Stop repression on Opposition: BNP

BNP secretary general Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan MP yesterday said the country's independence would be meaningless unless the interests of peasants were protected, reports UNB.

The independence of Bangladesh has been achieved through massive sacrifices made by the peasants, he said while addressing a meeting of the Jatiyatabadi Krishak Dal at the BNP central office.

Bhuiyan alleged that the peasants were now being oppressed in many ways. Even they were not getting fair prices for their agricultural produce like jute and paddy, he said.

Besides, the price of fertiliser has gone beyond their capacity, he said terming the role of the present government in this regard "frustrating."

The BNP leader called upon the government to provide the peasants with necessary fertiliser at fair price.

He demanded of the government to stop repression on leaders and workers of the BNP, Krishak Dal and other front organisations.

The meeting was adjourned yesterday till 11 am today.

But the planned import, he said, indicated that the much needed agri-input was being smuggled out to neighbouring countries.

The meeting of the Krishak Dal central executive committee began yesterday morning with its acting president Mahbul Alam Tara in the chair.

It was addressed, among others, by Krishak Dal general secretary Shamsuzzaman Dudu MP, Shamsul Bari, Borhan Uddin, Mirza Alamgir, Ashraf Hossain, Mojibor Rahman, Ehsanul Kabir, Ahmed Ali MP, Rashidunnabi Babu and Shahjahan Samrat.

The meeting was adjourned yesterday till 11 am today.

Importers of reconditioned cars evading VAT

Star Reports

A section of importers of reconditioned cars are evading Value Added Tax (VAT) while selling their vehicles in the retail market, according to sources in the National Board of Revenue (NBR).

The government is being deprived of crores of Taka in VAT due to the unscrupulous practice by such dealers, the sources said. They also mentioned that VAT on retail sale of imported reconditioned cars is quite low.

These dealers after importing the vehicles, immediately register those with the BRTA (Bangladesh Road Transport Authority) under individual names showing that those were meant for private use, not for commercial purpose. The vehicles are then sold from the showrooms and the traders approach the BRTA and get their ownership transferred in the name of the buyers, thus shifting the VAT onto them, the sources said.

Here, the buyer has no idea that ownership of the imported reconditioned car is only being transferred in his name from another name. In this way the trader evades the VAT under a cover, an NBR official said.

VAT on retail sales of vehicles was imposed in July this year.

The NBR in a recent notification said that buyers who bought such vehicles from local markets after July 28 this year have to carry VAT receipts. Receipts should be shown to any checkpoint manned by VAT detectives on the roads, the notice said.

"Since July, we realised only two lakh Taka VAT on car sales in Dhaka division whereas a rough estimate showed that over two thousand reconditioned cars were sold from the city showrooms. On an average seven to ten thousand Taka is paid as VAT for each sale depending on the price of the car."

It was learnt that in July last, the NBR, through a gazette notification, vested in the

Clash over land in Sylhet: 4 shot

From Staff Correspondent

SYLHET, Dec 21: Four people including two children sustained bullet wounds during a clash over a disputed land at Kuarpar area of the town this morning.

The clash erupted when a group of people resisted another group who were erecting a wall on the disputed land. At one stage, the latter group opened fire indiscriminately in which four residents including a woman of nearby houses were wounded, police said.

On getting information, police rushed to the spot and arrested 18 young men. They also recovered a revolver, a pipegun, several bullets and other lethal weapons.

The Bank said population growth and limited financial resources had created severe pressure on existing municipal services, including water supply, sanitation, solid waste collection, and drainage services in Dhaka.

Only half of the city's population, or some 4.1 million, is served by the water supply system while the remainder depends on contaminated sources. About two out of five people living in urban areas have access to sanitary waste disposal services.

Because of the limited sewerage systems and inefficient sanitary waste disposal facilities, untreated or poorly treated domestic sewage is a major source of water pollution and waterborne diseases.

The aim of the Roads and Markets Improvement and Maintenance Project is to help boost rural employment and incomes and reduce rural poverty by establishing an improved, sustainable rural transport and trading infrastructure.

"Roads and waterways are the arteries which feed the heart of the rural economy — the markets," says project task manager Thamim Pankaj, a principal transport specialist

at the World Bank.

The project will work both at the national level and in a project-specific geographic area which covers 14 out of 64 districts, including six districts in Dhaka area and eight in northwest region.

Under the nationwide rural structures component, the project will build, through community participation, about 6000 culverts and small bridges along 4000 supplementary earthworks, which will fill existing gaps of about 10,500 kilometre of rural roads and make them passable year-round.

This component will particularly emphasize local participation, use of labour-intensive technologies, and employment of landless poor and disadvantaged women.

In the main project area, feeder roads connecting important rural markets to the regional road network will be upgraded with small bridges, culverts, tree planting alongside the roads and road safety improvements, and a planned maintenance system will also be set up.

Both the credits will be at standard IDA terms. The water-supply project credit will mature in 40 years while the road project credit in 35 years.

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