

প্রাণ

এটি সাধারণ পানীয় নয়
এটি পাকা জ্বালের রস তৈরী



Inside Today

Article

Limited but Essential Role of Government

Column : Beneath the Surface
by Abdul Bayes
Page 4

Star Literature

A self-made man; The studios of famous painters in France; Colours in the chemistry
Pages 6, 7

International

29 killed as commuter plane crashes in Michigan
Lankan troops consolidate positions at northern bases
Page 5

Business

Trade ban is not a way to counter child labour: UNICEF
Page 8

NEWS BRIEFS

Bangladeshi killed by BSF

JHENIDAH, Jan 10: A Bangladeshi national was killed by India Border Security Force (BSF) on Wednesday. M. Abdul Jabbar of Shamkur village in Mahespur thana of the district was shot dead at Sonatanpur village in Hasakali thana on Nadia district. BDR sources here said today. After the incident, BDR sent a letter to BSF for a flag meeting, but was yet to receive any reply, reports UNB.

BSF yet to return fisherman

From Staff Correspondent
SYLHET, Jan 10: A Bangladeshi fisherman who was kidnapped by a group of BSF members from the Kushiara river on Tuesday night is yet to be released. Shamsu Miah of village Maiyakhali of Beani-bazar thana was fishing at about 11 pm when a group of BSF men kidnapped him. BDR has already protested the incident and asked the BSF to hand over the Bangladeshi national immediately, official sources said tonight.

Woman banker robbed

A woman officer of the Gulshan circle one branch of the Janata Bank was robbed of her cash and prize bonds near Gulshan police station on Thursday evening. Police said yesterday. Shamsu Ara was attacked by the muggers when she was returning home from the bank by a rickshaw. They snatched away her cash, a cheque book and prize bonds worth Tk 30,000, reports UNB.

India to buy two Russian subs

NEW DELHI, Jan 10: India will import two conventional submarines from Russia and build two killer-class submarines under German licence, a defence ministry spokesman said here today. "We are importing one this year and the second in 1998 from Russia," he said, confirming the deal was clinched last month when India's defence Secretary Tapas Banerjee visited Russia to purchase Sukhoi-30 warplanes. The official said Germany has also agreed to India's plans to build under licence two specialised killer submarines, designed for underwater combat, reports AFP.

Traffic disrupted on Dhaka-Ctg road

From Our Correspondent
NARAYANGANJ, Jan 10: A truck caused disruption of traffic on Dhaka-Chittagong highway for several hours as it created a barricade on the road after its axle was broken yesterday afternoon.

Sehri, Iftar timings

Ramadan	Jan	Sehri	Iftar
1	11	—	5:34
2	12	5:20	5:35
3	13	5:20	5:35



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina receiving her British counterpart John Major on his arrival at the Zia International Airport yesterday.

Hasina, Major hold official talks today

By Staff Correspondent

British Prime Minister John Major was accorded a warm welcome when he arrived in the city last night on a three-day official visit to Bangladesh.

He was accompanied by his wife Norma Major. Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina received the distinguished guests at the airport on their arrival at 10:45 pm by a special flight of the British Airways.

Cabinet ministers, Mayor of Dhaka city Mohammad Hanif, heads of diplomatic missions, senior officials, and chiefs of the Army, Navy and Air Force were present at the airport. Bangladesh High Commissioner to Britain Mahmud Ali and British High Commissioner to Bangladesh David C Walker were also present.

Major arrived from Bangalore, India, on the second leg of a three-nation tour that will later take him to Pakistan.

Two tiny tots presented bouquet to the British Prime Minister as he alighted from the aircraft.

After the airport formalities, John Major drove in a ceremonial motorcade to the residence of the British High Commissioner at Baridhara, where he will stay during his visit.

Major streets in the capital were decorated with the National Flag of Bangladesh and the Union Jack, marking the visit of the British premier.

This is the first visit by a British Prime Minister since the then premier James Callaghan came to Bangladesh in 1978.

Apart from senior officials, a large delegation of top businessmen from leading British companies are accompanying Major.

The visit is being considered important as it would seek to strengthen further the existing bilateral trade and commercial links between the two countries.

John Major's itinerary, besides official talks with Sheikh Hasina today, includes the signing of an agreement between Cairn Energy/HBR Energy and Petrobangla on gas purchase and sales from Sangu gas field. It is Bangladesh's first offshore gas field explored and to be developed for commercial production by a British company.

Official talks between the two leaders will continue today. See Page 12 col 5

Major praises water-sharing accord

CALCUTTA, Jan 10: British Prime Minister John Major has appreciated the recent water sharing agreement between India and Bangladesh, reports BSS.

He was speaking at a special plenary session of the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) partnership summit 1997 at Netaji Indoor Stadium here. Major also termed the water sharing agreement as a tremendous achievement for the both sides. Chief Minister of West Bengal Jyoti Basu also spoke.

Major, on the first day of week-long visit to South Asia, also told Indian businessmen that he regretted the tiger had become one of the most endangered animals in the world.

"The plight of the tiger is close to the hearts of the British people, and is of concern the world over."

"The tiger is a proud and glorious animal. We must ensure his survival so that our great grandchildren can enjoy his grace and power as much as we do," he said.

Prime Minister warns By-elections if BNP MPs fail to return to JS in 90 days

By Staff Correspondent

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina said yesterday that by-elections would be held if Jatiya Sangsad seats fall vacant due to absence of BNP lawmakers from the House for 90 working days in a row.

"I personally communicated with both the Opposition Chief Whip and the BNP Secretary General, invited them to return to House and resolve grievances through discussions. If they don't return, by-elections will become inevitable and that's the provision", Sheikh Hasina, also chief of ruling Awami League said meeting in observance of the 26th anniversary of Bangabandhu's home-coming day. A number of ministers

and senior party leaders also took part in the discussion, organised by the party at the lush green lawn of the Institution of Engineers in the city.

In her half an hour address, the prime minister spoke about various issues including BNP's abstention from the Jatiya Sangsad (JS), effective running of the House, and the proposed sub-regional grouping among Bangladesh, India, Nepal and Bhutan.

BNP has been abstaining from JS session since November 10 last year, placing a 10-point demand including neutrality of the Speaker, neutral coverage of the proceedings. See Page 12 Col 4

'BNP only party to raise voice against misrule'

BNP Chairperson Begum Khaleida Zia yesterday said her party is the strongest political force to protest the activities of the present 'fascist' government, reports UNB.

"This government is not a democratic government. It's a fascist government," she said while addressing a meeting at 29 Minto Road, official residence of the Leader of the Opposition in the Jatiya Sangsad.

The meeting was organised on the occasion of joining the BNP of some leaders and workers of a social organisation, Jatiya Tarun Sangha, led by its Chairman Fazlul Huq.

Begum Zia said the government was trying to suppress the BNP as there is no political party other than the BNP, which would raise their voice against the government's misdeeds and repression.

About other political parties, she said, the Jamaat has been lagging behind due to its own faults. "I don't want to make any

comment on the Jatiya Party because it was born as a B-team of the Awami League and it has now been playing the same game," she added.

The BNP Chairperson said all nationalist and patriotic forces would have to forge unity and stand on a common platform to launch a movement to save the country.

Begum Zia urged her party-men to organise the people from all walks of life, including all professionals, during the month of Ramadan to prepare for a greater movement.

The Leader of the Opposition said, "the Home Minister who failed to contain terrorism was not elected by the people. BNP had won in that constituency."

The former prime minister said during her time, the price of fertiliser did not exceed Tk 250 per bag despite the road blockade by the then Opposition.

"But now the peasants cannot buy fertiliser at less than Tk 300 per bag," she said. See Page 12 Col 3

Ramadan begins

The holy month of Ramadan begins today as the moon of the Arabic month was sighted in Bangladesh yesterday evening. BSS quoting an Islamic Foundation press release said.

A meeting of the National Moon-sighting Committee, chaired by State Minister for Religious Affairs, Maulana Mohammad Nurul Islam yesterday decided that the holy Lailatul Qadr (Shab-e-Qadr) would fall on the night of February 5 as the Ramadan starts today.

Religious Affairs Secretary A B M Abdus Shahid and Director General of Islamic Foundation Mohammad Morshed Hossain were present in the meeting.

President Justice Shahabuddin Ahmed and Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina in separate messages congratulated the countrymen on the occasion of the holy Ramadan and urged all to maintain the sanctity of the holy month.

The President said Almighty See Page 12 Col 4

BNP protests Ershad's remarks

The Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) yesterday protested the false and indecent remarks of the late President H M Ershad made about the BNP in an interview with BBC Thursday night, reports UNB.

In a statement, BNP office secretary Nazrul Islam Khan urged Ershad to refrain from such propaganda against BNP, which "will not bring any benefit" for him or his party.

Khan said Ershad's comment was part of a conspiracy against the nationalist forces because it is Ershad who captured state power by toppling an elected BNP government in 1982.

He said the ousted President, during his nine-year rule, institutionalised corruption, looting and lasciviousness and eliminated the BNP. See Page 12 Col 2

Ershad likely to address public meeting Jan 17

By Staff Correspondent

Former president and Jatiya Party chairman HM Ershad is likely to address a public meeting in Rangpur on January 17, according to party sources. He will fly to Rangpur, his home district a day ahead of the public meeting, the sources said.

Ershad contesting from jail, has elected from five constituencies in Rangpur in the 1991 and 1996 general elections.

Prior to his visit to Rangpur, he may address a joint meeting of the Presidium and the Central Working Committee of the Jatiya Party in the city.

On the second day of his release yesterday, Ershad went to the residence of JP Vice-Chairman Mizanur Rahman Chowdhury in the city and had an hour-long meeting. Some other leaders including JP joint secretary Nazim Rahman Manju were also present.

Meanwhile, Yousuf Hussain Humayun, lawyer of Ershad, said they will pray before the court so that Ershad is not required to appear physically before the court during hearing of the cases.

Mother stabbed to death by step-son

From Our Correspondent

NARAYANGANJ, Jan 10: A teenage boy reportedly stabbed his step-mother to death at Mukundi village under Arahazara thana last night.

Shamsunnahar, 35, second wife of one Joydev Miah, sustained fatal injuries as her step-son Monir Hossain, 18, stabbed her following an altercation reportedly over a family feud at about 9 pm Thursday night, police said. She died on the spot. Monir fled the house soon after the incident.

However, Monir surrendered to police at Arahazara thana this morning. He was arrested on charge of killing his mother. The body of Shamsunnahar was sent to the Narayanganj Sadar Hospital for autopsy.

30 shanties at a city slum ransacked

By Staff Correspondent

A group of people attacked a slum and ransacked more than 30 thatched houses at Dholaiapur under Demra thana in the city early yesterday.

Police said that the group of about 25 people including some local residents attacked the slum in Dholaiapur Bagicha area at about 3 am and damaged most of the houses during about a four-hour-long rampage. They also evicted the slum dwellers during the attack.

However, no casualty was reported in the incident till filing of this report last night.

The gang, reportedly the musclemen of a local influential person, attacked the slum See Page 12 Col 8

Sources of arms in Ctg an open secret

Four political parties finance purchase of illegal arms

From Nurul Alam

CHITTAGONG, Jan 10: Inflow of illegal arms to the port city and its surrounding areas is posing a threat to law and order here, source concerned said.

These arms are mostly possessed by terrorists, miscreants and political activists, the sources said.

The illegal arms include sophisticated AK-47 assault rifle, rocket launcher, sten gun, LMG, SMG, sawed rifle, revolver, SLR, pipegun etc, they added.

Two LMGs were recovered by police from Raozan two years ago and two rocket launchers were recovered from Chandgaon area in the city a few months back.

The sources said most of these sophisticated arms are in the hands of 'activists' of four political parties who have separate hideouts at different places in the city including Paharoli, Nandankanan, City College area, Chittagong Medical College Hostel, Chittagong College Hostel, Chandanpura, Nur Ahmed Road, Nasirabad Raufabad Colony, Raozan, Fatikchhari and Chandanaisah.

Leaders of these political parties allegedly finance purchase of illegal arms by their activists. They get the illegal arms in exchange of huge payments, reportedly from Shantubahini

and from Rohingya insurgents in Myanmar, highly placed sources said. Such inflow of illegal arms is not only known to police but also to other agencies concerned, they added.

Not only that, even Chittagong Port was being used by the 'godfathers' of these activists as transit point for illegal import of sophisticated arms through cargo vessels. The illegal arms were then tactfully taken out of port jetties and supplied to respective destinations inside the country, the sources alleged.

Two containers of sophisticated illegal arms were seized at See Page 12 Col 8

Police deem it 'a big victory' Three of Tangail's top 21 armed elements held

By Mizan Ali back from Tangail

Three of the 'top 21 armed elements' in Tangail have been arrested in the current drive to curb terrorism in the district, police sources said.

The arrested persons are Azad Siddiky, younger brother of Kader Siddiky, Ghora Biplob and Insan, the sources said. The drive began on December 25, they added.

However, no arms could be recovered from their possession, the sources said. "Yet we consider this drive a big victory for us as we succeeded in arresting terrorists without facing any unwanted pressure from any quarter," a senior police official said requesting anonymity.

Of the three, Azad Siddiky was given one month's deten-

tion and the two others are on police remand.

The sources expressed optimism about rounding up all the identified elements. One senior police official said that they were getting "vital information" from the arrested persons. "We have carried out search in some of the hideouts, basing on their information. But the gangsters keep on changing their hideouts frequently." He did not elaborate.

Talking to this correspondent the DC of Tangail said, "We are trying to build the confidence of the people on the administration. People's distrust on the administration for the last 25 years cannot not be removed in one single day." See Page 12 Col 7

Terrorism Ctg mayor blames a section of police

CHITTAGONG, Jan 10: Mayor A B M Mohiuddin Chowdhury today declared a three-month programme to combat terrorism and warned that police would be held responsible if law and order in the city was not improved, reports UNB.

Addressing a civic rally at Laidighi Maidan in the afternoon, he also announced the formation of a seven-member committee that would detect the people involved in protecting terrorists and law violators.

The committee comprising members of Parliament, justice, lawyer, police and representative from DGF will make a list of persons among government officials, police and politicians who are responsible for giving shelter to terrorists. See Page 12 Col 7



Malaysia Red skipper Khairul Anuar receiving the Bangabandhu Cup from Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at the Dhaka Stadium yesterday.

Garments worker violated in N'ganj

From Our Correspondent

NARAYANGANJ, Jan 10: A 15-year-old garments worker was raped by a gang of about seven people near Narayanganj Sadar Hospital on Thursday night.

The gang intercepted the girl near the DC's Bungalow when she was returning home at about 10 pm at Khanpur Bank Colony from her workplace, police said.

They forcibly took her to an open space behind the hospital and raped her. However, the attackers fled the scene when the local people, hearing the screaming of the girl at about 11 pm, rushed to her aid, hospital sources said.

She was immediately taken to the Narayanganj Hospital. A case was lodged with Sadar thana accusing three persons, police said.

Malaysia Red lift Bangabandhu Cup

Sports Reporter

Professionals ruled over the semi-professionals as Malaysia Red finally exposed their real lacade to lift the Bangabandhu Cup Silver Jubilee of Independence football tournament title with a convincing 2-1 victory over favourites PSM (Ujung Pandang) Football Club of Indonesia in the final at the Dhaka Stadium yesterday afternoon.

The war of nerves between the two South East Asian neighbours remained locked 0-0 at the 10th minute but striker Gik Jambil struck twice for second string Malaysia, a selection of Malaysian League Clubs, midway through the second half.

On the other hand, Cameroonian forward Musa Kallon pulled one back for the powerful

Indonesian side, currently second in the Indonesian semi-professional League, which failed to repeat the magic of their previous match, the semi-final against local League Champions Mohammedans.

On a chilly Friday afternoon with a crowd of 10,000 dotting the stands of the big bowl, both sides made a cautious start with a defensive attitude. Unless they had clear opportunities to make breaks, neither embarked on taking initiatives early in the game, probably a shared strategy to conserve energy.

The Malaysians, who ousted local League runners-up Abahani Krira Chakra in a tie-breaker in the first semi-final on Tuesday, concentrated on saving their own fort in the See Page 12 Col 1

Global campaign to reach micro-credit facilities to 100m families

By M Anwarul Haq

PM opens confce in US Feb 2

through providing micro-credit.

Letters of invitations have already been sent out to some 185 heads of state and government besides thousands of leading organisations and professionals across the world.

The summit is going to be divided into 15 council sessions each dedicated to a substantial professional area. The councils at the summit include, the council of UN agencies, the

council of NGOs, council of parliamentarians, council of donor agencies, council of international financial agencies, council of religious groups and several others. Some 3,000 participants from across the world are expected to take part in the deliberations of the council sessions which would be an integral part of the micro-credit summit.

The decision to hold the world micro-credit summit was

drawn up following a series of global summits on the environment, health and women. The last was the global summit on Food held in Rome.

The aim of the micro-credit summit is to launch a decade-long campaign, ending in 2005, for providing micro-credit schemes to the poor, with particular emphasis to women.

The summit would also seek to raise a fund of 20 billion US dollars by the year 2005 through the efforts of the respective countries.

The Director General of the America Desk in the Ministry

of Foreign Affairs, M Asrafuddinwah, said that it is for the first time that Bangladesh has been given the honour to chair the conference in recognition of the achievement in implementing micro-credit operations. Bangladesh presently is also globally recognised as having some of the largest NGOs in operation working for poverty alleviation, he noted.

Speaking about the contribution of Grameen Bank in organising this summit, he said the Bank has set an outstanding See Page 12 Col 3

A world-wide campaign to reach micro-credit facilities to 100 million families will be launched during the 3-day World Micro-credit Conference in Washington beginning February 2.

The exemplary work done in the rural micro-credit sector, particularly by the Grameen Bank, will bring Bangladesh and the activities of the NGOs in the country into focus at the international conference.

The opening session, which is likely to be attended by several heads of state and government including US President

Bill Clinton, is due to be chaired by Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina.

Hillary Clinton and Queen Sophia of Spain along with T Hata, a former premier of Japan, are Honorary Co-chairpersons of the Conference. Sheikh Hasina is scheduled to leave for the US on January 30.

Organised jointly by the Grameen Bank and the Result Education Fund of the US, the micro-credit summit, is the first global effort at raising awareness and sensitising governments regarding alleviating the conditions of the poor