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# Down to Earth

# Disconcerting Trends In Private Schools

Lately we have been observing certain disconcerting trends in the city's school system. The city walls in particular areas are hung with banners advertising admission openings in a growing number of private schools. Most of these schools are called kindergartens with tal city. English medium of instruction. The current propensity of putting children in English medium schools is a later phenomenon after an initial period when we were dithering over merits of Bangla and English mediums. Now the craze of the people with affordable financial means is for the Englishmedium schools for their chil-

According to observers, most of such schools are profitfriendly rather than qualityfriendly. As a result, it is widely felt that the very basic purpose of teaching and guardianship is being lost in the labyrinth of earning undue profits at the cost of education.

The city has been witnessing a boom of kindergartens set up under private initiatives as quasi-business institutions for earning large income. The motives behind these schools are purely commercial. The necessity of providing adequate facilities for education for the school-going age group along with the maintenance of parity between the various social stratifications and incomegroups are recognised as universal prerequisites. But the economic backwardness is felt to have debarred the accom-

plishment of this important responsibility. Consequently there has ensued the mushrooming of kindergartens for the beginner-pupils and residential model schools and cadet colleges for the youngsters all over - especially in the capi-

ban population and the lack of adequate schooling facilities of reasonable standard have accentuated the growth of kindergartens in the city. On the other hand, there is apparent inabil ity of the government to provide adequate educational facilities

growth of the kindergartens. The tuition fees and other charges at these schools are so high that they are above the reach of the common people as well as of most middle-class families. There exists a limited number of schools with good reputation in the city, but their fees and others are more exorbitant so that children of wealthy people can get access to them.

The disconcerting aspect of the situation is that some of the people engaged in this business do not have the requisite educational background and training. This frustrates the very purpose of imparting proper education to the students. In this context, it is felt necessary that government should exercise control on such institutions by laying down minimum standards of educational qualifications and experience for the teachers of such schools and

ensuring proper attendant facilities such as open space swings and other playing equipments. The standard of teaching and the facilities provided by these institutions should be regularly monitored and it should be ensured that such facilities are commensurate with the expenses and donations borne by the guardians

the same considerations as mentioned above should govern the operation of private colleges also for we come across instances where an individual or a group of them have set up more than one school or college depending on business success of the initial initiatives of the sponsors. Against the background of this situation, it has been suggested that since the motives behind setting up these institutions are predominantly commercial, there are good reasons for assessing them under

free market environment and the sponsoring authorities of such institutions, like other business or entrepreneurs, are free to charge any rate they want, should not be allowed to rule in wildcat racketeering of fees. In the area of education, it is felt that honesty, restraint and commitment should be given the chance to rule. If it fails, fiscal and other regulatory measures, as in other business concerns, may be adopted to bring discipline at the opera-

# Mass Upsurge Day observed zlur Rahman Patal. MP paid homage to Shaheed Matiur The nation yesterday ob-

served the historic Mass Upsurge Day recalling the supreme sacrifice of Shaheed Matiur Rahman 28 years ago, report agencies

On this day, Matiur Rahman, a student of class nine, was gunned down by the then autocratic Pakistani regime while he was at the foreground

of a mass procession.

Matiur's killing caused the historic mass upheaval in 1969 that led to the fall of the Ayub regime and the country's inde-

pendence war. Several socio-cultural organisations including the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP), Jatiya Gano Front and Shaheed Asad Parishad held separate discussions in observance of the day.

The Dhaka city BNP held a discussion at the party central

Speaking as chief guest, Fa-

# Girl missing as box-culvert explodes in city

By Staff Correspondent A three-year-old girl was

missing when the top of a boxculvert exploded under pressure of gas formed inside the storm sewer near a market at Segun Bagicha in the city yesterday af-

Nargis, daughter of Kalam, fell into the sewerage line after the culvert exploded at about 12:30 pm. Nargis and two children were playing on the culvert when the accident occurred. The two others, however, escaped unhurt, police said.

Motinur Banu, mother of Nargis, used to live in a pavement close to the culvert. Mot inur worked as maid in a house in Segun Bagicha.

A rescue team of the fire ser vice could not trace out the girl after about a two-hour search in the sewerage line, fire service sources said. Besides, a WASA team also conducted a search till late last afternoon to trace the missing girl, said police adding that the girl could not found till last night.

A general diary was lodged with Ramna thana in this connection.

## 13 injured as villagers clash in Rajshahi

From Our Correspondent RAJSHAHI, Jan 24: At least 13 people were wounded in a gunfight between two rival groups at Jamira village under Belpukuria union of Puthia thana this afternoon.

Of them eight bullet wounded were admitted to hospital in critical condition. They were identified as Mamun, 14, Tuhin, 15, Awal, 30, Mahtab 25. Wali, 25. Wajed, 27. Gani, 22 and Sharif, 25. Six people were admitted to Rajshahi Medical College Hospital while the others to Puthia Thana Health Complex.

gan following the digging of a canal between the supporters of union chairman Badiuzzaman and ward member Sirajul Islam. Both the groups used lethal

the Rajuk official.

# Rahman, who embraced martyrdom during the mass up-

The discussion meeting. presided over by BNP national committee member Kazi Abul Bashar, was also addressed by Rizvi Ahmed, Abul Khair Bhuiyan, Habibur Rahman Habib and Abdul Wadud Master.

Freedom fighter Mozammel Haq Bir Pratik chaired the Shaheed Asad Parishad programme which was addressed by president of the Parishad Dr Sakhawat Ali Khan, president of Jahangirnagar University Teachers' Association Dr Jasimuddin Ahmed, Workers Party leader Hazera Nazrul and Shamsuzzaman Milon.

### Homage paid to Ctg massacre victims

CHITTAGONG, Jan 24: People have today paid rich tributes to those who were killed in police firing on this day in 1988, reports BSS.

On this day at least 25 people were killed and 200 others injured when police opened fire on them on the eve of the public meeting at Laldighi Maidan where Awami League chief Sheikh Hasina was scheduled to address.

Different political parties professional and socio-cultural organisations paid homage to those heroic sons of the soil through day-long programmes.

The programmes included placing of wreaths at the monument erected at the footsteps of the Court Building, wearing of black badges, holding of silent processions and memoria meetings.

### Millionaire garbage collector

HARTFORD. (Connecticut Jan 24: An overnight million aire is sticking with his night job - picking up trash in New York City, reports AP.

Sergio Matini, 50, and his wife Elena, 44, won 10.3 mil lion dollars in Powerball, a lottery shared by several states and based in lowa.

Although the wife quit her health food store job, Sergio will stay with the New York Sanitation Department for another two and half years so he can collect a pension.

"I'm not a bun. I'm not the kind of guy who sits around all day," Sergio said.

The couple were about to file for bankruptcy, their home being foreclose on, when Martini bought the winning ticket for the January 4 drawing at a Connecticut convenience store

On the night of the drawing Sergio was working. With a pile of tickets in his hand, he compare the winning numbers. "I jumped in the air like wild man," he said.

On Thursday, the couple received a check for 377,377 dol lars at the state lottery head quarters. For the next 19 years. they will get almost 373,000

dollars a year after taxes. Although staying with his truck. Martini did quit his weekend taxi-driving job.

The first thing he and his wife plan to do is pay off bills. Next is to buy three new, cars from their daughter, who works for a Honda dealer.

Then comes the new house and travel. Their last vacation was a honeymoon in Italy 25

"Is there a law that says that can't hit again?" Sergio said. "If I win again, a lot of people will be taken care of forever.

Second Small-Scale Water Re-

sources Development Sector

Loan, a rural cooperative pro-

ject, and Fourth Rural Infras-

for the 1998-2000 period in-

clude a sector type of loan for

rehabilitation and expansion

of Chittagong Port, a third road

improvement project as well as

a PPTA for a fourth road im-

provement project (priority

stretches include Khulna-

Mawa, completing of priority

sections on the Dhaka-Chit-

tagong highway, and feeder

roads on the Mymensingh-As-

istry showed keen interest in

developing the Dhaka bypass

on a Build Own Operate/Build

Own Transfer (BOO/BOT) basis.

The Bank is willing to assist,

both during bid solicitation and

over the 1998-99 period will be

for the 4th Natural Gas Project

the efficiency of resource use

and support policy reform in

the sector while the power pro-

ject will add 400 megawatt peak

power capacity to the country's

power system and also provide

for evacuation and utilisation

of power from second private

ongoing higher secondary edu-

cation project and the sec-

ondary education development

project, a PPTA for a secondary

education sector project cover-

ing the entire secondary cycle of

grades 6 to 12 is proposed to

As a follow-on project to the

sector BOO/BOT project.

and the 10th Power Project.

The main ADB operations

The gas project will increase

The Communications Min-

sam of India route).

investment phases.

The main current proposals

tructure Project.

start in 1997 for a possible loan in 1999, supplemented by a

# Synchro-start recording from CD

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Outgoing Chinese ambassador Zhang Xujiang called on BNP chairperson and Leader of the Opposition in the Jatiya Sangsad Begum Khaleda Zia at her residence in the city -Star photo

### Khaleda

nient time.

From Page. 1

Zhang, who was accompanied by his wife, thanked Begum Zia for the cooperation extended to him by her government which facilitated his task as the ambassador of China.

Begum Zia said the cooperation between Bangladesh and

the ties of friendship and cooperation between the two countries was further strengthened and that was reflected by Chinese cooperation in many fields

hoped that the friendship with the Chinese people would be developed further in future.

tribution of Ambassador Zhang Xujiang to foster friendship and cooperation between the two countries and wished his success in his future assignment.

BNP secretary general Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan, party's adviser and former ambassador M M Rezaul Karim and press secretary to the BNP chairperson Ahmed Nazir were present during the meeting.

# Ctg fire

mother and her minor daughter sustained serious burn injuries in a fire that broke out near Bayeiid Bostami Mazar under Panchlaish thana here this

According to fire service sources, an electrical short circuit sparked off the fire which

ter and her five-year old daughter Baby were admitted to Chittagong Medical College Hospital in a critical condition. The extent of damage was estimated at about Taka 60,000, the. sources added.

From Page 1

Following a decision taken southern region of the country.

drive was launched are: Jessore. Jhenidah. Chuadanga. Meherpur, Kushtia, Pirojpur, Barisal, Khulna Bagerhat and Satkhira.

### Vote-buying 8 Rao aides

# ordered to appear in court

NEW DELHI, Jan 24: Eight political figures close to former Prime Minister P V Narasimha Rao were ordered today to appear in court next month on charges of buying opposition voters to save his government, reports AFP.

A special court ordered Rao aide Bhajan I al, two former cabinet ministers, and five others to appear in court on February 12. They were charged by the Federal Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) on Wednes-

# Clash over land in Sirajganj: 10 injured

SIRAJGANJ, Jan 24: An armed clash over a land dispute today at a village in Ullapara thana left ten people wounded, police said, reports UNB.

The clash began when a group of people, led by one Hanif Sardar of Borohar village, took an attempt to grab a pond of Abdur Rab Pannu of the same village at 8 am today. The feuding groups used countrymade sharp weapons during the hour-long clash.

Seriously wounded Pannu, 35, and his aunt Marium, 48 were sent to Suhrawardy Hospital in Dhaka and Siraigani General Hospital respectively. A case was filed with Ullapara police in this regard.

### Darjeeling From Page 1

ket, a Darjeeling resident said

The busy town in the foot hills. Siliguri, was also under the grip of cold wave with most of the people preferring to remain indoors. · Offices and institutions also

recorded a thin attendance here, officials said.

# Hasina

From Page 1

Members of Parliament Mufazzal Hossain Chowdhury Maya and Kalparanjan Chakma will also join the Prime Minister at the Micro-credit Summit.

A meeting between the Prime Minister and US President Bill Clinton was yet to be finalised till vesterday, according to official sources. The Prime Minister is ex-

pected to visit Boston to receive an honorary Doctorate of Law from Harvard University on February 6.

### Regional meeting From Page 1

diplomats posted in Consulates in Karachi, Lahore, Peshwar, Bombay and Calcutta and other parts of the region would also participate.

Bhutan and the Maldives which do not have US ambassadorial level representation but are included in the US territorial grouping composing the South Asian countries on similar lines as the seven SAARC countries, will also come under the purview of the regional review meeting, sources said.

On January 27 and 28, the visiting US Assistant Secretary will have bilateral meetings with senior officials of the foreign ministry where talks on increasing Bangladesh-US bilateral co-operation, with special emphasis on trade and investment, will be given. Raphel, according to diplo-

matic sources, will call on Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina Leader of the Opposition in Parliament Khaleda Zia, Foreign Minister Abdus Samad Azad, Commerce Minister Tofael Ahmed and Energy and Mineral Resources Minister Nooruddin Khan and is also likely to meet other political leaders to "familiarise herself with the latest political situation in Bangladesh, sources

added. The US Assistant Secretary of State is due to address a press conference prior to her depar-

# Anwarul Karim elected Ecosoc vice-president

vice-president of Economic and

The permanent representative of the Czech Republic was elected the president along with three other vice-presidents from Congo, Chile and Germany, each representing their respective regional groups at a meeting of the Ecosoc held at the UN headquarters on Thurs-

### Peace talks From Page 1

through a liaison committee led

that brought Awami League back to power after 21 years, the Parliamentary Committee was bers led by Chief Whip Abul Besides him, three MPs from

the hill districts. Bir Bahadur. Kalpa Ranjan Chakma and Dipankar Talukder and Engineer Mosharraf Hossain are members of the new committee. Two MPs from BNP and another from Jativa Party were also included. But the BNP MPs did not attend the last two meetings grachhari in November and De-

It could not be known till the BNP MPs had attended a working papers for today's

talks with the PCJSS. None of the members of the National Committee or officials concerned were available

Mayor of Chittagong City Corporation A B M Mohiuddin Choudhury, who is also a member of the National Committee, will accompany the five-mem-

held at the state guest house Padma for two days. But the du-

they were yet to get permission from the Ministry for the meet-

# Survey report

report was inadequate, incomplete, amateurish and therefore

About two months ago the ministry concerned was informed about the commission's decision and, in turn, the ministry has demanded explana tion as to why payment was at all made to the contractors.

Officials at the Directorate said that for surveying each site, the contractors charged over Tk 8.000. Meanwhile, the actual aim of the survey re-

# From Page 1

Printed & Published by A. S. Mahmud, Managing Director, on

# Bofors scam

From Page 1 Bern on Tuesday, following seven years of legal wrangles after India asked for help to solve

the case. The documents, which were flown in from Switzerland earlier today, were presented to a court before the CBI was ordered to begin its investigations.

Three sealed folders were brought from Switzerland by CBI director Joginder Singh, who was then legally required to take them to a judge to be un-

sealed. Judge Ajit Bhartihoke and several investigators retired to his chambers with the documents, leaving a courtroom

packed with journalists. After a half-hour, Bhartihoke emerged to issue an order allowing the CBI to retain the documents "so that they can thoroughly peruse the same for the purpose of proper investigation of the case

The scandal, which involved the purchase of 410 artillery guns, eventually brought down prime minister Rajiv Gandhi's government in 1989. CBI on Thursday set itself a

### politicians have called for the papers to be made public.

one-week deadline to work

through the documents. Indian

From Page 1 Hossain, Moinul Islam Chowdhury. Md Abdul Hakim Mandal

and Md Sikander Ali. Promotion of the aforesaid officials will be effective from the date of posting. The officials would be posted in accordance with their seniority subject to availability of posts, the

sources said The Ministry of Law and Justice had prepared the panel and sent it to the Supreme Court, to be placed before the 'full court' consisting of the Chief Justice and all other judges of the High Court Division of the Supreme Court.

Following approval by 'full court,' the panel was sent to the Ministry of Law and Justice. The ministry forwarded it to the Prime Minister's Secretariat, from where it was sent to the President's office for his consent, the sources said.

From Page 1

help of the government," said

government did not do anything to build new roads in the city. Several of our moves were turned down and when we proposed to acquire the adjacent lands to meet our expenses the leadership responsible vehemently opposed the move." said

# weapons during the clash.

an official.

# Witnesses said the clash be-

# 9 major roads

are at stake. Here we need the

"In the last five years, the

From Page 1

new lending in six projects in

infrastructure and social sec-

tors. The areas are: Agriculture,

infrastructure, energy, educa-

tion, urban development and

environment protection sec-

Bangladesh amounts

dollar for 209 projects.

Project

ADB's total lending to

4.509.20 million US dollar up

to December 1997 for 117 loans

and grant in the form of techni-

cal assistance to 105.47 million

Under three separate agree-

ments signed on January 9, the

ADB pledged 256 million dollar

to co-finance three major pro-

jects in Bangladesh. The pro-

jects are: The 9th power project,

Jamuna Bridge Access Roads

Project and Forestry Sector

scope for increasing private sec-

tor's role in infrastructure fi-

nancing as well as improving

the environment for efficient

public-private partnership for

1998-99 pipeline as initially

discussed with the government

by the ADB mission include

Southwest Area Water Re-

sources and Kalni-Kushyara

River Management projects in

The mission, however, indi-

cated that the timely delivery of

these two loans will be contin-

gent to institutional improve-

ments of the Bangladesh Water

loan has also been included in

1998 together with PPTAs for a

A third rural infrastructure

the agriculture sector.

Development Board.

The main features of the

infrastructural development.

It said there is substantial

The donor agency will make

years ago Sergio also plans to keep buying Powerball tickets.

China was initiated and forged by Shaheed president Ziaur Rahman. During her regime, she said,

like Barapukuria project. Leader of the Opposition

Begum Zia lauded the con-

# 2 injured in

CHITTAGONG, Jan 24: A

evening, reports BSS.

gutted four houses. The mother Rawshan Akh-

Anti-terrorism

lice. Range Reserve Police and the Armed Battallion. at a meeting of the cabinet committee on law and order on January 14, the drive was launched the next day in the

The 13 districts where the

# Dhaka asked to prioritise projects

teacher training project. Officials said the ADB will continue to give priority to urban development over the 1998-2000 period. The programme already includes an urban development sector loan in 1998-99 aimed at providing improved urban infrastructure in selected secondary towns and munici-

Supply and Sanitation project in 15 district headquarters. The Bank is also supporting a long term programme for reform of land administration, through a series of technical assistances, culminating in a possible investment project in

Environment protection

palities as well as a Third Water

will continue to be one of the key objectives of the Bank's strategy in Bangladesh. The Bank's approach to environment protection will continue to be action oriented with the principal focus at the sector level through stand-alone environment projects and integration of important environmental dimensions into other relevant projects.

1999-2000.

The 1998-2000 pipeline currently includes one major environment project for Biodiversity Conservation in the Sundarbans (1998). Initial areas include, Biodiversity Conservation in the

North-East region. Chittagong Integrated Watershed Management, Coastal Wild Life Preservation, and Impact Assessment of Environmental Degradation in South-West Coastal Region.

ture on January 28.

## Ambassador Anwarul Karim Chowdhury, Permanent Representative of Bangladesh to the

United Nations, was elected Social Council (Ecosoc) for 1997, reports BSS.

by Hansdhaj Chakma. After the June 12 elections reconstituted with new mem-Hasnat Abdullah.

with the PCJSS held at Kha-

mid-night last night whether meeting of the National Committee yesterday to prepare the

for comment. Today's meeting is expected

to begin after lunch following arrival of the PCJSS delegation led by Jyotipriyo Bodhipriyo Larma alias Shantu Larma by a MI-17 military helicopter from the tiny frontier hamlet of Dudukchara in the hill district of Khagrachhari.

ber PCJSS delegation to Dhaka. The authorities are providing maximum security to the PCJSS delegation during their stay in Dhaka. The talks are likely to be

ration of the negotiations may be extended, according to sources concerned. Meanwhile, Home Ministry was approached by a 'citizens national committee on the CHT for a meeting with Shantu Larma. But sources in the committee said last night that

out such a survey," said a member of the evaluation commission which rejected the report. "When we read the reports we were startled to find that even history was distorted on some historical sites in those districts," he added saying that the

not suitable for publication.

mains unclear. BCP activists

### lawed Biplabi Communist Party who quit the party a few weeks back. A hand-written

note found on the chest of one of the dead indicated that they belonged to the outlawed party Police sent the bodies to morgue for autopsy, but could not identify them.

# Federal Express The World on Time

# By ASM Nurunnabi

The mammoth growth of ur-

of proper standard in the city. This has fuelled the spurting

In the opinion of observers.

taxation laws. The argument that this is a

tional level.

connecting Mugda with Ka

malapur. They refused Railway

authorities' offer to have an al-

away from the existing one.

ternate road, some 700 feet

Sarker, convener of road clo-

sure resistance committee, told

The Daily Star last night that

they would continue to register

their protest against the road

dent last night. Communica-

tions Minister Anwar Hussain

Monju said that he had asked

Director General of Bangladesh

Railway to seek local MP Saber

Hussain Chowdhury's coopera-

had earlier channeled Tk 50

crore to the Railway authority

for speedy expansion of the ICD

to ease ongoing congestion at

the port. Shipping Minister A S

M Rob visited the construction

Cold spell claims

3 in Habiganj

spell claimed three lives in

Ajmeriganj thana here in the

past two days ending this morn-

ing, unofficial sources said, re-

35, of village Khardair, Dhan

Miah, 50, of Kakailchheo and

Babul Hossain, 12 of Ra-

monipur, all of them from

normal life throughout the dis-

trict and hampered Boro culti-

vation. However, intensity of

the cold could not be measured

due to absence of Met office

The cold has collapsed the

The deceased are: Ful Banu.

HABIGANJ, Jan 24: Cold

site Wednesday last.

ports UNB.

Amerigani.

Chittagong Port Authority

tion in resolving the problem.

Talking to this correspon-

closure plan.

Advocate Shahajuddin

# Local people demonstrating against the alleged move to close the Mugda-Kamalapur link road in the city yesterday. Protest against ICD

extension in city Star Report Work for expansion of the Inland Container Depot (ICD) at Kamalapur in the city is progressing at a slow pace amid protests from local inhabi-The expansion work, which

resumed on January 22, but hundreds of residents of Mugda, Kamalapur, Sabujbagh and other nearby areas brought out processions and held rallies in

protest at the site, adjacent to

Kamalapur Rail Station, yes-

planned closure of a link-road

was suspended on December 24.

### Local people obstructed the expansion work because of the

Trade team From Page 1 Commerce and Industry sepa-

On Monday morning, the

British delegation will go to

Chittagong and meet the leaders

of the Chittagong Chamber of

rately tomorrow.

Commerce and Industry On Tuesday, the delegation will call on the Ministers of Finance and Energy and Mineral Resources and the State Minister for Foreign Affairs. The members of the team are Simon Lee of ANZ Grindlays

Export Finance Limited, Tim Anderson of Hunting Aviation Limited, Barry Exton of Kvaermer Construction Limited, Tom King of Lasmo plc, Arun Singh of Masons Solicitors and Peter Lee of Mott Mac Donald International. There are at least 40 British

companies established in

Bangladesh while new British

companies are actively in-

volved in the energy and infras-

tructure sectors.

# **Editor: Mahfuz Anam**

here.

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