



VOL. VII NO. 21 REGD. NO. DA 781

The Daily Star

MAGH 21 1403 BS.

DHAKA MONDAY, FEBRUARY 3, 1997

RAMADAN 24 1417 HIJRI

12 PAGES : PRICE TAKA 6.00

Bill to toughen environment protection law soon

An amendment bill will be placed in Parliament soon to toughen the existing environment-protection laws spelling stringent punishment for the trespassers, reports UNB.

This was stated by Environment and Forest Minister Syeda Sajeda Chowdhury while addressing a high-level meeting on environment protection at the Department of Environment yesterday.

Only formulating laws will not do, it should be properly enforced, she said stressing massive campaign and publication on the environment for creating public awareness about environmental pollution and its effect.

In this regard, she emphasised large-scale programmes. "Wage a social movement against environment pollution from respective positions so to

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1900 illegal workers held in Malaysia

KUALA LUMPUR, Feb 2: Malaysia today sought the help of local employers in flushing out an estimated one million illegal workers, after arresting some 1,900 in an intense blitz a day earlier, reports AFP.

Deputy Home Minister Megat Junid Megat Ayob said he was disappointed with the poor response from illegal immigrants to the government's voluntary repatriation programme.

Only about 5,000 had registered themselves when an extended three-week offer to register illegal workers and for illegals to seek amnesty to return home without facing prosecution ended on midnight Friday.

"We are disappointed with their response towards our good intention. "We've carried out a six month amnesty programme and offered them a trip home without being prosecuted," Megat Junid was quoted as saying by Bernama News.

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Announcement

Star Fashion '97 is available throughout the country at Tk 20.00 per copy. Please ask your hawker for your copy.

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Take advantage of excellent investment opportunities in Bangladesh, ambassador urges Japanese entrepreneurs

39-point fall in DSE index

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DSE MARKET

DSE price index 1750.99 (+2.9%)
Market capital Tk 13106.51cr
Transactions in volume 297159
Transactions in value Tk 9.49cr

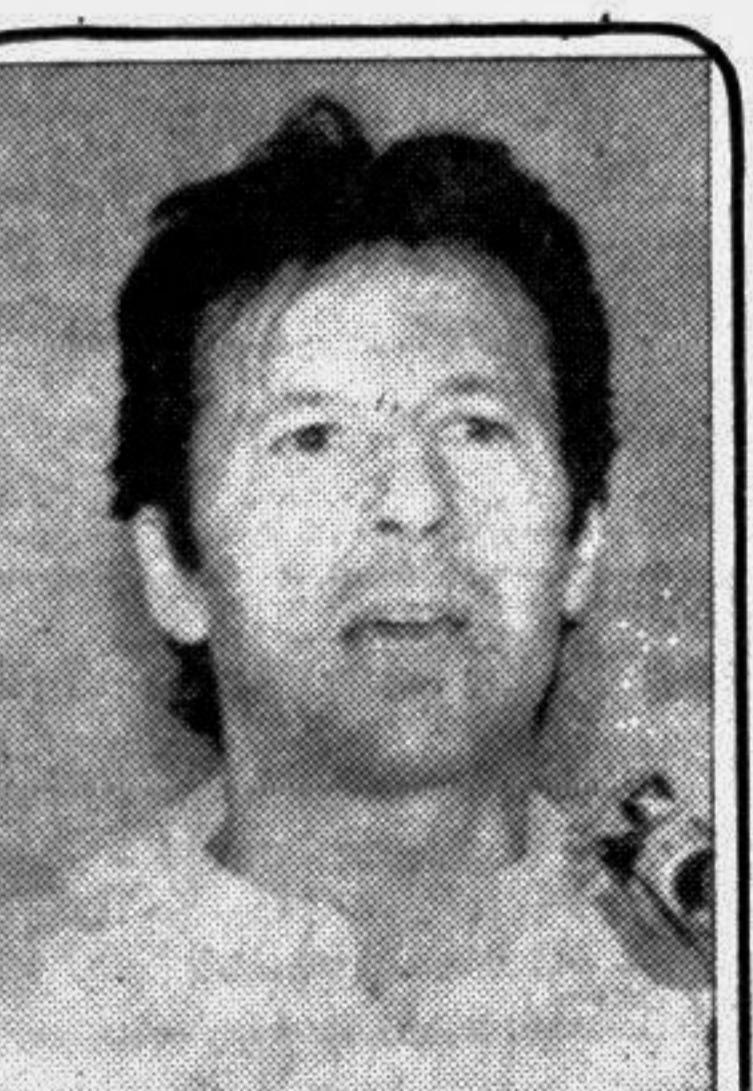
CSE MARKET

CSE price index 758.30 (+2.7%)
Market capital Tk 9931.18 cr
Transactions in volume 75025
Transactions in value Tk 13614842

Sehri, Iftar timings

Ramadan	Feb	Sehri	Iftar
24	03	—	5:50
25	04	5:16	5:50
26	05	5:16	5:51

Pakistan goes to polls today Benazir, Sharif set for showdown



Politics is a sticky wicket

ISLAMABAD, Feb 2: Pakistan goes to the polls for the fourth time in eight years to elect a new parliament tomorrow in a fresh attempt to put its fragile democracy on the road to stability, reports AFP.

The main battle is expected to be between the parties of former prime ministers and arch-enemies Nawaz Sharif and Benazir Bhutto, which have dominated politics since the late 1980s when parliamentary democracy was restored after a decade of military rule.

The race includes a newcomer, cricket hero Imran Khan, leading his fledgling Movement for Justice in a spirited bid to present a third choice to the 56-million electorate in this nation of 132 million.

Most analysts and observers



Nawaz Sharif

Benazir Bhutto

HC stays notification authorising Alamgir Mohiuddin's role in JS

By SC Correspondent

The High Court yesterday ordered stay of the Cabinet Division notification authorising Dr Mohiuddin Khan Alamgir, technocrat State Minister for Planning, to function in Parliament on behalf of the ministries other than his own ministry.

Through this notification Dr Mohiuddin Khan Alamgir was given the responsibility of the Ministry of Planning, President's Secretariat, Prime Minister's Secretariat and Cabinet Division.

On January 26 when Dr Mohiuddin Khan Alamgir rose to answer question relating to ministries other than his own it was strongly protested by the members of the Opposition BNP alleging that Article 73 A of the Constitution was being violated.

In response to the said protest Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina first informed the House of the notification.

Article 73 A reads "every

minister shall have the right to speak in, and otherwise to take part in the proceedings of Parliament, but shall not be entitled to vote (or to speak on any matter not related to his ministry) unless he is a Member of Parliament also."

The petitioner mentioned various grounds for issuing a *rule nisi* against the Cabinet Division order, which triggered a series of stormy debate in Parliament.

Among other grounds are: (1) the impugned order is violative of the Constitution and therefore ex-facie illegal.

(2) the order being a violation of Article 73 A of the Constitution is illegal and (3) in violation of the basic structure of the Constitution and therefore not tenable in law.

Barrister Maudud Ahmed assisted by Barrister Mahbubuddin Khokan moved the petition, while Barrister Nazmul Huda was present in the court.

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Yasmin murder case Trial of 9 accused begins today

By Staff Correspondent

A few hundred students of Lalmatia Women's College and Dhaka Mohila College staged demonstrations separately yesterday protesting the college authorities' decisions regarding the students who failed to pass college test examinations to qualify for the Higher Secondary Certificate (HSC) examinations, 1997.

The students of Lalmatia Women's College demanded that the students who failed in the test examinations be given the chance to sit for the HSC final examinations. The students of Dhaka Mohila College accompanied by some guardians alleged that the college authorities were charging "thousands of taka" from those who failed in the test examinations to allow them sit for the HSC final.

Earlier on the day, about 500 students of Lalmatia Women's College held a rally and brought out a procession on the campus, witnesses and police said.

At one stage they started pelting brickbats at window panes and attempted to damage a bus and a micro-bus of the college. However, women police deployed in and around the college following Saturday's violence there, tamed the agitated girls.

Later, the college authorities served a notice at about 1 pm assuring that the students who failed in the test examinations would be allowed to fill up registration forms to sit for the HSC final examinations. It calmed the girls who then left the campus. The college was closed for Eid vacation until February 14.

Some students of Dhaka Mohila College staged a demonstration on the college campus at Dhamondi protesting that the college authorities were al-

Ekushey '97 Lecture series begins, poetry festival ends

By Staff Correspondent

The month-long Amar Ekushey programmes entered the second day yesterday. Like in the past years, various socio-cultural and political organisations are observing the Ekushey through elaborate programmes with a renewed pledge to uphold the spirit of the Language Movement of 1952.

The Bangla Academy yesterday began its fortnight-long lecture series on "Amar Shahitya Shadhanar Pachish Bachar, Shadhanita Uttarak" at its auditorium. Eminent litterateur Ahmad Rafique was the main speaker while Prof Kabir Chowdhury presided over the discussions.

Prof Monsur Musa, director of the academy delivered the address of welcome. The speakers included Dr Khandakar Muzammil Haque and Dr Rafiqullah Khan.

In his speech Ahmad

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Hasina urges expatriates to invest at home

WASHINGTON, Feb 2: Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina apprised the expatriate Bangladeshi in America of major changes being effected by her government in country's socio-economic sphere and urged them to invest their money back home to support the drive.

"If you cooperate, we'll not be lagging behind and be able to face the challenges of 21st century," she told the expatriates who accorded a grand reception as the Bangladeshi Prime Minister arrived in the US capital Saturday evening.

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Sub-regional group

Foreign secys of 4 states likely to meet in March

Foreign Secretaries of the four countries of the planned sub-regional cooperation are expected to meet in Kathmandu in the last week of March to work out outlines for its founding, an informed source said yesterday, reports UNB.

The proposal for sub-regional cooperation, grouping Bangladesh, Nepal, Bhutan and India, has been mooted by Dhaka in a meeting of the SAARC Council of Ministers in New Delhi in December.

India has already endorsed the proposed sub-grouping whose possible areas of cooperation are telecommunications, roads and transport, and trade and development of water resources.

Foreign Ministers of the four countries are also likely to hold a meeting to discuss the sub-re-

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Yasmin murder case

Trial of 9 accused begins today

By Staff Correspondent

RANGPUR, Feb 2: The trial of all the nine accused in the Yasmin rape and murder case of Dinajpur will start here tomorrow at the Special Judge's Court, reports BSS.

Abdul Matin, District and Sessions judge of Rangpur, will be the judge of the Special Judge's Court.

The charges against the accused persons were earlier framed by this Special Judge's Court in two parts. In the first part, charges have been framed against three main accused under Women and Children Repression Control Act 6(4) while all the nine persons have been charged under Section 201(34) BPC in the second part.

The accused persons included former Police Superintendent of Dinajpur Abdul Muttalib and medical officer of Dinajpur Dr Md Mohsin.

The trial of the three main accused — former ASI Moinul Haque, former constable Abdul Sattar and former police line driver Amritlal Barman — began last month and was adjourned on January 29. Next date of trial in this case has been fixed February 15. Out of 55 witnesses, 47 have so far testified.

The meeting also decided that compensation in lieu of duty drawback for textiles

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Zobaida's bail prayer: HC rule on govt

By SC Correspondent

The High Court Division yesterday issued a rule on the government to show cause as to why Begum Zobaida Rashid, an accused in the August 15, 1975 killing case should not be enlarged on bail.

The division bench of the HC comprising Justice Mahmudul Amin Chowdhury and Justice Md Zainul Abedin also directed the Deputy Commissioner, Dhaka to produce the confession statement of Begum Zobaida Rashid recorded under

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The city's traffic situation has become almost unmanageable as Eid shopping is gaining momentum.

— Star photo

Worst traffic jam in city

By Staff Correspondent

The traffic situation in the city turned worse yesterday as frenzied Eid shoppers invaded the markets barely a week before the Eid-ul-Fitr.

It took exactly an hour to reach the Jatiya Press Club from Road No. 3 at 12:30 pm as traffic became virtually unmanageable in central Dhaka.

Its spill-over effects were felt

in the city with the ubiquitous rickshaws, two-stroked auto-rickshaws, tempo and cars clogging the streets, lanes and by-lanes, fumigating harmful black smoke.

Eid shoppers made the situ-

ation more difficult by parking their vehicles at random, occupying substantial parts of the roads.

Even the lanes marked for rickshaws only were turned into parking lots, ignoring no parking signs.

Overflowing traffic from

around forced opening of the Abdul Ghani Road for all types of transports. Normally, rickshaws, auto-rickshaws, buses and push-carts are not allowed to ply on the road, catering to the mandarins of the secretariat.

But sheer necessities rolled

the traffic onto as people, after receiving pay cheques, abandoned offices and hopped around the *bazars* nearby.

The result was a nightmare for traffic police.

In Hatirpool area, traffic snaking towards the Eastern Plaza and New Market tangled up in a mess at the Elephant Road crossing and the Sonargaon Road.

On the new Elephant Road, the situation was worse. Similarly, the part of Elephant Road from the Bata crossing to Gawsia market had been forced

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Functioning of 47 DU committees stayed

The High Court yesterday issued a rule nisi staying the functioning of 47 committees formed by the Dhaka University Syndicate on November 12 last for appointment of teachers, reports UNB.

A High Court Division bench comprising Justice Mozammel Huq and Justice Abdul Matin issued the rule upon a writ petition filed by Prof Nurul Amin Bepari of Political Science Department.

The petitioner alleged that the committees for appointment of assistant professors and lecturers in the university's 47 departments and institutes were formed in contravention of law.

He accused the DU authorities of politicising the committees which are dominated by pro-Awami League Blue Panel having only five members in the DU Syndicate, out of 15.

Barrister Moudud Ahmed appeared on behalf of the petitioner.

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