

FedEx

Federal Express
The World on Time

SIGNED, SEALED & DELIVERED

From documents to packages, FedEx delivers peace of mind reliably to over 210 countries worldwide. Our integrated network of 550 planes, 37,000 vehicles and 1,200,000 people, promises smooth delivery every step of the way. We can even advise you on the status of your shipments; thanks to our unique computerised global tracking system. So the next time you have to send a package, relax - call your FedEx agent BANEZ to deliver your package hassle-free - on time - to your satisfaction.

For more information call - Head Office: 9665114-7 Fax: 9665112
Golehan: 887771, Chittagong: (031) 712127, Khulna: (041) 723008

Kesri blamed for defeat in recent elections

NEW DELHI, Feb 13: Fresh infighting erupted in India's Congress (I) Party today, with a group of dissenters blaming its new chief for its stunning defeat in a series of elections last week, reports AFP.

Ten Congress members of parliament close to former premier P V Narasimha Rao urged party president Sitaram Kesri to call a meeting to discuss the humiliation.

They said the party's drubbing in elections to the legislature in the northern state of Punjab and in 18 parliamentary and state by-elections held on February 7 were a major blow.

The reverses have "greatly demoralised the party leading to a feeling of despondency," a joint statement said. "It is a certain indication of further erosion of the support base and loss of image."

The statement was seen as a further intensification of a proxy war between Rao, who was Congress president for five years until September, and his successor Kesri, who has been warring with Rao supporters.

The once-dominant Congress lost by-elections held to fill four parliament seats, and 14 out of 18 by-elections for different state assemblies.

The Congress defeat included the loss of a seat its candidates had been winning for 16 years. Two other seats which it won even during a countrywide opposition wave in 1977 were lost.

The most disastrous show was in Punjab, where a Sikh-Hindu alliance swept to power after crushing the ruling Congress party.

"The loss of ... impregnable citadels ... is a matter of grave concern," the Congress members said.

There was no immediate response from the Kesri camp, which had on Monday blamed Rao for the Punjab drubbing.

"No individual can be blamed for the defeat," said Congress official and Kesri aide Ghulam Nabi Azad. "The primary reason for the defeat in the state was the neglect of the party organisation ... by the previous leadership."

L'ORÉAL PARIS
STUDIO LINE
Sculpt your hair any way you like it
TRANSCOM DISTRIBUTION CO. LTD.

PM to attend OIC summit in Islamabad

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina will attend the OIC Summit due in Islamabad on March 23, reports UNB.

Pakistan will host this "extraordinary summit" of the Muslim countries on the eve of its 50th founding anniversary.

Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, as the Prime Minister of Bangladesh, attended the second summit of the OIC in Lahore in 1974.

Hasina is expected to leave for Pakistan on March 22 to attend the conference to be participated by heads of state or government of all 42 member countries of the OIC.

Officials here termed the planned visit of Sheikh Hasina to Pakistan as "significant" as it is expected to provide her an opportunity to have parleys on bilateral matters with Nawaj Sharif who is scheduled to assume the office of the Prime Minister on Monday.

Repatriation of stranded Pakistanis and sharing of assets are main outstanding issues between the two countries.

Police SI suspended

KISHOREGANJ, Feb 13: A police sub-inspector was suspended today for sexually harassing a teenage boy at Nikli thana in the district, officials said, reports UNB.

Earlier on Wednesday, SI Zakir Ali Khan was closed from his duties at Nikli police station and brought to district police line.

Police said Zakir called the 13-year-old boy, a class eight student, and abused him at his residence on Tuesday night. The boy was rescued from Zakir's house and admitted to Nikli Health Complex. He was later brought to Kishoreganj Sadar Hospital from where he was released today.

Police first declined to take any case in this regard. But police super Chowdhury Ahsan Kabir and additional super Mujibur Rahman, while visiting the spot, asked the thana to register a case.

Sobhraj granted bail after 21 yrs in Indian jail

NEW DELHI, Feb 13: A man who has boasted of a trail of crimes around the world was ordered freed on bail today after 21 years in an Indian jail, reports AP.

The judge said Charles Sobhraj would be free pending trial on escape charges as soon as he posted bail set at 30,000 rupees (about 850 dols). Sobhraj told reporters a half sister living in India would post the bond today or tomorrow.

He looked relaxed and happy after hearing the ruling, but said he was not used to being more demonstrative.

"I now feel like jumping, but I can't do that," he said. "I hope to do something with my life now, and, if possible, stay here."

Sobhraj, a Vietnamese-born French citizen, said the first thing he would do upon release was to go to the French embassy in New Delhi to request identification documents. Without a passport or visa, he could face immediate expulsion from India.

555 more Rohingyas repatriated

COX'S BAZAR, Feb 13: Some five hundred and 55 Rohingyas refugees today voluntarily returned to their homes in Myanmar through Teknaf border points here.

Official sources told BSS tonight that it was the 432 batch of Rohingyas refugees and the total number of repatriated persons now stood at 2,24,005.

Officials in connection with the repatriation process saw the refugees off when they were crossing the border. At present, a total of 26,832 refugees are awaiting repatriation in three camps of Cox's Bazar district. The sources said adding that the repatriation process is expected to be completed by March next.

Shima

From Page 1
tions," the Naripakkha release said adding that a total of five persons including four policemen were accused in the chargesheet.

In a joint press statement five human rights groups today demanded immediate enquiry into the death of Shima Chowdhury and action against those responsible.

The statement was issued by Ain O Salish Kendra, Bangladesh Legal Aid and Services Trust, Bangladesh Mohila Ainjibi Shomiti, Bangladesh Society for the Enforcement of Human Rights, Jatiyo Ainjibi Porishod and Odhakar.

Lalbagh fire

From Page 1
house during the fire.

Agriculture and Food Minister Begum Matia Chowdhury accompanied by local MP Haji Mohammad Selim and Awami League leaders visited the slum. She assured the slum dwellers of government assistance at the time of their distress.

Meanwhile, the government has allocated six metric tons of rice, 400 sarees, 400 lungis and 40 tins of biscuits for the affected families.

The family of Liton has been allocated Tk 5,000.

Haji Selim MP at his own expenses has opened a gruel kitchen for the affected people. It will remain open for one week.

Our DMC Correspondent adds: Three persons received burn injuries in a fire at SS Textile Mills in the city Shamspur area yesterday.

The fire originated from a gas pipeline while it was being repaired by technicians. The injured technicians who were admitted to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital are Anwar, 23, Ali Ashraf, 23, and Shahidul, 18.

IPU confce

From Page 1
Lok Sabha Speaker P Sangma told newsmen at a briefing here today.

A Reuter message from New Delhi reported that members of parliament from more than 77 countries meet in India this week to seek ways to reduce the worldwide shortage of women in politics, officials said on Thursday.

Bangladesh's Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and Namibian President Sam Njoma will join 250 lawmakers in discussing strategies and targets to bridge the gender gap at the five-day conference beginning in New Delhi today.

The Geneva-based Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), the conference organiser, said it would be a follow-up to the United Nations conference on women in Beijing in 1995.

The conference is expected to adopt a declaration on Tuesday setting out ways to increase the number of women in parliament. "This may be the most important international conference of this century," the Speaker of India's parliament, Purno Sangma, told the news conference.



Munajat being offered at Eid congregation at the National Eidgah in the city.

FBCCI team leaves for Delhi today

A high-powered businessmen delegation led by Yussuf Abdullah Harun, President of the Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FBCCI) leaves today for New Delhi accompanying the prime minister, reports BSS.

Other members of the delegation are Samson H Chowdhury, Abdul Awal Mintoo, R Maksud Khan, Abdul Haque, Obaidur Rahman, Kazi Zalarullah, C K Hyder, Syed Toufique Ali and A K M Shamsuddoha, a FBCCI press release said today.

The delegation will discuss matters of bilateral trade, investment and other issues concerning trade matters with the leaders of the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) and the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII).

The delegation is expected to return on February 16.

Massive hunt for ULFA activists in Assam

GUWAHATI, Feb 13: The army has launched an intensive operation in the Kamalpur area of Assam's Kamrup district following the ambush late on Tuesday night by the banned ULFA who killed two soldiers and seriously injured 10 others, reports PTI.

Official sources said here today that the army has launched a massive hunt to track the extremists and was combing the area to flush them out.

Stating the ULFA had way-laid an army convoy on way to the Indo-Bhutan border to raid militant hideouts at Haberkura village near Kamalpur, sources said, that the extremists fired indiscriminately killing two jawans on the spot. The army personnel also retaliated.

The slain had been identified as lance naik Sambhu Bahadur and R G Paradirkar while the injured were shifted to the army base hospital at Bashistha here.

Gas: US co allowed

From Page 1
any signing of agreement had to be technically reviewed thoroughly for its soundness and long-term impact.

A hurried decision bypassing the government's own rules for negotiation will only repeat incidents like that of the Schimitar," a source said.

The Shahbazpur gas field was discovered in November, 1995, by Petrobangla's exploration unit BAPEX. It has a proven reserve of 0.40 trillion cubic feet of gas.

The US company which had been awarded the Shahbazpur gas field for one year earlier conducted a "non-committal" study on the gas field with the help of BAPEX and had submitted an integrated proposal on its basis.

The proposal include setting up a 200 MW power station by utilising the gas of Shahbazpur field and setting up a gas distribution or supply network.

"Its proposal was made on the basis of a feasibility study or any seismic survey and exploration activities," a source noted. But the one-year agreement will now allow it to study and submit its detailed plans for Shahbazpur gas field, if the government agrees to the plan,

Knitwear export orders

From Page 1
said another exporter of knitted garments.

Manufacturers are now working on products for which LCs were opened before January 23, the day from which the EPB strictly applied the rules of origin. But they are fearing cancellation of their orders as importers are pressing for shifting of import duty on the exporters.

A leading supplier to the European market told The Daily Star that his average monthly export of knit apparels enjoying GSP facility came down from 25 containers to 12 containers last month. "For this month, I expect export to further decline to ten containers," he said.

Meanwhile, assessment by Coopers and Lybrand, a London-based leading market analyst, on January 27 said up to 90 per cent of the garments imported to the EC under GSP were not entitled to preference, rather than the 75 per cent previously suggested.

Coopers and Lybrand has also cautioned that importers should note that UK Customs have been unable to obtain assurances that GSP Forms A are now being issued in respect of eligible goods only. UK Customs have therefore decided that, with immediate effect, security for the full amount of duty must be provided for any knitted garments declared for GSP from Bangladesh before they will be released for free circulation.

It has also cautioned that "GSP has not been withdrawn from Bangladesh - but you will need pretty good evidence to convince anybody that any knitted garments are eligible. Although there are discussions regarding the simplification of GSP origin rules for the least developed countries, nothing has been agreed upon and, even when it is, it will not be back-dated. Likewise, the EC has not agreed to waive its demands for back duty."

Meanwhile, a Joint Customs Consultative Committee (JCCC), UK, information paper issued in January said importers and agents will have to provide security for the full rate of customs duty before any such product is released for free cir-

ulation, and pending the outcome of enquiries to establish its entitlement to preference.

According to reliable sources, Vice-President of EC Manuel Marin, in response to Industries Minister Tofael Ahmed's request for derogation on the rules of origin criteria, said there was considerable sympathy for Bangladesh in the EC. However, in analysing the derogation requested, various other factors had to be taken into consideration such as similar requests by other LDCs, their global impact on the textile industry of the EU and ensuring that these derogations really benefited the targeted countries and that there was no deviation of trade.

The EC has also not committed any timeframe for solution of the problem. But at the insistence of the Minister for an early decision, the vice-president assured that there was a positive attitude towards finding a satisfactory solution to the problem, the services involved were working closely together and he hoped there would be a favourable outcome before too long.

It has also banned carrying firearms in the entire district from 1 pm on Saturday to Tuesday noon under Article 17A of the Arms Act in order to ensure free voting in a congenial law-and-order situation, said an official announcement yesterday.

"Stern action, including seizure of the arms under Article 17A(2) of the Arms Act 1878, will be taken against anyone who violates the prohibition," the government warned.

The restriction, however, will not be applicable for the law-enforcing agencies policing the forthcoming bypolls as well as security guards of different government, semi-government and non-government organisations.

Steps taken to ensure supply of urea in Dinajpur

JHENIDAH, Feb 13: Emergency steps have been taken to ensure adequate supply of urea in the district where farmers staged demonstration Wednesday blocking the Dhaka-Khulna highway, a top official here said today.

Deputy Commissioner Mohammad Mizanur Rahman told UNB that 50 to 100 metric tons of urea would be supplied in the district everyday for five days from today to meet the shortfall caused by labour strike in Mongla seaport.

The government had allotted 5,026 metric tons of urea for the district for the month of January, 4,011 mt for February and 4,544 mt for March.

But, the district administration received only 547 mt of urea during the month of January. The DC said urea supply from Kaliganj buffer stock godown to Jessore, Magura, Meherpur and Chuadanga districts, will remain suspended for the five days to meet the fertiliser crisis here.

Urea is now selling at Tk 240 to 250 per 50-kg bag in the district market, he said. Some 2,000 peasants of Naldanga and Maharajpur unions in Sadar thana blocked the Dhaka-Khulna highway for three hours on Wednesday demanding adequate supply of urea. About 105 boro schemes are in progress in the two unions.

Christian protestors batoncharged in Karachi

KARACHI, Feb 13: Police on Thursday tear gassed Christian demonstrators protesting anti-Christian attacks last week that led one person dead and two churches destroyed, reports AP.

Hundreds of Christians joined the march through this southern port city to mark riots last Wednesday in Khanewal, 600 miles (950 kilometers) to the north in Punjab province.

A force of 200 police, armed with automatic rifles and backed by armoured cars, charged the marchers with batons as they approached the residence of the governor of southern Sindh province.

At least one marcher was seriously injured when he was hit by a tear gas shell. Many were severely beaten by police, witnesses said.

Sylhet clash

From Page 1
As a result, a fierce clash broke out between the anti and pro-fair group in which 50 people including on duty policemen were injured. Eleven seriously injured persons were admitted to a local hospital.

More than six shops were looted by the agitating people during the clash.

Two cases were registered with Comapanyganj police. Twenty-nine persons including 12 actresses of the jatra party were arrested from the spot.

A tense situation was prevailing at Companyganj following the clash.

Strike in Kashmir protesting Deve Gowda's visit

Srinagar, Feb 13: A general strike greeted Indian Prime Minister H D Deve Gowda Thursday on his first visit to the troubled northern state of Kashmir since local elections here last year, reports AP.

Streets were empty and shops were closed in the state capital of Srinagar following a protest call by Muslim militants. Gowda arrived at the airport near the capital, and later addressed a small crowd as he inaugurated a hydroelectric project at nearby Baramulla.

One killed in Jhenidah clash

JHENIDAH, Feb 13: One person was killed and 10 others were injured when two groups of villagers clashed over supply of irrigation water in a paddy field in Sadar thana today, reports UNB.

Police said Javed Ali, 45, of south Somospur village was chopped to death on the spot.

Witnesses said during the clash which erupted at about 10 am, both the groups used sharp weapons. Of the injured, five were rushed to Jhenidah General Hospital.

The body was sent to sadar hospital for autopsy.

Michael Jackson becomes father

LOS ANGELES, Feb 13: A healthy boy was born about 1 am Thursday to Michael Jackson and wife Debbie Rowe Jackson at Cedars-Sinai Medical Centre, said a hospital source, reports AP.

It was a natural childbirth without complications, the source said on condition of anonymity, and the couple was expected to leave the hospital with the infant by midmorning. The name, weight and length weren't immediately available.

Hospital spokesman Ron Wise said he was unable to confirm the information.

Bribery scandal Two more close aides to Kim arrested

SEOUL, Feb 13: Two more close aides to President Kim Young-sam were arrested today, along with an opposition legislator, in the bribery scandal surrounding a bankrupt steel company, reports AP.

Senior prosecutor Choi Byung-kook said further high-profile arrests were "very unlikely," indicating prosecutors were close to wrapping up their probe into the three-week-old scandal.

Opposition political parties accused the government of covering up the scandal while public attention was turned to the sensational defection of Hwang Jang Yop, 72, a member of the Central Committee of North Korea's ruling Workers' Party.

Wang is the highest-ranking official to defect from the communist North. He is now in the South Korean Embassy in Beijing seeking asylum in Seoul.

Black Faruque

From Page 1
lected tolls forcibly from various mills and factories in Tejgaon industrial area.

In another raid on Wednesday night, police arrested Arif Mia alias Guddu, a terrorist of Ashique Group of Mirpur, Tejgaon and Mohammadpur area, from Sher-e-Bangla Nagar area.

Police also arrested Shaded Akter alias Tutul yesterday with 10 bullets from West Rajabazar area.

When police challenged Tutul and his two accomplices, they tried to escape, but Tutul could not.

Armed clash in Sunamganj: 20 injured

From Staff Correspondent
SYLHET, Feb 13: Twenty persons sustained bullet injuries in an armed clash between two rival groups of villagers at village Pukidar of Deral thana in Sunamganj yesterday.

Of the injured, five with critical wounds were admitted to Sylhet MAG Osmany Medical College Hospital while others admitted to thana health complex.

The clash took place as sequel to previous dispute over a land.

Police said, both the groups used firearms and at least 50 shots were fired during the clash.

AL rally in city tomorrow

The city Awami League will hold a public meeting at 3 pm on February 15 at the Bangabandhu Avenue to mark the democracy killing day, reports BSS.

The decision on holding the meeting was taken yesterday at an extended emergency meeting of the city unit of the party with its senior vice-president Rewaz Uddin Ahmed in the chair.

Moni surrenders

From Page 1
Moni, had earlier denied the allegations brought against him in the FIR and alleged that the officials of the Taxation Department demanded bribes from him after assessing inflated taxes on his business house and kept it concealed from him. At the same time the Department also froze his 10 separate accounts in various banks in the first week of January, he added.

Police had earlier arrested four of his accomplices.

Assistant Commissioner (Taxes) Ruhul Amin in his FIR lodged with the Ramna thana alleged that Moni along with a least 10 armed hoodlums entered into his office suddenly at around 11.30 am on January 30 and used abusive language against him. Ruhul Amin also alleged that Moni assaulted him during that time.

The other FIR in this connection was lodged by Kabirul Fazdani Khan, Assistant Commissioner (Taxation), Tax Area-1, Dhaka.

In his FIR, Kabir alleged that Moni along with at least 10 armed hoodlums entered into the office of Delwar Hossain, Commissioner (Taxation), Circle-1, at around 10:30 am on January 30. Abusive words were used against the commissioner (Taxation) Delwar Hossain, in presence of Siddiq Hossain Chowdhury, Commissioner (Taxation) (appeal area-1) and Md Badul Islam, additional Commissioner (Taxation).

BNP

From Page 1
The meeting also expressed concern at the frequent load-shedding during the month of Ramadan, causing immense suffering to the Muslims who observed month-long fasting and the students preparing for SSC examination.

It demanded of the government to ensure fair price and smooth distribution of fertiliser in the current season and to stop smuggling from a neighbouring country that has hit hard local industries.

The meeting also expressed concern at the incidents at different places of the country including Naogaon, Jibonagar and Dinajpur on Eid day that deprived local people of offering Eid prayers. It pointed out that mismanagement of local administration was responsible for the incidents.

Editor: Mahfuz Anam

Printed & Published by A. S. Mahmud, Managing Director, on behalf of Mediaworld Ltd, 52, Motijheel C/A, Dhaka-1000, from City Publishing House Ltd, 90, Kakrail, Dhaka-1000. Editorial, News & Commercial Offices: House No: 11, Road No: 3, Dhanmandi R/A, Dhaka-1205. PABX: 500092-4, Commercial: 500091 (Direct), Fax No: 88-02-863035, GPO Box No: 3257, Cable: DAILYSTAR, DHAKA. Email: dstar@bangla.net