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VOL. VII NO. 45 REGD. NO. DA 781 FALGOON 20 1403 BS. DHAKA TUESDAY, MARCH 4, 1997 SHAWAL 24 1417 HIJRI 12 PAGES : PRICE TAKA 6.00

Cabinet approves proposal to waive overdue agri loans

The cabinet yesterday approved a proposal for waiving overdue agricultural (takabi) loans, reports UNB.
A meeting of the cabinet also approved with some amendments the Model Production Sharing Contract (PSC) 1997 framed to attract investment from local and foreign companies in exploration and extraction of oil and natural gas in the country.
Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina presided over the meeting held at the PM's Office.
The cabinet meeting reviewed the country's overall economic situation in the current (1996-97) fiscal year.
Ministers and State Ministers attended the meeting. Cabinet Secretary, Principal Secretary to the Prime Minister and concerned secretaries were present.

SEC extends tenure of probe body

By Special Correspondent
The Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) has further extended the tenure of the committee probing the alleged scam in the country's capital market last year during a bull run.
According to SEC sources, the committee is expected to submit its report by March 23.
The five member committee, headed by Prof Amirul Islam, Vice-Chancellor of the Jahangirnagar University, was formed on December 27, 1996. It was scheduled to submit its report by January 27. But its tenure was earlier extended until February 27.
Since its formation the committee gathered information on the capital market during the bull run between July and November. There had been

Samad Azad in Pakistan

ISLAMABAD, Mar 3: Foreign Minister Abdus Samad Azad arrived here today on a two-day official visit to Pakistan, reports BSS.
He was received at the Islamabad International Airport by the Foreign Minister of Pakistan, Gauhar Ayub Khan and senior officials of the foreign ministry.
Bangladesh high commissioner to Pakistan, Qama Rahim and Pakistan high commissioner to Bangladesh, Karam Elahi were present at the airport.
During his stay in Islamabad, Abdus Samad Azad will call on Prime Minister Mohammad Nawaz Sharif and hand over a special message to him from Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina.
Besides holding wide ranging talks on bilateral issues with his Pakistani counterpart Gauhar Ayub Khan, Samad Azad will call on President Farooq Ahmed Khan Leghari, Senate Chairman Wasim Sajjad and Speaker of the National Assembly Elahi Baksh Soomro and discuss matters of mutual interest.

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Train accident in Pakistan kills 126

ISLAMABAD, Mar 3: A runaway passenger train jumped its tracks in Pakistan's eastern Punjab province today killing at least 126 people, according to emergency rescue workers, reports AP.
Another 175 passengers were injured when the brakes failed on the express train near Khaniwal, about 400 kilometres southeast of Islamabad.
"The scene is horrific," said Mohammed Zubair, an emergency worker in Khaniwal. "Nineteen of the dead were children."
Hours after the accident occurred several people were still trapped inside the overturned railway cars, said Shamshad Iqbal, another ambulance worker.
"You can hear the people screaming for help, but we can't reach them," he said. "We are having trouble getting to them."
Some railway cars rolled on top of others making it difficult to reach through the twisted metal to reach those inside.
The government called in the army to help with the rescue, said Iqbal.
Zubair and Iqbal, both contacted in Khaniwal, said many of the injured were in critical condition.
The 17-car train was en route from Peshawar in Pakistan's Northwest Frontier Province to southern Karachi on the Arabian Sea when the accident occurred early this morning.
The train was apparently ordered to stop to make way for a second passenger train that was leaving Khaniwal, the railway authorities said.
When the operator of the train realised the brakes had failed, he drove the train onto a track for runaway trains. It jumped the tracks and the first five cars overturned, they said.
Most of the dead and injured were sleeping in these cars when the accident occurred, said Iqbal.
Pakistan's train system is antiquated and there are frequent accidents.
People from Khaniwal arrived at the site of the accident and pulled bodies from the overturned rail cars, said eyewitnesses. They covered them in white shrouds.
Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif took a helicopter to the scene of the accident. He went to the hospital in Khaniwal where hundreds of people had gathered to donate blood.
The shops in the Punjab town closed to mourn the dead.

Meetings, processions held Agitation to continue till demands are met: BNP

Opposition BNP yesterday began a month-long demonstration to press for its demands and to protest, what it said, wrong policies of the Awami League government that aggravated the law and order situation and also weakened the economy, reports UNB.
It held meetings and processions in the capital and district headquarters, pledging to continue agitation until the demands are met and the situation improves.
At a rally in front of the Jatiya Press Club in the afternoon, the BNP leaders threatened to launch a tougher programme against the Awami League government if the present situation does not improve by March 30.
Organised by Dhaka city BNP, the rally was presided over by its convener Sadeq Hossain Khoka MP. Later, a procession was brought out that paraded the city streets and ended at the Mouchak crossing.
Addressing the rally, Deputy Leader of the Opposition in par-

Attack on BNP procession in Rajshahi: 25 hurt

From Our Correspondent
RAJSHAHI, Mar 3: Twenty-five people were injured in a bomb attack on a procession of BNP and in a clash between BNP workers and police at Shaheb Bazar here this afternoon.
The BNP blamed the Awami League for the bomb attack.
As part of BNP's countrywide programme, the local BNP brought out a procession which came under attack near the Bora Masjid crossing. Ten people, including word commissioner Zahid Hossain and JCD city unit joint convener Waliul Huq Rana, were injured. The angry BNP workers then ransacked three vehicles and chased the attackers.
Police lobbed tear gas shells and made baton charges to disperse the mob. Some 15 BNP workers and the policemen were injured.
At a press conference this evening, the BNP leaders demanded action against the attackers.



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday consoling a relative of one of the four persons killed in firing by Ansars at village Sadhapur in Savar on Friday. — PID photo

Prime Minister declares at Sadhapur village Killers will be punished, no matter how powerful & wealthy they are

SADHAPUR, Savar, Mar 3: Drastic action will be taken against those involved in the Sadhapur killing, the Prime Minister declared as the mourning villagers sought justice when she visited the spot today, reports UNB.
Those who committed such a crime would be put to trial. The killers, whoever they may be, will be tried," said Sheikh Hasina and consoled the members of the bereaved families.
Four people were killed and nearly 50 injured on Friday when Ansars opened fire during a clash with the villagers over a dispute land.
A section of the villagers of Sadhapur, six kilometre off Savar thana, went to evict the Ansars from the camp on a land claimed to be owned by the Par-tex Group of Industries, police said.
Family members of the victims burst into tears when the Prime Minister went to visit the spot.
"I've no word to console you,

Home Minister says

CID has taken up case, probe ordered
By Staff Correspondent
Home Minister Rafiqul Islam informed the Jatiya Sangsad yesterday about various measures taken to probe the killings at Sadhapur village in Savar on Friday, which he termed a sad incident.
He was giving a statement on the incident that took place here on Friday.
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told the mourners who sobbed, and then shouted: Hang the killers.
The killers, no matter how powerful and wealthy they are, will not be spared, trial of the killings will be held. Killing is a crime against humanity.
"Law will take its own course. The criminals will be tried under the provision of law," she said.
The Prime Minister said her government would never support the people who would try to grab other's property.
She said the politics of her party is to stand by the poor people, not to protect the amassed wealth of the rich.
A waiting Jainar Banu, wife of the killed villager Sayeed Mollah, told UNB correspondent "I have lost my husband, none is left to look after my sons and daughters."
Mahbub Alam, brother of another victim, Shahed Alam, said: "We were six brothers. Now we are five."
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BNP secretary general Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan addressing a public meeting in front of the Jatiya Press Club yesterday, as part of the party's month-long agitation programme. — Star photo

Annual general meeting of BOC ends in fiasco

By Staff Correspondent
The Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the BOC Bangladesh Ltd, a British subsidiary, producing gas, welding and medical equipment ended in a fiasco when some shareholders hurled rocks and chairs at the company board members sitting on the dais at the Officers' Club in the city yesterday.
Company sources and witnesses said they were agitating demanding one bonus against each share, instead of its proposed one bonus for five shares. At one stage they went unruly, hurling invectives, rocks and folding chairs, leaving at least one of the company executives, Mohammad Saber, hospitalised with injuries and Managing Director A Hasnat Khan nursing his facial wounds. British Deputy High Commissioner Ms Mirium McIntosh was present at the meeting.
The board members had to shield themselves with chairs and duck the missiles. A contingent of police who were behind the pandal came forward. Neither they nor the security guards, hired for the occasion from a private company, could tame the trouble makers, number of them were arrested.
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Killing of doctor: 12 remanded for 2 days

By Staff Correspondent
The twelve people, arrested in connection with the murder of a doctor of the PG Hospital, were taken on remand for two days yesterday.
The arrested persons, allegedly the members of an organised gang of dacoits, were produced before the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's Court which granted two days' remand for further interrogation, police said.
Dr Hafizur Rahman was gunned down in front of his residence at Sanatagar in Zigatola under Dhanmondi thana Saturday night.

Another bus accident in Manikganj: 5 killed

MANIKGANJ, Mar 3: Five people were killed and 50 others injured, 15 critically, when a coach skidded off the Dhaka-Archa highway at Kalampur today, reports UNB.
Survivors said the Bogra-bound coach from capital Dhaka fell 35 feet into a roadside dry ditch at about 8:30 am as its driver lost control over the steering.
Three people died on the spot while two others died on way to hospital. Two of the victims were identified as Sumon, 8, and Zahir, 23.
An injured passenger, Rashid, said the coach, which left the Gabtoli terminal at 7:30 am, was crammed with passengers beyond its capacity.
The injured passengers were being treated at Dhamrai Thana Health Complex, Manikganj Sadar Hospital and different hospitals of the capital.
The bodies were sent to Dhaka Medical College Hospital for autopsy. A case was filed with Dhamrai police.
BSS adds: A person was killed when a bus hit him at Sanir Akhra, Demra, on Sunday night, hospital sources said.
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British consortium to set up \$300m container terminal

Five major foreign companies have formed a consortium for a massive investment to build a new port near the Chittagong seaport and do other businesses in Bangladesh.
The consortium, under the leadership of Trade and Investment Department (TID) of the United Kingdom, has already chosen a suitable place at the mouth of river Karnaphuli to set up the planned container terminal likely to cost 300 million US dollars.
Talking to UNB yesterday Tim Steel, Chairman of Britain's TCM group, which is coordinating the consortium, said: "This is a highly viable project and we are aggressively ready to launch it."
He, however, would not mention names of the five companies as the huge investment is very much dependent on political stability.
Initially, five major companies have participated in the consortium. I hope more big companies will show their interest to join in the consortium," Steel said.
"Fund is ready. He have already submitted a draft proposal to the government, seeking 300 acres of land at Patenga," he said. "The government has agreed to it and the five-company consortium is ready to invest the 300 million dollars after government's final approval."
Tim Steel further informed that the proposed private-sector port facility would be operated on the basis of build-own-transfer (BOT) system.
The TCM Chairman lauded government's intentions to accept the consortium's proposal and said the government had assured that if necessary, it

Japanese team keen to invest in 3 sectors

A six-member Japanese trade delegation, led by Koya Mita, chairman of Itochu Aviation Co. Ltd Japan, called on Commerce and Industries Minister Tofael Ahmed at his office in the city yesterday, reports UNB.
The Japanese delegation expressed their willingness to participate in infrastructure development of Bangladesh and showed keen interest to invest in textile, power and gas sectors, said an official handout.
They also expressed their satisfaction over the overall situation in Bangladesh, particularly 'investment-friendly environment' now prevailing in the government and private sectors.
Welcoming the Japanese team, the minister said that Japan is a good friend and one of the major development partners of Bangladesh.
A good number of projects with Japanese assistance are being implemented in the government and private sectors, the minister added.
Bangladesh has a huge reserve of natural gas and the government is interested to build fertilizer factory, power plant and gas-based industries
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CID probe Ansars chased villagers and opened fire

By Staff Correspondent
Preliminary investigation by the CID into the incident in Savar has revealed that the Ansars at Sadhapur on Friday morning chased the villagers and at one stage opened fire on them killing four persons and injuring many others.
The CID team probing the incident observed that the villagers were not in any agitating mood which could have provoked the Ansars to open fire.
Meanwhile, the 32 people, including 13 Ansars, arrested were produced before the District Magistrate's Court yesterday and later sent to jail. CID sources said.
The CID team yesterday questioned seven villagers who were injured in the incident. They also visited the houses of the dead and injured persons
See Page 12 Col 5

Partex for judicial probe, again claims ownership of land in Savar

Partex Real Estate firm, a sister concern of Partex Group, yesterday urged the government to institute a judicial enquiry into the February 28 Savar incident, reports UNB.
It also expressed deep shock at the untoward incident that left four people dead and some 20 others injured at village Sadhapur in Savar thana over a land dispute.
Addressing a press conference, vice chairman of the company Aziz Al Kaiser said his company, if necessary, is ready to compensate the victims' families.
He gave an elaborate description of buying the land, measuring 79.42 acres or 216 bighas, and once again claimed their ownership on it.
The Partex has undertaken a plan to establish Composite Textile Mills on the land at a cost of Tk 246 crore with the financial assistance of a foreign investment company.
According to M Nurul Haq, a
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Bangabandhu murder: Court to set date for trial today

By Mizan Ali
The District and Sessions Judge's Court, Dhaka, will announce today the date for appearance of the accused in the Bangabandhu murder in his court, according to sources concerned.
Earlier, the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's (CMM) Court had transferred the case to the Court of District and Sessions Judge Kazi Golam Rasul on March 1.
The date for trial would be announced on the day of the appearance of the accused at the Court of the District and Sessions Judge, the sources said.
While ordering transfer of the case, the CMM had observed that all necessary formalities in connection with the case was completed and that it was now ready for trial.
Former Army officers Lt Col.
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Rajuk Commercial Plot Auction Notice
Most suitable Commercial-cum-Residential Plot No. 2, Road No. 2, Sector No. 3 having road facilities on three sides measuring more or less 929.37 sqr. metre (13 katha 14 chattak) and Plot No. 58, Road No. 2, Sector No. 3 more or less 356.31 sqr. metre (5 katha 5 chattak) of Uttara Model Town, Dhaka will be allotted for 99 years lease on open auction.
Applications on prescribed form with terms and conditions to be obtained from Sonali Bank, Rajuk Bhaban Branch, Dhaka on payment of Tk. 500/- (Taka five hundred) only in cash for each set (non-refundable) and will be received by the Deputy Director (Estates) from the intending bidders up to 2:00 PM on 16-3-97.
The auction will be held on 17-3-97 in the Conference Room, 3rd floor of the Rajuk Bhaban, Dhaka at 10:00 AM.
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