

For Documents Door to Door delivery
To 237 Destinations in INDIA

BLUE DART
EXPRESS LIMITED

PLEASE CONTACT: BANGLADESH AIR EXPRESS INT'L LTD.
Head Office: 9565114, Fax: 9565112, Gulshan: 887771, Chittagong: (031) 712127, Khulna: (041) 725008



BNP chairperson Begum Khaleda Zia receiving a bouquet from Advocate Taimur Alam Khandaker and other lawyers from Narayanganj who joined her party yesterday.

Khaleda accuses govt

From Page 1

Reiterating her allegations that the present government had sold out the country to India, the BNP chief also charged the government with non-implementation of any of its election pledges and keeping all its commitments to its masters.

"In its nine-month rule, the government has not done any development work but has destroyed all those done by the previous government," Begum Zia said. It has ruined the national economy, shut down mills and factories and sold out national sovereignty in a planned way to make the country a vassal state of India, she asserted.

Opposing the move to form a sub-regional grouping, the Opposition leader said that the initiative was aimed at turning all the neighbouring countries of India into its provinces. "They've gone to such an extent that they're now contemplating introducing a common national anthem for the countries in the region. It reveals their ultimate design of getting all the independent countries of the region as its provinces," Begum Zia went on.

The BNP chief alleged that the government's plan to give transit to India meant yet another treaty of slavery, which

Rickshawpullers observe strike in Rajshahi

From Our Correspondent
RAJSHAHI, Mar 15: The rickshawpullers observed a half-day strike here today protesting the killing of two persons in a road accident.

Rickshaws and rickshawpullers were off roads from 6 am to 2 pm. The rickshawpullers also brought out a procession and held a rally.

Two rickshaw-van drivers — Shahjahan, 22, and Shukur Ali Jamshir, 23, — were crushed under the wheels of a night coach at Choudhupai in the city yesterday.

Minister: Loadshedding

From Page 1

ment Board (BPDB) and Dhaka Electric Supply Authority (DESA) are also present.

"The real problem lies with Dhaka which is currently consuming nearly half (over 900 MW) of the total power generated daily," Moir Uddin Khan pointed out. "We have no choice but to implement load management measures."

"If shops remain closed during the peak hours in Dhaka we can save 30 to 40 MW power," the Energy Secretary said.

The Energy Minister refuted a wide-spread rumour that the government was intentionally organising the loadshedding to create an opinion in favour of purchase of power from India.

"In no way," he said replying to a question whether loadshedding was intentional. "Our energy policy allows import of power. But in importing power we have to see whether it can be done quickly and at a cheaper rate. We will also have to have control over the purchased power and get that during the peak hour," he added.

The minister alleged inaction of the previous government in the sector. The previous government did not set up a single power generation unit during its five-year rule. Implementation of a few important projects like the AB gas pipeline project were also delayed.

The Bakhraabad gas field in Chittagong region was producing a smaller quantity of gas

would make Bangladesh a target of attack by the pro-independence people of seven north-eastern states of India. How can this government protect the country from foreign attacks when it has miserably failed to ensure people's fundamental rights, she asked.

Mentioning that she was under constant pressure to announce anti-government agitation programmes, Begum Zia said this government would not be given any more chance to destroy the country. Fresh agitation programmes would follow the on-going programmes ending on March 30, she added.

Advocate Taimur Alam Khandaker along with 37 other members of Narayanganj District Bar Association and eight prominent persons from the district joined BNP on the day.

Father hands over son to police for raping girl

RANGPUR, Mar 15: Another father Abdus Sattar, set an example by handing over his son Manju to Kotwali police here in the early hours of today, reports BSS.

Manju reportedly raped Shilpi, a student of Begum Rokeya College on March 8 which led the girl to commit suicide.

Earlier, police declared a cash award of Taka 20,000 for giving the correct information about the whereabouts of Manju who was absconding for several days.

EC to simplify

From Page 1

The EC urged all concerned to send their opinion to the Election Commission as soon as possible. Mailing address: Additional Project Director (Tel: 817910) or Deputy Project Director (Tel: 815602), Voter ID card project, Election Commission Secretariat, Sher-e-Bangla Nagar, Dhaka.

and therefore power generation in the 210 MW Rajan power plant, connected with the Bakhraabad system, remained suspended. The AB pipeline will enable the PDB to restart the Rajan plant with gas from Ashuganj.

The 58-km AB pipeline will pass through three rivers — Gumti, Buri and Titus. Submarine pipeline has already been installed in Gumti river and Petrobangla engineers are currently installing submarine line in Buri river, the minister said.

"We also have some shortfall in gas supply to the power plants in Ghorashal. Work is going on to finish installation of a 26-km gas pipeline to improve the situation in Ghorashal units," the minister said.

The three 33 MW units in Siddhirganj are also unable to go for optimum production due to gas crisis. "Only one unit is partially operative now. To improve gas supply there, a tender will be floated tomorrow to build a 41-km pipeline," the minister noted and expressed his hope that the pipeline would be completed by eight months.

The minister further said that a number of power plants are now under rehabilitation. These plants will gradually come into operation between May and December and add around 300 MW power. "In addition, the second unit of the 210 MW Rajan plant will come into operation after June," he said.

Govt has given India corridor secretly: BNP

BNP secretary general Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan yesterday alleged that the Awami League government has "secretly performed the task of giving corridor to India," reports UNB.

In a press statement, he said Foreign Minister Abdus Samad Azad has put Bangladesh into the prison of slavery anew by signing the agreed minutes relating to the "road and rail transit" at the Joint Economic Commission (JEC) meeting in New Delhi on March 12.

Bhuiyan said the government did not pay any heed to the concern and protests by freedom-loving people of this country and signed the agreed minutes just a week ahead of the expiry of the 25-year Indo-Bangladesh "treaty of slavery."

The government even did not allow any discussion in parliament on such an important issue which might jeopardise the national independence and sovereignty, the BNP leader said.

Besides, he said the agreed minutes of the JEC has no link with a cabinet decision relating to the issue. In the cabinet decision, it was said that an agreement would be signed with India to facilitate people from Bangladesh to visit holy Azmir Sharif.

The BNP secretary general asked the government to disclose what else have been given to India under the cover of the agreed minutes of the JEC. He demanded publication of the agreed minutes in full.

Accords on trade

From Page 1

Turkish President Suleman Demirel is also scheduled to fly in the city the same day on a three-day state visit.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina is also expected to hold talks with President Demirel on relations between the two OIC countries.

They are likely to discuss matters relating to the newly launched D-8 cooperation, particularly a date for its summit.

The D-8 (Development-8) forum, whose three ministerial and official-level meetings had already been held in the Turkish cities, groups Bangladesh, Pakistan, Iran, Egypt, Nigeria, Indonesia, Malaysia and Turkey.

Bangladesh and Turkey are expected to sign an agreement on trade and economic cooperation.

Sheikh Hasina is also expected to discuss with Yasser Arafat the latest situation of the Middle East peace process and future of the State of Palestine to which Bangladesh has a strong support.

SSC exams

From Page 1

paper was yet to be found.

For such examinations, more than one set of question papers are prepared, he said. "So far what has been reported on leakage of question papers concerns one set."

Meanwhile, the Ministry of Education formed a probe committee yesterday, headed by Vice-Chancellor of the National University Prof Aminul Islam to investigate the probable leakage of question papers of the SSC examinations and locate the sources of this, said an authoritative source in the ministry.

Other members of the committee include one representative each from the Education Ministry, Home Ministry, Cabinet Division and Directorate of Secondary Education.

The ministry had already instructed the chairmen of the five education boards to investigate the alleged leakage of question papers.

Officials of Dhaka Board said that no decision was taken for cancellation of the English first paper examination, as reported in a section of the press.

Nat'l policy needed to combat malnutrition: PM

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina said over 60 per cent of children under five are suffering from malnutrition and stressed the need for a national food and nutrition policy to combat the problem, reports UNB.

She said a policy frame finalised by the Bangladesh National Nutrition Council in this regard would be placed before the next meeting of the council for discussion.

Inaugurating a three day 7th Bangladesh Nutrition Conference in the city yesterday morning, the Prime Minister said the government had taken initiative to develop a plan of action on nutrition programme as per recommendations adopted at the International Nutrition Conference held in Rome in 1992.

This programme will be implemented by 2010, she told the function.

Referring to women health, Hasina said the condition of female population was the worst. Fifty per cent of them weigh less than 40 kg and have a height of less than 147 cm, she added.

Today mothers and children are victim of severe malnutrition, the Prime Minister said, because the mothers could

never take their food with content.

The Prime Minister stressed the need for developing an appropriate and suitable food policy for the next century and hoped that all the relevant ministries, development partners, and nutrition experts would undertake integrated action plan to face the challenge of nutritional problem.

Laying emphasis on supply of nutritious food to the patients in hospitals, the Prime Minister said nutritionist should be appointed in the hospitals.

"One should remember rich and costly foods, vegetables are not the only source of nutrition. There is abundant nutrition in general foods, vegetables and fruits," she said and called for a change in the traditional food habit.

She thanked the development partners and international agencies for helping Bangladesh combat nutritional problem through an integrated nutrition project.

Later, the Prime Minister distributed "recognition crest" among some organisations, like the World Bank, FAO, UNICEF, Bangladesh Nutrition Society, Ministry of Health, in recognition of their contribution.

Samad Azad to visit ROK from Apr 2

Foreign Minister Abdus Samad Azad will pay a three-day official visit to the Republic of Korea beginning April 2, reports UNB.

"The visit aims at bolstering Dhaka-Seoul ties, particularly in trade and economic cooperation," said an official yesterday.

2 towers of E-W interconnector collapse

Power supply between eastern part and north western part of the country has been disrupted since Friday after two towers of the east-west interconnector collapsed near Ishwardi, reports UNB.

Official sources said supply is being maintained in the north-western zone by extensive load-shedding.

The Power Development Board has started construction of a bypass line as an emergency measure for restoring the 230 kv interconnector.

The construction work on emergency bypass line is expected to be completed within a week, officials said.

Yasmin murder

From Page 1

tions that the accused were involved in raping and killing Yasmin.

They told the court that there were no evidences that the three accused on the night of the incident went out on a patrol duty and termed the prosecution allegations completely untrue.

The counsels said the accused former Dinajpur Kotwali thana ASI Moinul Haque, former constable Abdus Sattar and former policeman driver Amir Lal Barman were not guilty.

The three main accused who are charged under the Women and Children Repression Control Act were on the dock. The court withheld judgement till the end of hearing of another case in connection with the Yasmin rape and murder incident pending before the District and Sessions Judge court, Rangpur where the hearing will resume on April 13.

PM: Supply water, power

From Page 1

the greater Faridpur district with financial assistance from the Swedish government.

Besides, German government assisted a Tk 70 crore project for infrastructural development in greater Tangail district. Danida assisted municipality and thana water supply and sanitation projects in Feni, Noakhali, Laxmipur, Borguna and Patuakhali districts.

A feasibility study for north Dhaka sewerage system assisted by the Japanese government and a World Bank and French government assisted Saydabad water purification project in the Dhaka city to increase water supply were also taken up.

The Prime Minister was also briefed on the present power, water, traffic jam, waterlogging and mosquito problems of cities, particularly of the capital city. She directed the officials to supply power and water on emergency basis by fixing time and area.

She also asked the officials to take urgent steps to end the mosquito menace immediately. The Prime Minister said her government wants to build up a strong local government system through decentralisation of power to deliver service to doorstep of the people.

She said all development activities should be carried out centering the villages. She also directed the officials to undertake projects for village-oriented development.

The Prime Minister asked the officials to take up projects on the basis of appropriate technology for the development of human habitat. She also suggested cooperatives based agricultural development.

The cooperatives should be made more attractive and meaningful, Hasina said and asked the officials not to be

Dacoity at city house

By Staff Correspondent

Dacoits took away money, gold ornaments, and other valuables worth about Tk six lakh from a house at New Palatan in Azampur in the city Friday night.

A police officer at Lalbagh thana said, a gang of five dacoits equipped with deadly weapons entered the house of one Sirajuddin Ahmed on Khaleda Lane at about 9:30 pm. The attackers tied the family members with cloths and looted gold ornaments, Tk 30,000 in cash, electronic goods and other valuables worth about Tk six lakh.

Lalbagh police said, two persons arrested in this connection were being interrogated.

JSJ to gherao TV Bhaban Mar 25

The Jatityabadi Sangskritik Jote (JSJ) will gherao the Television Bhaban on March 25 to protest 'politicisation' of the state-run media and press the demand for autonomy to radio-TV, reports UNB.

The decision of the token gherao programme was taken at a meeting of the 'polymaking parishad' of the Jote yesterday evening.

Presided over by Chashi Nazrul Islam, the meeting observed that the authorities were broadcasting 'distorted' history and showing 'disparity' in news treatment.

Torn knee tendon in Clinton's leg repaired

BETHESDA, Maryland, Mar 15: Surgeons repaired a painful torn knee tendon in President Clinton's right leg Friday after a freak middle-of-the-night accident at the Florida home of golfer Greg Norman. The president will hobble on crutches for eight weeks or so and face arduous physical therapy, reports AP.

"We were very happy with our repair," the chief surgeon said. "I feel great, they did a terrific job." Clinton said after two hours of surgery, "I just had an unlucky break." He said he would go ahead with plans for a trip to Finland next week for a summit with Russian President Boris Yeltsin.

The loss was estimated at about Taka one lakh. A general dairy was registered with Pallabi police station.

Vacuum Cleaner
Compact & ultra light

Transcom Electronics Limited
Official licensee of Philips Electronics N.V.
for lighting products, radio and TV sets
Dhaka: 815306-9, 819625-9, 889993
Ctg: 716353, 723578, Khulna: 720304, Bogra: 6215

Backed by Guarantee

Let's make things better

PHILIPS



The members of Bangabandhu Shishu Kishore Mela participating in a function at the Shishu Academy in the city yesterday, organised on the occasion of 77th birth anniversary of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and National Children's Day.

BGMEA for further devaluation of taka

Finance Minister Shah A M S Kibria said the government would take every possible step to solve the existing problems in the garments industry, reports UNB.

He said this while talking to a delegation of Bangladesh Garments Manufacturers and Exporters' Association (BGMEA) at his office yesterday.

BGMEA President, Mostafa Golam Kuddus led the delegation.

The BGMEA leaders apprised the minister of various problems faced by the garments sector including stock-lot and bank charges.

They suggested further devaluation of taka to enable Bangladesh garments to compete favourably in the international market.

The BGMEA hailed the government's decision to allow tax-free import of generators and mobilising taka 500 crore for setting up back-ward linkage industries in the country.

The Finance Minister advises the entrepreneurs to diversify garments production and suggested investment in composite textile mills.

Banking Secretary Syed Amir-ul-Mulk and Chairman of the National Board of Revenue, Shah Abdul Hannan were present at the meeting, said a PID handout.

Bata Shoe store gutted in city

A Bata shoe store was gutted in a fire at Mirpur seven in the city on Friday midnight, reports BSS.

According to Fire Brigade sources, an electrical short circuit sparked off the fire at about 12:30 am. Three fire tenders from Mirpur sub-station rushed to the spot and brought the blaze under control after about one hour of struggle.

However, no casualty was reported.

The loss was estimated at about Taka one lakh. A general dairy was registered with Pallabi police station.

Sub-regional group

From Page 1

women and children, cross-border trade and smuggling. A thrust area of sub-regional cooperation would be combatting insurgency and terrorism in the region.

Although harnessing the vast water resources is seen as a crucial area, this may take a back seat at the formative stage of the sub-regional cooperation concept, diplomatic sources hinted.

The sub-regional forum will also address common concerns like environmental degradation and river management.

The idea of sub-regional cooperation was first officially floated by Bangladesh Foreign Minister Abdus Samad Azad at the SAARC Foreign Ministers Conference held in Delhi in December last. Then, Foreign Secretary of Nepal Kedar Bhakta Srestha also delivered an "approach paper" at the Standing Committee meet during the SAARC summit.

The new concept was generally welcomed by the four countries, but the summary of conclusions of the SAARC Foreign Ministers did not finally include the proposal of sub-regional cooperation due to the reported objection of Pakistan.

However, both Bangladesh and the other sponsor of the concept claim that the sub-regional cooperation concept was not against the spirit of SAARC and sub-regional cooperation was possible under Article 7 of the SAARC Charter.

The article mentions that SAARC Standing Committee may set up Action Committees of member countries, concerning implementation of projects involving more than two countries but not all the states of the SAARC regional organisation.

54 cos likely to bid for exploration blocks

By Staff Correspondent

Energy Minister Li Gen (ret'd) Noor Uddin Khan yesterday said that some 54 international companies are likely to participate in the biddings for exploring oil and gas in 15 blocks in the country.

The companies will also participate in international seminars for investment in the Bangladesh oil and gas sector in London on March 24 and in Houston on March 31.

The notice inviting offers for oil and gas exploration in the 15 blocks was published in the national and international media yesterday.

"If everything goes right and agreements are reached between the government and various companies, I tell you Bangladesh will be so rich soon that the world will forget how poor Bangladesh was," the Minister said at a press conference in the city.

"Already Production Sharing Contracts (PSCs) have been signed for eight blocks and one company — Cairn Plc has started investing 200 million US dollars. We believe the total investment in these eight blocks will be 500 million dollars this year," he added.

The minister pointed out the discovery of gas in the Sangu-1 well by Cairn had generated

tremendous enthusiasm while the formulation of the Energy Policy and finalisation of model PSC had reinforced the enthusiasm. A number of multinational oil and gas companies had opened up their offices in Dhaka and they are likely to participate in the biddings.

Some 10 senior officials and experts will attend the seminars sponsored by the World Bank.

Gunfire rocks

From Page 1

the JCD at the Bangabandhu Hall Thursday morning.

Yesterday's trouble began when the procession of a JCD faction was approaching towards the Jashimuddin Hall at about 1 pm, demanding trial of the killers of Arif Hossain at about 1 pm, the witnesses said.

The processionists earlier held a rally at the premises of Bangabandhu Hall. The rally was addressed by Nurul Haq Zitu, joint convenor JCD DU unit, Zulmat Ali, former General Secretary of Bangabandhu Hall, Wahiduzzaman and Shahidul Islam Babul.

Police lobbed at least five tear gas shells to bring the situation under control and later raided Jashimuddin Hall and Surya Sen Hall.

A cut rifle and some ammunition were recovered by the police from Surya Sen Hall, police said. The ammunition included 49 bullets of point 303 rifle, 15 bullets of 9 mm rifle, a magazine of SMC and a magazine of a 9 mm pistol.

Police arrested four JCD leaders, two from the teachers' quarter adjacent to the hall. They are Mainuddin Chowdhury Liton, Farhad Hossain Azad, Mizanur Rahman and Ainul Islam.

Vice-Chancellor of the University Prof Abul Kalam Azad Chowdhury visited the Surya Sen Hall after the incident.

A large number of police have been deployed in the troubled northern area of the campus to avert further clash.

AL national council

From Page 1

heard as probable aspirants for the post. According to party sources, AL Joint Secretary Abdul Jalil, Organising Secretary Mohammad Nasim and Presidium Member Amir Hussain Amu were being seen as likely contenders for the post of party general secretary. Besides, names of the incumbent and another presidium member of AL, Mohammad Selim, were also being heard as aspirants.

The party leaders, however, preferred to make no comments at this stage.

In the past, the authority of choosing a party general secretary was passed onto the party chief. The rank and file of the party, therefore, is not quite sure about the modus operandi this time. On two previous occasions, councillors had passed the authority onto Sheikh Hasina, who eventually opted for a 'compromise candidate' in nominating a new general secretary.

In 1992, the 'Subject Committee' at the council of Dhaka city unit, after failing to select or elect a new executive committee for the unit, had also passed the authority to the party chief.

The schedule of the ensuring national council was fixed at a meeting of the 65-strong AL Central Working Committee (ALCWC) on January 28 last with Sheikh Hasina in the chair.

A proposed national council preparatory committee is yet to get the party president's final approval. Hasina will be ex-officio Chairperson of the committee.

AL failed to meet its March 6 deadline for completing the

councils of all district units. Till yesterday, councils of 22 out of 70 organisational district units could not be held, said party sources. AL Joint Secretary Abdul Jalil said councils of the remaining district units would be held well before the national council and those of Barisal, Patuakhali, Barguna district units and Chittagong city unit are scheduled to be completed this week.

Other sources in the party disclosed that there were intra-party feuds in some units and leaders of the units could seek cooperation from an yet to be formed 'appeal tribunal' of the party for amicable resolution of those.

Meanwhile, the city unit council is likely to be held on March 27.

The last national council of AL was held in September, 1992 and the previous one in January 1987. At the flag end of the tenure of ALCWC in September, 1995, the party held a special council. Since then the tenure of ALCWC was extended twice — first, for one year till September, 1996 and then for another six months till this month.

When the tenure was extended last time, it was decided that the last extension would have to be endorsed by the new ALCWC, scheduled to be elected in the forthcoming national council.

It was charted out then that councils of the party's 70 organisational district units would be completed by November 15 and the national council by December last year. But due to organisational problems and intra-party feuds in some districts and thanas, those could not be held as scheduled.

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