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Former addicts advisers in anti-drug campaign

By Govinda Shil

The Department of Narcotics Control (DNC) will launch a motivational campaign to contain the ever increasing problem of drug smuggling and drug abuse, official sources said.

Former drug addicts who are now leading normal life will act as advisers in the campaign which will include TV films and other motivational programmes through the media focusing on drug abuse. NGOs will also be involved in the campaign, the sources said adding that shortage of manpower and funds were hindering DNC's efforts to control drug abuse in the country. A total of 450 out of 1274 posts in the DNC are new vacant, they added.

The Department's patrol works and other operational activities were being hampered due to shortage of manpower and other logistic support, a senior official of the DNC said. The DNC head office has only four vehicles which is too inadequate for its operational activities, he said.

"We contribute about 25 crore to the national exchequer per year, but we are given only six to seven crore taka," he said.

Opposing ideologies

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right. "But we do not need to go for unity with those who had opposed the country's war of liberation in 1971," he said, arguing that such moves would isolate the party from thousands of people who dislike both the AL and the Jamaat on separate grounds.

While struggling against the 'autocratic practices' of the Awami League, we should rather try to win the hearts of the 'secular nationalist forces' who dislike Awami League for its 'inherent intolerance to its political opponents.' and the parties like Jamaat-e-Islami that betrayed our national cause in 1971, the BNP leader said.

Besides, the Jamaat is not a dependable friend, because the party is destined to seek AL friendship due to its misdeeds during our liberation war and this has been proved more than once over the last couple of years," another leader of the BNP's left camp noted.

This section of the BNP leadership is also of the opinion that the party should 'go slow' in taking to the streets.

On the other hand, the BNP leaders with rightwing political background assert that the party should now go for unity with all the anti-Awami League forces, irrespective of their political past.

"We need to organise all the anti-Awami League forces to free the people from the clutches of the AL," a BNP leader known as a top brass of its right wing camp, said, arguing that the division of the people on the pro-liberation and anti-liberation lines would eventually benefit the Awami League.

Revised quota

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into effect from March 26 last.

The rates of other quotas are: 45 per cent on merit for class I and class II posts, 10 per cent for women, 5 per cent for tribals and 10 per cent for general candidates of districts.

For the posts of class III and IV, 10 per cent for orphanage residents and disabled, 15 per cent for women, 5 per cent for tribals, 10 per cent for Ansar and village defence party members and the rest 30 per cent for the general candidates of districts.

BTV body

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cial handout yesterday.

Other committee members are: Mostafa Monwar, Syed Siddique Hossain, Atiqul Haq Chowdhury, BTV's Director General and Dy Director General.

The committee will make recommendations to improve the quality of programmes and determine the acceptability of dramas telecast by BTV.

It will also determine the total monthly duration of package programmes, supervise the audit test of new artists and discharge other responsibilities to be given from time to time.

Meanwhile, another three-member committee with Prof Kabir Chowdhury as chairman was formed by the government to take tests for selecting new newscasters for BTV.

The high-level committee includes Prof Mustafa Nurul Islam as member and BTV Director General as member-secretary.

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JCD, BCL clash in Sirajganj

SIRAJGANJ, Apr 22: At least 10 persons were injured when the activists of BCL and JCD clashed here this afternoon, reports UNB.

Police picked up four activists for their involvement in the clash.

Witnesses said the clash between the Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) and the Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) began at about 9:30 am in a sequel to a trouble over enjoying a movie at local Moushami Cinema Hall three days back.

Sources said JCD leader Shamim was beaten up by some BCL activists on Sunday.

Since then, activists of both the organisations had engaged in sporadic clashes in Sirajganj town's Mahmudpur and Sayedhangara mahallas.

Ctg JCD leader held with pistol

CHITTAGONG, Apr 22: Police arrested a Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal leader along with a pistol, loaded with two bullets, from Ambagan in the port city last night, reports UNB.

On-duty police of Doublemooring thana halted city JCD vice president and former VP of Pahartoli College Students Union, Shafiqul Islam Swapan, while he was returning home by a motorbike about 30 minutes past midnight.

During a search, police found the pistol and bullets from Swapan's possession. He was sent to jail when produced before the CMM Court today.

Police said Swapan was wanted in several cases, including the murder of a fire brigade worker and a retired assistant superintendent of police.

20 injured in N'ganj clashes

From Our Correspondent

NARAYANGANJ, Apr 22: At least 20 people were injured, two of them with bullet, in two separate incidents of violence here today, witnesses said.

The two persons were hit with bullet in a gunfire between two groups of gamblers over share of money during gambling at West Talla under Fatulla thana. Three others were injured during the fight as the gamblers also exploded cocktails.

Bullet-hit Abul Hussain, 22, and Helal, 23, were admitted to Narayanganj Hospital.

In another incident, rival gangs, one from Paikpara and the other from Noapara under Narayanganj thana, clashed after taking bath at a canal at Noapara. Four persons were stabbed and 11 others received minor injuries during the clash as the miscreants used lethal weapons.

Masum, 18, Rama, 15, Kalu, 17, and Habib, 18, were taken to Narayanganj Hospital with stab injuries.

When contacted, police said none was arrested and no case was lodged in connection with the incidents.

Jalalabad Day observed

CHITTAGONG, Apr 22: Glowing tributes were paid to the legendary hero of the anti-British movement Masterda Surja Sen and his comrades in observance of the historic Jalalabad Day today, reports BBS.

On this day, Masterda and his companions fought the British soldiers in Jalalabad hill where the troops swooped down on them.

To mark the day, different organisations garlanded the statue of Surja Sen at the JM Sen Hall and held discussions.

Chittagong city chapter of Awami League held a discussion at its Daroo Fazal Market office with its vice-president Dr Sayeedur Rahaman in the chair.

Awami League leaders Kazi Enamul Haq Dianu, Mohammad Khaleduzzaman, Badilul Alam, Belayet Hossain, SK Chowdhury, and Iftekhar Saimun Chowdhury participated in the discussion.

20 shops gutted in Nabiganj

HABIGANJ, Apr 22: A devastating fire burnt down some 20 shops at the thana Sadar bazar of Nabiganj in the district early today, reports UNB.

Witnesses said the blaze, originating from a grocery at 5:30 am, raged through other shops and gutted goods worth an estimated Tk 1.5 crore.

Firefighters from district headquarters and Moulibazar rushed to the spot and extinguished the flame after a two-hour combat.

SAARC summit

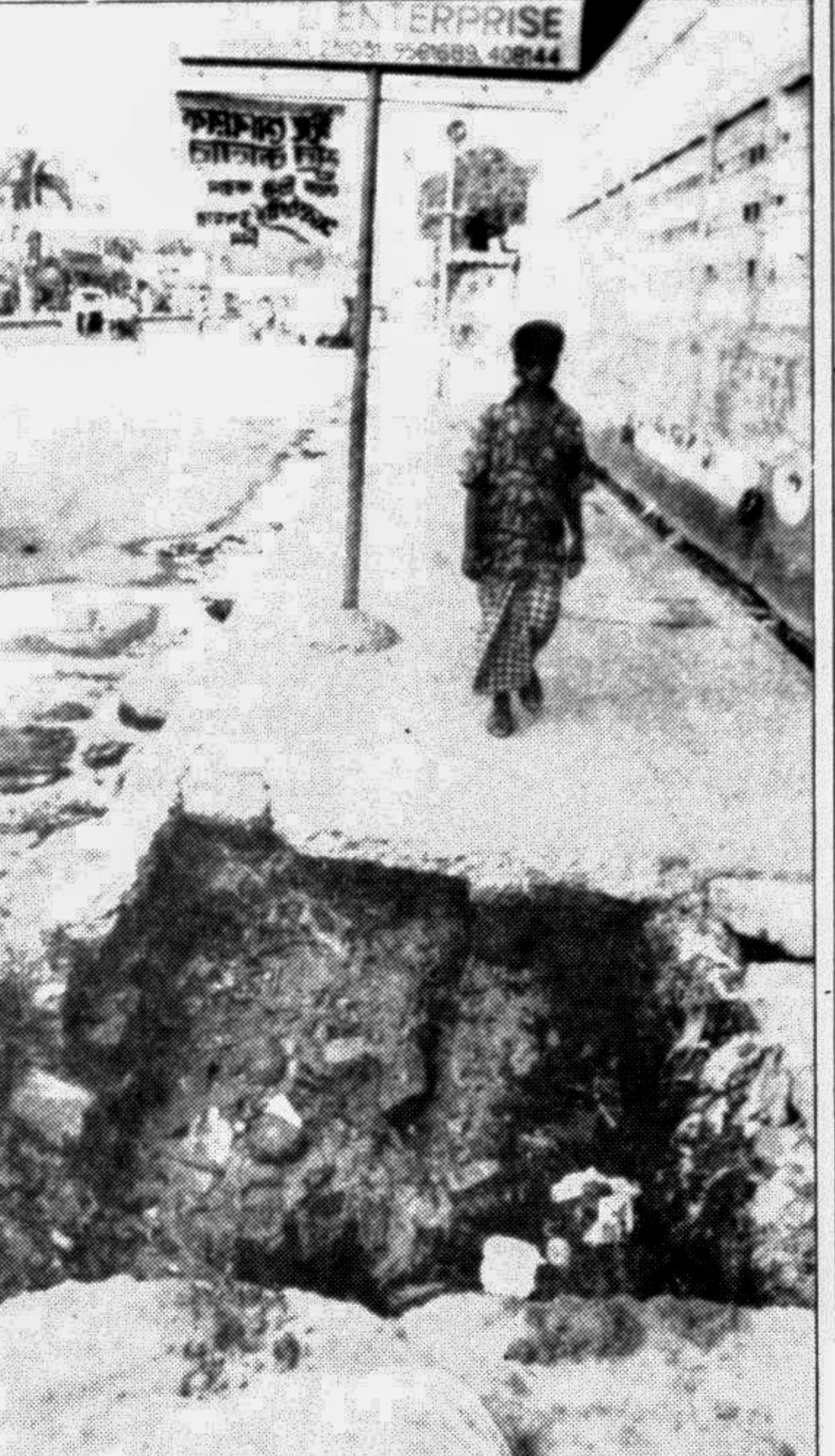
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for the welfare of more than one billion people in the region, besides adopting SAFTA, an arrangement liberalising trade among the member countries.

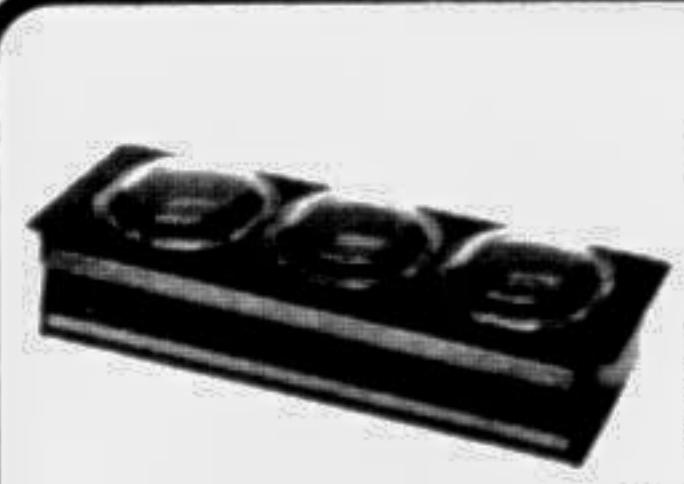
The forum, grouping Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, the Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka, had also adopted convention on curbing drug abuse and child trafficking as well as action programmes for the welfare of women and children.

The three-day summit will be preceded by a meeting of the Council of Ministers to finalise the agenda of the summit.

Foreign Secretaries and senior officials of seven member countries will hold meetings in Male in the first week of May to prepare the programmes of the conference which will review progress of the 13-year-old association and endorse new course of action.



A veritable death trap on the footpath along the road in front of the DB office at Malibag in the city. — Star photo



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93 massacred in Algeria

ALGIERS, Apr 22: An armed group massacred 93 villagers including women and children, early today, in the bloodiest such attack since the start of an Islamic insurgency five years ago, authorities said, reports AF.

Security forces announced without comment the death toll in the pre-dawn massacre in the village of Haouch Mokfi, near Bougara, about 20 kilometers south of Algiers.

Members of a family who fled the area described the heavily armed group as Islamic guerrillas. They said the group began killing villagers because they refused to "collaborate."

Armed groups depend for their survival on the aid of simple citizens who provide food, money and other necessities.

"We have no more to give. They've already taken everything," said one member of the family which arrived in the capital. He and his kin spoke on condition of anonymity.

No further details were immediately available.

Village massacres around Algiers have become a prevalent form of violence since the start of the insurgency.

The Haouch Mokfi massacre was the biggest single mass killing since the birth of the insurgency after the army cancelled January 1992 legislative elections to thwart a victory by an Islamic fundamentalist party. At least 60,000 people have been killed in the conflict between security forces and militants.

President Liamine Zeroual has scheduled the first legislative vote since then for June 5.

JP rebel leaders discuss action plan today

By Staff Correspondent

The three rebel leaders of Jatiya Party will sit today at the residence of Mizanur Rahman Chowdhury, to discuss their next course of action if the expulsion of Kazi Zafar Ahmed is not withdrawn, sources confirmed.

JP chief H M Ershad held a meeting with party Secretary General Anwar Hossain Manju and Nazirul Rahman Manju last night at the residence of Nazirul Rahman.

The meeting was held as the 11 mid-ranking party leaders mediating for a solution to the present crisis were reportedly told by the rebels that they would not meet Ershad unless Zafar's expulsion was withdrawn. The outcome of the meeting could not be known.

Shah Moazzam Hossain, spokesman for the three rebel leaders, when contacted, said that they would meet Ershad only after the expulsion of Kazi Zafar was withdrawn.

Hail storm

From Page 1

missal of the case as per the law which states: "Where the defendant appears and the plaintiff does not appear when the suit is called for hearing, the court shall make an order that the case be dismissed."

Pilnik is still legally married to Ruma.

Amir said Runa had filed a divorce suit in the UK, which she later withdrew.

Another case filed by Runa to annul the marriage is pending with Dhaka's Second Sub-Judge Court.

Meanwhile, immediate past

finance minister of India P Chidambaram, while participating in the discussion on the motion of confidence to Gujral's government in Lok Sabha, said today that India being the largest country in the region should provide trade concessions unilaterally to other SAARC countries.

Rashid, Chairman of Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC), said: "I was surprised to read your letter. Peregrine is not in the list of accused companies and firms. In fact, the name of your company has not been mentioned in the Enquiry Report nor has it been accused of any wrong-doing. However, Ms Runa Alam and her associate set up a brokerage firm," SES Company Limited and engaged in business in the Dhaka Stock Exchange. The Enquiry Committee set up by the SEC has named it as one of the firms which indulged in manipulation of the market. On the basis of the report, the Commission has filed a case in the courts here in accordance with the relevant law. Your letter therefore, appears misconstrued. Your remark that the action taken against her for "politically motivated reasons" is absolutely baseless.

Meanwhile, the Wall Street Journal's international edition on April 15 carried a report on the Peregrine's problems in Vietnam, Burma and Bangladesh. In Vietnam, the chief of its subsidiary, Nguyen Trung Truc, had been arrested on tax evasion charges. Earlier, the company was fined for operating a business from an unregistered office.

"Truc's arrest comes on the heels of several other setbacks for Peregrine in its strategy of investing in emerging markets... earlier this month Peregrine ran into problems in Bangladesh... neither has Peregrine's foray into Burma been a happy one," the journal said adding that it shut down its office after fighting a court battle with its representative Ms Segal who tried to wrest control of its prawn-processing venture.

36 Manipuris

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Indian currency worth Tk 2028, Indian currency worth Rupees 27640, one camera, one mini tape recorder, some clippings of Indian newspapers and leaflets in Manipuri language were recovered from their possession, the official source added.

However, no arms were found with them. All the arrested are between 15 and 22 years of age. On interrogation, they informed police that they had come to visit Bangladesh, and meet the Manipuri community here.

The SP, Sylhet declined to say anything about the interrogation.

SAARC states

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that there was a need for institutional mechanism for settlement of trade disputes amongst the business in the region and to establish such a mechanism.

He said the ninth CEC meeting will be held before the second meeting of the commerce ministers.

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BB: Bank loans

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Monirul Alam (Tk 3.23 cr), Alamgir Kabir (Tk 0.67 cr) and Abus Salam (Tk 0.48 cr) of NCCLB; Sultan Hashem (0.44 cr), Bazal Ahmed (Tk 0.43 cr), Abdul Khair Chowdhury (Tk 0.05 cr), Sharif Zahir (Tk 0.05 cr), Hazi Yunus Ahmed (Tk 9.17 cr) of UCBL; A B M Feroze (