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**Govt firm to streamline financial sector: PM**

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday said the government is not for giving loans to fortune-seeker industrialists, rather it is committed to bringing back discipline in the financial sector, reports UNB.

"We have to be industrially developed fast for increasing the GDP," she told a delegation of the Bangladesh Chamber of Industries (BCI) that called on her at her Secretariat office.

Hasina said the government is committed to protect and help flourish the local industries for improving the country's economic status.

"The government has already taken some important steps and some more steps are under consideration for the development of industrial sector," she added.

The delegation of the 24-member Board of Directors of the BCI, led by its president Sharif M. Afzal Hossain, handed over a letter of invitation to her to attend an exchange of views session.

The industrialists said they are inviting five political parties to exchange views on how best the industries could be developed and an alternative to hartal could be evolved.

The parties are ruling Awami League and opposition BNP, Jatiya Party, Jamaat-e-Islami and JSD (Robi).

The BCI delegation said it is time to abandon the attitude of opposing for the sake of opposition only. It urged the government to grow confidence in private sector entrepreneurs.

It hailed the government decision for the new office timing, saying that it would help increase communication of the private sectors with the outer world.

The Prime Minister said the timing, which is not facing any identity crisis now, has gained the confidence of the investors and is getting huge response from foreign investors.

She called upon the industrialists to go for massive industrialisation in the backward northern region of the country for making the best use of Jamuna bridge.

Chairman of the Privatisation Board Kazi Zafarullah was present at the meeting.

**Schoolgirl raped Reward for information leading to arrest of 3**

By Staff Correspondent

Police have announced rewards of Tk 15,000 each for information leading to the arrest of the three persons accused of raping and killing a teenage girl of Sonargaon under Narayanganj district last week.

The SP of Narayanganj announced the rewards in a press release last night. The accused are: Afzal Huiq alias Shudhir of Chargoaldi, Moniruzzaman alias Montu of Mongolar Gaon and Mahfuz of Chargoaldi under Sonargaon thana.

According to the press release, the accused persons kidnapped Rawshan Ara, a student of class ten of the Chowdhury Gaon High School and later raped and killed the girl.

**2 girls raped**

From Page 1

near the Pathantula point and took them to the Tarapur tea garden area at about 11:30 pm, they gang-raped Jahanara there.

Police later recovered the victim in an unconscious state. A case was lodged.

Police said, medical examinations of the two victims would be performed in the Sylhet MAG Osmani Medical College Hospital tomorrow.

Jahanara is now in hospital while Rekha Rani is in police custody, police said.

**Expelled**

From Page 1

of the party.

In a related development, 18 office bearers of the party in a joint statement expressed 'solidarity with the rebels.' Of the 18, nine are vice chairmen while the others hold offices in various capacity.

Shamim Al Mamun, joint secretary of JP, called the council meeting on June 30, as requested by Kazi Zafar and Shah Moazzem.

Earlier, Mizanur Rahman Chowdhury, Kazi Zafar and Shah Moazzem, through a joint press statement, had challenged the leadership of Ershad. Mizan Chowdhury, later expressed his allegiance to Ershad.

**Ctg BCL activists snatch leader from police**

CHITTAGONG, June 4: Activists of the Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL), the student wing of ruling Awami League, snatched away one of their leaders as police arrested him from Patiya town today, reports UNB.

Quoting news reports on landing of an Indian helicopter at a village in Habiganj, she claimed all its passengers were military personnel, but the government was yet to give any explanation or formally protest it.

"It is an unholy and dangerous exercise that a foreign fighter could safely intrude into our airspace, safely landed, stayed and unhindered took off," the opposition leader told a function.

Begum Zia also mentioned a recent meeting of some Indian officials with the DC of Mymensingh. They came by road through the Halaughat border and returned the same way, she said.

But the DC refused to disclose the matter of discussion to journalists. "Naturally, it raises the question whether the agreement to give corridor to India has already been signed," the BNP chairperson said.

One more serious question arose following the statement by Indian Prime Minister during his recent visit to Agartala. The Indian PM, she said, has assured the people of Tripura of getting a corridor through Bangladesh.

Begum Zia mentioned the construction of road by Indian BSF within 100 yards of Bhurangamari border, but, she regretted, the government was still silent on all the issues.

The Leader of the Opposition in the Jatiya Sangsad also referred to another news item that an office of Indian intelligence has opened in Dhaka.

She expressed her deep concern at those news reports and urged the silence of the government. "The government has neither given any explanation nor

**Sectt impasse**

From Page 1

cession, Zafar Ahmed presided over the rally which was addressed by Ataur Rahman and Araj Ali. General Secretary of the Class Four Employees Association.

Later Habibur Rahman returned along with Shah Alam and the rally continued. They vowed to continue their agitation.

Sources in the employees associations said they will review the situation at a meeting of the 31-member Executive Committee of the Sanjukta Parishad later today after talks with the Establishment Secretary.

**AL: Office timing**

From Page 1

With the new office timings introduced, communication with Europe would be possible for at least twelve and a half hours five days a week while communication with the SAARC countries could be made for an extra 20 to 30 hours every week, Zillur said.

The AL General Secretary further noted that the new timing would benefit people engaging more time for social contacts and curtail expenditures in fuel and power sectors.

**Eye hospital**

From Page 1

among the patients. It one stage, they damaged valuables worth over Tk 10 lakh.

Two patients and two electricians were admitted to the KMC Hospital in critical conditions.

Police and witnesses said the attack came after eye hospital authorities refused to give illegal electricity connection from the transformer of the hospital.

The patients of the Canadian-aided eye hospital said they were also beaten up.

At least half of the patients have left the hospital out of fear.

Subedar Abdul Jalil and SI Eskander Ali have been suspended in connection with this incident, said Mujibul Huq, C-O of APBN. A case has been lodged with Khanjahan Ali thana.

**Economic bloc**

From Page 1

new grouping and it had already agreed to sign the draft, but since it was a bit late in signalling its consent, it would be included subsequently in the new alliance.

Abul Hasan Chowdhury said that a bridge could be established between the SAARC and the ASEAN countries through the new grouping.

"This will increase the vibrancy of the region as a business and commercial hub both for inter-regional trade and as a catalyst for attracting foreign investors," said Chowdhury.

He pointed out that the new alliance presently comprises three SAARC countries while Thailand is a prosperous member of the ASEAN. Myanmar is also set to get its membership in the ASEAN very shortly.

The state minister said that besides trade, tourism, investment, exchange of scientific data including meteorological data would also figure in the detailed areas of co-operation.

Chowdhury also informed that increasing the potential of Chittagong Port both as a sub-regional hub and for acting as a gateway to the contiguous parts of Bangladesh is likely to be pursued under the new grouping.

Diplomatic observers feel that the new alliance if directed cohesively may be able to muster enough clout to act as a powerful sub-regional grouping not only in South Asia but also in the Indian Ocean region.

Earlier 14 countries bordering the Indian Ocean had launched a loose but potential trading alliance in the Indian Ocean region. Bangladesh is still to be included in the Indian Ocean Rim (IOR) grouping but is seriously pursuing to be a member.

Observers also feel that Malaysia, if approached seriously, will be willing to participate in the new grouping which could significantly strengthen its trading potential.

**Accord giving corridor to India might have been signed: Khaleda**

Begum Khaleda Zia yesterday expressed concern over some reported activities by people from a neighbouring country inside Bangladesh territory and apprehended that an agreement giving corridor to India might have been signed, reports UNB.

Quoting news reports on landing of an Indian helicopter at a village in Habiganj, she claimed all its passengers were military personnel, but the government was yet to give any explanation or formally protest it.

"It is an unholy and dangerous exercise that a foreign fighter could safely intrude into our airspace, safely landed, stayed and unhindered took off," the opposition leader told a function.

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The Leader of the Opposition in the Jatiya Sangsad also referred to another news item that an office of Indian intelligence has opened in Dhaka.

She expressed her deep concern at those news reports and urged the silence of the government. "The government has neither given any explanation nor

protested the news items regarding the security-related matters."

Addressing the function of the 12th founding anniversary of the daily Inqilab at hotel Furban, the BNP chairperson called upon all to come forward to build a liberal democratic society in the country and strengthen the democratic system further.

She said there can be conflicts in a society in a certain period, but existence of various opinions glorifies the society where there is multi-party democratic system.

Turning to free flow of information, the Leader of the Opposition said the main theme of free flow of information is to give the right to the people to know. In a democratic society, people are the main source of power, so they have the right to know everything.

Turning to "attack on daily Inqilab, she questioned whether the attack on the newspaper meant attack on our independence and democratic rights.

The meeting was also addressed among others, by Moudud Ahmed, Jamaat secretary general, Matur Rahman Nizami, Jagga president Shaiful Alam Frodhan, Anwar Zaid, Nazmul Huda MP, Moulana Mohiuddin Khan, Mufti Fazul Haq Aminu, Abul Asad, Air Vice Marshal (Retd) Altaf Hossain Chowdhury, Gias Kamal Chowdhury, Reazuddin Ahmed, Rafia Begum Kakoli, Awlad Hossain and Moulana Mannan.

The speakers protested what they said steps taken against daily Inqilab by the government and a section of people.

They called upon the patriotic people to unitedly foil the "conspiracy" hatched against Inqilab.

**Two DGFI men**

From Page 1

The two constables were beaten up as they came to the rescue of the two DGFI personnel when they were being assaulted.

The reason behind the incident could not be known immediately. The officer-in-charge of Tejaon thana was investigating it. Police suspected that it was a pre-planned attack.

Sayed Iskander along with about 25 others attacked the two DGFI men as soon as they reached near Titas Gas building on a motorbike at about 11 am discharging their duties, police said.

The business office of Sayed Iskander, brother of BNP chief Begum Khaleda Zia, is situated nearby.

A police team from Tejaon thana rushed to the spot, rescued the four victims and arrested two persons Ahmed Imdadul Anwar and Zulfikar Ali, reportedly office staff of the retired major. All others fled the scene, according to police.

A case was lodged with Tejaon thana accusing Sayed Iskander and about 20 others in connection with the incident.

UNB adds: BNP Secretary General Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan in a statement said police went to arrest Sayed Iskander without warrant, but a local resistance of local people, they could not arrest him and were compelled to return.

He condemned the "harassment on Begum Zia's family members" as part of "the plot to tarnish the image of the family."

"Such activities are not only provocative and deplorable, but also dangerous for democracy," Bhuiyan said and called upon the government to stop such acts.

**FBCCI**

From Page 1

the banking transaction and export-related establishments. "If needed, narrowing of the holiday provision can be considered in future for enhancing efficiency."

Expressing deep concern over the situation arising out of the demands of office schedule and pay scale, the FBCCI said the government and administration are shrinking in many countries in this era of private sector.

"The size of the government in Bangladesh remains large despite introduction of denationalisation," the chamber said, adding it has no dissent to a raise in salaries of the employees if the size of the government is reduced.

**R&H staff**

From Page 1

engineer.

Meanwhile, on Tuesday, the leaders of the forum met the Communications Minister who asked them to extend the time limit of the ultimatum. He had also directed the Chief Engineer of Roads and Highways not to give postings considered to be punitive, a written statement of the forum said.

Talking to The Daily Star, the leaders, demanding the extension of service of Mahatab Uddin, former chief engineer (CE), said, "We have known Mahatab Uddin for quite a long time. During his tenure he was able to complete projects well ahead of time."

When contacted, Mahatab Uddin said, he had no connection with the demands of the forum members. He also said, "I see no possibility of the extension of my service."

In the meantime, a number of forum leaders alleged that a section of officers were trying to cancel the orders implemented by Mahatab Uddin.

Despite the ban on rallies and demonstrations inside the R&H head office premises, the forum leaders have continued holding rallies inside the office building. More policemen were deployed yesterday to avoid any untoward incident.

**4 school boys**

From Page 1

of Detective Branch, Shamsuzzaman, raided the thatched house of Abdus Salam at Jaotola at around 4 pm today and found the four kidnapped students.

Police last night raided 12 residential hotels and other places to rescue the boys as tension brewed up at Rangamati town after their abduction. A GD was recorded with Rangamati Kotwali thana in this regard by the victims' guardians.

**Shima: JS probe body**

From Page 1

scheduled second visit to Chittagong by the parliamentary committee was deferred twice.

Prof Khaleda Khanam, a member of the committee told The Daily Star that when the committee members visited Chittagong on March 1, they could not find Dr Mahub, who had initially said Shima was violated. "We need to talk to 10 to 12 more persons, particularly Hafiz and Dr Mahub, before drawing any conclusion," she said.

During their visit, committee members had found no evidence of Shima's marriage with Hafiz. The committee also verified a widespread rumour about Shima's conversion to Islam and found that the Hindu girl had not converted to Islam at 'Garom Bibir Mazar' at Bahaddarhat in the port city.

JS sources said that the parliamentary body had not yet received the report of a one-member judicial enquiry commission formed on February 15, comprising Justice Daliluddin Ahmed, a retired judge.

Opposition Chief Whip Khandakar Delwar Hussain, a member of the parliamentary committee, said that its work was progressing slowly.

Salahuddin Kader Chowdhury, a BNP lawmaker and a member of the committee, also expressed his concern at the 'slow pace' and asked "why Hafiz is not being produced before us?"

Despite efforts over the last three days, head of the committee Abdus Samad Azad could not be contacted.

Earlier, in its autopsy report the Forensic Department of CMC said Shima died of typhoid and a two-member enquiry committee, comprising two magistrates found negligence on the part of jail authorities in providing Shima with proper and timely treatment. Similar view was expressed by a three-member committee (formed by Chittagong district administration) in its report on February 13.

A probe committee, formed by the Civil Surgeon of Chittagong, in its report held the jail authorities responsible for negligence and said that Shima was sick since she was brought to the jail. Subsequently, superintendent of the jail, Amentul Islam was made OGD and jail doctor Salahuddin Ahmed was suspended.

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**From Downing Street to commentator's box at Oval**

LONDON, June 4: Former British prime minister John Major might carve out a new career as a cricket commentator, according to a press report today, reports AFP.

Immediately after moving out of Downing Street on May 2, he took his family to watch a match at London's Oval Stadium, and until this week has refused all public comment except on cricket.

Now Major, who will resign as Tory party leader once a successor has been found, has been asked to be a guest presenter on the BBC's venerable Test match special programme at the final of the England county championship next month — provided his team Surrey win through to the last two.

"The cup final will be a trial run," a BBC insider was quoted as saying. "If Mr Major enjoys himself and if we think the listeners want more, then he could become a regular part of the team."

**Japan to give Tk 316 cr debt relief grant**

Bangladesh will receive 9134.366 million Yen (approximately Tk 316 cr) as debt relief grant assistance from Japan under an Exchange of Notes signed here yesterday, reports UNB.

This is the first tranche of 20th Japanese grant aid for debt relief. Bangladesh is expected to receive another debt relief grant in December this year.

ERD Secretary Dr AKM Masihur Rahman and Japanese Ambassador in Dhaka Yoshikazu Kaneko signed the agreement on behalf of their respective governments.

Under the exchange of notes, the government of Japan will provide Bangladesh with a grant assistance of the said amount with the intention of producing the same effect as cancelling an international debt.

When the repayment of an

official development assistance debt is made by a least developed country, Japan instead of reducing the debt, offers the same amount as the repaid debt. This grant will be utilised both by the private sector agencies and the public sector enterprises for import of various commodities like raw materials, chemicals, lubricants, machinery and spare parts.

Commodities and equipments can be purchased from all member countries of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD).

**Pay Commission**

From Page 1

new recruitment in government offices.

The government will collect an additional revenue of Tk 1300 crore annually through strict realisation of income tax and VAT, it said.

It has also suggested withholding of salaries of employees who will fail to submit their income tax returns by October each year.

According to the Commission, the number of government employees is about 6.5 lakh now against the provision for eight lakh. The freeze on new recruitment for three years will enable the government save Tk 675 crore annually.

**French Open Sergi, Patrick in semis**

PARIS, June 4: Patrick Rafter downed Galo Blanco in straight sets and two-time champion Sergi Bruguera beat Hicham Arazi in four Wednesday to advance to a semifinal showdown at the French Open, reports AP.

Rafter became the first Australian in 20 years to reach a French Open semifinal, using an aggressive serve-and-volley game to beat Blanco 6-3, 7-6 (7-3), 6-3 in a quarterfinal match between two unseeded players.

Bruguera, at No. 16 the only seeded player left in the men's draw, rallied to beat Arazi, a 55th-ranked Moroccan, 4-6, 6-3, 6-2, 6-2.

There will be three unseeded players in the semifinals, a French Open record, and at least one unseeded player will make the final.

The second semifinal will pit Filip Dewulf of Belgium against Gustavo Kuerten of Brazil.

**Red passports**

From Page 1

enough to get visa since they have no mechanism to check their genuineness.

Dreher said about 300 to 400 people seek US visa from Dhaka everyday. Besides, they are to receive 150 to 200 phone calls and 30 to 40 fax-messages or letters regarding visa.

Last year, 70 per cent immigration visas were issued out of the 10,000 applicants, he said adding that the remaining 30 per cent did not have legal documents for their stay in the States.

He said some 8,500 Bangladeshis have become legal residents of the United States last year.

Asked about the reason of putting seal on passports of unsuccessful visa applicants, the US official said they do it under the regulations.

To another query, he said 2,000 Bangladeshis sought political asylum in the States. The concerned US authority sent papers of about 100 asylum seekers to the embassy in Dhaka to verify whether their documents were correct.

After the briefing, the journalists were taken to the Consular Section to show them the interviews of visa applicants as well as forged passports used in seeking visa.

**Police escort**

From Page 1

When contacted, several police officials told The Daily Star that they heard about the reduction in the security force but could not tell anything specifically.

One of them explained that Begum Zia was so far enjoying the security given to her by the caretaker government during the last general elections.

Meanwhile, BNP Secretary General Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan, MP in a statement last night strongly condemned what he called withdrawal of security force for the Leader of the Opposition.

**Bandarban clash: Police file case against 13**

BANDARBAN, June 4: Local police have filed a case against 13 people, including six teachers and lawyers, on charge of damaging government property and assaulting public servants, reports UNB.

The case was filed with Sadar thana Magistrate Court on Tuesday following a clash between police and angry mob during an all-party procession in the town on May 28.

The procession was brought out demanding restoration of electricity and water supply in the town, snapped by the May 19 cyclone.

The court today granted interim bail to three of the accused — Advocate Kazi Mohtul Hossain, Advocate Mohiuddin and Advocate Abul Kalam.

It also issued show cause notice on the Court Inspector and General Record Officer of Sadar thana for their delay in producing case documents.

**Comilla Polytech**

From Page 1

Dhaka Medical College Hospital where he died at 8 in the morning.

As the news of Yusuf reached the Institute, the angry students put barricade on the busy Dhaka-Chittagong highway at Nandanpur near Chotbari at about 11 am.

Hundreds of vehicles on both sides of the highway were stranded for three hours. The blockade was withdrawn after police intervention at about 2 pm.

The namaj-e-janaza for Yusuf was held at the Town Hall premises in the afternoon and later the body was sent to his village home at Hasnabad in Burichang thana for burial.

Police arrested three youths — Mostafa Farhad, Dilip and Babul — from Takhurpara in the town in connection with the incident.

Comilla district unit of the Chhatra League blamed BNP's student wing, Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal, for the attack and condemned it.

In a statement, BCL president Abdullah Babul and general secretary Chittaranjan Bhoumik also demanded arrest and exemplary punishment of the killers of Yusuf.

**World Environment**

From Page 1

tive of party affiliation, to take part in environmental protection activities side by side with the government's allout efforts to develop environment.

"Bangladesh is committed to protection of environment globally, regionally and locally," she said adding, the very existence of human being is threatened due to its unforeseen development activities on earth.

Environment and Forest Minister Syeda Sajeda Chowdhury also gave a message on the occasion.

The Department of Environment (DOE) has drawn up elaborate programmes to celebrate the day.

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The season for planting trees is fast approaching. It's time for taking all sorts of preparation. Contact your nearest Forest Department official for necessary information. You will get from him right advice, and all sorts of help and cooperation.

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