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Boat capsize

50 feared

Proposed pay scale may be implemented in phases

Finance Minister Shah A M S Kibria yesterday hinted that pay of the civil servants might not be raised at one go and the Pay Commission recommendation could be split for implementation, reports UNB.

"We have no pledge to fulfil everything at a time," he said of the proposed pay-hike for the government officials and employees at a post-budget press conference at the NEC audito-

The national budget for fiscal 1997-98, placed in parlia-See Page 12 Col 7

Ctg port users won't join today's talks

From Staff Correspondent CHITTAGONG, June 13: Port Users Forum (PUF) at a meeting here vesterday decided not to join the fresh round of talks with the government scheduled to be held in Dhaka tomorrow.

Forum sources said, the port users have rejected the invitation by the political advisor to the Prime Minister and the decision was communicated to him yesterday.

The forum meeting demanded implementation of the Prime Minister's commitment on the use of private equipment at the Chittagong port, forum sources added.

The PUF members have decided to boycott Chittagong Port from June 15 if they are not allowed to use the private equip-

3000 vehicles stranded at 3 ferry ghats

MANIKGANJ, June 13: Several thousand passengers were stranded at Aricha, Nagarbari and Daulatdia ferry ghats, where nearly 3,000 vehicles waited to be ferried across the river in the evening today, re-BIWTC sources said ferry

services were disrupted as four ferries of Aricha-Nagarbari and Aricha-Daulatdia routes went out of order. They said despite shortage of

ferries, some 3,000 vehicles, including bus, truck, microbus and car, were ferried across the river in the last 24 hours till this evening.

Witnesses said the long queue of vehicles at Aricha ghat has gone up to nearly five kilometres, causing untold sufferings to passengers, particularly women and children.

Hasina to address rally in city June 23

By Staff Correspondent Prime Minister and Awami League president Sheikh Hasina will address a rally in

The rally, to be held at Pantha Path at 3 pm, has been planned to celebrate the completion of one year of the present government, says a press

the city on June 23.

After the parliamentary election on June 12, 1996, AL had formed a government of 'national consensus' on June 23 the same year.

Meanwhile, AL presidium member Abdul Mannan will act as the acting president at the party during Sheikh Hasina's visit to Turkey, the press release added.

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Boeings

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Man does not think with brains alone; Of pains, pleasures and cheers; and Harking back to cave drawings Pages 6, 7

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Business

Int'l labour union denounces globalization of economies

Page 8

JAYISTHA 31 1404 BS.

Kibria defends budget proposals

Surcharge imposed to

alleviate poverty

By Special Correspondent

Finance Minister S A M S

Kibria yesterday strongly de-

fended the 2.5 per cent sur-

charge on imports and fresh

duties in the budgetary propos-als for fiscal 1997-98, saying

they aim at mobilising re-

sources to cut across poverty

lines, reflecting Awami League's

commitment to the electorate

opment surcharge is directed

towards alleviation of poverty

in rural areas. We want to har-

ness resources from it to use for

specific projects," the Finance

Minister told reporters in his

post-budget press conference at

that he had proposed some-

thing in one hand for the people

and taken it away by the other

faced a volley of questions from

The Finance Minister, who

He dismissed suggestions

The infrastructure devel-

for social justice.

the NEC building.

DHAKA SATURDAY, JUNE 14, 1997

Cinema fire kills 60 in New Delhi

NEW DELHI, June 13: At least 55 people were killed and about 200 injured in a stampede triggered by a devastating fire that raged in a packed 1050-capacity cinema hall in posh South Delhi area today, report agencies.

Almost all the victims were brought dead to the All India Institute of Medical Sciences and Safdarjung Hospital, additional DCP S B K Singh told newsmen at the site.

United News of India news agency said 60 people had been killed. Police said there were at least 18 women and two children among the dead. Fire officials said 60 people

were brought out unconscious from the smoking 1,000-seat theater. Most deaths were by asphyx-

iation caused by the dense smoke from the burning ceiling insulation, said Maxwell Periera, additional commissioner of police. The fire started soon after

the intermission of a Hindi movie and many viewers thought the smoke was part of special effects of a war scene, said Balram Sharma, who was on the lower floor, from which most people rushed out un-

Most of the dead had been trapped in the balcony when the false ceilings in the hall caught

Prime Minister Sheikh

Hasina leaves Dhaka this

morning for Istanbul to attend

D-8 Summit scheduled for to-

countries, called D-8, will adopt

the "Istanbul Declaration" gen-

erating a new economic bloc,

originally initiated by Turkey.

planned economic alliance are

from two continents - Asia and

Africa. They are Turkey,

The summit of eight OIC

Eight partners of the

Cultural accord

among D-8

states signed

A joint declaration on cul-

State Minister for Cultural

Other D-8 member countries

See Page 12 Col 7

tural cooperation was signed on

Thursday by the ministers for

morrow, reports UNB.

fire and billowed noxious smoke into the upper level. Movie goers on the lower floor fled in panic, but most escaped. Most of the victims died of

asphyxiation, said the fire department's R C Sharma. Firemen brought out a total of 160 people, including the unconscious, he said.

According to the fire department the fire started with an electricity generator. There was no immediate indication of sabotage or criminal activity.

At least three people jumped from a second floor stairwell into the street to escape the flames, said Pinikan Dinesh,

who was inside when the fire broke out. Forty-eight fire engines were called to the battle the flames

and black smoke. "I personally carried six people, including children, out of the hall. Some of them may

have been dead," said Mamman Ram. He had just watched the early matinee show and was still outside when the next performance had begun. "A lot of local people helped"

before the fire engines arrived. he said. The Uphaar Theater in the

southern Green Park suburb of New Delhi was nearly full. It was screening a new Hindi movie called "Border."

Bangladesh, Pakistan, Iran

Malaysia, Indonesia, Egypt and

The new bloc will work

mainly in eight areas of coop-

eration for the promotion of

socio-economic condition o

nearly 800 million people of the

trade, industry, investment,

banking, tourism, culture and

ready signed a declaration for

developing cultural cooperation

The areas of cooperation are:

The eight countries have al-

State Minister for Foreign

Affairs Abul Hasan Chowdhury

left Dhaka yesterday for Istan-

bul to attend the ministerial

meeting to be held today. The

ministers will finalise the draft

declaration for approval of the

summit. Chowdhury will also

join the Prime Minister at the

accompanied by her Principal

Secretary Dr S A Samad, For-

eign Secretary Farooq Sobhan

and Secretary of Rural Devel-

opment and Cooperatives Divi-

sion of the LGRD Ministry Ayub

The Prime Minister will be

member countries.

rural development.

among themselves.

summit.

Quadri.

PM leaves for Istanbul today

D-8 identifies 8 areas

for cooperation

Nigeria.

VAT had its anomalous effect reporters, received helping State Minister for Planning Dr Mohiuddin Khan Alamgir on the industry as a whole. The hand from cabinet heavy-— Star photo (R) are also seen. See Page 12 Col 4 weights Abdur Razzak, Tofael MCCI, DCCI express mixed reaction to proposed budget

Two leading chamber bodies have expressed mixed reaction to the proposed budget for 1997-98 placed by Finance Minister S A M S Kibria in the Jatiya

Sangsad on Thursday. President of the Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce and Industry (MCCI) Samson H Chowdhury, in a statement yesterday, welcomed the new budget for reduction of corporate tax, emphasis on infrastructure development, allocation of funds for the poor and the destitute and decision to privatise 65 state-owned enterprises (SOEs).

He, however, expressed concern at the 'decline' in industrial growth, imposition of 2.5 per cent surcharge and lack of 'new incentives' to export-oriented industries

"We are disappointed that no new incentives have been given to boost export" Samson Chowdhury said adding that raising revenue through 2.5 per cent infrastructure development surcharge on imports and local products were retrograde

The MCCI president appreciated reduction of corporate tax

The schedule for DUCSU

election will be announced

within a week or two. Vice

Chancellor of Dhaka Univer-

sity Prof A K Azad Chowdhury

told The Daily Star on Thurs-

body and the fresh election

schedule will be announced si-

atabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) is

opposing the idea of dissolving

the DUCSU body before holding

held on June 6, 1990. Despite

versity authorities, DUCSU

election could not be held due to

Basu's belief

CALCUTTA, June 13: The ex-

tra security cordons thrown

around the VIPs came in for

ridicule by West Bengal Chief

Minister Jyoti Basu yesterday.

anecdote to the audience at a

function here while doubting

See Page 12 Col 5

Basu narrated a humorous

repeated attempts by the uni-

The last DUCSU election was

multaneously, he said.

a fresh election.

Dissolution of the DUCSU

The BNP-backed Jatiy-

By Staff Correspondent

Finance Minister SAMS Kibria addressing a post-budget

press conference at the NEC auditorium yesterday.

Commerce and Industries Minister Tofael Ahmed (C) and

but said it was expected that corporate tax rate would progressively come down to stimulate investment.

He criticised the allocation of additional funds for implementation of the pay commission award, saying that though the recommendations of the Commission were included in the budget, no corresponding measures were taken to reduce administrative costs.

Budget for the rich: CAB

Consumers Association of Bangladesh (CAB) has criticised the proposed national budget for 1997-98 fiscal year and called it a "unprecedented taxladen budget", reports UNB.

Giving its reaction in a statement yesterday the CAB said the proposed budget offered protection to the interests of rich people, bureaucrats and industrialists. It said the lower middle class

people would be affected more as the budget imposed new See Page 12 Col 3

Expressing concern over the declining industrial growth, Samson Chowdhury said in spite of massive decline in industrial growth last year, it was not addressed in the proposed budget and no remedial measures were taken.

Imposition of 2.5 per cent surcharge will have unhealthy effect on the 'recovery of industrial growth', rather, this sector would further lose it competitiveness against imported goods, particularly goods which come in through smuggling by land and sea, he said.

The DCCI hailed the proposed budget for giving priority to education sector, but observed that to spread computer literacy, separate allocation should have been made to build institutes for training and education in the field of information technology.

The DCCI, at a meeting chaired by its president ASM Quasem yesterday, identified negligence to industrial sector as the biggest shortcoming of the budget. The sector had registered only 3.6 per cent growth compared to a double digit See Page 12 Col 8

Economists' reaction

Ahmed and Begum Motia

Choudhury. State Minister for

Planning Dr Mohiuddin Khan

Alamgir also answered queries

cisms that the new budgetary

measures would choke the local

industries and everyone bar-

ring beggars has been burdened

modern system of taxation (the

new surcharge and duties and

tariffs). It has been simplified

and rationalised. It would help

spur the growth of local indus-

tries and open ways for the gov-

ernment to provide services ef-

Lending a hand to him

Commerce and Industries

Minister Tofael Ahmed added:

The local industries are still

gasping under liberalisation

policies of the previous gov-

ernment. The effects of zero

ficiently," Kibria said.

"You should understand the

Kibria brushed aside criti-

from journalists.

with taxes.

By Staff Correspondent Leading economist Prof Muzaffar Ahmed has said allocation for health and qualitative education is not sufficient in the proposed national budget for 1997-98.

"We cannot ensure the quality of education only by increasing total allocation for the sector. Increased allocation is an old idea to develop human resources. We need a qualitative change in the education system to have a breakthrough," he told The Daily Star yesterday.

Prof Ahmed said productivity of the civil servants must be determined for the betterment of national economy and the nation as a whole.

He criticised Tk 700 crore allocation for the implementation of new national pay scale and said "The actual requirement should not be less than Tk 2,000 crore.' Prof Ahmed said the gov-

ernment should ensure fair price of farm output and make a policy decision on how to develop the agricultural sector. Dwelling on levying of tariff

late in giving protection to our home industries." He further said "We have killed our industries and now we are trying to protect it. I re-See Page 12 Col 1

13 alleged dacoits, 8 terrorists held in city

Police have arrested 21 persons including 13 alleged dacoits from different parts of the city and recovered some arms and ammunition from their possession during the last two days, reports BSS.

A team of Demra police yesterday arrested six alleged dacoits from Jurain and Postagola areas. The arrested are Abdur Rahim alias Golakata Rahim, Akhter Hossain, Chandu alias Alam, Shahid, Jahangir and Khalil. Police said the arrested per-

sons are allegedly involved in dacoity at different bus terminals of Dhaka, Narayanganj, Munshigani and Maoa. A team of detective branch of

police also arrested six alleged terrorists from South Musundi area and recovered two revolvers, 17 bullets, two daggers, and six cocktails from their possession. The arrested are See Page 12 Col 7

Holzman named new US envoy to Bangladesh

bassador to Bangladesh, said a USIS Press release yesterday. reports UNB. President Bill Clinton on

ination of Holzman as a Career Member of the Senior Foreign Service, Class of Counsellor, to be ambassador to Bangladesh. Holzman will replace David N Merrill

Holzman of Hawaii, began his career in the US Foreign Service in 1972, when he was posted to Guinea. He later served in the Netherlands, Cameroon, India and Ghana. His State Department as-

Development Finance, the Office of Israel and Arab-Israel Affairs, and the Office of Pakistan. Afghanistan and Bangladesh Affairs, where he was the Director. He has served as the Deputy Chief of Mission in Pakistan since 1994. See Page 12 Col 4

Artistes performing dance at a cultural programme at the Russian Cultural Centre in the city yesterday, organised to mark the National Day of Russian Federation. Star photo | him dead.

drowned in Netrakona

NETRAKONA, June 13: At least 50 persons were feared killed in a boat capsize today in the river Dhanu at Kaglajor point about 35 kilometres east from here.

S R Barai, SP of Netrakona, told BSS that an engine boat carrying 250 passengers left Sasna Bazar of Sunamganj district early in the morning for Itna Bazar of Kishoreganj district via Kaflajor Bazar. The boat capsized in the river due to strong currents.

About 200 passengers swam ashore. Local people recovered the body of a minor boy from the river. However, they could not salvage the boat or rescue the missing passengers.

A police rescue team led by Assistant Superintendent of Police (ASP) Chandra Kumar Chakma rushed to the spot immediately after the incident. Rescue operation was going on till 10 pm tonight.

Shibir calls hartal in Rajshahi divn June 22

Islami Chhatra Shibir has called for an eight-hour hartal in Rajshahi division on June 22 demanding a halt to what they said repression on Shibir activists and restoration of peaceful academic atmosphere on the Rajshahi University campus, reports UNB. The programme was an-

nounced from a protest rally in front of Jatiya Press Club yesterday afternoon. The Jamaat-backed Shibir also announced a 10-day action

programme in support of their various demands relating to the The programme includes student rally in Rajshahi divi-

sion on June 15, march towards the Jativa Sangsad and submission of a memorandum to the See Page 12 Col 1

Young man stabbed to death in N'ganj

From Our Correspondent NARAYANGANJ, June 13: A young man was stabbed to death here last night.

Police and witnesses said. Mansur. 22, son of Abdul Kuddus of Azidpur Aillabon under Siddirganj thana, received stab injuries in his chest at 10 pm near a grocery shop in the area. Sensing a possible fight between two rival groups of youth, Mansur tried to pacify them, but some youngmen became furious and stabbed him. He died on the spot.

Following a case filed with Siddirganj thana by Feroza Khatun, elder sister of the victim, police nabbed three youths in connection with the killing. The arrested were identified as Shahin, Kamal and Murtaza.

The body was sent to Narayanganj Hospital for au-

3 young men crushed by train

NARSINGDI, June 13: Three young men were killed by a speeding train at a village two miles west of Narsingdi rail station here, on Thursday night, reports UNB.

Witnesses said the Noakhali Express crushed them as they were playing three characters of "Arabian Nights" on the rail line at village Dakuria at about 10:30 pm after watching the serial on BTV.

The dead were identified as Jainal Miah, 30, Afiluddin, 25, and Mamun, 22, sons of three brothers Alfazuddin, Jahiruddin and Shaffuddin.

Railway police recovered the bodies and sent them to Sadar Hospital for autopsy today. An unnatural death case was filed with Sadar police.

Alleged smuggler killed in clash with BDR

COMILLA, June 13: An alleged smuggler was killed and five BDR jawans were injured in a clash early today at a village, some 250 yards south of Shashidal railway station in Brahmanpara thana, reports

The clash started at about 3 am, when the BDR jawans tried to arrest the smugglers who were loading smuggled Indian sugar on a local train.

BDR sources said they raided the area acting on a tip, but sensing their arrival, the smugglers, numbering more than 300, started throwing stones towards the border guards. To bring the situation under

control, the BDR fired two rounds of bullet that injured Amir Hossain, 20, of Anandapur village in the same thana. Critically injured Amir Hossain was rushed to the Comilla

Medical College Hospital, where the attending doctors declared

VC tells The Daily Star

Dissolution of DUCSU body, fresh polls schedule soon

By Aminul Islam

opposition from different student organisations at different times. JCD won the 1990 DUCSU election.

The VC, talking to The Daily Star, said: "All the student organisations expressed their opinion in favour of holding DUCSU election during the last meeting of the DU Paribesh Parishad and only JCD boycotted the meeting

JCD boycotted the meeting last Wednesday protesting the presence of the Proctor of the university in the meeting. It has been demanding resignation of

the Proctor Regarding the demand of the JCD, the VC said, "I have invited

sive talks with me."

Evading a direct reply to whether he would take any decision unilaterally if JCD did not respond to his invitation or oppose the holding of DUCSU election, the VC said, "I hope they would come and would not oppose the election."

The DU Syndicate at its meeting of April 28 this year had decided to dissolve the DUCSU committee and those of all hall unions.

The Syndicate at the meeting

also recommended immediate

election to these bodies for smooth running of the univer-The Syndicate acted on the

See Page 12 Col 8 JCD leaders for having exclu-

Support to UF govt to continue: Kesri his party would maintain a NEW DELHI, June 13: Newly elected Congress President Sitaram Kesri said here today that his party would continue to support the United Front government led by Prime Minister

against non-Congress government in various states, reports Addressing his first formal press conference after his landslide victory in the party presidential election he said support to the United Front government would continue in view of their better behaviours towards Congress Party. There was no

I K Gujral, even as he pleaded

for agitational programmes

question of withdrawing the support at present, he added. However, observers said Kesri's reference to the partymen urging them to launch agitational programmes against the non-Congress governments in the states does not bode well for the Gujral government. Thus Kesri's contention that good relation with the United Front government cannot be taken at face value because the Janata Dal, which is a major constituent of the Front, is also in power in the states of Bihar and Karnataka. Replying to a question Kesri, who emerged as the strongman

in the Congress after the party election, said that the Congress Working Committee (ČWC) would be converted into the party's steering committee which would soon decide on issues like holding of the plenary session, most probably in Calcutta in the second week of August. He indicated that he was gearing up to face the challenges

the party. Answering another question as to the role of Sonia Gandhi See Page 12 Col 3

and that he had been authorised

by the partymen to take what-

ever steps he deems appropriate

for the good of the country and

signments include the Office of

John C Holzman has been nominated as the New US Am-

Thursday announced his nom-

cultural affairs of D-8 countries in Istanbul, reports UNB. Affairs Obaidul Quader signed on some domestic industries, he the declaration on behalf of the said "We have done too little too government of Bangladesh, according to a message received in the city yesterday. who signed the joint declara-