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Down to Earth

Of Pathological Laboratories

By ASM Nurunnabi

According to recent press report, pathological test facilities at city's private laboratories are dismally poor. There are other aspects of this sad situation. A sample survey of such labs in the city reveals that patients pay 20 to 50 per cent extra charge for various pathological tests at the private pathology centres. This is believed to be the out-

come of what is generally known as a physician's self-referral. In other words, this means sending patients to facilities in which the physician has a financial interest. At present it is widely felt that self-referral has spread quietly into many areas of medicare, including physical therapy and rehabilitation, X-rays, ultrasonogram, etc.

Self-referral operates on a simple principle. The more patients doctors refer, the more money they make. The practice has made many physicians rich, while potentially undercutting patient-doctor trust. Although many doctors do not participate in self-referral, no one knows for sure how many do. It is difficult to uncover all the doctors who invest in joint ventures, because they try to hide it.

It is a fair guess that, across the country, many of the clinical labs and physiological labs are wholly and partly owned by referring physicians. Many doctors justify self-referral by saying it helps assure quality care. In the opinion of independent observers, that is not just

It has been observed that self-referral entrepreneurs usu-

Garments worker

raped in city

garments worker at Manda TT

Bari in Sabujbagh thana in the

city Thursday evening, reports

hunt for the alleged rapists

immediate after the victim's fa-

cused Abul Kalam, a resident of

Manda area. Kalam, son of Ab-

dul Latif, hails from village Di-

pasha of Bauphal thana in Pat-

Bangladesh model

of democracy'

Bruce O Riedel, special assistant

to US President Bill Clinton,

described Bangladesh as a "mo-

del of democracy" for the deve-

loping countries of the world,

During a meeting with

Bangladesh ambassador to the

US KM Shehabuddin on Wed-

nesday, Riedel commended the

commitments of Bangladesh

government to democracy and

cess in population control pro-

gramme, he said it would serve

as an example for developing

countries. Commitment to

market economy and liberal

facilities for foreign invest-

ment in Bangladesh would at-

Indo-Pak talks

From Page 1

days will be constructive and

purposeful," said Indian For

eign Secretary Salman Haider,

who flew in here last night, just

istani foreign secretary, was

also highly positive when he

said resumption of official

talks between New Delhi and Is-

lamabad was a historical op-

portunity which should be used

for the benefit of the people of

both countries, and added, "We

talks between the prime minis-

ters of both countries yesterday

over the reactivated hotline.

said, "Out meeting takes place

in the light of their wishes and

SI closed

From Page 1

Metropolitan Police AK Al

Mamun instructed Sutrapur

thana to register a murder case

under Section 302 of the Penal

death case' filed earlier with the

thana following Nuruzzaman's

death was cancelled and its In-

vestigation Officer (IO), SI Ja-

hangir Alam, filed the murder

case. None was, however,

named as accused in the murder

Sheikh Hasina told the Jatiya

Sangsad on Tuesday that exem-

plary punishment would be

given if any body is found re-

sponsible for death in police

the issue of the Biman crew's

death was raised in the House

by M Shamsul Islam, a former

minister and BNP legislator.

She gave the assurance when

custody or inside jail.

Earlier, Prime Minister

Police said the 'unnatural

instructions."

Code.

Haider, while referring to

have commenced our journey."

Shamshad Ahmed, the Pak-

before the start of the talks.

tract the investors, he added.

Lauding Bangladesh's suc-

reports BSS.

rule of law.

WASHINGTON, June 20:

ther filed a case on the night.

Police went on a massive

They picked up the main ac-

Three youngmen raped a

ally offer limited partnerships in joint ventures-so called, because many doctors have ownership shares. The amount the doctor invests may be ridiculously small, because the owners do not want the doctor's money. They want his patients. Owners choose physicians selectively, concentrating on specialities guaranteed to produce a high volume of patient referrals. The more patients a doctor has, the more desirable he or

she is fore self-referral. Self-referral mostly preys on patients attacked with a serious illness or people who trust in their doctors to make decisions for them. Money, of course, is the obvious reason. The money is not earned from any service performed by these doctors. It is just a kickback for referring patients.

Among other things found deplorable is that it is anticompetitive. That is why, in many cases, self-referrers charge prices that are often higher than they should be. Self-referrals also run up profits by another method-ordering expensive tests and procedures for questionable medical rea-

The practice of self-referrals potentially bring about erosion of patient-doctor trust which is bad for medicare and bad for patients. There is little reason for self-referral other than the doctor's business interest. This may be avoided if conscientious doctors are careful not to allow commercialism to encroach on the practice of medicine.

The allegation of charging for tests at rates higher than the actual costs was made in a study, as reported, made by

Population Council, a New York-based international research organisation. Another study on Testing facilities and quality Assurance in Private Pathology Centres also found that test charges are not uniform in all the centres. The difference in charges is reported to have often led to confusion among people about the relia-

cheaper centres. The most concerning feature of the existing situation is said to be the lack of skilled technical manpower like pathologist, technician, etc. In this context, there seem to be reasons for holding the view that the number of non-qualified technicians is more then the qualified technical hands by a large mar-

bility of the reports of the

There are also reportedly snags in many testing labs in the matter of disposal of solid wastes. The common method of solid waste disposal is said to be simply throwing them in the municipal dustbins, while the liquid wastes are said to be disposed of by flushing with running water without any neutralising agent. There are also allegations of the widespread practice of disposal of used syringes and needles through questionable ways. There was a recent press report on this behalf about such harmful methods of disposal followed by some quarters in the city's whole-sale medicine market.

The bottom line on the subject is that the existing aberrations from the medical point of view need to be tackled with strict regulations for the pathological laboratories.

Rebels form body

to amend JP

constitution

By Staff Correspondent

The rebel faction of Jativa

Party yesterday formed an 11-

member sub-committee to pro-

pose necessary amendments to

the party constitution in its

council session scheduled for

June 30, a party press release

Prof Nurul Islam Milon, would

propose 'amendments seeking

changes in the autocratic as

well as undemocratic provi-

sions of the JP constitution'

with a view to building the

party as a 'real democratic or-

level units of the Jatiya Party

have been requested to send

their proposals to the sub-

committee by June 27, the press

The heads of the district

ganisation'.

release added.

The committee, headed by

Magurchhara gasfield

From Page 1

Singapore, has already reached the site, the sources added. Once dousing operation starts, the fire will be extinguished within 24 to 48 hours. according to sources concerned. Fire of a gas drilling site is less hazardous than that of an oil toring of the division. field. The fire at Magurchhara The PCD is responsible for is smaller than that of Kuwait after the Gulf War, the sources

The well design of the Occi-Regarding the fire fighting dental was risky which the looperation an expert observed, After the fire is extinguished, they have to kill the well and plug the holes. Otherwise there will be danger of gas coming out

of the fishers," he added. UNB adds: The loss caused by the accident at Magurchhara gasfield may shoot up to Tk 20,000 crore as the whole upper structure of the gasfield is on

Situated in Surma basin which is rich in liquid hydrocarbon, the Moulvibazar well-1 in block 14 blew up early Sunday, opening a gas reserve of approximately 700 billion cubic feet, the current price of which is estimated at more than Tk 20,000 crore.

A local geologist and a drilling engineer told UNB on condition of anonymity that the accident was caused by "human error and careless-

Experts dismissed the idea that the accident had occurred

at "a pocket reserve of gas." They said gross thickness of the upper zone of the gas filed is around 80 metres and is expected to encounter after 800 metres. The gross thickness of the lower zone is around 100 metres and is expected to encounter at around 2150 metres.

The blow up took place as the Occidental drilled up to 840 metres and gas encountered in the upper zone could not be balanced which resulted in the ac-

cident, they said. Explaining further, they said a diametre of 17.5 inch of drilling hole, which is bigger considering the soft formation, of the Surma basin due to shal-

BNP's popularity has increased:

Mannan Bhuiyan BNP Secretary General Ab-

dul Mannan Bhuiyan yesterday said the popularity of BNP has increased in last one year despite 'repression' by the ruling party, reports UNB. He was talking to Ishwardi

Pourasava Chairman and thana BNP general secretary Mokhlesur Rahman Bablu, who called on the BNP secretary general in the morning, after his recent release from jail on

Bhuiyan alleged that the ruling party wanted to stop the forward march of BNP by killing and arresting its leaders and workers, unleashing torture, and filing false cases against them. "But BNP's organisational

strength and popularity have increased in the last one year," The BNP leader blamed the

government for, what he said. increasing sufferings of the people by imposing new taxes. Textiles and leather industries are now under threat while both mill owners and workers are becoming jobless due to the "wrong policy" of the government, he said.

Bhuiyan said Awami League, during its one-year rule. has "given nothing but tall talks and the politics of slavery."

low gas, made the accident in-evitable.

Drilling engineers and geologists, however, pointed their finger at the Production Concession Division (PCD) of Petrobangla for the accident which they said was also due to the negligence and weak moni-

Production Sharing Contract

cal experts think may be one reason for Sunday's accident. The experts blamed the PCD officials for overlooking the risky well design and giving its

approval for reason unknown. President of Occidental Nigel Hoop told UNB that the fire experts reached the site and were planning to start their operation to extinguish the fire. Asked about the compensa-

now concentrated on bringing the flame under control and they have not discussed the issue of compensation for the loss caused by the fire. Energy Minister Nooruddin Khan reportedly said that the

tion, he said all their efforts are

government would realise compensation for the loss, but the extent of loss was not yet ascertained. Nigel could not say when the

not spread further, he said. He said cause of the accident would be known after the enquiry of the probe committee

fire would be put out. Fire did

The Petrobangla will issue the investigation report.

Arms recovered from Rangpur Polytech hostels

RANGPUR, June 20: Police recovered a revolver and some ammunition from the dormitories of Rangpur Polytechnic Institute today, reports UNB.

Acting on a tip off, police raided the hostels, of the institute this morning and recovered a foreign-made revolver, some bullets and explosives.

One chopped to death in Khulna

KHULNA, June 20: A young man was killed in Dolkola area of the city today, police said, reports UNB.

Hafiz, 25, was attacked by

unidentified miscreants when he was taking tea with friends at a stall near his home in the afternoon. The armed gang beat him mercilessly and chopped him

with sharp weapons. He succumbed to his injuries at the Khulna Medical College Hospi-None was arrested in con-

nection with the killing in broad daylight.

Water plants From Page 1

Abul Bashar Khan, DTP's development specialist, said that arsenic content in water was relatively higher in the specified project areas than in the rest of the country. Arsenic content in the water of these six districts is 50 to 160 micrograms per litre, way above danger level. According to experts, normally 10 micrograms of arsenic in a litre of water is toler-

Each plant involving about Tk one crore will be set up with Dutch funding. Similar treatment plants will eventually be set up in 14 more districts of the country, the expert said.

RU student commits 'suicide' "the government is determined to build a terrorism-free society and the law enforcing agencies

Hasina

From Page 1

must take action against the

order situation of the district,

where political killings and

clashes are much more than

other areas of the country, she

said it is the duty of the law en-

forcing agencies to nab the ter-

changed if their is will," Hasina

told them to find the roots of

terrorism in the district and

launch combing operation in

Laxmipur and Noakhali dis-

tricts to root out terrorism and

will not also spare those who

are giving protection to the ter-

rorists from the capital.

against the terrorists.

visit, the sources said.

storage of water.

Hasina warned that the law

"We have a commitment to

the nation to remove terrorism

from the society, we have to ful-

fill that," she said urging all to

take strong and united stand

2 accords likely

From Page 1

ment protection will be ini-

tialled during the PM's Tokyo

to seek Japanese financial as-

sistance for the construction of

the proposed Ganges barrage.

An expenditure of Tk 18,000

crore has been estimated for the

construction of the barrage for

donor of Bangladesh, has been

extending financial support to a

large number of big projects in

various sectors, including

communication, health, rural

development, energy, industry,

construction of cyclone centres

Dist MLCs

From Page 1

money loan suits and not with

any other cases civil or crimi-

proposal also suggested consol-

idating the laws relating to re-

covery of loan given by finan-

given green signal for setting up

of separate MLCs to streamline

loan recovery and performance

of financial institutions, the

The Daily Star that the Law

Commission had suggested set-

ting up of separate money loan

courts and enactment of

tougher laws providing for civil

prisons for loan defaulters and

stringent conditions for appeal

Earlier, it was reported in

cial institutions.

sources said.

The sources said that the

The World Bank has also

and social infrastructure.

Japan, the largest bilateral

Besides, Bangladesh is likely

restore peace.

"The condition can be

Being briefed on the law and

terrorists and killers.

RAJSHAHI, June 20: Jakir Hussain, a Masters examinee of Social Work Department of Rajshahi University allegedly committed suicide by hanging

at his room in Shah Mokhdum Hall today. According to sources, Jakir's roommate found his body hanging from the grill of the window with a gamcha (a sort of towel).

Jakir hailed from Sailkupa thana of Jhenidah district. The cause of the death could not be known immediately. Some sources in the residen-

tial hall said he was an accused in a case filed with his local police station while Rajshahi police suspected that the death may not be a suicide. The body was sent to Ra-

jshahi Medical College Hospital (RMCH) for autopsy

Vice Chancellor of RU Prof M Abdul Khaleque and Proctor Prof M Mukhlesur Rahman visit the spot.

A case of unnatural death has been lodged with Mothihar thana in this connection.

One stabbed as rival AL groups clash in Khulna From Staff Correspondent

KHULNA, June 20: An AL activist was severely stabbed in a clash between the two rivalgroups of Awami League at Khalishpur today.

Eyewitnesses said both Ashraf and Ibne Zaman groups of Khalishpur unit of AL traded gun-shots and exploded handbombs during the clash. The injured activist, Kamal Hossain, 24, belongs to Ashraf group. He was admitted to KMC hospital in critical condition. Police later arrested four ac-

tivists belonging to Zaman group and recovered one revolver and two razors from

Owners of electronic shops to stage sit-in Monday

The owners of electronic shops will keep their shutters down for one hour from noon on Monday.

This was decided in Thursday's meeting of the National Association of Shop Owners in Bangladesh.

The shop owners are demanding withdrawal of VAT on electronic goods.

During the token strike, the owners of electronic shops across the country will also stage a sit-in on the road near their shops, says a press release of the association.

PM distributes lands among 5 landless families in Laxmipur

Let's make

things better

RAMGATI (Laxmipur), June 20: Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina today started a land distribution programme for the landless by handing over five deeds to five distressed families of Char Abdullah, reports UNB.

She handed over the deeds of lands to the families of Sekandar Huq, Rezaul Huq, Latu Mia, Shamsul Huq and Amulya Kumar Sheek at a rally at Char Alexander College ground.

be distributed among 70 landless families in the first phase of the programme. Speaking on the occasion,

of the government. For many years, the people

were deprived of their rights, Hasina said adding "we want to being deprived of their rights."

economic emancipation and service to the people are the only objective of the government, said the prime minister calling upon all to work for the poor and distressed people of the country.

BMET project From Page 1

cheques through which Tk 8 lakh was misappropriated have been proved finally by both of the probe bodies. These three forged cheques

were signed by the then director of IBA and the Director of Ac-

priated by putting additional figures on the left hand side of

The total amount put in the cheques is Tk 6,805.36 and the total amount drawn Tk 8.06.805.36

case of those three cheques.

Vice-Chancellor of the Dhaka University Prof Abul

গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার

কর্মকান্ডে আপনার অবদান রাখুন।

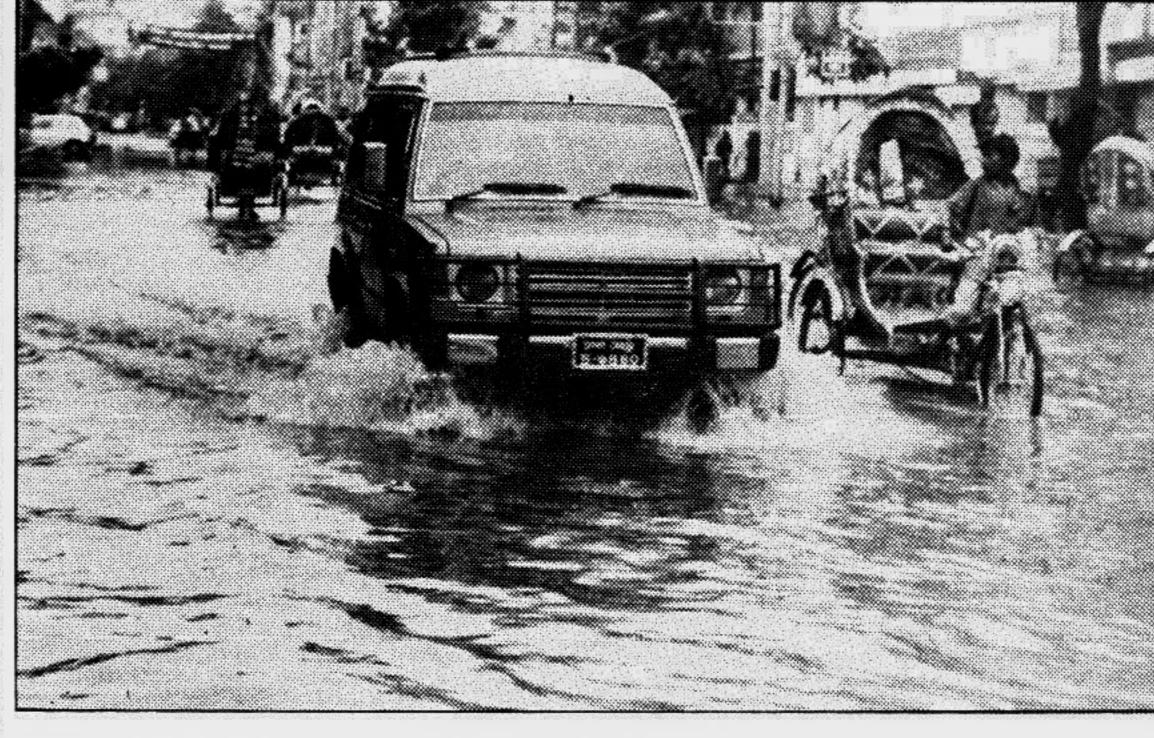
আপনি জানেন কি?

আপনার আয়কর সংক্রান্ত যে কোন বিষয়ে পরামর্শ প্রদানের জন্য

ডিএফপি-১৪৭০৯-১৮/৬

Editor: Mahfuz Anam

Dhaka-1000 and published by him on behalf of Mediawogld Ltd., 52 Motijheel C.A., Dhaka-1000. Editorial, News & Commercial Offices House No: 11, Road No: 3, Dhanmandi R/A, Dhaka-1205. PABX: 500092-4, Commercial: 500091, Fax No: 88-02-863035, GPO Box No: 3257, Cable: DAILYSTAR, DHAKA. Email: dstar@bangla.net



THE SAME OLD STORY: A four-wheeler and a rickshaw negotiate their way on the flooded Outer Circular Road at Rajarbagh in the city after rains yesterday. - Star photo

at Rayerbazar since Thursday

transformer there.

told The Daily Star yesterday that there has been no supply of water and electricity in the area since Thursday afternoon. An executive engineer of the

Dhaka Electric Supply Authority (DESA), when contacted said an attempt yesterday to restore power supply in the area failed as the transformer could not take the "overload." He said a new transformer will be installed there today.

According to DESA sources. yesterday.

Sufia Kamal SYLHET, June 20: Prime

PM's gift for

Minister Sheikh Hasina today sent a bouquet to greet poet Sufia Kamal on her 86th birthday and wished her a long life, reports BSS. The Prime Minister also

sent some gifts which included saree and sweets. On behalf of the PM, journalist Baby Moudud handed

residence of Advocate Sultana Kamal, daughter of Sufia Kamal, here this afternoon. Reciprocating the greetings Poet Sufia Kamal in an emotion-choked voice said that she wants to breath her last with

over the gifts to the poet at the

Pol Pot captured

the love of the 12 crore people of

PHNOM PENH, June 20: Khmer Rouge leader Pol Pot has been captured by renegade guerillas, the rebels' clandestine radio station announced today, reports AFP.

"Pol Pot was captured on 19 June 1997," the radio said.

Windies 94/5 at lunch

KINGSTOWN, June 20: Sri Lanka's bowlers vindicated their captain's decision to field as West Indies struggled to 94 for five at lunch on the opening day of the second and final cricket Test at the Arnos Vale Field today, reports AFP.

Carl Hooper completed his

15th half-century to be un-

beaten on 50 alongside Ian

Bishop, who was batting on two after being promoted to seven at the interval on a day of hazy sunshine. Gaining bounce and a bit of movement on a hard, true pitch, Sri Lanka's bowlers led by pacer Ravindra Pushpakumara (8-1-29-2), removed four West Indies

world's 78th Test venue. No water, power

batsmen in the first hour of a

match being contested at the

By Staff Correspondent Residents of Rayerbazar area in the city have been facing a lot of Suffering since Thursday for want of water and electricity following collapse of a power

Some residents of the area

some transformers supplying electricity to Mohammadpur Rayerbazar and Dhanmondi areas became inoperative after Thursday's storm in the city. Power supply in all the areas except Rayerbazar was restored

PM flies to coastal areas today

CHITTAGONG, June 20: Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina will fly to the country's coastal areas tomorrow to initiate a seed spreading programme to create a green-belt there, reports UNB.

Sheikh Hasina will spread seeds of different saplings from a helicopter covering the region from Chittagong to Cox's Bazar from 9:30 am to 11:30.

Another death

about the accident. They sus-

pected that the 'earthing of a

pole' might have been electri-

From Page 1 details

fied after the rains. The body of Nargis was sent to her village home in Faridpur. People raised Tk 8,000 including contributions from the garments factory for her funeral. Nargis, who was unmarried, used to share a shanty at Pearabagh with her younger sister, also a garments worker, who took the body home.

City slum dwellers From Page 1

While talking to The Daily Star ADB delegation leader William A Costin, said land

their poverty.

ownership for the new settlers, who will benefit owning house and land besides enjoying about a dozen other amenities, is now the "main obstacle before the loan negotiation stage. This is the pre-assessment stage. "We will sit for two more evaluation stages before the 20 million dollar loan from ADB is sanctioned." Costin said, "So far we are happy with the way things are progressing. We held a formal

meeting with the government to

discuss the issue of arranging

the land ownership. What

would happen after 10 years?.

Would all the settlers benefit

owning land permanently?

These are the main issues that

remains to be solved. You see,

we must be sure that the settlers

in future face no trouble with

the ownership of the land."

that they were now working on the main components, especially about site selection for the 'new communities'. The terms and conditions had been completed, except for a few minor changes which would to be done shortly. According to the LGED sources, the project includes

A senior official of the LGED said until the land issue is resolved, implementation of the project may suffer a serious blow. If things go smoothly, work on the project is likely to

start in January next, he added. The ADB team leader said

micro-credit scheme, income generating activities, non-formal education, water supply and sanitation, garbage collection, installation of street lights, construction of footpath and drains and health education. In most cases, the beneficiaries themselves would get the opportunity to take part in the construction work.

to higher court. Shima's death From Page 1 sheet in the rape case had

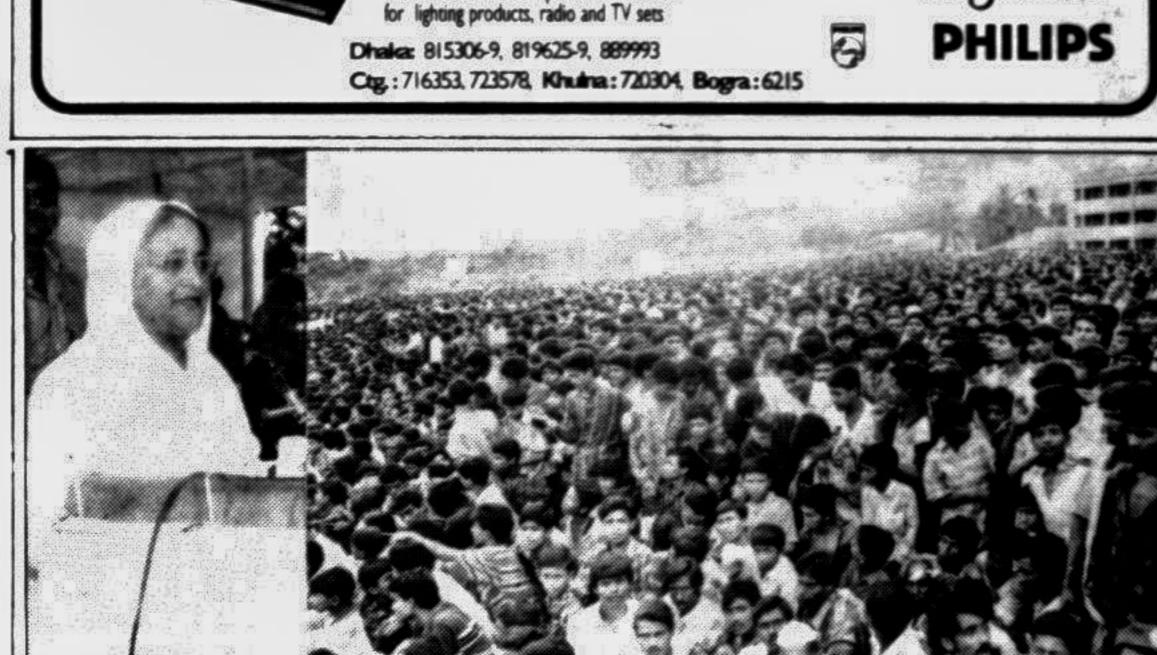
sparked off a furore. Many human rights and women's organisations raised their voice for proper probe into the death. An official of the Parlia-

ment Secretariat The Daily Star yesterday that the committee members would hear policemen who had picked up the girl first, the doctor and other officials of Chittagong Jail, one doctor of Chittagong Medical College Hospital and Abdul Hafiz provided he is made available at the Circuit House

Prof Khaleda Khanam, a ruling party MP and also a member of the probe body, told this correspondent yesterday that the committee would try to prepare its report immediately after today's visit to Chittagong. BNP lawmaker and another

member of the committee Salahuddin Kader Chowdhury told The Daily Star that the first visit of the committee members to Chittagong on March 1 last was not a fruitful one. "Except visiting some places, the real task of the committee did not progress much. Let's see what progress can be made this time." Earlier, in its autopsy report

the Forensic Department of Chittagong Medical College Hospital said Shima died of typhoid. 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 threemember committee, formed by the Chittagong district administration, in its report on February 13 last.



Transcom Electronics Limited

Official licensee of Philips Electronics N.V.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina addressing a mammoth public meeting at the Laxmipur Government College ground in Laxmipur yesterday. — PID photo

From RU Correspondent

Some 106 acres of land will

the prime minister said improving the living standard of the poor and creating jobs for them is one of the main targets

ensure that the people are not Homes for the homeless

ily proved. Faults with three

counts of the DU. The money was misappro-

the original amounts in the cheques. The additional figures were also put in words. The amounts were drawn from the Sonali Bank, DU branch. The number of the three cheques, date, original amounts and the forged amounts are as

follows: A) 0556864, 26.09.87, Tk 237.36, Tk 1,00,237.36, B) 977802, 05.01.88, Tk 4,608.00, Tk 1,04,609.00, C) 077872, 26.06.88, Tk 1,960.00, Tk 6,01,960.00.

The Syndicated probe body said that general rules of writing cheques were violated in the

Kalam Azad Chowdhury when contacted said the action could be taken against any person proved guilty by any committees. "We have requested the Anti-corruption Bureau to investigate into the incident," the VC said.

জাতীয় রাজস্ব বোর্ড

প্রদেয় কর যথাসময়ে পরিশোধ করুন এবং অর্থনৈতিক

একটি **'কর পরামর্শ কেন্দ্র'** প্রতিষ্ঠিত হয়েছে। আয়কর সংক্রান্ত প্রয়োজনীয় পরামর্শের জন্য আপনাকে ১৩৩, নিউ বেইলী রোডস্থ বিসিএস (কর) একাডেমীতে অবস্থিত 'কর পরামর্শ কেন্দ্রের' সাথে সকাল ৯টা হতে অপরাহু ২টার মধ্যে সরাসরি অথবা টেলিফোনের মাধ্যমে (টেলিফোন-৪১৭৮৩৩) যোগাযোগ করতে অনুরোধ कानाता याट्ह।

कि- ১१०%

জাতীয় রাজস্ব বোর্ড

Printed by the Editor from City Publishing House Ltd., 90 Kakrail,