

MARBLE MARBLE MARBLE

WE HAVE HUGE READY STOCK OF
ITALIAN CARRARA, PERLATO SICILIA,
BOTTICINO, INDIAN KESHWARI GREEN,
MALAYSIAN AND PAKISTANI MARBLE
OF DIFFERENT TYPES.

NIRMAN INTERNATIONAL LTD.
199, TEJGAON 1/A, DHAKA
TEL: 805957, 807363 SHOW ROOM: 861985

The Daily Star

Today's issue
20 pages

কর্মবাস্তব মানুষের জন্য স্বাস্থ্যকর পানীয়

Nestlé

NESTOMALT

MALTED FOOD DRINK

VOL. VII NO. 170 REGD. NO. DA 781

ASHAR 30 1404 BS.

DHAKA MONDAY, JULY 14, 1997

RABI-UL-AWAL 7 1418 HIJRI

20 PAGES : PRICE TAKA 6.00

Abu Sayeed made SEC chairman

Former secretary M Abu Sayeed has been made chairman of the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC), reports UNB.

He has replaced Dr. M Haroon Rashid who resigned alleging non-cooperation from the finance ministry.

An official announcement yesterday said the resignation letter of Dr Rashid, also a retired bureaucrat who was appointed SEC's second chairman weeks after the Awami League government took over in June last year, was accepted.

M Sekandar Ali, former managing director of the Investment Corporation of Bangladesh, Bangladesh Shipba Bank and Bangladesh Shipba Rin Sangstha, has been appointed.

See Page 12 Col 5

Spl measures to expedite cargo handling at Ctg Port

CHITTAGONG, July 13: The Chittagong Port Authority (CPA) has made special arrangements to run the seaport round the clock from today to expedite cargo handling, reports UNB.

Under the arrangements, work at the port will continue round the clock even on Fridays and other holidays with the cooperations of organisations concerned to clear the backlog created by strike.

The operation already started this morning following a decision of the port authority at a meeting with Port Chairman Zulfikar Haider Chowdhury in the chair.

A control room had been set

See Page 12 Col 1

Yasmin's body was hurriedly buried, court told

From Our Correspondent

RANGPUR, July 13: Hearing of the Yasmin rape and murder case resumed today in the court of District and Sessions Judge, Rangpur.

Two prosecution witnesses testified before the court today. They were Subedar Abdul Khaleque and Arun Kumar Banerjee, a witness of inquest report.

Abdul Khaleque in his deposition narrated how the body of Yasmin was hurriedly taken away from near Dashedmire where she was raped and murdered and later buried. Arun

See Page 12 Col 1

Bangabandhu murder case: Hearing resumes today

Deposition and cross-examination of prosecution witnesses in the Bangabandhu murder case will resume in the Dhaka District and Sessions Judge Court today, reports UNB.

The court was adjourned on Wednesday when principal witness AFM Muhtul Islam was being cross-examined by Sharfuddin Mukul, defence counsel of lone civilian accused Taheruddin Thakur.

Muhtul Islam on the first day of his deposition on July 6 in detail narrated the painful episode of killing of the country's founding father, Sheikh

See Page 12 Col 2

Inside Today Article

The Bridge on the River Jamuna, and ...

Column: Frankly Speaking
by Faruq Choudhury
Page 4

Focus

Education—a matter of social obligation
Page 5

Business

CAB statistics on essentials: High rent, education costs shadow drop in food inflation
16-point fall in DSE index
Pages 6,7

Supplement

Today's 20-page issue of The Daily Star contains a 6-page supplement on 'Bastille Day' Pages 13-18

Fresh areas in 9 dists flooded: 22 more die

By Staff Correspondent

The flood situation in Chittagong region remained unchanged yesterday while it deteriorated in nine other districts.

According to UNB, at least 22 people were killed in flood related incidents on the day, raising the toll to 79 so far.

Nine people were killed in Chittagong, seven in Cox's Bazar, four in Rangamati and two in Manikganj, it added.

According to our correspondents, the flood situation deteriorated in Pabna, Sirajganj, Manikganj, Feni, Jamalpur, Comilla, Kurigram, Kishoreganj and Rajshahi further deteriorated.

More areas in the worst-hit districts went under water and some parts were devoured by the swelling rivers. Standing crops on thousands of acres of land were damaged while lakhs of people remained marooned in the affected areas.

A weather expert told The

Daily Star last night the monsoon rains triggering floods in 22 districts are on the wane after washing the country with a fury that had been unusual this season.

Four days incessant rain from July 9 to 12 had already accounted for 48 per cent of the monthly average in the country. Director of the Meteorological Department Sajedur Rahman told The Daily Star last night.

He said rains in the country along with heavy showers in the north-eastern India's Arunachal, Meghalaya and Assam, Nepal and in the foothills of the Himalayas in West Bengal, Bihar and Uttar Pradesh led to the spate of flooding in the northern and south eastern districts.

It caused a serious congestion in the major river systems and flash floods, triggering landslides in the hill districts of Bandarban and Rangamati

and parts of Cox's Bazar. Thousands of people were marooned in Bandarban where the Army was ordered to mount relief and rescue operations, providing food and shelter to the affected, our Staff Correspondent in Chittagong Nurul Alam said. The authorities in Dhaka reviewed the flood situation and decided to airdrop food to the affected.

However, the intensity of the flooding decreased in Bandarban. At the district town water rose up to a height of two-storeyed building making people desperately seek safe shelters, as the Sangu went into spate. Its last such fury was seen in 1977, Alam said.

The swirling waters of the Khowai badly damaged a bridge at Shaistaganj, snapping Sylhet's road link with Dhaka and Comilla. Our Staff Correspondent in Sylhet Iqbal Siddiqi re-

See Page 12 Col 6

3-pronged drive to recover overdue bank loans launched: Kibria

The government has launched a three-pronged drive to recover overdue bank loans, asking the banks to file cases against the defaulters.

Finance Minister Shah AMS Kibria disclosed the government strategy in an interview with UNB yesterday. He said the banks are going to file cases against the 1-an defaulters to recover the unpaid loans amounting to Tk 15,000 crore altogether in the private and public sectors.

The government has prepared the legal background on the basis of which the banks are going to sue the defaulters, the minister said.

Mentioning the passage of the Bankruptcy Act in Parliament, he said it will bring about a 'fundamental change' in the whole picture of the default syndrome. The law will be promulgated on August 1 after framing certain rules under it, he added.

The government has also enacted some other laws that bar a bank-loan defaulter from being in charge of any of the

banks, the Finance Minister pointed out.

Kibria said the administra-



SAMS Kibria

tive actions, neglected in the past, were also initiated. The Bangladesh Bank and other banks have formed task force to monitor the loan-recovery situation.

"Defaulters simply cannot hope to escape from being punished due to indifference or negligence of the banks," he said. "The banks are going seriously to the borrowers either to look at their problems, help them if necessary, reschedule the loan if possible or to take drastic legal action."

He said the recovery of loans is given as much importance as disbursement of loans.

All the steps, the minister said, would result in a higher rate of recovery of loans.

Asked about the liquidity crisis in the commercial banks for which they are unable to disburse long-term credit, Kibria outright ruled out any such problem.

"There is no liquidity crisis in the banks," he said, adding the central bank and other commercial banks informed him that no genuine borrower had been turned away by them because of shortage of fund.

"We are not pressing the banks to give loan as done in the past. The banks were asked

See Page 12 Col 4

PM arrives in Hamburg

HAMBURG, July 13: Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina arrived here this morning to attend the UNESCO sponsored 5th international conference on adult education beginning here tomorrow, reports BSS.

Chief of protocol of Hamburg Dr Reiner Rohde received the Prime Minister as she alighted from a Biman commercial flight at Hamburg Airport at 9:50 local time. Others present at the airport to receive her included Assistant Director General of UNESCO Colin N Power on behalf of the director general.

Bangladesh ambassador to Germany Shamsur M Chowdhury was also present at the airport.

The airport was decorated with the national flags of Bangladesh and Germany and also UNESCO flags.

A large number of Bangladeshis living in Germany were also present outside the tarmac to greet the PM.

From the airport the Prime Minister was taken to Hotel Intercontinental where she will be staying during her visit to Hamburg.

See Page 12 Col 8

Shima rape & murder case

4 accused policemen acquitted

CHITTAGONG, July 13: Four policemen accused of violating a garments worker, Shima Chowdhury, who later died in jail, were "honourably" acquitted today, reports agencies.

Syed Enayetullah, Judge of the 'Nari-O-Shishu Nirjaton Damon Adalat' (Women and Child Repression Prevention Court), gave the verdict at 12:30 pm in a crowded court.

In his 46-page judgement, the judge said it is a case without evidence or proof.

Syed Enayetullah in his judgement said some 41 persons had appeared as witnesses and given their deposition in the case, but the allegations levelled against them were not proved sufficiently.

The government side hardly presented one or two evidences in favour of their allegations and, as such, it failed to furnish sufficient evidences wanted by the court, the judge said.

Thus the judge, as per clause 6(3) 1995 of the acts of special

tribunal, acquitted sub-inspector Uttom Kumar, police constables Sadek Ali, Abul Bashar and Goura Chandra Karmakar of the charges.

The judge also posed a question as to why the victim Shima Chowdhury did not file the case herself.

The judge also said that the statement of the victim, Shima Chowdhury, under 164 GPC which was essential for the case, was not recorded.

The 41 witnesses who included district superintendent of police, members of the medical board and relatives of Shima Chowdhury made their depositions.

Public Prosecutor Nurul Sofa Tahukdar and special PP Ilias Mia appeared in the case on behalf of the state while Advocate Ahsanul Haq Hena and Shamsuddin Khan Mukul pleaded for the accused persons.

According to the prosecution case, Shima was picked up by

See Page 12 Col 3

Govt-PCJSS talks resume today

The fifth round of talks between the government and leaders of Parbatya Chattagram Jana Sanghati Samity (PCJSS) begins in the city today, report agencies.

Chief Whip Abul Hasnat Abdullah, who is chairman of the national committee on CHT affairs, will lead the government side to the meeting at the state guest house Padma.

The tribal delegation will be headed by Jyotirindra Bodhipriya Lama alias Santu Lama of the PCJSS, the political wing of Shantibahini.

About duration of the parley, an official of the Ministry of Special Affairs said: "It depends on the temperament of the deliberations."

The official, however, expressed optimism about a positive outcome of the talks.

The tribal team has already reached Dudukchhari under Khagrachhari district. It will fly to capital today by an army helicopter.

The talks are expected to start at 2:30 pm. Rupayan Chakma, Gautam Chakma,

See Page 12 Col 6

Police finding

5 killed in mob beating were muggers

From Our Correspondent

NARAYANGANJ, July 13: Police has said that the five persons, beaten to death by a mob at Bhulgarh on the Dhaka-Narayanganj link road yesterday, were muggers.

According to preliminary findings of the police, the angry people caught red-handed the five persons when they were trying to escape after mugging Taka 1,000 and a wrist watch from Nuruddin Ahmed, an employee of The Daily Ittefaq, in Jalkuri area at about 6 am.

Chased by the people, some of them using a 'training' car which was available on the spot, the scooter, carrying the muggers, skidded off the road and fell into a ditch. There a crowd of over 100 people, armed with iron rods, sticks and brickbats, started beating the muggers indiscriminately and continued doing so until police had reached the spot two hours later.

See Page 12 Col 3

Amu questions motive behind hartal call

Acting President of the ruling Awami League Amir Hossain Amu has questioned the motive behind the July 15 hartal called by Jamaat-e-Islami and some other pro-Islamic groups and supported by main opposition BNP.

"Why this hartal has been called and against whom?" he asked while talking to UNB at his Eskaton residence yesterday. "There is protest and anger everywhere, but no hartal has been called in any other country of the world," he said.

Amu said the Awami League government has strongly protested and expressed indignation against the dastardly acts of the Jews 'designed to defame our great Prophet Hazrat Muhammad (SM) and the holy

See Page 12 Col 1

Employees of DEPZ factory gherao

Savar thana: 7 held

By Staff Correspondent

Several employees of an industrial unit were injured in a lathicharge by police when they gheraoed the Savar thana yesterday demanding release of two fellow employees who were arrested Saturday.

Police arrested seven of the agitating workers.

Savar thana police said that a several hundred workers of the Youngone Hightech Ltd factory gathered in front of the police station at around 4 pm yesterday.

See Page 12 Col 7

IU teachers begin strike

From Our Correspondent

ISLAMIC UNIVERSITY, Kushtia, July 13: A deadlock has been prevailing in Islamic University following the agitation of the teachers and students demanding removal of the Vice-Chancellor Prof Enamul Haque.

The Islamic University Teachers' Association (IUTA) began strike today as part of its 'non-cooperation programme' protesting the alleged corruption and nepotism of the VC.

Meanwhile, the Bangladesh Chhatra League (S-F) continued strike at the university for the 15th day today demanding removal of the Vice-Chancellor.

The Islamic Chhatra Shibir began its agitation against the VC a few days ago.

Sri Lanka take on Pakistan in Asia Cup opener today

Sports Reporter

The four-nation Pepsi Asia Cup begins in Colombo today with world champions Sri Lanka taking on Pakistan in the opener at the Premadasa Stadium.

The inaugural match, weather permitting, is expected to begin at 10.30 BST.

Bangladesh Television as well as Star Sports will provide live coverage of all the seven matches including the grand final of the biennial tourney which also includes Bangladesh and India.

Undoubtedly the underdogs, Bangladesh will kick off their campaign against Pakistan on July 16. Defending champions India, who possess the best track record in the regional tournament, having won the trophy four times, will feature in their first match against the hosts on July 18.

The sixth version of the tournament will be played on a round robin format with the top two teams playing in the final on July 26. Prize-money worth 30,000 US dollars is on offer for the winners while the runners-up will get 20,000 dollars.

(Details on page 10).



FOUR SKIPPERS ... (From R-L) Bangladesh's Akram Khan, India's Sachin Tendulkar, Arjuna Ranatunga of Sri Lanka and Pakistan's Rameez Raja pose with the Asia Cup at a joint press conference in Colombo yesterday. The four-nation cricket tourney kicks off in the Sri Lanka capital today.

—AFP/UNB photo

Japanese envoy tells The Daily Star

Investment climate congenial but infrastructure needs improvement

By M Anwarul Haq, back from Tokyo

Japanese ambassador to Bangladesh Yoshikazu Kaneko has said that the visit of the Bangladesh Prime Minister to Japan has opened a new window of opportunity for improving bilateral and business ties between the two countries.

Talking to The Daily Star in Tokyo during Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's recent visit, the ambassador spoke about different aspects of bilateral relations and the problems and prospects of attracting Japanese investment in Bangladesh.

He said the visit of the Prime Minister generated a new wave of interest in the investment opportunities available in Bangladesh, particularly in the private sector. Besides, the visit further strengthened the traditional friendly ties between the two countries and contributed

to "an understanding of mind and a working rapport" between Sheikh Hasina and her Japanese counterpart Ryutaro Hashimoto.

The ambassador noted the concerted efforts made by Dhaka to bring about a welcome climate of change in South Asia. Tokyo, he said, lauded the water treaty between Bangladesh and India and hoped that Dhaka would be able to garner the support of other countries and donor agencies for undertaking a regional water management policy, including implementation of the Ganges Barrage project.

The Japanese envoy said that the investment climate in Bangladesh was congenial but certain impediments and bottlenecks needed to be removed to create a more enabling atmosphere.

He said it was important that the Karnaphuli Fertilizer Company (KAFCO) receive the stipulated supply of gas immediately, as assured by the Bangladesh side so that the company could meet its production target. He hoped that the required quantum of gas supply would be ensured to KAFCO following the commissioning of the AB gas pipeline.

Kaneko stressed that KAFCO must be made a success as was pointed out by the leading members of the Japanese business community at the Keidanren meeting in Tokyo. KAFCO was then termed a flagship company for attracting Japanese private sector investment in Bangladesh.

Explaining the importance of KAFCO in the eyes of Japanese investors, he said, the company was scheduled to start repay-

ment of its loans last year but the payments have been rescheduled due to shortage of gas supply.

"If KAFCO fails to make repayment, it is Bangladesh which has to pay since the government is the guarantor. That is why people in Japan are very much concerned about KAFCO. It would discourage potential investors to come to Bangladesh."

When told that the KAFCO contract carried some unfair conditions when it was initiated, the envoy said it could be so. But he stressed that from the point of business goodwill, any project once agreed upon should be seen through its commitment in order to convey a positive message and a desired signal so that more Japanese investment could be attracted in future.

See Page 12 Col 1

Tribal returnees for rehabilitation under UNHCR supervision

By Staff Correspondent

The tribal refugees who returned to Khagrachhari from India have demanded that the government create a "congenial atmosphere" for the return of 40,000 refugees from India, by "properly rehabilitating" those who have already returned home.

The Returnee Jumma Refugees' Twenty-point Implementation Committee made the demand at a press conference held at the Jatiya Press Club yesterday.

Claiming that most of the 20-point assurances are yet to be fulfilled, the leaders of the organisation also alleged that the present government, like its predecessor, was giving lip service regarding the problems of the hill people.

Replying to a question, Sukriti Jibon Chakma, Joint Convener of the organisation

said if the government fails to meet its commitment regarding proper rehabilitation of the returnees, the refugees still living in India may not feel encouraged to return home.

The leaders demanded that rehabilitation of the returnees be done under the supervision of the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR).

They said, after the government of Sheikh Hasina took over, a total of 6,703 refugees returned home between March and April this year on an "experimental basis." But members of 170 families have not yet been rehabilitated in their homesteads and members of 200 families are yet to get back their cultivable lands, they claimed.

Convener of the organisation—

See Page 12 Col 4