

3-tier edn system suggested

By Staff Correspondent

The Committee for Formulating the National Education Policy has suggested a three-tier education system — primary, secondary and higher levels of education, according to official sources.

Teaching of English language as a subject has been given special emphasis maintaining Bangla as the medium of instruction. Committee sources said, adding that introduction of English language from Class II, instead of Class III earlier, has been recommended.

Work-oriented curriculum have been recommended for all levels. The need for training of teachers after a regular interval has also been given emphasis. Consideration of increase of higher education fees for the wards of solvent parents was also suggested, the sources added.

The committee recommended inclusion of Class I to Class VIII in primary level, and

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Cinematographic equipment, shooting costume at FDC gutted

Huge quantities of cinematographic equipment and shooting costume of the Film Development Corporation (FDC) were gutted in a fire in the small hours of yesterday, reports BSS.

Police and Fire Brigade sources said the fire originated from an electric short circuit in the godown on the second floor of the old building at 1 am.

Five Fire Brigade vehicles rushed to the spot and brought the blaze under control at 2.50 am. The operation of the Fire Brigade was hampered as electricity was off at that time.

No casualty was reported by the FDC authorities. The estimated loss in the fire could not be ascertained immediately. Fire Brigade sources added.

A general dairy was registered with Tejgaon thana.

Agri-commission report by Sept

The Agri-Commission formed to devise the techniques for producing surplus foodgrains in the country will submit its primary report to the government by next month, reports UNB.

This was disclosed in a review meeting of the Commission held at BARC auditorium yesterday.

Addressing the meeting, Food and Agriculture Minister Begum Matia Chowdhury urged the commission to finalise the report in a shortest possible time.

The Minister also gave emphasis on incorporating specific recommendations on development of fisheries, livestock and environment in the report.

She also stressed the for adding recommendations to the report on technology transfer, development of fertiliser and irrigation management, use of balanced fertiliser, planned use of surface and ground water, role of government and non-government organisations and inter-organisational coordination and ensuring fair price of food crops to the farmers.

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Tk 203400 cr dev outlay in Fifth Plan Average growth rate projected at 7.3 pc

The draft fifth five-year plan (FYP) for 1997-2002 with a development outlay of Tk 203,400 crore, 58 per cent of which is projected to be shared by the private sector, was released yesterday at a national workshop at the Planning Commission, reports BSS.

The draft national plan came after a two-year break since the fourth FYP expired in 1995. The size of the proposed outlay is more than three times greater compared to the previous one.

Inaugurating the workshop, Foreign Minister Abdus Samad Azad said the fifth FYP is aimed at minimising poverty and making the country ready to face the challenges of the 21st century.

"It will be a matter of shame for Bangladesh to step into the coming century with its

poverty. We must have specific programmes to reduce the poverty level," he said.

State Minister for Planning Dr Mohiuddin Khan Alamgir chaired the function while politicians, MPs, academics, senior officials, NGO leaders and representatives and mission chiefs of donor agencies, including World Bank and UNDP, took part in the discussions.

Social Science Research Council of the Planning Commission organised the workshop.

Samad Azad said despite the past efforts for socio-economic development through five-year plans, the desired results could not be achieved.

"We need to analyse the reasons behind it and, therefore, an open dialogue, like this, between researchers, policy-makers

and planners, and the policy implementers is very important to chalk out our future action plans," he said.

According to the draft document, out of the total outlay, Tk 117,500 crore is to be contributed by the private sector.

On the other hand, the projected share of national savings to the outlay is 78.39 per cent against 21 per cent of external financing. In the previous Tk 62,000 crore fourth FYP, the share of private sector, domestic savings and foreign financing was 44 per cent, 55.64 per cent and 44.36 per cent respectively.

The projected average GDP growth rate during the next five-year period is 7.3 per cent with 6.01 in 1997-98, 6.27 in 1998-99, 7.55 in 1999-2000, 7.98 in 2000-01 and 8.54 in

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Biman admits issuance of circular on ZIA

Star Report

Biman Bangladesh Airlines has admitted issuance of a circular asking all its cabin crew to announce the name of Zia International Airport as 'Dhaka International Airport'.

Deputy General Manager of Biman's Flight Service Md Mujibul Haque, when contacted by The Daily Star yesterday, admitted that the circular signed by him was issued on July 17.

The circular, a photo copy of which was made available to The Daily Star, reads, "As per

decision of the Management, from now on whenever inflight announcements are made regarding Dhaka Airport, it must be mentioned as 'Dhaka International Airport'.

The official name of the airport is Zia International Airport (ZIA).

On July 27, a government handout clarified that the name

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Biman flight's unscheduled landing in Istanbul

A Biman flight in London-Rome-Dhaka route had to make an unscheduled landing in Istanbul offloading 50,000 litres of fuel for technical reasons on Thursday, reports UNB.

The plane had to make a stopover in the Turkish city as a passenger suffered cardiac attack on board and doctors advised that he be taken to hospital immediately.

The passenger fell sick half an hour after the flight (BG-008) had taken off from Rome. Three doctors who examined the patient were travelling in the same flight.

The aircraft then spewed out the fuel in space and landed in Istanbul. "This (offloading fuel) was done for technical reason," said a Biman high official.

The passenger, Shahidul Dewan, was, however, out of

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JRC meets in Lalmonirhat today

RANGPUR, Aug 2: A meeting of the Bangladesh-Joint River Commission (JRC) will be held at Doanl of Lalmonirhat district tomorrow on water sharing of the Teesta, reports UNB.

The meeting, which begins at 10 am, will be held at the Teesta Bridge Guest House, Aurbokash. In the meeting, a four-member Indian side will be led by the chairman of North Bengal Flood Control Commission from Jalpaiguri, M R Mandal. Chief Engineer (Project-4) Aftab Ansari will lead the Bangladesh side.

One dies, 9 fall sick after dinner



(Clockwise from bottom left) Body of Kabir at the DMCH, one of his children being taken to hospital, and his wife wailing.

Police suspect foul play as maid missing

By Staff Correspondent

A businessman died and nine others including his wife and two children fell sick after dinner Friday night at a house at Sobhanbagh in the city.

Police suspected 'foul play' as a 25-year-old maid at the house was missing following the incident.

Kabir Hossain Chowdhury, 40, died after he was taken to Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) yesterday morning. Kabir with his wife and children came to that house to attend the quikhwani of his father-in-law, who died around a week ago.

Hospital sources said the nine others included three members of Kabir's in-law's family, two employees of a medicine shop of the family and a maid. They were also ad-

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UN convention on discrimination against women Dhaka withdraws reservation about some provisions

By Masud Arif

Bangladesh government has withdrawn reservations about some provisions of the Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women relating to personal rights such as family benefits and guardianship of children.

The decision was communicated to the monitoring body for the implementation of the Convention at the UN headquarters in New York last week, according to the United Nations Information Centre (UNIC) in Dhaka.

The Committee on Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) is the monitoring body for implementation

of the Convention, the only United Nations treaty that deals exclusively with women's rights. The 23-member expert committee convened the second of its two 1997 sessions from July 7 to 25.

According to UNIC sources here, the withdrawn reservations of Bangladesh pertain to Article 13 (a) and Article 16 (1) (f) of the Convention. Article 13 (a) gives women the right to family benefits. Article 16 (1) (f), among other things, says, "States parties shall take all appropriate measures to ensure that men and women have the same rights and responsibilities

ties with regard to guardianship, worship, trusteeship and adoption of children."

Bangladesh still maintains its reservations to Article 2 and Article 16 (1) (c) of the Convention. Article 2 says, "States agree to combat discrimination against women in various ways, including adoption of laws and ensuring that public authorities and institutions refrain from any discriminatory act or practice."

Article 16 (1) (c) says man and woman have equal rights and responsibilities in matters relating to marriage, its dissolution and family relations.

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Flood water snaps Ctg-Cox's Bazar road link again

From Our Correspondent

COX'S BAZAR, Aug 2: At least 1,50,000 people in 25 unions under three thanas of the district have been marooned in flood water.

Incessant rainfall in the last two days and onrush of water from the hills caused the flood.

Road communication between Cox's Bazar and Chittagong was cut off since early morning today as the highway went under four feet water at Naibila in Chokoria.

The affected areas include, Chokoria, Pourashava, 16 unions in Chokoria thana, four unions in Ramu thana and five

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Comilla BCL leader stabbed to death

COMILLA, Aug 2: Masudul Alam alias Masuk, Organising Secretary of Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL-SP) Brahmanpara thana unit was stabbed to death by a group of alleged miscreants this afternoon, police and family sources said, reports BSS.

Son of Badshah Miah, a member of Shashidul union parishad, Masuk was attacked at Tetabuhuni village under Shashidul union. He succumbed to his injuries on way to Comilla General Hospital.

His body was sent to Comilla General Hospital morgue for autopsy.

Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs Minister Abdul Matin Khasru expressed his deep shock at killing of the student leader Masuk. He conveyed his sympathy to the members of the breathed family.

Rival BNP groups clash in Ctg

From Staff Correspondent

CHITTAGONG, Aug 2: Activists of two rival factions of BNP clashed today near Kazir Dewri over formation of the new committee of the party's city unit, leaving at least five persons injured, police and witnesses said.

The injured persons were admitted to private clinics.

The clash erupted at about 5 pm when a meeting was in progress in front of the residence of Mir Mohammad Nasiruddin, president of the new committee and a process-

sion of the faction opposing the committee was passing through the area.

Activists of both the factions blasted cocktails and exchanged brick bats. Window panes of Nasiruddin's house were damaged, police and witnesses said.

Talking to this correspondent, Commissioner of Chittagong Metropolitan Police, Asraf Huda, said the clash did not continue for long as police, deployed there earlier, dis-

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Kazi Zafar meets Khaleda

A four-member delegation of Jatiya Party (Zafar-Moazzem), led by its Co-Chairman Kazi Zafar Ahmed met with BNP Chairperson Begum Khaleda Zia in the city last night and discussed with her matters related to anti-government agitation, reports UNB.

A JP press release said they discussed the country's latest socio-economic and political situation, particularly the issue of launching a united movement against the 'anti-people' government.

The delegation included Mostafa Jamal Haider, Shamim Al Mamun and Mainuddin Bhuiyan. BNP Secretary General Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan was present at the hour-long meeting.

JP Co-Chairman Shah Moazzem Hossain could not attend the meeting due to indisposition, the release said.

Gujral heckled at party meet

NEW DELHI, Aug 2: Under pressure to clean his party's image, Prime Minister Indira Kumar Gujral today left a national meeting of his party leaders in a huff midway through his speech after members heckled him, reports AP.

Gujral has been embarrassed in recent weeks over corruption charges against leaders of his Janata Dal Party that he had pledged would clean up politics muddled by years of rule by the Congress Party.

Last month a party split was led by a powerful regional politician, who for weeks doggedly defied Gujral's directive to resign as chief minister of Bihar state after he was charged with embezzling state funds. The breakaway group is

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Magurchhara fire

Site for relief well selected

From Staff Correspondent
SYLHET, Aug 2: The new site for drilling a relief well at the Magurchhara gasfield has been selected. The location is about 640 metres west of the main well.

Dr Robert W Nicholson, International Drilling Manager of Occidental, after visiting the gasfield yesterday afternoon informed that it will take about six weeks more to seal the gas well. This has to be done by capping the mouth of the main well through diagonal drilling. For this purpose, drilling of the relief well is expected to begin next week, Nicholson said.

Meanwhile, transportation of the dismantled parts of the Relief Rig T-41 and other

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26 arsenic patients found in Narsingdi, Comilla

By Special Correspondent

A team of doctors from the Dhaka Community Hospital Trust (DCHT) have found 26 patients suffering from arsenic poisoning in Narsingdi and Comilla districts during the past three days, raising the number of arsenic patients to 1107 in the country, DCHT researchers said yesterday.

Dr Mahmudur Rahman, coordinator of DCHT, said at a press conference at the hospital that they found 18 patients at Srirampur village in Raipura thana of Narsingdi district on July 31. Another eight patients were found at Tujarbhanga village of Baragangsa union in Daudkandi thana on Saturday.

A DCHT team also combed the Srinagar and Louhajang thanas of Munshiganj on Friday, but found no patients. It collected water samples from tubewells for analysis from the two thanas, he said.

The DCHT released an update of their arsenic poisoning survey which was initiated in October last year. The results computed until June shows that highest number of arsenic affected people are in village Samta under Sharsha thana of Jessore, Luxmipur district in Noakhali ranks second with 41 patients.

On per litre of water out of 3577 samples collected from 28 out of 34 districts in the country showed that 1341 samples have less than the permissible level of 0.01 mg globally recommended by WHO. Maximum WHO recommended level in

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Bangladesh is 0.05 mg.

On 645 samples there were, 0.01-0.049 mg, on 402 there were 0.05-0.099mg, 0.10-0.299mg in 665 samples, 0.30-0.499 mg in 244 samples, 0.50-0.699 mg in 130 samples, 0.70-0.99 mg in 88 samples and more than 1.00 mg in 62 samples.

The DCHT is currently working with the School of Environmental Studies (SOES) of Jadavpur University of West Bengal on Groundwater Arsenic problem in Bangladesh.

Dr Rahman said compared to West Bengal it appears that higher concentration of arsenic is more abundant in Bangladesh. The SOES has so far analysed samples from more than 40,000 tubewells in

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Two mud pumps brought from Thailand to cap the mouth of burning gas well at Magurchhara.

—Star photo

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SUBSCRIPTION OPENS ON 4 AUGUST 1997
SUBSCRIPTION CLOSURE ON 13 AUGUST 1997

PROSPECTUS PUBLISHED ON 29-06-1997 IN THE DAILY STAR
UNDER WRITTEN BY

(01) Capital Roots Ltd. (02) Fidility Securities Ltd. (03) Prime Finance & Investment Ltd. (04) Delta Life Ins. Co. Ltd. (05) Green Delta Ins. Co. Ltd. (06) Corporate Securities Management Ltd. (07) Satcom Securities & Management Ltd. (08) 63 Members of DSE Ltd. (09) 11 Members of CSE Ltd. (10) Management Development & Financial Services Ltd.

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