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The World on Time



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina presenting a cheque for Tk one lakh to the wife of Ibrahim Selim who was killed during the movement against the Ershad government in 1983.

— PID photo

Damaged decay tank to be isolated from N-reactor

Bangladesh Atomic Energy Commission (BAEC) yesterday decided to isolate the decay tank from the three megawatt research reactor at Ganakbari in Savar.

Talking to BSS, BAEC Chairman M A Quaiyum said the decision was taken on the basis of the recommendations made by a committee formed with scientists from BAEC and Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (BUET).

Employees assault IF official

An assistant director of the Islamic Foundation was injured in an attack by a group of its workers and employees yesterday, reports UNB.

Police said the group attacked Anisur Rahman, Assistant Director (Marketing) of the Foundation, at his office room at about 12 noon.

They said the attack on Anis followed a drive to evict the illegal shops from Baitul Mokarram Market owned by the Foundation.

A section of employees and workers of the Foundation have set up the shops on the compound illegally, police said.

The victim was given first aid at Dhaka Medical College Hospital. A case was filed with Motijheel thana.

Trader, teacher

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miscreants stabbed him severely and snatched the money. He was taken to Jhenidah Sadar Hospital where he succumbed to his injuries.

The businessmen in Jhenidah town observed a dawn-to-dusk hartal today to protest the killing. They also demanded punishment to the killers.

In another incident, Hossain Ali alias Hassan Mia, 52, a madrasah teacher of village Bogura under Saikupa thana of the district was beaten to death by some rival villagers yesterday.

Police and eye-witnesses said, two armed men called Hassan out of his house as about midnight. The miscreants allegedly cut the tendons of his legs and left him near Mokrampur, police said. He was rushed to Saikupa Thana Health Complex where he succumbed to injuries at about 4-30 in the morning.

A case was filed with Saikupa Thana. Police arrested two youngsters, Tushar Majumder and Enamul Hassan, in this connection.

Ban order misquoted

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directive meant, which banned any coloured SSP and all kinds of granular SSP.

The colour is the catch here, for the farmers are fooled to buy the much cheaper SSP which looks like TSP. This was the main reason why, according to the minutes of the Cabinet meeting, the axe came on that type of fertiliser.

The February 17, 1997 Cabinet decision signed by Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina was formally communicated five days later to Commerce Secretary Alamgir Farooq Chowdhury on February 23 (The commerce ministry notification with the mistake was dated February 20).

The next day, February 24, based on the decision, a Bangladesh Bank circular "advised" fertiliser dealers "not to open LCs and to refrain from extending shipping deadlines for already-opened LCs".

Six days later, on March 2, the commerce ministry admitted the mistake when it wrote to the BB Governor requesting issuance of another circular to correct the situation.

On March 4, 1997, the Office of the Chief Controller of Imports and Exports (CCIE) issued

He said after removal of the connecting aluminium pipe, the reactor will be sealed mechanically so that no more reactor water is lost.

The isolation work will begin within a couple of days.

The water leakage in the primary cooling system of the atomic reactor was first detected by the scientists on July 14. After detailed investigation, the BAEC experts identified the damage on July 23 and found that the leakage of the decay tank was caused by rust.

Four committees were constituted with scientists from BAEC, BUET and Dhaka University to submit a complete report on the matter, the BAEC chairman said.

The 'decay tank' was built on a platform inside a concrete house in an interim arrangement for storage of radioactive waste water that flows from the reactor.

Student politics

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Asked about the guideline on students politics, the chairman referred to President Shahabuddin Ahmed's comments on the issue, printed in the media recently and said, "Comments of the President are binding on the nation."

President Shahabuddin Ahmed in his recent speeches urged the political leaders not to use students for political purposes.

The 58-member Committee was formed on January 15. Prof M Shamsul Huq is a former Vice-chancellor of Dhaka University and an advisor in the caretaker government last year. Nineteen sub-committees were formed with the members of the committee. The first meeting of the committee was held on February 1.

New envoy

From page 1

the request of Hossain himself, it was learnt. His proposed nomination had sparked off criticism in the Parliament.

Mosharraf Hossain is the father-in-law of the Prime Minister. The sources also said that the summary, appointing Hossain as high commissioner to Canada, was also not signed by the Prime Minister due to his reservations after receipt of a written objection. Hossain had given his verbal consent earlier.

One highly placed source said, "The summary of Mosharraf Hossain, appointment as high commissioner was never prepared. His agreement was not sent."

a public notice putting the "colour-coated and granular SSP" on the list of goods prohibited to be imported.

But by then, the three firms owned by the two men completed their task. And the commerce ministry appeared to have come to their rescue.

"The prohibition order will not be applicable to those LCs which were opened or those SSP shipments which were made before the March 4 notice," the Ministry wrote to the CCIE on March 13.

The issue went further as the LCs were given validity far beyond the normal period — three months in such cases, six months for capital machinery. Sources claim that the LCs are valid for nine months.

Meanwhile, one shipment has already been unloaded; another ship called Ocean Falcon is unloading at Mongla. The second shipment for which figures were obtained carried at least 13,000 tonnes.

A 50-kg bag of SSP costs Tk 220 at normal times, and now, when it is in short supply, SSP is selling at Tk 290 a bag.

A simple arithmetic puts the figure at Tk 10 crore in extra profits in a sellers' market, in the expense of farmers.

JU strike

Employees place 2 proposals

By JU Correspondent

The officers and employees of Jahangirnagar University (JU) have placed two proposals to the university authorities to end their 9-day strike which began on Sunday.

According to the proposals, the office-hour should be either 7:30 am to 2 pm with one weekly holiday or 7:30 am to 2:30 pm with two holidays.

The proposals were adopted at a general meeting of the officers and employees yesterday following a discussion with the authorities Sunday.

After placing the proposals, leaders of the officers and employees threatened the authorities to stop the transport services if their demand regarding the office timing is not accepted by today.

On Sunday, the JU authorities assured the leaders that their demand not to cut 20 per cent from their pensions would be considered.

CFTC urged again to withdraw surcharge

From Staff Correspondent

CHITTAGONG, Aug 18: The Chittagong Port Authority has made a fresh protest against the imposition of congestion surcharge on container cargo at Chittagong Port by the Chittagong Feeder Trade Committee (CFTC), a Singapore-based organisation of feeder vessel operators, port officials said.

The CPA protest note was sent to CFTC yesterday, urging it to immediately withdraw the punitive surcharge, the officials added.

Meanwhile, port officials today held a meeting with the local representatives of mainline operators to persuade them to withdraw the surcharge.

The vessels of the mainline

operators move in the route between Singapore and Europe. The mainline operators also imposed a surcharge of 50 US dollars on every container to and from Chittagong Port, port sources said.

The CFTC imposed 150 dollars surcharge against each 20 feet long container and 300 dollars for 40 feet long container at Chittagong Port from August 16.

A six-member delegation comprising port officials and port users went to Singapore to urge the CFTC representatives to withdraw the surcharge. But the talks failed as CFTC did not agree to withdraw the surcharge. The delegation will return from Singapore tomorrow.

Move to resolve dispute on work distribution

CHITTAGONG, Aug 18: As the Coaster and Hatch Workers Union threatened an indefinite gherrao of the Port Bhawan from tomorrow, the Shipping Ministry today announced its decision about the work distribution in the port, reports UNB.

According to the decision, merchant workers would now work at jetty numbers 1 to 17 and at vessels alongside the ships at Sadarghat lighterage jetty while the coaster and hatch workers would perform on ships at the outer anchorage.

Moreover, the merchant labourers would continue their shed delivery works as before in the port's protected shore areas. They will also handle the works of overseas delivery at river mooring and other specialised berths.

A senior assistant secretary of the Shipping Ministry, Farid Uddin Ahmed, informed the decision to the Chittagong Port Authority (CPA) by a faxed message tonight, port sources said.

The Ministry will observe the work distribution for the next three months, the message said.

Yasmin murder

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line driver Amrita Lal Barman said that prosecution counsel failed to show documentary evidences that his client was on duty when the incident took place.

Mr Iqbal, another defence counsel, argued that the autopsy report prepared by his client Dr Md Mohsin was correct and nothing was concealed in it.

Arguments in the case began yesterday. All the nine accused in the case were on dock. They are facing trial under Section 201 (34) of the Penal Code. The court will sit tomorrow.

Body on local govt reforms meets

The second meeting of the committee on local government reforms was held yesterday with its convenor and cabinet secretary in the chair, reports BSS.

The meeting discussed different matters relating to the transferring of subjects and departments to the different tiers of local government.

The next meeting of the committee will be held on August 31, said an official hand-out.

Bonsai Nursery opens in city

Minister for Forest and Environment Syeda Sajeda Chowdhury yesterday urged the people to play a vital role in the protection of environment, alleviation of poverty and economic development through tree plantation and its nursing, reports BSS.

Inaugurating the 'Bonsai Nursery' of Bangladesh Tobacco Company Limited (BTCL) at Panda Garden premises, the minister said the government had turned the tree plantation drive into a political as well as an economic movement.

She urged all non-government organisations to come forward to make the tree plantation drive a success.

The minister laid stress on the coordinated planning to set up pollution-free industrial units at all levels and keep the water of the river Buriganga free from pollution. The Bonsai Nursery will distribute one lakh saplings among the city dwellers free of cost this year to create awareness about the afforestation programme.

Managing Director of BTC Hugh Tweed was present as special guest while Chief Conservator of Forests SM Jalil also spoke on the occasion.

Khaleda urged to form national front

A meeting of five smaller political groups yesterday urged BNP Chairperson Begum Khaleda Zia to take initiative to form a national front with nationalist and Islamic forces, reports UNB.

The call was made by leaders of Jatiya Party (Z-M), Democratic League, JAGPA, PNP and Islamic Oikyo Jote who held the joint meeting at the residence of Kazi Zafar Ahmed.

The meeting discussed the formation of the proposed Oikyo Front representing patriotic, nationalist and democratic forces.

It criticised the authorities concerned for not giving permission to the Islamic Oikyo Jote (IOJ) to hold its planned meeting at Manik Miah Avenue on August 22.

Democratic League president Oli Ahad, JAGPA president Shafiqul Alam Prodhan, PNP president Shawkat Hossain Nilu, IOJ leaders Masud Khan and Abdul Latif, and JP secretary general Shamim Al Mamoon were present.

Diarrhoea claims 12, attacks 1000 in Kishoreganj

KISHOREGANJ, Aug 18: The diarrhoea took 12 lives and attacked some 1,000 in the last five days in Sadar and Tarail theas of the district, according to unofficial sources, reports UNB.

Of the deaths, two children, identified as Selim, 5, of Gazaria village in Tarail and Palash, 3, of Sekandarnagar village in Sadar, died today. The rest ten — eight in Tarail and two in Sadar — died till Sunday.

However, official sources confirmed five deaths in the two thanas during the period.

Bangabandhu

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tonment, the BDR, the Police Headquarters or the Police Control Room when he heard the Radio announcement that Bangabandhu had been killed. He said that he had talked to the duty clerk at the Ganabhaban over telephone at around 6:30 am but could not remember his name.

Bashar said he also tried to contact Brig. Mashrurul Huq, the then Military Secretary to the President but could not reach him. Brig Mashrurul Huq was his commanding officer in Dhaka, Bashar said.

About the responsibility of the military guards deployed at the residence of Bangabandhu, Bashar said that their duty was ceremonial and the police was responsible for security. There was coordination between the police and military guards, he said.

Daily events during duty used to be reported verbally to the superior officers and there was no system of reporting those in writing, Bashar said answering questions from the state defence.

"For emergency communication, there was a system of sending messenger to me, which did not arise," Bashar said adding that there was no communication system between him and the guards through wireless set.

He said that during inspection, he found the guards discharging their duties properly excepting on August 15, 1975. Asked whether he had issued show cause notice for negligence to duty, Bashar said, in the Army there is no such system. Their negligence to duty was verbally reported to the commanding officer of the Regiment in Comilla, he said.

Govt, donors

From page 1

planting of trees like Eucalyptus which affect the soil. The government has ordered cutting of Eucalyptus and such other trees from all government lands and urged others to refrain from planting these trees.

About the post-GAAT conditionalities, Motla said, "We have to study it more to ascertain whether its impact will be good or bad for the third world countries." She also spoke about IPM (integrated pest management) and evolving low-cost agro-technology.

Other speakers stressed on establishing the right of LDCs on bio-diversity and raised a note of caution that new laws are in the offing under World Trade Organisation (WTO) to curb their rights on seeds and agro-products.

Other speakers included Dr Vandana Shiva of Research Foundation for Science, Technology and Ecology (India), Kristin Dawkins of Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy (USA), Jean Christie of Rural Advancement Foundation International (Canada), Sebastian Matthew of International Collective in Support of Fishworkers (India), Meenakshi Raman of Consumers Association of Penang (Malaysia), Ahmed Selim, a renowned poet from Pakistan, Manzurul Ahsan Khan of Communist Party of Bangladesh, Hasanul Haq Inu of JSD (Inu) and Farhad Mazhar, director of the UBING

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PDB employees demonstrate to press their 11-pt demand

By Staff Correspondent

Workers of the Bangladesh Power Development Board are holding countrywide demonstrations to press home their 11-point charter of demands including withdrawal of the government decision to hand over the power distribution zones of BPDB to the Power Grid Company of Bangladesh (PGCB).

A group of workers yesterday brought out a procession inside the Biddut Bhawan in Motijheel. They are scheduled to hold a large rally in front of WAPDA building tomorrow.

Led by Bangladesh Jatiya Biddut Samik Karmachari Union, which dominates the Combined Bargaining Agent of the BPDB, the workers and employees at the BPDB offices in Chittagong, Sylhet, Khulna, Barisal and Dhaka have launched a series of demonstration programmes from July 28 last.

The other demands of CBA include immediate implementation of the new pay scale and various agreements signed with the CBA, withdrawal of the decision to import power from a foreign country, stoppage of all types of 'politically motivated' transfers of workers and cancellation of the 'contracting out' of four power distribution and management areas to private sector in Chandpur, Tangail, Kustia and Dinajpur.

Clinton

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Clinton gave an indication that he would come to Dhaka while he would undertake a trip to South Asia.

When contacted, a senior diplomat in the Foreign Office said, "We are not ignorant of this development."

He said US Assistant Secretary for South Asia Carl Derfuth would come to Dhaka on September 10. He might communicate to Prime Minister Hasina about Clinton's planned visit.

Loadshedding in city

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MW in key areas covered by substations like Tejgaon, Satmasjid Road and Kamalapur, the DESA sources said.

As the DESA engineers and technicians grapple with a system that appears to have gone errand, baffled residents find it difficult to cope with the situation.

The power shortage also disrupts water supply adding to the miseries of people.

In addition, frequent voltage fluctuations are also damaging domestic appliances like televisions, refrigerators, water pumps, washing machines and computers.

The DESA System Control officials said that the voltage fluctuations were due to problems in the local distribution lines. But insiders say there are trouble in the whole system of regulating the voltage in the capital. A number of regulators are not working. The auto-system being controlled manually sometimes cause havoc in the flow, according to a DESA source. But DESA officially

would not admit it.

While shops continue to use power defying an official order to close the shops by 7 pm, students, senior citizens and the general public suffer silently in darkness in the stifling heat and humidity.

Official sources said the situation is unlikely to improve very soon as the PDB is wrestling to reopen the power units at Kaptai, where a unit is going through maintenance cutting output from 230 MW to 150 MW.

In the Chittagong region power supply has been reduced by half.

In Raonan two units have been shut down for maintenance and Shikabaha is only producing half of its 60 MW capacity. Besides, two units of Ashuganj and Bheramara power plants and one unit each in Khulna and Siddhirganj are going through repairs.

The situation in Khulna and the south-western region is also critical. Out of the requirement of about 300 MW, the region is getting only about 100 MW.



Dhaka University Teachers' Association brought out a silent procession on the campus yesterday protesting the recent attack on the Vice Chancellor and some teachers by JCD activists.

— Star photo

Crime: 1500 acres of land

From page 1

istry and other departments said in many cases, the actual owners could not be found. One such case is the land on both sides of the Tongi Diversion Road. Nobody knew who owned the land. So, illegal shops, houses and businesses have mushroomed there over the years.

Town planners in RAJUK and DCC said this sort of negligence has been caused by unplanned and haphazard growth of the city.

Among other land grabbers are political parties, especially their local offices. Once the local partymen grab a land and set up an office, it is never an easy job for anyone to evict them unless the party leadership takes interest in it. "If it is the office of the party in power, none will dare to touch it," said a DCC official.

Next in the list comes the trade union offices. After grabbing an empty space the unionists quickly move to the Labour Directorate and get the premises registered. Then they display the registration number prominently and use that as a basis for their 'right to remain' there. Roadside land is usually the prime target of the unionists.

Another common tactic to grab land in the city is building a mosque or declaring a site a 'shrine' of a pious man. City's waterlogging problem could not be solved for years as two mosques — one at Fakirpool and the other near Notre Dame College — were illegally built, encroaching the water outlet.

WASA's sewerage officials, in the face of criticism from mem-

bers of the public last year, reached an understanding with the mosque committees for an unspecified amount of money to clear the site.

The DCC will face a tough test while implementing its Shadmondi Lake Project, scheduled to start soon. Lake-side land owners have grabbed more than seven acres of government land extending their boundary walls or even constructing buildings, according to a survey conducted by the PWD two years ago. Several moves by the government to recover the land failed as the grabbers are none other than top government officials or big

shots in the society.

A Land Ministry official said this 'lawlessness' has to be stopped. "The city canals are khas lands. Where are they today? Why are they letting the city protection embankment to become the fastest growing slum?" he asked.

Bangladesh Railway (BR) is one of the largest landowners in the country with 61,839.31 acres in its eastern and western zones. It has recently identified that a total of 5,907.90 acres of its land is 'abandoned' while 1,459.97 acres are illegally occupied by other government departments. BR sources said a rather small portion, totalling 419.23 acres, is occupied by individuals. Failing to recover this land, BR is now planning to sell or lease it to the occupiers.

Despite several attempts it was not possible to know exactly how much land DCC owned in the city. Some officials there alleged that some DCC lands have been grabbed by its own employees. They have even removed valuable land documents from the archive so that nobody can detect the misfortune, an official explained. According to a top DCC functionary, at least 120 acres of its land is now under illegal occupation. "We have magistrates working for us but there is a mysterious silence when it comes to recovering the land," the official said.

Officials and individuals interviewed on the subject were of the opinion that the city Mayor should play a more active role to resolve this problem.

Salman Shah

From page 1

They were questioned by CID officials Senior Superintendent Abdul Hannan Khan, Additional SP Subodh Chandra Chanda and investigation officer ASP Khalequzzaman.

Sources close to the investigators said Kamruddin and Neela Chowdhury could not give any satisfactory answer as to why their vehicle was used in taking Reza Ahmed from Cantonment thana to the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's Court on July 22.

The parents also failed to satisfy the investigators as to why they stayed for a long time at the Cantonment police station, where Reza was detained after his arrest on July 20 from their house.

Jaglu, brother of Neela Chowdhury, was a witness while the 'surathal' report of Salman's body was prepared after his death on September 6, 1996.

Qul Khwani



Qul Khwani of Late Mrs Hosne Ara Karim, former Director-General of the Foreign Ministry and wife of Late Md Enayet Karim, former Foreign Secretary, will be held today, Tuesday, August 19, 1997, at her daughter's residence at House No: 1/A, Road No: 123, Gulshan after Asr prayers.

All relatives, friends and well wishers are requested to attend and pray for the departed soul.

Family Members

Editor: Mahfuz Anam

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