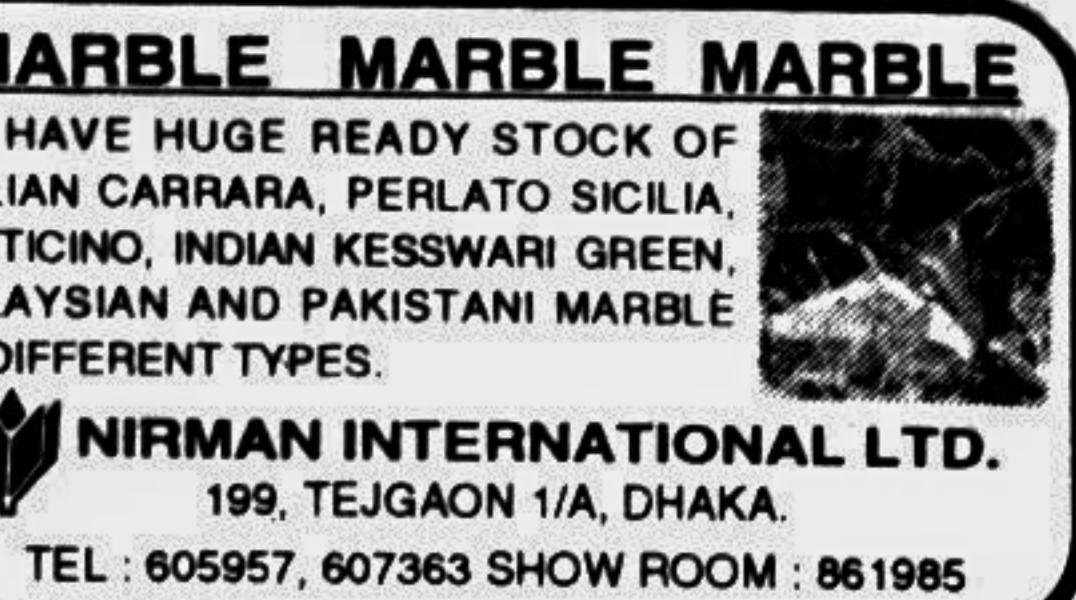




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Jessore-Benapole rail line may be restored by June next

Star Report

The Jessore-Benapole rail line is expected to be restored by the end of the current fiscal after about 23 years, according to sources in the Ministry of Communications.

Earth filling work and repair of culverts and bridges in the 40-km route is nearing completion and the track laying work will be done in six months after sleepers are procured, the sources added.

The Planning Commission recently allocated Tk 20 crore for the project. An ADB allocation of Tk one crore sanctioned in fiscal 96-97 has already been utilised.

The Indian Railway Authorities will supply the re-

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New 10-taka note bearing portrait of Bangabandhu

Star Business Report

A new 10-taka note bearing the portrait of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman will be in circulation from December 16, the Victory Day.

Sources say the Bangladeshi Bank plans to print 20 crore pieces of the note, worth Tk 200 crore.

Officials at the Security Printing Company confirmed that its Managing Director AH Tawfiq Ahmed said he had received such an instruction from the central bank, but did not give details.

One official said December 16 was still a "tentative" date. "It depends on the availability of paper and ink."

They have however "finalised the design and other technicalities" and are prepared to do the job if paper and ink are made available.

Hasina to attend Teresa's funeral

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina will attend the state funeral of Mother Teresa in Calcutta on Saturday, reports UNB.

Foreign Minister Abdus Samad Azad said in the city yesterday.

The details of her participation in the funeral are being worked out," Azad added.

Hasina, who is now in Manila, is scheduled to return home today.

Star Magazine

Read all about Mother Teresa in this week's Star Weekend Magazine



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Corruption, irregularities rampant in edn boards Audit objections involving hundreds of crores of taka unanswered

By Mizan Ali

Audit objections involving hundreds of crores of taka of the education boards in the country were not settled or answered since Independence, according to the Task Force report submitted to the Education minister recently, official sources said.

"Corruption, nepotism, violation of rules, misappropriation of funds, irregularities in promotion of staff members, opening of new schools, colleges and examination centres, unfair practices in tabulation of results, malpractices in purchasing and selling of goods, tussle between permanent staff

members and officials on depu-tation have literally crippled functioning of the boards.

The government did not take any effective step against some of these irregularities regarding which inquiry reports were submitted to the divisions concerned in the ministry," earlier also the report said.

The nine-member Task Force headed by Dr Nazrul Islam was formed on April 3 for reviewing the activities and management of country's education boards.

The Task Force conducted a four-month long investigation, examination and evaluation of

the activities of Secondary and Higher Secondary education boards of Dhaka, Rajshahi, Jessor and Comilla; Bangladesh Madrasah Education Board; Bangladesh Vocational Education Board and the National Curriculum and Text Book Board.

It also examined five years' audit report of the boards.

The Task Force also recommended remedial measures to improve performance of the education boards.

The Task Force report said, "Objections raised in the audit reports of the last five years involving Tk 111,72,25,726/79

are yet to be settled". The report also said that the audit objections raised since the Independence of the country has not been sorted out so far.

Raising objections in the audit reports and taking no follow-up action against those seems to have become a custom. The auditors have identified those responsible for financial discrepancies and even recommended measures against them. None seem to have been punished for such irregularities so far."

The remedial measures suggest Page 12 Col 1



Relatives attending a patient at the Bangabandhu Medical University (formerly PG Hospital) yesterday on the indefinite strike by nurses continued.

We want AL to apologise to people once again: Khaleda

By Staff Correspondent

Leader of the Opposition in Jatiya Sangsad and BNP chief Begum Khaleda Zia yesterday claimed that her party was under constant pressure from the people to launch an oust-government movement, but it was waiting to see the "liar" government apologise to the people once again.

"Before the elections, they had apologised to the people for their past misdeeds but resumed all those practices after returning to power... We want them to beg pardon once more for their wrong-doings. They must do...", the BNP chief told the 19th founding anniversary function of her party's women's front — Jatiyatabdhi Mahila Dal — at her Minto Road official residence in the evening.

The former prime minister, in her first public speech after

returning from a 15-day tour to Pakistan and United States, said, "The country is now suffering from the worst-ever crisis of image abroad though the present government claims to have restored the country's image abroad."

"People at home and abroad don't believe this liar government. They don't have any confidence in the incompetent government. Foreign investors are unwilling to come here because of the law and order situation and terrorism by the ruling party," she told the gathering.

Blaming the ruling Awami League for "pushing the country back to the state of '72-'75 period," the Opposition leader said the words bottomless basket were again being heard now.

Asking the government to

refrain from all activities opposed to the interests of the people and the country, the BNP chief said. "Otherwise, we'll be left with no option but to wage a massive street agitation. We're now in agitation to protect the national sovereignty and the people's rights. We'll have nothing to do if such an agitation topples the government."

Accusing the government of ignoring the Jatiya Sangsad, the Leader of the Opposition said her party would decide its role as the Opposition in parliament in consultation with the party lawmakers if the 14-point demands were not met. In this regard, she added one more demand — cancellation of a government circular renaming the Zia International Airport.

The injured nurses were Rehana Khatun, Nur Jahan, Shandhya Kabir Shekhar and

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Patients suffer as strike at PG continues

By Staff Correspondent

All operations, except those in the emergency section, were stopped at the Bangabandhu Medical University (formerly PG Hospital) while sufferings of patients mounted as the indefinite strike by nurses continued yesterday.

Relatives were seen helping their patients, at times with doctors assistance.

"There is virtually no activity at all," said an attending doctor. "Many patients badly need supervision round the clock. We are attending those patients who have no one to look after," the doctor said.

Meanwhile, four nurses and one Class Four employee were injured when women police clubbed demonstrating nurses trying to force their way to the first floor to meet the Director of the hospital.

The injured nurses were Rehana Khatun, Nur Jahan, Shandhya Kabir Shekhar and

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— Star photo

Rampant corruption in Titas Gas alleged

By Sharier Khan

An unscrupulous section of employees of Titas Gas Transmission and Distribution Company Ltd, backed by a strong lobby in the management, has been causing more than Tk 40 crore revenue loss to the organisation every year, according to official sources.

Corruption in the company has reached such an extent that Titas Gas Officers' Welfare Association in an unprecedented move recently, adopted a resolution at a meeting alleging that corruption practices and irregularities were leading the organisation to destruction.

Presided over by acting pres-

ident of the Association Mofitul Alam Khan, the meeting blamed the Titas Gas management for sheltering a section of corrupt employees and harassing the honest ones. The association demanded replacement of the current management.

Although a profitable organisation, the system loss of Titas Gas has been ranged from 7 to 9.22 per cent in the recent years as against less than two per cent before 1989.

The technical system loss of Titas Gas is only 1.52 per cent.

The overall system loss at present is about 8 per cent while it was 7.78 per cent last year.

According to the annual report of the company for '95-'96 published on August 21 last, system loss worth Tk 39 crore was due to non-technical and distribution loss. The loss stood at Tk 41 crore in the previous year.

The sources pointed out that although 8 per cent system loss appeared tolerable, it was actually "massive" since it was being caused only by the industrial consumers.

There are more than 1700 industrial consumers, of whom some 200 have "unfair" links

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overnment itself, pilferage is out of question, they said.

Industrial consumers purchase 10.76 per cent of gas, commercial consumers 1.16 per cent and domestic consumers 9 per cent.

The sources alleged that under the patronage of a strong lobby in the management, an unscrupulous section of employees, mostly field workers, favour some large industrial consumers in exchange of money.

There are more than 1700 industrial consumers, of whom some 200 have "unfair" links

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There are more than 1700 industrial consumers, of whom some 200 have "unfair" links

See Page 12 Col 3

RB asked to publish results of 6686 within 30 days

From M A Ali

RAJSHAHI, Sept 9: The court of Senior Assistant Judge, Rajshahi today gave permission to the Rajshahi Education Board to publish the results of HSC examination on the scheduled date, court sources said.

Along with the permission, the judge also ordered the Board to publish within 30 days the results of 6,686 HSC examinees whose examinations were to be cancelled due to alleged irregularities.

The court also ordered the Board to report about the results of the 6,686 examinees.

Advocate Mohammad Ali moved the case in the court for Rajshahi Education Board and Mohammad Yahia moved for the plaintiffs.

The Rajshahi Education Board on May 20, 1997 took the decision to cancel the examinations of the 6,686 examinees.

Amirul Islam and Rezaul Islam Rony, two retained students who appeared in the examination from M A Hadi College of Charchhat thana under Rajshahi district, challenging the board's decision filed an petition seeking an ad-interim order restraining the Board from implementing the decision taken on May 20.

The two plaintiffs later filed a case on September 3, terming the decision "illegal" and seeking a permanent injunction on the decision to cancel examinations of the 6,686 examinees.

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HSC results tomorrow

Results of the HSC (Higher Secondary Certificate) examinations of 1997 under five education boards will be published tomorrow simultaneously, reports UNB.

An official handout yesterday said the results will be available at the examination centres after 4 pm. Examinees have been asked to have their results from their respective colleges or centres.

The results will not be available at the Education Board offices, Education Ministry or newspaper offices, the handout added.

Talks tomorrow
US Asst Secy of State arrives today

Bangladesh and the United States will hold official talks here tomorrow to review existing bilateral relations and find avenues to bolster Dhaka-Washington ties, reports UNB.

US Assistant Secretary of State for South Asian Affairs Karl F. Rutherford who arrives here today will lead his country's side at the talks to be held at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Foreign Secretary Farooq Sobhan will head the home side at the meeting that will cover the entire gamut of bilateral relations as well as regional and international issues of common concern.

Though there is no specific agenda for the meeting, it is likely to deal with expansion of trade, economic cooperation and American investment in Bangladesh.

Babri Mosque issue
Advani, Thackeray, Joshi, 46 others charged

NEW DELHI, Sept 9: An Indian court today slapped charges of rioting and criminal conspiracy on 49 Hindu politicians and religious leaders for destroying a 16th-century mosque five years ago, reports AFP.

Judge JP Shrivastava framed the charges against, among others, Hindu national leaders Lal Krishna Advani and Bal Thackeray in a court in the northern city of Lucknow.

The United News of India (UNI) said they were charged with criminal conspiracy, rioting, promoting religious enmity between different groups of people, hurting religious sentiments and damaging a place of worship.

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Rival transport workers clash at Bahaddarhat: 20 injured

From Staff Correspondent

CHITTAGONG, Sept 9: At least 20 people including two police personnel were injured in a pitch battle between two rival groups of transport workers at Bahaddarhat bus terminal this afternoon, police said.

Among the injured, 10 people were rushed to Chittagong Medical College Hospital while others were admitted to private

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Business leaders in Manila offered Lucrative incentives, unlimited ownership

By Staff Correspondent

When troops of the First Bengal Lancer assembled for night parade at about 3:30 am on August 15, 1975, they were told that Bangabandhu would proclaim monarchy in the country. Sirajul Huq, twelfth prosecution witness in the Bangabandhu murder case told the court yesterday.

Huq, then an Assistant Lance Dafadar, was among the troops. He was later dismissed from service.

The troops on parade were ordered to collect ammunition and carry out instructions of superior officers. Huq said they were brought to road No. 32, Dhamondi, in a truck through the Mirpur Road.

At around 2:00 pm on August 14, 1975, Squadron Dafadar Maj Bashir Ahmed instructed us to remain present at the night parade which will be

valuable partners in progress of Bangladesh.</