

PACKAGES DOCUMENTS & FREIGHT WORLDWIDE



For more information call-Dhaka: 9665114, 807857, 807771,
Chittagong: (031) 712127, Khulna: (041) 725008, N. Ganj: (871) 74336

FedEx
Federal Express

The World on Time



Some ministers and Awami League leaders listening to party workers at the party central office in the city yesterday. — Star photo

Job-oriented education policy soon: PM

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday said the government would formulate a scientific, liberal and job-oriented education policy, reports UNB.

The proposed education policy will be a unified one. "For national unity a unified education policy is imperative," she said.

Talking to a 41-member delegation of BCS General Education Association at her office, the Prime Minister said the government was determined to upgrade the standard of education.

Hasina told them without sincere efforts of the teachers this goal could not be achieved. "We, along with the people, want to build the nation and

Ershad

From Page 1

that the government is selling out the country's interests, Ershad said it is the BNP which had sold it out. The country was made open for Indian goods through SAPTA agreement during the BNP rule, he added.

Turning to Indo-Bangla relations, he said it is not possible to resolve any bilateral problem making the relations hostile. "All the problems will have to be resolved through friendship and bilateral cooperation."

Ending his three-day organizational tour in the district, the JP Chairman today returned to the capital. On way to Dhaka, he addressed a public meeting at Dhunat Pilot School ground in the afternoon.

He told the meeting that if the government withdraws army from the Chittagong Hill Tracts, the region will no longer exist as part of the country. "It will be a suicidal decision. Don't withdraw the army from the CHT."

Power tariff

From Page 1

not be interested to sell power to the government at the current 'poor' rate.

However, 20-year flat rates of power were offered by private power company AES in the case of 300 MW-450 MW Meghnaghat power project and the 300 MW Haripur scheme. AES quoted Tk 1.16 (2.79 US cents) and Tk 1.14 (2.73 US cents) per kilowatt hour (kwh) respectively. Both these proposals were accepted and contracts were awarded to AES.

"These rates are much lower than that of the Bangladesh Power Development Board and show that the current tariff is already more than attractive," said an energy expert.

Besides, 20-year flat rates of power offered by two private companies, which signed agreements with the government for installing two large mounted power units, was 5.21 US cents, which also is lower than the current rate. Since large mounted units use imported fuel as the main raw material, cost of power is usually higher than that in other units.

Initially, the Asian Development Bank had tagged the increase of power tariff by 25 per cent with its financing of the 9th power project. After a series of negotiations, the government agreed to increase tariff by 15 per cent. It had argued with the ADB that further increase would not be possible as it would mount sufferings of the people.

The government had accordingly increased the tariff by 10 per cent in October, but did not increase it by 5 per cent in December. Instead, it increased the rate by 5 per cent in March and added another five paise increase under the 'dollar rate fluctuation formula' with that hike (together the percentage comes to around 7 per cent).

Editor: Mahfuz Alam

Printed by the Editor from City Publishing House Ltd., 90 Kakrail, Dhaka-1000 and published by him on behalf of Mediaworld Ltd., 52 Motiheel C.A., Dhaka-1000. Editorial, News & Commercial Offices: House No. 11, Road No. 3, Dhanmandi RA, Dhaka-1205. PABX: 500092-4, Commercial: 500091, Fax No: 88-02-863035, GPO Box No: 3257, Cable: DAILYSTAR, DHAKA. Internet edition address: <http://www.dailystarnews.com> and Email address: dstar@bangla.net

The Daily Star

Trade accord with Romania signed

Bangladesh and Romania signed a trade agreement in Bucharest yesterday for bolstering bilateral trade links, reports UNB.

Commerce and Industries Minister Tofael Ahmed, now in Bucharest, and his Romanian counterpart Calin Popescu Taricenu signed the agreement on behalf of their respective governments, according to a message received in Dhaka.

Under the accord, the two countries will initiate all-out steps to encourage, facilitate and expand bilateral trade and economic relations on a long-term basis.

Both the countries have agreed to exchange frequent visits at both public and private levels, participate in trade fairs and exhibitions, and on sharing information.

They have also agreed to provide each other the most nation (MFN) treatment and exempt customs duty on the import of some goods and services used for specific purposes.

While signing the agreement, Tofael Ahmed said it would pave the way for ushering in a new chapter of cooperation between Bangladesh and Romania.

Tofael said now the chamber houses and other business communities of both countries can take the lead for full exploitation of the opportunities

incorporated in the agreement. Through the government of Romania, he invited the businessmen of that country to take part in Dhaka's annual international trade fair.

Speaking on the occasion, the Romanian minister said the agreement would facilitate expansion of industrial and commercial cooperation between the two countries.

Earlier, Tofael Ahmed had official talks with his Romanian counterpart on bilateral issues, including trade and commerce.

The Romanian side expressed eagerness to import raw jute, leather and garments in a bigger way from Bangladesh.

India, Pakistan resume talks today

NEW DELHI, Sept 15: India and Pakistan resume a fragile dialogue here on today to try to build trust after tensions caused by cross-border artillery duels in disputed Kashmir and tit-for-tat expulsions of diplomats, reports Reuters.

Pakistani Foreign Secretary Shamshad Ahmad arrived in the Indian capital today and said the two countries aim to activate working groups on issues that divide them during the three-day talks.

But hopes for improving ties have dimmed due to the Kashmir artillery exchanges over the past two months, and expulsions of junior embassy personnel announced over the weekend.

The cross-border firing and the expulsions on the eve of the talks have made things pretty tense. Jyotindra Nath Dixit, a former Indian foreign secretary said.

Mowla takes over as JS Sect Secy

Kazi Muhammad Munzur-e-Mowla took over as the Secretary of the Jatiya Sangsad Secretariat on September 11, an official handout said in the city yesterday, reports BSS.

Before joining the present post, he was secretary of the Ministry of Defence. He has been appointed in his present post for three years on contract basis with effect from October 1, 1997, the handout said.

Panic in Bangkok

BANGKOK, Sept 15: The first of 3,000 troops the army plans to move into Bangkok for a military ceremony were to arrive in the capital today amid appeals to the public not to worry about a possible coup, reports AP.

The troops movements coincide with reports a key party in Prime Minister Chavalit Yongchaiyudh's embattled coalition, which faces a no-confidence motion and a crucial vote on constitutional reform in the next two weeks, is maneuvering to quit his government.

Senior army commanders pressured Chavalit last week to back down on his opposition to a draft constitution aimed at cleaning up political corruption partly blamed for a national economic crisis felt throughout Southeast Asia.

Thailand has long been prone to military coups. The army has generally kept out of politics since the last military government ended after bloody street protests in 1992.

But rumors of takeover have fluctuated with the worsening of the current crisis, and the military has taken the unusual step of issuing a statement saying troop movements in Bangkok this month were no cause for worry.

BAC to probe scam

From Page 1
make Tk 1.75 crore available to Baghkhali Fisheries, in which the Rahman brothers and their Beximco Group allegedly have an interest.

The money was needed, according to 'rescheduling' terms, to pay 15 per cent of an overdue loan amounting to Tk 9.93 crore, originally in the form of export cash credit, but later turned into a term loan in violation of banking rules.

Cheques drawn on different accounts to pay for the required sum bounced one after another. All these went against accepted banking practices, according to IFIC sources quoting the central bank inquiry.

Asked, top Bangladesh Bank officials remained tight-lipped. Officials at Bureau were not also forthcoming.

The Baghkhali affair, along with other transactions, only created new loans of Tk 8.80 crore with the IFIC Dhanmondi branch as on July 30 this year.

It was also found to have agreed to extremely favourable rescheduling terms, which gave Baghkhali Fisheries eight years to repay, from October 1 1997 to October 1 2004, with a low nine per cent rate of interest. The usual is 15 per cent.

The bank also violated a major clause of the Banking Company Act, by not seeking the Bangladesh Bank approval, mandatory when the loan amount exceeds 15 per cent of a bank's capital and reserves.

In this case, the loan amount was 20.57 per cent of the total

capital of the bank.

Contacted yesterday, managing director Abbas Uddin Ahmed again wouldn't say "anything".

"There are so many inquiries done by the Bangladesh Bank. I have no knowledge of any such (the one of Sunday's) inquiry," he said, in response to The Daily Star query. "There are no irregularities," he reported.

The Dandy episode was also a work of the bank's Dhanmondi branch.

A Tk 70 lakh loan was sanctioned against a 'so-called work order' of the mostly family-owned company. The money was received by a firm called Messrs. Anna (pvt) Ltd, which the central bank inquiry found did not exist at all.

The central bank inspectors detected that the loan had been given without any collateral and had never been serviced.

The process of sanctioning the loan also ran at an unusual speed, with the money being paid before it had been approved, according to the sources.

The third episode brought to the notice of the anti-corruption investigators saw Mohammad Yusuf receive a Tk 20 lakh loan against property already acquired by the government.

In this case, the Bangladesh Bank inspectors found, the IFIC branch acted against the opinion of their legal adviser, and had not conducted an on-the-spot inquiry.

Dacoity at Kalabagan: 3 arrested

By Staff Correspondent

Dacoits robbed cash, gold ornaments and valuables worth about Tk 86,000 from a house at Kalabagan under Dhanmondi thana in the city Sunday night.

A gang of about six unidentified armed men attacked the house of Kutubuddin Ahmed Chowdhury at Lake Circus in Kalabagan area at about 11 pm.

Dhanmondi police arrested three persons, including a woman as suspects from the adjacent Kathalagan area yesterday morning. Police were interrogating them.

Quoting the FIR, police said the dacoits first rang the calling bell. The attackers stormed into the house as soon as a family member opened the main entrance.

Tying up the inmates of the house, the gang took away the gold ornaments, cash and other valuables and left the house after about an hour half operation.

The owner of the house, Kutubuddin Ahmed Chowdhury, filed a case with Dhanmondi thana in this connection.

50 hurt as storm lashes 7 villages in Sirajganj

SIRAJGANJ, Sept 15: At least 50 people were injured and 500 houses damaged when a storm lashed seven villages in Sadar and Kazipur thanas today, reports UNB.

Officials said the storm, with a speed of about 75 kph, hit Kuraila and Chigacha in Sadar thana, and Boukhola, Shingabari, Bangabazar and Simantabazar in Kazipur thana at about 1.30 pm. It lasted for about half an hour.

Rabul Haq, a teacher of Simantabazar Mohila College, was critically injured when the college building raged to the ground during the storm. He was rushed to Dhaka for treatment.

Total lunar eclipse tonight

A total lunar eclipse will take place tonight, reports BSS. According to the Bangladesh Meteorological Department, the eclipse will begin at 11:8 pm and end at 2:25 am.

The magnitude of the eclipse will be 1.97 and it will be visible all over Bangladesh, said an ISPR press release.

RB showcase

From Page 1

"guilty persons" has begun. "We have also formed an enquiry committee to probe whether any Board officials are involved," he said.

Of the total 282 colleges at least 15 are government colleges, the sources said. The Board Committee at its meeting today cancelled examinations of 456 examinees for committing "major irregularities".

The Committee also took a decision to publish the results of 6,230 retained examinees who changed their colleges without transfer certificates.

DCC concerned

From Page 1

lic," said a DCC press release. "The DCC urged all concerned to hold meeting at the places earmarked by the government in the interest of the city dwellers."

Holding such meetings at places other than the selected venues is unexpected, the DCC release said.

The government-designated meeting venues are Golapbagh Stadium, Bashabo Ground, Agargaon Parade Square, Mirpur-1 School Ground, Ground opposite to the Azad office, southeastern part of Osmani Uddyan and Outer Stadium.

Benazir

From Page 1

ings in Pakistan and the frozen assets, it said.

Swiss authorities will decide if further action is warranted after receiving the formal request.

The Swiss government has also agreed to block accounts of about half a dozen foreign-based firms in which Benazir and her husband Asif Ali Zardari had a 'covert' partnership, said Senator Saifur Rahman, in charge of a government commission dealing with corruption cases.

"It is a major milestone" in the government's drive to unearth a case of 'loot and plunder' by the previous government, he told a news conference.

Law Minister Anwar Khalid who was also present at the news conference said, "the Swiss laws are quite tough" and the authorities there can not be influenced easily, he said.

The Swiss government acted on the basis of 'evidence' considered reliable. Anwar said as officials claimed they had documentary evidence to prove the transactions were ill-gotten.

Bangabandhu murder

From Page 1

hearing of the case, because newspaper reports revealed that the judge had met a diplomat who observed the proceedings of the case on Wednesday last.

Rejecting the petition, District and Sessions Judge Kazi Golam Rasul said, "I assure you that I did not have any such meeting with anyone." The reporter concerned apologised to the court saying what had appeared in the newspaper was a printing mistake.

The lawyer then pleaded that continuation of the proceedings after the prayer for adjournment under Section 526 (8) of the Code of Criminal Procedure raised apprehension regarding fair trial for his client.

The judge said, "Please ascertain the authenticity of the incident before blaming the court of its neutrality. I do not see any reason why the proceedings should be adjourned now. The proceedings will continue, till the higher court stops the proceedings of the case or it gets stopped by some other ways."

In his deposition the PW-13 also said that he had seen Maj Khandaker Abdur Rashid of the Second Field Artillery visiting the First Bengal Lancer Unit in the later hours of August 14, 1975.

"Maj Farook had left the unit along with Maj Rashid but had returned after sometime."

"Because of the scheduled parade of the Second Field Artillery at Balurghat on that night, the parade of the Bengal Lancer Unit was held in our own parade ground."

"At around 3:30 am, Risaldar Moslemuddin, along with Dafader Marfat Ali Shah and ALD Abul Hashem Mridha boarded a truck and asked me to follow their truck."

He further said, "An officer boarded my jeep and some jawans of the Second Field

Artillery also followed him. We reached Mohakhali where we saw Artillery forces. Some forces also boarded the truck of Moslemuddin."

"The convoy reached Mirpur Road via Farm Gate and went to Sat Masjid Road crossing the Dhanmondi field. Then it moved towards the south and stopped after crossing a lake."

Risaldar Moslemuddin, Dafader Marfat Ali Shah and Abul Hashem Mridha got down from their vehicle along with others and rushed to a two-storied building. I heard noise of gun shots at the first floor of the house and the group returned soon after."

"As we reached the entry point of Rd No. 32 at the Mirpur Road, I asked Dafader Marfat Ali whose house was that. He told me that they had killed Sheikh Moni and his wife there."

"On arrival at the entry point of Rd No. 32, Risaldar Moslemuddin, Dafader Marfat Ali Shah and Abul Hashem Mridha had left for the residence of Bangabandhu located on that road," he said.

"Maj Farook then came in a tank and ordered me to go to the Radio Station. He came to Mirpur Road through Rd No. 32. We left for the Radio Station as Risaldar Moslemuddin, Dafader Marfat Ali Shah and Abul Hashem Mridha came back and boarded the vehicle."

60 kg python caught in Sylhet

SYLHET, Sept 15: Workers at Malnichhara Tea Garden in the divisional town caught a python weighing about 60 kg this afternoon, reports UNB.

The python, which was caught alive by a group of about 15 workers of the garden, will be handed over to the Forest Department tomorrow.

Rail, road barricade

From Page 1

"jeopardising" the country's sovereignty by selling out all national interests to India, Begum Zia alleged. "They're acting to turn the country into a vassal state. No such intrigues will be allowed to succeed. We can't sit idle when our independence is at stake because we earned independence through a bloody struggle."

In her 28-minute speech, Begum Zia dwelt on all major issues of national interest and castigated the 15-month-old government of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina for its "failure in all sectors."

Blasting the authorities for not granting permission to her party to hold yesterday's public meeting on the road adjacent to the BNP central office, she said the government spoke of democracy but denied democratic rights to its opponents.

In this context, the BNP chief demanded immediate withdrawal of the ban on public gathering around Baitul Mokarram Mosque. Otherwise, she warned, the people would defy the ban just as they did in holding yesterday's meeting.

Earlier, the Dhaka City Corporation denied the BNP permission to hold the meeting on the street and urged the party to use any of the venues it (DCC) had selected for the purpose. The DCC decision was announced last week to 'avoid traffic congestion'. BNP protested the decision.

The authorities, however, did obstruct BNP in holding the meeting on the street, the first such programme since the DCC decision was announced.

The former prime minister charged the ruling party with politicising the administration and using the police for party interests. "The sincere police officials, unwilling to carry out illegal orders, are either being transferred or suspended," she said and announced that such police officials would be reinstated once her party returned to power.

Begum Zia accused the AL government of telling lies frequently about its performance, its election pledges and the rule by the previous BNP government.

Elaborating, she said, the ruling party begged people's apology before the elections for its past misdeeds and promised not to repeat those if voted to power. But, she added, returning to power through a rigged election, it had started the same old practice of working against the interests of the people.

Reminding AL's election pledge to ensure price of jute at Tk 500 per maund, the BNP chief said "now a farmer can't buy a saree or a lungi by selling one maund of jute." It had miserably failed to protect the interests of farmers, industrial workers, government employees and businessmen. In this regard, she criticised the government for not yet implementing the national pay scale for public servants and not taking steps to increase wages of industrial workers.

The former prime minister said they (AL rulers) claimed no industrial development took place under the BNP government but were compelled to admit in parliament that

82,000 new industrial units were set up during the BNP rule.

Referring to the government initiative to resolve the long-standing CHT problem, Begum Zia said, "No extra-constitutional solution will be accepted."

Referring to her Sunday's visit to Shayestaganj, where a bridge over the Khawal river was damaged, the BNP leader said greater Sylhet had been isolated from the rest of the country. The government is so incompetent that it could not take any step as yet to repair the bridge, she added.

Begum Zia was also critical of the government for the share market scam, fresh taxes in the budget, 'liquidity crisis' in the banks, lack of foreign investments in the country and frustration among the business community.

Chaired by city BNP convener Sadek Hossain Khoka, MP, the meeting was also addressed by, among others, Deputy Leader of the Opposition in Jatiya Sangsad Prof. Badruddoza Choudhury, party secretary general Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan, MP, Abul Salam Talukdar, Abul Hasnat, Tariqul Islam and Sirajul Hossain Khan.

UK minister

From Page 1

The British minister hoped that the government would successfully implement the development programmes.

When her attention was drawn to a ban on import of frozen fish and readymade garments from Bangladesh by the EU countries, Short said Britain was ready to help Bangladesh in this respect.

But the quality and standard of the items would have to be raised, she asserted.

She told another questioner that she had discussed with Foreign Minister Abus Samad Azad the Bhairab bridge project during his just-concluded visit to Britain.

"I'll proceed with the project during the trip," said the British minister.

Replying to a question from a BBC correspondent, Sport said: "Political consideration is taken into account in giving the aid."

Finance Minister Shah A M S Kibria, who received the British minister at the airport, described the visit as 'significant'. It would further strengthen the ties between the two countries, he hoped.

ERD Secretary Masihur Rahman, British High Commissioner to Bangladesh David C Walker and Additional Foreign Secretary Aminul Islam were present at the airport.

The British minister will hold talks with the Finance Minister on bilateral matters, particularly on economic cooperation and flow of the British aid into Bangladesh.

Issues relating to embargo on imports of frozen fishes and GSP on readymade garments from Bangladesh into European countries are likely to figure prominently in the talks.

Short, leading a 6-member delegation, will also call on Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina.