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The World on Time

## Down to Earth

## Turmoil in Bus and Launch Terminals

A most disconcerting issue is: In whose hands lies the control of the city's bus terminals and transport sector? The issue is undoubtedly a ticklish one on account of the absence of a clear picture of the operating control mechanism. Certain aspects of it, however, appear to be somewhat clear.

elements which keep the terminals under their control are mercenaries who just carry out the command of the upper echeion of the control structure. It is said that the political godfathers aren't the actual wielders of power, for their term of influence ends with the change of political scene. It is widely believed that the real power is held by sections of toll-collecting transport owners and labour leaders. Governments may come and go, but these powerful elements continue to play their roles irrespective of the political changes. As a result, it is alleged that from humble origins, these elements rose to become millionaires.

Some examples are cited of such rapid rise to heights of riches. One leader of a terminal's transport owners' association was said to have been a bus driver; another reportedly started his career as a small shop owner; a third one was said to be an ex-employee of a government department in the beginning. In all such cases,

By AS M Nurunnabi their strategy has remained the same: when one set of titular political heads of their organisations lose ground, another new set of titular heads with links with political quarters take their place, but the elements who actually are said to wield real clout continue their games of collecting big amounts It is apparent that the armed of toll money to fill their pock-

> It is further alleged that under the aegis of different organisations of transport owners' and labour unions on the national plane, there are more than 500 branches of unions as members of the central bodies. all collections from whom go into the pockets of their leaders. who tenaciously cling to their seats of power as a means of amassing their fortunes.

It is alleged that a part of the Dhaka Road Transport Samity is the most powerful and it controls all the bus terminals of the Dhaka city. There are other allegations that all the five bus terminals of the city have become centres of criminals, leaders of toll collectors and conduits for drug trafficking. There has been emergence of new godfathers with the change of time. Under their aegis, the reign of terrorism, lawlessness, incidence of toll collection and harassment of bus passengers go on unchecked, as in the past. According to some knowledgeable sources, more than two

cial leave petition in the

Supreme Court, so if the charges

were framed today, that peti-

tion may becomes infructuous

(not fruitful)," defence counsel

Suraj Singh said. The Supreme

Court has not yet set a date for

Court dismissed an appeal by

Rao and ruled there was enough

evidence to justify the framing

of charges against the former

sweeping free-market reforms

in 1991 as head of a minority

Congress government, has said

conspiracy carry a maximum

penalty of five years in prison.

by his special security guards,

was asked to appear before the

who quit as Congress Party

chief in September 1996 after

leading the party to humiliat-

ing defeat in general elections.

has also been indicted in a

Businessman

stabbed to

death in Khulna

From Staff Correspondent

nessman, Mizanur Rahman, 30,

was stabbed to death today by

some unidentified persons at

Anjuman road under Daulatpur

KHULNA, Sept 19: A busi-

criminal fraud case.

court again on September 25.

The charges of bribery and

Rao, who was accompanied

The former prime minister,

he is innocent in the case.

Rao, who launched India's

Last week the Delhi High

hearing the appeal.

prime minister.

hundred identifiable terrorists and criminals are in control of the five bus terminals of the city. They reportedly act as private cadres of some influential bus owners and leaders of transport workers who are all engaged in the job of illegal exactions of tolls from the operators of transports in the terminals. As a result of the power struggle among different groups of transport workers' organisations, the real casualties appeared to be the absence of orderly environment, breakdown of law and order and mismanagement in the terminals.

A similarly gloomy picture afflicts the Sadarghat launch terminal which is said to have been held hostage by a circle of musclemen. There are prescribed rates of porterage, but in most cases they are not followed. Allegations are there that the porters charge much higher than the fixed rates. It was reported that a system of 'contractors' operates at the launch ghat under which the socalled contractors take the lion's share of the collections made by the porters.

As a result of the widespread harassing practices at the city's bus and launch terminals, the passengers are subjected to unbounded suffering without any prospect of relief through effective measures by the authorities concerned.

### Vote-buying case

### Charges against Rao to be framed Sept 25

NEW DELHI, Sept 19: The trial of former Indian Prime Minister P V Narasimha Rao in a vote-buying case was postponed today until next week after lawyers filed an appeal in the Supreme Court, reports

Trial court judge Ajit Bharihoke told a packed courtroom: "In view of the formal application for adjournment, the next date for framing of charges is September 25.

An impassive Rao, who faces charges of criminal conspiracy and abetting bribery, sat through the brief court proceedings. Behind him sat three of his former cabinet colleagues and two former chief ministers. all accused of buying votes from a regional party to win a 1993 confidence vote in Parliament. "We have already filed a spe-

#### Indian team

ing regulations relating to security and customs.

For a smooth operation of services, the proposed agreement calls for easier procedure for checks at a single point, preferably in the no-man's

land, by the representatives of agencies concerned in both the According to a source, one way fare for Dhaka-Calcutta

trip has been proposed to be between Tk 400 and Tk 500, and the buses must not be more than four-year old. To make the trips comfortable, the usual 52-seat buses has been proposed to be converted into 40-seaters.

About a dozen agencies have so far sought permission from the Ministry of Communications for operating bus services in Dhaka-Calcutta route to be extended up to Ajmeer, destination for many pilgrims from Bangladesh.

Similar services by Indian companies might take some more time.

They source said much of comfort would depend on the road from Petrapole to Calcutta in India, which would have to be improved. It is also learnt that the West Bengal government is taking steps for such improvement.

K R Bhatti, a joint secretary in the Indian ministry of surface transport, will lead his country's five-member team to the two-day talks.

The Indian team also consists of representatives from the state governments of West Bengal and Tripura and the Ministry of External Affairs.

Karar Mahmud Hasan, a joint secretary in the Roads and Highway Division, will lead the eight-member Bangladesh

The Bangladesh side will have representatives from the PMO, ministries of Foreign Affairs, Communications, Law and Commerce and Bangladesh Road Transport Authority.

#### He died on the spot after being stabbed in the chest while returning home from his shop. Police arrested three persons in connection with the inci-

dent. They are Gani, Sirajul and

Shantu Larma

thana.

From Page 1

the National Committee on Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) before finalising the draft agreement on Wednesday.

The PCJSS leader returns to his headquarters, believed to be at Bishnupur in southern Tripura, sometime today.

With his departure and withdrawal of the heavily armed guards from the military wing of PCJSS, Shantibahini, 13 security camps and border guard posts will be reactivated on Sunday.

Meanwhile, the Awami League and its front organisations staged rallies and processions in CHT welcoming the draft accord. The major opposition BNP and Bangalee Krishak Sramik Parishad also staged separate rallies denouncing the draft for what they said ignor-

ing the interests of the settlers. But there had been no reports of any untoward incident.

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### PM: Teresa

From Page 1 1995, the Prime Minister said the Mother went straight to the Dhaka Community Hospital at Malibagh from the airport to see the patients there.

The Prime Minister said during her visit she (Hasina) met Teresa at Tejgaon, the memory of which she still cher-

She said that the Mother was due to visit Bangladesh and inaugurate Menon Hospital in Chittagong but could not do so due to sickness. She said that a ward of the Menon Hospital has been named after Mother

Mother Teresa's whole life was dedicated to the distressed. poor, hungry and helpless people. She was an affectionate mother to all, the Prime Minister said. Recalling her memorable

help to thousands of refugees of Bangladesh during the Liberation War, she said the people of the country would always remember her with gratitude.

Some 14 charity centres of Mother Teresa, including the ones at Dhaka, Sylhet, Barisal, Khulna, Chittagong and Rajshahi, are being run in the country, Hasina said.

She said Mother Teresa, receiving the Nobel Peace prize for her undying love of the people, had rather added glory to

Paying tributes to Mother Teresa she said, "her death is an irreparable loss to humanity. The world has lost a great server of humanity."

Sister Macdeline, a close associate of Mother Teresa. Indian High Commissioner in Dhaka Dev Mukherjee, Shuddhananda Mohathero and Archbishop of Dhaka Michael Rozario also spoke on the occa-

Earlier, two prayer songs were presented by the nuns of the charity centres of Mother Teresa and a poem by Begum Sufia Kamal, dedicated to the Mother, was recited by Maleka Begum.

#### Jiang reelected

From Page 1 time were top graft-buster Wai Jianxing, 61, and vice premier and senior trade official Li

Langing, 65. The other members who retained their seats include premier Li Peng, 70, who is due to step down next March after two five-year terms and is likely to take over as head of parlia-

Jiang's most powerful rival, current parliament chief Qiao Shi, 72, fell from the politburo after retiring from the central

committee on Thursday. Jiang Zemin also retained his job as head of the military today, winning re-election as chairman of the central mili-

tary commission. He also succeeded in keeping important allies on the commission, while two veteran opponents retired.

Ageing generals Liu Huaqing, 80, and Zhang Zhen, 83, both retired from their posts as senior vice chairmen of the powerful party commission that runs China's three-million-strong People's Liberation Army.

Two of Jiang's allies, General Chi Haotian and General Zhang Wannian, retained their positions as vice-chairmen, automatically moving up to become the most senior serving military officers on the commission.

# 8 killed, 51 injured in road accidents

Eight people were killed and 51 others injured in separate road accidents in Comilla and

Feni yesterday, reports UNB. Four passengers were killed and 46 others wounded in a road accident at Sreedharpur in Sadar thana of Comilla dis-

The killed are bus driver Badal, 55, Sahajahan, 40, of village Monpur under Kochua thana and Nurul Amin, 30, of village Sowanda of Kochua thana in Chandpur, Abdus Sattar, 45, of village Chaita under Mirzaganj thana in Patuakhali. Survivors said a Chatkhil

bound passenger coach hit a Dhaka bound bus when it tried to overtake a Kochua bound bus from Dhaka on Dhaka-Chittagong highway at 11 am, leaving 50 passengers injured.

Of the injured, driver Badal died on way to Comilla Medical College Hospital and three others — Sahjahan, Nurul Amin

load shedding

From Staff Correspondent

BARISAL, Sept 19: A hurri-

cane procession was brought

out at Barguna this evening

protesting continuous load she-

dding in the town and its ad-

Consumers Association bro-

ught out the procession which

was followed by a rally in front

manded regular supply of elec-

tricity, connecting Barguna

with the power supply line of

Patuakhali substation. Now.

Barguna is connected with the

Bus service to

& from Rajshahi

still suspended

From Our Correspondent

vice between Rajshahi and the

rest of the country remained

Rajshahi District Motor

Sramik Union had called the

strike for an indefinite period

following a clash between

transport workers and Awami

League supporters at Puthia

has raised three demands that

include arrest of the attackers

on transport workers in Puthia.

immediate and unconditional

release of the two union leaders

and safety of the transport

threatened to extend the trans-

port strike all over the northern

region of the country if their

demands were not met by

Pirerbagh murder:

One arrested

By Staff Correspondent

person yesterday for his alleged

involvement in the attack on

two brothers that left one of

them dead and another criti-

cally injured at South Pirer-

identified as Mizan, who is an

accused in the murder case filed

by Jahirul Islam, another bro-

ther of the victims, police said.

Sirajul Islam, 30, was killed

and Jasimuddin, 26, was criti-

cally injured as they were in-

discriminately stabbed by a

Jasimuddin, who is under

treatment in Dhaka Medical

College Hospital, was improv-

Police said the condition of

gang of about five assailants.

The arrested person was

Hazi Jainal Abedin's sons

bagh Thursday night.

Mirpur police arrested one

The union leaders also

The Motor Sramik Union

Tuesday last.

workers on roads.

Monday next.

suspended for the third day to-

RAJSHAHI, Sept 19: Bus ser-

Speakers at the rally de-

of the Barguna Press Club.

grid line from Barisal.

The Barguna Electricity

joining areas.

and Abdus Sattar succumbed to injuries at the hospital. Police seized the three vehi-

cles but two other bus drivers managed to flee. Seriously wounded 15 people were sent to Comilla Medical College Hospital, Comilla Sadar Hospital and Comilla

Combined Military Hospital. In Feni, four people were killed and five others injured in a road accident near new Muhuriganj, police said.

The accident occurred when two trucks collided head on a about 10 am on Dhaka-Chittagong highway, leaving three people dead and six others wounded.

Of the injured, one person died on way to Feni Sadar Hospital

One of the dead was identified as Manik Lal, 28. The injured were admitted to Sadar hospital. A case was filed with Feni police.

#### Procession in People want JP in power: Ershad Barguna to protest

Jatiya Party Chairman H M Ershad yesterday said failure of BNP and Awami League governments proves there is no alternative to his party to run the administration smoothly, reports UNB.

"People now want to see Jatiya Party in power following failure of BNP during its fiveyear regime and also 14 months' rule of Awami League." he told a meeting with the Jatiya Sramik Party leaders.

The former president said, "BNP could not do a quarter of what the JP government did for the well-being of working class. The present government also didn't take any positive step." Ershad asked them to high-

light the success of his government and take organisational steps to unite the working class for materialising their de-

JP leaders Communications Minister Anwar Hossain Manju. Naziur Rahman Manzur Hasanuddin Sarkar and Sramik Party president Shah M Abu Zafar also spoke on the

#### Kibria leaves for HK World Bank-IMF

### board of governors' meet Sept 23-25

Finance Minister Shah A M S Kibria left Dhaka yesterday to attend annual meeting of the board of governors of World Bank-IMF to be held in Hong Kong from September 23 to 25. reports BSS

He will lead a seven-member Bangladesh delegation in the meeting, says a PID handout. The members of the delegation included ERD Secretary Dr Mashiur Rahman, Finance Secretary Dr Akbar Ali Khan, Governor of Bangladesh Bank Lutfur Rahman Sarkar, alternate executive director of World Bank Syed Ahmed, commissioner of Bangladesh embassy in Hong Kong Badiuzzaman

### Train accident kills seven in London

LONDON, Sept 19: Seven people were killed and 150 inured when a high-speed train collided with a freight train in Northwest London before catching fire, rescue services said to-

day, reports AFP. London fire brigade spokesman said there was an explosion after the crash at a major rail junction. Four people remained trapped inside the overturned carriages.

Some of the coaches caught fire following the explosion, he added, saying he did not know what caused the blast.

Many of the passengers were MPs and journalists returning to London from Cardiff after Thursday's referendum on Welsh devolution.

# Political showdown

From Page 1

ner of the AL sponsored movement against the government of Khaleda Zia a couple years back, has reportedly decided to go 'a bit slow'. But the party has communicated to the BNP that it would "eventually" go for "allout agitations" against the government for its "anti-people activities", sources inside the Jamaat say.

Meanwhile, a section of the BNP leadership having leftist political background is feeling "uncomfortable" with the party getting closer with the religionbased organisations. This section, led by party's Secretary General Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan, is trying to get the Left Democratic Front (LDF), a political platform of some smaller left wing parties, as a political ally in a greater antigovernment movement. According to sources, Bhuiyan has already started contacting the LDF leaders.

Aware of the BNP moves Awami League which has a long experience of playing opposi-tion, also seems to be busy trying to get some of the opposition parties in its fold. In a bid to win their support against the possible BNP agitations, Prime Minister and AL chief Sheikh Hasina has already initiated dialogue with the 'moderate' and left-wing political forces. The ruling party's move to have dialogue with the smaller par-

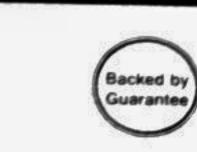
ties came specially tollowing Jatiya Party chief HM Ershad's public announcement that his party had decided to withdraw from the government and was willing to play the role of a "truly opposition party". The JP, one of the partners of the government of Sheikh Hasina. however, is yet to withdraw its secretary general from the cab-

Meanwhile, the Prime Minister held separate discussions with at last three 'moderate' and left-wing political parties -Gano Forum, Communist Party of Bangladesh and Workers Party — over the last few weeks. Responding to the PM's call to rally round her party against the alleged BNP move to organise the Islamic fundamentalist forces, the parties told the Prime Minister that they would continue to pursue secular and democratic ideals in the coming days. Some leaders attending the meetings with the Premier told this correspondent separately that they were critical of the government for "giving concessions" to the fundamentalist forces. They also told her that from the opposition camp, they would continue to speak loudly about sufferings of the people and that they would be doing so independent of BNP influence.

next month.

However, a concrete polarisation of the political parties are expected to take shape by

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# Save Dhaka, Clean Dhaka

Dhaka: 815306-9, 819625-9, 889993





Schoolboys and girls picked up brooms, baskets and spades, collecting garbage and visits homes, to resume the Save Dhaka, Clean Dhaka campaign yesterday. They moved from house to house urging residents in the city's Shahjahanpur area to keep their neighbourhoods clean. The Dhaka Railway District Scouts arranged it as part of the campaign launched last year jointly by The Daily Star, Bangladesh Scouts, Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (BUET) and the Directorate of Youth.

Star photo by Anisur Rahman

#### Bus accident

From Page 1 evening

The rickshawpuller was later sent to Pongu Hospital. Witnesses said soon after the accident, angry people attacked the state-owned bus and damaged it seriously.

Police rushed to the spot and brought the situation under control. They later took the bus to Sabujbagh thana. The driver, however, man-

aged to escape from the scene immediately after the accident. A case was filed with Sabujbagh police.

#### AL public meet From Page 1

the ALCWC. The meeting took stock of the latest political, economic and law and order situation in

the country. The ALCWC meeting also discussed in detail the upcoming union parishad elections and the jute market situation while ministers gave a brief resume of the activities of their respective ministers.

It also decided to continue the ongoing practice of ministers attending party's central office regularly.

#### BNP warns

From Page 1 rowness by dismantling the

bridge. Presided over by city BNP convenor Sadeq Hossain Khoka MP, the meeting was also addressed, by Abdullah Al Noman, Mirza Abbas, Barrister Abul Hasnat, Selima Rahman Fazlur Rahman Patal, Amanullah Aman, Salahuddin Ahmed, Kazi Abul Bashar, Nazibul Bashar Maizbhandari, Rizvi Ahmed and Fazlul Huq Milon.

Meanwhile, acting secretary general of BNP Abdullah Al Noman has protested the firing of tear gas shells targeting BNP chairperson Begum Khaleda

"It was an attempt on her life," he said in a statement yesterday.

Noman said police had lobbed tear gas shells aiming Begum Zia's car near BNP central office and blamed the government for the 'attempt on her

He alleged that the government had hatched a deep-rooted conspiracy to curb people's rights and a ban on meetings and processions is part of that conspiracy. He also said the anti-people

government had taken recourse to killing, arrest and repression to foil the democratic movement of BNP. He urged the people to build up a strong resistance against the government's misdeeds.

### EC: Derogation of rule

From Page 1

of the EC for bolstering our exports even in markets other than the EU countries. He requested the EC Vice

President to send letters to the EU countries so that the importers could return the duties in a staggered manner over 2-3 Gonzales accepted the pro-

posal and said he would write letters after the meeting. He also informed that the present GSP regulations will end on December 31, 1998. A new regulation will come into effect on January 1, 1999 and continue up to 2005.

He said at this stage, countries, including Bangladesh will get derogation upto 1998, and will continue with new regulation upto 2005.

The EC will continue to take compensatory measures for Bangladesh in order to comply with the mutual and international obligations, the EC Vice President added.

Later, Commerce and Industries Minister Tofael Ahmed had another meeting with Mario Monti, the EC member in charge of customs affairs. Monti highly appreciated the Bangladesh government for its bold efforts to the EC requirements in getting GSP and dero-

gation. Tofael requested him to phase out the payment of duties from irregular certificates. Referring to the discussion with the European importers, he said it would be very helpful for them to refund the duties if they get a staggered schedule. Monti replied positively and

### Diana

From Page 1 swirling around Diana's last

words at the site of the crash. Diana was initially reported to have said "leave me alone" and "oh my god," as rescue workers, police and photographers bustled around the scene of the crash, which also killed her lover Dodi Al-Fayed and the driver.

Dodi's father Mohamed Al-Fayed has said he received Diana's last instructions and conveyed them to Diana's sister Sarah, but neither he nor her family will say more.

Frederic Mailliez, an off duty doctor at the scene who had originally said Diana moaned and gestured, now refuses to say how she looked or

what she said. Time said. "This is the kind of situation that creates myth," Time cited Mailliez as saying. If she told him anything. Mailliez added "I would say it only to her fam-

ily, her sons, her husband."

said the EC would send letters to member countries on their request. The EC would reextend all possible support to Bangla-

desh for expanding its export,

he added. Earlier, Tofael called on the Prime Minister of the government of Wallonia of Belgium and exchanged views on expanding bilateral relations, specially in the field of trade and investment.

#### Khaleda

From Page 1

have become miserable due to 'endless failures' of the government, it has adopted a strategy not to allow main opposition BNP to speak against those.

"The government is afraid of

criticism," she said and alleged that the people are being deprived of their constitutional rights of holding meetings and processions, and the protesters are being harassed and repressed. Meanwhile, BNP leaders and workers from different parts of

the city called on party

Chairperson Begum Khaleda

Zia last night and apprised her of "police action", on them. During the meeting at her 29 Minto Road official residence, leaders of city BNP, Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) Jubadal, Sechchasebak Dal Sramik Dal, Mohila Dal and other front organisations also

apprised her of the latest

situation in their respective ar-

### Manju

From Page 1 among BNP activists.

The bridge was removed following an order issued on September 16 by the Communications Minister, who is also secretary general of Jatiya Party. The minister ordered the removal within 24 hours of a reported observation by Foreign Minister and Awami League presidium member, Abdus Samad Azad that the Communications Ministry was missing AL flavour.

Requested to comment on this. Manju said that the decision of removal of the bridge had nothing to do with the Foreign Minister's observation. The Communications Min-

ister was passing by the site of the bridge when Roads and Highways Department personnel were removing it under heavy police protection. Talking to The Daily Star

last night. Manju said that he was returning to his residence when the work was in progress.