

President visits 2 more venues, Mayor's talks with parties Saturday

President Shahabuddin Ahmed yesterday visited the Osmany Udyan and the National Square to see for himself whether these places are suitable for holding public meetings, reports UNB.

President Shahabuddin advised the City Mayor Mohammad Hanif, who accompanied him during the visit, to initiate fresh dialogue with the opposition political leaders so as to reach a consensus on the question of suitable venues for holding public meetings.

The City Mayor assured the president that he will hold meetings with the leaders of opposition political parties with a view to finding a suitable solution to the problem, said an official handout.

Another report says Mayor Hanif will hold talks with the city unit leaders of different political parties on Saturday to exchange views on the selection. See Page 12 Col 3

Rain mars BNP programmes

By Staff Correspondent
BNP could not stage its planned demonstration in city wards due to downpour yesterday afternoon.

The BNP had planned demonstrations at different wards in the city and at districts and thanas outside Dhaka yesterday as part of its four-day countrywide agitation programme to protest government "repression" on opposition activists, ban on street rallies in the capital, attempt on BNP chief Begum Khaleda Zia's life and removal of the floating bridge over Crescent Lake leading to Sheeta Zia's mazar in the city.

However, demonstrations in districts and thanas were held, a party source said.

BNP is scheduled to bring out torch processions across the country today. The four-day agitation will culminate in a countrywide dawn-to-dusk hartal tomorrow.

Tk 93 lakh gold seized at ZIA

By Staff Correspondent
Smuggled gold worth about Tk 93 lakh was seized from an Indian national at the Zia International Airport (ZIA) Monday night.

Customs sources said they seized 75 gold bars, weighing 10 tolas each, and 8,534 grams of gold ornaments from the luggage of a Calcutta bound transit passenger Abdul Aziz. The gold was concealed inside four packets of electronic goods.

Aziz, who hails from Rajkot in India had arrived from Singapore by a Biman flight.

CHT truce extended till Dec 31

By Special Correspondent
The Government and the Parbatya Chattagram Jana Samhati Samiti (PCJSS) have agreed to extend the ceasefire in the three districts of the Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) till December 31, an official announcement said in Dhaka last night.

The ceasefire was due to expire on September 30.

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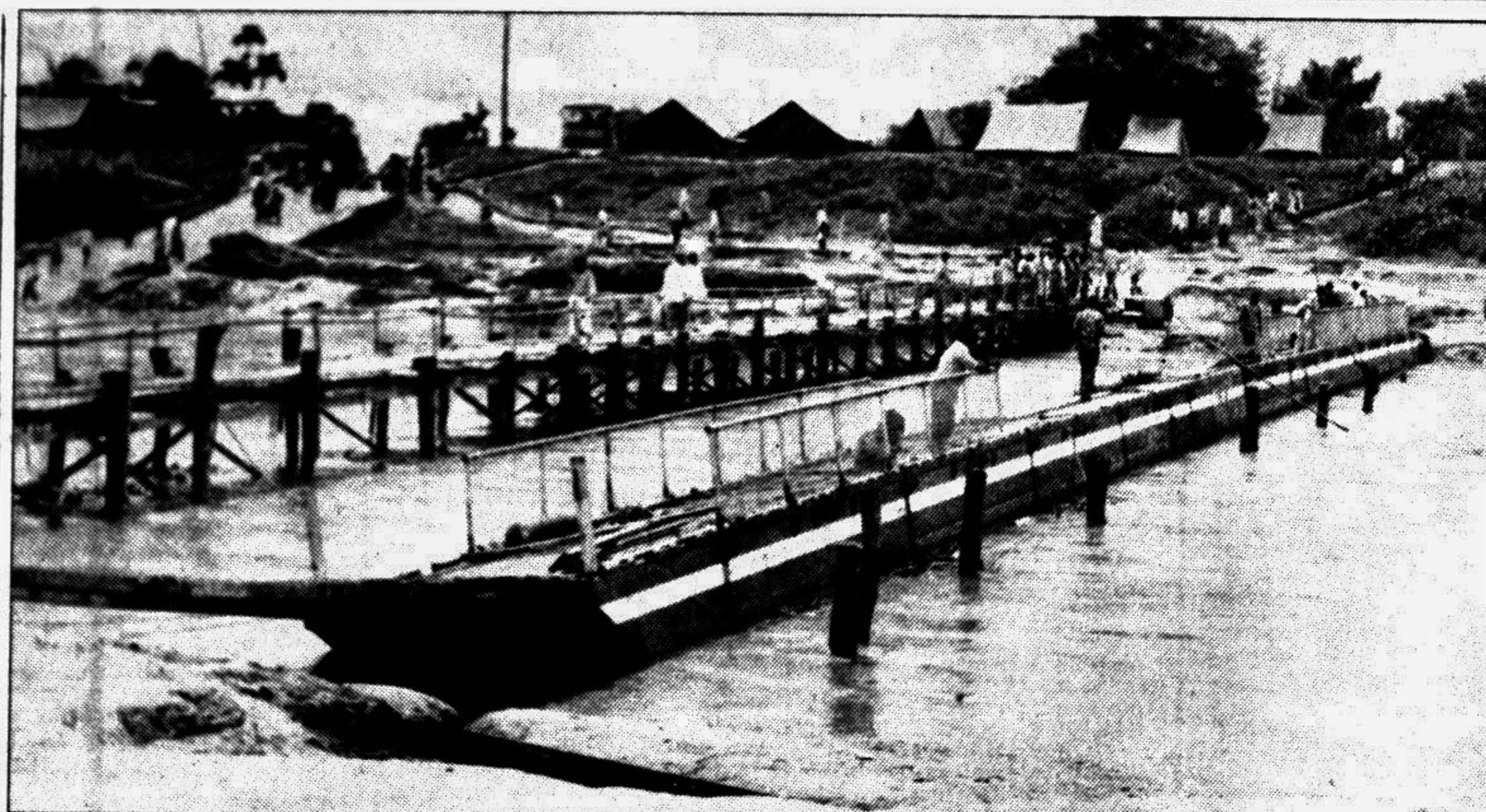
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Business

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Supplement

Today's issue of The Daily Star contains a two-page special supplement on 'Multinational Banks in Bangladesh' Pages 8, 9



The third temporary pontoon bridge on the river Khwai at Shayestaganj is nearing completion. The pontoons have been taken from Dhaka, where they spanned the Crescent Lake to the mazar of late president Ziaur Rahman. It's mid-night removal on September 17 added fuel to the current confrontation between the government and the major Opposition BNP. Engineers hope to complete welding the pontoons together today to open it for people soon, beside the wooden bridge for pedestrians. Another pontoon bridge is used only for ferrying vehicles. — Photo: Anisur Rahman

Privatisation of state-owned enterprises Donors' aid for shouldering long-term liabilities sought

By Staff Correspondent

The Privatisation Board (PB) yesterday told the donors of a government plan to undertake the long term liabilities of enterprises to be privatised and sought their assistance in this regard.

At present, the government takes the current liabilities and buyers take the long term liabilities.

"This dissuades good buyers on the one hand, and on the other, the government also suffers because most buyers ultimately do not pay the long term liabilities," Chairman of PB, Kazi Zafarullah said at a press briefing yesterday following the meeting with donors at his office.

He said one way out of it could be inclusion of long-term

liabilities in the price of such units.

"This plan can be a good success if the donors assist the government for undertaking liabilities," he said.

Some eighteen representatives from different donor organisations and countries were present in yesterday's meeting. They include the ambassadors of USA, Italy, the Netherlands, Australia, Denmark, high commissioner of UK, representatives of USAID and IMF.

The donors were also briefed about the 'success' of the AL government's privatisation effort. "Before I joined the board, one mill was sold and after my joining, privatisation process for 28 more units has been completed," he told reporters.

"Three units have already been handed over to the buyers and six others are in the final stage of sale. The buyers have already paid their money for these six," he said.

He expects these will also be handed over within a month.

The already sold three SOEs — IK Industries, Feroze Ata Dal Mill, and Bangladesh Cold Storage — fetched Tk 6.20 cr. The six others are Hafiz Textile Mills, Royal Textile Mills, Deshbandhu Sugar Mills, National Ice Factory, Ashrafia Oil Mills, and Bangladesh Can Company. These units would fetch over Tk 38.72 cr.

He said the donors were impressed by the government's performance. See Page 12 Col 1

UNCTAD chief praises steps to liberalise trade

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday expressed the confidence that UNCTAD would come forward in developing the poor nations further, reports UNB.

"We have adopted free market policy, liberalised trade and created the opportunity for foreign investment," she told the visiting UNCTAD secretary general Rubens Ricupero who called on the Prime Minister at her office yesterday morning.

Hasina said the main objective of her government is poverty alleviation and referred to the reply of her letter from US President Bill Clinton, where he has assured to do everything for alleviating poverty.

The UNCTAD secretary general praised the development efforts in Bangladesh, under the leadership of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina.

Ricupero particularly lauded the government steps to liberalise trade. See Page 12 Col 1

150 Bangladeshis & Pakistanis arrested in Turkey

By Staff Correspondent

Over 150 Bangladeshi and Pakistani travellers were arrested from a city in Turkey on Sunday, a Turkish Embassy spokesman said in London, according to BBC monitored in the city yesterday.

The spokesman said the arrested would be sent back to their respective countries soon. They were among a group of 450 who were travelling to various destinations in Western Europe and Italy. The illegal travellers were arrested from Gopchikoy city in Turkey.

The report also said that each traveller paid 5000 US dollar to five different agencies to reach their destinations. The agency officials were also arrested.

New netting system Market operators react positively

By M Shamsur Rahman and Rafiq Hasan

Market operators reacted positively as the country's two bourses began trading yesterday under a new, identical system that would settle business twice a week.

Brokers, both in Dhaka and Chittagong, were mostly upbeat about a positive change, although the market dipped yesterday because of other reasons.

The Dhaka Stock Exchange index plunged by seven per cent, while the CSE index was down by 5.5 per cent. The decline was attributed to political turmoil, which would mean loss of two trading days, and profit taking by investors.

The positive response came earlier than even the introduction of the new system. "The reaction on the market started earlier when market players started taking positions last week," said Abdul Huq Howlader, the DSE chief.

"It will boost transactions," he said. "There will be a small percentage of traders who will buy shares and sell those in the shortest possible time to take profit, the duration may even be five minutes."

Howlader said this would mainly help reduce fluctuations in the market as investors would sell shares at a smaller price. See Page 12 Col 4

RU Controller of Exams made OSD

From Our Correspondent

RAJSHAHI, Sept 23: The Controller of Examinations of Rajshahi University, A K Monir Ahmed, has been made OSD (Officer on Special Duty) and four employees of the Controller Section have been suspended.

The decision was taken in a Syndicate meeting today following a recommendation of a probe committee which investigated the alleged irregularities in Degree Subsidiary and Pass. See Page 12 Col 3

Downpour floods streets, triggers traffic jam

By Special Correspondent

A sudden downpour for two hours late yesterday afternoon flooded the city streets and caught rush hour traffic in a mess.

It focused once again the inadequacy of the city's drainage system, clogged with rubbish and liberal dumping of polythene bags, because of long neglect by the authorities concerned.

Triggered by a thunder storm building up on the north-western horizon, the rains washed the metropolis from 4 pm to 6 pm totalling 112 mm.

Thousands of commuters on their way home from work found it difficult to negotiate the flooded streets.

Traffic failed to move in a massive jam as many of the cars and other vehicles failed to 'swim'. Their engines failed to carry on when water entered their system.

Auto-rickshaws stopped putting and puffing smokes, sitting like lame ducks on water.

The latest reconditioned cars from Japan were equally unable to ply on the streets with ankle to knee-deep water.

Only the rickshaws, with their wide wheels were the fit ones for the job, but it cost their passengers extra.

The plight of commuters, including students were compounded by the massive jam on the streets, where street lights failed to shine at places like Asad Gate and Lalmitia.

The situation was equally bad in Fakirpool, Dainik Bangla crossing, Motijheel, Gulistan, Press Club, Dhaka Medical College Hospital, Shantinagar, Rajarbagh, Nazimabad, Bangshal and Faridabad areas of the city.

Residents of old Dhaka complained of dirty drains overflowing onto the streets and alleys, leaving the evening air foul with the smell of rubbish. See Page 12 Col 2



Most of the city roads went under water following downpour yesterday. — Star photo

The Daily Star
on the Internet
<http://www.dailystarnews.com>

Chambers concerned at hartals, violence

The business community expressed concern over violence and hartals in the city which they said are discouraging potential foreign investment, reports UNB.

The Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industry in a statement yesterday said it felt deeply concerned that hartals invariably end up in violence and destruction of public property.

Such violence badly hinders the economic development of the country and brings miseries to the business people in particular and commonmen in general, it noted.

The FBCCI, the central and federative body of all chambers of the country, said the incidents discourage the potential foreign investment which is so. See Page 12 Col 2

Ideal College student stabbed to death in city

By Staff Correspondent

A college student was stabbed to death by two unidentified persons at Siddikbazar under Kotwali thana in the city yesterday.

The dead was identified as Zahidur Rahman alias Bipu, 24, son of Ataur Rahman of Siddikbazar.

A student of Ideal College, Bipu sustained stab injuries in his neck and chest when two youths attacked him near his residence at about 12:30 pm, police said.

He was immediately rushed to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital, but the doctors declared him dead.

Police suspected that he was killed following a dispute over money. The body was handed over to the family members of the victim after autopsy.

None was arrested in this connection till filing of this report last night. A murder case has been lodged.

Bus service India wants some changes in draft accord

A two-day Indo-Bangla talks on introduction of bus service between Dhaka and Almeer Shareef in India via Calcutta concluded in the city yesterday, reports UNB.

The meeting ended with a 'positive outcome' as the two sides reached an agreement to sign an accord as soon as possible, said Joint Secretary of the Ministry of Communications Karar Mahmudul Hasan who led an eight-member home team at the talks.

K R Bhaty, Joint Secretary of the Ministry of Surface Transport of India, led his country's 5-member delegation to the talks held at the conference room of the Ministry of Communications.

When contacted, Hasan told UNB over telephone that the next meeting is expected in early October. See Page 12 Col 2

Bangabandhu Murder Case PW-15 names 10 army personnel who 'took pride' in killing

By Staff Correspondent

Commodore Golam Rabbani, who was one of the three ADCs (Aid de Camp) to the then President Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, yesterday named 10 military personnel who acknowledged to have killed Bangabandhu, Sheikh Moni, Abdur Rab Semiatat and their families on August 15, 1975.

"The killers of Bangabandhu were frequent visitors to Bangabhaban after the incident and some of them even started residing there," said Rabbani, 15th prosecution witness in the Bangabandhu murder case during his deposition before the Court of District and Sessions Judge, Dhaka.

They used to take pride in telling, we committed the murders to save the country," the PW-15 said.

Rabbani, now a Director in the Directorate of Field Intelligence was being cross-examined by the lawyers of the state defence when yesterday's proceedings of the court were adjourned till 10:00 am today.

Earlier in the day, lawyers of the accused in custody completed their cross-examination of the PW-14.

Answering to a question from a lawyer of the state defence Rabbani said, "As ADC to the President from 1973 to

1976, I had served four Presidents, Mohammadullah, Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, Khandaker Mushtaque Ahmed and Justice ASM Sayem."

Khandaker Mushtaque Ahmed was already sworn in as President when we reached the Bangabhaban in the afternoon of August 15, 1975," he said.

Rabbani said, "In course of discussions with Maj Syed Farook Rahman, Maj Khandaker A Rashid, Maj Sultan Shahriar Rashid Khan, Maj Shariful Huq Dalim, Maj SIIMB Noor, Maj Aziz Pasha, Maj AKM Mohiuddin, Maj Bazul Huda, it was

See Page 12 Col 3

Substandard drug production falling

By Naimul Huq

Production of sub-standard drugs in the country is declining.

According to statistics available from the Drug Administration, the percentage of sub-standard drugs manufactured in 771 plants was 36 in 1981 which came down to 5.4 in 1996.

The percentage can be reduced further with tighter vigilance by the authorities on quality control, sources in the Drug Administration and professionals in drug manufacture said.

The professionals alleged that there are some drug manufacturers who do not maintain quality recommended by the World Health Organisation.

Some companies are producing and marketing drugs without proper supervision by registered pharmacists. Relevant law says, "No drug shall be manufactured without the personal supervision of registered pharmacist."

According to sources in the Institute of Public Health (IPH), where about 70 per cent drugs are tested for quality, drugs which fail to pass quality mark come from companies which are not very reputed.

In 1990, out of 3,555 samples tested for quality, 298 'failed'. In 1995, out of 4,623 samples tested, 241 failed. In 1996, out of 4,830 samples, 261 failed. Most of the low quality drugs were of See Page 12 Col 7

CTBT sent to senate for ratification, says Clinton

UNITED NATIONS, Sept 23: On a day of diplomacy at the United Nations, US President Bill Clinton opened a bid on Monday to gain Senate ratification of a global treaty outlawing nuclear test explosions, reports Reuters.

He said he had sent legislation to the Senate to ratify the comprehensive test ban treaty (CTBT), a pact talked about since Dwight Eisenhower was president. It was signed a year ago by 146 countries, including

the United States, Russia and China, but so far the legislatures of only four countries have ratified it.

In a speech to the UN General Assembly, Clinton called the treaty "our commitment to end all nuclear tests for all time, the longest-sought, hardest-fought prize in the history of arms control."

Clinton also urged the United Nations to accept a proposed US compromise for paying

ing a large portion of its 1.5 billion dollar in back dues in exchange for reforms, including a cut in how much America pays.

"This year... we have the opportunity to put the questions of debts and dues behind us once and for all," he said.

In a meeting with Pakistani Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif, Clinton announced he would visit Pakistan during a South Asia tour planned for next year, possibly in early spring. He will also visit India on that trip.

Clinton's announcement on the test ban treaty placed pressure on India, which has said it will not sign the treaty and whose signature is crucial for the pact to take effect.

Clinton urged "greater cooperation" from India on disarmament issues in a meeting with Indian Prime Minister Inder Kumar Gujral later in the day.

Assistant secretary of state Carl Inderfurth said Gujral offered no concessions but agreed to continue to talk about the treaty, Israel and Pakistan have also not signed it.

It will require a two-thirds majority vote of the 100-member US Senate to gain ratification of the test ban treaty, and some Republicans who want to retain the US right to test nuclear weapons will offer some stiff opposition. The United States is already adhering to the test ban.

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Subject : Tender Invitation for Making Colour Video

Tenders are invited from reputed video making firms for making an international standard 10/12 minutes duration colour video reflecting investment opportunities, industry, trade, economic activities in Bangladesh.

Firms intending to participate in the tender are requested to send their tenders with the undermentioned information, among others, by 2:00 PM of 05-10-1997.

(A) Primary script, (B) Time required for making the video, (C) How much it will cost.

Tender under lac sealed cover should be submitted in the tender box kept at the office of the undersigned and Pay Order for Tk 10,000/- (ten thousand) only from any scheduled bank as earnest money (refundable) in favour of "Executive Chairman, Board of Investment" must be submitted with the tender.

Md. Shamsul Alam Talukder
Director
Phone: 9567541

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