

Review body on
Pay Commission
Report yet to
submit its
recommendations

By Special Correspondent

The seven-member review committee on the Pay Commission Report could not submit its recommendations till Tuesday, the last day for submitting it to the government.

According to official sources, it could not be formally submitted as the member-secretary of the committee, Dr M A Samad, Principal Secretary to the Prime Minister, is out of the country. He is expected to return home on Saturday.

The Committee, headed by Cabinet Secretary Ataul Huq, was formed on June 23 to review the recommendations by the Pay Commission headed by former Cabinet Secretary Muhib Huq. It was scheduled to submit the report by September 30.

The Pay Commission suggests See Page 12 Col 3

PM sanctions
Tk 35 lakh for
celebrating
Durga Puja

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has sanctioned Tk 35 lakh from her special fund for Hindu Community of the country for celebrating Durga Puja, reports UNB.

The fund will be distributed among puja committees throughout the country with the advice of Hindu Religious Welfare Trust and in accordance with the number of Hindu population in each district under the supervision of respective DCs.

In the past, this amount did not exceed Tk 25 lakh from the fund. See Page 12 Col 6

MOU with India on
cultural exchange
programme signed

NEW DELHI, Oct 1: Bangladesh and India signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) on the cultural and academic exchange programme between the two countries here last night, reports BSS.

The secretary-in-charge of the Ministry of Cultural Affairs of Bangladesh, Syed Yusuf Hossain, and his Indian counterpart, BP Singh signed the MOU for the period 1997-99 on behalf of their respective governments.

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Barisal Kotwali
thana OC
suspended

From Staff Correspondent

BARISAL, Oct 1: Sheikh Abdul Mannan, OC of Barisal Kotwali thana was put under suspension last night following an alleged violation of a teenage girl by an ASI of the same thana on September 15 while escorting her to Daudkandi of Comilla district. He was replaced by senior SI Moinuddin.

Departmental actions were also taken against 9 other police personnel of Kotwali thana in connection with the same incident. They are ASI Abdus Satter, SI Abdus Samad, ASI Moinuddin, SI Yunus, SI Khaleque, SI Alamgir, SI Kalam, SI Ramzan, SI Ayub and SI Barak.

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PSCs for 12 exploration blocks by Dec likely

By Toufique Imrose Khalidi

The authorities are hoping to hand international oil companies seeking exploration rights in Bangladesh contracts by December after negotiations with technically-responsive bidders. The talks are expected to begin in less than two weeks.

Energy Minister M Noor Uddin Khan said his ministry was looking into reports from the Petrobangla evaluation committee and would form another committee with a representative from the ministry by the middle of this month to conduct negotiations towards signing production sharing contracts [PSCs].

A total of 21 IOCs (International Oil Companies), including several top companies which are known as Oil Majors, are seeking to undertake exploration activities on 12 blocks out of 15 on offer in this

second round of bidding. This is the first time Bangladesh invited multiple offers for a block.

Bangladesh is divided into 23 blocks, out of which eight have gone to different explorers who signed PSCs during the first round of bidding, which considered one single offer at a time.

As the current round of bidding significantly differs from the first, problems and issues are also different and, in some cases, difficult for officials involved in making decisions.

Multiple offers which came under four major criteria — work programme, bank guarantee, experience, financial capability — for one block are being classified in three categories.

The officials, who are giving maximum weightage to work programme, plan to call com-

panies one by one according to the classification to discuss profit-sharing formula, which is "negotiable" according to bid documents.

But worries centre around work programme as some of the companies have offered drilling programmes, which are "too ambitious" and "cannot be implemented", a ministry source said.

For instance, one company, small and without proven track record, has offered to drill 10 wells in three years, something that even world's top companies have not matched.

Merely stating that a company will drill a huge number of wells is not enough. This statement has to be backed up by bank guarantee, technical expertise, track record and the profit-split," a ministry official

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Azad holds talks with Inderfurth, Richardson
US considering writing off debt under PL-480

Bangladesh has requested the US government to take steps for the cancellation of debts under PL-480, reports UNB.

Foreign Minister Abdus Samad Azad made the request when US Assistant Secretary of State for South Asian Affairs Karl S Inderfurth called on him at his hotel suite in New York on Tuesday morning.

Inderfurth said Bangladesh's request in this regard is under active consideration of the US government, according to a message received in Dhaka yesterday.

Azad is in New York to attend the UN General Assembly session.

During the meeting, Azad and Inderfurth discussed a wide variety of issues, including US investment opportunities in Bangladesh.

The US Assistant Secretary of State emphasised further improving the bilateral ties and said they want closer political and economic relation with Bangladesh.

Earlier, the Foreign Minister congratulated Ambassador Inderfurth on his appointment as the new Assistant Secretary of State for South Asia.

He assured Inderfurth of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's preference for availing American technology in Bangladesh's economic growth in various sectors, particularly energy, power, telecommunication and software.

Earlier, the Foreign Minister congratulated Ambassador Inderfurth on his appointment as the new Assistant Secretary of State for South Asia.

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Probe into alleged rape in DC's room starts today

From Our Correspondent

PABNA, Oct 1: The Additional Deputy Commissioner, Pabna, who heads the enquiry committee investigating the September 13 incident of alleged rape of a girl in the DC's chamber, has directed five local journalists including The Daily Star correspondent to appear before the enquiry committee tomorrow at 10 am.

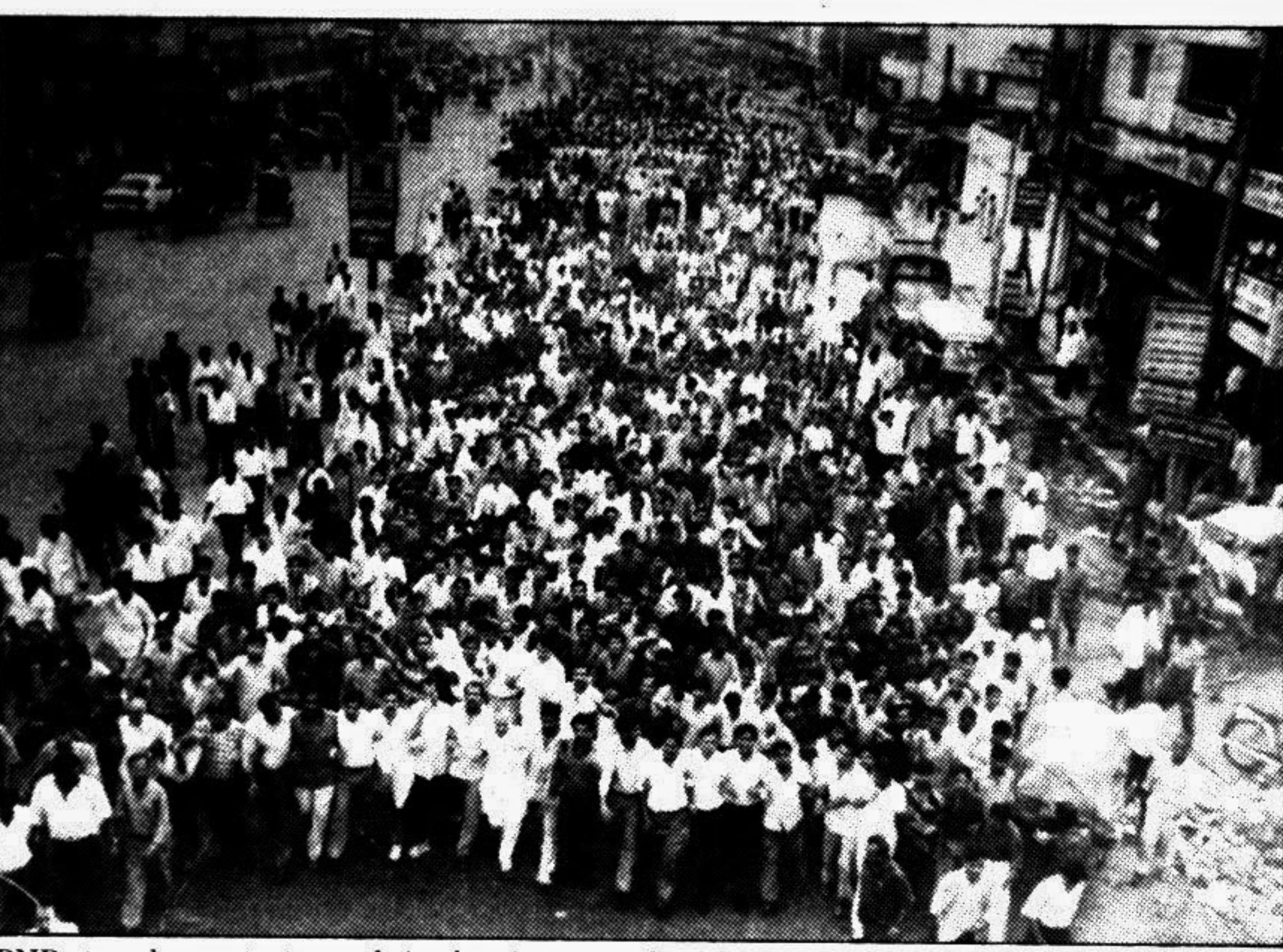
The enquiry committee was formed by the DC earlier.

The notice served on the Pabna Correspondent of The Daily Star (bearing Memo No Establishment/532) on September 30 stated that investigation would start on October 2 at 10 am in the office of the Collectorate on the basis of the news item published in the newspaper on September 29 under the heading "Rape in the DC's office room".

You are requested to appear before the enquiry committee along with proofs for the news item," says the notice.

The notice was signed by Mohammad Masud Elahi additional deputy commissioner

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BNP staged a protest march in the city yesterday.

— Star photo

BNP stages protest march in city

By Staff Correspondent

Several thousand workers of the major opposition BNP yesterday marched through city streets for nearly three km, under strict vigilance by riot police.

The procession started from the Naya Paltan party central office and terminated at Bangla Motor crossing. No untoward incident took place during the march.

BNP organised the demonstration to protest the ban on processions towards the BNP office, several thousand workers managed to gather at the spot through different ways. At about 5 pm, the gathering turned into a procession and started its march towards Kakrail.

Riot police allowed the processionists to come across the barricade at Bijoy Nagar point but followed it up to Bangla Motor crossing. Police barricade was also put up on the other end of inner Circular Road. Kakrail Pool point. Besides, police were also deployed on all lanes leading to BNP office.

The procession was led by BNP Secretary General Abdul

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BNP complained to the President against police action

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\$80m ADB loan for capital market development

Bangladesh will receive 80 million US dollars as loan from the Asian Development Bank (ADB) for the Capital Market Development Programme undertaken to revitalise the country's stock market, reports UNB.

A memorandum of understanding (MOU) to this effect was signed yesterday between Bangladesh and the ADB in Manila, according to a message received in the city.

Banking Division Secretary Syed Anamul Muhi initiated the MOU on behalf of Bangladesh government, finalising the draft loan agreement.

The aim of the Capital Market Development Programme is to strengthen market regulation and supervision, develop the capital market infrastructure and modernise capital market support facilities.

It also aimed at increasing the limited supply of securities to the market, developing institutional sources of capital to raise demand for securities, and strengthening policy coordination over matters likely to affect or affecting the capital market.

DSE members likely to amend Articles of Association at EGM today

By M Shamsur Rahman

Aiming to bring transparency and boost investors' confidence, the Dhaka Stock Exchange is expected to amend its Articles of Association at an extraordinary general meeting today in order to restructure the management of the bourse, DSE sources said.

The amendments are designed to create provisions for separating the DSE management from the policy-making 12-member DSE Council and appointing a Chief Executive Officer (CEO), the sources added. The planned changes would also increase the number of Council members to 16.

The proposed amendments would need support from two-thirds of the general members. An SEC source said that the DSE will appoint or remove the CEO with the consent of the regulatory agency.

According to the planned changes, the Council will give policy guidelines, and the CEO

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BATEXPO '97 begins in city today

Star Business Report

Bangladesh Garments Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA) hopes that a lot of foreign buyers would participate in the Bangladesh Apparel and Textile Exposition, BATEXPO '97, beginning here today.

BATEXPO, the biggest garments exhibition in the country, will be inaugurated by prime minister Sheikh Hasina at hotel Sonargaon in the morning.

The closing ceremony of the three-day exhibition will be addressed by Leader of the Opposition.

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10 more bodies of fishermen recovered

From Staff Correspondent

BARISAL, Oct 1: Ten more bodies of missing fishermen were recovered from the Bay of Bengal near Kuakata and Sonarchar area today and the day before.

They had been missing since Friday midnight.



FOR A CHANGE: A beaming Mukti Joddha captain Imtiaz Ahmed Nakib (R) shares the glory with his team-mates after receiving the Mahanagar Cup from Post and Telecommunications Minister Mohammad Nasim at the Mirpur Stadium yesterday. — Star photo

Mukti Joddha lift Mahanagar Cup

Sports Reporter

Mukti Joddha Sangsad Krira Chakra gave a desired twist in the tradition of local football when they lifted the Shamsuddin Spinning Mahanagar Cup title with a lone goal win over aspirants Mohammadman Sporting Club in the final at the Mirpur Stadium yesterday.

With only a few thousand spectators around, the triumph of the all-red team over country's one of the two most crowd-pulling outfit was a compliment from their workmanlike winger Rakib Hasan, who headed home a 75th minute flag-kick off medio Masud Rana. The win put an end to a quite monotonous battle for glory between the two local giants — Mohammadman and Abahani.

It was Mukti Joddha's second title triumph in the domestic football since their elevation to the top flight way back in 1994 when they won the Federation Cup. But since then the emerging third force remained in the wilderness despite enjoying the services of a host of national players.

Ignoring the boisterous press

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JP no more with AL govt: Ershad

From Our Correspondent

JATIYA Party Chairman H M Ershad has said his party is "no more with Awami League government."

"We extended support to Awami League to honour people's verdict. We hoped that it would work for the welfare of the people. But we are seeing that it is not sincere to fulfil its commitments," Ershad said while addressing a big public meeting at Shahab Bazar in the city today.

He advised Awami League to "proceed in its own way." "We shall go in our own way."

He, however, said Jatiya Party will support good activities of Awami League. "At the same time, we shall obviously protest the misdeeds of the government," he said.

Organised by the local unit of Jatiya Party, the meeting was presided over by Nurunnabi Chand. Among others, Nazirul Rahman Manju, Sardar Amjad Hossain, Fazle Rabbi, Dr. M A Matin and Monirul Islam Chowdhury addressed the meeting.

Biman sources said the sufferings of customers in getting tickets were often caused by CBA's influence over the reservation control desks of different international routes.

The Biman leaders want to

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PW-18 tells court

We were ordered to resist Rakkhi Bahini

By Staff Correspondent

The eighteenth prosecution witness in the Bangabandhu murder case said yesterday that he was among the Second Field Artillery troops deployed at the Mirpur Road to resist the Rakkhi Bahini on August 15, 1975 when Bangabandhu and his family members were killed along with their family members.

Havildar Gunner (retired) Mohammad Abu Taher, who belonged to the Papa Battery of the Regiment, during his deposition in the court of District and Sessions Judge, Dhaka also