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Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina being received at the Edinburgh airport yesterday by Ian McLumey, Representative of the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs. — PID photo

### Ganges barrage project

## Dhaka plans consortium meet of donors in Feb

Dhaka is planning to hold a consortium meeting of donor countries and agencies in February to mobilise support for the proposed Ganges barrage project, reports UNB.

The project is aimed at protecting the country's south western and northwestern parts from environmental degradation caused by salinity intrusion and desertification.

Nearly three crore people in southwestern districts are facing problems due to saline water while another one crore people in northwestern districts for the desertification process.

Talking to newsmen at his ministry yesterday, Water Resources Minister Abdur Razzak said the planned Ganges barrage would help Bangladesh utilise river water during the lean period after the signing of the Ganges water treaty with India.

The construction of the multi-purpose barrage would ensure protection of environment, forest, wild life and fisheries from salinity and ensure smooth irrigation as well.

A number of countries and donor agencies have already pledged support to the pre-feasibility and feasibility study for the project whose estimated cost is about seven billion US dollars.

India assured technical assistance while Netherlands, Italy, UK, Korea, ADB and World Bank also expressed their positive attitude towards the project.

A technical commission of ADB is now visiting the country in connection with feasibility study of the project. It will prepare an appraisal report and submit it to the Bank.

Razzak who recently visited Japan said he had fruitful talks with Japanese leaders and officials who showed keen interest in the barrage project.

At the planned consortium, Razzak said the government would apprise donor countries and agencies of necessity of the project in the wake of environmental degradation and salinity problem and try to forge an understanding among the donors.

He said countries in the Ganges basin like India, Nepal and Bhutan will also be invited to the consortium meeting.

In this regard, a joint river commission (JRC) ministerial meeting will be held in New Delhi in the first week of December and another JRC meeting will be held there in the last week of December for discussing the issue with India, the minister said.

A total of 17 million US dollars will be spent for preparing the feasibility reports, Razzak said.

## Press report on pay scale

From Page 1

The press release said as per the estimate of the Finance Division Taka 936.15 crore would be spent as the pay hike of the officials and employees and tiffin allowance for the year 1997-98.

Of the amount, it said, Taka 851.40 crore will be spent as additional expenditure in revenue sector and Taka 84.75 crore as additional expenditure for the salary of officials and employees or development projects.

The press release said no estimates of the report was consistent with the estimates of the Finance Division.

It said as per the primary estimate of the Finance Division at least Taka 100 crore will be spent as tiffin allowance for the government non-gazetted employees and employees of government grant-dependent autonomous organisations.

The report did not present this information deliberately, the press release said.

It said that the press report also did not mention that those who would retire from July 1, 1997 to June, 1998 would be given 100 per cent benefit of gratuity and pension as per the pay scale.

The press release said as per the estimate of the Finance Division at least Taka 133.20 crore will be spent as tiffin allowance for the government non-gazetted employees and employees of government grant-dependent autonomous organisations.

The report did not present this information deliberately, the press release said.

It said that the press report also did not mention that those who would retire from July 1, 1997 to June, 1998 would be given 100 per cent benefit of gratuity and pension as per the pay scale.

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### IJO approves 7 new projects

International Joint Organisation (IJO) has approved seven new projects and reviewed the progress of the IJO projects under implementation, reports UNB.

The approval for new projects was given at 28th session of IJO's Committee on Projects (COP) held at IJO headquarters in the city yesterday.

The projects are IJO Workshop for Evolving an International Standard Specification of Jute Batching Oil, Application of Genetic Engineering Techniques for Varietal Improvement of Jute, and Entrepreneurship Development for Diversified Jute Products.

The projects also include the Assessment of the Technical and Market Potential of Controlled Permeability Formwork Manufactured Using Nonwoven Jute, 1st phase of 'Establishment of a Jute Trade Information Centre', Sustainable Human Resource Development for Management of Jute Industry, and Development and Application of Potentially Important Jute Geo-textiles.

### Sheikh Mujib Way in Chicago

Two miles of a road in Chicago city of the United States will be named Sheikh Mujib way, said a PID handout in the city yesterday, reports UNB.

It said a plaque of 'Sheikh Mujib Way' will be unveiled on Diton Avenue in Chicago on October 28, according to an announcement made by Chicago City Council on September 10.

### 2500 Bangladeshis From Page 1

regular contact with the Saudi authorities and has been continuing talks with the Saudi Embassy in Dhaka.

It decided to take measures to expedite return of the Bangladeshi workers from Saudi Arabia.

The issue of chartering a ship for the purpose also came up for discussion and directive was given to the Shipping Ministry to take immediate steps in this regard.

The State Minister also urged the officials concerned to step up measures for return of illegal workers.

Acting Foreign Secretary Aminul Islam, Director General Abdul Kalam Azad, DG of Manpower Bureau Kazi Abdus Bayes, Joint Secretary of Civil Aviation and Tourism Ministry M. Nurul Huda, Joint Secretary of Labour and Manpower Ministry Abdur Rouf and AMA Reza-e-Rabbil, Deputy Secretary of Home Ministry AMM Abdul Matin Bhuiyan, Deputy Secretary of Shipping Ministry Fayez Ahmed and high officials of Bangladesh Biman were present in the meeting.

During his visit Mr. WU called on President Shahabuddin Ahmed and Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and visited Export Processing Zone at Savar, Commerce and Industries Minister Tofael Ahmed and Telecommunications Minister Mohammad Nasim called on him at his hotel suite. He also paid a call BNP Chairperson Begum Khaleda Zia.

### 5 scouts

Ahmed expressed deep shock at the tragic deaths of five rover scouts in a road accident at Joytura in Dhamrai thana today (Thursday).

He conveyed his deep sympathy to the bereaved family members and prayed for the salvation of the departed souls.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina also expressed deep shock at the deaths of five rover scouts.

In a condolence message, sent from Edinburgh in UK, the Prime Minister said the death of young rover scouts, who were devoted in social works, is a irreparable loss for us.

She conveyed her sympathy to the bereaved family members of the victims, prayed for salvation of the departed souls and wished early recovery of the injured.

### HC rejects

Mahbubur Rahman were implicated as respondents in the petition.

Dr Kamal Hossain with Advocate HR Sharif and Nazrul Islam Chowdhury moved the writ petition, while Attorney General KS Nabi with Additional Attorney General Abdul Wadud Bhuiyan, on behalf of the government, opposed it.

### Taka devalued

istari rupee was devalued and the real effective exchange rate (REER) appreciated by 4.5 per cent.

The last devaluation was made on August 17 by 45 paisa.

Regarding the differential spread between the buying and selling rates, the BB said it was done to encourage dealers to go to the inter-bank market rather than the central bank for their funds procurement and disposal.

### DCC demolition

dismantle hundreds of structures situated on their lands, he replied that the acting Mayor had talked to the Housing and Settlement Minister last week and moves were underway to bring about a coordination in this respect.

The Mayor might also ask the local police to oversee that those evicted do not come back to resettle," he said.

## 4 lakh leave KSA taking advantage of amnesty

RIYADH, Oct 23: Almost 400,000 illegal foreigners have left Saudi Arabia in the past three months, taking advantage of an amnesty which expired last week, a senior official said today, reports AFP.

A total of 399,815 expatriates who have been residing in the kingdom illegally have returned to their respective countries since the campaign started," said Assad Abdel Karim al-Fareeh, director-general of Saudi Arabia's passports department.

The Saudi government announced in mid-July that foreigners without work permits could be punished by a six months in prison and fines of up to 26,000 dollars if they stayed in the country beyond the deadline.

Thousands of illegal Asian and African workers rushed to airports, docks, and their embassies in a race to leave Saudi Arabia before the amnesty expired but many remain stuck in deportation centres waiting to be repatriated.

Al-Fareeh was quoted by the press as saying that the government was making an "all-out" effort to send back illegal workers and was paying their expenses such as plane tickets, food and accommodation.

He said the interior ministry had "regularised" resident permits for 166,755 foreigners but vowed that authorities would continue to crack down on illegal overstayers and those who shelter them, who face fines of up to 13,000 US dollars.

The Al Riyadh newspaper said on Wednesday a total of 539 illegal aliens had been picked up in a sweep in the Riyadh region since the end of the amnesty.

### Humayun Kamal made envoy to Poland

The government has appointed Humayun A. Kamal, Ambassador to Poland, an official announcement said yesterday, reports BSS.

Kamal, who served in several Bangladesh missions abroad including Kuala Lumpur, Tokyo and Ottawa in different capacities, was deputy head of mission in Colombo before being dispatched to the SAARC Secretariat.

During his three years stint (1992-95) at the SAARC Secretariat in the Nepalese capital as a director, Humayun Kamal was closely involved in various SAARC activities and programme.

A graduate of Dhaka University, Humayun Kamal joined foreign service in 1969.

After his return from Nepal, Kamal served as Director General in charge of SAARC and Central Asia and briefly as Director General of South Asia.

### Bangguo leaves for Hanoi

Chinese Vice Premier WU Bangguo left Dhaka yesterday morning for Hanoi expressing "satisfaction" over his visit to Bangladesh, reports BSS.

WU who led a forty-member high-powered delegation on a three-day visit to Bangladesh was seen off at the airport by Foreign Minister Abdus Samad Azad.

During his visit Mr. WU called on President Shahabuddin Ahmed and Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and visited Export Processing Zone at Savar, Commerce and Industries Minister Tofael Ahmed and Telecommunications Minister Mohammad Nasim called on him at his hotel suite. He also paid a call BNP Chairperson Begum Khaleda Zia.

### Accord with Indus Valley: Probe body submits report

A 3-member enquiry committee submitted its report to the Works Minister yesterday after reviewing the agreement signed between RAJUK and a Singapore-based company for the development of Gulshan-Baridhara lake, reports UNB.

Indus-Valley Investment Pvt Company signed an agreement with RAJUK for the development of the lake.

The probe body, headed by Works Secretary MAN Ziauddin, investigating and reviewing the agreement, submitted the report with its recommendation to Works and Housing Minister Mohammad Nasim, said a handout.

### 6 Banglabazar Patrika staff granted bail

CMM's court yesterday granted bail to six Banglabazar Patrika journalists and employees in a case filed against them by the management of the daily, reports BSS.

They are Kazi Tofael Ahmed, Kamal Hasan, Kausar Mahmud, Giasuddin Ahmed, Azizul Haque Dulal and Golam Kibria.

Shahidul Islam Sarder, Khondker Abdul Mannan, MA Mannan Khan, Abed Reza, Ashlam Mia and AKM Sohel of Bangladesh Legal Aid Services Trust were defence counsellors.

### Bangabandhu murder

"I went to the hospital for duty at about 8 am on August 15, 1975 and through road learnt that Bangabandhu had been killed," he said. On the following day, he said, he came to know from local police that his body will be brought to Tungipara.

The PW said he along with Ilias Hossain and cook Idris Ali went to Tungipara thana ground when a helicopter was hovering over there at about 2 pm on August 16. Police CI Sheikh Ishaq and SDPO of Gopalganj also went there.

"But the helicopter didn't land, it was hovering overhead for sometime. Someone from the copter's window indicated to remove the people who gathered there. CI saheb drove us away by whistling and it landed on the thana ground."

The witness said some army personnel carrying arms jumped out of the copter and took position. They also called the people by hand signal. "As we, along with CI and OC sahebs, went there they asked us to bring out their coffins."

He said they accompanied by SDPO (sub-divisional police officer), CI (Circle Inspector) and OC (officer-in-charge), took the coffin to the family graveyard of Bangabandhu and after opening it saw the body of Sheikh Mujib.

"The army personnel asked us to bury the body as it is. But we said: This is the body of a Muslim. Without ablution and janaza, the burial is not possible."

As the army men gave them 10 minutes for preparation of janaza, Hye said he along with

### United Nations Day today

The 52nd United Nations Day will be observed in the country as elsewhere in the globe today, reports UNB.

The United Nations officially came into existence on October 24, 1945 with 51 member countries.

UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan delivered a message on the occasion of the United Nations Day 1997 and extended his warmest greetings to the peoples across the world.

President Shahabuddin Ahmed and Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina also gave separate messages on the occasion.

To mark the United Nations Day 1997, the UN system in Bangladesh will organise a children's painting competition at the South Plaza of Parliament at 9 am.

The theme of the painting is "Our City/Our Village in 2010".

Over 2,500 under-14 children from different schools are expected to take part in the one kilometre long group painting, to be coordinated by artist Kalidas Karmakar.

A group of folk artists will render popular songs to cheer up the juvenile artists during the painting competition.

Foreign Minister Abdus Samad Azad, LGRD and Cooperatives Minister Zillur Rahman, Environment Minister Sajeda Chowdhury, the UN Resident Coordinator, UN Mission heads, diplomats and other dignitaries will be present on the occasion.

In observance of the day, Chittagong-based Nippon Academy in cooperation with UNIC will organise a youth rally in the port city in the morning.

The United Nations Association of Bangladesh (UNAB) will hold a function on the occasion of UN Day 1997 at Hotel Purbani at 10.30 am.

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### CHOGM begins

British Prime Minister during the visit.

The Commonwealth, established in 1931, represents one fourth of the world population and one fifth of the world's trade.

A Commonwealth Centre, run by the Royal Commonwealth Society and partially funded by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, has been set for NGOs at CHOGM.

A Business Forum was held in London on October 22 for the first time prior to the meeting.

Leaders of industry, commerce, trade and finance joined the Forum in order to consider ways to promote trade and investment between Commonwealth countries.

Their findings will be put to heads of the government during CHOGM, said a British High Commission press release in the city.

### Pay scale

From Page 1

vis the pay scale, basing it on inflation and cost of living index and pay the arrears in cash in a single package instead of staggered payment in savings certificates.

Presided over by Habibur Rahman of PO Samity, the meeting was addressed by President of Sachibabala Karmachari Samity, Zafar Ahmed, President of Class Four Employees Association, Araj Ali, Mizanur Rahman, Abdul Malek, Nijamul Islam, Khalil and Mahe Alam.

The employees would hold rallies on Sunday, one of their leaders told The Daily Star last night.

He said the government should initiate talks with the elected representatives of the employees and review the pay scale. Otherwise they would continue their protest.

### Fazil, Kamal exams results published

The results of Fazil and Kamal examinations held in May-June this year under Madrasah Education Board were published yesterday, reports BSS.

A total of 17,949 students, including 1244 females, appeared in the Fazil examinations. Of them, 13,344 came out successful — 532 got first division, 8,044 second division and 4768 third division. The percentage of pass is 74.34.

In the Kamal Hadis, Fiqha, Tafsir and Adab examinations, 9770 students, including 184 females, appeared. Of them, 912 students got first division, 6,502 second division and 931 third division. The percentage of pass is 85.41.

Among 6,207 student, 140 of them are females, who appeared in the Kamal Hadis examinations. 553 passed in first division, 4,324 in second division and 708 in third division. The percentage of pass is 89.98.

In the Kamal Fiqh group, out of 1668 students, 170 passed in first division, 965 in second division and 78 in third division. The percentage of pass is 72.72.

In the Kamal Tafsir group, among 1605 examinees, 129 got first division, 1053 second division and 138 third division. The pass percentage is 82.24.

A total of 290 students took part in the Kamal Adab group. Of them, 60 passed in first division, 160 in second division and 7 in third division. The pass percentage is 78.27.

### Film Censor Board reconstituted

Government yesterday reconstituted Bangladesh Film Censor Board with information secretary and vice chairman of Bangladesh Film Censor Board as its chairman and vice-chairman respectively for one year, a PID handout said yesterday, reports BSS.

The other members of the board are: Managing Director of Bangladesh Film Development Corporation, Director General of Bangladesh Film Archive, Director of Prime Minister's Office, Deputy Secretary of Information Ministry Gazi Motiur Rahman, Khaleda Khanam MP, News Editor of the daily Ittefaq, Golam Sarwar, Prof Q IM Nuruddin of the Department of Mass Communication and Journalism of Dhaka University, Baby Moudud, Kabir Sarwar, President/General Secretary of Film Producer and Distributors Association, executive Council member of FBCCI Shukumar Ranjan Gosh Alamgir Kumkum, Syed Hassan Imam, Advocate Abdul Mannan Khan, head mistress of Udayan School Shyamoli Nashrin Chowdhury and Morshedul Islam.

She alleged that the ruling party had created "god fathers" in every district to carry out terrorism. "They created such a god father in Feni, which is my constituency."

Begum Zia said this government cannot be called a democratic government. "It has no right to stay in power anymore. So it will have to be forced to step down through movement."

She said the ruling party would have to admit that it had caused irreparable loss to the country's economy calling 173 hartals during BNP period.

"Declare publicly that you had caused the loss and you will not call any hartal in future," the Leader of the Opposition asked the party in power.

Referring to the dilapidated condition of Tangail-Myensingh road, she said no development work was being done in the country under the present regime due to terrorism and extortion.

Referring to the CHT problem, she said the government planned to strike an agreement with the tribal insurgents by only negotiating with the representatives of 22 per cent people.

The meeting was also addressed, among others, by Maj Gen (retd) Mahmudul Hasan, Sahjahan Siraj, Lutfur Rahman Khan MP and Abdul Kalam Azad MP. Thana BNP president Ajar Ali Tarafdar presided.

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BNP chairperson Begum Khaleda Zia, during her visit to Kalihati yesterday, consoling a relative of one of the 65 people killed in a road accident recently. — Star photo

## Khaleda: Terrorist govt

From Page 1

She said no minister or top leader of the government had come to the accident spot or to convey sympathy to the relatives of the victims.

"But we have come to stand beside you... though we have nothing to do for you as we are not in power. Those who are in power have no sympathy for you," the BNP chairperson told the gathering.

The Leader of the Opposition branded the present regime as a "terrorist government" and said "the whole country is now in grip of the terrorists."

She alleged that the ruling party had created "god fathers" in every district to carry out terrorism. "They created such a god father in Feni, which is my constituency."

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