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WB to help implement Privatisation programme

The World Bank has assured the Privatisation Board of necessary cooperation and assistance for successful implementation of the disinvestment programme in Bangladesh, reports UNB.

The assurance came from Marilou Uy, chief of world Bank's Private Sector Development and Finance Division for South Asia Region, when she met with Board Chairman Kazi Zafarullah in the city yesterday.

During the meeting, they discussed matters relating to the country's privatisation activities. They also discussed private sectors involvement in the jute industries of Bangladesh.

The difficulties in privatising jute mills under the Jute Sector Adjustment Credit (JSAC) programme in the past

came up for discussion. The steps for privatising the jute units were discussed in detail.

Zafarullah highlighted the importance of public awareness programme with the World Bank team. The team agreed that the benefit of the privatisation should be known to the people, specially the stakeholders.

It was informed that teams consisting of Members of Parliament and labour leaders will visit soon some of the countries where privatisation programmes were successful.

Matters of the Bank's possible assistance to the Privatisation Board for its technical and institutional capacity building were also discussed.

The Board chairman expressed the government's firm commitment to the privatisation of the state-owned enterprises (SOEs).

3 alleged snatchers beaten to death in Chuadanga

CHUADANGA, Nov 18: Three alleged snatchers were beaten to death by villagers at the Nilmoniganj village under Chuadanga sadar thana today, police said.

The victims were identified on Abdul Hye (27), Hanif (25) and Haul Sardar (26).

Police said they allegedly snatched Tk 6,750 on gun point from a local BRAC employee, Golam Mostafa, while he was returning to his Chuadanga office after collecting loans from loanees.

The BRAC employee then informed the villagers about the incident. The villagers caught them and beat them to death.

The bodies were taken to Chuadanga Sadar Hospital morgue for autopsy. Two pipe guns were recovered from the victims but the money was not found.

Mohammadullah hospitalised

Former President Mohammadullah was admitted to the National Institute of Cardiovascular disease here at 11.30 last night following cardiac problems, reports BSS.

Kazi Masud made envoy to Germany

The government has decided to appoint Kazi Anwarul Masud, at present ambassador of Bangladesh to Vietnam, as ambassador to Germany, said an official announcement yesterday, reports UNB.

Masud joined foreign services in 1966 and held various diplomatic assignments in Cairo, Yangon, Brussels and Jeddah.

Dhaka Zoo

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quently and teased those animals.

"This unfortunate boy did not know what a risk he was taking when he crossed the safety barrier," said a senior Zoo official.

Zakir, from the nearby Nababur Bagh slum under Mirpur thana, had come to the Zoo to collect dry leaves for cooking fuel, police said quoting local people.

After dragging the body inside, the tiger left it and did not touch it again. Zoo officials said the tiger was then confined in a small cage.

Hundreds of people gathered near the cage to have a look at the feline which was born in the Zoo five years ago.

Meanwhile, the Zoo authorities filed a general diary with Mirpur thana in this connection. Police sent Zakir's body to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital morgue for autopsy.

Khaleda

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making fortunes for themselves, rather than doing anything for the progress of the country, she said and alleged that they are smuggling out thousands of crores of taka to foreign countries.

The former Prime Minister cautioned that once they are out of power, members of "this corrupt regime" will be tried on this soil.

The Awami League government is making "advance announcement of victory in the ensuing union parishad elections," she said.

Begum Zia blamed the government for the deteriorating law and order situation as manifested in rising incidents of stealing, dacoity, snatching and terrorism across the country. It is not allowing the administration and the police to act impartially, she said.

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Delhi confce suggests full implementation of water treaty

NEW DELHI, Nov 18: Water experts, academicians and politicians from Bangladesh, India and Nepal began a two-day conference here today to find ways for optimum use of water resources for economic betterment of the people of the region, reports UNB.

They suggested full implementation of the Ganges water sharing treaty signed by Bangladesh and India last year and Indo-Nepal Mahakali treaty.

The participants also attached importance to the augmentation of the flow of the Ganges water and cooperation in the water management, flood control and flood forecasting through exchange of data.

The Fifth Conference on Harnessing the Eastern Himalayan Rivers and GBM Regional Cooperation, sponsored jointly by the Bangladesh Unnayan Parishad, Centre for Policy Research (CPR) of India and Institute of Integrated Development Studies (IIDS) of Nepal, is designed mainly to focus on the Ganges, Brahmaputra and Meghna (GBM) basins.

More than 50 participants from the three countries are taking part in the conference that began at Hotel Samrat in the Indian capital this morning.

Former Indian Defence Minister KC Panth, former secretary Ramaswamy Iyer and VG Verghese of CPR, Dr Quazi

Kholiuzzaman Ahmed of BUP and former Speaker of Nepalese Parliament Daman Nath Dhungana spoke at the opening session.

Bangladesh High Commissioner to India CM Shafi Shamai was present.

KC Panth observed that the present political atmosphere in the region is conducive to resolving problems and promoting regional cooperation. He suggested quick implementation of water-based projects especially those for irrigation and energy for the benefit of the people.

The former minister felt that the planned sub-regional cooperation within the SAARC could also contribute to economic development of the region.

Dr Kholiuzzaman said confidence-building process can be strengthened if agreements reached among India, Bangladesh and Nepal are properly implemented.

Bangladesh delegation includes Sultan Mohammad Mansur Ahmed MP of Awami League, Barrister Ziaur Rahman MP of BNP, JSD general secretary Hasnainul Huq Inu, former DU Vice-Chancellor Maniruzzaman Mia, Dr Ainun Nishat of BUET, Dr Sajjadur Rashid of Dhaka University, JRC member Khalilur Rahman and Director Tawhidul Anwar Khan and BFUJ President Iqbal Sobhan Chowdhury.

Dalmiya: WC cricket

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UNB adds: Ruling Awami League and main opposition BNP have agreed to extend full support and all-out co-operation for hosting the proposed World Cup Cricket.

The assurance came when Dalmiya made separate courtesy calls on Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and BNP secretary general Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan yesterday.

Sheikh Hasina told the ICC supreme that Bangladesh is keen to host the proposed knock-out basis World Cup Cricket.

She said the government was giving total support for the development and flourishing of cricket, a very popular game in the country.

BNP secretary general Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan said his party and he himself were very happy to know that the World Cup Cricket might be held in Bangladesh.

The previous BNP government, he recalled, has made a lot of contributions for the development of cricket in Bangladesh.

The world cricket's ruling body has masterminded the idea of a knock-out championship in a region where the game has a promising future. The eighth and the ninth ranked countries will play in a pre-quarterfinal match while the top seven will have a direct entry to the quarterfinals. There will be a total eight matches.

In the welcome speech, BCB president Saber Hossain Chowdhury said, "I think we have been able to assure the ICC president of our total commitment in making this tournament a success if the governing board gives us a chance".

Meanwhile, the body of Manmurt Rashid was sent to his village home at Paik Kandi in Gopalganj district of her native Bangladesh on the BL College campus.

Hundreds of people including students and leaders of all political parties attended the Janaja.

Leaders of Awami League (AL) and BCL blamed BNP for the killing but local BNP leaders denied the charge.

AL and BCL leaders have demanded immediate arrest of the killers but Daulatpur police said no case was filed yet in connection with the killing.

70 businessmen

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President of the Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FBCCI) Yusuf Abdullah Harun invited the chiefs of apex chamber bodies in Pakistan and India on the occasion of the Business Summit.

Talking to The Daily Star, FBCCI chief said between 250 and 300 businessmen from Bangladesh are expected to attend the inaugural session of the summit of ministers of the three countries.

During the two business sessions, the number of participants from the local chamber bodies may be around 100.

Hossain Kamal, DG of External Publicity in the foreign ministry, said some 35 Indian and Pakistani journalists have been invited to cover the event.

Of them, 25 are from India and 10 from Pakistan.

50 hurt

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the college campus. Both the groups fired gunshots and exploded crackers.

The injured were admitted to Rajshahi Medical College Hospital.

Later, police raided the district Jamaat office and arrested four leaders of the party and its student front, Chhatra Shibir.

The college authorities have suspended classes for two days following today's incident.



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High priority to N-proliferation in South Asia, says Albright

ISLAMABAD, Nov 18: US Secretary of State Madeleine Albright today expressed concern over nuclear proliferation in South Asia, saying Washington attached "high priority" to the issue, reports AFP.

Albright told a news conference she had stressed to Pakistan leaders the 'importance' the United States attached to limiting the spread of nuclear weapons technology and would also make it "quite clear" in India.

This is one reason for the current confrontation between the United States and Iraq, she said, following meetings with President Farooq Ahmed Leghari, Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif and Foreign Minister Gohar Ayub Khan.

Albright arrives in Delhi

NEW DELHI, Nov 18: US Secretary of State Madeleine Albright arrived in New Delhi today on a visit shortened by the Iraq standoff, reports Reuters.

Albright, the first US Secretary of State to visit South Asia in 14 years, made no remarks on arrival.

Business Summit: Press kept off

By Staff Correspondent

The government has decided to cover the deliberations of the 3-nation Business Summit by the state-controlled media.

The only opportunity for the press corps to cover the day-long event on the spot will be limited to the press conference which is likely to be addressed by the Bangladesh foreign minister alone.

Officials of the Press Information Department said that a list of selected journalists are being prepared for covering the press conference.

Replying to queries an official concerned of the government said that neither the inaugural session to be addressed by the three prime ministers nor the two business sessions is open to the media.

Tk 75 lakh gold, electronic goods seized at ZIA

By Staff Correspondent

Customs officials at the Zia International Airport (ZIA) recovered gold and electronic goods worth about Tk 75 lakh from three passengers Monday night.

The seized goods included 27 gold bars, weighing 10 tolas each, 448 grams of gold chains, 30 walkie-talkie sets and 37 mobile phone sets, customs sources said last night.

Customs officials seized the goods as three passengers of two Bangladesh Biman flights from Singapore and Hong Kong tried to smuggle in those goods without paying duties.

Airport sources said a cus-

tomers team, on suspicion,

searched the body of Md Selim at about 10 pm Monday and found gold bars hidden inside his shoes and belt. Customs officials recovered 27 gold bars worth about Tk 20 lakh from Selim who arrived by BG-087 flight from Singapore.

Besides, customs officials recovered 30 walkie-talkie sets and 448 grams of gold chains from Munir Hossain, another passenger of the flight. Munir allegedly tried to pass the walkie-talkie sets hiding those inside some computer parts. The recovered goods were valued at Tk 45 lakh, customs sources added.

Later, the customs officials

recovered 37 mobile phone sets from Khan Shahadat, a passenger of BG-077 flight which arrived Dhaka from Hong Kong at about 2 am yesterday. The seized telephone sets are worth about Tk 10 lakh.

Three departmental cases have been filed in connection with the seizures.

Stevedores

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rice today.

President of BMSA Tarek Kamal told The Daily Star that the chairman of Chittagong port was informed about the decision this afternoon.

"We have been compelled to take such action programme as the dock workers' go-slow programme has affected the loading and unloading of cargo in the ships," he said.

The dock workers started the go-slow programme from November 10 when the stevedores stopped the payment of tips to them.

Convenor of Port Users Forum (PUF) Kamal Uddin Ahmed said following the go-slow programme, there had been a congestion of cargo vessels at Chittagong port.

He said that loading and unloading of cargo in the ships had slowed down by 70 per cent.

Besides, foreign cargo ships have to incur demurrage ranging from 3000 US dollars to 7,000 dollars per day for overstay due to go-slow programme, Kamal Uddin said.

Extortionists

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shed Fakir of Tongibari in Faridpur district. The body was sent to the hospital morgue for autopsy.

A case was lodged with Tejgaon thana but none was arrested in connection with the murder till filing of this report last night.

The collection was Tk 419.88 crore higher than that of the corresponding period of the last fiscal.

(Of the total, Tk 3,677.28 crore was indirect tax and Tk 525.60 crore direct tax.