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BNP chairperson Begum Khaleda Zia addressing a public meeting at Kishoreganj stadium yesterday. — Star photo

Khaleda

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tive of the government. She warned that if the ruling party tries to turn the UP election results in its favour by rigging, a non-stop movement throughout the country will be waged to topple the government. Begum Zia said a good number of BNP leaders and workers were killed and hundreds were arrested during the 17-month rule of the AL government.

Seventeen lawyers of the local Bar Council, including Jatiya Party leader Nasiruddin Ahmed Shahjahan, joined BNP today expressing their allegiance to the leadership of Begum Zia.

Later, Begum Zia exchanged views with the journalists at the local Press Club and lawyers at the Bar Council.

The rally was also addressed by Prof Jahanara Begum, Habibul Islam Bhuiyan, Mojibul Haque Chunnun and local leaders. Maj (retd) Akteruzzaman MP presided.

WB team

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for more credit in the private sector which the financial institutions may not be able to meet fully. This is why we have initiated the move. But we have a problem with the institutional framework in channelling the funds because of the weak condition of the two development financing institutions — Bangladesh Shilpa Bank and Bangladesh Shilpa Rin Sangstha, an authoritative source told The Daily Star.

"We have a plan to make the management of these two institutions efficient and put in professionally trained people so that project monitoring and implementation can be improved to channel the funds," he said.

Both these institutions are in a bad financial condition because of huge non-performing loans.

The funds under the PSIC had been disbursed by three financial institutions — IDLC, IPDC, ULC — and the IFIC Bank.

Dhaka-Ctg train service resumes

FENI, Nov 23: Direct rail communication between Dhaka and Chittagong resumed this morning after 24 hours, reports UNB.

The communication was disrupted following a collision between two goods trains at a place in between Langkolkot and Hasanpur, 24 kms off Feni at about 4:30 am yesterday.

PM reviews

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Resources and Environment and Forest Ministries. This included encroachment in the river Buriganga and afforestation programme.

The Prime Minister is expected to review more projects of the ministries of Agriculture, Water Resources, Energy and Mineral Resources, Communications, LGED, Health, Education and Women and Children Affairs, and Environment and Forest in next few days.

Transport strike in Feni

FENI, Nov 23: A transport strike in five routes of the district was enforced today protesting extortion, reports UNB.

The routes are: Feni-Chittagong, Feni-Karerhat, Feni-Khandahal, Feni-Ramgarh and Karerhat-Dhaka.

Accord with EIB

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the EIB Rudolf de Korte signed the agreement on behalf of their respective sides.

An autonomous institution within the European Community, the EIB can support private/public sector projects in the infrastructure, industry, agro-industry, mining, energy and tourism.

Miss World '97

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She was dressed by Hermant Trivedi, who was largely compensated for designing the most beautiful bathing suit in the contest.

But back home, a feminist who last year led fiery protests against the beauty contest being held in India said today that Hayden had insulted her country by winning the 1997 title.

Premila Nesargi, a politician from the main opposition Hindu nationalist party, told AFP she was 'shocked and dismayed' that Hayden had won the crown.

"It is an insult to us that an Indian has gained cheap publicity by exposing herself... selling one's body is an indecent offence," Nesargi said by telephone from the southern city of Bangalore.

AP adds: Hayden today dismissed suggestions that her business ties to one of the judges and pageant sponsors helped her win the contest.

Questions were raised about her victory because one of the contest's judges heads the company that distributes records for Hindi pop artists managed by Hayden.

But Hayden told reporters the contest was fair.

"There are nine judges of the day, and I had all the judges come up and say, you're doing great," Hayden said. "If I may say so, for the final round, I did pretty well for myself."

The judge in question was Ketan Somaia, an Indian businessman who heads the Dubai-based record distributor Dolphin Group.

Beaten up extortionist dies at DMCH

By Staff Correspondent

An alleged extortionist who was totally injured in a mob beating in the city's Mugdipara area Friday night, died at the Dhaka Medical College Hospital yesterday.

Police said Sohrab Hossain was caught and beaten seriously by some local people when he demanded money from shopkeepers at about 8 pm.

Police rescued Sohrab, son of Tamijuddin in a critical condition and sent him to the DMCH. Police also seized a pistol from Sohrab. His body was sent to the DMCH morgue for autopsy.

Shabujbagh police said Sohrab was an accused in several cases. However, none was arrested or no case was lodged in connection with the death till last night.

Advice for job seekers in Bahrain

The government has advised the people not to go to Bahrain with so-called free visa without confirming their employment there, reports UNB.

The government, according to an official handout, has also advised women workers willing to go to Bahrain to get their visas attested from the authorities concerned.

They have also been asked not to go to that country without clearance from the Bureau of Labour, Manpower and Training.

The handout said a large number of women workers are facing difficulties after going to the Gulf country.

No data

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that by introducing the disks our work would be made much easier," he said.

"This directive confused our existing method of data processing and we kept waiting for the modern technology to spread roots," explained a BBS official. We are still waiting with a two-year stockpile of data to be published."

He said since 1976 the department had been processing most of the data manually.



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Taka devalued again

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build up in 1994. The foreign exchange reserve rose very little recently, but a payment of 108 million dollars at the Asian Clearing Union (ACU) on November 19 eroded more than that.

"We have no option but to make payment at the ACU as per the requirement," said another central bank official. "So, the latest devaluation was done to encourage exports and inflow of remittances from expatriate Bangladeshis."

Another Bangladesh Bank official said credit to the private sector has risen by 17 per cent during the September-October period, drawing down the foreign exchange reserve further and fueling inflation.

He said the central bank's target was a 14 per cent growth in the private sector lending. "If

Albright

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racy faces, about the great economic potential that your reserves of energy may spur, and to share with you the social advances your people have made."

She concluded, "Let me emphasise our friendship to your nation and express my sincere desire that I will soon meet you in Dhaka."

During the meeting with the US envoy, they also discussed other matters of mutual interest, according to an official handout.

the credit expands at such a rate, the level of foreign exchange would reduce further... we want to squeeze credit," he said.

The rate of inflation rose to about 6 per cent and it was showing a rising trend. It was giving a warning, the central bank official said.

Asked if the measures would have any negative impact on the overall economy, he said it is true that there would be some negative impact, but these were done considering all aspects of the economy.

Tofael: SOEs

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country. He directed the BSCIC to take special drive for attracting entrepreneurs for the countrywide BSCIC estates.

The minister asked the authorities concerned to make a wayout to get rid of the huge loss.

He directed BSTI authorities to take up motivational programmes for getting certifications on ISO 9000 and ISO 14000 series.

He asked the Steel and Engineering Corporation to make arrangement for leasing out the vacant lands in various enterprises so that foreign investors can set up new industries. He also stressed the need for BMRE of some enterprises for higher productivity.

The inaugural ceremony of Premium Bus 2nd Route (Mirpur-Gullistan) today at 3-00 p.m. instead of 10 a.m.



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