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Ship movement at Ctg Port channel suspended due to dense fog

From Staff Correspondent
 CHITTAGONG, Dec 24: Movement of ships at the Chittagong port channel was suspended today due to dense fog, port sources said.

There was no movement of incoming or outgoing vessels. Ship movement faced disruption in the past two days also during morning hours due to the dense fog that made the channel almost invisible and risky.

Besides, the cold spell, now sweeping the country, kept most of the people indoors. Traffic movement was thin in the city.

The minimum temperature in Chittagong was recorded at 12 degrees Celsius and the maximum at 23.6 degrees Celsius, according to the local Met office.

Clashes in Rangamati during Tofael's visit: 35 hurt

RANGAMATI, Dec 24: Thirty-five people were injured in separate clashes between the activists of Awami League and Sarbadalya Oikya Parishad in the district during the visit of Commerce Minister Tofael Ahmed today, reports UNB.

Witnesses said 20 people were wounded in clashes at Kaulkhal thana headquarters. The trouble ensued as the Parishad men attacked a ruling party meeting at about 2 pm.

In Baghalchhari thana, 15 people were injured when the supporters of the Parishad attacked another meeting of Awami League in the afternoon. The Commerce Minister addressed the meeting.

Eleven of the injured were admitted to the thana health complex. The attackers also ransacked the dais and set fire to a nearby shop.

Inside Today Article

Treaty on CHT: An Ominous Foreboding?

Column: Currents and Crosscurrents by M M Rezaul Karim Page 4

Business

Safety, labour standards key to getting quota raised, says Solaz

DSE index marks slight rise Pages 6, 7

Supplement

One-page special supplement on Merry Christmas Page 5

Domestic service resumes today Biman's one-plane show

By Staff Correspondent

Bangladesh Biman resumes its domestic flights partially this morning with the operation of a Dhaka-Chittagong flight at 11:40 am.

All domestic flights were suspended after an F-28 aircraft of Biman met with an accident in Sylhet on Monday night.

Biman officials said minor maintenance work of the only usable ATP aircraft of its domestic fleet of four was completed last night.

However, operation of flights will remain limited in Dhaka-Chittagong, Dhaka-Sylhet and Dhaka-Jessore routes only. Flights in four other domestic routes connecting Dhaka with Rajshahi, Syedpur, Cox's Bazar and Barisal are still uncertain.

The officials said it will not be possible to resume normal operation of all the flights in the domestic routes in the next three months. But they hoped regional flights will operate normally within the next few days. An Airbus will be pressed into service in the Dhaka-Calcutta route, they added.

At least 50 per cent of the weekly domestic flights, numbering about 60, will remain postponed till January when an F-28 aircraft, now grounded for D-check, joins the fleet.

The previous timings of flights will also be re-scheduled as Biman management will re-arrange the flights, combining the wide-bodied Airbus with the ATP.

The flights will be scheduled, linking up incoming flights from London and the Middle East, mainly to ferry transit passengers, they said.

Damage of the F-28 aircraft in Sylhet on Monday has made it difficult for the national carrier to maintain flights in its domestic routes as only one ATP is now available for an average of eight domestic and some regional flights everyday.

Another F-28 is now in the hanger for D-check while an ATP is still out of order, after it skidded off the runway at Chittagong airport in June.

Meanwhile, senior Biman officials at a meeting yesterday discussed the possibility of temporarily hiring narrow-bodied aircraft from foreign airlines to resume domestic flights.

Officials hoped that the partially damaged ATP now lying in Chittagong, would be repaired and pressed into service by mid-February.

A senior Biman official said they have instructed the sales department to refund the money if anybody wants to cancel their tickets purchased earlier.

Meanwhile, Aero Bengal, the only airlines in the private sector, yesterday said it is procuring its second 48-seat Russian made AN-24 aircraft soon so that it can partially fill up the existing vacuum, created by Biman's absence. Its flights connect Dhaka with Chittagong, Barisal and Cox's Bazar.

Another private airlines, Air Parabat, is likely to go into operation by early next month. An official of the airlines, which has two 19-seat aircraft now, said yesterday they were waiting for the pilots' clearance and aircraft certification.

Air Parabat is likely to operate in routes connecting Dhaka with Chittagong, Sylhet, Jessore, Rajshahi and Barisal.

Our Staff Correspondent reported from Sylhet yesterday that Biman would resume flights in its Dhaka-Sylhet route today. District manager of Biman informed.

See Page 12 Col 5

Three likely reasons for Monday's crash-landing

By Masud Arif

Aviation experts have said there may be three main reasons for crash-landing of Biman's F-28 aircraft in Sylhet on Monday night.

Four experts including two aviation officials, talking to The Daily Star separately yesterday, pointed out almost the same probable causes for the crash-landing.

They expressed the view that "technical factor" and "weather" might not have caused the accident. However, they did not rule out the two factors.

They emphasised "probable errors in judging and monitoring the instrument on board."

Errors could have happened in adjusting and reading the altimeter on board and during descent while the aircraft was approaching the runway, they said.

Before landing, a pilot follows the VOR (very high frequency omni range) instrument to locate the airfield. After flying two minutes as per the VOR, the aircraft turns 'inbound' at a height of about 1,200 feet and approaches the runway.

See Page 12 Col 5

East Asian economic storm set to lash Bangladesh

By Inam Ahmed

The recent economic turmoil in the South East Asian (SEA) countries will have a negative impact on the prospect of foreign capital flow into Bangladesh from the region, once dubbed as 'the economic power house of Asia'.

Bangladesh was looking toward these SEA countries, specially South Korea, as a source of foreign direct investment. A number of high powered missions had visited these countries in a bid to net in funds which the Asian 'tigers' were thought to have in excess.

But with the currency turmoil and financial crisis, rescue packages of 100 billion dollars have already been put in for three hard-hit SEA countries alone.

"Bangladesh is virtually insulated from the turmoil in the international capital market". It does not face a danger of capital flight since there is at present hardly any foreign financial asset in the country", observed leading economist Prof. Wahiduddin Mahmud.

However, the East Asian financial crisis may have some implication for Bangladesh's prospect for attracting foreign private capital. The likelihood of direct foreign investment in Bangladesh by East Asian countries like South Korea has now greatly diminished," Prof Mahmud noted.

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) has already projected that the growth rate of the world economy next year may be reduced by one percentage point to around 3.5 per cent because of the effect of the East Asian debacle. Many of the Japanese companies are about to go bankrupt in the crisis.

Two months ago, Asian financial crisis hit hard Thailand, Malaysia and Indonesia. Now with South Korea and others swept by the storm, there are predictions of meltdown and possibly worldwide disaster.

See Page 12 Col 2

DESA arming itself to arrest irritant supply

By Sharier Khan

The Dhaka Electric Supply Authority (DESA) will introduce a computerised power monitoring system from May-June next to ensure stable power voltage, better management of loadshedding and services.

The system, called Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition (SCADA), is now being installed at the DESA's Kataban office in the city under the Eighth Power Project, funded by the Asian Development Bank (ADB), according to sources in the DESA.

Built at a cost of 16 million US dollars under a turn key contract with Swedish company Asca Brown Boveri (ABB) Network Control, SCADA will enable DESA to monitor the level of total power generation in the city round the clock from the Kataban office.

If there is any power disruption in any area of the city, a wall to wall monitoring board connected with modem and computers will instantly show the location and the nature of problem. This will help DESA to take remedial measures immediately.

DESA will be able to detect problems in any of its 9000 distribution lines.

See Page 12 Col 1



A procession in the city yesterday protesting loadshedding. — Star photo

Alleged threat on banker's life: GD against BNP MP

By Staff Correspondent

A general diary (GD) was lodged with Cantonment Thana yesterday against BNP MP Maj (ret) Akhtaruzzaman for allegedly threatening an official of Agrani Bank in connection with a defaulted loan of his company, Gachihata Aquaculture Firm Ltd.

According to the GD, Belayet Hossain, assistant general manager (AGM) of the bank's BAF branch, was given threat on his life over telephone on Tuesday.

Akhtaruzzaman, however, denied the allegation.

Akhtaruzzaman's company See Page 12 Col 4

Khaleda condemns raid at Salahuddin Quader's house

BNP Chairperson and Leader of the Opposition in Parliament Begum Khaleda Zia yesterday condemned the police raids on the residences of party MPs Salahuddin Quader Chowdhury and Gasuddin Quader Chowdhury, reports UNB.

In a statement, she said the "fascist" government, failing to run the country and bartering away its independence and sovereignty, was now harassing the public representatives.

Begum Zia said this government has filed thousands of false cases against political workers and the MPs, and was nakedly using the state machinery to serve its petty interests.

See Page 12 Col 5



Children being presented with gifts at Sheraton Hotel on the eve of Christmas yesterday. — Star photo

Merry Christmas

The Daily Star wishes its readers and patrons belonging to the Christian community a merry Christmas

Christmas today

The Christian community in the country as elsewhere across the globe will celebrate the Christmas today with great enthusiasm, gaiety and religious fervour, reports UNB.

On the occasion President Shahabuddin Ahmed, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and Leader of the Opposition in Parliament Begum Khaleda Zia gave separate messages, greeting the members of the Christian community.

The day is a public holiday. The day's programmes include prayers, decorating Christmas trees, exchanging gifts among the family members and cutting of X-Mas cakes.

Different organisations have drawn up elaborate programmes to mark the day.

Newspapers will bring out special supplements and the radio and the television put up special programmes.

PM urges Armed Forces Remain alert against false propoganda

GAZIPUR, Dec 24: Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina today urged the members of the armed forces to remain vigilant against any conspiracy to foil the country's independence, sovereignty and stability, reports UNB.

Addressing officials and jawans of the 6th Air Defence Brigade, she said the armed forces, symbol of national unity and sovereignty, should be kept above all controversies.

The Prime Minister, who came here to review the winter exercise of the Air Defence Brigade, said in the past, army was used by powermongers in their petty interest, but this government is committed to build it as a symbol of unity and national prestige.

A certain quarter, which spread false campaign against Awami League in the past, is now also spreading falsehood with an ill-motive, she said, assuring that the government would continue its sincere efforts to develop the army as a modern force. "Do not pay heed to any false propoganda."

Referring to the signing of the CHT peace agreement, she See Page 12 Col 1

38 arrested so far Shibir calls hartal in Cox's Bazar today

From Our Correspondent
 COX'S BAZAR, Dec 24: Ismail Chhatra Shibir activists today defying Section 144 to protest the killings of Shibir worker Abu Nasser and school student Mortuza Hasan in police firing yesterday.

The activities of the tourist town came to a halt today as the showpoppers launched a 48-hour strike from morning and vehicles were off the roads till noon to protest the killings.

The showpoppers also hoisted See Page 12 Col 8

Delay in payment of wages Angry Adamjee workers shut down mills

From Our Correspondent

NARAYANGANJ, Dec 24: Workers virtually closed the Adamjee Jute Mills this noon after the mill authorities put up a notice regarding delay of payment of weekly wages.

The mill authorities, who usually pay wages to the workers every Thursday, put up a notice at 11 am, saying that payments will be made next Monday due to unavoidable circumstances.

Angered by the notice, some workers attacked the management office and within an hour all workers stopped work and shut down the mills.

Executive Director Mir Jamaluddin, however, told this correspondent that the notice was given after discussion with the mills' CBA.

The mill authorities were compelled to defer the payment schedule by four days because of three consecutive holidays beginning tomorrow.

Besides, cash flow of the mills have been affected by continuous strike at the Chittagong Port where some shipments of the mills remain stuck See Page 12 Col 7

Rakibur Rahman new DSE chief

By Staff Correspondent

Md Rakibur Rahman was made the chairman of the Dhaka Stock Exchange (DSE) for 1998 by the newly-elected council yesterday.

Ahmed Iqbal Hasan and Md Shahid Khan were elected senior vice-chairman and vice chairman respectively as predicted earlier.

Their elections were a formality given the intense lobbying and behind the scenes manoeuvring that centred around the DSE polling on December 18.

Rahman became a member of the bourse when he was a student of political science in 1977 and served as councillor during 1979-83 and 1991-97.

See Page 12 Col 5

ঢাকা সিটি করপোরেশন, ঢাকা।

আপনার পরিবেশ সুন্দর ও পরিষ্কার রাখুন
 আপনার শিশুকে টিকা দিন

মশার কামড়ে —
 ম্যালেরিয়া ছাড়াও ফাইলেরিয়া এবং মারাত্মক ডেঙ্গু জ্বর হয়!!

ঢাকা মহানগরীর অধিকাংশ মশা নোংরা নর্দমা, ডোবা, সেসটি ট্যাংক, ইত্যাদি দূষিত/ময়লা পানিতে জন্মায়।
 ডেঙ্গু জ্বরের মশা বাড়ির ভিতরে ফুলের টব, পানির জ্যারিকেন, ভাঙ্গা বোতল, চৌবাচ্চা, ডাবের খোসা, রেফ্রিজারেটরের নীচে, পলিথিন ব্যাগ এবং বিভিন্ন প্রকার পাত্রে জমা পানিতে জন্মায়।

আপনার বাড়ির ভিতর ও আঙ্গিনার সকল স্থানের জমাকৃত পানি ফেলে দিয়ে, ঝোপঝাড় কেটে নিয়ম এলাকা পরিষ্কার রাখুন। এবং মশার বংশ বৃদ্ধি রোধ করুন।

ঢাকা সিটি করপোরেশন

ডিসিসি/পিআরটি/২৪৯/৯৭-৯৮

All but 2 ferries operating now to ease congestion

By Naimul Haq

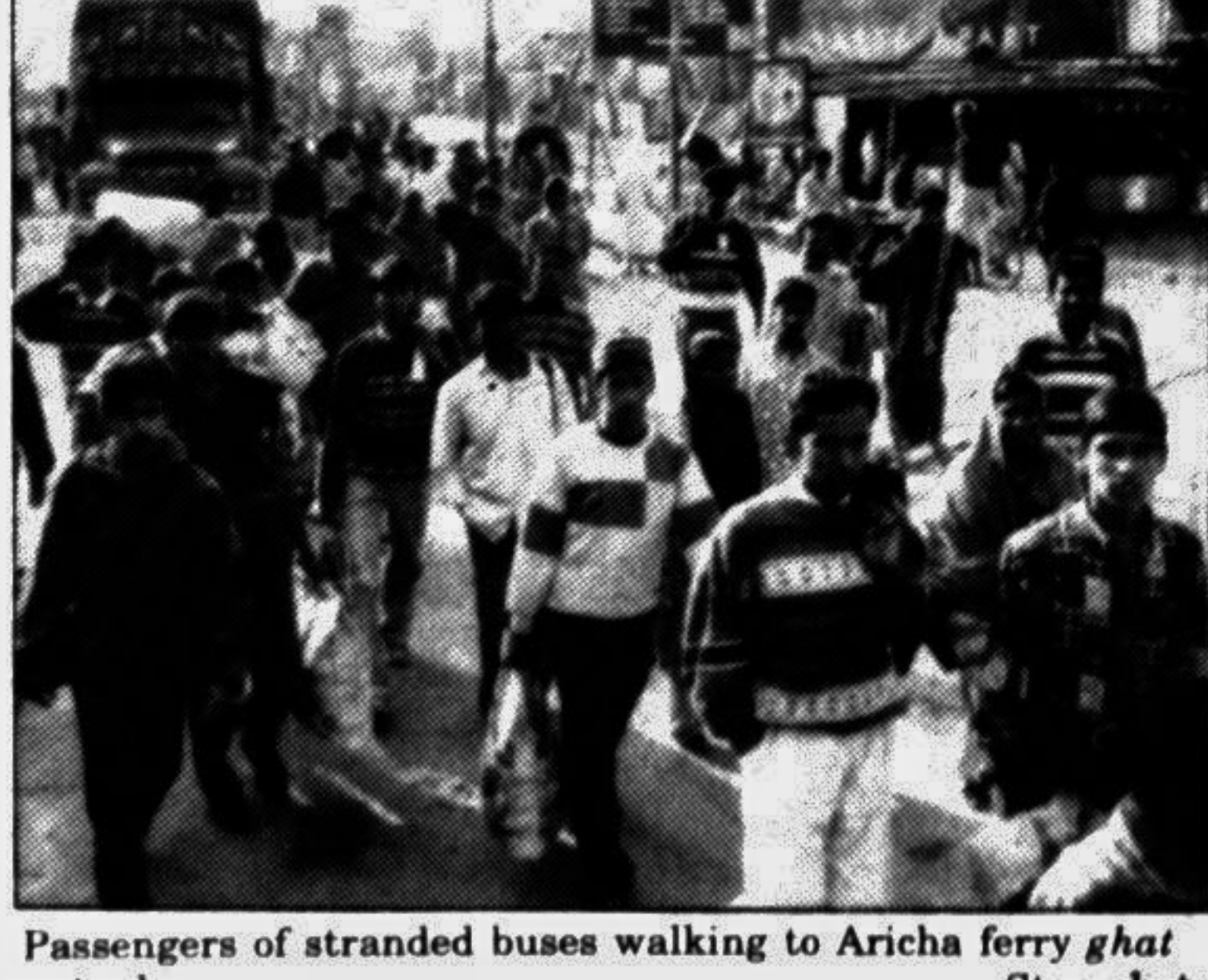
More than 1700 vehicles mostly trucks were waiting to cross the rivers Padma and Jamuna till 9 last night at three ferry ghats — Aricha, Daulatdia and Natakholia.

A two and a half kilometre queue of vehicles, mostly trucks carrying perishables, were waiting to board ferries at Aricha ghat while a total of 650 vehicles were waiting to at Daulatdia and Natakholia.

Thousands of passengers of inter-district buses — many of them women and children — were anxiously waiting for their turn to board ferries. Those who arrived in the city's Gabtali terminal said last night.

"I along with my fellow passengers walked more than four kilometres to find a bus at Aricha ghat," said Rozi from Gopalganj.

Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Corporation (BIWTC) officials at Aricha expected an



Passengers of stranded buses walking to Aricha ferry ghat yesterday. — Star photo

নতুন বছরের সূচনায় এসআইবিএল পরিবারের নতুন খবর

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এই ব্যাংক একবিংশ শতাব্দীর চ্যালেঞ্জ মোকাবেলায় প্রচলিত ব্যাংক ও সমবায়ের বিকল্প একটি ত্রিযুগী ব্যাংকিং মডেল যা আপনাকে দিচ্ছে আন্তরিক গ্রাহক সেবার নিশ্চয়তা।

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