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# The Daily Star

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Meet on proposed  
tribal affairs  
ministry today

By Special Correspondent

A special meeting of high officials with Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina will be held today to finalise the outlines of a tribal affairs ministry against the backdrop of last month's accord on Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT).

The draft will be later placed before the Cabinet for approval, highly placed sources said last night.

They said the government is

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4 sister cos of  
Beximco fail  
to repay loan  
instalments

Star Report

Four sister concerns of Beximco group have defaulted in repaying their loan instalments to Arab Bangladesh Bank amounting to Tk 12.72 crore due on December 30 last.

These companies — Satkhira Fisheries, Pharmatek Chemicals, Khulna Fisheries, and Mrittika Ltd — had their loans guaranteed by the Beximco Group.

As such, Beximco is held liable for any default by the four companies. The total outstanding loan of these companies to AB Bank stands at over Tk 115 crore.

According to sources, these companies have written to AB Bank saying that they would

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UP chairman  
shot dead in  
Cox's Bazar

From Our Correspondent

COX'S BAZAR, Jan 5: A newly-elected Union Parishad Chairman was shot dead here today.

According to witnesses, unidentified assailants attacked Amir Hamja Sikdar, chairman-elect of Chakmarkul Union Parishad when he was arbitrating a dispute between two groups of local people at a tea stall at about 8 pm. He received bullet wounds in his head and died on way to Cox's Bazar Sadar Hospital.

The attackers, equipped with arms, chased the people attending the arbitration.

The body of Sikdar was sent to the sadar hospital morgue for autopsy.

No case was filed in connection with the killing till filing of this report.

Businessman  
abducted in Ctg

From Staff Correspondent

CHITTAGONG, Jan 5: A businessman was abducted by armed terrorists from Balurhdi area near Khatungon in the city this evening, police said.

The victim Mujibur Rahman was abducted at 7:30 pm from his business house by the gunmen who came by auto-rickshaw, police said.

On receipt of the information, police and the detective branch launched a joint operation in the city to rescue him.

In another incident yesterday, a businessman was robbed of Taka 3.50 lakh from Lal Khan Bazar area in the city, police said.

The businessman M A Halim came under attack in the morning while he got into his car to go to his business house, police said.

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Mayor with

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'Secular Front' to be  
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Sehri, Iftar timings	
Ramadan	Jan
6	6 5:18 5:29
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# Dhaka now to host special WC cricket

The special World Cup cricket tournament, the biggest after the World Cup, involving nine test playing nations will now be held in Dhaka instead of Sharjah, from October 26 to November 4 this year, report agencies.

The tournament, to be held on knock-out basis, aims at raising money for the International Cricket Council, which administers the game. The venue was shifted because of sponsorship problems in the

United Arab Emirates.

"There are some restrictions on sponsorship in Sharjah which will significantly reduce the income from the event," Jagmohan Dalmiya, the ICC chief, told reporters in Calcutta, the capital of West Bengal state.

India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, England, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, the West Indies and Zimbabwe will participate in the one-day championship.

All the matches will be

played in Dhaka and the final is scheduled for Nov 3.

Bangladesh Cricket Board president and Deputy Minister for Shipping Saber Hossain Chowdhury later conveyed the message of the ICC president at a hurriedly called press conference at the BCB office here yesterday afternoon.

The BCB chief told newsmen that the ICC president talked with Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and finalised Dhaka as the new venue after receiving

positive response from the head of the government herself.

"We were the first choice," Saber Chowdhury said, "but missed the bid due to weather problem. How the schedule have been partially changed as weather in Dhaka generally remains good in later part of October and early November," he said.

The ICC, in its executive committee meeting last month in Calcutta, decided to offer the event to Sharjah to organise it

in September following Bangladesh's regret, he said.

The BCB officials will be here during the Independence Cup cricket tournament to be held January 10-18.

Replies to a question, the BCB president said Bangladesh Betar will broadcast the running commentary of the tri-national Independence Cup cricket and Bangladesh Television is also expected to telecast the matches live.

Marketing committee chairman in Dhaka on January 16.

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Cold wave  
claims 9  
more lives

By Staff Correspondent

The cold wave that has been sweeping the country since Saturday claimed nine more lives in three districts — Sherpur, Sirajganj and Jamalpur — in the last four days.

Of the victims, two died in Sherpur, three in Sirajganj and one in Jamalpur.

Our Sherpur Correspondent reports: The cold wave claimed two more lives in the district yesterday.

According to sources, an old woman and a new-born baby aged 21 days died of cold wave in Sadar thana of the district.

The body of the old woman, aged about 50, was handed over to her husband Anwar Kazi. The new-born baby could not be identified.

UNB adds: The severe cold wave, claimed seven more lives in Sirajganj and Jamalpur.

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**Nasim says**  
**Proposal for**  
**dialogue**  
**already there**

By Staff Correspondent

The government will not make any fresh bid to re-open the dialogue with the BNP to bring the party back to the Jatiya Sangsads.

The government stance has been taken as its recent move for a fresh dialogue to resolve the parliamentary stand-off received no satisfactory response from the BNP.

"Our proposal for a fresh dialogue is already there. We're not going to make proposal for negotiation any more ... In a parliamentary democracy, we believe, both the sides in the House have equal responsibility." Telecommunications and Works Minister Mohammad Nasim told a couple of reporters at his Hare Road official residence in the city yesterday evening.

Nasim, Organising Secretary of the ruling Awami League who was earlier assigned by the Prime Minister to open dialogue with the BNP ahead of the winter session of the JS, termed BNP's decision to boycott the parliament a 'wrong step.' The winter session is due to start on January 14.

**Cases against  
ULFA leader,  
2 others filed**

By Staff Correspondent

Three cases were lodged with Mohammadpur thana in the city against Anup Jetia alias Golap Barua, the said general secretary of United Liberation Front of Assam (ULFA), and two of his accomplices yesterday.

Meanwhile, the CID is likely to take up the cases against the three 'Indian nationals' now detained at the Dhaka Central Jail.

Police said Sub-Inspector Farid Ahmed of Mohammadpur thana filed the cases against them on charges of illegal stay in Bangladesh and for possessing forged passports and foreign

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Prokrichi postpones programme  
**Reforms body to remove  
anomalies, says PM**

By Sharier Khan

Bangladesh will incur a loss of over 400 million US dollars over the next 15 years, by purchasing about one trillion cubic feet of gas from Sangu Gas Field, now being developed by British company Cairn, according to a calculation by energy experts.

This huge loss will be incurred mainly due to the wide gap between the government-subsidised sale price of gas and the agreed purchase price from Sangu. Another reason is escalation of the Sangu Field development cost, which the Petro-

bangla has not yet agreed to.

Dollar rate fluctuation will also affect Bangladesh's share of profit.

Besides, there is a provision in the present Production Sharing Contract (PSC) under which Petrobangla pays the corporate tax of the oil company.

Cairn is expected to supply 160 million cubic feet (mmcf) of gas per day to the national grid from April next. As per the PSC, Petrobangla will pay about 9.33 million US dollars in foreign currency per month for Cairn's share of gas (which would be

126 mmcf out of 160 mmcf).

By selling 160 mmcf gas in the local market, the government will get 5.76 million dollars per month. The deficit per month will be 3.57 million dollars if local price of gas is not raised to the level of international gas price.

Bangladesh will face severe economic crisis in the next five years by paying this amount, sources claimed.

Petrobangla, which will pay this money to Cairn, will become bankrupt within 10 years

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**Admin cadres  
form body to  
press demands**

By Special Correspondent

About 200 members of the BCS administrative cadre yesterday formed an action committee to press their seven-point demand including immediate implementation of upgrading of 321 posts in their cadre.

The 31-member committee headed by Dr Mujibur Rahman, a deputy secretary in the finance ministry, was formed at a meeting at the conference room of the finance ministry.

Earlier, they gathered in front of the Finance Secretary's office protesting a ministry decision on Thursday to put on hold a December 21 order, upgrading 321 posts, action committee

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Edn boards' employees demand  
**Stop implementation  
of Task Force report**

By Staff Correspondent

The Inter-education Board Employees Federation said yesterday that the indefinite strike by employees of the eight education boards will be called off if the education ministry gives a written assurance that the Task Force (TF) report will not be implemented.

This was conveyed to the ministry officials by a 10-member delegation of high officials of seven boards during a meeting yesterday. Prior to meeting the officials, the delegation held a three-hour meeting with the Federation leaders.

But the ministry's reaction was not yet known, sources in the boards' delegation told The Daily Star last night.

The delegation which is meeting between the Ministry and the Federation will hold another meeting with the Federation leaders this morning on the basis of the ministry's reaction, they said.

When contacted, a high official of the ministry said: "The demand put forward as a pre-condition to call off the strike is not logical."

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Agitation at  
BIRDEM  
deferred  
till Feb 10

By Staff Correspondent

The situation at BIRDEM remained calm yesterday but Employees Welfare Association (EWA) leaders last night warned that they would announce agitation plans if the authorities did not fulfil their promises.

The boards' delegation promised us that the 1992 service rules would be amended by February 10 and the 1996 service rules would automatically be considered null and void," Treasurer of the EWA Md Abdur Rashed said.

He told this correspondent, "We have given the authorities till February 10 to amend the service rules. We have decided to defer all our agitation programmes till then."

Another leader of the EWA said, "We will wait till February 10. Within this period, a five-member national committee headed by Maj Gen (rtd) A R Khan will sit to formulate a new set of service rules combining the service rules of 1992 and 1996. A five-member team of EWA representatives will constantly work with the committee.

Talking to The Daily Star, on condition of anonymity, a member of the present three-

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SEC to lift circuit breaker  
to revive capital market

By Toufique Imrose Khalidi and M Shamsur Rahman

in a major move to revive the market, the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) has decided to withdraw the circuit breaker, which will allow stock prices to jump or fall beyond the now-imposed band.

But a "case-to-case" review will be there for scrips behaving abnormally.

The decision will take "immediate" effect after certain formalities by the bourses, according to a senior SEC official. Two officials, one each from SEC and the stock exchange,

will jointly monitor the market and decide on applying a circuit breaker when a particular scrip will rise or fall against market fundamentals.