

Few Apartments
Ready / Nearing completion

With Loan / Instalment facilities at different locations

PROPERTY DEVELOPMENT LTD.
12 RM. MISSION ROAD, DHAKA
FAX: 880-2-8669416 PHONE: 8663117, 8663126, 8669412-3

The Daily Star

MARBLE MARBLE MARBLE
WE HAVE HUGE READY STOCK OF
ITALIAN CARRARA, PERLATO SICILIA,
BOTTICINO, INDIAN KESSWARI GREEN,
MALAYSIAN AND PAKISTANI MARBLE
OF DIFFERENT TYPES.

NIRMAN INTERNATIONAL LTD.
199, TEJGAON I/A, DHAKA.
TEL: 605957, 607363 SHOW ROOM: 861985

VOL. VII NO. 349 REGD. NO. DA 781

POUSH 30 1404 BS.

DHAKA TUESDAY, JANUARY 13, 1998

RAMADAN 13, 1418 HIJRI

12 PAGES : PRICE TAKA 6.00

BNP standing body grills Akhtaruzzaman

By Nazmul Ashraf

The BNP standing committee yesterday forced a rebel lawmaker to abandon his campaign for the party's joining parliament, threatening him with "dire consequences" unless he withdrew.

The committee grilled M Akhtaruzzaman, MP, for two hours and compelled him to apologise in writing that he was wrong in taking the move.

He had circulated a "letter" among all party MPs arguing in favour of returning to parliament, which ran contrary to the party stand on the issue. A copy of the "letter" was obtained by The Daily Star.

"I humbly state that I am sorry for having circulated the letter and it was not right on my part," he wrote.

See Page 12 Col 2

Board employees resume work

By Staff Correspondent

Employees of the eight education boards resumed work yesterday. Amjad Hossain Bakshi, President of the Inter-education Board Employees Federation, told The Daily Star.

The Federation on Saturday had announced postponement of the indefinite strike by the boards' employees from Monday yesterday in view of the education minister's assurance of further talks on its four-point demand, Bakshi said.

He replied in the negative when asked whether the week-long strike would affect the SSC and HSC examinations, scheduled to begin from April 16 and May 29 respectively. Registration forms of the SSC examinees have already been received by the boards and those of the HSC examinees were in the process, he added.

Setting up of int'l migration office okayed

A meeting of the council of ministers yesterday approved the proposal for setting up a sub-regional office of the International Organisation for Migration in Bangladesh, reports BSS.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina chaired the meeting at her office.

Dec 11, 17 incidents

JUTA demands judicial body

By Staff Correspondent

Jahangirnagar University Teachers' Association (JUTA) has rejected the probe committee headed by a police official to investigate the incidents of attack on JU students by trucks at Aminbazar near the city on December 11 and on the students and teachers by police on the JU campus on December 17.

The JUTA executive committee at a meeting yesterday demanded formation of a judicial probe body headed by a judge of the Supreme Court within seven days for the sake of proper investigation into the incidents. The committee should submit its report within one month, it said.

The teachers of JU are wearing black badges since yesterday protesting the incidents of attack.

The meeting decided that fresh programmes would be announced if the demands were not met within the stipulated time.

Bangladesh beat Namibia by 4 wickets

JOHANNESBURG, Jan 12: Bangladesh beat Namibia by four wickets in their under-19 World Cup Cricket encounter today, reports AFP.

Inside Today Article

Sonia's Entry, Not Unmixed Blessing

Column: Between the Lines
by Kuldip Nayar
Page 4

Focus

Visualizing Japanese perspective of environment and sustainable development
Page 5

Sehri, Iftar timings

Ramadan	Jan	Sehri	Iftar
13	13	5-20	5-35
14	14	5-20	5-35
15	15	5-20	5-36

Pakistan meet India in first final tomorrow

Hosts put up poor show



TIMBRE: Pakistan leggie Mushtaq Ahmed exults after having Bangladesh opener Javed Omar Belim bowled round his legs during the Coca-Cola Independence Cup match at the Dhaka Stadium yesterday.

Sports Reporter

After an adrenaline-pumping display against India on Saturday, Bangladesh yesterday abjectly surrendered to Pakistan, allowing the former world champions to storm into the final of the Independence Cup.

One of the two favourites in the tri-nation meet, Pakistan steamrolled the hosts at the Dhaka Stadium by nine wickets to set up the three-match final against arch-rivals India beginning from Wednesday.

Rest day today

Today is the rest day of the tournament. The first final between arch-rivals Pakistan and India will be held tomorrow. BTV will telecast the match live. The other two finals will take place on Jan 16 and 18.

Although the result was quite in keeping with the form book, for the expectant exuberant home crowd it was the realisation of their worst fear — the fear of seeing their side running out of gas after a spirited display. Indeed Bangladesh cricketers, notorious for their temperamental fickleness, truly ran out of gas yesterday negating the gains of their match against India where they fought all the way before going down by four wickets.

It was the same old story at the outset. Overs were curtailed due to insufficient light, making it a 41 over-a-side affair and Bangladesh were asked to make the first use of the wicket after skipper Akram Khan lost the toss for the second and last time in this meet. Upper-order batsmen showed that at least conceptually they are light years away from the one-day cricket.

Openers Javed Omar Belim and Habibul Bashar, who replaced an out-of-form Shahriar, hung around in the middle without any purpose till the 13th over before the latter departed for a struggling 15 off 36 balls, leaving Bangladesh at 33 for one. Javed made a sedate 17 before he was bowled round the wicket by Pakistan leg-spinner Mushtaq Ahmed.

One-down Sanwar fell for 13 and vice-captain Aminul Islam, who scored a brilliant half-century against India, scored only one run.

See Page 12 Col 1

Bank deposits almost static

By Rafiq Hasan

Banks witnessed a lower growth of deposits last year due to huge borrowing by the government, higher rate of interest on saving certificates, after-effect of the share market crash and a depressing situation in the business arena, banking sources said.

Due to these factors, deposits in the banks showed a sluggish trend throughout the year keeping the total almost static compared to that in the previous year. Though the latest statistics from 39 banks operating in the country showed an increase of deposit by Tk 2156 crore, the sources believed that the figure would not surpass the previous year's position after deducting the interest given by the banks on those deposits. On an average, 7 to 8 per cent interest is being added to the money deposited under different savings accounts.

According to official figures, on December 31, 1996, the total deposits in all banks stood at Tk 46,192 crore while it shot up to Tk 48,348 crore in the first week of November 1997. The estimate for the remaining period of the year was not available.

Among the four categories of banks operating in the country the four nationalised bank had the highest deposit of over Tk 30 thousand crore while 17 private banks had a total of more than Tk 12 thousand crore.

The deposit in 13 foreign banks showed an upward trend, rising to Tk 3,360 crore from Tk 2,970 crore at the end of last year.

\$ 80m ADB loan for capital market dev programme

Bangladesh will receive 80 million US dollar concessional loan from the Asian Development Bank for capital market development programme (ICMDP), reports UNB.

An agreement to this effect was signed between Bangladesh and the Asian Development Bank in Manila yesterday.

The loan will come from the Asian Development Fund, the bank's concessional lending window, for the ICMDP which

See Page 12 Col 2

Admin cadre to meet PM in a day or two

By Special Correspondent

The BCS (Administration) cadre yesterday decided to meet Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina to explain their seven-point demand after making a 'courtesy call' on the Finance Minister at his office.

The meeting is likely to be held either today or tomorrow, according to a leader of the BCS (Administrative) cadre action committee last night.

A large number of civil servants gathered before the finance minister's office yesterday morning under the watchful gaze of a posse of riot police. But there had been no trouble.

Some of their members, led by Dr Mujibur Rahman, convenor of the BCS (Administrative) cadres action committee, met the minister as per a scheduled appointment.

It was just a courtesy call, Dr Rahman said about the meeting. He later told reporters that there was no point in discussing the demands with the finance minister.

See Page 12 Col 5

Logs worth crores of taka rot away



Piles of seized logs in front of the Dhaingmari Forest office in the Sundarbans. —Star photo

By Morshed Ali Khan, back from the Sundarbans

Logs worth crores of taka, seized by the Forest Department from unauthorised wood cutters in the Sundarbans get rotten as it takes too long a time to get a court verdict to dispose those of.

Forest officials in Chandpai Range of the Sundarbans said huge quantities of quality timber, confiscated by them, are rotting in high salinity.

After confiscation, the logs are piled up on the ground in front of the forest offices. Then transports, usually large country boats, are anchored in the canals and the persons arrested are sent to court with Prosecution Offence Reports.

Chandpai Range officials said such logs and boats worth crores of taka are rotting all over the Sundarbans. On an average, a case takes more than a year to be settled in the court.

"By the time the stock is of no use at all," said a forest official.

At Dhaingmari forest office, under Chandpai Range, Deputy Ranger Habibur Rahman showed this correspondent piles of logs in front of his office.

"We do not understand why these logs are rotting away," he said.

See Page 12 Col 8

Three-nation business summit

Meet to work out Dhaka Declaration begins today

By Diplomatic Correspondent

The Three-Nation Business Summit beginning in Dhaka on Thursday is expected to bring about a climate of change and accelerate the pace of economic development and expand trade among the participating countries — Bangladesh, India and Pakistan — as well as in the region. Foreign Minister Abdus Samad Azad has said.

"I am confident that the Summit will turn a new leaf in the annals of cooperative efforts in the history of the sub-continent and also be an epoch-making event in South Asia."

The foreign minister was addressing a press briefing at the conference room of the ministry yesterday.

He stated categorically, "It is not a prime minister's summit, it is a business summit. Each country may have its own problems with others, but the Summit has nothing to do with politics."

"The Summit will essentially be a plank for businessmen of the three countries to meet each other and take the opportunity to discuss the problems and prospects of business," Samad Azad emphasised.

He, however, said, "We have problems among nations but efforts will always continue to solve those through dialogue. It is a constant endeavour."

Senior officials of the three countries will begin a two-day deliberation in Dhaka today to hammer out the details of the Summit and also to work out the proposed Dhaka Declaration.

The foreign minister said that the Summit, which was postponed earlier, will begin at noon on January 15 and all the

See Page 12 Col 3



Samad Azad making a point at the press conference

Dhaka office ignorant Peregrine faces liquidation

By Toufique Imrose Khalidi and Inam Ahmed

The Hong Kong-based investment bank, Peregrine Investment Holdings Ltd, faced liquidation yesterday, after it defaulted on payments and failed to secure rescue funds.

The company executives in Dhaka said they did not know "anything" about the fate of its Bangladesh operations.

Reports from Hong Kong said angry investors yesterday swooped on the offices of Peregrine Investment Holdings Ltd which drew up a liquidation petition after a bailout deal with a Swiss firm in Zurich fell through the previous night.

While the investors were seeking to transfer their share portfolios held by the crumbling brokerage firm, its staff in Hong Kong were packing up after being told that they would soon be out jobs.

The company said investors holding share accounts at Peregrine would get their shares back or be able to switch them to other brokerages, according to Reuters in Hong Kong.

Top executives at its Dhaka office also seemed at a loss, and couldn't say what would happen in Bangladesh.

"I don't know actually. I have to wait till tomorrow to find out (what happened)," said Runa Alam, managing director at its Bangladesh branch office. She said she had no knowledge of what was happening in Hong Kong.

"They've been so busy. They can't be reached by phone," she told The Daily Star last night.

Alam, a Bangladesh-born American who came to the limelight after a presentation

See Page 12 Col 6

PID statement misleading There's no JS body on establishment ministry

By Nurul Kabir

The Press Information Department (PID) issued a misleading statement Sunday regarding a government step to resolve a crisis arising out of the administration cadre's demand for upgradation of 321 posts.

The PID under the Information Ministry said in the statement that the issue of upgradation of some posts of the administration cadre had been "sent to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Establishment Ministry for scrutiny."

But in reality, there is no existence of such a committee, Parliament Secretariat sources said yesterday.

The PID release came a day before the scheduled demonstration by the members of the administration cadres inside the secretariat to realise their demand.

The administration cadre officials postponed their agitation after issuance of the PID statement while other cadres opposing the upgradation also welcomed so-called move.

But a parliamentary standing body on the Establishment Ministry has not yet been formed by the Jatiya Sangsad, the sources in the Parliament Secretariat confirmed yesterday.

Jatiya Sangsad formed 14 standing committees on various ministries in November last year. Of the JS bodies, there was no committee on the Establishment Ministry. Eleven other standing committees, including Public Accounts Committee and Business Advisory Committee were constituted earlier which were not ministerial committees.

However, when his attention was drawn to the non-existence of any parliamentary standing body on the Establishment Ministry, the minister said that the committee would be formed soon.

See Page 12 Col 1

48-hr transport strike in 21 dists begins

From Staff Correspondent

KHULNA, Jan 12: Transport strike in 21 districts of south-western zone of the country began from 6 am today.

The 48-hour strike was called by the zonal committee of Bangladesh Sarak Parishad, a "Sramik Federation" to press home its six-point demand including withdrawal of, what it said, filing of false dacoity case against some union members.

All passenger buses, trucks and tank-lorries remained off the roads much to the inconvenience of the people during Ramadan.

The strike will continue till tomorrow.

Fog disrupts ferry service at Aricha

By Staff Correspondent

Dense fog disrupted ferry service at Aricha ghat again yesterday, the fourth time in the last ten days.

Movement of all ferries was suspended from 3 am till about 11 am yesterday due to the fog. "A total of about 1700 vehicles were stranded at three ferry ghats in Aricha," an official of Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Corporation (BIWTC) told The Daily Star from Aricha ghat yesterday.

He said that movement of ferries was normal at Aricha, Natakhola and Dablatdia ghats on Saturday and Sunday. But the services were interrupted when mist re-appeared in the early hours of yesterday, forcing hundreds of vehicles waiting in queue. He however said the pressure of vehicles was less due to a transport strike in the south-western routes.

The BIWTC official said 800 vehicles were ferried across the

See Page 12 Col 4

Tk 126cr project for Kashimpur Central Jail

By Mizan Ali

The government has taken up the Kashimpur Central Jail project at a cost of Tk 126 crore, official sources said.

The foundation stone of the project is expected to be laid within a week. The Kashimpur Central Jail will provide accommodation for 2000 convicted prisoners and 300 classified prisoners.

The government has allocated Tk 5 crore for the Kashimpur Central Jail so far, of which Tk 2 crore was sanctioned in the present fiscal year while Tk 3 crore was spent in the previous year.

The jail will contain two separate prison houses, one for the convicts and the other for classified prisoners.

Sources in the home ministry said.

See Page 12 Col 8

CMP commissioner transferred

From Staff Correspondent

CHITTAGONG, Jan 12: Commissioner of Chittagong Metropolitan Police Asraful Huda has been transferred to Sylhet division as Range DIG, official sources said.

The DIG of Sylhet, Kutubur Rahman, has been transferred to the post of CMP Commissioner to replace Asraful Huda.

The order of transfer was issued by the government yesterday, administration sources said.

Earlier Kutubur Rahman worked at CMP as additional commissioner.

Administration sources indicated that the reshuffle was made against the backdrop of increase of crime in the port city.

Armed men kill 120 more in Algeria

ALGIERS, Jan 12: An armed gang attacked two villages outside the capital, slaughtering up to 120 people in a movie theatre and in a mosque, hospital sources and witnesses reported today, says AP.

Security forces put the number of dead at 103 and said 70 others had been injured, including two soldiers. Authorities are known to underestimate death tolls in massacres and other violence wracking Algeria since 1992.

The two separate attacks yesterday evening about 20 kms (12 miles) from Algiers were the bloodiest in the Algiers region since a series of attacks in August and September that left hundreds dead.

Violence around Algeria stepped up with the start of Ramadan, the Muslim holy month, on December 30. At least 600 people were reported killed in two waves of attacks in mountain hamlets in western Algeria.

According to medical sources at several Algiers hospitals, 120 people were killed and 100 others injured in the Sunday night attacks in a public room used to show movies in the village of Sidi Ahmed and in a mosque in Haouche Sahraoui.

In each case, bombs were set off at the start of the attacks.

The statement by security forces, carried by the state-run APS news agency, said that self-defence groups armed by the government and security forces helped push back the attackers at Sidi Ahmed.

There was no immediate claim of responsibility for the latest attacks, but suspicion fell on Islamic insurgents whose battle to topple the military-backed government was moving into its seventh year.

The radical Armed Islamic Group, known as the GIA, is implanted in the region south of Algiers.

"We know the attackers," said Farid, an adolescent who lost several members of his family. "It's the GIA. They had already threatened us. They said, 'We're going to kill you, and they came.'"

Farid spoke to The Associated Press on condition he not be further identified.