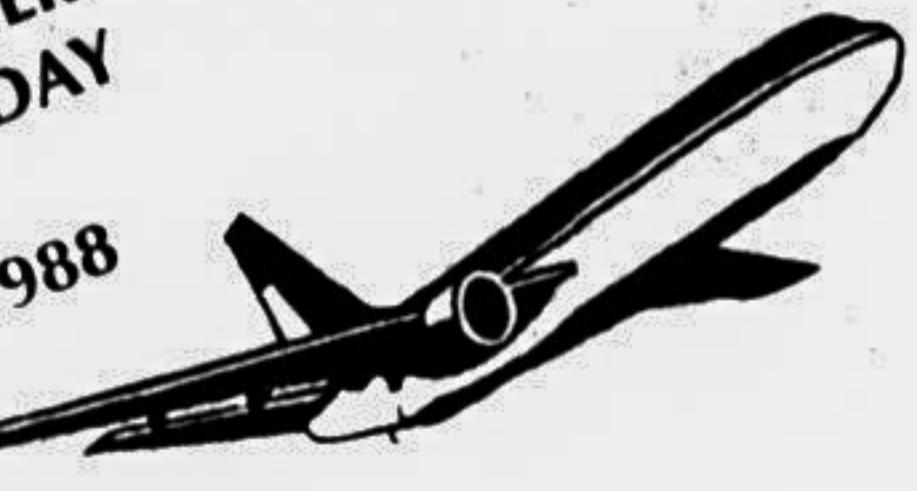


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PHILIPS

Down to Earth Ensuring Quality Control of Drugs

By A S M Nurunnabi

The question of maintaining a proper standard of drugs and medicines has been an important issue since the adoption of the Drug Control Ordinance of 1982. The law laid down specific lines for elimination of certain drugs and medicines considered unnecessary in the changed circumstances in the medical world. The aims of the new law were quite laudable in the context of the then existing multiplicity of similar pharmaceutical products for the same medical remedies, leading to unorganised medical practices.

At the initial stage, however, the new law spawned an undesirable development. It led to the proliferation of new pharmaceutical units which paid little or no attention to the quality control aspect of their products. The situation took such an ominous turn that the government had to intervene in a bold way to stop the unfortunate drift. Many units which began to produce sub-standard medicines and market them in the outlying areas beyond the reach of the public health authorities had to be weeded out. The drug control authority is still said to be playing that helpful role, for which constant alertness and monitoring of the quality of drugs and medicines by pharmaceutical units are logical imperatives. Evidently, this is an on-going process which does not allow the quality control authority to rest on its oars.

Tough movement after Eid, says Khaleda

BNP Chairperson Begum Khaleda Zia asked her party leaders and workers to be prepared for waging tough movement against the government after Eid-ul-Fitr, reports UNB. "Current movement cannot be suppressed by any repressive steps unleashed by the present regime," she told a meeting of workers of BNP Demra thana unit.

Earlier, Demra thana BNP's general secretary and Ward Commissioner Nabuillah Nabi who was released from jail recently, met Begum Zia Thursday night at the party's central office.

The BNP Chairperson said her party's on-going mass contact programme will have to be geared up during the month of Ramadan to let the people know of various activities of the 'fascist' government against the interest of the country.

She reiterated that the current movement could not be stopped by resorting to torture and repression on the leaders and workers of BNP.

BNP Dhaka city convenor Sadek Hossain Khoka MP, Mirza Abbas, Khalilur Rahman, Sheikh Matiur Rahman, Shamshul Alam Babla and Monir Hossain were present.

Six-hour road barricade in Faridpur

FARIDPUR, Jan 16: Hundreds of vehicles to and from Barisal remained stranded at Bhanga here today as transport workers put up barricade demanding cancellation of direct Faridpur-Mawa bus services, reports UNB.

The barricade continued from 9 in the morning to 3:30 pm, snapping road communication between Barisal and Dhaka.

However, the bus workers withdrew the barricade after the intervention of police.

Hasina

From page 1

The Prime Minister said the package of incentives offered by her government for foreign investors has also attracted great attention and very significant investment are coming to Bangladesh.

"A fair wind is blowing today in our region. It arouses great hopes and expectations in us. A preview of this was clearly visible in our summit."

Hasina hoped the directions and the signals that have been given to the leaders of business, commerce and investment in the summit deliberations would lead the region to the next millennium.

Chief Justice, Speakers, ministers, senior political leaders of different parties, diplomats, chiefs of three services, elite and high officials attended the banquet.

Editor : Mahfuz Anam

Published by the Editor from City Publishing House Ltd, 90 Kakrail, Dhaka-1000 on behalf of Mediaworld Ltd, 52 Motijheel C/A, Dhaka-1000. Editorial, News & Commercial Offices: House No: 11, Road No: 3, Dhanmondi R/A, Dhaka-1205 PABX: 500092-4, Commercial: 500091, Fax No: 88-02-863035, GPO Box No: 3257, Cable: DAILYSTAR, DHAKA. Internet edition address: <http://www.dailystarnews.com> and Email address: dstar@bangla.net



Gillian Anderson and David Duchovny played the part of FBI agents in the television series "The X-Files" which has been nominated for Best Drama in television series in the Golden Globes, scheduled on Sunday.—AP/UNB photo

Dispute over cricket ground

Clash near Rajshahi jail: 30 injured

From Our Correspondent

RAJSHAHI, Jan 16: At least 30 people were injured, 14 of them seriously, in a clash between jail police and local people at Rajshahi Central Jail playground today.

The clash erupted when about 100 members of different sports organisations and some local people tried to prepare a cricket pitch at the ground, but the jail police prevented them from doing so. At one stage, the jail police resorted to lathi charge to disperse the cricket lovers.

The agitated cricket lovers, in retaliation for attack, started pelting brickbats and used hockey sticks. During the clash 30 people, including two journalists — Subrata Das of Ajker Kagoj and Abbas Ali of weekly Dharni — were injured.

Meanwhile, various sports organisations of Rajshahi city in separate statements today condemned the attack by the jail police on the cricket lovers. They demanded punishment to the persons responsible.

**Launch dacoity
in Jamuna**

MANIKGANJ, Jan 16: Armed robbers looted valuable worth over Tk seven lakh from the passengers of a launch in the river Jamuna this evening, police said, reports UNB.

The gang of 10-12 robbers forcibly took the Daulatdabu launch to Kushtia Char in Goalanda and decamped with the booties that included jewellery, new clothes and cash.

The passengers came from Dhaka by a bus and boarded the launch at Aricha ghat. The dacoits had also travelled with the same bus in disguise of passengers.

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Magurjhara fire

Damaged well sealed, but gas leakage continues

From Iqbal Siddique

SYLHET, Jan 16: Sealing of the damaged drilling well at Magurjhara has been completed.

However, gas leakage through many points around the well is still continuing, sources in the area said today.

A Petrobanga official who visited the site also confirmed leakage of gas.

Meanwhile, the Occidental is transporting its equipment and machinery including the drilling rig from the Magurjhara site to Sylhet. The transportation began three days back.

The Occidental has also withdrawn most of the security men it had hired from a private company and deployed there.

The "restricted area" which was earlier earmarked by netted fence has also been reduced, the source added.

An official of the Occidental told this correspondent on condition of anonymity that it

was transporting the major equipment and machinery from Magurjhara and that the "restricted area" and security men were reduced.

Sources in the area also said that local people were seen collecting huge scraps from around the damaged well, some taking among those on rickshaws and pushcarts.

When contacted, Deputy Commissioner of Moulvibazar Nurul Amin told this correspondent over telephone this afternoon what, he was not aware of the latest situation at Magurjhara. He said, the Occidental had stopped giving him written statement on Magurjhara since the beginning of this month.

When contacted, an official of Occidental's Sylhet office said, "We have reduced jobs at Magurjhara and for the time being, it will be stopped." He declined to give details.

Let's learn from past

From page 1
to be identified while ongoing projects have to be successfully completed as the "possibilities are enormous."

"Our affinities, our common faith and heritage, and our shared perceptions of the major issues of the present day world provide the impetus for close cooperation for promoting regional peace and harmony, progress and prosperity."

The Pakistan Prime Minister congratulated his Bangladeshi counterpart Sheikh Hasina for her initiative in convening the first ever trilateral Business Summit. "This was well conceived, timely and ably executed."

The Pakistan Prime Minister said regional economic cooperation can only flourish in a secure and peaceful atmosphere, devoid of tension and mistrust and that is why he had taken the initiative to resume dialogue with India.

The purpose was to discuss all outstanding matters between Pakistan and India including the core issue of Jammu and Kashmir. India must now reciprocate our sincerity by agreeing to seriously address the root cause of tension."

He said Pakistan is committed to peace and has taken the first bold step towards peace. "Unless the Kashmir issue is resolved, South Asia will remain locked in a cold war of its own making," he added.

Referring to two-decade-old Afghanistan issue, he said no

country has suffered more from the continuation of the conflict than Pakistan. "We, therefore, have a vital interest in the restoration of durable peace in Afghanistan."

The Pak Prime Minister said democracy flourished in both Pakistan and Bangladesh. "It is for us to nurture this precious flower. Freedom cannot exist in isolation. It has to be strengthened by growth and development."

He mentioned some structural political and economic reforms in his country and his party Pakistan Muslim League's victory in the 1997 elections. "We are now in the process of fulfilling the people's mandate."

Sharif said the investment incentives offered by his country are among the most liberal in the world. "The macro-economic adjustments we have made are beginning to show results. We are now entering a phase of economic stabilisation."

He also mentioned his country's offer to host a South Asian Economic Summit with the assistance of the World Economic Forum this year focusing on the tremendous economic potentials of the region and the vast opportunities for foreign investment.

"We believe that the Summit would further the cause of development through regional co-operation."

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At the talks, Sheikh Hasina proposed settlement of all outstanding issues between the two countries, including repatriation of stranded Pakistanis and division of assets.

On the issue of asset sharing between the two countries Hasina told the Pakistani side that there was no progress on this matter for a long time. She requested Pakistan to take measures to implement the suggestions of the joint body on asset sharing formed several years ago.

She also requested Nawaz Sharif to take back the Pakistani citizens stranded in Bangladesh. She pointed out that Bangladesh is taking care of 2,40,000 stranded Pakistanis for the last 25 years.

The Bangladeshi premier told her Pakistani counterpart that although the problem was a humanitarian one, it was a "big pressure on Bangladesh". She mentioned that an accord was signed earlier about the repa-

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Sharif described repatriation of stranded Pakistanis and settlement of assets and liabilities between the two countries as "outstanding issues" and assured Islamabad's cooperation in this regard.

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