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The Baily Star

SHAWAL 22, 1418 HIJRI

MARBLE MARBLE MARBLE WE HAVE HUGE READY STOCK OF ITALIAN CARRARA, PERLATO SICILIA, BOTTICINO, INDIAN KESSWARI GREEN,

MALAYSIAN AND PAKISTANI MARBLE OF DIFFERENT TYPES.

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JS session

adjourned

till Mar 1

Parliament yesterday went into a 9-day recess to enable the

members attend the historic Language Martyrs Day functions in their respective con-

The Day will be observed

tomorrow across the country to pay homage to those who made supreme sacrifice for establishing Bengali as state language in

journed the House until 10 am

posed of two resolutions. One of

the resolutions was moved by

Begum Shahin Monware Haq

Hajj flights

from March 3

Bangladesh Biman will op-erate official Hajj flights from March 3, an official press re-

lease said yesterday, reports

likely to perform the holy Hajj

this year under government

management. The flights will continue till March 23 and a to-

tal of 24 flights will ferry them

flight should report to the Haji

camp before February 26, the

Article

Where Have All

the Children

Gone?

Column: Do I Dare

by AZM Obaidullah

Khan

Page 4

Business

BGMEA polls: Forum

releases its manifesto:

Let ports be placed in

private hands to solve

problems

Downward trend in DSE

price index halted

Pages 6,7

The passengers of the first

Inside Today

to Saudi Arabia.

press release said.

It said 8,068 pilgrims are

See Page 12 Col 3

The House yesterday dis-

on March 1.

stituencies, reports UNB.

FALGOON 8, 1404 BS.

DHAKA FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 20, 1998

PM hints at ALPP meeting

More BNP MPs may be inducted into Council of Ministers

By Reaz Ahmad

Deputy Speaker Abdul Hamid who was in the chair ad-Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday told her party MPs that the government would welcome return of more BNP lawmakers to the Jatiya

Sangsad. Hasina, also the Leader of Awami League Parliamentary Party (ALPP), was presiding over a meeting of the ALPP. held at the Sangsad Bhaban. The meeting began at 9:45 in the

Some of the party MPs later told The Daily Star that the Prime Minister had given hints of induction of more BNP lawmakers into the Council of Ministers. "Wait for more surprises within next 10 days," one MP quoted her as saying. Mentionably, two BNP

deputies, Hasibur Rahman Swapan and Dr Alauddin, took oath as deputy minister and state minister on February 9 and 17 respectively.

Another ruling party MP told this correspondent that there were clear indications that a number of opposition lawmakers might opt for joining the 'consensus government' before next Monday's Cabinet meeting, scheduled to be held at the Bangabhaban.

In her address to party legislators, Sheikh Hasina set aside the criticism that her government violated parliamentary norms by inducting ministers from another party "Those who return to the House deserve appreciation," she said.

She said, "MPs, no matter which party they belong have no right to deprive the nation, more particularly one's own constituency, by not attending the proceedings of the House. BNP remained out of the House without any genuine reason, she added.

In an apparent bid to tame party aspirants for ministerial positions, Sheikh Hasina, repeatedly reminded them of the supreme sacrifice made by the Father of the Nation. Praising sacrifices made by party MPs in past, she indicated that the situation may demand more sacrifice.

One of the aspiring MPs told this correspondent, "She made See Page 12 Col 8



A wall near the Central Shaheed Minar being inscribed with verses from a Bangla poem yesterday ahead of Amar Ekushey. - Star photo

Khaleda chairs 'important' BNPPP meeting today

Begum Khaleda Zia returns home today, ending 11-day visit to Saudi Arabia, amidst a 'deep sense of anxiety in her Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) that has been the ruling party's 'target of mass exodus'.

Begum Zia is scheduled to hold a meeting of her party's parliamentarians, eight hours after she flies back to Dhaka at

10 in the morning. The meeting, due for 6:30 pm at the Jatiya Sangsad Bhaban, has been convened at her directive from Saudi Arabia against the backdrop of two BNP lawmakers' joining the government in a span of eight days as well as wide speculations about more 'defection'.

The two BNP MPs Dr Mohammad Alauddin and Hasibur Rahman Swapan, took oath as state minister and deputy minister respectively in Sheikh Hasina's 'government of national consensus'. BNP expelled both of them on charge of breaking party discipline and wrote to the Speaker demand-ing vacation of their seats for By Nazmul Ashraf

'crossing the floor'. Begum Zia, also the Leader of the Opposition in the House, is expected to convey 'very important message' to her party legislators, with a good number of them now reportedly under constant watch by the party hierarchy for their alleged con-

tacts with the government. The crucial meeting of the BNP Parliamentary Party.

> Six BNP MPs deny press reports

By Staff Correspondent Six MPs of the Bangladesh Nationalist Party, the main opposition in the Jatiya Sangsad yesterday condemned the joining of Hasibur Rahman Swapan and Dr Alauddin, in the government of Sheikh Hasina, ac

cording to a BNP press release. The MPs said Dr Alauddin See Page 12 Col 1

likely to be followed by a meeting of the party's Standing Committee, is expected to evolve a strategy to counter the government move.

The issue of BNP's return to the parliament is likely to dominate the discussions as the five-month-long boycott has "angered most of the party MPs," a top BNP leader in-See Page 12 Col 2

Vacate seat of Alauddin, BNP urges Speaker

By Staff Correspondent BNP yesterday sent a letter to Speaker Humayun Rashid Choudhury, requesting him to vacate the seat of party lawmaker Dr Mohammad Alaud-

din for "crossing the floor". Signed by Deputy Leader of the Opposition, Prof AQM Badruddoza Choudhury, the let-See Page 12 Col 7

held yesterday with its coordinator and the president of the Dhaka University Teachers' Association (DUTA) in the chair also urged the people to maintain the sanctity of the

day.

The day's programmes will begin at one minute past zero hour when President Shahabuddin Ahmed will place wreaths at the Central Shaheed Minar. The President will be followed by Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, members of the cabinet and the Speaker.
After the Speaker, the mem-

Amar Ekushey

programmes

By DU Correspondent

vance Committee has taken all

necessary measures to observe

the Shaheed Day tomorrow in a

A meeting of the committee

befitting manner.

The Amar Ekushey Obser-

bers of the executive committee of DUTA led by DU vice Chancellor and the heroes of the Language Movement will place wreaths.

The meeting decided that the committee would welcome the Leader of the Opposition Begum Khaleda Zia at the Shaheed Minar premises and cooperate her in placing wreaths.

Meanwhile, authorities have See Page 12 Col 3

Biman forms body to probe cancellation

formed a three-member enquiry committee to investigate the airline's 'blues' on Monday, when three Airbus captains reported 'sick'.

available for duty, leaving flight 086 cancelled and another delayed which triggered protests by passengers at the departure founge of ZIA. Out of 13 captains of Airbus,

only seven were available for duty on the day. Biman had to summon four others who were not available for a number of reasons.

Biman's flight 086 was

Deputy Managing Director Zainal Abedin, will submit its report within seven days of its formation on Wednesday, Biman sources said.

Annan on last-ditch peace mission

UN relief workers leaving Iraq amid fear of attack

BAGHDAD, Feb 19: Several dozen UN relief workers left Iraq today as a precaution against a possible US-led attack expected if the UN secretarygeneral's last-ditch peace mission to Baghdad fails, reports

Meanwhile, a UN advance team of about 20 support staff arrived at Habbaniya airport west of Baghdad to prepare for UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan's arrival tomorrow.

Annan, who won the blessing of the UN Security Council on Wednesday night for the diplomatic mission, said he was leaving with a "reasonable chance of success" and would meet with Iraqi President Saddam Hussein.

As a precaution in case the mission fails, 29 employees of the UN humanitarian office loaded their gear into buses in Baghdad and headed by road for Amman in neighboring Jordan. Denis Halliday, the UN humanitarian coordinator for Iraq.

said roughly the same number would leave Friday. Two other employees were going to northern Iraq which is under Kurdish control

The world body last week ordered another 81 staff abroad on leave to remain out of the country under contingency plans drawn up in case the

Student stabbed by snatchers dies at DMCH A student of Jagannath Uni-

versity College who was stabbed by snatchers ten days ago in city's Shyamoli area died at the Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) yesterday morning. According to police the dead was identified as Kamruzzaman Manik, 26, son of Abbas Ali, a resident of Shyamoli.

Three muggers intercepted a See Page 12 Col 7

United States and Britain carry out their threat to attack Iraq to force it to give complete access to UN weapons inspectors.

The Philippines is also preparing plans to evacuate thousands of Filipino workers in the Middle East in case a new war breaks out in the Gulf, the chief presidential aide said in Manila today.

He added the new plan was needed to avoid 'mistakes' from the 1991 Gulf war, where Filipino workers in Iraq and Kuwait were caught in the fighting, with some trekking across

deserts to make it to safety. Annan was expected in Baghdad tomorrow in what many see as the last hope for a diplomatic solution to the standoff over Baghdad's refusal to allow UN monitors unrestricted access to presidential sites in their search for weapons of mass destruction.

The United States and Britain have threatened mili-See Page 12 Col 4

Dhaka International Trade Fair '98

: Sher-e-Bangla Nagar (to the west of Rokeya Sarani and south of Planning Commission)

Duration

: 22 February-21 March '98

Inaugural Ceremony : 22 February '98 at 10.00 AM (For invited guests only)

To be

inaugurated by

: The Hon'ble Prime Minister, Govt. of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

Sheikh Hasina

Fair Timing for General Public

: 2 PM to 9 PM a. Inaugural day (22 February '98)

excepting Friday

& Saturday Friday

: 10 AM to 12 Noon

2 PM to 10 PM

: 10 AM to 10 PM

ORGANISED BY Ministry of Commerce and Export Promotion Bureau

Plan to involve private sector in road projects on BOT basis

By Mizan Ali

The government plans to involve the private sector in capital investment and resource mobilisation for implementation of road infrastructure projects, according to official sources.

"The government desires private sector involvement in infrastructure development in the roads and highways sector under Build-Operate-Transfer (BOT) system", said a high official of the ministry of communications. Private sector involvement

in the road sector has so far been limited to construction services only, carried out on the basis of fixed price contract, he

For introducing the BOT system, certain administrative measures will have to be im-

proved and big investments in highway project will have to be exempted from the Monopolies and Restrictive Trade Practices

Besides the road sector will have to be declared an "industry" so that banks and other commercial institutions including international funding agencies like the IDA, WB, ADB give loans, the sources said.

It is envisaged that the company or group of entrepreneurs involved in such projects will be made responsible for the "project output" for a particular period and then transfer it under the government responsibility for their upkeep, improvement and operation. This will enable the en-

trepreneurs get back their in-See Page 12 Col 7

of flight

By Staff Correspondent Bangladesh Biman has

Besides, four others were not

scheduled to Teave Monday morning for Singapore... The committee, headed by

Project for expansion of Dhaka Central Jail

By Staff Correspondent

The Dhaka Central Jail authorities have taken up a project for increasing the accommodation capacity of the jail for another 600 prisoners, according to officials of the home ministry. About 6000 convicts and un-

Central Jail as against its existing accommodation capacity for 2100. A three-storied building will now be constructed for the prisoners along with vertical extension of two other buildings, the

sources added. Construction work has already begun and it will cost the government about Tk 2.7 crore. The building is likely to be

ministry said, certainly not.

সময়

क्रेग्रांत्रगान, अश्विनिष्ठ পরিষদ

এম.ডি, এनভग्न গ্রুপ

completed by the end of the current fiscal year. Asked whether the capacity increase will meet the required demand, a source in the home

He, however, hastened to add it will definitely bring lot more relief to prisoners in the jail. Plans are there also to shift the convicts in Dhaka Central Jail as soon as Kashimpur Cen-

tral Jail is constructed. It will

provide accommodation to

der trial prisoners are in Dhaka 2000 convicts and 300 classified prisoners, he added. Enhancing the accommodation capacity of Dhaka Central Jail is part of the frome min istry's project to increase that of jails across the country for another 4000 prisoners. The project is worth Tk 9 crore 20 lakh, sources said, adding that

the finance ministry has already disbursed the amount. The home ministry took up the project as part of its initia-tive for jail reforms on the basis of the 13 decisions agreed upon at a meeting of the ministry officials with the Prime See Page 12 Col 3

SMC incident: Independent investigation demanded By Staff Correspondent

Leaders of the Sramik Karmachari Union of the Social Marketing Company (SMC) which has been locked out since February 8, yesterday demanded that all accounts of the company be frozen and an independent inquiry be carried In a press conference held at

a city restaurant, the union leaders accused some top SMC officials of nepotism, filing false cases against dedicated workers and embezzlement of company funds. They also alleged indiscriminate expenditure by some officials and gross incompetence in running the company.

The union leaders termed the lock out 'totally illegal' and said there was an ill motive behind it. "They pressed for voluntary retirement but none Sée Page 12 Col 6

APTECH's computer edn in Bangla

Export earning to reach \$6b this fiscal, says Tofael

By Staff Correspondent

Commerce and Industries Minister Tofael Ahmed yesterday hoped that export earnings would reach six billion US dollars during the current financial year.

"All barriers have been removed to increase export earnings. The country is experienc-ing tremendous growth in export earnings during the last couple of years," Tofael said. He was speaking at a func-tion marking launching of

computer education in Bangla language at a community centre in the city. APTECH Limited introduced computer education in Bangla language (Interface and curriculum) for the first time in the country with the help of Ax-iom Technologies Ltd. They have also evolved a special syl-labus in Bangla for computer The function was also ad-

dressed by APTECH Chairper-

son Shaheen Anam, Executive

Vice President K Ramesh, Exec-

utive Director of Bangladesh

Computer Council Dr Abdus Sobhan, President of Biswa Shahittaya Kendra Abdullah Abu Sayeed, Luise Ziggare of Open University of British Columbia, Rizwan Bin Faroque and a student of Bangla computer training programme, Abdullah Al Mamun. "When the new government

3 electrocuted at city slum By Staff Correspondent

mother and her two-year-old baby, were electrocuted at a slum under Gulshan thana in the city yesterday. Two daughters of the woman were also wounded in the inci-

Three persons, of them a

Police said the dead were identified as Halima Begum, 35. her son Alauddin and Chan Mia, 50. The injured Popi, 7, See Page 12 Col 5

came into power the country's export earnings were around four billion US dollars. The government had fixed the growth in export earnings at 14 pr cent but it grew at 19 per cent," Tofael said.

This was possible because of prompt action by the government to solve various problems faced by the exporters. He said the government has been able to make the European Commis-sion withdraw a ban on frozen food export and also keep two-stage derogatory facilities for garments exporters. He also said the government

ogy to earn more foreign currency through export of computer software. Explaining the objective of computer education in Bangla language Shaheen Anam said, "We want to reach computer

gave top priority to develop-

ment of information technol-

the country. See Page 12 Col 8

technology to every corner of

वि जि अय ३ अ निर्वाहन के

বি জি এম ই এ নির্বাচন, ১৯৯৮ উপলক্ষ্যে বিজিএমইএ'ব সভাপতি জনাব মোস্তফা গোলাম কুদ্দুছ-এর নেতৃত্বাধীন সম্মিলিত পরিষদ মনোনীত প্রার্থীদের প্যানেল পরিচিতি সভা আগামীকাল ২১ ফেব্রুয়ারী'৯৮ অনুষ্ঠিত হবে। উক্ত পরিচিতি সভায় সম্মানিত পোশাক শিল্প মালিকগণকে অনুগ্রহপূর্বক উপস্থিত থাকার জন্য সবিনয় অনুরোধ করছি।

> সোনারগাঁও হোটেল, ঢাকা। স্থান

তারিখ २১ य्ह्याती'रु

কুতুবউদ্দিন আহ্মদ

पायित्र इयायुन याश्यूम क्रीधुत्री *সম प्रमाती* এম.ডি, মেহের গ্রুপ

विकाल ৫ घिका।

पातून कारमय शंग्रमात्र श्रधान সম चग्रकात्री क्यांत्रगान, रेग्नुथ अन्त