

**WB to provide
\$280m for
road network**

By Naimul Haq

The World Bank will provide 280 million US dollars, the highest amount under a single package, to develop the country's road network.

"This is a very positive sign," Communications Minister Anwar Hossain Manju told The Daily Star last night.

A five-member team led by Rezaul Hyat, Secretary of Communications Ministry, has just returned home from the World Bank headquarters in Washington signing the loan agreement.

The team also confirmed a 50 million dollar grant from Britain also for development of road network in the country.

According to sources in the Communication Ministry, the loan money would be used to develop the 250-km Dhaka-Sylhet highway, to rehabilitate 500-km long national high-

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Today's 16-page issue of The Daily Star contains a 3-page supplement on 'National Day of the State of Kuwait' on
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**Clinton warns Baghdad
US to act unilaterally
if accord is violated**

WASHINGTON, Feb 24: President Bill Clinton gave his qualified approval to a UN-Iraq accord on weapons inspections Monday, warning that the United States would act unilaterally if Baghdad violated it, reports AFP.

US military forces will remain in the Gulf until Washington is satisfied Iraqi President Saddam Hussein will open weapons sites to UN inspections.

"Our soldiers, our ships, our planes will stay there in force until we are satisfied that ... Iraq is complying," Clinton said, warning of "grave consequences" if Baghdad violated the agreement.

"If he does not keep his word this time, everyone would understand that the United States ... would have the unilateral

right to respond at a time, place and manner of our own choosing," he said.

The United States had threatened military strikes if Iraq persisted in refusing to open its "presidential sites" to UN inspectors as required by agreements signed ending the 1991 Gulf War. Iraq is barred

from having nuclear, biological and chemical weapons and long-range ballistic missiles.

Despite the agreement, US forces continued moving to the Gulf, where there are about 6,500 US ground troops.

Britain, the strongest US ally in backing a possible attack, also opted to retain its military force in the Gulf for now, British Defence Secretary George Robertson said.

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The agreement signed by UN Secretary General Kofi Annan and Iraqi Deputy Prime Minister Tarek Aziz was reached after Annan held a two-hour private meeting with Saddam, and was to be given to the UN Security Council today.

The two-page memorandum of understanding cites the need to respect Iraqi sovereignty, dignity and national security, which is expected to lead to less heavy-handed methods by UN weapons inspectors.

The accord spells out the guidelines for inspecting the presidential sites in one paragraph. The inspectors would be accompanied by diplomats, sources said, and it discusses a critical issue for Iraq — lifting economic sanctions imposed after the 1990 invasion of

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**Partnership with Tullow in Block-9
US, Malaysian cos asked to
take decision by March 7**

Star Report

The negotiation committee for the second round oil and gas block bidding has asked US joint venture Chevron-Texaco to come up with a decision regarding partnership with Irish company Tullow in block 9 by the first week of March.

The committee also asked Malaysian company Petronas and its partner US giant Mobil late last week to decide on partnership with the same Irish company in block 11 at the same time.

In both these moves, the government has favoured the Irish company by suggesting Chevron-Texaco and Mobil-Petronas that Tullow should get 45 per cent equity in each of the

two blocks. At the same time, Chevron-Texaco would split another 45 per cent in block 9 and Mobil-Petronas 45 per cent in block 11, leaving a pettey 10 per cent for Bangladeshi explorer BAPEX in each of the blocks.

Both Chevron-Texaco and Mobil-Petronas representatives were initially asked to discuss the "suggestions" of the government with Tullow Chief Aidan Heavey and decide on partnerships by this week. However, this time frame was extended up to the first week of March as the convenor of the negotiation team went to Japan yesterday to express its interest in partnership with Tullow in block 9.

Sources said that while

chances of partnership between Chevron-Texaco and Tullow were brighter, the position not so clear about Mobil-Petronas-Tullow partnership.

Chevron-Texaco has been competing for block 9 only, the most prospective block in Bangladesh, while Mobil-Petronas has been bidding for both block 9 and 11 along with BAPEX.

Although mobil-petronas was the first big joint venture to agree to talk about partnership with Tullow in block 9 and 11 in mid-December, it was side tracked when Chevron-Texaco

expressed its interest in partnership with Tullow in block 9.

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Acting on a tip-off, two officials of the Drug Administration seized 244 ampoules of pethidine hydrochloride with labels and another 220 without labels. The drug is prescribed for sedation and pain-killing.

The factory was closed for the last five months.

One of the officials talking to The Daily Star at the factory said, "When we entered the factory premises at about 1 pm, we

464 ampoules of illegal pethidine seized from a drug company

By Staff Correspondent

Drug Administration officials yesterday raided the factory of a reputed pharmaceutical company in Tejgaon Industrial area and seized a large quantity of pethidine ampoules produced without licence.

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**Govt trying its best
for Opposition's
return to JS: PM**

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday said the government is trying its best to bring back the opposition to parliament for ensuring a stable political situation and making parliament effective, re-

portants UNB.

"We have accepted their demands which they raised at different times, we have made the parliamentary committees according to their demand. Despite that they did not return to the House," she said.

Responding to queries on the economic situation of the country, the Prime Minister said the government is trying to maintain economic stability.

About the rice price, Hasina said the government has taken all possible steps to arrest the upward trend. Arrangements have been made to import rice by the government and private traders as well.

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**PM, ministers,
AL leaders
meet briefly**

By Staff Correspondent
Members of the council of ministers and members of Awami League's Advisory Committee and Working Committee held a brief meeting on the sidelines of a social function at a minister's residence in the city last night.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, most of the ministers, state ministers, deputy ministers and senior leaders of AL attended the 'Akika' (name giving ceremony) of the grandson of Commerce and Industries Minister Tofael Ahmed at his Hare Road residence.

Two newly induced members in the council of ministers, Hasibul Rahman Swapan and Dr Alauddin — both BNP legislators — were also present.

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**Promotion of 154
officers evokes
sharp reaction**

By Special Correspondent

Promotion of 154 officers, mainly from the administrative cadres, have evoked sharp reaction from members of the other cadres, particularly from the BCS-Prokritic Coordination Committee, grouping engineers, doctors and agriculturists.

The promotion of 154 officers, out of 250 recommended by the Superior Selection Board (SSB), on Monday, led to an emergency meeting of the BCS-Prokritic Coordination Committee which expressed its deep resentment.

It also drew flaks from cadres of former Central Superior Services of Pakistan.

The newly promoted are one secretary, 20 additional secretaries, 30 joint-secretaries and

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**US envoy
meets PM**

US ambassador to Bangladesh John C Holzman made a courtesy call on Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at her office in the city yesterday, reports BSS.

**New Telephone Numbers of
The Daily Star
(With effect from today, 25th
February, 1998)**

Old Numbers	New Numbers
500091	866771
500092	866772
500093	866773
500094	866774

**Bangabandhu Murder Case
Move to bring back all
absconding accused**

The government is making all out efforts to bring back all the absconding and other accused in the Bangabandhu Murder Case.

A Foreign Ministry official told BSS yesterday that an American attorney had been engaged to pursue the case of Lt. Col (retd) Mohiuddin Ahmed, an alleged killer of August 15, 1975.

Mohiuddin, who served as a diplomat during the successive governments of Ziaur Rahman, H M Ershad and Begum Khaleda Zia, is now in police custody in the United States. Bangladesh, seeking his extradition, has submitted necessary papers sought by the US government. A

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Out of the 19 accused five are in custody. Only a handful could be tracked in different

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