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From Page 1

sion of the governing party.

clearly implicating that the

Television in its English news

bulletin however said, "It is

feared that the incident might

ipated by Gano Forum President

Dr Kamal Hossain, BNP MP

Hafizuddin Ahmed, BB,

Workers Party leader Haider

Akber Khan Rono, Director of

the Fair Election Monitoring

Alliance Fakhruddin Ahmed

and Ms Rasheda K Choudhury.

It was moderated by Shafiq

dent yesterday, top officials of

all the concerned agencies de-

clined to own any responsibil-

ity and blamed each other for

Distribution Company Ltd. the

lone suppliers of gas in the city.

said the accident had occurred

due to alignment problem of the

plot where the construction

(PWD), the supervising author-

ity for the construction of

apartments for BTV officials.

said as per the drawing, the

pipeline was supposed to be 65

feet away from the point where

it was damaged during the pil-

said the matter, being a techni-

cal one, was beyond their con-

trol and the accident would not

have occurred if the gas pipeline

was marked properly by the au-

Gas Major (retd) M Muktadir

Ali informed that 20 feet on

both sides of a gas pipeline is

acquired for the Titas and none

is supposed to build any struc-

ture on a 50 feet area around the

four feet under the surface." he

said standing upon the heaps of

muddy soil dug out for reaching

the damaged point of the line to

restore supply after necessary

"A gas pipeline remains only

Managing Director of Titas

The BTV officials, however,

Public Works Department

Titas Gas Transmission and

the accident.

work was going on.

Talking to a UNB correspon-

Rehman, editor of Jai jai Din.

The session was also partic-

have been an act of sabotage.

The state-run Bangladesh

BNP is responsible.

-The Daily Star___

Ideal gift for any occasion. Conventional Kettle

Tofael: Not an act of sabotage

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Let's make things better.

PHILIPS

Larma staying at

Khagrachhari dist

Parishad quarters

Amidst tight security, PCJSS

leader Shantu Larma and sev-

eral top-ranking Shantibahini

leaders are now staying at the

quarters of Khagrachhari Hill

District Parishad, reports UNB.

recently at a cost of Tk 11 lakh

and Shantibahini are now stay-

ing in the hill town. Six of them

are staying at the local circuit

Chakma, convenor of the Liai-

son Committee, expressed hap-

piness over the completion of

arms surrender by Shan-

maintained contact between the

PCJSS and the National Com-

75 houses gutted

in Rangamati

75 kutcha houses and a number

of shops were gutted in fire at

Bairagi Bazar in Longadu thana

of the district in the early hours

who suffered burn in the fire,

A 14-year-old boy, Faruk,

of today, reports UNB.

RANGAMATI, Mar 6: Some

mittee on CHT since 1992.

The Liaison Committee

tibahini.

Meanwhile. Hangsadhaza

with all modern facilities.

The quarters were renovated

In all, 24 leaders of PCJSS

KHAGRACHHARI, Mar 6:

Down to Earth

Woes of Victims of City Slum Fire

By AS M Nurunnabi

Another characteristic as-

There has been another sad

pass their days under the open

sky till they are able to rebuild

their shelters. They are some-

rents of rivalling political and

dwellers has always been found

to be subject to threat of fires.

without assurance of any secu-

rity. In the natural cycle of life.

the burnt slum areas again

come up with strings of renewed

existence. When the dwellers go

out daily in their pursuits for a

living, constant fear lurks in

their mind that their shelters

ing poverty, have sprouted prac-

tically all over the city. The rate

at which they have proliferated

over the past couple of years or

so appears to call for serious

thoughts as to what must be

done to alleviate the sufferings

of the poor who repeatedly fall

prey to the incidents of fire. By

and large, the government for

its part responds to such prob-

Slums, a symbol of increas-

may go up in flames any time.

Thus the life of the slum

The latest in the series of fire incidents in city slums was the pect observed in the past in one at Rayer Bazar which took some cases was that such fires place last month, killing four didn't originate from one place people and destroying more but from several points at the than 800 shanties. More than same time. This used to give rise three thousand people were to the suspicion that in some rendered shelterless. The place cases such acts of arson were deis one of the poverty pockets in liberately caused by vested the city where daily wage earnquarters in achieving their neers ranging from day labourers farious objectives. to rickshawpullers, garments workers and an assortment of aspect. When a fire breaks out lower income groups live in in the slum, devouring all the shanties, the slum dwellers make-shift houses.

What has been seen happening as a regular feature is that when a slum fire occurs and after the fire-fighters have times victims of the cross-curbrought the fire under control, the VIPs in the administration commercial motives. rush to the spot. The next gesture is that of doling out relief either in cash or by cheques to those seriously affected by the fire. The charity-based relief, commendable as it is, is generally felt to be out of place in the context of slums and slumdwellers.

The recurrence of fire incidents in the slum areas have always tended to raise certain questions. It has been alleged that in some cases such fires were caused by vested groups for the purpose of eviction so that those groups could get possession of the land. In this context, certain fire incidents in the past were cited, such as the fires in the sweeper colony. Zahuri mohalla, Arambagh slum, Syedabad slum and the slum near Roopnagar.

BJP confident

From Page 1

nothing could break the al-

drababu Naidu, the charismatic

leader of one of the most potent

regional parties, who sneered at

the Congress Party's ambitions

before heading for New Delhi to

make clear where his loyalties

support a Congress-led govern-

ment at any cost," a senior

(TDP) is part of the United

Front coalition, whose 18-

month-old minority govern-

ment collapsed in December af-

ter Congress withdrew its

It remained to be seen, how-

Front leader said.

lifeblood support.

"Naidu is adamant not to

Naidu's Telugu Desam Party

liance.

But Front leaders said

All eyes were on Ghan-

lem pointing to their general development planning including that relating to economic growth and development.

The issue, however, may be faced by recognising that the city slums have developed into a real problem for the administration to do specifically something for the rehabilitation of the slum dwellers under a plan definitively drawn up to this end. In this context, the slum rehabilitation has to be an integral part of the overall poverty alleviation project with specific goals, time frame and adequate budget allocations.

There are some other points equally worthy of serious consideration. It is a patent fact that the city's expansion — particularly by way of un-restricted growth of slums - has not been matched by an adequate extension of the fire-fighting capability of the city's Fire Service Department. This capability needs be ensured by expansion of their fleet of fire engines with acquisition of the state-of-theart equipment coupled with necessary training.

Another important point stressed by observers is that since the fire-fighting units cannot have proper access to a burning slum due to, in most cases, narrow approach lanes, there is need for the appropriate authorities to ensure provision of enough space within slums for facilitating quick movement of fire fighting units in an emergency.

A dozen MPs

From Page 1

Manju from the post of JP secretary general," a JP source

"The dinner may turn a test as to who enjoys how much support from the 33 party lawmakers," the source said.

"More than a dozen JP lawmakers have decided not to attend Ershad's dinner," a party MP preferring anonymity said. He added that efforts were on so that Ershad reviews his decision regarding Manju.

Golam Faruk Ovi, who is among those MPs opposing Ershad's removal of Manju from the party post claimed last night, "Many MPs have already decided not to join the dinner. Asked whether he would attend the dinner, he said "no".

Sources close to Ershad said that the party chief has personally invited Manju to attend the dinner.

When contacted Manju said that he had received an invitation for the dinner. But he did not make any comment when asked whether he would attend

Manju's removal from his party post has "definitely polarised" the JP, commented a party source. "While many of the MPs are divided into two camps - that of Ershad and Manju - few others are considering joining the government.

"Internal strife and conflict developed in the JP after Ershad's release from jail. This is harming the long-term interest of the party. "At least three JP lawmakers may join the government of consensus under the ruling Awami League," the source said.

Women's Day

From Page 1

hagen in 1910. This year, the theme of the day is 'The right to free movement of women'

International Women's Day Celebration Committee (IWDCC) yesterday held processions, rallies and organised cultural programmes in the city to mark the Day, says a press re-

the National Museum, about 2000 women paraded various streets of the city before joining the rally near the Osmany Park

Speakers at the rally called upon the menfolk to 'treat the women as human being.' They chanted slogans for creating a social awareness for the wom-

The IWDCC, a conglomerate of 40 organisations have arranged week-long programmes at 28 places across the country

The accident occurred Thursday morning as the pile After gathering in front of driver directly hit the gas pipeline under 22 feet.

How was it possible? The chief of Titas Gas, a company under Petrobangla, said the pipeline is 65 feet away

Cooking on rooftop using a make-shift stove as gas supply remained disrupted for the second day yesterday. -Star photo measurement of the (pipeline) there was a pipeline at the spot. alignment," he said. "But they did not pay any Muktadir also said the accident had occurred at a point on

Gas supply in city

their acquired land. "We bought it 25 years ago. I don't know how the land was again given to another authority to build a multi-storied building."

Although there is a system of regular monitoring of the main gas pipeline, he said they were not aware of piling and construction at that point as the master plan didn't indicate it.

The Titas MD also expressed his resentment that dozens of multi-storied buildings were being constructed in the capital city everyday. "But none contacts us before construction. Only the City Corporation contacted us during the construction of the underpass." he said.

Other officials of the Titas Gas said what their MD didn't mention was that the BTV and PWD authorities were given letters about a month back when the construction work began at the site after earth filling. It was informed in the letter that

From Page 1

areas in the old town and Mir-

pur sections 1 and 2 told The

Daily Star that the gas pressure

had declined in the afternoon

people used electric heaters to

cook their breakfast and lunch

while others bought foods from

hotels and restaurants. Some

visited their relatives living in

unaffected areas of the city to

trol room, gas supplies from

three out of five control centres

were suspended. The centres are

at Mirpur Section 10, Nandi-

para and Gulshan Section 1.

Supply from the Aminbazar

and Postogola centres remained

inally sunk about four feet be-

low the surface and there was a

pole carrying Titas gas mark to

identify the line. But when the

Eastern Housing Ltd. a leading

land developer of the country,

filled up the low land, the

pipeline went more than 20 feet

below the surface. Sources said

that the Titas pole-mark also

went under soil and therefore

the gas pipeline was apparently

The pipeline there was orig-

According to Titas gas con-

In the affected areas, many

yesterday.

spend the day.

uninterrupted.

untraceable.

heed to it," said one of them adding that a senior BTV official told the Titas authorities that halting the construction was beyond their control as higher authorities wanted its early completion. Another senior Titas official

wondered how the construction was going on at a place just adjacent to the state-run Television Bhaban. "It's a key point installation (KPI). No establishment is supposed to be allowed beside such a sensitive installation. Watching the restoration

work in the cordoned off area. Director General of BTV Syed Salahuddin Zaki told the UNB correspondent that he had nothing to say as the matter is a echnical one. "The investigation will say

..." he said adding that the gas pipeline should be marked. "The accident could not have occurred if the line had been marked," he said.

hazard of pipeline gas supply

for domestic purposes which is

discouraged in most of the

countries of the world. The

pipeline network is unplanned

and we always run a risk of a

gross system crash," said a

There is a gas pipeline net-work of over 5000 km in the

country with about seven lakh

was admitted to Longadu thana health complex in critical condition, hospital sources said. Local people brought the fire under control after fighting for several hours. The fire affected people said that there was no fire station in the thana. The cause of the fire could

not be immediately known, but local people suspected that it originated from a tea stall at the bazar.

Arsenic From Page 1

known after the planned geological and geo-chemical survey to be conducted by a British geological survey team. The survey will begin soon, the sources

The experts have suggested immediate switchover to use of surface water and rain water to remain safe from arsenic contamination. Without it we will not be able to combat the war", said Dr Mahmudur Rahman, a leading physician of the coun-

Khaleda

From Page 1

"The government has sacrificed the country's integrity by handing over one-tenth of our territory by signing the CHT accord with Shantu Larma," Begum Zia told the meeting.

About the attack on foreign diplomats and investors at Feni, she said the foreign investors are shying away due to political instability in the country as well as terrorist activities unleashed by the ruling

She said common people cannot run their business due to illegal toll collection and snatching of tender papers by the goons of the ruling party. Begum Zia said a famine has

gripped the country's northern region. The government has failed to tackle the rice crisis through open market sale of rice as there is no stock of rice in the godowns.

She called upon the people to be prepared for joining a long march to the CHT, if necessary, to force the government to

scrap the CHT accord. Presided over by Rafiqul Islam Bakul MP, the meeting was also addressed by Mir Shaowkat Ali, Mizanur Rah-

man Minu, Mirza Abbas, Maj (retd) Akhteruzzaman MP, Maj (Retd) Manjurul Kader, Habibur Rahman Habib and Habibur Rahman Tota.

Begum Zia left for the capital after the meeting ending her four-day organisational tour of the northern districts.

BOREA

7 March, 1998

"This incident shows us the

14 JP MPs From Page 1 Meanwhile JP chief H M Er-

Petrobangla official.

consumers.

shad has invited all the party MPs to a dinner at a restaurant in the city this evening. Signatories of the statement

included Golam Faruk Ovi, M Rustam Ali Farazi, Shahdat Hossain, Ahsan Ahmed, T I M Fazle Rabi, Noor Mohammad Mandal, M Tajul Islam, Sharfuddin Ahmed Jhantu, A K M Mustafizur Rahman, Z A Bhutto, Golam Hossain, Lutfor Rahman Chowdhury, Shabita Begum and Abdur Rashid Sarker. The statement neither car-

ried the signature of Communications Minister Anwar Hossain Manju, who was removed from the post of JP secretary general last week nor his wife, Begum Tasmima Hossain, also a party MP.



BANGLADESH GARMENT MANUFACTURERS AND EXPORTERS ASSOCIATION BTMC BIIABAN, 7-9 KAWRAN BAZAR, DIIAKA. ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

NOTICE

To: All Members of BGMEA

The Annual General Meeting of Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA) will be held to-day the 7 March'98 at 4 p.m. at Ball Room, Sonargaon Hotel, Dhaka. The notice has already been sent by Courier Service and also published in the national dailies on 20 February'98. This is just a reminder.

You are cordially invited to attend.

By order of the Executive Committee.

plaugui Col M M Jahangir (Retd) Secretary

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, Dhanmandi R/A, Dhaka-1205. PABX: 866772-4, Commercial: 866771, 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

ever, how the TDP would use the Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

Dhaka **Notice**

Sub: Regarding Illegal Import and Connection of Cellular Telephone

National Board of Revenue

Illegal import of cellular telephone handset without paying customs duty has assumed an increasing trend. According to Customs Act, such imports are considered as smuggling. Any one possessing such illegally brought in handset, any one using it, any one selling it, any one buying it, any one providing connection to, any one availing of the connection, even any one who knows about but refraining from disclosing the information to customs official — all will be held offender of violating the Customs Act and be punishable. Under the circumstance, all are cautioned not to be involved with such smuggled in cellular handset.

2. The government under special consideration, offers ar opportunity for regularisation of earlier imported illegal cellular handset by paying the applicable customs duty and Tk 100/= (one hundred) only as fine. Any one possessing such illegal handset may roduce it for regularisation to the Assistant/ Deputy Commissioner, in-charge of Dhaka Custom's House Taxation Group-3 (in case of Chittagong Customs House, Assistant/Deputy Commissioner, Preventive). This opportunity will remain open up to 15th March, 1998 till 5.00 PM. After that date, legal action will be taken against such handset and every one involved with it. In case any one facing any difficulty in regularisation by paying the customs duty, he may contact the undersigned.

3. Import of old and low quality/faulty cellular handset is prohibited. All importers and passengers coming from abroad are advised to refrain from such import.

4. Callular telephone handset is not a baggage item. Passengers coming from abroad are advised not to carry such handset. In case of any passenger carrying a handset the applicable customs duty and legally imposed fine will be realised.

DFP-4474-1/3

G-393

Mahmud Akhtar Second Secretary (Customs) Phone: 838120-6/343

Forgery of 'quota' From Page 1

Earlier, EPB sources said, the authorities had summoned the managing director of the garments company for a hearing on the allegation of forgery of export quota. The MD admitted the forgery but blamed his company staff for it. He also disowned the signatures put for him in the forged documents.

However, EPB officials said that they found the MD's signature in the fake document, matching his specimen signa-

ture preserved with them. The MD also filed a case with Motifheel police on February 16, accusing the company's commercial officer of the forgery and dismissed him When contacted, Mohammad

He, however, said they were

this year.

Abdur Razzak DG(textile) of the EPB, confirmed the fresh incident of forgery of export quota but declined to elaborate.

now installing computerised system to check such corrupt practice and the new system would come into effect by June

Bangladesh Garments Manufacturers and Exporters Assomay be expelled from the asso-

in the morning. ciation (BGMEA) has also asked the owner to buy the entire forged export-quota for the association, as a penalty to its member, BGMEA Vice President en's rights. Nurul Haq Sikdar told The Daily Star. If he does not, he



International Women's Day Celebration Committee

Historic Mar 7 today

From Page 1 freedom, the struggle is for independence) - voiced Bangabandhu calling upon the people for launching the struggle for

independence. The entire nation started non-cooperation with the regime of erstwhile Pakistan following the 7th March speech of Bangabandhu.

The then East Pakistan was later pushed into a bloody war on the night of March 25, 1971 as the Pakistani army went on a crackdown on the innocent civilians. The long-cherished freedom was achieved on Dec 16 at the cost of about three million lives. In a message on the occasion

of the historic 7th March, President Justice Shahabuddin Ahmed called upon all, irrespective of party affiliation, to work unitedly for building a happy and prosperous Bangladesh as desired by the people.
"Bangladesh, which has

great potentialities, needs united efforts as well as materialisation of democratic thinking and spirit for its march forward," said the Presi-

He said the speech, given by father of the Nation, Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman at Suhrawardy Udyan on this day, was actually the call for liberation of the coun-

In a separate message, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina urged

the countrymen to join the struggle for building a self-reliant Bangladesh imbued with the spirit of the historic 7th March. "The commitment of this

day should be to win the struggle against hunger, poverty and oppression in building a Sonar Bangla as dreamt by the father of the nation," she said. The Prime Minister said the

historic 7th March in 1971 was the milestone in the blood stained path towards the country's independence, a cherished dream of the Bangalees. Different political parties,

socio-cultural organisations and student and professional bodies have drawn up elaborate programmes to observe the The day's programmes in-clude, laying of wreaths on the

portrait of Bangabandhu, dis-

cussions, meetings and proces-Awami League leaders and workers will converge at Bangabandhu Bhaban at 7 am and place wreaths on the portrait of Bangabandhu. Besides, the party will hold a

Maidan at 3 pm. Prime Minister and AL chief Sheikh Hasina will address the meeting. Bangladesh Television and Bangladesh Betar will air special programmes highlighting the day's significance. Newspapers will carry special articles

on the historic 7th March.

public meeting at Paltan

from the accident point as per the drawing shown by PWD. "So, it is clear that the accident occurred due to wrong

repair.

thorities.

Grand reception to FFs today

A grand reception for the gallantry award recipient freedom fighters of the country will be held at the north plaza of the Jatiya Sangsad Bhaban at 10 am today, reports BSS.

4 shot as dacoits fire on villagers CHITTAGONG, Mar 6: At

least four people, including a minor girl, sustained bullet wounds when dacoits opened fire on villagers at Chandpara in Satkania thana late Thursday night, reports UNB. The dacoits left the village

after committing dacoity at four houses in the village. The injured were admitted to Chittagong Medical College Hospital

Kutupalong From Page 1

clash with Ansars. The clash took place as Ansars tried to prevent a fight between two groups of refugees on the issue of collecting their weekly ra-

Tension was mounting in the camp since last week when an elderly refugee died and militants alleged the death was due to 'police torture'.

Officials said the death of Dil Mohammad, 60, was normal, but the extremists used it as a pretext for refusal to draw The extremists fled the camp

with the body of Dil Mohammad when BDR and police launched the raid in the partly gutted camp, where nearly 2000 have been rendered shelterless. Police said they 'freed' 23 people, including seven women,

who were forcibly held by the

extremists for speaking against

The action was necessary because a small group inside the camp had forced others not to collect their food and medicines, UNHCR chief in Dhaka Wilbert van Hovell told BBC after the police raid. He said the UNHCR would

BNP to gherao From Page 1

rebuild the camp.

the country because of mismanagement, faulty policy, inefficiency and failure of the government," Mannan Bhuiyan said in a statement. "This government has no control over the market and the OMS scheme has already failed

due to corruption and nepo-

tism," he added. He also called upon his partymen as well as the people to gear up the movement across the country protesting price hike of essentials.

brought out a procession in the city yesterday. -Star photo