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DHAKA MONDAY MARCH 30, 1998

Banking Division abolished, energy ministry divided

The President has abolished the Banking Division of the Ministry of Finance through

The President has also divided the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Resources under heads "Power Division" and "Energy and Mineral Resources Division," the handout added.

Cabinet may okay 3 bills on hill

commodating certain contents of the recently signed CHT peace accord. other things, strengthening of three hill councils in Ranga-

the CHT accord. The cabinet will also consider some amendments to the

According to law ministry sources, the bills, if approved by the cabinet, would be placed in parliament during the current

JMBA draft ordn approved

The amended Jamuna Multipurpose Bridge Authority (JMBA) draft ordinance was approved by the authority at a

It discussed the appointment of contractors for maintenance and management of the Bangabandhu Bridge.

The meeting was attended by Secretary of the Jamuna Bridge Division Abdul Muyeed Chowdhury, Communications Secretary Syed Rezaul Hayat, Law and Justice Secretary Aminullah and Chief of General Staff of Bangladesh Army Major General Masud Chowd-

Some medicines

porarily cancelled the registration of some medicines and imposed ban on the production and marketing of these drugs, reports UNB.

Banned tablets are: Fendein of ACI, Decodine of Amico, Dinafine of Beximco Pharma Tenafen of Fisons, Fena of GA Company, Jefradine of Jayson Pharma, Tarfedine of KDH Lab, Fenadine of Opsonin, Tarfen of

HC to Canada

Secretary (OSD) at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, has been made High Commissioner to Canada, said an official announcement yesterday, reports

Aminul Islam, a career diplomat, served in various capacities in Bangladesh missions abroad, including Kuala Lumpur, New Delhi, Bonn, Tokyo, Calcutta and Ottawa.

Inside Today —

Article

An Ever-growing Underclass of

by Brig (Rtd) M Abdul Hafiz

Village health workers can test tubewell water for arsenic Page 5

Business

Kibria rejects proposal for drastic cuts in tax rates DSE index falls by 17

Pages 6, 7

further amending the distribu-tion of responsibilities of different ministries, an official handout said yesterday, reports

councils today

By Staff Correspondent The weekly cabinet meeting today is likely to give final approval to three draft bills ac-

The draft bills seek, among mati, Khagrachhari and Bandarban districts in the light of

Women and Children Repres-

sion Prevention Act, 1995. session of Jatiya Sangsad.

meeting yesterday, reports BSS.

Presided over by Communications Minister Anwar Hossain, the meeting also brought several amendments to the proposals adopted by the steering committee, which was formed for the inauguration of "Bangabandhu Bridge.

banned

The government has tem-

The ban was imposed following a cautionary note issued by the World Health Organisation in this regard, said an official handout yesterday.

SKF, Sardinine of Novartis and Nosidon of Square Pharma.

Shawkat Osman seriously ill Aminul Islam new Eminent writer Shawkat Osman has been admitted to

Mohammad Aminul Islam,

Our Society

Column: Perspectives Page 4

Focus

Irish company Tullow Exploration in a letter to the government recently expressed its concern over "rumours" that blocks 9 and 11 would be placed for a fresh bid saying that if the government did so, it would make a mockery of the whole second round block bidding for

one of the most favoured foreign oil company in the second round block bidding till recently, in a faxed letter on March 20 claimed that the govpoints ernment has already given it a

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as Energy Minister

By Staff Correspondent

Energy and Mineral Re-sources Minister Lt Gen (retd) M Noor Uddin Khan was stripped of his portfolio yesterday after-

noon. The announcement of his removal from the energy ministry came through the official news agency BSS, quoting a handout, at 2 pm. It said that Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina made Lt Gen (retd) Noor Uddin Khan a minister without port-

folio but gave no details. The replacement for Noor Uddin Khan was not announced till the filing of this report at 10 pm. However, the Cabinet Secretary told The Daily Star that the Prime Minister herself would take care of the vital portfolio.

Signs that the Prime Minister had taken the deteriorating power supply situation with seriousness were apparent when Noor Uddin's departure was followed by an emergency meeting on the situation, chaired by the

PM late yesterday afternoon. Sheikh Hasina directed high officials to put an end to the dismal power supply situation. She told the officials during the two-hour meeting that allout efforts must be made to increase power generation.

She reminded them of sufferings of the people. The meet-ing was also informed that there was a shortage of 80 million cubic feet of gas every day, which caused a shortage of 320 mw of power per day.

When contacted, Noor Uddin Khan declined to talk. The former energy minister, See Page 12 Col 4

Noor Uddin removed 17 more children rescued in Bangalore



India, on Saturday. - AP/UNB photo

By Nazmul Ashraf

Another group of 17 Bangladeshi children, rescued in India while being trafficked to the Gulf states to be used as camel jockeys, are expected to be sent back home in a couple of days, an official of the Bangladesh mission in Calcut', a told The Daily Star over telephone, last night.

The children, along wit'n 15 adults who posed as their parents, were rescued from traffickers by police in Bangalore recently, the official said seeking anonymity.

The fresh team of 17 children and their fake parents are likely to reach Calcutta from Bangalore tomorrow (Monday). or the day after and reach Dha'ka in another two days," he

We're taking adequate measures for their protection and safe return home... They're coming here by train...", he said adding that the mode of their journey from Calcutta to Dhaka See Page 12 Col 6

Shaheed Minar incident

DU to issue showcause on 6 JCD leaders

Noor Uddin Khan

The Dhaka University syndicate has decided to serve showcause notices on six leaders of BNP-backed Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) for their alleged involvement in the untoward incident at the Central Shaheed Minar on February 21, reports UNB.

They are: Habib-un-Nabi Sohel, Monzoor Elahi, Monir Hossain, Selimuzzaman, Bashir Ahmed Khan and Amzad Hossain Shishir. The decision was taken at a

meeting of the syndicate yesterday with Vice-Chancellor Prof A K Azad Chowdhury in the chair. The syndicate took the decision in line with the report of the probe committee which

submitted its report to the au-

thorities blaming the JCD lead-

ers for desecrating the Shaheed

the CMH in the city yesterday.

the Combined Military Hospi-

tal, Dhaka, following a massive

cerebral infarction yesterday

narian Shawkat Osman is be-

ing given treatment in the in-

tensive care unit (ICU). He is

now in a semi-coma state and

his right side suffered paralysis

Prime Minister Sheikh

Hasina yesterday visited the

ailing poet and litterateur at the

pressed her deep concern at the

deteriorating health condition

of Shawkat Osman who only on

Wednesday received Indepen-

cussed with the attending doc-

tors about his health condition

The Prime Minister dis-

dence Day Award from her.

oil and gas exploration.

45 per cent of Block 9.

Tullow, which had remained

"Letter of Intent" (LOI) offering

and treatment.

The Prime Minister ex-

after the cerebral infarction.

CMH sources said, octoge-

morning, reports BSS.

Armed Forces Divn to monitor power situation from PMO

A high level meeting with Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina in the chair yesterday took a number of important decisions to streamline the country's power supply system, reports

Briefing newsmen after the meeting, Principal Secretary to the Prime Minister Dr S A Samad and Press Secretary to the Prime Minister Jawadul Karim said that the decisions included establishment of strong inter-agency coordination, proper load management, snapping illegal power connections, reducing frequent loadshedding and generation of additional quantity of electricity.

Decisions were also taken to

stop systems loss and redouble

efforts for maintenance of

power plants and their proper

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina visited ailing Shawkat Osman, a renowned litterateur, at

The lone witness, a minor

boy, in the rape case of the six-

year girl at CMM court building.

recorded a statement before a

metropolitan magistrate yes-

CID investigators produced the boy, a friend of the victim,

Maria (not her real name), be-

fore the magistrate at about

2pm. It took about half an hour

to record the statement, police

a young man at a place near the

police control room on the first

floor of Chief Metropolitan

Magistrate's Court at about 3

cused in the rape, has already

recorded a confessional state-

Results of second round block

bidding may be delayed further

By Sharier Khan

Tullow's claim of LOI saying

that the government did not is-

sue any LOI to any bidder of the

second round block bidding, in-

cluding Tullow, regarding any

on October 22 last year and

later Block 11 on the basis of its

work programme. However, as

negotiations for getting a big

and financially capable partner had caused delay in the whole

bidding process, the govern-

ment is now thinking about

putting these most sought-after

blocks to fresh bidding or post-

pone the bidding process.

Tullow was offered Block 9

However, officials denied

Obayedul Matbar, 25, ac-

Maria was raped allegedly by

source said.

pm on March 10.

ment in this regard.

Rape: Statement of lone

witness recorded

By Staff Correspondent

upkeep. The Prime Minister assured the meeting of adequate budgetary provisions for this. Meanwhile, a monitoring cell to supervise round-the-

clock the power situation across the country has been set up at the Prime Minister's Office to be managed by the Armed Forces Division. The Prime Minister gave a directive to increase the gener-

ation capacity of the existing power plants through proper management and renovation. She also directed the authorities concerned to give prior notice to the clients regarding timings of loadshedding.

The Prime Minister, who took personal initiative to improve the power supply situation, told the meeting that halt-See Page 12 Col 3

- PID photo

Meanwhile, the CID hoped

that they would receive the

medical report of Maria from

the Dhaka Medical College

Hospital within a couple of

interrogated about 40 people

including the policemen of

CMM's court barrack in connec-

tion with the rape. They are

likely to question some more people in and around the court

her father recorded separate

statements before the magis-

now at the Razarbagh police

hospital while the little boy

who recorded statement yester-

The results of the bidding

process was originally sched-

uled to be announced on De-

cember 15. But now, because of

indecision about blocks 9 and

11, it is not clear whether the

government would be able to

announce the results in the next

11 were not planned to be in-

cluded in the second round

block bidding which was

floated on June 15 last year.

These blocks, according to offi-

cial documents of Petrobangla

and the Energy Ministry, were

supposed to be reserved for ex-

See Page 12 Col 4

Originally, blocks 9,10 and

couple of months.

Earlier last week, Maria and

Maria and her father were

The investigators have so far

Eid-ul-Azha on April 8

The holy Eid-ul-Azha will be observed throughout the country on April 8, reports UNB.
The National Moon Sighting Committee announced this as the moon of the month of Jil-

hajj was sighted yesterday. The announcement came following a meeting of the committee which reviewed reports from various parts of the

country. Vice Chairman of the committee and secretary to the Ministry of Religious Affairs M Ismail Hossain presided over the meeting at Islamic Foundation yesterday evening, said a press release.

Rail-road barricade by jute, textile workers tomorrow

By Staff Correspondent The jute and textile mills workers have called a countrywide rail-road barricade programme tomorrow demanding formation of fifth wage commission and immediate implementation of 12 points agreement between the government and Sramik Karmachari

Oikya Parishad (SKOP). They will also observe a 24hour work stoppage in all mills and factories the same day.

Their demands include implementation of the recommendations of wage commission '91 in private-owned jute and textile mills, cancellation of denationalisation programme and reopening of closed mills and factories.

Labours and workers brought out several torch processions in Demra, Postogola, Adamjee and Shiddhirganj industrial areas last night to drum up support for tomorrow's programme. The Patkal Sramik Karma-

chari Sangram Parishad. Bangladesh Suta-Bastrakal Sramik Karmachari Federation and Bangladesh Bastra Shilpa League in a joint statement last night called upon the workers to observe the programme peacefully.

Rivals beat up 2 BCL activists at DU: 17 held

By DU Correspondent

tivists were beaten up, one severely, by a rival faction at Sir AF Rahman Hall of Dhaka University late Saturday night.

as Nasim and Sobhan. Seriously injured Nasim was admitted to the Orthopaedic Hospital while Sobhan was treated at Dhaka Medical College Hospital. Nasim was seriously injured in the face, head and

from AF Rahman, Mohsin and Surya Sen halls of the univer-

day was under the CID custody.

to look into profitability of PSCs again'

Eminent geologists of the country have urged the govern-ment to suspend the Second Round Block Bidding process for selecting foreign companies to explore oil and gas in the

ate the existing Production Sharing Contracts (PSCs) with four foreign companies and in the light of the evaluation see, if the second round bidding can be as profitable as it is said.

ensure accountability By Staff Correspondent The government will appoint local NGOs, the conference was an Ombudsman to ensure the also addressed by Attorney General Barrister K S Nabi,

Ombudsman soon to

accountability of the executive wing of the state towards the people in general and to remedy injustice sustained by individuals in particular. This was disclosed by Suran-

jit Sengupta, parliamentary affairs adviser to Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina. He was addressing a conference titled "Towards Establishment of the Office of Ombudsman in Bangladesh" in the city yesterday afternoon. "On behalf of Prime Minister

the audience that the government will appoint an Ombudsman," Sengupta said. He, however, told the gathering that the civil society should propagate the need of an Ombudsman among the people.

Jointly organised by three

Sheikh Hasina, I am assuring

Awami League MP Akhtaruzzaman and BNP legislator Khalequzzaman Chowdhury. Justice K M Sobhan chaired the conference, while Dr Borhan Uddin Khan made an audio-visual presentation on the subject. He discussed in details about the origin of the concept of Ombudsman, its objectives as well as its effectiveness in establishing justice in the society. The concept of the Ombuds-

man was adopted in the country's Constitution in 1972, while a law was enacted to meet the constitutional colligation in 1980. But the office of the Ombudsman is yet to be established in the country. According to the law, the

Ombudsman will enjoy the See Page 12 Col 7

Oil, gas major areas

Investment prospects bright: US team

By Staff Correspondent

The high-powered US trade delegation vesterday said there were bright prospects for US investment in the country, spe-

cially in the energy sector. George Munoz, leader of the three-member delegation, speaking at a press conference at the American Club here, said they were happy at the government's attitude towards US investment in the country.

"We came here to make sure

that everything is alright and on the right track."

He said that the government was welcoming private investment and that it removed many barriers which were obstructing

foreign investment. Munoz is the President and Chief Executive Officer of the Overseas Private Investment Corporation (OPIC) of US. Two other members of the delega-

See Page 12 Col 4

Owners of 2 travel agencies held on charge of cheating 31 Hajj pilgrims By Staff Correspondent

The Detective Branch of police arrested the owners of two travel agencies on charges of cheating 31 Hajj pilgrims from different areas in the city Saturday night. Police identified the arrested

persons as Kazi Shahadat Hos-

sain, owner of a travel agency

in Khulna, and Belayet Hossain, owner of another travel agency in the city. They were arrested for misappropriating about Tk 16 lakh of the 31 Hajj pilgrims from

Khulna, police said. Shahadat took the said amount from the intending pilgrims as plane fair and other expenses. Shahadat and Belayet See Page 12 Col 2

Compulsory retirement of Biman official stayed

The High Court yesterday stayed the operation of compulsory retirement of an official of Bangladesh Biman, reports

The court comprising Justice A M Mahamudur Rahman and Justice Zakir Ahmed stayed the compulsory retirement of Md Yusuf Harun, General Manager, Cargo Terminal of Biman. Yusuf Harun was placed under compulsory retirement on

Bangladesh Biman Corporation Employees (Service) Regulations, 1979. Advocate A F Hassan Ariff moved the petition on behalf of

Harun.

March 22 under the Public Ser-

vant (Retirement) Act 1974 and

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No: 3, Dhanmondi R/A, Dhaka 1205 before the closing date of each round. See Page 12 Col 6

By Staff Correspondent

The geologists said that the government should first evalu-

at Jahangirnagar University on See Page 12 Col 3

The victims were identified

Police arrested 17 students

sity after the incident. A case was filed yesterday in connection with the incident accusing 20 students. The arrested 17 students included ten accused in the case. They are

'Suspend bidding

country.

Participating in a seminar

Two Chhatra League ac-