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Dual citizenship Cancellation of JS membership of 3 AL MPs demanded

By Staff Correspondent A BNP lawmaker yesterday demanded in the Jatiya Sangsad that membership of three ruling party MPs includ ing a state minister be cancelled for holding dual citizenship.

In a call attention notice. A K M Hafizur Rahman informed the House that State Minister for Foreign Affairs Abul Hasan Choudhury obtained British citizenship on July 18, 1995 His British passport number is 701185593.

Two more Awami League lawmakers — Dr Mohammad Selim and Syed Ashraful Islam - have dual citizenship, he said but did not name the foreign countries from where they obtained citizenship.

Hafizur Rahman said Article 66 (2) (c) of the Constitution restricts a foreign citizen to become member of the Jatiya Sangsad. Abdul Hasan Choud-See Page 12 Col 8

Move to convince Belgian govt not to shut down its Dhaka mission

By Staff Correspondent Dhaka is likely to send an

emissary to Brussels shortly in an attempt to convince the Belgian government not to close down that country's mission in Bangladesh, according to diplomatic sources.

Belgian Ambassador to Bangladesh Ms Cristina Funnes Noppen is learnt to have conveyed to Bangladesh government recently the decision to close down Belgian's Dhaka mission or to downgrade it because of budgetary constraints. Noppen, her country's envoy to Thailand, is concurrently accredited to Bangladesh.

The foreign ministry has suggested a visit at the Foreign Secretary level to examine the See Page 12 Col 4



the DCC.

The Dhaka City Corporation

(DCC) has taken over nearly

half of a playground in Mo-

hammadpur area to build a

shopping complex with a

The playground near the Mohammadpur Town Hall is

known as Shaheed Park. It is

used by hundreds of people of

the congested Mohammadpur

crore 114-shop complex is going

on. A huge tin-shed mosque has

also been built on the western

corner, further encroaching

whatever remained of the field.

the mosque yesterday said

eventually the tin-shed struc-

ture would be turned into a

Madrassah hostel and the

mosque would be moved to the

first floor of the Shopping

Some people coming out of

Construction of the Tk 2.53

mosque on the first floor.



A new Dhaka Stock Exchange leadership which sailed through in what was more a mock polling than anything after a lot of wheeling and dealing by top power brokers launched frantic efforts to revive the market. Will they be able to repair the lost confidence? Read SWM's Cover Story this week on Dhaka's dying stock market

-Inside Today-Article

Towards a poverty-free world

by Muhammad Yunus Page 4

Focus

BJP has no easy choice; Is President Suharto treated unjustly? Page 5

Business

Finance Minister rejects MCCI proposal

> DSE index falls Pages 6, 7

All Prizes Courtesy:

Non-stop unplanned urbanisation

City growing by 4.5 sq km a year

By Morshed Ali Khan

The city fringes in all directions are witnessing rapid unplanned urbanisation with townships growing without proper road, sewerage and other civic amenities.

ভার

Sources in Rajuk, DCC and other agencies attributed this to factors ranging from lack of awareness, corruption in Rajuk in approving building plans and Rajuk's failure to offer a plan for land use in the city.

Experts said if the authorities fail to check this haphazard growth immediately, these new urban areas will pose enormous problems. The city is growing at a rate of about 4.5 square km a year, they pointed out.

The worst affected area, according to some experts, is the eastern fringe of the city. Despite a World Bank (WB) aided multi-million taka project for planned development within the Flood Protection Embankment, this vast city suburb is

becoming concrete jungles like many other inner city areas. The Tk 16-crore Dhaka Metropolitan Development Planning (DMDP), completed in

1996, devised the Dhaka Master Plan and the Structure Plan. It defaulted in one of the most important components — Detailed Area Planning (DAP) of 26 areas of Dhaka, Narayangani and Demra (DND)

DMDP officials claimed they had completed planning of two areas and were working on the rest which might take up to 12 years to complete.

"The whole stretch of the eastern fringe - from Tongi bridge to Demra — by the river Balu has been left to unplanned urbanisation. And people are constructing on the assumption that the area is protected by an embankment," said an official.

"But if there is a severe flood as in 1988, the area will be submerged because no em-

A portion of the playground at Mohammadpur being turned into a shopping complex by

The DCC's decision has an-

gered residents in the locality

who termed it a 'mindless con-

spiracy' to 'deprive the people of

the minimum civic amenity

in the name of an illegally con-

structed mosque on the edge of

the field about fifteen years

ago," alleged Syed Motaleb Hos-

sain, an elderly resident of the

A group of elderly people

adjacent Sher Shah Suri Road.

who gathered at the spot ex-

pressed their dismay and al-

leged that the DCC was "desper-

ately trying to earn quick

money in the name of a

crime prone zone without play-

ground or any recreational fa-

See Page 12 Col 6

"Mohammadpur is a highly

"This project was initiated

available in the area.

DCC building shopping

complex on playground

By Staff Correspondent

bankment was built there under the Flood Action Plan", he said.

The unplanned growth of townships has caused land price plunge. House owners in those areas complained that due to lack civic amenities, house rent in those areas is much less than in planned ar-

Senior police officials said crime rate in those areas is 'hundred times' that in inner city areas. "These are the new breeding grounds for crimes, being added to those in the city at an alarming rate", said one of-

At Badda, about 100 feet from the Swadhinata Swarani, a residential area with rows of houses has come into being in the last 10 years. The road through it is hardly 10 feet wide at the entrance, then it narrowed down to hardly five feet and even less.

At Amin Bazar, across Mir-

- Star photo

2 more girls allege

Obaidul raped

us several

months back

Two more girls have told po-

lice that they were raped by

Obaidul Matabbar alias Mora

who is now in jail in connec-

tion with the Tania rape case.

Johura, 12, and Tahera, 11 -

two sisters - yesterday made

separate statements to Crimi-

nal Investigation Department

accusing Obaidul of violating

They told the investigators

that Obaidul raped them at the

Chief Metropolitan Magistrate Court premises. Obaidul had

been fined Tk 300 for raping

The CID police picked up Jo-

hura from her aunt's house in

Keraniganj thana of Dhaka dis-

trict while Tahera was brought

from her village home in

Faridganj of Chandpur district.

them several months back.

Tahera, officials said.

reports UNB.

pur bridge, the lanes in the 'residential areas' are so narrow that two persons cannot walk side by side. "We even have difficulty in carrying a dead body from here," said a resident.

At Char Kamrangi, across the river Buriganga, a township has grown in the last 15 years, without even a proper entrance. The entrance is so narrow that a car finds it difficult to pass. The whole area is almost devoid of any civic amenities.

Rajuk planners said the situation is almost out of control due to a rising population pressure on Dhaka. "People have to come here even for minor jobs," one planner noted.

Other Rajuk sources pointed out that over the years, most of its top officials have been bureaucrats. "Time has come to put professional technocrats at the top for improving the situation", said an official, request-

Bill to increase

salary of Auditor

General passed

amid protests

By Staff Correspondent

The Jatiya Sangsad yester-day passed a bill seeking en-

hancement of the package of

remuneration of the

Comptroller and Auditor Gen-

eral, amidst strong opposition

The bill - Auditor General

(Remuneration and Privileges)

Bill, 1998 - which will come

into force with retrospective ef-

fect from January 1995, was

Opposing the increase in

salary and allowances of a "top

bureaucrat", most of the BNP

lawmakers said that the gov-

ernment had proposed it at a

time when the country's people

were exposed to a "silent

famine". They alleged that the

Awami League government was

out to appease bureaucracy as

See Page 12 Col 6"

`Half a per cent

more growth

only if corruption

reduced slightly'

By Staff Correspondent

half a per cent more growth and

have four per cent of its GDP as

additional investment every

year only if it could cut corrup

tion by just one level of the cur-

This was told by John

Williamson, Chief Economist

of the World Bank, at the con-

cluding session of an interna-

tional conference on 'Adjust-

ment and Beyond: The Reform

Experience in South Asia' here

He said wilful loan default

Williamson said wilful de-

ing, corruption and bad gover-

nance are the issues that the

faulting is bringing crisis to the

financial system while corrup-

tion is thwarting development

Bank now wants to address.

yesterday.

Bangladesh could generate

from the BNP lawmakers.

passed by voice vote.

See Page 12 Col 4

Biman to be withdrawn from domestic routes

By Special Correspondent

Bangladesh Biman will be withdrawn from the domestic routes, leaving those to private airlines.

"Domestic routes will be totally given to the private sector. We will concentrate on regional and international routes", Civil Aviation and Tourism Minister Mosharraf Hossain told newsmen yesterday.

The minister said this after he visited two Bombardier Dehavilland Dash-8-100 aircraft, which are going to ferry 37 passengers each for the country's third private airline, GMG Airlines, from next week.

But the minister could not give any specific time schedule for phasing out the national carrier from domestic routes.

He said the Biman is going to raise its domestic fare from May 1 but stopped short of disclosing the rate of enhance-

The minister said Biman is incurring Taka 22 crore losses annually to operate the domestic service, which is being subsidised from its international operations.

Aviation sources said Biman's fare is going to rise by 15 per cent, ten per cent less than what was proposed by the air-

GMG Airlines brought two turboprops from Bombardier Aerospace of Canada recently.

It expects to operate six flights daily in Dhaka-Chittagong, Dhaka-Sylhet and Dhaka-Jessore routes next week, Shahab Sattar, Managing Director of the airline told The Daily Star.

Plans are there to add another Dash-8-100 next month and a 54-seater Dash-8-300 later to expand services to all the routes currently served by Biman, he said.

The minister said with the entry of GMG, there will be ten flights a day between Dhaka

See Page 12 Col 7

VAT network likely to be expanded from next fiscal rate of VAT from the present

The government is likely to expand the VAT network to certain services and commodities from next fiscal year, re-

ports UNB. An announcement on the expansion of Value Added Tax (VAT) network will be made in the coming budget for 1998-99. Sources in the National Board of Revenue (NBR) said the

its corporate plan endorsed by the government. The plan includes bringing Bidi under VAT replacing the

expansion would be made as per

present excise duty. Ten more service sectors, including the transport sector, are likely to be brought under VAT

network. The NBR is also planning to raise the rate of turnover tax from 3 per cent to 4 per cent to make its impact more comparable to that of VAT.

Meanwhile, NBR officials rejected the idea of reducing the

a credit of 150 million US dol-

lars to Bangladesh to take up a

new primary education devel

opment programme for attain-

ing overall improvement in ed-

ucation at primary level, re-

An announcement regarding

the interest-free credit was

made on Tuesday at the bank's

headquarters in Washington,

bank will support the govern-

ment's objectives for primary

education over the next five

years to boost net enrollment

from 85 to 95 per cent and in-

crease primary school comple-

tion rates from 60 to 70 per

cent. It is also intended to dou-

ble learning achievement so

that 85 per cent of completing

students attain at least grade 4

level competencies in literacy,

Through this project, the

said a press release yesterday.

ports BSS.

level of 15 per cent. The trade bodies, including

FBCCI, MCCI, DCCI and other business associations, are demanding reduction in the VAT rate almost every year since its inception in the fiscal 1991-92. They have also reiterated the

demand this year, urging the

government to reduce VAT rate by at least 5 per cent considering the rate followed by the neighbouring countries. The NBR officials said the proposed reduction was impossible because any reduction

might hamper government's revenue collection. Without giving any figure, they admitted that VAT collection during the current year was

The project will also reduce

drop out rates and grade repeti-

tion, allocate education re-

sources more effectively to raise

enrollment of the girls and the

poor in selected urban areas

and in underserved rural com-

munities and improve educa-

Audrey Aarons, a World

Bank Education Specialist in

South Asia Education Sector

Unit and project task leader.

said, "Bangladesh has made

great strides in increasing en-

rollment in primary education

since the early 1990s and, more

recently, in secondary educa-

tion, specially for girls." She, however, noted that "the qual-

ity of education and low learn-

ing achievements are still a

tion administration.

much less than expected. However, during the first seven months of the current fiscal year, the total revenue deficit has been estimated at See Page 12 Col 8

\$150m WB credit for pry

ciation for the year of 1998-'99. Both of them were backed by the Bangladesh Nationalist

Party (BNP) The election was held on

Habibul Islam got 702 votes which his Awami League

second 571 votes. Abdul Awal secured 704 votes. His rival, AL backed Nurul Islam Sujan got 339 votes. Advocate Kazi Shahabuddin

Ahmed and Syed A B Mahmudul Islam were elected Vice-Advocate Shahabuddin Faiz

was elected Treasurers and A B M Bayezid and Md Firoz Shah were elected Assistant Secre-

The newly elected members of the Executive Committee are Advocates Fazilatun Nessa, Farida Begum, Zainul Abedin Tuhin, Rashidul Hasan, Shahnaz Haque, Md Golam Hossain (Sarwar) and Abu Hasan Mohammad Mushfigur Rahman

See Page 12 Col 5

Economists at int'l conference

S Asian nations should formulate their own development agenda

By Staff Correspondent

Some economists of international repute yesterday said the South Asian countries should formulate their own development agenda and policies best suited to their needs instead of wholly depending on reform measures suggested by foreign institutions.

They felt that if the reform measures are fully based on external policy suggestions, it might sometimes fail and backfire and the countries will have no one to blame but themselves.

Several leading economists and academicians were giving their views at the concluding session of the International

Conference on 'Beyond Adjust ment-Emerging Development Issues' organised by the Bangladesh Economic Association and the International Economic Association at the

Sonargaon Hotel yesterday. Prof Rehman Sobhan of the Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD) said the reforms did not work in the region because no one owned them. He talked about domestic ownership of reforms and said reforms would not work unless the political constituency is motivated and given part of the benefit of re-

Dr Amiya Bagchi said struc-

tural adjustments were taken up by countries to meet foreign aid and foreign capital conditions. He said the IMF, WB and the WTO are dictating the world what to do and not to do.

He said the policymakers are too weak to formulate their own policy so that the South Asian countries can have their policy autonomy. Bagchi also blamed the

semi-feudal form of society in South Asia for hampering industrialisation. Lord Meghnad Desai of the

London School of Economics

suggested integrating the South

Asian economy with the global

with the global economy is the only hope for South Asia," he Desai also talked about po-

litical correctness in the sense that political parties should form a platform to bring about drastic changes in the economy for globalisation. "Change is going to hurt the current vested groups which enjoy subsidy, but it will help the landless farmers," he pointed out. Dr Mahbubul Huq of Human

Development Centre in South Asia said by prioritising social spending and cutting back on See Page 12 Col 5

economy. "Getting integrated

Embezzlement of Tk 4.2cr from Sonali Bank in city: 5 held

education project

The World Bank will extend numeracy and life skills, the re-

lease added.

Police arrested five persons;

including two bank officials, Sonali Bank. Motijheel police identified

the arrested as Zahurul Huq Manik and Abdus Salam, deknown immediately. They were produced before

The misappropriation was unveiled after Sohrabuddin

By Staff Correspondent

till yesterday in connection with the embezzlement of Tk 4.2 crore of House Building Finance Corporation (HBFC) from the Baitul Mukarram branch of

Chowdhury and Azhar Hossain, principal officers of the bank, Sohrabuddin Gazi an account holder in the branch, and tails about whom could not be

the CMM's Court yesterday afternoon. Police prayed for seven days remand for further interrogation. But the court sent them to the Dhaka Central Jail rejecting the remand prayer, police said.

problem.

submitted a withdrawal cheque

for Tk two lakh to the Sonali Bank branch Tuesday morning. Bank officials got suspicious about Sohrabuddin's account and later they found the act of forgery of a big amount of money through his account.

The cashier of the bank, Nazimuddin Ahmed, has been absconding since the incident. According to police, loan recipients of HBFC used to repay the loans in an account of the Sonali Bank branch. The money was later supposed to be

transferred to another HBFC account of the bank. But the money repaid by the recipients in the first account was being transferred to an ac-count of Sohrabuddin, instead of the second account of HBFC.

for a period of over one year. A case was lodged with Motijheel thana in connection with the incident Tuesday night.

lice from traffickers, were brought back Dhaka last night. The children were being taken to the Gulf states to be used as camel jockeys and the women as 'sex slaves. There were eleven men among the group. They will be handed over to Bangladesh

17 rescued

children

return home

By Special Correspondent

Seventeen children, aged be-tween two and eight and five

women, rescued by Indian po-

dian authorities at Bengapole today. They were brought back by a Bangladesh Biman flight from Calcutta.

immigration authorities by In-

They will be temporarily sheltered at the office of the Bangladesh Jativa Mahila Ainjibi Šangstha (BJMAS).

BJMAS runs a project to shelter such children and women and pays for their repa-See Page 12 Col 1

BDR-BSF meet ends Pledge to maintain peace in border areas

The three-day high-level border coordination conference between Bangladesh Rifles and Border Security Force of India ended at Rajshahi yesterday with a firm pledge to maintain peace and discipline in frontier areas, reports UNB. Deputy Director General of

BDR led the Bangladesh side while BSF Inspector General led Indian delegation at the conference, said a BDR press release. The conference discussed different issues of bordering ar-

eas, including prevention of smuggling, gunfire, killing, dacoity, arms and narcotics smuggling, children and women trafficking and land dispute. SC Bar polls

Habibul Islam, Abdul Awal new president, secy By SC Correspondent

Advocate Habibul Islam Bhuiyan and Advocate Abdul Awal have been elected President and Secretary respectively of the Supreme Court Bar Asso-

Tuesday.

backed rival Amir-ul Islam

Presidents.

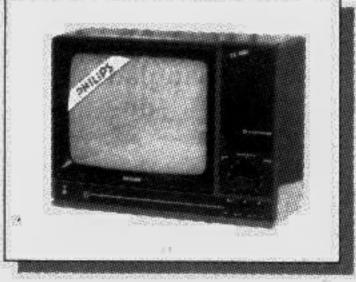
BARI clarification

By Staff Correspondent The Bangladesh Agricultural Research Institute (BARI) has issued a clarification in response to a report published in the March 21 issue of The Daily Star under the headline, "Mismanagement, internal politics hampering BARI activities." Giving some examples, the

clarification said, "... on promotion as DG BARI in May, 1995, the present DG is trying to place appropriate person in proper It further said, "there is no scope of single handed decision

by the DG himself. The decisions are taken on the recommendations and proposition of the three directors and divisional heads." The clarification said, "there is no knowledge of circulation of 'green paper' by a section of

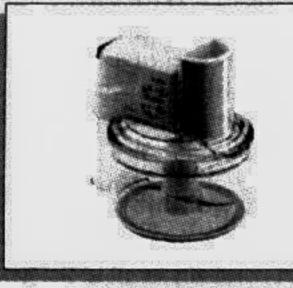
employees of the institute. In fact, there exists a congenial atmosphere in the institute and everything is going on smoothly and at present the See Page 12 Col 3

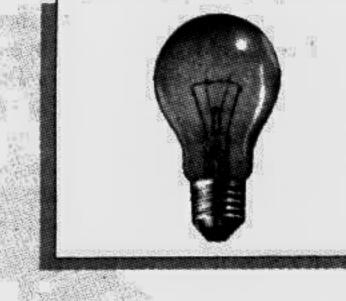




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