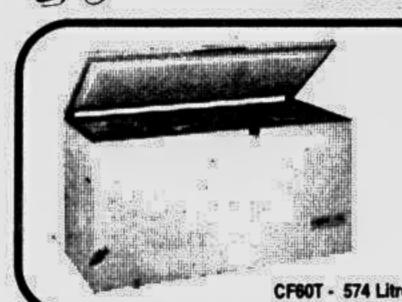
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Down to Earth City's Dwindling Greenery

By AS M Nurunnabi

Dhaka city is at present under a serious threat of depletion of its greenery. As a result, the need for saving the city from worsening environmental situation has become very urgent. In the process of rapid unplanned growth of the city, we have already lost many spots and traces of greenery. With a feeling of nostalgia, it is often said that the city once prided itself on its large green open spaces, particularly in the Ramna area. green belt for the city.

As most of the city's green landscape is in the process of rapid depletion, the need for a greater expanse of verdure is being increasingly felt. The city's geographic location itself has been a great helpful factor in this regard. On its south and east flows the river Buriganga and on the other two sides, we have the Turag and Lakhya rivers. Though much of the patches of green within the city areas have gone out of reach of the citizenry, the remaining patches of verdure need to be protected from further onslaughts for the sake of relief from a barren outlook, marked with the growing phenomenon of air pollutions from various The need for having a green belt in the vicinity of the city has been felt since the sixties. But the idea has not made much headway, for one reason or the other. It is now felt that it is not yet too late to look for some places around the city where a green belt can be developed. There is already a notable example in this regard in the es-tablishment of the large horticultural garden at Kasimpur near Tongi. Similar projects in the private sector can play a significant role in creating a

Nevertheless, the overriding necessity of examining the issue at the expert level as to where more of such green belts can be set up hardly requires any emphasis.

Another dimension to the issue has lately been highlighted in some quarters. It has been reported that on account of scarcity of trees and greenery in big city like ours, birds and animals find less opportunities for roosting. According to expert opinion, the more roosting places a city provides for the birds, the better their physical environment will be. It is said that part of the answer to our city's environmental deterioration lies in creating more arti-

ernment is working for bring-

ing smile in the faces of teem-

Referring to the proposed

budget, the Prime Minister said

the new budget has been pre-

pared aiming at the welfare of

thereby will create employment

Amid rain, thousands of

Presided over by Hemanta

people thronged the school

ground to greet the Prime Min-

Kumar Adhikari, President of

Kotalipara unit of Awami

League, the meeting was also

ister and listen to her.

situation of the country.

Hasina said the government,

ing millions.

the people.

opportunity.

ficial forests and parks which are likely to provide abodes and sanctuaries for the species under the threat of extinction. Besides helping to enhance the city's natural beauty, these measures may play a positive role in saving the rare species of birds and animals.

In some big cities of the world, there is charming existence of green belts around them with many gardens and large stretches of greenery. In our soil, trees grow up even without much care and help. In this situation, if we make planned and coordinated efforts, achieving the objective of creating a green belt with carefully tended three plantation programmes may not be a difficult proposition.

In this connection, observers believe that efforts of the different agencies involved may not alone suffice. What is also needed in the annual ritual of tree plantation programmes is greater ecological awareness. so that the plantation drive maybe turned into a mass movement for maintaining ecological balance and environmental upgradation not only of the city, but also of the entire country.



Jamaican midfrelder Theodore Whitmore scoring the first goal of his team against Japan at the Gerland stadium in Lyon during the Soccer World Cup Group H match yesterday. -AFP photo

BNP out to mislead people: Hasina

GOPALGANJ, June 26: Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina today accused the main opposition BNP of hatching conspiracy by creating issues out of nothing, reports UNB.

"They don't want peace and stability ... they are out only to mislead people," she told a huge gathering at TT High School ground at Vangarhat in Kotalipara thana.

Referring to 'BNP's negative attitude' to the CHT peace accord, Hasina said they do not want peace in the CHT for the interest of drug and arms smugglers, who are hit hard following signing of the accord.

Without mentioning the name of the BNP chief, Hasina said, "Why has she led the longmarch towards the CHT and demanded resignation of the government?"

She said people have ousted the 'vote thieves' as they tried to cling to power through the February 15 voterless elections.

Hasina also blamed the previous BNP government for killing 140 people in their bid to stay in power.

The Prime Minister said her government is striving hard for overall development of the

country. She said the government attaches priority to the development of communication sector as it is the foundation of the

economic development. For the sake of balanced development of the country, special attention will be focused on neglected areas, she said.

Hasina listed various steps undertaken by her government. including measures to activate the rural economy by providing small credit for setting up of poultry, dairy, fisheries, cottage industries.

Mentioning introduction of allowance for elderly citizens and shelter for the destitute, the Prime Minister said her gov-

Khaleda asks repression

Zia said in a statement.

which inherited a disastrous economy from the previous government, has put all its efforts to improve the economic The government's sincere efforts have brighten the country's image abroad which, she said, is attracting foreign inarrested. vestment in the country and

it is a democratic right to bring out processions and hold meet-

Begum Zia demanded immediate release of the arrested leaders and withdrawal of false cases against them.

FBCCI discussion on budget today

By Staff Correspondent

The discussion meeting of Federation of Bangladesh Chamber of Commerce and Industry (FBCCI) with Finance Minister Shah AMS Kibria and Industries Minister Tofael Ahmed on budget for 1998-99 fiscal year will be held at 9:30 am today instead of 11 am at hotel Sonargaon, says a press release by FBCCI.

Transit

From Page 1

is examining every aspect of relations with its neighbours, the official added. Asked if there has been a

shift from the "Gujral doctrine" which emphasised improving India's ties with neighbours, a senior foreign ministry official said, "So far as Bangladesh is concerned, we are yet to discern any change. But the Indian prime minister is very much in control of his country's foreign policy as he himself holds the vital portfolio."

Mustafizur Rahman said that the talks would review all

aspects of bilateral relations. The secretary-level talks would pay a critical role as the "basic plan" of all key policy decisions between the two countries ever since the United Front government of Prime Minister Deve Gowda and I K Gujral took office, an official noted. Later Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and her former Indian counterpart Deve Gowda, during the latter's official visit to Dhaka in January 1997, agreed in principle to revive the moribund JRC, JWG and JEC, which are the policy formulating bodies on key is-

sues between the two countries. No foreign secretary-level talks were held last year. However, in 1996, two meetings were held between then Indian External Affairs Secretary Salman Haider and Bangladesh Foreign Secretary Farooq Sobhan — one in Dhaka and the

other in Delhi. Uttara From Page 1

tara, Sheorapara, Kazipara, Shenpara, Jatrabari, Jurain and Shanir Akhra areas.

"All these areas except Uttara have grown without any plan whatsoever and there is no outlet for waste water," said the to be blamed for not thinking about sewerage even in the area it proudly called 'Model Town."

Knock-out round Confce on woman, child follows: (group champion/ trafficking begins Group A: Brazil and Norway, Group C: France and Den-

By Special Correspondent

A four-day regional conference on 'organising against sexual exploitation regionally and globally began in the city yesterday, underlining the need for combating trafficking of women and children and their exploitation.

Organised by the Coalition Against Trafficking in Women (CATW) - Bangladesh, the conference has been sponsored by the Royal Danish Embassy in

· Thirty-two participants from abroad, including delegates from India, Pakistan, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Cambodia, Indonesia, the Philippines, Japan, China, UK, US and Canada, are attending the con-

Prof Amirul Islam Chowdhury. Vice Chancellor of Jahangirnagar University, was the chief guest at the inaugural function.

The participants were welcomed by Advocate Sigma Huda, Convenor of CATW. Bangladesh. Ms Aurora Javate De' Dios President of CATW-international, Finn Thilsted. Charge 'd Affaires of the Royal Danish Embassy, Dr Janice G. Raymond, co-executive director of CATW-international and Advocate Shaheen Akhter Mu-

on the occasion. At the working session, discussions took place on a paper presented by Jean d' Cunha of the Philippines CATW-Asia Pacific, and Yim Po, Director of the Cambodian Centre for the Protection of Children, on the "Effects of Sexual Exploitation on Women and Children, Phys-

nir of CATW-Bangladesh spoke

ical and Psychological." It was chaired by Prof Ishrat Shamim. Later, presentations on group reports on health took place. The conference aims at setting up of a regional centre for coordinating action against trafficking of women and children, their physical exploitation, better liaison between the

NGOs and governments, networking among the NGOs in SAARC countries rescue and rehabilitation of victims trafficking and their proper treatment including psychological counselling, Shaheen Akhter

Munir said. A participant from India, Manabendra Mondal, executive director of Socio-Legal Aid Research and Training Centre in Calcutta told The Daily Star that public awareness must be created so that school children are 'taught not to be enticed by traffickers.'

Jamaica win From Page 1

Kawaguchi. Whitmore added his second when the Japanese defence gave him space to take Fitzroy Simpson's pass down the right wing. The midfielder spun defender Noria Omura around and nailed a left-footed drive from 15 meters.

Japan hit the post and forced goalkeeper Aaron Lawrence to make several solid saves in the second half, and finally broke through when Naoki Soma's long ball was headed by Wagner Lopes to Nakayama, whose onetimer from 8 meters easily beat Lawrence.

Jamaica was content to play a long-ball strategy in the early minutes, then stepped up the attack when the Japanese grew frustrated. Whitmore's second goal came immediately after a missed Japan scoring opportunity, and its deflated defenders were caught off guard.

Jamaica also had a goal disallowed in the 15th minute when Ian Goodison, who headed in a well-laid corner kick from Simpson, was apparently whistled for pushing by Austrian referee Gunter Benko.

The spirited blue-clad Japanese fans overwhelmed the black, green and gold contingent from Jamaica on another rainy day at the Stade de Gerland. Japan wanted a win to help justify its role as co-host of the 2002 World Cup.

Argentina

From Page 1

body check on Ortega and it will suspend him for the secondround game. It almost led to the second goal, when Gallardo took the freekick.

Immediately after halftime, captain Zvonimir Boban got another yellow for a late tackle on midfielder Juan Veron. And in the 59th minute, Robert Jarni got yet another for protesting a referee's decision.

Both teams were already assured a place in the second round so the battle centered on who would take first place in Group H.

Croatia was boosted by the return of Boban, who sat out the Japan game with a pulled leg muscle. Veteran defender Igor Stimac, suffering from blistered feet, was the only regular starter missing but came on as a substitute.

After routing Jamaica 5-0 and defeating Japan 1-0, the South Americans only needed a draw to finish atop the group and set up a second-round game with the Group G runner-up most likely England or Colom-

Uzbek business team arrives

tomorrow

A high-level Uzbek business delegation arrives in the city tomorrow from Tashkent in connection with the inaugural flight of Uzbek Airways, sources at the Foreign Ministry said, reports BSS.

The 32-member delegation will be led by Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of Uzbekistan Ergashev Ismatulla. The visit will establish business relations between Bangladesh and the Central Asian Republic.

Leaflet

den. Movement of rickshaws, tempos and cycle is not allowed. All concerned are urged to cooperate with the police, army and security personnel at the site for maintenance of safety and security.

lowed till about 10:30 am," said an official working at the site. "People then gathered in hundreds, chanted slogans and moved towards the bridge," he added.

India refuses Japanese aid for cyclone victims

NEW DELHI, June 26: India refused tents, blankets and other Japanese emergency aid for cyclone victims because Tokyo had imposed anti-nuclear sanctions, a Japanese embassy official said today, reports AP.

The official, who refused to be named, confirmed a report in the Times of India today that called India's decision a 'diplomatic protest.

The officials said Japan had offered the tents, blankets, generators and other goods worth 40 million to 50 million yen (about 282,000 dollar to 354,000 dollars) after a cyclone devastated the western coast state of Gujarat on June 9.

Japan cut off new loans and grants to India as punishment for its nuclear weapons tests in May. Japan is India's largest donor, extending about 133 billion yen (1 billion dollars) in loans annually since 1992.

Bangladeshis detained in Malaysia

KUALA LUMPUR, June 26: Malaysian police and immigration officials detained 365 illegal immigrants including 23 Bangladeshis, in a series of raids in two states, a news report said today, according to

Agents swept through construction sites in the northern state of Perak, capturing 271 illegal immigrants, including five women, Bernama national news agency said. The immigrants did not

have proper travel documents or work permit requirements. the report said.

Production of Prithvi begins NEW DELHI, June 26: Serial

production of army version of formidable surface-to-surface 'Prithvi' missile has begun, the latest annual report of the defence ministry has disclosed, reports PTI. The missile 'Prithvi' (PI).

having a strike range of 150 kms, is in its production phase. the 1997-98 report said.

Microcredit Summit From Page 1 The message was read out by

Ambassador Anwarul Karim Chowdhury, Permanent Representative of Bangladesh to the UN, who also represented the government in the Council Meeting. This is the first meeting following up the Microcredit Summit. It said positive support had

since been secured, at the initiative of Bangladesh, in various summit level meetings including SAARC, Organisation of African Unity, Commonwealth Summit, OIC, and also the G-7 summit of last year. Bangladesh will propose to

declare the year 2005 as the UN International Year of Micro-The opening session was at-

tended by more than 1200 participants from over 100 countries, said a message received in the city yesterday. The inaugural session was also addressed by Alberto Fu-

jimori, President of Peru, World Bank President James D Wolfenshon, Louise Frechette, UN Deputy Secretary General, Diane Marleau, Minister of International Cooperation of Canada, Albertine Heple, Family and Women Promotion Minister, Cote d' Ivoire and Prof M Yunus. Managing Director of Grameen Bank.

Annan's envoy From Page 1 thinking and her visit to India

and Pakistan to reduce tension in the region figured in promi-Talking to the news agency

after the meeting, the envoy said he has come here to deliver a personal message from UN Secretary General Kofi Annan to Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina. The message, Alvaro de Soto

said, is related to the tension that arose in the region following the nuclear test conducted by India and Pakistan.

The envoy, who will go to Pakistan this evening and hand over Kofi Annan's message to Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif. did not clearly say whether he will also go to New Delhi on his current trip.

Asked his comment about India's objection to international mediation on the nuclear issue. Alvaro de Soto said: "Purpose of my mission is not mediation but to hand over the messages (of the Secretary Gen-

eral)." Foreign Minister Abdus Samad Azad said the envoy has come to hand over Kofi Annan's message to Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and to know about her thinking and visit to New Delhi and Islamabad to re-

duce the regional tension. Azad said the UN Secretary General's special envoy appreciated Bangladesh's position particularly the Prime Minister's initiative to maintain peace and stability in the re-

Majid was present during the meeting.

Clinton-Jiang summit From Page 1

detaining political dissidents. This is "not China at its best and not China looking forward. but looking backward," he said. Clinton's national security adviser, Sandy Berger, used even stronger language. "I think China's human rights record is terrible," Berger said.

Clinton, in his meeting with Jiang, was expected to urge Chinese authorities to release political prisoners — and not simply exile them as China did with Wang Dan and Wei Jingsheng, both now living in America. Berger, however, cautioned not to expect early re-

The President also will urge China to talk directly with Tibet's exiled spiritual leader, the Dalai Lama, on autonomy for the region.

China, on the other hand, sees Taiwan's future as its No. 1 priority and Jiang will urge Clinton to reiterate that the United States doesn't want to see an independent Taipei government, which has been the US position since President Nixon made his historic 1972 visit to China. Beijing sees Taiwan as a renegade province. The United States provides military aid to Taiwan and urges talks for a peaceful settlement.

Putting aside differences, the two Presidents will focus on how the United States and China can work together to ensure stability in the region rocked by nuclear tests from India and Pakistan and an Asian financial crisis. For decades. Beijing helped Islamabad's nuclear programme, but in just the past couple years has agreed to stop, including halting delivery of missiles to Pakistan. China also has halted co-

Now, the Clinton administration wants China to stop exporting all missile-related technology and know-how to Pakistan and Iran as well by agreeing to adhere to all aspects of the Missile Technology Con-

operation with Iran.

trol regime. Improved Chinese export controls on chemical and biological materials to prevent their use as weapons also are on the agenda.

Stanley Roth, assistant secretary of state for the region. "The whole agenda is aimed at strategic cooperation," Roth

Negotiations continued

through the eleventh hour, said

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release issued by BNP.

country manager at London Branch of the Arab-Bangladesh Bank. His body will be flown to Dhaka, the release added. BNP chairperson and Leader of the Opposition in the Jatiya

Sangsad Begum Khaleda Žia

has expressed deep shock at the

death of Mizanur Rahman.

addressed by Sheikh Fazlul Karim Selim, MP, Sheikh Md Abdullah and Kazi Akramuddin

Ahmed. Zia's brother

dies in London By Staff Correspondent

Mizanur Rahman, younger brother of late President Ziaur Rahman, died of heart attack in London vesterday, says a press

Rahman was working as

govt to stop

BNP Chairperson Begum Khaleda Zia yesterday asked the government to stop repression on her party leaders and

workers, reports UNB. "Like in the past, we along with the people will topple the fascist government through mass movement if it continues its repressive measures," Begum

She condemned and protested the attack on the procession of BNP by police and ruling party activists at Bajitpur in Kishoreganj district on June 18 where some 60 party activists were injured and 6 leaders of Jubo Dal and JCD were

Leader of the Opposition said

Wholesalers said rice price may increase further as plantation of paddy saplings was being hampered due to insufficient rain. One wholesaler said rice price increased due to government purchase of rice and paddy that begun recently.

From Page 1

Group B: Italy and Chile,

Group D: Nigeria and

Group E: Holland and Mex-

Group F: Germany and Yu-

Group G: Romania qualified,

Group H: Argentina and

Italy will meet Norway in

the first match of the second

round tonight while world

champions Brazil will take on

Chile in the other. Winners to

Prices of rice

From Page 1

has increased by Tk 50 to Tk 70

per maund and is selling at Tk

820 to Tk 830 a maund against

its previous price of Tk 750 to

IRRI rice was selling at Tk 12.50

to Tk 13.00, Swarna Tk 14.50 to

Tk 15.00, and Nazirshail at Tk

At retail markets, one kg of

move to the quarter-finals.

England/Colombia and

runners-up

mark.

Paraguay

goslavia

Croatia

Tk 780.

18 to Tk 20.

"The price may increase by at least one taka per kg in next one month if the government does not build up a sufficient stock," said Mohammad Abdullah, secretary general of the rice wholesalers' association at the

market. Prices of potato and green chilli have also increased. One kg of potato was selling at Tk 9 to Tk 10 against its last week's price of Tk 8. One kg of green chilli was selling at Tk 50 to 60 against its last week's price of

Tk 25 to Tk 30. Retailers at Kawranbazar said prices of spices and vegetables also increased in the market due to their short supply. However, prices of brinjal and onion were stable in the last 10 days. One kg of brinjal was selling at Tk 14 to Tk 16. and onion at Tk 14 to Tk 15 yes-

9 killed.

From Page 1 Two people were killed and

another was injured in two sep-

arate road accidents here early vesterday. Police sources said a Parshuram-bound mini bus hit a rickshaw in front of Feni B Ed College leaving rickshaw pas-

senger Sirajul Islam, 30, dead on the spot. Rickshawpuller Manu Mia, 28, was critically injured. The injured was rushed to Feni Hospital. Police seized the

bus, but its driver managed to

In an another accident Ezab Uddin, 45, a pedestrian, was run over by a speeding bus on Feni bypass road at 11 pm.

From Page 1

and UNHCR - were working for

immediate resumption of Ro-

hingya repatriation. "We're

anxiously waiting for a date be-

cause, you know, fund con-

straint may not allow us to run

(WFP) has approved a conclud-

ing phase of relief operation to

provide food aid to Rohingya

refugees. WFP will supply 2,965

MT of food items since 1992.

WFP provided food items worth

51 million US dollars to the

from the international com-

munity in December, 1997 but

the response was very poor,

The UNHCR had sought fund

refugees.

The World Food Programme

the camps till end of the year."

UNHCR runs out of funds Hovell said. Only 3.5 lakh US dollars are expected from Ger-

city yesterday.

A Rathjatra procession of the Hindu community in the

many, he added. When contacted, a spokesman of the German embassy here said his government want that the funds be used for peaceful settlement of the Rohingya refugee problem".

as possible because the UNHCR is no longer in a position to seek any more funds from donations for the same refugees. An earlier UNHCR proposal to 'locally integrate' the remaining Rohingyas was turned down by the Bangladesh gov-

ernment which want that all

the refugees go back home.

Hovell stressed on comple-

tion of the repatriation as soon

earlier issued clearance for some 7,134 refugees out of the 21.661. But there has been no progress in resumption of repatriation. A list of another 9,000 refugees was sent to the Myanmar government months ago but it is yet to be cleared. Meanwhile, following a police raid and arrest of some

'trouble mongers' at the Kutupa-

Myanmar government had

- Star photo

long refugee camp in Cox's Bazar few months back, hundreds of Rohingyas both in Kutupalong and Nayapara refugee camps had registered their names with UNHCR and repatriation officials, expressing their willingness to return home.

From Page 1

"The restrictions were fol-

Director General (UN) Jamil