



The Daily Star

MARBLE MARBLE MARBLE
 WE HAVE HUGE READY STOCK OF
 ITALIAN CARRARA, PERLATO SICILIA,
 BOTTICINO, INDIAN KESSWARI GREEN,
 MALAYSIAN AND PAKISTANI MARBLE
 OF DIFFERENT TYPES.
NIRMAN INTERNATIONAL LTD.
 199, TEJGAON I/A, DHAKA.
 TEL: 605957, 607363 SHOW ROOM: 861985

Pvt terminal: TUs announce work abstention at Ctg Port in protest

From Staff Correspondent
CHITTAGONG, Aug 5: The coalition of 22 trade union bodies at Chittagong Port today announced work abstention programmes on two days this month at the port in protest against setting up of a private container terminal at Patenga by a foreign consortium, Stevedoring Services of America (SSA).
 The coalition leaders called for work abstention at the port on August 10 for four hours from 8 am and on August 26 for nine hours from 8 am.
 The leaders also threatened a strike for an indefinite period at the port if the port authorities sign any agreement for handing over land to SSA for setting up the terminal.
 The programmes were announced at a workers' rally organised by the coalition in front of the port office.
 The rally was addressed by coalition leaders Mahfuzur See Page 12 Col 3

5-yr export-import policy announced Higher export growth, lower trade deficit targeted

By Staff Correspondent
 The government has announced a five-year export-import policy targeting a "high growth" in exports, reduction of trade imbalance and creation of a congenial environment for investment.
 Commerce and Industries Minister Tofail Ahmed announced export-import policy for 1997-2002 at a press conference at the Commerce Ministry conference room yesterday.
 The policy will be reviewed every year. It will liberalise import but at the same time protect local industries, he said.
 Under the policy, the export earning target by the terminal year (2001-2002) has been fixed at 8,100 million US dollars with a growth of 12.89 per cent.
 The target in the current fiscal is 5,630 million dollars with 12.15 per cent growth.
 The targets for the mean years have been fixed at 6,340 million dollars (1999-2000) and 7,175 million dollars (2000-2001) with growth rates of 12.61 per cent and 13.17 per cent respectively.
 Tofail, however, expressed his optimism that the export earnings may stand at 10 billion dollars by the year 2001-2002 if the computer software development industry is boosted.
 He said, an 'information technology (IT) village' will be set up and trained people will be provided with soft-term loan to export computer software.
 He said leather and leather goods, value-added readymade garments, computer software and agro-processing industries have been identified as thrust sectors.
 Commodities under the crash programme, according to the policy, include toys, luggage and fashion goods, electronic and leather goods, diamond cutting and polishing, ornaments, silk clothes, stationery goods, cut and artificial flower, orchid, gift item, fine rice, vegetables and engineering consultancy and services.
 Commodity-based councils will be formed for jute, tea, shrimp, readymade garment and leather and leather goods.
 The import policy provides for easy import of basic equipment and raw materials for boosting export.
 BEPZA, BSCIC and Investment Board have been considered as supporting bodies for industries concerned. Therefore, the import policy orders and industrial policy, placed for approval of the Cabinet, will be coordinated, withdrawing pre-approval of different ministries for setting up industries.
 The compulsion of country of origin will not be applicable for import of raw materials by export-oriented organisations that enjoy bonded warehouse facilities.
 According to the new import policy, the tax net will be ex- See Page 12 Col 1

Proshika-Daily Star Computer Programming Contest No alternative to computer edn: PM

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday said the government wants to build the nation, modern in science and technology, educating people with computer technology to face the challenges of the next century, reports UNB.
 "Information technology is now considered as the tools for changing the lot of the people, she said adding that it is playing an important role for improving the living condition.
 Addressing the prize distribution ceremony of the first National Computer Programming Contest at Hotel Sheraton, the Prime Minister said the government will do its best to produce 10,000 computer programmers every year. The contest was organised by Proshika in collaboration with The Daily Star.
 "We want to turn our huge population into a skilled human resource to build a society free from poverty and hunger... spread of computer technology will help a lot in this regard," she said.
 She said the nation will have to make good use of the huge possibility of information technology to face the challenges of the 21st century.
 "We'll have to ensure the use and application of the information technology in trade and commerce, in science, management and in other sectors."
 Hasina mentioned that the government has undertaken a project to introduce computer courses in secondary and higher secondary levels.
 Apart from the schools, she said, "We will also introduce computer education in the madrasahs."
 She said the government has already taken some important steps for expansion of information technology. See Page 12 Col 6

Funds for arrear salaries of textile workers likely to be released soon

By Rafiq Hasan
 The Ministry of Finance is likely to release Tk 6.62 crore for payment of arrear salaries to workers and employees of 13 BTMC textile mills, ministry sources said yesterday.
 The Daily Star published a report on Wednesday that as many as 15,000 workers and employees of 13 mills were not getting salaries since March for lack of funds.
 The sources said, the ministry has completed all necessary documentation for payment of their salaries upto June and the file is awaiting the finance minister's approval.
 "The file may be signed today or tomorrow," said a high official, requesting anonymity.
 Earlier, State Minister for Textiles A K M Jahangir Hossain in a letter to the finance minister had requested disbursement of Tk 9.62 crore for giving the arrear salaries.
 But the ministry had disbursed Tk 3 crore for giving one month's salaries to the workers and employees.
 All the 19 mills under the BTMC except one in Chittagong are making losses.
Judicial body to probe Satkhira incident formed
 The government yesterday formed a one-member judicial commission headed by Khulna District and Sessions Judge Khondokar Musa Khaled to investigate the July 27 incident in Satkhira on the leasing out of land for shrimp cultivation, an official handout said here, reports BSS.
 The commission will submit its report along with recommendations to the Land Ministry within one month.
 The handout said the commission will investigate the reason behind the incidents centring the eight shrimp plots in Debhata and Kaliganj thanas of the district and identify the persons responsible for it.
 The Deputy Commissioner of Satkhira will provide the secretarial assistance to the commission.
 Meanwhile, a meeting of the Parliamentary Petition Committee in a meeting with its Chairman Speaker Humayun Rasheed Chowdhury yesterday reviewed the Satkhira incident.
 It decided to convene another meeting of the committee "soon" to find out ways to resolve the issue after hearing the opinions of the Land Ministry, Fisheries Ministry, concerned deputy commissioner and other persons on the incident.
Gold smuggling 5 chargesheeted in Sylhet
From Staff Correspondent
SYLHET, Aug 5: The Detective Branch of police has submitted chargesheets against five persons in the sensational gold smuggling case today.
 Inspector Shamsuddin submitted it to a magistrate's court at Sylhet, an official said.
 On January 11, a DB team, acting on a tip-off, halted a private car near the Khashabari Jame Mosque area on the Air-Port Road and recovered 102 gold bars weighing 1020 tolas which were kept inside five charger lights. The lights were in a luggage which was brought from Dubai in the name of a passenger.
 The team also arrested two persons, Mahfuj Chowdhury alias Liton of village Kheilgram under Jakiaganj thana and Kamal Uddin of village Kachua thana under Feni district.
 Later, the DB also arrested Jaitun of village Daidpur under Sylhet Sadar thana for his involvement in the case. Ali is also a class four employee of See Page 12 Col 6

People have expressed no-confidence in govt: Khaleda

Opposition Leader Begum Khaleda Zia yesterday said the people have expressed their 'no-confidence' in the government for its total failure to mitigate the sufferings of the flood victims, reports UNB.
 "This government cannot be the people's government as it failed to stand by the distressed people and had not extended help and succour to those affected by the flood," she said.
 Begum Zia was making a brief speech while distributing relief goods at the Madartek Abdul Aziz High School flood shelter in the city in the afternoon.
 During the day, the BNP Chairperson and Leader of the Opposition in Parliament distributed relief goods among the flood-affected people at nine points in Sabujbagh and Motijheel thanas from 4:30 pm to 7:35 pm.
 The relief distribution centres were Rampura Ekramunnesa High School, Mahibag Chowdhury Para Primary School, Khilgaon Government See Page 12 Col 3



FLOOD VICTIMS FROM THE NORTH: A group of flood affected people from Gaibandha have found a patch of high ground in a partially flooded Dhaka city. The railway yard at Gandaria station provided a 'suitable' place for about 100 of them. They also found the easiest job — begging. — Star photo

Flood water starts receding in city

The flood situation in the districts along the Brahmaputra-Jamuna river slightly deteriorated up to Bahadurabad and remained static at downstream yesterday, reports UNB.
 The situation in the capital and its adjacent areas improved with the recession of flood water. But all the rivers of these areas were still flowing above their danger levels.
 Twelve more deaths caused by flood were reported today, all from Dhaka district, raising the death figure to 268, officials said.
 According to the Flood Information Centre, flood water from the districts in the Ganges basin receded with the continuous fall of water level of the Padma river and other surrounding rivers.
 The flood situation in the upper part of the Meghna basin deteriorated and remained unchanged from Bhairab Bazar to downstream.
 According to the control room of the Disaster Management and Relief Ministry, flood water receded from most of the affected districts including Jamalpur, Mymensingh, Netrokona, Narsingdi and Manikganj, but it remained steady in Narayanganj and Dhaka.
 In 24 hours till 9 am yesterday, the Jamuna was flowing above danger level at Aricha, the Buriganaga at Dhaka, the Sitalakhya at Narayanganj, the Turag both at Mirpur and Tongi and the Kaliganaga at Taraghat.
 The Padma was flowing above its danger level at Pankha, Goolando and Bhagyakul. In the Ganges basin, the Mohananda was flowing above the danger level at Chapaina-wabganj.
 Most of the rivers in the Meghna basin rose and the Surma at Kanaighat and Sunamganj, the Kushiyara at Amalshid and the Meghna at Bhairab Bazar were flowing above the danger marks.
 The significant rainfall of 135 mm was recorded at Durgapur, 124.8 mm at Chandpur, 61 mm at Kurigram, 58 mm at Lama and 52 mm each at Pabna and Chittagong.
 Meanwhile, health directorate control room said diarrhoea claimed two more lives and attacked 2,570 people in the flood affected areas during the last 24 hours.
 With this, the death toll from diarrhoea rose to 33 and the number of people attacked by the disease to 48,370.
 Round-the-clock observation in the flood affected districts is being continued by the medical teams that were sent earlier to all-37 districts.
 The stock of medicines was adequate in these areas and the supply is being given as per demand, said an official handout.

Star Weekend Magazine



Recreation is an integral part of balanced mental and physical development for a child. Yet there are very few facilities that provide the fun that is vital for their growth.
 Read this Friday's cover story in the Star Weekend Magazine on the state of the Existing Amusement Parks.

Inside Today

- Article**
Let there be an Opportunity to Resume Talks
 Column: Between the Lines by Kuldip Nayyar Page 4
- Focus**
Nuclear deterrence is a dangerous illusion
 Page 5
- Business**
Delta Life directors deny charges
Agro-processing industry 'can outshine garment sector in 5-10 years'
DSE index falls further
 Pages 6, 7, 8

Bangabandhu Murder Case All five arrested accused plead not guilty

All the five arrested accused in the Bangabandhu Murder Case pleaded not guilty in the trial court yesterday, reports UNB.
 In an unequivocal tone, Lt Col (ret'd) Sayeed Farook Rehman, Lt Col (ret'd) Sultan Shariyar Rashid Khan, Lt Col Muhiuddin Ahmed, Honorary Capt (ret'd) Abdul Wahab Joardar and former State Minister for Information Taheruddin Thakur told the court that the confessional statements were taken from them forcefully through inhuman torture.
 The accused also denied their involvement in the August 15, 1975 killing of President Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and most of his family members, and subsequent toppling of his government.
 After completion of the cross-examination of 61 prosecution witnesses that took about a year, Dhaka District and Sessions Judge Kazi Golam Rasul yesterday read out the gist of the allegations framed on the basis of cross-examinations of the witnesses.
 All the accused, except former State Minister for Information Taheruddin Thakur, submitted written replies to the allegations framed against them, pleading not guilty.
 Thakur claimed he was made a victim of circumstances and prayed for his release.
 "I didn't make voluntarily true confession purported to have been recorded by a magistrate as my statement. In fact, it is not my statement," he said.
 The so-called confession, Thakur said, was illegally, improperly and forcefully obtained from him. "It was caused by inducement, threat and promise under inhuman mental and physical torture by illegally confining and keeping me by police in CID office from the night following 2nd October till 26th October, 1996."
 He said: The so-called confession was not true and voluntary and I have retracted it before the magistrate on January 20, 1997. I was made a victim of circumstances. I humbly pray for my release.
 Farook said he was in charge of security of the then President (Bangabandhu) till August 2, 1975 and during his charge of security, the then President could have landed into a similar incident of August 15, 1975.
 "Who does not know that Indira Gandhi, Indian Prime Minister, was shot dead by her own security army men in her residence in Delhi."
 Pleading himself innocent, Farook said he is not a holder See Page 12 Col 7

'AC Akram ordered us to pick up Rubel'

Star Report
By Staff Correspondent
 Constable Mir Faruq, an accused in Rubel murder case, yesterday gave a judicial statement in which he is said to have confessed that he had picked up Shamim Reza Rubel following orders from AC Akram Hossain and tortured him to recover illegal firearms.
 Faruq said he himself and five other accused DB men were directly involved in the torture on Rubel, according to court sources.
 The five others are Inspector Aminul Islam, SI Hayatul Islam Thakur, ASI Abdul Karim, hawilder Nuruzzaman and constable Parvez.
 One of the seven arrested accused policemen of the Detective Branch, Faruq took about five hours from 2 pm to give the statement before Metropolitan Magistrate Abul Kashem.
 Details of the statement could not be known immediately. A CID official concerned declined to disclose the content of the 'confessional statement' as, he said, the case was still under investigation.
 CID investigators, on the last day of the two-day remand yesterday, produced Faruq in the CMM's Court for recording his confession, the first judicial statement given by an accused in the murder of Rubel in DB custody on July 23. Faruq was later sent to Dhaka Central Jail.
 However, Inspector Aminul, now in the central jail, and the four other plainclothesmen who were remanded with Faruq, were yet to confess anything regarding the brutal killing.
 Officials said the four would be produced before the CMM's court today.
 Court sources said Faruq's statement yesterday was more or less similar to that he had given earlier to CID investigators. See Page 12 Col 8

MOU signed for 5-yr US plan for disaster assistance

By Staff Correspondent
 Nepal Lt Col Frank Rondone, civil affairs coordinators at the US Embassy Russell Moshier and Peter Peirce and Director of USIS John Kinkannon were present on the occasion.
 The 10-member military team arrived in the city at the beginning of the month and has already visited several places including Chittagong and some other districts as part of its assessment study. During its current tour of around three weeks, it will also meet officials of the Relief and Disaster Management Ministry and different departments and representatives of various organisations and NGOs involved in humanitarian and disaster work.
 Capt Gardner said the programme taken up is called 'Humanitarian Assistance Needs Assessment (HANA)' and is not unique for Bangladesh only. The United States military, he said, has stepped up its disaster and humanitarian activities in recent years, particularly after the end of the cold war. US defence personnel, he said, are now involved in different humanitarian assistance programmes in nearly 100 countries including Laos, Cambodia, Mongolia and Thailand.
 "We want to provide focused attention to Bangladesh's humanitarian and disaster work." See Page 12 Col 4

JS body on Home Ministry stresses Accountability of police must be ensured

By Nurul Kabir
 It is high time for modernising laws regulating police activities and ensuring accountability of the law enforcing agencies to the people, the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Home Affairs observed at a meeting held yesterday.
 The Committee, a 10-member body comprising MPs from both the Treasury and the Opposition benches, also felt that the police should be provided with adequate logistics to enable them to respond to the changed crime situation, dominated by hoodlums with modern equipment. The committee also found it very important to strengthen the police force by increasing manpower and filling up the vacant posts.
 The Committee members heard the Home Secretary, Inspector General of Police, Deputy Inspector General of Police, Dhaka Range and Commissioner of Dhaka Metropolitan Police at the meeting. They told the Committee about various limitations, especially relating to logistics and sought cooperation for overcoming the problems.
 The Committee decided that it would put forward soon a package of recommendations to the government to bring about reforms in the police force.
 "We discussed a number of See Page 12 Col 7

Sweden Aslam's bail cancelled

The High Court yesterday cancelled an ad-interim bail granted to notorious terrorist Sweden Aslam, reports UNB.
 Aslam, who was arrested on charge of murdering his former wife's husband, was granted the ad-interim bail by a High Court division bench when it issued a rule as to why he should not be granted bail.
 The ad-interim bail was subsequently stayed by the Appellate Division.
 The rule was heard by another High Court division bench comprising Justice Sirajul Islam and Justice Abdul Matin on Tuesday. The court discharged the rule yesterday cancelling the ad-interim bail. The trial of the murder case is pending in the court of 5th Additional Sessions Judge, Dhaka.
 Adv MA Wahab Mia, assisted by Adv Enayetur Rahim, appeared for Aslam in the rule hearing while Deputy AG Monsurul Hoq Chowdhury, aided by AAG Soyeb Ahmed Chowdhury, for the State. See Page 12 Col 8

Gold haul in Ctg: 2 arrested placed on remand

From Staff Correspondent
CHITTAGONG, Aug 5: The two suspects arrested yesterday from Chittagong Airport in connection with gold haul incident, have been placed on two days remand today.
 They were produced before the court and placed on remand for further interrogation by police.
 They were interrogated by port thana police after the arrest. A senior police official here said an investigation would be launched to detect the kingpins linked with the gold haul incident.
 The seized gold bars have been deposited with the treasury of Bangladesh Bank today, customs officials said.
 A total of 1600 tolas of smuggled gold worth about Tk one crore were seized yesterday. See Page 12 Col 7