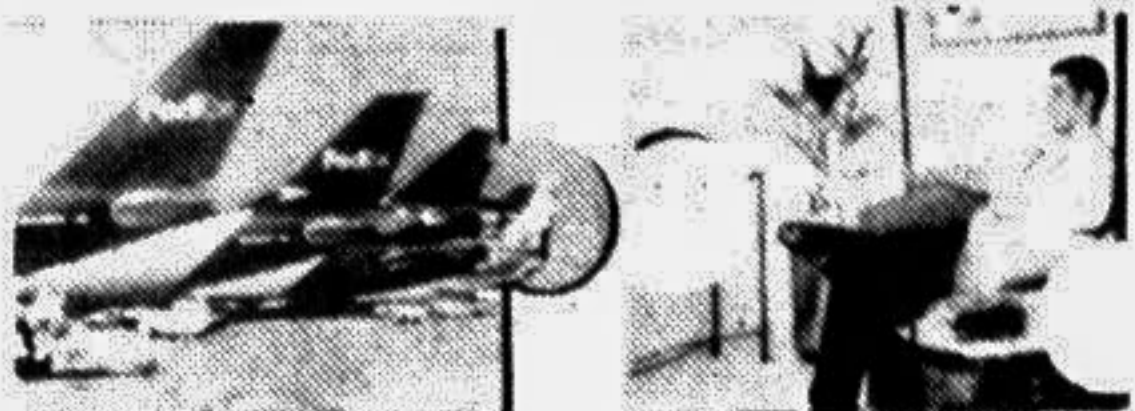


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Samad Azad calls on Annan Continued UN aid for flood victims assured

UN Secretary General Kofi Annan has assured world body's continued assistance to Bangladesh's flood victims and its post-flood rehabilitation programme, reports BSS. He assured this while Foreign Minister Abdus Samad Azad called on him at the UN headquarters in New York on Tuesday, according to a message received in Dhaka yesterday.

Bangla Foreign Minister is participating in the 53rd session of the UN General Assembly. Kofi Annan expressed his sympathy to the flood affected people in Bangladesh and assured that the UN would continue to support all it could do to assist Bangladesh government in its efforts to help the flood victims as well as in post-flood rehabilitation and reconstruction.

Annan praised Dhaka's active role in the United Nations and other international fora. "We consider Bangladesh Prime Minister as a friend of the United Nations," he said about Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina in reference to her prominent role in the multilateral and international forums.

Flood waters

From Page 1 the danger mark at Narayan-ganj. The flood situation in the capital also eased with the decline in the water levels of the adjoining rivers. But the water level of Turag at Mirpur and Tongi was still above red mark. The river was flowing 26 cm above the danger level at Tongi and 23 cm above at Mirpur.

According to Flood Forecasting and Warning Centre, the flood situation in the Meghna basin has become normal except at Bhairab Bazar where the Meghna was flowing 23 cm above the danger level.

However, the flood situation in and around Bhairab Bazar was also improving. The flood-related death toll rose to 918 with seven more deaths reported from various parts of the country today.

World Bank loan

From Page 1 highway network. It will also repair the Dhaka-Sylhet road and high priority feeder roads in the north-western and south-western parts of the country.

In addition, the project will cover reconstruction of narrow bridges and maintenance of national and regional roads. To help support the Roads and Highways Department's ongoing organisational improvements, the project also provides long-term technical assistance to strengthen its capacity for improved road maintenance, provide training, improve financial management systems, and implement action plans for road safety, axle load control and traffic management.

FBCCI leadership battle

From Page 1 making institutions when it comes to business and economy. The president sits on more than 30 government committees along with ministers and senior civil servants. The prime minister chairs many of these bodies.

A large number of candidates also gave in to the lobbyists, who acted with support from a group of known defaulting bank borrowers, business sources said.

Three of the five vice-presidential aspirants withdrew, leaving the largely ceremonial second slot open to a direct fight between Kamal Uddin Ahmed of Chittagong Chamber and M A Mumin of Sylhet Chamber.

Mohammad Ali of Rajshahi Chamber, Abdus Shahid of Kishoreganj Chamber and Lutfur Rahman Khan of Madaripur Chamber left the battlefield.

Khan, promoter of the newly introduced taxi cab services in the city, was reportedly reluctant till the last moment, but agreed to 'honour' the wishes of some government leaders.

The present FBCCI leadership is reportedly promoting the Chittagong chamber president, while Mumin, a former Sylhet Chamber chief, has backing from an influential government minister.

Meanwhile, the role of the outgoing president has increasingly come under fire from those 'forced' or 'maneuvered' out of the election process.

As head of the Council of Chambers, a body represented by chiefs of 102 district chambers, Harun was mandated to conduct negotiations and pick up candidates at a meeting at

Editor: Mahfuz Anam. Published by the Editor from City Publishing House Ltd., 90 Kakrail, Dhaka-1000 on behalf of Mediaword Ltd., 52 Motijheel C.A., Dhaka-1000. Editorial, News & Commercial Offices: House No. 11, Road No. 3, Dhanmandi I/A, Dhaka-1205. PABX: 866772-4, Commercial: 866771, Fax No: 88-02-869035, GPO Box No: 3257, Cable: DAILYSTAR, DHAKA. Internet edition address: http://www.dailystarnews.com and Email address: dstar@bangla.net



Pitiable condition of a city road after recession of flood water. The picture was taken from Maniknagar at Sabujbagh. — Star photo

PM's directive to speed up unloading of foodgrains

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has asked the authorities concerned to speed up unloading of food-grains at the sea ports, reports UNB.

Her directive came at a high level meeting at Ganobhaban last night which reviewed the present food stock position and procurement and distribution of foodgrains.

"Food distribution is our top most priority at this moment," the Prime Minister told the meeting.

Food distribution

From Page 1 VGF or Food for Work programme. A ship carrying an initial WFP consignment of 15,000 tons wheat has already been unloaded in Chittagong port.

Two more ships carrying 52,500 tons wheat are expected early October.

Food Minister Begum Matia Chowdhury has announced that the FFW programme will begin from October 1 while the government, if necessary, is ready to provide food through VGF up to May next.

WFP statistics showed that 141,522 metric tons of wheat is needed to feed 4,423,500 most vulnerable people at 16 kg per family in the initial two months of September and October.

Before the floods, loadshedding during this period if the two 200 MW units at Rauzan were in operation, he said.

Power failure

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Major changes

From Page 1 embassy, is being posted as the New High Commissioner to Kenya while the incumbent Dr Afzarul Qader is being appointed as ambassador to Indonesia.

Anwarul Alam, minister in the Ottawa mission, is taking over as the new ambassador to Bahrain while the present envoy Brig (ret) Giasuddin is being called back.

Earlier it was decided that Tofail Karim Haider, envoy in Paris, would move to his new assignment in Tehran while Syed Muazzam Ali will replace him in Paris.

The government is yet undecided about the appointment of an ambassador to Japan after the retirement of incumbent Rashed Ahmed.

2365 BSCIC borrowers

From Page 1 Yasmin Samad a field officer of the BSCIC in Savar. She said about Tk 1.58 crore was disbursed among 2365 persons in 33 villages in Savar under BSCIC's Women Entrepreneurs Development Programme.

"Most of the loan recipients are in bad condition due to the prolonged flood. Many villages including Nagoranda, Chandpur, Beraid, Chakudia, Chandrangam and Hemayetpur in Savar are still under water and road links snapped," Yasmin said. "We could not go there and see the condition of our clients" she added.

"The poor borrowers need some sort of help, either waiver of interest or suspension of installment collection for at least three months," said Belayet Hossain acting in-charge of BSCIC's Savar office.

When contacted, BSCIC Chairman A H M Rezaul Karim said they should get some sort of moratorium. "But we can not do anything unless the government gives a decision in this regard."

Impeachment inquiry Gingrich rejects immediate deal with Clinton

WASHINGTON, Sept 23: House Speaker Newt Gingrich rejected on Wednesday talk of an immediate deal with President Bill Clinton to avoid a possible impeachment inquiry despite polls showing most Americans don't want the president removed from office, reports AP.

"For anybody to talk about doing anything before we finish the investigative process simply puts the cart before the horse," Gingrich told reporters following a meeting between Republican and Democratic House leaders. "I don't understand how people can rush to a solution before they finish the investigation."

At the White House, however, press secretary Mike McCurry said the idea of a lesser punishment such as a congressional censure followed by a fine is a "bipartisan idea" that better reflects public sentiment.

McCurry said Gingrich and his top lieutenants appear mainly interested in delaying the matter for partisan political advantage.

"It is some concern to the White House that people who are genuinely motivated, who want to bring this matter to some resolution, seem to be drowned out by those who want this matter to drag on and on and on," McCurry said today.

Asked about polls showing Americans seem to agree, Gingrich said, "I think people would be frankly horrified if the Congress was simply a polling institution that enacted a grotesque version of justice based on the latest poll or the latest talk show."

House Democratic leader Dick Gephardt called on Independent Counsel Kenneth Starr Wednesday to turn over all material on Clinton's potentially impeachable conduct that was held back in an earlier report for totally unexplained reasons.

Gephardt acted a day after Clinton's attorneys complained that Starr's report failed to include direct statements from Ms Lewinsky that no one asked her to be about the affair or promised her a job in exchange for her silence.

House leaders gathered in Gingrich's office as Republicans tried to snuff out new talk of a punishment for Clinton short of impeachment.

AIGs seek

From Page 1 All the nine officers came from the army and when absorbed in the police force, were given seniority on the basis of their length of service in the army.

Chowdhury is now serving as the chairman of BIWTC while Huq is now the DG, Passport and Immigration. They are on deputation.

When contacted last night, Chowdhury refused to talk and Haq could not be reached over telephone.

Three of the nine officers were made OSD. They are: Ahmed Fazul Kabir, Shahudul Huq, and M Salam.

The other officers who were superseded are DMP Commissioner Mahmud Al Farid, MA Khaleque Chairman Rajshahi Development Authority, AN Hussain chairman BRTA and Rafikul Islam who is now working in a Bangladesh mission abroad.

Of the nine officers, lien of five has already been suspended, the sources said.

AK-47 rifle recovered in Ctg: 2 held

From Staff Correspondent CHITTAGONG, Sept 23: Police in a raid into a house at Ghasiapara, under Chandgao thana last night recovered an AK-47 rifle and arrested two persons in this connection.

The arrested were identified as Md Ismail and Kazal Mallik. Police said.

Defence counsel tells trial court Process of investigation by IO has prejudiced accused

Investigation into Bangabandhu murder case started much before filing of the FIR and it continued during the trial period ignoring "all lawful manners," a defence lawyer said yesterday, reports UNB.

The First Information Report (FIR) was lodged with the Dhanmondi thana on October 2, 1996.

Defence counsel Khan Saifur Rahman told the court that investigation had started much before the FIR was lodged and it was carried out even during the trial period and all lawful manners were ignored during the investigation.

In support of his claim, the counsel for Lt Col (dismissed) Syed Farooq Rahman, said the investigation officer (IO) of the case put forward his demand to DGF on September 8, 1996 and PW-2 Rama came to Dhaka from Gopalganj to give his statement before the IO on October 4, 1996, two days after the FIR was filed.

"The present FIR is not at all an FIR as it hit the very root of the case," Khan Saifur said on the 10th day of his argument. "Behind the FIR of this case there was an invisible FIR and carrying out investigation before the filing of the FIR is violation."

The lawyer said as the government decision of taking legal action was necessary, secret investigation was carried out before filing of the FIR is evident. Police had earlier rejected to accept a complaint from Tahiduddin and Md Mohsinul Huq on the August 15, 1975 incident.

The lawyer cited a judgement, where the court said "When the investigation of a case had already started prior to the lodging of ejarah, it can't be treated as an ejarah, it can't be treated as the First Information Report (FIR) and it must be kept out of consideration."

"So, there is no ejarah in this case and ejarah behind the screen was not brought before the court, thus it had hit to the root of the case and frustrated the case," he argued and added that "this FIR can be considered as a statement (161) under the CrPc."

He said the process of investigation by the IO has prejudiced the accused because knowing the whereabouts of Maj Bazul Huda the warrant against him fell invalid. So, it is now the responsibility of the prosecution to present Maj Huda to the court and allow him to appear.

Undertrial prisoner escapes from court

PANCHAGARH, Sept 23: An undertrial prisoner escaped from local judge court, evading the eye of police today, reports APB.

Court sources said Muhammad Mostafa, accused in a case under the Woman and Child Repression Act, was brought from the jail hajat today to the judge court along with five other accused in the case who were later released on bail.

Two raped

From Page 1 filed a case with Kotwali thana under the Women and Children Repression Prevention Act 1995 accusing Milton.

In another incident, an eight-year-old girl of a flood affected family was raped by a teenager boy at a flood shelter at North Jatrabari under Demra thana in the city Tuesday, police said yesterday.

The alleged rapist, Jamal, 14, and the victim were staying at the flood shelter at Sabuj Biddiyya Pith along with their families.

At about 7 pm on Tuesday, Jamal dragged her inside a bath room of the school and raped her.

When the girl screamed, others in the flood shelter rushed there, rescued the girl and caught Jamal.

Jamal was handed over to Demra police. He was produced before the CMM's court yesterday. The court sent him to Dhaka Central Jail, police said.

The victim's mother filed a case with Demra thana under the Woman and Children Repression Prevention Act 1995 Tuesday night.

Diarrhoea

From Page 1 Dhaka city, it is found that the highest 13.6 per cent patients came from the flood affected areas in Gulshan thana, 7.8 per cent in Lalbagh thana and 6.8 per cent in Tejgaon thana and 27 per cent from various parts of the country.

Food served

From Page 1 throughout the city in the absence of any government action in this regard. Both sides of the road adjacent to the district court building have been taken over by caterers in the same manner. Cooking is done on wooden planks placed over the filthy drain. Women use stone grinders on the muddy road to make spice paste. In the court area, the customers were found to be a little better off than those of other areas. The same scene was witnessed at Sadarghat and in other areas along the river.

The Dhaka City Corporation's Public Health Laboratory — which is responsible for ensuring hygienic food in the city — has been inoperative for more than a year.

After the laboratory was shifted from the city's Luxembazar to the Nagar Bahan a year ago, DCC officials decided that it should be installed in another building, not in the Nagar Bahan.

It may be mentioned here that several floors of the monumental Nagar Bahan have remained vacant and DCC officials have been trying to rent those out.

5TH DEATH ANNIVERSARY. The fifth death anniversary of late Begum Shakera Banu, wife of late Khan Bahadur Mujibur Rahman, will be observed today (Thursday), the 24th September, 1998. All her relatives, friends and acquaintances are requested to pray for the eternal peace. D-494

Advertisement for a 2000 taka loan. It features a large '2000' and text: 'সময়ের সঙ্গে চলুন সাপ্তাহিক ২০০০ পড়ুন'. Below it, it says 'হকারকে বলে রাখুন দোরগোড়ায় পৌঁছে যাবে' and '২০০০' with '১৯/৯৭ নিউ ইকসটিন, ঢাকা-১০০০' and 'ফোন: শিবলিয়ার: ৯০০৯২-৩'.