

# The Baily Star



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### BNP calls day-long hartal in Ctg today

From Staff Correspondent CHITTAGONG, Oct 14: Chittagong chapter of BNP has called a day-long hartal in greater Chittagong tomorrow demanding withdrawal of cases against its leaders and activists

including four MPs. The cases were initiated against them by the police in connection with three incidents of violence that took place on November 11 and November 27

The supporters of both BNP and AL brought out separate processions in the city today for and against the hartal.

BNP also brought out a torch procession in the city that paraded the thoroughfares in support of tomorrow's hartal. Salauddin Kader Chowdhury, Gias Uddin Kader Chowdhury, Morshed Khan and Oli Ahmed were chargesheeted recently by CID police.

Additional police were deployed at important points of the city.

#### Clandestine radio It's Betar's job, says T&T

official By Staff Correspondent

authority to monitor radio fre-Telephone Board.

He said the Frequency and Wireless Board under the Ministry of Post and Telecommunication allocates and monitor

quency was allocated to Bangladesh Betar, it should detect and inform the Board first that their frequency is being used illegally by somebody else" the official told The Daily Star. requesting anonymity.

The Board can take action only after receiving complaints frequency, he noted.

tor General of Bangladesh Betar, talking to The Daily Star on Tuesday night, denied the responsibility of detecting illegal use of radio frequency.

clandestine radio transmitter was broadcasting religious speeches of Moulana Saidee for more than one month.

desh from abroad

A Strange Experience Stymied by Stark Reality

Crosscurrents

evolve increased US

Asian economy set to worsen amid deepening

Pages 6, 7 & 8

World Bank funds to fight air pollution in Bangladesh

# Auto-rickshaws may be out of streets in 4 years

By Shehab Ahmed

Pollutant auto-rickshaws may not be seen in major cities in the country four years from now if a project finalised yes-terday goes ahead trouble free.

The World Bank (WB) is coming in aid of Bangladesh to fight air pollution in major cities. A government-WB deal aims to reduce emissions from three wheelers and other vehicles under a four-year programme, officials said.

The programme envisages phasing out the ubiquitous auto-rickshaws using a deadly cocktail of leaded petrol and engine lubricants, stricter check on emission by motor vehicles and promoting use of unleaded petrol and proper lubricants.

Earlier, the WB had suggested introduction of more buses, including premium services, to reduce air pollution in the city and improve public transport system.

The auto-rickshaws have been found responsible for 64 per cent of air pollution in the capital. Some 40,000 of them ply its streets, leaving clouds of smoke at rush hours.

their numbers through higher duties on imports from this fiscal, unscrupulous traders made their way to import 3,500 of them this year.

Despite a move to reduce

A nationalised bank provided loans to import the vehicles using vintage technology of the 50s from India where the vehicles are banned in major cities as pollutants and being phased out in others.

Even Nepal banned them on

Kathmandu streets, encouraging converted auto-rickshaws

using electric engines. But powerful importers and organised union leaders managed to bypass the government decisions, prompting a feud between the Bangladesh Road Transport Authority (BRTA) and the Department of Envi-

ronment (DOE). Lately, DOE has requested BRTA not to issue these vehicles route permits to operate in major cities.

In this backdrop, the WB signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the government yesterday.

The US\$ 6.5 million Air Quality Management Project in Bangladesh (AQMPB) plans to phase out the two-stroke-engine vehicles in four years, highly

placed sources said.

"The idea is to actively push them out of circulation. The spares are going to be pricey from the next budgets onward," an official told The Daily Star.

On different aspects of the project, the sources said there would be check posts in differ-ent parts of the cities, where offending vehicles will be moni-

tored and penalised. But the owners would be given the opportunity to test their vehicles at workshops about the level of their emissions. The WB project would provide emission-testing equipment to government and private workshops.

The WB will provide equipment, laboratory facilities, and support training programmes and awareness campaign.

## Amartya Sen wins Nobel Prize

STOCKHOLM, Oct 14: Amartya Sen, a scholar from India whose work produced a new understanding of the catastrophes that plague society's poorest people, today won the Nobel Economics Prize, reports AP.

Sen was awarded the prestigious prize for his contributions to welfare economics, which help explain the economic mechanisms underlying famines and poverty, the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences said.

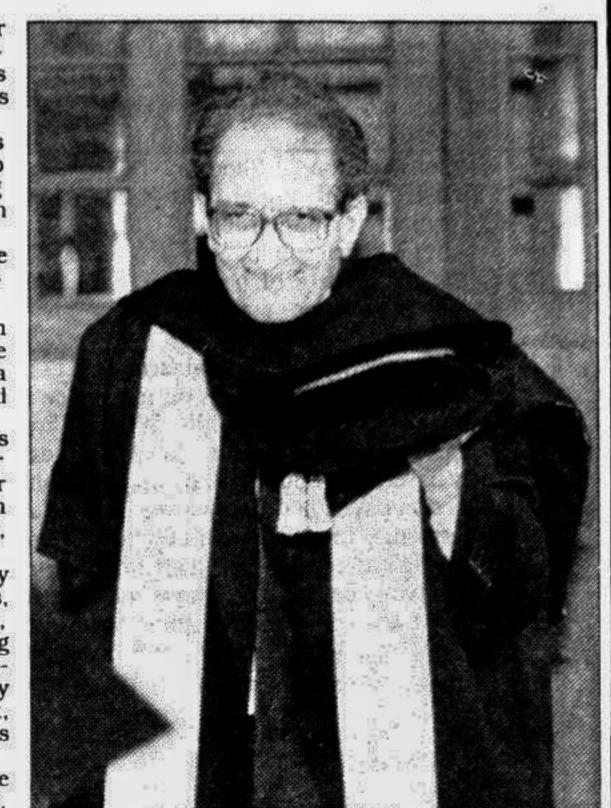
Sen "has restored an ethical dimension to the discussion of vital economic problems," the citation said.

Sen was born in Bengal (now Bangladesh) in 1933 and received his doctorate from the University of Cambridge in 1959. He has been a Professor in India, Britain and the United

States.
The 64-year-old economist joined Britain's
Tirinity College in Cambridge this year after
teaching at Harvard University, among other
institutions. He has studied the Bangladesh famine of 1974 and other catastrophes in India, Bangladesh and the countries of the Sahara.

The economics prize has been tarnished by the controversy surrounding last year's winners, Americans Robert Meton and Myron Scholes, who were honoured for their work on valuing risky 'derivatives' investments such as stock options. Last month, the hedge fund in which they were partners, Long-Term Capital Management, nearly collapsed and needed a 3.6 billion dollars bailout from banks.

Sen works in development economics, the study of the welfare of the world's poorest people. See Page 12 Col 1



Bangladesh Betar is the lone quency in the country and it can not deny the responsibility of detecting the clandestine transmission of religious speeches, said a high official of Bangladesh Telegraph and

the 'frequency uses'.

"As the country's radio fre-

from the authorised users because it does not have any instrument to detect illegal use of

On the other hand, the Direc-

It was reported earlier that a

#### Inside Today — Article

Overview of Bangla-

Column: Currents and by M M Rezaul Karim Page 4

## Business

Ministries, RMG exporters sit next week to quota winning strategy

global crisis

DSE, CSE price quota-

## Big battle today By M Shamsur Rahman

Bangladesh's business community will elect its new leaders today for the next two years after an electioneering that reached its dirty heights amid propaganda hitting opponents below the belt.

The 32-seat committee of the Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FBCCI) includes president, a vice president and 30 executive members.

The race for the top post has put Abdul Awal Mintoo and M A Rouf Chowdhury in a straight fight after intense lobbying failed to keep the presidency out of the election. Kazi Shafiqul Islam, the incumbent vice president, bowed out of the race. Mintoo is representing Bangladesh Textile Mills Asso-

#### 'A dirty game at the last minute' By Staff Correspondent

A letter depicting FBCCl

presidential candidate M A Rouf Chowdhury as a "cheat' and "insane person" was circulated yesterday, but the person whose name appeared in the leaflet rushed to the Press Club to say that he had no knowledge MA Quddus, a voter of the

Bangladesh Katch (Glass) Dealers Association, alleged that certain vested quarters were using his name in spreading "malicious propaganda against MA Rouf Chowdhury. At a hurriedly called press

conference. Quddus dismissed the contents of a letter issued in his name carrying his voter number. On his arrival from Chittagong yesterday morning. he said, some voters called him to say that they had received a See Page 12 Col 3

ciation and Chowdhury Bangladesh Vegetable Oil Refiners and Vanaspati Manufacturers Association. This year, the Association Group has its turn to choose the president.

169 associations will exercise their franchise. Forty-five candidates are vying for the 15 posts of executive

A total of 730 voters from

committee members from the Association Group. Each group elects the president alternatively but can have 15 members on the executive

The Chamber Group wil have the vice president. MA Mumin of Sylhet Chamber, is sure to win as his rival Kamaluddin Ahmed of Chittagong Chamber withdrew at the last moment following a consensus.

As Ahmed withdrew after the last date of withdrawal, his name will appear on the ballot

Thirty-two candidates are vving for the 15 executive members from the Chamber Group. The Election Board has already completed preparation

for the election. Six booths for the association group and three booths for the chamber group have been set on the seventh floor of the FBCCI Building. Polling will begin at 9:00 am and continue till 4:00 pm with a

one-hour break from 1:00 pm to 2:00 pm. Around 100 police personnel are likely to be deployed to deal

with any possible disturbances. The count will begin soon after closing of voting. The Election Appeal Board will receive

appeals against election results till 4:00 pm on October 18 and give its decisions from October 19 to 21. The final results of the elec-

tion will be published on October 21.

#### **Jail Killing Case** Charge sheet to be submitted

today By Staff Correspondent

The charge sheet in the Jail Killing Case will be submitted before the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's Court today, according to the CID officials. Four national leaders -

Syed Nazrul Islam, Tajuddin Ahmed, Mansur Ali and AHM Kamruzzaman — were killed inside the Dhaka Central Jail on November 3, 1975. All formalities have been

completed for submission of the charge sheet, CID officials said. "All the papers have been completed as per the investigation. Those were sent to the Public Prosecutor (PP) today (Wednesday) for his opinion, an investigation officer told The Daily Star last night.

Some 23 people may be charge sheeted in the case. K M Obaidur Rahman, Shah Moazzem Hossain and Nurul Islam Manjur who were junior ministers in 1975 were taken into custody in connection with

the jail killing. The other arrested accused are: Taheruddin Thakur, Nuruzzaman Khan, Col Syed Faroogur Rahman, Col Shahriar Rashid Khan and Major Khairuzzaman. The rest are absconding.

Two of the accused — former president Khondaker Mushtag Ahmed and Mahbubul Alam Chashi — are dead.

Most of the accused persons were also accused in the Bangabandhu Murder Case, the verdict of which is scheduled for November 8.

Sources further said, 60 people were listed as prosecution witnesses in the Jail Killing Case.

# Who's telling the truth?

By Naimul Haq

How many tubewells were damaged by the recent flood? The Department of Public Health and Engineering (DPHE) claims that over three lakh tubewells were damaged but officials of Grameen Bank said none of the more than four lakh tubewells given to its borrowers was damaged.

There is no scope for tubewells to be affected by floods, Grameen Bank officials say.

A report prepared by the DPHE says twenty per cent or 60,000 of the damaged tubewells are beyond repair. The total cost of repair and resinking of damaged tubewells and sinking of new ones will be around Tk 176 crore, it said.

Water and sanitation experts contacted by this correspondent also dismissed the DPHE claim saying, flood hardly causes any damage to tubewells. Only those located close to rivers may be damaged but their number is very limited.

According to Zakir Hossain,

#### Depression over Bay likely to intensify further The depression over west

central Bay and adjoining area off Andhra coast remained practically stationary, reports

It was centred at 6 pm yesterday about 1100 km southwest of Khulna city and 1260 km southwest of Chittagong port. A special bulletin of the Met Office said last night that the depression is likely to intensify

further and move in a westnorthwesterly direction. Maximum sustained wind

See Page 12 Col 2

Senior Principal Officer of Grameen Bank's Training and Special Activities Department, none of the tubewell given to the

bank's borrowers in the flood

affected areas was damaged by

the recent floods. "We have given over four lakh tubewells to our borrowers through our credit scheme. We have not received any complaint from the borrowers about any damage. Some tubewells needed minor repair but their number was very small and hardly any financial support was needed for that", Hos-

sain said. An official of a UN body operating in Dhaka also corroborated the views expressed by the Grameen Bank experts, "Complete damage of a tubewell in submerged condition even in high tide is not possible. It may be infected with microogranism but normal functioning can be restored after disinfecting if organism with bleaching powder after water recedes.

damage to tubewells," he said. DPHE Chief Engineer S A K M Shafique, when contacted said that majority of the damaged tubewells were located in Rajshahi and Dhaka divisions. "We are continuing our effort to locate the damaged tubewells and their number is likely to

But flood causes no physical

The water and sanitation experts said pipes of a tubewell remain under soil so it does not make any difference during flood. The 'neck' of a tubewell, when submerged for a long time, sustain no physical dam-

increase.

"An independent body should be assigned to conduct a survey to verify whether DPHE's claim is correct," one of the experts said.

Oil chiefs in

### UNCTAD report says

- Star photo by AKM Mohsin

## Bad weather puts lid on LDCs including Bangladesh

Bad weather has cast a pall over future prospects of the least developed countries (LDCs) including Bangladesh, reports

a call.

The UNCTAD report for 1997 released Wednesday evening said, "The key question facing LDCs today is whether their overall improved economic performances of recent years can be sustained, given their continued vulnerability to external shocks, notably adverse weather conditions and sharp fluctuations in the prices of their export."

Commerce secretary Syed needs of disaster relief and food

WAITING FOR WORK: The prolonged flood has triggered

an influx of rural people into the cities, especially the

capital, in search of a living. Here is a group of day

labourers at the city's Moghbazar yesterday hoping to get

launching ceremony while UN Resident Co-ordinator David Lockwood was present at special guest. The report said in 1997, the effects of El Nino weather sys-

Alamgir Farooq Chowdhury

was the chief guest at the

tem resulted in widespread crop failures and consequent food "The essential cash crops was also reduced. Government

thus obliged to divert expendi-

ture from investment in infras-

tructure and manufacturing to

more immediately pressing

procurement," the report said. It said the outlook was more even foreboding. "Devastating floods in Bangladesh and above average rainfall in Bhuttan and Nepal this year, as well as hurricane damage in Haiti, foreshadow further difficulties in

The floods that covered twothirds of Bangladesh are likely to restrict growth severely at least for the foreseeable future, the UNCTAD report said. On the other hand, a number of LDCs continued to experience

growth.

Some heavyweights in the ruling Awami League and Jatiya Party are still accusing each other of playing a 'mysterious role' in the brutal murder of Bangabandhu and his family members in 1975. It is quite sometime now that the politicians, who are not officially accused in the

the elected government of Sheikh Mujiur Rahman. But the investigators of the case have so far not shown any a relatively high level of sign of interrogating the politi-

cians in question.

case, have been locked in a war

of words over their alleged

links with the politico-military

events that violently overthrew

## People confused as political leaders trade charges By Nurul Kabir

The battle began with Naziur

Rahman Manju, secretary general of Jatiya Party, demanding on October 4 that while the government was trying the 'killers of Bangabandhu, it should also try the conspirators behind the killing when the present trial was over.' In a statement, he clearly hinted that Commerce and Industries Minister Tofail Ahmed was somehow or other behind it.

According to Manju, once a good friend of Tofail, the minister's role in mid-August, 1975, was 'mysterious'.

Naziur Rahman, a distant relative of Prime Minister

Sheikh Hasina, went on further offensive against Tofail. Manju managed to get a resolution passed by his party's secretariat members on October 6, which clearly said that Tofail should be tried for his 'involvement in the conspiracy' behind the killing of Mujib. JP chief HM Ershad was present at the meet-

ing as a guest. Tofail Ahmed went on a counter offensive on October 9. He dismissed the allegations raised by Monju, with whom he had developed enmity over the killing of the latter's close associate Obaidul Huq Babul who

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city to meet PM, other officials Senior representatives from Unocal, Shell, and Cairn Energy are in Dhaka to meet the Prime Minister and other se-

officials, a USIS press release said yesterday. Kincannon, John spokesman of the US Embassy said. "The executives are here to show their continued interest in the development of the coun-

nior Bangladesh government

try's energy sector." "To this end, we understand the companies are willing to cooperate with the government of Bangladesh and each other. The companies look to the Bangladesh government for

guidance on how to accelerate See Page 12 Col 1

## দেশের প্রথম দেশের সেরা ইউ ভি স্ট্যাবিলাইজার GAZI ট্রডমার্ক ভধুমাত্র পালী ট্যাংকের ক্রেরেই প্রগোজ্য পরিবেশক: সী এন্টারপ্রাইজ রভশন টাভরার, ১৫২/২/এ-২ ঝীন রোড জাকির হোসেন রোড, পাস্থপথ, ঢাকা-১২০৫,বাংলাদেশ কোনঃ ৯১২৪২৪৩,২৪৪৮১২

## Truant teachers

By Gobinda Bar

More than a fifth of teachers at the nine public universities in the country are on leave, bringing down the teacher-stu-dent ratio to 1:21 from 1:16. A total of 799 teachers out of 4015 are on leave for different

reasons, according to University Grants' Commission (UGC). The absentee teachers are reportedly busy with 'more rewarding activity' -- overseas employment, research or studies or in pursuit of higher de-

grees abroad, says UGC sources. At Jahangirnagar University (JU) which tops the list of absentees, the number is an amazing 41 per cent. As many as 138 of the 337 teachers are not accessed by their students. At BUET, around 33 per cent of the teachers are absent -- 114

At Dhaka University, the absence is as high as 16 per cent -- 200 out of 1247.

In Rajshahi, 97 out of the

out of 424.

656 are not there. In Chittagong, 86 of the 483 teachers are on leave. Fifty-four of the 396 at

Bangladesh Agriculture University (BAU) in Mymensingh are absent. Forty-eight of the 188 teachers at Shahjalal University of Science and Technology (SUST) in Sylhet have had something to do other than lecturing students in classrooms or helping them in laboratories.

Thirty of the 114 Khulna University (KU) teachers and 32 of the 170-strong Islamic University (IU) faculty are on leave.
A total of 44 teachers of six universities are on "unauthorised leave" at the moment, according to UGC.

Of them, 25 teachers at DU, two at RU, nine at BUET, three at CU, three at JU and two at IU. Three DU teachers, two BUET teachers and 62 JU teach-See Page 12 Col 8

## FROM TODAY

On the occasion of the International Cup cricket being held at Dhaka from Oct 24-Nov1, 1998



See Now!