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Development of human resources a must: President

President Shahabuddin Ahmed has stressed the need for greater cooperation among developing partners like Bangladesh and Japan for improving the conditions of the commonman, reports APB. Countries in the region can solve many of their problems through closer contacts, integration and promoting investments, he said.



Over-bridges set up by the DCC at different city roads are hardly used by pedestrians. One wonders if factors like location of schools and the rush of traffic were taken into consideration while selecting the sites. Children are seen crossing the busy road in front of Wills Little Flower School braving the hazardous traffic.

Massive preparations to host D-8 summit

By M Anwarul Haq

Bangladesh will draw international attention when it hosts the 'D-8 Summit' on March 2 and 3, the first single largest gathering of international leaders in Dhaka. The summit, earlier scheduled for November 28 and 29, was deferred due to the devastating floods at the request of Bangladesh and the new dates have been fixed in consultation with the member states, sources said.

Diplomatic observers feel that the summit will harness the potential of the new economic alliance and set it rolling in a focused direction. The alliance was launched to forge closer ties among its members and create bigger markets for the common benefit of its peoples and emphasise 10 thrust areas of cooperation. It decided to cooperate in the fields of trade, industry, communications and information, finance, banking and privatisation, rural development, science and technology, poverty alleviation and human resources development, agriculture, energy, environment, health, tourism and culture and sports.

A three-day cultural programme participated by leading artists from the eight member countries is expected to be held in Dhaka on the occasion of the summit. The programme is likely to include a half-day retreat of the summit leaders either to the picturesque Sunderbans or the lush green hills in Sylhet. Presidents or prime ministers of Egypt, Iran, Indonesia, Pakistan, Malaysia, Nigeria, Turkey and host Bangladesh will meet on a common platform to unveil the future course of action of the economic block launched in Istanbul in June last year.

Head of visiting EU team says

Accord soon to open up new trade avenues

By Staff Correspondent

European Union countries will extend more trade and business facilities and enhance avenues for bilateral cooperation following the signing of a new cooperation agreement with Bangladesh shortly. The EU will also give increased focus on such priority areas as health, education, empowerment of women and food security. Ruth Albuquerque, Head of the Unit of European Commission overseeing its activities in Bangladesh, said this at a press briefing in the city yesterday.

round of negotiations to strike the Bangladesh-EC cooperation agreement is likely to be held in Brussels shortly during a visit by a Bangladesh delegation. Dhaka, she said, has indicated it would agree to all necessary conditions including signing of Conventions on International Property Rights and taking back illegal immigrants to qualify for signing the new cooperation agreement. From the next year, the EU will stress building an adequate food security system and reducing food aid. This will be done through providing the rural sector with agri inputs, "increasing food security would help attainment of food self-sufficiency," Albuquerque said.

Development of human resources, she said, will receive utmost attention of the EU. "Our main area will continue to be poverty alleviation or poverty reduction. The EU countries will in future concentrate on fewer areas but on larger projects to bring qualitative change to help 'institution building process' and also improve the conditions of the people." She said EU will enlist the names of 10 more Bangladeshi shrimp processing firms and the list will be expanded to 27. She also hinted that the time limit for shrimp export would be waived if the authorities concerned request. Albuquerque said she was impressed to see some fish processing plants and hoped they would continue to maintain the high EU hygienic standard. Bangladesh will continue to receive GSP facilities till 2001 and then up to 2005 on certain products, she said. The EC official also praised See Page 12 Col 8

PM opens pvt sector hospital for children

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has said her government wants to build up a society where all children would grow up enjoying the same facilities and opportunities, reports BSS. "We want to give books to every child and ensure proper medicare to all children," she said while inaugurating a 65-bed Institute of Child Health Children Hospital in the private sector at Mirpur in the city yesterday afternoon. She said for the welfare of the children her government had done everything possible within the limited resources. She urged the rich to come forward and contribute to the development of children, particularly the distressed and the poor. Finance Minister Shah A M S Kibria, Health and Family Welfare Minister Salahuddin Yusuf, State Minister for Social Welfare and Women Affairs Dr Mozammel Hossain, national professor and project director of the Institute of Child Health Dr M R Khan, member-secretary of the institute Dr Mohammad Shahidullah and vice president A K M Emdadul Huq also spoke on the occasion. See Page 12 Col 1

Dalim now in Dhaka?

By Staff Correspondent

Gulshan police along with personnel from three other agencies raided a house in Gulshan area suspecting that Maj (Rtd) Shariful Huque Dalim, one of the absconding convicts in the Bangabandhu Murder Case was hiding there, highly placed police sources said. Senior police officials were present there during the two-hour raid from about 9:00 pm. Gulshan police was assisted by Special Branch, Detective Branch and CID. Some sources said that the house belongs to a leading businessman of the country but did not name him. "The raid was conducted on the basis of information that Dalim was there, the sources said. Top secrecy was maintained during and before the raid, the sources said. However, none was arrested from the house during the raid, Gulshan police said late last night.

Hold upazila polls under caretaker govt: Khaleda

KURIGRAM, Nov 27: Opposition Leader Begum Khaleda Zia today demanded Upazila Parishad elections under caretaker government to ensure fair and neutral voting, reports UNB.

"The ruling party is trying to rig the forthcoming bypolls in Pabna-2 constituency. They had stolen votes in the previous by-polls," she told a public meeting at local government college ground in the afternoon. Begum Zia said Awami League is again hatching conspiracy to steal votes after assuming power by rigging the general elections in 1996. She asked the people to remain alert against any evil design. Referring to current socio-political situation of the country, the BNP chief said the government, which could not ensure food and clothes for the common men and protect their lives, can't be a people's government. "This government has to quit power immediately," she demanded. Khaleda said more people would die and poverty increase if this government remains in power. "We have taken to the street and I will remain in the street. You join the current movement to unseat the government for the sake of the country," she told the rally. Calling Awami League a liar, the former premier said the ruling party had violated its election pledges. She alleged that ruling party had not yet cancelled the Special Powers Act. The BNP leader said the ruling party in a bid to destroy the opposition, particularly BNP, has been arresting and detaining her party leaders and workers under the Special Powers Act. She said the government also did not give autonomy to radio and television. Instead of giving equal opportunity to the opposition, the electronic media are being used for "government propaganda and family campaign." Begum Zia said some 200 leaders and workers of BNP were killed in two and a half See Page 12 Col 2

Appointment of MCS judges soon

By Staff Correspondent

The government will shortly appoint Metropolitan Sessions Judges in the newly created Metropolitan Courts of Sessions (MCS), official sources said. The two MCS in Dhaka and Chittagong will start functioning on January 3 and 17 respectively. The MCS each will have a judge of the rank of Sessions Judge, five Additional Sessions Judges and seven Assistant Sessions Judges. The names of a legal advisor in the works ministry and a district and sessions judge, who hail from Gopalganj and Faridpur respectively, are being heard as possible appointees for the posts of Metropolitan Sessions Judges, the sources mentioned. Law ministry officials said the MCS will have the jurisdiction to try only sessions cases from the two metropolitan areas of Dhaka and Chittagong and the District and Sessions Judges' Courts will try sessions cases from the rest of the areas in the two districts and civil cases from the entire districts. The provision for MCS was made in 1976 and was to be effective from 1979 under the same law that provided for the creation of metropolitan magistracy and metropolitan courts. A four-member committee set up by the government early this year suggested the creation of MCS for quick dispensation of criminal justice.

Hepatitis vaccine: Help for mass production assured

By Shehab Ahmed

The International Institute of Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology (IGEB) has agreed to assist Bangladesh in the mass production of anti-hepatitis vaccine to check the deadly disease claiming thousands of lives. This will lower the cost of vaccines to less than Tk 400 from the current price of Tk 1200-1400," said Dr Ahmed Azad, a member of the council of scientific advisers to the New Delhi-based IGEB. Bangladesh-born Dr Azad, who works as Chief Research Scientist for Molecular Science at the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO) in Melbourne, talked to The Daily Star last week. He was in the city to attend a seminar on anti-hepatitis vaccination. Dr Azad spoke of extensive application of bio-technology

and genetic engineering in treating various other diseases at a cheaper cost. Every child could be given the vaccine as part of the national immunisation programme, he said. "Fruits like banana could be used for this purpose with transgenic vaccination. The vaccine could be routed through the banana and given to children," Dr Azad said. "If it is given under the national immunisation programme — say three crore children are provided immunisation — it would be possible to cut cost substantially," he noted. He suggested that the government should take initiative to take advantage of the transfer of technology before hepatitis goes out of control. Even private sector pharmaceutical firms could benefit from it. He also stressed the use of DNA (Deoxy Ribonucleic Acid) technology for the benefit of the people.

Train crash toll rises to 192 KHANNA, India, Nov 27: Rescuers using cranes and acetylene torches cut through the wreckage of two trains today and extricated a total of 192 bodies in India's worst railway accident in three years, reports AP. Police and railway officials at this wheat-trading town in the northwestern state of Punjab expect the death toll to cross 200 when the final wreckage is cleared tomorrow. Earlier story on page 5

Tribal leader shot dead in Khagrachhari

KHAGRACHHARI, Nov 27: Unidentified assailants shot dead a tribal leader in Moniagram, 9 kilometres off the town, on Thursday night, reports UNB. Police said the victim, Kamini Mohon Chakma, 45, was taken away from his house and shot dead. The body was recovered this morning. In another incident, a degree student was abducted allegedly by some anti-peace accord activists from the town this morning. Police said, a group of armed tribal youths intercepted a bus in Ghiripool area, coming from Panchhari, and kidnapped Priti Kushum Chakma, 22, at gun point. PCJSS claimed that Priti Kushum was a supporter of the peace accord.



The newly crowned Miss World 1998 from Israel, Linor Abargil, centre, poses with the two runners up, from Malaysia, Pick Lim Lina Teoh, 2nd runner up, left, and France Veronique Caloc, 1st runner up, right, shortly after being announced the winner of the Miss World pageant in Seychelles, Thursday.

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Where hunger brings man, monkey together

By Gobinda Bar back from Madaripur

Monkeys move freely in Char Muguria Bazar near Madaripur town and collect food from shops and passers-by fearlessly. They often gang up and storm shops, snatching food for survival as they are exposed to starvation due to lack of natural sources of food. They eat tender leaves of trees, green coconut, muri, biscuit, sweets and whatever edible they get, local people said. Over two thousand monkeys live in different godowns and abandoned houses in the market and nearby. They depend on local people and shopkeepers for food and often live very close to them on the premises of their houses. People are becoming friendly with the monkeys, taking their menaces as part of their life and bothering none of the animals. Betel-leaf seller Mostaq Khan said the local people are still friendly to the monkeys though they create a lot of



problems. "They break road lights, tear electric wires, damage crops and vegetables and eat up leaves of trees. None can grow any fruit tree in the area because of the animals." See Page 12 Col 8

Mystery shrouds death of DMCH nurse Depali

By Staff Correspondent

Mystery shrouds the death of Dipali Rani Hawlader, a staff nurse of Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH). Doctors declared her dead when she was taken to the DMCH emergency at about 9:30 am yesterday. The man who took her to the emergency identified himself as Ripon but escaped when she was declared dead, hospital sources said. The reason behind her death could not be known immediately. Police said there was no injury mark on her body. She was a resident of the Nursing Institute Hostel in the DMCH compound, police and hospital sources said. Hospital sources said Dipali had left her hostel room in the early morning. The body was sent to DMCH morgue for autopsy. An unnatural death case was filed with Ramna thana in connection with the incident. Dipali was the daughter of Suriya Kanta Hawlader of Pirojpur district

Hectic campaign in Pabna-2

From Our Correspondent

PABNA, Nov 27: Vigorous campaign is going on in Pabna-2 constituency as the by-election to the Jatiya Sangsad is only two weeks away. Leaders of the two major parties — ruling AL and main opposition BNP — are wooing voters in all the 15 unions under Sujanagar and Bera thanas and newly created Sujanagar pourashava every day. Four candidates, including those of Awami League, BNP and Jatiya Party are contesting for the parliament seat which fell vacant following the death of Awami League MP Ahmed Tafazzuddin on June 27 last. Local units of Awami League and its front organisations have launched a vigorous campaign in favour of party candidate, Air Vice-Marshal (Rtd) A K Handkar, a Liberation War hero. Awami League is holding at least seven public meetings every day. Its district and central leaders including Telecommunications Minister Mahammad Nasim and State Minister for Information Prof. Abu Sayeed are addressing the meeting. They have been given 'special

responsibility' to conduct election campaign in favour of their party candidate, party sources said. Many other central leaders and ministers are likely to arrive soon. BNP is not lagging behind in campaigning. Its central leader BNP secretary general Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan yesterday warned of launching an out-governments movement if there is rigging in the Pabna-2 by-election, scheduled to be held on December 10. "This will be the final step to dislodge the Awami League government... We will start this movement centring this by-election," he said while addressing an election projection meeting for BNP candidate Selim Reza Habib at Aminpur High School ground at Bera. He alleged that the government was trying to influence the polls and conspiring to rig it because it became unbalanced seeing the massive wave of pub-

ers Aminul Haque and Fazlur Rahman Patal visited the area three days ago. Today, BNP Secretary General Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan, Shamsuzzaman Dudu and some other central leaders arrived and addressed several public meetings. Tomorrow, Deputy Leader of the Opposition Prof Badruddoza Choudhury, Nazmul Huda and Amanullah Aman are expected to arrive to address a number of meetings in the constituency. Voters of the constituency believe that major contenders for the parliament seat are Awami League and BNP candidates. The three other candidates are: A K M Selim Reza Habib of BNP, Sajjad Hossain Bachchu of Jatiya Party and Krishak Sramik Party chairman, Krishak Mohammad Sadeq. The Election Commission and the district administration, meanwhile, have completed all arrangements for ensuring peaceful and smooth holding of the by-election. There are about 1,86,500 voters in the constituency. Polling will be held in 80 centres.

Rajuk's rejoinder & our reply

Rajuk rejoinder issued the following rejoinder. "Attention of Rajuk authorities has been drawn to a news item, 'Rajuk doing it again,' published in the widely circulated, 'The Daily Star' on November, 20. The news is not only false and fabricated but may also mislead the people about the performance and activities of Rajuk. "For clarification of the matter it is to be mentioned here that Rajuk has a Master Plan already approved by the government. Under the Master Plan, Rajuk has undertaken some activities in Gulshan, Banani and Baridhara. It is now known to all that in the past, a sizable portion of the lakes/waterbodies were indiscriminately earth-filled to provide plots to some so-called highly influential persons. Some of the allottees willfully encroached upon the lake-side land and plantation areas which were bitterly criticised by the print media. It is to be noted that an investigation team is already working to identify the encroachments for taking remedial measures. "Besides, Rajuk has undertaken See Page 12 Col 3