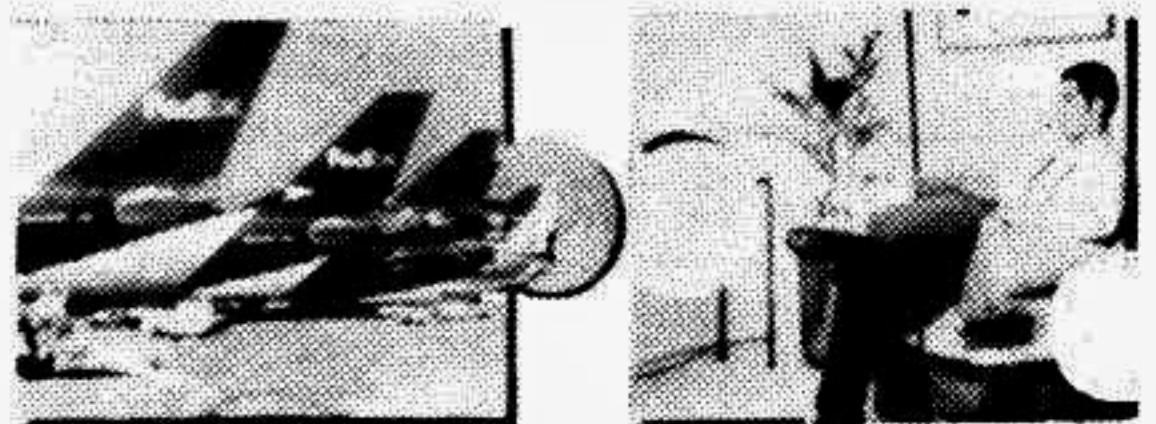
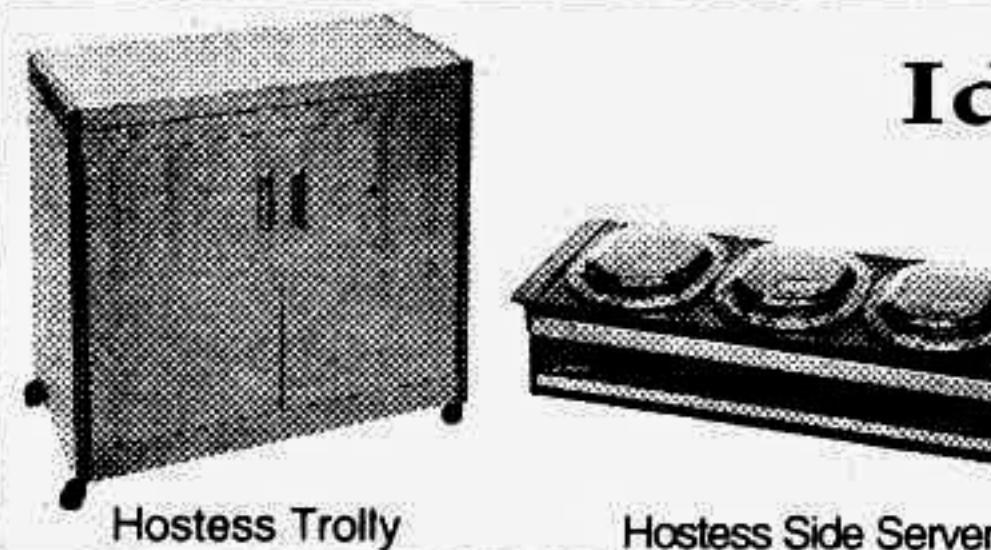


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Pakistan to sign CTBT before Sept this yr

From Syed Talat Hussain

ISLAMABAD, Feb 6: Pakistan is likely to sign the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty before September this year, but may hold on longer on Treaty ratification, highly-placed defence sources confirmed on Thursday.

"It is more or less decided that we will put our signatures on the CTBT before September 1999," source said.

Denying that there was a link between US Deputy Secretary of State, Strobe Talbott's visit to Pakistan for the eighth round of talks with foreign secretary Shamshad Ahmad and the informal decision to sign the CTBT, sources said that the move is "independent of the American pressure" on Islamabad on the issue.

"We have been weighing this option for some time and are still looking at it from many angles. It is our view that our national security interests are not in the least affected by signing the CTBT. The American pressure has been on us but when we meet the September deadline it will be independent of this factor," one of the sources pointed out.

The joint statement issued at the end of the eighth round of

US energy team

From Page 1
tion Plan to implement the Joint Statement, and signing of several agreements involving the Energy Information Administration and the US Trade and Development Agency.

"It is my conviction that Bangladesh's prospects in the next century are very bright indeed. Energy development can lead the way as the engine for national economic growth and prosperity that can benefit all Bangladeshis."

"It is my hope that through the visit of our delegation, we can make a meaningful contribution to this worthy cause," Humphrey said in his short statement.

Conveying warmest greetings of US Secretary of Energy Bill Richardson to the people of Bangladesh, Calvin Humphrey

Petroleum

From Page 1
bon Unit would need technical and managerial training.

A set of legal and regulatory steps would be outlined with the help of US expertise to protect the interest of the society and to provide for national objectives, the sources said.

The government would emphasise strengthening the Hydrocarbon Unit of the ministry to plan and regulate the gas sector, recommend PSC, monitor oil companies, effectuate established regulations, production and depletion management and information to the members of the public.

Petrobangla may pursue setting up of an unit to deal with data management system, resources assessment and evaluation of technical reports such as field development plans etc.

The government is also willing to bring the state owned company and the national and international private companies to a level playing field of competition. Under this new strategy, no company will be given any preferential treatment.

The government may want to frame certain national policies that would not give short term increase in revenue from the petroleum sector. The government may also want to restrict some activities to protect the interest of other groups or sectors.

Besides, improvements could be achieved in maintaining different types of data - seismic, well log, production etc. To do these, a data management system should be set up, the sources said.

President

From Page 1
the research conducted by FREPD would help in policy-making and implementation.

Ational Education Commission was formed on July 26, 1972 with a view to overhauling country's education system maintaining consistency with its heritage, values and ideals which placed its report in 1974, but the recommendations were neither evaluated nor implemented during 24 years, he resuted.

The President mentioned some steps taken by the present government to formulate education policy. A 54-member committee, headed by Education Adviser Prof Shamsul Huq, has already submitted report formulating education policy which is under consideration of the government.

Editor : Mahfuz Anam

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Talbott-Shamshad talks contained only a passing reference to the CTBT: Pakistan reiterated its position on the CTBT as enunciated by Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif in his address to the UNGA (United Nations General Assembly).

Officially unconfirmed reports however suggest that Strobe Talbott during his meeting with Shamshad Ahmad was strong on the point that Pakistan should take the step of signing the CTBT.

Sources denied that the decision marked a sure change in Pakistan's public posture on the CTBT saying that this was what Pakistan Prime Minister Sharif promised to the world in his September address to the United Nations General Assembly.

Sharif had said that Pakistan was "...prepared to adhere to the CTBT before September 1999." However Pakistan's adherence to the Treaty was to take place only in "conditions free from coercion or pressure."

This was the first public commitment Pakistan gave on the CTBT. Pakistani officials at that time justified it on the removal of all sanctions.

Only last week Pakistan's foreign minister Sartaj Aziz created a stir in Islamabad's diplomatic circles when he emphatically stated in the Senate that Islamabad's signing of the CTBT was subject to the removal of all sanctions.

Abdullah

From Page 1

noted that his mission was "important".

The US team will discuss with Bangladeshi officials about private sector investment in gas and power sectors, legal aspects and transparency issues. "The consequent Action Plan will have certain points, which the government can later consider to implement," he said.

The Bangladeshi government has expressed its commitment to the US government that it wants to develop the energy sector, he said. "The US government is now reciprocating the signal."

After this mission defines areas of mutual co-operation, the DOE will send more delegations and a two-way relationship would continue, he said.

The US delegation includes Tom Cutler, Cynthia Lowry, Gordon Weyand, Dennis Zivinakis, Bob Middleton, Mary Ann Milosavich, Brian Castelli, Roger Taylor, John Herrman, Don Juckett, Russ Protofitch, Donna Bobbish, and Mark Rodekoh.

Energy Secretary Dr Tawfiq-e-Elahi Chowdhury, Director General for the Americas in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Ambassador SK Sharif Hassan and Additional Secretary of Energy Ministry Syed Tanveer Hussain were also present on the occasion.

JSD to observe local govt day today

Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal (JSD) will observe "Local Government Day" through out the country today demanding free, fair and neutral election and establishment of powerful self-regulatory local bodies, reports UNB.

251 shanties gutted in Ctg

CHITTAGONG, Feb 6: At least 251 shanties were gutted in a fire that broke out at a slum adjacent to Jhautala railway station under Pahartali thana here today, reports BSS.

Fire service and police sources said, the fire originated from an oven of a kitchen and soon engulfed the adjoining houses. Five firefighting units struggled worked for half and hour to extinguish the blaze.

AL leaders

From Page 1

"We decided yesterday to send central level leaders to different districts to hold rallies to pursue people that they should exercise the right to franchise, defying Opposition call to boycott the municipal elections," a Presidium member of the party told The Daily Star yesterday evening.

The AL high command has also asked district unit leaders to make sure that eventually only one candidate from the party contest for the post of chairman of a municipality.

The directive was issued as more than one AL candidate submitted nomination papers for the post of chairman in different municipalities, and in many cases, they did not withdraw their candidature.

The central leaders during their visits would also try to prevent one but all party candidates from contesting in a municipality, the sources said.

Editor : Mahfuz Anam

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Children take part in a painting competition to mark the Language Movement. The Bangla Academy organised the event yesterday ahead of the *Ekushey February*.

— Star photo

Resist conspiracy to foil municipal polls: AL

Ruling Awami League yesterday called upon the people to resist the conspiracy being hatched by BNP-led opposition to foil the coming municipal elections, reports UNB.

"A spontaneous enthusiasm has been created among the people centring the municipal elections. But some opposition parties, led by BNP, were trying to create anarchy and terrorism to foil the polls aimed at strengthening the local government bodies," said a meeting of the Central Coordination Committee of Awami League on Municipal Elections.

Awami League Presidium member and President of the Committee Amin Hossain Amu presided over the meeting held at the Awami Foundation in the afternoon.

Some Arab publications expressed doubts about whether Crown Prince Abdullah had what it takes to rule. One newspaper, Iraq's Babil, warned that Israel may take advantage of the king's illness to grab Jordanian territory.

We hope that Jordan, under the new young leadership, reconsiders its policy in a revolutionary manner and comes back to the Arab fold," said Libyan leader Moammar Gaddafi, himself in power for nearly 30 years.

The policy of appeasing America by recognising the so-called Israel has proved its failure," said Gaddafi, one of several Arab leaders who have consistently criticised Hussein for his pro-Western policies and for signing a 1994 peace treaty with Israel.

Closies with Israel forged by the 63-year-old king have at last led to tensions with Arab heavyweights like Hafez Assad of Syria, Egypt's Hosni Mubarak and Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein.

AFP says, Hosni Mubarak gave his full support today to Abdullah.

Mubarak phoned Abdullah to express his support to the leadership and the people of Jordan at this historic moment," reported Egyptian television, which interrupted its regular programming to make the announcement.

A departmental case has been lodged in this connection.

Tk 25 lakh gold seized at ZIA

By Staff Correspondent
Customs authorities at the Zia International Airport (ZIA) recovered gold bars and ornaments worth about Tk 25 lakh from a Bangladeshi coming from Dubai in an Emirates flight yesterday.

Customs personnel who were following him on suspicion since his arrival, challenged him there and recovered 41 gold bars, weighing ten tola each and 59 grams of gold ornaments from his pockets, the sources said.

The BNP Secretary General congratulated the party activists for introducing one party system through holding "farcical" municipal election through the country toward confrontation through "farcical" municipal election ignoring the demand of the opposition parties, reports UNB.

It also called upon all democratic forces to make the polls a success for strengthening the democratic system and people's participation in the government.

The elections that government and CEC are going to hold ignoring people's opinion and keeping the opposition, including BNP, out of the race would not be acceptable to anybody," BNP secretary general Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan said yesterday.

He said government and the CEC are trying to introduce one party system through holding "farcical" municipal election through the country toward confrontation through "farcical" municipal election ignoring the demand of the opposition parties, reports UNB.

He also asked the party's district presidents and general secretaries to send list of those who have not withdrawn their candidature.

The BNP Secretary General congratulated the party activists for introducing one party system through holding "farcical" municipal election through the country toward confrontation through "farcical" municipal election ignoring the demand of the opposition parties, reports UNB.

"We also remind you that we are to request the government of Bangladesh to repay the said amount in accordance with the letter of guarantee dated March 28, 1992," the bank said.

And two days after the repayment failure came the OECF warning. The Japanese government agency, rather harshly, pointed out that the government of Bangladesh being the guarantor would now be in trouble.

"J-EXIM informs us that it intends to seek repayment of the amount due immediately from the guarantor, the government of Bangladesh," the OECF said. "Were the Govern-

ment not to repay the amount due, the government would itself be in default."

"This would not only affect the Kafco's operations, but would also damage the credit of the government in the international financial market, ultimately affecting the national economy as a whole. OECF, as an international development organisation, sees this situation as very serious."

"We have heard that the current serious situation could be settled if the government officially approves the commercial settlement of the long-standing plant acceptance issue."

The latest OECF move is a grim reminder of what Bangladesh went through in the early 1990s when the Japanese corporate lobby and the government manoeuvred in all possible means to secure the guarantee for the entire amount of export credit and unprecedented fiscal and other concessions for the now US\$ 600 million project.

Guitarist gunned down in Khulna

From Staff Correspondent

KHULNA, Feb 6: Arif Raihan Pitu, 28, a guitarist, was gunned down by some unidentified assailants at about 7 pm on Friday at TB boundary road in the city.

The assailants fired at Pitu point blank and he died on the spot.

Pitit said, two young men, identified as Nobel Shaikh 26 and Chand Mia, 24, were arrested in this connection.

Pitit could not find out the reason behind the murder of the guitarist who was also a supporter of the ruling party.

Local people said that Pitit used to vehemently protest toll collection by a group of armed cadres of the ruling party in the area.

Pitit was murdered when top level leaders of district and city Awami League, including the State Minister for Disaster Management Talukder Abdul Khaleque, Whip Mostapha Rashidi Shujah and Sheikh Helaluddin MF were attending the extended committee meeting of the party to formulate a policy on non-interference in the police action against the wanted criminals and murderers of political leaders and activists.

However, no murder case was filed with the police till filing of this report.

Scouting also helps a child to be self confident, conscious and dedicated, and build up a worthy citizen, Hasina said asuring all possible help from

PM asks scouts to help country march forward

MAUCHACK (Gazipur), Feb 6:

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina today called for united efforts to remove obstacles to the country's development, reported UNB.

"We will have to go ahead removing hunger, malnutrition, ignorance and superstition which are hindering our progress," Hasina said while inaugurating the 6th National Scout Jamboree here this morning.

She urged the scouts to help the society by applying their personal skill, leadership, efficiency and knowledge.

"You are bold and indomitable, you are determined and you are the scouts. This is your only identity," she told the gathering.

More than 10,000 scouts from across the country joined the Jamboree this year. The scouts from India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Bhutan also take part in it.

Scouting also helps a child to be self confident, conscious and dedicated, and build up a worthy citizen, Hasina said asuring all possible help from

Bangla Academy

From Page 1

TSC island at 10 am on February 18.

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