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Lead-free petrol to be imported from July 1

The government will import lead-free petroleum from July 1 to minimise air pollution, reports BSS.

The National Environmental Council at its sixth meeting chaired by Forest and Environment Minister Syeda Sajeda Chowdhury took the decision yesterday.

The meeting also decided to impose high duties on imported two-stroke engines used in auto-rickshaws and make "catalytic converter" mandatory for buses, trucks and other vehicles.

The converter frees fuels from lead, the main culprit for city's air pollution.

The meeting also discussed measures against black smoke, noise pollution, introduction of more double-decker buses and constitution of environment courts.

The Environment Minister See Page 12 Col 6

Biman's failure to lease planes puts int'l flights in disarray

By Special Correspondent
Bangladesh Biman is yet to get two aircraft on lease from Air Chartered World to ferry haji pilgrims, leaving its regular international schedule in disarray.

Chinese company, China South Airlines, had agreed to provide two Boeing-777-200 wide-bodied aircraft for chartered haji flights, through the Air Chartered World, to carry 380 pilgrims each flight.

Now, Biman has started direct talks with representatives from the Chinese company who arrived in the city Saturday night.

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Prayer Timings

March 1	
Fajr	5:29
Johr	12:45
Asr	4:30
Maghrib	6:05
Esha	7:25
	5:34
	1:15
	4:35
	6:08
	7:30

Source: Islamic Foundation



Warm smiles and radiant aspirations
Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina receives Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad (middle) and Iranian First Vice President Dr Hassan Habibi (left) upon their arrival in Dhaka. The leaders are in the city to attend the D-8 Summit starting today.

Star Photo by A K M Mohsin

Leaders to focus on economic programmes D-8 summit opens today

By Staff Correspondent

Bangladesh plays host to a two-day Summit of the D-8 countries beginning in Dhaka today.

Expansion of trade and taking up of concrete economic programmes will receive primary focus at the Summit of the Developing Eight (D-8) that has already identified 13 thrust areas of cooperation.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina will inaugurate the Summit at 3 pm at the newly built Sheraton Hotel Conference Centre. The opening session will be followed by a state banquet hosted by President Shahabuddin Ahmed at the Bangabhaban in the evening.

The Summit will be capped by the adoption of the Dhaka Declaration tomorrow, en-

shrinning the pledges and commitments of the participating nations.

It will be attended by Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad of Malaysia, Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif of Pakistan and Turkish President Suleyman Demirel.

President Demirel, Prime Minister Mahathir and Iran's First Vice President Dr Hassan Habibi arrived yesterday and were received at the Zia International Airport by Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina. Smartly turned out contingents drawn from the three services presented separate guard of honour to each of the distinguished leaders after they alighted from their aircraft.

Egyptian President Hosni

Mubarak, Iranian President Khatami and Indonesian President BJ Habibie would be unable to attend the Summit due to 'domestic compulsions.'

Nigeria, which is busy with general elections is expected to be represented by a senior official.

BTV to telecast

Bangladesh Television (BTV) will telecast live the inaugural and concluding sessions of the two-day D-8 Summit beginning today, reports APB.

The programmes will be telecast directly from the Dhaka Sheraton Hotel, the venue of the summit, at 3 pm today and 6 pm tomorrow, a PID handout said yesterday.

The D-8 was launched on

June 7, 1997 in Istanbul, comprising the eight largest Muslim countries in terms of population. These are: Bangladesh, Egypt is being represented by its Foreign Minister Amre Mousa, Indonesia by its Coordinating Minister for People's Welfare and Poverty Eradication Haryono Suyono and Iran by its First Vice President Dr Hassan Habibi.

Pakistani Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif is due to arrive this morning.

Tomorrow, the leaders attending the Summit would go for a three-hour river cruise on the Meghna aboard the refurbished luxury vessel M V Ma-

sud.

The D-8 was launched on

Saturday to hold elections on the Upazila Parishads in May, they mainly discussed the possible opposition stance on the polls, sources said.

It was the third round in a

BNP, JP discuss possible stance on UZ polls

By Nazmul Ashraf and Rezaul Karim

Desperate to give teeth to the current anti-government agitation, Opposition leader Khaleda Zia passed another hectic day yesterday at her Minto Road of official residence where she had exclusive talks with her senior colleagues in the BNP and a top leader of the Jatiya Party.

In the wake of the Prime Minister's announcement on Saturday to hold elections on the Upazila Parishads in May, they mainly discussed the possible opposition stance on the polls, sources said.

Several BNP leaders, who met Khaleda Zia yesterday, said that she was determined not to

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series of discussions the Opposition leader had been holding since her party's failed attempt to resist the crucial municipal elections.

BNP and its allies boycotted the February 23-25 municipal polls and called hartals on the election dates and the key dates leading to the polling. But the shutdown failed to stop holding of the polls, held by and large peacefully with a 60 per cent turnout of voters.

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Municipal polls 64 tribunals set up to settle disputes

Sixty-four election tribunals have been constituted to settle disputes in the recently held pourashava elections in the country, reports BSS.

Sixty-one sub-judges have been appointed for 61 tribunals to settle disputes in their respective districts while the district magistrates in Rangamati, Khagrachhari and Bandarban districts will act as judges of the tribunals of the three hill districts, an EC press release said yesterday.

The Election Commission has urged all concerned to lodge complaints with the tribunals within 30 days of the publication of the gazette notification of the elected representatives as per municipal elections rule. The candidates personally or any of his authorised persons can register the complaints with the election tribunal, it added.

Cross-examination of Shazneen's father continues

By Staff Correspondent Latifur Rahman, father of murdered teenager Shazneen, was cross-examined by Mohammad Ali, lawyer of supervisor Badal, in the Shazneen murder case, for the fifth day in the Metropolitan Sessions Judge Court yesterday for about two hours starting from 11 am.

All the six accused were produced before the court yesterday. Shazneen Tasnim Rahman, 15, youngest daughter of Latifur Rahman, was raped and murdered at their Gulshan residence on April 23 last year. Two cases — one relating to the murder and another under the Women and Children Protection Act 1995 — were filed with Gulshan thana after the brutal killing.

In the charge sheet of both the cases police accused seven persons — domestic help Shahid, contractor Hasan, supervisor Badal, carpenter Shani Ram, guard Humayun Kabir and two maids named Parveen and Mina. Of them, guard Humayun Kabir died of a cardiac arrest on January 11.

Following is a brief account of the answers given by Latifur Rahman See Page 14

Detention of Aziz Bhai illegal: HC

By SC Correspondent

The High Court yesterday

declared the detention of Aziz Mohammad Bhai illegal and without lawful authority.

The Division Bench of the HC comprising Justice K M Hasan and Justice M A Quddus after hearing the writ petition filed by his wife Naurin Aziz gave the verdict.

Earlier on January 31, the court issued rule upon the government to show cause within two weeks as to why the detention order against him should not be declared illegal and without lawful authority.

Aziz Bhai was arrested on January 6 under Section 54 of the Code of Criminal Procedure.

Subsequently, under the Special Powers Act, 1974, his detention order was issued on January 7.

Later he was shown arrested

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Malaysian FM tells The Daily Star Trade and investment to be mainstay of the D-8

By M Anwarul Haq

The Malaysian Foreign Minister has said the D-8 will soon establish itself as a 'practical, operational and pragmatic' organisation.

Although it has emerged as an off-shoot of the OIC, the D-8 is a more forward looking organisation and a meaningful group.

"Developing countries want to have something tangible and not rhetorical. It is our expectation that the D-8 would be able to take up projects which are activity oriented and achievable," Datuk Seri Syed Hamid Syed Jaafar Albar told The Daily Star in an interview on Saturday.

When it was launched, there was considerable speculation even among developing countries that it would be a "Talk Shop" but holding of the second summit within a year and half and the Dhaka Declaration would serve as a major milestone in the march forward of this "emerging bloc," he said.

"Trade and Investment would be the mainstay of the D-8. We are going to emphasise trade facilitation measures as a first step towards increasing economic and commercial cooperation."

"Our experience in ASEAN and other regional cooperation forums has shown that trade facilitation measures have contributed towards enhancing trade and investment flow."

Malaysia, he said, is going to organise seminars and work-



Foreign Secy Mustafizur Rahman dead

By Staff Correspondent

Foreign Secretary Mustafizur Rahman died at a Singapore hospital yesterday. He was 57.

Family sources said that he was suffering from lung cancer and underwent a minor surgery at Gleneagle Hospital there. He died at 6:45 pm BST.

He had gone to Singapore last month for treatment.

Mustafizur Rahman was known in diplomatic circles as an astute diplomat, soft-spoken, firm, honest and fair.

He had joined the then Pakistan Foreign Service in 1964 after a short stint in the Air Force.

Rahman defected in favour of Bangladesh during the War of Liberation while he was posted in Kathmandu. He served the country in various capacities and was high commissioner to Malaysia and ambassador to Myanmar, Russia and China.

He was in Beijing as envoy for three and half years before he was appointed foreign secretary.

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Khulna's 'top terrorist' Shanu arrested

From Staff Correspondent

KHULNA, Feb 28: Golam Moulai Shanu, 32, a top terrorist of the city, was arrested from Haji Meher Ali Road this morning.

His name was on the top of the list of 40 alleged terrorists and professional killers supplied to the Khulna Metropolitan Police (KMP) recently by the ruling party.

The alleged terrorist told po-

Dhaka's reaction to HR Report

Bangladesh is of the view that despite several shortcomings, the US government's ob-

session contained in "Human Rights Report on Bangladesh for the year 1998" has some positive elements.

When contacted about the reaction of the government to the report, acting Foreign Secretary Mohiuddin Ahmed told BSS yesterday that "the report for 1998 has some positive elements. It is better than the 1997

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family sources said that he was suffering from lung cancer and underwent a minor surgery at Gleneagle Hospital there. He died at 6:45 pm BST.

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Further, thousands of employers in the developed countries including those in the above continents can employ poor workers from other countries. Under the present Free Market Economic Order movement of all commodities and all factors of production have been made free. Labour is a commodity and also a factor of production. But the entry of labour from other countries to the developed countries are restricted by rules. To free the mankind from the present level of hunger, poverty and deprivation, movement of labour across the world should be unrestricted.

Visamuktabiswa Andolon submitted a memorandum on 24th October, 1998 to the United Nations General Secretary to adopt a Resolution in the General Assembly to give the Employers of all countries the right to employ any worker from any country of their choice.

We appeal to the leaders of D-8 Dhaka Summit to take steps to make movement of labour free across the world in line with the said Memorandum.

We welcome you to Bangladesh and wish the summit a success.

Engr. S. M. Shaheedullah
Convener-Committee of Advisors
Visamuktabiswa Andolon