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## Cabinet okays agri policy, discusses power crisis

By Staff Correspondent

The Cabinet yesterday approved the National Agriculture Policy, aimed at boosting food production and ensuring food for all in the near future.

The approval was given at the weekly Cabinet meeting held with Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina in the chair. The draft of the policy was placed before the Cabinet in November last year.

The main objective of the newly formulated National Agriculture Policy is to make the nation self-reliant in food through boosting production of all crops including granular foods," said an official announcement in the afternoon.

Later talking to The Daily Star on the policy, a Cabinet member said it stressed the need for optimum utilisation of the country's limited cultivable lands.

"Besides, it has proposed a lot of mechanism to strengthen the private sector in agriculture. At the same time, it has underlined the need for constant monitoring by the state so

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## DESA to produce power side by side with PDB

In view of the current short-fall of electricity, the Dhaka Electric Supply Authority (DESA) would start producing power side by side with the Power Development Board (PDB).

Minister of State for Power, Energy and Mineral resources Prof Rafiqul Islam told BSS yesterday that preliminary work in this regard has already started. He hoped that the additional power to be generated by DESA would be able to meet the requirement of the Dhaka city especially during the peak hour.

A senior official of the ministry said that Taka 700 crore would be required for the generation of power by DESA through establishing several stations in Hasnabad, Dhanmandi and Tongi. Each of these

See Page 12 Col 4

## BIT, Rajshahi closed sine die

From Our Correspondent

RAJSHAHI, Apr 19: The Bangladesh Institute of Technology (BIT), Rajshahi was closed sine die today.

The students were asked to vacate their residential halls by 11 am today.

The BIT was closed following yesterday's clash between Awami League backed Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) and BNP backed Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD). At least 25 people were injured in the clash.

The academic council of BIT, Rajshahi at an emergency meeting this morning reviewed the situation and closed the institution.

Police earlier arrested two JCD leaders Nobel and Suman. They were produced before the court today and sent to jail as the court cancelled the bail prayer.

JCD protested the arrest of its two leaders.

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'No alternative to potent running of RMG backward linkage industries'

Ailing Asian economies on way to recovery: ADB DSE, CSE price quotations Pages 6, 7 & 8

### Prayer Timings

April 20		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	4-30	4-35
Zohr	12-45	1-20
Asr	4-45	4-55
Maghrib	6-25	6-30
Esha	7-30	7-35

Source: Islamic Foundation

# BSF firing kills 6 Bangladeshis

KUSHTIA, Apr 19: At least six people including a member of the BDR were killed and a number of others injured when the Indian Border Security Force (BSF) personnel opened fire on Bangladeshi civilians and BDR personnel 'without provocation' at Jamalpur under Daulatpur Thana here today, reports BSS.

BDR and police sources said the BSF personnel opened fire from Jolongi camp across the border killing one Bangladeshi civilian in front of Jamalpur Border Observation Post (BOP) at about 11-30 am. The BSF also took away the body of the victim, creating a tense situation in the area.

A large number of people gathered at the scene to protest against the killing. The BSF again opened fire on the unarmed villagers. One BDR Naik Laktiullah, 40, was killed and several villagers and a BDR jawan were injured critically in the attack.

An official of BDR sector headquarters told BSS that following the trouble, over 200 BDR troops from Kushtia and Chuadanga were sent to the place of occurrence to bring the situation under control.

At about 2 pm, the Indian border guards launched mortar attacks on the Bangladeshi civilians and BDR. The BDR responded to the attacks, the sources said.

The hour-long Indian attack left five civilians of Jamalpur village killed and a number of villagers and members of the Bangladesh border guards including Battalion Commander of Mirpur Major Mahmud injured.

The dead were identified as Abu Bakar, 30, Amir Hossain, 30, Arju, 40, Abdul Hannan, 27, and Feli, 13.

The BDR personnel could not recover the body of the villagers till 10-45 pm. The injured are being treated at Daulatpur Thana Health

Complex. Of them, 8 critically injured persons were shifted to Kushtia General Hospital where one BDR jawan was operated upon.

The BDR official said the sector commander of Kushtia was on the spot. The sporadic firing from across the border continued till late in the evening, the official said quoting the sector commander.

UNB quoting witnesses said: A BSF patrol party intruded into Jamalpur village in Bangladesh territory at 11 am and caught hold of a farmer for reasons unknown to them. The BSF troops tried to drag him across the border. When resisted, they shot him dead on the spot.

Hearing the gunfire, BDR men from the nearby Jamalpur border outpost rushed to the spot. Immediately, the BSF personnel fired upon BDR men. The BDR retaliated and the exchange of fire continued till 1- See Page 12 Col 8



Reserved for accident victims, Ward 30 at Dhaka Medical College Hospital is deposited with new casualties everyday. But it is neither adequately equipped nor suitably staffed to address the flood of hapless humanity. The ward serves as a poignant reminder of the pathetic state of our healthcare system. — Star photo

## Beheaded body found near GRP thana

Star Report

A decomposed and beheaded body of an unidentified man in his thirties was recovered from the rooftop of a 'platform tunnel' adjacent to the GRP thana at Kamalpur railway station in the city yesterday.

Witnesses said the body was found by GRP at around 6 pm following information from some floating children at the station.

The man was wearing a grey shirt, black trousers and a wrist watch. Two sharp *chapatis* were found beside the body. His severed head was lying beside the body.

Identity of the man could not be known till the filing of this report at about midnight. No paper or document was found with the body.

According to GRP, the beheaded man's face was also deformed. A pair of shoes was found near the head.

GRP OC Mohammad Haider told The Daily Star last night that they came to know about the matter from some *tokais*. The roof has barbed wire fencing near the railway overbridge. But at a particular place, one can climb it from the overbridge.

The Daily Star correspondents visiting the spot at

around 10.30 pm found several floating people sleeping on the overbridge and elsewhere in the station.

The Railway Hospital man who removed the body from the roof at around 7pm told these correspondents that the man might have been killed at least two days back.

GRP recovered the body after receiving a memo from Platform Station Manager (PSM) Abul Ashraf. He said he came to know about the body from some people at around 6 pm and later issued a memo to the GRP and Railway Hospital to take necessary steps.

At 11.30 pm, the body was seen lying on a tricycle van at the station. Police said it would be sent to the DMCH for autopsy.

The PSM said the area from where the body was recovered was 'out of the surveillance of the station authorities'.

Asked whether outsiders are permitted to go to platform tunnel rooftop, the PSM said, "Though this is a restricted area, people usually climb the roof of the platform tunnel from the overbridge as there is no surveillance".

DIC of GRP Shahidur Rahman said... See Page 12 Col 5

## 13 top police officials transferred

By Staff Correspondent

Thirteen high police officials were transferred from their positions in different parts of the country yesterday, sources said.

Deputy Commissioner of DMP Detective Branch Altaf Hossain Mollah was transferred and posted as Assistant Inspector General of police at the police headquarters.

Abdul Hannan Khan SP, Special Branch, was transferred to Dhaka Metropolitan Police.

SP of Moulavibazar Majharul Islam was transferred to Special Branch, Dhaka. SP of Gopalganj Abu Musa was transferred as SP of Brahmanbaria and SP of Brahmanbaria Nabo Kumar was transferred to Chittagong Metropolitan Police.

Jasimuddin, SP of Rajshahi Metropolitan Police, was appointed SP of Gopalganj. SP of Chandpur Shahidul Huq was made SP of Maulvibazar. SP of Comilla Lutfor Rahman made SP of Cox's Bazar. SP of Cox's Bazar Amiruddin Shah made SP of Chandpur and SP of Khagrachhari Jahangir Hossain was made SP of Meherpur. SP of Meherpur Moniruzzaman was transferred as SP of... See Page 12 Col 8

## Misuse of power by police rampant: HC Frame code of conduct for law enforcers immediately

By SC Correspondent

The High Court in a judgement yesterday said the authorities concerned should take appropriate steps immediately to frame a code of conduct for law enforcing agencies.

The HC also observed that there has been rampant misuse of power by police in recent years which caused gross violation of fundamental rights of citizens as a result of which peoples' confidence in police has decreased to a greater extent.

A division Bench of the HC comprising Justices Md Fazlul Karim and Justice Md Ali Asgar made the observations in the judgement on a writ petition filed by Bangladesh Legal Aid and Services Trust (BLAST) challenging the detention of one Javed, aged about 10, of Sutrapur area in the city.

Javed was detained by Sutrapur police on December 22 last year under the Special Powers Act. He was shown 19 years old by the Sutrapur police, which was reported in a Bangla daily.

The HC had issued a *rule nisi*

on January 3 and directed Sub-Inspector Alauddin of Sutrapur thana who took the initiative to detain Javed, to show cause why appropriate legal action shall not be taken against him.

Meanwhile, on intervention of the then Home Minister, Javed was released and the detention order was revoked.

After continuous hearing of the rule for three days, the court delivered the judgement yesterday.

However, the court took a lenient view in disposing the matter as the detainee had already been released and did not give any specific directive regarding SI Alauddin.

But the HC held that the authorities should take immediate steps to establish a trustworthy, dignified and strong disciplined police force enjoying peoples' confidence.

In recent times, misuse of power by police has gone so far that even foreigners are afraid of going to any police station without any escort, the court observed.

The court, citing a news item

published in The Daily Star on April 4, 1999, further observed "The police has emerged as a law breaking agency inspite of being a law enforcing agency."

The role of police force has come to question as regards establishment of a civil society, the HC observed.

The court also observed that there has been rampant abuse of detention laws and powers which is evident from Javed's case. SI Alauddin took the initiative to detain him under the Special Powers Act although a specific case was pending against him.

Such rampant misuse of power by police cannot be overlooked by the constitutional court, it said.

The court gave directives to send copies of the judgement to the Home Secretary and the IG of police.

Advocate M K Rahman with Advocate Idrisur Rahman moved for the petitioners, while DAG Obaidur Rahman Mustafa appeared for the government and Advocate Khalekuzzaman represented SI Alauddin.

## Suo moto rule on CMM for granting bail

CHITTAGONG, Apr 19: In a rare move, the Metropolitan Sessions Judge's Court today asked the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate to show cause why he had granted bail to an accused in an arm case "without any lawful authority", reports UNB.

First Additional Metropolitan Sessions Judge M Golam Murtaza Majumder issued the *suo moto* on CMM AKM Monirul Islam. The rule is returnable on April 28.

Court sources said police arrested five people along with firearms on September 2, 1998, from the city and filed cases against them under the Arms Act.

Of them, Abul Kalam Azad was refused bail by the District Judge's Court soon after the arrest.

Later, Azad filed a bail petition with the CMM court and upon hearing the case, CMM granted bail to Azad on January 24.

Agitated students lock up office of Shahjalal University

From Staff Correspondent

SYLHET, Apr 19: Administrative activities at the Shahjalal University of Science and Technology has been suspended as the All Party Students Unity locked up the Registrar Building this morning for an indefinite period.

The students had been pressing for a six-point demand including withdrawal of the recently raised tuition fees, extension of date for admission into the first year Honours class, and resolving the residential and transportation problems.

The agitating students also brought out a procession on the campus and later held a rally in the SUCSU premises. It was addressed by vice-President of the Shahjalal University Central Students Union Kamrul Ahmed Kaberi, General Secretary Abdullah Al-Mamun, VP of the Shahpuran Hall Union, Jainal Abedin, Jahedur Rahman Choudhury, Saadequr Rahman, and Joydip Das Chappu. The unity represents BCI, JCD, Chhatra Union, Chhatra Shibir and Jatiya Chhatra Dal.

The University authorities started a meeting with the student leaders in the afternoon. The meeting was going on till filing this report.

Dr Kamal welcomes President's call for nat'l unity

President of Gono Forum Dr Kamal Hossain has welcomed President Shahabuddin Ahmed's appeal for national unity he made on the occasion of Mubtuhagar Day.

Dr Kamal, in a written statement issued on April 18, said in a nation where people's anger and sense of frustration are increasing each day, the President's appeal to the nation for unity and for a fundamental change in the current confrontational mode of politics is timely.

He has appealed for a united effort to resolve national problems, rising above party interests. He has called for a national consensus by all political parties on major national issues.

The statement said that despite continuing confrontation by the parties, we, the entire people of the country, are united in our shared sense of mounting concern by the terror created by

See Page 12 Col 4

## Paris meeting reviews Bangladesh economy Kibria expects \$2.04b, sees 6.4pc growth next fiscal

Star Report

The two-day meeting of aid-giving countries and international organisations, grouped as Bangladesh Development Forum, began in Paris yesterday with the participants taking a hard look at the country's economic progress.

Finance Minister S A M S Kibria, leading the government team to the annual meeting, said he was expecting a 6.4 per cent growth in 1999-2000 after a much slower progress this fiscal because of unprecedented floods last year.

Representatives of 26 Aid Group members - 14 nations and 12 international organisations - began closed-door meetings that are to wind up today with a slew of decisions on Dhaka's requests for fresh

funds for development projects. Kibria said he would expect foreign finance in the form of grants and loans to be at the level of US\$ 2040 million. He argued the money was needed to fund the development plans for the next fiscal year.

The minister expected that the donors would commit US\$ 80 million in food aid, US\$ 140 million in commodity aid and US\$ 1820 million in project aid.

According to AFP in Paris, World Bank officials, hosts of the meeting, said there "will be no pledging session" of overall aid but that details were expected on major projects requiring foreign aid.

The finance minister made a comprehensive presentation on

Bangladesh's economy and its needs before the donor club in the inaugural session of the two-day meeting of Bangladesh Development Forum, popularly known as Paris Aid Consortium.

"Commitment and disbursement for fiscal year 2000 are estimated at US\$ 2040 and US\$ 1645 million respectively. New commitments include US\$ 80 million in food aid and US\$ 140 million in commodity aid and 1820 in project aid," said Kibria setting forth the country's development agenda for the coming fiscal year.

He said that the estimate of prospective commitments was slightly lower than previous year because of the lower esti- See Page 12 Col 1

## Narayanganj JP leader stabbed to death

From Our Correspondent

NARAYANGANJ, Apr 19: A local leader of Jatiya Party was stabbed to death by armed miscreants at Bholalibazar in Khashipur village under Fatullah thana today.

The victim, Abdul Halim, 38, was Secretary of JP's Khashipur Union Committee. He was the son of Noor Box Matbar.

According to police, Abdul Halim was called by his neighbour Ali Hossain to attend a *shalis* (a meeting of village leaders to settle a dispute) in the morning. At about 9:45 am, a group of youths who attend the *shalis* attacked Halim with sharp weapons.

Halim died on the spot. The youths left the spot leaving the body on a nearby road.

Police, quoting local people, said Halim was killed in a sequel to a previous enmity with the group.

See Page 12 Col 7

## Kafco Board meets today as IFC tries to work out bailout formula

By Toufique Imrose Khalidi

The board of directors of Kafco is meeting today as the International Finance Corporation (IFC) tries to draw up a financial restructuring plan for the cash-strapped company and takes a critical look at its problem-ridden plant in Chittagong.

On the agenda are a long-standing row with the general contractor, a public interest litigation which has led to a court order suspending acceptance of the plant, a second financial restructuring, the company's off-take agreements with two foreign companies, operation, production and marketing.

But the commercial settlement proposed by the general contractors (Chiyoda and Marubeni of Japan) will be at

the heart of discussions. Plant acceptance is part of the settlement which aims to give immunity to the defaulting contractors from all its obligations to Kafco for an insignificant compensation package.

Another issue that will be importance is the extension of Chiyoda's US\$ 25 million performance bond.

The general contractors are shareholders of the company and have representation on the board. The two Japanese companies along with Tokyo's Overseas Economic Cooperation Fund (OECF) are partners in Kafco Japan Investment which has a 31.29 per cent stake in the joint venture.

The general contractors who See Page 12 Col 7

## Dhanmondi playground for whom?

By Morshed Ali Khan



Playing with playing field An overview of the Dhanmondi Club playground where 465 stalls have been set up for a BSCIC fair. —Star photo

While the entire city is almost devoid of playgrounds, the authorities of Dhanmondi Club are renting out the field at Road-8 almost throughout the year for *meenabazar*, trade show, cattle market and circus, depriving hundreds of sports enthusiasts.

At present, the field is being used by the BSCIC (Bangladesh Small and Cottage Industries Corporation) for a 465-stall fair. The club rented the field to BSCIC for Tk 1.5 lakh without even bothering to inform the Dhaka City Corporation (DCC), the caretaker of the field.

The owner of the field, Public Works Department (PWD), had entrusted the DCC to look after the field. The Dhanmondi Club is also on one side of the 'simple ground' that it has been using for sometime now for its sports activities', a PWD source said.

Secretary of Dhanmondi Club Sadekur Rahman Babla talking to this correspondent claimed that the DCC authorised the club to rent out the field for any such purpose and See Page 12 Col 3

## 'Beximco directors ready to repay bank loans under any conditions'

By Staff Correspondent

Lawyers for four Beximco directors yesterday told High Court judges that their clients were ready to repay unpaid loans due to AB Bank and IFIC Bank under any conditions.

But, while arguing in the court, they said the notices served by the AB Bank were the results of "a board room battle".

The Beximco directors had filed a writ petition challenging the legality of AB Bank notices.

After almost 14 months, hearing on the petition began at the court of a division bench comprising of Justice Kazi Ebadul Huq and M Mozammel Hossain.

they would lose their seats on the board if they did not clear the debts.

Lawyer KZ Alam appearing for Sohail Rahman and Salman F Rahman, also IFIC directors, said that the notices of the AB Bank were illegal which were served following direction from the Bangladesh Bank.

He said that the directors had asked for rescheduling and were ready to repay under any conditions. "We want similar rescheduling terms and conditions which were allowed to the Islam Group."

The lawyer also said that there were other reasons behind the notice. "The notices were aimed at removing my clients by the other board members. It's a boardroom battle. Just give me time and I will repay the money under any condition," he said.

Barrister Nazmul Huda appeared for the directors. See Page 12 Col 4