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'Our Earth, Our Future'

World Environment Day was observed in the country as elsewhere across the globe yesterday with a renewed pledge to protect the environment, reports UNB.

'Our Earth - Our Future - Just Save It' was the theme of the day.

The Day is being observed on June 5 every year as per the UN General Assembly decision following a conference on human environment at Swedish capital Stockholm in 1972 to make the people aware of the environmental pollution, environment preservation and its management.

President Shahabuddin Ahmed and Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina gave separate messages on the occasion calling for concerted efforts to prevent environmental degradation and maintain ecological balance.

At the national level, the Environment and Forest Ministry and Department of Environment chalked out an elaborate plan.



Time to make a fresh pledge
A World Environment Day parade in Dhaka yesterday. —Star photo by Amran Hossain

No space for vehicles

Real estate developers give a fig to law

By Morshed Ali Khan

Rajuk's call to restore in-house parking has been ignored by all multi-storied building owners.

Rajuk said, they have recently served notices to all multi-storied building owners urging them to have parking facilities in their structures, as required by law within June 25.

Responding to an allegation that Rajuk was indiscriminately approving plans for multi-storied buildings and shopping malls without assuring parking facilities, a Rajuk official said the parking provision existed in all the plans but the owners converted that space into offices or shops.

Rajuk is also alleged to be ignoring zoning provisions of the city and allowing shopping centres at busy intersections without the slightest regard for traffic.

Hundreds of such buildings are creating traffic jams all over the city. There are hundreds more now under construction.

Rajuk chairman, M Azizul Haque told The Daily Star, his office would start a drive for implementing the regulation, soon. "We will move door-to-door and ensure that owners abide by the law. If necessary we will resort to legal action against offenders," Haque warned.

The chairman said it was necessary for the owners of these buildings to realise how much problem they were creating by not having parking facilities inside their premises.

Rajuk sources said they have flagged quite a few buildings in the city, which has increasingly become a nuisance. Another official added, almost all these buildings have converted their parking lot into offices or shops.

The glaring example is the Pir Yemeni market located at one of the busiest junctions of the city near the GPO. This person has converted the parking facility into shops that sell mosquito nets," informed a Rajuk official.

In another instance at Dhanmondi road-1 BEXIMCO bought a land which they claim, is outside the residential area. Officials differed: They are using the road, electricity and water of Dhanmondi residential area. The 14-storied commercial building called Bell Tower has only ten parking spaces in the underground.

The building now uses road-1 as its parking lot for hundreds of visitors and its own fleet of cars day and night. Residents said, at times the area gets so crowded with cars that it becomes a traffic nightmare.

"It seems they have bought up the entire area to run their business," said a resident who sent several complaints to Rajuk and police but they have gone unanswered.

Rajuk sources said, they were well aware of the problem but could not do anything against the offenders. "If the Prime Minister takes steps to solve the problem, only then can we move. Otherwise, we are afraid we will lose our jobs. If we take action," a Rajuk official said requesting anonymity.

Bangabandhu hospital tense

By Staff Correspondent

A showdown is likely at the Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University Hospital (BSMMUH) today with the Sarkari Karmachari Shramanay Parishad calling a 24-hour strike and the authorities warning of "legal action".

"Any one found spilling the peaceful atmosphere at the hospital will face legal action," the authorities have said in a notice.

The authorities have already

GMG plans to go regional

By Mustak Hossain

Private sector carrier GMG Airlines, which carries about 45 per cent of passengers on domestic routes, plans to expand its services to neighbouring countries, company sources said.

"Bangladesh has a strategic location in South Asia and we are trying to utilise this potential," Managing Director Shahab Sattar said.

10 killed in N'ganj bus collision

At least ten people were killed and 35 others injured, some of them critically, in a road accident at Bhoita on Dhaka-Narsingdi road this afternoon, police sources said, reports BSS.

Police and eyewitnesses said the accident occurred at about 2-15 pm when a Dhaka-bound minibus collided with a Sylhet-bound passenger bus, killing one person on the spot and injuring 35 others.

Local people rescued the injured passengers. They were immediately rushed to Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) where nine of them succumbed to their injuries. Four of the dead were identified as Ayub Hossain, 40, Nazrul Islam, 22, Mosharraf Hossain, 18, and Haider Ali, 19.

The condition of some passengers were stated to be critical, hospital sources said.

All the bodies were kept at the morgue of DMCH for autopsy.

Police seized both the buses and lodged a case with Rugganj thana in this connection.

BPC-Esso venture being revived

Star Report

The government is reviving a joint venture LPG project between Bangladesh Petroleum Corporation (BPC) and oil giant Esso, one that was considered "dead" because of some serious flaws in the proposal, sources said.

An inter-ministerial meeting will review the project today.

The project was proposed in January 1997 but was shelved in early 1998. It had proposed setting up of a one lakh tonne capacity LPG bottling plant with an import terminal and marketing of LPG in Bangladesh through the BPC.

Esso, which is globally merging with oil giant Mobil, was earlier proposed to be black listed by the BPC for violating rules in a tender floated to import 5.2 lakh tonnes of petroleum products for July-December this year.

BPC's subsidiary Jamuna Oil, which is involved in marketing petroleum products, is already a partner of Mobil in another LPG joint venture project.

Sources said that the LPG joint venture project originally involved an investment of 22 million US dollars.

It was proposed that BPC, though a regulatory authority, would purchase a minimum of 20,000 tonnes of LPG from Esso annually and market those.

The government had then opined that BPC did not have any marketing network and that a joint venture partner could not be forced to purchase a certain quantity of LPG. The government had suggested that a distribution agreement could be signed with BPC's sister concern, LPL.

It was proposed that BPC would own 25 per cent share in the project. Mohammadi Petrotrade (a local private company) 15 per cent and Esso 60 per cent.

The government had said that the agreement would be signed between Esso and BPC on the basis of a 75 per cent - 25 per cent equity. If any third party has to be included, it should be done from Esso's share later on.

Following the government stand, Esso did not proceed further with the project. However, the project may be revived with one modification that BPC will not have to buy 20,000 tonnes of LPG as a mandatory provision.

The sources said it has now been proposed that a BPC land in Mongla will be used for the project.

This plot of land has been earmarked for setting up the second unit of the Mongla Oil Installation (MOI). It does not have any room for a LPG plant," noted a source.

Earlier last month, Esso was proposed to be blacklisted or fined one million dollars by BPC. Sources said that Esso was the lowest bidder in a tender to import 5.2 lakh tonnes of petroleum products.

But when the BPC Board was finalising the bid procedure on May 31, Esso sent a revised price raising it by Tk 23.64 crore.

Taken aback by such an unprecedented move from an oil giant, the BPC Board awarded the contract to the second lowest bidder, Shell Oil.

As per rule, BPC then suggested fining Esso one million dollars or blacklisting it for two years. The suggestion has been forwarded to the Energy Ministry.

Faysal Bank
A way of life
Shoring in Success

A view from the Gully

From Page 1

men can deliver the Cup to India.

The Australians surprised the West Indies in their last group match. McGrath was the wrecker in chief. They were also in contention and a team of Australia's standing, a pre-tournament favourite can never be taken lightly by any opponent however powerful or confident they felt they are. Like India, Australia were also putting their act together after the initial setback.

Experts were divided on the issue of Azhar's decision of putting the Australians in to bat on the traditionally hard and bouncy wicket of The Oval. Australia have a strong batting line-up and their middle order with Michael Bevan coming in at number 6 is particularly capable of taking apart any attack. So, against a side that had a penetrating attack it was suicidal to have invited them to bat, specially when India won their last three matches batting first and with the knowledge that they were bad chasers. A total beyond 250 on these English wickets have always been difficult to overhaul for any team unless something extraordinary happened. Australia always looked like a side that was capable of scoring these runs.

The Indian seam attack has hardly been as effective as the Australians' and the fifth bowler's slot has always been filled in with part-timers like Ganguly and Robin Singh. On this particular day the opening attack came for a bit of stick

and it was left to Ganguly to provide a breakthrough but by that time the Aussies were in a happy position. All the top seven bats men scored freely and the Indian spinners were shown no respect by the Aussies led by Mark Waugh. That was a pointer too, because Australia had hardly lost a game in which Mark Waugh scored runs and this one too proved no exception. The absence of genuine fifth bowler was once again felt as Ganguly, Singh and Tendulkar conceded 78 valuable runs in their 13 overs.

The much heralded battle between Tendulkar and Shane Warne did not see the light of the day as McGrath brought one up just from short of length that caught the maestro in two minds. It was a gem of a delivery to which any bats man of Tendulkar's class would have succumbed. A similar delivery sent Dravid to the dressing room and when Fleming fooled Ganguly, all the centurians retired to the dressing room with only a dozen runs on board. When Azhar was struck by an awkward bounce India's pitcher of owe was full to the brim.

A sporting Jadeja and heavy weight Robin Singh launched a crusade against Aussie attack hammering Warne for 21 runs in one over but by then the Australians were safely on a boat for the shore. Jadeja's ton, achieved in carefree manner, went in vain.

The Indians must win against New Zealand and Pakistan very convincingly if they want to keep their chances alive, even then the calculators will come into play.

Murder in Ctg Protestors on fire

CHITTAGONG, June 5: Angry protesters set afire the house of the principal accused in Commissioner Liakat Ali Khan Murder Case here today, reports UNB.

Witnesses said angry people from a rally held in front of Panchlaish Ward Commissioner office in protest against the murder stormed into the house of contractor Abdul Gani at Chaltatoli at about 7 pm and set it ablaze.

Gani remained absconding after the killing on June 2 of commissioner Liakat, who was also Awami League's city unit organising secretary.

Police and fire-fighters brought the flame under control at about 9 pm.

Meanwhile, police today arrested two more people from a Rangamati-bound passenger bus in the city's Panchlaish area in connection with the murder.

With the arrest of the two young men, Selim and Yunus, five people have so far been arrested for their alleged involvement in the killing.

A senior police official said they have got important information about the killing and two special teams are now staying outside the metropolis to arrest the killers.

Indo-Pak failure to fix a date

Mediamen told to leave battle zone

NEW DELHI, June 5: India and Pakistan today failed to agree on a date for peace talks and the Indian army ordered journalists to leave battle zone in disputed Kashmir where it was involved in a fierce combat with armed intruders from Pakistan, reports AP.

Pakistan's offer to send Foreign Minister Sartaj Aziz to New Delhi on June 7 "is not convenient," said Raminder Singh Jassal, an Indian foreign ministry spokesman in New Delhi.

But he said India would soon suggest alternative dates.

The delay may be an attempt by India to turn the ground situation in its favour and negotiate from a position of strength. But tension between nuclear armed India and Pakistan is expected to exacerbate in coming days.

In Pakistan, Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif's Cabinet flayed the Indian crackdown on the insurgents entrenched in the mountain peaks of disputed Kashmir border. Pakistan pledged "full moral, diplomatic and political support" to what it called the Kashmiris fighting for their right of self-determination from India.

The Indian army sealed entry for civilians into its mountainous battle zone, suggesting an escalation in fighting against the insurgents. Officials said journalists would no longer be able to travel freely on the northern Kargil highway where the fighting was taking place. The area is 700 kilometres (440 miles) north of New Delhi.

Until now, journalists carrying army-issued passes and a few civilian supply trucks were the only nonmilitary traffic allowed through checkpoints into the area.

"In the past 24 hours, the ground forces have been able to further close in to the positions occupied by the armed intruders," Brig Mohan Bhandari, the military spokesman, told reporters in New Delhi.

For the first time today, the air force took a break in its 10-day-old airstrikes as ground forces were locked in close combat with infiltrators on the Indian side of Kashmir since last month. "Airstrikes can't take place when the ground assault is imminent," said Group

ধন্যবাদ জ্ঞাপন

আসসালামু আলাইকুম

আমি কাজী আকরাম উদ্দিন আহমদ স্টাভার্ড ব্যাংক লিঃ-এর চেয়ারম্যান হিসাবে স্টাভার্ড ব্যাংক লিঃ এর গ্রাহকদের কাছে সশ্রদ্ধ চিন্তে আমার মোবারকবাদ জানাচ্ছি যে, আমরা গত ৩রা জুন '৯৯ইং তারিখে ব্যাংক উদ্বোধনের মাধ্যমে আমানতের ব্যাপারে আপনাদের কাছ থেকে যে সাড়া পেয়েছি তাতে আমি ও আমার পরিচালনা পরিষদ অভিজ্ঞত।

আমাদের সর্বমোট আমানত ৯২.২৮ কোটি (বিরানবই কোটি আটাইশ লক্ষ) টাকা মাত্র। আমাদের জানামতে বেসরকারী ব্যাংকের উদ্বোধনী দিনে এই পরিমাণ আমানত সর্বকালের সর্বোচ্চ।

আমরা আপনাদের কাছে স্বীকৃতি, আশা করব আগামী দিনগুলিতে একইভাবে আমাদেরকে সাহায্য ও সহযোগিতা করবেন, যাতে পরবর্তীতে আমরা যেন সত্যিকার অর্থে দেশের আর্থিক উন্নয়নে সহায়ক ভূমিকা পালন করতে পারি।

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