



Bangladesh Computer Operator Council (BCOC) brought out a colourful procession in the city yesterday on occasion of 'Computer Revolution Day '99'. — Star photo

Weather

Thundershowers likely

Light to moderate rain or thundershowers with temporary gusty wind is likely at most places over the country with moderately heavy to heavy rain at places over Chittagong, Barisal and Khulna divisions in the next 12 hours till 6 pm today, reports UNB.

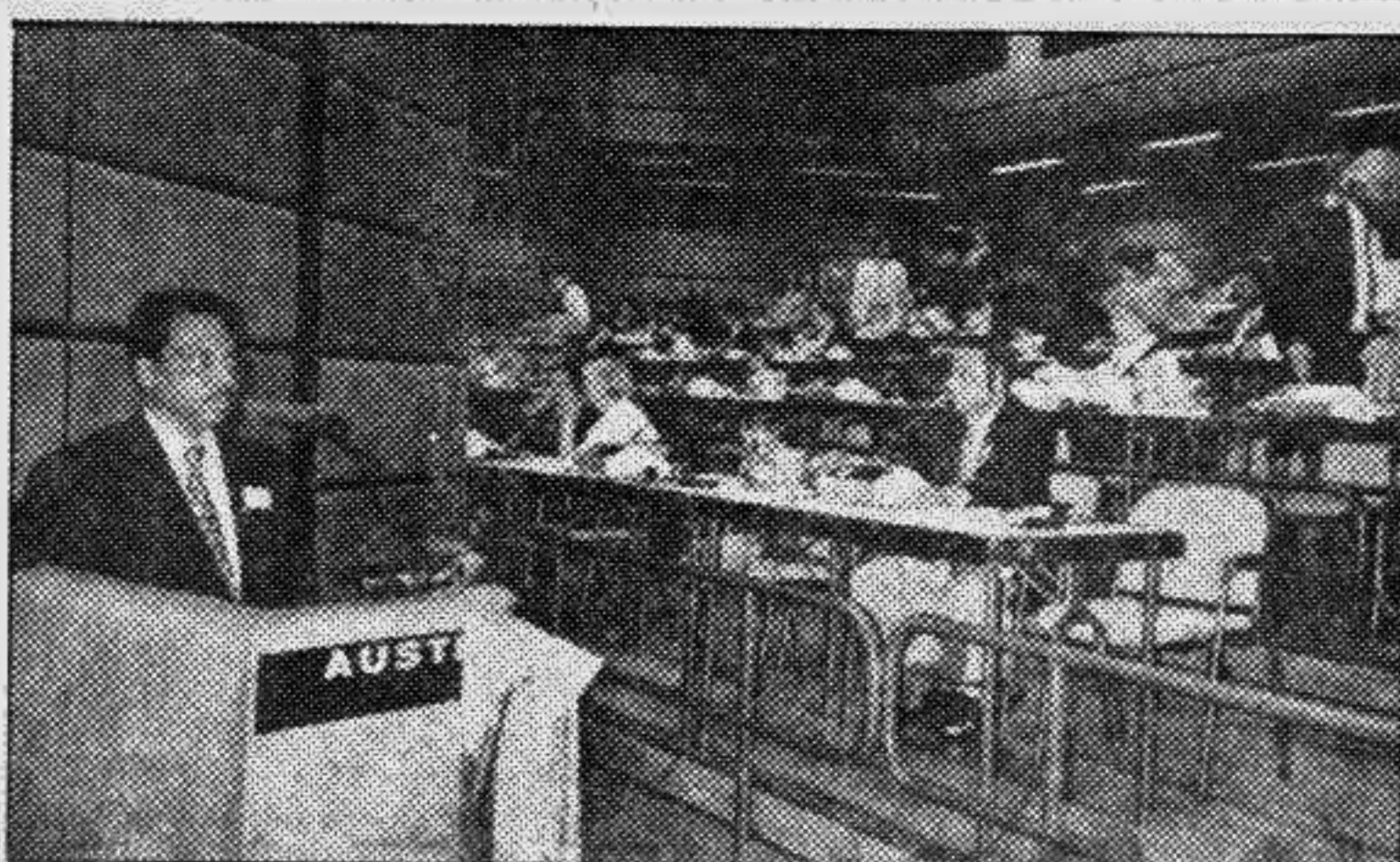
No appreciable change in day temperature is expected over the country during the period, Met Office said.

The country's highest temperature 34.0 degree Celsius was recorded yesterday at Sylhet and the lowest 23.9 degrees at Faridpur.

The sun sets today at 6.47 pm and rises tomorrow at 5.10 am.

Maximum and minimum temperature and humidity recorded in some major cities and towns yesterday were:

City/Town	Temperature in Celsius		Humidity in percentage
	Max	Min	
Dhaka	32.3	25.7	85
Chittagong	31.5	25.0	92
Rajshahi	29.5	26.0	86
Khulna	30.0	24.5	83
Barisal	32.4	25.2	78
Sylhet	34.0	26.2	80
Cox's Bazar	30.8	25.2	86



A conference on 'Multicultural European Unity with Diversity' was held at the Austria Centre in Vienna recently. Dr Zaidul Hassan Zahid, honorary secretary of the All Europe Bangabandhu Parishad who led the delegation from Britain, is seen addressing the conference.

HERE and THERE

Viqarunnisa Noon School & College

Viqarunnisa Noon School & College authority accorded a reception to the recipients of Primary Junior Scholarship examination for the current academic session in the school auditorium in the main building at Bailey Road in the city Thursday, says a press release.

Hamida Ali, Principal of the institution delivered the address of welcome. Dr H B M Sibal, MP, chairman of the governing body of the institution attended the function as the chief guest and distributed crest to the recipients of scholarship in talent pool and distributed books among the recipients in general grade.

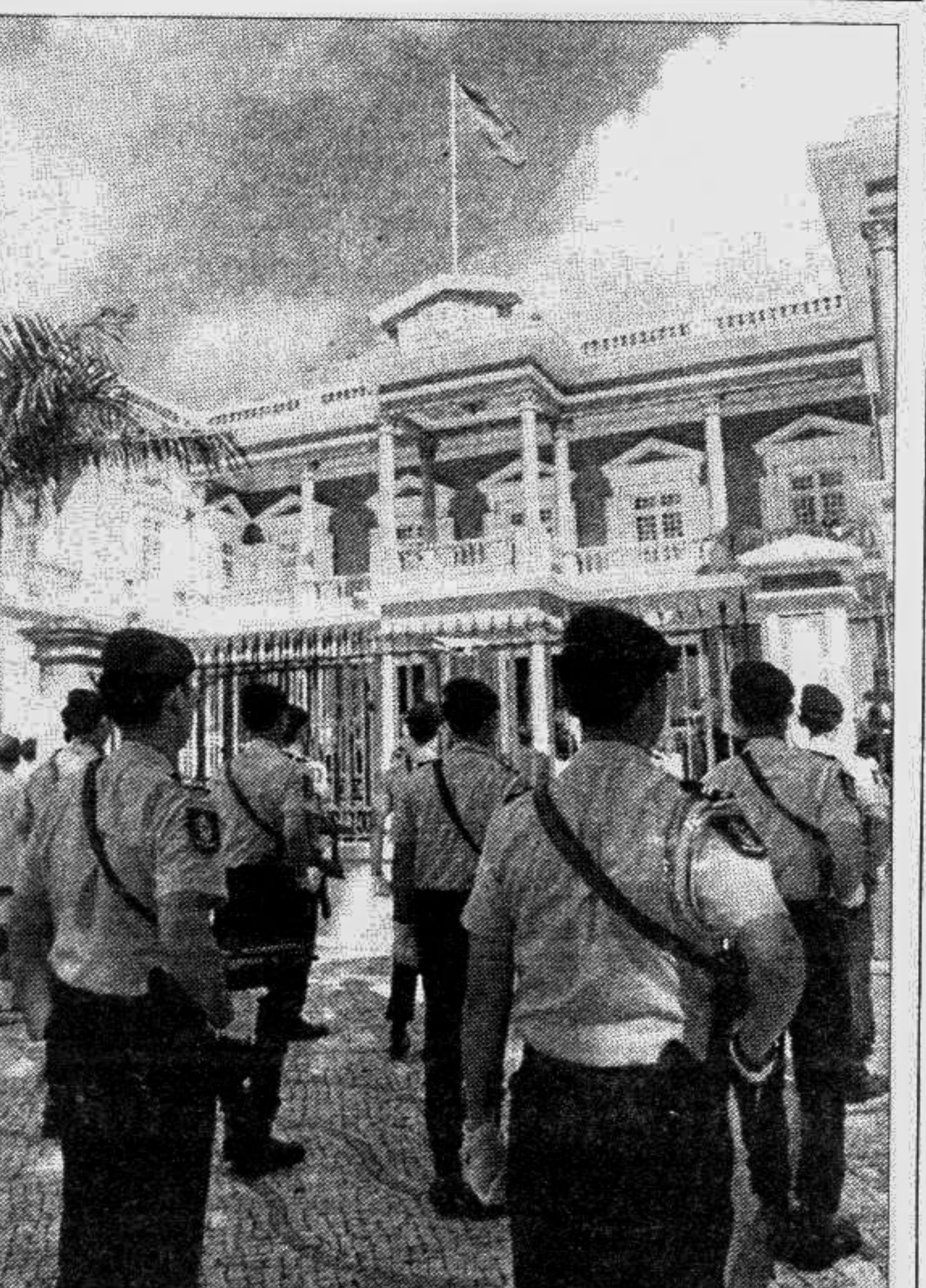
Earlier, the chief guest inaugurated the newly-built computer science class building

Aparajetha and Krishnachura Bhaban.

Sir Salimullah Muslim Orphanage

The election of the executive committee of the Sir Salimullah Muslim Orphanage was held yesterday, says a press release.

Begum Shamsunnahar Khawjah Ahsanullah was elected the president. Hakim Mohammad Yusuf Haroon, Kazi Awlad Hossain and Abdul Latif Pahlawan, Gowhar Ali Khan (G A Khan), Khawjah Zaki Ahsanullah, Shawkat Hussain, Ayesha Alam, Mahmudur Rahman Osmani, Serajul Islam, Mukarram Hussain Khan, Iftekar Uddin, Anisur Rahman, Sumaiya Sultana (Daisy) and S A B Siddique were the others elected to the committee.



Macau police stands at attention as the Portuguese flag is hoisted at the Governor Palace in Macau on Thursday, for the Portugal Day ceremonies. It was the last time that the national day ceremonies took place in Macau, as the Portuguese colony will be returned to China on December 19. — AFP photo

President, PM greet Estrada

President Shahabuddin Ahmed and Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina greeted President Joseph Ejercito Estrada of the Philippines on the occasion of his independence day, reports UNB.

In a message President Shahabuddin Ahmed said the existing friendship and cooperation between the two countries would be further strengthened and consolidated in future for mutual benefit.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina in her message expressed her firm conviction that the friendship and cooperation between the two countries will continue to grow in the years ahead.

Both the President and the Prime Minister wished good health, happiness and long life of Estrada and continued peace, progress and prosperity of the friendly people of the Philippines.

Handicraft exhibition postponed

The national handicraft exhibition 1999 scheduled to be held on June 13-15 at a city hall has been postponed due to countrywide strike on June 13 called by the BNP led opposition parties, reports UNB.

The organisers announced the postponement of the three-day show at a press conference yesterday and they said the fresh date would be announced later.

Bangladesh Handicrafts Manufacturers and Exporters Association (Banglacraft) and Export Promotion Bureau (EPB) have jointly organised the National Craft Show for the third time in the country.

Some 48 entrepreneurs are expected to participate in this year's show.

Explaining the reasons of the postponement, Banglacraft President SU Haider told the conference, "We need at least one day to attract the foreign buyers but the 'hartal' on the inaugural day will create a big problem for us and the participants."

He said the handicraft industries have been suffering from many problems, including scarcity of current capital, lack of appropriate training for the manpower and lack of necessary equipment and raw materials.

For smooth growth of the industry, he made a set of recommendations. These include setting up of a training institute for handicraft research and design, introduction of awards for eminent artists of this sector to encourage them, taking measures to set up a 'crafts village' in Rajshahi division and devaluation of Taka for maintaining competitive edge with the exporting countries.

EPB Director and other senior were present at the press conference.

Foreign liquor seized, 2 held in city

Narcotics officials Thursday arrested two persons from the city's Captain Bazar area and seized 205 bottles of foreign liquor and 792 cans of beer from them, reports BSS.

A team of the Department of Narcotics Control (DNC) led by Assistant Director Amzad Hossain raided a private guesthouse and arrested Nurul Huda and Harez Miah.

They also seized the foreign liquor and beer, raw spirit, rectified spirit and some empty bottles from the guesthouse.

DNC officials said the arrested were allegedly involved in drug trafficking. They usually smuggled foreign liquor and added rectified spirit to it.

"Such unwarranted practices are seriously hazardous to public health," a senior DNC official said.

Three cases were registered with Sutrapur police in this connection.

Monju attends review meet of R&H Deptt

MEHERPUR, June 11: Communications Minister Anwar Hossain Monju attended a review meeting at the office of Roads and Highways Department here and directed the officials to take appropriate steps for the development of Meherpur-Kushtia and Meherpur-Chuadanga road, reports BSS.

He said the government is determined to construct necessary infrastructures as early as possible to boost the economic growth of the country.

The minister directed the employees and officials of the Roads and Highways Department to work sincerely to ease the hazards of public transportation.

The Jatiya Party lawmakers Golan Hossain, Sahadat Hossain, Ahsanul Hossain and party leaders Munirul Hoque Chowdhury, Sadeq Siddiqui and Abdur Rouf Sikder, among others, accompanied the minister.

Rise in crime in Sri Lanka leads to overcrowding in prisons

COLOMBO, June 11: A sharp rise in crime in Sri Lanka has led to severe overcrowding in the country's prisons, a newspaper today quoted a senior official as saying, reports Reuters.

The Independent Island newspaper said more than 18,000 people were being held in Sri Lankan prisons, intended to accommodate only 6,100.

Transport strike in Pabna

From Our Correspondent PABNA, June 11: The district Motor Sramik Union called for an indefinite transport strike in all inter-district routes from this evening demanding release of two of its members arrested in Rajshahi for their alleged involvement in a robbery.

The members of the Pabna Sramik Union Jewell and Bipu were arrested by Boalia thana police in Rajshahi district last night following a robbery in a Rajshahi bound night coach at Gachpara near Pabna in the early house today.

A group of armed men attacked the driver of the night coach, Shubhechha, near Nagarbari and taken control of the bus, and robbed money and valuables from the passengers.

The armed group left the bus at Shwamkhola. The driver then drove it to Boalia thana and in from the police about the incident.

The police seized the bus and arrested its conductor Jewell and helper Bipu.

The police later released the bus and handed it back to its owner.

President of Pabna district Motor Sramik Union Feroz Khan alleged that the night coaches in the district are 'fell' victim of robbery, but police had never taken any action. He demanded safety of the night coaches in the district.

Indonesian polls Amien Rais concedes defeat

JAKARTA, June 11: A prominent opposition leader whose party was trailing in partial election returns conceded defeat today, boosting the legitimacy of a key step in Indonesia's democratic transition, reports AP.

Amien Rais, a vocal critic of former authoritarian President Suharto, was the first national figure to admit losing the parliamentary election even though only about 20 per cent of the votes have been counted.

"I accept the result wholeheartedly," Rais told Associated Press Television News. "I don't want to make any protest because, as far as I know, the election was fair and free."

Returns showed another opposition leader, Megawati Sukarnoputri, in the lead with 34.9 per cent, and the ruling Golkar party was second with 20.3 per cent despite expectations that it would fare poorly.

Megawati, a former legislator, is the daughter of founding President Sukarno and draws popularity from her pedigree. Rais, former head of Indonesia's second-largest Muslim group, founded his party last year.

Ctg: Crime

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thana accusing eight persons including a former leader of BCL, Jahangir Sattar Tinku, who hails from Raazan.

However, none was arrested in this connection so far.

Meanwhile, over Tk seven lakh was looted by an armed gang from a garment factory at Shulakbar in the city in broad-day light on Tuesday.

The gang members riding a microbus waited in front of the garments factory and at gun point took away the bag containing the money from inside a car. The money was being brought from bank to pay salary and wages of employees and workers, police said.

They fled the spot firing shots and exploding crackers after the incident, agitated workers and employees of the factory put up barricades on the roads nearby.

Besides, looting of valuables and money from shops and business houses continued amid deterioration of law and order.

Against the backdrop of such a situation, the OCs of four city thanas — Port, Doublumoor, Kotwali and Pahartoli — were transferred outside the city, official sources said.

Commissioner of Chittagong Metropolitan Police Ahmedul Huq, talking to The Daily Star, claimed that efforts were being made to step up security in the city to curb crimes.

Buriganga

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ganga is a just a political campaign to please the people without any determination or planning whatsoever to do this.

He went on, "People who are illegally occupying the lifeline of the city have political backing and are influential. To evict them means losing their support. Do you think the government would take such a risk?"

Some Environment Ministry officials expressed their surprise as to why the government was carrying out time-consuming surveys once again.

"There is an extensive report on the present situation of the river, made by the district administration, DCC and DOE. A DOE report even identified 113 structures and named the persons who encroached on the river, but not a single encroacher was evicted," the official said.

Several government spokesmen including the ministers for environment and pollution are alarmingly rising. "Unless the government acts fast, the river will be a thing of the past within a few years," one of them noted.

Kibria: No new tax

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Rahman, the pioneer of VAT in the country, could oppose the idea of expanding it. The philosophy of VAT is that it gradually expands to the retail level.

UNB adds: Referring to observations that revenue expenditure has surpassed the ADP allocations, he said the two expenditures could not always be differentiated as development expenditure in many cases merges with the revenue budget.

He prided himself on the fact that this is for the first time in Bangladesh that 51 per cent of the ADP budget comes from the domestic resources.

However, later replying to a query, State Minister for Planning Dr Mohiuddin Khan Alamgir informed that the lowest foreign component to the ADP was during 1972, 73 and 74. It was only 39 per cent.

The budgets were in the post-liberation period when there had been scarcity of foreign aid.

Setting forth the objectives of the 1999-2000 budget, a fourth authored by him in a string, the finance minister said widespread tax cuts on raw material imports would give momentum to domestic industries and thus generate employment.

Specific measures have also been proposed to expand export trade, he added.

Water Resources Minister Abdur Razzaq, Industries and Commerce Minister Toif Ahmed, Food and Agriculture Minister Matia Chowdhury, Planning Minister Dr Mohiuddin Khan Alamgir and State Minister for Information Prof Abu Sayeed were present.

Kibria said the proposed new budget would also encourage agro-based industry that in turn will ultimately lead to modernisation of agriculture.

Regarding eight per cent rise in defence budget, Kibria told a questioner that anything necessary for national interest would be done for defence because national security is a major concern. "We won't be dictated or influenced by others."

Criticising JP chairman Ershad, who rejected the budget as a "Tax-laden recipe," the finance minister said he was the man who ruined the economy.

The Commerce and Industries Minister said despite the century's worst flood in 1998, industrial sector witnessed a 2.8 per cent growth and exports could hit five per cent growth.

"I myself was surprised to see the positive growth in industry as the floods had stalled industrial activity for three months."

Exports may not reach the 5.63 billion dollars target but they registered a positive growth and will be higher than last year's export earnings in value despite the damper, he added.

He termed the proposed budget "export-oriented" having guidelines for industrial development. He sought cooperation from all in quickening the privatisation of state-owned enterprises to relieve the exchequer of huge financial haemorrhage.

Pointing to a bumper harvest of post-flood crops, Agriculture Minister Matia Chowdhury said this is for the first time that the crop damage was recouped in the same year of flooding.

Earlier, crop damage used to be made up the following years, she said, citing the 1974 and 1988 floods.

State Minister for Planning said if the coming fiscal year could achieve 6.8 per cent growth and the Tk 15,500 crore ADP be implemented, some 5.5 million jobs would be created.

slips by Zimbabwean captain Alistair Campbell after making 20 and then missed on 85 by wicketkeeper Andy Flower.

The 30-year-old from Karachi, who holds the world record one-day score of 194, took advantage to put on 95 with opening partner Wahabullah Wasti and then 67 for the third wicket with Inzamamul Haq.

But Pakistan then stumbled from 183 to 231 for eight as Zimbabwe's pace bowlers began to find sharp reverse swing.

Ijaz Ahmed's dismissal sparked the collapse, run out after a mix-up with Anwar.

The most bizarre incident of the day cost Inzamam his wicket.

Flower appeared to have missed a stumping chance off leg spinner Adam Huckle after

Khaleda
From Page 1
tory. The government did not give the real situation of the country to hide its failures and incompetence, she added.

Johnstone, who called for Sunday's hartal, Khaleda Zia said it is aimed at manifesting the resentment of the people. She called upon the countrymen to build up a strong resistance against the government by making the hartal a success.

Meanwhile, the Dhaka city BNP will bring out torch procession in the city today to garner support for the general strike. The main procession will be brought out from its city office at Nawab Yusuf Market at 6 pm.

BNP secretary general Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan in a press statement has asked all city, district, thana and ward committees of the party to stage similar demonstrations in their respective areas today and make Sunday's hartal an all-out success.

Indo-Pak talks
From Page 1
Pakistan in this misadventure," Singh told reporters.

Pakistan denies its soldiers are involved, claiming the militants are all Kashmiri "freedom fighters."

Tomorrow's talks will be the first diplomatic effort to ease the crisis that has aroused worldwide concern over a potential war between two countries which recently demonstrated nuclear capability.

"It is still my hope, even at this late stage, sense will prevail and Pakistan will pull back from this adventure," Singh said.

To support Singh's contention, the government later released what it said were transcripts of conversations between two Pakistani generals.

In one transcript from May 26, army chief Perviz Musharraf, who was then visiting China, told Lt. Gen. Mohammed Aziz, the chief of the general staff, that Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif was concerned the fighting could escalate into a full-scale war.

"On this logic, we gave the suggestion that there was no such fear as the scruff of their neck is in our hands. Whenever you want, we can regulate it," Musharraf allegedly said, referring to the Islamic guerrillas occupying Indian territory.

In another conversation May 29, Aziz tells the army chief that the foreign minister would be advised against accepting any truce in Kashmir when he travels to New Delhi.

"And he should not even accept cease-fire because if there is cease-fire then vehicles will be moving (on the Dras-Kargil highway)," the purported transcript said.

India also charged that the corpses of six soldiers returned by Pakistan showed evidence of mutilation, further casting a shadow over tomorrow's talks. Pakistan denied the bodies were mutilated.

NU Hons part I exams July 3

GAZIPUR, June 11: BA, BCom, BSc and BSS honours part I and subsidiary examinations of 1997-98 session of all colleges under National University will begin on July 3, reports UNB.

University sources said distribution of forms for the examinations began on May 23 and it would continue till June 13 with late fees.

Alarming rise in river water levels in Chandpur

CHANDPUR, June 11: Water levels of different rivers in the district marked an abnormal rise due to the high tide in the Bay of Bengal during last two days, reports UNB.

The Meghna, Padma and Dakatia are flowing four to five feet above the normal level inundating vast tract of croplands.

People here are apprehending another flood after the severe deluge of last year.

Rain submerges low-lying areas of Sirajganj

SIRAJGANJ, June 11: Incessant rain and onrush of hilly waters from across the border during last few days submerged low-lying areas of the district, reports UNB.

The River Jamuna recorded an abnormal rise intensifying the erosion. A large number of dwelling houses and educational institutions on the river bank have already been flooded by the mighty river.

The worst affected areas are: Vatripari, Mechra, Kawakhola UPs in sadar thana, Patuarpura, Patgram and Shuagachha UPs in Kaziupur, Chardua and Sholajangal UPs in Belkuchi, Betil, Enayetpur, Ghamagram and Saudia UPs in Chowhal and Khukni Gola, Bajura and Jalalpur UPs in Shahjapur thana.

Affected people of the erosion-hit areas have started taking shelter in safer places.

They alleged that authorities of the Water Development Board did not take any measure to stop erosion.

Road mishap leaves 11 dead in India

NEW DELHI, June 11: At least 14 people were killed when their jeep collided with a truck in the western Indian state of Maharashtra, the Press Trust of India reported today, says AFP.

Police officials said the accident occurred late Thursday when the truck driver lost control over his vehicle and slammed into the jeep carrying pilgrims.

The truck driver has been arrested, police said. Ten people were injured in the accident.

SAARC envoys meet British home secy

Envoys of SAARC countries met the British Home Secretary of State Rt Hon Jack Straw on Thursday in London in continuation of their dialogue with British government on evolving a British multicultural society, reports BSS.

According to a message from London, Bangladesh High Commissioner in UK AH Mahmood Ali took the initiative of involving the SAARC envoys in the negotiation process following the racial bombings in Brixton, Brick Lane and Soho in London.

Other envoys who attended the meeting are Lalit Mansingh, High Commissioner of India, Mian Riaz Samee, High Commissioner of Pakistan, Dr Lal Jayawardena, High Commissioner of Sri Lanka, Dr Singha B Bhasnyat, Ambassador of Nepal and Adam Hassan, Acting High Commissioner of the Maldives.

Initiating the discussion, the Bangladesh High Commissioner Mahmood Ali conveyed the gratitude of the SAARC envoys to the Home Secretary and expressed their satisfaction at the strong measures taken by the British government.

Ali congratulated Prime Minister Tony Blair and the Home Secretary for their strong statements against the racial attacks.

He also put forward some ideas for the consideration of British authorities.

Indian High Commissioner said that all ethnic minorities should work together for better life in British society. The Pak High Commissioner said education perhaps could be an area for further stress in the development of a multicultural society.

Sri Lankan High Commissioner also felt that more emphasis could be given on education. Nepalese Ambassador said working together was a must for the ethnic minorities. The Maldives Acting High Commissioner supported the idea and the concept of working together.

He referred to the positive changes in British Immigration and Nationality Laws and provisions for ethnic minorities introduced by the new Labour government. He said his government is determined to see that laws are implemented and that laws are amended wherever needed like the extension of Racial Equality provision in case of public sector.

Jack Straw expressed gratitude to the SAARC envoys and said he would like to meet them at a regular interval to exchange views on the matter.

Flood forecasting
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period beginning next year, the officials said.

The facilities at the centre include Hydrological and Hydrodynamic Mathematical Model. It covers northern Bangladesh covering a 82,000-square kilometre area, about 55 per cent of the country.

The satellite imagery downloading system gathers images in real time. Capability to produce coarse flood maps showing extent of inundation, using MIKE-11 and GIS and internet facilities to disseminate flood information.

Besides, the centre receives data from Farakka at the upstream of the Ganges in India, Dhubri and Goalpara in Assam on the Brahmaputra, Shilacha at the upstream of the Surma-Kushiyara (Meghna) and rainfall data from 16 stations through teleprinter circuits.

The centre also receives rainfall data from Badarpur (upstream of Surma-Kushiyara), Kailaspur (upstream of Manu) and Amarpur (upstream of Gumi) through wireless contact points.