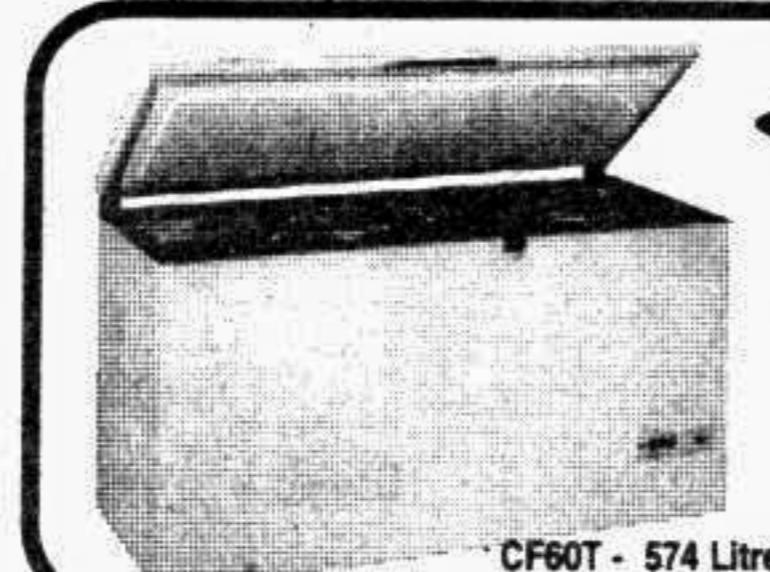


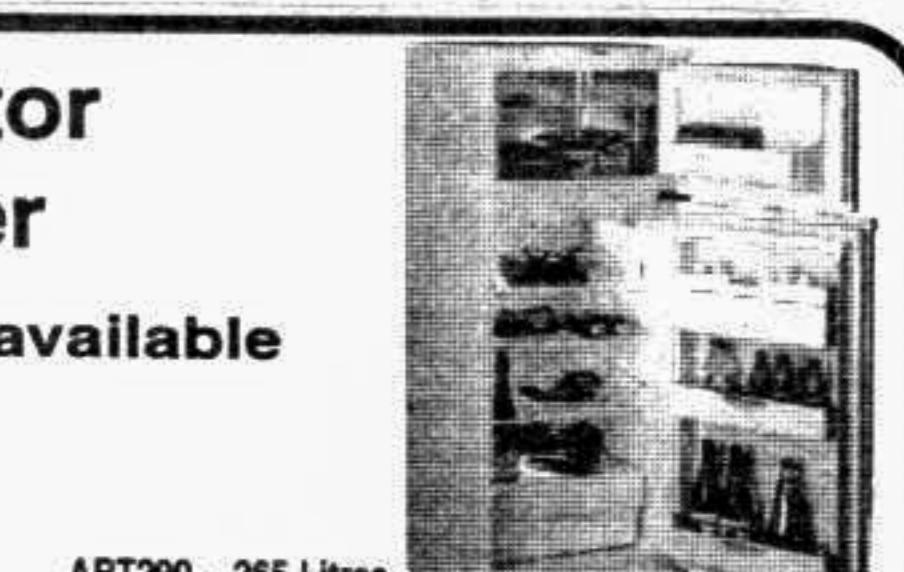
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Khaleda says
Take positive steps to keep CSM open

By Staff Correspondent
BNP Chairperson and Leader of the Opposition Khaleda Zia has asked the authorities concerned not to close down the Chittagong Steel Mills and take effective steps to offset losses.

Talking with the leaders of joint action committee of Chittagong Steel Mills met here last night, the BNP chief said the move to close the mills will discourage industrialisation in the country. Chittagong Steel Mills is one of the heavy industries in the country and it contributed a lot at the initial stage to industrialisation in Bangladesh.

Her government had taken some positive measures and kept the mills in operation, she said.

However, she said, the present government has decided to close down the mills which might leave the skilled and experienced technicians, workers and employees unemployed.

The former prime minister asked the government to reconsider the decision considering the interests of industrialisation and fate of the workers and employees.

Jatiyatabadi Sramik Dal president Abdurrahman Noman and general secretary Nazrul Islam Khan, leaders of joint action committee Nur Mohammad Abdul Jabbar Khan were present.

Aktheruzzaman's reply today

By Staff Correspondent

BNP lawmaker Aktheruzzaman is likely to reply to the show cause notice today, served on him by the party for his press statement on the Opposition-called June 13 hartal to protest the proposed national budget for the 1999-2000.

The notice served by BNP Secretary General Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan on June 19 asked Aktheruzzaman to reply in writing within a week.

"I have to reply by tomorrow (Saturday) because the show cause notice asked me to reply within seven days. I have almost prepared my reply and hopefully I will submit it tomorrow," Aktheruzzaman said when contacted over telephone yesterday.

In his press statement, he had opposed the June 13 hartal called by the BNP-led four-party alliance and urged the people not to respond to it.

Khaleda

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withdraws new taxes," said a member of the liaison committee after its meeting yesterday.

The liaison committee which met yesterday at Jamaat-e-Islami central office in the city held discussion on future course of action including further expediting the current anti-government movement, strengthening of simultaneous movement of the four parties.

Presided over by Jamaat secretary general Matiur Rahman Nizami, it was attended by BNP leader Anwar Zahid, Jatiya Party leader Kazi Zafar Ahmed, Jamaat leaders Mohammad Kamaruzzaman, Abdul Kader Mollah and ATM Azharul Islam, Islamic Oikya Jote leaders Fazlul Haq Amin, ARM Abdul Matin and Pirzada Moslehdin Abu Bakar.

Meeting sources said the liaison committee almost agreed on enforcing a countrywide dawn-to-dusk hartal in the first week of July if new taxes to the tune of about Tk 1000 crore were not withdrawn.

They said there would be continuation of next programme and the anti-government programmes is expected to get momentum after the rainy season.

Sources said the liaison committee representatives were unanimous to maintain their unity at any cost and asked all concerned in the alliance to remove all misunderstandings for the sake of the movement.

UNP quoting a source said the liaison committee may call hartal on July 8 if the budget is passed "without changes or with some changes for eyewash."

Meanwhile, a meeting of the 7-party alliance was held yesterday morning at 29 Minto Road official residence of the Leader of the Opposition in Parliament Khaleda Zia.

The meeting demanded re-polling in the Registered Graduate election of Dhaka University Senate because the election was rigged.

The opposition to cover up their failures.

Accusing the Awami League of using unparliamentary word in Parliament she said: "If Awami League can do that, my party has every right to reply."

On the question of her absence from the House, she said: "There is no atmosphere in Parliament. Can I reply the Awami Leaguers in that language? I was not born in such a family."

She called upon the journalists to maintain neutrality in performing their professional duties and accused the government of threatening the newspapers and the journalists.

Down to Earth Harrowing Experience for City Commuters

By A S M Nurunnabi

The city commuters always run the gauntlet in their daily pursuits of various business when, in the midst of perennial ghastly traffic jams, they are required to move from one place to another. There is hardly any let-up in the course of this bitter experience during any part of the day.

This daily grind in a commuter's life relates to three specific city locations, among others, namely city's Court Buildings Complex, the Salimullah Medical College Hospital, and the Sadarghat Launchghat terminal.

The Dhaka Court Buildings Complex is situated in a densely populated area of old Dhaka. Getting access to this place by all concerned people like judges, magistrates, practicing lawyers, litigant people and others is a nightmarish experience. The Court Buildings Complex has several components, such as, District and other tiers of judiciary, the Metropolitan Magistrates Courts, the Treasury, a police administration unit and other auxiliary facilities. Take any of the roads to reach this place and you will have a tortured experience. One such road is Nawabpur Road which always remains jammed with rickshaws, baby-taxis, push carts, etc.

Both sides of the road are lined with a great number of shops dealing in all kinds of goods. The traffic jams, both pedestrian and vehicular, are a constant phenomenon. The other important route is the North-South road. The road, running south-east from Gulistan area, has both shops lined on both sides. The characteristic feature of this stretch of road is that the shops here mainly deal in R S rods, sanitary wares, pipes and fittings and other building requisites. Long lines of trucks are parked outside the numerous shops, loading and unloading roads, C I sheets and

other building supplies. This is a whole-time spectacle. The traffic jams thus created leave the passengers of rickshaws, baby-taxis and buses waiting in their tracks for an indefinite time.

In this awesome situation, one wonders what the various classes of people who are obliged to go to the court buildings, viz, the judges, magistrates, government officials, the litigant persons and others involved, could suffer the tribulations of daily passage through this area.

There have been for long suggestions for shifting the court buildings to a more suitable place outside the sphere of overwhelming city congestion, but no positive results have yet emerged. It, therefore, seems that the concerned professional people and others are doomed to undergo the daily experience of suffering for an indefinite period.

The other place similarly difficult for easy access is the Salimullah Medical College Hospital. Being situated in the old part of the city, surrounded by a maze of lanes and by-lanes connected to the main road which also suffers from heavy traffic jams, the patients who require their services, particularly in emergencies, are vulnerable to anxiety and tension. The reasons are obvious. It is no easy job to negotiate the heavy crowds of passersby and the long lines of rickshaws jamming the outlets to the hospital. Even a hospital ambulance carrying a patient in emergency faces the same critical situation. The problem of congestion has been compounded by the existence of a large-scale medicine market opposite the hospital premises. Since this is mainly a wholesale medicine market, traders in medicine both from within and outside the city, throng the area. The problem of getting easy access to the hospital in times of need tends to discourage many pa-

ents to seek its services and divert them to other hospitals in the city. This being the only big hospital in the old part of the city, its importance can hardly be over emphasised. To solve the problem of heavy congestion around the hospital premise, it seems that the only remedy lies in the construction of a sort of fly-over connecting the hospital zone from a suitable point in a jam-free area. This is, of course, an ambitious idea, requiring a substantial outlay of funds but in view of the overwhelming importance of the hospital in a densely populated area, such fly-over may be a feasible proposition, if we keep in view that such fly-overs are quite helpful in Bangkok which previously suffered from chronic traffic jams.

The third problem of heavy congestion bedeviling the life of passengers intending to undertake launch journeys, is the location of the Sadarghat Launch Terminal. In this case also, the awesome chaos resulting from the over crowding by hawkers, pavement sellers of various commodities, and hordes of rickshaws makes it a virtual bedlam. In this situation, if any person wants to avail a steamer journey at a particular time, he needs to keep sufficient time in hand to pass through the heavy crowd in the vicinity of the launchghat. Since the launchghat has to stay where it is and it is not easy to overcome the prevailing environment of heavy congestion, it seems that the intending launch passengers have to live the existing state of things as best as they can.

The bottom line is that as long no positive steps are taken to ease off the traffic pressure caused by the rising city population, there is no escape from the continuing distress that city commuters suffer when their destinations lie in the locations specified above.



Appalling road digging coupled with waterlogging has made the narrow street at the city's north Goran a nightmarish proposition.

Opposition

From Page 1

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All set for bus run by June 30

The Ministry of Communications has said that commercial operation of Dhaka-Calcutta direct bus service would get off at the end of this month, reports UNB.

"We're optimistic about beginning the operations on June 29. If not possible, it's must be the day after (June 30)," said a senior official of the ministry.

He told UNB that all formalities to begin the commercial operations had been completed from Bangladesh side. It may take another day for New Delhi to finish with the task.

The official said they kept regular contacts with Delhi which is also interested in launching the commercial bus operation between Dhaka and Calcutta via Benapole by this month.

"Only minutes before I had talks with Bangladesh High Commission in New Delhi that informed that the approval by the Indian government was now only a fax message away from us," he said.

The approval by the respective governments is mainly needed for conducting customs protocols at the starting and ending points instead of border checkpoints.

It is also essential for companies to complete immigration formalities inside the buses at the checkpoints at Benapole on the Bangladesh side and Petrapole in India.

Bangladesh government has already approved the customs and immigration protocols for the launch end of September to update the agreement signed here June 17, if needed.

Anniversary of Jahana Imam's death today

The fifth anniversary of death of Shahid Janani Jahana Imam will be observed in the country today, reports UNB.

On this day in 1994, Begum Imam, who had launched a massive movement against the 1971 war criminals by forming Jatiya Samonoy Committee and Ekatturer Ghatal Dalal Nirmul Committee, died in the USA after suffering from cancer for a long time.

Jatiya Samonoy Committee and Ekatturer Ghatal Dalal Nirmul Committee have chalked out elaborate programmes to observe the death anniversary of Jahana Imam, the mother of Rumi, a martyr of the War of Liberation.

Other socio-cultural organisations and student bodies as well as different political parties have also taken up programmes to observe the day.

President Shahabuddin Ahmed and Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina issued separate messages on the eve of the death anniversary and recalled her glorious role in uniting people imbued with the spirit of the Liberation War.

On the occasion, Projorno '71, an organisation of children of the Liberation War martyrs, organised a discussion on "Communalism in Bangladesh: Our Destination" here yesterday.

Speakers at the meeting held at Muktijuddho Jadughar recalled the role of Shahid Janani in uniting the new generation in the crusade against the war criminals.

It was addressed by poet Shamsur Rahman, Syed Hasan Imam, Barrister Amrit Islam, Prof Borhanuddin Khan Jahan, BPFUJ President Abdul Kalan, Prof Abdul Mannan Chowdhury, Dr Nimchandra Bhumi, Shamim Akhter and Meghna Guha Thakurta.

The Projorno '71 and Barrister Shafiq Ahmed have been awarded with this year's Jahana Imam Award introduced by Ekatturer Ghatal Dalal Nirmul Committee.

Besides, different anti-drug and social organisations will also observe the day through discussion, rally and procession.

However, I can declare here that at the end of the fiscal, total exports will be near the target.

Fisheries and Livestock Minister ASM Rab said although export from the frozen foods sector was on the decline, there was scope to increase it exploiting the opportunities unfolding through globalisation.

The frozen foods sector, having a total of 300 fish processing plants that produce two lakh metric tonnes of fishes annually, is the second-highest export earner after garment industry.

Since there has been no research on DEHP or survey on the number of people exposed to the toxic chemicals in the country, details are not available.

Research in the US, however, showed that DEHP can cause cancer in human body.

Research details made available to this newspaper show that polyvinyl chloride

plastic (or PVC) is a hard plastic that requires chemicals called phthalates, one of which is DEHP, for plasticity. "Since DEHP is not chemically bound to vinyl, it leaches out of the plastic and into body fluids or IV solutions where it is infused directly into patients."

The BUET authorities on Thursday expelled one student for life and three others for four terms with two terms of suspended expulsion for their "involvement in vandalism and terrorist activities" on the campus on April 25 and 26. The authorities also ordered suspended expulsion of 22 students for varying periods for involvement in the incidents.

The action was taken following a probe body report on the incidents. The probe body comprising some BUET teachers submitted its report to the authorities on May 30.

The APSU leaders have been demanding a judicial probe into the incidents.

The APSU leaders at a press conference at the BUET cafeteria earlier on Thursday had termed the probe body report "partial and motivated" and said that it reflected the demands of BUET Teachers Association (BUETTA).

After yesterday's meeting, the APSU leaders said they will continue their movement till formation of a judicial probe body for a "neutral and impartial" investigation into the incidents.