



Over 3 million customers depend on FedEx everyday for timely and reliable delivery of their packages and freight to 211 countries worldwide. You will get the same level of world-class service here at FedEx.

**Bangladesh Express Co. Ltd.**  
Licensee of Federal Express Corporation. 95 Motijheel C.A. Dhaka-1000. E-mail: [banex@bangla.net](mailto:banex@bangla.net) Internet: <http://www.fedex.com>  
For customer service details, please dial :  
Dhaka (880-2) 9565114, 9884851, 9883927, 894213, 9130647, 9338931, 9345261, 9667462, 808803, 863896, 9010493  
Chittagong (880-31) 712127, 724823, CEPZ 740108 Narayanganj (880-2) 9714336, Khulna (880-41) 725008

## Govt accepts Agranai MD's resignation

By Staff Correspondent

The government has accepted the resignation of Agranai Bank managing director A K M Nazmul Haq and asked Rabul Hossain, the senior most general manager of the bank to take charge until further order, according to finance ministry sources.

The sources said that Rabul Hossain was not given current charge but was asked only to run the bank in the absence of a managing director.

Nazmul Haq tendered his resignation on July 12 reportedly after facing criticism from the government regarding a mass-transfer order of bank officials at the beginning of this month.

Haq had ordered a mass transfer order of its 76 officials or what he termed as streamlining the bank's operation. But it immediately raised controversy as it was perceived to be motivated. The transfer orders from Dhaka were immediately followed by the return of many officials and given responsibility of important branches. They were earlier charged with corruption and given punishment post outside Dhaka.

Later the MD stayed the transfer orders under political pressure and expressed his desire for early retirement.

### Lunar eclipse on Wednesday

A partial lunar eclipse will take place on Wednesday (July 28), reports BSS.

According to the Bangladesh Meteorological Department, the moon will enter umbra at 1622 BST and come out of it at 1845.5 BST, an ISPR press release said.

The eclipse will begin before moon rise. The moon rise will occur in Dhaka at 1841.9 BST in the day. So, the eclipse will be visible in Dhaka for 3.6 minutes only, the press release added.

### Bangabhaban

From Page 1  
kept at a posh Gulshan residence declaring the same as a 'sub-jail'. At the initial stage, arrangements of food were not there in the Gulshan residence but the then Acting President took initiatives to reach food to the imprisoned former President from Bangabhaban and inquired about him through his (Shahabuddin's) personal staff. The Acting President was, however, personally sorry for putting the former President behind the bar which he told many, including the former Attorney General. But he never told anybody that he sought apology to Ershad for putting him behind the bar in the interest of the state.

### Gas

From Page 1  
power plants.  
All these projects will be completed between 2003 and 2004.

In one word, we will be needing an additional gas supply of 450 mmcfd to 550 mmcfd within the next five years. The existing active and prospective gas fields do not ensure more than 350 mmcfd additional gas supply.

Presently different government operated gas fields and two foreign company operated gas fields, either supply around 1,000 mmcfd gas. This demand is rising by 10 per cent a year.

In future, gas production in Sangu and Jalalabad gas fields will increase to 160 mmcfd and 150 mmcfd respectively.

The only gas field to be developed within a few years by PSC operators is at Bibiyana. The Bibiyana gas field is said to be the biggest under PSC, but it will take at least three years for Occidental/Unocal to develop it even if they start work right now, the sources maintained.

The other gas fields that may be developed in near future by PSC operators (subject to approval of Petrobangla) include those at Kafra and Ratna in the Surma basin and Semutang in the Chittagong Hill tracts.

"Kafra appears to be an oil field," said a source. Exploration activities at Ratna is still going on. Exploration activities by Cairn and Occidental were abandoned due to their failure. In other blocks, no major exploration activity has been initiated so far.

## Floor crossing Appeal Hearing on 2 BNP MPs begins

The appeal hearing on two BNP MPs, who recently joined the government, began at the Appellate Division yesterday, reports UNB.

A High Court bench earlier directed the Speaker to refer the floor crossing matter of Dr Md Alauddin and Hasibul Haq Swapan to the Election Commission.

Attorney General Mahmudul Islam submitted the petition and began his argument yesterday.

The hearing will resume on Tuesday.



The Barisal-bound "Launch March", as the Ershad-led Jatiya Party called it, on the Buriganga yesterday. —Star photo by A K M Mohsin

## Flood waters recede

By Special Correspondent

A less active monsoon contributed to improvement in flood situation in the country yesterday.

The Padma flowing above danger level at Bhagyalakshmi started falling yesterday for the first time since it went into spate three weeks ago.

The Meghna continued to stay above its red mark, up by 17 cm at Bhabar Bazar, fed by the Surma and Kushiya which also remained above their respective danger levels.

According to Flood Forecasting and Warning Centre (FFWC), the Brahmaputra-Jamuna registered slight rise upstream but fell downstream. The Padma registered fall at almost at all places.

Reports from India said the Ganges was rising in Bihar where flood situation turned bad following heavy rains in Nepal.

The FFWC, in its forecast for 48 hours beginning at 6 am tomorrow, said the Padma may rise at all points, the Brahmaputra may rise at Chilmari and the Meghna may rise by 1 cm and flow 19 cm above danger level.

There were no rains in the country yesterday.

**Chittagong and Sylhet divisions and one or two places in Dhaka and Rajshahi divisions, with moderate or heavy fall at few places in Khulna, Barisal.**

**Morocco's new king weds secretly**

RABAT, July 25: King Mohamed VI, named successor to the Moroccan throne after his father succumbed to a heart attack on Friday was secretly married hours after the death of Hassan II, government sources said today, reports AP.

The new king, who announced his father's death on state television Friday, was married the same evening to fulfill Moroccan and Muslim dynastic tradition requiring a head of state be wed, the sources said on condition they not be identified by name.

The identity of King Mohamed's bride was not provided.

The government refused to confirm the report of the marriage, saying only that the wedding was "logical" given Moroccan rules of dynastic succession.

**Students damage vehicles in front of Dhaka College**

By Staff Correspondent

A group of students of Dhaka College damaged some vehicles in front of the college last night.

Witnesses and police on the spot told this correspondent that the group of about 15 students of the college went to New Market at about 8 pm to collect toll from traders. When the traders chased the group, they ran back to the college and began to damage motor vehicles that were crossing the area at the time, sources said.

At least five vehicles were damaged during the incident and traffic movement on the road was disrupted for about half an hour.

Traffic movement was restored after police arrived. Additional policemen were deployed in the area.

## Tanbazar eviction termed illegal

## Sex workers plan to go to court

By Staff Correspondent

The Tanbazar Movement Solidarity Council said yesterday they would go to court to challenge the "illegal eviction" of sex workers from Tanbazar and Nimtoli brothels at Narayanganj on Saturday.

"We are planning to legally challenge the illegal eviction within a couple of days as the authorities had no court order as required for eviction," Advocate Alina Khan said at a press conference in the city.

Speaking on behalf of the Council, she termed the forcible eviction illegal and state-sponsored terrorism and condemned the "assault" on sex workers during the eviction.

The press conference was organised by 52 human and women's rights organisations that formed the Council recently. It is protesting the way the government is going ahead with its "rehabilitation plan" for the sex workers and is trying to realise their demands.

Putting forward a four-point demand, Convenor of the Council Mahbuba Mahmud said the

government has violated human rights and fundamental rights of sex workers.

She alleged that Sathi, a leader of sex workers, was "hijacked" during the eviction.

The Council leader said that the government must take the opinion of sex workers before going for any plan for rehabilitation. The present government seems to have no specific plan in the city.

At the press conference, Sathi's mother who was present at Tanbazar when police forcibly picked up her daughter expressed her concern that Sathi was still untraced.

Sex workers' demands include bringing back the evicted inmates to their respective brothels, payment of compensation to them, removal of the DG of Directorate of Social Welfare, action against the OC of Narayanganj thana for negligence of duty and rehabilitation of sex workers as per the plan given by them.

They have suggested social

rehabilitation and allowing them to stay at the brothels till their rehabilitation.

Among others, Advocate Habibunnesa, Rashida Hosain and Roslin De Costa were present at the press conference.

Meanwhile, Samilita Nari Samaj (SNS) yesterday termed the eviction of sex workers from the Tanbazar and Nimtoli brothels a "blatant fascist action and a serious violation of fundamental human rights".

In a statement, SNS said:

"Using a politically motivated directive from the Prime Minister to 'rehabilitate' the inmates of Tanbazar, local political mafias and the police have joined hands in this dastardly act, leaving thousands of women and children helpless and on the streets".

SNS demanded an immediate inquiry into the incident, safety of all sex workers 'missing' since Saturday's eviction and compensation at least Tk 1 lakh each to those evicted.



Hena, a leader of Tanbazar inmates, speaks at a press conference organised by Naripakkha yesterday to protest their eviction by authorities. —Star photo by Anisur Rahman



Ideal gift for any occasion.

Instalment facility available only for purchases above Tk. 7,500

Transcom Electronics Limited

Official licensee of Philips Electronics N.V. for lighting products, radio and TV sets.

Dhaka: 815307-10 Ctg: 716353, 723578 Khulna: 720304 Bogra: 6215

Visit your nearest Philips Display Centre today

Backed by  
Guarantee

Let's make things better

PHILIPS

## Power disaster feared in 4 western districts

From Delwar Kabir

JHENIDAH, July 25: Power supply in four districts from Jhenidah grid sub-station here

may collapse any moment, causing suspension of power supply for an indefinite period.

He further said five mega volt amper (MVA) of Kalganji feeder has been inoperative since long disrupting power supply.

Rehabilitation of the grid sub-station by a Chinese company — CHICO — was not done properly. The sources said this would remain so till a certified copy of the Supreme Court judgement could be obtained.

On July 12, the Supreme Court upheld a High Court verdict that rejected a petition by directors of the bank, Sohel and Salman Rahman, challenging a notice issued by the bank to repay their defaulted loans.

PDB sources said Jhenidah power distribution division collected Tk 16.50 crore revenue last year.

## Where have the hilsas gone?

By Morshed Ali Khan

Where have all the hilsas gone? This is the question now being asked by millions of people around the country, and particularly by those along the coastal areas who depend on this delicious fish at this time of the year for a living.

Fishermen, hawkers, wholesalers, small fish traders, ice producers, and money lenders in their thousands --- all wait and even offer prayers for the hilsa schools to hit the nets as it has been happening for centuries.

The elderly people of Kuakata, Kalapara, Amtoli, Pathorghata and Borguna say they have not seen anything like this in their lifetime.

Fisheries Department officials and people involved in the hilsa trade, blamed indiscriminate plundering of the sea by bagda fry catchers, catching of hilsa cost between Tk 30 and 40 at the retail level.

Many local people blamed thousands of bagda fry catchers for the scarcity of hilsa in the sea. Thousands of men, women and children comb the shores of the sea with the finest possible hand-pulled nets for catching bagda fries which sell between Tk 0.60 and 1.50 each. In the process of catching the fries, they pull out all sorts of tiny marine life from the sea and dump them on the sand to die after carefully picking the bagda fry. It is believed, for every bagda fry caught some 1,000 marine life is destroyed. These arrays of life include microscopic creatures, plants and fries of many other fishes.

Others blame the indiscriminate catching of jhatka or hilsa fries throughout the year for its near depletion. Fisheries' department sources said although law protects the jhatka, but several thousand tonnes of jhatka is killed in the country every week.

Fisheries official also blame the siltation and change in major river courses for the hilsa to change routes. Hilsa prefers strong currents and many famous rivers along the coast have now become slow-flowing ones due to siltation.

But the fisheries department officials failed to point out why millions of deep sea hilsas failed to rush to the coastal sweet water rivers this year to lay eggs. They said last year unusually large hilsas were caught throughout the coastal belt and this might have caused the stock to suffer.

Others point out that global warming and the El Nino effect might have caused the hilsa to change character altogether.

With the change of water temperature the hilsa stocks might have been disillusioned which resulted in the change of schedule.

The fishermen's frustration

and helplessness has been such that there were reports of attempted suicide. At Chardhanga union, under Pathorghata thana one Abdul Jallil, son of Aris Ali attempted suicide on July 7 by taking poison after he

had been evicted from his house.

According to reports reaching Dhaka, small schools of hilsa are appearing at the Cox's Bazar point and also at some places of Bholia, Patuakhali and Borguna. But their number is very low and the sizes are unusually small.

## Oxy: Damage deal

From Page 1

"contingency expenditure" with any other party.

Occidental had sent a letter to Petrobangla early last month informing it about a deal with Unocal. Under the deal, Unocal would "take over" Occidental's operatorship in blocks 12, 13 and 14.

In response to the letter, Petrobangla told the American company last week that processing and finalisation of the transfer of operatorship would require "some time".

But Petrobangla did not say that it would not approve the transfer of operatorship unless Occidental settled the compensation issues, the sources said.

The Environment Ministry has requested the Energy Ministry not to approve Occidental's transfer of operatorship till it settles the compensation issue.

Environment Ministry claimed a compensation of Tk 612 crore for the environmental damage caused at Magurhara by the blow-out due to carelessness of Occidental. The compensation is payable in 50 years.

Under the deal, Occidental will wind up its operations in Bangladesh and take over some concerns of Unocal in the Middle East.

Occidental signed Production Sharing Contracts (PSCs) with Petrobangla for these blocks in 1995.

Meanwhile, Petrobangla has sought several legal documents from Cair