

FedEx
Federal Express
Bangladesh Express Co. Ltd.
Licensee Of Federal Express Corporation
Tel # 9565114 Fax # 9565112

DHANMONDI
House # 53 (New) Rd. # 3A (New)
Dhanmondi R.A., Dhaka
Tel # 863896

KALYANPUR
Khawja Super Market
Kalyanpur, Dhaka
Tel # 808803

MIRPUR
House # 96, Section # 10
Senpara Parbata
Mirpur, Dhaka
Tel # 9010493

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



PHILIPS Let's make things better



Waiting for Godot?
Rubber planters at Khagrachhari wait anxiously for the development authority to buy their labouriously produced rubber juice. — Star photo

State exploitation

CHT Board runs up huge arrears to poor rubber planters violating contract

By Shuvra Jyoti Chakma from Khagrachhari

Rubber planters in the hill district of Khagrachhari are being exploited by the government by keeping the payments in arrears and lately not buying the produce in violation of the contract with the government.

The lone rubber factory in the area is owned by the Chittagong Hill Tracts Development Board.

In 1976, the government established the Board and 1200 rubber gardens at a cost of Tk 86 crore to improve the lot of the hill people. Each garden had 1200 plants. Normally it takes 10 to 12 years for a rubber plant to mature fully. Now that the long gestation period is over the planters find themselves without a market.

Meanwhile, due to erratic purchasing by the board's factory the 65,000 people dependent on it are undergoing severe economic hardship.

Kader Siddiqui receives notice, refuses to reply

By Nazmul Ashraf

Defiant Awami League lawmaker Kader Siddiqui, yesterday said he will not reply to the show-cause notice served on him by what he said the illegal leadership of the party.

The AL issued the notice on August 1 asking its rebel MP to reply in 30 days why he should not be expelled from the party for his "anti-party activities". Copies of the notice were simultaneously sent to Kader Siddiqui's residences in Dhaka and Tangail.

The AL Central Working Committee (ALCWC) at its July 23 meeting suspended Siddiqui's party membership on charges of breaking party discipline and indulging in activities contrary to the interests of the party.

The meeting, chaired by party chief and prime minister Sheikh Hasina, also decided to serve show-cause notice on the rebel leader and justify his position by the end of the month.

Reached on phone at his Tangail residence last night, Kader Siddiqui confirmed that he has received the show-cause notices but he wondered how the AL could disclose contents of the notice to a Bengali daily before the deadline for reply.

"It's an act of dishonesty and a breach of trust on the part of the Awami League. There is no question of responding to the notice issued by the illegal leadership of the AL. Should I give legitimacy to the illegal leadership by replying to its notice? I'm ready to die but not to accept illegal expulsion from the party."

Replying to another question, Siddiqui reminded of his recent announcement that he would resign from the Jatiya Sangsad if the government did not scrap the Aia Ordinance in two months. "I promised my

PM urged to redeploy army at Cig port

From Staff Correspondent

CHITTAGONG, Aug 10: President of Chittagong Chamber of Commerce and Industry (CCCI) and convener of port users forum Kamal Uddin Ahmed has appealed to the Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina to redeploy army at Chittagong port for security reason.

The chamber president made the appeal in a message faxed to the Prime Minister today. A meeting of the port users forum held at Chittagong chamber today with Kamal Uddin Ahmed in the chair. The meeting expressed concern over withdrawal of army from Chittagong port.

Meanwhile, Chittagong Port Truck Owners and Contractors Association has expressed its concern over withdrawal of army from the port.

The association urged the government redeploy army at the ports to maintain security.

Editor: Mahfuz Anam
Published by the Editor from City Publishing House Ltd., 90 Kakrail, Dhaka-1000 on behalf of Mediaword Ltd., 52 Motijheel C.A., Dhaka-1000. Editorial, News & Commercial Offices: House No. 11, Road No. 3, Dhanmondi R/A, Dhaka-1205. PABX: 866773-4, Commercial: 866771, Fax No: 88-02-863035, GPO Box No: 3257, Cable: DAILYSTAR, DHAKA. Internet edition address: http://www.dailystarnews.com and Email address: dstar@bangla.net

Rid campus of political parties

Young scholars from different disciplines yesterday expressed mixed opinion on banning student politics but all of them had unanimity on the view that it must be de-linked from political parties through legislation, says BSS.

They observed that campus should not be the place for propagating ideologies of the national leaders.

These opinions were put forward in the daylong seminar titled "Student Politics: Alternative Visions" organised by Bangladesh Institute of International and Strategic Studies (BISS) held in its auditorium.

The participants of the seminar, mostly young faculty members of different universities and young researchers of various national and international organisations, could not reach a consensus on whether student politics should be banned or not at the moment. But they were in favour of imposing some sort of restrictions.

Earlier inaugurating the seminar in the morning, Vice-chancellor of Dhaka University Prof A K Azad Chowdhury said, "I am not against student politics, but of course against the conventional trend of student politics."

He said the student community should have to introduce a different value system and different pattern of politics with vision and idealism to meet the challenges of the next millennium.

Major general Mustafa Kamaluddin, Chairman of Board of Governors of BISS, chaired the inaugural session.

UNB adds: Kamaluddin commented that today's student politics can be compared to shutdown of nihilism which threatened to corrode the pillar of education in the country.

Sheikh Masudur Rahman, who presented a paper as a student, said incidents of Jahangirnagar University proved that the students could build up a movement against injustice without being involved in party backed student politics.

A BISS researcher, Sabir Ahmed, opined that session jams in various universities are the results of national and teachers' politics, not student politics.

Sadat College students clash with police, halt traffic

TANGAIL, Aug 10: Enraged by the killing of a student at Government Sadat College, protesters today clashed with police and put up barricade on Dhaka-Tangail highway, paralyzing traffic for four hours, reports UNB.

Hundreds of vehicles remained stranded on both sides of the barricade part from 10 am to 3 pm.

Tensions prevailed on the college campus during the barricade as police and students chased each other several times, witnesses said.

Traffic resumed after police removed the barricade, put up in protest against the killing of Belal Hossain in police firing during Monday's clash.

The students under the banner of Combined Students Unity brought out a procession at Korotia and held a protest rally at the local Shaheed Minar.

Belal was killed and over a hundred people were injured in the fierce clash between police and students over supplying to the examination hall during the examination hall during the daylong strike at Sadat College on Monday.

The deceased was a student of Korotia Madrassah, according to the victim's father, Abdus Sattar. He hailed from Sonalia village in Basal thana.

Namaj-e-Janaza for Belal was held today at his village Sonalia and later he was buried at family graveyard. Local people, including Abdul Kader Siddiqui, MP, attended the Janaza.

Kader Siddiqui, suspended from Awami League, at a press conference at his residence today said innocent Belal was killed and many were injured in police action.

"Such a heinous attitude of police cannot be tolerated... the government has to take the responsibility," said Siddiqui demanding judicial probe into the incident.

Fearing further troubles and insecurity, most of the teachers of Sadat College, including the Principal, packed up and left Korotia today.

However, the district administration has decided to take strict measures to conduct the next examinations.

Police on Monday arrested 13 students after the violence in which police reportedly fired rubber bullets and gunshots while students, backed by outsiders, exploded bombs during the clash.

Bhutan protests

Bhutanese Ambassador to Bangladesh Lhatu Wangchuk yesterday in a press release referred to the news item entitled "Delhi conspiring to make Bangladesh another Sikkim or Bhutan" printed in The Daily Star on August 9.

Following is the text of the press release: Addressing a public meeting in Mainamati, Comilla, on 8 August 1999, the Chairperson of the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) and the leader of the Opposition, Begum Khaleda Zia has been quoted as having "accused the Government of relegating the country to the stature of Bhutan".

The statement questions the sovereign and independent status of Bhutan.

The Royal Bhutanese Embassy deeply regrets that a senior political leader of a friendly neighbouring country should make such a gratuitous remark.

It would like to state that Bhutan has always been a sovereign independent nation which has never been colonized by any foreign power. Since 1971, it has been a member of the United Nations and it is a founding member of SAARC.

Bhutan was the first country to recognize the People's Republic of Bangladesh in 1971.

The Royal Government of Bhutan has always enjoyed excellent relations with the Government of Bangladesh from its first Prime Minister. Likewise, there has always been friendly and fraternal relations between the peoples of the two countries. In this connection, it may be mentioned that both Begum Khaleda Zia herself and her late husband, President Ziaur Rahman had personally

Bus falls into river in India: 60 feared drowned

NEW DELHI, Aug 10: About 60 people are feared drowned after a bus careened into a rain-swollen river in central India, rescue workers said today, reports AFP.

Rescue workers and navy divers were scouring the bed of the Jam river but so far only the bodies of three women, two children and two men had been found, officials said.

Gambhir Singh, a rescue official in Chhindwara town, said 65 people were thought to be aboard when it plunged into the river.

Brothels turn to training centres!

By Nazmul Ashraf and Ehsanul Haque

The government is planning to convert the Tanbaraz and Nimitoli brothels at Narayanjan into vocational training centres for the sex workers who used to reside there before their eviction last month, according to officials sources.

The plan partially incorporates a suggestion by women and human rights organisations which prefer vocational training for the sex workers alongside their sex business at the brothels.

But as per the government plan, the prostitutes will not be allowed to continue sex business while they will be trained in various vocations.

The Ministry of Social Welfare has already directed the Narayanjan district administration to assess the ownership of 21 buildings at the two abandoned brothels.

After assessment of ownership the government will "acquire the brothel houses from their owners and take possession", the ministry officials said.

"Primarily, we are trying to find out if there is any government land in the brothel areas. Then will contact them for

and ask them to donate or sell their lands which were earlier used for sex trading," said a highly placed source in the Narayanjan district administration. The ownership assessment began yesterday, he said.

According to the plan, all the former inmates of the two brothels will be offered vocational training at the planned centres. On completion of training, the government will provide jobs to a selected group of sex workers and also let others take up various professions as per their training.

The Department of Social Service (DSS), which is supervising the project for rehabilitation of sex workers, has directed its district officials to monitor activities of the sex workers being released from Gazipur vagrants' homes and of those who fled from the red-light area in Narayanjan earlier.

"We have provided our district offices with personal information about the prostitutes freed from Gazipur homes. We've also asked them to collect information about the sex workers who fled the brothels so that we can contact them for

the planned vocational training," said a top DSS official.

The 21 houses at Tanbaraz and Nimitoli are now vacant since the two brothels were raided and inmates were forcibly taken to two vagrants' homes in Gazipur on July 22. Seventeen owners of these houses are reportedly hiding since the eviction of the sex workers.

The DSS could not yet complete preparation of the suggestions it received from NGOs and women and human rights bodies at a meeting on Wednesday.

"We need another five to six days to prepare and send the proposals to all ministries concerned," DSS Director General Giasuddin Pathan told The Daily Star, earlier this week. Pathan further said they will organise more such discussions involving officials of relevant ministries for "smooth implementation of the government's rehabilitation plan".

Meanwhile, the process of releasing sex workers from vagrants' homes continued. Till yesterday, 131 of the 267 sex workers sheltered at Kashimpur and Pubail homes were freed.

Flying defaulters

Private operators fail to clear CAAB dues

By Special Correspondent

The Civil Aviation Authority of Bangladesh (CAAB) is yet to realise unpaid duties and charges from the country's first private airline, Aero Bengal which has ceased flying for more than a year, according to the CAAB sources.

Another private airlines, GMG Airlines, which started flying last year, has not paid about Tk 70 lakh in dues to the CAAB, the sources said.

But the scuffle between the CAAB and Aero Bengal over the unpaid charges of Tk 60 lakh has resulted in grounding of the two Chinese-built aircraft, which CAAB has declined to deregister, leaving a state-owned Chinese company making efforts through its embassy to get them back.

Aero Bengal started operation in 1995 with two Yum-13s, a 17-seat turboprop leased from the China National Aero-technology Import and Export Corporation (CATIC).

It suspended its operation after the CAAB grounded the two aircraft, prompting the company to lease a Russian aircraft from Kazakhstan Airways, which had been taken away by the Kazakh company.

The Chinese aircraft were grounded as their propellers were due for replacement along with other spares.

But CATIC reportedly declined to provide the spares because of unpaid dues to them, a former Aero Bengal official said.

Until the issue of unpaid dues is settled the aircraft would not be permitted to leave the country, the CAAB sources said. The aircraft are registered in the name of the Aero Bengal, not in the name of the CATIC, the sources said.

Aero Bengal chairman HBM Iqbal, who is also a ruling party MP, was not available for his comment. But managing director of the company BH Haroon denied all the allegations against his company. He refuted the claims that it is pressurising the CAAB to release the aircraft.

Haroon accused the CAAB of withholding the aircraft and dismissed the claim that the company owed money to the CAAB.

Asked if the company is going to resume services, he said there is no plan to operate at domestic routes.

"Rather we are planning to resume flying on regional routes. We have already explored alliances with private airlines in India and Nepal. Moves are on for getting approval from the authorities," he said.

But the CAAB sources said they are yet to receive any request from the Aero Bengal for their new route.

6700 low-cost houses to be built in rural areas

The Housing Fund Trustee Board yesterday sanctioned Tk 13.40 crore for construction of some 6700 new low-cost houses for the poor people living in the rural areas, reports BSS.

The allocation was made at the fourth meeting of the Board at the Prime Minister's office with Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina in the chair.

The Housing Fund was created by the present government with a view to providing shelter to the poor people living in the rural Bangladesh. The NGOs have been entrusted with the task of constructing the houses and handing it over to the poor on long-term loan basis. The scheme, first of its kind, has been introduced so that rural people can also have houses of their own. Such loan facilities were earlier available in the big cities only.

The Board had earlier allocated Tk 15 crore as credit to 29 NGOs for construction of 9500 houses.

The meeting was held that

Tk 6.87 crore was released and construction of 1748 houses was completed. With yesterday's sanction, the Board's activity will be spread to 155 villages in 53 districts of the country.

Speaking on the occasion, the Prime Minister said her government wanted to provide shelter to every citizen of the country. "However small may be, we want to give our people shelter, at least a roof over their heads."

Turning to the city's slum areas, she said life in such areas cannot be accepted in civilised society. She said the government would rehabilitate the evicted slum dwellers in a better place so that modern amenities were available to them.

In this regard she mentioned the constitution of a 13-member committee to rehabilitate the slum dwellers and said her government has already taken a decision to properly rehabilitate them under a massive programme.

বাংলাদেশ তার ও টেলিফোন বোর্ড

বাংলাদেশ রুরাল টেলিকম অথরিটির (বিআরটিটিএ) গ্রাহকবৃন্দ

এবং জনসাধারণের জ্ঞাতার্থে জরুরি বিজ্ঞপ্তি

জনসাধারণ ও বাংলাদেশ রুরাল টেলিকম অথরিটির (বিআরটিটিএ) সম্মানিত গ্রাহকবৃন্দের অবগতির জন্য জানানো যাচ্ছে যে, বাংলাদেশ রুরাল টেলিকম অথরিটি নামক প্রতিষ্ঠানটি বাংলাদেশ তার ও টেলিফোন বোর্ডের সাথে সম্পাদিত চুক্তি মোতাবেক দেশের বেশ কিছু থানা পর্যায়ে টেলিযোগাযোগ সার্ভিস প্রদান করে আসছে। এ সার্ভিস চালু হওয়ার শুরু থেকে বাংলাদেশ রুরাল টেলিকম অথরিটির কাছে বাংলাদেশ তার ও টেলিফোন বোর্ডের ব্যবহারী পাতনা নানা অজুহাতে পরিশোধ করতে গড়িমসি করে আসছে। এমতাবস্থায় বাংলাদেশ রুরাল টেলিকম অথরিটির নিকট বাংলাদেশ তার ও টেলিফোন বোর্ডের বিপুল অঙ্কের পাতনা আদায়ের জন্য তাদেরকে বিভিন্ন সময়ে পত্র মারফত অনুরোধ করা সত্ত্বেও বাংলাদেশ রুরাল টেলিকম অথরিটি তাতে কোন কর্তপাত করেনি। চার্জ প্রদান না করে তারা বাংলাদেশ তার ও টেলিফোন বোর্ডের টেলি নেটওয়ার্কের মাধ্যমে দেশে বিদেশে টেলিযোগাযোগ চালিয়ে যাচ্ছে।

বাংলাদেশ রুরাল টেলিকম অথরিটির এহেন কার্যকলাপের প্রেক্ষিতে বাংলাদেশ সরকারের ডাক ও টেলিযোগাযোগ মন্ত্রণালয়ের সচিব মহোদয় বাংলাদেশ রুরাল টেলিকম অথরিটি ও বাংলাদেশ তার ও টেলিফোন বোর্ডের সাথে সম্পাদিত চুক্তির আলোকে বাংলাদেশ তার ও টেলিফোন বোর্ডের পাতনা পরিশোধের ব্যাপারে সালিশি করে রোয়েদাদ প্রদান করেন।

সালিশির রোয়েদাদ মেনে নেয়া সত্ত্বেও বাংলাদেশ রুরাল টেলিকম অথরিটি বাংলাদেশ তার ও টেলিফোন বোর্ডের বকেয়া পাতনা পরিশোধ করতে ব্যর্থ হয়েছে। উল্লেখ্য, বাংলাদেশ তার ও টেলিফোন বোর্ড একটি সরকারী প্রতিষ্ঠান। এর সকল রাজস্ব সরকার তথা জনগণের টাকা যা তারা ইতোমধ্যেই তাদের গ্রাহকদের নিকট হতে আদায় করেছে অথচ টিএন্ডটি বোর্ডকে পরিশোধ করছে না। তাই বাংলাদেশ রুরাল টেলিকম অথরিটিকে বাংলাদেশ তার ও টেলিফোন বোর্ডের টেলিযোগাযোগ নেটওয়ার্ক জনস্বার্থে আর ব্যবহার করতে দেয়া সম্ভব নয়।

এমতাবস্থায়, জুন '৯৮ পর্যন্ত বিভিন্ন খাতে প্রাপ্য বকেয়া রাজস্ব ২১৭২.৮১ লক্ষ (একশ কোটি বাহাওর লক্ষ একশি হাজার) টাকা পরিশোধে ব্যর্থতার কারণে সরকারের সিদ্ধান্তক্রমে বাংলাদেশ তার ও টেলিফোন বোর্ড কর্তৃপক্ষ বিগত ৫ই আগস্ট '৯৯ তারিখ হতে বাংলাদেশ রুরাল টেলিকম অথরিটির আওতাধীন সমস্ত বিদ্যমান কর্তৃত্ব হাতে নিয়েছে।

সরকারী রাজস্ব পরিশোধে ব্যর্থতার দরুন বাংলাদেশ তার ও টেলিফোন বোর্ড কর্তৃক বাংলাদেশ রুরাল টেলিকম অথরিটির আওতাধীন সমস্ত বিদ্যমান কর্তৃত্ব হাতে নিয়েছে। বাংলাদেশ রুরাল টেলিকম অথরিটির গ্রাহকবৃন্দ ও অন্যান্যদের অসুবিধার জন্য বাংলাদেশ তার ও টেলিফোন বোর্ড আন্তরিকভাবে দুঃখিত

ডি.কে.পি. ১৭০৭১-৯/৮
গ্রাহক সেবাই আমাদের লক্ষ্য
বাংলাদেশ তার ও টেলিফোন বোর্ড
জি-১৪৯