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PM leaves for Australia tonight

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina leaves Dhaka tonight for Australia on a 5-day official visit, reports UNB.

"I look forward to Sheikh Hasina's visit as an opportunity to enhance Australia's ties with Bangladesh and to discuss current regional issues," said Australian Prime Minister John Howard in a statement yesterday.

Hasina is the first head of government of Bangladesh to undertake a bilateral trip to the Pacific nation at the invitation of the Australian Prime Minister. Trade and investment issues are likely to dominate her official talks with the Australian prime minister.

Howard said: "There are good opportunities now for both Australian and Bangladesh exporters to expand their markets in each other's country and to

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Toxic vetch being sold as lentil

Imported from Australia, vetch can impair eyesight, affect human tissues

By Staff Correspondent

Toxicity in 'vetch', imported from Australia and marketed in the country as lentil for human consumption, can impair eyesight and affect human tissues.

According to study reports in many countries including Australia and Sri Lanka, one-week-old chickens, when fed on vetch grains, died by the end of the next week.

"It is toxic even for animals", officials of the Institute for Development Policy Analysis and Advocacy (IDPAA), a subsidiary of a local NGO, Proshika, said at a press conference in the city quoting the reports.

As per the reports, only vetch plants can be safely used as fodder, they told newsmen.

They also demanded an immediate ban on import of the item, its withdrawal from the

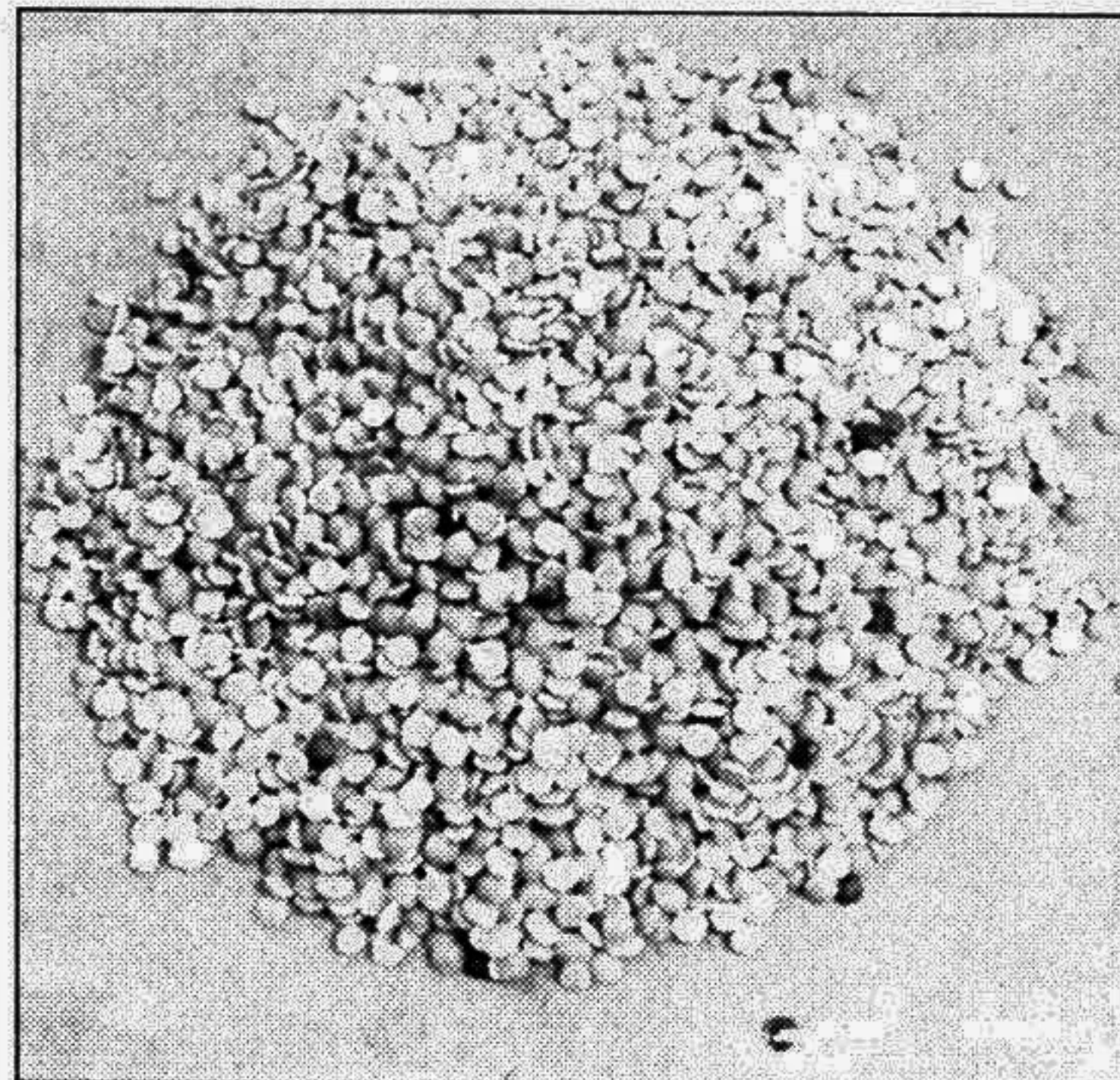
market and action against the importers for the sake of public interest.

Huge quantity of the item has been imported and marketed throughout the country for a long time, they said.

Presenting detailed reports on test results in different countries, Deputy Director of Proshika, Omar Tareq Chowdhury said the businessmen concerned in Bangladesh and Australia are equally responsible for import of the toxic item. "We demand action against the businessmen and the officials in Bangladesh who allowed it".

They also demanded an immediate announcement from the Australian government that vetch would no more be exported. They named two Australian companies, T1 Teague (SA) Ltd and Societa Cofica Ltd

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Sample of vetch collected from a local market. — Star photo

Cyclonic storm

By Special Correspondent

The well marked low in the West Central Bay turned into a cyclonic storm yesterday afternoon and continued to move to the north-west, meteorologists said.

It is likely to intensify further and continue to move in a north-westerly direction, making a 'land fall' at Orissa coast in India this afternoon.

"We are watching its movement in case it may take a turn and head towards the Bangladesh coast," a senior weatherman said.

The Met Office has already advised Chittagong, Mongla and Cox's Bazar maritime ports to hoist cautionary signal number-3.

The core speed of the storm is 65 kph which may rise up to 85 kph in gust/squalls at the cyclone centre. It was located 790 km south-west of Chittagong and 690 km south-south-west of Khulna at 6 pm, Met Office said.

Under its influence, there

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Funds constraint Project for lead-free fuel uncertain

From Nurul Alam

CHITTAGONG, Oct 16: Bangladesh Petroleum Corporation's proposed project to set up a 'lead-separator unit' at the Eastern Refinery to supply lead-free fuel for motorised vehicles has become uncertain due to lack of funds, sources said.

The 100 million US dollar project was prepared against the backdrop of government's decision to market lead-free fuel to reduce air pollution. The project was included in the Fifth Five Year Plan.

In the absence of a lead separator at the refinery, petrol and

delayed due to delay in import of unleaded motor spirit, they said.

The BPC had planned to import 90,000 tonnes of unleaded motor spirit to meet the requirement for July-December period. A total of 27,000 tonnes have been imported and the rest is in the process, BPC Chairman Anwar Hossain told this correspondent.

He claimed that the BPC supplied motor fuel now is completely unleaded.

Marketing of unleaded fuel was to begin from July 1 but was

70 injured in Dighinala clash

From Our Correspondent

Khagrachhari Oct 16: At least 70 people were injured, eight of them seriously, in a clash involving tribal people, Bangalee settlers and army personnel in Dighinala thana of the district this afternoon.

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DESA's priority to push areas

By Staff Correspondent

The Dhaka Electric Supply Authority (DESA) gives priority to push areas like Gulshan, Banani, Dhanmondi and Eskaton over industrial belts in supplying power because of "pressure from higher authorities", said a senior official of DESA.

"We always try to maintain uninterrupted power supply to the push areas because most of the government high-ups live there", the official said requesting anonymity.

"We often face pressure from the authorities whenever power supply is disrupted in VIP areas. But hardly any pressure comes if power supply is disrupted in industrial belts in Tongi, Joydevpur, Savar, Demra, Narsingdi and Narayanganj," he added.

There was 145 mw load-shedding in DESA areas yesterday, he said but declined to specify the quantity in different zones. The load-shedding is distributed among the 17 zones under DESA. In the last couple of days, the quantity varied from 5 mw to 9 mw in different zones, the official said. The total requirement for DESA areas was 830 mw yesterday.

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EU move to halt aid to Pakistan US hints at accepting a new civilian govt without Sharif

WASHINGTON, Oct 16: The United States signalled on Friday it could accept a new civilian government in Pakistan that did not include ousted Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif, who was toppled in a bloodless military coup on Tuesday, reports Reuters.

Asked if he wanted Sharif reinstated, President Bill Clinton told Reuters the United States wanted a restoration of civilian government in the South Asian country but pointedly did not address whether this should include Sharif.

"As a matter of principle, the United States, any country, never attempts to select the people are supposed to do that, not us," Clinton said in a brief interview after a White House event on youth violence.

The position contrasted sharply with an intense and ultimately successful US effort to

restore former Haitian President Jean-Bertrand Aristide after a 1991 coup.

Also on Friday, the State Department said the United States had halted all but a tiny slice of aid to Pakistan in response to the military takeover — a largely symbolic move because most aid had been cut off under sanctions dating back to 1990.

State Department spokesman James Foley said Washington was undecided on whether to oppose International Monetary Fund loans.

Clinton's comments followed remarks by another US official that Washington was not seeking Sharif's return to power after Tuesday's bloodless military coup led by Gen Pervez Musharraf, the head of the Pakistani military.

"It is our view that that's not the practical solution to the current political crisis — to call for his return to power," said the

US official, who asked not to be named.

The United States, hopeful of a quick return to civilian rule, has been relatively mild in its criticism of the coup and of Musharraf's steps on Thursday to tighten his grip by suspending Pakistan's constitution and its national assembly.

Washington also has been mindful of the lack of protest in Pakistan at the ousting of Sharif, who did not enjoy wide public support.

Musharraf gave no hint of a return to democracy in two hours of talks with US ambassador to Pakistan William Milam on Friday, raising fears in Washington of an extended military rule that may spark conflict with India, US officials said.

He didn't give an indication of what his intentions were or his timeline," White House

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Vajpayee's silence over talks with Pakistan

NEW DELHI, Oct 16: Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee today announced a wide range of policy initiatives to speed up economic reforms and infrastructure development, but gave no indication he was ready for talks with Pakistan where a military coup has complicated already difficult relations between the two South Asian neighbours, reports AP.

In the past, Vajpayee had said one of his first priorities after assuming office would be to renew with Pakistan, a dialogue that had broken down this summer after a confrontation over the disputed Himalayan territory of Kashmir.

In his first address to the nation after being elected Prime Minister, Vajpayee said his government was committed to giving India a stable and good government that would make the country strong, vigorous and prosperous in the 21st century. An advance copy of his television speech was made available by the United News of India.

For the first time in a decade, the Indian electorate has given a decisive mandate to

a political group. Vajpayee's National Democratic Alliance, a coalition of 22 parties, won more than 300 seats in the 543-member parliament, giving the government a fair chance of completing five in office. His previous two administrations lasted 13 days and 13 months respectively.

In the coming days, Vajpayee said, his government would introduce financial reforms for better expenditure management, tax reforms and restructuring and disinvestment of public sector companies.

In addition, the government would promote investment, including foreign direct investment, by removing bottlenecks that lead to costly delays, he said.

Despite huge progress the world has made, poverty and rising unemployment still confront India, problems that are of deep concern to him, Vajpayee said.

"The soul of India rebels against this," he said. "Our government pledges itself to narrowing the gap between our performance and your expectations."

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Anniversary of SM Ali's death today

By Staff Correspondent

Today, the 17th of October, marks the sixth anniversary of death of S M Ali, the founding editor and publisher of The Daily Star.

Syed Mohammad Ali popularly known as S M Ali died at the age of 65 in a Bangkok hospital on this day in 1993 after a prolonged suffering from lung cancer. The late Ali had a celebrated career in journalism as a media and communication professional.

He held key positions in newspapers and other media organisations in South-East Asia. He served as managing editor of the Bangkok Post, managing editor of the Hong Kong Standard, executive director of Press Foundation of Asia and Unesco communication advisor for Asia and the Pacific.

He founded The Daily Star in January, 1991.

Boat capsizes: 9 drown in Chalan Beel

NATORE, Oct 16: At least nine passengers drowned and seven others remained missing after an engine boat capsized in Chalan Beel in Shingra thana on Thursday, according to a delayed report received here today, reports UNB.

Police quoting survivors said the Dahia-bound engine boat from Biddhor with about 50 passengers, was caught in a storm and sank in the Beel when it reached Kushabari area.

Local people and police recovered the bodies of Dhukhuni Bala, 60, Thanda Bibi, 55, Janara Bawa, 40, Binol Halder, 40, Ashalata, 42, Shakti Narayan Gosh, 45, Abdur Razzak, 48, Akron, 9, and Sathi, 8.

They hailed from villages Kolom, Biddhor, Krishnapur and Dahia.

3 more accomplices held Shikdar shifted to Daulatpur thana

From Quazi Amanullah

KHULNA, Oct 16: Ershad Shikdar was shifted to Daulatpur thana from the well fortified interrogation cell at Sonadanga thana today.

He has been shifted for security reason and also for keeping him away from 'Swarnkomol', his residence, which is adjacent to Sonadanga thana, said a source in the Khulna Metropolitan Police (KMP).

But allegations have it that Shikdar was trying to contact some of his associates through verbal messages to some of 'his police constable friends' now serving in Sonadanga thana.

The allegations are being investigated, said a KMP official. Liaquat Lashkar, another accomplice of Shikdar was also shifted to Sonadanga thana from Daulatpur thana today. He was kept at Daulatpur thana after his arrest.

DC (South) Mazharul Huq said today that Shikdar and his former bodyguard Noor-e-Alam would be interrogated together in the same room at the KMP

headquarters tomorrow by some senior officials of the 25-member interrogation team.

Earlier, Shikdar said that he did not know Noor-e-Alam.

Police arrested three more armed cadres of Shikdar from Rajor in Madaripur district Friday night.

They have been identified as Mosharef Hossain Moshia, Jahangir and Babul.

Police believe that information about the murder of ward commissioner and AL leader Moslemuddin Khan could be collected from the three armed cadres.

Moslem was killed on February 25, 1995. A case was lodged with Khulna thana on the following day accusing 14 people. Shikdar was the principal accused in the case.

But the IO of the case had submitted a charge sheet dropping the names of ten of the accused including Shikdar.

On February 28 this year, the remaining four were convicted

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IFIC in for a raw deal?

Star Report

The IFIC Bank management has acted quite cleverly in trying to ensure purchase of a piece of land from the Beximco Group based on an uncompetitive offer, which insiders say has caused ripples in the banking circles.

The piece of land at city's Kauran Bazar is intended for building the bank's head office.

The Beximco's 'single' offer of sale to the bank is likely to be placed to the board soon, the insiders said. But the whole affair has already had eyebrows raised both inside and outside IFIC as it is illegal for the bank, which is a public limited company, to consider or accept a

'single' offer, sources said. Reports have it that the key owners of Beximco, Salman and Sohail F Rahman who are also the sponsors of IFIC Bank, desperately need money to keep their tottering empire going. "As a sure, quick and profitable way to manage money, they have planned to sell their land to their own bank at a higher-than-the-market price," says one banker.

"If the bank accepts Beximco's offer, it will stand to lose a lot of money because of higher price," said a senior IFIC official, who spoke on condition of anonymity.

"But the whole purchase will be illegal as the bank did not invite any tender or bid and there had not been any offer. Although the bank management talked about searching some more plots, it never placed any details of the other lands to the board."

The question being asked is, why should Beximco's single offer get the privilege of getting to the board?

The situation becomes all the more sensitive in this case since the two brothers are also owners of IFIC.

The IFIC management has strongly recommended the purchase of the land, which now houses Beximco's media concerns — The Independent and the Muktakantha. According to a management report, the bank needs a piece of land to build its head office which is now situated at rented premises at Motijheel.

Apart from legality, the proposed deal has also brought to the fore the ethical question. Beximco has about Tk 150 crore in loan liabilities with the bank, co-owned by Salman and Sohail F Rahman. Major portions of the loans have been taken under different fictitious accounts and the business conglomerate has defaulted in repaying the loans on several occasions.

Bankers say the Beximco Group, which owes the bank such a huge amount of loans, should rather have offered to clear part of its liabilities against the price of the land. "That would at least have cleared the ethical question," one banker said.

According to the insiders, the whole scheme was drawn up to help Beximco sell its 2.5-bigha plot, which was why the bank management did not consider any other offer.

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Representatives of the recently appointed American consultant firm, Parsons, are expected to arrive in the city on October 29 to scrutinise the controversial Western Region Integrated Project (WRIP) being pursued by US company Unocal and supervise follow-up action of the government, official sources said.

The government has already prepared necessary documents which include a report by Petrobangla on the outcome of negotiations and disputed issues of the 700 million dollar project.

The WRIP seeks to develop Shahbazpur Gasfield in Bhola, lay a 150 km pipeline and set up four power plants in Gopalganj-Khulna region.

In its report, Petrobangla

pointed out that WRIP was passing all the risk factors on Bangladesh government. It suggested that as an investor, Unocal must take all the risks including gas supply risk.

Petrobangla expressed its reservations about the tariff structure and the diameter of the 150 km pipeline.

It said Shahbazpur has a medium size gas reserve of 300 billion cubic feet (bcf) and a pipeline with 16 inch diameter is enough for optimal supply of Shahbazpur gas. Yet, Unocal was insisting on a 24-inch diameter pipeline.

Petrobangla argued, if Unocal was so much interested in a bigger pipeline ignoring Bangladesh's suggestions, it should agree to a concession under which tariff for

the pipeline would not exceed that applicable to a 16-inch diameter pipeline. "It may build a 24-inch pipeline or 20-inch pipeline, but the tariff would be calculated against a 16-inch pipeline," clarified one source.

Petrobangla asserted that Gas Transmission Company Ltd (GTCL) of Bangladesh should be designated as a joint operator with Unocal in the pipeline scheme under WRIP.

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US team arrives Oct 29 to scrutinise WRIP

By Sharier Khan

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Petrobangla asserted that Gas Transmission Company Ltd (GTCL) of Bangladesh should be designated as a joint operator with Unocal in the pipeline scheme under WRIP.

It further suggested that GTCL, which is currently enjoying monopoly in gas transmission in the country, should be given a carried interest of 20 per cent as it was partially losing its monopoly.

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Inside Today

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Prayer Timings

October 17

	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	4-30	5-00
Jorh	12-45	1-20
Asr	4-10	4-25
Maghrib	5-40	5-43
Esha	7-45	8-15

Source: Islamic Foundation

ঢাকা আন্তর্জাতিক বাণিজ্য মেলা সচিবালয়
রতন উন্নয়ন ব্যুরো
১২২-১১৪, বহির্বিলা বা/এ
ঢাকা

ঢাকা আন্তর্জাতিক বাণিজ্য মেলা-২০০০ উপলক্ষে প্রকাশিতব্য ৪০০০ (চার হাজার) কপি সূচনিক মূল্যের নিমিত্ত মুদ্রণকারী ও সূচনিকের ছাপানোর লক্ষ্যে বিজ্ঞাপন সংগ্রহের জন্য বিজ্ঞাপন সংগ্রাহক নিয়োগের নিমিত্তে খ্যাতনামা বিজ্ঞাপনী সংস্থাসমূহের নিকট থেকে আগামী ০৩-১১-১৯৯২ তারিখ বেলো ৩.০০ টার মধ্যে সীলমোহরকৃত দরপত্র আহ্বান করা যাচ্ছে। দরপত্রের পৃথক পৃথক সিডিউল প্রতিটি টাং ৪০০/= (অফিসের ভাষায়) মূল্যে প্রতিদিন অফিস চলাকালীন সময়ে আগামী ০২-১১-১৯৯২ তারিখ পর্যন্ত ব্যুরোর সাধারণ শাখা হতে সংগ্রহ করা যাবে।

২। সূচনিকের মুদ্রণের জন্য আন্তর্জাতিক মানের প্রকাশনা মুদ্রণের পূর্ব অভিজ্ঞতাসম্পন্ন প্রতিষ্ঠান ও বিজ্ঞাপন সংগ্রহের জন্য সরকারী/আধাসরকারী/স্বায়ত্তশাসিত/বিশিষ্ট বেসরকারী প্রতিষ্ঠানের উন্নতমানের প্রকাশনার জন্য বিজ্ঞাপন সংগ্রহের পূর্ব অভিজ্ঞতাসম্পন্ন বিজ্ঞাপনী সংস্থাসমূহ দরপত্রে অংশগ্রহণ করতে পারবে। অভিজ্ঞতার প্রমাণস্বরূপ সনদপত্র সাহায্য দাখিল করতে হবে।

৩। দরপত্রের সাথে সূচনিকের ৩ (তিন) টি কভার ডিজাইন দাখিল করতে হবে।

৪। বিস্তারিত জানার জন্য ব্যুরোর প্রকাশনা শাখায় যোগাযোগ করা যেতে পারে।

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সদস্য-সচিব
প্রচারাঙ্গ উপ-কমিটি

জিডি-১৫১
ঢাকা আন্তর্জাতিক বাণিজ্য মেলা-২০০০

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all family members of
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A dedicated, professional, friendly, helpful & family man
whose sudden & premature demise will certainly be missed dearly by all.