

What's on today....

SAIC meeting: The inauguration of the 3-daylong 14th meeting of the Governing Board of the SAARC Agricultural Information Centre (SAIC) will be held. Venue: BARC conference room. Time: 9:00 am.

National seminar: Bangladesh Institute of Management (BIBM) will hold a national seminar on "Problems and Prospects of Collateral-Free Banking in Bangladesh." Venue: BIBM Bhaban, Plot no 4, Road no 1, Mirpur 2. Time: 9:30 am.

Sitar recital: Ustad Shahed Parvez, a noted sitar artist will perform a solo recital followed by a short lecture and demonstration. Organiser: Shadhona, a centre for advancement of subcontinental music. Venue: Goethe Institut, House no 10, Road no 9, Dhanmondi R/A. Time: 10:00 am.

UNAB symposium: United Nations Association of Bangladesh (UNAB) will hold a symposium. Chief guest: Abud Samad Azad, Foreign Minister. Venue: Hotel Purbani International. Time: 5:00 pm.

Film Show: German embassy, Dhaka presents German Film Week 99. *The Tin Drum* by Gunter Grass will be screened on the first day of the festival. Venue: Goethe Institut, House no 10, Road no 9, Dhanmondi R/A. Time: 6:30 pm.

..... and tomorrow

Memorial meeting: A memorial meeting will be held on Dr Md Ibrahim, founder of BIRDEM to mark the 10th anniversary of his death. Venue: BIRDEM auditorium (2nd floor), Shahbagh. Time: 11:00 am.

Film Show: Three German movies *Man of Straw*, *The Bridge* and *Comedian Harmonists* will be screened on the second day of the German Film Week 99. Organiser: German Embassy. Venue: Goethe Institut, House no 10, Road no 9, Dhanmondi R/A. Time: 2:00 pm, 4:30 pm and 7:00 pm.

Weather

Temperature may rise

Light rain or thundershowers is likely at one or two places over Khulna, Barisal and Chittagong divisions and weather may remain dry with partly cloudy sky elsewhere over the country till 6 pm today, reports UNB.

Day temperature is likely to rise by 1 to 3 degree Celsius over the country during the period, according to Met Office. The country's highest temperature yesterday was recorded at 34.4 degree Celsius at Dinajpur and the lowest 22.4 degree Celsius at Satkhira.

The sun sets in the capital today at 5:25 pm and rises tomorrow at 6:01 am.

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

City	Temperature in Celsius		Humidity in percentage	
	Max	Min	Morning	Evening
Dhaka	33.0	24.7	72	90
Chittagong	33.7	25.7	86	79
Rajshahi	32.8	23.2	86	89
Khulna	33.0	24.2	77	88
Barisal	33.0	23.2	82	92
Sylhet	32.4	25.0	80	85
Cox's Bazar	33.6	25.4	73	84

HERE and THERE

FREPD

Speakers at a meeting underscored the need for well-coordinated diplomacy to secure necessary foreign direct investment and aid on appropriate terms, says a press release.

Characterising the ongoing diplomacy of the country as unsatisfactory, particularly in the economic field, they called for unified and cohesive diplomatic efforts to promote national interests and interests in international arena.

Shah AMS Kibria, the Finance Minister, was speaking as the Chief Guest at the launching ceremony of a book titled 'Aid, Development and Diplomacy: the Need for an Aid Policy,' authored by National Professor M Shamsul Huq and Dr C R Abrar, at the auditorium of Educational Planning and Development (FREPD), on Saturday.

Prof M Shamsul Huq, a former foreign minister, while introducing the book stated that visions of change and progress belong to the political leaders. They set goals and policies and the bureaucracy is there to translate these visions into realities.

Dr Q K Ahmad, Prof Nurul Momen and Ambassador Faruq Ahmed Chowdhury also took part in the discussions. The session was presided over by Prof M Sirajuddin, Member-Secretary of FREPD. Mr Mohiuddin Ahmed of the University Press Ltd conducted it. A number of senior academics, researchers and other professionals were present at the review session.

Old Placidians

A get-together of Old Placidians was held last Wednesday evening in preparation for the OPA Re-Union to be held at St Placid's School, Chittagong on October 28 and 29 next, says a press release.

All old Placidians resident in Dhaka have been interested to join the re-union or meet are requested to contact the following gentlemen: David D'Silva - Phone: 817427-8/Fax: 818429, Haroon ur Rashid - Phone: 9884255, Salim Masood - Phone: 810601-2, Zaidi Sattar - Phone: 861065/426 and Jerry Matthias - Phone 9333258.

Robbery at flour mill

MANIKGANJ, Oct 23: A gang of armed robbers swooped on a flour mill near the Dhaka-Aricha highway here early today and decamped with valuables worth about Tk 4 lakh, reports UNB.

Quoting the mill authorities, police said about 25 robbers stormed into the United Flour Mills at Goadra area in Sadar thana at about 1:30 am. They tied up the security guards and took away 100 sacks of flour, some equipment and money in a truck. A case was filed with the police.

BPJA

A three-day long photographic exhibition on the recently held "eighth SAF games," organised by the Bangladesh Photo Journalists Association (BPJA) began at its auditorium in the city yesterday, reports BSS.

State Minister for Youth, Sports and Cultural Affairs Obaidul Kader inaugurated the exhibition. About 100 photographs taken by the photo-journalists during the eighth SAF games in Nepal were on display. The exhibition will remain open for all from morning to 6 pm every day upto October 25.

President of BPJA Salahuddin Ahmed and its General Secretary A K M Mohsin and sports journalist M A Hamid were present on the occasion.

Greater Comilla Assoc in London

Greater Comilla Association in London headed by A B M Ishaq gave a grand reception to Prof Ali Ashraf MP from Chandina in Bangladesh Centre here, reports BSS.

Ali Ashraf MP, who came to London after attending the inter-parliamentary meeting in Berlin, spoke of the historical link he had as the Director of External Publicity of the Mujib Nagar Government in exile, with the Bangladesh Centre, which was the London office from where the late President Abu Sayeed Chowdhury was leading the UK and international struggle for the independence of Bangladesh.

Dr Belal Joy, the founder member of the association and the co-ordinator of the Bangladesh Center, while presiding over the reception meeting welcomed the ruling party MP and raised a long standing demand on behalf of the association including a university in Comilla. He informed the MP that the association plans to set up a Comilla Bhaban in London, in line with the Bangladesh Center, which amongst other activities, houses 28 students studying in London.

The MP assured the audience that the successful government of Sheikh Hasina plans to set up 12 technical universities in Bangladesh and that would include one in Comilla close to BARD.

AL CHT leader passes away

RANGAMATI, Oct 23: The founder president of the greater Chittagong Hill Tracts union of Bangladesh Awami League, Haji Noyab Ali died here today at his Reserve Bazar residence in the town. He was 105, reports BSS.

He was suffering from old-age complications, family sources said. The deceased left behind his wife, two sons, five daughters and a host of admirers and relatives to mourn his death. He was laid to rest at the Rangamati central graveyard today.

Theft at Post Office
4 held in Bagerhat

BAGERHAT, Oct 23: Four people were arrested from Khulna town on Friday in connection with stealing of Tk 4 lakh of Bagerhat Post Office from a local Sonali Bank branch, reports UNB.

Acting on a tip-off, a team of district DB Police went to Khulna and arrested Mannan Fakir, 34, Zaman Medha, 26, Abdul Hannan, 28, and Labiu Miah, 27, from in front of Khulna Shilpa Bhaban. They also held Abdur Rahman Shikdar Farazi from the town on Friday midnight in connection with this case but are yet to recover the money. An official of District Post Office lost Tk 4 lakh just after withdrawing it from the bank on Tuesday. The official said the bag containing the money was stolen as he bent down to pick up some notes which had fallen on office floor.

CU postpones today's exams

From CU Correspondent

CHITTAGONG, Oct 23: All the examinations of the Chittagong University (CU) scheduled to be held on October 24 have been postponed due to unavoidable circumstances, said a CU press release here today.

Of these first year BA Honours examination of Oriental Language Department, first year BA Honours of Philosophy Department and second year BA Honours of Mathematics Department have been shifted to October 25 from October 24.

Meanwhile, the examinations of MA final History, MBA final year of Finance Department and MSS Preliminary (written) of Political Science Department have been postponed date of which will be announced later.

Two arrested with heroin in Magura

From Our Correspondent

MAGURA, Oct 23: Two men were arrested along with 5 grams of heroin by Shalikhtha thana police here last Friday night.

Police acting on a tip-off, raided a Magura-bound passenger bus at Arrara Bazar area on Magura-Jessore road and arrested them. The arrested were identified as Alauddin Sheikh, 28, and Hassan Biswas, 26, residents of village Nizanduali under Magura sadar thana.

All set for Faridpur-4 by-elections

From Our Correspondent

FARIDPUR, Oct 23: Preparations for holding of Faridpur-4 constituency (Sadarpur, Char Bhadrans) by-election have been completed.

According to the district election officer, all relevant papers except the ballot papers have been sent to the concerned thana headquarters. A little over 1.36,000 voters are expected to vote in the 76 polling centres -53 in Sadarpur and 23 in Char Bhadrans thanas of the constituency.

Unprecedented security measures have been taken to hold the by-election scheduled to be held on October 27. When contacted over telephone the Police Super said that one platoon of law enforcing agency under a magistrate will be stationed at each polling centre and forty groups of striking forces will be kept alert under forty magistrates. Besides, army will be deployed in the

constituency to tackle any unpredictable situation and female Ansars will be deployed in each constituency.

The constituency fell vacant following the death of Awami League MP Mosharrar Hossain who was elected from the constituency 3 times. Though five candidates are contesting the by election, close contest is likely between Awami League candidate Saleha Begum, widow of late MP Mosharrar Hossain and Zaker Party candidate Mostafa Ameer Faisal, Chairman of Zaker party and second son of late Zaker Manzil.

Home Minister Md Nasim will review the law and order situation of the district with the concerned district level officers tomorrow, the SP said. Almost all the 76 polling centres of the constituency are vulnerable, it has been learnt.

Korean frigate for Navy

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Navy's requirement, the frigate should not cost more than 50 million US dollars.

In 1997, the government floated tender again. This time, nine suppliers offered 25 proposals. A 16-member expert committee scrutinised the bids and selected Daewoo Corporation as the best bidder, but not the lowest bidder.

According to a confidential defence report, the lowest offer was made by Chinese company PLA. It offered to supply two fully equipped frigates, one at a price of 83 million dollars and another at 78 million dollars. The defence report further said that the "technically best" offer was made by Spanish company Impress National Bazan, but it quoted a price of 127 million dollars.

The Daewoo offer was "mediocre". It quoted a price of 93.73 million dollars, but the proposed frigate lacked missile and torpedo systems, the sources said.

However, as the bid committee selected Daewoo, negotiations began and Daewoo agreed to add missile and torpedo systems at additional costs. The costs for the frigate finally stood at 99.97 million dollars and a contract was signed on March 11, 1998.

Defence experts expressed their surprise that instead of lowering the price through negotiations, it was actually enhanced by more than six million dollars, the sources said. As per the deal with Daewoo, the government paid the first instalment of around 33 million dollars immediately after

the agreement. But Daewoo Corporation went bankrupt after the agreement. The Defence Ministry wrote letters to the company asking for the status of the deal.

Daewoo assured the ministry that the shipping unit of Daewoo was in good shape financially and that the Korean government guaranteed supply of the frigate as per schedule.

According to the sources, there has been allegations from some members of the JS body that a leading businessman having high political connection was "irrationally tagged" with Daewoo as a supplier of missile, torpedo and other war equipment. The cost was "deliberately increased to ensure high profit for the businessman", they alleged.

Quoting naval experts, some of the members also claimed that the frigate could be purchased at around 50 million dollars.

Besides, the members also expressed their dissatisfaction that the deal with Daewoo did not guarantee supply of spare parts for missile and other war equipment.

Two more private TV stations soon

The government has agreed in principle to allow two more independent television stations with satellite facilities to operate in the country soon.

Reliable sources told UNB that several proposals for new private television stations are under consideration of the government.

Hartal called in Faridpur today

FARIDPUR, Oct 23: As police today arrested two people in connection with Tuesday's bomb plantation in a cinema hall at Madhukhali, the Rasul Sainik Parishad called for a dawn-to-dusk hartal in the district tomorrow demanding release of five suspects, reports UNB.

Local units of opposition BNP, Jamaat-e-Islami and Islami Oikya Jote have extended their support to the hartal call.

The five were detained in Dhaka on charge of planting bombs in different parts of the country. Those arrested here were identified as Hafizur Rahman Biswas, 26, son of Akkas Ali Biswas of village Mathurapur in Madhukhali thana and Abu Bakar Sheikh, 52, son of Abujuddin Sheikh of village Betang Tarakandi in Ballakandi thana of Rajbari district.

Gayebana janaza for Shibir activist held

Opposition alliance held Gayebana Janaza after Asr prayers at Baitul Mokarram National Mosque yesterday for Islami Chhatra Shibir activist Ansurullah, reports UNB.

Ansurullah, a BA student of Chittagong Government College, received bullet injury at the port city during Thursday's hartal and died on the following day.

Jamaat-e-Islami secretary general Moulana Matiar Rahman Nizami conducted the Janaza at the South Gate of the Mosque.

Road march

From page 1 Executive Committee, Advisory Council to the chairperson, MPs, central leaders, members of party's front organisations, city conveners, joint conveners and general secretaries and ward commissioners has been made mandatory.

Apart from them, interested leaders of different district committees of BNP, will be allowed to take part in the road march.

All participants have been asked to join the marchers under their own arrangements and in their own vehicles, till the end of the march. The participants have been requested to register their names and registration numbers of their vehicles with the Central Office of the party by October 27.

Khaleda

From page 1

support her demand for immediate resignation of the government and early election to Parliament.

Describing the government's 'failure, misdeeds and misuse' during its three and a half years rule, she said it failed to provide security to the people and develop the country. So, it has no right to stay in power, she said. The former prime minister said prices of essentials has gone up many-fold, revenue of the country declined and the government borrowed heavily from banks to meet its expenses.

Termining the government's 'subversive policy to India, Khaleda said it has signed agreements with that country sacrificing national interest.

Presided over by Rashiduzzaman, the meeting was also addressed by Nazrul Islam Khan, Amanullah Aman, MP, Rezabuddin Chowdhury, Serajul Huq, Firoza Talukdar and Shyamol Dutta. The meeting over, BNP chairperson went to the residence of deceased Razzak at Takimari village under Dewan-garj thana and consoled his father, wife and two daughters.

OC transferred

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higher authorities are annoyed with Khair for giving a 'faulty supplementary chargesheet' in Jainal murder case naming Nasir Khan as an accused, an accomplice of Shikdar.

Nasir was in jail hajat in another case when Jainal was murdered at Skid Ghat in 1994. Another case against Shikdar and his men was recorded with Rupsha thana today for murdering a boatman, Jashim. He was killed over two and half years ago near Rajapur ferry ghat in Rupsha thana.

Five held in city with contraband

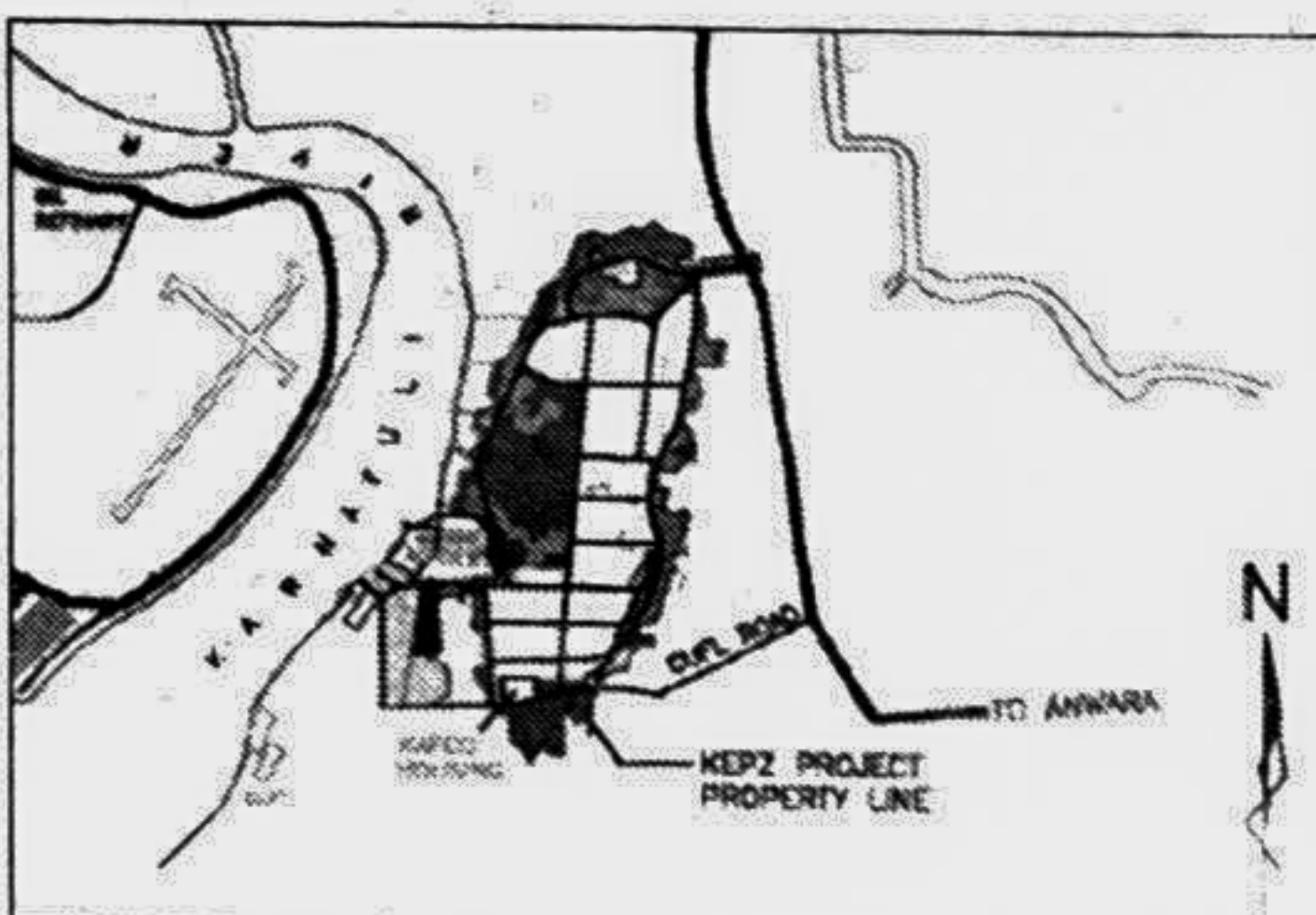
The Dhaka Metropolitan Police arrested five persons including an Indian national from the capital and recovered drugs, arms and contraband items from their possession yesterday and on Friday, reports BSS.

A team of police led by Deputy Commissioner (DC) South M A Kashem today raided several shops at Moulvi Bazar under Lalbagh thana and seized huge contraband items. The team arrested Sona Miah and Nazrul Islam from the market for their alleged involvement in dealing with the contraband items.

A team of Sabubagh police yesterday arrested one Zakir Hossain (20) from Maninagar area and recovered a pipe gun loaded with a bullet from his possession. Other accomplices of Zakir, however, managed to escape sensing the presence of police, police said.

A petrol team of Gabtoli police out post arrested an Indian national from inside the terminal and seized 275 grams of smuggled heroin from his possession last night. The arrested person confessed to police that he is a resident of Mozaffargarh district under Uttar Pradesh in India and came here with the heroin.

Kihak Sung cultivates



Location map of Korean EPZ (BD) Ltd

From page 1 nies will generate US\$ 1.25 billion in annual production or exports when it's all ready by 2009.

These are "guesstimates," as one journalist put it, but the man from Korea has proved that he is on way to making it. His 13 companies in Chittagong and Dhaka EPZs employ 22,000, making him the largest private sector employer in Bangladesh. With US\$ 100 million already poured as capital, he is at the top of the list of foreign investors.

In Chittagong, he has occupied roughly one twentieth of the land but boasts a fourth of total investment attracted so far by the country's largest EPZ, a fourth of exports and a fourth of the total employment. It's about 1.8 million square feet built-up manufacturing space with modern, welfare-focused facilities," says Hussain of the Youngone factories at CEPZ.

The 10 companies at CEPZ have a 15,000-strong workforce, garnering orders from owners of some of the top brand names in the world. He has five other factories in the Savar (Dhaka) EPZ, employing another 7,000. Fabric products are at the top, followed by shoes, accessories, bags and other related products.

"It's possible to do business in Bangladesh," announces Kihak Sung. "There are problems though."

About problems, he tells the already-told stories. "Administrative delays and difficulty entail some opportunity costs. If they work more efficiently, more coherently, it's always better... yes, we would have been 3-4 years ahead with CEPZ," he says in response to persistent queries.

But he has his own calculations to cover up the extra costs borne out of the sloth and bottlenecks in the system. "It's the size of the project (KEPZ) that will sail us through."

So Kihak Sung will do it, testify his 'colleagues' - from sewing machine operator Shafiq to factory manager Zahedul Hoque.

While they vouch for their "Chairman" who joins them for the same subsidised lunch almost regularly in sprawling dining rooms inside the factory buildings, 25-year-old Sakila who stitches jackets has an air of unhappiness. Her pay package - Tk 2000 take-home plus Tk 280 conveyance, free lunch and free medical facility and a 8.33 per cent employer contribution to the provident fund - isn't just enough for meeting both ends.

But she didn't try other places "because the work environment here is so good."

It all comes as part of the management tactic defined by the Youngone chairman. "I would rather invest in my people," he says explaining why he has employed so many specialist doctors at the round-the-clock medical centres and ensured a jerry can of purified water for each of his workers.

It is this "work environment" and "management approach" that bring in those such as young Jafr Sabir, a deputy sales manager in one of the companies, who clearly sees his career path up the ladder in a set-up where "performance-based evaluation is guaranteed."

A business graduate from Dhaka's IBA, Sabir has done his year-long foundation training in Korea immediately after joining in 1995 and takes pride in being part of a high-tech corporate environment. "It's just a few buttons, and you are connected anywhere in Korea. We have our own V-SAT and it works magic."

"Even an operator on a training in Korea can get in touch with his/her family any time. All they have to do is come to our office. This phone is everywhere."

This element of magic also keeps the agile and athletic Omar Faruk going. The young graduate from a little-known Dhaka college is never tired of travelling with his "Chairman Sir", shuttling between Dhaka and Chittagong several times a week, flying his personal plane in most cases.

Kihak Sung lent his personal plane to relief work during the devastating flood last year and frequently offers it to evacuate a seriously ill worker for better treatment elsewhere.

And his investments in human resources are paying him off. Today, he has more and more Bangladeshi managers who can be posted out to assignments with his companies and offices in other countries.

Recently, he has taken up a three-year programme "to expel illiteracy from my factories". By 2002, there will be no illiterate people, he declares and quickly adds in an obvious reference to a recent donor-driven move: "In fact, illiteracy should be expelled first before talking about trade unions in EPZs."

His employees echo the chairman to the extent that they "hate" strikes and were unwilling to welcome trade unions. "It means extra costs for me. I have to pay more for travel to work," says Zahedul Hoque. For Kihak Sung, the EPZs

are good, better than other places, but not good enough. "That's why I am having my own EPZ... to set examples for others to follow."

But then, will he relocate all his factories from the two government-run EPZs to his own on the other side of the Karnaphuli? "No, the question doesn't arise," he says and adds jokingly: "I am not as competent to take the land with all the employees to Korea."

But wherever he is located, he says, he is committed to creating a "clear, environmental and functional production system". Waste water treatment plants, when necessary, are just part of his manufacturing units while his neighbours drain toxic water to adjacent canals. He declares that the KEPZ is not going to be just real estate development.

Promising more than govt EPZs

All fiscal, non-fiscal incentives, benefits and concessional facilities available to the investors in the government EPZs are also available to the investors in KEPZ," he says pointing to the provisions of the Private Export Processing Zone Act 1996. "And KEPZ is kept to offer further services and incentives to investors based on its long and vast experience of operating in similar facilities around the world."

"It will be open to eligible investors from all over the world with priority given to Bangladeshi investors seeking joint venture opportunities," says Kihak Sung of his dream project which is expected to be in business by next year while development will continue in phases.

As he offers hopes, there is no hype from the 52-year-old man about what he has planned. It's just any other venture he has started from the scratch.

The KEPZ will grow on a barren, non-arable piece of land, displacing only 425 families from nine villages at the confluence of three tharas (administrative sub-districts), a location just three kilometres from the country's main sea port.

And none of the displaced have been reported unhappy. "Each of the families was compensated adequately. They have welcomed the project unlike many similar situations in Bangladesh. But the local people would be expecting preferential treatment for employment," says Moazzem Hossain, a Dhaka-based journalist who hails from project-affected village Daulatpur and has lost his land to the Kihak Sung venture.

"We are not killing any rice fields," the Korean entrepreneur says with his trademark touch of humour, referring to the CEPZ, set up on arable land.

The popular support apart, nature is perhaps backing the project most. The high land dotted with hills has never been affected by flooding, according to recorded history. "We have analysed the flood data in the 100 years. We'll be 1.5 metres or 5 feet above the highest flood level recorded. Even in the worse case scenario, such as when the second-floor of a building in Halishahar residential area or Agrabad commercial area is under water, it will only reach our level," says Salahuddin, one of the site engineers.

And the hills will protect the lives and establishments from cyclones, the constant fear in the sea side locations in Bangladesh.

So Kihak Sung did not mind paying for the land as soon as the government was ready hand it over to him. He paid Tk 64.5 crore in cash - Tk 40 crore for the land and the rest for compensation. Transfer fees will cost another five crore or so.

But one issue makes him uncomfortable. There has been suggestion from some government officials that he continue to pay an annual levy for the land he has bought.

For a businessman whose many manufacturing units greet visitors with sculptors' work on both sides of the entrance and fascinating terra colta reflecting Bangladesh's culture inside the clean factory premises, it's not a smooth pill to swallow.

Five pedestrians hurt as terrorists clash in city

By Staff Correspondent

At least five pedestrians, including a child and a woman, suffered bomb injuries when two groups of terrorists clashed at Maniknagar under Shabubagh thana in the city yesterday afternoon.

The feuding groups chased each other and exploded crackers near Nasir Hotel at around 1:20 pm. Of the injured, three were identified as Julia, 8, Ayesha Begum, 30, and Namdu Mia, 60. They were admitted to Dhaka Medical College Hospital, hospital sources said. "It means extra costs for me. I have to pay more for travel to work," says Zahedul Hoque. For Kihak Sung, the EPZs



Obaidul Kader, State Minister for Youth, Sports and Cultural Affairs, inaugurated a three-day long photo exhibition on 8th SAF games at the auditorium of Bangladesh Photojournalists' Association yesterday. — Star photo

'Concerted efforts must to consolidate democracy'

Participants at a roundtable yesterday said all concerned should work for consolidating democracy to frustrate any eventual looming of autocratic forces in the country, reports BSS.

They said rational behaviour of both the ruling party and the opposition, and mutual tolerance and trust are the cornerstones for survival and growth of democracy.

Bengali daily Ajker Kagoj organised the roundtable, "Democracy in Bangladesh," at its office here.

Former VC of Dhaka University Dr Moniruzzaman Mia, former VC