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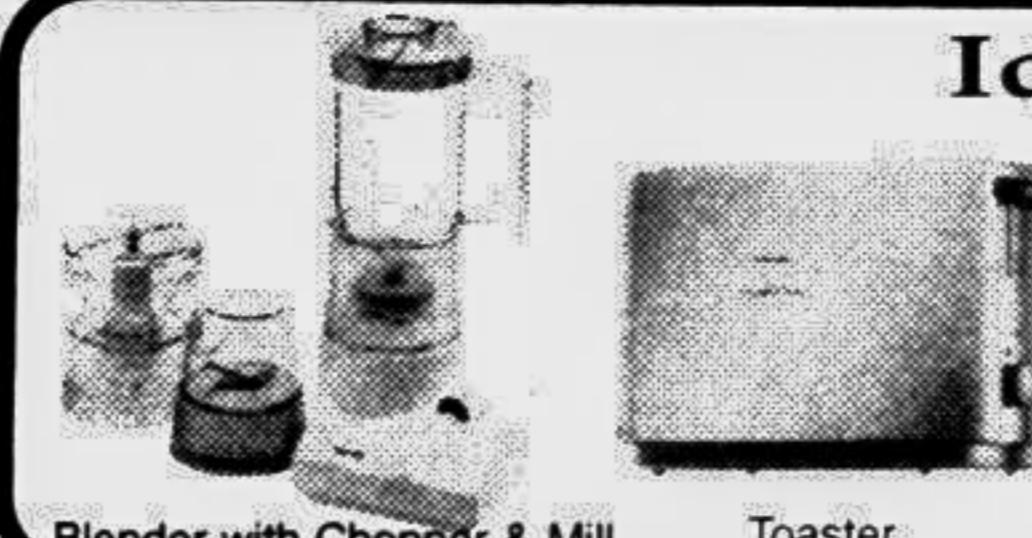
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PHILIPS

No decision yet on allocating gamchha

By Staff Correspondent

The government has not yet communicated anything to the Election Commission about the latter's proposal to replace two election symbols, pan and ship, with gamchha and shirt.

"We are yet to receive any response from the Ministry of Law regarding our proposal for replacing the election symbols," said a high official of the Commission yesterday.

The EC sent the proposal for vetting by the ministry in the first week of this month. "We are still thinking over the issue," a law ministry official told this correspondent yesterday.

Earlier, expelled Awami League leader Abdul Kader Siddique, who is contesting parliamentary by-election in Tangail-8 constituency, had requested the Chief Election Commissioner to allocate him gamchha (a type of thin cotton towel) as his election symbol. CEC Mohammad Abu Hena assured him that he would consider the request.

There are 140 registered elec-

Declarer me unfit
for questioning,
Shikdar roars
at doctors

From Staff Correspondent
KHULNA, Oct 24: Ersahid Shikdar has threatened the doctors who have been checking up his health regularly since formation of the three-member medical board, headed by the civil surgeon, Khulna.

One of the doctors was threatened on Friday for prescribing antacid and paracetamol tablets for mild temperature and light pain in his body, according to a source in Khulna Metropolitan Police (KMP).

"Why don't you declare me unfit for appearing before the interrogators? I will teach you what is medical science", Shikdar threatened the doctor.

"There is no power on earth to detain me this way. After the transfer of Police Commissioner Anwarul Iqbal, I will again emerge as powerful as before and then show you that the world moves round the sun."

The doctor who went to Daulatpur thana to check him up may withdraw himself from the board out of fear, the source said.

Shikdar has denied the charge of giving bribe to Deputy Commissioner Abdullah Azad Chowdhury of KMP. "None of the present DCs took bribe from me, nor did I get any chance to offer them as they made my underground life miserable and left no alternative but to surrender", Shikdar said during interrogation. "He chased me like a street dog during my days of hiding".

Another source in KMP claimed that Shikdar was trying to blackmail police officials to divert their attention from investigation. "I will bring charge of taking bribe if you torture me during interrogation", one of the interrogators quoted Shikdar as saying.

Police are looking for the masons and carpenters who were involved in the construction of Swarnakamal, Shikdar's palatial residence, the sources said.

NOTHING SECRET ABOUT IT

Circulation of a newspaper is open and transparent all over the world. In Bangladesh, assessing the actual figure is never easy. There appears to be something secretive about it. Prothom Alo has decided to reveal the Exact Figures.

Today PROTHOM ALO's

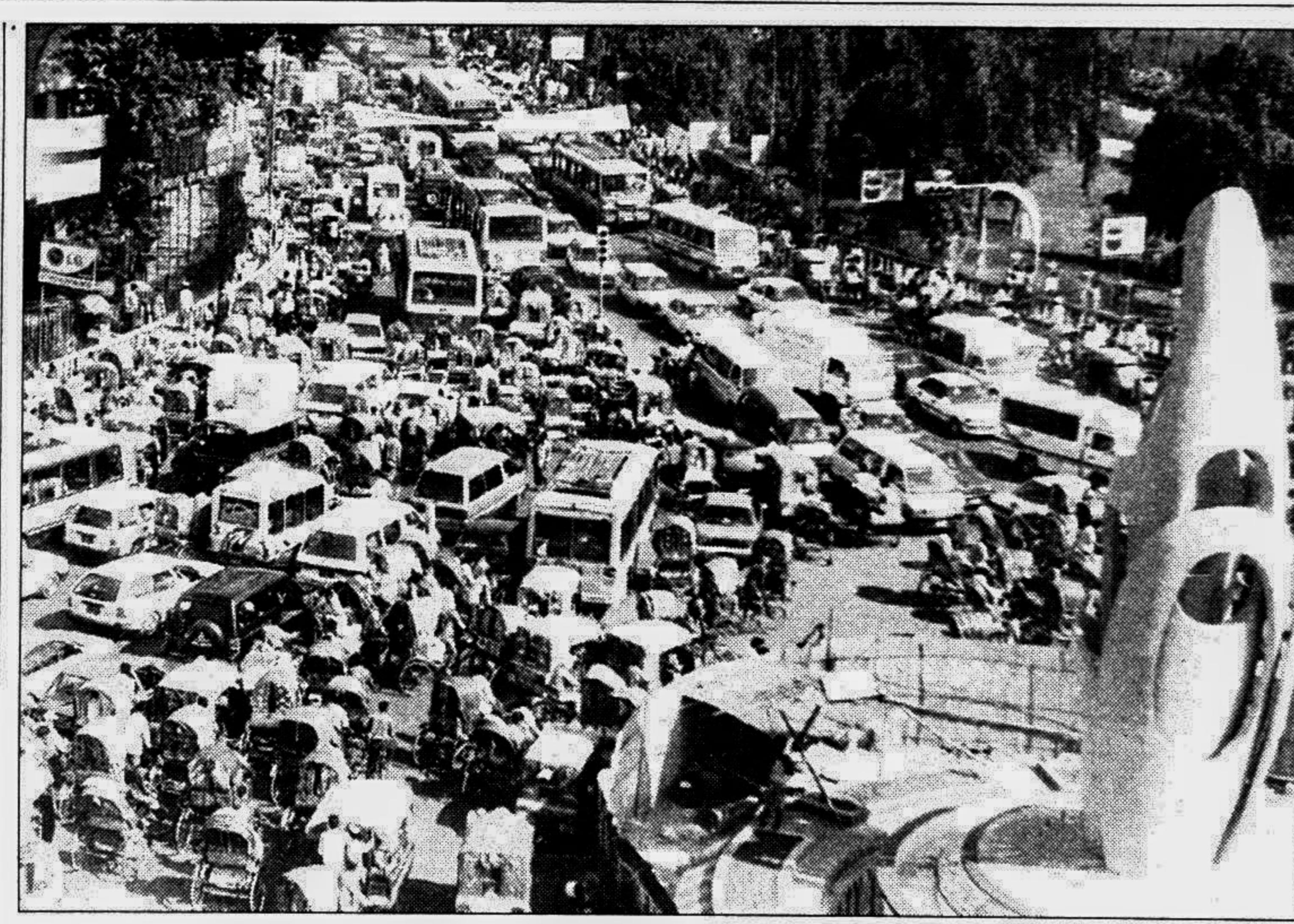
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Traffic chaos is back in the city after a four-day 'holiday' that included a full-day hartal, Hindu festival Durga Puja and the usual weekend.

— Star photo

Ad-interim bail to Shahida Obaid extended

By Staff Correspondent

A Division Bench of the High Court yesterday ordered police not to arrest or harass Prof. Shaheda Obaid, allegedly involved in a plot to kill the Prime Minister, until a full length hearing of a petition for an anticipatory bail on November 9.

"This is an extension of the order of the Vacation Bench comprising Justice Sirajul Islam that gave the same instruction to police on October 18," said Advocate Mabubur Rahman, who appeared for Shaheda Obaid. "The order amounts to interim relief having the effect of an anticipatory bail."

In his order, Justice Islam had also said that the order would remain valid till the next hearing of the petition after reopening of the court on October 24.

A recent news item, released by state run news agency BSS, claimed that one Shaheed Chowdhury, now in custody, told police that he had several meetings with Shaheda Obaid on a plot to kill the PM and 30 other dignitaries.

Advocate Mahbubur Rahman argued in the court that her name was not there in the FIR. It, therefore, seems that a conspiracy is being hatched up to implicate her in the case only to harass her in the name of interrogation."

They said stones were pelted at the jeep near Natun Bazar from the procession, but none was hurt.

BNP leaders AKM Mosharraf Hossain, MP, and Fazlul Rahman Sultan have protested the arrest of Shahidul Haq and demanded his immediate release.

Award a block to BAPEX, JS body recommends

By Staff Correspondent

The Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Undertakings yesterday recommended that the Energy Ministry award a block to Bangladeshi oil and gas exploration company BAPEX.

A meeting which mainly discussed the gas sector, the Committee headed by Imran Ahmed raised a number of questions to Petrobangla and Energy Ministry officials regarding oil and gas exploration, gas reserve and other burning issues.

A Petrobangla audit report that raised objections to the expenditure of Tk 2300 crore by its different departments and subsidiaries was placed before the Committee.

The audit report, prepared by Petrobangla's vigilance team, raised questions on the expenditure of around Tk 1200 crore by Titas Gas Ltd and Tk 700 crore by Petrobangla itself.

The report also raised objections regarding the spending relatively smaller amounts of money by other subsidiaries including Bakhrabad, Jalalabad, Sylhet Gasfields etc. Of these, the questioned expenditure by Bakhrabad is Tk 190 crore.

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From Our Correspondent
SIRAJGANJ, Oct 24: A housewife and her young daughter suffered acid burns when a gang of miscreants threw acid on them at their Haribhanga residence in the town in the early hours of today.

The victims identified as Ayesha Khatun, 40, wife of Refat Paramonik, and her daughter Sheuly Khatun, 22, in Ullahpara thana of Sirajganj district.

Police and hospital sources said a gang of seven came their house at about 12.15 am and then threw acid on their faces as soon as Ayesha opened the door.

The reason behind the attack could not be known immediately.

Neighbours rushed them to the Sirajganj General Hospital.

A case was lodged with Ullahpara thana in this connection but police failed to arrest any of the accused till yesterday.

Hearing in Humayun Zahir Murder Case Nov 8

The Metropolitan Session's judge court in the city yesterday fixed November 8 to hear the arguments in Humayun Zahir Murder Case, reports BSS.

All accused, including Akeruzzaman Chowdhury Babu, were present before the court during the hearing.

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Gas explosion kills 18 in Pakistan

LAHORE, Pakistan, Oct 24:

At least 18 people have been killed and dozens others injured in a gas explosion in Pakistan, officials said Sunday, reports AFP.

According to witnesses cited by police, the blast occurred late Saturday in the town of Toba Tek Singh in the central province of Punjab when workers were digging up a gas pipeline.

Eleven workers died in a supply station which was gutted in the fire, a police official said.

Seven others died later in hospital, including five women and two children, he said.

Officials, who described the blast as accidental, said five labourers were still missing.

The explosion produced an enormous fireball which prompted the evacuation of several hundred people from nearby houses, a police spokesman said.

Officials said the fire destroyed 170 houses in several localities. At least two cars, five trucks and about a dozen motorbikes were also gutted, they said.

Police have cordoned off the area which presented a gloomy picture as wailing residents gathered near smouldering homes to mourn their losses, they said.

Rescue workers were engaged in digging through the debris amid fears some people might still be trapped.

Pak coup leader leaves for KSA, UAE today

By Staff Correspondent

ISLAMABAD, Oct 24: Pakistan's new military leader's first official visit will be to Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, according to a foreign ministry statement issued today, reports AP.

Gen Pervez Musharraf will leave Monday, less than two weeks after staging a bloodless coup to overthrow Pakistan's elected government.

During his two-day visit to Saudi Arabia, Musharraf will perform Umra, a Muslim pilgrimage to Islam's holy sites, and hold talks with Saudi King Fahad bin Abdul Aziz Al-Saud.

There was no information on what the two men will discuss. He also will meet Saudi Crown Prince Abdullah bin Abdul Aziz Al-Saud.

Saudi Arabia was one of the first country's to send official greetings to Musharraf following the coup. Most international leaders have criticised Musharraf's delay in announcing a timeframe for elections.

Power sector

From page 12

The meeting also discussed different aspects of a 600 million dollar project earlier offered by the WB for power infrastructure development.

The meeting ended inconclusively, said a source, adding that the WB team would stay in Dhaka till next Friday and would continue to hold meetings with officials from different departments.

The WB team will meet the Power Secretary today.

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DU classes resume today

Classes of the Dhaka University will resume today after eight-day Puja vacation, university sources said, reports BSS.

ATTENTION DESIGNERS, BOUTIQUE & FASHION HOUSES

Welcome to The Daily Star Fashion Album 2000

As the Eid approaches, The Daily Star prepares itself for the big occasion: This year as usual The Daily Star Fashion Catalogue 2000 will feature dresses and saris selected by a panel of judges. The album works as a source book for both buyers and sellers. Designers, boutique and fashion houses are invited to participate in this fashion extravaganza.

How to send your saris and dress materials? Dresses and saris will be considered for selection under seven groups according to their prices.

1. Group A : Sari : Price range 3500 Taka and above
2. Group B : Sari : Price range between 2000 & 3500 Taka
3. Group C : Sari : Price range between 1000 & 2000 Taka
4. Group A : Salwar-kameez : Price range up to 3500 taka and above
5. Group B : Salwar-kameez : Price range between 2000 & 3500 Taka
6. Group C : Salwar-kameez : Price range between 1000 & 2000 Taka
7. Men's wear price range : up to 1000 taka

The Daily Star will nominate seven saris and dresses from each group. The nominated items will feature in our Fashion Album 2000 with colour photographs plus write-ups describing the fashion wears and their creators.

Today is the last day to send in your fashion wears and saris for nomination.

Rules and regulations

- A. The dresses and saris should express the mood of the festival. The materials used for saris and dresses should be locally produced. The design should be original and the material suitable for our weather and environment friendly.
- B. Information about the fashion house and price should accompany the dresses. In case of saris name of the weavers should be mentioned.
- C. The dresses and saris send in for the Album are returnable.
- D. The dresses and saris will be accepted for submission with properly filled up forms attached to the letters of invitation.
- E. There will be an entry fee of taka 100.
- F. Send your fashion wears and saris to the office of weekly 2000 (mentioned below) between 10 am and 4 pm.

Ziaul Karim
Chief Coordinator

EID FASHION ALBUM 2000

2 0 0 0

96/97 New Eskaton Road, Dhaka-1000, Tel : 9350951-3, Fax : 9350954, E-mail : s2000@bangla.net

Bilby Hoque
Chief Organiser

Flare test of Kalachhara well completed

From Iqbal Siddique

SYLHET, Oct 24: Flare test of the newly drilled well at Kalachhara was completed Tuesday afternoon.

People around the location became panicky as a huge fire was seen from several kilometres away during the flare tests.

Inhabitants of the Moulibazar town, which is about 20 kilometres away also saw the flame of the fire. They remembered the horrifying blow-out in the Magurchara well in June 1997.

Drilling of