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MRANGS GROU

VOL. X NO. 10 REGD. NO. DA 781

www.dailystarnews.com

DHAKA SUNDAY JANUARY 23, 2000

3rd Millennium

MAGH 10, 1406 BS

SHAWAL 15, 1420 HIJRI

16 PAGES PRICE: TAKA 6.00

Two die after

taking alcohol

in city

By Staff Correspondent

taking alcohol in separate inci-

as Kala Chan Goswami, 30, of

Baharpur of Rajbari and Nikhil

dents in the city last night.

Sarker, 40.

for autopsy

2 am yesterday.

Two young men died after

The victims were identified

Hospital sources said Kala

was found unconscious in a

room of a residential hotel at

BCC Road on Thursday. He was

sent to the Dhaka Medical Col-

lege Hospital in an intoxicated

condition. He died at the DMCH

at about 3 am yesterday. The

body was sent to DMCH morgue

In another incident, Nikhil

was sent to the DMCH in an in-

toxicated state by the employee

of a hotel at Waizghat in old

Dhaka. He died at the DMCH at

witnesses said Nikhil drunk

along with his friends at the ho-

tel room. He suddenly fell sick.

He died soon after admission to

the hospital. The body was sent

to DMCH morgue for autopsy.

Hospital sources quoting

Opposition rallies in city today

By Staff Correspondent

The BNP-led opposition alliance will announce a fresh agitation programme from separate public meetings in the city

BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia. Jamaat-e-Islami Ameer Golam Azam and Islami Oikya Jote chief Azizul Haq will announce the programme from their respective public meetings at Paltan Maidan, north gate of Baitul Mukarram and Purana Paltan this afternoon.

The Jatiya Party has postponed its today's programme because the party Chairman HM Ershad will appear before a court in connection with Major Gen Manjur Murder Case. The party has decided to announce the identical programme through a press statement.

Central Liaison Committee of the alliance at a meeting yesterday finalised fresh programme but fresh hartal in this month is unlikely because of a three-day Biswa Ijtema beginning on January 29.

Held at 29 Minto Road with BNP secretary general Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan in the chair, the meeting decided to stage countrywide demonstrations before the litema and mass processions in the first week of February to protest government's move to enact a 'black law in the name of Public Safety Act.

Sources said tougher pro-. See Page 12 Col 8

BNP likely to reply to Speaker's letter today

By Staff Correspondent BNP will reply to the Speaker's third letter to the Leader of the Opposition in Parliament requesting her party to return to the House.

Deputy Leader of the Opposition Prof AQM Badrudosza Chowdhury told the reporters at 29 Minto Road yesterday that they had finalised the reply and opposition Chief Whip Khandaker Delwar Hossain would reply to the letter on behalf of Khaleda Zia.

Speaker Humayun Rasheed Chowdhury wrote the third letter to the opposition leader on January 13.

The BNP, JP and Jamaat MPs have been abstaining from attending parliament session since June last year alleging that the government was not allowing them to speak in the

Talking to newsmen, Khandaker Delwar, who replied the previous two letters, said that the reply was expected to be handed to the Speaker today.

Replying to a question, he expressed frustration over the role of the Speaker, saying that he (Speaker) had shunned his responsibility by refraining from touching the BNP's 'fiveprecondition 'deliberately'.

He said, 'our contention has already been communicated to the Speaker in the previous two

Earlier, Badrudozza Chowdhury, Khandaker Delwar Hossain and Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan had a brief meeting with party chairperson Khaleda Zia at 29 Minto Road and 'finalised the reply'.

- Inside Today —

Article

Internet Economy will Surpass Industrial Revolution

Column: Connecting the Dots by Dr A R Choudhury Page 4

Business

Dhaka, Delhi sign MOU on agri cooperation

G7 calls for balanced global growth DSE, CSE price quotations

Pages 6, 7 & 8

Prayer Timings January 23 Jamaat Azan Fajr 5-40 6-10 Zohr 12-45 1-15 4-15 4-00 Maghrib 5-40 5.45 7-15 7-45

Source: Islamic Foundation

PM renews dialogue offer, ready to talk any issue

Khaleda to address business conference tomorrow

By Staff Correspondent

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday renewed her dialogue offer to the Leader of the Opposition in Parliament for discussing any issue including Opposition's one-point demand for resignation of the government.

The PM's fresh offer came at the inaugural session of a twoday Businessmen's Conference in the city where business leaders said any concession by the government to bring the Opposition to a dialogue to resolve the political impasse would be rewarded by the nation.

The business leaders also expressed serious concern over

deteriorating law and order and said it is linked with political unrest. They urged the government to ensure security of people, which is their fundamental

The Prime Minister said, "I am ready to sit with the Leader of the Opposition at any place she chooses. She can raise any issue including their one-point demand for resignation of my government. If necessary, it will be broadcast live over television and radio.

"Even, we can sit for a dialogue before an audience, and I am ready to take any question from them," she told country's top business leaders at the packed Osmany Memorial Auditorium.

Federation of Bangladesh Chamber of Commerce and Industry (FBCCI) organised the conference to bring the government and the Opposition together to end their stand-

Leader of the Opposition in Parliament and BNP chief Khaleda Zia will address the conference tomorrow.

"But unilateral initiative will not solve any problem if the other side does not come up with a positive mind", the Prime Minister and President

of ruling Awami League said. She recalled her earlier dialogue offers to the Leader of the Opposition. "I called the Leader of the Opposition over telephone, but I couldn't reach her.

She urged the business leaders to play their role even if her attempts to resolve the political impasse fail due to "negative attitude" of the Opposition. "You (businessmen) have to keep your offices and shops open if the Opposition calls hartal even

She did not call me back even

for the sake of courtesy,"

after my repeated attempts for See Page 12 Col 4



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at the inaugural session of the Businessmen's Conference at Osmani Memorial Hall in the city yesterday. - Star photo

'Campus violence will vanish if student wings abolished'

President's call for govt-opposition consensus

By Staff Correspondent

President Shahabuddin Ahmed has said if both the 'government and the main opposition agree to abolish their students wings and completely issociate from the students oranisations', campus violence will automatically vanish. "Violence on university

campuses, which stand in the way of good education for our students, is an issue on which I have been expressing my alarm all through. The President was address-

ing the launching ceremony of two books by Finance Minister SAMS Kibria at Osmany Memorial Auditorium in the city vesterday. There should be consensus among the main political par-

ties — both ruling and opposi-

tion — on this and other vital

national issues, he stressed. Referring to the two books -Bangladesh at the Crossroads and The Emerging New World Order - the President said in many of the articles Kibria has expressed his concern about the

India to fence

remaining

portion of border

NEW DELHI, Jan 22: Prime

Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee

today said his government has

decided to fence the remaining

portion of the Indo-Bangladesh

border in the north-east and

construct border roads at an es-

timated cost of Rs 1,335 crore,

Work on this project will be-

gin in April this year, the Prime

Minister said at a rally in

Shillong, according to the text

of the Prime Minister's speech

10,271 crore central "agenda"

for socio-economic develop-

ment of the north-eastern re-

gion of India at a two-day con-

ference of the governors and

chief ministers of the region in

He said his government

would sanction three Indian re-

serve battalions (IRBS) one each

for Tripura, Mizoram and Ma-

nipur which, he added, was

likely to cost Rs 15 crore for

view of the peaceful atmosphere

in Mizoram, his government

has allocated Rs 180 crore to

cover its financial crisis.

border trading points.

The Prime Minister said in

In banking sector, he said,

Rs 500 crore would be given for

rural infrastructure develop-

ment fund (RIDF). Banking fa-

cilities would be provided at all

Vajpayee announced a Rs

reports BSS.

released here.

Shillong.

three years.

future of democracy and the direction of civil society in Bangladesh. "There is no doubt that these issues still continue to be matters of big concern for

ciety is a precondition for helping democracy take its roots and this can develop only if the citizens are exposed to good books, he said. Shahabuddin went on, "I

understand that readership of books has been on a decline. This, as I find, is more so in the cases of political leaders and workers. If they keep themselves busy in criticising and rebuking each other all the time, how will they manage the time to read books that comes handy in times of need?"

The President mentioned that the University Press Limited had earned reputation by publishing useful and quality books in different disciplines of knowledge and established itself as a national institution. Speaking on the occasion,

Patients receiving radiation

therapy could be subjected to

dangerous overdoses, since

most hospitals and diagnostic

centres don't comply with ra-

Parliament passed a law in

1993 placing all radiation

sources under the control of the

Atomic Energy Commission.

Dhaka's cancer institute is the

only licensed public sector

body. Most private centres are

allocated money so hospitals

can obtain a licence, which is

quite a huge amount," said a

"However, the financial aspects

commission's director of radi-

ation control, said the com-

mission couldn't implement

the law immediately since it

didn't know how many ma-

15 to determine the locations,

weaknesses, problems and

other relevant matters. The

survey, in six divisional head-

12 volumes, has already been

"We started a survey on May

chines were in the country.

Dr. Kazi Obaidul Awal, the

health ministry official.

are being dealt with.

"The government has not

diation safety regulations.

Kibria said that there was no substitute for a national consensus for economic develop-"I believe in non-inflation-

ary growth and I wrote about it I have faith in the rule of social The habit of reading in a sojustice, which I wrote in my books," he said. "We must have common strategies for serving the poor." Earlier, Editor of The Daily

Star Mahfuz Anam, Vice Chancellor of Dhaka University Prof AK Azad Chowdhury, Director General of Bangla Academy Dr Syed Anwar Hossain and former foreign secretary AKH Morshed discussed different aspects of the books. Of the two books,

Bangladesh at the Crossroads deals with political, economic and cultural issues as well as various problems facing the civil society. The other book -

The Emerging New World Order - focuses on contemporary world events as viewed from the So th Asian perspective.

completed," said Awal. "By year

end we expect to submit a total

of 84 volumes of information

on the radiation machines in

the country which will ulti-

mately give us a complete pic-

ment used in hospitals, diag-

nostic centres and clinics in-

clude cobalt therapy machines

and simulators. There is also

There are over 400 unli-

"We've asked the commerce

censed X-ray machines scat-

ministry repeatedly to allow us

to conduct safety inspections,"

said Awal. "Companies have

been importing X-ray machines

without our approval for quite a

a shortage of trained radiation

technicians and medical physi-

cists in hospitals. This means

there are few people who know

how to measure a dose of radia-

Doses or radiation exceeding

prescribed levels can damage

tion or operate the sophisti-

cated equipment properly.

illnesses, such as cancer.

Unfortunately, there is also

The most common equip-

ture of the situation."

one linear accelerator.

tered across the country.

long time.

quarters and Natore district in healthy cells and lead to serious

Over 400 unlicensed

X-ray machines

No safety inspections

By Naimul Haq

'TU, transport leaders are toll collectors'

By Staff Correspondent

Home Minister Mohammad Nasim has cautioned the people that they might have to walk to their places of work for a month due to a possible transport strike.

The government is planning a crackdown on toll collectors in the transport sector, which might make transport workers call a strike, he told the Businessmen's Conference at Osmany Memorial Auditorium in the city yesterday.

"According to available information, trade unions and transport leaders are associated with the ring engaged in toll collection".

It is a practice with transport union leaders to call strike whenever government initiates any move against their vested interest. Nasim said . "But for the sake of the country and for preventing deterioration of law and order, we have to move ahead with bold measures. We seek your support and co-operation in this regard". He also said crimes could not

be curbed substantially as most of the offenders could not be kept behind the bar for long. "The problem did not arise overnight. We have to find a way to permanently solve the

problem. Arrest of a criminal is a temporary solution. For a See page 11 col 8

Bangladesh face Zimbabwe today

Sports Reporter Bangladesh take on Zimbabwe in their last Plate group league match of the World Youth (Under-19) Cricket Championship at the NCC ground in Colombo today. The match will determine the champions from Group One.

Bangladesh confirmed their place in the semifinals when they thrashed Kenya by 125 runs in Matara on Friday. After being thrown out of the Cup race on poor run rate, Bangladesh played their first Plate match against Namibia on January 19. The Hannan-led boys shot out Namibia for a tournamentlow 57 and then went on to overhaul the target losing three wickets.

The defending Plate champions are likely to field the same eleven that played against Zimbabwe. "I think I have got the right combination after playing four matches," said coach Dipu Rai Chowdhury.

Bangladesh clinched the Plate in South Africa, beating strong West Indies two years back. We are confident to retain our title. We are not only thinking about Zimbabwe but also looking ahead for a place in the final," said skipper Hannan on Friday.

Dhaka-Agartala bus service agreed By Diplomatic Correspondent

Mosque cordoned off to

arrest armed cadres

of Jamaat, Shibir

From Staff Correspondent

Bangladesh and India have decided to introduce bus service between Dhaka and Agartala, capital of India's eastern state of Tripura. Train service between Be-

napole on the Bangladesh side and Petrapole on the Indian side would also be resumed shortly. Moves are also underway to have direct train links between the two neighbours. This was disclosed by Indian

State Minister for External Affairs Minister Ajit Panja, while talking to newsmen at the state guest house "Padma" prior to his departure on conclusion of a three-day visit to Bangladesh. This was the first trip by an

Indian minister since the installation of the new BJP government in New Delhi last Oc-

The Indian minister said that running the Dhaka-Agartala bus service is a part of an everall idea of opening multimodal communication links

between the two countries. He

KHULNA, Jan 22: Over two

hundred riot police have cor-

doned off Tarer Pukur Jame

dred armed cadres and activists

of Jamaat and Islami Chhatra

A high official of the KMP

said that all the activists in the

mosque would be arrested at

any cost for launching attack

on policemen during a proces-

Two policemen, including SI

The confined people include

Abdur Rashid, were severely in-

former MP Shah Mohammad

Ruhul Quddus and top ranking

leaders of city Jamaat and

According to police and wit-

nesses, police fired 13 rounds of

blank shots and tear gas shells

procesionists when they hurled

bombs targeting police vans

near the residence of city AL

president Manzurul Imam on

One of the bombs directly hit

Shamsur Rahman Road.

to disperse the Jamaat Shibir

sion this evening.

jured in the attack.

Shibir

Mosque to arrest over one hun-

however said that the opening of bus and other surface communication links would enable the development of regional communication and help movement of people and goods to Bhutan, Nepal and Myan-"The opening of multi-

modal communication links would provide a unified communication network and enable goods and people to move economically and more comfortably". Ajit Panja said. The opening of the Dhaka-

Agartala bus service would now give direct access for passengers from India to travel to the eastern state of Tripura via the Bangladesh capital. Last year, the two countries

initiated the Dhaka-Calcutta bus service. The modalities for the new

bus service between the two countries would now be worked Panja said both sides had

Khulna thana seriously. They

lice and Jamaat-Shibir ac-

tivists were locked in fierce

clash at Shantidhsm square.

During the clash over one hun-

dred activists took shelter at

the mosque at the time of Ma-

mosque confining the Jamaat-

Shibir activists there.

Police soon cordoned off the

The mosque remained be-

sieged by riot police led by the

DC (South) Mazharul Islam till

filing of this report till 8 pm to-

Magrib prayers were not also

allowed to come out of the

mosque and none was allowed

to go there also for saying 'Esha'

and Shibir have also been kept

under surveillance apprehend-

hinted to swing into action af-

ter failing to convince the be-

ing counter attack on police.

The local offices of Jamaat

A high official of KMP

Devotees who were saying

Few minutes later, both po-

were admitted to hospital

grib prayers.

One shot by extortionists in city See page 11 Col7 By Staff Correspondent

A youngman was shot by extortionists at Nayatola under Ramna thana in the city yester-The victim was identified as

Mahbubur Rahman Babu, 28, son of Golam Mawla of Naya-The incident occurred at 4 pm when Babu was supervising

the construction work of his maternal uncle. The extortionists stopped the construction work as the owner of the house refused to pay them toll. Babu came in aid

of his uncle and started construction work. It angered extortionists Selim and Shipon. They shot Babu in his leg, hospital sources said. He was sent to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital yes-

Abducted jeweller rescued in Ctg: 2 held

From Staff Correspondent CHITTAGONG, Jan 22: The abducted jeweller was rescued by police from a house at Hill View Housing Society under Panchlaish thana this after-

Rajendra Roy, owner of a ewellery shop at KC Dey road in the city was kidnapped by alleged terrorists for Tk 10 lakh

as ransom two days ago, police Acting on a tip off, police rescued Rajendra from a room on the ground floor of a house at Hill View Housing Society guarded by two terrorists, police

said. Two persons identified as Nur Mohammad and Md Shafi, were arrested in this connec-Nikunja murder

Sohel to be questioned further

By Staff Correspondent CID police will hold Sohel, a suspect in the Nikunja Bihari

Debnath murder case, for at least two more days, according to official sources. Sohel was taken into custody on the basis of Shukur Ali's judicial statement, which

Debnath, 55 joint secretary.

dence sculpture at the intersec-See page 11 Col7

Finance Minister Shah AMS Kibria (R) hands over the Second SAARC Golf Championship trophy to members of the victorious Indian team at the Senakunja last night. -Star photo



India retain SAARC golf title

India emerged victors overs Sri Lanka by a margin of 2-1 in the final to retain the SAARC Golf Championship at the Kurmitola Golf Club (KGC) yesterday, reports BSS. Ashok Kumar and Rahil

Gangjee beat Tissa Chandradasa and Anura Rohana respectively while Samarjeet Singh lost to Lalith Kumara. India won the inaugural title in Bangalore in January last

Pakistan became third followed by Bangladesh in fourth. See Page 12 Col 3

Dhanmondi lake Project remains stalled for lack of funds

a police van injuring SI Abdur sieged Jamaat and Shibir ac-

Rashid and a constable of tivists to surrender.

By Staff Correspondent had issued instructions to re-Despite ECNEC approval of a

Tk 16.62 crore revise | proposal nearly two months ago, work on the Dhanmondi lake development project has remained stalled due to lack of funds. Sources concerned said the

Planning Commission is yet to release the funds. Moreover, a member of the committee for the lake development project has failed to finalise a Tk 1.8 crore extended walkway component of the project.
Anisul Haq Chowdhury.

Member (Development) of the Planning Commission, said he would sit with the project officials concerned today and 'settle the matter'. About the delay in releasing funds, he said he saw no reason for delay. Besides, the Prime Minister

cover 98 kathas (about five bighas) of public land from 42 individuals but the authorities concerned are yet to take any step. The Public Works Department under the Works Ministry is supposed to go for the recovery process, but it has so far ignored several letters from the LGRD Ministry in this regard. Some vital components of

the project including the four km -long walkway are incom-Meanwhile, the project im-

plementation authorities have taken initiative to change some of the original project designs for what they said, fund constraint. For instance, instead of using ceramic bricks in some See Page 12 Col 8

suggested Ali and eight others were involved in the killing. of the ministry of LGRD, was stabbed to death by muggers near the Struggle for Indepen-