

The Daily Star

BUY NOW — PAY LATER

Whirlpool
HOME APPLIANCES
USA

Gas Cooker

Transcom Electronics Limited
Authorized distributor in Bangladesh for Whirlpool Appliances, USA

GENERATORS

MADE IN JAPAN by

MITSUBISHI
HEAVY INDUSTRIES, LTD.

RANGS GROUP

VOL. X NO. 51 REGD. NO. DA 781

www.dailystarnews.com

DHAKA SUNDAY MARCH 5, 2000

3rd Millennium

FALGOON 22, 1406 BS

ZILQAD 27, 1420 HJRI

16 PAGES PRICE : TAKA 6.00

Chief Justice says State must protect human rights

COMILLA, Mar 4: Chief Justice Latifur Rahman said today the state must protect human rights, since it is the highest authority, reports BSS.

"Protection of human rights should be the principal policy of a state. These can be ensured by establishing three factors, including fundamental rights, the rule of law and freedom of speech," said Rahman while speaking as chief guest at a seminar on "Human Rights and Role of Lawyers" at the district court premises.

Rahman said delayed justice in a country like Bangladesh constitutes a violation of human rights.

The judiciary is the most effective institution to protect human rights in this country," said Law Minister Abdul Matin Khasru, who also attended the seminar as special guest. The seminar was organised by Bangladesh Bar Council and Comilla District Bar Association.

Vice-Chairman of Bangladesh Bar Council, Amir-See page 11 Col7

Clinton's visit High-level meet reviews security measures

A high-level meeting at the Home Ministry yesterday reviewed the security measures to be adopted during US President Bill Clinton's visit to Dhaka and took some important decisions, reports UNB.

Chaired by the Home Minister Mohammad Nasim, the meeting was attended by IGP, high officials of the Home Ministry and chiefs of different intelligence agencies, said a press release.

It also discussed in details to stop toll collection in the cattle markets being set up for the coming Eid-ul-Azha and in other markets and decided to intensify police patrol.

The minister directed the officials concerned to take necessary steps for implementation of the decisions.

Our new numbers

19 Karwan Bazar, Dhaka-1215
Phones : 812 4944, 812 4955
& 812 4966
Fax: 812 5155

Inside Today

Article

UNCTAD conference

Bangkok Declaration: Full of Sound, Not Much Fury

by A M M Shahabuddin
Page 4

Law and Our Rights

International Women's Day: Notes from history, and Restore the dignity of repressed women
Page 9

Supplement

One page supplement on 'BDR Week-2000' on Page 8

Business

Banks need to shoulder risks for collateral-free loans: Kibria

DSE, CSE price quotations
Pages 6 & 7

Prayer Timings

March 5		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	5:20	5:50
Zohr	12:45	1:20
Asr	8:45	5:00
Maghrib	6:05	6:08
Esha	7:30	8:00

Source: Islamic Foundation

Food aid to dip to a record low

Ministry expects only 5 lakh MTs in 2000-01

By Reaz Ahmed

Food aid to Bangladesh dipped to a new low with the European Commission's (EC) new food security strategy taking a final shape.

The food ministry projected a food aid volume of only five lakh metric tons (MTs) in the upcoming 2000-2001 fiscal, lowest in 20 years, said sources.

Bangladesh's projected food aid volume for the current fiscal (1999-2000) was nine lakh 92,000 MTs and the volume was 12 lakh 33,000 in 1998-99, the sources added.

They said in spite of the success of the government in targeting food distribution and the demonstrated benefits of direct food distribution, food aid to Bangladesh has declined over time.

EC used to contribute almost one-fourth of the total food aid volume to Bangladesh annually. The EC decision to introduce the 2000-2002 food security cycle with lesser food and more cash has its toll on food aid flow to Bangladesh.

Out of 80 million euro made available for the three-year cycle, EC plans to channel an overwhelming amount of 61

million euro in cash while only 19 million euro in food.

Again, this food aid would come in a 'slowing sequence' - 10 million euro in the first year, six million in second year and only three million in final year.

Paul Dorosh, representative of the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI), said Bangladesh could have six lakh MTs of food instead of five lakh MTs in 2000-2001 provided EC does not switch over to cash aid.

However, EC would definitely channel the same amount of aid but not in food; rather in cash," added Dorosh.

The government is taking time before embarking on a formal food security agreement with the European Commission against the backdrop of declining food aid flow.

There has not been a formal agreement as yet although two months have gone by since a fresh three-year cycle of the EC's food security programme began.

The food ministry still prefers the donors to channel aid in development projects in

terms of food instead of cash.

Official sources said Bangladesh is well poised to take up the challenges of reduced food aid, as its granaries are full of paddy with successive bumper crops.

But if same level of domestic stock can not be maintained and if other donors also follow the EC suit, Bangladesh would not feel comfortable, they said, pointing to the fact that Bangladesh is still a food-deficit country.

A high-level EC delegation had series of meetings in late February but, sources said, it might take a bit of a time than anticipated to convince the government about new EC food security strategy.

Paul Webber, director general (Development) of EC headquarters in Brussels, said Tuesday, "We've met your prime minister, finance minister, food minister and also the officials at the Economic Relations Division and assured that the level of aid would be the same, no matter it comes in terms of food or money".

Before leaving Dhaka, Webber-See page 11 Col 8

Khaleda warns of bringing new faces in leadership

By Staff Correspondent

BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia has warned of bringing new faces in the front line if the present leadership at various levels fails to strengthen the party and intensify the ongoing movement.

From now on, I will bring worthy people in the leadership and give them responsibility to carry on party activities if the present leadership fails to discharge its duties properly and keeps away from party programmes," she said.

The Leader of the Opposition in Parliament was addressing the newly elected office bearers of the city BNP and its leaders and activists at her official residence yesterday.

Khaleda Zia said she does not like the leaders who pose for photographs, quit the spot and gather at her residence

when a hartal ends.

A 294-member Dhaka City Committee of BNP was formed on Thursday with Sadek Hossain Khoka MP as President and Abdus Salam as General Secretary.

Without mentioning any name, the BNP chief said there are many leaders in the party who do not take part in party programmes actively, quit the spot after posing for photographs and come here (her residence) when the programmes end.

"I want to see the leaders work for the party and participate actively in the street movement," she said.

Khaleda Zia said she has confidence in the new leadership of BNP city unit because they have passed the test of time

See page 11 Col 8

BNP standing body discusses future action programmes

By Staff Correspondent

A meeting of the BNP Standing Committee yesterday reviewed the political situation and discussed future action programmes and strategies.

Held at 29 Mintia Road with BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia in the chair, the meeting discussed strengthening of the party activities and bringing changes in different front organisations.

Sources said the meeting stressed the need for holding of council of BNP's district and thana units, front organisations' central bodies to bring more dynamism.

Members of the committee suggested dissolution of present committees of the front organisations, including the Jubo Dal, Chhatra Dal, Jasas and Sechhashebak Dal, and form new committees to bring fresh leadership.

See page 11 Col7



Shad Ershad (below), and the victim (above) being taken to court yesterday. — Star photo

Abduction Ershad's son on remand

By Staff Correspondent

Shad Ershad, 16, son of Jatiya Party chief and former president HM Ershad, was placed on a two-day police remand for his alleged involvement in the abduction of a teenage girl on Thursday.

Shad was arrested by Gulshan police yesterday morning from their residence and later shifted to Cantonment police station, sources concerned said.

The victim was identified as daughter of a businessman in Gulshan.

In a judicial statement in the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's Court, Dhaka, yesterday, the girl accused Shad of kidnapping her from a Gulshan market, police said.

She was sent back to her parent Friday afternoon, police added.

Her father lodged an FIR with Gulshan police under the Women and Children Repression Prevention Act 2000 on Friday.

In the FIR he said, "Three unknown boys came in a car - Dhaka Metro Ga 12-1177 - and picked her up forcefully, put her in the car and fled away". She went to buy some medicine prescribed by her psychiatrist.

"My daughter aged about 14 is suffering from mental disease," the father said.

Sources close to Shad's family said there are many inconsistencies in the FIR and that they would challenge it in the court of law.

A source close to the girl's family said "She comes from a broken family and her father married again recently".

The girl's father could not be contacted even after repeated attempts.

Some JP leaders who are close to Ershad's family, however, claimed the victim frequently visited Ershad's residence and is a friend of Shad.

Ershad and Roushan Ershad

See page 11 Col 8



The monument portraying the nation's struggle from 1952-71 was inaugurated at the 'Bangabandhu Square' in the city yesterday. — Star photo

PM inaugurates monument at Bangabandhu Square in city

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina unveiled the plaque of an impressive monument yesterday at the historic Bangabandhu Square portraying the glorious struggle of the nation from 1952 to 1971, reports UNB.

The 11-meter high monument, designed in a bud with seven petals, symbolises the heroic struggle of the Bangladeshis, War of Independence and national unity.

The seven petals are the symbols of the nation's seven "Bir Shrestha" as well as an expression of seven milestones of struggle from the Language Movement of 1952 to the War of Independence in 1971.

The milestones are: Language Movement of 1952, United Front election of 1954, Education Movement of 1962, Six-point Movement of 1966, Mass Uprising of 1969, Bangabandhu's historic speech of the March 7, 1971, and Liberation War and Independence of 1971.

The monument built in reinforced concrete structure by Dhaka City Corporation at a cost of Tk 1.91 crore is located at Gulistan Square that links the new Dhaka with the old.

Some 80 high-power halogen bulbs are installed at the monument to illuminate at night.

Local government minister Zillur Rahman, Dhaka city mayor Mohammad Hanif, state minister for shipping Mofazzal

See page 11 Col7

News Analysis

Attorney General's views trigger fresh dispute

By Staff Correspondent

The rejection of Attorney General's views on a parliamentary standing committee's jurisdiction to address an issue has once again triggered a dispute between the executive and the legislative branches of the state.

The AG, chief law officer of the state, had given his views at the request of the Finance Ministry.

"Without a reference being made by Parliament, a standing committee on ministry cannot entertain a complaint for investigation," the AG observed.

The Parliamentary Standing Committee on Finance Ministry had met on January 23 to discuss why Bangladesh Bank had not allowed rescheduling of the loans of Rahman Group, a top defaulter with Sonali Bank.

Sonali Bank had allowed rescheduling of the loans several times. But Rahman defaulted and sought further rescheduling without making the required 10 per cent down payment. Later, Bangladesh Bank directed Sonali Bank to go for legal action.

A latest Bangladesh Bank investigation report found that Rahman Group had indulged in massive irregularities in taking loans from the SB. The Group owes Sonali Bank Tk 129.80 crore outstanding loans as of June 30, 1999, of which Tk 46.16 crore loans are bad.

Following this development, Rahman appealed to the Standing Committee on Finance Ministry to address the issue and the Committee discussed it.

Finance Minister SAMS

Kibria later contested the Jatiya Sangsad body's discussion and sought suggestion from the AG through the Law Ministry. But when he presented the AG's view on the matter, it was rejected by the JS body saying only the Speaker could give an explanation of the Constitution and that the AG did not have the jurisdiction.

The Finance Minister's plea for referring the matter to the Speaker was also rejected on the ground that matters are referred to the Speakers only when disagreements arise among the members.

However, different quarters now feel that events like these may crop up in future and this should be settled once for all, otherwise the Standing Committee

See Page 12 Col 1

AL plans civic reception for Clinton

By Staff Correspondent

A joint meeting of three top bodies of the ruling Awami League yesterday discussed plans for a civic reception for US President Bill Clinton at the National Parade Square in the city.

But the reception is subject to clearance by the White House pre-advance team now in the city, meeting sources said, adding that schedule of the planned reception would be finalised later. Clinton is due to arrive in Dhaka on March 20.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, who is also president of AL, chaired the meeting of her party's Advisory Council, Pre-advance and Secretariat at her Ganabhaban official residence in the city.

Addressing the meeting, Hasina asked her party's top leaders to take preparations for the next general elections and revamp the party across the country.

See Page 12 Col 1

Kalaroa incident Probe committee starts work

From Our Correspondent

SATKHIRA, Mar 4: The one-member inquiry committee headed by Additional District Magistrate Emdadul Haq has started its inquiry into the Kalaroa College incident today.

Magistrate Emdad took statements of three people including sub-inspector Akbar Ali. Six people including three examinees and a female teacher were killed and more than 25 injured in a stampede at a SSC examination sub-centre at Kalaroa thana on Thursday.

Meanwhile, speakers at a rally today demanded judicial inquiry into the Kalaroa incident, compensation to the families of the dead and injured and punishment to the persons responsible for the incident.

The Bangladesh Teachers Association Kalaroa thana unit

See Page 12 Col 8

Opposition to launch fresh agitation in Ctg Mar 12

From Staff Correspondent

CHITTAGONG, Mar 4: Chittagong unit of the opposition alliance has decided to launch fresh agitation programme in the port city from next week demanding cancellation of Chittagong City Corporation (CCC) election held on January 3 this year.

Talking to The Daily Star, leader of the opposition alliance and president of BNP city unit Mir Md Nasir Uddin said the agitation programme would include demonstration, mass hunger strike and hartal in the port city.

He said the programme would begin from March 12.

Sources hinted that fresh agitation programme of opposition alliance might trigger a tense situation in the port city.

Opposition alliance boycotted the CCC polls on January 3 and enforced 'curfew hartal' in the port city to resist the election.

Sumon murder Relatives demand CID probe

By Staff Correspondent

Relatives yesterday demanded a CID investigation into Ahmed Hossain Sumon's murder.

The DB Police accompanied by local goons killed Sumon in a pre-dawn sloop on February 9 at the victim's residence in the city, the family alleged.

Will the sub-inspector level officials be able to conduct an investigation into a case in which the accused are of the rank of Assistant Commissioner?

Brother of the victim Haji Mozammel Hossain asked during the press conference held at the Jatiya Press Club yesterday, Hossain, also the commissioner of Ward No 90 of the Dhaka City Corporation, came

See page 11 Col7

APAC, AL men clash in Sylhet: 50 hurt

SYLHET, Mar 4: A clash between All-Party Action Committee (APAC) and ruling Awami League left some 50 people injured at Chouhatta Point in the town today, report agencies.

Witnesses said the clash ensued as an APAC procession came under attack by workers of Awami League and its front organisations in the afternoon. The feuding groups exchanged gunfire and exploded bombs during the half-an-hour clash. Police dispersed the warring groups by lobbing tear gas shells.

The Chhatra League workers clashed with the APAC activists who launched their attack from hideouts in the local Alia Madrassah complex.

Police fired several rounds of warning shots and used tear gas to restore order during the more than two-hour long violence. At least 50 rickshaws and auto-rickshaws were damaged and set ablaze during the violence.

The Awami League staged the march to welcome Foreign Minister Abdus Samad Azad who is scheduled to visit Sylhet tomorrow despite being declared persona non grata by the APAC.

The violence came less than an hour after the APAC activists chaired by Sylhet district BNP president MM Haq held a rally at Court Point and brought out a procession protesting foreign minister's visit to Sylhet.

See page 11 Col 8

New liquor in old bottle

Foreign brands often mixed up with rectified spirits and recapped

By Shaikh Nazrul Islam

can't rely on their help all the time."

The official said the department's attempts to crackdown on the shops have been futile, since police usually inform their "clients" about raids before they take place.

In Gulshan and Banani, about 100 street boys sell alcohol in plain view of the police. One boy said each man pays the police about Tk 1,000 per week so they can operate. The dealers also bribe the police so they won't be hassled, said the boy.

"During a recent visit to shops, this correspondent found hawkers assure customers they could return the bottles if they thought they were impure."

One street broker said he used to return the alcohol to the dealer if its quality wasn't up to the mark. However, he said he

usually sells the real thing to long-term customers, unloading the adulterated liquor on new customers.

Department officials said large quantities of foreign alcohol are imported by the Bangladesh Porjota Corporation. Some of that alcohol is smuggled into the local market with the help of a section of officials inside the corporation.

The government lost Tk 5 crore in duties between 1998 and 1999 due to the theft of duty-free goods from the corporation's warehouses, according to an annual Board of Revenue investigation.

The thefts came to lights during an investigation conducted by a special customs squad. They found over 97 per cent of entries in Ex-bond bills issued by the corporation were fake.