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Clinton's tour Advance team in Delhi to shortlist visiting spots

HYDERABAD, Mar 6: A 54-member advance team from the United States is here to shortlist probable places President Bill Clinton is likely to visit during his forthcoming day-long schedule here on March 24, reports PTI.

The team, comprising officials and experts in various fields, which arrived yesterday, visited Centre for Cellular and Molecular Biology (CCMB), Mahavir Hospital, Indian Institute of Information Technology (IIT), Hi-tech City and Shilparamam crafts village, official sources said.

At CCMB, the team was given a presentation on genetic engineering while at Mahavir Hospital and audio-visual presentation on health care was presented, the sources said.

All party CU students give ultimatum

From Our Correspondent

CHITTAGONG, Mar 6: All Party Student Alliance (APSA) of Chittagong University (CU) yesterday asked the authorities to meet their demands or they will go for a dawn-to-dusk hartal in greater Chittagong on April 2.

It was announced at a students rally at Lalidighi Maidan in the city this afternoon.

The demands include arrest and punishment of the culprits involved in the killing of 19 Shibir leaders on January 19 on Chittagong University campus, immediate release of 54 students, removal of VC and Pro-VC of the university and restoration of congenial academic atmosphere at the university.

Copy supply

2 handed over to
Gafargaon police

From Our Correspondent

MYMENSINGH, Mar 6: Two local BCL leaders were beaten up by ruling party MP Altaf Hossain Gollandaz for their alleged involvement in supplying copies to SSC examinees at a centre under Gafargaon thana today.

The BCL leaders are Ariful Islam Bhuiyan, president of Gafargaon Government College unit and Tariqul Islam Real, general secretary of the Gafargaon thana BCL.

The MP found some BCL leaders supplying copies to the SSC examinees at the Gafargaon College centre. He immediately chased them and caught Arif and Tariq red-handed, witnesses said.

Later they were handed over to police.

Police also arrested one Samiul Alam Sumon while supplying copies at the same centre.

OTs at DMCH

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blood-gas machine, bedside monitor. These were supposed to be supplied under a Tk 60 crore package, also funded by the ADB, sources concerned said.

But the ADB cancelled the deal as the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Health Ministry detected massive irregularities in awarding the tender for those.

The DMCH authorities then proposed to the health ministry to allocate an amount of Tk 6.70 crore for purchase of the equipment and instruments for the OTs. The ministry assured an allocation of about Tk three crore.

However, the process is being delayed due to bureaucratic tangles, the sources pointed out.

Shazneen

From Page 1

Dhaka while they were already facing trial in the Sessions Judge's court.

Shazneen Tansim Rahman, 15, youngest daughter of Latifur Rahman, Chairman of Transcom Group, was raped and murdered at the Gulshan residence on April 23, 1998.

Two separate cases, one for murder and another for rape, were filed with Gulshan police accusing seven persons.

Shahidul Islam Shadid, a domestic help at that house was the principal accused in the case while contractor Hasan was the mastermind.

Other accused persons are supervisor Badal, carpenter Shani Ram, guard Humayun Kabir and maids Parvin and Minu. Among them Humayun Kabir died of cardiac failure last year.

Editor: Mahfuz Anam

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Visitors often stop for a couple of tea at a shop on the sidewalk on Minto Road. They call on ministers at their official residences for different business. —Star photo

Judge refuses to hear tapes, adjourns proceedings Squabble at Pak court over authenticity of recordings

KARACHI, Mar 6: A squabble over the authenticity of tape recordings from the control tower at Karachi International Airport dominated the court proceedings today in the trial of deposed prime minister Nawaz Sharif, reports AP.

Judge Rehmetullah Hussein Jaffri ended the squabble when he refused to hear the tapes and adjourned the proceedings until Wednesday.

Sharif and his co-accused are charged with hijacking, attempted murder, kidnapping and terrorism. All the charges carry either the death penalty or life in prison.

The charges were laid after Sharif allegedly denied landing rights to a passenger plane returning Army Chief Gen Pervez Musharraf to Pakistan on Oct 12, the same day the military took power in Pakistan and threw out the elected government.

Pakistan's military revolted after Sharif dismissed Musharraf as army chief and replaced him with a junior general. At

the time of his dismissal Musharraf was en route back to Pakistan from Sri Lanka. According to the testimony of the Pakistan International Airlines Pilot he was ordered to divert the aircraft to a Middle Eastern country. The Karachi Airport was shut down, the lights turned off and fire trucks parked on the runway to prevent the passenger plane with 200 passengers and crew from landing.

When the army takeover was complete and Sharif in custody the aircraft was allowed to land. When it did touch down there was barely seven minutes of fuel remaining, according to the pilot.

Jaffri decided against hearing the control tower tape recordings after Sharif's defense lawyers demanded proof that the tapes were authentic.

The prosecution said Jaffri's ruling will have little bearing on their case because the transcript of the recordings has already been accepted as evidence. "The ruling will not make

any difference," said Zahoor-ul-Haq, a prosecution lawyer. "We have a very strong case. We were not relying heavily on these tapes."

Sharif's lawyers, who rescinded an earlier protest resignation, said they expected their client would give his written testimony on Wednesday.

The judge ordered the accused to give their testimony in writing after the prosecution expressed concern that they might reveal confidential information or threaten national security.

The judge will also let Sharif and his co-defendants speak but he will censor their testimony. Sharif's lawyers resigned earlier to protest the ruling which would allow the judge to unilaterally decide what part of their client's testimony would be censored.

"Now the judge has indicated that our point of view will be heard and that has brought a tangible change in the atmosphere," said Khawaja Sultan, one of Sharif's lawyers.

Cable operators threaten to switch off some TV channels

By Staff Correspondent

Bangladesh Cable Operators Oikya Jote, a platform for the country's cable operators, has threatened to switch off certain channels by March 9 to protest hikes in renewal fees.

The operators also urged people to side with them in their dispute with Nation-wide Communications Limited, the service provider, assuring their customers sports channels would be unaffected.

They made the threat during a press conference at the Jatiya Press Club, which was addressed by Mir Hossain Akhtar, president of the Bangladesh Satellite Cable Networks Owners Association, Sadaf Hasnain Monjur, president of the Cable TV Owners Federation, and Fazul Karim Abu, president of the Cable TV Equipment Importers, Dealers and Cable Operators Association of Bangladesh.

The leaders said NCL took advantage of its monopoly and raised renewal fees by 20 per cent for certain channels, such as Star Movies and Zee Cinema, and by 141 per cent for Channel V.

The leaders said service providers in neighbouring countries didn't increase their subscription rates, despite subsidising the cost of decoders. NCL did not subsidise Bangladesh's cable operators and has been charging high fees for digital decoders, they said.

The leaders said they have no choice but to increase their subscription rates.

"However, increasing subscription rates wouldn't solve the problem, since the city's various area have different financial capabilities," one leader said. "If we increase our rates we'll lose a lot of customers, pushing our operational costs beyond our capacity."

Subscribers were charged only Taka 200 per month when cable operators introduced the service, when most of the channels were free-to-air, they said.

The cable operators will also hold a rally on March 9 at 11:00 a.m. in Muktangan. They will also submit a memorandum at NCL's office to press home their demands.

PM: Clinton

From Page 1

"Hasina-Clinton talks will be productive," he said, referring to a letter Clinton wrote the Prime Minister last December.

Azad, however, said the agenda for the official talks might change right up to the last day, since many things are coming up everyday.

Azad said bilateral talks between Clinton and Hasina, the reception at the airport and a banquet by President Shahabuddin Ahmed at the Bangabhaban had been settled. The proposed civic reception was still up in the air.

Clinton will arrive in Dhaka between 10 am and 10.30 am from Delhi on March 20 and leave after attending a banquet at the Bangabhaban.

The Foreign Minister said Bangladesh as leader of the LDCs will raise the issue of zero-tariff access for exports to the US market.

Azad said Bangladesh is the fourth-largest garment exporter to the United States, and would ask Clinton to increase its quota.

Azad said the extradition of the killers had been discussed several times in the past and would come up during the talks.

Azad said Clinton was coming to Bangladesh at the invitation of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina.

An advance team from the White House will arrive in Dhaka tomorrow to finalise the itinerary for Clinton visit, security and other related matters.

Fourth day of SSC exams

1509 more expelled in 15 districts

By Staff Correspondent

About 1,509 students were expelled on the fourth day of the SSC examinations.

According to Dhaka Education Board officials, 374 students were expelled from the Bengali 2nd paper exam in 15 districts.

Six candidates were expelled in Gazipur, six in Narayanganj, 19 in Munshiganj, four in Manikganj, 90 in Mymensingh, 14 in Sherpur, 31 in Netrokona, 15 in Kishoreganj, 57 in Tangail, 81 in Jamalpur, 15 in Faridpur, nine in Gopalganj, four in Rajbari, 14 in Madaripur and nine in Shariatpur.

About 400 blank answer-scripts were stolen from the Chandaikona High School in Raiganj, Sirajganj, last night. The thieves jumped the security guard, tied him up and then broke into the store room where the papers were kept.

Police officials said the incident was "mysterious." A case was filed with Raiganj thana, but no arrests have been made.

Chandaikona High School centre authorities said they were trying to recover the stolen answer scripts.

Sources said 146 candidates were expelled, leading the district administration to ask authorities to deploy paramilitary forces to examination centres.

Copying was a common phe-

nomena at almost all the district's centres. A group of local reporters weren't allowed to visit the centre at Bagmati High School, where copying was going on in plain view. The reporters were also badly treated by the school authorities.

The allegations of rampant copying also attracted the Sirajganj district administration's attention.

In another development, at least 15 people were injured in clashes in front of the centre at the Ullahpara Kamil Madrasah, where the 'Dakhil' examination was taking place. Five 'Dakhil' students were expelled for copying.

Six more students were expelled from centres under the Jessore Education Board. Approximately 7,633 students sat for the Bengali 2nd paper examination in Magura district.

A total of 989 students and three teachers were expelled from 14 districts under the Rajshahi Education Board. One hundred were expelled in Rajshahi, 61 students and 2 teachers in Nawabganj, 54 in Naogaon, 14 in Naore, 44 students and one teacher in Pabna, 146 in Sirajganj, 62 in Rangpur, 70 in Kurigram, 77 in Gaibandha, 25 in Nilphamari, 19 in Lalmonirhat, 167 in Dinajpur, 92 in Thakurgaon and 58 in Panchagarh.

Firearms of Shikdar

'Jamai' Farook, Nasir remain tightlipped

From Staff Correspondent

KHULNA, Mar 6: 'Jamai' Farook and Nasir Khan have not divulged any information on the huge firearms Ershad Shikdar possesses.

Although Farook and Nasir are being interrogated in police remand for the last few days, police did not ask them anything on Shikdar's arms and ammunition, said a source in Khulna Metropolitan Police.

The way they were interrogated is not enough to recover the firearms, said the source. The questions did not focus solely on arms, rather on those

on people arrested on charges of murder at Skid Ghat during the rise of Ershad Shikdar.

The officials say they are not applying the "third degree" for recovering the firearms fearing there may be complaints of human rights abuses.

"This is just an excuse to avoid the matter because police officials know who are in possession of these arms after the arrest of Ershad Shikdar," said a lawyer of Khulna Bar.

Meanwhile, BDR were deployed in the court compound. See page 11 col 8

'Strong political will needed to tackle air pollution'

By Staff Correspondent

A two-day 'Global Workshop' of environmental journalists ended in Dhaka yesterday, stressing the need for immediately tackling air pollution threatening millions in the world with serious health hazards.

Participants in the workshop drafted a strategy to combat air pollution. They underlined that a strong political will is needed to implement it to clean the air, specially in the Third World cities like Dhaka.

The media could play a major role in building up pressure in this regard, the participants noted.

The workshop was inaugurated by Minister for Environment and Forests, Syeda Sajeda Chowdhury. It was organised by the Forum for Environmental Journalists of Bangladesh (FEJB), Asia Pacific Forum of Environmental Journalists (AFPEJ) and Commonwealth Environmental Journalists Association (CEJA).

The workshop was attended by journalists, media strategists and 120 environmental experts from nearly 20 countries and organisations from across the world.

"Until environment is on the political agenda in countries like Bangladesh, I am afraid, little could be done to save the mother earth," said Holiday editor Enayeturrahman Khan, who attended the concluding session as the chief guest.

Haroon Habib, chief editor of Bangladesh Sangbad Sangstha, said developing countries must have a strong political will to address environmental issues since their people lack awareness.

"In many cases political activists or beneficiaries of ruling parties are involved in breaking environmental laws, where the law enforcers obviously feel themselves orphans."

"And I may not be incorrect in making this statement that

politicians are more ignorant than many other quarters on questions of environment."

Amanullah Kabir, Executive Editor of the daily Independent, called the pollution of environment "a synonym of 'pollution of mind'." He said it should be considered as an "ethical issue."

Shireen Kamal Sayeed, UNDP's assistant resident representative, said there must be policy guidelines and actions to bring down the level of air pollution. She identified lapses in the enforcement of existing regulations and laws for the protection of environment as a problem.

She also identified the lack of information as another problem to deal with environmental issues.

"We really still don't know the extent of damage caused by air pollution. Environment degradation is not an economic loss alone, it is a human loss which is irreparable."

FEJB chairman Quamrul Islam Chowdhury presided over the session which was organised in collaboration with the Asia-Pacific Forum of Environmental Journalists, the Commonwealth Environmental Journalists Association and with support from the UNDP, World Bank, Ministry of Environment and Forest and several other development agencies.

FEJB chief Quamrul Islam

Protest against Taslima in Bombay: 100 held

BOMBAY, Mar 6: Controversial Bangladeshi feminist writer Taslima Nasreen today vowed to continue her fight against oppression as Muslim groups held a protest rally to denounce her visit to the city, reports AP.

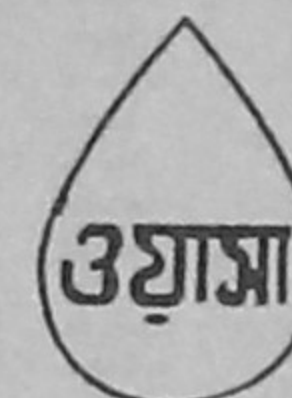
Police detained some 100 Muslims for staging protests against Nasreen, who launched the Marathi language translation of her novel 'Shodh' ('Paying Back') here today.

The protesters carried banners and posters which read: "Nasreen go back. We are ready to kill Taslima Nasreen," the witnesses said.

Nasreen told a 1,000-strong audience at a downtown Bombay auditorium that death threats and other forms of intimidation did not scare her.

"I will never be silent but will fight all the evil forces till my death. Your love and sympathy has made me more committed and determined to be true to my cause," she said to thunderous applause after releasing the translation of her latest work.

"I hope that the handful of crazy people who are creating all this noise will one day find reason and hear not only their own voices but also the voices of others."



সুষ্ঠু ব্যবহারের মাধ্যমে নগরীর পানি সরবরাহ
স্বাভাবিক রাখতে সহযোগিতা করুন

গত এক বছরে ঢাকা ওয়াসার গভীর নলকূপের সংখ্যা ২৩৮ থেকে ৩০০-তে এবং পানি উৎপাদন ৯০কোটি লিটার থেকে ১১৮ কোটি লিটারে উন্নীত হয়েছে। বিদ্যুৎ বিভাটের কারণে যাতে পানি উৎপাদন ব্যাহত না হয় সেজন্য নগরীর বিভিন্ন গভীর নলকূপে মোট ১৫০টি জেনারেটর ইতোমধ্যে স্থাপন করা হয়েছে। আরও ৫০টি স্থাপনের কাজ শীঘ্রই শেষ হবে। ফলে নগরীতে চলতি শুক মৌসুমে পানি সরবরাহ পরিস্থিতি স্বাভাবিক থাকবে বলে আশা করা যাচ্ছে। তথাপিও শুক মৌসুমে (মার্চ থেকে জুলাই) নগরবাসীর পানির চাহিদা প্রায় ২০ ডাগ বেড়ে যাওয়ায় সার্বিক পরিস্থিতি মোকাবেলায় সম্মানিত গ্রাহক সাধারণের সহযোগিতা অপরিহার্য। চলতি শুক মৌসুমে সম্মানিত গ্রাহক সাধারণের প্রতি ঢাকা ওয়াসার অনুরোধঃ

- কোনভাবেই পানির অপচয় করবেন না। পানি ব্যবহারে যতটা সম্ভব মিতব্যয়ী হোন।
- পানির দূষণ রোধে বাড়ির জলাধার নিয়মিত পরিষ্কার রাখুন এবং সার্ভিস লাইনের ও বাড়ির ট্যাপের লিকেজ তাত্ক্ষণিকভাবে মেরামত করুন। পানি উপচে পড়া রোধে বাড়ির ভূগর্ভস্থ ও ছাদের জলাধারে স্বয়ংক্রিয় ফ্লোট ভাষ/বলকক ব্যবহার করুন।
- সরাসরি হোস্ পাইপের সাহায্যে গাড়ী ধোবেন না। ওয়াসার পানি বিতরণকরণের জন্য ব্যবহৃত ফোরিন গাড়ীর রং মারাত্মক নষ্ট করে। তাই বালতিতে ৫/৬ ঘন্টা জমা রেখে পানি দ্বারা গাড়ী পরিষ্কার করুন। হোস পাইপের সাহায্যে বাগানে পানি দেয়া বন্ধ রাখুন।
- মনে রাখবেন, সুয়ারেজের বিল বাবদ পানির বিলের প্রকৃত অঙ্ক দিওণ করা হয়। তাই অপচয়কৃত পানির বিলও দিওণ হয় এবং বিলের অংক অনেক বেড়ে যায়। পানির মিতব্যয়ী ব্যবহার নিশ্চিত করে পানির বিল কমান।

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