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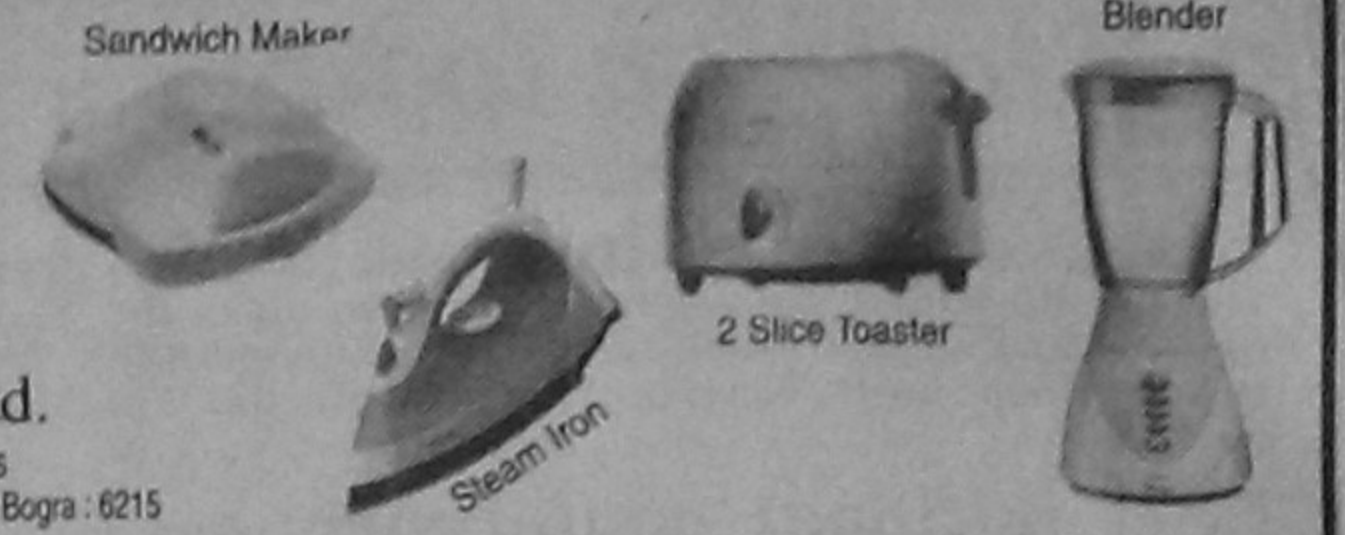
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CMCH tense: Security tightened

From Staff Correspondent CHITTAGONG, Apr 2: A tense situation prevailed at Chittagong Medical College Hospital following some stray incidents of violence as a sequel to rivalry over election of Bangladesh Medical Association (BMA), Chittagong unit, held on Thursday, CMCH sources said. Security was tightened around CMCH with deployment of additional police force there to foil fresh violence. Four office rooms of doctors locked allegedly by rivals were not opened even today and the doctors concerned stayed away from duty reportedly fearing attacks. The rooms were locked on Saturday night while three doctors were beaten allegedly by their rivals. When contacted, director of CMCH Brigadier Md Shahjahan told this correspondent that ef-

Bill to set up environment court placed

By Staff Correspondent

A bill seeking setting up of environment courts to try environmental pollution cases was tabled in the Jatiya Sangsad yesterday. Placing the bill, Minister for Environment and Forests Sajeda Choudhury said the bill has been introduced to quickly dispose of environment pollution cases piling up in conventional courts. Worldwide, environment related Acts and codes are being considered as a new addition to knowledge and taken up as a technical matter. In Bangladesh, proper implementation of such Acts and codes is not possible in conventional courts, she said. She said the Environment Conservation Act was introduced in the country in 1995 for better conservation of environment and pollution control. The Environment Conservation Code, 1997 was enacted to implement the objectives of the Act. The bill proposes setting up of environment courts in divisional headquarters at first, and beyond later, if necessary. There will be an Appeal Court in Dhaka. An appeal may be made within 30 days of the judgment of the divisional courts. But the activities of the environment court, decrees, judgements, compensation decrees and penalties can not be challenged before any other court. The bill proposes setting up of environment courts in divisional headquarters at first, and beyond later, if necessary. There will be an Appeal Court in Dhaka. An appeal may be made within 30 days of the judgment of the divisional courts. But the activities of the environment court, decrees, judgements, compensation decrees and penalties can not be challenged before any other court. The bill proposes setting up of environment courts in divisional headquarters at first, and beyond later, if necessary. There will be an Appeal Court in Dhaka. An appeal may be made within 30 days of the judgment of the divisional courts. But the activities of the environment court, decrees, judgements, compensation decrees and penalties can not be challenged before any other court.

'260 murdered, 65 raped across country in Mar'

About 261 people were murdered and 65 women and children violated across the country last month, according to a legal aid body, reports UNB.

More than eight people were murdered a day on average in March. The murder and rape figures were collated through a survey conducted by the Institute of Democratic Rights (IDR) with the help of newspaper reports and its own sources. The IDR report says of the murder victims, 198 were male, 63 female and five newborns. Of the total women violated in the month, 35 were gang-raped and seven murdered after rape. Of the rape victims, 22 were children. Besides, according to the findings, police raped two women. The report also said 22 women fell victim of dowry - 10 of them were killed and five committed suicide to escape further torture. During March, 20 people, including 15 women, came under acid attacks. Moreover, 77 people, 50 of them women, committed suicide. Of the total 58 kidnapped, four were killed after abduction. During the month, two people died in police custody and police firing killed four. Besides, a man was killed in BDR and three others in Indian BSF firings. The survey report said a total of 355 people were killed in road, rail and river way mishaps, said IDR in its release yesterday.

Demolition drive continues

By Staff Correspondent

The joint team of PWD and DCC demolished five illegal structures, including part of a residential building along Dhanmondi Lake and its adjacent areas yesterday. Accompanied by a contingent of police and a magistrate the team also demolished an illegal structure on Road No. 1. The off beat demolition was not part of the public land recovery programme in the Dhanmondi Lake area, sources said. PWD sources said they have recovered public land from 20 encroachers. They reviewed list contains 48 names of encroachers. One official said the list of encroachers was being reviewed 'every day' and new ones are being added to it. Sources said the DCC has started work on the recovered land of the Dhanmondi lake. But they alleged that at least in two cases the authorities were making concessions. They alleged that a section of the PWD officials were showing reluctance to knock down part of residential buildings. But a PWD engineer denied the allegation and said none would be spared. He said the demolition team has given the encroachers 'some time' to knock down their residential buildings with their own men. Because if a payloader knocks the wall down, the remaining structure of the building is likely to be affected. The demolition drive continues today.

Bringing back killers of Bangabandhu Envoys to intensify diplomatic efforts

A high level meeting yesterday reviewed the process to bring back the killers of Bangabandhu hiding in different countries, reports UNB. Twelve of the 15 former army personnel condemned to death in absentia by a lower court in November 1998 were staying in different countries. One of them was later expatriated from Bangkok. Presided over by Home Minister Mohammad Nasim, the meeting was attended by Law Minister Abdul Matin Khasru, State Minister for Foreign Affairs Abul Hasan Chowdhury, Inspector General of Police AYBI Siddiqui and senior officials. "We are very much hopeful to bring back at least four or five killers within a short time," said a senior official after the meeting. The renewed effort to bring them back was taken as the Supreme Court is about to take up the case of confirmation of the death sentence for hearing. The meeting that was held at Home Ministry yesterday took some important decisions aiming at bringing back the killers of Bangabandhu as early as possible.

Chickenpox comes with no warning. Check it before it catches you. Vaccination can now prevent it. Ask your doctor how!

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11-yr under trial boy: HC rule on govt

By Staff Correspondent

The High Court yesterday issued a rule on the government to explain why criminal proceedings against an under trial prisoner for nearly 11 years at Chittagong jail should not be quashed or why he should not be released on bail. An HC Division Bench comprising Justice Abu Sayed Ahmed and Justice Ali Asgar Khan issued the rule on the Secretary, Ministry of Home, District Magistrate Chittagong and Superintendent of District Jail, Chittagong. "No one should be in custody beyond reasonable time without trial, so 11 years jail custody as an under trial prisoner for said Faruque is irregular and it cuts upon the image of the independent judiciary of this country," the HC ruling observed. Faruque Ahmed, an accused in a murder case has been detained in Chittagong jail since 1990 without trial, reported a Bangla daily on March 22. Only one witness was examined during this long time and after that the said accused is languishing in the jail, the report added. The report also mentioned that his brothers implicated him in the case on the allegation of killing his father.

Windies 155/2 in 36 overs

West Indies were 155 for two in the 36th over after deciding to bat first in the second match of the tri-series against Zimbabwe at the Sabina Park in Kingston, Jamaica yesterday. Wavell Hinds was batting on 53. Captain Jimmy Adams (41) was the other not out batsman.

JCD calls off strike at RU

RAJSHAHI, Apr 2: Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) has postponed its four-day strike in Rajshahi University scheduled to begin tomorrow to press for a 12-point demand including withdrawal of enhanced admission fees. Rajshahi University JCD postponed the strike after a discussion with Vice-Chancellor Prof Saifur Rahman Khan this evening.

Iftekhar full-time SEC member

The government under a contract has appointed Dr Iftekhar Gani Chowdhury as a full time member of Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) for a term of three years from date of his joining, an official announcement said today, reports BSS. The order comes into immediate effect in public interest.

Rickshawpuller crushed under wheels in city

A rickshawpuller, aged about 45, died instantly as a bus crushed his three-wheeler at Mouchak crossing at about 8 pm yesterday, reports UNB. Witnesses said the bus, running from Sayedabad to Kalkaor in Gazipur district, also hit two other rickshaws. But none was injured. Traffic movement over the busy crossing was disrupted for about 15 minutes before police rushed to the spot and recovered the body lying on the street. Police held the killer bus. But the driver and the helpers managed to escape the scene soon after the accident. Replying to a supplementary



Bangladesh Cricket Board and United Nations brought out a colourful rally in the city yesterday commemorating ICC Cricket Week-2000. - Star photo

Report on internal grain purchase Inefficient system blamed for high expenditure, misuse

By Reaz Ahmad

The inefficient system used to purchase, distribute and manage rice and other grains put unnecessary pressure on the government exchequer, states a commission report. In its report entitled "Effectiveness of Government Intervention in Agro-produce Marketing," the commission, headed by an advisor to the prime minister, Dr. Anisuzzaman, concluded ineffective grain storage and preservation, transportation losses and excessive bureaucracy lead to high expenditures and misuse. The commission also suggested the system would work better if the government purchased grain when the price was low and sold when the price peaked - a "no gain, no loss" policy. According to the report, the government's internal grain purchasing policy could not stop food prices from falling during surplus years due to financial limitations and a shortage of storage space. Traders, mills and government officials who purchased grain were the ones who ultimately benefited. Small and medium-scale farmers lost interest in selling their product to the government's buying centres, since the centres refused to purchase grain on various pre-texts or pay fair prices. The report suggested local government bodies could take over domestic grain purchases and stock maintenance to cut down on bureaucracy. The report stated there should be no food imports by the public sector. If domestic prices surge compared to international market prices, food should be imported under private sector initiatives. The government borrowed \$338 million US from the IMF and IDA for emergency food imports after the 1998 flood destroyed about 2 million tonnes of paddy worth \$630 million US. Successive bumper paddy crops forced the government to sell grain last January to prevent it from rotting and make room in the silos for fresh product. However, official sources said stored grain shouldn't rot if food-supported programmes operated efficiently. A record 16 lakh 25,000 tonnes of grain stored in warehouses created a situation where the government had to sanction additional grain for food-supported development programmes. Otherwise, there wouldn't have been any space left in the silos for the latest crop.

Tejgaon Polytechnic 15 students killed in 15 years

By Staff Correspondent

Two platoons of police have been deployed at the three hostels of Tejgaon Polytechnic Institute in the city where a Bangladesh Chhatra League leader, Habibur Rahman Zahid, was killed by rivals in the party on Thursday, police said yesterday. With Zahid's killing, fifteen students of the institute have been killed in the last 15 years. The Vice-principal M A Rashid said talking to The Daily Star. Each time case was filed but none was tried and punished, he said. Local people said the killers are sheltered by influential ministers, MPs and political leaders. Zahid was killed due to rivalry over control of the nearby industrial area and dispute regarding share of toll collected from there, some businessmen of the area said. Huge tolls are collected regularly from industrial units, shops and even from owners of residential houses, they said. The FIR-named accused in the case filed after Zahid's murder is also a BCL leader, sources in the BCL unit at the institute said. Although Zahid was killed on Thursday, police said yesterday that they could not recover any *alamat* from the spot.

"But Zahid's blood stained lungi, some sticks and documents were collected from the spot by his brother on Sunday," said an official of the institute. A BCL unit was formed at the institute after Awami League returned to power. Riyad, convener of the BCL unit was killed in front of a hostel of the institute in 1996. Sajal, president of BCL unit at the institute, was killed on the campus in 1998. Sohel, who was elected general secretary of the students union at the institute in 1997 and VP in 98-99, was killed in 1999 near a hostel. Earlier in 1995, Mizanur Rahman, convener of JCD unit at the institute was killed within 200 yards of a hostel. Shakil Ahmed, general secretary of JCD unit was killed in a dormitory in 1992. Two other JCD leaders --- A Rab and Shahbuddin --- were also killed in the same year, sources said. In 1987, Sharif Hossain general secretary of the student union was killed in front of a hostel, sources noted. Muniruzzaman Munir, a leader of Jatiya Chhatra Samaj at the institute, and five of its activists were killed in 1985 in separate incidents.

Prisoners living inhuman life, admits Nasim

Home Minister Mohammad Nasim admitted in Parliament yesterday that the condition is inhuman in the prisons of the country, reports UNB. "We can't deny that the condition is quite bad in the prisons and the prisoners are living an inhuman life," he said during question hour in the House replying to supplementaries from Shamsul Haq (AL-Mymensingh) and Advocate Fazle Rabbi (JP). "It is also true that the prisons are filled beyond their capacity," the Home Minister added. He said the government has taken a number of steps to improve the situation, but the pace of improvement is not at the desired level due to shortage of funds. BSS adds: Nasim said there are 80 jails in the country with 59,885 detenus including 14,002 convicts. He said the government has already steps to improve accommodation, sanitation and food for the prisoners despite resource constraints. Replying to a supplementary

Int'l Rotary confce in city Apr 7-9

By Staff Correspondent

Rotarians from at least 11 countries will meet in Dhaka to attend the Rotary International Presidential Conference 2000 from April 7 to 9. Bangladesh Rotarians plan to hold a project fair during the conference to attract donors to help tackle arsenic problem, conduct vocational training and building low cost housing for the poor, members of the Rotary's public relations committee said at a press briefing yesterday. The briefing was held at the Hotel Purbani International. "This is a honour for Bangladesh to be able to host this conference," said Iftekarul Alam, chairman of the committee. He said the country's PolioPlus Program run by Rotary has been a great success and by the end of the year 2000 Polio is expected to be eradicated from the world. Rotary's district governor M Ozaif Farooq said that at present there are 19 reported cases of polio in Bangladesh. Highlighting the conference, likely to be attended by some 500 participants, the Rotarians said Bangladesh will greatly benefit from the event as Rotary International might come up with more projects in the country. Rotarian Mustafa Zaman Abbasi also spoke on the occasion.

Jalal murder Sureties asked to produce Ziaul Ahsan

By Court Correspondent

The Fifth Additional Metropolitan Sessions' Judges Court yesterday directed the sureties of police inspector Ziaul Ahsan, accused in the Jalal murder case, to produce him before the court on April 27. The court also directed doctor Golam Rabbani, an associate professor of Sir Salimullah Medical College Hospital, to appear before the court on April 27. Rabbani on April 1 gave a medical certificate that Ziaul Ahsan was suffering from 'physical depressive disorders' and advised him bed rest for four weeks. The court further directed the police headquarters to attach movable properties of Abdul Malek and to arrest him. Munshi Atiqur Rahman, investigating officer of the case, submitted a supplementary charge sheet in the same court on December 26 accusing Abdul Malik for his involvement in the killing.

ADB's poverty reduction strategy Focus on agriculture, rural development

Asian Development Bank (ADB) has chalked out its Poverty Reduction Strategy for Bangladesh following its president Tadao Chino's arrival in Dhaka yesterday on a three-day visit, reports UNB. During the visit Chino will sign a Poverty Reduction Partnership Agreement with Bangladesh. This will be the formal beginning of ADB's new Poverty Reduction Strategy with overarching focus on eradication of extreme poverty from the Asia and Pacific in partnership with governments of its developing member countries, said a press release. Since most of the region's poor live in rural areas, agricultural and rural development will get particular attention in the strategy. "Greater attention will be given to the social, environmental, and institutional factors necessary to enhance efficiency and productivity in all areas of agricultural production, and associated non-farm activities," it said. All ADB loans and technical assistance will be expected to contribute to the reduction of poverty and the projects and programmes will either be designed to accelerate pro-poor growth or focus on poverty directly. ADB's desired lending mix would include not less than 40 per cent of all public sector lending for poverty interventions. In selecting projects, ADB will favour those that promise the biggest return in terms of poverty reduction. Besides, promotion of the private sector activity in the rural areas will also be pursued.

As per the proposed strategy, ADB will increase its support for human capital development since such investments are often the most effective way of breaking the cycle of intergenerational poverty. "By supporting efforts to improve policy and institutional arrangement, it will help ensure that the poor have access to essential social services," the release said. To expand access to and quality in basic and non-formal education and skill development, especially for women, the bank will provide strong and innovative support. It will also continue to promote early child development.

Pirates loot MV Revenge

From Staff Correspondent

CHITTAGONG, Apr 2: A group of pirates raided a detained ship anchored at the outer anchorage and looted some valuable goods yesterday evening, port sources said. The pirates also tortured the crew of the ship MV Revenge, a Romanian flag carrying vessel, the sources added. The crew then left the vessel which is already in a risky position there after the sea water started to enter its engine room due to a leakage, they said. Meanwhile, the port authority planned to go for beaching the detained ship after taking permission from the admiralty court, sources informed. The ship was detained following an admiralty suit after it arrived at Chittagong port in August last year.

Badrunnessa College clarifies

By Staff Correspondent

Nilfar Huda, principal of Begum Badrunnessa Government Girls' College said yesterday that the hostel of the college was closed till April 15 due to renovation although the classes were scheduled to open from April 2. It was notified to all students. "But a group of students tried to force into their way the hostel on April 1 although the principal, vice principal and heads of different departments brought the situation under control later," she said in a statement, referring to press reports in this regard. She also said that the principal was present at the college before the students entered the college premises.

Rickshawpuller stabbed to death in city

By Staff Correspondent

Muggers stabbed to death a rickshawpuller at Dayaganj in the city yesterday, hospital sources said. Mustafa Mollah, 35, son of Sahar Ali Mollah and a resident of South Sayedabad in Surtrapur, was returning home after depositing rickshaw with the owner at the garages. When he arrived at Dayaganj at about 11:30 pm a gang of muggers stopped him and asked him to hand over his valuables. They stabbed Mustafa when he hesitated to hand over his valuables. Fatally injured Mustafa was sent to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital where the attending doctor pronounced him dead at about 12:15 am. The body of the victim was kept at hospital for autopsy. Sutrapur police said no case was filed.

GSS governing body dissolved

By Staff Correspondent

The government dissolved yesterday the governing body of the problem-ridden Gano Sahajya Sangstha (GSS) and formed a three-member caretaker body of the NGO. The body was formed with Safur Rahman, a retired secretary as convener and Imam Hossain, a retired additional secretary, and noted actor Asaduzzaman Noor as members. The government acted under the Voluntary Social Welfare Agencies (Registration and Control) Ordinance of 1961. It also asked authorities concerned to take necessary steps to circulate administrative order immediately with terms of reference of the caretaker body.



Obituary

By Staff Correspondent Ahram Khaer Bishal, the youngest son of noted businessman Abul Khaer Litu, died of a heart attack on Saturday night. He was 19. His namaj-e-janaza was held yesterday at Gulshan Azad mosque and his qulshwani will be held at House#6, Road#69, Gulshan-2 tomorrow.

REGRET BENGAL FOUNDATION ANNOUNCES POSTPONEMENT OF ARTIST MOHAMMAD KIBRIA'S SOLO ART EXHIBITION SCHEDULED 4-20 APRIL, 2000 DUE TO THE SAD AND UNTIMELY DEMISE OF MR. AHAM KHAIR (BISHAL), YOUNGEST SON OF ITS CHAIRMAN, MR. ABUL KHAIR LITU. FRESH DATES FOR THE EXHIBITION WILL BE ANNOUNCED LATER. BENGAL FOUNDATION TEL. 9885136, 8810362. C-308