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VOL. X NO. 82 REGD. NO. DA 781

www.dailystarnews.com

DHAKA SUNDAY APRIL 9, 2000

3rd Millennium

CHAITRA 26, 1406 BS

MUHARRAM 3, 1421 HIJRI

16 PAGES PRICE : TAKA 6.00

## Hasina tells press Kashmir issue can be resolved thru' Indo-Pak dialogue

LYNCHBURG, Virginia, Apr 8: Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina told American newsmen Friday the long-running conflict between India and Pakistan over Kashmir could be settled through peaceful dialogue between the two rival neighbours, reports UNB.

"If they could have dialogue, they could resolve the long-standing conflict," she told a press conference immediately after receiving the Key of Lynchburg City at the Smith Memorial Hall of the Randolph-Macon Women's College.

The Prime Minister said after the nuclear tests by India and Pakistan in May 1998, she undertook a peace mission to urge both New Delhi and Islamabad to halt the nuclear arms race in the interests of peace in South Asia.

When asked about the empowerment of women in Bangladesh, Hasina said they were still neglected and her government was doing its best to empower, educate and involve them in the decision-making and development process.

If women were properly educated, they could stand on their own feet and attain economic self-reliance, said Hasina.

## Power failure hits many city areas

By Staff Correspondent  
Dhaka and surrounding area experienced a 150-megawatt power shortage yesterday.

The Dhaka Electricity Supply Authority received 870 megawatts from the Power Development Board compared to its 1,020-megawatt demand.

Gulistan, Nawabpur Road, Old Dhaka, Mohammadpur, Dhanmondi, Maghbazar, Malibagh, Elephant Road, Farinaghat, Kawan Bazar, Tejgaon, Mohakhali and Gushan were hardest hit by power disruptions.

Residents along Elephant Road complained the power shortages prevented them from watching the cricket match on television.

Power Development Board control room sources said the total deficit in power generation was only 111 megawatts. The country produced 2,525 megawatts compared to its 2,650-megawatt demand. Eleven power plants are still out of order.

## Our new numbers

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April	Sun Rises	Sun Sets
9	5:42am	6:18pm
10	5:42am	6:18pm

## Prayer Timings

April 9		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	5:00	5:30
Zohr	12:45	1:30
Asr	4:45	5:00
Maghrib	6:25	6:28
Esha	8:00	8:30

Source: Islamic Foundation



Rest of the World Eleven captain Mark Waugh and Asia Eleven skipper Wasim Akram shake hands after the toss (left), Sachin Tendulkar plays one down the third (middle) and Saurav Ganguly whacks Phil Tufnell for a six during yesterday's day-night match at Bangabandhu Stadium.



# Asia atop the world

By Sports Reporter

The Asia Eleven survived a scare from Australian Michael Bevan to escape with a one run win over the Rest of the World in the CricketNext, Com Cup at the Bangabandhu National Stadium last night.

The left-handed batsman, who has the highest one-day average, plundered an unbeaten 185 off only 132 balls to propel his side to just one run short of what at the start looked like an almost unattainable target.

Bevan hit a four off the last delivery of the match to leave the Rest of the World at 319 for eight in 50 overs, chasing an Asia Eleven's towering total of 320 for nine in 50 overs.

Skipper Mark Waugh clipped in with 28.

Earlier, Indian maestro Sachin Tendulkar and prolific batsman Saurav Ganguly

## View From The Ground



guided Asia Eleven to a mammoth 320 for nine in 50 overs.

Wasim Akram's side rode on a 114-run second wicket partnership between the two Indians after Akram decided to bat first at the packed stadium.

Tendulkar made a blazing 80 runs off 77 balls, belting eleven boundaries while Ganguly, who came in the squad in place of Saeed Anwar, scored 67 runs off 66 balls with six fours and three big sixes.

Both the batsmen returned

to the pavilion offering catches to Franklin Rose at long-on off English left-arm spinner Phil Tufnell, who was the most expensive bowler in the innings. His nine overs cost 68 runs.

Sanath Jayasuriya and Sachin Tendulkar opened the Asian Eleven innings but their association did not last long.

South African speedster Nantie Hayward gave his side the breakthrough when he had dashing Jayasuriya caught at square leg by Michael Bevan.

Jayasuriya made only 12.

Former Indian captain Tendulkar opened his account by whacking Andrew Caddick to the cover boundary in the second ball of the innings.

The right-handed opener, arguably the best in business, reached his 50 off 48 deliveries, cracking the ball across the rope nine times.

However, Tendulkar was dropped at 70 when Tufnell failed to get hold of a return catch and in the very next ball the English off-spinner also dropped Saurav Ganguly when he was on 41.

Ganguly had another close call when Australian wicket-keeper Adam Gilchrist failed to hold the ball in his gloves off a Rose delivery when the Indian was on 11.

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## Half of foodgrains allocated for projects unutilised

By Reaz Ahmad

More than half of the foodgrains sanctioned for distribution under the Public Food Distribution System in the current financial year remained stockpiled in government silos even after eight months of the year due to slow progress in food-supported development projects.

The allocation under PFDS in the current fiscal is 20 lakh tonnes. But till February, 9,83,000 tonnes were distributed, according to food ministry records. If the government wants to exhaust the full budgetary allocation, it has to utilise over 10 lakh tonnes by June.

Lesser food distribution for development projects has put the performance of PFDS to question, sources said. The PFDS is not performing well, they observed.

Speedy implementation of projects and taking up of fresh ones could create more work for the unemployed rural workforce during the lean period, they observed.

But officials claim that all food-supported projects were on time and allocation under the Food for Work (FFW) Programme was raised to 7, 5,000 tonnes from 5, 25,000 tonnes to face the situation.

In addition to the budgetary allocation, the government released one lakh tonnes for projects under the Local Government Engineering Department and another 50,000 tonnes under the Water Development Board, the officials said.

In January, the Directorate of Food had spelt out a government plan for delivery of 12 lakh tonnes under the PFDS during the current dry season for infrastructure development, vulnerable group feeding (VGF), vulnerable group development (VGD) and relief projects.

The officials said, due to stable rice price, there has been no pressing need for operation of OMS (open market sale of rice) by the government. This also contributed to lesser release of food grains from silos, they

said. Successive bumper crops led the government to increase food grains allocation under PFDS to 20 lakh MT tonnes in fiscal 1999-2000 from 17, 30,000 tonnes, the sources noted.

A bumper IRRI-Boro harvest last year, followed by a good Aman harvest this year, estimated at over one crore tonnes, resulted in continued satisfactory rice supplies in the market. Wholesale prices of coarse rice in Dhaka was lower by over Tk 20 in March this year than last year's, says a Food Ministry report. Five per cent import duty on rice was imposed to check further fall of the price, they said.

The supply and stock position of food grains are very good because of the good harvests. As a result, commercial import of four lakh tonnes, planned earlier, may not be necessary. Food grains stock with the government was 15, 7,000 tonnes in March, the food ministry report said.

## No funds for new power transmission lines

By Sharier Khan

The power sector in the country is heading for a major crisis due to lack of required power transmission infrastructure and funds for building it.

It has become urgent for the government to set up new inter-regional power transmission systems while pursuing new power projects, but the donors are unwilling to fund any project in the public sector, a well-placed source in the Power Development Board (PDB) said.

The government right now needs investment of at least Tk. 2500 crore to set up some high capacity power distribution systems. Till these distribution lines are set up, it will not be possible to make the power from under-construction and proposed plants available to the people, he said.

The PDB has made some proposals to set up new transmission lines but the donors and lending organisations are unwilling to finance installation of any such project, specifically those pursued by the PDB, he said.

The donors, led by the World Bank, are clearly saying that they will consider financing power distribution projects pursued only by the newly formed Power Grid Company of Bangladesh (PGCB) and not by the PDB, he said.

The donors further said that though the PDB handed over some assets and transmission lines to PGCB, the company could not be properly launched. The whole power transmission system in the country should go to PGCB from PDB, they say.

On the other hand, PDB is unwilling to hand over more power lines to PGCB right now as it believes that PGCB is not "matured enough to handle and pursue new transmission lines".

An Energy Ministry official said that the PDB has already made a number of proposals to the government. The first proposal is for installation of a

100-120 km high voltage 230 KV transmission line covering Iswardi-Baghabari-Shahadatpur-Siraganj-Bogra areas. This project would require an investment of around Tk. 300 crore.

The second proposal aims at supplying power from the Barapukuria coal fired power plant in near future. The 367 km transmission line from Khulna to Barapukuria requires an investment of around Tk. 1000 crore.

Besides these, PDB has proposed a number of small projects. These include setting up of transmission lines in Meherpur, Thakurgaon, Chuadanga, Magura, Patharghata, from Chandpur to Comilla and from Sylhet to Ashuganj.

"Without these transmission lines, power supply from new plants in Barapukuria, Sylhet, Chandpur, Baghabari and other places will not be possible at all. As a result, there will be

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## Interference delays \$5m Air Quality Management Project

By Shehab Ahmed

Bureaucratic wrangling and interference from high ups in selecting tenders for pre-qualification of contractors and a project director have delayed the five million dollar World Bank aided Air Quality Management Project (AQMP) for urban areas, authoritative sources said.

The project was scheduled to be launched in January this year but it has now become uncertain.

An environment ministry source, however, said, "We are hopeful of addressing the problems and launch it by June".

The Department of Environment (DOE), entrusted with the responsibility of starting the project, initially found the going difficult in the face of

non-cooperation from various ministries.

The DOE is going without a Director General following the departure of AR Khan, now made Divisional Commissioner of Dhaka.

A Project Director also could not yet be appointed.

On the other hand, the government decision to cut the number of auto-rickshaws in the city from July last year, through imposition of higher duties on import of two-stroke engines, spares and auto-rickshaws, have practically been shelved.

Interested quarters openly bypassed the law, importing 5,500 auto-rickshaws, the three-wheelers from India

See Page 12 Col 1

## Project aid for Bangladesh Britain tops list of European donors

By Rafiq Hasan

The United Kingdom has so far made the highest commitments among European donors for project aid to Bangladesh in the current 1999-2000 financial year.

Out of total commitments of over 492 million US dollars by eight European countries and the European Commission till March, UK has agreed to provide 120.13 million, according to a preliminary estimate by the Economic Relation Division (ERD). UK's commitments are almost one fourth of the total.

Besides, the UK has also arranged another 22.6 million dollars soft loan from HSBC bank for construction of a bridge.

Letters of Intent (LOE) have already been signed for many of the project aids. The rest will be signed within June this year, ERD sources said.

The major commitments from UK include 56.88 million US dollars for construction of the Bhairab Bridge, 43.04 million for Rural Hygiene, Sanitation and

See Page 12 Col 8

## Biman's F-28 averts mishap after bird hits engine

By Special Correspondent

A Bangladesh Biman F-28 narrowly averted a mishap while landing at Zia International Airport yesterday after a bird hit one of its two engines.

The flight from Sylhet landed safely, said aviation sources. However, airport security denied that any such incident occurred.

Birds, especially Pariah Kites, live around Zia, drawn to nearby ponds that are leased to fisheries.

The men who cull the birds are often helpless, since their guns are often unserviceable. Sometimes they only have one gun per shift, said sources.

Despite news items published in different newspapers about the menace posed by the birds, the situation has not improved.

Meanwhile, officials discovered another Biman F-28 was missing one of its flaps after it arrived from Jessore yesterday.

Both aircraft were purchased recently from Indonesia.

Another F-28, the third in Biman's fleet, had trouble with its radar yesterday.

Biman had trouble fulfilling its domestic flight schedule due to the technical problems.

## Boat mishap 36 passengers rescued by Navy ship

From Staff Correspondent

CHITTAGONG, Apr 8: Bangladesh Navy patrol ship rescued 36 boat passengers, including three children who fell into the sea after their boat tilted in high tide near Sandwip Channel today.

Police and navy sources said the 36 survivors were later released after first aid.

The Hatia-bound engine boat from Chittagong with 100 passengers on board suddenly tilted near Sandwip Channel at around 11-20 am.

A navy patrol ship, Jamuna, staying there came forward and rescued the victims.

## Ishaq's JS seat BNP to file writ with HC today

BNP has decided to challenge in the High Court the gazette notification that declared vacant the Parliamentary seat of BNP lawmaker Shamsuddin Ahmed Ishaq from Narshingdi-1, reports UNB.

Party sources said Barrister Moudud Ahmed will move a writ petition today challenging the order.

Speaker Humayun Rasheed Chowdhury on April 4 declared in parliament that Ishaq lost his parliament membership as he remained absent from parliament for 101 consecutive sittings.

A parliamentary seat falls vacant if a member without informing the Speaker remains absent for 90 consecutive sittings.



**Rajdhani Unnayan Kartripakkha**  
Rajuk Bhaban, Dhaka

## Notice Inviting Re-Tender for Auction Auction Tender No: 05/1999-2000

It is notified for information of all concerned that the RAJUK (empowered by govt.) has decided to offer the undermentioned abandoned properties for 99 years' lease of residential plot including buildings, structure, trees etc. Interested bidders may collect tender schedule from Sonali Bank/Janata Bank/Agrani Bank, Rajuk Bhaban Branch and Cashier, Rajuk, Dhaka on payment of Taka 1000/= (Taka one thousand only) in cash (non-refundable) from 18/4/2000 to 24/4/2000 during office hours and will be received in the office of the Joint Secretary (Dev), Ministry of Housing & Public Works, Bangladesh Secretariat, Member (Finance)/Planning/(Dev)/(Admin & Land)/(Estate), Rajuk, Commissioner, Dhaka Division, Chief Engineer and Director (Estate), Rajuk Additional Chief Engineer, PWD, Dhaka Zone, Executive Engineer, PWD Eden Building Division, Bangladesh Secretariat, from intending persons up to 1.00 pm on 30/04/2000. Tenders will be opened at 1.30 pm on the same day in presence of the bidders, if present.

Schedule of Building/House for Sale (Including Land)

Gr. No.	Building/Plot No. with location	Area of land (more or less) in decimal	Earnest money
1	Plot No. N.W (H)-7, Road No. 51/54, Holding-7, Gulshan, Dhaka.	37.83	Tk. 20,00,000/= (Tk Twenty lac only)

Auction tender form along with terms and conditions of bid offer and other relevant papers may be seen and can be collected from the cashier of the office of the undersigned and can also be obtained from the abovementioned officers on any working day up to 24/04/2000 at any time from 9.00 am to 5.00 pm on payment of usual charges (non-refundable) and no auction tender form will be sold after the abovementioned date and time. The competent authority reserves the right to accept or reject any or all the auction tenders without assigning any reason.

DFP-7744-4/4  
G-627

Chairman

Rajdhani Unnayan Kartripakkha