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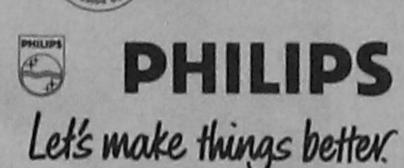
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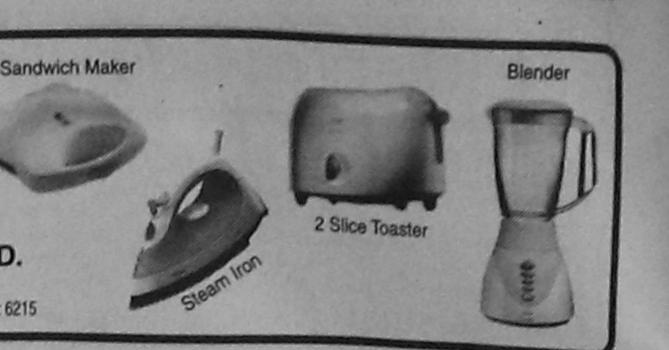
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### 158 garment units set up with help of Agrani Bank shut so far

By Staff Correspondent As many as 158 garment factories set up with financial help

factories became irregular, they said, and attributed the closing of the factories to huge stock lots, massive flood in 1998 and political unrest.

up 527 garment factories.

Bangladesh Garments Manufacturers' and Exporters' Association yesterday. The bank officials agreed to

cooperate in reviving operation of the closed factories. There will be two meetings every month between the BGMEA and the bank officials to discuss the problems of the factories, meeting sources said.

managing director of Agrani Bank, led their respective delegations, according to a BGMEA press release.

been facing closure for long. The factories that have been closed down will be able to repay their liabilities with the bank once they resume opera-

ident. The Agrani Bank MD said the bank would take necessary steps to revive the factories.

### Child labour BGMEA to urge US to continue

By Staff Correspondent

Bangladesh Garments Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA) will urge the US government to continue child labour monitoring activities during a discussion with a

The delegation led by Andrew James Samet, Deputy Under-secretary of International Affairs is scheduled to arrive here today and meet the BGMEA leaders at a city hotel.

The discussion would be a follow-up of the consensus reached at a meeting between the BGMEA and the US embassy officials on the issue last month.

US Ambassador John C Holzman called the meeting at his residence where BGMEA

The meeting agreed to continue the existing 88 schools

sions, the BGMEA would bear the cost of its monitors, ILO and other donors would provide funds for foreign personnel and stipend would be given to the new child workers.

The meeting also decided that any new child workers found would be sent to the school for education until they

Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was signed between Bangladesh Garments Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA), ILO and UNICEF in 1995 for eliminating child labour from garments

Bangladesh and the US mission in Bangladesh provided support for implementation of the agreement

joint survey was conducted for identifying the child labour in the garments sector. The child labourers were removed from the factories and they were sent to special schools set up for their education programme.

The tenure of the MOU will end in June this year and the BGMEA wants to sign another agreement to continue the programme, the sources said.



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina addressing officers and soldiers at Senakunja at Dhaka Cantonment yesterday. The event marked the 30 anniversary of the Bangladesh Army. -PID photo

# Govt firm to keep armed forces above politics: PM

Prime Minister Sheikh litical purpose that created a Hasina said her government was determined to keep the armed forces above politics and increase their institutional prestige, report agencies.

"Many undesirable incidents took place in the armed forces during the time of grabbing power through killings, coups and conspiracies after the killing of the father of the nation," she said while addressing the Darbar on the occasion of the 30th founding day of army headquarters at Senakunja in the city yesterday morning.

She said it is important for members of the armed forces to earn the people's confidence to safeguard the nation's

sovereignty. "The armed forces have already earned the people's faith and confidence by the steps taken by the government, which has also closed the distance between the armed forces and the people," she said.

The Army Headquarters was established in Mujibnagar under the leadership of Commander-in-Chief of the Liberation War Col M A G Osmani on April 12, 1971.

brutal killing of the father of the nation on August 15, 1975, the armed forces became victims of unwanted incidents. As the politics of killing,

Hasina said that after the

of officials and jawans were killed indiscriminately while thousands were sacked unnecessarily.

army, said Hasina.

gap between the people and the

"After assuming power, we took steps to close the gap between the people and members of the armed forces, and regain the people's confidence in the

Hasina said through their involvement in various welfare-oriented activities, the country's armed forces have earned the trust and confidence

encouraging. The present government has been continuing its efforts to build a modern and skilled armed forces, a symbol of pride, independence and sovereignty

of the country. forces, the government has formed an infantry battalion and a riverine engineering bat- budget.

"We have also raised a support battalion, locating battery and a logistic support unit for the 19th infantry division," she said. A new infantry brigade will be launched in Sylhet shortly, she added. coup and conspiracy were introduced in the post-75 era. the The Bangladesh Infantry

in Rajshahi, and the government is going to hand over the Bangladesh Machine Tools Fac-During that time, hundreds tory to the army soon, she said

> Hasina said the government has completed the formalities to procure a modern frigate for the navy and has bought two gunboats and the latest "action speed tactical trainer."

The formalities to procure another ship for the navy are in the final stages. The Khulna Shipyard has also been handed over to navy.

For the air force, modern equipment and fighters, including Mig-29 and C-130 carrier of the people, which is certainly aircraft, have been bought. She said the Armed Forces

> War College will open in 2001. An Armed Forces Medical College and a Military Institute of Science and Technology have also been set up. Despite resources con-

To strengthen the overall de- straints, the government has fence strategy and the armed increased the salaries and allowances of government officials and employees. It has defor the Bangabandhu Bridge, as cided to introduce a time-scale well as an air defence regiment for the armed forces in the next

Hasina said the Trust Bank has opened in different cantonments. "The government has also introduced health insurance for the army.'

"We have approved a new DOH in Mirpur for the private housing of army officials," she said. Almost 30 hectares has been set aside for the project.

# Delhi seeks to form 'united front' to fight drought

NEW DELHI, Apr 25: The Indian government sought to present a united political front after an all-party crisis meeting today to address the drought affecting 50 million people across the country, reports AFP.

However, clear signs of dissent remained among opposition groups and even within the ruling coalition on how best to combat the worsening drought in the states of Gujarat, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Orissa and Andhra Pradesh.

"Everybody agreed ... that this terrible drought should be treated as a national calamity. and all political parties should rise above narrow considerations to fight the crisis," Parliamentary Affairs Minister Pramod Mahajan told reporters after the meeting of 40 MPs from 21 parties.

"Everyone stressed the need for long-term planning and a long term solution for drinking water, as well as fodder for cattle and adequate foodgrains."

Pressed for details of the meeting, Mahajan admitted that opposition leader Sonia Gandhi had complained that the affected states were being treated differently according to their political hue.

Mahjan said Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee, who had called the crisis meeting, responded by pledging that the government would "never consider the (political) colour of the state" when it came to providing relief aid.

Earlier Tuesday, the central government had announced the provision of 9.5 billion rupees (220 million dollars) in drought relief for the worst-hit states.

APAC observes

hartal in Sylhet

SYLHET, Apr 25: A dawn-to-

dusk hartal called by All Party

Action Committee (opposition)

was observed in the district

protest filing of case against a

Khelafat Majlis leader Maulana

insurance offices remained

closed and traffic movement

came to a halt in the town dur-

the town were seen plying as

Shops, offices, banks and

However, vehicles outside

Habibur Rahman.

ing hartal.

APAC called the hartal to

peacefully today, reports UNB.

"The prime minister made it clear that no relief work would

the ruling TDP party in Andhra Pradesh, Yerra Naidu, who at-

be hampered due to lack of

money," Mahajan said.

However, a senior leader of tended the crisis meeting, complained that the level of federal assistance was insufficient. "We have requested assis-

tance of 7.3 billion rupees, but the government of India has only given 750 million," said Naidu, whose party is a key ally of Vajpayee's ruling coalition. Meanwhile, Orissa Chief

Minister Naveen Patnaik said his state was still trying to cope with the aftermath of a devastating cyclone that hit the eastern coastal state last year.

"I've just come out from the

horrors of the super cyclone five months ago and I'm facing an acute water crisis," he said. India's main communist party issued a statement slamming the government's "lackadaisical attitude" in dealing

with the drought. Vajpayee, in an address to the nation late Sunday, had called for public donations to help tide affected states over the drought.

The all-party meeting agreed that all MPs should donate one month's salary to the prime minister's relief fund.

for the main opposition Congress party, told AFP before the all-party meeting that the central government was responsible for the crisis.

jasthan, said the state's Congress administration had told New Delhi in November that 23,406 villages in 26 out of 32 districts faced drought conditions and warned the situa-

tion could worsen.

"We repeated the same warn ings in March but it seemed to fall on deaf ears. This is the third consecutive year that there is a drought in Rajasthan," she said.

Mahajan announced that the government would provide 526,462 tonnes of wheat and rice to Rajasthan and 359,205 tonnes to Gujarat -- the two worst-hit states.

"There is no shortage of foodgrain. Whoever wants it will get it," he said.

Gujarat Water Resources Minister Narottam Patel told AFP his government would start running water trains, possibly from May when the situation was expected to get worse.

"We have identified four railway stations near the Mahi river and three dams -- Datarwadi, Moj and Sani -- from where the water will be sourced," he said.

More than 100 of the 143 dams and reservoirs in Saurashtra, Kutch and north Gujarat were either dry or had water for barely a fortnight.

### 6 HC judges take oath

Six new judges took oath as Girija Vyas, a spokeswoman judges of the High Court Division of the Supreme Court yesterday, reports UNB.

Muhammad Latifur Rahman, Md Abdul Quddus, Md Abdul Aziz, Bijon Kumar Das Vyas, a leader from Ra- ABM Khairul Huq and Md Mozammel Hossain took oath as permanent judges of the High Court Division.

All the six judges, earlier, worked as Additional Judges in the High Court division.

### Preparation of new voters' list begins May 15

The Election Commission (EC) will begin preparation of new voters' list on May 15, reports BSS.

The EC urged the citizens yesterday to cooperate with the staff who will go home-to-home from the date to collect information about the eligible vot-

According to EC rules, any Bangladeshi who have reached the age of 18 years on January 1, 2000 is eligible to be a voter. One person will be a voter usually at the place where he or she

A person will not be allowed to be a voter or cast his or her vote in more than one place.

A person will have to be present, provide personal details on a prescribed form and sign or put thumb impression on it during the information collection, the EC said.

Any voter, who has been listed previously, will have to enroll his name on the new list.

### One shot dead in city

Unidentified assailants shot a young man to death at city's Mirpur area on Monday night, reports UNB. Hospital sources said the

miscreants attacked Sirajul Haq Shaheed, 25, of Mirpur Section 6, on his way home from Block C of the same area at about 10 pm.

They stabbed him indiscriminately and shot in his chest prior to leave the spot safely. Shaheed died on way to Dhaka Medical College Hospital, the sources said.

### Peace procession

From Page 1

said the present crisis at SUST should be resolved keeping the sentiment of the people of Syl-

He also said the students' right to education should be ensured because education is the root of any development programme.

Chaired by N H Zahid, the press conference was addressed, among others, by Nazmul Islam Lucky, Sirajul Islam, Nurul Islam. Habibur Rahman and Jalaluddin Ahmed.

### 150 students

From Page 1

840 students selected for admission did not get admission due to the deadlock. Arun Kumer Bhattacharya,

principal of the college, said the National University was not giving permission for admission of the selected students. The university extended the last date for admission twice earlier for Rajshahi College, sources

The students earlier staged sit-in in front of the office building of the college. They also observed token hunger strike yesterday from 10 am to 3 pm to press home their de-

connection with the triple murder in the city recently.

The lawyer told the court that the college authorities on March 28 called the guardians of 132 students and stated that some problem arose regarding registration of the students. But the college authorities on April 11 received coaching fee of Tk 1050 from each of them that amply indicated that the problem of registration has been re-

The students and their guardians were surprised to know that they would not be able to sit for the examination, submitted the lawyer and made a plea that the students should be allowed to appear at the ex-

Earlier, Additional Attorney General Mahbubey Alam said the government is not responwould not be able to appear at

The hearing resumes today

### Cops beaten up

From Page 1 claimed that the dollars were fake and asked him to accompany them to the Minto Road DB office. Khosru agreed.

the Kakrail Church, they him and took away the dollars, Khosru alleged.

case with the Lalbagh thana. The decision was taken at a meeting of the university with They asked the authorities DU vice Chancellor Prof Ak Azad Chowdhury in the chair The meeting was attended by DU pro-VC Prof M Shahadat Ali, Treasurer Prof Abul Hashem and Provosts of Zahu-

sible for the lapses for which 132 students of the college

the examination.

stopped their bike, intimidated

investigate the snatching incident. Headed by Pro-VC M Sha-Blaming the inertia of a por- hadat Ali, the other member o tion of the administration for the committee are Provost o the situation, the intellectuals Zahurul Huq Hall Prof Abdul demanded immediate actions Mannan and university Proctor against this terrorists network. Dr AKM Nurun Nabi.

# Rubel murder

till May 2 vestigation. It recommended By Court Correspondent that the tender be awarded to The Third Additional Metropolitan Sessions Judge's Court, Dhaka yesterday adjourned the proceedings of the sensational Rubel murder case

of time by the prosecution lawyers till May 2 It issued a letter on Decem-The Judge Mollah Mostafa ber 21, 1999 instructing the pro-Kamal adjourned the proceedings of the case as the prosecution witnesses in the case did not appear at the court yester-

following a prayer for extension

Shamim Reza Rubel, 24, a BBA student of the Independent University, was picked up by a team of Detective Branch of Po-The PMO said the matter lice from near his residence on July 23, 1998 and was tortured (a) to death in the custody the same

> All the accused, including AC Akram and Mukuli Begum were produced before the court during proceedings.

### HC notices

From Page 1

sion asking them to reply why the 13th amendment to the Constitution should not be declared Ultra Vires of the Constitution. Those notices had already been replied.

As hearing of the writ began yesterday the Division Bench of the High Court comprising Justice Gholam Rabbani and Mohammad Latifur Rahman issued similar notices on the General Secretary of AL and Secretary General of BNP In his petition, Advocate Salimullah submitted that the

13 amendment was opposed to democracy and people's constitutional right to be governed by their elected representatives. The caretaker government is composed of non-elected per-The next hearing will re-

sume on May 9.

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refundable) or all the offer(s) partly or wholly at any time and or/stage without assigning any reason whatsoever and no claim shall be acceptable in this regard.

Kazi Ekramul Haque

of Agrani Bank closed down

over the years, sources said. Operation of another 152

Agrani Bank has helped set The issue came up during a discussion between the bank officials and a delegation of

Anisul Haq. BGMEA vicepresident, and M. A. Yousuf,

The BGMEA delegation urged the bank officials to arrange working capital with soft term for some factories that have

tion, said the BGMEA vice-pres-

monitoring

delegation from the US Labour Department today, according to sources.

president Anisur Rahman Sinha and other leaders were present.

run by the UNICEF According to other deci-

attain the age of 14. The existing child labour

factories The government of

Following the agreement, a

### Lok Sabha told 3846 Bangladeshis held along

armed forces were used for po-

Indo-Pak border NEW DELHI, Apr 25: Indian Minister of State for Home Affairs I D Swami today told parliament that about 3.846 Bangladeshis were apprehended along the Indo-Pakistan border during the period between 1997

and March 2000, reports BSS. Replying to a question in the Lok Sabha, he said quoting 'available reports" that some Bangladeshi immigrants crossed over to Pakistan in search of better livelihood.

and porous border with Bangladesh and also on account of various push and pull factors, many Bangladeshis had managed to sneak into various parts of India. "Due to ethnic and linguistic

He said in view of the long

similarities, they are able to mingle easily with the local population," he added. Answering another question as to what step the Indian government had taken to stop "rising cases of prostitution and other crimes committed by the infiltrators" Swami said instructions had been issued to the state governments and

union territory administra-

tions to deal firmly with those

found violating law of the land.

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## JRC survey

Regimental Centre has opened

From Page 1 Officials of the Sylhet-Assam Sector of the joint river commission began their first joint survey last July. They met four times in two months to discuss developments. The officials agreed to complete the survey by the next dry season. Officials of both the countries

### agreed to complete the works of the joint commission in a year. Terrorist acts by fundamentalists in Brahmanbaria

condemned By Staff Correspondent Twenty-five noted intellectuals of the country in a statement yesterday condemned the increasing terrorist activities

by the fundamental forces in Brahmanbaria. They also denounced the threat made at a public meeting to kill prominent NGO leader. National Professor Kabir Chowdhury, poet Shamsur Rahman, Professor Anisuzzaman, director general of Bangla Academy Dr Syed Anwar Hossain, pro-VC of University of Dhaka Dr Md Shahadat Ali, artist Hasem Khan, actor Asaduzzaman Noor, actor Ali

Zaker, writer Selina Hossain

are among the intellectuals who

delivered the statement yester-

In the name of retaliation against a statement made by Proshika president Dr Kazi Faruk Ahmed at a seminar in Dhaka, terrorist activities have been taking place in Brahmanbaria. The Proshika president did not pass any such comment about the Bara Hujur of Brahmanbaria, they said.

concerned to immediately pro-

vide security to NGO offices, de-

velopment workers and their

The recent incidents in Brahmanbaria are not isolated. Rather these are part of a blueprint masterminded by those who are paralysing Chittagong and Shahjalal universi-

# 132 students

From Page 1

lawyer

amination.

But when they reached near

### Students expelled From Page 1

rul Huq Hall, Mohsin Hall and Ziaur Rahman Hall. The DU authorities also formed a three-member body to

### usual and two trains left the Sylhet station two hours behind the schedule in the morn-APAC leaders at a meeting in the afternoon at Court Point demanded withdrawal of cases filed against its leaders and

and cancellation of naming of halls and buildings. The meeting was addressed by Dr Shafiqur Rahman of Jamaat, MA Haque of BNP, Giasuddin of JP, Maksud Hossain of JAGPA. Meanwhile, some 12 leaders

workers, immediate release of

the jailed leaders and workers

and workers of APAC were released from jail today. They were granted bail by the court on Monday.

BIRDEM

From Page 1

Siemens. The standing committee en dorsed its sub-committee's recommendations on December 14, 1999 in the presence of the state minister and the social welfare secretary

ject executing authorities of the ministry to execute the recommendation. However, the ministry ignored the standing committee's recommendation and submit-

ted a summary in favour of re-

tender to the prime minister on

should be resolved at the min-

February 14, 2000.

istry level. "I am really surprised at the ministry's support for re-tendering," said Md. Dabirul Islam, chairman of the parliamentary standing committee on the Ministry of Social Welfare. "DAB's action was unfair, un-

However, Prof. A.K. Azad

Khan, secretary general, DAB,

said the tender was floated

without "detail specifications,

which caused a lot of problems

democratic and unjust.

with equipment selection. "We floated the tender on a trial and error basis, since we never had any experience in dealing with such a huge project. Keeping in mind that we may award the tender or may go for re-tendering, DAB national committee decided to re-tender for the sake of avoiding errors.' "Realising that we had made

mistake and had been badly

served by not appointing a con-

sultant earlier, we wanted to correct things," said Khan when asked why they appointed a technical evaluation committee of top experts. "So we appointed a consultant to look into designing specification."

Moniruzzaman Monir and Manik were arrested in

### -Star photo mand. Proceedings adjourned

Tender Notice Dry Lease of DC 10-30 and A 310-300 Aircraft

livery at Dhaka at the earliest. Tender to be submitted based on the terms and conditions as detailed in the tender schedule.

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The offer for each aircraft to be submitted in two separate sealed envelopes, one for technical specifications and another for financial offer, addressed to the General Manager, Planning, Bangladesh Biman, Head Office, Balaka, Kurmitola, Dhaka-1229, Bangladesh latest by 1200 hrs BST (0600 hrs UTC) on or before 25 May 2000 and same shall be opened immediately after closing time in presence of bidders, if any. Offers/Bids can also be submitted through

Dhaka and in Foreign Stations of Biman on all working days during office hours from 2nd May 2000 on payment of USD 100 (one hundred) or equivalent foreign currency (non-refundable). In case of purchasing the tender schedule from Bangladesh the amount will be BDT 5125/- (Five thousand one hundred twenty five only) (non-Biman Bangladesh Airlines reserves the right to accept or reject any

General Manager Planning (ACTG)