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Two-stroke engine vehicles Govt prefers conversion to imposing ban

By Staff Correspondent

The government will encourage conversion of two-stroke engine vehicles into CNG-run ones instead of a ban in the next budget, said Finance Minister S A M S. Kibria yesterday.

He also said the financial institutions should tag the condition of setting up a waste treatment plant before giving loans to any industrial project to curb the country's environmental degradation.

Kibria was speaking at a roundtable on "Eco-friendly Budget" where academics and NGO activists urged him to address the environmental issues in the next budget and take steps to check the onslaught on environment.

Poribesh Rokkha Shapath, Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies, Coalition of Environmental NGOs, Bangladesh Centre for Advanced Studies and daily Promoth. Also organised the roundtable at the BIDS conference room.

The minister also said the government is mulling over setting up a big industrial waste treatment plant in the city's Hajjaribagh area where most of the tanneries are. Earlier, the government tried to shift the tanneries from that area but the moves failed in the face of opposition.

Most speakers urged the minister to tighten laws and

take measures in the next budget to discourage import of anti-environment appliances and vehicles like air-coolers, aerosol, refrigerator that uses CFC gas and two-stroke three wheelers.

However, Kibria said policies and laws won't do any good for environment. The major problem is the enforcement of the law. He invited practical suggestions for an effective enforcement of law, but added that social pressure will be more effective than enacting law.

"How will you determine whether an engine is two-stroke or four-stroke and who will do it? ... There is a lack of enforcement of law."

The finance minister said imposing heavy duty on or banning two-stroke three wheelers would not arrest the degradation since there always remains the possibility of smuggling in the vehicles which are very popular here.

A ban on two-stroke engine may trigger off a movement, he said.

Kibria said the government is serious about the environment issue and will encourage conversion of motor vehicles into CNG (Compressed Natural Gas) ones.

Former finance minister A M A. Muhi, who presided over the roundtable, emphasised ban on import of two-stroke

three wheelers. He said only one company in a particular country manufactures these anti-environment vehicles. The restriction would work as a discouragement for that company as Bangladesh is the major importer of the vehicles.

He suggested development of a river route around Dhaka to reduce pressure on road transport in the capital and said it will cost only Tk 400 crore.

Attur Rahman, senior research fellow at BIDS, suggested that import duty on two-stroke three wheelers be increased from 100 per cent to 300 per cent, catalytic converter addition in motor vehicles made mandatory and import of diesel without Diesel Particular Filter banned.

Speakers also recommended greater investment in agriculture research and development, especially on non-cereal crops such as fruits, vegetables, pulses, oil seeds and spices; increased funding for awareness building and sensitisation on use of agro-chemicals, and pricing policy for use of underground water for irrigation.

Director general of BIDS Abu Abdullah, professor of Jahangirnagar University, Syed Abdul Hye, research director of BIDS Quazi Shahabuddin, Mohammad Alauddin of University of Queensland and M Asaduzzaman of BIDS also spoke at the roundtable.



Baffled residents try to figure out the damage after a blaze reduced about 50 tin-roof houses to rubble in the city's Jurain yesterday.

Workshop in city from May 12 BNP's bid to give a 'clear view' of vital issues to activists

By Staff Correspondent

The city BNP will organise a political workshop on May 12-13 with the objective of giving the field level leaders a clear conception on various vital issues including the country's socio-economic and political situation in the context of the changing world order.

During the two-day workshop, some top BNP leaders and eminent educationists will give a series of lectures on the party and its 19-point programmes, Bangladesh nationalism, relations among political parties, changing world order, science and technological advancement and economic development.

There will also be a total of seven theoretical classes on specific topics, besides discussions on organisational matters.

Deputy Leader of the Opposition in Parliament Prof AQM Badrudozza Chowdhury will deliver lectures on three topics — The historical background of founding of BNP, Bangladesh Nationalism and Ziaur Rahman's strategy towards political parties.

BNP Secretary General Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan will give a lecture on the reality of malice and relations among the political parties in the country.

Party stalwart and former finance minister M Saifur Rahman will speak on economic development during BNP rule.

Former vice chancellor of Dhaka University Prof M Maniruzzaman Mian will speak on the 19-point programme of BNP. Prof Jashimuddin Ahmed will give a lecture on possible political developments with the advancement of science and technology and former diplomat MM Rezaul Karim on appropriate-

Extortion Arrested cops produced in court, remanded

By Staff Correspondent

A Sub-inspector of City Special Branch and a suspended Naik police arrested on Tuesday, were produced before the CMM's Court yesterday and the court placed them on one-day police remand.

The two — SI Fattah and Naik Tota Mian — were rescued by Motijheel police from a mob attack at Purana Paltan and arrested.

They allegedly took away 2400 US dollars from one Tobarak Hossain Khasru on April 20.

Police said they were looking for two other sub-inspectors in this connection. One of them is from Demra police station and the other is yet to be identified.

When Tota Mian was being taken to a police van on way to the court, he told reporters he went there to purchase clothes for his kids. He was taking tea and was suddenly attacked by a mob.

Fattah said he was going by a rickshaw when he met Tota, a former colleague, and he stopped to talk to him. But a mob attacked him.

Motijheel police said Tota Mian confessed his involvement in taking away the dollars and Fattah accompanied him.

SB sources said they are investigating the incident and a case has been filed.

Complaint against 5 ministers embarrasses police

By Staff Correspondent

Police authorities 'felt embarrassed' with the first ever-formal complaint against five ministers by a lawyer who alleged that the ministers terrorised the judges by bringing out stick procession in the city last week, reports UNB.

Advocate Golam Kibria of Supreme Court filed the complaint with Motijheel police under Public Safety Act on Tuesday.

"We will have to verify first whether a stick procession is a violation of law as street procession or torch procession is part of the country's political culture," DMP Commissioner Matiuur Rahman told the news agency yesterday.

If such complaint is accepted without examining the prima facie of the matter it will encourage every body to go to police station to file case against any procession or agitation, other police officials said.

Abdul Haq Khan, officer-in-charge of Motijheel Thana said it is the constitutional right of the people to bring out procession. "For that reason we are verifying the prima facie of the matter."

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300 examinees

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forms during filling in. They did not perform their duty properly," said one REB official.

REB chairman Prof Khondoker Khalilur Rahman said special arrangements are being made to take examination of those whose mistakes in filling the documents were "minimum and negligible".

Meanwhile, REB authorities identified most of the 259 examination centres as 'risky' in terms of adopting unfair means during the examinations. The risky centres will be kept under strict surveillance, REB sources said.

A total of 65 vigilance teams, comprising both government and non-government college teachers, have been formed.

A total of 1,43,818 examinees are appearing at the HSC examinations under Rajshahi Board this year.

Concern at alarming rise in revenue expenditure

Star Report

The country's leading economists suggested yesterday that the government keep revenue expenditure at a reasonable level and stop borrowing heavily from the banks.

They expressed concern over the alarming increase in revenue expenditure at a meeting of the Finance Ministry's Macro Economic Advisory Council, held at the ministry. The four-hour long meeting discussed the measures to be incorporated into the next budget.

The economists also said that the plan to increase fertilizer and fuel prices will be a wrong decision. Instead, they suggested to lower the prices.

Finance Minister S A M S

Kibria at a meeting with the Economic Reporters' Forum had earlier hinted that government might increase fuel and fertilizer prices.

Kibria told the meeting that there was no reason to be concerned about the government expenditure and borrowing as the inflation was kept at a reasonable level, meeting sources said.

He said the next budget will mainly aim to attract more private investment, especially in the manufacturing sector and there will be special incentives for the sector.

The meeting also agreed to give special attention on information technology, agriculture and agro-processing industries in the next budget.

Leading economists Rehman Sobhan, Wahiduddin Mahmud and Binayak Sen, and finance secretary Dr Akbar Ali Khan were present, among others, at the meeting.

APSU formed to gear up anti-govt movement

By Staff Correspondent

An 'All-Party Students Unity' (APSU) was launched yesterday to intensify the ongoing anti-government movement of the Four-party Alliance, reports UNB.

Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) vice-president Monwar Hossain Rana, announced the formation of the new students alliance at a press conference at the Jatiya Press Club in the morning.

A 15-point demand of the newly-formed alliance was also announced at the press conference.

The eight student bodies are: JCD, Jatiya Chhatra Samaj, Islami Chhatra Shibir, Islami Chhatra Majlis, Chhatra League (JAGPA), Progotshil Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal, Ganotantrik Chhatra League, and Islami Chhatra Samaj.

As its first programme, the APSU will hold a grand rally at Paltan Maidan on May 9 demanding resignation of the government and release of all arrested student leaders, including JCD president Habibur-Nabi Sohel and general secretary Nasiruddin Ahmed Pintu.

The next programme will be declared from the rally.

Nor'westers hit 3 dists, over 1000 houses damaged

By Staff Correspondent

Nor'westers lashed three districts of the country yesterday, causing extensive damage to standing crops and damaging huge kutcha houses, reports UNB.

At least 500 houses were damaged as nor'westers hit Shariatpur district yesterday morning.

At least 30 people were injured when a passenger bus, hit by the storm, fell into a roadside ditch at Kotapara on Shariatpur-Mawa road.

Five of the injured, identified as Ali Akbar, 42, Babul Sardar, 30, Abdur Rab Sadar, 30, Moza Sardar, 30 and Bimol Chandra, 25, were admitted to hospital.

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New bench to be formed to hear Sharif's appeal

KARACHI, Apr 26: A new panel of judges will be constituted to hear ousted Pakistani prime minister Nawaz Sharif's appeal against his hijacking conviction, following a reshuffle in the superior judiciary, officials said today, reports AFP.

"Obviously a new bench will be constituted to hear the appeal of Nawaz Sharif and the one filed by us demanding the death sentence for him," said public prosecutor Ilyas Khan.

Sharif, deposed in a military coup in October, was convicted by an anti-terrorism court here on April 6 of hijacking and terrorism and sentenced to life imprisonment.

A new bench will be constituted because one of the two judges of the previous bench of the provincial Sindh High Court, Abdul Hameed Dogar, has been elevated to the Supreme Court, the prosecutor said.

In the reshuffle late Tuesday, the government also appointed judge Syed Saeed Ashhad as new chief justice of the Sindh High Court in place of Deedar Hussain Shah, who has been moved to the Supreme Court.

After taking oath on Friday,

the incoming provincial chief justice will nominate a new panel to hear the appeals, Khan said.

"I don't think the change in the bench will delay the hearing of the appeals" which is scheduled to start May 2, the prosecutor said.

Sharif's lawyer Azizullah Sheikh offered no comment on the reshuffle, saying only, "Wait and see. Be patient like us."

Sharif was convicted on charges that he attempted to prevent a commercial plane carrying army chief General Pervez Musharraf and 198 passengers from landing at Karachi on the day of the October 12 coup.

The plane carrying Musharraf, whom Sharif had sacked hours earlier, landed only after the army took control of Karachi airport. Musharraf seized power and arrested Sharif.

The anti-terrorism court acquitted six co-defendants in the case, including Sharif's brother Shahabaz, but they remain in custody in connection with corruption cases.

Rajiv murder Nalini's death sentence commuted

CHENNAI, Apr 26: Tamil Nadu Governor M Fathima Bibi has commuted the death sentence on Nalini, prime accused in the Rajiv Gandhi assassination case, to life, reports PTI.

The governor's order, dated yesterday, was communicated to Nalini in the Vellore prison, superintendent Balachandran told PTI.

When contacted from Chennai, Balachandran said the governor had allowed Nalini's mercy petition, but had rejected the clemency pleas of the other three death row convicts, Murugan, Perarivalan and Chinnna Santhan.

These orders were also communicated to the three convicts by the jail authorities yesterday.

Rajshahi College Fast-unto-death foiled by police threats

From Our Correspondent

RAJSHAHI, Apr 26: The planned 'fast-unto-death' by 150 students seeking admission into first year Honours class in Rajshahi Government College could not begin this morning in the face of police threats.

The students alleged that they were selected through admission tests but the college authorities postponed the admission process halfway when some student organisations demanded at least 10 per cent quota for them.

The date for admission expired on February 27.

About 900 seats are lying vacant in 19 departments of the college for the current session, college sources said. National University is not giving permission for admission as it had already extended the last date for admission twice for the college.

The students held the college authorities responsible for the failure.

Govt employees demand 30pc DA

Bangladesh Government Employees Solidarity Council (BGESC) yesterday demanded 30 per cent dearness allowance, reports BSS.

The BGESC said the purchasing capacity of the employees has been decreased at least 35 per cent due to devaluation of Taka in several times from 1997.

It was announced at an emergency meeting at BGESC Segunbagicha office with its president Syed Aatur Rahman in the chair.

The BGESC also demanded of the government for immediate implementation of their 15-point demand including increasing TA and DA, pension gratuity and introducing selection grade, medical and transport allowances.

BGESC Secretary General Mohammad Shahabuddin, central leaders AKM Mahabubul Alam, Mohammad Lokman Ali, Atiar Rahman, Abdul Hakim Mian, Mizanur Rahman Majumdar, Khandokar Mohammad Yarof, Mohammad Ibrahim Khalil, Dilip Kumar Das and Mahafuzur Rahman Bhuiyan.

On Tuesday, Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee had told Parliament that India would not resume official peace talks with Pakistan.

"We will examine the possibility of talks about talks... to create an atmosphere which would not aggravate the situation," Singh said. "We don't shut any doors..."

Pakistan's military ruler, Gen. Pervez Musharraf, has said he is willing to talk to India anytime and anywhere.

Responding to Musharraf's offer, Singh told Parliament, "We aren't interested in what they say, but what they do."

Singh said the right climate must be created for resumption of dialogue and Pakistan should not indulge in "endless hostile propaganda and continuous call of jihad."

Musharraf has been quoted in India as saying that wresting the disputed region of Kashmir from Indian control is a jihad or holy war.

Singh said that since

Delhi to consider 'talks about talks' with Pakistan

NEW DELHI, Apr 26: India's foreign minister said today that the government would consider holding "talks about talks" with Pakistan in order to avoid increasing tension between the two neighbors, reports AP.

Jaswant Singh's comments, answering questions in Parliament, appeared to refer to some type of low-level informal contact.

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Musharraf's coup ousting Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif, Pakistan had enhanced its sponsorship and support of "cross-border terrorism" in Kashmir and elsewhere.

Pakistan's government denies India's charges that it provides artillery cover for infiltrations, training and money to the militants. But Islamabad says it supports the militants' cause.

Pakistan is demanding the Kashmir dispute be settled by giving Kashmiris on both sides of the disputed border a vote to decide whether a united Kashmir would join either Pakistan or India.

India opposes such a referendum.

Agri products

From Page 1
ing of commercially and industrially important crops like soyabean, sunflower and maize; fruit and vegetable export; development of refrigerated distribution system for fresh and processed products and production of dairy and poultry feed, medicines and vaccines.

Development of technology, human resource and marketing infrastructure is not possible without government support, they said.



Hitler's skull
A fragment of Adolf Hitler's skull on display at the exhibition "The Agony of the Third Reich: Retribution" at the Exhibition Hall of Federal Archives in Moscow. The exhibition that opened yesterday has been sponsored by several archive agencies of Russia with the participation of the Russian Federal Security Service, the Defence Ministry and the Foreign Ministry.

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- তথ্য প্রযুক্তিতে সন্মাননাময় পেশা নির্ধারণের সহায়ক তথ্য
- বিশ্বব্যাপি তথ্য প্রযুক্তির অগ্রগতি ও সাফল্য পর্যালোচনা

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