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VOL. X NO. 157 REGD. NO. DA 781

www.dailystarnews.com

DHAKA TUESDAY, JUNE 27, 2000

3rd Millennium

ASHAR 13, 1407 BS

RABIUL AWAL 24, 1421 HIJRI

16 PAGES PRICE: TKA 6.00

We Rejoice

The long nights of anguish and expectation are finally over. A new sun will rise on the horizon tomorrow heralding the arrival of a new Test-playing nation representing 120 million cricket-crazy people of Bangladesh. The hopes and aspirations of a sporting nation have been finally recognised by the elite group of people who control and conduct this gentlemanly game of glorious uncertainties.

The Daily Star joins the nation in celebrating this historic achievement and offers warm felicitation and congratulations to those who have toiled hard for achieving this glory for the nation.

—Editor

President, PM hail Test elevation

President Shahabuddin Ahmed and Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina hailed yesterday the ICC decision to grant Bangladesh the status of the tenth Test-playing nation in world cricket, report agencies.

President Shahabuddin expressed his happiness at the news that Bangladesh has achieved Test status.

"This is no doubt a historic occasion for Bangladesh, specially for the cricket lovers, players and cricket board officials of the country."

The president wished meri-

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Fanatics on the rampage

Descent into the Dark Ages...

by Praful Bidwai

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Prospectus of Social Investment Bank Limited

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A time of celebration: Ministers, Awami League leaders, BCB officials, national team players and cricket enthusiasts ride round the Bangabandhu National Stadium on a truck after hearing Bangladesh's elevation to the Test club, and cricket crazy fans light some fireworks to celebrate the historic event yesterday evening.

—Star photos

Bangladesh enter Test club

Bangladesh erupted into euphoria when the International Cricket Council (ICC) elevated it as the 10th Test-playing nation at a meeting at Lord's yesterday, reports UNB.

The country's dream came true when all members of the International Cricket Council (ICC) unanimously supported Bangladesh's plea for full membership of ICC.

Bangladesh joined the elite club of Test nations yesterday, the concluding day of a five-day annual meeting of the ICC.

There were supporters from all the nine Test-playing and 26 associate members of the ICC, Bangladesh Cricket Board President and Deputy Minister Saber Hossain Chowdhury said, breaking the historic news from the ICC meeting in London.

Thousands of cricket crazy fans burst into jubilation as soon as State Minister for Sports Obaidul Quader disclosed the news of the recognition he received from Saber Chowdhury over tele-

phone.

The former and current national players and BCB officials distributed sweets among the cricket fans who were waiting at the BCB office in the afternoon.

"This is one of our greatest achievements," Obaidul Quader said in his instant reaction. He hoped that Bangladesh would earn success in Test cricket within a short time.

A colourful truck rally was brought out from the BCB office in the evening, which terminated at the Central Shahid Minar premises after parading different thoroughfares of the city.

BCB officials and former and current national players took part in the rally singing, drumming, dancing and spraying colours in celebration.

Saber Chowdhury further informed that the decision of giving

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4 BCL activists beaten up, held for rowdiness at Sikkha Bhaban

By Staff Correspondent

Six employees at the Sikkha Bhaban in then city were injured, three of them bullet-hit, when some activists of Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) clashed with employees there yesterday.

Four of the BCL activists including Shafiqur Rahman Shafiq, President of its unit at Mohsin Hall of Dhaka University, were caught by the employees, beaten and then handed

over to police, witnesses and some employees said.

Ramna police said the four have been arrested but DMP Commissioner Matir Rahman and some other senior officials refused to talk on the incident.

Ramna police also said an abandoned pistol was recovered from there after the clash. Witnesses and some employees however said two pistols were recovered from the BCL ac-

tivists. Some employees said Shafiq is also a contractor of the Facilities Department of the Education Ministry.

When contacted later, Dhaka University authorities said a three-member probe body has been formed to investigate the incident.

The witnesses and employees said six BCL activists went to the Shikkha Bhaban at about

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Khaleda says We have to maintain this dignity

By Staff Correspondent

BNP Chairperson and Leader of the Opposition in Parliament Khaleda Zia has congratulated the people, all current and former cricket players, officials and patrons as the country attained Test status.

In a message yesterday, she said "I am expressing my grati-

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Kashmir state assembly votes for autonomy

SRINAGAR, June 26: The Jammu-Kashmir state assembly voted today to approve a plan to implement autonomy in India's only Muslim majority state, setting up a showdown with the national government, reports AP.

After five days of debate, the motion was passed by voice vote to return the state to its pre-1953 status, when Jammu-Kashmir had its own president and prime minister.

The motion, urging the national government to take "positive and effective steps for implementation," sets up a conflict between the state government and its allies in New Delhi.

The Bharatiya Janata Party

of India's Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee opposed the autonomy measure in the state assembly, and members of the party walked out before the vote.

Shiv Charan Gupta, a member of the BJP, said: "We don't want autonomy and nobody in the state wants autonomy. This was a futile exercise. It is not going to pass in the center (New Delhi)."

The autonomy plan was immediately rejected by Kashmiri militant and political groups fighting for secession from India since 1989. They are demanding more than just autonomy; they want complete freedom from India.

All state activities in

Jammu-Kashmir — except defense, foreign affairs and telecommunications — were under local control until India's national government abolished the special laws that had existed since the Kashmir region was added to India in 1948.

Since 1989, militant groups have been fighting to separate the state from India, with some groups favouring its annexation to Pakistan. The state has been the cause of two of the three wars between Pakistan and India.

"Nothing short of complete freedom will be acceptable to people of Kashmir," said a written statement by pro-Pakistan group Hizbul Mujahideen.

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Human genetic code cracked

PARIS, June 26: Scientists announced today they have completed a working draft of the instructions to make a human being, launching an era of dazzling medical rewards and sombre moral concerns, reports AFP.

An international group of public-sector scientists said it had unravelled 97 per cent of the human genetic code and 85 per cent of the data had been assembled in the right sequence.

Hailing what it called a landmark in knowledge, the consortium, the Human Genome Project (HGP) said it

had "assembled a working draft of the human genome — the genetic blueprint for a human being."

Announcements were made by HGP participants in Japan, Britain and France. Other countries participating are the United States, which has shouldered the lion's share of the work and 300-million-dollar (280-million-euro) cost, as well as Germany and China.

An American firm, Celera Genomics, has raced with the HGP to the finishing line. It was scheduled to make a joint announcement in Washington

with the public-sector group later Monday.

The decoding of the human genome, the deciphering of the "book of life," is a milestone in science," said French Research Minister Roger-Gerard Schwarzenberg.

Cancer treatment, drug tolerance, even longer life — British researchers see a range of possible applications stemming from the knowledge of mankind's genetic blueprint.

Scientists in London said it was a breakthrough comparable with the invention of the

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1000 suspected illegal Bangladeshi migrants asked to leave Assam

GUWAHATI, June 26: Police in India's northeastern state of Assam said today they had served expulsion notices on at least a thousand people, believed to be illegal migrants from Bangladesh, reports AFP.

A police spokesman said the notices were served on immigrants who had entered India between 1966 and 1971 and had failed to register their names with the authorities.

"They will now be considered illegal immigrants and will face deportation within 15-days of the receipt of the notice," the spokesman said.

The police campaign has been criticised for heavy-handedness, with some villagers complaining that Indian citizens were among those being deported.

"My husband, Sudhangshu Dey, was picked up by police

and deported to Bangladesh about ten days back," said Hira Dey, the mother of four young children.

Dey told AFP that a magistrate had declared in an affidavit that her husband had been a resident of the Meghalaya state capital Shillong since April 1962, before shifting to Sonapur in Assam in 1973.

"Moreover, my husband's

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Heartiest felicitations to

all those who paved the way to

Test Status



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Congratulates

all those who worked hard for achieving **Test Status**

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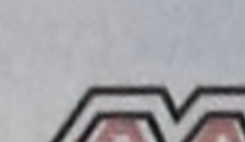
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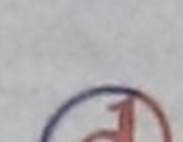
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