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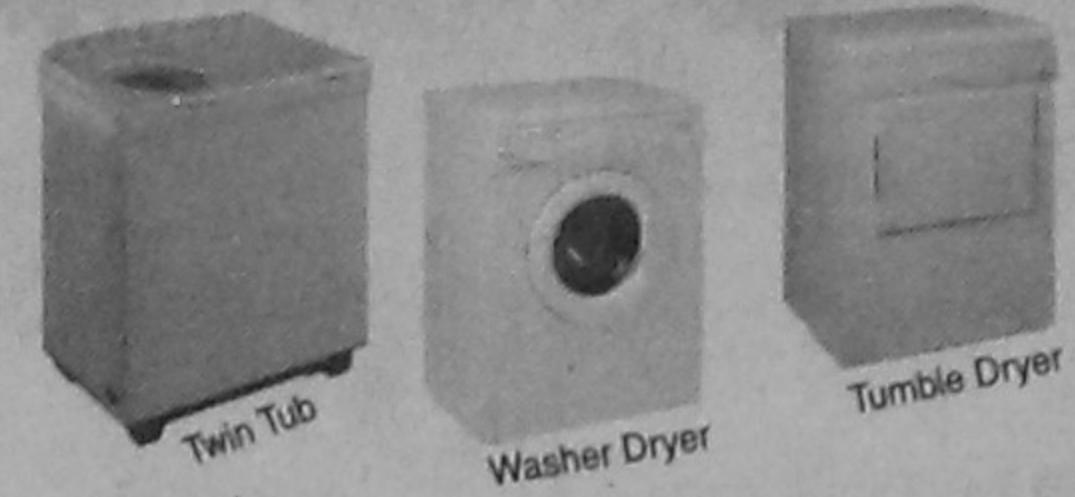
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Spread of dengue under control: PM

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday said the government has taken necessary measures to control the spread of dengue virus, and the situation is under control, reports UNB.

"There is nothing to be alarmed. Instead, people should undertake cleanliness measures to destroy breeding grounds of the Aedes mosquitoes around their homesteads," she said, while directing the officials to continue their allout efforts for tackling the deadly disease.

Talking to the Health Ministry officials at a review meeting at the Secretariat, the Prime Minister asked all concerned to take adequate measures to combat the crisis and motivate the people not to be panicked.

According to official figures, 21 people died of Dengue fever and 1,212 others have been reported affected by the Dengue virus till last Tuesday. Some 297 patients have so far been admitted to different hospitals with Dengue fever.

The meeting was informed that the Health Directorate has

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Larma blames govt for not implementing CHT accord

By Staff Correspondent

Parbatty Chatagram Jana Sanghati Samity (PCJSS) Chairman Jyotiindriya Bodhipriya Larma alias Shantu Larma has criticised the government for not taking initiative to properly implement the CHT peace accord.

The tribal people are still deprived of their social, political and economic rights but the government is yet to take steps to ensure these rights as per the peace accord, he said.

Shantu Larma, who is also Chairman of the CHT Regional Council, was addressing a rally at the Central Shaheed Minar in the city yesterday, organised by the Jatiya Adibasi Samanay Committee in observance of the World Day of the Indigenous People.

He regretted that the Day was not observed at state level and hoped the government would go for observance of the Day at state level to share the joys and sorrows of tribal people.

Larma said, "Besides the CHT people, ethnic minorities

Nikunja murder:

Four PWs cross-examined

By Court Correspondent

Four prosecution witnesses in the sensational Nikunja Bihari Debnath Murder Case were cross-examined in the fourth Additional Metropolitan Sessions Judge's Court, Dhaka yesterday.

The witnesses are Mohini Mohan Chattarjee, Kanu Lal Das, Uzzal Roy and Maniklal Das.

Judge Syed Aminul Islam adjourned the proceedings of the case till August 21.

The third PW Mohini Mohan in his statement said at around 7 pm on January 11, he came to the ground floor after hearing shots and found Nikunja Debnath injured in a rickshaw.

The fourth, fifth and sixth PWs said, they did not hear about the incident but heard about it from the police at around 11 pm the same day.

All the accused including principal accused Shukur Ali were present in the court yesterday.

Nikunja Bihari Debnath, 55, Joint Secretary of the Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development was stabbed to death by muggers near the Swadhinata Sangram (struggle for independence) Sculpture on the Dhaka University campus on January 11.

Accused in Gulshan triple murder case arrested

GAZIPUR, Aug 9: Detective police today arrested an accused in the Gulshan triple murder case from the outskirts of the town, reports UNB.

Police said, acting on a tip-off, they searched the staff quarters of Seed Certification Office early in the morning and nabbed the accused, Bachchu, 32.

Bachchu fled to India with another accused Sajedul Islam Imon but returned home recently after the arrest of Imon by Calcutta police.

Editor: Mahfuz Anam

Published by the Editor from Transcraft Ltd, 229, Tejgaon Industrial Area, Dhaka-1208 on behalf of Mediaworld Ltd., 52 Motijheel C.A., Dhaka-1000. Editorial, News & Commercial Offices: 19 Karwan Bazar, Dhaka-1215. Telephone Numbers: 8124944, 8124955, 8124966. Fax: 8125155. GPO Box No: 3257, Cable: DAILYSTAR, DHAKA. Internet edition address: <http://www.dailystarnews.com> and Email address: dstar@bangla.net



Bangladesh Diploma Engineering Students, Teachers and Professionals Action Committee brought out a procession in the city yesterday in support of their demands, but it created a severe traffic jam on the road in front of Jatiya Press Club.

— Star photo

2 Spl PPs appointed Proceedings of Shazneen case adjourned till Sept 12

By Court Correspondent

The Special Court for Prevention of Women and Children Repression, Dhaka yesterday adjourned the proceedings of the Shazneen Tasnim Rahman Rape Case till September 12 following a time prayer by the prosecution lawyers.

The Judge M Shah Alam Mia adjourned the proceedings of the case following a petition by the prosecution that the Law Ministry recently appointed two special public prosecutors to conduct the case.

The newly appointed Special Public Prosecutors have replaced Public prosecutor M. A. Barai. But they are yet to get necessary papers relating to the case.

The two public prosecutors were appointed on the basis of a petition filed by the victim's father Latifur Rahman.

Shazneen Tasnim Rahman, 15, youngest daughter of Latifur Rahman, Chairman of Transcom Group, was raped and murdered at their Gulshan Residence on April 23, 1998.

Shahidul Islam is the principal accused in the case while contractor Hasan is the alleged

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Electoral alliance not yet on AL agenda

By Reaz Ahmad

Awami League is not yet thinking of any electoral alliance for the next general elections, party sources said.

The ruling party is unlikely to follow the opposition as regards sharing of seats with like-minded parties in the parliamentary polls, they felt.

An AL presidium member who is a senior minister said the move to form an electoral alliance of components of the BNP-led four-party alliance reflects organisational weakness of the opposition parties.

AL is quite capable of fielding its own candidates for all the 300 parliament seats as it did in the 1996 polls, he said.

However, AL shared its traditional election symbol 'Boat' with leftist politicians in 1991.

The ruling party leadership is now watching the progress on the issue of seat-sharing among components of the opposition combine - BNP, Jatiya Party, Jamaat-e-Islami and Islamic Oikya Jote (IOJ). An early agreement among the parties on the issue would greatly help AL formulate its election strategy well in advance, party insiders pointed out.

JP led by deposed president HM Ershad has been insisting on an early agreement on the seat-sharing issue but has not yet agreed to this.

AL insiders said party leadership is now too preoccupied with the National Mourning Day programmes and would go for formal consultations on matters concerning the next elections shortly.

As the mainstream opposition parties have now focused more on elections than on street agitation, the ruling party would also concentrate on election issues and draft a fresh agenda.

Farooq was neither involved in conspiracy nor in killing: Defence

Condemned army officer Syed Farooq Rahman was neither involved in the conspiracy nor in the killing of Bangabandhu, while in charge of security of Bangabandhu's residence till August 2, 1975 since 1972.

Indian Prime Minister Indira Gandhi was killed by her bodyguards and there was no conspiracy there," the counsel mentioned in this context arguing that Farooq could kill Bangabandhu that way.

Drawing from evidences of different prosecution witnesses, the counsel said if it was plan to overthrow the government, then it was not a planned one, because there were some army-men in civil dress, and in a planned conspiracy army people will only move in uniform.

There was even no such evidence that Bangabandhu was killed in presence of Farooq and he was found present in Bangabandhu's residence after the occurrence. So, he pleaded, Farooq was not involved in the killing.

Stretching his arguments, Khan Saifur told the court that Farooq did not require hatching up any conspiracy to kill Bangabandhu. If he wanted he

could kill him (Bangabandhu) while in charge of security of Bangabandhu's residence till August 2, 1975 since 1972.

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The queue at the Red Crescent Blood Bank at Asad Gate in the city yesterday testifies to the high demand for blood for dengue patients.

— Star photo

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— Star photo

Regional co-operation on transport to benefit all

By Special Correspondent

Bangladesh could gain a lot by availing the opportunity of becoming the hub of regional transport system, participants at a discussion on prospects of sub-regional cooperation in transport observed yesterday.

"Regional Cooperation has high potential for us. If we can forget the prejudices then we can play the role what Singapore plays in the Malacca Straits. If we do not take the advantage, others will take it," Dr Mohiuddin Khan Alamgir, State Minister for Planning said, summing up the discussions.

The seminar on Prospects of Sub-regional Cooperation in Transport was organised by Development in Democracy Inc. (DID) at Dhaka Sheraton Hotel.

The seminar examined in depth the issue with the presentation of a study on Sub-regional

Transport Cooperation: A Bangladesh Perspective. The study, prepared for the DID, was carried out by two researchers of the Bangladesh Institute of International and Strategic Studies.

"It presents (before us) a wide area for co-operation in the region, which is yet to be explored," Dr Alamgir said while pointing out the potential that remains to be tapped through cooperation.

"If we need to take some steps, then we need to take them to explore," he said, adding that creation of trade prospect in the region is a possibility in the region and it would be foolish not to take advantage of that.

"If we open up the area we need a deep sea port. This may be the end product of the countries that may be interested. A private sector company with support from the government could be engaged to open up the region from Hunan to Sylhet," Dr Alamgir noted.

On the benefits of linking the railheads between Bangladesh and India, he observed that "it is a good idea to get rail links back from where they existed since 1947."

In an attempt to allay security concerns, he noted that See page 11 col 2

Changes at secy level

By Staff Correspondent

The government yesterday made some changes at the secretary level.

Dr Towfiq-e-Elahi Chowdhury, Secretary, Energy Ministry, was transferred to the Planning Commission as its secretary.

Information Secretary Akmal Hossain was transferred to the Energy Ministry. Director General of Bangladesh Betar, Md Chowdhury, was made Information Secretary.

Maid murdered in city

By Staff Correspondent

Unidentified people murdered a domestic help at the residence of a top government official in Sobhannbagh staff quarters in the city yesterday afternoon, police said.

Chairman of BRTA Azizul Haque Bhuiyan said the sector is now plagued with lots of man-made problems. A vested quarter aggravated the problems, he added.

The chairman of BRTC said inefficiency of bus services coupled with an overstuffed office are its main problems.

Md Abdul Quasem, joint secretary in commerce ministry, stressed the need for improved transport facilities for development.

While most of the speakers talked about land transport policy some said there should rather be a single policy covering land, water, rail and air transports.

Bushra murder: Kader, 2 others on fresh remand

By Court Correspondent

Three people including two women arrested in connection with the killing of Bushra Islam Phool, were placed on a five-day fresh remand yesterday.

Abdul Kader, city Awami League relief and social welfare secretary, Kaniz Fatema Hena, sister-in-law of Kader and Sufia, a domestic help of Kader, were produced before the CMM