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Whites a minority in London by year 2010!

LONDON, Sept 9: White people are likely to turn into a minority in London at the end of the decade and in Great Britain at the end of the century, reports UNB.

Race Equality Official of London Mayor Lee Jasper said the percentage of minority in London is now 40.

In favour of his argument, he mentioned that London has always advocated for diversity and it is still one of the most suitable places for living.

He said there was hybridisation among nations and races in the past and it will happen in the future.

However, Jasper said the minority state principle is totally obsolete in the present day.

Meanwhile, Race Relation Advisor office disclosed that Whites have no majority in three borough councils - Newham, Tower Hamlet and Brent.

In Tower Hamlet, there are 20 councillors from Bangladesh-origin who are playing significant role in policy-making.

Common currency

BNP protests PM's remarks

By Staff Correspondent

BNP Secretary-General Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan has strongly protested Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's remarks about introduction of a common currency in Bangladesh and India in an interview with the CNN.

In a statement yesterday, he said the prime minister's replies to questions regarding introduction of an identical currency and whether Bangladesh will unite with India are "objectionable," which will deal a severe blow to the dignity of the country.

He said the prime minister did not protest when she was asked whether Bangladesh would unite with India, rather she took an evasive action to say that India and Bangladesh have a "sweet relation."

"Now it is the question of common people as to whether the prime minister or her party men gave the commitment to merge with India before or after coming to power," Bhuiyan added.

Diploma engineering course: Movement postponed till September 25

Movement of Bangladesh Diploma Engineering Teacher-Student Action Committee has been postponed till Sept 25 on the assurance of the government to meet their demand from the current academic session, reports UNB.

State Minister for Planning Dr. Mohiuddin Khan Alamgir, on behalf of the Prime Minister, assured admission of students to the four-year diploma engineering education course yesterday, said a press release.

It was decided at a meeting of the action committee on IDEB premises at Kakrail with its convenor Mridha Nazrul Islam in the chair.

The meeting regretted that although the Prime Minister directed the authorities concerned to introduce the four-year diploma course about four years ago, it was not implemented due to the conspiracy of a coterie in the government.

It called upon the Education Ministry to implement the directives of the Prime Minister.

Death threat to Sharif's lawyer

KARACHI, Sept 9: Police guards have been posted at the residence of a prominent criminal lawyer after he reported a death threat for representing ousted prime minister Nawaz Sharif in hijacking and terrorism cases, officials said today, reports AFP.

Southern Sindh province's Advocate-General Raja Qureshi said the government had provided security to the defence lawyer, Azizullah Sheikh.

"A police mobile will escort Sheikh's car and armed guards have been placed outside his residence in Karachi," he said.

Sheikh said on Friday that he had been receiving threatening calls for the past six days.

Qureshi, who is also prosecutor in the case against Sharif, said some other security measures were also under consideration.

Unknown gunmen on March 10 shot dead Sharif's main lawyer Iqbal Raadhi in his office in southern Karachi.

Police arrested three alleged terrorists from an ethnic group in May and their case is pending at an anti-terrorism court.

We have requested the government for the trial of the accused, Ajmal Pahari, Asif Baig and Suhail Ahmed, inside prison as there are intelligence reports that a terrorist group plans an attempt to free them," said a senior police official, Manzoor Mughal.

Debate on 'Women Shaping Globalisation' in NY

Women are no longer ready to take back seat: PM

NEW YORK, Sept 9: Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has said globalisation has hit harder the women folk and urged world's women leaders to unite to eke out a better living for them in the one-world era.

She, however, noted that as mankind enters a new millennium, it is indeed encouraging to see that women are no longer prepared to take a back seat.

Despite daunting challenges, women in the world are now unified, vocal and empowered, she said speaking at a debate on "Women Shaping Globalisation" at Hilton Hotel here Friday afternoon.

The Prime Minister, who is here attending the UN Millennium Summit, was a keynote speaker at the debate.

She suggested actions in five priority areas to make a difference for women and get them involved in globalisation process.

These are: poverty eradication, increased role of women in

decision-making, inclusion of women in all areas of human activity, preventing violence against women and women's greater participation in peace-making as peacemakers and community leaders.

Hasina said the gender equality is a global agenda today. "Let us pledge to achieve gender equality and make the world a better place for women in the new millennium."

Sponsored by the State of the World Forum and UNIFEM, the debate was participated by New Zealand Prime Minister Helen Clark, Speaker of South African parliament Frene Giniewala, Director of UNIFEM Noeleen Heyzer and Director General of ILO Juan Somaria.

Referring to adverse impact of globalisation, Hasina said at the beginning globalisation was welcomed for the opportunities it promised. But that optimism is yet to be materialised for developing countries. Instead, she said, the process of global-

isation became a bane for millions.

Painting a gloomy picture, Hasina said devoid of social safety nets, women became easy prey to traffickers and others who exploited and abused them.

The Prime Minister observed women have been victims of exploitation, prejudice and abuse for long. They have suffered discrimination and inequalities all over the world.

Grinding poverty and persisting violence have denied them opportunities to shape the course of history, or even to determine their own destinies.

Pointing to women leaders who have a special responsibility in enabling women to meet the challenges in a globalized world, Hasina called upon all women leaders from every sphere of life to unite in making concerted efforts to transform challenges into opportunities and make a real difference in

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Cruise at your own risk

SYDNEY, Sept 9: A Sydney-bound cruise ship, which will become a floating hotel during the Olympics, is under suspicion after passengers began falling ill, health authorities said Saturday, reports AFP.

New South Wales Health Department officials said they had been advised that four passengers aboard the Pet O Fair Princess, due in Sydney on Sunday after a South Pacific cruise, had been admitted to hospital in Noumea suffering pneumonia.

A department spokeswoman said other passengers were suffering flu-like symptoms.

It was initially feared passengers on board the ship may have been caught in an outbreak of legionnaires' disease.

"We're in contact with the ship... but from the information we've got from Pet O Fair, there's no obvious source on board," the spokeswoman said.

"Our public health experts are discussing it with them at the moment." She said health officials were considering joining the ship before it docked in Sydney.

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People gather at the Olympic Village in Sydney yesterday to attend a rehearsal of the opening ceremony of the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games. — AFP photo

Pry teachers on strike, ministry waiting for PM's return

By Staff Correspondent

While the primary school teachers continue their strike, the education ministry officials are waiting for the prime minister to return and resolve the crisis.

The primary school teachers following, the footsteps of high school teachers have been on strike since Saturday last. Ministry officials now feel that the issue has been politicised with the teachers inviting opposition political leaders to their rally.

Leader of the opposition and BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia is expected to attend the strikers' rally as chief guest today, while Jatiya Party Chairman Hussain Muhammad Ershad, Jamaat-e-Islami chief Golam Azam and Islami Oikya Jote leader Azizur Rahman will join it as special guests.

The grand rally will be held

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2 policemen, boy injured in a shootout in city

By Staff Correspondent

Two policemen and a minor boy were injured in a shootout at RK Mission Road under Sutrapur thana in the city last night, police and hospital sources said.

Sutrapur police could not give names of the wounded policemen but said the victims were of the rank of constable and Naik. The eleven-year-old boy was identified as Arifur Rahman, son of one Dr Nurul Islam.

The incident took place when the on duty policemen challenged a speeding auto-rickshaw passing through the area at that time, police and witnesses said.

Passengers of the vehicle fired indiscriminately injuring the two policemen and the boy who was standing in front of his house, hospital sources said.

None was arrested and no case was registered in this connection till filing this report last night.

Rajuk abandons Detailed Area Plan

DND, Badda may become concrete jungle, town planners fear

By Morshed Ali Khan

Rajuk's failure to implement the Detailed Area Plan (DAP) of DND and Badda might turn these vast urban areas, larger than the size of Khulna metropolitan, into a tangle of concrete structures, city planners fear.

The city planners use the DAP, a component of the Master Plan, for any development work. Rajuk was recently forced to cancel the DAP for DND area after residents and planners alleged that the DAPs for both areas are grossly unrealistic and impossible to implement.

They said the DAP in DND area has overlooked existing roads, canals and natural settings.

The DND area comprises parts of Dhaka, Narayanganj and Demra.

Although Rajuk is yet to start implementing DAP in Badda, similar problems have already arisen there. Unplanned urbanisation has already taken strong roots in Badda and even Rajuk officials said the DAP would brace the fate of DND in Badda.

Sources said when the de-

tailed planning was done, only a small part of the DND area was surveyed. They said the so-called experts had drawn a scheme over a densely populated area, with an uninhabited space of land in mind. The financial loss due to the single abandoned DAP ran into Tk 50 lakh while the city is left with a huge unplanned urban area and a consequent environmental disaster.

Thousands of angry residents of DND, who built up structures without any regard to the DAP, recently forced Rajuk to withdraw its scheme and use the chairman's discretionary power to amend it. Law makes it mandatory to follow the master plan in any development work in the city.

According to the Dhaka Metropolitan Development Plan (DMDP) or Master Plan, Rajuk would have to prepare 26 DAPs for the city. All building plans must be in line with the DAP. Rajuk has so far completed DAPs on DND and Badda. Work on six more DAPs is at the final

stage. Rajuk Chairman M Azizul Haque said that the UNDP experts prepared the DAPs for DND and Badda as a part of the DMDP. Had Rajuk implemented these plans, both DND and Badda would have become well-planned areas like Gulshan, Banani or Baridhara, he said.

"Those who have already built structures in those areas are opposing our plans and now with the amended plans these areas are going to look like Kalabagan," the chairman said.

But a Rajuk town planner said, showing two maps, that the DAPs have sketched new roads and retention points whereas the area already has a network of roads and canals.

The town planner said faced with increasing public pressure to amend the master plan in many city areas, Rajuk has recently formed two committees, each comprising three members.

In case of an application for

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Students union election not held for years in many city colleges

By Abul Kalam

Students' union election in many colleges in the city were not held in the last five years or more, crippling extra curricular activities in those institutions.

Authorities of the colleges say the atmosphere was not congenial for holding polls due to intra- and inter-party conflicts of big student bodies like Awami League-backed Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) and BNP-backed Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD).

Student organisations in most of the colleges blame the authorities' reluctance for this. However, at some colleges, initiatives by certain student bodies were foiled due to opposition by rival factions or organisations, sources said.

In Dhaka College, the last election was held in 1994. When contacted, its principal Jahanara Begum said polls were not held as the student organisations did not demand it "sincerely and collectively".

Some BCL leaders discussed the issue with her several times "but none of them was serious about holding of the election," she said.

"I will not hesitate to hold the polls if all student bodies demand it collectively," she added.

Sources said some BCL leaders took initiatives and met her in 1996 and 1997 for holding of polls. But polls were not held due to opposition by

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BCL-JCD clash at Magura College

MAGURA, Sept 9: Ten people were injured in a clash between ruling party's student front Bangladesh Chhatra League and opposition BNP-backed Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal at Magura Government College today, reports UNB.

Witnesses said the clash ensued over a trifling matter between two activists of BCL and JCD. Later, their supporters joined them using sticks and bricks.

Of the injured, three were rushed to Sadar Hospital.

Hospital sources said some employees were injured in an attack by some unruly youths during the treatment of the wounded.

Police arrested four people in connection with the incident in the hospital.

Some x-ray and pathological clinics adjacent to Sadar Hospital were also damaged. The BCL and JCD blamed each other for the incident.



BNP took out a procession in the city yesterday demanding withdrawal of 'false case' against its Chairperson Khaleda Zia. Khaleda and nine others have been facing charges in a Tk 175cr graft case relating to purchase of two Airbuses for Biman during her tenure. — Star photo

60 killed in China as truck carrying explosives blows up

BEIJING, Sept 9: A truck carrying explosives blew up in China's restive Muslim northwest, killing 60 people, injuring 309 others and scorching nearby vehicles and homes, officials and state media said today, reports AP.

The Xinhua News Agency reported the casualty count in the explosion yesterday evening in Urumqi, capital of the Xinjiang region, and officials with the city police and government confirmed the account. But they provided few details. Reuters said the blast killed 100 people.

Investigators believe the explosion was an accident, al-

though they have not ruled out terrorism, said an official with Xinjiang's foreign propaganda office, who only gave his surname, Zhang.

Police and paramilitary units cleared the wreckage through the night, sending the injured to at least four area hospitals, government and medical officials said.

Some among the 90 injured taken to the Coal Mining Hospital were permanently blinded or crippled by the explosion, said an emergency room administrator, surnamed Chen.

The explosion occurred around 5:30 pm local time on a major artery in the sprawling

industrial city's western suburbs that was crowded with residents leaving work. Xinhua said the truck was taking the explosives for disposal when they detonated. It added that more than 20 vehicles and homes were damaged.

"I heard a boom and saw black smoke in the sky," said an employee at the Materials Transport Co, also surnamed Chen. He ran the two kilometers from his office to the explosion.

He counted at least 50 people dead and saw the injured, too numerous to count, lying on the road and sidewalk.

Strike at garments factories tomorrow

By Staff Correspondent

Bangladesh Garment Workers Unity Council held rallies in front of different garment factories and brought out torch processions in the city yesterday in support of its tomorrow's strike to realise its five-point demand.

The demands include declaration of a minimum national wage commensurate with the price level, ensuring safe working condition in factories, Tk two lakh compensation for the family of each victim of the recent fire incident at Globe Knitting, judicial inquiry into the incident and removal of "corrupt" officials from the Department of Factory Inspection.

The strike programme was announced last week.

The Unity Council is the apex body of ten garment workers' federations.

Talking to this correspondent yesterday, Mohammad Khurshid Alam, senior President member of the Council and President of Bangladesh Garment Workers Federation, claimed that all garment workers would join the strike spontaneously.

Alam said the minimum wage should be Tk 3000 per month. The existing minimum wage, declared in January 1994, is too inadequate because of the increased cost of living and devaluation of Taka.

Since declaration, the minimum wage has not been reviewed

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The Garment Sramik-Karmachari Oikya Parishad, staged a demonstration in the city yesterday demanding an end to repression on garment workers at workplaces. — Star photo

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