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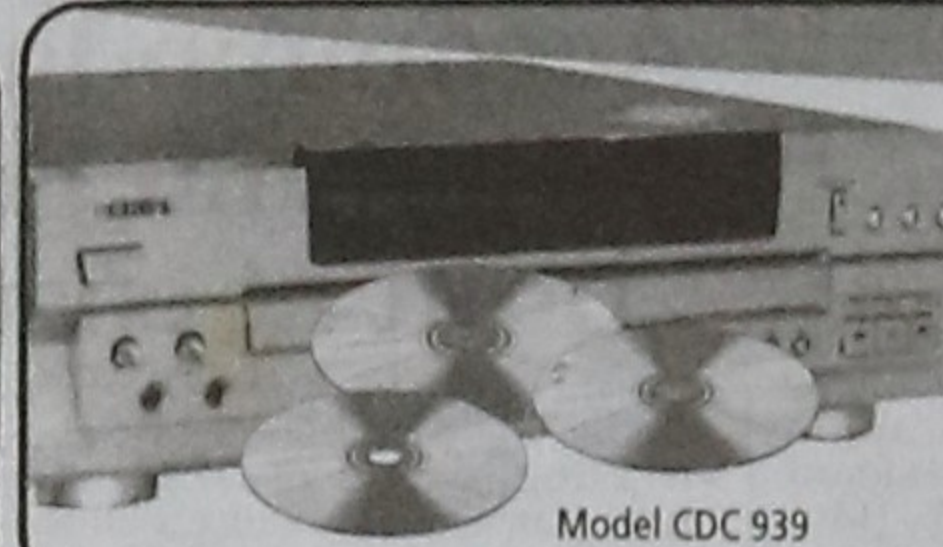
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## Olympians lock doors as drug testers reach Sydney

SYDNEY, Sept 12: The ugly issue of drugs at the Olympics was on and off the agenda here today as final preparations went into overtime with the greatest sporting show on earth just three days away, reports AFP.

The International Olympic Committee has boasted of its strongest ever clamp-down in the build-up to the extravaganza - but officials admitted testers were having problems with its programme.

Olympians at pre-Games training camps around Australia have resorted to locking their apartment doors when the drug testers hit town, one official said.

Australian Sports Drug Agency (ASDA) spokeswoman Vicki Kapernick confirmed not all competitors had been cooperative, but refused to discuss specific cases.

"Some have done some interesting things," Kapernick said, adding that sampling officers have field reports on a number of incidents without elaborating.

"It's been an interesting time for us, and I think we've done pretty well," Kapernick said.

China, still reeling from a scandal that saw 27 athletes booted off the team last week, were at pains to stress to avoid doping talk when they arrived at the athletes village.

Officials were eager to avoid See page 11 col 7



Millie, one of the mascots of the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games is shown at the Main Press Centre in Sydney yesterday, three days before the opening ceremony of the Games. Millie is an echidna, an egg-laying mammal, one of the rarest animals in the world. — AFP photo

## Adel to surrender in court today

By Staff Correspondent

Jahangir Mohammad Adel, who is facing a sedition charge will surrender before the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's Court, Dhaka today following an order passed by the High Court on Monday.

The Vacation Bench of Justice Nurul Islam and Justice Latifur Rahman on Monday ordered him to surrender before the trial court after hearing his bail petition. The court also ordered police not to harass or arrest him during the period.

Earlier, Adel went to the court on Sunday and spent the night in his lawyer's chamber since his bail petition could not be heard during the day for time constraint.

Adel has been charged for sedition for hoisting Pakistan's national flag atop his residence on the independence day of that country on August 14.

Kotwali police brought the sedition charge against Adel on August 21. Police also attached his moveable property on September 8 following a court order.

## Enhanced bus fare Opposition to demonstrate today

By Staff Correspondent

The BNP-led opposition alliance will stage demonstrations in all thanas of the city today protesting increase of transport fare.

The BNP, Jatiya Party, Jamaat-e-Islami, Islami Oikya Jote and some other smaller parties under the banner of All-Party Action Council will jointly bring out processions and rally in all 21 thanas of the city, said a press release.

The alliance will also stage demonstrations across the country tomorrow to protest government's "conspiracy" to export gas and "anti-state" remarks by the Prime Minister during her interview with CNN.

As part of the programme, the alliance will hold rallies and bring out processions in all cities and at district and thana headquarters.

Meanwhile, BNP secretary general Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan called upon the party activists and people to make the programmes a complete success.

Another press release said the Jaljatabadi Samik Dal will hold a rally at Muktagang in the city at 4 pm and bring out procession to protest filing of "false" cases against BNP chairperson Khaleda Zia, former finance minister M Saifur Rahman MP and former civil aviation minister Abdul Mannan MP.

As there are strong entrepreneurs See page 11 col 6

## Biman's pre-bid talks to replace four aircraft

By Shehab Ahmed

Bangladesh Biman held pre-bid talks yesterday with representatives of 19 companies including Boeing and Airbus for procuring four new generation aircraft to replace its ageing fleet of DC-10-30 aircraft, sources concerned said.

The meeting discussed the Request for Proposal (RFP) for long term lease of either Boeing 777-200 Extended Range or Airbus A340-300.

Civil Aviation and Tourism Secretary Choudhury Mohammad Mohsin chaired the meeting held at the Biman headquarters. Biman's new Managing Director Air Commodore Khasrul Alam, among others, was present.

The bidding that closes on October 10 is for procuring four aircraft on operating lease or lease purchase or lease with option to purchase. The lease will be for 10 years in three phases with phase-in/phase-out plan for four DC-10-30 aircraft of the Biman. The 10-year period includes one year of wet lease for training of crew.

The potential supplier has

also been offered to swap the four DC-10-30 aircraft or buy those.

Besides the representatives of Boeing and Airbus companies, those of engine makers Pratt and Whitney of US and aircraft leasing companies attended yesterday's meeting.

The RFP for lease was read out to the bidders, a Biman source said but gave no details. After the meeting, Mohsin told The Daily Star that procurement of new generation aircraft has become imperative for the national airline to retain and increase its market share.

"The old aircraft are causing a fall in its market share. The DC-10 are there for a long time, making it difficult for us to compete with other airlines with new generation aircraft," he said, explaining the reasons behind the move to procure new generation aircraft.

"We cannot buy new aircraft but it is also not possible to continue services with vintage aircraft. So we had to devise a way to lease new generation aircraft and to phase out the DC-10," he added.

The Secretary said the deal is expected by the year end. "We have asked for aircraft made in 1995 so that these are comparatively new as we cannot buy brand new aircraft."

Biman has 14 aircraft including six DC-10 and a workforce of 5500. It connects 24 destinations worldwide. Its fleet includes three Airbus A310, three F-28-400 and two Advanced Turboprop which are grounded now and consultants are working on a plan to sale those.

The national carrier is going to have another DC-10 and the fourth Airbus A310 on dry lease in the next two months, sources said.

Biman procured three DC-10 in the early eighties from the Singapore Airlines. The fourth DC-10 was bought from the manufacturer, McDonnell Douglas, in 1989. The DC-10 aircraft are no longer built after those were replaced with MD-11 series which also ceased to be in production after the merger of McDonnell Douglas with Boeing company.

## Khaleda leaves for KSA today

By Staff Correspondent

BNP chairperson and Leader of the Opposition in Parliament Khaleda Zia leaves for Saudi Arabia today on a 10-day visit at the invitation of King Fahd-Bin Abdul Aziz.

Party sources said Khaleda will fly to Jeddah by a Saudi Airlines aircraft at noon.

She will perform Umrah and undergo medical checkup at the King Faisal Specialised Hospital.

Khaleda's eldest son Tareq Rahman, private secretary Moaddek Ali and Chittagong city BNP president Mir Mohammad Nasir will accompany her, sources said.

## Forex reserve hits all time low

Star Report

The country's foreign exchange reserve hit an all time low in recent times when it dipped to 1.37 billion US dollars on Monday.

According to Bangladesh Bank sources, the reserve is equal to the amount needed for import of two months' merchandise.

The reserve dipped because of the recent payment to the Asian Clearing Union. Before the payment, the reserve was around \$1.5 billion.

According to banking sources, there had been an increase in over-invoicing in recent times. Illegal transactions in foreign exchange also increased, resulting in the reserve crunch.

## Raspi Data asked to explain

Star Business Report

The Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) has called for an explanation from Raspi Data Management and Telecommunication Ltd for its alleged overvaluation of expenditure and assets.

The company early this month offered initial public offering (IPO), inviting members of the public to subscribe its shares.

The explanation was sought after a complaint was lodged with the SEC.

Officials of SEC said the company will come up with an explanation today.

## 2 businessmen mugged in city

A group of muggers snatched Taka 51,600 from two businessmen at Shantinagar crossing yesterday, injuring one of them critically, reports BSS.

The muggers stopped the rickshaw carrying the businessmen and demanded the money. One of the businessmen Joyanal was stabbed as he refused to give the money.

The injured was sent to Dhaka Medical College Hospital.

## CPD dialogue in city told

## Market forces should be the real stimulus for SAARC's success

By Staff Correspondent

Market forces need to be the real stimulus for South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation's (SAARC) success. This was the unanimous conclusion at the dialogue titled South Asia: Recent Trends in the Region, organised by the Centre for Policy Dialogue yesterday.

The dialogue, attended by a varied set of specialists from both home and abroad, was chaired by CPD Chairman Professor Rehman Sobhan, while Jim Junke, Director (South Asia) of the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, Canada presented the keynote paper.

Pointing at the necessity of regional cooperation, and praising Bangladesh's role in

initiating the SAARC, Jim Junke said: "Even before the establishment of the SAARC, Bangladesh has been contributing positively to South Asian affairs." Its commitment to peace was evident when Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina visited both India and Pakistan after they ran nuclear tests. However, the Indian decision to stall the summit owing to political changes in Pakistan was certainly very short-sighted as far as regional cooperation is concerned," he added.

Focusing on the postponed SAARC summit scheduled in the Nepalese capital Kathmandu in October last year, Prof. Rehman Sobhan said, "Smaller nations have always

played important role, and they played it positively; and it is the people of the region who not only wanted to make Saarc work, but also wanted to strengthen it."

While explaining India's stance against the regional body, Prof. Sobhan tried to lessen the teeming pessimism among the discussants when he said, "The Indian factor has always been there right from the beginning. The very size of India says everything. The whole process of SAARC will be meaningless without it. What we need to do now is find ways to convince India to play its part," he added.

As there are strong entrepreneurs See page 11 col 6

## Pvt container port in Ctg Rule Nisi on 7 officials

By Staff Correspondent

The High Court yesterday issued a rule nisi on seven high officials asking them to explain why the order for lease of lands to S S A Bangladesh to set up private container ports would not be declared illegal and unlawful.

The respondents include the secretaries of shipping and land ministries and the chairman of Chittagong port.

The shipping ministry earlier ordered the chairman of Chittagong port to lease lands to the American company at the estuary of Karnaphuli river in Chittagong and at Pangaon in Dhaka.

About 212 acres of land were earmarked for the container port in Chittagong, of which 20.77 acres belong to Chittagong port and 88 acres to Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Authority (BIWTA).

A Division Bench comprising Justice Nurul Islam and Justice

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## SKOP's 48-hr programme ends

By Staff Correspondent

The second day of 48-hour rail-road barricade programme enforced by Samik Dal (SKOP) ended yesterday without any incidents.

SKOP enforced the programme demanding implementation of agreement signed with the government two years ago.

The programme was observed in different industrial belts including Hajirabadi, Tejgaon, Tongi, Demra, Postogola and other industrial areas in the country. SKOP leaders said.

Leaders and activists of SKOP brought out a procession and held a rally in front of Sonali Bank at Motijheel in the city yesterday.

The rally was addressed, among others, by SKOP coordinator Dr Wajedul Islam Khan, Noor Hossain, Jafrul Hassan Nasu Miah and Paritosh Mandal.



Workers of Shaympur Industrial area staged a demonstration on Dhaka-Narayanganj road yesterday, the second day of the SKOP-called 48-hour rail-road barricade programme. — Star photo

## Putin survives attempt on life: Ukraine

KIEV, Sept 12: An assassination attempt against Russian President Vladimir Putin was foiled last month at a summit of ex-Soviet nations in Yalta, the head of Ukraine's security services, Leonid Derkach, was cited as saying by Interfax today, reports AFP.

He said the Ukrainian law enforcement authorities had "received information about an assassination bid against Russian President Vladimir Putin" during the informal August 18-19 summit.

Several suspects believed to be preparing an attempt on Putin's life had been arrested in Ukraine's Crimea peninsula following a tip-off from intelligence agencies in other countries, he told Interfax.

Derkach added that the suspects "were expelled from

Ukraine territory," Interfax reported.

Derkach added that the suspects "were expelled from Ukraine territory," Interfax reported.

Russia's domestic intelligence service FSB (formerly KGB) refused today to confirm or deny Derkach's claims.

"We have no official comment," an FSB spokesman told AFP.

However, Interfax cited an unnamed source from the Russian presidential bodyguard service as saying that the Ukrainians had been tipped off about the assassination bid by Russia's secret services.

The Kremlin for its part stonewalled questions today about the alleged assassination plot, saying: "We do not have this information."

The Ukrainian security chief

told a news conference Saturday that four Chechens and several Middle Eastern nationals had been arrested after Ukraine received information about the planned assassination of one of the leaders attending the CIS summit in Yalta last month.

Elected president in March this year, Putin was the architect as prime minister of the Russian army's crackdown in Chechnya, where federal troops have been fighting an 11-month war against pro-independence rebels.

The Commonwealth of Independent States is a 12-strong grouping of all the former Soviet republics except the three Baltic countries.

Derkach said today that the Yalta case was "not the first time" the Ukraine security

services had received such information from intelligence sources in other countries.

"We currently receive criminal inquiries relating to individuals who have come to Ukraine from other CIS countries and are wanted in connection with earlier crimes," he was cited saying by Interfax.

## Bus fares

From Page 1

AL government is an anti-people government and it has no responsibility to the people.

The Consumer Association of Bangladesh (CAB) in a statement also expressed concern at the enhancement of transport fare.



## CONGRATULATION

Heartest Congratulations to Mr. Yousuf Abdullah Haroon for being elected as President of FBCCI for the second time.

Members of the Board of Directors &amp; Management


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