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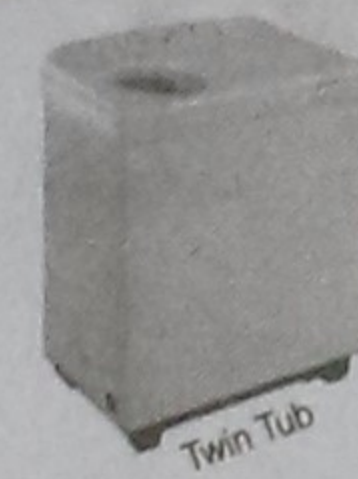
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EU parliamentary team due today

By Staff Correspondent

A three-member European parliament delegation is expected to arrive here today on a five-day visit.

The delegation include Joaquim Miranda, member of the European Parliament from Portugal, and Chairman of the committee on development and co-operation, and Bob van den Bos, member of the European Parliament from the Netherlands and rapporteur for Bangladesh of the committee on development and co-operation, says a press release.

They will be accompanied by Michael Wood, principal administrator of the European parliament secretariat.

The delegation is expected to call on Prime Minister, Speaker of the Jatiya Sangsad, the chairman of the standing committee on foreign affairs and cabinet members.

They are also scheduled to meet the Deputy leader of the Opposition and meet the personalities concerned with development and human rights activities in Bangladesh.

The European parliament delegation will go to Ranganmati and call on Chairman of the CHT regional council. Later, they will visit Chittagong to meet the Mayor and the Chairman of Chittagong Port Authority.

Before returning to Europe, the MEP will sit for a dialogue with the selected representatives of civil society on development issues and other aspects of EU-Bangladesh relations.

Oli gets bail in murder case

CHITTAGONG, Sept 13: A court here today granted bail to former Communications Minister Col (Retd) Oli Ahmed in a murder case, reports UNB.

Col (Retd) Oli was asked to appear before the court on October 11.

Metropolitan Sessions Judge Mohammad Ismail Mia granted him bail he prayed for appearing before the court in a murder case of November 11, 1997.

Oli Ahmed and 22 others were sued in the case filed by former BCL president of Chittagong Medical College unit Mohammad Selim after a gunfight between JCD factions that left a number of people dead and wounded.

BNP chairperson Khaleda Zia was on the campus during the clash.

However, 22 other accused, including Morshed Khan, MP, Salauddin Quader Chowdhury, MP, Giasuddin Gader Chowdhury, MP, city BNP president Meer Mohammad Nasiruddin and general secretary Alhaj Dastgir Chowdhury and former JCD central leader Habibun Nabi Solih, are already on bail.

They were also asked to appear before the court on October 11.

Humayun Zahir murder: Hearing of argument continues

By Court Correspondent

The hearing of argument in the Humayun Zahir Murder Case continued for the 9th day yesterday in the 8th Additional District and Sessions Judge's Court, Dhaka.

After hearing argument from the defence side, the Judge Mir Mohammad Awlad Hossain adjourned the proceedings of the case till 11 am today.

Lawyers for the accused submitted many important points derived from deposition of the prosecution witnesses and sought acquittal of the accused.

Humayun Zahir, a leading businessman, was shot dead by See page 11 col 5

Rubel murder

21st prosecution witness cross-examined

By Court Correspondent

Constable Nazir Ahmed, the 21st prosecution witness in the Shamim Reza Rubel Murder Case was cross-examined in the Third Additional Metropolitan Sessions Judge's Court, Dhaka yesterday.

Judge Mollah Mostafa Kamal adjourned the proceedings of the case till September 25.

Nazir Ahmed was declared hostile witness.

Shamim Reza Rubel, 24, a BBA student of the Independent University was picked up by a team of DB police from his Siddeswari residence under Ramna thana on July 23, 1998 and was tortured to death in the custody the same day.

All the accused including AK Ram Hussain and Mukul Begum, a local Awami League leader, were produced before the court yesterday.

Metropolitan PP Quamrul Islam appeared for the state while Advocate Mahub Alam, Shamim Akbar and Humayun Kabir for the accused.

Transport fare hike pushes up prices of perishable items

By Staff Correspondent

A 50 per cent rise in transport fare has pushed up prices of spices, vegetables and fruit items, adding to the miseries of the fixed income group.

"We are forced to raise the prices of these commodities as their prices in the wholesale market have been raised," a retailer in the city's Kauran Bazar told The Daily Star.

He said the transport fare hike has caused a drastic fall in the supply of vegetables, spices and fruits.

The government raised the fare of bus and minibus by about 50 per cent on Sunday to maintain parity with the recent increase of fuel prices by 15 per cent on an average.

Bus fare per kilometre has now been raised to 0.47 poisa from 0.32 poisa and minibus fare to 0.50 poisa from 0.35 poisa.

Prices of commodities both

in wholesale and retail markets have shot up as those items are mostly supplied from different parts of the country, market sources said.

Prices of rice specially Nazir-shal variety rose to Tk 18 from Tk 17, while Pijam and Miniccate to Tk 18 to Tk 19 from Tk 17.50. Parja variety sold at Tk 14 to Tk 15 as against Tk 13 to Tk 13.50.

Fine varieties of rice also witnessed a sharp rise in price. Polao rice was selling at Tk 42 to Tk 46.

Onion was selling at Tk 17 as against Tk 16 just a few days ago.

Prices of garlic, ginger, lentil also showed upward trend, market sources said.

Prices of Balsam apple rose to Tk 20 from Tk 18 per kg.

Brinjal to Tk 18 from 16, lady's finger to Tk 20 from Tk 16.

Different types of fruit items mostly imported from neigh-

bouring India were also dearer.

Prices of different kinds of dairy products and edible oil continued to rise for the last few days due to further devaluation of Taka against US Dollar.

Another retailer said, "A section of unscrupulous businessmen have raised the prices of their commodities that are already in their stock on the plea of fuel price hike."

Mokbul Hossain, MP, President of Bangladesh Transport Owners Association said, "The government has justifiably increased transport fare after 11 years and we proposed to increase the fare per passenger per kilometre every year by Tk 0.01 to Tk 0.02."

"We shall take stern action against those transport owners who charge excess fare than the government fixed rates," he said.

Union leaders, officials agree to restore working condition at WDB

By Special Correspondent

A meeting between union leaders and officials has agreed to restore normal working condition at the Water Development Board (WDB), sources concerned said.

At the meeting held on Tuesday, the union leaders promised not to interfere in the administration.

Chaired by Azad Ruhul Amin, Secretary, Ministry of Water Resources and Flood Control, the meeting was attended by high officials of the WDB and union leaders.

It was convened following engineers' decision not to use official vehicles until the authorities take action against a section of union leaders who prevented drivers of 11 officers from operating the vehicles.

Every citizen is burdened with Tk 6000 foreign loan

By Staff Correspondent

Every citizen of the country is burdened with an average foreign loan of Tk 5,909.19, Finance Minister SAMS Kibria told the Jatiya Sangsad yesterday.

The country paid Tk 765.33 crore during the last fiscal and is due to pay Tk 850 crore in the current financial year as interests on the unpaid foreign loans that stood at Tk 75,696.75 crore until June last year, the finance minister said in reply to a question from Nurul Islam Nahid of the ruling party.

Asked about the annual rate of interest on the foreign loans, the minister said it depends on the amount of unpaid loans and fresh loans.

In reply to another question from dissident BNP lawmaker

Akhteruzzaman, Kibria said according to latest data the rate of inflation on point-to-point basis in June last was 2.77 per cent while the average annual inflation is 3.90 per cent.

The finance minister claimed that the government has curbed inflation and maintained economic stability in the country by dint of increased production in the agricultural and industrial sectors.

Elaborating, he said the government distributed industrial term loans of Tk 2,524.45 crore in fiscal 1999-2000 and working capital loans up to Tk 9,884.26 crore, which is highest in recent times.

To maintain stability of market price and to control the flow of rice in the market, he said

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Road rage: Rush hour traffic in desperate attempt to squeeze through every available space at Kakrail crossing in the city yesterday.

— Star photo

Low over Bay may turn into depression

By Special Correspondent

A well marked low over the east central and adjoining northeast Bay of Bengal may turn into a depression bringing with it high winds and another spell of heavy rains, Met office has warned.

Brewing since Tuesday the low became a well marked one yesterday and was centred in the northwest Bay and adjoining area yesterday morning.

It is likely to continue to move towards northwest having about 30 kph sustained wind within 40 kms of the central region, rising to 40 kph in gusts/squalls. The sea will remain rough over the Met office said in its warning yesterday.

Maritime ports of Chittagong, Cox's Bazar and Mongla have been advised to keep hoisted local cautionary signal number three.

The offshore islands and chars may experience tide of 2-3 feet above normal height, it

One shot dead in city

By Staff Correspondent

Miscereants shot dead a young man at Demra in the city Tuesday night.

The dead was identified as Masum, 28, an employee of a shop that rents loud speaker at Demra. The victim was called out from the shop and shot dead by a gang at about 11 pm Tuesday night, police said quoting an FIR.

The killing was a sequel to previous enmity, police said.

The body was sent to the Mitford hospital morgue for autopsy.

Victim's wife Latifunnesa Lata, filed a case accusing one Monir with Demra police.

Govt won't act against country's interest: PM

By Special Correspondent

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina said yesterday her government would not take any decision against the interest of the country, reports UNB.

Referring to the recent remarks by the Leader of the Opposition Khaleda Zia that her government would export gas if it is profitable, the prime minister said, Begum Zia will not even hesitate to sell out the country if she finds it profitable.

Addressing a meeting of the Feni district Awami League at Ganabhaban in the afternoon, Hasina said Awami League does not think about profits, it only thinks about the interest of the people and the country. "We will not sell anything ignoring the country's interest."

Referring to a statement of BNP Secretary General Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan about her interview with CNN, the Prime Minister said in the question of CNN there was no word "promise."

She said, the BNP leader, with an ulterior motive to confuse the people, put the word "promise" in the mouth of the CNN interviewer who asked about one currency and reunification with India.

"We do not know whether his leader Begum Zia made any promise or not during her rule," said the PM, adding that her party would not tolerate any conspiracy against sovereignty and independence of the country.

She said the opposition parties have understood that they would not be able to win election and started conspiracy against the government.

As part of their conspiracy, she alleged, the opposition parties are unleashing terrorism in the country and giving shelter to the terrorists.

They have hoisted Pakistani flag in the country on the inde-

pendence day of Pakistan, she said charging that the opposition parties have taken stand against the country's independence.

The Prime Minister said if the leaders and workers of Awami League remain united, then no force would be able to defeat the ruling party in the next election.

"Through massive works and service we have gained people's trust and confidence," she said and called upon the party workers to continue their service for the welfare of the people.

Central Awami League Office Secretary Abdul Mannan Khan and Feni district Awami League acting President Aziz Ahmed Chowdhury and General Secretary Joinal Abedin Hazari MP were present in the meeting, among others.

Kotalipara incident Two arrested for giving shelter to an accused

By Staff Correspondent

BEGERHAT, Sept 13: Ram-

pai police arrested two persons for giving shelter to an accused in the Kotalipara bomb planting case on July 21, reports UNB.

Towhidul Mollik, 32, and Habibullah Sheikh, 28, arrested on Tuesday were taken to police remand for five days when produced before the court today.

Police said they gave shelter to Anisur Rahman, an accused in the case, who was taken to custody from village Hiron on September 4. Brother of the main accused Mufli Abdul Hannan, Anis is now in 10-day police remand.

BNP calls hartal in Sylhet div today

By Staff Correspondent

SYLHET, Sept 13: The BNP has called a dawn-to-dusk hartal in the Sylhet division tomorrow protesting the charge sheet in a corruption case against Khaleda Zia, Saifur Rahman and others.

Hartal was called as part of a week-long agitation programme at a press conference at the Sylhet Press Club on Thursday last.

The Sylhet district BNP in support of tomorrow's hartal, brought out a procession and held a rally with M A Haque in the chair at the Madhuban Point this afternoon.

Double murder Son to die, father gets life term in Chittagong

By Staff Correspondent

CHITTAGONG, Sept 13: The Fourth Additional Sessions Judge, A S A Mahfuz, today sentenced one Zakir Hossain to death by hanging and one Abdul Huq to life term for killing two brothers of Anowara thana here, reports BSS.

Zakir Hossain, S/o convicted Abdul Huq was tried in absentia. The prosecution story is that Abdul Huq had some quarrel with Obaidul Huq of village Khan-Shama of Anowara thana. On March 13, 1991, Abdul Huq asked Obaidul Huq to meet him. When Obaidul Huq came out of his house, Hossain hacked Obaidul Huq to death. Hamidul Huq, brother of Obaidul Huq who came to rescue his brother was also hacked to death by them.

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New IO of Rab Murder Case

From Staff Correspondent

KHULNA, Sept 13: Mohammod Khashrul Huq, ASP of CID, Dhaka has been made IO of S M A Rab Murder Case, KMP source said.

The new IO is expected to take up the case tomorrow afternoon or on Saturday from AC Abdul Matin of DB.

The case is being handed over to CID for an impartial and influence-free investigation. The Police Commissioner does not want KMP to investigate the case despite confidence of the complainant, the source said.

5 girls missing in Jessore

From Staff Correspondent

KHULNA, Sept 13: Five girls have been mysteriously missing from Keshabpur thana of Jessore since September 8.

The three minor girls, identified as Moushumi, Rehana and Lipi, are students of class one of Balladanga Non-govt Primary School under Keshabpur upazila. They were reportedly brought by their teachers to participate in a rally on September 8 marking the International Literacy Day.

Two other young girls missing since September 10 from Keshabpur Darul Ulum Madrasah were not identified as their guardians and madrasah authorities requested police not to disclose their names. The girls hail from Keshabpur town, police said.

Power disruption

From page 1

Maniknagar line. Limited power supply was restored in some other parts of the city at 12:16 pm. It took more than two hours to restore power supply in about half of the areas of the capital.

DESA supplied 550 MW of power at 1:30 pm against the requirement of more than 750 MW. But frequent power disruptions continued till last night.

The DESA command areas were facing a power shortage of more than 350 MW at about 8 pm last night, they said.

Our Sirajganj correspondent reported over telephone that power supply in the town was not restored till 8 pm.

At around 4 pm yesterday, the total supply for the 16 northern districts was only 113 MW against the requirement of about 300 MW, PDB sources said.

The supply across the country was gradually increased. It reached 1882 MW at around 7 pm, leaving a shortage of more than 800 MW, they said.

Our Narayanganj correspondent reported that the town and its surrounding areas were without power for at least seven hours due to failure of the national grid.

Besides, the Siddhirganj area including Adamjee Jute Mills experienced frequent power disruptions from 6 am yesterday, our correspondent reported.

Power transmission through one of circuits was restored.

The other circuit could not be repaired till filing of this report last night.

The government yesterday formed two committees to probe the power failure. One of the committees is headed by Joint Secretary of Energy Ministry Kazi Nasirul Islam and the other is headed by PDB's Chief Engineer (Planning and Development) M A Mottalib.

Tribal militants kill 10 cops in Assam

GUWAHATI, Sept 13: Separatist tribal guerrillas ambushed a convoy of policemen and shot dead at least 10 of them in the northeastern Indian state of Assam today, police said, reports Reuters.

"Tribal militants ambushed four vehicles carrying policemen about 10 km from Diphu this afternoon, killing ten of them on the spot," a police spokesman told the news agency.

Four policemen were also wounded in the attack, which took place in the Karbi Anglong district about 270 km (170 miles) south of Dispur, Assam's capital.

Officials said the guerrillas opened fire with automatic weapons from both sides of the road and lobbed grenades.

An Indian intelligence official said the United People's Democratic Solidarity group, linked to Naga tribal separatists in the region's Nagaland state, was behind the attack.


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