

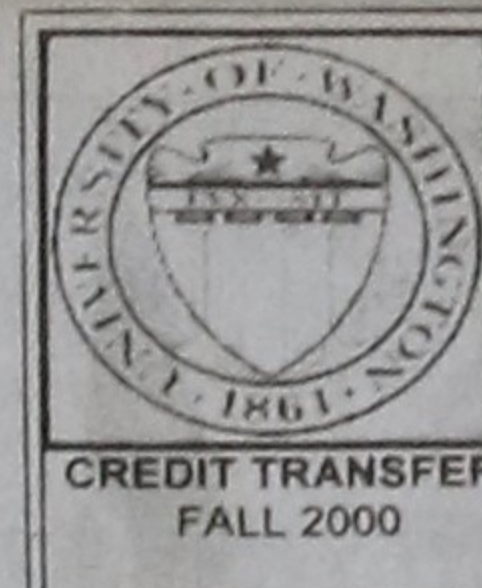
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Grocer missing with crores of taka

From Our Correspondent

NARAYANGANJ, Sept 19: Thousands of people on Monday ransacked the house of a grocer who is missing with crores of taka invested by thousands of people of Shahidnagar area in Narayanganj Sadar upazila.

The exact amount embezzled by Razzak Hawladar, the grocer, could not be confirmed immediately. He had been taking money from thousands of people under the banner of 'Shahidnagar Grocers Cooperative Society' against a special rate of interest for the last seven years.

Soon after the news spread, thousands of investors rushed to his residence at Shahidnagar. They staged a demonstration and at one stage ransacked the house.

The agitating investors caught Motahar Hossain, president of another cooperative society in Shahidnagar area, suspecting his links with Razzak Hawladar. Later he was handed over to police.

A police official said the number of members of the society was at least five thousand while some investors claimed it to be ten thousand.

Advocate Mobarak Hossain Pradhan one of the investors, told The Daily Star that he had deposited Tk 22 thousand to Razzak. A local businessman deposited Tk 22 lakh to Razzak, he added.

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Column: Between the Lines

By Kuldip Nayar

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Energy options for Bangladesh

Nuclear Power: Panacea or Peril

By Dr Ahmed Badruzzaman

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	Sun Rises	Sun Sets
Sept 20		5.57 pm
Sept 21	5.47 am	

Prayer Timings

September 20

	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	4-45	5-15
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	4-30	4-45
Maghrib	6-03	6-08
Esha	7-45	8-15

Source: Islamic Foundation

Dissatisfaction over policy, reforms

ADB hints at aid squeeze

By Staff Correspondent

Bangladesh's share of Asian Development Bank (ADB) resources may shrink in future unless it improves performance in policy and institutional reforms.

Moreover, the country's cost of borrowing from the bank will also increase as it has hardened loan terms from its soft lending window Asian Development Fund (ADF) - in view of scarce resource and stiff competition among the member countries.

ADB Resident Representative in Dhaka Phlipit Suphaphiphat yesterday disclosed these at a luncheon meeting of the American Chamber of Commerce in Bangladesh (AmCham) in the city yesterday.

Suphaphiphat and former minister AMA Muhith were speaking on 'New Dynamics in Aid Operation in Bangladesh'.

AmCham President Forest E Cookson also spoke on the occasion.

"Increasing or even maintaining the current level of ADF lending to Bangladesh will require satisfactory performance in terms of efforts of the government to strengthen policies and institutions. Aid absorption capacity of the country also needs to be improved through addressing long-standing issues in project implementation and agreed reforms in key sectors," the ADB Resident Representative said.

He also said that the average delay in project implementation is about three years.

Moreover, Suphaphiphat said, ADB has also initiated a performance-based lending policy for allocation of ADF resources among eligible developing member countries. This may have negative impact on Bangladesh's access to ADF funds due to its poor implementation rate.

In performance-based lending, allocation of ADF resources would be based on performance in macroeconomic management, commitment to policy and institutional reforms, progress in achieving good governance.

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Bangladesh to give two more transit routes to Bhutan

By M Anwarul Haq

Bangladesh has agreed to provide three transit routes to landlocked Bhutan, official sources said yesterday.

There is only one operational transit route now for transportation of goods and movement of people between the two countries. The route is through Burmari point in Lalmonirhat district.

The recently signed Trade and Transit Agreement between the two countries provides for the two new overland routes.

Thimphu and Dhaka would now approach Delhi to permit use of the new routes through Indian territory.

The first Trade and Transit Treaty between Bangladesh and Bhutan was signed in 1980 for a period of 10 years. It was renewed for another 10 years which ended on September 7.

A high-powered delegation from Bhutan led by Foreign Secretary Ugyen Tshering visited Dhaka last month to renegotiate the treaty. Following extensive talks, the Bangladesh side led by Commerce Secretary Golam Rahman and the Bhutanese team agreed on two new trade and transit routes and to renew the treaty for a further period of six years. Then it would have to be renegotiated again.

The decision to renegotiate the treaty would help both the countries to include mutually advantageous changes at that point of time, which cannot be foreseen now, an official involved in the signing of the treaty said.

Talking to The Daily Star, Bhutanese Ambassador to Bangladesh Lhatu Wangchuk confirmed that the two new transit routes have been agreed on by Dhaka.

Of the two proposed transit routes, one is Dalu-Nakugaon route. Dalu is a Bhutanese town near the Indian border and Nakugaon is in Sherpur district of Bangladesh. The distance between Dalu and Dhaka via Gaspur-Gobrakura in India is 199.76 km.

The other is through Halaghat in Mymensingh district bordering the Indian state of Meghalaya.

A high-powered Bhutanese team came to Bangladesh in the signing of the treaty.

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Svetlana Khorkina of Russia falls off the uneven bars yesterday at the SuperDome, during the gymnastics women's team finals at the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games. The 21-year-old gymnast is the reigning World, Olympic and European champion on the uneven bars. - AFP photo

Thorpe back to golden lane

Seven world marks broken in a day in Sydney

SYDNEY, Sept 19: Flying Dutchman Pieter van den Hoogenband and his Australian rivals fired off world records in the Olympic pool today while on land South Korea's women archers notched up the first 1-2-3 of the Games, reports AFP.

Australia's swimming hero Ian Thorpe returned to his golden lane, a day after taking silver behind van den Hoogenband in the 200m final, leading the Australia to a world record victory in the 4x200m relay.

On a day when seven world records were broken, China continued to dominate women's weightlifting. India produced its first ever woman medalist and the normally faultless USA softball team's 112-streak winning run came to an end.

The United States retained its water thin lead on the medal

table with seven golds and 18 medals over all, while Australia and China have six golds, and Australia's overall tally at 17.

A bizarre security scare sent alarm bells ringing when a Ko-

rean team official and three volunteer Korean workers were briefly abducted by two prison escapees who hijacked an Olympic vehicle near the main stadium.

All four, one of them pregnant, were freed within minutes as the prisoners dumped the van and fled on foot.

Dutch dazzler van den Hoogenband was the feature performer in the pool today, staking a claim to freestyle greatness with a stunning 47.84sec in the 100m freestyle semi-finals, adding to the 200m freestyle record he stole from Thorpe two days ago.

This time it was Australian Michael Klim replaced in the record books.

Thorpe, Klim, Todd Pearson and William Kirby extracted a measure of revenge when they crushed the 4x200m free relay world record with a time of 7:07.05.

Just as van den Hoogenband starred in the water, shy high

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Rain likely to continue

By Special Correspondent

A low hanging over the Indian states of Orissa, West Bengal and adjoining areas of Bangladesh triggered rains almost all over the country yesterday, which is likely to continue today, Meteorological Department said.

The rains are likely to aggravate the flood situation in the country as the Ganges-Padma and the Brahmaputra-Jamuna rivers are already flowing above their respective danger levels.

The situation may start improving later today with a decline in the rains. There may be little change in the weather in the next 48 hours beginning at

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Incessant rain for the better part of the day yesterday put brakes on city life. - Star photo

Rain triggers flood in 5 districts

By Staff Correspondent

Incessant rain and onrush of waters from upstream have triggered flood in Rajshahi, Chapainawabganj, Sirajganj, Satkhira and Manikganj districts.

Most of the low-lying areas in those districts have been inundated, damaging standing Aman crops and kutcha houses.

Our Rajshahi Correspondent reports: Many areas in Rajshahi and Chapainawabganj districts have been submerged by flood water.

The Padma was flowing 65cm above the danger level at Pankha, 51cm at Goalunda while the Mohananda was flowing 60cm above the danger mark at Chapainawabganj at 6 pm yesterday.

In Rajshahi city, normal life was disrupted due to incessant rain. All markets have been closed and attendance in both government and non-

government offices was thin.

The charlands along the river Padma have been flooded as the river continued to swell.

The Padma has also deluged some areas in Chandanahar, Tangon, Pirojpur, Gopalpur of Charghat Upazila and Harirampur, Alipur, Keshabpur, Pakuria of Bagha Upazila, in Chapainawabganj.

At least 30 unions of the district have been inundated by flood water caused by incessant rain and further rise in water level in the river Mohananda.

The worst affected unions are Shibganj, Sundarpur, Bakher Ali, Pankha, Debinagar, Ratinagar, Kalinagar, Vimgachi and Uzirpur.

Two-third areas in Shibganj have gone under water. Road links between Chapainawabganj and Shibganj, Rohapur and Sonamasjid have been

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Five drown as bazar devoured by Padma

SHARIATPUR, Sept 19: Century-old Shureswar bazar in Naria Upazila today disappeared into the Padma taking five people with it, reports UNB.

Witnesses said the bazar was devoured at about 1 pm while people were shifting their shops and other establishments after sighting cracks in the bank of the river, which is now in a spate under the influence of active monsoon.

The whole incident happened so fast that people got little chance to escape, witnesses said.

The cracks around the river-bank bazar were first detected this morning. People managed to shift 19 shops out of 32, when all of a sudden, the rest of the shops were swept into the Padma.

Ayub Ali Mridha, 40, Arman Mridha, 12, Mohammad Akhter, 15, Hafez Ali Majhi, 53, and Sumon, 12, were inside the

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The Daily Star

Award Presentation Ceremony 2000

Attention: Private Candidates of 'O' & 'A' Level Examinations

The Daily Star is proud to host the Second Award Presentation Ceremony on October 7, 2000 to honour students who achieved outstanding results in O and A level examinations in the sessions June 1999 to June 2000.

We invite private candidates who sat for the examinations to directly register their names at The Daily Star office. In order to avoid duplication, those who appeared from schools are requested not to contact The Daily Star office. Instead, they should contact their respective schools and register their names through them. Participating schools will send the list of successful candidates directly to The Daily Star office by 25th September, 2000.

The criteria required to qualify for registration are as follows:

- For 'O' Level:**
Six 'A's or above in one or two consecutive sittings (June 1999 to June 2000)
- For 'A' Level:**
Three 'A's or above in one or two sittings (June 1999 to June 2000)

Eligible private candidates are requested to contact Lavina A. Ahmed at The Daily Star office with their original individual candidate statement of results (along with photocopy) on September 20, 21 and 23 between 10 am to 2 pm.

Sutrapur: A crime zone where cops patronise criminals

By Staff Correspondent

Narrow lanes and by-lanes of Sutrapur in Old Dhaka, the most densely populated urban area in the world, bear the testimony of high crime rate in the area.

All along these dilapidated roads, overhead black banners, put up by local people, demand justice for numerous killings that took place in the area recently.

At Sutrapur thana, the Officer-in-Charge (OC), Abu Hena Mostafa Kaimal, who took over charge after his predecessor was removed a day before for negligence of duty, told The Daily Star that 34 people were killed and numerous others survived murder attempts in the area in the last six months.

Besides, burglaries, robberies, hijacking, mugging, intimidation and extortion are rampant, some residents including businessmen and teachers said.

With the crime figure, Sutrapur is also one of the most crime prone areas in the country. The residents and even some policemen alleged that law and order deteriorated in the area under the direct patronage of Sutrapur thana.

"Here the roads are so narrow and run-down that hardly anyone from the upper echelon of police or from newspapers can make regular visits. So, accountability of Sutrapur thana was almost non-existent and police took total advantage of this situation," a resident who is a college teacher said requesting anonymity.

The state of law and order and the dubious role of Sutrapur thana came to light with the murder of two young men whose decapitated bodies were recovered from a manhole of Dholaikhal Box Culvert on Saturday morning.

Before hundreds of onlookers including a screaming mother, a well known gang of about six young men dragged Mohsin and Sayem onto rickshaws at about 7 am on Friday.

When Mohsin's mother shouted for help, the abductors told her to see them at the Murgola Rifles Club. For the families of Mohsin and Sayem, the following 24 hours was a nightmare.

At the Rifles Club, Mohsin's mother Monowara Begum and Sayem's father Mahabuddin begged of Sumon and his fol-

lowers release their sons. The two boys were being tortured by the gang inside the club while the parents cried outside, residents told this correspondent.

Throughout the night, the families kept shuttling between Sutrapur thana and the Detective Branch of Police at Mintoo Road, requesting all to do something to save their sons. But all pleas fell on their deaf ears. On the following morning, the two decapitated bodies were recovered.

Sumon and his gang killed the two innocent boys as their families refused to pay Tk 50,000, the victims' family sources said.

The once prestigious Rifles Club became a den of criminals at the onset of BNP rule, local people said. In 1996, Sumon, with the blessing of his mother Nasim, an influential ruling party backed Ward Commissioner, forcibly occupied the Rifles Club, chasing away its BNP backed authorities.

"Sumon became more ferocious after he became convenor of the city unit of the Commit-

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