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Pak FM denies comment on Hasina's UN statement

Pakistan Foreign Minister Abdul Sattar has denied making the comment that the Bangladeshi Prime Minister's statement denouncing military rule at the UN Security Council was made under foreign influence, reports UNB.

"The report was false and baseless," he said yesterday in a letter to Foreign Minister Abdus Samad Azad.

The Pakistan Foreign Minister said: "I am sorry to learn that at her press conference on September 12, Her Excellency the Prime Minister of Bangladesh commented on a report ascribing to me a remark I did not make."

Sattar categorically said he did not say that Hasina's statement at the Millennium Summit meeting of the UN Security Council was made "under foreign prompting or influence".

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BNP protests abduction of Laxmipur leader

By Staff Correspondent

The BNP brought out a procession in the city yesterday to protest the abduction of its Laxmipur district unit organising secretary Nurul Islam and the country's worsening law and order.

Beginning from the city's Muktangan, the procession paraded different thoroughfares before ending in front of the National Press Club.

Earlier, a rally was held at Muktangan. Abdul Motin Chowdhury, Moudud Ahmed, Opposition Chief Whip in Parliament Khondaker Delwar Hossain, BNP acting Secretary General Ashraf Hossain, M Shamsul Alam, commissioner Abdus Salam and Amanullah Aman MP were among those

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Humayun Zahir murder
Proceedings of case adjourned till Oct 1

By Court Correspondent

The hearing of argument in the sensational Humayun Zahir murder case continued for the 11th day yesterday in the 8th Additional District and Sessions Judge's Court, Dhaka.

Judge Mir Mohammad Awad Hossain adjourned the proceedings of the case until October 1 after hearing argument from the defence side.

Advocate Malibub Ahmed, lawyer for Akhteruzzaman Chowdhury Babu, the main accused in the case, submitted many important points derived from deposition of the prosecution witnesses and sought acquittal of Babu.

Humayun Zahir, a leading businessman, was shot dead by a group of assailants on the premises of his Dhamondi residence on April 8, 1993.

Zahirul Haq Khan, father-in-law of Zahir filed a murder case with Dhamondi thana accusing seven people the same day.

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Trader beaten to death in Gazipur

By Staff Correspondent

A trader was beaten to death allegedly by his rival at Fouzaband Bazar under Sripur thana of Gazipur district yesterday, hospital sources quoting the victim's relatives said.

The victim Mohammad Ali, 40, son of Sripur Ali Bepari, was beaten up by his rivals - Mukul, Mona, Tofazzal and Huria - at about 11.00 am as a sequel to previous rivalry over possession of a land, hospital sources said, quoting Abul Hossain, brother-in-law of the victim.

The victim was taken to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) where he succumbed to his injuries at about 1.30 pm.

Khulna thana OC transferred

From Staff Correspondent

KHULNA, Sept 24: The Officer-in-Charge of Khulna thana was transferred to Detective Branch yesterday.

He will be replaced by Kamruzzaman Islam, OC of Khalishpur thana. Shibli Noman of DB was appointed OC of Khalishpur thana, a reliable source said.

The changes were made on Saturday in view of deteriorating law and order situation, particularly rise in armed deccotes, murders and drug trafficking in the south zone under KMP.

CHITTAGONG, Sept 24: Police today arrested 59 foreign fishermen who were caught by Bangladesh Navy along with three trawlers from deep sea during illegal fishing.

Transmission sector PGCB takeover may worsen PDB's financial condition

By Monjur Mahmud

Operation of the Power Grid Company of Bangladesh (PGCB) will gradually takeover the transmission sector is likely to worsen financial condition of the Power Development Board (PDB), sources concerned said.

Set up last year as per a donor's prescription to 'reform and unbundle' the power sector gradually, PGCB's existence would lead to increase in PDB's transmission and overhead cost. But no reform measures have been planned to raise the earning of PDB.

As per official schedule, PDB will have to complete the process of handing over transmission lines to PGCB by 2002. The authorities are trying to com-

plete it earlier, a senior PDB official told this correspondent.

Functioning of PGCB would push up power transmission cost of PDB by 7 poisa per kilowatt hour, he said.

On the other hand, faulty revenue collection is mainly responsible for hundreds of crores of taka of annual losses of PDB and Dhaka Electric Supply Authority (DESA) and piling up of huge arrears, resulting in lack of cash flow in the power sector.

DESA owes PDB more than Tk 3200 crore as arrears and the amount is increasing every month by Tk 25 crore. As a result, PDB is operating with severe liquidity crisis and it is

now a defaulter with Petrobangla which supplies gas.

Created under pressure from the Asian Development Bank (ADB), PGCB is a company wholly owned by PDB and it started functioning in October last year with the handing over of Haripur transmission line to it.

PDB will pay the cost of transmission to PGCB among other expenditures. PDB's own transmission rate is only 11 poisa. But for PGCB, the government has fixed a rate of 18 poisa.

Earlier, there were moves to give PGCB a lot of exclusive facilities and facilities including

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Bangladesh Teachers' Association brought out a procession demanding, among other things, nationalisation of their jobs.

— Star photo

Fenchuganj power plant to resume partial operation in a week

From Iqbal Siddique

SYLHET, Sept 24: After remaining shut for over two years, the first unit of the 90 MW power plant at Fenchuganj is expected to resume operation within a week or two, while the second and the third units are expected to be ready for power generation by December, an official told The Daily Star today.

Each of the three units - Gas Turbine I, Gas Turbine II and the Steam Turbine - at the 90 MW combined cycle power plant at Fenchuganj is expected to produce 30 MW power. Of them, Gas Turbine I (GT-I) and Gas Turbine (GT-II) run on the first unit (GT-I) is being replaced at a cost of about Tk 6 crore. The work is expected to

be completed by ruling party men at about 11:30 pm on September 18 and was yet to be traced.

The steam received from the GT-I and GT-II.

The turbine blade of the second unit (GT-II) broke down on April 12, 1998 forcing its immediate shut down. A severe technical fault in the control circuit led to the shut down of the steam turbine on May 20 while the first unit (GT-I) went out of operation on May 28, 1998. Since then, the whole plant has been lying inoperative, official sources informed adding, the total loss incurred during the period would be not less than Tk 200 crore.

The worn out spares of the first unit (GT-I) is being replaced at a cost of about Tk 6 crore. The work is expected to

be completed by ruling party men at about 11:30 pm on September 18 and was yet to be traced.

The teacher will also submit a memorandum to the Prime Minister.

About 92 thousand teachers of the country's 23 thousand non-government primary schools continued their strike for the 23rd day yesterday to realise the demands.

The teachers will assemble at Osman Uddyan and march towards the PM's secretariat at 11:30 am.

Shamsul Alam and Alhaj Akkas Ali Sheikh, President and General Secretary respectively of BNPTA, in a statement yes-

By Staff Correspondent

Non-government primary school teachers will lay a siege to the Prime Minister's secretariat today demanding nationalisation of their institutions.

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The teachers will assemble at Osman Uddyan and march towards the PM's secretariat at 11:30 am.

Shamsul Alam and Alhaj Akkas Ali Sheikh, President and General Secretary respectively of BNPTA, in a statement yes-

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