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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 Bangladesh 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 Abdul 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 Awlad Hossain adjourned the proceedings of the case until October 1 after hearing argument from the defence side.

Advocate Mahbub 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 assassins on the premises of his Dhanmondi residence on April 8, 1993.

Zahirul Haq Khan, father-in-law of Zahir, filed a murder case with Dhanmondi 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 Fouband Bazar under Sirpur thana of Gazipur district yesterday, hospital sources quoting the victim's relatives said.

The victim Mohammad Ali, 40, son of Suruj Ali Bepari, was beaten up by his rivals - Mukul, Mona, Tofazzal and Huru - 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 Khulna thana was transferred to Detective Branch yesterday.

He will be replaced by Kamrul 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 robberies, murders and drug trafficking in the south zone under KMP.

Transmission sector PGCB takeover may worsen PDB's financial condition

By Monjur Mahmud

Operation of the Power Grid Company of Bangladesh (PGCB) which 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 complete 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 Petro-bangla 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 benefits 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 Siddiquee

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 gas supplied from the Jalalabad Gasfield but the Steam Turbine (ST) needs no fuel and runs on

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

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Non-govt pry school teachers to lay siege to PM's Sect today

By Staff Correspondent

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

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 demand.

The teachers will assemble at Osmani 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 yesterday

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Fifty-nine foreign fishermen with three trawlers were caught fishing illegally in Bangladesh territorial water by a Navy patrol yesterday. They were later handed over to police. — ISPR photo

59 foreign fishermen held, three trawlers seized

From Staff Correspondent

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.

Navy patrol ships launched a two-day raid near Saint Martin island on September 21. During illegal fishing in Bangladesh territorial water and on the second day of its raid on September 22, three fishing boats were impounded after a chase for several hours, navy and police sources said.

The seized trawlers and the fishermen were handed over to Patenga thana this afternoon, police said.

Navy patrol ships BNS Modhumita and BNS Jamuna caught 41 fishermen of three trawlers on board while 18 others jumped into sea. They were later rescued and handed over to Patenga police.

The arrested were identified as nationals of Myanmar, Thailand, the Philippines and Taiwan.

Cases were filed against the

fishermen on charge of illegal fishing in Bangladesh territorial water and trespass.

They will be produced before the court tomorrow, police said. Meanwhile, at least 600 foreign nationals including 14 women are languishing in different jails of the country despite completion of their prison terms, sources said.

Of the 600 expatriates, 510 including seven women from Myanmar are in jails in Chittagong, Cox's Bazar, Comilla.

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Poura polls: Five Chandpur AL leaders expelled

CHANDPUR, Sept 24: Incumbent Chandpur Pourasava chairman and district Juba League president Yusuf Gazi, who is contesting the pourasava election as an independent candidate, was today expelled from the party for defying its decision, reports UNB.

District Awami League also expelled four other leaders of Awami League and its front organisations for acting in defiance of the party decision.

They are former MP and district president of Awami League M Shahi Ullah, AL town unit president Nasir Uddin Bhuiyan, Tofazzal Hossain alias SDO Patwary and Samik League leader Nurul Islam Mizi.

A press release issued to night and signed by acting president of district Awami League Zakaria Chowdhury and general secretary Advocate Fazlul Haq Sarkar said they were expelled from the party for anti-party activities.

Meanwhile, the supporters of Yusuf Gazi and AL candidate Abu Naim Dulal Patwari clashed this evening after a rumour spread in the area that Naim withdrew his candidature in favour of Yusuf Gazi, leaving three people injured.

BNP MPs to visit Laxmipur Sept 28

By Staff Correspondent

BNP lawmakers would visit Laxmipur on September 28 to know the fate of district unit leader of the party Advocate Nurul Islam who was kidnapped six days ago.

Deputy Leader of the Opposition in Parliament Prof AQM Badruddoza Chowdhury will lead the BNP MPs.

The decision was taken at a party meeting yesterday with party Chairperson and Leader of the Opposition Khalea Zia at her official residence, party sources said.

Nurul Islam, organising secretary of Laxmipur district unit of BNP, was kidnapped allegedly by ruling party men at about 11:30 pm on September 18 and he was yet to be traced.

All BNP MPs have been asked to be in Dhaka on September 27 and start for Laxmipur by 7:30 am the following day.

Road accident kills 8 in Mirersarai

From Our Correspondent

CHITTAGONG, Sept 24: Eight people including two women were killed and 21 injured in a road accident in Dhaka-Chittagong highway at Mirersarai today.

The accident occurred when the driver of a Chittagong-bound bus from Sonapur of Noakhali reportedly lost control while trying to save a pedestrian and fell into a roadside ditch in Ichhamati area under Mirersarai thana at around 12:30 pm. Six passengers died on the spot while two others on way to hospital.

District police rushed to the spot and rescued the survivors with the help of the local people.

Four of the dead were identified as Saifuddin, 32, Shah Alam, 45, Shahabuddin, 28, and Jan-e-Alam, 42.

Most of the 21 injured were admitted to Mostannagar Hospital, Sitakunda Health Complex, Chittagong Medical College Hospital and different clinics.

4 get 10 yrs RI each under PSA in Khulna

From Staff Correspondent

KHULNA, Sept 24: Four people have been sentenced to 10 years' rigorous imprisonment and fined Tk 50,000 each, in default to suffer two years more RI under PSA for mugging Tk 1.16 lakh at gun point from fish traders of Noakhali at Natun Bazar at 10 pm on April 6.

A case was filed with Khulna thana the following day with Md. Yusuf Shaikh as complainant. He is proprietor of SA Enterprise of Khulna Bazar.

The convicts are Mohammad Kalam, Md Raquib Alam, Mohammad Shah Alam and Mohammad Elias. Two were acquitted charges. They are Mohammad Selim Hossain and Kabir Howlader. Convicts Shah Alam and Md Elias were tried in absentia.

The judgement was delivered by the Judge of the Tribunal Saeed Khan Mohammad Anisur Rahman who tried this case under PSA. Thirteen prosecution witnesses disposed in the Tribunal during trial that took 56 days to complete.



Construction workers unearthed two pieces of artifacts yesterday afternoon, which appeared to be cannons, at Loharpool in the city's Sutrapur area. The artifacts were later taken to Sutrapur police station in the evening from where these would be sent to the National Museum soon for necessary tests. — Star photo

Angry depositors attack procession by ITCL staff: 25 injured

By Staff Correspondent

At least 25 people were assaulted when a group of depositors of Islamic Trade and Commerce Ltd. (ITCL) attacked a procession taken out by the ITCL staff in New Dhaka Road area in Sirajganj town yesterday noon.

Meanwhile, all staff of Raiganj upazila branch of the ITCL have been missing since Friday night with over Tk 2.5 crore while employees of Puthia upazila branch have disappeared with over Tk 40 lakh on Saturday.

Our Sirajganj correspondent reported that yesterday's incident took place when about four hundred staff of different branches of the ITCL in the district brought out a procession.

The processionists chanted slogans against a number of the national dailies and the people who are, according to them, responsible for recent attacks in a number of ITCL offices across the country.

Many of the ITCL offices in the district were found under lock and key yesterday. When the procession reached in front of Moushumi

Cinema Hall, the angry depositors and their accomplices equipped with machetes and sticks attacked it. They beat up the processionists and man-handled a number of women.

Later, a group of ITCL staff submitted a memorandum with a five-point demand to the DC.

Meanwhile, 12 staff members of Raiganj upazila branch of the ITCL, including its manager, disappeared with more than Tk 2.5 crore cash Friday night. The branch collected the amount from about 2100 depositors through credit cards within last three years.

Sources said the branch staff fled when the depositors put pressure on them to return their money on charge of alleged irregularities, our Sirajganj correspondent added.

Our Rajshahi correspondent reported yesterday that the manager of the bank's Puthia branch and his colleagues have left the area with their families early in the morning on Saturday.

The depositors came to know of their disappearance when they found the branch under lock and key the same day, sources said.

Jail Killing Case

Hearing on charge-framing ends: Court's order Oct 12

By Court Correspondent

The hearing on charge-framing in the Jail Killing Case was completed in the Metro-politan Sessions Judge's Court, Dhaka yesterday.

Judge Ahmed Jamil Mostafa will give order on October 12, whether charges would be framed against the accused or not.

The proceedings of the case was adjourned after the hearing on charge-framing against Lt Col (Retd) Sultan Shahriar Rashid Khan, Major (Retd) Bazul Huda, and Major (Retd) Khairuzzaman - are now detained at the Dhaka Central Jail.

They were produced in the court during the hearing. Metropolitan PP Quamrul Islam appeared for the state while Advocate Anwar Zahid Bhuiyan for the accused.

Eight of the accused - Taheruddin Thakur, Shah Muzammil Hossain, K M Obaidur Rahman, Nurul Islam Manzoor Ltd Col (dismissed) Syed Farukur Rahman, Lt Col (Retd) Sultan Shahriar Rashid Khan, Major (Retd) Bazul Huda, and Major (Retd) Khairuzzaman - are now detained at the Dhaka Central Jail.

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Four national leaders - Syed Nazrul Islam, Tajuddin Ahmed, Captain Mansur Ali, and A H M Quamruzzaman - were brutally killed in the Dhaka Central Jail on November 3, 1975.

Then DIG (Prison) Abdul Awal filed the Jail Killing Case on November 4, 1975 under Section 302/34 of the Penal Code.

Prodipta Sirajganj Boy sued for not attending class

SIRAJGANJ, Sept 24: A 9-year-old boy of Sadar upazila was sued for not attending mass education centre under the TLM programme. "Prodipta Sirajganj," reports UNB.

Official sources said Malek, son of Aminul Islam, was sued by Magistrate Atiqul Huq, who is in-charge of the local TLM programme, on September 7 for not attending the class at Char Rampur centre.

On September 18, Malek's lawyer appeared before the court and prayed for bail submitting that the case was not justified in case of a minor boy.

As per the provision of the Total Literacy Movement (TLM), an illiterate person aged between 11-45 is bound to attend the education centre.

However, the court granted bail and advised Malek to attend the education centre.

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