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## Int'l conference on regional cooperation October 22-24

The Bangladesh Institute of International and Strategic Studies (BISS) and the German Embassy in Dhaka are jointly organising a three-day international conference on Regional Cooperation in South Asia: Interfacing New Dimensions and Perspectives from October 22-24 at the BISS auditorium, says a press release.

About 70 experts from both home and abroad will participate in the conference. Participants from abroad include experts from Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Germany, Indonesia and Belgium. The main objectives of the conference are to explore and project the shape of regional co-operation in South Asia in the light of existing realities and changing circumstances in the new millennium.

A total of 19 papers will be presented in five working sessions.

The conference will be inaugurated by Minister for Finance Shah AMS Kibria.

## Biman officials, consultants meet today to finalise IM

By Special Correspondent

Bangladesh Biman officials and the consultants from the Citibank of New York are meeting today to finalise a draft Information Memorandum (IM) for restructuring and commercialisation programme of the national carrier.

Biman sources said during the two-day meeting the IM will be finalised for approval by the authorities on off-loading 49 per cent shares of the Biman, nine percent of which will go to the airline employees and 40 per cent will go to a Strategic Partner.

After finalisation, the IM will be posted on the Biman website on the Internet for perusal by the prospective strategic partners, barring airlines from South Asia.

## Swedish envoy calls on Kibria

Swedish Ambassador to Bangladesh Anders Johnson yesterday called on Finance Minister Shah AMS Kibria at his office here, an official handout said, reports BSS.

They discussed matters of mutual interest with special reference to the ongoing and pipeline projects under Swedish assistance in Bangladesh.

### SM Ali

From page 1

He served as Managing Editor of the Bangkok Post, Managing Editor of Hong Kong Standard, Executive Director of Press Foundation of Asia and UNESCO Communication advisor for Asia and the Pacific.

He launched The Daily Star in January 1991.

### Akther's appeal

From page 12

"Our Army was established to protect the country from external attack and assist the government in national disaster and internal crisis. Army men should behave friendly with people."

"They should remember that they are paid by the people, who expect a lot from them", the lawmaker said.

### BBC reporter

From page 1

and the driver to open the door. As soon as the door was opened, five more people appeared on the scene and grabbed both of them.

"They held me and searched my pockets and threatened to kill me if I shouted. When I told them I had some local currency, they insisted that I hand over the dollars. I told them that I was not a passenger and I came to receive someone coming from New York," Moazzem said.

As the muggers left the scene, taking away Tk 1000, Moazzem sought help from the police patrol nearby. The policemen said to him that the driver of the car he was in was involved in the incident. The policemen then asked some people on the scene whether they had seen anything. When the people denied the policemen, led by Provisional Sub-inspector Azharul Islam, started to question if the incident had really taken place.

The policemen said they could not help him because nobody had seen the incident that had taken place a few minutes ago.

According to sources at ZIA, law and order has deteriorated so much at the airport that passengers arriving in late night flights do not go out of the arrival lounge unless day breaks. Families with children wait on sofas for the night to be over.

Another source said the parking area of ZIA is the most crime-prone zone of the airport. But policemen on duty at the ZIA deliberately remain away from the parking area and station themselves near the main road.

The duty officer of Cantonment police station said last night that the Provisional Sub-inspector failed to realise the gravity of the situation. He said the PSI was a fresher and lacked experience.

A general diary was lodged with the cantonment police in this regard.



Leader of the Opposition in parliament and BNP chairperson Khaleda Zia addressing the biennial conference of Dhaka Union of Journalists (DUJ) at the National Press Club yesterday. — Star photo

## News

Ershad may seek extension of time for surrender

By Staff Correspondent

Former President H M Ershad's lawyers are likely to file an appeal to the Supreme Court for extension of time for his surrender before the trial court, which sentenced him to five-year imprisonment in the Janata Tower corruption case.

"We are going to submit a time-prayer to the court for extension of time for surrender," Ershad's lawyer Advocate Khandaker Mahbub Hossain told the Daily Star last night. The filing may take place either today or tomorrow, he said.

On an appeal by the former President's lawyer, a High Court bench handed down a five-year jail sentence on him and compensation of Tk 5.5 crore for his conviction on August 24.

A vacation bench allowed Ershad to surrender before the trial court by October 21.

According to law, a convict reserves the right to file an appeal against the trial court's verdict. But the appeal against the High Court judgement regarding the same will not be considered as the right of the convict's, said a senior prosecution lawyer. "It depends on the desecration of the judge."

**Dengue : 19 more hospitalised**

By staff correspondent

Nineteen more people with dengue haemorrhagic fever were admitted to different hospitals across the country yesterday. Of them, four were admitted to Dhaka Medical College Hospital and one each to BIRDEM, Dhaka Shishu Hospital and Red Crescent Holy Family Hospital while two each to Chittagong Medical College Hospital, Bangladesh Medical College Hospital and Khulna Sadar Hospital.

Besides, six patients were admitted to khulna Medical College Hospital.

### Rubel murder

## Recording officer cross-examined

By Court Correspondent

Sub-inspector Sirajul Islam, the 25th prosecution witness as well as the recording officer of Shamim Reza Rubel Murder case was cross-examined in the third Additional Metropolitan Sessions Judges Court Dhaka yesterday.

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

Sirajul Islam in his statement said he was on duty at Ramma thana since 8 pm, on July 23, to 8 am on July 24, 1998. He recorded an unnatural death case of Rubel filed by the Sub-Inspector Hayetul Islam Thakur, the main accused in the case at above 8 am on July 23, 1998.

He also told the court that he recorded a murder case in the registration khatra of Ramma thana filed by victim's father Abdur Rob on July 24, 1998.

**Fish trader chopped to death**

By Staff Correspondent

Miscreants chopped a fish trader in front of a tea stall at the Bawali Jute Mills staff quarters in Demra yesterday afternoon.

Liton, 28, son of Abdur Rakib and a resident of the staff quarters was chopped allegedly by one Akther Hossain and his accomplices.

The incident took place at 2.30 pm when Akther and Monir demanded toll from Liton. They dragged him near a tea stall and chopped with a billhook when he refused to pay them toll. Liton received injuries in his chest, hand and leg.

### Crisis in EC

From page 12

The EC officials believe that the CEC's absence may also hamper some very important jobs they are due to do in the next three weeks.

The issues are: finalisation of the new voters' list, holding of by-election to the Khulna-5 constituency that fell vacant due to death of the minister without portfolio Sallauddin Yusuf, and re-elections at two centres in the Comilla municipality and the dispute over parliament membership of BNP's expelled MP Aktheruzzaman.

"But, the absence of the CEC may hamper the process in many ways," said one official. The CEC is expected to return home on November 12.

The US government invited 24 representatives from different countries across the world to participate in the US political system study and the presidential election observation.

Countries such as Mexico, South Korea, Italy, United Kingdom, Congo, Belize, Malaysia, Israel and Sri Lanka will participate in the trip sponsored by the US government.

The CEC is expected to share views with the politicians of the US and representatives from the other developing countries and observe the US election scheduled for November 4.

### CMCH

From page 1

The 50, brought by one aya from outside.

"At the gynaec ward on the 5th floor, one has to pay Tk 10 to an aya for water for a mouth wash when WASA supply fails" Banu said.

The director said a shallow pump has been installed on the hospital premises and more will be added shortly to solve water crisis.

## Road accident kills 11 in Sunamganj

SUNAMGANJ, Oct 16: At least 11 people were killed and 40 injured as a bus crashed down into a ditch after falling off a bridge on Sylhet-Sunamganj road today, reports UNB.

Police and hospital sources said the accident took place when a Chhatak-bound bus from Sylhet tumbled down breaking the railings of the small bridge in Muktirganj area in Chhatak upazila at about 11.40 am.

The accident occurred just when driver Kantol Mia was drinking wine while driving the bus, witnesses said.

Eight people died on the spot while three others succumbed to their injuries at Sylhet Osmani Medical College Hospital.

Three of the victims were identified as Abdus Shahid, 28, of Chhatak, Sundar Ali, 38, of Doarabazar and Subodh Chandra Roy, 50, of Jawabazar.

Some of the injured were

## Seminar on clinic-based essential services

By Staff Correspondent

In the transition from door to door family planning services to clinic-based essential services, some non-government organisations have demonstrated the potential of new programme strategies — Essential Services Package (ESP).

"There is enough evidence that there is a demand for static clinic services if they are of good quality," said Dr M Alaudin, Country Representative of Pathfinder International yesterday while addressing a dissemination seminar on From the home to the clinic. The next Chapter in Bangladesh's Family Planning Success Story—Rural Sites.

The study by Dr Schuler, Dr Md Alaudin, Dr M Khalid Islam and Lisa Bates between November 1999 and June 2000 also suggested that NGOs should strengthen focus on men and providing integrated essential health services and not just family planning.

The study pointed out that clients need to be informed about the clinics and the services which are available.

It also pointed out that high quality services now provided at more than 170 such community clinics undertaken by Pathfinder International under its rural family health services since 1997 was reflected in the study.

Schuler said that NGOs should maintain these standards and reinforce staff to treat clients with kindness and respect.

Referring to the study, she also mentioned that outreach efforts should distinguish the NGO clinics from the ones run by the government and educate potential customers about the referral system.

## World Food Day

From page 12

measures' specially for the hardcore poor.

Food Minister Amir Hossain Amu also spoke of 'inequality' in the distribution of food. "If an equitable distribution of food grown in the world could be ensured, none would have remained hungry."

FAO representative in Dhaka KB Shresta said food insecurity is equally a big problem as inadequacy of food itself. Reading out a brief Food Day message from the FAO Director General, he said strategies have to be developed to ensure that people can either produce enough food or earn enough to buy it.

Fisheries and Livestock Minister ASM Abdur Rob said that increased production of meat and egg was meeting the demand for those, doubled in the last two decades. He, however, did not mention the issue of huge import of livestock and poultry products from India.

Agriculture Secretary Dr AMM Shawkat Ali stressed management of production surplus.

## Eating Out

**Shikara is a Gourmet Restaurant that serves Indian and Thai dishes on the city's new skyline.**

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## Bangabandhu Murder Case

From page 12

Referring to a report in Crime Journal of India of 1982, Advocate Paul argued that five pre-conditions were necessary to prove any conspiracy how, when, where and who implements a conspiracy and motive behind the conspiracy.

The scores of prosecution witnesses only Prof Khurshed Alam mentioned the place of conspiracy but he also admitted that he was not present in the meeting when the so-called conspiracy was hatched. None corroborated his witness, contended the defence counsel.

Justifying the presence of Noor Chowdhury in Bangabandhu's residence, defence lawyer said that his client went there as Sheikh Kamal, the eldest son of Bangabandhu also killed in the

massacre, was one of his close friends.

Sheikh Kamal and Noor Chowdhury were ADCs to Gen MAG Osmany after the independence of the country in 1971.

Responding to a query from the court, the defence lawyer said law and order situation was not normal when top brasses of the Army and senior civil officials were present at the oath-taking ceremony at Bangabandhu.

The counsel contended that accused army officials Abdul Wahab Joarder, Abul Hashem Mridha and another one who were also present in Bangabandhu's house on that day were acquitted of the charge.

Justifying the presence of Noor Chowdhury in Bangabandhu's residence, defence lawyer said that his client went there as Sheikh Kamal, the eldest son of Bangabandhu also killed in the

massacre, was one of his close friends.

He contended that only one of the prosecution witnesses had stated that Noor fired at Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman but other did not corroborate it.

Advocate Saifuddin, who was apparently not adequately prepared with his brief will continue his argument when the hearing resumes today.