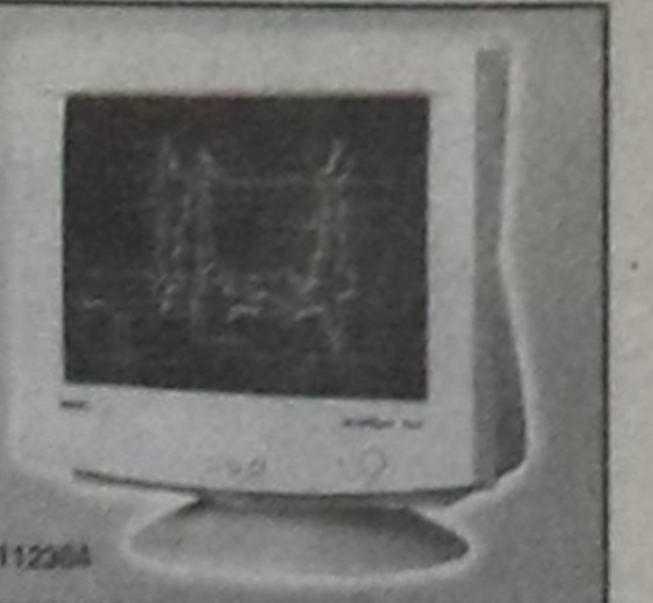


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Clinton invited to observe election

By Diplomatic Correspondent
Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina said yesterday that she had invited US President Bill Clinton to come to Bangladesh as a poll observer when the caretaker government takes over.
"I have invited the US President to see our national elections as a caretaker government as under a poll observer. As his tenure expires in January next, I have invited him," Hasina said at a press conference at her office yesterday.
Asked if Clinton has accepted the invitation, she said, "He was glad but said it would depend on his schedule."
See page 11 col 8

Osman Farruk joins BNP

By Staff Correspondent
BNP chairperson Khaleda Zia has said the atmosphere of the country is very much in favour of her party and hoped that people will elect BNP in the next elections to get rid of the current woe-filled situation created by the ruling Awami League.
"Everything is in favour of BNP and now it is time for us to avail the opportunity, she told her party members while addressing a function organised to welcome Dr M Osman Farruk, former top official of the World Bank, to her party at 29 Minto Road yesterday evening.
Osman Farruk along with a good number of local people with
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Inside Today

Article

Military Debate in US Presidential Election

Column: Perspectives
By Brig (Retd) M Abdul Hafiz
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Focus

Industrial development at crossroads: SMEs need priority attention

	Sun Rises	Sun Sets
Oct 23		5.27 pm
Oct 24	5-59 am	

Prayer Timings

October 23		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	4-45	5-20
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	4-00	4-15
Maghrib	5-35	5-40
Esha	7-30	8-00

Source: Islamic Foundation

BB stops all ITCL activities

Sonali Bank asked to take over assets & liabilities

By Inam Ahmed

Bangladesh Bank (BB) yesterday stopped all activities of Islamic Trading Company Limited (ITCL) to protect public interest and declared all its transactions unlawful.

It has also directed Sonali Bank to take over all the assets and liabilities of the company which was illegally conducting banking activities.

The BB will ask for liquidation of the company within seven days from yesterday, the first such move by the central bank in the country.

"We were forced to crack down on the company to avoid an Albania-style investment fraud," said a BB high official yesterday. "Those who had already put money in the company will be affected by this decision. But we have saved many more prospective victims."

He however assured that after receiving all the assets of the company, these will be distributed among the depositors accordingly.

Earlier, BB conducted a number of investigations on ITCL and unearthed gross illegal

activities.

The BB action came in the wake of wide-spread allegations that ITCL and a number of so-called investment companies are involved in taking deposits.

Currently, ITCL has accounts in 10 banks where it has a few crore taka in deposits. The company could not withdraw money from these accounts in recent times, sources said.

If ITCL fails to hand over its assets and liabilities to Sonali Bank within two days, the
See page 11 col 3

Diverse use of gas only after determining reserve: PM

'Visit a turning point in ties with US'

By Diplomatic Correspondent

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has said the country's gas resources would be utilised for improving the quality of life of the people and its use in any form would be determined by the quantum of reserve.

"Gas is our national resource. We have to preserve it for at least 50 years for our posterity. However, we will think about its diverse use when the quantum of reserve is determined after an on going survey (by the USGS) is completed," she said.

The PM was replying to questions at a press conference at her office yesterday, a day after her return from a four-day official visit to the United States.

She did not give specific replies to other some other questions about the outcome of her talks with US President Bill Clinton regarding energy and RMG sectors, which attracted a lot of focus at home and abroad. "We will take



Sheikh Hasina

necessary steps" after the survey is completed, she said.

Quoting from the joint statement on her visit, Hasina said, "The Prime Minister and the President welcomed progress on

the conclusion of negotiations on gas production and exploration in east-central Bangladesh. Given the important role that natural gas can play in Bangladesh's development, the two leaders applauded the work of Petrobangla and the United States Geological Survey (USGS) in estimating Bangladesh's gas resources.

She termed her visit a turning point in Bangladesh-US relations and said, "Our relationship has been turned into that of a development partner of the United States from the poor position of an aid-recipient. Our image of a basket case has now changed."

The US visit was very "fruitful" and her talks with President Clinton were "very productive." The talks which lasted 45 minutes covered issues of mutual concern, she said.

"I was very happy at Clinton's
See page 11 col 7

Countrywide spl drive to arrest criminals begins

By Staff Correspondent

A special drive to arrest listed criminals and recover illegal arms began across the country at midnight last night.

The whole country has been divided into 11 sectors to conduct the raid.
Railway police and armed police will also take part in the drive. If necessary Special Branch and CID personnel will be called to assist the police, sources said.

A list of criminals has been prepared through different sources during the last four months. Police headquarters will supervise the drive which will continue for a month, sources added.

The border security forces (BSF) have been asked to arrest arms traffickers and seize firearms within five kilometers from the border.

A circulation from the Home Ministry directed to arrest the culprits regardless of their political identity, sources said, adding that stern action would be taken against policemen who will violate the order.

According to police sources, a total of 1379 firearms were seized and 132 people arrested during the last four months across the country. More than 700 cases were filed with different police stations.



Members of Yasser Arafat's mainstream Fatah movement demonstrate in Gaza City against the Arab summit yesterday. Israeli and Palestinian territories were gripped by tension again as a Palestinian was killed in renewed clashes with Israeli troops as the emergency Arab summit came to an end in Cairo yesterday.
--AFP photo

Barak for a 'timeout' in peace process

Cairo summit ends with fierce words, little action

JERUSALEM, Oct 22: Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak told his Cabinet today that Israel needed a "timeout" to re-evaluate the tattered peace process, a move that would put on hold years of negotiations with the Palestinians, reports AP.

After more than three weeks of violence that has left 120 dead, Barak said there was little hope for progress toward a comprehensive political settlement, though that's been his top priority since his election last year.

"We need to have a timeout whose goal is to reassess the peace process in light of the events of the

last few weeks," Barak told the weekly Cabinet meeting today. "Israel will continue to pursue peace and every path that leads to it, but one would have to be blind to security and political needs to continue as if nothing has happened."

The statement issued by Barak's office did not say when the timeout would begin or how long it might last. The prime minister made brief remarks to journalists following the Cabinet session, but gave no additional details.

Hannan Ashrawi, a prominent Palestinian
See page 11 col 4

Dhaka for implementation of Indira-Mujib accord

Four-day border talks begin in city

By Staff Correspondent

Problems in Bangladesh-India border areas can be greatly resolved if steps are taken to implement the 1974 Mujib-Indira agreement, the DG of BDR said here yesterday.

"Three major clashes between the two countries could be avoided and lives of people saved had the treaty been implemented," he said in his inaugural speech at the DG-level talks between BDR and Indian Border Security Force (BSF).

The four-day border talks will cover, among other issues, demarcation of unmarked border, exchange of 'adverse lands' and free movement of Bangladeshis through the Teen Bigha corridor.

Maj. Gen. A L M Fazlur Rahman, Director General of BDR is leading a 19-member Bangladesh team at the talks. E N Rammoohan, Director General of BSF is leading a 12-member Indian team.

The main agenda of Bangladesh side is demarcation of unmarked border, exchange of enclaves, exchange of 'adverse lands', Tin Bigha and Muhurir Char issues, trafficking of children and women to India, push-in of Bengali speaking Indian nationals and firing by BSF and Indian nationals from across the border, sources said.

Smuggling of drugs and firearms from India and trespass by BSF personnel and Indian nationals are also expected to be discussed. The DG also said that people of Angarpota Dohagram want free movement to the mainland for 24 hours.

The DG of BSF said that all the issues were taken up with his government but unfortunately most of these are still unresolved. At least 22 people have been killed and 28 injured in 38 incidents of firing by BSF and Indian nationals from across the border so far.



A huge consignment of foreign cigarettes was confiscated from the Customs Container Terminal in the city's Kamalapur area yesterday.
--Star photo

Tk 1.75cr cigarettes seized at Kamalpur ICD

By Staff Correspondent

A Customs Intelligence and Investigation team seized cigarettes worth about Tk 1.75 crore from a container at the Inland Container Depot (ICD) at Kamalpur in the city yesterday.

The consignment was meant for the 'Attache' of an embassy in Dhaka with a document describing it as foodstuff, customs officials said without giving details.

It was shipped from Dubai for the 'Attache' and it reached Chittagong port on October 5 and the capital on October 10, they said.

The customs team led by Joint Director Atiqur Rahman and Deputy Director Hafizur Rahman raided the ICD, opened the container and recovered 495 master cartons of Benson and Hedges cigarette.

The consignment was seized following permission from the foreign ministry as it carried a diplomat tag.

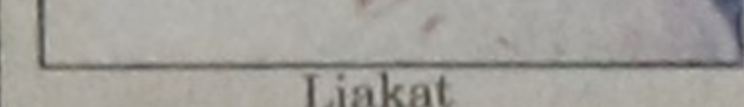
None claimed it so far, officials said. So they suspected that those who 'imported' it were alarmed following seizure of two 'diplomatic consignments' worth about Tk 7.5 crore and Tk 6.5 crore from Gulshan and the ICD in the last one month.

Liakat allegedly had hand in snatching tender papers

By Staff Correspondent

Liakat Hossain, a central leader of Jubo League and an alleged underworld don, was arrested mainly due to his reported involvement in snatching tender papers from two Chinese companies in the city on October 10.

A gang of youths earlier man-handled several officials of the companies while they were going to submit tender papers to authorities at the Roads and Highway Building for a Tk 64



Liakat

See page 11 col 4

'Build a common front in region to fight poverty'

By Special Correspondent

A three-day international conference that began in the city yesterday underlined the need for strengthening regional cooperation to build a common front against poverty, taking lessons from the ASEAN, European Union (EU) and the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE).

The participants also stressed that formation of sub-regional groupings like the South Asia Growth Quadrangle and the Bangladesh, India, Myanmar, Sri-Lanka Trade and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC) should be expedited.

They also called for strengthening the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) that groups Bangladesh, Bhutan, Maldives, Nepal,

Sri-Lanka, Pakistan and India. The participants included scholars from the region and Europe, Ambassadors of Germany, EU and the Charge d' Affaires of France. They discussed evolution of SAARC, ASEAN, EU and OESD with reference to cooperation in the region.

They pointed out that cutting across geographical and psychological barriers in an age of globalisation could help countries of the region integrate their economies, foster trade, ensure security and protect independence while eliminating poverty.

The International Conference on Regional Cooperation in South Asia: Interfacing New Dimension
See page 11 col 1

ATTENTION DESIGNERS, BOUTIQUE & FASHION HOUSES

Welcome to The Daily Star Fashion Album 2001

The Daily Star for over some time now has become a virtual barometer of fashion trend in Bangladesh. As the Eid approaches, The Daily Star prepares itself for the big occasion. This year as usual The Daily Star Fashion Catalogue 2001 will feature dresses and saris selected by a panel of judges. The album works as a source book for both buyers and sellers. So, this is the best opportunity for the designers, boutiques and fashion houses to be highlighted in this fashion extravaganza.

How to send your saris and dress materials? Dresses and saris will be considered for selection under seven groups according to their prices.

1. Group A: Sari: Price range Taka 3501 and above
2. Group B: Sari: Price range between Taka 2001 to 3500
3. Group C: Sari: Price range between Taka 1001 to 2000
4. Group D: Sari: Price range upto Taka 1000
5. Group A: Salwar-kameez/Fashion/Western: Price range Taka 3501 and above
6. Group B: Salwar-kameez/Fashion/Western: Price range between Taka 2001 to 3500
7. Group C: Salwar-kameez/Fashion/Western: Price range between Taka 1001 to 2000
8. Group D: Salwar-kameez/Fashion/Western: Price range upto Taka 1000
9. Men's wear price range: up to Taka 1000

The nominated saris and dresses from each group will feature in our Fashion Album 2001 with colour photographs plus write-ups describing the fashion wears. The designers will also be profiled in the album.

Rules and regulations

- A. The dresses and saris should express the mood of the festival. The materials used for saris and dresses should be locally produced. The design should be original and the material should be suitable for our weather and be environment friendly.
- B. Information about the fashion house and price should accompany the dresses. In case of saris name of the weavers should be mentioned.
- C. The dresses and saris sent in for the Album are returnable.
- D. The dresses and saris will be accepted for submission with properly filled up forms which will be given at the office of Weekly 2000 (mentioned below).
- E. There will be an entry fee of Taka 100.
- F. Send your fashion wears and saris to the office of Weekly 2000 between 10 am and 5 pm on 23, 24 and 25 October, 2000.

Contact
Ms Bizly Hoque
At:

96/97 New Eskaton Road, Dhaka-1000, Tel: 9350951-3, Fax: 9350954, E-mail: S2000@bangla.net

ইসলামিক ট্রেড এন্ড কমার্স লিঃ (আইটিসিএল) এর অবৈধ ব্যাংক ব্যবসা পরিচালনার বিরুদ্ধে ব্যাংক কোম্পানী আইন, ১৯৯১ এর ধারা ৫২(১) মোতাবেক প্রদত্ত বাংলাদেশ ব্যাংক এর ঘোষণা।

ব্যাংক কোম্পানী আইন, ১৯৯১ এর ধারা ৫২(১) এ প্রদত্ত ক্ষমতাবলে বাংলাদেশ ব্যাংক নিম্নরূপ ঘোষণা প্রদান করছেঃ

আইটিসিএল-এর কার্যক্রম তদন্ত করে তার অফিস হতে জব্দকৃত কাগজপত্র/দলিলাদি, বই-খাতা, হিসাবপত্র ইত্যাদি পরীক্ষা ও পর্যালোচনা করে এবং বাংলাদেশ ব্যাংক কর্তৃক আইটিসিএলকে প্রদত্ত কারণ দর্শানো নোটিশ-এর জবাব বিবেচনা করে বাংলাদেশ ব্যাংক এই আত্মত পোষণ করে যে, আইটিসিএল-এর কার্যকলাপ ব্যাংক কোম্পানী আইন, ১৯৯১ এর ধারা ৫২(১) এ সংজ্ঞায়িত ব্যাংক ব্যবসায় অন্তর্ভুক্ত হওয়ায় আইটিসিএল এবং তার পরিচালক, কর্মকর্তা ও কর্মচারীবৃন্দ বাংলাদেশ ব্যাংক হতে কোন প্রকার লাইসেন্স গ্রহণ না করে উক্ত আইন এর ধারা ৩১(১) এর বিধান লঙ্ঘনপূর্বক বেআইনী ব্যাংক ব্যবসায় নিয়োজিত, যা আইনত দণ্ডনীয় অপরাধ।

অতএব, বাংলাদেশ ব্যাংক উপরোক্ত ঘোষণা প্রদান করে আইটিসিএলকে তাদের সকল প্রকার কার্যক্রম ও লেনদেন বন্ধ করার নির্দেশ দিয়েছে এবং আরো জানিয়েছে যে, উপরোক্ত ঘোষণার পর তার সকল লেনদেন অকার্যকর হবে।

এই ঘোষণা ব্যাংক কোম্পানী আইন, ১৯৯১ এর ধারা ৫২(১) মোতাবেক জনস্বার্থে ও জনগণের অবগতির জন্য জারি করা হলো।

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