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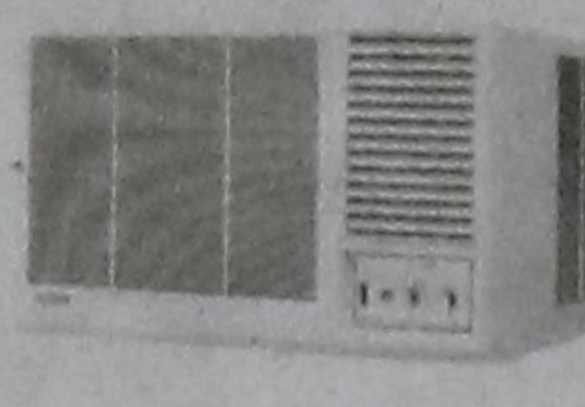
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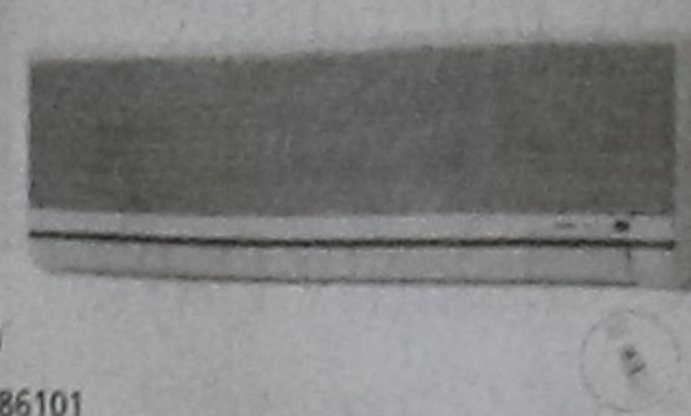
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Corruption costs govt Tk 11535cr in first half of this year

Education sector tops the list as per TIB report

Corruption, rooted deep in the country, has drained down government wealth estimated at Tk 11,534.98 crore or 2.1 billion US dollars during the first half of 2000 (January-June), says a report of Transparency International, Bangladesh, reports UNB.

Releasing the report at an informal meeting yesterday with a group of senior journalists, Prof Muzaffar Ahmed, Trustee of TIB, said the figures were compiled from newspaper reports, which

are incomplete compared to the actual corruption in different sectors of the government.

"It's a tip of the iceberg," said Prof Ahmed who was an adviser in the caretaker government in 1991. Corruption has been retarding the progress of the nation, he added.

TIB Secretary General Towfiq Newaz explained activities of the Bangladesh chapter of German based Transparency International. He said they started opera-

tion four years ago with the objective of combating corruption. The core financing of their project came from the Danish government and later from USAID.

Presenting the salient features of the report, TIB Executive Director Barrister Monzoor Hasan said the 'News Scan Database Report' is based on reports of nine national and six regional dailies.

He said a sample survey to verify the newspaper reports

showed that 95 per cent of those was correct. Some were however found far less than what actually happened. Citing an example, he said, a report said a loss of Tk one crore in a health sector project in Jessore. But TIB spot investigation revealed that the actual loss was about Tk 4.5 crore.

The report said 1,345 newspaper reports were scanned during the period, of which, 655 were related to financial loss. These

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Intern doctors at Barisal Medical College begin token strike

BARISAL, Nov 4: Intern doctors of Sher-e-Bangla Medical College Hospital here began a token work stoppage today demanding appointment of doctors to the vacant posts and solution to accommodation problem, reports UNB.

They announced the six-hour work stoppage everyday until November 11 at a sit-in in front of the Director's office today. They would enforce an indefinite strike from Nov 12 if their demands are not met by this time.

Sufferings of the patients increased as the intern doctors refrained from their duties in the hospital from 8 am to 2 pm. Meanwhile, students' strike at the medical college demanding resolution of the teachers' problems entered the sixth day today.

Although Health Minister Sheikh Fazlul Karim Selim directed the authorities concerned to fill in the vacant posts of teachers.

Garments worker shot dead in Ctg

From Our Correspondent

CHITTAGONG, Nov 4: A garments worker was shot dead by unidentified gunmen at Kazir Dewry under Kotwali thana in the city last night.

Police and witnesses said, three miscreants entered the house of Md Bashir Alam at Kazir Dewry Lane area and looted some valuables at gunpoint at around 10 pm. The miscreants fired at Bashir Alam, killing him on the spot.

The victim's wife filed a case in this connection.

CU student killed in road accident

CHITTAGONG, Nov 4: Three persons including a student of Chittagong University (CU) were killed in separate road accidents here today, reports BSS.

An unidentified person died on the spot and Mohammad Salahuddin Chowdhury, 20, a first year student of the Finance, Department of CU, was seriously injured as a railway engine knocked them down from the Dewanhat Bridge while they were walking down the rail line, the university sources said.

Salahuddin succumbed to his injuries on way to Chittagong Medical College Hospital.

Arafat, Barak to meet Clinton separately

JERUSALEM, Nov 4: Israeli and Palestinian leaders announced readiness to meet with US President Bill Clinton in Washington for crucial negotiations aimed at breaking the vicious circle of violence that has shattered hopes for peace in the Middle East, reports AP.

The Palestinian areas were far from quiet on Friday, meanwhile, despite calls for restraint issued by both sides in an attempt to implement their latest cease-fire and stop five weeks of bloodshed.

Three Palestinians were shot dead and hundreds injured in a series of clashes with Israeli troops in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, hospital doctors said. Four Israeli soldiers were also hurt, according to the army. Numerous firefights, some involving machine-guns, were reported late Friday.

Still, Israeli leader Ehud Barak pledged to "persevere in our efforts for peace."

"We are strong enough to stand on both fronts: the battle for peace and the struggle against violence and terror," the prime minister said.

Palestinian leaders, who have designated the past several Fridays a "day of rage," also took on a more subdued tone, saying events Friday and Saturday would determine whether the truce agreement reached earlier in the week was taking hold.

On the political front, aides to Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat said he was ready to meet with US President Bill Clinton in Washington. No definite date was set, said Arafat's spokesman Marwan Kanafani.

He said Arafat would arrive after the American presidential elections "to discuss the situation in the Palestinian areas and the future of the peace process" with Clinton and US Secretary of State Madeleine Albright.

Shlomo Ben-Ami, Israel's

Foreign Minister, told Israel Television from the United States that Arafat was expected in Washington on Wednesday, Nov 8.

Clinton has also invited Barak, and Ben-Ami said the Israeli leader may travel to Washington after the planned Clinton-Arafat talks. He described the separate meetings as a "US attempt to check how the peace process can move forward."

"I don't think they will talk at the moment about some defined peace package... The sides will check with the Americans what is the best way to advance the process after this harsh breakdown," Ben-Ami added.

The momentum generated by the daily clashes proved hard to stop. After midday prayers at mosques, confrontations began breaking out. One Palestinian was shot dead in Tulkarem, two others were killed in Hizme, both in the West Bank.

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Warehouse of garments factory gutted in city

The warehouse of a garments factory at Pallabi Shopping Centre was gutted after yesterday morning, reports BSS.

Fire Brigade and Police officials said the fire at the dream wears limited originated from an electric short circuit in the small hours of yesterday and gutted the warehouse.

Eleven fire units from the Fire Brigade headquarters, Mirpur, Mohammadpur and Kurnitola rushed to the spot and extinguished the fire after several hours.

No casualty was reported in the fire, police said.

3500 bottles of phensidyl seized: Two arrested

By Staff Correspondent
Demra thana police arrested two alleged drug traffickers and seized 3,500 bottles of phensidyl syrup from a truck at Sayedabad in the city yesterday evening.

Acting on a tip-off, police stopped a truck (Jhenidah Ta-02-0150) at Sayedabad and recovered the drugs at about 5 pm.

The arrested were identified as Rabiul Islam, 33, driver of the truck and Ismail Hossain, 30.

A case was lodged in this regard.

In another raid Detective Branch of police seized bomb-making materials from Mir Hazaribagh area in the city yesterday evening and arrested one person.

The arrested was identified as Bulbul alias Khokon, 25.

Police raided the area at about 3.15 pm and recovered 1.5 kilograms of bomb making materials from his possession.

A case was filed with Demra thana in this regard.



A three-day Mega Expo 2000, organised by Conference and Exhibition Management Services (CEMS), began at Sheraton Hotel yesterday. Three different exhibitions titled Comptexpo, Elexpo and ConExpo are being held under the unified banner. — Star photo

Find alternative to big 2 bourgeois parties

Sixth congress of Workers Party begins

From Shehab Ahmed

RAJSHAHI, Nov 4: Amidst fluttering red flags and deafening drum beats of the Santals, the sixth Congress of the Workers Party of Bangladesh began here today with Leftist leaders vowing to make the new century an era of Socialism despite its demise in the previous century.

Buoyed by presence of the comrades from West Bengal,

India, and Sri Lanka, the greying bands of Bangladesh's leftist leaders also urged the people to find an alternative to the big two bourgeois parties to free the country's politics from "maastans and black money," communalism and fundamentalism, the evils of free market and imperialism.

The opening session of the four-day Congress was held at

the sprawling Madrassah Maidan. The firebrand Santal leader and West Bengal state government minister Upen Kisku spoke for sometime in Santali language to his kin in Bangladesh, drawing instant ovation from the Advasis.

Shailen Dasgupta, the elderly Chairman of the ruling Left Front

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Sonia loyalists change gear

Cong gen secy resigns to campaign against Jitendra Prasada

From Pallab Bhattacharya

NEW DELHI, Nov 4: Loyalists of India's main opposition leader Sonia Gandhi have decided to launch the campaign for her election to the Congress presidency, settling the stage for what promises to be an interesting war of attrition with dissident leader Jitendra Prasada.

Sonia supporters' decision to take the plunge, just a day after Prasada kicked off his own campaign, was manifested in the resignation of Ambika Soni, a staunch loyalist of Rajiv Gandhi's widow, from the post of Congress General Secretary yesterday. Congress sources said some other senior party leaders are also likely

to help move Sonia's campaign into top gear in the next few days. Ambika Soni said she took the step in "keeping with the highest tradition of propriety and ethics. I did it as an emotional response to stridently counter the charges being made against the Congress President Sonia Gandhi. It would have been improper for me to do so while holding office."

The fact that Sonia Gandhi promptly accepted Soni's resignation tended to lend credence to speculations that it was a "stage-managed" event reflecting that Sonia camp would not let Prasada's campaign go unchallenged.

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BCL factions clash at Aliya Madrassah

By Staff Correspondent

Four people including two policemen were injured when two BCL factions clashed at Aliya Madrassah at Bakshibazar in the city yesterday evening.

The injured policemen were identified as Sub-inspector Yaqub Ali and constable Saiful Islam, hospital sources said. Identity of two other injured could not be known immediately.

A motorbike was set on fire and four vehicles were damaged during the clash.

The incident took place when some activists of a faction of BCL protested readmission of a rival BCL worker Sagar who was expelled in 1996 from the madrassah, witnesses said.

Earlier Sagar along with his associates went to the principal's office and pressed the principal for Sagar's readmission. The principal readmitted him under pressure, hospital sources said.

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2 PROTHOM ALO'S AND ANNIVERSARY

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Activists of Islami Chhatra Shibir raised hell at the Aliyah Madrassah yesterday, ransacking the principal's office and setting a few motorbikes afire. — Star photo

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অত্র সমিতির বর্তমান সভাপতি জনাব এম.এ রউফ চৌধুরী ও প্রাক্তন সহ-সভাপতি জনাব মোহাম্মদ আলী গত ২১-১০-২০০০ইং তারিখে অনুষ্ঠিত দি ফেডারেশন অব বাংলাদেশ চেম্বার অব কমার্স এন্ড ইন্ডাস্ট্রি (২০০০-২০০২) সালের নির্বাচনে এসোসিয়েশন গ্রুপ থেকে জনাব মোহাম্মদ আলী, সহ-সভাপতি ও জনাব এম.এ রউফ চৌধুরী, এক্সিকিউটিভ কমিটির সদস্য পদে নির্বাচিত হওয়ায় বাংলাদেশ ভেজিটেবল অয়েল রিফাইনার্স এন্ড বনস্পতি ম্যানুফ্যাকচারার্স এসোসিয়েশনের পক্ষ থেকে অভিনন্দন ও মোবারকবাদ জানাচ্ছি।

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