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BDR lodges protest with NASAKA

Planting of mines along border

From Nurul Alam
CHITTAGONG, Nov 13: Incidents of mine explosion along Bangladesh-Myanmar border in recent weeks created panic among the villagers in the border areas of Bangladesh, sources said.
In the latest incident of mine explosion on Friday, a Bangladeshi woodcutter was killed and another seriously injured, police and other sources said.
The incident prompted the Bangladesh border guards, BDR to lodge a protest with Myanmar border security force NASAKA yesterday, BDR sources said.
In the protest note, BDR requested NASAKA to stop planting of mines along the border.
Intelligence source said Myanmar border security force has started planting of mines along the border inside Myanmar to check easy access or movement of insurgents reportedly staying inside the deep forest near border points.
Meanwhile, Rohingya Solidarity Organisation (RSO), an insurgent group fighting for independence of Arakan of Myanmar, in a press release issued to the press, claimed that its activists ambushed and killed 11 Myanmar soldiers and injured some others during an encounter at village Saledaung near the border on November 10.
RSO also claimed that the encounter occurred while Myanmar soldiers were planting mines in that area, the release added.
When contacted, BDR sources said that they had received a report of
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Caught in BTTB bottleneck

More than one lakh cell phone users have no access to land-based lines

By Mustak Hossain
Bureaucratic tangles and red-tapism stand in the way of more than one lakh mobile phone users to get access to the mainstream fixed telephone networks including most essential services like police, fire and ambulance.
The mobile phone operators have been unable to provide their subscribers access to the network of the state-monopoly Bangladesh Telegraph and Telephone Board (BTTB) due to absence of its infrastructure, sources said.
Four private mobile operators of the country had earlier proposed to the Ministry of Post and Telecommunication (MPT) to take up a project to upgrade BTTB's infrastructure.
The mobile operators - Pacific Bangladesh Telecom Limited (PBT), GrameenPhone (GP), Telecom Malaysia International Bangladesh (Aktel) and Sheba Telecom agreed to invest five million US dollars in the project.
"If the MPT agrees to upgrade its infrastructure then private mobile operators would be able to allocate 100,000 mobile phones more with BTTB's access facility," an official with a leading mobile company said.
An official with the MPT said the ministry is working on the proposal to set modalities - how the money invested would be returned to the mobile operators.
A total of 2,20,000 cellular telephones are now in operation in the country and more than one lakh of them have only mobile-to-mobile option, which means their users do not have access to BTTB's network.
"I can't call an ambulance, fire brigade or police in case of an emergency despite having a phone," one cell phone subscriber said.
"The government is denying me access (to fixed telephone network) despite the fact that I am paying an annual government royalty of 1,120 taka and a 15 per cent value-added tax (VAT) on every call."
There is a huge demand for fixed phones in the country and people are subscribing to mobile phone services due to non-availability of fixed phone.
About half a million fixed telephones in the country have been installed over the past 40 years. On the other hand, the 220,000 mobile phones came into operation in less than five years' time at a
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Estrada impeached

Filipino president face ouster on corruption charges

MANILA, Nov 13: Philippine President Joseph Estrada was impeached by the House of Representatives on Monday, setting the stage for his trial for alleged corruption which could end with his ouster, reports AFP.
The 63-year-old leader would remain in office but would face a Senate trial on several charges including taking 8.3 million dollars in bribes from illegal gambling operators. He is the first Filipino leader to be impeached.
Estrada was impeached on charges of bribery, corruption, betrayal of public trust and culpable violations of the constitution.
"My conscience is clear," Estrada said in a nation-wide radio broadcast earlier Monday, expressing hope that his trial would vindicate and exonerate
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Joseph Estrada

Richshawpullers threaten hartal in city Nov 16

By Staff Correspondent
Rickshaw Peshajibi Songram Parishad, a platform of rickshawpullers has announced that it will call a hartal in the city on November 16 if the government stops plying of rickshaws on Gabtali-Azimpur road from November 15.
It was announced at a rally organised by the Parishad at Muktagan in the city yesterday.
The Parishad claimed that around five thousand rickshawpullers attended the rally.
"No government took initiative to set up mills and factories to generate employment for thousands of young people rather, they are trying to eradicate rickshaws from the streets," Momin Ali, convenor of the Parishad, said.
He said the government should apologise to the rickshawpullers for its failure to generate employment for them.

BCL activists block traffic on city roads

By Staff Correspondent
Angry activists of Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) yesterday put up barricade on several roads in the city demanding arrests of the killers of Akkasur Rahman Akhi, general secretary of the city unit (north) of BCL who was gunned down at Gulshan on Thursday.
Huge traffic got stuck up on the Old Airport Road at Farm Gate when students from Tejgaon College blocked the main road for about 15 minutes just at the stroke of noon.
The students also went on a rampage in front of the Agriculture College at Sher-e-Bangla Nagar, demanding arrests of the killers of Akhi and their punishment. Some said they were also protesting interference by a cabinet minister from the ruling party to secure release of the killers.
Gunmen shot and killed Akhi and injured four other BCL leaders at Gulshan-2 in the city Thursday night. Police and party activists believe that the killing was a sequel to feud over controlling a club in Badda area.
BCL activists went on a rampage at several city areas following the killing, damaging vehicles, firing gunshots and exploding crackers. Two policemen were also injured on Thursday when the students exploded homemade bombs.
Police have so far arrested nine people in connection with the killing. Detectives suspected involvement of more men within the same organisation and picked up SM Zahid Hossain, president of Dhaka city (north) of Jubo League late Saturday night.
But the detectives had to let Zahid walk away from their office after an influential minister reportedly intervened. The minister, however, denied influencing the detectives for Zahid's release.
The remand of five arrested in connection of Akhi murder case ends today and the detectives will produce the suspects before the court.



BCL activists blocked traffic movement on several roads in the city yesterday demanding arrest and trial of the killers of Akhi, who was gunned down at Gulshan on Thursday. Akhi was general secretary of BCL's city unit (north). - Star photo

One stabbed to death at Demra

By Staff Correspondent
One person was stabbed to death at Demra in the city on Sunday night, police said yesterday.
A gang of eight miscreants stabbed Habibullah Habib, 32, when he was returning home after an arbitration meeting to settle a dispute between his younger brother and a group of local youths. The dispute was over a cricket match.
Habibullah was rushed to Dhaka Medical College Hospital where doctors declared him dead. He was the son of late Dukhi Mia of village Baikhatia.
The body was sent to the victim's village home after autopsy at the DMCH morgue.
The victim's brother Nasir Uddin filed a murder case with Demra police accusing eight persons including Alamgir, Akkel Ali, Kalu Mia, Mizan, Jahangir and Kashem Mia, police said.
Police arrested five persons for their alleged involvement in the killing. They are Zia Haq Zia, Sirajul Islam, Rofiq Mia, Idris Ali and Newaj, police said.

BCIC godowns brim with unsold urea

Over 35,000 tonnes worth Tk 17cr stockpiled

From Iqbal Siddique
SYLHET, Nov 13: Over 35,000 tonnes of urea worth nearly Tk 17 crore lie unsold in BCIC godowns, thanks to faulty marketing policy coupled and decline in demand for the last four months.
According to sources, about 21,000 tonnes of urea are stored in the Natural Gas Fertiliser Factory (NGFF) at Fenchuganj while the rest in the BCIC buffer godowns in North and South Bengal. Given the situation, the quantity of unsold urea will soon exceed the storage capacity of the factory.
With a 15 per cent increase in gas price since September 1, production cost has also gone up. Meanwhile, Jalalabad Gas Transmission and Distribution Limited, which supplies gas to the factory has been pressing for immediate payment of its outstanding gas bill amounting to over Tk 30 crore, of which Tk 15 crore is long overdue. Before the increase in gas price, the average monthly gas bill stood at about Taka 2.5 crore but now it will be about Tk three crore per month. Jalalabad Gas has even warned the NGFF authorities that gas supply could be disconnected any time.
Sources informed that despite many obstacles, the state-owned NGFF, a BCIC concern exceeded its production target during the last three years. Following a decision of the ministry to impose the cordon system, dealers from only four districts of Sylhet region, where the annual demand of fertiliser is 50,000 to 55,000 tonnes, are allowed to take delivery of fertilisers from NGFF. Besides, unlike before, dealers from nearby districts of Kishoreganj and Brahmanbaria no longer collect fertiliser from NGFF but rather from Zia Fertiliser Factory in
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50 per cent croplands still under water

By Rafiq Hasan back from Satkhira
At least fifty per cent croplands in the flood affected southwestern districts are still under stagnant water, raising fear among farmers that they would not be able to cultivate winter crops including Boro in those lands.
During a visit to Jessore, Satkhira and Chuadanga districts, many farmers told this correspondent that the stagnant water is unlikely to recede before the next cropping season due to unplanned construction of dams and culverts in rivers, canals and other water bodies.
The destruction is emerging gradually with recession of flood water from high lands. Apart of crops and fruit trees, over ninety per cent of mud houses - a common sight in the area - have been destroyed. The flood also washed away many roads and culverts.
Most of the farmers - rich and poor - said they would not be able to sustain without help. But the government is yet to start rehabilitation work.
Administration sources in the districts said they government's rehabilitation work would begin from the middle of this month after the relief and rescue work.
The government allocation for house building is meagre compared to the needs. Deputy Commissioner of Satkhira Abdul Matin Chowdhury said house building allocation for the district is Tk 1.20 crore, which would benefit only 12,000 people. He estimated the number of damaged houses at 1.39 lakh.
A large number of flood victims are still living in makeshift shelters erected on roads and high ways.
The unprecedented flood in the six districts has affected the well to do and the poor alike.
"People of this area used to provide relief for flood victims in other areas. Now we are seeking relief," Sarwar Hossain of Subarnakhali village under Sharsha thana in Jessore district said. Sarwar said his family has 80 bighas of land. "Crops in all the lands have been destroyed and there is no hope of winter crops", he said.

Health policy won't allow docs to evade outstation postings

By Staff correspondent
The new health policy will not allow government doctors to evade posting outside the capital.
"No more tricky business. All doctors will have to accept posting in rural areas. The policy is designed so that doctors can no longer evade posting orders by taking posting as OSDs (Officers on Special Duty)," Health Minister Sheikh Fazlul Karim Selim told a crowded press conference at a city hotel yesterday.
The minister was formally announcing the National Health Policy (NHP).
"We will not allow doctors to stay in the capital for years by repeatedly taking advantage of OSD post-ings," the health minister said.
He however said those who are doing various academic courses in the capital will be allowed to continue those on deputation.
The fifty-page document, expected to be placed in the Jatiya Sangsad on Wednesday, gives priority to healthcare services for the most vulnerable people of the society, specially women and children.
It also aims at ensuring timely attendance of doctors, nurses, technicians and other staff and availability of medical equipment at hospitals round the clock.
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Arms, not books being handed to students

President tells Education Week function
Apprehending that the country's education system is crumbling, President Shahabuddin Ahmed said the future of the nation would be shrouded in darkness if use of students for political purposes continued, reports UNB.
He made the grim predictions at the concluding ceremony of the "National Primary Education Week" yesterday, adding that terrorist activities increased in educational institutions.
"Arms instead of books are being handed to the students for serving the interest of political parties," said the President.
He said sustainable foundations of education had been laid in the country after a long process and literacy rate increased due to continuous efforts.
"But, it's not all, we have a long way to go. Our total efforts should be evaluated on the basis of assessment of how far proper education could be imparted to those for whom all this is being done," he said deploring declining standard of schooling.
President Shahabuddin blamed teachers, students and guardians for the rot in educational arena.

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Warrant against Inqilab editor

From page 1 secretary, political-three section of the Home Ministry.
It was alleged in the complaint that on October 20 accused AMM Bahauddin, editor, ASM Baqui Billah, publisher, and AS Mosharaf, the writer, committed sedition under section 124 A of the Bangladesh Penal Code. Citing the Presidential order number 130 of December 31, 1972 which published the national anthem in a gazette notification as per the descriptions on the article 4(1) of the Constitution, the complainant said it is an offence to publish anything mimicking the national anthem.
The complaint also said that by publishing the parody the paper wanted to create hatred and public anger against the government, which is an offence under section 124A.
The complaint requested the magistrate to take necessary action under 124 A and other relevant law against the three.
The magistrate issued the warrant after taking cognizance of the petition at 2 p.m. yesterday.
However, the accused are yet to be arrested.

EU envoy calls for new round of trade talks

By Staff Correspondent
The European Union's Head of Delegation to Bangladesh Ambassador Antonio de Souza Menezes has emphasised on starting a new round of trade negotiation for reducing the gap between developed and under developed countries.
The new round is essential to create the necessary balance between market access and rules, he said while addressing a seminar "Labour Problems in the RMG Sector and Possible Solutions" jointly organised by Bangladesh Garments Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA) and Bangladesh Garments Workers Unity Council (BGWUC).
The Minister for Labour and Employment M.A.Maman M.P. was invited as chief guest while the Ambassador became special guest. BGMEA President Anisur Rahman Sinha presided the seminar.
The Ambassador said in the absence of a new round, there is a high risk that countries would turn away from multilateralism and privilege of unilateralism and bilateral relations.
"A new round is the best instrument to allow us to improve the participation of a address the impact of trade liberalisation on key trade objectives," de Souza added.
In this regard he further mentioned that the EU had already taken an initiative to allow duty free and quota free access of goods from 48 least developed nations.
"The European Union is living up to its commitments and promises vis-a-vis developing and least developed countries as regards market access," said the Ambassador.
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Bid to help PBCP leader - avert imprisonment foiled

From Quazi Amanullah
KHULNA, Nov 10: The Additional District Judge Hasan Imam and some senior officials of Khulna Metropolitan Police (KMP) have recently managed to foil an attempt by a section of corrupt police officials to help Mahmud Hasan Shimul, a leader of the outlawed Purbo Bangla Communist Party (PBCP) to escape arrest. Jessore Kotwali thana police arrested Shimul on May 27 this year.
According to a KMP source, an organised gang of corrupt officials of Khulna District Police tried to get Shimul released on bail suppressing the fact that he had been sentenced to 42 years of rigorous imprisonment in several murder cases and ten cases under the Arms and Ammunition Act.
According to a high official of KMP, Shimul gunned down one Imran Gazi of Dumuria upazila at Sholgate bazar on December 24, 1991. A case was recorded in this connection with Dumuria thana on the same day. Daud Ghazi, an eyewitness of the murder was also killed a few days later at Sholgate ferry ghat.
The then Additional District & Sessions Judges of the first and the third court sentenced Shimul to life imprisonment in this murder case and 12 years of RI in another case under the Arms and Ammunition Act respectively.
The accused appealed to the High Court in 1993 against the verdict of the Judges' courts and was granted bail.
After being released on bail, Shimul again actively engaged in underground activities as a divisional level leader of PBCP. According to official sources of the Range office, Mahmud Hasan Shimul is one of the accused in 30 murder and 12 arms cases recorded with different police stations of Khulna division.
After his arrest on May 27 this year, Shimul was remanded several times in police custody and was interrogated by officials of KMP and Khulna District Police. Police officials, however, failed to dig up any important information as to the sources and where
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Mr. Habibur Rahman, Chairman, MAAN BANGLADESH LTD. receiving the prestigious award for the best sales performance in the world within 61 countries for the period 1999-2000 from Mr. Bob Jang, President LG-OTIS Elevator company, Seoul, Korea. On this occasion Mr. Charles Lee, the Vice President, Mr. Victor Kim, Export Director, senior officials of the Company, local journalists and Mr. Md. Moin Uddin, Managing Director of Maan Bangladesh Ltd. were present.

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