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Nat'l Health Policy likely to be placed in JS today

Prevention was given the highest priority in the National Health Policy, which is likely to be placed before the parliament today, Health Minister Sheikh Fazlul Karim Selim said, reports BSS.

The main objective of the health policy is to create mass awareness about preventive measures against diabetes than that of curative steps," he said while speaking as chief guest at a discussion on World Diabetes Day-2000 here in the city yesterday.

Held at the National Press Club, the function was also addressed by State Minister for Social Welfare, Dr Mozammel.

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Interim bail for Inqilab editor

Police sealed every entrance to the Supreme Court and dozens of plainclothes policemen took up position in and around the court premises after AMM Bahauddin, editor of the Daily Inqilab, sought refuge inside a chamber of a lawyer at the Supreme Court Bar Association building last night.

By Special Correspondent

Police sealed every entrance to the Supreme Court and dozens of plainclothes policemen took up position in and around the court premises after AMM Bahauddin, editor of the Daily Inqilab, sought refuge inside a chamber of a lawyer at the Supreme Court Bar Association building last night.

AMM Bahauddin, editor of the daily Inqilab, was granted anticipatory bail until November 20.

The bail was granted by a High Court Division Bench at 11-40 last night.

He was waiting there for a decision on his bail petition at a Special Bench constituted by the

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PM returns today

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina returns home this morning from Doha, Qatar after attending the 9th OIC Summit, reports BSS.

During her stay in Doha, Sheikh Hasina addressed the OIC Summit and a Special Session of the Summit on the Palestine Situation. She also met other heads of government and state attending the Summit.

The Prime Minister also attended a reception accorded to her by the Bangladeshi community living there.

	Sun Rises	Sun Sets
Nov 15		5.13 pm
Nov 15	6-15 am	

Prayer Timings

November 15		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	5-00	5-35
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	3-45	4-00
Maghrib	5-19	5-24
Esha	7-15	7-45

Source: Islamic Foundation



Huge quantities of wood and tyres have been piled up to ignite the furnace of a brick kiln at Basila under Mohammadpur thana. --Star photo by Sk Enamul Haq

Brick fields ready again to spew toxic gas

Authorities sit idle while DoE struggles with poor staff

By Morshed Ali Khan

As floodwater recedes and winter sets in, thousands of brick kilns around the city amass used tyres, fuel wood and coal to light their furnaces in the most rudimentary way.

From Sonargaon and Kanchpur to Kamrangirchar, and from Hazaribagh, Mohammadpur and Keraniganj to Savar, Konabari and Gazipur, about 5,000 of these kilns will be burning millions of tonnes of these highly toxic fuels' round-the-clock until the rainy season sets in.

As in previous years, exhausts from these kilns will blanket the city and its peripheral area with a thin cloud of toxic gas for the next few months. Millions of people, livestock and arable lands, trees and water bodies in these areas will be exposed to a high level of air pollution, giving rise to serious health hazards.

Neither the district administrations nor the Department of Environment (DoE) has any programme in hand to look at this environmental nightmare. The DoE is already struggling with a handful number of inspectors to look into thousands of other cases related to issuance of environmental clearance to industrial units.

The DoE officials say as per law of the land the police can also clamp down on such practices, but due to lack of initiative the law-enforcing authorities are completely indifferent to the problem.

Easily licensed by the respective district Deputy Commissioner's office, over 99 per cent of these brick fields run without any environmental clearance whatsoever. The brick-field owners not only brush aside the legal requirement of installing filters in the chimneys, but also openly defy the government ban on burning wood and toxic substance such as used tyres. They also do not care about the legal requirement of having exhaust chimneys high enough to disperse the waste beyond human contact.

Abdul Malek Munshi, manager of a brick field in Mohammadpur area, said they were burning wood and tyres because coal was too expensive and scarce. He said for the last five months the furnaces remained in the water and therefore a 'good fire' is needed to dry the ovens.

"We have license for the brick field and we also obtained a clearance from the DoE," Munshi said.

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OIC summit ends a day early

Declaration calls members to sever links with Israel

From Staff Correspondent

DOHA, Nov 14: The ninth OIC Summit concluded here midnight Tuesday, a day ahead of schedule, amidst a call upon all member-states to sever relations with Israel.

Despite strong opposition from radical members - Iraq and Sudan to name the obvious two - the Doha Declaration called for cessation of ties with Israel as a non-binding resolution for the member states.

Radicals had earlier lobbied hard to convince others to agree to a jihad or holy war against Israel. Moderates led by Egypt and Turkey argued that the Doha Declaration should exclude jihad.

The final communiqué said, "The conference urged the Muslim states which had established relations with Israel and those which had started taking measures towards the establishment of relations with Israel within the framework of the peace process to break those relations, including closing down of representations and bureaus and economic relations, and put an end to all forms of normalisation with Israel until it sincerely and accurately implements UN Resolution relevant to the issue of Palestine, Al-Quds Al-Sharif."

The leaders of the 1.2 billion Muslims representing 56 member countries of the OIC urged in their non-binding resolution to cut ties with Israel for what they said the latter's attempt to eradicate the Arab character of Jerusalem.

The Malaysian capital of Kuala Lumpur will host the next OIC summit in 2003.

In another summit resolution the leaders of the Muslim Ummah denounced Israel for using helicopter gun-ships and tanks to quell a seven-week Palestinian uprising costing 217 lives, almost all of whom Palestinians, and called for UN peacekeeping force to protect the Palestinians.

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West Bank sealed off

Palestinian gunmen kill four Israelis

JERUSALEM, Nov 14: Israeli soldiers erected obstacles to blockade Palestinian-ruled towns in the West Bank today after Palestinian gunmen killed four people in one of the bloodiest days of violence since a Palestinian uprising began, reports Reuters.

The Israeli army said it was cordoning off Palestinian-ruled areas in the West Bank for security reasons after a 41-year-old mother of five, two Israeli soldiers and a 26-year-old truck driver were killed in drive-by shooting attacks in the West Bank and Gaza Strip on Monday.

The army clampdown came after almost seven weeks of Israeli-Palestinian bloodshed in which 214 people have been killed, mostly Palestinians.

Four Palestinians also died on Monday - two teenagers shot in Gaza, a policeman in the West Bank and a youth critically wounded during clashes on Saturday.

The Israeli deaths prompted Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak, in Chicago for meetings with Jewish leaders, to consult military and political advisers at home by telephone.

"He [Barak] has instructed them all on what steps to take," a senior Barak aide, Gilad Sher told reporters in Chicago.

The move was a return to the widespread sanctions against Palestinians that Israel lifted in mid-October after committing to a ceasefire accord brokered by the United States at the Egyptian resort town of Sharm el-Sheikh.

The head of the Israeli forces in the West Bank, Major-General Yitzhak Eitan, said the closure would be more stringent than in the past.

"Now we are closing most Palestinian towns and areas, with limits on free movement between cities and main roads. Palestinians won't be stuck, but their movements will be limited," the general said.

In effect, only vehicles transporting food, medicine or humanitarian aid will be able to enter or leave cordoned zones, he said.

"Following the gunfire incidents in which civilians and soldiers were killed, the Israel Defence Force encircled all towns in Judea and Samaria (the West Bank) and imposed a closure on Gaza," the army said in a statement.

Gunshots echoed in the West Bank and Gaza late on Monday as Israeli soldiers and Palestinian gunmen exchanged fire near the West Bank towns of Qalqilya, Bethlehem and Nablus, the army said.

A massive gun battle was also being fought near the Kfar Darom Jewish settlement in Gaza. Palestinian witnesses said. There were no immediate reports of casualties.

Israeli forces and Palestinian gunmen traded fire at a familiar flash-point on the outskirts of Jerusalem on Monday.

Soldiers fired anti-tank rockets at the West Bank town of Beit Jala after gunmen there opened fire at Israeli apartment buildings in the Jewish settlement of Gilo, a neighbourhood on the fringes of Jerusalem.

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Reserved JS seats destined for doom

Long-pending bill to be submitted soon

By Nazmul Ashraf

Having waited for nearly five months for a crucial support from the opposition, ruling Awami League is going to place the long-pending bill for retaining reserved seats for women in parliament soon.

With an obstinate opposition, Awami League is going to bring the bill back to the House along with suggestions drawn from various quarters, including the women rights organisations.

After sitting on the bill for nearly five months, the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Law Ministry is likely to submit it before the House shortly. "Yes, I'm going to submit the scrutinised bill in a day or two," committee chairman Suranjit Sengupta told the Daily Star last night.

The AL move will have no other option but to let the long-pending bill be submitted soon.

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Gold worth Tk 1.68cr seized at ZIA

By Staff Correspondent

Customs authorities at the Zia International Airport yesterday seized 30 kilograms of gold bars and 7.94 grams of gold ornaments, worth about Tk 1.68 crore from three passengers, who arrived on a Kuwait Airways flight (KU 281) at about 8:20 in the morning, said officials.

According to officials, on arrival at ZIA, Sangram Acharya Chowdhury and Sathi Acharya Chowdhury tried to hand over the gold to unidentified people at the boarding bridge. On the other hand, Samrat Ahmed Chowdhury tried to hand over the gold to some people at the customs hall.

The three were carrying at least 10 kilograms of gold each, officials said, adding that the ornaments were recovered when their luggage was searched.

Any passengers coming in are allowed to carry ten kilograms of gold each on payment of tax.

They were carrying the gold without any declaration, officials claimed. The gold items as well as their passports were confiscated.

The passengers later left the customs hall saying that they would get back the gold bars and ornaments after paying tax.

A departmental case was lodged in this regard.



Customs officials at Zia International Airport yesterday seized gold bars and ornaments worth about Tk 1.68 crore from three passengers who arrived on a Kuwait Airways flight. --Star photo

Truckers go on wildcat strike at Ctg port

By Staff Correspondent

CHITTAGONG, Nov 14: Delivery of goods to and from Chittagong port was suspended as truckers went on wildcat strike from 8 am today protesting a restriction on easy entry of trucks inside the port area, police and port sources said.

The entry of trucks without any requisition from C&F agents was restricted in the port protected area to keep it free from traffic jam for smooth handling of cargoes.

Besides, the measure was taken to check pilferage of goods from port protected area.

Only the trucks holding requisition and slip from C&F agents were allowed to enter the port protected area. But the move angered the truckers and truck owners who stopped to operate trucks for carrying goods to and from port, sources said.

However, C&F agents were trying to negotiate the problem with the truck owners this evening.

Cricket stars visit polio booths today

Cricket stars will visit different polio booths in the city on the occasion of the first round of National Immunisation Day today, reports UNB.

National cricket team captain Naimur Rahman Durjoy, vice captain Khaled Masud Pilot, former captains Aminul Islam Bulbul and Akram Khan and batsman Habibul Bashar Sumon will join the programme to encourage the cricket fans and their families to immunise their children under five.

Durjoy will visit the booths in Khilgaon area with ECB President, UNICEF and WHO representatives while vice captain Pilot in Mirpur area with a WHO official.

Former captain Bulbul will visit the booths in Lalbagh area, Akram Khan in Kathalbagan and Sumon in Mohakhali and Tejgaon area, said a UNICEF press release yesterday.

Public call centres not yet

More than a year lost on dispute over discount

By Mustak Hossain

The Ministry of Post and Telecommunication (MOPT) is delaying announcement of the introduction of public call centres (PCCs) with a special discount for calls for nearly a year now.

The ministry had agreed to waive 30 per cent revenue earned from NWD and ISD calls from a PCC. But later it changed the decision and told the telecom businessmen that it was unable to award any discount, leaders of Telecom Babosayee Samity (businessmen's association) alleged.

The government decided last year to introduce public call offices (PCOs) to facilitate people who do not have access to phone, and increase revenue from telephone service sector. Introduction of the PCCs was also aimed to stop misappropriation of telephone bills and employ a huge number of unemployed educated youths.

"This happened due to a tussle between the Telecom Ministry (MOPT) and the Finance Ministry," said a source.

"Why would the public and telecom businessmen suffer for an inter-ministerial feud?" asked a telecom businessman, who requested anonymity.

"This would encourage an unscrupulous section of businessmen to evade call charges and overburden."

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Four chargesheeted in Shamsi Murder Case

By Court Correspondent

The Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's Court, Dhaka accepted the charge sheet in the Ammar Shamsi Murder Case yesterday.

Later, the CMM's court sent the case to the Tribunal for prevention of Public Safety Disturbance and Crime, Dhaka for trial.

Detective Branch of police (DB) submitted the charge sheet against four youths to the CMM's courts, Dhaka at 8 pm on November 13 after 18 days of investigation.

The charge sheeted accused are Ziaur Rahman Zia, Salauddin, Mostafa Almas and Alamgir.

The investigation officer inter submitted the charge sheet

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আপনার শিশুকে টিকা দিন

৮ম জাতীয় টিকা দিবস ১৫ নভেম্বর, ২০০০ ইং
(১ম পর্ব)

প্রিয় নগরবাসী,
আসসালামু আলাইকুম।
আজ ১৫ নভেম্বর, ২০০০ ইং রোজ বুধবার ৮ম জাতীয় টিকা দিবসে পুনরায় ০-৫ বছর বয়সী সকল শিশুকে দু'ফোটা "পোলিও টিকা" এবং ১-৫ বছর বয়সী সকল শিশুকে একটি উচ্চ কমতাসম্পন্ন ভিটামিন-'এ' ক্যাপসুল খাওয়ানো হবে।

ঢাকা মহানগরীতে "পোলিও" রোগে আক্রান্ত একটি শিশু সনাক্ত করা হয়েছে। অর্থাৎ ঢাকা মহানগরীতে এ রোগের জীবাণু বিদ্যমান রয়েছে। এ কারণে পোলিও রোগে আর একটি শিশুও যেন আক্রান্ত হতে না পারে সে লক্ষ্যে অদ্য সকল শিশুকে "পোলিও টিকা" এবং ভিটামিন-'এ' ক্যাপসুল খাওয়াতে এগিয়ে আসার জন্য পিতা-মাতা, অভিভাবকসহ সকল সচেতন নগরবাসীকে আমি বিশেষভাবে অনুরোধ জানাচ্ছি।

এর আগে শিশুকে "পোলিও টিকা" খাওয়ানো হলেও পুনরায় এ টিকা খাওয়ানোর প্রয়োজন আছে।

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আল্লাহ আমাদের সহায় হউন।

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BNP, allies get Paltan for Nov 23 rally

National Sports Council (NSC) has given permission to BNP to use Paltan Maidan (Outer Stadium) on November 23 for holding the planned rally of the combined opposition, reports UNB.

Party sources said the NSC yesterday sent the permission letter to BNP central office following an application submitted on November 8 on behalf of city BNP President and All-Party Action Council convener Sadek Hossain Khoka.

Earlier, the NSC denied BNP to use the same venue for holding a joint rally of the combined opposition.

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Grand Opening Today

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