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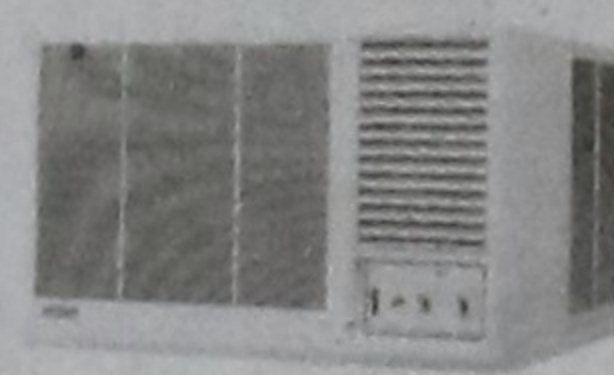
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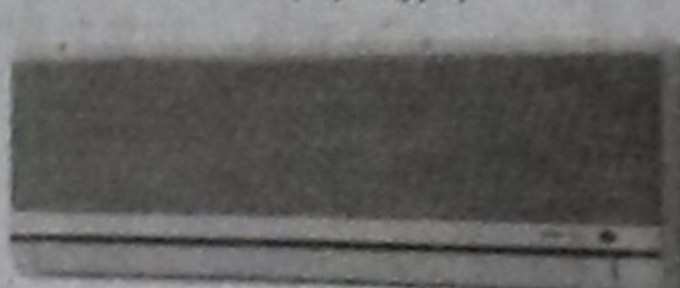
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Ministry asked to cancel order removing BFDC chief

By Special Correspondent

The Parliamentary Standing Committee on the Ministry of Fisheries and Livestock has directed the ministry to cancel the 'illegal' order removing the Chairman of Bangladesh Fisheries Development Corporation (BFDC), sources in the JS body said.

BFDC Chairman Mohammad Musa was removed by Livestock and Fisheries Minister ASM Abdur Rob last month following an alleged row with him at the ministry's office. The ministry also ordered a director to take charge as acting chairman.

The Establishment Ministry should deal with all such matters, the JS body observed.

The issue has created an uneasy situation in the ministry and bodies under it, sources said.

When contacted, highly placed sources said they are trying to resolve the matter.

HC asks press not to publish any news on tape-recorded conversation

The High Court yesterday directed the Press not to publish any news on the tape-recorded conversation between former president Hossain Mohammad Ershad and a High Court judge, reports BSS.

The court order came on a petition from the Ershad regarding a news item published in daily Janakantha on December 4.

The High Court division bench comprising Justice Syed Amirul Islam and Justice AKM Shafiuddin earlier directed that no newspaper should publish the conversation contained in the tape as it is now a sub-judice matter.

The court further ordered the counsels for the newspapers concerned Manab Jamin, Ittefaq, Janakantha and Sangbad to ask their respective news editors to publish this court order in their respective dailies.

Khandker Mahbub Hossain appeared for Ershad while Attorney General Mamudul Islam for the state.

Khaleda demands judicial probe into Mongla Port incident

BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia has strongly condemned and protested the killing of four people and injuring over 100 others in police firing on the agitating workers at Mongla port, reports UNB.

In a statement yesterday, Khaleda termed the police action in the month of Ramadan as barbaric and heinous. She said the government has failed to run the port and resolve the problems of the workers.

The BNP chief alleged that the government made the situation volatile by killing the workers and the innocent people.

She demanded judicial inquiry into the incident and exemplary punishment to those involved in the killing.

2 GrameenPhone staff shot

By Staff Correspondent

Two employees of GrameenPhone received bullet injuries when unidentified gunmen shot them and ransacked a GrameenPhone show room at 56/8 Lake Circus, Panthapath in the city yesterday evening.

The injured were identified as HM Jalal Ahmed, General manager of the shop and Mamunur Rashid Mamun an employee of the shop. They were rushed to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital.

A shop employee told the Daily Star last night that three armed young men came to the shop at about 6:45pm. They ransacked the shop, shot the two employees and fired eight rounds of bullets inside the shop.

The three however, did not take any valuables from the shop but said that the act was intended to serve as a warning to the shop-owner for misbehaving with the ward commissioner candidate of Sukrabad. The owner was not there during the incident.

The gunmen fired another five rounds of blank shots outside the shop before leaving.

ISPR on rape incident

Legal action would be taken against the army personnel if found guilty of raping a young woman passenger in a compartment of a Mymensingh-bound train on December 2, reports BSS.

According to an ISPR press release yesterday, the army headquarters would take legal action on the basis of information and recommendations to be submitted by a court of inquiry that was formed immediately after getting

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Life on wheelchair

Tale of FFs at a city rest home

By Staff Correspondent

One can easily spot the signboard, 'Juddhahata Muktiyoddha Rogamukt O Bismaragar (Cure and Rest Home for Injured Freedom Fighters), at College Gate in the city's Mohammadpur area. However, rarely does anyone willingly venture inside the compound of the one-storey structure.

Modasser Hossain Madhu, Bir Pratik, Mohammad Golam Mustafa, Bir Bikram, Bir Pratik, Golam Nabi and Md. Shamsur Ali Mandal, four disabled freedom fighters on wheelchair were basking in sun when this correspondent entered the gloomy yard of the cure and rest home.

They are among the 18 completely disabled freedom fighters currently living here, said Manager of Muktiyoddha Kalyan Trust Abdul Hannan.

Muktiyoddha Kalyan Trust (Freedom Fighters Welfare Trust) initiated this cure and rest home in January 1973 with 24 freedom fighters on wheelchair. Of them, only one is living now. Apart from him, rest of the 18 freedom fighters confined to wheelchair have become totally disabled over the years.

Madhu joined the war at the age of 21 and was based in Chapalnawabganj area under Sector No 7. He fought a number of wars in Mahdipur, Dhobra, Argarahat, Kalabari and Timmohani under greater

Chapalnawabganj. In the battle of Sonar Masjid Resistance on October 5, 1971, he sustained severe bullet wounds. One bullet pierced into his lungs and is still there. After receiving treatment in a number of hospitals in India, he returned home in August 1973.

Since then he is passing his life on wheelchair in this rest home.

"We cannot live with our family, for it is really tough to take care of a wheelchair patient for 24 hours. We can not even go to the toilet on our own. Recently, the government has granted an allowance of Tk 1400 for an attendant to tend to each of us. But who will devote 24 hours for only Tk. 1400 these days?" said Madhu.

Madhu is the only one alive out of 24 freedom fighters wheelchair-bound after the war.

Mohammad Golam Mostafa Bir Bikram, Bir Pratik got injured on December 6, 1971 while defending the Chandura bridge at Tamabil border in Sylhet. Thirty-nine Pakistani army personnel surrendered on that day.

He could carry on crutch initially, but disease gradually got better of him. In 1987, he became deranged for several years. Now he can not move

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Moadasser Hossain Madhu, Bir Pratik and Mohammad Golam Mostafa, Bir Bikram Bir Pratik at the Cure and Rest Home for the Injured Freedom Fighters in the city's Mohammadpur area.

-- Star photo

Opposition blocks Lok Sabha proceedings

Vajpayee rejects demand for dropping three ministers

NEW DELHI, Dec 6: Opposition parties today blocked proceedings in Parliament, demanding the resignation of three Cabinet ministers who joined Hindu nationalists in destroying a historic Muslim mosque eight years ago, reports AP.

Agitated members belonging to the opposition Congress Party and left-wing parties shouted slogans in both Houses of Parliament. They called for the resignation of Home Minister Lal Kishan Advani and two other Cabinet members until the Speakers of both Houses announced the adjournment.

The opposition parties want the Central Bureau of Investigation, India's version of the FBI, to open an independent investigation into Advani's role in the destruction eight years ago of the 16th century Babri mosque in Ayodhya, a town 550 kilometers (350 miles) east of New Delhi.

The opposition parties fear the CBI's investigations would be hampered since Advani as the home minister oversees the agency. They also feel judicial proceedings would be delayed if the ministers remain

in office.

Advani, Human Resource Minister Murli Manohar Joshi and Uma Bharti, a junior minister, are facing criminal charges after being questioned by the CBI in its preliminary investigation into the razing of the mosque.

Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee rejected the resignation demand today saying the ministers who were in Ayodhya on that day tried to calm the crowd and prevent them from destroying the mosque. He also called the demand for constructing a Hindu temple at the site of the mosque in Ayodhya as the "expression of national feeling" and described it as an "unfinished task."

The destruction of the mosque on Dec 6, 1992, sparked off riots between Hindus and Muslims that killed 2,000 people. Hindu nationalist leaders claim the mosque was built by Mogul rulers at the site of a Hindu temple. They also claim that the site of the mosque is the birthplace of the Hinduism's supreme god, Rama.

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The placard held aloft in the audience (right) sums up the sentiment echoed on the third day of the People's Health Assembly at the Gonoshastya Kendra auditorium in Savar yesterday. Some 3,000 health activists raised a storm over the World Bank's policies which, they say, devastate economies and favour multinational pharmaceuticals.

-- Star photo

The Guardian to launch legal challenge against monarchy

LONDON, Dec 6: A British newspaper announced today it is to launch a legal challenge against the monarchy, using newly-introduced European human rights legislation to argue that the ancient institution is unlawful, reports AFP.

The left-wing Guardian newspaper said it had teamed up with leading civil rights lawyer Geoffrey Robertson to bring the challenge, which could have far-reaching implications for the future of Britain's royal family.

The newspaper and its lawyers will argue that eighteenth century legislation which bars Roman Catholics, other non-Protestants, and people born out of wedlock, from succeeding to the British throne, is discriminatory.

It will also mount a legal challenge against the 1848 Treason Felony Act, an obsolete statute which threatens anyone calling for the overthrow of the monarchy with deportation.

"We hope that in time we will move by democratic consensus to become a republic," The Guardian said in an editorial.

"Let the Queen remain Queen for as long as she lives, or she wishes, or she remains able. But in the meantime there should be a long, vigorous, and grown-up debate

both inside and outside parliament as to who, or what, should succeed her."

"The legal process should, in itself, provoke a fundamental debate about how precisely the crown wishes to define its future role and whether it is any longer tenable for church and state (not to mention armed forces and the courts) to be united in one person," said the editorial.

A referendum asking the British people whether they want to see the monarchy abolished should also be held, the newspaper said.

An opinion poll commissioned by the paper showed that 63 per cent of British people wanted the bar on accession to the monarchy repealed. It also showed that 60 per cent of adults prefer to see themselves as citizens while only 32 per cent described themselves as royal subjects.

The Act of Settlement, adopted in 1701, ruled that only Protestant heirs of Princess Sophia, grand-daughter of English monarch James I, can sit on the throne.

It was passed at a time of widespread fear of Catholicism in Britain, but is outdated and incompatible with modern human rights law, according to The Guardian.

The newspaper said the Act had excluded many Euro-

pean aristocrats most of them in Germany from claiming their right to the English throne.

It said it had placed an advertisement in German newspaper Suddeutsche Zeitung, "asking them to join the action to reclaim their birthright."

The Guardian's legal action is possible because of the Human Rights Act.

Made law just two months ago, it means that British law should, "as far as possible," be compatible with the European human rights convention.

The newspaper's campaign could have wide repercussions because of widespread ambivalence about the future of the monarchy.

Opinion polls over the last few years have shown British public opinion fairly evenly divided between those who wish to retain the monarchy and people who favour a republic.

Scandals over extra-marital affairs involving the Queen's children most famously the unhappy marriage of heir to the throne Prince Charles and the late Princess Diana have helped to erode some of the respect people hold for the institution.

Young man shot dead at Uttara

By Staff Correspondent

A young man was shot dead at Ashkona in the city's Uttara area last night.

The victim was identified as Mohammad Swapon, 35, of 224 Ashkona.

A gang of miscreants fired at Swapon at about 8:15 pm. He received bullets in his right chest and right thigh.

Swapon was rushed to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital where the attending doctor declared him dead.

The body was sent to the DMCH morgue for autopsy.

The reason behind the killing could not be known immediately.

When contacted Uttara police, the duty officer said that they were not aware of the incident.

Business Awards: Nomination date extended

Star Report

The last date for submission of nominations for the Bangladesh Business Awards has been extended from December 7, 2000 to December 21, 2000 at the request of the business community. Those interested are requested to send in their nominations within the new deadline, according to a press release.

The Bangladesh Business Awards is an annual event hosted by The Daily Star and DHL Worldwide Express to recognise the contributions of the country's businesspersons and enterprises.

The awards will be given in three categories: Business Person of the Year, Outstanding Woman in Business and Enterprise of the Year.

An independent 11-member jury panel comprising leading intellectuals, business persons, academicians, lawyers, financial experts and eminent personalities with high social standing, credibility and prestige, including the CEOs of the two sponsoring organisations, shall select the winners from the nominations received.



Stand by the acid victims ... Henry's Heritage coincided its emergence as a private limited company with inauguration of a special show dedicated to the acid burn victims yesterday. The boutique announced that it would spend one per cent of its profits for rehabilitation of the acid victims, some of whom attended the ceremony at its Dhanmondi showroom. -- Star photo by Anisur Rahman

Indian troops kill 12 'armed rebels' on Kashmir border

Delhi rejects peace talks with Islamabad

SRINAGAR, Dec 6: Indian soldiers killed 12 suspected Islamic guerrillas as they sneaked across the disputed Kashmir border from the Pakistani side today, hours after New Delhi rejected an offer to hold peace talks with Islamabad, reports AP.

On Tuesday, India said it wouldn't discuss Kashmir with Pakistan until it prevented armed militants from crossing into Indian territory.

In Islamabad, Pakistan's Foreign Secretary Inamul Haq said Wednesday that India's refusal to enter into three-way talks with Pakistan was disappointing. Pakistan said representatives of the Kashmiri people should also be part of any India-

Pakistan dialogue to settle the Kashmir dispute. Dialogue was key to solving the protracted dispute, Haq said, speaking to state-run media.

"We would have expected a more positive response by India to the initiative taken by Pakistan," Haq said.

Today's killings took place in Ranbirsinghpura, 50 kilometers west of Jammu, the winter capital of Jammu-Kashmir state. The suspected militants were sneaking across the plains, where they typically take cover under the tall "elephant grass," a Border Security Force spokesman said on customary condition of anonymity.

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11 BNP, Juba Dal activists held in Feni

From Our Correspondent

FENI, Dec 6: Police arrested 11 BNP and Juba Dal activists from different areas in Sonagazi upazila last night for their alleged involvement in the killings of four Juba League activists on November 30 and December 1.

Police said the arrested were wanted in different cases including murder.

Lawyers of Dhaka Bar boycott vacation court

By Court Correspondent

Lawyers of Dhaka Bar yesterday boycotted the court of the vacation judge protesting his unwillingness to grant bail to the accused in criminal cases.

The vacation judge, Mohammad Rafiqur Rahman, appointed by the Ministry for Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs on November 21 to hear and dispose of the criminal cases in the courts of Dhaka district and sessions judge and Metropolitan sessions judge, rejected bail petitions of 65 out of 66 cases on December 5.

About three hundred cases were filed with the vacation court for bail hearing.

Generally, lawyers filed criminal appeals with the vacation court against the rejection order of the lower courts. But they felt disappointed with rejection orders at the vacation court regarding the bail of the accused.

When contacted, Mohammad Mohsin Miah, General Secretary of Dhaka Bar Association refused to comment on the court decision regarding the hearing of the bail petitions of the cases.

ADB to give \$140m for Meghnaghat plant

Asian Development Bank will provide US \$140 million for the construction of a 450MW power plant by US company AES Corporation at Meghnaghat, reports UNB.

The financing package, approved Tuesday, consists of US\$50 million in ADB loan, a US\$70 million loan from a syndicate of commercial banks under the Bank's partial risk guarantee scheme and a US\$20 million loan from commercial banks under ADB's complementary financing scheme.

The combined-cycle gas-fired power plant, to be built on Boo (build, own and operate) basis under a 22-year power-purchase agreement with PDB, is scheduled to commence commercial production in January 2003.

AES will provide equity of US\$80 million while the rest US\$80 million will come from Infrastructure Development Company Limited (IDCOL), a government-owned financial institution, to constitute the total cost of US\$300 million.

The US\$ 50 million ADB credits will come from its ordinary capital resources on the basis of the market-based lending facility.



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Editor: Mahfuz Anam

Published by the Editor from Transcraft Ltd., 229, Tejgaon Industrial Area, Dhaka-1208 on behalf of Mediaworld Ltd., 52 Motijheel C.A., Dhaka-1000. Editorial, News & Commercial Offices: 19 Karwan Bazar, Dhaka-1215, Telephone Numbers: 8124944, 8124955, 8124966, Fax: 8125155, GPO Box No: 3257, Cable: DAILYSTAR, DHAKA. Internet edition address: http://www.dailystarnews.com and Email address: dstar@bangla.net