

Sonali Bank opens branch at Shiliguri

UNB, Dhaka

Sonali Bank yesterday opened a branch at Shiliguri, known as the gateway to six northwestern states of India and an important frontier trade centre in West Bengal. Das.

Bangladesh Bank Governor Dr commercial prospect of its new Mohammad Farashuddin inaugubranch considering the position of rated the bank, a second unit in the the sub-divisional town in the Indian state after its Kolkata branch, export-import trade between at the confluence of Shebok Road Bangladesh and India. and Bidhan Road.

The branch will play an important role in gradual expansion of Bangladesh-India trade and busi-ness," the governor told his audience at the inaugural ceremony.

The BB governor called upon the Indian businessmen in general and the businessmen of Shiliguri and northeastern Indian states in particular to import Bangladeshi products, including cosmetics, medicines, ceramics and iamdani sarees.

Chaired by Sonali Bank managing director M Enamul Hug Chowdhury, the function was also addressed by West Bengal Minister for Urban Development Authority and Municipality Affairs Ashok Bhattacharya, SB Chairman Mohammad Ali, Deputy High Commissioner of Bangladesh to

side of Panchagarh border. Bangladesh has already taken initiative to construct a modern land

Pepsi concert

nere

port at Banglabandha transit point in the frontier district. Among all the foreign banks in India, the Kolkata branch of Sonali Bank, opened in 1978, earned the highest profit amounting to Tk 4 crore in 2000. The amount is

expected to increase this year. Officials said Deputy General manager of the Kolkata branch of Sonali would supervised the operations of the Shiliguri branch.

Ultimatum ends FROM PAGE 1 Khaleda set a condition saying that

they would consider the advice of the President provided the government declares dissolution of parliament and transfer of power by the first week of April.

Kolkata M Humayun Kabir, Deputy Since the March 30 ultimatum Mayor of Shiliguri Municipal went unheeded, the alliance would Corporation Harisadhan Ghose and now proceed to enforce countrywide North Bengal Federation of Chambers and Commerce and hartal April 1-2 to press for resignation of the government for general Industry general secretary Biswajit elections under a caretaker adminis-The bank is expecting a bright tration

Afghanistan FROM PAGE 12 nance could meet the test of being

It is also expected to contribute to boosting trade with Nepal and based on the consent of the popula-Bhutan, said a message received tion. The official reported that there Shiliquri is situated on the other had been several massacres since

last May and the situation was catastrophic for a population fleeing the fighting and drought. Speaking of the massacre of some 300 civilians in January at

Yakawlang in the central Bamiyan province, Hossain said there had been an "identified list of names" from "very reliable sources."

He added that "the identities of commanders who were present in the area at the relevant time are available in these reports," especially from Human Rights Watch. "They should be brought to iustice." he uraed.



Children from different schools joined a rally organised by Poribesh Rokkha Shopoth (Porosh) at Eidgah Lalmath (playground) at Mirpur 12 yesterday. They demanded a halt to the construction of an apartment complex on the playground.

DCC bid to lease out road

Rajuk enthrals audience FROM PAGE 12 in the morning and continued till the afternoon.

convinced by those"

WB credit

their position.

FROM PAGE 12

related reforms.

hold a press conference to explain

The Ministry of Law, Justice and

Parliamentary Affairs will have

overall responsibility for implement-

ing the project, and the Supreme

Court will be responsible for court-

Minister, and the Chairman Law

Commission, will provide policy

A Consultative Group, com-

prised of a broad spectrum of

Bangladesh civil society, will meet at

least once a year to receive and

provide input on broad issues

affecting the judicial system and

ensure civil society is aware of the

implementation of judicial reforms,

said the press release.

guidance and project oversight.

An Oversight Committee, con-

DU CORRESPONDENT

Thousands of young music lovers gathered at the Army Stadium in the city yesterday afternoon to enjoy an open-air concert sponsored by

Pepsi. Five popular musical band groups Vikings Nagar Baul, LRB, Ark, and Prometheus performed at the musical festival.

Old Rajshahi Cadets Association (ORCA) in collaboration with Transcom Beverage Ltd. arranged the concert to raise funds for a voluntary blood donation programme titled 'ORCA Blood for

The programme began at around 4pm with the performance of young band group Prometheus. Then comes Ark. Vocalist Hasan

Sumon

FROM PAGE 12 However, he would bear all the expenses for her education and upbringing. He will also never try to meet her and (3) Maria would agree to the divorce in lieu of two flats owned by Suman and the royalty that he gets from cassettes and CDs sold by Saregama, a musical com-

pany. Mukherjee also stated that Sumon had readily agreed to all the proposals. The two have already filed a petition with the Alipore Court in Kolkata stating that they are mentally ready for a separation. Maria has also filed another netition stating that she would like to with draw all the allegations she had

Sufian.

enthralled the audience by singing some popular numbers including Jadi hatam Samrat Shahjahan 'Ja chhilo aarale 'Swadhinata', porichoy', 'Ekaki' and 'Bangladesh'

James of Nagar Baul sang a number of popular songs 'Ma', 'Laise fita laise', 'Mira bai', 'Sultana bibiana' and 'Tomar chithi paechhi'. Ayub Bachchu of LRB also enthralled the audience. The last

band group at the concert was Vikings A voluntary blood donation programme was also arranged on the occasion. About one hundred

bags of blood were collected during the programme, the ORCA officials

Meanwhile, a large number of people entered the concert venue without ticket breaking through the south gate of the Army Stadium at around 3.20 pm. Later, the Military Police resorted to baton-charge to bring the situation under control. Rubel, a student of Kabi Nazrul

Government College, was injured seriously in the melee. He was admitted to Orthopaedic Hospital.

Daulatpur OC FROM PAGE 12

Landgrabbers FROM PAGE 12 persons posed threat to law and plexes were built there. Attempts order under the cover of ruling party have been made by RAJUK, without with full blessings of nominated result so far, for recovering posseswoman MP Begum Mannujan sion of the illegally occupied land.

Besides these areas of public Neither Mannuian nor the police land under illegal occupation, there commissioner could be contacted for their comment till 5 pm yesterday land in old Dhaka which have conas they were not available over phone We are absolutely fed up with the way of tampering with our administration. Crimes can not be contained serving under political influence, an AC of KMP said. As time of JS polls is drawing nearer, thana officials are being subjected to political influence for usually resort to civil court proceedfavouring criminals belonging to ings to maintain their longruling party, another to KMP official who wants him to be transferred as soon as possible before being

politically victimsed, said.

Out of their 400 patrons, 45 cancelled booking. The actual money received against the project

The company also claimed that

formal agreements with all the

buyers were yet to be completed.

The company did not receive any money against development of

the custom authority that they would

pay VAT immediately upon receiv-

argument and assessed the evaded

The authorities accepted their

ing money for land development.

nount to be Tk 74.35 lakh.

olots.

The company also assured

was Tk 15.65 crore, they admitted.

FROM PAGE : road and the footpaths on both sides for open markets on weekly holidays and other government holi-

days. This has created a sharp reaction among children, their guardians Ahmed Ali Noor Rana, son of Mia and scores of children's organisa-Mohammad Noor, said, "We tions.

showed them (Rajuk officials) Tomorrow is the last date for necessary papers but they were not submitting bids. Sources however said that a When asked, Rana said they will

leader of the ruling party-backed Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) is the only bidder. When contacted, Director of

Bangladesh Shishu Academy Golam Kibria expressed grave concern over the move. "No sound-minded person can accept it," he

told The Daily Star yesterday. It is beyond imagination that damage government's reputation, it said

A copy of the letter has also been DCC can take such a decision while the government is allocating crores sent to the Mayor, urging him not to of taka for development of children, lease out the road and the foot-

he said. paths Meanwhile, a total of 30 chil-Terming the move a "deadly" one, the Director said, thousands of dren's organisations in a statement children coming from across the strongly protested and condemned country will be affected if the road the DCC move and said this will and the footpaths are leased out for affect activities for children's developen markets. opment.

children's development. It will also

Join JS to discuss caretaker govt: PM

The Prime Minister said, "When she (Khaleda) failed to pull down the government through agitation, I urged her to join to parliament session and ask for early polls. As she did not want to come to the parliament, I later urged her to ask for polls from any other place. She

polls by May. "Then we met the President and made the issue clear that we would hand over power after observing the Mujibnagar Day on April 17. But all polls-related issues have to be settled beforehand." The Prime Minister further said

The Opposition leader does not

Forest Minister Sajeda Chowdhury, Razzak, Industries Minister Tofail Ahmed and Agriculture Minister

Motia Chowdhury

Mammoth gathering

FROM PAGE 1 people who attended the rally would stand at 10 lakh.

Some others however put the figure at around five lakh. The people carried hundreds of colorful banners, festoons, National lags and portraits of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and Sheikh Hasina. An extra colour was added as hundreds of "ghat sramik" from Dhaka and employees from Adamiee Jute Mills attended it wearing red shirts and sporting red

ribbons on their heads. People from different parts of the city and adjoining districts started gathering at the venue from noon, carrying banners and fastening multi-colour ribbons on their heads. By afternoon, it became a human sea.

The adjoining Begum Rokey Sarani from Manik Mia Avenue to Shewrapara was jam-packed during the three-hour meeting, which began at 3 pm. The entire area, specially Farmgate, PHOTO: STAR

Agargaon, Monipuripara Shewrapara as well as the area near the Jatiya Sangsad resounded with various slogans in favour of Awami League.

The meeting wore a festive look as most of the participants, with band parties accompanying them, came to the venue dancing and singing. Many of them carried illuminated election symbols of Awami League.

Several thousand activists of AL's Mirpur unit attended the rally wearing "uniforms", which gave a special look. They wore T-shirts marked with the portrait of Kamal Ahmed Majumder MP, the leader of the unit. Haji Mohammad Selim MP who led an organised procession from the city's Lalbagh area reached the venue at the fag end of the rally.

Many of the banners carried by party activists read various slogans demanding execution of the killers of Bangabandhu, trial of '71 war criminals and ban on fundamentalist politics.

Earlier, the BNP secretary-

general addressed a function com-

memorating the liberation war at

Shibpur Pilot High School play-

ground as chief guest. Hundreds of

freedom fighters from Narsingdi and

its adjoining areas, who fought for

independence under Bhuiyan,

joined the reunion from home and

In the discussion meeting, vet-

eran freedom fighters demanded

immediate cancellation of the

freedom fighters' list as they said

they believed that many identified

razakars were included in the list

and genuine freedom fighters

exceptional as it turned into a peo-

ple's war and no razakar was born in

Shibpur and Narsingdhi district.

Speakers said the AL even sent

some Mujib Bahini people from

India during the liberation war to kill

Mannan Bhuiyan, but seeing the

mass resistance in Narsingdi, they

(Mujib Bahini) joined the war under

the leadership of Mannan Bhuivan.

men killed many freedom fighters,

who fought in Narsingdi, including

veteran Naval Sirai who was killed

Akbar Khan Rono, who joined the

war in Narsingdi, highly praised

Bhuivan's leadership and said the

Workers Party leader Haider

after the liberation.

The freedom fighters said the AL

They said the war at Shibpur was

dropped from it.

abroad after 30 years of liberation.

People won't forgive

FROM PAGE 1 BNP will win at least 200 seats if it contest the polls alone, and 250 seats if unitedly

He said the AL, which only a few days ago made adverse comments about Ershad, is now trying to the break the alliance by bringing the Ershad-led JP out of it.

About Prime Minister Sheikh lasina's shift from her commitment about early elections. Bhuivan said she never speaks the truth whether at home or abroad and even tells lies sitting in the holy city of Madina.

BNP central leader and Sector They demanded of the govern-Commander Lt Gen (Retd) Mir ment not to lease out the road and Shawkat Ali, BU, in his speech said footpaths for open markets for the the Muktijoddaha Sangsad has Despite repeated telephone become an organisation subservicalls, neither Mayor Hanif nor any of ent to the ruling party and has lost credibility. The list of real freedom fighters cannot be expected from

this organisation. Demanding cancellation of the list prepared by the Sangsad, he suggested that the task of preparing the list of true freedom fighters should be given to the sector commanders, sub-sector commanders and those like Mannan Bhuiyan who fought the actual war.

Presided over by thana BNP President Abdul Haris Rikabdar, the meeting was also addressed, among others, by Col (Retd) Akbar Hossain, Major (Retd) Shahjahan Omar, BU, freedom fighters Wing Commander M Hamidullah Khan running the administration very Noim Jahangir, Prof Jashimuddin efficiently. The Opposition leader Ahmed, Abdul Ali Mridha, central has no standing to demand our and local BNP leaders Khairul Kabir Khokon, Shirin Sultana, Tofazzel The rally was also addressed by, Hossain, Arif Mridha, Mesbah among others, AL Presidium mem-Uddin, Nurul Islam Kanchon, ber Syeda Zohra Tajuddin, Local Mahbubul Haq Nannu and Government Minister Zillur Sultanuddin Mollah

those responsible for thefts and

all 84 autorickshaw workers

arrested under the Public Safety Act.

Faroog, President and General

Secretary respectively of the union

The alliance leaders also called for

taking immediate measures towards

the trial of those responsible for the

bombing and killing in the CPB's rally in

Paltan Maidan in January. They asked

the people in their meetings and rallies

to forge a greater unity all over the

12-day foot-march on March 20 from

Tetulia, Chapainawabganj, Cox's

Bazar, Sunamganj, Pirojpur and

The 11-party alliance started their

country against the communal forces.

BNP leaders, including Tariqul

They also demanded release of

Azizul Hug Mukta and Golam

hijacking of the autorickshaws.

were present.

11-party

FROM PAGE 12

occupation forces could not enter the district as people from all walks of life here actively participated in the war. **BTV's special** arrangement to

Khaleda cover AL rally

and taking up of legal action against

FROM PAGE 1 sisting of the Chief Justice, the Law Bangabhavan.

The rally synchronised expiry of Opposition's March 30 deadline for the aovernment to resian. announced at a March 21 rally in the

Referring to the talks between the President and Khaleda Zia, the Prime Minister claimed that the BNP chief "turned down" the President's advice for discussion with the government.

Besides, the Prime Minister said, Khaleda Zia will have to commit to the people that she would not call hartal any more, shun the "path of terrorism" and give an undertaking that she would take part in the early polls once the date is fixed.

Hasina, also president of ruling Awami League, claimed that the Opposition-called hartals were not successful in the past and would not benefit the Opposition in future also. nockets of khas

The Shishu Academy also sent a letter to the Ministry of Women and Children Affaires on Thursday, greater interest of the children seeking necessary steps to stop it. In the letter the Academy authorities said the DCC move is contradictory to government's activities for

Had she confidence in polls, she would not have given an ultimatum,"

Hasina said.

government and said, "We are

"We even told the President that we were ready to discuss their (Opposition) various demands. But, they did not agree to hold talks.

Water Resources Minister Abdur FROM PAGE 1

In her half an hour speech, the Prime Minister also gave a long list of development and welfareoriented projects undertaken by her

went to the President and asked for resignation."

Rahman, Food Minister Amir Hossain Amu, Environment and

DCC's officials could be contacted for comments.

Hasina also charged the former prime minister (Khaleda) with embezzlement of crores of taka from the public exchequer and of inefficiency in running the government while in power.

made against Sumon and that the police should stop harassing him. Justice Taj Mohammed has already asked the Detective Department to handle the matter amicably.

The main reason why Sumon agreed to all the conditions was probably because he had been asked not to leave the country. Sumon had been planning to visit Bangladesh for quite sometime now. However, court ruling had prevented him from doing that. Now his lawyers feel that the restrictions imposed on the singer would be lifted.

company paid only Tk 3.14 lakh as VAT. The team also discovered that

the company did not maintain any

regular register book against selling

for payment of VAT. The commissionarate issued a

show cause notice to explain why

punitive actions should not be taken

company informed the customs

officials that they received money

from their clients on different instal

ments. Besides a number of their

clients took money back after book-

Responding to the notice, the

against them for evading tax.

tinued to be under illegal occupation

for a long time. Because of long standing encroachments on these splinter plots of khas land in old Dhaka, the authorities don't find it easy to dispose them of by open auction under exiting policy by evicting the illegal occupant who

ne isol

subsisting occupation. In this context, the illegal occupation of public land on both sides of the river Buriganga may be mentioned. Although high-level decision was already taken by government to clear the river banks of the fastgrowing encroachments, no step has yet been taken in this regard so that the river could be saved from the shrinking process. The encroachments have proceeded to such an extent that only a narrow space of the river is available for navigation.

Such encroachment has lately been reported to have taken place also on the banks of Sitalakya river. Thus the landgrabbers appear to be mightier than the land-owning

authorities.

SAARC FMs' meet

Developer fined

FROM PAGE 1

ing the plots.

regional cooperation The next SAARC Summit, the eleventh in its 15-year history, was earlier scheduled to be held in Kathmandu.

Track-II initiatives by members of the civil society have also been contributing to rejuvenating the SAARC process. Members of the South Asian civil society held two major conferences recently. The South Asian Citizens Commission headed by former Indian Prime Minister I K Gujral held a conference in Kathmandu while the South Asian People's Summit was held in Colombo recently

Three of the Five SAARC Technical Committees have already

held meetings. The SAARC Charter was signed by the heads of state or government of the seven South Asian countries on December 8, 1985 in Dhaka. establishing the regional organisa-

Meanwhile, at a meeting Dhaka it was decided that a SAARC Telefilm Festival will be held in July. Telefilms from all the member countries will be telecast each day at a

designated time during the weeklong festival. The films will be of the duration of 60 to 90 minutes and sub-titled or dubbed in English.

Bombs hurled FROM PAGE 1

Junayed, Amir Hossain Hossain, and Sentu. Police also recovered a revolver from their possession.

Police said they suspected that the arrested persons were members of Jatiyatabadi Chatra Dal, students' wing of opposition BNP. The Dhaka city witnessed serious

traffic iam vesterday due to processions and convoys of vehicles. The worst jams were in Tikatuli,

Gulistan, Paltan, Banglamotor, Farmgate, Agargaon, Mirpur, Mohammadpur, Mohakhali, Gabtali People were seen waiting for

hours together on various roads. Despite a ban on movement of

trucks in the city during day-time, hundreds of trucks with AL workers on board plied on the streets yesterday

FROM PAGE 1

Meanwhile, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has expressed her deep shock at the death of 20 people in the fatal road accident at Sherpur vesterday.

In a condolence message, the Prime Minister prayed for the salvation of the departed souls and conveyed her sympathy for the members of the bereaved families.

Sheikh Hasina also wished early recovery of the injured now undergoing treatment in different hospitals

Another report says: Eight people, including three policemen were injured when a tempo overturned on Sherpur-Jamalpur road on Wednesday night.

Police said the tempo turned turtle when one of its wheels caught in a pit on the run-down road at Purardokan in sadar upazila at about 11 pm.

Of the injured, the tempo driver and constable Roisuddin were admitted to Mymensingh Medical College Hospital and SI Kamrul, ASI

"I had given her (Khaleda) a chance (proposal for early polls).

believe in democracy and election She just wants our resignation."

Unidentified people hurled crackers at buses carrying supporters of Awami League to a rally at National Parade Ground yesterday. This incident occurred near the Secretariat building at Topkhana Road in the city

20 killed as truck overturns

Salam, constables Kuddus and Aziz and Ansar Golam Mostafa to Sadar Hospital.

Meanwhile, three people including a minor boy were killed and five others injured in separate road accidents on Dhaka-Chittagong highway and Narayanganj-Demra road in Narayanganj yesterday.

Police said two trucks collided head-on at Malibag area in Bandar thana on Dhaka-Chittagong highway at about 7:30 am killing Sabui and Alam on the spot and injuring five others.

Two of the injured, including Chinese national Chang Guru, were admitted to Dhaka Medical College Hospital in critical condition.

In another mishap in SAO Road area in Siddhirganj thana, Iqbal Hossain, 9, son of one Safiuddin of Laxmankhola in Bandar thana, was crushed under the wheels of a tank lorry while crossing the road at about 8 am.

BSS from Chittagong adds: Three people, including a woman, were killed and 20 others injured in

outside the city here yesterday. Pakhi Begum, 19, a garment

worker, was crushed under the wheels of a speeding truck when it was fleeing after knocking down a tempo in Rupbug area on Baizid Bostami Road under Panchlaish thana

The tempo driver was slightly injured, police sources said. There were no passengers in the tempo.

In a second accident, a truck ran over Suman Dev. 28. in front of AK Khan Gate on Jakir Hossain Road under Pahartali thana.

Suman, son of Kamalhari Dey of Howanok, under Moheskhali thana. Cox's Bazar died on the spot.

One youth was killed and ten people were injured at Banshbaria under Sitakunda thana when an S Alam coach collided head-on with a pick-up van. Identity of the victim could not be known immediatelv

Ten passengers were injured in front of Dry-Dock on Airport Road under Patenga thana when a "maxi"

four separate road accidents in and rammed against a roadside tree Two of the injured were admitted to Chittagong Medical College

Hospital while others were treated locally Correspondent from Rajshahi adds: Three people were killed and

three others seriously injured in three separate road accidents in the district yesterday

Liton, 17, was killed on the spot when a speeding truck knocked him down at Daingpara area under Godagari upazila. The driver managed to escape with the truck

Ainuddin, 45, who was seriously injured in a road accident at Sapahar area, succumbed to his injuries at Rajshahi Medical College Hospital (RMCH) yesterday.

Another man Akbar Ali, 32, son of Mohasin Ali of Kamardaha village under Boraigram upazila in Natore district, was seriously injured in a road accident on the way to Rajshahi and succumbed to his injuries at RMCH yesterday.

The state-run Bangladesh Television (BTV) made special arrangements to cover Awami League's grand rally at the National Parade Ground yesterday.

"At least 40 people equipped with necessary things from BTV camera unit were assigned to cover the rally." a BTV crew told this correspondent at the rally venue.

Islam, Sadek Hossain Khoka MP, He added that eight cameras Mirza Abbas and Mujibur Rahman Sarwar MP and Saifuddin Ahmed were in operation to cover the rally. Organisers of the rally had set up Moni were present.

eight towers at various points of the venue to facilitate adequate TV coverage.

JSD backed BCL

FROM PAGE 12 drawal of the new GS

The councilors at the rally said they were not allowed to talk freely during the council as they demanded a provision in the party constitution on age limit for the student leaders.

The committee was formed after long four years replacing its president Obaidur Rahman Chunnu and general secretary Karim Sikder.

outside the capital usually on week

ends and see patients in private

chambers or clinics in nearby dis-

tricts including Narsingdi, Comilla,

Mymensingh, Manikganj,

Munshiganj and Faridpur. Most of

them charge consultation fees not

Doctors working in the public sector who visit different private

clinics to see patients charge fees

up to Tk 300 . Law does not permit

exceeding Tk 100, sources said.

Pvt medical practitioners

FROM PAGE 1

Barguna

PHOTO: STAR

practice shall issue receipts to patients and shall keep a copy for inspection. Practitioners must also display a list of fees and keep a register of patient's names and address.

Asked about this, Secretary General of Bangladesh Private Medical Practitioners' Association (BPMPA) Dr Muniruzamman Bhuiyan said. "The 1982 law was passed by the then military rulers.

We have rejected it. Patients at some doctors' private chambers resented that the fees charged from them are too high. Some of them, who recently went to West Bengal in India for treatment, mentioned that doctors in Kolkata have fixed rates of fees, much lower than that of doctors in Dhaka.

Many of the general practitioners n the city charge Tk 200 to 300 for consultation and senior ones charge about double the amount. In Dhanmondi area, most of the senior doctors employed in leading medical colleges and hospitals charge around Tk 500.

A number of doctors also go violating the laws.

When asked about the rates of fees fixed in the 1982 Ordinance, a leading physician said patients are at liberty to choose their doctors for consultation. "There are no fixed fees. The fees fixed in the 1982 Ordinance are not appropriate in view of the rising

prices of all types of commodities. he said, refusing to be identified. Sources in the Directorate of Health Services which is supposed

to enforce the relevant laws said they do not have required manpower to do this. According to official records, none has been penalised so far for