

Over 3382 schools, colleges to be equipped with computers

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government will equip 3,382 schools and colleges with computers in the next academic year.

Under five government projects to introduce computer courses at the secondary and higher secondary education, 10,388 computers will be given to these institutions in the first phase, official sources said.

The Cabinet Purchasing Committee approved on Thursday the procurement proposal for personal computers (PCs).

"We hope to install computers at the institutions selected on the first stage within two or three months from now on, provided the government departments concerned cooperate with us," said Shamsul Alam of Byte Communications Sweden B.V., a partner of Tulip Computers International.

The Netherlands will share half the estimated cost of Tk 45.45 crore under an agreement between Bangladesh and the Netherlands.

Bangladesh sought the Dutch grant in mid-2000 with a view to bringing computer education at the grassroots level.

Under this programme, the Dutch computer company would also provide special training to 6,764 school teachers at NOTRAMS Bogra.

Earlier, the government lifted duty on computer imports to promote IT education and create IT-related job market in the country. Every year nearly 1,00,000 students would benefit from the courses, education ministry sources said.

About five years ago, the ministry took up five projects for introducing computer courses at schools and colleges, both in government and private sectors, with an estimated cost of Tk 125 crore. But, no school or college has so far received any computer despite the fact that Tk 25 crore had already been spent.

Criminal case
Charges framed against four policemen

COURT CORRESPONDENT

The Second Additional Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's Court, Dhaka framed charges against four policemen on Sunday in a criminal case.

The accused are Sub-Inspector Mohammad Khorshed Alam, Assistant Sub-Inspector Abdul Hakim, and constables Amir Hossain and Abdul Karim of Mohammadpur thana in the city.

The ACMM, Muhammad Shafiqul Azim Khan Siddiqui, fixed August 20 for trial.

The accused pleaded not guilty and demanded justice before the court after hearing the charges against them.

The accused took away Sheikh Mohammad Harun a fax-phone trader from the Tajmahal Road in the city, snatched Tk 10,000 and tortured him mercilessly at about 10 am on April 24 in 1999 for which he was in coma for eleven days.

Victim's brother filed a petition case with the CMM's court, Dhaka against them the same month.

Advocate Syed Rezaur Rahman appeared for the accused while Advocates Khondaker Abdul Mannan, Mohammad Abdul Mannan Khan of Bangladesh Legal Aid and Services Trust (BLAST) for the complainant.

All the accused were present in the court during the hearing.

Trader shot dead in Sylhet

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

A young trader was shot dead by miscreants at Kuarpar area of the town yesterday afternoon.

A gun was found near his body.

Police and local people said the assailants called Delwar, 20, out of his house at 94 Kuarpar at about 5 pm, when he went to have lunch from his grocery shop.

Delwar is son of one Lilu Miah. The miscreants took him to a nearby pond side and fired in his chest. He died on the spot.

A case was filed with the Kotwali police.

The body was sent to the Sylhet MAG Osmani Medical College for autopsy.

The cause behind the killing could not be known immediately.

Produce quality fabrics to face world market: PM

TexBangla exhibition begins in city

UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday asked private entrepreneurs to prepare adequately, especially with increased fabric production, to face imminent competition in the world apparel market.

"Public and private sectors will have to make united contribution so that the textile industry can meet its requirements from local products; we will have to face the challenges of an open competition," she said referring to the post-MFA (Multi-Fibre Agreement) era that is in the offing.

Inaugurating the TexBangla textile exhibition at Hotel Sheraton yesterday morning, the prime minister said there would be a free competition when the multi-fibre agreement will expire after 2004 abolishing privileged market access for the poorer countries to the developed world through quota system.

Attaching importance to setting up more backward-linkage industries, she said the government would

continue its total support, cooperation and assistance for every initiative of attaining self-sufficiency in textiles and making apparel export vibrant and dynamic.

In this regard, Hasina hoped that BTMA (Bangladesh Textile Mills Association), the organiser of the textile show, would take pragmatic plans to establish mills to produce quality yarn and fabric for fulfilling people's demand and helping government efforts to attain self-sufficiency in textiles.

She pointed out that apart from the world market, there is also a big domestic market of 12 crore people for the textile industry.

Finance Minister Shah AMS Kibria, Industries Minister Tofail Ahmed, Commerce Minister Abdul Jalil, State Minister for Textiles AKM Jahangir Hossain and BTMA Chairman Salman F Rahman also addressed the inaugural function.

Eminent economist and Executive Director of the Centre for Policy Dialogue Dr Debapriya Bhattacharya

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Seasonal insanity... digging on the stretch of road goes on in full swing near Kakrail crossing in the city yesterday. Come monsoon and the utility agencies begin their repairing and maintenance work in renewed vigour, causing extreme inconvenience to the city-dwellers.

15 'Taliban activists' arrested in Khulna

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

Police yesterday arrested 15 madrassah students from Balurmath area of Labonchora under Khulna thana.

All the 15 young men are being suspected as Taliban activists.

The place from where they were arrested is half-a-mile away from the spot where Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina will lay foundation of Rupsha Bridge on May 30.

Police seized their luggages. They hailed from Jessor, Jheridah and Patuakhali districts. When asked, the madrassah students said they were bound for an excursion trip to the Sundarbans. But police do not believe this as some evidences were recovered from their possession. Those include army uniforms, booklets on Taliban ideology and poems on Taliban activities.

The arrested are aged between 16 and 20. Police are continuing hunt for their leaders who managed to escape during the raid. All the 15 were arrested from a trawler, police said.

Acting on a tip-off, Khulna thana OC Kamrul Islam along with some sub-inspectors raided the trawler at Labonchora early in the morning.

Sources said the 15 young men were recently enrolled as "Taliban commandos". They were bound for the Sundarbans for a training course.

Police arrested them under Section 54 and all of them have been

2164 arrested on second day of special drive

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Police arrested 2164 people including 18 listed terrorists on the second day of month-long countrywide special drive yesterday.

Police also recovered 53 firearms and 251 bullets from across the country during the operation yesterday.

Over 2000 people including some listed criminals were arrested on the first day of the drive on Sunday.

Police started the month-long operation to arrest criminals in a bid to restore law and order across the country.

Our Magura correspondent said 56 people including four listed criminals were arrested from the district on the second day.

BDR-BSF flag meet at Tetulia today

BSS, Panchgarh

A sector commander level flag meeting between Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) and Indian Border Security Force (BSF) will be held today at Tetulia of the district, BDR sources said.

BDR Rangpur sector has arranged all preparations to hold the meeting.

The two sides will discuss, withdrawal of soldiers deployed in the bordering areas, easing complexities created following construction of a groyne in the Mohananda river and keeping open the "Tin Bigha Corridor" for 24 hours for the movement of the people of the Chittagong.

BDR Rangpur sector commander Colonel Ferdous Ahmed Khan and DIG of Shilguri sector of BSF Ajit Shing will lead their respective sides in the meeting, sources said.

The officials of BDR and BSF will also attend the meeting. The meeting will discuss the ways to ease tension in the bordering areas, stop smuggling, drug and women trafficking.

Colonel Ferdous Ahmed and his adjutant of 22 battalion in Rangpur, Lieutenant Colonel Abdul Quader, will receive the 13-member BSF delegation at the 772 main pillar in Bangabandha frontier at 10 am today.

Super high-yielding rice

The Bangladesh Rice Research Institute (BRRI) has developed a 'Super High Yielding Variety (S-HYV)' of rice with a growth potential of 12 to 14 metric tons per hectare, BRRI Director General Dr Nurul Islam Bhuiyan announced yesterday. He said the new variety, developed through hybridisation of a HYV with a foreign variety, would be in the hands of farmers after two to three seasons of field trials. This thick and sturdy Super HYV has no lodging problem and each panicle holds more grains than any HYV.

National Library policy approved

BSS, Dhaka

The Cabinet yesterday approved the National Library Policy at its regular meeting with Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina in the chair.

The cabinet also okayed the proposal to amend the Buddhist Religious Welfare Trust Ordinance, 1983.

It approved the proposal for formation of Ashugan Power Company Ltd under the Company Act for corporatisation of Ashugan Power Generation Centre being run by the Bangladesh Power Development Board.

Besides, the meeting approved some recommendations of Public Administration Reform Commission (PARC) regarding driving license, vehicle registration, fitness and simple road tax payment system.



Leaders and activists of the left leaning 11-party sport posters demanding ban on bank loan defaulters from the coming polls during a human-chain programme at Motijheel in the city yesterday.

5 dacoits held with arms after gunfight in Ctg

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Detective Branch (DB) of police arrested five dacoits with eight firearms after a 45 minute gunfight from Char Rangamati area on the northern bank of the Karnaphuli river under Chandgaon thana on Sunday night.

The arrested were identified as Abdul Mannan, 30; Nazrul Islam, 35; Md Ibrahim, 32; Md Ali 32 and Jahangir Alam, 35.

Police also recovered guns, 3-LG, 1-pipegun and 16 cartridges from their possession.

Acting on a tip-off, a DB team led by Sub Inspector AKM Mohiuddin took position in disguise there hours before the operation. At about 10 pm, a gang of 12 dacoits arrived at the place in an engine boat and started preparing for a dacoity.

At this stage, police cordoned the place and the dacoits started firing. Police returned the fire. After exchange of over 100 rounds, police caught five dacoits while the others escaped in their boat.

Police yesterday produced the arrested dacoits in court and prayed for a seven-day remand.

During the gunfight, SI Mohiuddin was slightly injured, police said.

Two cases were filed by police with Chandgaon thana in this connection.

Woman's body recovered

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The body of an unidentified woman was recovered from behind the Sultana Kamal Women's Sports Complex in city's Dhammandi in the early hours of yesterday.

The woman, aged about 20, was wearing shalwar-kameez. The victim had marks of injury in her throat and is believed to have been strangled by miscreants, police said.

Police sent the body to Dhaka Medical College Hospital morgue for autopsy.

Dhanmondi police filed an unnatural death case in this regard.

Plea to take SQ Chy back into party fold

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Chittagong

A faction of BNP's Rangunia unit and its front organisations there loyal to expelled party leader Salahuddin Quader Chowdhury demanded withdrawal of the expulsion order on him and urged the party high command to take him back into the party fold.

The demand was made by some leaders of a faction of the party's Rangunia unit at a press conference in Chittagong yesterday.

The leaders who spoke at the press conference included KKM Rafiq Bin Chowdhury, Nawab Meah Chowdhury and Syed Fazle Karim.

They claimed that expulsion of Salahuddin Quader had angered BNP supporters in Rangunia.

They alleged that some so called leaders of BNP were conspiring to create chaos during observance of the death anniversary of president Ziaur Rahman at his 'first mazar' at Rangunia.

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