Local traders to be allowed to re-export **Indian goods**

UNB, Dhaka

The government will allow local traders to import Indian goods for reexport to India, thus facilitating the next-door neighbour to send its own products to its remote hill states conveniently using Bangladesh territories.

The new trading arrangement will come into effect on experimental basis early next year after the National Board of Revenue completes some formalities

"It's neither transit nor transshipment. It's as simple as re-export through back-to-back LC. Commerce Minister Amir Khasru Mahmud Chowdhury told UNB yesterday as many viewed the arrangement as the other name of transshipment, a move BNP opposed while Awami League was in power.

Similar re-export arrangements exist also in the garment trade here. and Singapore and Hong Kong have long been benefiting from such business arrangements with third countries, he cited.

Under the new arrangement. Bangladeshi traders will import Indian fruits and vegetables from one point through LC and re-export those to other bordering states. Bangladeshi carriers will carry the consignments from one point to another within Bangladesh territory.

The re-export arrangement will add minimum 10 per cent value to the commodities as well as provide business to Bangladesh's private transport sector, the minister said explaining the arrangement which is expected to come into effect from

Khasru felt, the SEE PAGE 11 COL 4

PM to visit **Jhalakathi** today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Barisal

Prime Minister Khaleda Zia is scheduled to visit Jhalakathi today. On arrival at 10am, the prime

minister will address a public meeting at Rajapur Pilot School ground. Later, she will formally inaugurate the Gabkhan Bridge over Gabkhan

She will also meet the local BNF leaders at Circuit House, sources

The prime minister will be accompanied by the Communications Minister Barrister Nazmul Huda, State Minister for Land Major (Retd.) Shajahan Omar and some central leaders of BNP.

Two abducted in Fatikchhari

Two persons were kidnapped by miscreants in separate incidents in Fatikchhari area on Wednesday and Thursday night.

Miscreants abducted Mohammad Gofran, 42, from Kazirhat Bazar at about 9:30 on Thursday night, district police and local sources said vesterday. Fazal Hogue, 35, a cycle-parts

trader was abducted from near Fatikchhari Coronation High School on Wednesday night, sources said.

Police started frantic search in different parts of Fatikchhari, particularly at tea and rubber gardens, to rescue the victims, Additional Police Super Aurongazeb Mahamum said.

Local people of Kazirhat Bazar yesterday put up barricade on Fatikchhari-Ramgarh road protesting the kidnapping of Gofran. Police removed the barricade at noon, sources said.

Dacoity at a house in Uttara

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A gang of dacoits took away money in cash, gold ornaments and other valuables from a house at Chalaban of Hazipara in the city's Uttara, Azampur area in the early hours of

Sources said six armed dacoits entered the house of Samsuzzaman Miah after cutting the window grills at

about 3:00 am. The gang looted Tk.24.000 in

cash and gold ornaments and others valuables worth about Tk.58.000.

Samsuzzaman filed a case with Uttara police station in this regard.

Shifting of Karwan Bazar vegetable market

Govt can't take major steps because of pending cases

RAZIUR RAHMAN

At least eight cases regarding possession of land in Karwan Bazar area are standing in the way of implementation of the government decision to shift the city's largest vegetable market to other places.

Officials concerned said the cases now pending with the court were filed between 1997 and 2001 when Dhaka City Corporation (DCC) attempted to recover its land. Sources alleged that negligence and corruption by a section of DCC officials helped the encroachers to grab the public lands.

An inter-ministerial meeting held on July 26 instructed the authorities to take short- and long-term measures to shift the largest vegetable market to three city entry points. A committee was also formed in this regard with DCC's Chief Executive Officer Nurul Huda as its head. The committee also comprises representatives from Raiuk, PWD and DMP.

The decision was made in the light of commercial mportance of the Karwan Bazar area

Huge numbers of illegal shops on the footpath, roads and public lands as well as indiscriminate parking and mindless loading and unloading of goods from more than 400 trucks at Karwan Bazar everyday is not only disrupting traffic movement in and around Karwan Bazar but also hindering normal activities of other estabishments located at the commercially important part of

Talking with The Daily Star, Chief Executive Officer of DCC Nurul Huda admitted that there had been no significant progress so far in terms of implementation of the government decision to shift the kitchen market. He attributed the non-implementation to the pending cases.

The DCC officials said no major steps to shift the market could be taken until the settlement of the cases.

"As part of the process, we initially decided to evict the illegal traders and demolish the illegal markets but it was not possible due to the pending cases", said Huda.

Sources said five out of the eight cases were filed by some local traders who got allocation to build shops on the land of Karwan Bazar Park last year. Violating a prime ministerial directive, a portion of the park was allocated to 51 individuals to build shops.

The allottees built the shops felling trees of the park and occupying a portion of a nearby road and walkway The allocation was later cancelled following press

When the DCC took preparation to demolish the shops, five of the allottees filed writ petition before the **ASM N**URUNNABI

Although the problems of air and water pollution have received much publicity through the print media, there seems to be a lack of awareness in the case of noise pollution.

Notably, environmental activists as well as journalists have not been vocal enough about the adverse effect of noise pollution, which is no longer just a minor health hazard. Despite being widespread, its longterm ill effects are somehow no obvious to the casual observer and even trained environmentalists apparently have failed to take stock of the situation. At present, its pernicious effects can be felt even in district towns, not to mention big

For lack of zoning laws governing growth activities in specific areas like residential, commercial, industrial, recreational, etc., we find an intermingling of disparate entities in a given area. For example, a predominantly residential area may have mills and factories, commercial centres, educational institutions etc. Hospitals, recreational areas such as parks, and libraries are found located within areas of heavy vehicular traffic, causing serious noise pollution as the rattling sound from two-stroke engines of auto-rickshaws and uncontrolled honking of horns by cars, trucks and buses continue all DOWN TO EARTH

City-dwellers suffer from noise pollution

In many cases, our lack of civic sense compounds the problem. Organisers of different functions including marriage ceremonies and other social or political events install loudspeakers to play music or to deliver speeches, even in the late hours of night. They do not spare a thought that the noise they create could be a source of extreme mental agony for people living around, particularly patients, students studying for exams or those trying to rest after a hard day's

The intensity of sound is measured in logarithmic units known as decibels. Sounds measuring 80 decibels can cause hearing defects. Steady exposure to sounds exceeding 90 decibels, a level that is frequently reached in many common urban areas during

construction work involving drilling and welding, takeoff and landing of iet planes, traffic iams, etc., can cause permanent damage to the ear. In addition to loss of hearing, noise can produce other deleterious effects on human health and work performance.

Developed countries are much more conscious about the adverse effects of noise pollution. In Japan, stretches of noise insulation boards have been installed along the road from the Narita Airport to the Tokyo City Centre in order to protect residential areas from the onslaught of noise rising from movement of heavy motor traffic.

In many cities, operation of drills and other noisy equipment after daylight hours is legally prohibited. Another strategy of urban planning is to locate busy city centres and heavy industries outside city limits.

Mob beatings in city kill

As far as we are concerned, it is not that we lack legal provisions regarding noise control in our country, Dhaka Metropolitan Police have issued codes governing the use of loudspeakers during public meetings and other functions. But enforcement of these rules is another matter.

Our legal instruments available cannot be used for noise control due to the indifference on the part of the affected quarters. Lately, the situation has reached such proportions that some are saying that we as a nation, are not yet fit for urban

In view of the growing menace of noise pollution, the onus of convincing the people about the hazards of noise pollution and building up an effective movement to stop it lies on the doctors, scientists, environ-

2 new pvt TV channels soon

MUSTAK HOSSAIN

Two new satellite TV channels in the private sector are likely to launch transmission of programmes early next year, sources said.

Universal Television (UTV), owned by BRB Cables, a leading electric wire manufacturer, and Inqilab Televisin (ITV) of The Daily Inqilab have obtained licences.

UTV will launch its programme on Pahela Baishak, the first day of Bangla year and ITV on March 26, the Victory Day, the sources said.

The Ministry of Information has received a good number of applications from prospective companies for permission to export multimedia programme software and establish satellite ground station.

The government is likely to formulate soon a policy on giving licence to private firms for exporting multimedia programmes and news. which will ultimately help those to establish satellite channels, sources in the ministry said.

"The ministry is preparing a

was used by the Taliban and al Qaida as a military garrison.

2 Pakistan-based

terrorist groups

President Bush on Thursday

marked the 100th day since the

September 11 terror strikes by

calling on allies to freeze assets of

two South Asian organisations he

so far, and we've got a lot more to

do" in the fight against terrorism, he

said in the White House Rose

Garden, flanked by US Secretary of

State Colin Powell and Treasury

Bush said he was freezing

assets of the Pakistani group Umma

Tameer-e-Nau (UTN), which he

charged had provided nuclear arms

data to suspected terrorist master-

mind Osama bin Laden, and

Lashkar-e-Taiba (LET), one of two

Secretary Paul O'Neill.

"I know we've accomplished a lot

accused of supporting terrorism.

AFP, Washington

US to freeze assets of

policy. Eligibility of the applicants will be examined as per its provisions" a top official of the ministry told The Daily Star on Wednesday.

The government encourages such initiative in the private sector, A committee is likely to be formed

with officials of the ministry and relevant departments to judge merit of companies intending to produce multimedia programmes, he said.

The new government has already given permission for export of locally produced multimedia news and other programs, which will be telecast through satellite from other countries, sources in the ministry said.

The ministry has received applications from different business houses willing to export programmes through Satellite News Gathering (SNG) equipment.

SNG is a device which transmit programmes through satellite, reducing the time for their physical shipment and enabling the producers to transmit multimedia

Anti-Taliban forces look at abandoned pieces of mortars at Jalalabad's Afghan royal residential compound which

militant groups India blames for last

week's bloody attack on its parlia-

terrorism, and it hopes to destroy

relations between Pakistan and

India and undermine" Pakistani

President Pervez Musharraf, said

committed acts of terrorism inside

both India and Pakistan, I look

forward to working with the govern-

ments of both India and Pakistan in

a common effort to shut it down, and

to bring the killers to justice," the

former official of Pakistan's atomic

energy commission and, while

masked in "the disguise of charity,"

Bush said UTN was founded by a

SEE PAGE 11 COL 6

"To achieve its purpose, LET has

the US leader.

president declared.

"LET is a stateless sponsor of

programmes abroad.

There is a huge market for Bangladeshi news and entertainment programmes abroad especially in India, United Kingdom, United States and Middle Eastern countries where many expatriate Bangladeshis live.

Bangladesh can earn millions of dollars through export of programmes produced by local firms having telecasting facilities abroad, sources in the industry said.

They said state-run Bangladesh Television (BTV) used to provide such facilities earlier. Now the BTV's satellite-fed station is inoperative due to on-going modernisation work. Many foreign agencies now use ETV's equipment to send programmes abroad.

The country's two existing satellite channels now telecast programmes from Bangkok and Singapore via satellite. Earlier, these two companies were given permission to link programmes through SNG.

Powell plays down

U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell

downplayed speculation that Iraq

might be the next target in

Washington's declared war on

terrorism, saying in an interview

published yesterday that a military

success in Afghanistan did not

"They're two different countries

with two different regimes, two

different military capabilities,"

Powell said in the interview with The

Washington Post. "They are so

significantly different that you can't

take the Afghan model and immedi-

While playing down speculation

about a campaign to oust Iraqi

President Saddam Hussein, Powell

told the Post Iraq "is very much

always on our agenda. We are con

SEE PAGE 11 COL 6

ately apply it to Iraq."

quarantee a similar result in Iraq.

speculation

that US may

target Iraq

REUTERS, Washington



Laden, Omar still holed up in Afghan mountains?

AFP, Jalalabad

Suspected terrorist mastermind Osama bin Laden is still in the mountains of eastern Afghanistan, a US-allied Afghan commander said Hazrat Ali, security chief for

Nangarhar province, also said fugitive Taliban leader Mullah Mohammad Omar was still alive bu did not say where he may be hiding. "Mullah Omar and Osama bin

in the mountains." Ali told reporters in the provincial capital Jalalabad. A spokesman for the US-led coalition force said he believed both

Laden are still alive. Bin Laden is still

men remained holed up in the "We have no reason to think either Mullah Omar or Osama bin Laden are outside Afghanistan,"

Kenton Keith told reporters in the

Pakistani capital Islamabad. Ali did not give the source of his information about bin Laden, whom the United States accuses of planning the September 11 terror attacks in New York and Washington.

Last week Ali said bin Laden had been seen around Tora Bora some days previously but added

SEE PAGE 11 COL 8

38 Hindus held in Satkhira for illegal entry

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

Police and BDR in a joint operation arrested 38 people from Kalaroa Bazar of Satkhira district at midnight on Wednesday for entering Bandladesh from India without any valid documents. Of them, 16 were male, 16

female and the rest children. Two separate cases were

recorded with Kalaroa police station in this connection the following day. The arrested people belonged to the members of the Hindu commu-

nity of Barisal, Jhalakathi, Barguna

and Pirojpur districts They told the police that they were compelled to go to India due to post-election violence. Their houses were looted and burnt by

"Now the situation has improved and we are going back to our ancestral homes", said Monindra Halder of Jhalakathi and Jogesh Dhali of Barguna. Laxmi Biswas and Dipa Biswas

armed hoodlums.

of Kaukhali upazilla in Pirojpur district alleged that armed hoodlums molested them on the night of October 8. "We are still afraid of SEE PAGE 11 COL 8

21 in last 21 days ascertain whether the victims

SHAIKH NAZRUL ISLAM

Incidents of killing in mob beating have gone up alarmingly in the city with at least 21 people killed in the last 21 days of this month. Mobs beat to death at least six

people in the four days of Eid

holiday and 14 in the first nine days of the month. All the victims were alleged muggers or extortionists, according to police. Another alleged mugger was burnt to death and two others injured when an auto-rickshaw in

which they were escaping was torched at Sat Mosjid Road in the city's Dhanmondi area. The reports indicate that in the face of rise in crimes, people are

taking law in their hands rather than seeking help from law enforcing agencies, sources said

were muggers or were victims of Of the victims, six were killed in

Sutrapur, five in Dhanmondi, five in Shyampur, two in Demra, two in Teigaon and one in Hazaribagh area. Of the six, four were killed in one incident in Sutrapur.

The highest number single-day killings was on December 9. Five people were killed on that day, followed by four on December 15. two each on December 1, 3, 6, 8, and 18, and one each on December 4 and 5, according to police record.

Of the victims, only five could be identified

At some of the spots, witnesses told this correspondent that such brutal incidents took place because police were not available In many cases police could not

But the main reason behind mob beating is that people believe if they hand over muggers to law enforcers, they will be freed in exchange of money, they claimed.

Another reason is that such killings in mob beating are rarely investigated, they claimed.

Several incidents of mob beating took place almost in the same places but police could neither identify the victims not could arrest the person who took law in their hands, they said.

Terrorists also kill their opponents in public, giving it a colour of mob beating, a witness said.

But police officials said they do not release the muggers handed over to them by mobs. They send them to court, which releases them for lack of evidence.

Hamas suspends suicide attacks inside Israel

The militant Hamas announced yesterday that it is suspending suicide bomb attacks inside Israel, after a day of clashes between its backers and Palestinian police in Gaza, reflecting Yasser Arafat's crackdown on violent groups.

The leaflet, with an official Hamas seal, was sent to The Associated Press in Gaza. It said the ban on suicide bomb attacks and mortar firing was in effect "until further notice." It said all members of the group, including the military wing, must abide by the decision.

Hassan Youssef, a senior Hamas official in the West Bank, confirmed that the organisation made a decision to stop the suicide bombings, which have killed dozens of Israelis and wounded hundreds during 15 months of Palestinian-

Youssef told The Associated Press that the decision was made "to preserve Palestinian unity." It came after a day of clashes in Gaza between Palestinian police and Hamas backers, as police tried to arrest a Hamas leader and stop a Hamas cell from firing mortars at Israeli targets.

The Hamas move was a victory for Arafat, who announced a ban on attacks against Israel during a speech Sunday, referring to the suicide bombings and other operations against Israel as "terrorist activity" for the first time. Up to now, Hamas leaders had resisted Arafat's

There was no immediate word from the second, smaller militant group in Gaza, Islamic Jihad, which has also sent bombers into Israel. Its leaders, based in Damascus and

Beirut, rejected Arafat's cease-fire call, labelling it 'surrender' to Israel.

In the Jabaliya refugee camp next to Gaza City, Islamic Jihad backers clashed with Palestinian police during the funeral of a 17year-old who was killed Thursday night in a clash between militants and Palestinian police.

Witnesses said about 300 people demonstrated in front of the Palestinian police post in the sprawling refugee camp. In an exchange of fire, a 12-year-old boy was wounded, they said.

Confrontations between militants and Palestinian police were reported Friday in both the West Bank and Gaza

In the Dir al-Balah refugee camp in central Gaza, about 400 Hamas supporters marched on the police station, throwing rocks and bottles, SEE PAGE 11 COL 2

Pledge to fight terrorism

BIMSTEC discusses 6 areas of cooperation

Delegates from Bangladesh, India, Myanmar, Sri Lanka and Thailand wrapped up a one-day ministerial meeting yesterday with pledges to fight terrorism and enhance economic cooperation. The ministers urged the international community to "comprehensively

combat terrorism in all its dimensions and forms. "For our part, we reiterate our resolve to support the international consensus and abide by the relevant international legal instruments against terrorism," the officials said in a joint statement.

The meeting of the association known as BIMST-EC, which groups

Bangladesh, India, Myanmar, Sri Lanka and Thailand, with Nepal present as an observer, was the fourth in the Myanmar capital. The meeting was made up mostly of commerce and deputy foreign

Myanmar's Deputy Foreign Minister Khin Maung Win, who chairs the group, said strides had been made in six areas of cooperation, and that

Myanmar could contribute to further teamwork by virtue of its location and "We are encouraged at the progress made in ... trade and investment, technology, transportation and communication, energy, tourism and fisher

200 journalists likely to cover **SAARC** summit

RAFIQ HASAN, Back From

Around 200 journalists from SAARC member-countries and other Asian, European and American nations are likely to come to Nepal to cover the next SAARC summit scheduled to be held in Kathmandu from January 4-6 next year.

Ministry of Information, seating arrangement for 200 journalists has been made in the main hall of Birendra International Convention Centre (BICC) at Baneshwar in Kathmandu where the summit conference will be held. They said all seven member-

According to sources in the

countries have already confirmed the number of participating journalists from those countries. Besides, European and American journalists also sent their

names to be enlisted for covering the u m SEE PAGE 11 COL 7

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