REGD. No. DA 781

Vol. XII No. 227

DHAKA FRIDAY DECEMBER 27, 2002

People's Right to Know

BHADRA 22, 1409 BS ZAMADIUS SANI 27, 1423 HIJRID 20 PAGES PLUS MAGAZINE PRICE: TK. 10.00

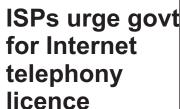
Janatar Mancha Case

Alamgir, Shafiur & 6 others chargesheeted COURT CORRESPONDENT

The Criminal Investigation Department (CID) has pressed charges against former state minister for planning Dr Mohiuddin Khan Alamgir and seven others in a sedition case (Janatar Mancha

Munshi Atigur Rahman, ASP of CID and Investigation Officer (IO)f the case, submitted the chargesheet to the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's (CMM) Court, Dhaka yesterday.

The seven others are former secretary and incumbent Election Commissioner Shafiur Rahman. former director of Narcotics Control Department Syed Bazlul Karim, former students relationship officer in the Ministry of Education Abu Alam Shahid Khan, former joint secretary in the Women's Affairs Ministry and incumbent member of the public service commission Sirajuddin Ahmed, senior assistant secretary (now OSD in the establishment ministry) Rabiul Alam SEE PAGE 11 COL 8



STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Internet Service Providers Association (ISPA) yesterday urged the government to give its members Internet telephony license on easy terms so that they can provide people with cheaper telephony.

The country can earn billions of dollars by legalising VoIP (Voice over Internet Protocol) as there are huge potentials for cheaper Internet telephony in the Asia Pacific region, ISPA President Akhtaruzzaman Manju told a press conference at the Jatiya Press Club here.

It was also addressed by, among others, former president of ISPASM Iqbal, its secretary general Ershad Shafi Chowdhury, treasurer Azhar Chowdhury, and executive committee members Sumon Ahmed Sabbir, Syed Farhad Ahmed and Rezaul Hassan.

Quoting a report of the 6th International Asia Pacific VoIP Seminar held recently in Singapore, Manju said Internet telephony in the region will rise to 600 billion minutes and generate a revenue of

SEE PAGE 11 COL 1



Awami League President Sheikh Hasina takes former commerce minister Abdul Jalil, who was later elected general secretary of the party, into confidence during the inaugural ceremony of the triennial council at the Paltan Maidan in

ISPs urge govt for Internet Jalil succeeds Zillur

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Sheikh Hasina was yesterday re-elected unopposed president of the Awami League at the party's triennial national council at the Paltan Maidan in the city.

The councillors also chose Abdul Jalil to succeed long-serving general secretary Zillur Rahman. The former commerce minister, too, faced no contender.

A three-member election commission, headed by former education minister ASHK Sadique, declared Hasina and Jalil president and general secretary respectively, as there was no response to its invitation for candidature to these posts. Later, after her election to presidency for the sixth

term straight, Hasina designated 37 office-bearers in the 73-member central working committee. The rest would be announced soon as per the party constitution. Thousands of councillors and delegates articulated their support to Hasina's leadership, as the former prime

minister asked her party colleagues to find a new leader in her speech as the outgoing president. As the election commission invited nomination for presidency, former foreign minister Abdus Samad Azad proposed Hasina, seconded by presidium members

Amir Hossain Amu and Suranjit Sengupta. The councillors greeted with cheers as the election

commission declared Hasina's re-election Abdur Razzak proposed Jalil as the general secretary candidate while Obaidul Quader and Sheikh Fazlul Karim Selim seconded his candidature. There was no other candidate

Meanwhile, the council adopted a number of amendments to the party's manifesto and organisational struc-

According to the new organisational structure, the party will have a 73-member central committee, a 71member committee at each city and district, a 67member committee at each municipal and upazila and a 51-member committee at each ward.

In the working session, member-secretary of the manifesto subcommittee AKM Jahangir Hossain placed

the proposals and they were adopted by voice vote. Ataur Rahman Khan Kaiser placed the party's economic policy and HN Ashiqur Rahman the party's accounts of income and expenditure for last two years. During this period the party earned Tk 11,27,70,000 and

spent Tk 6,83,52,000. The following are the office-bearers of the central

working committee Presidium: Johra Tajuddin, Abdus Samad Azad, Zillur Rahman, Sajeda Chowdhury, Amir Hossain Amu, Abdur Razzak, Tofail Ahmed, Suranjit Sengupta, Mohiuddin Khan Alamgir, Matia Chowdhury, Sheikh Fazlul Karim Selim, Kazi Zafarullah and Ataur Rahman Khan Kaisaer

Joint secretaries: Obaidul Quader, Syed Ashraful Islam and Mukul Bose

Organising secretaries: Saber Hossain Chowdhury, Abdul Mannan, Akhtaruzzaman, Mahmudur Rahman Manna, Sultan Mohammad Monsur Ahmad and Abdur

Finance and planning secretary: Professor Ali Ashraf: law secretary: Sahara Khatun: international affairs secretary: Syed Abul Hossain; education secretary: Nurul Islam Nahid; agriculture secretary: Dr Abdur Razzak; labour and manpower secretary: Habibur Rahman Siraj; publicity secretary: Asaduzzaman Noor: deputy publicity secretary: Asim Kumar Ukil; assistant office secretary: Mozammel Hossain: religion affairs secretary: Sheikh Abdullah; environment affairs secre

SEE PAGE 11 COL 2

Deaths, torture in custody disgrace to civilisation

President calls for an "end to these"

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

President lajuddin Ahmed yesterday said deaths in custody, torture on prisoners along with repression on women and children are disgrace to civilisation.

"We all want an end to these," the president said, adding that inclusion of chapters on human rights in national education curriculum would raise awareness about

President lajuddin was addressing the inaugural session of the eighth National Convention and 24th founding anniversary of the Bangladesh Society for Enforcement of Human Rights (BSEHR) at the LGED auditorium in the city yesterday.

The president lauded the role of human rights organisations and pointed out that human rights activists and organisations had come forward to protect the rights

of the unaware section of the society by imparting training and extending legal aid.

Speaking on the occasion, former chief advisor of the caretaker government Justice Latifur Rahman said adversaries to human rights abound in an underdeveloped country like Bangladesh, and poverty and illiteracy are the major reasons that undermine human rights

posters lent the sprawling Paltan

Maidan an air of festivity. The

podium was also elegantly deco-

rated. Most of the banners were

inscribed with demands for release

of AL leaders and workers arrested

to rejuvenate the main opposition

party that had been in doldrums

since its debacle in last year's

and there is no more time for us to

"A lot of time has been wasted

Yesterday's council was aimed

across the country

general election.

SEE PAGE 11 COL 3

Buriganga taskforce suggests ways of saving river

BSS, Dhaka

Members of a taskforce yesterday made several recommendations to protect the environment and remove illegal establishments on both sides of the river Buriganga to maintain its navigability as well as

The recommendations were placed at a meeting held here with Shipping Minister Lt. Col (retd) Akbar Hossain in the chair. The taskforce members Land Minister M Shamsul Islam, Minister for Housing and Public Works Mirza Abbas, DCC Mayor Sadeq Hossain Khoka, Prof. Abdullah Abu Sayeed, The Daily Star editor Mahfuz Anam and Md. Quamrul Islam Chowdhury attended the meeting.

The recommendations include compulsory certificate to be obtained from BIWTA before approval for construction of any establishment within 50 metres and SEE PAGE 11 COL 1

Geeteara new Dhaka Club president

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Geeteara Safiya Choudhury of Adcom Limited has been elected president of the Dhaka Club.

The elected executive members are Jahangir Shah Badsha, Tulu Kalimulla, Ruhul Amin Babul, Oliur Rahman, Lutse Nazib Khan Rumi, Zahed Huda, SM Baktier Alam, Niaz Md. Khan Boby, Khandakar Mahbub Zaman and Sved Igbal

Elections to the 11-member

Rejoinder and our reply

Premier Bank in a rejoinder to a story headlined "BB leash squeezes directors' loans" published in The Daily Star on December 22 has said none of its directors had taken any

New faces crowd out old guards STAFF CORRESPONDENT

New leaders have emerged as the majority in the organisational structure of the Awami League (AL), while a number of old ones have apparently said goodbye to vital

The 17th national council of the AL yesterday brought some structural changes to the 53-year-old

However, the council did not pronounce the names of well-known leaders like Mohammad Nasim and Professor Abu Sayeed in the central committee yesterday, as the full list of new leaders was not announced. Earlier, Nasim was organising

secretary and Sayeed the information and research secretary. The number of the central com-

mittee members has reached 73 up Six more posts have been added

to organising secretary. They are new generation leaders: Śaber Hossain Chowdhury, Abdul Mannan, Mahmudur Rahman Manna, Mohammad Akhtaruzzaman, Sultan Mahmud Monsur and Abdur Rahman. Apart SEE PAGE 11 COL 3

Hasina asks partymen at council opening session of the council. Colourful banners, festoons and

Get ready for tough

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

battle ahead

Awami League (AL) President Sheikh Hasina vesterdav asked her party representatives to prepare for a tougher struggle against "oppression" by the coalition government of Prime Minister Khaleda Zia. "They (the rulers) won't stop

repression or quit power only if they

are asked to. You must launch a tougher agitation for which you may find yourselves repressed like never before. But you have to hit back," she told the 17th triennial council of the 53-year-old party. Kicking-off the council at Paltan

Maidan in the capital, the opposition leader called upon the government to immediately stop "political vendetta, conflict, ill-designed propaganda and conspiracy to spare the nation from a deep crisis".

Some 15,000 representatives inclusive of nearly 6,000 councillors from across the country participated in the council. Leaders of some other opposition parties, professional bodies, diplomats and noted citizens also attended the

waste," Hasina said in her bid to energise her party deputies. She also stressed on revamping her party's countrywide network and

asked the delegates to launch a membership drive. "You have to make the people aware of the misdeeds and corruption of the coalition government. Explain them how this government has miserably failed to protect the people's lives and property. Stand

up to its propaganda and establish SEE PAGE 11 COL 4

loan facility from the bank. Reply: The Daily Star story was based on Bangladesh Bank statistics which showed loans against the bank's directors.

China offers HYV rice technology

Hainan governor hosts banquet for PM

share experiences and intensify cooperation in the fields of agriculture and tourism to the benefit of the The agreement was reached in a

Bangladesh and China agreed to

meeting of visiting Bangladesh Prime Minister Khaleda Zia with government leaders of Chinese island-province Hainan yesterday. "We will work untiringly to

expand the existing friendly relations," Wang Ziopeng, Governor of Hainan Province, said later speaking at a banguet hosted in honour of Prime Minister Khaleda Zia on the penultimate day of her five-day official visit to China

Just before the banquet. Khaleda Zia and Wang Ziopeng led their respective sides to a meeting that discussed possible areas of cooperation between Hainan and Bangladesh.

At the meeting at Boa Aguapalis

Golden Hotel, Khaleda Zia was assisted by all ministers and state ministers accompanying her while the Hainan Governor's team included officials from his office.

Khaleda Zia sought technologi-

cal know-how of developing high-

yielding varieties of rice, fruits and The province, with an agrarian economy, plays a significant role in meeting the food need of China supplying its high-yielding rice,

quality fruits and vegetables. Prime Minister Khaleda Zia proposed training of Bangladeshi farmers in cultivating the highvielding rice with similar technology

in Bangladesh. The Hainan governor gladly agreed to the proposal and offered his full support.

The meeting agreed to start official talks at the ambassador level immediately

> When Khaleda Zia asked about **SEE PAGE 11 COL 8**

IRON IN THE SOUL





dation and a lack of enforcement of any safety regulations have shadowed the success of these mills. For only Tk 80 to Tk 150, labourers risk their lives everyday working

dangerously close to metal-melting furnace and carrying heavyduty steel and irons. According to them, minor injuries are very common

Owners allege firm charging high price meters. The company has already started importing those from Import and sale of digital meters for

CNG autorickshaw

meter monopoly

JULHAS RIPON

CNG-run green autorickshaws and petrol-run mishuks have been monopolised by a company. This would result in much higher

price of the meters and a slowdown in their installation in the vehicles, sources said. The company -- Distribution One (DO) -- has fixed retail price of the

meters at Tk 7,500 each but sources in the transport sector said the price is supposed to be Tk 4,000 to 5,000. Nearly 2,500 four-stroke CNGrun three-wheelers and about the

same number of mishuks are now

plying in the city. The government had earlier made it mandatory to install meters in those vehicles from January1. Proper action would be taken in

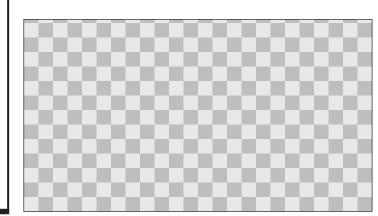
case of violation of this. Bangladesh Road Transport Authority (BRTA) permitted the DO on December 21 to import and sell

Taiwan.

The sources mentioned that lack of interest of the major importer of CNG-run three wheelers to import meters and absence of prompt initiative by the government to handle the situation have added to the undesirable situation concerning meters. Uttara Motors limited alone has imported 4,000 CNG-run autorickshaws, out of a total of 5000 permitted by the government so far.

When contacted, top officials of the (BRTA) said they permitted only one company to import and sell digital meters as other companies failed to meet the criteria for this. They however said more companies would be permitted to import if they meet the criteria.

Many of the owners and drivers of the three wheelers and mishuks alleged that the company is charge SEE PAGE 11 COL 7



STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Steel re-rolling mills have sprung up in the city's Postagola-Shyampur areas since independence to cater to the growing demand for housebuilding and other essential metal products. There are nearly 50 such factories in the city alone, employing nearly 5000 people.

These mills convert old wrecked ships into angle, grills, jet bars and other essential construction materials using gas-fired furnace. However, allegations of wholesale gas pilferage, environmental degra-

Locals of Postagola-Shyampur areas on many occasions have voiced their demand for removal of these factories from the area as these often create smog and other environmental hazards.