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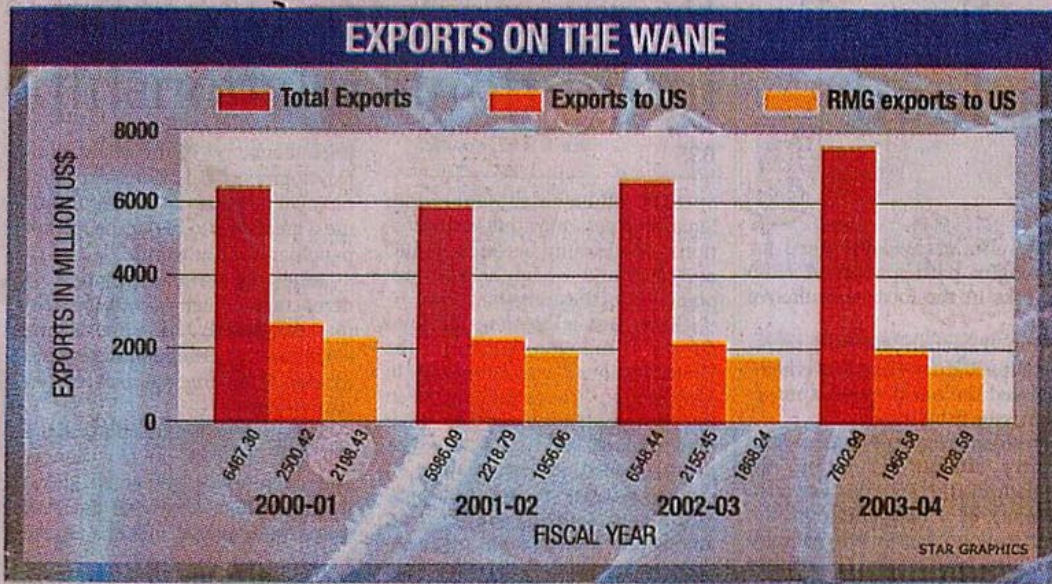


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People's Right to Know

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Exports to US set to dip further next year



MONJUR MAHMUD

Bangladesh is set to face a body-blow in its single largest export destination US with the income already dipping by US\$ 534 million or 22 percent in the last three years mainly for phaseout of export quotas on some garment items.

The US market may further shrink for Bangladesh garment exporters who will face stiff competition from China, India and some other countries when the open market regime begins next year with the abolition of all quotas.

Export income from the US reached the highest \$2500 million in 2000-2001 fiscal year, which came down to \$1966 million in FY 2003-04, due to a steep decline in earnings from the key export item, readymade garment (RMG).

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PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

Although people are struggling to cope with the spiralling prices of essentials, the city markets are getting ready to attract Eid shoppers. A small number of people now visit markets but shopkeepers believe the situation will change towards the end of Ramadan.

50 SIs under DMP being transferred

SHARIFUL ISLAM

Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP) authorities have already started transferring over 50 'incompetent' sub-inspectors (SI) of different police stations and the Detective Branch (DB).

The Police Headquarters also started giving postings of 'competent' officials from outside in the DMP.

The transfer process started soon after the DMP authorities sent a list over 50 SIs to Inspector General of Police (IGP) in the last week of September, a top DMP official said seeking not to be named.

Many SIs, panicked at the move, have been learnt to be lobbying with the police headquarters and DMP to stop transfer, said the source.

A number of SIs, preferring anonymity, alleged that the list was prepared not only on the basis of performance but also on consideration of loyalty to the present government.

Following a home ministry meeting in September, DMP Commissioner Ashraf Huda issued letters to the deputy commissioner (DC) of DB and DCs of DMP's east, west, north and south zones to

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Corruption check in public procurement

2 outsiders in 5-member body to scrutinise tenders, purchase proposals

REJAUL KARIM BYRON

A tender evaluation committee (TEC) will scrutinise tenders or proposals for public procurement from now on and two outsiders will sit on the five-member committee of the ministries concerned to ensure transparency.

The members from outside can be technical, commercial, financial and legal experts from other ministries, agencies, universities or reputable professional bodies.

"The outsiders are going to be drafted onto the committees for the first time to cut corruption and bring transparency to public purchase deals," a high official of the planning ministry told The Daily Star on condition of anonymity.

Public purchases involving more

than Tk 10 lakh in urban areas and beyond Tk 5 lakh in rural areas have to be evaluated by the TEC. A timeframe has also been set for completion of the entire approval process to discourage delays, the official added.

Any procurement is to be processed and approved in a maximum of four to eleven weeks and the winning bidder has to be notified about the work or supply order within the time.

The planning ministry issued a notification last week on Public Procurement Processing and Approval Procedures (PPPAP), which has been put into immediate effect, following presidential orders.

The approving authorities will fill out a checklist for procurement

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Water crisis still acute in some city areas

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Acute water crisis in some parts of the capital during the ongoing Ramadan has left thousands of residents in a miserable condition.

Residents of Mirpur-10, Nakhla, Shahinbag, Eskaton, sector 3 and 5 in Uttara area are worst sufferers due to shortage of water for the last few weeks.

Although deployment of army at different Dhaka Water Supply Authority (Wasa) pump stations has improved the situation of water distribution, some parts of the city are still getting much less supply of water.

Water borne diseases spread among the inhabitants drinking polluted water.

At Senpara Parbata under Mirpur area, sewer water leaked into water pipes a few days back, making the condition of about 40 thousand people miserable.

About two to three months ago, repair work of Wasa regional office caused serious damage to water supply line, resulting in supply of stinking water, local people said.

WASA authorities have not so far taken any step to solve the crisis,

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Tale of Biman's faulty F-28s

M ABDUR RAHIM

Biman's F-28 fleet of five aircraft appears to have become a burden to the national flag carrier as the ageing planes procured to save money face frequent technical faults, escalating maintenance cost and causing flight disruptions.

Although F-28s are known for recurring technical flaws, Biman authorities seem to have a liking for them, aviation sources pointed out.

Despite repeated technical troubles its previous F-28 fleet of three aircraft faced and opposition from pilots, Biman Bangladesh Airlines bought two 28-year-old F-28s in May this year raising the fleet strength to five.

On its maiden flight on June 6, one of the two newly bought F-28 aircraft could not take off from Zia International Airport (ZIA) on a flight to Jessore due to engine trouble, reminding Biman authorities of

its track record. The two aircraft bought from Hiebert Group Ltd. of Indonesia cost \$2.91 million.

Biman authorities however claimed F-28 planes are most suitable for short routes and its prices are also within the financial capability of the national flag carrier. But flight records of the two latest procured F-28s since their purchase showed the 1977-model aircraft developed the highest number of technical faults among the 15-

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Immersion of Durga today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bijoya Dashami will be observed today to bid farewell to Goddess Durga with due religious fervour.

Hindus celebrate Mahadashami Puja, the last day of five-day long Durga Puja, at the gaily-decorated Puja Mandaps across the country at 9.57am today.

Bijoya Dashami is the special ritual to reaffirm peace and good

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Academics term move to rename NU unjust

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Noted academics of the country yesterday described the National University (NU) authorities' move to rename the university Ziaur Rahman National University as unfortunate and morally unacceptable.

The senate of the NU at a meeting on Thursday decided to rename the institution. NU Vice-Chancellor Professor Aftab Ahmad made the proposal at the 10th session of the senate meeting that had barely filled the quorum.

Prof Serajul Islam Choudhury termed the NU's decision unjust, unfortunate and despairing. He, referring to Ziaur Rahman, a former president and founder of BNP, said it will rather make him controversial.

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5 soldiers hurt in fight with CHT 'rebels'

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Bandarban

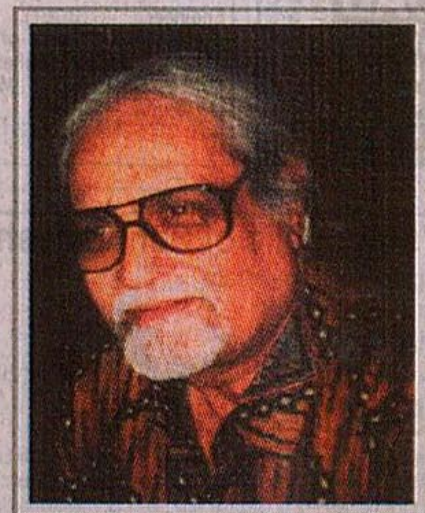
Five army personnel were injured, two of them seriously, during a firefight between the army and 'insurgents' yesterday morning.

'Insurgents' opened fire on an army convoy as it was crossing a water-body on engine boats near Betcharra, not very far from the district town, government officials in Bandarban said.

As the army returned fire, a terrible shootout began in which more than one hundred rounds of bullets were fired.

The 'insurgents' used rocket launchers and bombs during the

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Azimur Rahman
1935 - 2001

"Death is not the end of it but the hereafter is the eternal life"

Our love is for eternity...

- The Family