

International packaging materials provided free of charge! For every shipment...

FedEx Express
Bangladesh Express Co. Ltd.
Licensee of Federal Express Corporation

we live to deliver

On the occasion of our 1st anniversary Pizza Hut offers a very exciting meal deal at Tk. 99 only. This includes 1 PPP (Personal Pan Pizza) from the favourites line & 2 slices of Garlic Bread (usually priced at Tk. 157).

1st ANNIVERSARY OFFER
only Tk. 99

Offer valid for dine in & take away
6 December to 31 December 2004
12 noon to 4 pm

South Avenue, Gulshan 1
Between Shooting Club and Gulshan Circle 1
www.pizzahutbd.com

TRANSKOM FOODS LIMITED

RIVER-LINK PROJECT

Delhi should consult plan with neighbours

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

India should consult now with its neighbouring countries about its plans to link the rivers in India, speakers from Nepal and Bangladesh told an international conference yesterday on the Indian River-Linking Project (IRLP).

Former foreign secretary CM Shafi Sami told the conference that the idea must be explained to the people and the stakeholders as soon as possible to promote understanding and better regional cooperation.

"The lack of information on what India is considering might breed more conflicts and misunderstanding in the long run," he said presiding over the plenary session.

However, the Indian government's position was defended by George Verghese, a member of the taskforce in India that had been responsible for implementing the plan. He told the conference that the

idea was still only at a conceptual stage and the feasibility studies were not yet complete. He said the neighbouring countries should only be consulted once the proposals had been finalised.

He admitted that there had been some discussions with the UNDP and the World Bank but explained that this was because it would be necessary to seek funding for the project if it were to go ahead.

George Verghese, who was representing the Centre for Policy Research, New Delhi, also told the conference on 'Regional Cooperation on Trans-boundary Rivers: Impact of the Indian River-Linking Project' that the proposal would neither deprive the neighbouring countries of water of the common rivers nor destroy the biodiversity of the downstream regions as some had suggested.

He said the National Water Development Agency (NWDA) of

India had been trying to find a solution to the water scarcity problems suffered in the south-west and north of India during the dry season. It had come up with the idea of linking the rivers so that during the rainy season water could be saved and used in the dry areas at other times of the year.

Millions of people in a large part of India are living on land that could turn into desert, he said, and the Indian government must take precautionary steps to avert a possible disastrous situation. Bangladesh, on the other hand, is in a much better position, he noted.

"Transferring water from one place to another for human use has been a natural process from the beginning of civilisation." He criticised those people who oppose the river-linking issue by describing it as 'extraction' and 'anti-environmental'.

SEE PAGE 11 COL 3

Ruling coalition candidate wins Comilla by-poll

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Comilla

Ruling coalition candidate Zakaria Taher Samon won the Comilla-7 by-election held yesterday amid low turnout of voters and casting of false votes.

The BNP-led alliance candidate bagged 77,072 votes while his nearest rival Jatiya Party (Ershad) nominee Nurul Islam Milon polled 34,259.

The by-election boycotted by the main opposition Awami League (AL) was held almost peacefully.

The opposition candidate however alleged intimidation on voters by the ruling BNP men at different places during the polls while the ruling party candidate denied the allegation.

Seven candidates contested the election but only the BNP and JP polling agents were available at the centres.

Huge contingent of police, army, BDR and Ansar were deployed to maintain law and order.

The constituency fell vacant following the death of ruling BNP lawmaker KM Abu Taher.

TANORE RAPE Victim shifted to Dhaka after threat

ANWAR ALI, Rajshahi

The Rajshahi chapter of Bangladesh National Women Lawyers Association (BNWLA) sent the victim of the Tanore gang rape and her son to Dhaka yesterday, one day ahead of the schedule, fearing attack and facing pressure from certain quarters.

"We could not dare keep them in our office any longer, as I have been receiving repeated phone calls asking for their location," BNWLA Rajshahi division chief Advocate Dil Sitara Begum told The Daily Star before boarding a microbus with the woman and her eight-year-old son yesterday morning.

Dil Sitara did not name the callers but said they were influential people.

SEE PAGE 11 COL 7



Students and teachers of Siddheshwari Girls High School fly a black flag at the school premises yesterday to mourn their headmistress Sabera Begum Baby who along with her daughter was murdered on Thursday.

Attempts to disturb peace won't be tolerated: PM

UNB, Adamjennagar

Prime Minister Khaleda Zia yesterday said the prevailing peaceful atmosphere in the country has to be maintained to implement the development programmes initiated by the government and cautioned that any attempt to disturb the situation would not be tolerated.

"Development is possible only if there is political stability," she said while addressing a public meeting at Adamjennagar ground.

The prime minister assured continued efforts of the government

SEE PAGE 11 COL 7

Musharraf won't quit as army chief

REUTERS, Karachi

Pakistani President Pervez Musharraf has said he will continue to stay as army chief, reneging from an earlier pledge to quit the powerful post by the end of the year.

"I will remain in uniform even after Dec 31. I am telling you this for the first time," Musharraf said in an interview with the private Kawish Television Network late Friday.

Last year, Musharraf pledged to take off his military uniform by the end of 2004 in return for support for

SEE PAGE 11 COL 8

Garment worker gang-raped in Mirpur

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A garment worker was gang-raped inside the Martyred Intellectuals' Graveyard in Mirpur Friday night.

The 18-year-old victim was returning with a colleague to her Golarak residence through the graveyard at around 8:30pm when a gang barred them, the victim said.

SEE PAGE 11 COL 8

US won't strike Iran, DPRK over nukes

Says Powell

AP, Washington

Outgoing Secretary of State Colin Powell said Friday he doesn't regret being the public face for the Bush administration's international call to war in Iraq.

Now diplomacy is making headway in containing nuclear threats in Iran and North Korea, he said in an Associated Press interview.

The former Army general suggested he will remain in public life somehow.

"I've still got some treadwear left

on me," he said. Powell plans to leave office early next year. President Bush has nominated White House national security adviser Condoleezza Rice to replace him.

International pressure is putting a "heat lamp on Iranian nuclear activity, and the whole world is now concerned about it," he said.

North Korea, Powell said, is a problem that time may help to solve.

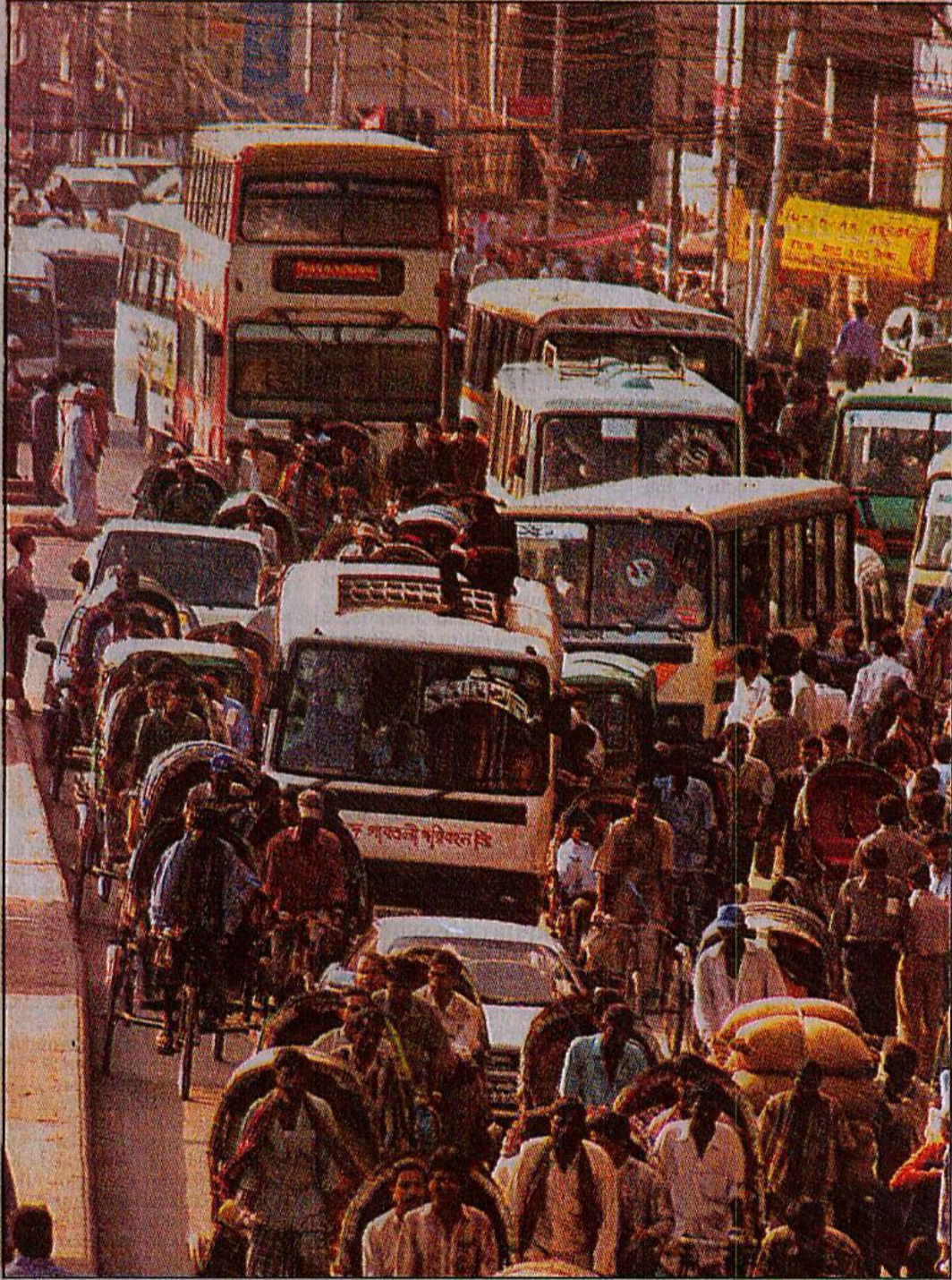
"The president is committed to finding a political, diplomatic solution. We believe that ultimately

North Korea will determine that is their best interest," he said.

Powell said there are no plans to launch a military strike on Iran, which has suspected nuclear weapons facilities, or to take military action in North Korea. Bush linked the two countries with Iraq as an "axis of evil" in 2002.

"In the Pentagon, people are always thinking about the unthinkable," Powell said of a potential Iranian strike. "But there are no military plans about to be launched

SEE PAGE 11 COL 6



Rickshaws clog Paltan road in a mockery of a daylong rickshaw strike enforced by the rickshaw-pullers in the city yesterday to protest the government making the road from Kalabagan to Azimpur out of bounds for the three-wheelers.

New antigraft body moves to check power abuse

Splits administrative wing from establishment

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The newly formed Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) has decided to designate two directors -- one to run the administration and the other to do establishment duties -- instead of one, in an effort to check abuse of office and strike an administrative balance.

The now-defunct Bureau of Anti-Corruption (Bac) had one director for the administrative and establishment tasks during its 47-year tenure. This led to allegations of misuse of power and corruption against the director in appointments, transfers

and promotions. Bac in 2002 sought government approval to separate the administration and establishment departments, but the government did not respond.

On December 14, the ACC decided on having two directors and accordingly, a new director for establishment in Mujibur Rahman Hawladar took charge yesterday. Hawladar, a joint secretary, is on deputation from the administration cadre.

The ACC earlier put Hawladar in

SEE PAGE 11 COL 5

BTTB to charge Tk5 peak-hour call charge for its mobile users

STAR REPORT

Telecom watchdog Bangladesh Telecommunication Regulatory Commission (BTRC) yesterday approved the call tariff for the mobile phones of the Bangladesh Telegraph and Telephone Board (BTTB), which is now expected to launch its service before the year-end.

SEE PAGE 11 COL 8

Prayer Timing		
December 19		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	5-20	5-55
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	3-45	4-00
Maghrib	5-22	5-25
Esha	7-00	7-30

Source: Islamic Foundation

Crushing defeat looms again

BISHWAJIT ROY from Chittagong

A bright morning turned into a gloomy afternoon for Bangladesh by the close on the second day of the second Test against India at the MA Aziz Stadium yesterday.

Buried under an avalanche of

runs on the first day, where India scored 334-2, the Bangladesh bowlers led by young paceman Mashrafe Bin-Mortaza and experienced left-arm spinner Mohammad Rafique fought back gamely in front of a capacity crowd.

SEE PAGE 11 COL 4

From your GP Mobile dial 2002 and listen to the latest cricket related information

GrameenPhone
Official Sponsor of Bangladesh National Cricket Team

শীতের শিখতায় গ্রীষ্মের উজ্জ্বলতায় বর্ষার উদ্দমতায় কিংবা যেকোন ঋতুতে-কেয়ারী সিন্দাবাদ-এ বেড়িয়ে আসুন

টেকনাক থেকে সেন্টমার্টিন

যত্নসহকারে রূপমার্চের দেশ আমার বাংলাদেশ। উজ্জ্বল গ্রীষ্ম আর গভীর বর্ষায় স্বপ্নময় হয়ে ওঠে টেকনাকের সৌন্দর্য। টেকনাকের শিখ সমুদ্রের পানি দুরন্ত হাতছানি দেয় মায়াময় ছেড়া দ্বীপ সেন্টমার্টিন। শীত-গ্রীষ্ম-বর্ষার রূপলাবন্যে যৌবনবর্তী হয়ে ওঠে সেন্টমার্টিন দ্বীপ।

টেকনাক থেকে সেন্টমার্টিন দ্বীপে "কেয়ারী সিন্দাবাদ" আপনাকে পৌঁছে দেবে একান্ত আতিথেয়তার আর সর্বোচ্চ নিরাপত্তায়। আল্লাহপাকের ইচ্ছায় দুর্ঘোষণাপূর্ণ আবহাওয়ায়ও এটি পুরোপুরি নিরাপদ। "কেয়ারী সিন্দাবাদ-ই" প্রথম সমুদ্র উপযোগী যাত্রীবাহী জাহাজ। যেটি জামনির লয়েড-এর সরাসরি তত্ত্বাবধানে নিযুক্ত।

অগ্রিম টিকেট, বুকিং এবং বিশেষ প্যাকেজের জন্য যোগাযোগ করুনঃ

কেয়ারী লিমিটেড

উপরে: অফিসঃ কেয়ারী ট্রাভেল (৬৪ তলা)
১৬ সাতসারিলাল রোড, বাসস্টেশন ৮/এ, ঢাকা।
ফোনঃ ৯৬১২০৮১, ৯৬১২০৮২, ৯৬১২০৮৩, ৯৬১২০৮৪
ই-মেইলঃ keari@keari.com.bd

কাজখানার অফিসঃ হোটেল সিগনোর শাইন
১৬ সেন্টেল রোড, কাজখানার।
ফোনঃ ৯৬১১২৮১, ৯৬১১২৮২, মোবাইলঃ ০১৮১-০৬৬৯০৬
ই-মেইলঃ keari@ghskati.net

চট্টগ্রাম অফিসঃ কেয়ারী হোল্ডিংস
১নং বর্শাক হাজারী লেন, চকবাজার, চট্টগ্রাম।
ফোনঃ ০৩১-৬২৪১৮২, মোবাইলঃ ০১৭১-১১৬৬০১
ই-মেইলঃ keari@fnibd.net