

Thai Airways to link Ctg with NY from May 1

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

The Thai Airways will start direct flights on the Chittagong-Bangkok-New York routes beginning May 1 to "cater to the need of the people of Chittagong, including businessmen, foreign citizens and tourists residing in the port city."

The flights will operate thrice a week -- Sunday, Wednesday and Friday -- from both ways and the most sophisticated Airbus 340-500 will be arranged from Chittagong to New York with transit facility in Bangkok. Weerawat Swasditbutra, general manager of the Thai Airways International told yesterday afternoon to journalists at the Chittagong Press Club.

Swasditbutra said the airlines will SEE PAGE 15 COL 1

Indo-Pak media hail 'irreversible' peace

AGENCIES, New Delhi

Indian and Pakistani newspapers yesterday hailed a declaration by the two countries that their peace process was "irreversible" and expressed optimism over what they called a win-win situation.

"The jury is still out on whether the two sides will live up to declared promises but ... (Pakistan President Pervez) Musharraf's visible sincerity in all he said calls for optimism, even ebullience," the top-selling Times of India said in an editorial.

"The general leaves saying there is no going back," said the Indian Express.

Dawn, Pakistan's oldest English-

language daily, said the fact that the two leaders met while their countries played cricket gave the peace process "popular legitimacy that should augur well for the future".

Earlier the US welcomed the joint statement by Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and Pakistan President Pervez Musharraf as "tangible breakthroughs" that will allow better people-to-people contacts between both countries.

The 57-member Organisation of the Islamic Conference also hailed Monday what it described as the "positive results" of peace talks between India and Pakistan in New Delhi.

Indian Prime Minister

Manmohan Singh and Musharraf, who met at least four times during the Pakistani leader's three-day visit to New Delhi, said in a joint communique Monday "the peace process was now irreversible".

The nuclear-armed rivals agreed to work for "a final settlement" on disputed Kashmir, the trigger of two of their three wars, boost people-to-people contact through cross-border trade and travel and enhance trade ties.

"All those sound bites add up to just this: the Indo-Pakistan peace process is on track," said the Indian Express. "If we play it right, in this positive sum game, both could SEE PAGE 15 COL 7

Anti-graft body summons former Nepal PM Deuba

AFP, Kathmandu

Nepal's anti-graft commission yesterday summoned sacked former premier Sher Bahadur Deuba to answer allegations of irregularities in a scandal involving embezzlement of state funds.

"The commission has ordered Deuba to appear before it (within 24 hours) to explain the allegations of irregularities concerning a multi-million-dollar water project and the misuse of the Prime Minister's Relief Fund," an official with the commission said.

The Royal Commission for Corruption Control was formed by King Gyanendra after he dissolved the Deuba-led coalition government SEE PAGE 15 COL 1



PHOTO: SK ENAMUL HAQ

A day labourer quenches his thirst with a glass of unhygienic, coloured drink in the capital in a hot and humid day yesterday.

2 boys appear before Bogra court on charge of ransacking

UNB, Bogra

Two boys appeared before the Court of District Magistrate in the town yesterday in a fabricated criminal case.

The magistrate, however, showcased the plaintiff of the case, Sumi, for implicating the two minors in her case.

It all happened when Goshaihari Union Parishad in an arbitration recently asked Akkas Munshi and his wife Sumi to leave Goshaihari SEE PAGE 15 COL 3



PHOTO: STAR

Angry students set fire to a truck in front of Jahangirnagar University yesterday after the truck driver refused to give way to a university bus.

Costly production turns profitable

Petrobangla's share in Sangu, Jalalabad gas fields goes up

SHARIER KHAN

Gas production under the Production Sharing Contracts (PSCs) that used to be very costly for the country a few years ago has now become profitable as Petrobangla's share in the Sangu and Jalalabad gas fields has gone up significantly.

About three years ago,

Petrobangla used to pay around \$20 million a month for purchasing around 220 million cubic feet gas per day (mmcf). Moreover, the government often had to defer payment to the oil companies and also face diplomatic pressure to pay in due time.

Petrobangla now pays around SEE PAGE 15 COL 4

BTTB service goes down with agitation

Staff protests on against Teletalk operations

MUSTAK HOSSAIN

The state-owned Bangladesh Telegraph and Telephone Board's (BTTB's) service is being greatly hampered as Telejogajog Sramik Kamachari Union (TSKU) continues to agitate for about a month against handover of the BTTB's mobile venture to Teletalk Bangladesh Limited.

Members of the TSKU at different exchanges keep off their duties for varying periods every day from late last month to join agitation programmes, causing the worst ever deterioration in customer service, many of the sufferers said.

The agitation has almost stalled different kinds of work, including commissioning of new telephone SEE PAGE 15 COL 3

EC allots symbols for CCC polls

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

The Election Commission (EC) yesterday allotted poll symbols to intending candidates for different posts in the Chittagong City Corporation (CCC) polls scheduled for May 9.

Twenty-one symbols were allotted for the mayoral race.

Of the two main contestants for the post of mayor, Awami League-backed and Chittagong Nagarik Committee-supported candidate ABM Mohiuddin Chowdhury got the symbol 'Hurricane' and the BNP-led four-party alliance nominee Mir Mohammad Nasir Uddin got 'Bicycle'.

Both contested the CCC polls in 1994 with the same symbols.

Earlier, Mir Nasir, also state minister for civil aviation and tourism, and Mohiuddin, incumbent mayor, informed the EC that they were interested in getting the same symbols also this time.

The EC also distributed 20 symbols SEE PAGE 15 COL 2

Prayer Timing		
April 20		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	4-25	5-00
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	4-45	5-00
Maghrib	6-27	6-31
Esha	8-00	8-30

Source: Islamic Foundation

