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COMMITTEE TO People's Right to Know

Biman's DC-10 with 215 aboard skids off runway



Mechanical fault forces flight from Dubai to belly-land at Ctg airport: 5 injured

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg
A Bangladesh Biman aircraft from Dubai narrowly escaped massive loss of lives of its passengers and crew yesterday morning while landing at the Chittagong airport as it skidded off the runway after it was forced to make a belly-landing due to technical faults in the plane's wheels and propeller.
All the 201 passengers and 14 crew on board came out safely from the aircraft after the plane skidded off and barged on the grassy land some 12 feet off the runway at



The DC-10 aircraft of Bangladesh Biman lies on a muddy patch, above, after it skidded off the runway of Chittagong Shah Amanat International Airport yesterday. Below left, passengers being rescued from the aircraft and right, two slightly injured passengers come out of the airport lounge.



Too wasteful for a losing concern

BJMC spends Tk 50 lakh 'extra' on 12 cars in two years

PINAKI ROY
A bleeding Bangladesh Jute Mills Corporation (BJMC) has spent as much as Tk 50.16 lakh in two years on fuel, maintenance and salaries of the drivers of 12 cars of the minister and other high officials of jute-related organisations.
All this happened when the BJMC was counting huge losses every year and suspended production in as many as eight of the 22 mills due to fund crunch, jute and Textile Minister Shajahan Siraj recently told parliament.
"The transport cost is very minimal compared to the huge losses that the BJMC incurs. But this money could have been saved as most of the car users have already had cars," said a BJMC official, wishing anonymity.
"If the government tries to find out the reason for the loss, it will find much more unusual cost," he added. "But who will bell the cat when most of the people are corrupt and the system is so bad?" the official asked.
According to the financial statement of the BJMC, its total loss stood at Tk 224 crore in 2004-05 financial year (FY), which was Tk 174.52 crore in FY 2003-04. In addition to that, it had to bear the extra cost for the minister and other high officials. From 1996-97 to May 2005, the loss totalled Tk 2,513 crore.
The minister, secretary, deputy secretary, personal secretary to the minister, former state minister, ex-chairman of the parliamentary standing committee on the ministry, and the police used those vehicles, sources said. They added many of them have had government cars

58 killed in 9 air crashes since '71

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
Fifty-eight people died so far in four of the nine air crashes in the country since independence.
The latest accident occurred in Chittagong yesterday as a DC-10 aircraft from Dubai with 201 passengers and 14 crew skidded off the runway.
According to official sources, the Biman flight BG-048 that left for Dhaka via Chittagong at



On June 8, a training aircraft of Bangladesh Air Force crashed onto a house at Uttara in the capital.

JMJB cadres to 'free' Bagmara of journos in five years

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi
Cadres of Bangla Bhai-led Jagrata Muslim Janata, Bangladesh (JMJB) have declared to have the restive Bagmara upazila free of journalists within next five years.
"We will carry out a unique mission over the next five years. During the period, no journalists will be allowed to stay in Bagmara. Neither will we let anyone [journalists] from Rajshahi city or elsewhere enter the area," locals quoted JMJB cadres as saying at Hamirkutsa Bazar on Thursday night.
Led by Mustafizur Rahman Mustaque, Majnur Rahman, and an outlaw-turned-JMJB cadre Afzal Hossain, a large group of JMJB activists paraded the roads of Hamirkutsa the same night.
The JMJB operatives made the announcement at Hamirkutsa Bazar, apparently irritated by frequent patrols by Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) and police following The Daily Star reports in last few days.
During their stay, they hurled abuses at The Daily Star correspondent, and said "from now on journalists are prohibited from operating in Bagmara".
DU Treasurer Prof Syed Rashidul Hasan on several occasions had

Less qualified staff reign in DU

Home district, political affiliations main criteria for recruitment

HASAN JAHID TUSHER
Political affiliations and home district appear to be the main criteria for appointing officers and third and fourth class employees at Dhaka University (DU), which most often leads to appointment of less qualified candidates depriving the competent ones.
Official sources said the current DU authorities leaning towards the ruling BNP-Jamaat coalition have appointed some 100 officers and more than 600 lower grade employees in recent years. Allegation goes that almost all of these employees were appointed either on political or parochial consideration.
Besides having affiliation with the ruling parties, the other easier way to bag the class III and class IV jobs is being an applicant from the greater Noakhali, Comilla and Chandpur districts, sources said. Most of the officers and employees appointed in the last few years were from these particular areas.
DU Treasurer Prof Syed Rashidul Hasan on several occasions had

Another grenade recovered from Savar

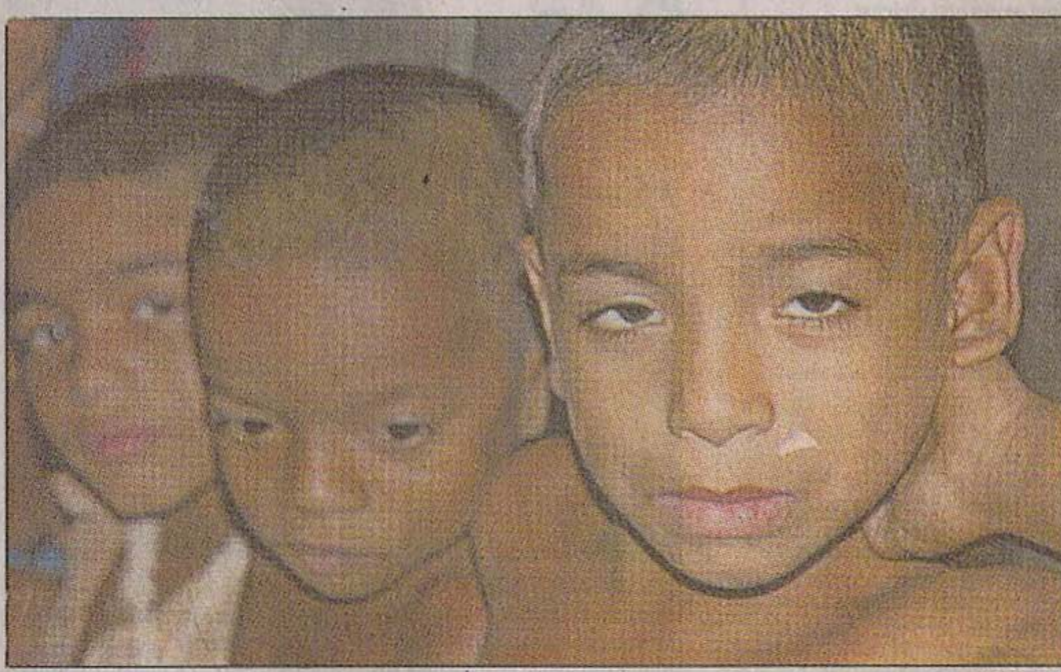
STAFF CORRESPONDENT
Members of Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) last night recovered a grenade from Shalipur in Amin Bazar area under Savar Police Station.
Following the statement of an arrestee, Nazrul, a team of Rab-4 went to the area at about 9:45pm and found the grenade.
"The Argus type grenade was hidden under earth beside a bridge," Saber Sharif, commanding officer (CO) of Rab-4, told The Daily Star last night.
Rab had earlier recovered three grenades from Savar area. "Nazrul's name came out when we grilled some persons arrested in connection with the recovery of grenades," the commanding officer said.
Savar police arrested drug peddler Nazrul, also an accused in a police murder case, on June 23. Rab took him on remand twice to know about grenades.
"Nazrul yesterday, the third day of his 5-day remand, confessed to possessing the grenade and told us about the location where he hid it," the CO said.
"We are still quizzing him to learn about the source of the grenade," he added.

CPB keeps off AL's move for common reform agenda

REAZ AHMAD
The Communist Party of Bangladesh (CPB) is finally keeping off the Awami League (AL) and its allies' move to formulate a common agenda by July 10 for reforms in the caretaker government and electoral systems ahead of the next general elections.
CPB President Manjurul Ahsan Khan informed AL General Secretary Abdul Jalil on Thursday over telephone that his party would not be involved in any move for a common reform agenda.
Earlier on June 28, the CPB had made it clear at an 11-party alliance meeting that it would not go with the AL on the reform issue.
Jalil told The Daily Star last night, "We will (AL, JSD, NAP and 11-party) sit tomorrow (Saturday) again to attain our target of preparing a common agenda by July 10 at the latest."
In reply to a question, he said, "I don't know if for sure but CPB president has assured me of continuing simultaneous anti-government movement even if the party does not like to join us in formulating a common reform agenda."
When contacted yesterday, the CPB president admitted to his telephonic talks with Jalil, and clarified his party position saying, "We have fundamental differences with Awami League. We had floated the 11-party alliance with the goal of evolving an alternative political force beyond the AL-BNP bipolar political culture. But I think there is nothing that can hold us back from continuing a simultaneous movement."
Asked if the 11-party combine is heading for a formal split when its other components go with the AL on the common agenda issue despite CPB's reservations, Manjurul said, "This (split) is inevitable because building an alliance with Awami League or BNP goes against the very spirit of the 11-party."
JSD (Inu) chief Hasanul Haq Inu termed the CPB move a 'stab from the back' in the process of building a united movement.

HEALTH HAZARDS IN TENGRATILA No sign of let-up in fire, agitation on

IQBAL SIDDIQUEE, Sylhet
There is little sign of a let-up in the raging gas field fire at Tengratila as the inferno continued for the seventh day with flames leaping up to 350 feet yesterday afternoon.
Meantime, Niko Resources has given a compensation of about Tk 1.19 crore in 345 cheques, said a Press Information Department (PID) news release yesterday.
Locals continued agitation against Niko's move to drill a relief well to seal the main well. The locals fear the move may cause another disaster.
Four physicians from the Sylhet MAG Osmani Medical College and Hospital have set up a camp at Tengratila to treat the ailments



Children suffer from fever and breathing problem following the June 24 Tengratila gas field blowout and fire that still continues.

Amir's chehlum cancelled, wife forced out of brother's house

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
Police and several ruling party adherents yesterday forced Aklima Akhter, wife of CNG-run autorickshaw driver Amir Hossain, who died from burns sustained on the May 21 hartal, out of her brother's house in Mayakanan in the capital.
Locals said police and BNP men went to the house at about 11:00pm on Thursday and compelled the family to cancel Amir's chehlum, a post-death rite.
They said the forced cancellation came as Awami League leader Saber Hossain Chowdhury had given Tk 10,000 to arrange the ritual. The family was also forced to return the money, they added.
However, Aklima said she has just

Tri-series final today

REUTERS, London
England and Australia have met four times in the past three weeks but the serious business begins in earnest with Saturday's NatWest one-day series final.
With Bangladesh removed from the equation, the two teams go head-to-head in four one-dayers and five tests over the coming two-and-a-half months.
Until now, excuses and explanations have been available both to the world champions and their nearest challengers.
Australia's Twenty20 defeat by England, according to Ricky Ponting, was something to laugh off

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