METROPOLITAN/NEWS

The Daily Star

Corruption, politicisation bring health sector to a halt

monev."

reflection of that

over Tk 3 crore

Awami League is voted to power.

AL leaders tell seminar

DHAKA THURSDAY OCTOBER 20, 2005

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Widespread corruption, politicisation and anomalies have brought the health sector to a halt, said the Awami League leaders at a seminar yesterday.

Due to financial irregularities, the World Bank, one of the largest development partners, has even suspended disbursement of fund for the Health and Population Sector Programme (HPSP), they said. The leaders also said that the

government brought the health sector to the verge of ruin by giving appointment to less qualified physicians on political grounds, enrolling ruling party activists to post-graduate medical courses and closing the planned operation of some 8,500 community clinics.

The alliance government soon after its takeover has suspended all the projects, including the community clinics, initiated during the previous

AUG 17 SERIAL BLASTS JS official on fresh remand **COURT CORRESPONDENT**

Abu Taleb alias Babul Ansari, assistant security officer of the parliament secretariat, was shown arrested in a case and taken on remand yesterday. Detective Branch (DB) of police

produced Ansari and his accomplices-- Giasuddin Azad, Mizanur Rahman Badsha, Saimum Islam Jewel and Azizul Haque -- before the Court of Chief Metropolitan Magistrate, Dhaka on completion of their five-day remand.

Meanwhile, the investigation officer (OC) submitted a petition for showing Ansari arrested in a case filed with Demra Police Station in connection with the August 17 serial bomb blasts. The IO also sought a seven-day remand for interrogation.

The forwarding report placed before the court said that Ansari is an active member of the banned Jama atul Mujahideen Bangladesh (IMB).

Ansari gave significant leads about the serial blasts during the previous remand. He needs to be further interrogated for more information, especially the details about others involved in the countrywide bombings, the report said.

After hearing, Metropolitan Magistrate Syed Mujibul Haq granted him a five-day remand for interrogation.

activists of his The four others organisation 'Allahr Dal', were sent to the Dhaka Central Jail as there was no petition for further remand for them.

AL rule, they added.

health minister Sheikh Fazlul Karim Selim MP said that politicisation and corruption are evident in the recruitment of staffs and teachers at the Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University and Hospital.

'Most of the appointments are illegal. In 2001, the university had 207 teachers and physicians and 693 support personnel. Today the figure rose to 1,224 and 1,838 respectively, whereas the hospital has only 979 beds. Many of the employees even have no place to sit," he said.

Moreover, the ruling party men are plundering public funds in the name of procurement of equipment for the hospital, he alleged.

The former health minister said the community clinics, appointing docgovernment has launched a revised tors and staff on the basis of merit, drug policy recently, excluding the creating vacancies for doctors, nurses provision of controlling drug prices. and staffs, setting up a training insti-'This is nothing but an opportunity for tute for capacity-building and revising a few business magnets aligned with

the drug policy. Prof Atiur Rahman said that reducthe alliance government to make ing the child and maternal mortality Referring to the Transparency rate was the main goal for the alliance International report, he said the government, but there has been no sign of success in the last four years of health sector has become the most

corrupt sector and the report is a its rule. Party's acting General Secretary The AL presidium member said the Obaidul Kader, former state minister government has allocated Tk 17 crore for health Prof M Amanullah, noted economist Dr Atiur Rahman, former for procuring a 'linear accelerator pro-vic-chancellor of BSMMU Dr machine' recently for cancer treatment at Chittagong Medical College Mahmud Hasan Prof Ruhul Huq, Dr Iqbal Arsalan and Prof Syed Modasser Hospital, but the actual price is not Ali also spoke.

He also presented a 10-point AL presidium member Motia proposal to be implemented if the Chowdhury was also present at the seminar moderated by Dr Mostafa The pledges include reopening the Jalal Mohiuddin

About 50 percent children are underweight making the country one of the most severe cases of malnutrition in the world, said a keynote paper at a

national workshop on food security and challenges. Quoting the reports of government, World Bank and the United Nations, the paper said recovery of 34 percent of the underweight children from malnutrition is non-attainable at the present rate of progress, while Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) target to halve the proportion of people who suffer from

ence room in the city yesterday.

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

hunger and malnutrition. Usha Mishra Joshi, senior advisor to World Food Programme (WFP), and AK Motahar Hossain, director general of Food Planning and Monitoring Unit (FPMU), presented the keynote at the workshop organised by the Ministry of Food and

Threat to censor board members

STAFF CORRESPONDENT A film producer yesterday threatened censor board members with dire conse-

quences for not giving certificate to his A board member told The Daily Star last night that Sharif Uddin Khan Dipu also hurled abusive words at them including noted actress Babita who attended the film show in the afternoon. Dipu was standing on the corridor of the film censor board office and threat-

ened the members when they were coming out from the show. The board decided not to give certificate to the film 'Encounter' as it contained a lot of vulgar and controver-

sial scenes and filthy dialogues. Censor board members also decided not to see any films unless Dipu is

brought to court.

Disaster Management in collaboraone percent annually and the impact tion with the WFP at IDB Bhaban in of climate changes.

Prime Minister Khaleda Zia holds a meeting with the secretaries of different ministries at the Cabinet Division confer-

'50pc children underweight'

the city According to World Bank MDG report, Bangladesh has far higher level of child malnutrition than expected at its present level of per capita GDP. This further underscores that access to available food is seriously limited, said the present-

They said about 70 percent people of the country were under food-based poverty line in the 70's. which now has come down to less than 50 percent meaning that about six crore people are still under povertyline.

"This number is also larger than most other global cases, leaving half the country far from being food secured," they added

Demographic changes in the upcoming years are likely to affect poverty and hunger in adverse ways, the paper said, adding, "Issues of governance and accountability further thwart the attempts at providing targeted safety nets."

The keynote paper apprehended secretary-in-charge of the Ministry that the production of crops in of Food and Disaster Management. Bangladesh would be compromised chaired the inaugural session of the by agricultural land decreasing at two-day workshop



Volunteer Against Disaster Rally organises a roundtable discussion Nari Sramik Karmachary Oikya on 'Worldwide disaster caused by recent earthquake and tsunami Bangladesh perspective'. Venue: Seminar room of the Department of Time: 11:00am Geography and Environment, DU. Time: 11:00am

Memorial meeting Moni Singha-Farhad Smriti Trust will

hold a memorial meeting to

Bakalpa Dhara Bangladesh organises a

Protest rally Sadhin Bangla Garments Sramik-

IOJ LEADER MURDER Investigation takes new turn STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

The investigation into the murder of Islami Oikya Jote (IOJ) leader Maulana Iqbal Bin Yakub has taken a new turn after the police arrested a housewife on Tuesday night in connection with the killing that took place in Chittagong on October 15.

The police suspected that an extramarital affair might have led to the brutal killing.

They arrested the woman, wife of one Sadek Anwar, an expatriate living in Korea. from her in-laws' house at Chatteshwari Road. She was being interrogated at Kotwali Police Station.

Police suspected that Shakil, a brother-in-law of the woman, might have a link to the murder as he reportedly has been in hiding since the incident sources said.

The police yesterday raided five places in the city and several other places in Rangunia and Raozan upazilas to track down Shakil

Meanwhile, police arrested a businessman, MA Rahman, from a phone-fax shop at the New Market on Tuesday night in connection with a death threat given to Yakub's father and brother over phone.

Rahman is the vice-president of Chittagong Shop Owners' Federation.

The paper also suggested diversification of food basket to attain Vow to eliminate minimum self-sufficiency in the non-cereal food grains and improve terrorism

PHOTO: PID

"Any growth must come from

increased productivity that

demands investment in agricultural

research and education," it sug-

food security targeting the women

and children, as this strata of soci-

ety is the most vulnerable among

the hungry," said Edward Mathew

Kallon, WFP Deputy Country

Disaster Management Minister

Chowdhury Kamal Ibne Yousuf said

despite significant achievements in

food grain production, food security

at national, household and individ-

ual levels remain a matter of major

Muhammad Fazlur Rahman,

concern for the government.

Speaking as chief guest Food and

Director to Bangladesh.

gested

food access

"Our policy programme must BDNEWS, Dhaka aim at improving and enhancing

Speakers at an opinion exchange meeting vesterday vowed to eliminate terrorism at any cost and stressed the need for holding convention in the divisional headquarters to create awareness against the menace.

Unity Against Terrorism, a platform of professionals and civil society members, arranged the opinion exchange meeting at the Diploma Engineers' auditorium.

We will have to be united and resist the menace of terrorism from across the country as one after another bomb attacks crippled the country with state patronisation," Bangladesh Bar Council vice chairman Barrister Rokanuddin Mahmud told the gathering.

Justice KM Sobhan, Ramendu Majumder, Shamsuzzaman Khan, Prof Sultana Shafi, Dr Kamrul Ahsan Khan Sved Abul Maksud, Engineer Khobiruzzaman and Dr Sarwar Ali also spoke at the discussion

Regularisation of 7500 RHD staffs demanded

Parishad will hold a rally and form a human chain demanding arrears and STAFF CORRESPONDENT bonus before Eid. Venue: Muktangon

Leaders of three trade unions of Roads and Highways Department (RHD) yesterday demanded immediate regularisation of 7500 irregular employees who have been working for the last 13 years. Speaking at a press conference, they also demanded measures for giving salary and festival bonus to the irregular employees. The press conference was organised by Bangladesh Roads and Highways Employees Union (BRHEU), Bangladesh Roads and Highways Workers Union (BRHWU), and Bangladesh Road and Highways Workers Employees Union (BRHWEU) at Dhaka Reporter's Unity (DRU) auditorium in the city. BRHEU General Secretary Md Moazzem Hossain in a written statement said the ferry jetties of the country will be closed automatically if the irregular employees are relieved of their duties. The leaders also announced programmes, including rally in front of Sarak Bhaban in the city and at district offices on October 23, 24 and 25, submission of memorandum to the prime minister on October 27 and a human chain in front of Sarak Bhaban at 11:00am on October 31.



Police officials inspect bomb-making materials and Jihadi books seized from the rest house of Bhangatikor Jame Masjid at Sheikhghat in Sylhet yesterday. (Story on Page 1)

Join politics to Tata wants a stake in face secular **Barapukuria** mine forces Minister urges Imams

UNB. Dhaka

The AL organised the seminar on 'Prevailing crisis in the health sector and its solution' at the Rajuk auditorium in the city. Presenting a keynote paper, former

Police arrested Ansari at his Green Road Staff Ouarters residence on October 5 in connection with his militant link. Later, he was shown arrested in a

case filed with Tejgaon Police Station in connection with the August 17 serial bomb blasts and taken on a 12-day remand in two phases

BRTC buses introduce half fare for the disabled **STAFF CORRESPONDENT**

The physically challenged persons will now be entitled to travel on BRTC buses at a 50 percent discount.

Transport Corporation (BRTC) has introduced this facility as part of the government's policy of extending cooperation to the disabled.

The BRTC distributed identity cards among 20 disabled persons at a programme vesterday, which will enable them to enjoy the facility Gradually all the physically challenged people will come under the programme.

Besides, two seats in each BRTC bus will be reserved for them, said the BRTC officials at the ID card distribution ceremony.

Communications Minister Nazmul Huda said the disabled persons with their dedication and commitment have proved that they can also contribute to society.

He also said that a similar discount will also be introduced in the railway.

Social Welfare Minister Ali Ahsan Mohammad Mujahid, State Minister for Communications Salahuddin Ahmed, BRTC Chairman Taimur Alam Khandakar, Barrister Joynal Abedin and Rafiqul Islam also spoke.

Tata Group wants a part of Barapukuria coal mine and its adjacent area to extract the fossil fuel for its proposed power plant and other

purposes. A delegation of the Indian industrial giant yesterday expressed the desire at a meeting with Energy Advisor Mahmudur Rahman at the Board of Investment (BoI) office. Mahmudur Rahman, who is also

the BoI executive chairman, told the Tata delegation that he would convey their proposal to the highest policy-making authority of the government. The Tata delegation, led by Alan

Rosling, executive director of Tata Sons, made a presentation on the group's proposed investment in the country's coal mining, particularly in Barapukuria. In the presentation, Barapukuria

coal mine and its adjacent area was divided into seven blocks. Of these, Tata is interested to extract coal

UNB, Dhaka

6:00pm today.

The state-run Bangladesh Road

the period. Met office said. Speaking on the occasion, Sitakundu and lowest 21.8 degree Celsius at Sayedpur. The sun sets in the capital at 5:28pm today and rises at 5:59am tomor row.

cities and towns yesterday were: City/Town

Dhaka

Chittagong Rajshahi Khulna Barisal Sylhet Cox's Bazar from four blocks using the open-cut mining technology.

But of the proposed four blocks, only one block has been developed where the Chinese operator, CMEC, was appointed to extract coal under an agreement with the government.

After expiry of the agreement with the CMEC in 2011, Tata wants to take over the operation of this particular part of the mine along with the other three blocks

The Indian industrial conglomerate also claimed that the open-cut mining technology is the most modern method in coal mining through which 90 percent extraction of coal is possible.

Meanwhile, another delegation of Tata Group separately met State Minister for Power Iqbal Hassan Mahmood at his Secretariat office. During the meeting, the Indian

business group expressed its interest to sell 200 MW electricity to the government from its proposed 1000 MW power plant.

No change in temperature likely

Rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty wind is likely at

many places over Dhaka, Khulna, Barisal, Rajshahi and Sylhet divisions and at

a few places over Chittagong division with moderately heavy falls at places till

Day temperature may remain nearly unchanged over the country during

Highest temperature 34.2 degree Celsius was recorded yesterday at

Highest and lowest temperature and humidity recorded in some major

Min

23.2

24.3

22.0

24.0

24.5

24.2

25.3

Humidityin

percentage

Evening

77

93

89

88

79

81

Morning

82

73

94

83

79

64

Temperature

in Celsius

Max

29.2

33.0

25.4

28.2

31.0

31.8

33.3

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Social Welfare Minister Ali Ahsan Mohammad Mujahid yesterday urged Imams to join the Islamic parties to face the secular forces in a bid to establish Islamic

rulein the country. "Once upon a time, Imams and devotees did not like politics but now time has come to join the politics to face the secular forces because it is impossible to implement the Islamic rule in the country without defeating the secular forces in the next general election," said Mujahid while addressing a national seminar.

Bangladesh Masiid Mission organised the seminar titled 'Present Bangladesh: Role and duty of Imams' at Mahanagar Natya Manchain the city.

Mujahid also blasted the progressive media for what he termed 'misreport' on Islamic forces and said these reports are prepared intentionally to tarnish the nage of Islamic forces.

Moulana Khalilur Rahman Madani read out a keynote paper at the seminar.

Secretary General of Masjid Mission Muhammad Khalilur Rahman, Prof Joynul Abedin and many other Imams spoke on the occasion.

Acute water, power crises at Demra, Shyampur

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The residents of Donia, Kajla, Noyapara in Demra and Shyampur in the city have been facing acute shortage of water for the last 15 days

Besides, they have been suffering from continuous power disruption for the last few months

Abul Hashem, a resident of Donia said, " For the last 15 days we are facing acute shortage of water.'

"And due to frequent power disrup tion, specially in the evening, study of our children are being hampered seriously, headded.

He said Dhaka Water and Sewerage Authority (Wasa) has taken no alternative step so far to supply water among the sufferers.

When contacted, Jahangir Alam Chowdhury, executive engineer, zone-1 of Wasa, said, the main problem is low voltage that leads to low production of water. The problem is almost solved.

They also filed a general diary with local police station after the threat.

Film censor hoard Chairman Dr Mahbubur Rahman was not present at thetimeoftheincident Bangladesh Film Censor Board in a

statement last night also informed the press of its boycott decision.

Earlier, another film produced by Dipu in the name of his wife also got objection from the board.

FROM PAGE 1

Barapukuria rejoinder, our reply

ous combustion events.

mines there are also the highest.

BCMCL can not fully depend on the

6,000 fatalities in China.

delayed for one year. Present indica-The Chinese contractor CMC has tions from data measurements provided mine staffs with selfsuggest that the area has been stabirescuers, which convert carbon lised... No mining expert can predict monoxide to harmless carbon dioxwithin days of this occurrence when the area will be accessed."

The rejoinder disagrees with the report on the question of the risks of leaving coal pits exposed to air for more than 24 hours, saying, "There is no rule that coal pits should not be exposed to air for more than 24 hours as this is totally impossible in a fully mechanised underground mining situation. Coal developof a chemical reaction of the coal's ments and production roadways carbon with insufficient oxygen.

must be left open and exposed to air Such an incident can be triggered by for periods of months and/or years neglect of different kinds. Crumbled to facilitate production ... " soft coal may spontaneously "No coal in the world is subject to combust at temperatures as low as 40 degrees Celsius.

spontaneous combustion following a 24 hour period. Typically the incubation period for coal is six to 12 weeks and spontaneous combustion only occurs in very specific conditions..."

"Investigation is ongoing to impossible to reach and extremely difficult and costly to put out.

BCMCL also ruled out the possibility of fire in the coal layer, saying the contractor has taken prompt technical measures and the mine was not saturated by carbon monoxide because the mine ventilation system diluted the gas.

contractor was not supposed to use vellow mud to cover exposed coal pits. The mud is used during the second slice mining.

temperature below 32 degrees

commemorate the 18th death Karmachary Federation, a body of anniversary of Comrade Mohammad garment workers and employees, will hold a protest rally demanding arrears Farhad. Venue: Trust bhaban, Purana and bonus before Eid. Venue: Paltan, Time: 5:00pm. Muktangon. Time: 11:30am.

Discussion

Human chain

discussion and an Iftar mahfil. Vneue: Sammilito Ainjibi Samannoy Parishad Central office of the Party, will form a human chain to realise their various demands. Venue: Supreme Shegunbagica. Time: 3:30pm.

> wisdom of a Chinese contractor. Keeping the Barapukuria coal, which is highly inflammable, for months is not a natural practice in the developed nations and such unsafe practices can not be passed as a mining rule.

International experts say that a temperature of 40 degrees Celsius is sufficient for self-combustion of soft coal, while Petrobangla in various meetings urged the contractor to keep the temperature below 32 degrees. BCMCL itself explains how yellow mud is effective in elimination of self-combustion. These are issues related to modern safety procedures practiced in Europe and USA.

> The draft-mining rule framed by the project's consultant, IMCL, also stresses importance on the use of vellow mud and temperature control for mine safety.

BCMCL's claim that the saturation of gas appears to be a 'localised anomaly' is confusing. If carbon monoxide has occurred naturally, it would not have saturated the mine

in the way it did. Globally, thousands of inextin-Whether it was the result of a guishable mine fires are burning, localised anomaly or hidden coal especially in China and India, where fire, experts assume that BCMCL poverty, lack of government regulawill not tap this part of the mine tions and runaway development unless it is safe. To make it safe, combine to create an environmental venting out the carbon monoxide disaster. China is the world leader in concentration alone will not help. coal mining, and fire accidents in the They say the miners will have to China's coal fires burn 20 30 eliminate the possibility of fire and million tons of coal a year. In 2004, excessive heat by cooling it. To official estimates calculated around cool it, the miners will have to pump in water, allow the water to These facts only prove that set in and later pump it out. This

process can take up to one year.

Obituary

Nuruddin Taufiqul Islam, a life member of the Institute of Engineers, passed away at his residence in

the city on October 16, says a press release.

A doa mahfil will be held at Sugandha Community Centre at Satmasjid Road, Dhanmondi, (opposite Medinova Hospital) after Asr prayers on October 21.

Relatives, friends, Rotarians, colleagues and well-wishers are requested to attend the programme.

Hajera Khatun

Hajera Khatun, wife of social worker Makbul Huq, passed away due to old age complications at a clinic in the city on Tuesday morn-

ing, says a press release

After a namaz-e-janaza at a mosque in Dhanmondi in the city, she was taken to Sherpur and buried at Sheikhhati family graveyard in Sherpur town.

Her gulkhwani will be held tomorrow at her house in Sherpur.

A mine fire is a fire that starts in a coal mine and burns underground. Mine fires can burn for months or vears, until the seam in which they smoulder is exhausted. Because they are underground, they are virtually

determine the causes of what would appear to be a localised anomaly."

BCMCL pointed out that the It added that keeping the mine

Celsius has no relation to spontane-

ide, the rejoinder pointed out. **OUR REPLY** The report did not say that the spon-

taneous combustion of coal pits happened within 24 hours of the coal's exposure to airit said that the coal was left exposed from May, which is operational negligence. According to mining experts, carbon monoxide occurs as a result