

Door-to-door express delivery

to over 220 countries & territories

Call 9565114 (24 hour Call Center)

FedEx

Express

Bangladesh Express Co. Ltd.
Licensee of Federal Express Corporation

Philips DVD Player

PHILIPS
sense and simplicity

Only @ 6,500/=

N'joy Movie without Ticket...

Customer Inquiry # 0172-665463 Dealer Inquiry # 0171404591

PM goes to Makkah tomorrow for OIC meet

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Prime Minister Khaleda Zia flies for Makkah tomorrow to attend the two-day third "extraordinary summit" of the Organisation of Islamic Conference (OIC) on December 7-8 called to finalise the organisation's 10-year programme of action to meet the challenges facing the Muslim Ummah in the 21st century.

Saudi King Abdullah Bin Abdul Aziz will also attend the summit.

SEE PAGE 15 COL 4

Lawyer hurt in Gazipur blast dies at DMCH

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Advocate Nurul Huda, who was critically injured in the November 29 blast on the district bar association premises, died yesterday, raising the death toll to nine in two suicide bomb attacks in Gazipur.

Huda succumbed to his injuries at the Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH).

SEE PAGE 15 COL 6

MOBILE POWER SOURCE

Govt to go for 8 plants before next polls

SHARIEF KHAN

After abandoning the scandalous small power scheme under the World Bank's pressure, the government is now resorting to install eight private skid or barge or trailer-mount power plants before the next elections -- which would be very costly and least efficient.

These plants will together generate 360 MW power.

Such plants typically cost three to five times more than the conventional plants of similar size, sources in the Power Development Board said. Whereas the Meghnaghat 450 MW plant charges Tk 1.8 per kilowatt hour, these plants may charge between Tk 4 and Tk 8.

Besides, experiences show that such plants cannot be installed within six or eight months' time if procured brand new ones.

"The only way the nation can

now procure and install skid or barge or truck mount power plants before the next national election is to buy them second hand," noted an industry insider.

Sources said like the previous attempt of a section of officials at the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) to award small power purchase contracts to different ministers and ruling party men, these officials are once again planning to award the deals to influential party men.

The Power Division of the energy ministry on December 1 in a notification said that the government has approved skid/barge or trailer mount plants to be set up in eight areas. These are: Kumargaon of Sylhet (20 MW gas based), Shahjibazar (20X4 or 80 MW gas based), Bogra (20 MW gas or petroleum), Katakali of Rajshahi (20 MW gas or petroleum), Thakurgaon (20 MW gas or petro-

leum), Fenchuganj (50 MW gas), Khulna (50 MW gas or petroleum) and Shikhaba (100 MW gas or petroleum).

The power ministry notification says these plants will be set up to tackle the power crisis in the next summer.

The PDB has been asked to start selling tender documents from yesterday with a deadline of January 16. The tender submission date has been fixed to be on January 17, tender evaluation deadline February 7 and the issuance of letter of intent and other clearances by February 28.

The notification says that the PDB will purchase the power from these plants in local currency under a 15-year contract. All these plants will have 'dual-fuel' provision. This provision makes a plant costlier, PDB sources said.

SEE PAGE 15 COL 3



PHOTO: PD

Prime Minister Khaleda Zia holds a meeting with the leaders of the FBCCI and other trade bodies at International Conference Centre yesterday.

Alliance meeting postponed over Jamaat-IOJ rift

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A meeting of the secretaries general of the four ruling alliance parties scheduled for yesterday was postponed on Saturday night as a result of the conflict between Jamaat-e-Islami and Islami Oikya Jote.

The meeting was scheduled to be held at the Sheraton Hotel.

SEE PAGE 15 COL 5

Rab asked not to give militant info to media

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

Members of Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) and police have been ordered not to provide any information about militants to journalists and not to let the media take pictures or video interviews of the militants.

An official order dated December 4 directed the Rab and police to follow the guidelines.

SEE PAGE 15 COL 3

RISE OF MILITANCY

Govt mulls 2 more battalions for Rab

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government is likely to add two more battalions to its elite force Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) against the backdrop of suicide attacks and alarming rise of militancy.

State Minister for Home Affairs Lutfuzzaman Babar at a meeting yesterday asked the Rab authorities to place a proposal to raise the number of its battalion from 10 to 12, sources said.

"Countrymen became panicked due to bomb attacks being carried out by the banned Jama'atul Mujahideen Bangladesh," Babar told reporters emerging out of the meeting.

"Two more new battalions are likely to join the Rab to bolster its capacity so that it can root out militancy from Bangladesh," he was quoted as saying by the BSS.

Once the proposal is approved, the 8,000-member force will be increased by another 1,376.

Presently, five battalions operate in and around Dhaka, and others have to cover 12 to 13 districts. Pressure on each unit increased immensely after militants went on bombing spree since August 17. Besides, the Rab authorities have to summon reinforcement from outside Dhaka on occasions like Eid, Puja, Ijtema and major political programmes.

"Each unit struggles to cope with the immense pressure when we call it back to Dhaka for 15 days or so," a top Rab official told The Daily Star.

With the top JMB leaders still evading the police dragnet, Babar asked Rab officials to beef up their intelligence network.

"The militants will be ideologically broken if the top leaders are caught," he said.

SEE PAGE 15 COL 3

Woman's body found in 14 pieces

DMCH CORRESPONDENT

Body of a young woman sliced into 14 pieces was found at the playground of a kindergarten school in city's Mohammadpur area yesterday.

The human pieces of the unidentified woman, believed to be a student of the school, were found scattered around the playground.

SEE PAGE 15 COL 8

BCS preliminary test results out

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh Public Service Commission (PSC) yesterday published the results of the preliminary test for the 27th Bangladesh Civil Service (BCS) examination where 26,500 candidates were selected for the written test against 1776 posts, a PSC press release said.

SEE PAGE 15 COL 3



SM Ali's birth anniversary today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Today is the 77th birth anniversary of Syed Mohammad Ali, founder editor and publisher of The Daily Star, better known as SMAli.

Born in Sylhet in 1928, SM Ali was the eldest son of late Syed Mustafa Ali, an official of the Assam civil service. He was born to a noted Bengali literary family.

SEE PAGE 15 COL 3

Terrorism, political strife bar growth

ADB sees 6pc GDP growth if risk factors do not deteriorate

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The GDP growth this fiscal year (FY) may level off at 6 percent provided some high-risk factors, particularly the overall security situation and political volatility, do not deteriorate further in the run up to the next general elections.

To safeguard the country and its economic progress, "the major political parties must work unitedly to root" proliferation of extremism and the terrorists, Asian Development Bank (ADB) Country Director Hua Du told a press conference yesterday.

In the Quarterly Economic Update for July-September FY06 launched at the conference in ADB

Bangladesh Resident Mission, the multilateral donor agency said the projected GDP growth rate hike from last year's 5.4 percent would be possible mainly thanks to a recovery in agriculture.

According to the update, besides the recent drastic downside in law and order, the other risk factors affecting the country's medium-term economic prospects include the longer-term impacts of the quota abolition on the garment sector, the implications of high oil prices on macro-economic management and weak governance.

"A stable domestic environment is essential for investment and private sector development,"

Hua told the press.

Terrorism now pervades the entire world, she observed and said global and South Asian leaders are committed and working hard to combat it, to see an end to it.

On terrorism in Bangladesh, she suggested for the political parties to deliberate on the issue and find way to address it domestically.

The ADB update identified the country's overall security situation as a major source of concern. In this connection it mentioned the frequent bombings and the Islamist militant groups in operation, adding, "In the run-up to the next elections, the political situation remains confrontational with

SEE PAGE 15 COL 3

Three ship-breaking workers die from gas poisoning

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Three workers died from inhaling poisonous gas trapped inside a scrap vessel

at Sagorika ship-breaking yard in Sitakunda upazila under the district on Saturday night.

The dead are Siddique Ahmad, 40, son of Abdul Baten of Mymensingh, Mohammad Kalam, 35, son of Munshi Mia of Barisal, and Mohammad Rafiq, 33, son of Abdul Wahab of Jamalpur.

Cutter Siddique got inside the scrap vessel MV Star but as he did not come out till 10:00pm, his fellow workers, Kalam and Rafiq, went to know his condition but all the three became victims of poisonous gas inhalation by 10:30pm, witnesses said.

Other workers recovered the bodies after the trapped gas was cleared out.

The bodies of the killed workers were sent to their village homes after autopsy.

Imams asked to preach against militancy

Director of controversial Kuwaiti NGO seen in meet with Babar

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Leading Aims (Islamic scholars) of the country yesterday asked the government to stop "wholesale" police drives in madrasas in the name of search for militants and seek permission from the madrasas concerned before any such raid.

Khatib of Baitul Mukarram National Mosque Moulana Obaidul Haque placed the demand on behalf of the aims at a seminar styled "Islam versus Militancy" organised by the Masjid Council for Community Advancement at the Osmani Memorial Auditorium.

State Minister for Home Affairs Lutfuzzaman Babar, who also addressed the seminar, agreed that the government does not believe that all madrasas are the hotbeds of militants. "The police will seek permission from the madrasa principals before any raid in the

future," he said.

Moulana Akramuzzaman, director of Kuwait-based NGO Revival of Islamic Heritage Society (RIHS) and believed to be a patron of militants in the country, also addressed the seminar.

Babar urged the opposition to sit in a dialogue with the government to discuss how to tackle the problem of militancy.

"Let us sit together putting aside

SEE PAGE 15 COL 8

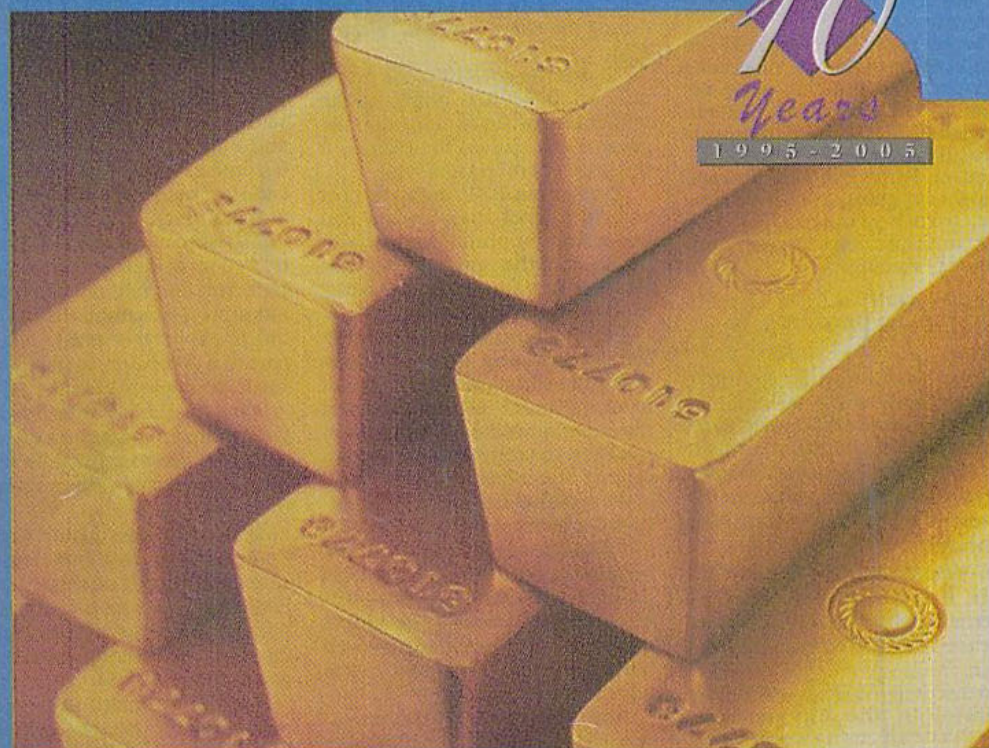
Prayer Timing

December 5

	Azan	Jamaat
Fair	5-15	5-50
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	3-45	4-00
Maghrib	5-19	5-22
Esha	7-00	7-30

Source: Islamic Foundation

Celebration Offer!

Celebrating
10 Years
1995-2005

1 (one) year and above

11.50% Interest on Term Deposit

This offer is only valid for a period upto December 31, 2005

সাউথইস্ট ব্যাংক লিমিটেড
Southeast Bank LimitedHead Office: 1 Dilkusha Com. Area (3rd Floor) Dhaka 1000 Bangladesh
PABX: 9550081, 9567271-2 Fax: 88-02-9550093 SWIFT: SEBDBDDH

www.southeastbank-bangladesh.com

One more step in the Progress of Islami Bank Bangladesh Limited

165thBranch Now at
Mohammadpur
Krishi MarketGRAND
OPENINGMohammadpur
Krishi Market Branch

On 05 December 2005, Monday

44, Probal Housing, Ring Road
Mohammadpur, Dhaka

4 More New Branches are going to be opened

in different important areas of the country in this year

Our cordial service is now at your Premises



Pioneer in Welfare Banking

Islami Bank Bangladesh Limited

Based on Islamic Shari'ah

www.islamibankbd.com