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7-yr-old boys charged with theft in shop

COURT CORRESPONDENT

Police on Sunday pressed charges against two boys in connection with a case filed for breaking open a shop and stealing valuables.

The accused are Robin, 7, son of Giasuddin and Sohail, 7, son of late Mohammad Shahid of Bizli Mohalla of Mohammadpur.

Sub-Inspector (SI) Abdul Latif of Mohammadpur Police Station, who is also the investigation officer (IO) of the case, submitted the charge sheet to the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate (CMM) Court, showing 12 people as prosecution witnesses.

Syed Sarwar Hossain of Bizli Mohalla in Mohammadpur filed the case against Robin and Sohail.

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Optical fibre cable stolen again

Tele-link thru' submarine cable disrupted

UNB, Cox's Bazar

Telecommunication with 22 countries and internet service were hampered for seven hours from 10:00pm Wednesday as criminals cut submarine cable here.

A police patrol team caught three people red handed while they were stealing optical fibre wire from two feet below the ground at Uttar Harbang in Chakoria upazila.

The criminals began cutting the optical fibre line at about 10:00pm on Wednesday and nearly completed the lifting wires at about 4:00am when law enforcers chased them, said Officer-in-Charge of Chakoria Police Station Ruhul Amin Siddiqui.

Three criminals -- Sabbir Ahmed, 38, Ahmad Hossain, 35, and Mahbubul Haque, 21, all from Villagerpara in Chakoria -- were arrested along with cables and wire cutting tools.

The submarine optical fibre line, opened in May last year, was brought up to Chittagong under the seabed from Cox's Bazar for better telecommunications and internet services.

TIB terms NGOs mid-level corrupt

Suggests forming independent NGO Commission

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Transparency International Bangladesh (TIB) has termed the NGOs of the country a mid-level corrupt sector and recommended forming an independent NGO commission to oversee their activities.

In a study titled 'Problems in good governance in the NGO sector: The way forward' released yesterday, the TIB noted lack of transparency and accountability in the sector as well as serious irregularities in their dealings.

TIB Research Officer Sadhan Kumar Das presented the study at a discussion at Cirdap auditorium in the capital. TIB Trustee Board Chairman Professor Muzaffer Ahmad presided over the discussion.

The study took into account the activities of 20 NGOs operating in different districts in six divisions in the country. Of them, one is an

international NGO, eight are national NGOs and 11 are local NGOs.

The study observed that many NGOs are registered with the government in exchange of bribes and some of those have existence only in paper and the government officials assist them in the process.

The NGO Affairs Bureau Director Salauddin Ali present at the meeting, however, disagreed with the study insisting that these are "sweeping allegations," adding that allegations should be specific, if any.

The range of corruption, however, could not be assessed as the NGOs did not provide TIB with adequate information and the NGO chiefs did not cooperate properly, the study said.

"Due to lack of transparency and autocratic attitude of the NGO chiefs, an environment is created where corrupt practices become obvious. They are not accountable

to the beneficiaries, rather to the donors," TIB Trustee Board Chairman Professor Muzaffer Ahmad said.

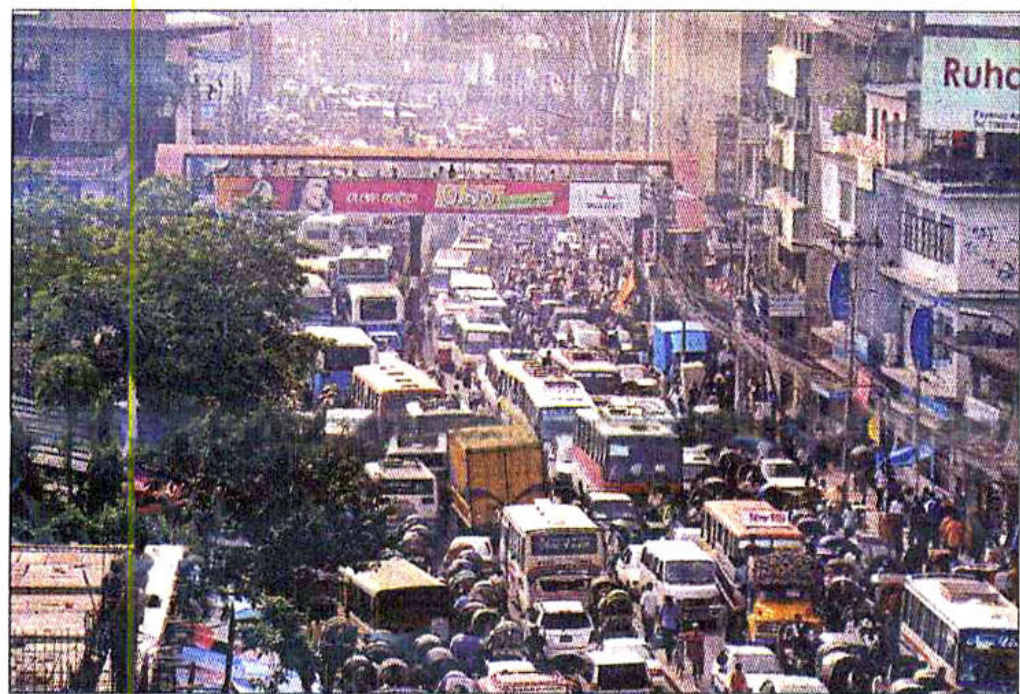
Noting that access to information from the NGOs was very difficult, Professor Muzaffer said that those who had information were not willing to talk or said that they did not have time.

A kind of centralisation has been found in the sector where the donors maintain relationships with the big NGOs, which are to assist the small ones. There are only a few NGOs that receive 90 percent of the resources from the donors, Professor Muzaffer said.

"We have to think how far this practice of corporate NGOs is justified," TIB Trustee Board chairman said cautioning that involving politics with rights-based activities of the NGOs may bring about dangerous result.

The study found that NGO

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Heavy traffic, a major cause for city dwellers' woes these days, paralyzes vehicular movement on Dainik Bangla-Paltan Road yesterday.

PHOTO STAR

Benazir upbeat over power-sharing deal

Asks Musharraf to quit army before polls

AFP, London

Former Pakistani premier Benazir Bhutto said yesterday she was "optimistic" about a power-sharing deal with President Pervez Musharraf and hinted she would not obstruct his re-election bid this weekend.

The two-time prime minister said nothing had yet been finalised on a so-called national reconciliation agreement that would grant her an amnesty on the corruption charges that drove her into exile eight years ago.

But she appeared to back down from an earlier threat that MPs from her Pakistan People's Party would resign from parliament, a move that would have robbed Saturday's presidential election of any semblance of credibility.

The Pakistani government also

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Get Prayer times from Warid Menu

Iftaar	Sehri
5.45 PM	4.32 AM

Sehri, Iftar timings

Ramadan	Oct	Sehri	Iftar
22	5	4-45	5-45
23	6	4-33	5-44
24	7	4-33	5-43

Prayer Timing

October 5		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	4-32	4-42
Juma	12-30	1-15
Asr	4-15	4-30
Maghrib	5-45	6-00
Esha	7-30	8-00

Source: Islamic Foundation

Lift emergency right now to hold local body polls in Jan

Zillur urges govt

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Awami League (AL) acting President Zillur Rahman yesterday called on the caretaker government to lift the state of emergency immediately saying that it is necessary for holding the local government election in January.

"It is heard that the local government election will be held in January. If it's the case, the government should lift the state of emergency right now," Zillur told the journalists at an Iftar party organised by Sweschhabek League at AL's central office on Bangabandhu Avenue.

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FLOODS IDA to give \$75m this fiscal year

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh will receive US\$ 75 million credit from the International Development Association (IDA) which will help finance part of the 2007-08 fiscal year resource gap incurred because of floods.

An agreement to this effect was signed yesterday between the government and IDA at the Economic Relations Division at Agargaon, said a press release.

Shaheedul Haque, additional secretary of Economic Relations Division and Mohamed Alhousseini Toure, acting country director of World Bank signed on

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Harris handed 3yrs for keeping forex illegally

Six high officials sent to jail in Rajuk house case

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday sentenced Harris Chowdhury, political secretary to former prime minister Khaleda Zia, to three years' simple imprisonment for possession of huge foreign currencies.

In the meantime, six high government officials including a secretary in office were sent to jail custody after they surrendered to a Dhaka court yesterday in connection with a graft case regarding the sale of 18 abandoned government houses.

HARRIS CASE

Judge Sayed Jahed Mansur of

Metropolitan Special Tribunal-9 handed down the verdict of the foreign currency possession case in Harris' absence in a packed courtroom.

The court also fined Harris Tk 10,000, in default of which he will have to serve six months more in prison. The punishment of the fugitive will be effective from the day of his arrest or surrender, the court said.

In his verdict, the judge said the charges brought against Harris were found to be true and therefore he was convicted of committing

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Rival Korean leaders issue peace call

Sign historic summit agreement

AFP, Pyongyang

The North and South Korean leaders called yesterday for a nuclear-free peninsula and a permanent peace pact to end the world's last cold war divide as they wrapped up a rare summit.

The historic foes agreed to step up trade, travel and political exchanges, including starting a freight train between the impoverished communist North and prosperous South and flights for the growing number of South Korean tourists.

North Korea's reclusive leader Kim Jong-Il, dressed in his trademark khaki jumpsuit, smiled,

shook hands and clinked champagne glasses with President Roh Moo-Hyun, only the second South Korean leader ever to visit Pyongyang.

The two leaders, closing the three-day summit, signed an agreement pledging to work for a permanent peace between the two Koreas, which remain technically at war after their 1950-53 war halted with only an armistice.

"The South and North will not take a hostile stance towards each other and will reduce military tension and resolve issues of conflict through dialogue and negotiation," the joint declaration said.

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GATCO CASE ACC quizzes 4 high officials

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) yesterday quizzed four members of the inter ministerial committee; which was involved in the process of awarding container handling job to Global Agro Trade (Private) Company Ltd (Gatco), and three incumbent bureaucrats in connection with the Gatco graft case.

The commission is likely to question some other bureaucrats of different ministries and Chittagong port officials in connection with the Gatco deal.

The ACC filed the case against 13 persons, including former premier Khaleda Zia and her younger son Arafat Rahman Koko, on September 2 on charges of awarding container-handling job at

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Tk 3CR EXTORTION Court to decide on charge sheet against Hasina, Rehana Oct 24

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday re-fixed October 24 to decide whether to accept the charge sheet against Awami League President Sheikh Hasina, her sister Sheikh Fazlul Karim Selim in a Tk 3 crore extortion case.

Metropolitan Magistrate KM Ruhul Amin set the new date following a time petition by the defence lawyers.

Earlier on July 24, the investigating officer (IO) and officer-in-charge at Gulshan Police Station, Obaidul Haq, submitted the charge

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