

## BANGLA NEW YEAR BDR, BSF exchange sweetmeats

A CORRESPONDENT, Benapole

Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) and Border Security Force (BSF) personnel exchanged sweetmeats on the occasion of Pahela Baishakh on Tuesday morning at Benapole check post, wishing peace and prosperity for the two neighbouring countries.

Company Commander Harun-or-Rahid of BDR camp at Benapole sent 10 kg sweetmeats as greetings on the occasion of the new Bangla year 1416 when BSF men sent the same amount on that day.

## Raise salary packages of 4 state-run banks

JS body asks authorities

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A parliamentary committee has directed the authorities concerned to increase the salary packages of four state-run banks in line with the private commercial banks ensuring profit sharing with their employees.

The parliamentary standing committee on the finance ministry at a meeting on Monday last said the managing directors of the four banks have

agreed to increase the salary as per its recommendations.

The four banks were corporatised during the last caretaker government, but the salary of employees was not hiked although the managing directors are enjoying handsome salary.

After a meeting at Sangsad Bhaban, AHM Mustafa Kamal, chairman of the standing committee, said it has already directed the management of the banks to increase the salary in line with private commercial banks.

"The managing directors have agreed to our proposal and will implement the decision soon," he added.

Around 51,000 employees are now working in state-run four banks Sonali, Janata,

Agrani and Rupali.

The parliamentary committee also asked the banks to have a uniform management policy with the approval of the finance ministry.

Kamal said the four banks performed well after they were corporatised.

They enjoyed net profits last year and were able to reduce non-performing loans.

Therefore, it is the time to share profits among the employees, he added.

The four state-owned banks performed better than before by realising around 50 percent of their default loans from top 20 defaulters and pulled off 94 percent of their targets from other defaulters in 2008, according to the latest review of the central bank.

## Transport strike on 18 routes called off

UNB, Khulna

The indefinite transport strike, called by the transport owners on 18 routes from 6:00pm yesterday, was called off for a week due to HSC examinations scheduled to begin today.

Leaders of Khulna Divisional Bus and Minibus Owners Association, after holding a fruitful meeting with district administration in the afternoon, took the decision to postpone the strike considering the HSC examinations.

Earlier, the association called the strike from 6:00pm yesterday on 18 routes of the division to press home their seven-point demand. The demands include halting the movement of human haulers on the routes and an end to police harassment.

The routes include Khulna-Barisal, Khulna-Patuakhali, Khulna-Satkhira and Khulna-Mongla.



PHOTO: FOCUS BANGLA

Traffic on a road near Moghbazar area come to a near halt yesterday afternoon. Overwhelming traffic jam is a regular phenomenon across the city. The photo was taken yesterday.

## BNP, Jamaat, JMB men to be put on trial for torture: PM

UNB, Rajshahi

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday said the government would bring BNP, Jamaat and JMB men as well as the patrons of the militant outfit to justice for torturing people during the BNP-led four-party alliance government.

The PM said this in a tele-conference with the Awami League leaders and workers at Bagmara upazila where Jagrata Muslim Janata Bangladesh had conducted a vigilante operation.

Hasina further said that the prices of essentials were brought under the buying capacity of common people. "The price will come down further in future," she added.

Adviser to Prime Minister HT Imam, lawmakers Emamul Haq and Abdul Wadud Dara, district AL President Tajul Islam Md Faruq and central leader Nurul Islam Thandu addressed the tele-conference with upazila AL President Makhbul Hossain Mridha in the chair.

## UNDP delegates call on Speaker

METRO DESK

A delegation of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) led by Renata Lok-Dessallien, UNDP Resident Representative and UN Resident Coordinator, met Speaker Md Abdul Hamid Advocate at his office at Jatiya Sangsad Bhaban yesterday, says a press release.

Matters relating to 'strengthening democratic process' project funded by the UNDP were discussed in the meeting.

The speaker said the 9th parliament has started functioning with immense hope and aspiration. He underscored the need for foreign training of members of the parliament, modernisation of library, establishment of database, interactive website and offices of the lawmakers.

He sought for increased assistance of UNDP to strengthen parliamentary system and building up infrastructure and develop IT facilities of the parliament.

Other members of the delegation are Kevin Deveau, parliamentary development policy adviser and Isabel Maria Corte-real, institutional capacity expert.



Finance Minister AMA Muhith unveils the cover of a foundation stone of the permanent campus of East West University at Aftabnagar in the city on Tuesday.

## Bangladesh-Ireland relations discussed

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Visiting Irish Minister for investment and coordination Conor Lenihan yesterday met State Minister for Foreign Affairs Dr Hasan Mahmud at his office in the city.

They discussed matters of mutual interests between Bangladesh and Ireland.

The state minister said Ireland could take skilled professionals from Bangladesh in IT sector.

The meeting also discussed investment and trade situation between the two countries.

Dr Hasan said there is large

scope for increasing bilateral trade.

After the present democratic government assumed power, an excellent investment environment is prevailing in the country, he said, adding the Irish investors can invest in Bangladesh availing the opportunity.

The state minister said Ireland is a friendly country of Bangladesh.

"We can cooperate with each other in different issues in international arena. Steps should also be taken to further strengthen relations between the two countries," he added.

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