

## Army pullout begins

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outside the cantonments for a few days more to check any outbreak of crime in the absence of troops.

But the army sources said the decision on whether or not there will be camps would be taken today.

The decision on the pullout was taken at a special cabinet meeting Thursday with Prime Minister Khaleda Zia in the chair. Around 24,023 army personnel and 339 navy members along with the paramilitary BDR, police and ansars began the Operation Clean Heart in the early hours of October 17.

Meanwhile, Inspector General of Police (IGP) Modabbir Hossain Chowdhury told BBC Radio last night that police would not face any difficulty maintaining law and order after the army pullout.

"The law and order situation has improved a lot," the IGP said. He believes police would be able to maintain peace. "It is also possible for police to improve the situation further," he said.

As many as 11,280 people, including 2,482 listed criminals, have been rounded up and 2,028 firearms and 29,754 bullets were recovered in the army-led drive.

In Natore, the joint forces raided Ramkrishnapur village in Lalpur Upazila Wednesday night and arrested Altaf Hossain Jhulphu, organising secretary of the Lalpur Upazila Awami League (AL).

The AL leader's father Abdul Aziz died of cardiac arrest the following day upon hearing the news. Jhulphu was released for

three hours to pay his last respect to his father. The Natore district AL protested the arrest.

The joint forces also held an alleged smuggler, Emdadul Haq Tikka, and BNP activist Sirajul Islam Nantu in the upazila the same night.

In Meherpur, the joint forces picked up Abdus Samad Bablu Biswas, president of the Sadar thana AL, on Wednesday. He was handed over to police.

The police headquarters in a press release said police picked up 1,238 people, including nine identified criminals, across the country in 24 hours until 6:00am yesterday.

During the drive, the law enforcers recovered one firearm and ten bullets. Cases were filed against three people under the Arms Act, the press release added.

The Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP) arrested 297 people in a special drive, said a press release yesterday.

## Mimi's body

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Energy Commission for grafting those in the damaged parts of her body.

But the doctors cannot say whether Mimi will survive or not.

"This can be said only after we see that no infection is taking place after grafting the artificial membrane in the damaged parts," Mimi's elder brother Parvez said quoting doctors.

Dr Shahidul Bari, Associate Professor and head of the Burn Department at Salimullah Medical College Hospital is supervising Mimi's treatment.

Babu and Arif are absconding. Police said they raided several places in the city and are hunting them.

## Gas flow

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city, more areas will be affected, said a top official of Titas.

Contacted last night, Managing Director of Titas Abdul Baset told The Daily Star that Titas increased gas supply in the city to 330 million cubic feet from 280 million cubic feet to avoid the crisis during winter.

At present, Titas lacks proper mechanism to cope with the problem, he said.

Even if Titas supplies more gas, it may not work because the capacity of supply pipes is limited, Baset added.

Unplanned urbanisation and mushrooming concrete structures have compounded the crisis, as more establishments mean more consumption, he explained. At present, nine lakh subscribers use gas in the city.

Asked about immediate solution to the crisis, Baset said Titas was thinking of launching a load management mechanism to ensure proper use of gas. Under the mechanism, the subscribers will be requested to use gas in shifts.

Meanwhile, official sources said Titas had taken up a gas development project to increase the gas flow.

Twelve city gate stations will be set up under the project. Titas will set up a gas distribution network to ensure proper supply to the city gate stations.

About 60 thousand gas meters to be imported soon will be installed to check the unlimited use of gas, the sources added.

## Dacoity at dyeing factory in Fatullah

**UNB, Narayanganj**

Armed robbers stromed into a dyeing factory at Kashipur Bholail in Fatullah thana Wednesday night and looted fabrics worth about Tk 6 lakh.

Police said a gang of 15 entered Mohiuddin Dying Factory at the dead of night, locked the guard, foreman and 12 other workers in a room, and decamped with the booty. A case was filed.

## Rokonuddin

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Mahmud pointed out that family members of any of the victims could challenge the Ordinance in the High Court.

It would be better if the aggrieved persons themselves challenge the Ordinance in the High Court in order to get a favourable verdict, he added.

## Shahdeen Malik

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that our international obligations are not overridden by the Ordinance," said Malik.

Commenting on the 'Joint Drive Indemnity Ordinance, 2003' promulgated on January 9, he said no victim of 'Operation Clean Heart' would be able to enjoy the right to seek justice as long as the Ordinance remains in force.

"If an aggrieved person now goes to a police station to file a case regarding custodial death or any other excesses and he is not allowed to do so because of the new Ordinance, he can go to the High Court and challenge the Ordinance itself," Malik added.

## Settle VC issue

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withdrew its appeal on December 15, 2002 and a new VC was appointed on December 31, the press release said.

The government asked the NSUF board to amicably settle the issue with Muslehuddin as the withdrawal of the appeal meant the government and he won the case.

But the university authorities did not take any initiative yet, the press release said.

Also, the appointment of a new VC was legally flawed, as Muslehuddin did not resign as the NSU VC.

Focusing on the legal aspects of the appointment of the new VC, the press release claimed that all work done these years, including signing of degree certificates by the pro-VC, lacks legal validity, as he was not appointed by the government.

Muslehuddin hopes the NSU authorities would take proper initiatives to settle the issue without delay.

## Afghanistan beaten

**FROM PAGE 1**  
Afghanistan to their credit didn't lose heart and inspired by their four Germany-based players, went close to equalising on a couple of occasions in the second half. The overly cautious Lankans however packed their defence to deny an Afghan fairytale.

Sri Lanka will face Pakistan in their next match while Afghanistan meet defending champions India tomorrow.

## TEAMS

Sri Lanka: Faurd, Azmeer (Mohideen), Steinwall, Kumara (Abeyssekera), Prabath, Weerasinghe, Channa, Devinda, Jayasuriya (Hameed), Mamsa and Mohamed.

Afghanistan: Jamshid, Najib, Zia, Omar, Rahil, Bashir, Nasir (Danish), Wahid (Rohila), Najibullah, Obaidullah (Elias) and Reza.

Yellow cards: Kumara, Prabath, Mohamed (Sri Lanka) and Ahmed Zia, Obaidullah (Afghanistan).

Referee: Budhi Bahadur Gurung (Nepal)

## Hospital waste

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types of waste including sharp things are collected separately. All these are then treated in treatment plants.

When contacted, Rezwana Hassan, executive director of Bangladesh Environmental Lawyers Association (BELA) said, "There are several laws defining types of waste but none of them mentions who would manage those. That is the main problem why no one has the responsibility to dispose of hospital or clinic waste."

According to an estimate, only in Dhaka metropolitan area, some 50 tonnes of waste, most of those contaminated with toxic chemicals, body fluids, contaminated blood and infectious materials, are generated everyday without being segregated at the hospitals or clinics.

Because there is no law on who would manage the waste, most of it is dumped in nearby municipal dustbins, creating health hazard.

Meanwhile, the Bangladesh Legal Aid and Services Trust (BLAST) has developed a draft guideline for hospital waste management.

The BELA in cooperation with Waste Concern, an NGO and Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (BUET) is preparing another guideline for hospital waste management, according to sources.



Prime Minister Khaleda Zia inaugurates the third South Asian Football Federation (SAFF) Championship 2003 yesterday at the Bangabandhu National Stadium in the city yesterday.

## Defiant DPRK dumps NPT

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led to begin at 9 a.m. (11 a.m. EST) Friday.

The two Koreas remain technically at war because the truce that ended their 1950-53 conflict never led to a peace treaty.

Friday's announcement followed an ultimatum from the Vienna-based IAEA Monday calling on North Korea to readmit the nuclear inspectors it expelled last month after announcing that it was restarting its plutonium reactor to produce electricity.

Some analysts have said impoverished North Korea is stepping up the angry rhetoric to win concessions from the West.

"North Korea always lays out the most hysterical rhetoric and stakes out the highest position just before they make a deal," said Brad Glosserman, of the Honolulu-based thinktank, Pacific Forum CSIS.

Pyeonggang threatened to pull out of the NPT before, during a 1993-94 nuclear crisis on the peninsula when it stepped back from the brink just one day before its three-month notice took effect.

Richardson, a Democrat, has a history of negotiation with the North Koreans that includes brokering the 1994 release of a US soldier whose helicopter crashed in North Korea and the freeing in 1996 of a young US citizen held on spy charges.

The North Koreans sought and won US government permission for two diplomats, including Han Song Ryo, its deputy permanent representative to the United Nations, to speak with Richardson.

"The intention is to hear what the North Koreans have to say," said one senior US official, adding that the State Department had agreed to the request "since we know Richardson is someone they talk to, they like to talk to, they can talk to."

## City's wholesale markets

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per cent of the expected value of a commodity. This kind of trading has the prospects of profit as well as risk of loss. Mangoes are one of the kinds of fruits that come within the scope of such advance trading. Other kinds of fruits, such as bananas are sold wholesale to the highest bidders through auction.

From economic and social points of view, this trading centre has great importance. Total daily transactions at this centre are reportedly in the neighbourhood of Tk 10 lakh, which supports the livelihood of more than 75,000 families.

Since the trading centre is located near the river Buriganga, most of the goods transported here are by boats and trawlers. Transportation through land by trucks is also substantial.

The environment of the trading centre however is far from satisfactory. The main problem is congestion, particularly in the vicinity of the areas where fruits are sold. The entry and exit points as well as passageways within this trading centre remain highly congested. And during rains, business deals become a very dirty affair as there are puddles of dirty rainwater all over the place and the stench from the garbage is simply horrifying.

Another important wholesale market for vegetables of all kinds is located at Karwanbazar, which serves as an important outlet to other city bazaars. The overall environmental situation at this wholesale vegetable market is deplorable. Most of the shops here are in the midst of dingy surroundings. There is no visible effort for improving the environment of this important market. The squalid situation here is in sharp contrast to

The United States, which has no diplomatic relations with Pyongyang, requires that North Korean representatives at the United Nations obtain permission if they want to travel more than 25 miles outside New York.

Richardson would not say what he would tell the North Koreans, but US officials said he would convey nothing more than the public US position that Pyongyang must scrap its nuclear programs and that no inducements would be offered.

In further efforts to end the crisis, Koizumi meets Russian President Vladimir Putin in Moscow Friday and French Foreign Minister Dominique de Villepin arrives in South Korea.

US Assistant Secretary of State James Kelly is due in Seoul Sunday and Japan's foreign minister visits three days later.

Diplomatic sources with close ties to Pyongyang told Reuters in Tokyo North Korea would agree to scrap its weapons plans if Washington reaffirmed a 2000 joint communique that declared the two nations had "no hostile intention" toward each other.

Washington had earlier offered the North talks but no negotiations and no incentives for scrapping the program.

President Bush says the United States has no intention of attacking North Korea, whose military is the world's fifth largest and deployed largely on its border with the South.

In Seoul, a spokesman for president-elect Roh Moo-hyun said he had named ruling party heavy-weight Chung Dae-chul as a special envoy to the United States. Roh, 56, has never visited the United States and is a relatively unknown figure in Washington.

Roh has come under pressure to

## Wheat ship diverted from Ctg to Mongla port

### Move to offset food shortage in six districts under Barisal division

**REAZ AHMAD**

A cargo ship reached the Mongla port Wednesday to offload around 12,000MT (metric ton) of wheat after it was diverted from Chittagong.

The government made the move to ride out the shortage of foodgrains in its granaries in Barisal division, said sources.

Food officials hope the shipment of 12,000MT wheat out of over 30,000MT in foreign food aid would offset the shortage of stocks in six districts of Barisal division until the vacuum is filled by the ongoing aman procurement drive.

Our correspondent in Barisal reported that the food officials wrote to the food directorate earlier last month, seeking a fresh supply of foodgrains for 72 local supply depots (LSDs) and one central supply depot (CSD) in the division.

Until last week, the warehouses with a storing capacity of over one lakh MT had a reserve of around 35,000MT.

But they had a stock of 72,150MT at this time the year

before, as the official statistics show.

The sources said the low foodgrains reserve in Barisal might threaten food security of the southern and coastal regions in case of any natural calamity.

Food officials in Dhaka, however, said the overall stock position in Barisal would improve thanks to a fresh intake of government-procured aman and foreign food aid. The national food reserve will increase too, they hope.

But this year, the government started the aman procurement drive on January 1 -- about one month behind schedule.

The officials put the current low reserve down to a massive release of rice from the public granaries under the state-run OMS (open market sale) programme late last year.

After release of three and a half lakh MT of rice from the silos under programme, the government has now hardly six lakh MT.

Responding to the request of the Barisal food officials, the government diverted the ship carrying

over 30,000MT of foodgrains to unload 12,000MT at Mongla and the rest at the Chittagong port, said an official.

"We have recently introduced the 40-60 per cent foodgrains offload system under which we will release 60 per cent to the Chittagong port and 40 per cent to the Mongla port. It is more cost-effective than trucking food from Chittagong to the southern region," the official explained.

Our Barisal correspondent added that 22 warehouses out of 73 in Barisal, with a storing capacity of 22,000MT, did not get any foodgrains.

The food officials in Dhaka admitted to it. But they said many warehouses are no longer used to stockpile food, as there were other warehouses in some command areas.

Besides, some warehouses were built in a hurry in the late 1970s without considering accessibility and transportation facilities.

The government now plans to sell out some of the warehouses, the sources added.

## 3 killed, 17 hurt in Fatikchhari bus mishap

**OUR CORRESPONDENT, Chittagong**

Three persons were killed and 17 others injured when a passenger bus fell into a roadside ditch at Baroihat in Fatikchhari upazila yesterday morning.

Police identified the dead as Shafiqullah, 45, Shahera Begum, 30, and her two-year-old son Sakhawath. They died on the way to Nazirhat Health Complex.

The injured persons were admitted to the Chittagong Medical College Hospital (CMCH) and different clinics in the city.

Sources said the accident occurred when the driver of the Chittagong bound minibus from Heyanku in Fatikchhari lost control over the steering.

The driver and helper of the bus managed to flee. Police seized the bus and filed a case.

## Homecoming

**FROM PAGE 12**  
Delhi on way back to Bangladesh, Bangabandhu had requested Indian Prime Minister Indira Gandhi to withdraw the Indian troops from the soil of Bangladesh. Responding to the request, the Indian government pulled all its troops out.

The speakers emphasised on the observance of Bangabandhu's Homecoming Day at state level.

AL general secretary Abdul Jalil, Zillur Rahman, Abdur Razzak, Amir Hossain Amu and Sheikh Fazlul Karim Selim took part in the discussion, chaired by senior Awami League leader Abdus Samad Azad MP.

## Moudud: Indemnity

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he had to draft law and ordinance which did not always match his personal views.

Held at the CIRDP auditorium in the city, the function was presided over by renowned economist and managing director of Grameen Bank Dr. Mohammad Yunus.

Former vice-chancellor of Dhaka University Dr Emazuddin Ahmed, The Daily Star Editor Mahfuz Anam, Holiday Editor Enayetullah Khan, Dr Devapriya Bhattacharya, Executive Director of Centre for Policy Dialogue, Dr Mizanur Rahman Shelly, Nazim Quamran Chowdhury and Mohiuddin Ahmed, Managing Director of University Press Limited also spoke at the function.

Moudud said he made some academic observations in his book on gas export.

Explaining his position, he said if the country has any surplus resources it should be utilised at this moment.

Moudud said the main theme of his book is to raise some key questions why South Asian countries are lagging far behind South East Asian countries in development.

Dr. Mohammad Yunus urged political leaders in South Asia to strengthen the SAARC and tighten the bondage among nations for overall development of the region.

"We will have to develop co-operation first before going for globalisation. Otherwise, all our development efforts will be slowed down".

He also urged politicians to free administrations and politics from corruption and to do "something meaningful" for the people.

In Bangladesh, politicians

always talk much but hardly implement decisions urgent for national development, he said. For example, information technology is yet to be opened for the masses only because of political indecision, he added.

Although Bangladesh has advantages over other nations in the region in different fields it is lagging behind in development because of some "artificial problems", Yunus said.

Criticising the recent ordinance, Mahfuz Anam said indemnifying alleged crime is a great tragedy for the whole nation.

He presented some positive and negative features of the book. Appreciating the 12-point suggestion made in the book, Mahfuz Anam hoped those will be implemented by the government as the author is a member of the cabinet.

He also criticised the government for not taking adequate initiatives to reduce the acrimony between the major political parties in the country.

The Daily Star editor also thanked the author for writing such a book while remaining directly involved in politics.

Dr. Devapriya pointed out that the book did not give any suggestion regarding revocation of the Special Powers Act and setting up of an independent anti-corruption bureau and a human rights commission.

He however said some of the suggestions in the book have already been incorporated in the government's policy and programmes.

## Tannery relocation

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However, the owners have taken full advantage of the situation by imposing 13 conditions. These include waiving mortgages of Tk 1,200 crore on their units at Hazaribagh and shifting the mortgages onto new units at Savar. They also demanded 300 acres of land on easy terms and huge amounts as compensation.

The Bangladesh Small and Cottage Industries Corporation (BSCIC) is the body responsible for implementing the project. Pre-ECNEC committee has okayed the project and now only the approval of ECNEC committee remains.

The Chairman of the BSCIC, MA Mannan, said the industry owners have agreed to the shifting but Secretary of the Bangladesh Tanners Association (BTA) Md. Abdul Hai said the move would not occur until their demands are met.

A source in the industry ministry claimed that the project is still "alive and kicking". He said the so-called 'unrealistic' conditions of the owners are nothing but a 'tactic to get a bargain for the relocation procedure'.

"We shall sign a memorandum of understanding with the owners after the ECNEC approval," the official said.

As the soil and water availability around the proposed Leather City has not yet been tested, the BTA has submitted a statement to the ministry including this point. According to BTA sources, water salinity has to be tested because fresh sweet water is required for tanning leather.

The government will provide Tk 194 crore of Tk 277 crore for project implementation. The remaining depends on foreign aid, sources said. According to the sources, the government will bear 43 per cent of the total cost, and 57 per cent will be considered as simple interest loan

to the tanners. The government will provide well-constructed roads, water, gas and electric supply line -- all free of cost.

To protect the environment, a Central Effluent Treatment Plant (CETP) will be devised at Leather City costing about Tk 77 crore. Later it will run by the BTA and the Bangladesh Finished Leather Goods and Footwear industries, according to the proposal.

Hannan, BSCIC chairman, has said, on ECNEC approval the tannery industries will be relocated to Savar by 2005. As for the CETP he said, "As we do not have adequate knowledge to run the CETP, we might get some foreign consultants."

But Md. Abdul Hai believes it will take at least 10 to 15 years to shift the industries.

Meanwhile, the Bangladesh Environmental Lawyers Association (BELA) has sent a legal notice to the tannery association and ministries concerned. They are planning to file a petition for the removal of the toxic industries out of the city. Syeda Rizwana Hasan, director (program) of BELA, told The Daily Star.

## Mercury dips

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day was in Teknaf, 24.2 degree Celsius. The lowest temperatures in Srimangal and Iswardi were 9.5 and 7.0 degree Celsius.

The lowest temperature recorded in the country to date was 2.8 degree Celsius in Srimangal on February 4, 1968 and the lowest in the capital was 4.5 on February 18, 1953.

The met office yesterday forecast further fall in temperature in the 48 hours from 6.00pm Friday. They said the temperature might fall by one degree Celsius during the next 24 hours, particularly in the north and northwestern regions.

Meanwhile, the cold wave is likely to last for another day but temperature would not vary much during the next one week or so, weather experts said.

The met office also predicted thick fog in many places in Rajshahi and Khulna divisions and some regions of Tangail during the next twenty-four hours.

A severe cold wave is also likely to sweep over the same regions and some parts of Chuadanga in the next two days, the met office further said yesterday.

Our correspondent, Nishith Ranjan Saha, from Pabna reported that three people died from cold in 24 hours. The death toll stands at 35 in Pabna district alone, since the winter began last year.

Reports received here say that many deaths were not reported, especially from the river basins where travelling has become extremely difficult owing to thick fog and chilly winds.

The dead in Pabna were identified as Arman, 80, who died yesterday in Majipur village in Algharia

apuzila. Kasiruddin, 38, died yesterday in village Raghobpur in the same upazila. Six months old Zahedul Haq Golap died yesterday in Pabna Sadar hospital.

Our correspondent also reported that distribution of relief materials was inadequate and most people in the char areas did not get the warm clothes being distributed by the district administration.

Reports also say that inter-district traffic movement was severely disrupted due to the dense fog on the river basins and highways. Many night coaches especially from Lalmonirhat, Kurigram, Dinajpur, Rangpur, Joypurhat and Bogra could not leave for the capital on time due to poor visibility at several points on the highway.

Our Barisal correspondent has reported that the cold wave has claimed seven lives in the district.

The dead are Bimal Halder, 31, and Harikundu Das, 65, of Nabagram, Abdul Majid, 70, of Amtali, Alam Khan, 65, of Nalchity, Shamsunnahar, 50, and Alam, 32, of Uzirpur and Shishu Bala, 70, of Agairzhar. A report from Khulna says at least six people died in different areas of the district owing to severe cold on Tuesday and Thursday. The dead have been identified as Amir Ali Ghazi, 55, Noorjahan, 62, Halima, 58, of Dhophkha village, Berek Sheikh, 60, of Chetieni and Narim Ghazi, 75, of Badda village and Arshad Fakir, 65, of Daulatpur. Four people died in Moralganj upazila of Bagerhat district. They are Nesaruddin Sheikh, 64, of Kalikabari, Jahanara Begum, 70, of Baraikhal, Hamiuddin Sheikh, 80, of Bajoraha and an unidentified woman of the same village.