

UN votes to lift Iraq sanctions

AFP, United Nations

After weeks of internal wrangling, the United Nations Thursday overwhelmingly voted to lift crippling sanctions imposed on Iraq in 1990 and give the UN a key role in rebuilding the devastated country.

The Security Council voted 14-0 to lift the 13-year-old UN sanctions immediately, adopting Resolution 1483, the fourth draft of a US bid to end the sanctions regime which has brought the Iraqi economy to its knees.

But as a damaging transatlantic rift over the future governance of Iraq showed signs of being on the

mend, the fatal shooting by US troops of two Iraqis at a checkpoint outside Baghdad highlighted the dangers on the ground.

French Foreign Minister Dominique de Villepin had announced earlier that holdouts France, Germany and Russia would finally back the new resolution at the UN Security Council meeting in New York. Syria boycotted the vote.

Under the resolution, Iraq's oil revenues will be put into a new development fund to be held by the central bank and spent on recon

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PHOTO: STAR

WASA has left this gaping death hole right in the middle of the busy Gulistan turn after work on drainage system a long time ago.

PM for society based on justice

UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister Khaleda Zia has called upon the judges to play the leading role in establishing a society based on justice.

"The truth and justice will be

established, wrong and injustice will be removed, and democracy and development will be consolidated when the judges will be able to ensure justice in the greater interest of the majority," she said.

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Middlemen not growers get wheat supply priority

REAZ AHMAD

The government has asked food officials to buy wheat from traders - a departure from its own policy of procuring wheat directly from the growers.

The change of policy on internal wheat procurement has surprised all concerned including the food officials who have last year's scam over procuring low-grade Indian wheat from a section of politically

linked-up traders still fresh in their memories.

Sources now fear that if wheat is procured from traders, the basic principle of public foodgrain procurement policy would be compromised and farmers deprived of government-provided price support.

This year's internal wheat procurement drive began on March 15 and is scheduled to run through June. But after spending almost two-thirds of the procurement period, the government could procure only 66,000 tonnes of wheat, out of a slashed down target of 2 lakh tonnes.

Keeping in view last year's wheat scam, the government declared a new wheat procurement policy at the beginning of this year's procurement season, cautioning food officials against buying wheat from old stock and non-

farmers.

"Wheat shall be procured from home-grown fresh stock (grown in 2003) and from real growers," reads the new wheat procurement policy introduced this year replacing the earlier one, which had no clear restriction on purchase of wheat from non-growers and old lots.

The sudden change in the procurement policy, allowing food

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Forget Gram Sarkar, says AL

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Awami League (AL) has demanded cancellation of the government decision to form Gram Sarkar, the lowest tier of local government, without elections.

Gram Sarkar has to be formed through direct elections under Section 59/1 of the Constitution, the main opposition party said.

The government decision to form the village-based Gram Sarkar without polls is a clear violation of the constitutional guarantee to hold election to every tier of local government, the AL presidium observed at a meeting in the city yesterday.

The meeting recalled that the previous AL government had decided to form Gram Sarkar through direct election as per constitutional provisions.

The present government's deci

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SQ Chy chosen to run for OIC top post

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh has nominated Salauddin Quader Chowdhury to run for secretary general of the Organisation of Islamic Conference (OIC) in the 2004 polls.

The decision of nominating the prime minister's adviser on parliamentary affairs was revealed at the foreign ministry's weekly press briefing yesterday.

"The campaign (in favour of Salauddin Quader Chowdhury) has officially been launched," Foreign Secretary Shamsher Mobin Chowdhury told reporters. But no other countries have so far announced their candidatures for

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	Sun Rises	Sun Sets
May 23		6-38 pm
May 24	5-12 am	
Prayer Timings		
May 23		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fair	4-15	4-50
Juma	12-15	1-20
Asr	5-00	5-15
Maghrib	6-44	6-48
Esha	8-00	8-30
Source: Islamic Foundation		