

Speaker, his deputy mum about anthem probe

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The speaker and the deputy speaker are keeping mum over the national anthem glitch and expenditure of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA) conference held in Dhaka recently.

Speaker Jamir Uddin Sircar, also former CPA president, did not divulge even in 11 days the finds of a probe body report on the failure to play the national anthem at the October 7 inaugural session of the conference.

The probe body submitted its report to the speaker on October 22.

Earlier, Sircar said he would disclose the probe report to the press within a week of its receipt.

Deputy Speaker Akhtar Hamid Siddiqui, who headed the CPA conference coordination body, too has not come up with any estimate on the expenditure of the conference.

Sources said last week he asked heads of the nine subcommittees on the conference to submit their expenditure report soon.

The speaker and deputy speaker are keeping the prime minister, also former vice-patron of the CPA, abreast of all developments and

Fear-stricken Iraq sees 2 more Marines' death

REUTERS, Baghdad

Guerillas killed two US soldiers yesterday in a bomb blast in northern Iraq, and in Baghdad schools were closed and shops shuttered due to fears of more bloodshed and suicide bombs after a string of attacks.

Rumours were rife in the capital that guerrillas had declared a "day of resistance" this weekend and planned a series of bombings.

A handful of United Nations international staff who had remained in Baghdad left their bomb-shattered headquarters early in the morning in a bus escorted by American soldiers in Humvees. A US helicopter hovered overhead.

The UN staff were being withdrawn from Iraq pending talks in Cyprus on whether to continue working in Baghdad despite mounting dangers. Most foreign staff had already left after a truck bomb attack in August killed 22 people including the head of the UN

mission, Sergio Vieira de Mello.

This week's evacuation followed suicide car bomb attacks on the International Committee of the Red Cross and three police stations Monday, which killed at least 35 people in the bloodiest day in Baghdad since Saddam Hussein's fall in April.

In the northern city of Mosul, a bomb was detonated outside a police station as two US vehicles drove past yesterday.

"There was a huge blast. The two drivers of the vehicles were definitely killed," said policeman Abdul Ahman Fawaz, who witnessed the explosion, his face spattered with blood.

The US Army said two 101st Airborne Division soldiers were killed and two wounded in the blast.

Attackers have killed 120 US soldiers since Washington declared major combat over on May 1 -- more than the 114 killed in action during the war in March and April.

The US consular office in Baghdad and the Australian embassy issued warnings of the risk of fresh terror attacks and the State Department warned Americans again to avoid travelling to Iraq, saying there was a "credible" though unspecified threat to civilian aviation.

Most Baghdad schools were deserted and normally busy shopping areas were quiet. Residents said they were worried that schools, markets and mosques could be the target of attacks.

"My family wouldn't allow my two sisters to go to school today because of the threats. Even my friends at university and college are staying at home," said Luay Adeebe, 19, a cigarette vendor in a Baghdad commercial district.

SEE PAGE 11 COL 8



Wholesalers at Dhaka's largest kitchen market Karwan Bazar sell local onions yesterday at Tk 28 to 30 a kilo, competing with imported onions at Tk 22.

Jail Killing Day tomorrow

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Jail Killing Day will be observed across the country tomorrow to condemn the slaying of four national leaders inside Dhaka Central Jail on this day in 1975.

The Awami League (AL) and its front organisations have chalked out various programmes to pay homage to the slain leaders.

Some disgruntled army men gunned down Syed Nazrul Islam, Tajuddin Ahmed, M Qamaruzzaman and M Mansur Ali -- four close associates of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman -- on November 3, 1975.

In observance of the day, the AL will hoist the national and party flags at half-mast. Black flags will be flown at party offices across the

SEE PAGE 11 COL 3

Uneasy calm on border with Myanmar

STAR REPORT

The Bangladesh-Myanmar border remained calm yesterday with Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) further stepping up vigil to check possible influx of Rohingyas from across the Naf river.

Quoting sources from both sides of the Naf, our Cox's Bazar correspondent said amidst reports of communal riots in certain areas of Myanmar, thousands of minority Rohingya Muslims from Arakan and Akiyab provinces are camping across the border.

Local people in Teknaf and Cox's Bazar fear influx of Rohingyas into Bangladesh as in 1978 and 1991-92.

District administration sources

SEE PAGE 11 COL 6

Transport strike from Dec 20 if cops' extortion not stopped

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh Sarak Paribahan Malik Sramik Oikya Parishad (an association of transport owners and workers) yesterday threatened to go for an indefinite strike from December 20 if the government does not put an end to police extortion by December 19.

The other demands of the Parishad include the launch of a multi-storied stopover bus terminal at Fulbaria in old part of the city, implementation of the contracts signed between the communications ministry and the Parishad, return of vehicle requisition dues to the transport owners and reorganisation of Bangladesh Road Transport Authority (BRTA) board.

Apart from its five-point demand, the Parishad yesterday at a press conference at the National Press Club also demanded of the government to set a guideline for legal toll collection to run the association.

Shahjahan Khan, Awami League lawmaker and member-secretary of the Parishad, read out a statement, in which he alleged that the government can stop legal toll but cannot stop extortion.

He said disorder and crisis due to

improper government rules and regulations prevail in the transport sector, causing serious loss to small businessmen.

Shahjahan claimed that the Parishad, an organisation of 300 members and four other associations -- Bangladesh Sarak Paribahan Samity, Bangladesh Bus Truck Owners Association, Bangladesh Truck Malik Samity and Bangladesh Sarak Paribahan Sramik Federation -- is not responsible for extortion.

"Bangladesh Road Transport Corporation has become a leasing company as its buses are run by private operators. It hampers our business a lot, as the private operators are on the run without any investment," Shahjahan alleged.

On fake driving licence, he said the government had committed to issue licence in a developed way to stop forgery. But the process has not been executed.

Shahjahan said the government is yet to install check posts to watch overloading of trucks, which is

SEE PAGE 11 COL 5

Cops held for 'mugging' sent to Dhaka jail

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The four law enforcers from Khilgaon Police Station arrested for allegedly mugging two businessmen at Goran on Friday were sent to Dhaka Central Jail yesterday.

But three others accused in the case filed under the Law and Order (Disruption) Speedy Trial Act, Sub-inspector (SI) Shahjahan Sabuj, Constable Habib and police informer Delwar, were absconding.

Khilgaon police produced the arrestees -- SI Shamsul Haq, constables Azhar Hossain and Helal Uddin and ansar Azad Hossain -- before the Court of Chief Metropolitan Magistrate, Dhaka. The court sent them to jail.

Locals caught the four near their police station soon after they mugged Tk 2 lakh from two 'jhut' (garment by-product) traders from

SEE PAGE 11 COL 1

Hotel manager shot dead

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Three unidentified assailants yesterday gunned down the manager of a city hotel reportedly over the ownership dispute of the hotel.

Thirty-year-old Meer Hossain Khokon bought share of the London Palace Residential Hotel, located on the first and second floors of 63, Boro Moghbazar recently, but was yet to take over charge, said his younger brother, Suman.

"Three youths aged about 25 entered the hotel and asked for manager

'Khokon Shaheb' at around 1:30pm yesterday saying they had important discussion with him," said a hotel boy.

"As we said he was sleeping in Room No. 102 on the first floor, they rushed upwards," he told The Daily Star, preferring anonymity. He or the other messier did not find anything suspicious about the youths' attitude.

Suman, who assists his brother in his work, was at Room No. 111 on the same floor then. "I heard two gunshots in his room and rushed out to see what happened," he said at

SEE PAGE 11 COL 4

Biman's Barisal route fare up by Tk 150

AKTER FARUK SHAHIN, Barisal

Biman Bangladesh Airlines has increased its fare by Tk 150 per passenger on Dhaka-Barisal route from November 1.

The one-way fare now is Tk 1,500 against Tk 1,350 earlier.

Sources at the Biman office here said the average number of passengers on Dhaka-Barisal route is higher than any of the four other domestic routes out of eight, coming next to only Dhaka-Chittagong, Dhaka-Sylhet and Dhaka-Jessore routes, they pointed out.

Moreover, the newly fixed fare for the 108-aeronautical-mile-long Barisal route is higher considering the distances of other routes. The one-way fare for the 204-aeronautical

SEE PAGE 11 COL 6

UN okays global anti-graft treaty

AP, United Nations

The United Nations General Assembly has adopted a landmark treaty to fight global corruption that not only calls on governments to outlaw bribery, embezzlement and other illegal practices but will enable countries to get back stolen assets.

The treaty, which the 191-nation body approved late on Friday by consensus, also spells out measures to prevent corruption in the public and private sector and requires governments to cooperate with each other in investigating and prosecuting offenders.

"The adoption of the United Nations Convention against Corruption sends a clear message that the international community is determined to prevent and control corruption," Secretary

General Kofi Annan said. "And it reaffirms the importance of core values, such as honesty, respect for the rule of law, accountability and transparency, in promoting development and making the world a better place for all."

The text was completed in Vienna on October 1 after two years of negotiations by experts from

SEE PAGE 11 COL 3

Sehri, Iftar timings			
Ramadan	Nov	Sehri	Iftar
6	2		5-22
7	3	4-44	5-22

Prayer Timings		
November 1		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	4-44	4-50
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	4-00	4-15
Maghrib	5-23	5-30
Esha	7-30	8-00

Source: Islamic Foundation

NOTICE

The Daily Star publishes the last part of the plot allottees' list in Rajuk's Purbachal project on pages 22, 23 and 24 today.