

The Baily Star



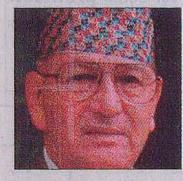
DHAKA THURSDAY DECEMBER 18, 2003

People's Right to Know

POUSH 4, 1410 BS

Shawal 23, 1424 Hirri

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Nepalese PM in city, talks with Khaleda today

UNB, Dhaka

Nepalese Prime Minister and Chairperson of South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (Saarc) Surya Bahadur Thapa arrived in Dhaka last night.

Prime Minister Khaleda Zia welcomed him at Zia International

Bush faces EU, UN flak over death penalty idea

President Bush said Saddam deserves the "ultimate penalty" for his crimes, but he faced objections from European countries, the United Nations and the Vatican, which are adamantly opposed to capital punishment.

While most European countries have abolished the death penalty, it's not clear how vociferously they would object to a death sentence for the captured Iraqi president.

A day after saying his opinion on Saddam's fate doesn't matter and of the United States but by the citi-

it's a decision for Iraqi citizens, Bush stepped forward with an unequivocal statement of his views.

"Let's just see what penalty he gets, but I think he ought to receive the ultimate penalty ... for what he has done to his people," Bush told ABC News' Diane Sawyer in an interview broadcast Tuesday. "I mean, he is a torturer, a murderer, they had rape rooms. This is a disgusting tyrant who deserves justice. the ultimate justice."

Bush said Saddam's punishment "will be decided not by the president zens of Iraq in one form or another." British Prime Minister Tony Blair's spokesman said earlier this week that Britain opposes the death

penalty, but it would have to accept

an Iraqi decision to execute. Yet Britain's top representative in Iraq, Sir Jeremy Greenstock, said his country would not participate in a tribunal or legal process that could lead to execution.

The Vatican's Cardinal Renato Martino stressed the Roman Catholic Church's longtime opposition to

PM urges her political rivals to work together for welfare

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Prime Minister Khaleda Zia yesterday called upon her political opponents to get infused with the spirit of Liberation War and work together for people's welfare.

"Our opinions can be different in a democracy, but we should not have disagreements when it comes to development. Let's work together for peace and stability," Khaleda said in her brief address to a high-profile

"Let's unite and work for the country the way we fought the occupation forces for independence in 1971," she said before leading a colourful procession down different roads.

rally at Paltan Maidan, organised to mark Victory Day.

City BNP President and Mayor Sadeque Hossain Khoka chaired the rally, also addressed by the party's Secretary General and LGRD and Cooperatives Minister Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan.

Khaleda said the political opponents in the name of countering the coalition spread what she said was propaganda against Bangladesh, which halted "devel SEE PAGE 11 COL 7

Hasina again asks

Awami League (AL) President Sheikh Hasina yesterday

said her party will announce its final agitation

programmes to topple the government from a rally at

Paltan Maidan in the capital on January 10 and asked

Prime Minister Khaleda Zia to quit power immediately

BNP-Jamaat-led coalition government and end the

The day is not far off when people will unseat the

admitting 'absolute failure' to govern the country.

Khaleda to quit

Announces oust govt

plan on Jan 10

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Glowing tributes to war heroes

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Pledging afresh to move forward resolutely to build a prosperous future, the nation cele-brated the 33rd Victory Day on Tuesday paying glowing tributes to the heroes who sacrificed

their lives for independence of the county.

On December 16 in 1971, the Pakistani occupation forces surrendered to the joint forces of the Indian army and freedom fighters

at the then Race Course (now Suhrawards Udyan) Maidan in Dhaka after a nine-month independence struggle.

The day started with a 31-gun salute and laying of wreaths at the National Memorial at

President Iajuddin Ahmed and Prime Minister Khaleda Zia placed wreaths at the memorial in the early morning. Cabinet men SEE PAGE 11 COL



Prime Minister Khaleda Zia sets free a white pigeon to open Victory Day childrens' programme at

140 killed as Bhutan cracks down on Indian rebel camps

SAKYASEN MITTRA, From Kolkata

At least 40 soldiers and 100 militants were killed in two days since Bhutan launched its first ever modern military operation against Indian separatists on Monday, according to military and administrative sources.

Armed Indian rebel groups hit back vesterday and forced the Bhutanese army to retreat after two. of their alleged training camps came

Bhutan, allegedly with the help of India, is carrying out operations on three Indian separatist rebel groups ULFA, the National Democratic Front of Bodoland (NDFB) and the Kamtapur Liberation Organisation.

Military sources here yesterday said that the rebels were heavily armed and were using sophisticated weapons. The attack was launched on the rebel camps at Guabari and Kalikhola.

"There was difficulty in raiding the camps at higher altitude because of heavy rains and slush," an Indian Army official quoted information from Bhutan as saying.

Meanwhile, talking to a few journalists in Assam, ULFA commander-in -chief Paresh Barua confirmed that the Bhutanese army

was forced to repeat after suffering

"We forced them to retreat from Guabari and Kalikhola after fierce fighting," he said. Bhutanese troops, which have so far overrun 13 rebel camps, wanted badly to capture the Guabari base because it houses the ULFA's '709 mobile battalion'.

The ULFA militants had vacated blew off a bridge at Hathinala to stop the chasing Bhutanese soldiers. The rebels also asked Bhutan to

stop the military crackdown. Baruah issued a statement Tuesday, urging mate struggle' NDFB commander B Susanagra

has warned Bhutan of dire consequence if it continues with the offensive. The Indian Army is reportedly

aiding Bhutan in its operation against the rebels, but top military official denied the charge. Lieutenant General Jitendra

Singh Verma, chief of the Indian army's eastern command, told mediamen here yesterday that it was only providing logistics and medical support to the Bhutanese soldiers. The Indian Army has nothing to

SEE PAGE 11 COL 8



Former president Badruddoza Chowdhury reacts angrily to the presence of police detectives at the launch of his new office in Baridhara Tuesday.

Chy prepares outline for his style of politics

ZAYADUL AHSAN

Former president AQM Badruddoza Chowdhury is drawing an outline for 'programme-based politics' instead of the conventional power politics.

A source close to Badruddoza, founding secretary general of the ruling Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP), told The Daily Star that he

would launch his political platform and declare its programmes soon after the outline takes shape.

Badruddoza is now busy analysing and finding out measures to overcome what he terms is 'the national crisis' and writing down what initiatives should be taken and how they could be implemented.

SEE PAGE 11 COL 1

Dhaka not on Iraq | Economy makes reconstruction list mild recovery

Eritrea, Marshall Islands, Ethiopia among eligibles

RAFIQ HASAN

Bangladesh has been left out of the list of countries eligible for participation in contracts for Iraq reconstruction funded by the US although minnows like Eritrea, Marshall Islands and Ethiopia are there.

The US Department of State recently published on its website a list of 63 countries eligible to bid for Iraq contracts, with none of the South Asian countries figuring on it. "This list names mainly those

countries that provided all-out support to the US in the war on Iraq," Foreign Minister M Morshed Khan said yesterday when asked to comment on the list.

However, when the list was shown to him, Morshed was surprised at seeing names of many countries -- including some smaller or impoverished ones -- that did not play any role in the Iraq campaign He did not comment further.

Besides US, the list includes its SEE PAGE 11 COL 4

STAR REPORT

The economy recovered slightly during the July-November period this year from the two-year-old slump thanks mainly to the agriculture sector's contribution to GDP.

MCCI review finds

The major contribution to GDP growth during the period came from the agriculture sector, which maintained the trend growth rate of the previous quarters and helped offset the deceleration in the industrial sector's growth, says Metropolitan

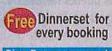
Chamber of Commerce and Industry (MCCI) in a review of eco-

nomic situation during the period. Domestic demand remains still depressed and some of the major manufacturing industries are still operating below their optimum capacities. "This is reflected in the slow growth of industrial production, lower growth in the government's revenue collection in term of both domestic VAT and income taxes, weak growth of exports, the SEE PAGE 11 COL 7

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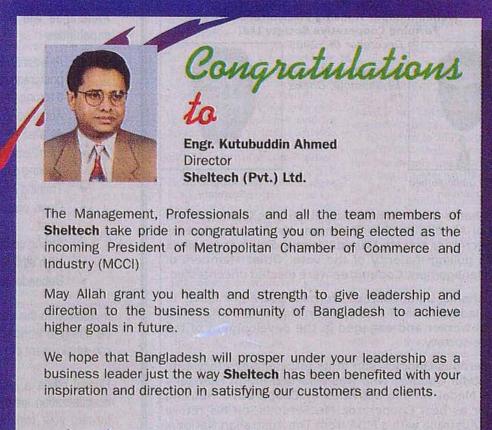
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Prof. Dr. Uwe Meffert, inventor of CMD, will be present as guest speaker at the launching ceremony of CMD and will provide a detailed description of the benefits of this amazing useful technology.

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