

People's Right to Know

REGD. No. DA 781

VOL. XIII No. 328

DHAKA FRIDAY DECEMBER 19, 2003

www.thedailystar.net

POUSH 5, 1410 BS

SHAWAL 24, 1424 HJRI

20 PAGES PLUS MAGAZINE PRICE: TK 12.00

Dhaka, Kathmandu agree on common river sharing plan

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka and Kathmandu agreed in principle to formulate a common strategy for sharing the water of common rivers and also to initiate a dialogue for drafting and signing a free trade agreement (FTA) to foster bilateral economic relations.

The agreements were reached after a one-hour discussion between the two heads of government, held at the Prime Minister's Office yesterday. Visiting Nepalese Prime Minister Surya Bahadur Thapa and Prime Minister Khaleda Zia led their respective sides in the meeting.

Later, briefing newsmen on the meeting, Foreign Secretary Shamsher Mobin Chowdhury said the prime ministers discussed the river-linking programmes of India and were of the opinion that there should be a tripartite approach, involving Bangladesh, Nepal and India, to resolve conflicts and issues over share of common river waters.



Prime Minister Khaleda Zia and her Nepalese counterpart Surya Bahadur Thapa talk at the Prime Minister's Office yesterday.

SEE PAGE 11 COL 1

Judiciary beyond poor's reach: CJ

BSS, Dhaka

Chief Justice KM Hasan yesterday said the judiciary is easily accessible to the rich but beyond the reach of the poor.

"Providing legal aid is not merely a right to the poor but a moral obligation of a welfare state," he told a workshop jointly organised by the Ministry of Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs Minister Moudud Ahmed.

Among others, Law Secretary Mohammad Asaduzzaman, Director of Legal Aid Nasrin Begum, Cida Resident Director James Baker and Robert Beadle of the Canadian High Commission also spoke.

Justice Hasan said the judiciary will be in danger if legal aid could not be ensured for the poor and disadvantaged section of society. He said the success of the legal

SEE PAGE 11 COL 2

Acid attackers slip thru' legal loopholes

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

NGO leaders yesterday accused police of recording cases of acid attacks under the Women and Children Repression Prevention Act for financial gains, as the act has multiple loopholes for easy release of the accused.

On-duty police officers tend to bypass the Acid Control Act that does not provide easy balls, the NGO (non-governmental organisation) leaders told a meeting in an allegation brushed aside by law enforcers, who attended the discussion.

"Victims themselves file the first information reports under the Women and Children Repression Prevention Act. We have nothing to do with that," a police officer said.

The meeting of National Acid Control Committee at the home ministry, with Home Minister Altaf Hossain Choudhury in the chair, focussed on production, import, transportation, stock, sale, use and misuse of acid and countervailing measures.

SEE PAGE 11 COL 1

First US fatality after Saddam's capture

REUTERS, Baghdad

Iraqi guerrillas killed a US soldier in an ambush in Baghdad, the US military said yesterday, as two assassinations underlined fears that internal political divisions could erupt into widespread bloodletting.

The soldier's death on Wednesday night was the first combat fatality suffered by US troops since news on Sunday of the capture of ousted Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein, and the 1998 since Washington declared major combat over on May 1.

A US spokeswoman said a soldier from the 1st Armored Division died in an ambush in the al-Karradah neighborhood of Baghdad at 10:30 p.m. (1930 GMT) on Wednesday. Another soldier and an Iraqi translator were wounded.

US forces swept into the town of

Samarra for a second day to flush out guerrillas from the so-called Sunni triangle in northern and central Iraq where Saddam had his power base. 86 people have been arrested in the past 48 hours.

Two brigades have encircled Samarra, some 100 km (60 miles) north of Baghdad, cutting it off from the outside world while soldiers from a third brigade make house-to-house searches and scour shops and junkyards.

US forces seized 200 AK-47 assault rifles and bomb-making material and arrested five people including an arms dealer, the US military said in a statement.

American soldiers returned fire at a car after coming under attack, killing one person, the military said. In a separate incident, US troops opened fire on a car that was

SEE PAGE 11 COL 8

Winter vegetables doubly dearer

MONJUR MAHMUD

Winter vegetables are selling at almost double the price in December last year.

Supply of seasonal vegetables remains poor unlike previous winters, pushing prices unusually high, traders said.

Indian tomato is plentiful in the market and locally produced sweet pea is still not available while potato is selling at a premium rate.

Officials of the Department of Agricultural Marketing said heavy rains in October damaged a large proportion of the crop fields. "The farmers had to prepare the land again and sow the vegetables, which

SEE PAGE 11 COL 6

GMG TRIAL OFFER

Special for leisure travelers.

GMG Airlines, the premium domestic carrier offers a great Trial package for leisure passengers. To enjoy this fabulous offer, all you need to do is book a ticket 7 days before the journey and keep atleast 2 nights gap between the first journey and the return one.

In return, GMG offers 30%-15% discount and its world class services.

So what are you waiting for?



ABC House, 9th Floor, Kemal Ataturk Avenue, Banani C/A, Dhaka - 1213, Bangladesh. Tel: 8825845-9, Fax: 8826115, e-mail: info@gmgairlines.com

Dhaka - 8816077, 8814236-7, 9894142, 7114155-7, 8127742, 8127372, 8915699, 8920548. Chittagong - 655659-61, 723151, 718147, 63098, 631596, 740285-6. Jessore - 73280, 73922, 73564, 0171890071, 0171890072, 0171296112. Sylhet - 721225, 721227-9, 720072. Khulna - 810881, 732273, 0171296110. Barisal - 56510, 55680, 0171890074, Cox's Bazar - 011869114.

GMG AIRLINES First Class All the Way

Advertisement for Pacific Jeans Ltd. Nominated for the 'National Export Trophy' for 4 consecutive years - 1998-99, 1999-2000, 2000-01 and 2001-2002. Heartiest Congratulations to Mr. Md. Nasiruddin, Managing Director, Pacific Jeans Ltd. Citibank logo.

Pakistan ready to drop referendum demand on Kashmir

REUTERS/BBC

Pakistan is ready to put aside its demand for a referendum in the disputed territory of Kashmir, President Pervez Musharraf said.

Pakistan's 50-year position has been that a referendum should decide if the divided territory become part of Pakistan or India.

The two nuclear powers have fought two of their three wars over Kashmir.

SEE PAGE 11 COL 7

India has refused to comply with United Nations resolutions calling for a referendum to resolve the dispute. "We are for UN resolutions," President Musharraf said in an interview with the Reuters news agency. "However, now we have left that aside. "If we want to resolve this issue, both sides need to talk to each other

Advertisement for Bangladesh Business Awards 2003. The Bangladesh Business Award Ceremony 2003, the Night of the Who's Who will be held on March 19, 2004, honouring the Highest Achievers in the world of business. The Nomination procedure is about to begin....

Advertisement for Bangladesh Business Awards 2003. The Nomination procedure is about to begin....

Criteria for Bangladesh Business Awards 2003. Business Person of the Year, Outstanding Woman in Business, Enterprise of the Year 2003, Joint Venture Enterprise of the Year 2003.

Rules of Eligibility, Selection process, and contact information for Bangladesh Business Awards 2003. The decisions of the Jury shall be final and binding and cannot be contested.

Advertisement for The Highest Achievers: 2000, 2001, 2002. Business Person of the Year, Outstanding Woman in Business, Enterprise of the Year.

Nomination form for Bangladesh Business Awards 2003. Includes fields for Nominee, Company, Why, and address.