

Bodies of six peacekeepers due in 3-4 days

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
The bodies of the six UN peacekeepers from Bangladesh killed in a road accident in Ivory Coast on Friday are likely to be flown into the country within three to four days.

"It may take three to four days more to bring those bodies in Bangladesh after completion of all formalities," said the director of Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR) yesterday.

The time is necessary for post-mortems on the dead, chartering an airplane and formalities relating to compensation for the deceased, he explained.

The six Bangladeshi soldiers died and 11 others received severe injuries when a military truck carrying them crashed and veered into a roadside ditch at Tiasali on their way to Abidjan from Yamoussoukro, the capital of the West African state, at around 11:30pm Bangladesh time.

BSF kills 1

UNB, Benapole
A Bangladeshi young man was gunned down by Indian Border Security Force (BSF) on Ghiba border in Jessore on Saturday night.

Locals said the BSF troops of Sute Camp shot at him when he was crossing the border at around midnight. He died on the spot.

Later, the BSF men took his body to Bongaon Hospital morgue, Bangladesh Rifles sources said. But they could not immediately give identity of the deceased.

EC goes for guideline to streamline poll monitoring

SHAKHAWAT LITON

Irked by the poll observers' non-compliance with the Election Commission's (EC) policy for observing polls during the last parliamentary election, the commission yesterday decided to make the policy more stringent this time around to prevent mushrooming of observers.

An EC meeting chaired by Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) MA Aziz decided to amend some provisions in the existing policy and to introduce a provision of punishment for observers in cases of gross violations of the policy for observing the polls during the next general election, sources said.

The decision came in wake of a widespread controversy about the neutrality of the organisations which have already started lobbying to become authorised to observe the next election.

The EC's policy on poll observation was formulated just before the October 2001 general election. Before the formulation of the policy, there was no legal framework for observing the polls.

The number of poll observers in October 2001 parliamentary election increased by five times compared to the seventh parliamentary election held in June 1996.

Sixty eight organisations deployed as many as 2,18,006 observers during the October 2001 election while the total number of observers was only 40,000 during June 1996 election, sources said.

Some of the organisations took blank identity cards for observers from the EC and deployed students of schools and colleges to observe the October 2001 election violating a policy that requires an observer to be at least 25 years old.

Only 18 organisations submitted observation reports to the EC after the election while others ignored the EC's directive to submit their reports.

Sensing a trend of an increase in the number of poll observers and observing recent activities of some organisations in pursuit of becoming observers, the EC fears the number is likely to shoot up in the next parliamentary election.

"The policy on poll observers will be made stricter so that the number

of observers does not shoot up and cannot create troubles at polling stations," the EC meeting documents say.

"We will also ask the intelligence agencies and deputy commissioners to inquire about the neutrality of the organisations which will apply to observe the election," EC Secretary Abdur Rashid Sarkar told reporters after the meeting.

"We will not allow any organisation to observe the polls if its neutrality is questioned by field level inquiry reports," the secretary said adding, "an organisation will be declared disqualified to observe two consecutive parliamentary elections in case of gross violation of the policy."

Once the provisions are amended, poll observing bodies will have to follow some rules to have permissions to observe the election.

They will have to apply to be authorised to observe the polls at least four weeks before the election instead of the existing provision of three weeks. Each of the observers' particulars will have to be submitted to the EC with the

SEE PAGE 15 COL 5

Hartal observed in water-logged areas of Jessore

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Jessore

A half-day hartal was observed yesterday in Abhoynagar, Manirampur and Keshabpur upazilas of Jessore protesting the government's indifference to the Bhabadaha waterlogging problem.

Earlier on August 10, the Bhabadaha Water Drainage Movement Committee at a protest meeting at Noapara gave an ultimatum to the government for taking steps to drain out the stagnant water from several thousand acres of land caused by a sluice gate

SEE PAGE 15 COL 6

15 hurt as JCD men clash with Shibir

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) and Islami Chhatra Shibir activists of Khulna Medical College (KMC) locked in a clash on Saturday night, injuring 15 people.

Four of the critically injured, all JCD men, were admitted to the KMC hospital. They are president of KMC unit Shahinul Kabir Shahin, secretary Rubel, Debashish and Tareque.

According to police and eyewitnesses, an argument between JCD leader fourth year student Rubel and Shibir activist first year student

SEE PAGE 15 COL 6



PHOTO: STAR

Concrete mixers kept on the street in front of an under construction multi-storey building in Paltan area in the capital, disrupting movement of pedestrians.

PRICE HIKE OF ESSENTIALS

Saifur blames lack of monitoring by commerce ministry

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Finance Minister M Saifur Rahman yesterday blamed the commerce ministry's lack of adequate monitoring of the market for the failure to check artificial price hike of essentials.

"Supervision and monitoring of the commerce ministry is not in a good way now, though it was in the past," Saifur told reporters emerging from a meeting of Coordination Council adding that it was possible for the ministry (commerce) to check market manipulation by sincere administrative measures.

Central bank governor and secretaries of the finance and commerce among other high officials attended the meeting on government policies for fiscal, currency and money exchange rate. A working paper on administrative measures to remove barriers against competitive market system was also presented at the meeting by the Bangladesh Bank.

The minister also briefed the newsmen about monetary policy,

fuel price, revenue collection and government borrowing from banking system.

Saifur said the commerce ministry largely depends on the Trading Corporation of Bangladesh (TCB), instead of improving its supervision activities on market.

"The TCB itself is a trader...How will it monitor the market when its goal is to make profit?" he said.

Referring to the situation in neighbouring India, the minister said traders there do not increase the prices through syndication. "Whereas in Bangladesh, some unscrupulous traders manipulate the prices for no reason," he said adding that as a result, price of onion jumps to Tk 28 from Tk 18 in only one day.

Asked about the government's efforts to keep the market stable, Saifur replied that they have already instructed the home and commerce ministries to look into the matter.

SEE PAGE 15 COL 6



8th Expert Group Consultation session today

STAR REPORT

Nagorik Committee 2006 will hold its eighth and last Expert Group Consultation session on the Vision 2021 for Bangladesh, Goal Eight: "To be a more inclusive and equitable society" at Cirdap Auditorium in the capital today.

The committee has identified eight inter-related goals for the vision. Earlier this month, consultations on the first seven were held. Those goals are: to become a participatory democracy; to have an efficient, publicly accountable, transparent and decentralised government; to become a

SEE PAGE 15 COL 7

Prayer Timing		
August 28		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	4-30	5-05
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	4-45	5-00
Maghrib	6-33	6-36
Esha	8-00	8-30

Source: Islamic Foundation



PHOTO: STAR

This hill next to Cox's Bazar district jail is being destroyed allegedly by the ruling party men in collusion with the administration. They cut part of the hill to build houses and roads.

Addicted father kills infant over brawl with wife

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A drug-addicted father killed his 20-day old daughter yesterday in the city following a quarrel with his wife.

Police said Muhammad Faruk, a floating resident of Nabab Yusuf Market in Kotwali area, took his daughter Chumki and threw her to the ground at 10:00am. The baby died on the spot.

The police arrested Faruk and sent the body of Chumki to Sir Salimullah Medical College (SSMC) Morgue for autopsy. Brishti Begum, mother of the infant, told reporters at the SSMC that her daughter has been ill since birth and was not taking any food.

She said her husband is addicted to drugs and being unable

SEE PAGE 15 COL 5

Pakistan kills Baluch tribe leader, sparks riots

25 elite commandos, 30 tribal insurgents die in fighting

AFP, AP, Quetta

Pakistan was on high alert yesterday after security forces killed a prominent tribal rebel leader in gas-rich Baluchistan province, in a major operation that left scores more dead, officials said.

Provincial authorities had been directed to take strict security measures following which extra police and security personnel have been

deployed at key installations and sensitive places, an interior ministry official told AFP.

An indefinite curfew has been imposed in Quetta city, the capital of Baluchistan province, where riots were sparked late Saturday after the news broke about the killing of rebel chieftain Nawab Akbar Bugti, police said.

At least 25 elite commandos and more than 30 tribal insurgents were

killed in the fighting near Dera Bugti town, close to a mountain hideout in Baluchistan where Bugti was sheltering, security officials said.

Information minister Muhammad Ali Durrani confirmed that Bugti was killed in operation.

"I can confirm that (Nawab) Akbar Bugti was killed in the operation," Durrani told AFP.

SEE PAGE 15 COL 7

49 killed in US plane crash

AFP, Louisville/Kentucky

A passenger plane crashed early yesterday after take-off at an airport in Lexington, Kentucky, killing 49 people in the worst US air accident in nearly five years, Comair's president said. The plane, bound for Atlanta, Georgia, was carrying 47 passengers and three crew members when it went down after take-off from Blue Grass Airport and burst into flames, Comair president Don Bornhorst said.

Local resident Ricky Brown said he was in his bathroom shaving when he heard the noise of the crash.

"I just looked around and saw over the hill side. I saw the flash of light and then the explosion and then just a big plume of smoke come up," he told Fox News television.

The lone survivor was transported to the University of Kentucky Medical Center, Gary Ginn, Fayette County Coroner, told CNN.

"It was a fire incident," he said. The plane, a 50-seat

Bombardier CRJ200 regional jet, departed at 6:10 am and crashed "approximately a half mile (one kilometer) from the end of the runway in Lexington," Comair president Don Bornhorst told a news conference in Kentucky carried live in television.

"From our officials at the scene we do have the confirmation of one surviving member of the passenger or crew group," Bornhorst said.

Witnesses reported seeing a flash of light when the crash occurred, according to local media.

Meteorologists reported that although the flight, scheduled for 6:00 am, took off before dawn, the weather was clear at the airport at that time.

Bornhorst said that National Transportation Safety Board and Federal Aviation Administration investigators were on the scene, but had no information on what brought the plane down.

"We are committed to doing everything humanly possible to

SEE PAGE 15 COL 8