

Morshed leaves for Nam summit in Havana

UNB, Dhaka
Foreign Minister M Morshed Khan left Dhaka yesterday to lead Bangladesh in Non-Aligned Movement (Nam) summit in Havana and UN General Assembly (UNGA) session in New York.

The 14th Nam summit will be held in the Cuban capital on September 15-16. The summit will be preceded with a ministerial meeting on September 13-16.

Foreign Secretary Hemayetuddin is now in Havana to attend Nam senior officials' meeting on September 11-12.

The summit leaders will urge the UN Security Council to exercise due caution before authorising sanctions or use of force against any country or a group of countries, sources here said.

Issues concerning terrorism, economy, development assistance and migration will also come up prominently in the Havana Declaration.

After the Nam meet, the foreign minister will proceed to New York to attend the 61st UN General Assembly session beginning on

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Reforms possible even in caretaker rule

Regional dialogue told

RAFIQ HASAN From Narayanganj

Speakers at the regional dialogue in Narayanganj yesterday observed that much of the reforms in the Election Commission (EC) and electoral system can be carried out during the tenure of the next caretaker government.

As the civil society raised voice for bringing reforms, major political parties will also accept the decisions taken by the caretaker government in this regard, they pointed out.

The speakers further said politicians often become hostages to bureaucrats who actually run the government and indulge in various corruptions.

The Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD) organised the event in collaboration with The Daily Star, the Prothom Alo and Channel I.

Yesterday's dialogue was the 15th and the last in a series of such



regional dialogues which started in Mymensingh on April 29 this year.

Executive Director of CPD Debapriya Bhattacharya conducted the seven-hour long dialogue chaired by Afzal Hossain, a former member of the parliament also founding general secretary of Narayanganj Diabetic Association.

Motiuur Rahman, editor of the Prothom Alo, spoke on behalf of the organisers while Prof Anisuzzaman and former member of a caretaker government Major General (ret'd) Moinul Hossain Chowdhury participated in the dialogue on behalf of Nagorik Committee 2006, formed to prepare a vision paper for 'Bangla-

desh in 2021'.

Chairman of Narayanganj Pourashava Selina Hayat Ivy, Chairman of Bangladesh Road Transport Corporation (BRTC) Advocate Toimur Alam Khondoker, and President of Bangladesh Knitwear Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BKMEA) Fazlul Haque were special guests.

A total of 85 persons took part in the discussion including teachers, lawyers, political leaders, journalists, cultural activists, NGO workers and students. A large number of local elites attended the dialogue in Narayanganj Club Community Centre.

The speakers pointed out that the EC is not strong enough for holding a free and fair election as it failed to prepare an acceptable voter list. They also proposed

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Biman pilot sacked over DC-10 crash

RASHIDUL HASAN

Biman Bangladesh Airlines authorities have axed a pilot from service as an inquiry found him responsible for the DC-10 aircraft accident last year at Shah Amanat International Airport in Chittagong.

Captain Selim was given forced retirement on Thursday following a report of the inquiry committee, Biman sources said.

He joined Biman in 1980 and had another seven years for normal retirement.

The DC-10 narrowly escaped a disaster as it skidded off the runway while belly landing on July 3 last year.

A high official of Biman said the inquiry did not find any technical fault of the aircraft, and attributed the accident to inefficiency of the pilot.

The action taken against the pilot is also a warning to others negligent to their duties, some Biman officials said.

All the 215 passengers and crew aboard the DC-10 survived the

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PHOTO: STAR

The partial lunar eclipse seen in the sky over Dhaka City in the early hours Friday.

3 Naogaon cops closed over custodial death

UNB, Naogaon

Three policemen of Mandha Police Station were closed on Friday night following the death of an accused in custody.

The policemen are officer-in-charge (OC) Shahider Rahman and sub-inspectors (Sis) Tofazzal Hossain and Shakil Uddin Ahmed.

Acting on the statements of two outlaws arrested earlier in connection with Choubaria killings, police arrested Monwarul Islam Sagor, 26, son of late Azizul Haq, at his home at Porsha on Thursday on the same charge.

Police took Sagor to his village home to recover firearms and arrest other accused in the killing case at night. They said Sagor was taken to Mandha Health Complex as he suddenly fell sick and died there at midnight.

But locals believe Sagor was

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PHOTO: STAR

This part of Gulshan-Banani Lake in the capital is filled up with water hyacinth and garbage while Dhaka City Corporation turns a blind eye to this environment pollution.

Face hartal politically

PM urges party men

UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister Khaleda Zia yesterday urged her party's field level leaders to face the opposition's hartal and blockade politically and make people aware about the bad impact of such programmes.

She made the call while exchanging views with the grassroots leaders of Sirajganj district at the Prime Minister's 30 Hare Road Office in the evening.

Around 34 leaders, including five MPs, met the party chief and apprised her about the organisational activities and the government's development projects in their respective areas.

The BNP chairperson urged the leaders to strengthen the organisational activities ahead of the coming general elections.

Saddam had no link with Qaeda

Finds US Senate panel, says CIA forced to back up Bush's case for Iraq war

AP, Washington

Saddam Hussein rejected overtures from al-Qaeda and believed Islamic extremists were a threat to his regime, a reverse portrait of an Iraq allied with Osama bin Laden painted by the Bush White House, a Senate panel has found.

The administration's version was based in part on intelligence that White House officials knew was flawed, according to Democrats on the Senate Intelligence Committee, citing newly declassified documents released by the panel.

The report, released Friday, discloses for the first time an October 2005 CIA assessment that prior to the war Saddam's government "did not have a relationship, harbour or turn a blind eye toward" al-Qaeda operative Abu Musab al-Zarqawi or his associates.

As recently as an August 21 news conference, President Bush said people should "imagine a world in which you had Saddam Hussein" with the capacity to make weapons of mass destruction and "who had relations with Zarqawi."

Democrats singled out CIA

Director George Tenet, saying that during a private meeting in July Tenet told the panel that the White House pressured him and that he agreed to back up the administration's case for war despite his own agents' doubts about the intelligence it was based on.

"Tenet admitted to the Intelligence Committee that the policymakers wanted him to 'say something about not being inconsistent with what the president had said,'" Intelligence Committee

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UPDF to contest from all 3 CHT seats

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Khagrachhari

The United People's Democratic Front (UPDF) yesterday announced it would contest from all three constituencies of hill tracts districts of Rangamati, Khagrachhari and Bandarban in the next parliamentary election.

The decision was taken following discussions with people of 16 regions of the districts, says a press release of the UPDF, a Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) regional political party that opposes the CHT Peace Treaty signed between the government and the Parbatya Chattagram Jana Sanghati Samity (PCJSS) on December 2, 1997.

The UPDF announcement to contest the next polls came before that of its rival PCJSS. The two parties have long been involved in clashes that often claim lives in the hill tracts.

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7 killed in city road accidents

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Seven people were killed and at least 30 others were injured in road accidents during the last two days in the city and its outskirts.

Four people were killed and 12 injured when a bus ploughed into a crowd of Muslim devotees in front of Shah Ali shrine at Mirpur in the city around 2:45am yesterday.

Three of the deceased were identified as Mohammad Babu, 20, Mukul Hossain, 17 and Haji Abdul Matin, 62. The identity of the other victim aged around 50 could not be known.

On-duty doctors of Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) declared them dead after social workers from Anjuman Mufidul Islam rushed them there.

Among the injured, Rahima Begum, 25, and Chanchala Begum,

35, were admitted to DMCH with severe injuries while the rest were treated at local hospitals and clinics.

Police and witnesses said the accident occurred on Shah Ali Shrine Road after the bus driver lost control over the steering and ploughed into a crowd waiting before the shrine.

"I saw a number of people pushing the bus to start its engine. Suddenly the engine started and it ploughed into the crowd," said Mosharraf Hossain who witnessed the accident.

Police seized the bus and arrested its driver, Mohammad Mizan.

Iqbal Mahmood, 18, was killed and eight others were wounded when a human hauler rammed a level crossing bar at Kashedi Bari in

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EU-Iran start last-ditch nuclear talks in Vienna

AFP, Vienna

EU foreign policy chief Javier Solana and top Iranian nuclear negotiator Ali Larjani began last-ditch talks in Vienna yesterday aimed at averting UN sanctions over Tehran's atomic ambitions.

Larjani drove into the federal chancellery building in central Vienna in a black limousine shortly before 5:00 pm (1500 GMT). Solana had arrived earlier.

Solana spokeswoman Christina Gallach said the talks would last around three hours and that the two men might speak to the press after that.

Solana and Larjani arrived in Vienna yesterday for the talks to avert UN sanctions over Tehran's atomic ambitions.

The two men came separately, Larjani from Italy and Solana from Brussels.

The United States has been pushing for a United Nations

Security Council resolution imposing sanctions on Iran over its contested nuclear program to be drafted as early as next week.

This would allow foreign ministers from the six nations trying to win guarantees that Iran will not make nuclear weapons to "complete a sanctions resolution" when they meet in New York at the UN General Assembly the week after next, US Undersecretary of State Nicholas Burns said Friday in Berlin.

The six world powers are seeking talks with Iran on a package of benefits for the Islamic Republic but demand that Tehran first suspend uranium enrichment, the process that makes nuclear power reactor fuel but also atom bomb material.

Iran has rejected this demand as well as a Security Council resolution that called for an enrichment freeze by August 31 and threatened

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Nato troops kill 60 Afghan insurgents

Suicide attack kills 16 more

AFP, Kabul

Nato-led troops in a major offensive in southern Afghanistan have killed about 60 insurgents in the past 24 hours, officials said.

The offensive, Medusa, has used air power, artillery and ground troops. It was launched a week ago to drive militants out of a stronghold in Kandahar.

"Later in the morning Isaf lost one soldier killed in action," the alliance said in a statement.

Afghan and Nato forces also destroyed "three insurgent positions, a bomb-making factory and a weapons cache," the statement said.

"We are engaging with everything from direct fire to artillery and air strikes," an official with the NATO-led International Security Assistance Force (Isaf) said, announcing the latest deaths.

The number of militants killed in Operation Medusa has now risen to more than 360. Five Canadian soldiers have also been killed, one by accident in friendly fire.

Fourteen British airmen died on the first day of the operation when their reconnaissance plane crashed in the Panjway area due to a technical fault.

Meanwhile police in Qalat, the capital city of restive Zabul province, said they had foiled an attempt to

detonate a car bomb by seizing the vehicle.

Police received intelligence reports that a suicide car bomb attacker was planning to target Afghan or foreign troop on the Kabul-Kandahar highway. Zabul police chief Noor Mohammad Pakteen told AFP.

The information led police to the vehicle.

"We found the explosives-laden vehicle close to Qalat, the suicide attacker managed to flee, police defused the car bomb and are looking for the attacker," Pakteen said.

Much of Afghanistan's

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Saber flown to S'pore

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Saber Hossain Chowdhury, political secretary to the Leader of the Opposition Sheikh Hasina, was scheduled to fly for Singapore for treatment late last night.

Also an organising secretary of the AL, Saber was critically injured when police beat him up even after giving his identity during the opposition's September 6 demonstrations against the Election Commission (EC).

He was admitted to Bangladesh Medical College Hospital first and later shifted to Apollo Hospital in the capital as his condition deteriorated.

Saber scheduled to get on a Singapore Airline flight at 11:50pm last night will be admitted to the Mount Elizabeth Hospital. He will be accompanied by his wife Yasmin Chowdhury.

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PHOTO: STAR

Fishermen captured this 12-foot python with fishing net yesterday from Bara Uthan area of Anwara upazila in Chittagong.

Bangladeshi abducted on B'baria border

OUR CORRESPONDENT, B'baria

Indian Border Security Force (BSF) abducted a Bangladeshi at bordering Baulata village under Akhaura upazila of the district yesterday.

According to BDR and locals, the Indian border guards entered the village and picked up Haroon Mia, 50, at gunpoint while he was

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Prayer Timing		
September 10		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	4-35	5-10
Juma	12-45	1-15
Asr	4-30	4-45
Maghrib	6-14	6-17
Esha	7-45	8-15

Source: Islamic Foundation