

Rebel MPs accuse Premadasa of tapping phones

COLOMBO, Aug 31: Rebel MPs campaigning for the ouster of President Ranasinghe Premadasa accused him today of tapping their telephones, reports AFP.

Gamini Dissanayake, a high-profile leader of the rebel United National Party (UNP) faction, told reporters here that all their telephone conversations were being tape recorded with the aid of a French-made bugging device.

"In the whole South Asian region, ours is the only country where telephones of MPs are being tapped," Dissanayake said, adding that the authorities could monitor 880 telephones at any given time.

Lalith Athulathudali, another leader of the rebel group and a former national security

minister, said that during his term of office there was a total ban on intercepts of a political nature such as of MPs' phones.

"But I can say the equipment that the government has got down in the past two years is very sophisticated and it is French-made," Athulathudali said.

Nizami's call to save river port from Jamuna erosion

Jamaat-e-Islami Secretary General Moulana Mattur Rahman Nizami Saturday urged the government to save famous river port Nakalia Bazar and adjoining areas of Pabna district from massive erosion by the Jamuna, reports UNB.

In a statement, the Jamaat Parliamentary Party chief said hundreds of families in the area had been rendered homeless by the erosion which already destroyed a mosque, high schools, a bank and thousands of homes and shops.

Pabna Irrigation Project pump station, built at a cost of about Tk 400 crore, is now under the threat of going into the gorge of the mighty river, he said.



Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia speaking at the publication ceremony of The Dainik Dinkal at a local hotel on Saturday. Story on page 1 —PID photo

Amjad freed

Sardar Amjad Hossain, MP, was released from the Dhaka Central Jail on Saturday, reports UNB.

Earlier, a bench of the High Court Division of the Supreme Court ordered release of Amjad Hossain, a former minister of Ershad government.

The court also held illegal his trial pending before the Special Tribunal No 2.

BIWTC employees threaten to disrupt ferry services

ARICHA, Aug 31: The BIWTC Employees Union Saturday stopped movement of a ferry vessel demanding implementation of the transfer order of its master, reports UNB.

MV Enayetpur was moored here this morning by the union which also threatened to disrupt all ferry services on the Aricha-Nagarbari and Aricha-Daulatdia routes, if their demand is not met within 72 hours.

The trade union, affiliated to ruling BNP's labour wing Jatiyatabadi Samik Dal, in a press release alleged that Abu Taher, thumping official order, was not handing over charge to the new master of Enayetpur.

Suspension of ferry services in the two routes, as threatened by the union, will paralyse road communications of 36 southwest and northern districts with the capital.

The employees resented disregard to the transfer order and demanded immediate withdrawal of Taher.

Injured Lankan succumbs to injuries

Another Sri Lankan, who was seriously injured in a private car accident in which two others were killed early Friday morning near Mohakhali, succumbed to the injuries on Saturday.

Nimal Jayatran (25) was injured when their Gulshan-bound car rolled over the road divider and struck a parked bus near the Mohakhali bus stand.

He was admitted at the Dhaka Medical College Hospital in critical condition where he died at around 2 am Saturday morning.

Earlier, Ravi Kundanlal (25), also a Sri Lankan national, and Sunil Paraini (24), an Indian national, died in the car accident on Friday.

30 feared missing in boat capsized in Netrokona, Sirajganj

By Staff Correspondent
At least 30 people were missing on Saturday when four boats capsized, three in Netrokona and one in Sirajganj, according to reports reaching here.

About 25 people were missing when three country boats with 55 people aboard capsized in the Dingauba haor in Netrokona. Thirty people swam ashore when the boat capsized due to a norwester.

In another incident, five people were missing after a mechanised boat capsized in the Jamuna near Khashrajbari village in Kazipur upazila, according to UNB.

Witnesses said the boat with 21 passengers aboard was going to Kazipur from Jagannathganj ghat.

Mustafiz leaves for NAM FMs meet today

By Staff Correspondent

Foreign Minister A S M Mustafiz Rahman leaves Dhaka today (Sunday) to attend a 4-day Non-Aligned foreign ministers' meeting in Accra, capital of Ghana. The meeting will begin September 4.

The meeting is expected to take stock of the international political, economic and security situation and discuss the courses of action the Non-Aligned nations can take to achieve the objectives of the Non-Aligned Movement.

Foreign Secretary Abul Ahsan told The Daily Star on Saturday that the foreign ministers' meeting is also likely to finalise decision about the venue of the next Non-Aligned summit meeting to be held next year. Indonesia and Nicaragua are the candidates for sponsoring the next summit meeting.

Foreign ministers attending the Accra meeting will present view points of their respective countries on the global political and economic situation. The situation in the Gulf, Africa, Middle East, Palestine, and questions relating to disarmament and Afghanistan are likely to figure prominently among the political issues.

Economic issues like shortage of capital faced by developing countries, their unfavourable conditions in trade, and problems relating to the transfer of technology are expected to be discussed at length during the 4-day meeting.

The Non-Aligned foreign ministers' meeting is being preceded by a 2-day official level meeting, according to sources.

BNP eager to punish Ershad, says Mizan

By Our Correspondent

Acting Chairman of Jatiya Party Mizanur Rahman Chowdhury Saturday said Ershad and his party never desisted from the policy of ensuring people's welfare and the people also never rejected them.

Ershad's victory in five seats in Rangpur in the last parliamentary elections was a testimony to this, he said while addressing bye-election meetings at Payraband, Bhanganj Bazar, Thakurbari and Haliashu in Rangpur, according to a party press release.

Mizan, who is also contesting the bye-election in a Rangpur seat alleged that the ruling BNP seems more eager to suppress Ershad and his party than to think about people's welfare.

Khulna varsity classes begin

KHULNA, Aug 31: Classes of Khulna University for the current academic session began today. A total of 80 students including 13 female students have been admitted into four different departments in the university, reports BSS.

Kaifu

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various fields. Kaifu said the objective of the mission's visit to Dhaka was to explore ways and means for promoting trade and investment between two countries.

The Japanese Prime Minister expressed the hope that the mission would achieve its objective following fruitful discussions with Bangladesh leaders.

Begum Zia thanked the government and the people of Japan for their interest in the development of Bangladesh.

During the meeting Begum Zia referred to the liberal industrial policy of the present government and urged the Japanese investors to utilise the facilities for strengthening the economic cooperation between the two countries.

The Japanese mission arrived in Dhaka on Friday on a five-day visit to Bangladesh during which they will visit the Export Processing Zone at Chittagong. It will also attend a day-long meeting of Bangladesh-Japan economic forum on Monday.

Corruption in by-election to be punished

By-election to the 11 vacant seats of Jatiya Sangsad will be held on September 11 (Wednesday), as per schedule announced earlier by the Election Commission, reports BSS.

According to an election Commission Secretariat press release issued Saturday the following activities will be taken as punishable election offences and corrupt practices under the relevant sections of the representation of the people order, 1972.

A person shall be punishable with rigorous imprisonment for a term which shall not be less than two years and also with fine if he fails to submit the return his election expenses or obtains or procures or attempts to obtain or procure the assistance of any government officer or employee or votes or applies for a ballot paper for voting at an election knowing that he is not qualified for or is disqualified from voting or votes or applies for a ballot paper for voting more than once in the same polling station or removes a ballot paper from a polling station during the poll.

A person shall be punishable with rigorous imprisonment for a term which shall not be less than two years and also with fine if he, exceeds the limit of the election expenses or is guilty of bribery, personation or undue influence or makes or publishes any false statement which may adversely effect the election of other candidates lends employs, hires, borrows or uses any vehicle of vessel for the purpose of conveying to or from the polling station any elector except himself and members of his immediate family or causes or attempts to cause any person present and waiting to vote at the polling station to depart without voting.

A person shall be punishable with rigorous imprisonment for a term which may extend to seven years and shall not be less than two years and also with fine if he, exceeds the limit of the election expenses or is guilty of bribery, personation or undue influence or makes or publishes any false statement which may adversely effect the election of other candidates lends employs, hires, borrows or uses any vehicle of vessel for the purpose of conveying to or from the polling station any elector except himself and members of his immediate family or causes or attempts to cause any person present and waiting to vote at the polling station to depart without voting.

Soviet parliament

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Congress will decide by a simple majority what percentage of the current members it will retain. He said he personally opposed "100 per cent" renewal.

AP adds: Most of the men arrested in the failed Kremlin coup have been transferred from private dachas outside Moscow to a prison in the city, where they are sharing cells with common criminals, newspapers reported Saturday.

Former KGB chief Vladimir Kryuchkov is sharing a cell with two criminals; his deputy, Col Gen Viktor Grushko has three cellmates; and former Defence Minister Dmitri Yazov has one, the newspapers said.

"Their conditions are no worse and no better than of the other inmates," the newspaper Nezavisimaya Gazeta quoted Russian Prosecutor Valentin Stepankov as saying.

The account dealt with 13 top government, military or party officials who were arrested on charges of treason for trying to topple Soviet President Mikhail S Gorbachev. The report did not include any information on former Supreme Soviet chairman Anatoly Lukyanov, who was arrested Thursday.

The prison where the men were being held was not identified, nor were the owners of the dachas where they had stayed earlier.

The reports detailed the few comforts that were allowed to the former high officials. The prisoners are allowed no visitors or food parcels, but clothes can be sent in.

Yazov's relatives sent him a track suit and former Prime Minister Valentin Pavlov asked for his own jacket and cap to wear during daily strolls, according to the newspaper Rossiskaya Gazeta.

The former envoy, Valentin Falin, a member of the central committee secretariat of the now-suspended Communist Party, said that while he was speaking in parliament on

Hasina

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League candidates Mattur Rahman and Ashkur Rahman also addressed the rallies.

Criticising JP leaders Mizanur Rahman Chowdhury and Shah Moazzem Hossain, who are contesting in Rangpur-5 and Rangpur-6 respectively, Hasina said this Mizan-Moazzem group plundered the country for nine years and amassed fortune illegally.

BAF chief meets Ishaque, Nawaz Sharif

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The Chief of Air Staff, Bangladesh Air Force, Air Vice Marshal Altaf Hossain Choudhury, now on a good-will visit to Pakistan, called on President Ghulam Ishaque Khan on Saturday, says an ISPR press release.

During the call on, the Chief of Air Staff, Pakistan Air Force, Air Chief Marshal Farooq Khan H(M), SBT, and officials of Bangladesh Mission were present.

Meanwhile, Air Vice Marshal Choudhury also called on the Pakistan Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif.

Delay over KAFCO

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Islam Khan at the conference room of Bangladesh Chemical Industries Corporation (BCIC).

The Japanese team feared that the delay in issuance of Letter of Guarantee would lead to suspension of KAFCO works. "This will have serious effects on industrial development in your country," Deputy Leader of the team Sawaki, who is also advisor, Tokyo Chamber of Commerce and Industry, told the Finance Minister.

The KAFCO project has already raised a lot of controversy in the country. A task force, set up earlier under the interim government that succeeded the Ershad regime, found several 'objectionable' provisions under the deal, citing it as a case of shoddy contract involving gross irregularities. The task force was one of the 29 similar teams constituted to review the country's economic situation, after long nine years of autocratic rule, and to recommend measures for sustainable development with transparency in deals involving business transactions in the public or government sector.

Sources said the provisions of gas supplies to Karnaphuli Fertiliser Project at a much reduced rate than what is now available to other operational gas-based fertiliser factories in the country and that too, for a period of twenty years, guaranteed export business and other compensation clauses for any disruption to production, and accounts operations abroad for funds involving the project clearly smacked of a bad deal.

Four ministries including Ministry of Law, Ministry of Industries, Ministry of Energy and Mineral Resources, and Ministry of Finance have also identified several controversial points, for resolving the same before the Letter of Guarantee could be issued by the government.

The Exim Bank of Japan, to recall, is to provide a buyer's credit of about 189 million US dollars towards setting up the

Referendum

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referendum reflects the true popular verdict on the system of government," he said while speaking at a high-level meeting on the preparation of the referendum and bye-elections on Saturday.

The Acting President urged the City Corporation Mayors, divisional commissioners and deputy commissioners to hold meetings down to the union levels in order to motivate the voters for participating in the referendum in large numbers.

He directed the law-enforcing agencies to maintain law and order during the referendum and bye-elections.

Justice Shahabuddin also urged all political parties to mobilise public opinion regarding the referendum.

Chief Election Commissioner Justice Abdur Rouf also addressed the meeting. He explained the procedure for casting votes in the referendum. Mayors of Chittagong, Khulna and Rajshahi city corporations Mir Nasiruddin, Sheikh Tayebur Rahman and Mizanur Rahman Minu and high officials were present.

BNP

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and held milad mahfils, discussions and rallies in this connection.

According to a party press release, the programmes of the Dhaka Metropolis include hoisting of party flag in the central office in the morning, and placing of wreaths and offering of munajat at the mazar of Shaheed President Ziaur Rahman, the founder of the BNP at 9 am.

Party Chairperson and Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia will address a public meeting marking the founding anniversary of the party at Manik Miah Avenue at 4 pm.

The Manik Miah Avenue meeting will also be addressed by senior party leaders. Barrister Talukder called upon the members of the Chhatra Dal, Juba Dal, Samik Dal, Mahila Dal, Jatiyatabadi Samajik Sangkritik Sangatha and other organisations to make the public meeting a success.

Explaining the economic policies of the government, the Finance Minister said that Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) government was committed strongly to support private sector for a market-oriented economy. Foreign private investors are welcome and will be ensured a stable macro-economic framework and rule of law, he added.

He mentioned about the changing global economic winds and said the government is conscious about the developments abroad. The economic reforms in Bangladesh will be pursued in a "steadfast manner" despite the painful process involved in it, he added.

Parliament rejects Solidarity gov's resignation

WARSAW, Aug 31: In a vote of confidence for Prime Minister Jan Krzysztof Bielecki, the parliament on Saturday rejected his resignation amid criticism of the government's austerity policies by former Communists, reports AP.

The Sejm, or lower chamber of the legislature, voted 114-211, with 28 abstentions, on Bielecki's offer to step down along with his nearly 8-month-old government of experts.

On Friday, in a dramatic speech to the Sejm, Bielecki announced his resignation saying that economic reforms cannot be carried out without good cooperation between the legislature and his Cabinet.

Bielecki and other cabinet members filled the government benches in the chamber and watched silently as the vote was carried out.

Strike

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ities to look into their 12-point charter of demands (which excludes diesel price reduction) made to the Shipping Minister M Keramat Ali earlier.

The 12-point demands include: exemption of charges by the owners for deployment of Ansars in the private launches, withdrawal of Value Added Tax (VAT) on repairing of ships and a stop to issuing new permits in water transportation.

Earlier in the afternoon, the association representatives also met the Shipping Minister and officials of his ministry where the 12-point demands were discussed.

Associations of different categories of motorised vessels started the strike from midnight August 23 demanding reduction in diesel price to the pre-Gulf war level.

Press freedom

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Agriculture Minister Majid-ul-Haq, Commerce Minister M K Anwar, Journalist Gias Kamal Chowdhury, DUJ President Zahurul Huq, Managing Director of Jatiyatabadi Prakashani Ltd Prof Majedul Islam and Acting Editor of the Dainik Dinkal Syed Zafar.

Prime Minister Begum Zia said apart from BNP regime there had been no practice of democracy as such and the media could not enjoy freedom.

She said, "now we have given full freedom to the press and at the same time initiatives have been taken to give the democracy an institutional shape."

The Prime Minister said the laws under the Special Powers Act, which curbed the freedom of the press, had been repealed. The rules and formalities required to bring out new newspapers and periodicals have been simplified and as a result a large number of journals are coming out, she added.

The Prime Minister expressed her belief that "press freedom could not ignore the reality of the society."

She said responsible journalism would not only make constructive criticism of the government but also point out the flaws of the opposition. "It would not only practice objective journalism but also give direction to solve the national problems," she said.

She called upon the media to bring out the truth and project it to the people.

Begum Zia said the newspaper, which could protect the national independence and sovereignty and work for the welfare of the people through upholding their rights, could become an alternative to the government.

In this context she referred to the famous saying of Thomas Jefferson that he would prefer newspapers without a government to a government without newspapers.

Wishing all success to the

The Midnight File

Benzair proposes formation of multinational Islamic army

ISLAMABAD, Aug 31: Pakistani opposition leader Benazir Bhutto proposed today setting up a multinational Islamic army to be deployed under UN supervision in times of crisis in Muslim countries. "Muslim countries have formed the (primary areas) of crisis for major conflicts for the past 12 years," the former prime minister said, referring to the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan, civil war in Lebanon, the Iran-Iraq conflict and Iraq's invasion of Kuwait, reports AFP.

Serbia accepts EC peace plan

BELGRADE, Aug 31: Serbia today accepted a European Community (EC) ceasefire plan for Croatia, including a proposal to allow EC observers monitor the truce in the breakaway republic, the Tanjug news agency said. The EC had threatened to impose sanctions on Serbia if it did not accept the plan, reports AFP.

Sri Krishna's birthday today

By Staff Correspondent
The Janmastami, the birth anniversary of Hindu god Sri Krishna, will be observed today (Sunday) by the Hindu community all over the country. The day is a public holiday.

Bangladesh Jatiya Janmastami Uddjapan Committee has chalked out elaborate programmes to observe the day. The committee will organise a rally of the devotees in front of Ananda Plaza (VIP International) at Sadarghat at 10 am.

A colourful religious procession will start at 10-30 am. The procession will disperse at the Ramna Kalibari after parading different city streets.

Road mishap

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(45), Ranzan Ali (46), Akbar Ali (50), Wailullah (30) Babul (16) and Hasina (25). All ten bodies were later taken to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital for autopsy.

Three of the seriously injured were shifted to the DMCH. They were identified by police as Hashmat (45), Nannu (16) and Badal (20).

The rest of the injured were taken to different hospitals in Narayanganj and Dhaka. Five of them were given first-aid at the Narayanganj General Hospital. The owner of the truck, Hanif Mia, and his wife and a son were admitted in a private clinic.

Most of the passengers were from the Jorain area in Dhaka, survivors said. It was learnt that the owner, after buying a new truck, took his family and relatives to Shah Jala's mazar in Sylhet and were on their way back when the accident occurred.

The truck (Dhaka-na-6502) was completely submerged. Local people helped to recover the dead and the injured. The truck could not be salvaged till writing of this report.

A case was registered with the Rugganj Police.

DU

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reopen on September 16, the Syndicate decided.

The Syndicate sought cooperation from all student organisations, political parties, guardians and people from all walks of life to maintain congenial atmosphere on the campus. It also requested the law enforcing agencies to take steps so that no armed clash took place there.

The Vice-Chancellor told the Syndicate members that the causes which led to the closure of the university was not yet removed but academic life of the students were at stake as it remained closed. He said there were pressures on the university authority from different quarters including the students and guardians to reopen the university. The Dhaka University Education Atmosphere Council (DUEAC) had also decided earlier to reopen the university as early as possible, he said.

Tin Bigha

From Page 1 Col. 8

Rao showed "keen" interest in resolving the bilateral disputes and promote neighbourliness, said the spokesman.

As the discussions on different issues went off well, two sides are keen to continue the dialogue at higher political plane. Solanki will visit Bangladesh in December to attend the meeting of Indo-Bangladesh Joint Economic Commission, of which two foreign ministers are co-chairmen.

During the visit, Bangladesh has stressed the need for an agreement of sharing the waters of the Ganges and Teesta before the advent of the next lean season.

Two sides discussed the bilateral trade and the balance, which is heavily against Bangladesh. New Delhi assured Dhaka of unrestricted entry of Bangladesh goods in India as a measure to obviate the trade gap.

Two sides saw big scope for joint ventures, a line that is expected to be followed up newspapers.

Wishing all success to the