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Holiday Notice

The offices of The Daily Star will remain closed today (Thursday) in observance of "National Solidarity Day." There will therefore be no issue of the newspaper tomorrow (Friday).

NEWS BRIEFS

No time frame for Tinbigha

NEW DELHI, Nov 6 : India wants to expedite the process of finalising arrangements for the leasing of the Tinbigha corridor to Bangladesh. An External Affairs Ministry spokesman said India will abide by its commitment to hand over the corridor but there was no definite time-frame for this purpose, reports Xinhua.

Naziur Rahman chargesheeted

The Bureau of Anti-Corruption has submitted charge sheet to the court for trial of former LGD and Cooperative Minister Naziur Rahman on charges of misuse of power, an official handout said on Wednesday, reports BSS.

Hearing of writ begins

The hearing of the writ petition filed by Abdus Samad Azad, Deputy Leader of the Opposition in Parliament, and six others challenging the Presidential Election Act 1991 began on Wednesday before a High Court Division bench of the Supreme Court, reports BSS.

Rao refuses to attend without Wangchuk

SAARC summit postponed

COLOMBO, Nov 6 : Foreign Ministers of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC), who began a meeting here Tuesday, postponed the summit indefinitely after failing to agree on staging it without the King of Bhutan, who has said he will not attend, reports AFP.

King Jigme Singye Wangchuk, who celebrates his 36th birthday Monday, cited domestic compulsions for his decision to pull out of the summit.

Indian Prime Minister Narasimha Rao reacted by saying he too would not attend. Indian officials said there was "little point" in his attending without the King, one of the two founding members still in the regional organisation.

Bhutan's Foreign Secretary Tj Riskin attended talks here while India sent State Minister for External Affairs Eduardo Falero.

Colombo officials said Premadasa had taken a personal interest in the arrange-

ments and until late Tuesday had been directing officials and seeing to minor details like seating.

"Because of the intimate interest he took, the disappointment will be greater," a local official said.

A SAARC diplomat close to the Council of Ministers said that, as a compromise, the leaders of Bangladesh, the Maldives and Pakistan would visit the Sri Lankan capital shortly "as a goodwill gesture in view of the elaborate arrangements" made by Colombo.

"They will come here for bilateral talks to show their goodwill," the diplomat said. Diplomatic sources and political analysts believe the reasons behind the Bhutanese King's decision to stay away went far deeper than the fact that Colombo failed to observe correct protocol in inviting the Buddhist Monarch.

"This looks more like a tit-for-tat and Premadasa is getting it back in kind," an Asian diplomat said, referring to the

Sri Lankan President's absence from the 1990 summit in the Maldives capital of Male.

Premadasa missed his turn to host the summit soon after assuming office in 1989, saying he could not stage the regional meeting with self-respect while Indian troops were deployed in his island republic.

His move led to a major dispute between Sri Lanka, India and other SAARC countries, and prompted Maldives Foreign Minister Fathullah Jameel to remark that the organisation had violated its own charter by failing to hold a summit that year.

The Maldives hosted the fifth SAARC meeting in November 1990 after much wrangling with Colombo. Premadasa took a last minute decision to withdraw and send his Prime Minister to the Maldives summit.

AP adds : The postponement was announced by India, the regional superpower, after the King of Bhutan declined to See Page 12 Col. 2



Lankan Prime Minister Mr DB Wijetunga welcomes Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia on Wednesday when she arrived at Katunayke International Airport in Colombo on a two-day state visit. —PID photo

Red carpet welcome for Khaleda at Colombo

COLOMBO, Nov 6 : Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia was given a red carpet welcome when she arrived here tonight on a two-day state visit to Sri Lanka, reports BSS.

Sri Lankan Prime Minister D B Wijetunga received Begum Zia at the Katunayake airport. A host of Sri Lankan ministers including Foreign Minister Harold Herat, Public Administration, Provincial Council, and Home Affairs Minister Fester Perera, State Minister for Education Services Sunantha Ranasinghe were present on the occasion.

Begum Khaleda Zia was presented with bouquets and was introduced to the dignitaries at the airport.

The airport ceremony was marked by a traditional Ceylonese dance 'Magul Bora'. From the airport, Begum Khaleda Zia flew to the city by helicopter accompanied by the Sri Lankan Prime Minister.

Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia left Dhaka on Wednesday afternoon for Colombo at the invitation of Lankan President Ranasinghe Premadasa.

Ad hoc Rules of Business framed

Powers of Ministers, Secretaries bifurcated

By Moinuddin Naser

The ad hoc Rules of Business, adopted at the first meeting of the cabinet after the change of government bifurcates power between the minister and the secretary in discharging ministerial functions.

However, the temporary Rules of Business has not yet been gazetted.

The ad hoc Rules of Business terms a minister the chief executive of his respective ministry and its attached divisions while vesting the responsibility of principal accounting officer in the secretary.

The draft of the ad hoc Rules of Business was framed by a seven-member committee headed by Majidul Haque, Communications Minister Col (ret'd) Oli Ahmed, Commerce

Minister M K Anwar and four other bureaucrats were also members of the committee.

The association of 24 cadres services of Bangladesh Civil Service Coordination Committee which excluded the BCS (Admin) cadres expressed its dissent over the decision of the cabinet to bifurcate the power.

It said that in the new arrangement the secretary would also enjoy more power than the minister as he would dictate terms in respect to any expenditure of the ministry.

Without drastic changes in the existing Rules of Business the government would not be able to function democratically and the bureaucrats who used to serve under the authoritarian regime as chief executives of their respective ministries

would remain as powerful as they were earlier, it added.

One of the members of the committee for formulation of the Rules of Business said when contacted that the Rules of Business was adopted on a purely ad hoc basis and that it was issued to all concerned ministries to be followed. However he said that a full fledged rules of business would have to be formulated soon.

But, by now, a section of government officials has already questioned the effectiveness of the ministers as heads of ministries as they had no power to spend money without clearance of the Principal Accounting Officer.

The BCS Coordination Committee which rendered its See Page 12 Col. 4

National Revolution, Solidarity Day today

The National Revolution and Solidarity Day will be celebrated today throughout the country in a befitting manner, reports BSS.

Elaborate programmes have been chalked out to mark the day with due honour and enthusiasm.

Both President Abdur Rahman Biswas and Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia in separate messages on the occasion said the historic November 7 would remain as a glorious chapter in our history.

President Biswas said the sepy-janata revolution of November 7, 1975, had put the country's independence and sovereignty on a solid foundation.

In her message, Prime Minister Begum Zia recalled that on this historic day in 1975 the freedom-loving people and the undaunted members of the armed forces had extended their support to shahed president Ziaur Rahman See Page 12 Col. 7

Typhoon kills 3000 in Philippines

MANILA, Nov 6 : The death toll from Typhoon Thelma has topped 3,000 people, the Philippines Civil Defense office here said today, report AFP and Reuter.

It said 2,900 people were killed in the eastern city of Ormoc on Tuesday when a dam burst, sweeping away an entire village, and about 100 were killed in the nearby eastern town of Bruaen. Both are on Leyte island.

Casualties were also reported in other areas of Leyte and the central island of Negros, the Office of Civil Defense (OCD) and the Red Cross said.

"The devastation was so great. Ninety per cent of the city of Ormoc was destroyed," Aurora Laboy, an official with the provincial Disaster Coordinating Council in Tacloban, capital of Leyte province, said. "Bodies are lying on the

street. Most have not been identified. So there will have to be a mass burial," she added. She said the city was under two feet of water and luxury cars were washed away in the surging flood waters.

Congressman Carmelo Locsin and Ormoc city Mayor Victoria Locsin, his wife, sent a call to the Red Cross in Manila, for fuel.

Telephone lines to Ormoc were down. The storm forced newly returned ex-first Lady Imelda Marcos to postpone a scheduled trip to Leyte, her home province.

Thelma has dwindled to a mere tropical depression with maximum winds of 55 kilometers (34 miles) per hour near the centre.

It was charted in the South China Sea at 4 pm (0800 GMT) today, 450 kilometers (279 miles) southwest of Manila and moving northwest at 28 kilometers (17 Miles) per hour.

65.30 pc pass SSC exams from Comilla Board

By Staff Correspondent
Results of the Secondary School Certificate (SSC) examinations held this year under the Comilla Board was announced on Wednesday.

The percentage of pass in the examinations is 65.30 which is more than double compared with that of last year. Last year's percentage of pass was only 30.47.

Despite interruptions in holding the examinations of the board due to the devastating cyclone of April 29 and leakage of question papers later on, the authorities managed to publish the results 60 days after conclusion of all the examinations in September.

See Page 12 Col. 5

Bangladeshi doctors barred from entering Dahagram

By Asiuzzaman
The Extensive Programme for Immunisation (EPI) was suspended in Dahagram and Angurpota enclaves as the Indian authorities did not permit Bangladeshi medical officials to enter the enclaves.

Meanwhile reports in Dhaka said at least 50 babies died of various diseases in past few weeks in the two enclaves.

The children in the two enclaves remained unimmunised though the programme See Page 12 Col. 3

Accused in Liton, Galib murder case arrested

By DU Correspondent
Nirmal Chandra Das, one of the accused in the Mirza Galib and Zafarullah Liton murder case was arrested Wednesday from Kaltabazar in the old town at about 2.30 pm.

Mirza Galib and Liton were killed in a fierce gunbattle on the Dhaka University campus between the supporters of the Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) and Chhatra League (S-A) on See Page 12 Col. 5

20 Bangladeshis held in Japan

TOKYO, Nov 6 : The number of crimes by foreigners visiting Japan hit an all-time high of 4,814 cases in the first nine months of this year, national police said Wednesday, reports AP.

The announcement said police arrested 2,629 Asians in the January-September period, or 81.5 per cent of the foreigners arrested.

Among them were 1,212 Chinese, including Taiwanese and Hong Kong residents; 518 South and North Koreans; 356 Iranians; 132 Filipinos; 77 Thais; 76 Vietnamese; 74 Malaysians; 62 Pakistanis and 20 Bangladeshis.



Trading Corporation of Bangladesh dumped 1,900 bags of powdered milk at Jatrabari outfall after they were found unfit for human consumption but health hazards did not restrain poor people from carrying some of them home. — Star photo

\$ 15 billion Arab order for warplanes and tanks

DUBAI (United Arab Emirates), Nov 6 : Saudi Arabia and other Arab states have ordered warplanes and tanks from two major US defence companies in deals worth nearly 15 billion dollars, spokesmen for the firms said here this week, reports AFP.

The spokesmen for General Dynamics and McDonnell Douglas said at the Dubai International Defence show that the deals included 260 F-16 and 72 F-15 fighters, and 1,592 Abrams tanks.

Saudi Arabia wants all the F-15s, 700 tanks and 200 F-16s while the rest could go to Egypt, Bahrain, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates (UAE), the spokesmen said. "The Saudi government has asked the US government to provide 72 additional McDon-

nell air superiority and multi-role F-15 fighters," McDonnell spokesman Robert Trice said in a statement.

He said the deal could be worth four billion dollars and the company would press the US government for approval.

"The US Congress has traditionally opposed major arms sales to Gulf states. But we will be lobbying heavily in a news post-war environment to encourage Congress to approve the sale," he said.

"We keep telling our friends in Washington that the allies perceive the US as an unreliable arms supplier. Bilateral restraint procures disastrous results for US.

Saudi Arabia, the world's biggest oil exporter currently has 84 of the sophisticated F-15 fighters played a key role in

the recent Gulf war. Riyadh has announced plans to bolster its Armed Forces and double its Army to about 160,000 troops.

Israel has lobbied against arms exports to the Middle East and US Congressional opposition has prompted Saudi Arabia to turn to other sources, mainly Britain.

"The Saudis have twice turned to Britain in recent years when the US would not sell them arms. This gave British Aerospace millions of dollars of business that might otherwise have been given to American firms," Trice said.

He said the UAE, which depends mainly on French weapons, had been offered 26 F-15 fighters.

"They have asked for a pricing, which is one step away from announcing intent to buy," Trice said.

A spokesman for General Dynamics said his firm won a deal to sell Bahrain 20 F-16s and expected a sale of 260 to other Gulf states.

Saudi Arabia may get 200 of the fighters, while 40 will be sold to the UAE and 20 to Qatar in deals worth 5.2 billion dollars, the spokesman said at the show, the third largest in the world.

"We will soon be holding negotiations with these countries on the details of the deals," he said.

F-16, with a cost of between 15 and 20 million dollars, is one of the most advanced fighters in the world. It

also effectively took part in the Gulf War with more than 11,000 sorties.

The General Dynamics spokesman also said the company would sell 1,592 Abrams tanks to Saudi Arabia, Egypt, and the UAE.

The deal could reach five billion dollars and involves 700 Abrams M1A1 and M1A2 tanks for Saudi Arabia, 555 tanks for Egypt and 337 for the UAE, he added.

Military experts in the region said such deals could double the six-nation Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) air forces, which had nearly 300 aircraft before the Gulf War.

GCC military delegates from Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar and the UAE held

extensive negotiations with exhibitors at the Dubai show but no details were revealed.

A senior UAE army officer said they had received several offers for jets and other weapons from French, American, British and Soviet companies.

"We are seriously studying these offers and will choose the best", Lieutenant Colonel Khaled Abdallah said.

McDonnell Douglas and General Dynamics are among 400 companies from 44 countries participating in Dubai's five-day show, which ends tomorrow.

Also on show here are Soviet MiGs, French Mirages and British Tornados and Harriers.