

Federal army begins pullout from Croatia

ZAGREB, Nov 29: The federal army began withdrawing Friday from one of its largest barracks near the Croatian capital of Zagreb at 8:35 am (0735 GMT). Croatian defence officials said.

The army issued appeals to Croatian citizens to allow safe passage of the withdrawing forces. Belgrade television reported.

Nearly 300 vehicles began leaving the Marshal Tito barracks near the Croatian capital of Zagreb at 8:35 am (0735 GMT). Croatian defence officials said.

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Fighting was reported in eastern Slavonia. Villages near the strategic city of Osijek in eastern Croatia were reported under sporadic artillery attack.

But the 14th truce in the 5-month-old civil war appeared to be holding elsewhere.

The UN Security Council on Wednesday recommended the swift use of peacekeepers, paving the way for their likely deployment. The United Nations says, however, that it will send no force until a cease-fire takes firm hold.

Croatian President Franjo Tudjman said in a TV interview Thursday that a UN force should not wait for "a definite cease-fire on all (Croatian) territory."

In an apparent bid to speed their deployment, Tudjman said he would accept such forces on Croatian territory as well as along the republic's border with rival Serbia.

Previously, Croatian officials

had expressed fears that deployment inside the republic might legitimize Serbia's demand to redraw the republic's borders.

"We have agreed that peace troops should go to the Croatian border, but also to the areas where war operations were carried out," Tudjman said in an interview with Croatian television.

Tudjman said Croatia "agreed to deblock... (federal army) barracks in order to make the UN and the international community know that we don't want to keep (the army) here."

"We let them go with their equipment because without equipment and weapons they didn't want to leave, and the EC has accepted their explanation that Croatia had taken army weapons while they were withdrawing from Croatia," he said.

Previous cease-fires have failed in part because of disagreements over whether departing federal troops could take their equipment and weapons.

The latest truce, sponsored by the United Nations and signed last Saturday, was the first to hold out the prospect of the imminent deployment of peacekeepers, desired by all sides.

Although the cease-fire has generally appeared to hold, Serb-led forces have mounted near constant artillery attacks on Osijek, the capital of the heavily embattled eastern Slavonia region.

Floating hotels, a fading heritage

Masud Hasan Khan

The kings or landlords of historic Dhaka may be only in books now, but for a few, the days and style of aristocracy is too difficult to give up. They are the torch bearers of our rich heritage.

Nawab Mia and few other owners of Dhaka's floating restaurants are among them. When 55-year-old Nawab Mia's life on the river comes to an end, a chapter of Dhaka's traditional inn-keeping will come to a close.

He is the last of the generation of hoteliers who run the pinish-the floating inns on the river Bariganga.

Not far from the bustling Sadarghat terminals and the trading centers vibrating nearby, there moored in a row are three pinishes, the last of the Dhaka species. Those were Faridpur Muslim Hotel, Uma-

Bhasani was among the guests of the 'pinish'. Maybe it is no more there to speak of the great leader's arduous journey from one corner of the country to another seeking emancipation for millions of 'downtrodden'.

'Pinish' sometimes called 'barra', 'green boat' or 'lal ding', is a kind of house-boat, may be one or two-storied. 'Pinish' is an adaptation of pinnace, a small boat with eight oars. There are small cabins upstairs. The ground floor has just enough space to accommodate a dozen visitors each night.

Each cabin, a bit larger than a coffin, is without furniture. The hotelier supplies pillow, quilt and bed sheets when a guest checks in. Pinishes are generally lighted by tallows, with a single washing closet at

ever drop by to see my business... the modern boys... he regrets.

The inn-keeper earns around Taka 7,000 a month and a big chunk of the money goes for salary of his three employees, taxes and for repairs.

The guests of the 'pinish' are however less romantic about passing nights on the river. They are mostly working class people - day labourers, peddlers, small traders - or the passengers who arrive at the city for business. The price for sleeping and eating on the pinishes is surprisingly as low as Taka 10 for a cabin every night and the bill for food never exceeds Taka 20 for two meals. For the regular guests there is concession.

In 1946 the charge was



Ujala Hindu Hotel, Dhaka Port Nazma Boarding.

Several gang planks are stretched on the river bank for the guests to board. Nawab Mia sat on his empty "Dhaka Port Nazma Boarding" pinish.

Once these house-boats or bazras were the symbol of prestige for the 'raja admis' (aristocrats) of old Dhaka. "Unless you had one you didn't belong to the aristocracy," he said.

Besides the inn-keeping business, the boats were used for cruising, political campaigns and by the peers and maulanas who visited the rural areas during the monsoon season. Dhaka's Nawabs owned the frequent storms and cyclones and the onslaught of modern-day hotel business on shore.

Leader of the masses Moulana Abdul Hamid Khan

the stern for common use. "It's a dying business... and it's hard time for us," Nawab Mia says sitting on his deserted boat. "You don't know what great days we had."

Mia, who has been in the business for straight 35 years, recalls there were 365 similar hotels when he entered the business. During the 1940s, Sadarghat was the nucleus of Dhaka's trade and commerce and there were only two hotels in the growing city.

And now in the land of rivers, when cruising has ceased to be a luxury, Nawab Mia feels like a misfit. Only three of the 21 pinishes owned by him have survived the frequent storms and cyclones and the onslaught of modern-day hotel business on shore.

"Not even my four sons

could not board a 'pinish' without a fresh shine on your shoes", the old inn-keeper said.

The charges began soaring and guests thinned with the growth of the city where numerous cheap brick and cement hotels came up lacking the beauty of the rocking boats.

"I'll stick to the trade until my death... and may be that's not too far," Mia said, but his guests pray that their host and tradition he has kept alive so far does not meet an early end, taking away with it one of Dhaka's lesser known heritage.

PM calls to combat campus terrorism

Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia Friday called upon the students to build an irrevocable movement against terrorism with the same spirit with which they had fought against autocracy, reports BSS.

She said, "You have to forge a movement with indomitable spirit to check terrorism on the campus and make it successful for better future of the nation."

The Prime Minister was addressing the students who swept the election of Eden College Student Sangsad as the candidates of Chhatradal panel and general students of the college at Sugandha.

The Prime Minister said the students had to dedicate themselves in studies to gain the capability of bearing the responsibility as leader in future.

Begum Zia also underscored the need for spontaneous participation of the students in the national development programmes.

She called upon the students to take part in the canal digging programme with spade and wicker to remove the sufferings of poverty stricken rural people.

SAARC

From Page 1 Col. 7

Begum Zia said the sovereign national parliament and the free press are the symbols of accountability and transparency of the government.

She expressed her belief that the combined intellect, wisdom, power and efforts of the country's ten million people would usher in a new era for the nation.

The Prime Minister expressed her happiness that the dreams of shahed President Zia who had first envisioned SAARC has come true. She also expressed her pleasure that the concept of mutual cooperation and exchange of views in SAARC had trickled down to different professional bodies like the SAFA.

The Prime Minister directed the Commerce Ministry to take necessary measures so that the revised Company Act of 1913 could be discussed in the next session of parliament.

The two-day conference, which has been jointly sponsored by Institute of Cost and Management Accountants and Institute of Cost Accountants, is being participated by 400 representatives from India, Sri Lanka, Pakistan, Nepal and Bangladesh.

The Midnight

Army's ultimatum to Togo

LOME (Togo), Nov 29: Soldiers trying to topple Togo's Prime Minister Joseph Koffigoh ordered him today to report to them within 48 hours or face the consequences. The ultimatum by troops who seized the radio and television stations on Thursday and encircled Koffigoh's offices was issued as France, the former colonial power, said it was assembling a force to protect European Nationals in Togo. French officials in Paris did not specify the size of the force. But it said the troops were gathering in Cotonou, capital of neighbouring Benin. They would not intervene in the confrontation that pits troops loyal to veteran President Gnassingbe Eyadema against Koffigoh, the officials said, reports Reuter.

Kirgizia PM killed in car crash

MOSCOW, Nov 29: The Prime Minister of the Central Asian republic of Kirgizia was killed Friday in a car accident, news agencies reported. Nasiridin Isanov, 49, was killed when a truck driving on the wrong side of the road hit his vehicle as he was travelling from the city of Osh to Dzhalsalabad, the Tass news agency reported. He died without regaining consciousness, it said, reports AP.

Pakistani beheaded in Riyadh

RIYADH, Nov 29: A Pakistani man charged with heroin trafficking was beheaded by sword today, the interior ministry announced one day after reports that Saudi customs officials had seized 30 kilograms (66 pounds) of heroin. Koboul Mohammad Birzadah was executed in the western Saudi town of Jeddah, where he was recently arrested when he tried to bring into the city a "quantity of heroin," the ministry said. The Saudi newspaper Okaz on Thursday reported that heroin worth eight million dollars were found at Riyadh's King Khaled Airport in the luggage of travellers who were on their way from Bangladesh to Nigeria, reports AFP.

Murder or suicide?

From Page 1 Col. 8

Police seized the Honda Civic car bearing number Dhaka Metro Ka-03-1185 and an unnatural death (UD) case has been registered with Tajgon police. The car was not his own.

Mokhtar Hossain hails from Aliganj, Fatullah. He left behind his wife and two sons and two daughters.

The police seized a revolver from the car with four rounds of bullet, an empty beer can and some belongings. "On one bullet was shot from this revolver", a police official said.

When Shaymoli, with her daughter returned home and got off from the rickshaw, Mokhtar asked both of them to get in the car.

When Shaymoli and her daughter got inside the car, Mokhtar accused her of not keeping the appointment. According to Shaymoli, at a stage of exchanging words, Mokhtar brought out a revolver from the dashboard of the car and fired a shot in his head.

Puzzled Shaymoli immediately rushed into her house and called her brother at the spot. They went to the Tejgon police station and informed the police about the incident. Within minutes police rushed to the spot and found Mokhtar dead in the driving seat of the car. The car with the body was brought to the Tejgon police station. The body has been sent to Dhaka Medical College Hospital for autopsy.

Tanbazar prostitutes' plea for help

From Our Correspondent NARAYANGANJ, Nov 29: The ad-hoc committee of the Tanbazar and Tanbazar prostitutes in a statement Friday urged the government to take immediate measures to save them from the crisis caused by the recent demonstrations by the anti-brothel activists in the town.

A statement signed by Rita Khanam, President of the ad-hoc committee said they were facing starvation due to decline in clients and passing fearful days apprehending attack by the prostitution eviction committee.

The ad-hoc committee appreciated the role of the law enforcing personnel during the recent onslaught on them by the anti-brothel activists. It hoped that they would again come forward to save them and their innocent children.

Shibir calls strike in Ctg today

From Staff Correspondent CHITTAGONG, Nov 29: Islami Chhatra Shibir (ICS) city unit has called hartal tomorrow in the city demanding violence free atmosphere in the Chittagong Polytechnic Institute (CPI).

It also demanded examination scope for nine CPI students who were Shibir activists earlier declared disqualified for appearing in examinations for percentage shortage.

The ICS brought out a procession and held rally in the city in support of its programme.

Transport strike

From Page 1 Col. 4

Sattar in another statement termed the strike call as illogical and unlawful. He said the strike call of the owners was aimed at foiling the country-wide strike call of the workers from December 1.

Bus owners

From Page 1 Col. 2

and General Secretary respectively of Bangladesh Sarka Paribahan Samik Federation were present.

It further said 626 appointment letters have been issued to truck workers in Dhaka and it is being issued to the truck workers of different districts from Friday.

The federation urged the transport owners to issue appointment letters to their respective transport workers by November 30.

It further said that transports whose workers will not be provided with appointment letters by their owners by November 30 will stop plying from December 1.

Phnom Penh pledges Khmers' security

PHNOM PENH, Nov 29: Prime Minister Hun Sen said today he felt completely responsible for Wednesday's near lynching of Khmer Rouge leaders and would give them a safe government building if they returned to the Cambodian capital.

"I very much regret what happened and this is my responsibility," the Prime Minister told AFP in an interview.

"We are very conscious of this (responsibility) because we can not accept that the peace agreement should collapse or that headquarters of the SNC be moved from Phnom Penh," he said.

The SNC (Supreme National Council) was set up under a United Nations peace plan for Cambodia signed in Paris last month. It groups Hun Sen's government and the three guerrilla factions, including the Khmer Rouge, which had fought it for 13 years, and is chaired by former monarch Prince Norodom Sihanouk.

Khmer Rouge leader Khieu Samphan returned to the Cambodian capital Wednesday morning after being in exile since 1979, but had to be evacuated back to Thailand by late afternoon after a frenzied mob attacked the Khmer Rouge house.

Khieu Samphan and Khmer Rouge military leader Son Sen were cornered on the floor of a bedroom closet before security forces managed to rescue them and take them to the airport in an armoured personnel carrier.

"Without my personal intervention, I think these people probably would have been lynched," said the Prime Minister, who had directed the evacuation from a balcony across the street.

He recalled his difficulty in trying to decide whether to order the police to use force against the mob enraged by memories of the Khmer

Rouge's killing of more than a million Cambodians during their rule under Pol Pot from 1975 to 1979.

If he had ordered the police to shoot, he would be accused of violating human rights, Hun Sen said. But if he had allowed the crowd to attack Khieu Samphan he would be accused of not guaranteeing the security of the Khmer Rouge.

"It was as if I was between the clamps of pliers," he said. The Cambodian Premier said the Khmer Rouge leaders told their 10 North Korean-trained bodyguards not to use their pistols. It was this restraint which kept the mobs from finishing them off.

"If any of them had fired, shots... I would never have been able to confront the mob. All of them might have been lynched," he said.

"I have to admire Khieu Samphan and Son Sen. They did not allow their bodyguards to use their weapons."

Hun Sen declined to reveal the location of the proposed government building for fear of jeopardizing the Khmer Rouge's safety in the future.

Prince Sihanouk said Thursday that the Khmer Rouge would return to Phnom Penh as soon as possible.

The Prince cancelled a trip to the Cambodian provinces and is due to leave Sunday for Thailand, where he has called an SNC meeting for Tuesday in the resort of Pattaya to discuss security measures for the Khmer Rouge's return.

Despite the incident Wednesday, the Khmer Rouge leaders have pledged to continue the peace process and are to attend the meeting.

Hun Sen denied reports that the government organised Wednesday's protests or that it had sent agents to provoke the violence. "This government had no intention of allowing this chaos and loss of law and order," he said.

Museum employees go on strike

By Staff Correspondent

Thousands of visitors had to go back disappointed from the National Museum in the city Friday as its employees kept all the entrances closed during visiting hours.

Museum sources said the employees went on a wildcat strike locking the gates demanding cancellation of a new Director General's appointment to the museum.

The visitors became dismayed finding the gates locked without prior notice.

The Acting DG Nizamuddin took over charge from Dr Enamul Haq early this year.

The Acting DG, when asked over telephone, said Friday night that he took all possible steps to ensure security to the invaluable treasures at the museum after the employees went on strike.

Zia rehabilitated killers of '71, says Sajeda

By Staff Correspondent

Awami League General Secretary Begum Sajeda Chowdhury, MP on Friday alleged that late President Ziaur Rahman politically rehabilitated the killers of '71 and allowed religion-based communal politics in the country.

She was addressing a meeting at Baktabali Pargana of Fatullah organised in memory of 139 Liberation War martyrs. They were killed by the Pakistan occupation forces.

She alleged that the Zia government began distorting the history of the Liberation War and also provided Bangabandhu's killers with jobs abroad.

Presided over by Ibrahim Sarker, the rally was addressed by, among others, Anwar Ali, Mafizul Islam and Shahidullah.

Industrial shutdown

From Page 1 Col. 4

given a fitting reply, and it is only the beginning," Daji, a communist, said "millions" had joined the work stoppage.

The strike has the backing of communists, but is not being supported by unions affiliated to the ruling Congress (I) Party and the right-wing Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP, Indian People's Party).

Daji said at least 150 workers were arrested in BJP-ruled Bhopal central India. PTI said nearly 2,200 people were detained late Thursday in the southern state of Tamil Nadu.

In New Delhi, leftist and several centrist MPs walked out of Parliament after the Speaker refused a discussion of the industrial shutdown.

On Thursday, P R Kumaramangalam, Parliamentary Affairs Minister, described the strike as "politically motivated" and said "certain sections wanted to make political capital out of the strike by misinterpreting government policies."

Communist parties hit back with accusations that the government was sacrificing India's interests by surrendering its "economic sovereignty" to the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank.

Since coming to power in June, P V. Narasimha Rao's government has embarked on a policy of sweeping economic liberalisation to open up its regulated economy. The reforms have won laurels from such international lending agencies as the IMF.

There was no official comment on the industrial shutdown, called by six national trade unions and their affiliates to protest the economic policies of Rao's five-month-old minority government.

The walkout is aimed mainly at government plans to divest itself of 98 public sector units identified as chronically ailing, creating worries of layoffs at a time of soaring unemployment and inflation.

It is the biggest industrial strike to hit India since 1978. Labour leaders had said more than 10 million employees in factories and public sector enterprises would take part in the strike, which the government estimates will cost 115 million dollars in production losses.

PTI said all road, rail and air transport came to a halt in West Bengal stranding thousands of passengers.

Schools and colleges were also closed in West Bengal and the neighbouring opposition-ruled Bihar state.

Buses and scooter-taxis went off the roads in West Bengal and Bihar while some government buses operated with police escort in the southern state of Kerala, where taxis and private buses however took a day off.

But 80 per cent of the staff turned up for work at the port of Kochi in Kerala, PTI said.

Hundreds of factories were shut in the Indian capital and in neighbouring towns.

The strike was expected to seriously hit banks and insur-

ance, coal and steel companies, almost all of which are government-owned, and affect railways, airlines and road transport in varying degrees.

Indian Airlines cancelled 40 per cent of its domestic flights, but a spokesman said the carrier was operating all international routes and working on "certain contingency plans." He did not elaborate.

In Bombay, senior officers were staffing the airlines counters at the airport after the ground staff walked out.

Tinbigha

From Page 1 Col. 5

see to it that the sovereignty and authority of India are not undermined. The security of the people of Kuchlbari has also to be borne in mind."

Dasgupta said that the state government had drawn the attention of the center on the problems in implementing the agreement and the Chief Minister Jyoti Basu had also visited the area.

Cop stabbed

From Page 1 Col. 5

police force stopped it and tried to arrest the miscreants. At one stage constable Strajul Haque was stabbed in the chest by the muggers.

Strajul Haque was admitted to Dhaka Medical College Hospital and his condition was stated to be critical.

Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia inaugurating the ninth conference of the South Asian Federation of Accountants (SAFA) at a local hotel on Friday. —PID photo

