

UN peace efforts at stake

Federal forces shell Dubrovnik

ZAGREB, Dec 6: Serbian led federal forces bombarded the Adriatic City of Dubrovnik today, damaging historic monuments and setting ships ablaze in the ancient port in renewed fighting which could signal failure for UN peace efforts, reports AFP.

The Yugoslav Army and Naval had been pounding Dubrovnik and its medieval old town with heavy artillery since morning, the Croatian news agency HINA said.

All parts of the city were hit, including the historic Orthodox church, the Dominican Abbey and Libertas hotel where refugees were sheltering.

By early afternoon several ships were on fire in the ancient port and the forest on the island of Lokrum facing it was aflame.

The death toll from the morning's fighting, which followed two weeks of relative calm, stood at one dead and eight wounded, the agency said.

Croatian television said the army also bombarded SRDJ fortress, held by stronghold which overlooks the city.

As the fighting raged, UNICEF's delegate in Rome Steffan de Mistura made a "desperate appeal" to Italian Immigration Minister Margherita Boniver to alert public opinion to the new onslaught, the Ministry said in Rome.

He telephoned the Minister from the hotel Argentina about a kilometre (half a mile) from the historic city centre, where hundreds of refugees were sheltering, and said many shells had hit the main street running through the old town, the Stradun, and that he believed more than one person was killed.

French Secretary of State for Humanitarian Action Bernard Kouchner in a visit to Osijek, another Croatian town under bombardment, called on Europe to "do infinitely more" and "oppose (with) true force the brutal force" at work in Yugoslavia.

In Belgrade, a Defence Ministry spokesman denied the army was bombing Dubrovnik, saying all reports of an onslaught were

"disinformation aimed at tarnishing the army at a time when difficult negotiations are underway."

Colonel Milan Gvero said the army Friday had responded to a Croatian attack.

Federal and Croatian forces were also pitted in a ferocious battle for control of the small town of Lipik, near Pakrac, 150 kilometres (90 miles) from Zagreb in western Slovenia, Tanjug said.

Long lines of refugees were fleeing villages nearby, Tanjug said.

UN special envoy Cyrus Vance meanwhile was holding talks in Sarajevo on the possibility of sending UN peacekeeping troops to Yugoslavia.

The former US Secretary of State was scheduled to meet in the city, the capital of Bosnia Herzegovina, with the President of the republic, Alija Izetbegovic. UN officials here said.

Related story on page 5

Transport strike continues in N districts as talks fail

By Staff Correspondent

The transport strike situation in northern districts remained unchanged as the government authorities, owners and workers on Friday failed to work out a solution at their meetings.

The owners refused to issue appointment letters before the resolution of the case lodged by them with the High Court while the workers were adamant about getting appointment letters.

Communications Secretary Manjurul Karim held separate meetings with the leaders of North Bengal Transport Owners Association and Transport Workers Federation at Rajshahi but failed to appease the parties. Chairman of Bangladesh Road Transport Authority (BRTA) was also present at the meeting.

The workers would sit today (Saturday) to discuss the situation among themselves, a source said.

Rohingya repatriation

From Page 1 Col. 7

villages in Arakan. The Rohingyas started fleeing into Bangladesh with increasing number. The total number of the fugitives now appears to have swelled to something between 35,000 and 50,000. As the refugees continue to pour into the border belt along Cox's Bazar and Bandarban districts, the Arakan-based Rohingya Solidarity Organisation are firm against going back home until democracy, returns to Myanmar. The leaders of RSO—Bangladesh apparently ignores their presence—often show up in Chittagong and issue press statements. Under these circumstances Bangladesh has two options: either to wait until establishment of a democratic government in Myanmar or to force the refugees back to their home against their will.

Because of the Guerilla activity the Myanmar government will not obviously be a kind host to the Rohingya refugees once they are back home. This kind of fear has already been expressed by RSO

Obhi

From Page 1 Col. 5

The source said that Obhi went out of the country several times earlier despite warrant issued against him. But the present situation was not all that favourable for him to do so, it said adding that the anti-Obhi elements in Chhatra League (S-A) had now become stronger after the arrests of some of his associates.

Obhi, former International Affairs Secretary of Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD), was expelled from the organisation along with some other activists at the peak-hour of the anti-Ershad movement last year for his alleged connection with the deposed regime.

A three-day fierce gunbattle followed his expulsion from the Dhaka University campus.

Earlier in 1987 Obhi was expelled from the Dhaka University along with eight fellow JCD activists and three JSD (Inu) backed Chhatra League activists. He was a third-year student of Internal Relations Department of the university at the time of expulsion from the university.

Editor : S. M. Ali

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Acting President of the Awami League Abdus Samad Azad addressing a public rally at Bangabandhu Avenue yesterday, that ended amidst police-public clash. — Star photo

Pearl Harbour bombing

Japan regrets after 50 yrs

TOKYO, Dec 6: Prime Minister Kiichi Miyazawa apologized today, while parliament balked at a similar act to mark the 50th anniversary of the Japanese bombing of Pearl Harbour, reports AFP.

"We feel deeply responsible for giving unbearable blows to people in the United States as well as people in the Pacific and Asian regions and causing extreme pain and sorrow to them," Miyazawa told reporters at his official residence.

He added that Japan had worked hard for peace and prosperity in the world since World War II to "atone for past

mistakes. I believe such efforts and sincerity on our part are being understood."

But Japan's parliament has derailed a resolution expressing regret at its wartime aggression. The government had hoped to have the resolution adopted before Saturday's anniversary of the Pearl Harbour attack, parliamentary sources said.

Instead a plenary session in the House of Representatives will devote its energies to debating a supplementary budget for the current fiscal year ending on March 31, the sources said.

The resolution, ardently sought by Foreign Minister Michio Watanabe, has no chance of being approved before US President George Bush attends ceremonies commemorating the 50th anniversary.

Related story on page 5

DU classes

From Page 1 Col. 8

The University authorities announced a four-day suspension of classes due to the volatile situation. Later the Dhaka University Teachers Association (DUTA) called for an indefinite strike demanding violence-free campus.

The DUTA later exempted examinations from its strike programme responding to the request of the University authorities, and the examinations of various departments were being held peacefully barring some stray incidents of beating some examinees by the rival student groups.

The teacher's association however, decided to postpone its strike at a meeting on December 2 in response to a request of the Federation of Bangladesh University Teachers Association (FBUTA).

The teachers however, will wear black badges and observe a one-hour token strike today at the call of the FBUTA to press for their demand of violence-free campus.

Rivals JCD and BCL (S-A) have been locked in clashes throughout the country. A large number of educational institutions across the country are now closed due to violent incidents on the campuses.

Unite to save democracy, calls PDF

By Staff Correspondent

Convener of the four-party Patriotic Democratic Front (PDF) Pankaj Bhattacharya yesterday (Friday) called for national consensus on all major issues in order to sustain democracy in the country.

Speaking at a public meeting at Purana Paltan afternoon to mark the first anniversary of the fall of autocracy, he termed the day Justice Shahabuddin Ahmed took over the office of Acting President as a historic event.

Bhattacharya, who is also the General Secretary of the National Awami Party (NAP), pointed out that due to lack of sincerity on the part of the major political parties most of the 1990 Joint Declaration objectives were yet to be achieved.

"Without national consensus on major issues democracy cannot survive," he added.

Presided by CPB President Saifuddin Ahmed Manik the meeting was addressed, among others, by CPB General Secretary Nurul Islam Nahid, Shamyabadi, Dal General Secretary Dilip Barua and Gono Azadi League President Abdus Samad.

Saifuddin Ahmed regretted that "black laws" like the Special Powers Act, Indemnity Ordinance and the Enemy Property Act were still in force in the country. He said suspicion about the sustenance of democratic achievements already made is cropping up in the mind of the people.

Asians fear hard days

From Page 1 Col. 7

doctors who have a specified number of years of practice in one EC country to practice in others.

An International Labour Organization report, projects that most movement will be at the professional rather than blue-collar level. The only gains this much thought are the Hinduja business tribe, who have reportedly produced a confidential study. In general, however, there is little apprehension about Europeans descending on "our jobs."

What is more worrisome is possible racial tension. A CRE spokesman pointed out, "We treat our minorities very differently from other EC countries." Legislatively, England is far ahead of its neighbours with regard to racial equality.

Three Race Relations Acts protect minority rights. In France, Germany and Belgium, all of which have substantial minority populations, there are no equivalent legal commitments.

"On a personal level, I would worry about it. I was

once refused tea in a Belgian cafe," recalls Moman. "You would not actually be denied services in Britain. Asians might not be treated as well in Europe."

Although racism is rampant in violent as well as insidious ways in England, the CRE is correct: longstanding legislation specifically protects racial equality. MPs like Flather are pushing for a comprehensive racial policy for the whole of the Community. The Labour Party has also made statements to this effect, hoping to garner the Asian vote. But as one political source so bitterly put it, "Asians vote on the fence. They'll wait and see and keep politicians guessing till the last minute." But of course the source was a Tory.

meeting of a particular political party on the BNP procession observing the historic and 'sacred' Democracy Emancipation Day of December 6, had marred the spirit of the day.

He said the subsequent investigating speeches of the party leaders and the assault on the police engaged in the maintenance of law and order have belittled the dignity and solemn atmosphere of the day.

The BNP Secretary General said it was also observed earlier that a particular political quarter was determined to destroy the atmosphere in the educational institutions including the universities by patronising terrorist.

He said in the backdrop of the adoption of effective measures to curb terrorism in the educational institutions and arrest of an accused along with arms named Liaquat Thursday a section of this political party dependent on terrorism have become desperate.

Talukder said the objective of this party was to disturb peace, discipline and stability of the country and create anarchy in the society. They want to fish in the troubled water, he observed.

The BNP Secretary General said this political party is perturbed at the successes of the government and so they are determined to strangle democracy by hatching conspiracy in various manners.

Talukder strongly condemned the undemocratic behaviour of this political party on the day of triumph of democracy.

Mukhter's body may be exhumed today

By Staff Correspondent

The body of late Hafez Mukhter Hossain was not exhumed from Aligarj graveyard Friday and it may be exhumed today (Saturday).

On a prayer of Chief Metropolitan Magistrate by Mukhter's brother, Alhaj Rakibuddin, the Magistrate on Thursday ordered to exhume the body for fresh autopsy and to complete it by December 8.

Hafez Mukhter Hossain, Chairman of now-defunct Narayanjan Sadar Upazila was found dead with a bullet wound on his head in a car parked near Holy Cross College at Tejgunipara on Friday evening.

Mary Janet Shyamoli, a girlfriend of Mukhter, was arrested on Sunday under Section 54 of Criminal Penal Code in connection with his mysterious death. She was sent to Dhaka Central Jail.

Meanwhile, police did not receive the examination reports of finger print on the revolver, the used bullet and its pellet from the CID till yesterday.

Earlier the autopsy report by Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) suggested that the death of Mukhter was a suicidal case.

After exhumation the body would be sent to PG hospital for fresh autopsy as the brother of Mukhter prayed to the magistrate not to send the body to DMCH for fresh autopsy.

Five-party

From Page 1 Col. 8

Sanjayantrik Dal (BSD) leader Manujit Khan Badal was addressing the rally.

Earlier, police fired rubber bullets and tear shells on two processions of BNP and Awami League while they were crossing each other near Gulistan Cinema Hall, about three hundred yards from the Five-party venue.

Five-party leaders later told journalist at the Jatiya Press Club that the police must play neutral and protect the rallies of the opposition parties as well as that of the ruling party.

They however blamed both the Awami League and BNP for the incident. Earlier, at the beginning of the rally the Five-party combine adopted a resolution accusing both the ruling party and the biggest opposition party in the parliament of frustrating the spirit of the last December's mass upsurge.

The resolution said that the armed hoodlums under the patronisation and shelter of both BNP and Awami League (AL) were the destabilising elements in the society. Failure to arrest the armed hoodlums does not irritate the ruling party in the one hand and the biggest opposition party does not suffer from sense of guilt in providing shelter to the killers the resolution said.

Referring to the Prime Minister's recent directives to her party members to form anti-terrorism committees solely with themselves and AL's processions demanding unconditional release of a Jubo League leader who was arrested with an illegal arms at his disposal, the resolution accused both BNP and AL of violating the seven-point resolution to curb armed terrorism on the campus adopted by the all-party conference held on December 3.

The Five-party resolution also said although the ruling party along with others earlier made a commitment to repeal the Special Powers Act, the government had already started arresting the industrial workers who played a vital role in ousting the autocratic regime of Ershad only one year back.

The Five-party combine has called upon the people to form all-party anti-terrorism committees everywhere on the basis of seven-point resolution adopted in the all-party conference.

Press note

From Page 1 Col. 8

They also held several policemen and kept them confined, the press note added.

It said in the incidents 16 police personnel including senior police officials were injured. Some members of the public were also injured by brickbats, cocktails and hand bombs hurled from the Awami League's meeting. They are under treatment at different hospitals.

During the repeated attacks on them they (police) resorted to baton charges and throwing tear gas shells in self-defence and dispersed the attackers, the press note added.

Later, Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia visited the Rajarbagh Police Hospital to see the wounded police personnel there.

The Midnight File

Pan Am bombing: Libya to hand over suspects

CAIRO, Dec 6: Libya has offered to hand over to an Arab country two of its nationals suspected by the West of blowing up a Pan Am plane in 1988, a state-owned Egyptian newspaper said. "Libya's Arab League envoy offered to hand over the two Libyans accused of blowing the American plane to an Arab state," Akhbar Al-Yom said in an early Saturday edition, reports Reuter.

Sardar Qayyum for Pak N-power

ISLAMABAD, Dec 6: A Kashmiri leader, has urged Pakistan to declare itself a nuclear weapons power. Abdur Qayyum, Prime Minister of Pakistan-held Kashmir, told The Associated Press that a nuclear deterrent would force India to the bargaining table over the troubled state of Kashmir. "The only logic India understands is force. That's why we need nuclear weapons," said Qayyum, reports AP.

De Klerk to visit Soviet Union

MOSCOW, Dec 6: South African President FW de Klerk will arrive in the Soviet Union on an official visit on December 13, a Soviet official said Friday. Foreign Ministry spokesman Vitaly Churkin said he expected de Klerk to raise the issue of restoring diplomatic ties between the two countries. They were cut by Moscow in the 1950s to protest South Africa's laws of racial separation, called apartheid, reports AP.

Clashes: 50 injured

From Page 1 Col. 7

Cinema at around 4 pm. When the two processions came close, police obstructed the BNP procession to allow passage to the Awami League processionists to meeting venue at the Bangabandhu Avenue.

But the BNP processionists however tried to cross the area hurriedly to reach Gulistan square, where the BNP meeting was held. This led to a clash between the activists of the two parties near the Gulistan cinema.

Police immediately went into action and fired several teargas shells to disperse the violent people, who reacted by pelting stones at the police. Police then resorted to massive tear-gas shelling in the area. At around 4:30 pm a tear-gas shell was thrown in the Awami League meeting when Abdus Samad Azad was addressing the gathering.

At this stage, Abdus Samad Azad was heard saying why the police was throwing tear-gas without any provocation was not understandable. But the panthe stricken people attending the meeting started running helter-skelter.

The teargas also engulfed the meeting place of the BNP where thousands of people gathered. Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia and her cabinet colleagues were sitting on the dias.

Begum Zia and her cabinet colleagues at one stage left the meeting place. Meanwhile a group of rowdy people came to occupy the meeting venue of the Five-party Alliance at the Zero

Point. Later police raised a barricade near Golap Shah Mazar to resist the violent people, most of whom were the activists of the Awami League. They were about to attack the supporters of the BNP who were waiting at the Gulistan square. However most of the people left the venue by that time.

Police had to fire rubber bullets to bring the situation under control when 50 persons were injured.

The meeting of the Awami League was after abandoned. And the Five-party leaders also left the venue although a group of the Five-party supporters were still standing near the dias at the Zero-point. At around 5:30 pm a group of Awami League supporters rushed to the Five-party meeting venue, snatched the mike and tried to announce their hartal programme. The Five-party activists however tried to resist them.

Thirty five of the injured persons were admitted to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital while 10 of the released after first aid.

Our DMCH correspondent adds: The 25 persons admitted to the DMCH include: Badrul Islam Chowdhury (21), Biplob (20), Morshed Alam (32), Korban Ali (30), Abdur Rashid (30), Babul (21), Al-Masum (20), Shiraj (24), Faizuddin Kabir (55), Sk Faruk (15), Babul (22), Shimul Khan (19), Bakshu (18), Abdul Malek (45), Abdur Rob (21) and Milon (22).

20 injured as Shibir, BCL clash in Ctg

CHITTAGONG, Dec 6: At least 20 people were injured, three with bullets, in a clash between Islami Chhatra Shibir (ICS) and Chhatra League (S-A) on the campus of newly founded Lila Kabir College today, police said, reports UNB.

ASI Niranjan Roy (40) of Fatikchhari thana and Nurul Ahsar (25) were rushed to Chittagong Medical College Hospital while Shahin (20) was admitted to a private clinic, with bullet injuries.

The clash erupted when about 40 activists of pro-Jamaat ICS and NDP-backed Ganatantrik Chhatra Shakti attacked supporters of the Awami League's student wing attending the opening function of the college at about 10:30 am.

Chhatra League supporters chased the Shibirites who were stopped by police near Fatikchhari thana. Shibir workers then opened fire on the police who in turn fired three blank shots.

Fatikchhari upazila is known as the stronghold of Chhatra League after Shibir was driven out of the area three years ago.

Khaleda

From Page 1 Col. 3

The Prime Minister said that the conspirators were ready to strike a blow at the nationalist forces and asked the people to remain alert against any such attempts during the observance of Shaheed Intellectuals Day on December 14 and Victory Day on December 16.

Earlier, Social Welfare Minister Tariqul Islam said that if any one tried to foil democracy, the BNP would resist the attempt by uniting peasants, workers, students and all sections of the people. He said that the Eight, Seven and Five Party alliance unitedly struggled for ouster of autocracy and now, if necessary, the three alliances would again unitedly resist the evil design of the enemies of democracy.



Three of the injured in yesterday's clashes. — Star photo

Justice Amin Ahmed dead

Former Chief Justice Amin Ahmed died of heart attack at the Combined Military Hospital (CMH) in the city Friday night, he was 92.

Justice Ahmed who breathed his last at 9 pm, was rushed to the CMH at about 5 pm with acute pain in the chest.

One killed in road mishap

By Staff Correspondent

One person was killed and another two were seriously injured when a speeding truck hit a rickshaw near the Bangla College in Mirpur of the city Friday afternoon.

Police said the truck hit the rickshaw from behind on the Dar-us-Salam Road in Mirpur critically injuring the two passengers and the rickshaw puller at around 5:45.