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Inside Today

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The Giants of Asia Come Together

The end of the Cold War ideological divide has led to new equations developing among old foes. The two Asian giants, China and India, are reassessing their relations to adapt to the changing times

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Dhaka Day by Day



Mrinal Haq speaks about his feelings, techniques and also about problems of artists in Bangladesh

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Structural adjustment conditionalities are imposed but needed

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The hybrid pea's potential yield is 40 per cent higher than natural varieties

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International



Rules to ensure future meets may be discussed

SAARC summit today

COLOMBO, Dec 20: South Asian leaders began gathering in Colombo today for a one-day summit on Saturday to discuss regional cooperation, reports Reuter.

Nepal Prime Minister Prasad Koirala, Bhutan's King Jigme Wangchuk and Maldivian President Maumoon Abdul Gayoom were among the first to arrive.

Prime Minister Khaleda Zia of Bangladesh also arrived later on the day.

India's Prime Minister PV Narasimha Rao was expected on Saturday morning just before Sri Lankan President Ranasinghe Premadasa is scheduled to open the meeting.

The seven countries form the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) formed seven years ago to raise the living standards of the one billion poor people in the region.

AP adds: Seven South Asian foreign ministers Friday reached agreement on 90 per cent of a declaration that will

be endorsed by their leaders at a one-day summit, officials said.

The leaders were expected to discuss how SAARC rules could be amended to ensure that future annual summit meetings took place even if one of the seven heads of state of government was unable to attend, conference sources said.

The intensive efforts that had been made at official level within the very limited time available enable agreement on almost 90 per cent of work connected with the draft declaration," Sri Lanka's Foreign Secretary Bernard Tilkeratna told reporters.

During the summit, the leaders also are likely to discuss terrorism, drug traffic and arms trade in the region, but no decision on these issues will be made, said officials who spoke on condition of anonymity.

The ministers also were to consider a plan to create a food security reserved board and a scheme to facilitate

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when the Bhutanese King was unable to attend due to security problems in his Himalayan kingdom.

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Lanka accords red-carpet welcome to Khaleda

COLOMBO, Dec 20: A hearty and red-carpet welcome was accorded to Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia when she arrived here tonight to attend the sixth summit of South Asian Association of Regional Cooperation (SAARC), reports BSS.

Lankan Prime Minister DB Wijetunga received the Bangladesh leader at the Katunayaka Airport.

Sri Lankan Foreign Minister Harold Herath, Public Administration, Provincial Council and Home Affairs Minister, and Per Era, State Minister for

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Sri Lankan Prime Minister DB Wijetunga receiving Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia on her arrival at the Katunayaka Airport yesterday.

— PID photo

No headway in govt-SKOP talks

By Nurul Kabir

negotiations for the last few days have been revolving around three major demands which include a written government announcement for a halt to nationalisation of public sector businesses and industries, fixation of a national minimum wage for both public and private sector workers at Taka 14 hundred and repeal of certain clauses of the labour laws that go against the interest of the workers and employees.

The discussion on the rest 75 demands is yet to begin. On the question of stopping

disinvestment, the government was ready to make a written commitment that it would not go for further privatisation unless both the government and the SKOP reached a consensus on the issue.

About the fixation of minimum wage, the government side maintained that they would form a wage commission within a week under the obligation of two separate agreements it signed with the Patkai Sramik Karmachari Sangram Parishad and Cotton

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The government and the Sramik Karmachari Oikya Parishad (SKOP) yesterday failed to get out of the stalemate they reached on Wednesday as neither side agreed to compromise on their stances.

The Labour and Manpower Minister Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan and the SKOP leaders sat for dialogue yesterday at 6 pm and continued it through 7:30 pm. The meeting will resume at 3 pm today.

The five-point SKOP charter is virtually a combination of 78 separate demands. But the

On the question of stopping

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Sramik Karmachari Oikya Federation brought out a torch procession in the city yesterday in support of their hartal call.

— Star photo

Pakistan recognises Russia, six Muslim republics

LAHORE (Pakistan), Dec 20: Pakistan announced today its recognition of the Russian Federation and the six Muslim-majority Central Asian republics, with which it wants to forge closer economic and cultural links, reports APP.

Foreign Ministry secretary general Akram Zaki announced the government decision, which marks Islamabad's recognition of 10 of the former Soviet republics. Pakistan had already recognized the three Baltic republics of Latvia, Estonia and Lithuania.

Azerbaijan's independence was recognized automatically when it was admitted to the Organization of Islamic

Conference (OIC) at the Islamic summit this month in Dakar, Senegal.

The government recognized Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Kirghizstan, Tadzhikistan and Turkmenistan on Friday.

The announcement coincided with talks here Friday between visiting Russian Vice President Alexander Rutskoy and Pakistani Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif, which officials said lasted nearly two hours.

Rutskoy, who arrived here late Thursday for a three-day visit, was to meet President Ghulam Ishaq Khan in Islamabad on Saturday and later hold talks with leaders of the Pakistani-based Afghan re-

publics to visit Pakistan.

He is a veteran of the Afghan war, which began with the Soviet invasion of 1979, and was at one stage a prisoner of war.

Zaki said the decision had been taken in the light of a report submitted by an official Pakistani delegation that returned home Wednesday after a three-week tour of Russia and the Muslim republics.

The delegation, led by Minister of State for Economic Affairs Sardar Asif Ahmed Ali, met with leaders of the republics and had intensive discussions, officials here said.

An official said Pakistan was keen to establish the closest

possible economic, cultural and trade relations with what he called the "rediscovered

world of Islam" in the wake of the breakup of the Soviet Union.

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An official said Pakistan was keen to establish the closest

and Pakistan will extend through Afghanistan to the Muslim republics."

An earlier report says, Rutskoy confirmed here late Thursday that differences existed within his federation's leadership, but denied there was any absence of democracy.

"We have democracy in Russia, but some people say that (there is no democracy), because they don't understand what democracy is," said Rutskoy on his arrival in Lahore from Tehran.

Of course President (Boris) Yeltsin has his own opinion. "We support his view, but there are some who do not.

They have their own opinion."

In an interview Wednesday with the Soviet newspaper *Nesavistimaya Gaveta*, Rutskoy had strongly criticised certain officials in the Russian leadership who dedicated their life to the teaching of scientific communism.

In the same interview, Rutskoy said he had been unable to have a frank conversation with Yeltsin because of the harmful influence of some of the Russian leader's advisors.

"In democracy, everybody must be equal before the law," Rutskoy said in Lahore, "in a democratic society, you cannot do anything you like."

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DUTA election tomorrow

By DU Correspondent

The election to the executive committee of Dhaka University Teachers Association (DUTA) for '92 will be held tomorrow (Sunday) at Dhaka University Club.

The 'Blue' and 'Pink' groups have jointly put up a panel against the 'White' panel in the year's election.

Dr Mahtabuddin of Chemistry, Prof Dr Md Shahadat Ali of Zoology, Prof Abdul Mannan Chowdhury of Management, Prof Dr Md Haron-ur-Rashid of Political Science and Dr Tofig Ahmed Chowdhury of Chemistry are the 'Blue-Pink' joint panel candidates for the posts of

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