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VOL. 1 NO. 345 REGD. NO. DA 782

POUSH 24, 1398 BS,

DHAKA WEDNESDAY JANUARY 8, 1992

RAJAB 2, 1412 HIJRI

12 PAGES: PRICE TAKA 4.00

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Myanmar FM's visit likely this month

Flag meet goes long into night

The second "flag meeting" between Bangladesh and Myanmar started nearly seven hours behind the schedule yesterday at Teknaf and was continuing late into the night, reports ISS.

The start of the talks was delayed by several hours and finally took off at 3-45 pm instead of 9 in the morning.

The meeting began in a cordial and friendly atmosphere, a Foreign Office spokesman said.

The meeting between the two sides, in attempt to resolve the problems caused by attack on BDR outpost at Rezipara by Myanmar troops on December 21 and influx of refugees, was in progress till late last night at

Teknaf rest house.

An 18-member delegation including two battalion commanders represented the Myanmar side. A media team accompanied the delegation.

In another development, the Myanmar Foreign Minister, Ohn Ghuaw, is expected to visit Bangladesh during the current month to discuss the bilateral relations.

He expressed his willingness to have discussions with Foreign Minister ASM Mostafizur Rahman when Bangladesh Ambassador to Myanmar Mostafa Faruque Mohammad called on him in Yangon Monday.

A Foreign Office spokesman

yesterday described the attitude of the Myanmar Foreign Minister reflected during his talks with the Bangladesh envoy as "positive" and expressed the hope that the on-going efforts to lessen the tensions along the border of two countries would produce meaningful results.

The Bangladesh Ambassador reiterated government's position on issues like the current situation along the border and return of the Myanmar Muslim refugees from Bangladesh.

Myanmar ambassador in Dhaka, Soc Myint, on his return to Dhaka from consultations with his government, spoke of his country's coop-

eration in ensuring peace and tranquility along the border when he met Foreign Minister Rahman last Friday.

The first "flag meeting" between the two countries was held on December 31 at Mongdu, Myanmar, 12 km of Teknaf on Bangladesh border. Major M A Khaleque represented the Bangladesh side while Myanmar side was led by Lanthin commander Lt Col Tun Yee.

The delay to start the "second flag" meeting was attributed to the late arrival of the Myanmar delegation to Teknaf.

The Myanmar side had as -
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ARMS AND THE MAN: The rush for depositing licensed firearms at DC's office in the capital increased over the past two days. A total of 750 licensed firearms were examined by the magistrates on duty at DC's office during the period while only 107 were deposited on the first two days.

CIS members unlikely to have warm ties with South Asia

The changes in the former Soviet republics is likely to have complicated implications in terms of their relationships with South Asian countries.

According to Andrey A Schildbach, senior researcher at the Institute of Asian and African Studies at the University of Moscow, the emergence of several states or blocs may also mean different attitudes or, in some cases, non-attitudes in their future ties with South Asian nations.

The demise of the Soviet Union was confirmed with the signing of the 'Alma-Ata Agreement' by 11 of the Soviet

republics on December 21 last year.

Presenting a paper at the international seminar organised by the Bangladesh Institute of Strategic Studies, Schildbach pointed out that the three Baltic states of Latvia, Estonia and Lithuania would be reorienting their international priorities in northern Europe.

"I do not suppose that any of the Baltic states would be interested in establishing serious political or economic relations with South Asia," he noted.

The same positions are

likely to be held by CIS members byelorussia and Moldova, he said, adding "They will hardly have the possibility to relate in any way to the distant countries of South Asia."

The Transcaucasian republics of Georgia and CIS member Armenia will definitely be preoccupied in the foreseeable future with internal and external conflicts respectively, Schildbach said.

Schildbach identified the group of former Soviet republics with the most possibility to develop ties with South Asian countries is the "Muslim

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Iran engaged in massive arms buildup

LOS ANGELES, Jan 7: Iran is conducting a multibillion-dollar arms buildup via secret deals with Russia, North Korea and other nations and shortly will become the dominant power in the Gulf, it was reported Tuesday, reports AP.

Iran's purchases include Soviet SU-24 fighter-bombers, MIG-29 fighter planes, tanks, missiles and other sophisticated weapons, as well as "nuclear research," the Los Angeles Times said.

The buildup has given Iran parity with Iraq, long the region's leading power, the newspaper quoted intelligence sources as saying.

Cash-strapped Russia is selling Iran arms from the Red Army's inventory to obtain foreign exchange, the Times said.

"It's cash-and-carry deal at cut-rate prices, and arms bazaars are sprouting up all over the place," one source said.

Iran's purchases also include "nuclear research," a Bush administration official was quoted as saying. The official did not elaborate.

"Our concern is not just what they are accumulating, but what they plan to do with it," the official said.

The Bush administration has insisted that existing controls over nuclear weapons of the former Soviet Union will prevent their unauthorised use or diversion by the former

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Work together for self-reliance: PM

BAGERIAT, Jan 7: Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia said here today that the participation of all people was necessary in the development activities to achieve self-reliance in the shortest possible time, reports ISS.

"We want to be a self-reliant nation by working together and overcome our dependence on foreign aid," Begum Zia told a huge public meeting at the stadium here.

The Prime Minister said the present democratic government had already re-started a number of the development programmes which had remained

suspended during the autocratic government's rule.

Begum Zia said the people had to take part spontaneously in all the on-going development programmes and give their voluntary labour to implement those success fully.

She said the maximum utilisation of domestic resources would be ensured for the rapid industrialisation of the country, especially the small-scale, besides developing the agricultural sector.

Begum Zia stressed that smuggling would have to be checked to help grow local in-

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AL working body talks movement

The Central Working Committee of Awami League Tuesday began deliberation on the latest political and economic developments in the country, reports UNB.

Awami League President Sheikh Hasina, who returned from Singapore this afternoon, chaired the meeting held at the party central office.

The meeting was adjourned till 9 am today (Wednesday).

Competent sources told UNB last night that the meeting discussed the government's recent "undemocratic" steps, including abolition of the elected local bodies.

They said corruption, government's attempts at politicising the administration, its patronisation of anti-liberation forces and terrorists as well as delaying tactics about the repeal of the Indemnity Ordinance also featured prominently during the deliberation.

Most of the speakers at the meeting suggested that the party should go for movement in view of the BNP government's failure in running the country.

Dr. Alauddin Ahmed, Gannuzaman, Amir Hossain Amu, Tofiqul Alam, Mohammad Nasim and Matia Chowdhury were among those who took part in today's discussion.

Shantibahini on killing mission, admits captured insurgent

CHITTAGONG, Jan 7: Injured and captured tribal insurgent Tariq Chakma today confessed that his insurgent group was on a mission to kill Bangladesh citizens to create panic among them, reports ISS.

Tariq Chakma (20) was captured yesterday by Bangladesh Security Forces after an encounter with the latter at Pabna Khali, Dhinghala upazila of Khagrachari hill district. He received bullet injuries on the thigh and back while four others fled away.

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Hasina returns

By Staff Correspondent

Awami League President and Leader of the Opposition in Parliament Sheikh Hasina returned Home Tuesday afternoon from Singapore. Sheikh Hasina left Dhaka on November 26 for Brunel to see her ailing brother-in-law, Prof Shaheque Siddiqui, who was later shifted to a Singapore hospital.

Deputy Leader of the Opposition in Parliament Abus Samad Azad, Party General Secretary Begum Sajeda Chowdhury and other central leaders were present at the airport to receive her.

War of words in court over Ershad

Defence questions legality of case

Scratchul Haq, chief defence counsel of former president H M Ershad in corruption case being heard in Special Judge's Court, yesterday questioned the very legality of bringing criminal case against the former Head of State, reports ISS.

Arguing for the second day on the charges of amassing Wealth beyond Ershad's known source of income, Haq said "There is no express provision in the Constitution or

any book of law where a president when he resigns or comes out of office could be tried in court". He asserted that "no offence is committed unless it is codified by law."

Haq said morality and constitutional legality were not same and, therefore, Ershad could not be prosecuted on moral ground in the absence of legal provision. He said if there was any need to punish him (Ershad) for any act, recourse to impeachment

could have been taken.

The chief defence counsel described the charges brought against the former president as "malafide and motivated" and added that those are not "permissible under law".

Earlier as the court resumed the day's hearing, Barrister Kazi Shahadat Hossain, one of the defence counsels, took up the argument saying there was "no charge at all against his

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Talks may resume as UN condemns Israel

JERUSALEM, Jan 7: Palestinian negotiators will attend the Middle East peace talks in Washington, a senior Palestinian close to the team said Tuesday, ending speculation they may not show, reports AP.

The delegation will leave for Washington on Wednesday, said the senior source, speaking on condition of anonymity.

Earlier, Jordanian and PLO officials met Tuesday to decide on participating in Middle East peace talks.

A senior Jordanian adviser said the council's resolution was likely to clear the way for Arabs to return to the peace

process that they had interrupted to protest the expulsion order.

The council's resolution, adopted unanimously Monday, also asked the Jewish state to halt all expulsions and allow previously deported Palestinians to return to the territories.

"We do not see what could block Arab participation in the peace talks after the UN vote," Anwar Khatib, a senior member of the advisory committee to the 14-member Jordanian negotiating team, told The Associated Press.

"I think that the joint delegation will be traveling to Washington today to resume

peace talks with Israel," Khatib said.

The decision on whether to participate will be up to the Jordanian government, and Khatib said he expected its ruling to be positive.

The Palestinians and Jordanians formed a joint team for multilateral Arab-Israeli talks in Madrid in November. For this round of talks, however, they are insisting the Israelis talk to individual Palestinian and Jordanian teams.

The talks had been scheduled to begin Tuesday in Washington. The Palestinians on Friday put off their departure for the United States to

protest the Israeli expulsion order. Syria, Jordan and Lebanon later followed suit.

"It is inevitable that the UN resolution will reflect positively on the decision of the Palestinian delegation regarding participation in the peace talks," said a senior official of the Palestine Liberation Organization.

The UN Security Council earlier delivered its harshest condemnation ever at Israel over the planned deportation of 12 Palestinians.

The United States joined the 14 other members of the council in unanimously condemning the expulsion orders, calling them a violation of in-

ternational law and asking Israel to halt all deportations and allow deportees to return.

By using the words "strongly condemns," the resolution was the strongest ever directed at the Jewish state over deportations, according to US, Palestinian and Israeli diplomats. This is the largest group of Palestinians ever to be ordered expelled.

The United States, which has used its veto to shield its Israeli ally in the past, has pointedly joined in council criticism of expulsions of Palestinians four times in the past 14 months. The last council criticism over expulsions was last May.

Increased ads for newspapers urged

By Staff Correspondent

The Bangladesh Council of Newspapers, the Bangladesh Council of Editors, the Federal Union of Journalists and the Dhaka Union of Journalists called for increasing allocation of the government advertisement by Taka five crore in the fiscal 1991-92 in the interest of press freedom.

At a joint meeting, leaders of the organisations discussed at length the prevailing financial crisis in the newspaper industry and urged the government to withdraw the decision.

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Rajuk Commercial Plot Auction Notice

Most ideally located Residential-cum-Commercial Plot No-12 at Gulshan Residential area, on Road No-113A having road facilities on two sides measuring 405.72 sq. metre (6 Kathas 1 Chhattak) will be allotted for 99 years lease on open auction.

Applications and prescribed form with terms and conditions to be obtained from Janata Bank, Rajuk Bhaban Branch, Dhaka on payment of Tk 200/- (Taka two hundred) only in cash (non-refundable) and will be received by the Deputy Director (Estates) from the intending bidders up to 1.00 P.M. on 19.1.92.

The auction will be held on 20-1-92 in the Conference Room, 3rd floor of the Rajuk Bhaban, Dhaka at 10.00 A.M.

Chairman
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