

India, US hold military talks

NEW DELHI, Jan 23: The US Army's Pacific commander discussed military collaboration with top Indian officers Thursday in a move toward reshuffling defences in South Asia, reports AP.

Lt. Gen. Johnny Corns chaired the first session of the Joint Army Steering Committee to map out exchanging visits and information and ultimately to conduct joint exercises.

Corns's mission coincides with a separate visit by Adm. Frank Kelso, the Pentagon's chief of naval operations, who will meet political and military leaders.

Kelso is the first American officer invited to watch Indian naval exercises from the navy's flagship, the INS Viraat, a US Embassy spokesman said.

US officials saw the military talks as a remarkable change in India's attitude. "It wasn't so long ago that the Indians were telling us we had no business being in the Indian Ocean," said one diplomat.

Others recalled that only a year ago India withdrew refuelling rights for US military aircraft flying toward the Persian Gulf because of objections from the Congress Party, which was the opposition party at the time but now heads the government.

Indo-US military cooperation became possible when Washington cooled its alliance with India's rival, Pakistan, and scaled down its involvement in Afghanistan's civil war.

The US administration severed military and economic aid to Pakistan 15 months ago when Islamabad failed to convince Washington that it was not producing nuclear weapons.

Meanwhile, India has been searching for new alliances. The collapse of the Soviet Union, left India without a reliable supply of spare parts for its largely Soviet-equipped military.

US Embassy spokesman Jeffrey Murray said the steering committee was not discussing the sale of military hardware. But news reports last week said the Pentagon has offered to sell India F-16 jet fighters and the production rights to a training jet.

The military cooperation reflects a comparable political readjustment by India.

Earlier this month, a top-level Indian team visited Moscow to renegotiate a 20-year friendship treaty that had just been renewed last year. The new draft deletes all references to mutual defence arrangements, Indian newspapers said.



Father of Matiur Rahman, a martyr of the '69 Mass Uprising, with Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia at the inaugural ceremony of the Matiur Mancha at the Shishu Academy yesterday. —PID photo

PM: Children

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She said late President Zia dearly loved two things, one was his country and the other children.

He had established Shishu Academy and Shishu Park and initiated Natun Kuri competition in the television to help flourish the latent talents of children, Begum Zia added.

The Prime Minister underlined the need for checking the population boom to provide the future generation a healthy and congenial atmosphere for the flourishing of their talent.

Presided over by State Minister for Social Welfare Begum Sarwari Rahman, the function was also addressed by Social Welfare Minister Tariqul Islam, Cultural Secretary in charge Mohammad Faizullah and Academy Chairman Kazi Anwarul Mansur.

Later, the Prime Minister handed over 1397 (Bangla) Shishu Academy award to children story writer Atoar Rahman. Social Welfare Minister handed over a cheque, collected by the academy, to Prime Minister for Prime Minister Relief Fund.

A book on late President Zia, published by Shishu Academy and written by Feroz Noon was presented to the Prime Minister by the writer.

Earlier the Prime Minister formally inaugurated the fair and Shaheed Matiur Mancha (

stage) at the academy premises.

During the seven-day fair cultural programmes based on folklore and cultural heritage, will be organised by different juvenile organisations.

Different children's organisations including UNICEF put stalls in the fair.

Shibir protests attack on worker

PABNA, Jan 23: About 300 activists of Islami Chhatra Shibir and Jamaat-e-Islami brought out a procession here at noon today protesting the attack on Ziaul Haque, a student leader of the organisation, reports UNB.

The processionists paraded the main thoroughfares of the town and demanded immediate arrest and punishment of the attackers. They also handed over a memorandum to the Deputy Commissioner.

Ziaul Haque (25), President of the town committee of Islami Chhatra Shibir and a student of Government Bulbul College was seriously beaten by some unknown miscreants Wednesday at 7.00 pm while he was returning home from Jamaat office.

His right hand and leg were fractured during the attack. He was rushed to the Sadar hospital in a critical condition.

Rohingya

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Diseases like viral fever, cold and measles have broken out among the refugees, with some of them living under bare sky.

The camps also lack water supply arrangements and sanitation facilities, they said.

A UNICEF team began installing tubewell and building toilets at some of the camps yesterday.

A dissident student activist who fled Myanmar yesterday said that authorities across the border were using Mugh youths in its extermination policy against the Muslim Rohingya community.

A student of political science of Yangon University, Preston, said that Myanmar troops were drafting Mugh youths and using them against the Rohingyas after a 15-day military training.

Niru

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Dr Shamsul Alam Khan Milon was shot dead near the TSC November 27, 1990, during the mass uprising against the anti-autocratic Ershad regime.

Others accused in the Milon killing case are Golam Faruque Obhi, now in Bangkok, Gazi Kamrul Islam Shajal, Ashfaq and Mirza Masud Jewel.

All the 10 accused were arrested by the Detective Branch of the DMP.

Stem action against big smugglers soon: Matin

Home Minister Abdur Matin Chowdhury said Thursday the present government would take stern action against big smugglers very soon, reports BSS.

The Home Minister was addressing a review meeting on anti-smuggling drive at the conference room of the ministry in Dhaka.

He said the on-going anti-smuggling drive was giving very good result as the market and shops had now become free of contraband goods. He emphatically said the government would continue the operation drive without any hesitation. Rather it would be made stronger if need be for the greater interest of the nation, he added.

Matin Chowdhury said the government's assurances of not harassing real businessmen during the operation drive and earnest cooperation from shop owners and association leaders were playing positive role.

The review meeting was attended, among others, by President of Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industries Al-Haj Akram Hossain, President of Bangladesh Shop Owners Association's Federation Syed Shamsul Alam Hasu and General-Secretary Amir Hossain, and convener of Dhaka City Central Market Convening Committee Helaluddin.

The Home Secretary, the convener of Central Task Force and the convener of Regional Task Force of Dhaka were also present.

Thanking the leaders of the shop owners associations the Home Minister urged them to extend their cooperation in anti-smuggling operation. The leaders assured their full support and cooperation in this regard.

Referring to the illogical price increases of some local products the minister said the government was monitoring this thing and it would resist this sort of illegal trends.

Dwelling on illegal toll collection, he said, special measures would be taken soon to uproot it.

The Midnight File

US airlifts food, medicine to former Soviet states Feb 10

WASHINGTON, Jan 23: The United States will airlift critically needed food and medical supplies to the former Soviet republics beginning on February 10, Secretary of State James Baker said today, reports Reuters.

Muslims violate curfew, stage protests in Srinagar

SRINAGAR, Jan 23: Hundreds of Muslims violated curfew in Kashmir's summer capital here today and staged anti-Indian street protests, police sources and witnesses said. Police fired shots in the air and charged the rock throwing protesters with canes at the Idgah grounds where the demonstrators gathered chanting anti-Indian and Pro-independence slogans, they said, reports AFP.

Rancour runs high

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personal attack from a man like Mohiuddin. Bitterly criticizing the AL rule between 1972-75, Moudud pointed out that 265 banks were looted during that regime and nobody was arrested at the time. He also said that over 4000 union parishad chairmen and members were killed during the period.

Moudud also sarcastically pointed out that the Awami League took part in the 1986 elections under an autocratic government and joined Parliament.

The House, at this point, broke into a Pandemonium as the Treasury Bench members thumped the tables cheering Moudud and the AL members jumped to their feet in protest.

After a noisy scene that lasted for few minutes, the Speaker gave the floor to Tofael Ahmed, who was trying to attract the attention of the Chair for quite sometime.

Refuting Moudud's statement, he said that Moudud, now criticizing AL rule, was seeking AL nomination for a seat in Noakhali at the time.

Tofael pointed out that Moudud was arrested in 1974 on charges of sending out secret state information through a diplomatic bag of a foreign country.

He also alleged that Moudud's wife accompanied Ershad on a trip to the United Nations.

BNP MP

From Page 1 Col 5

received the instruction to withdraw the bills. Insiders say the party, in a bid to ensure the Whip, issued the written instruction.

The lurch was the second in series to discipline the MPs and ensure their maximum attendance when the House is in session. The defeat of the party in a division vote was a big jolt to the leadership.

One of the MPs, who attended the lurch, confided to The Daily Star that the regular attendance by the MPs was discussed in detail. Participating in the discussion, Barrister Abdus Salam Talukder, Secretary General, blamed the ministers partially saying that if front rows were empty why should the backbenches be liable.

Incidentally, the attendance situation has improved since the lurch meetings with divisional MPs were introduced.

JS resolutions

Nine private members' resolutions were introduced in the House Thursday and one was withdrawn after concerned minister's assurance, reports UNB.

The resolutions seek compulsory family planning for couples with two children, nationalisation of registered primary schools, rubber plantation project in public sector in Jessore, madrasa education board in Rajshahi, permission for exporting wet blue leather, establishment of a primary school in each village, upgradation of Bangabandhu Government College to a university college in Gopalganj, declaration of advertisements on smoking as illegal and making greater Sylhet an administrative division.

The resolutions were moved by Syed Abul Hossain (AL), Dr Mozammel Hossain (AL), Tabibur Rahman Sardar (AL), Latifur Rahman (Jamaat), Sardar Sakaat Hossain Bakul (BNP), Kazi Abdur Rashid (AL), Sharif Uddin Ahmad (AL).

BNP member Sarder Sakawat Hossain Bakul withdrew his resolution for appointment of a Marriage Registrar in each union of the country after assurance from State Minister for Law Barrister Aminul Haq.

The state minister said the government had constituted a committee to formulate necessary principles for appointment of Marriage Registrar. The government will take necessary steps on the recommendation of its report, he said.

Rural marriages rarely have registration from lawful authorities, and reports says it is one of the causes of easy divorce.

Pak clergymen for public enforcement of prayer

ISLAMABAD, Jan 23: An official group which advises Pakistan's government on Islamic matters has recommended the public enforcement of prayers and changing the country's present political system, reports Reuters.

The religious leaders dominated working group on the enforcement of Shariah (Islamic law) also called for rulers to be pious and for air hostesses and female television announcers to keep their heads covered in line with orthodox Islam.

Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif set up the body last year to advise him on implementing a 1990 election pledge to Islamicise Pakistani society. Its recommendations are not mandatory.

The group has also called for the enforcement of Muslim prayers to public places and to ban work during prayer times, according to a statement quoting the body on Wednesday.

Devout Muslims pray five times a day, with the first at dawn and the last not long after sunset. Friday noon prayers at mosques, which follow a sermon, are a must for the faithful.

"Steps should be taken to change the present political system in the country," said the group in a report sent to Sharif's government. A Cabinet member, Religious Affairs Minister Abdus Sattar Khan Niazi, heads the body.

Overwhelmingly Muslim Pakistan is a multi-party democracy at present and the group did not say what system it was proposing as a substitute.

Presidential Election Act

Hearing of writ resumes Jan 28

The hearing of the writ petition, filed by Abdus Samad Azad and six others, challenging the Presidential Election Act 1991 continued for the second day Thursday before a single-judge bench of the High Court Division Bench, reports BSS.

Justice Anwarul Haq Chowdhury comprised the judge of the bench. The counsel Amirul-Islam argued on behalf of the petitioner.

The hearing will resume on January 28.

Seen from the gallery

From Page 1 Col 5

As Maudud wanted to make a personal explanation, the Speaker said, "If you represent satrachar you can do that. Maudud Ahmed swallowed the remark and started recalling the despotism of Mohiuddin Ahmed when he was a member of Baksal.

The situation came to an abrupt end as the Speaker ordered a break for the Maghreb prayer.

Immediately after the Maghreb break the depression formed earlier turned into a storm. But it took sometime.

The speaker was trying to settle the bills moved by different private members. By the time Rab Chowdhury's bill was withdrawn, Mohiuddin Ahmed challenged the statement made by Maudud earlier. Then came Maudud Ahmed's turn and he performed a surgery on the political past of the Awami League. And the storm came with all its intensity.

The Awami League members, hit by the comments of Maudud Ahmed, rose to their feet and started shouting full-throat.

The expressions of Abdur Rouf, one-time student leader, made the Speaker angry and he had to comment 'Are you trying to show strength? You can't make a threat' came the reply from Rouf. Before the situation went out of control the Awami League MPs soothed him. But the jittery Speaker did not stop there.

He made it a point to remind the members that the tendency of many members standing at a time to speak is not a parliamentary norm.

The Speaker was busy yesterday in enforcing discipline in the House. He even termed 'strike' an event of no importance while trying to stop Rashed Khan Menon from raising a point of order on the question of the teachers' strike.

Nazrul Academy 25 today

By Staff Correspondent

The three-day silver jubilee celebrations of the Nazrul Academy begins today (Friday) at the National Museum Auditorium.

The celebration programmes include discussion meetings, recitations and a conference on Nazrul's songs.

Deputy Professor of Parliament Prof Badruddoza Chowdhury will be the chief guest at the inaugural session.

Information Minister Barrister Nazmul Huda, Works Ruffiqul Islam Mia and State Minister for Cultural Affairs Prof Jahannara Begum will be the special guests.

Police blocked a procession of the non-government teachers near Bangla Motors in the city yesterday.

Three organisations of teachers submitted memoranda to the Speaker yesterday demanding implementation of their 15-point charter of demands.

The Speaker assured the teachers of taking steps for an immediate solution to the problems.

The police halted the procession of the three organisations at the Banglamotor crossing on their way to the Jatiya Sangsad. It started from the National Press Club.

The organisations were Bangladesh Federation of Teachers' Association (BFTA), Shikha Oikya Parishad (SOP) and Bangladesh College University Teachers' Association (BCUTA).

Later the teachers held a rally at the Banglamotor crossing demanding the implementation of their demands.

The demands include award of the new pay scale to the teachers.

The leaders of the teachers discussed their problems with the Speaker at the Jatiya Sangsad. The Deputy Leader of the Opposition in Parliament Abdus Samad Azad, Rashed Khan Menon, Sajeda Chowdhury were also present, BFTA sources said.



Police blocked a procession of the non-government teachers near Bangla Motors in the city yesterday. —Star photo

Teachers press for 15 points

By DU Correspondent

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UP election: Voting postponed

From Page 1 Col 7

Following an attempt by unruly elements to snatch ballot boxes and ballot papers from Hajipur High School centre at Magura Sadar upazila at 10.45 am. Polling at the centre was postponed.

Clashes by rival groups and attempt to snatch ballot boxes also led to postponement of voting at two places of Bishwanath upazila of Sylhet district. A police control room spokesman said, voting was suspended at Karaga government primary school centre at Rampasha union at 3.20 pm when clashes erupted in the polling area between two rival groups of supporters. Election was also suspended at Bushall Government School Centre of the same upazila while miscreants attacked the centre to snatch ballot boxes and ballot papers. Police fired three rounds of shots to bring the situation under control. The control room officials said authorities also had to postpone polling at six centres of Sundarganj upazila under Gatabdanga district following disturbances.

On the second day Thursday, elections were held in four unions of Hakimpur upazila under Dinajpur district, 12 unions of Alamdanga upazila under Chuadanga district, ten unions of Hahluaghat upazila un-

der Mymensingh district, six unions of Hossampur upazila under Kishoreganj district, four unions of Kashinai upazila under Gopalganj district, eight unions of Bishwanath upazila of Sylhet district, four unions of Salla upazila in Sunamganj district, two unions of Manikchhari upazila under Khagrachhari district and three unions of Dhanchi upazila under Bandarban district. No poll will be held today (Friday). Elections will be held in 513 unions of 52 districts tomorrow (Saturday). Of the unions, 136 are in 14 districts of Rajshahi division, 72 in ten districts of Khulna division, 147 in 15 districts of Dhaka division and 158 in 13 districts of Chittagang Division.

Our Narayanganj Correspondent said chairman of six out of seven union parishes of Sonarganj upazila were declared elected unofficially on Thursday. They are Mosharraf Hossain of Mosharara Union Parishad, Sadekur Rahman of Amirpur Union Parishad, Mesbahuddin of Shambhupur Union Parishad, Abdur Rouf of Projpur Union Parishad, Sabur Khan of Kanchpur Union Parishad and Abdur Hye of Jampur Union Parishad. Turnout of voters in the UP elections, held Wednesday,

was 65 per cent. Elections to the UPs of Rugganj upazila under the district will be held tomorrow (Saturday).

Anti-smuggling drive: I killed in Chapainawabganj

From Our Correspondent

CHAPAINAWABGANJ, Jan 23: The BDR jawans belonging to 31 battalion acting on secret information launched two anti-smuggling drives and captured two persons along with 90,000 Indian rupees yesterday. One man in Babupur village named Ruhul Amin was killed in firing.

According to BDR source a squad of BDR men of Hayatpur BOP captured one Abul Kalam of Babupur village of Shubganj upazila along with 20,000 Indian rupees from Babupur area.

Later, while some twenty persons led by Ruhul Amin of the same village equipped with lethal weapons tried to snatch Abul Kalam and arms from the BDR jawans, they fired four rounds of bullet and Ruhul Amin was killed. In another drive the BDR apprehended one Bayzid Bostami along with 30,000 Indian rupees.