

Dhaka, Yangon sit again Sept 27

By Staff Correspondent

Bangladesh and Myanmar will hold another round of official talks September 27 to find ways to start sending back the reluctant Rohingya refugees.

Officials in Dhaka said that Bangladesh would emphasise on making renewed efforts to ward off fears among the refugees who refuse to believe that the military-ruled Myanmar would be a safe haven when they return.

Persuading the more than a quarter of a million Muslim refugees to go back has been the prime job for both the countries since Bangladesh and Myanmar Foreign Ministers signed an agreement four months back. The accord said that the repatriation would be voluntary.

The talks, ninth since the April 28 pact, will be held in Sitwae, a Myanmar town in the Akyab region.

Chittagong Divisional Commissioner Omar Farooq will lead the Bangladesh team of officials while the Myanmar side will be headed by the country's Immigration Ministry Director General Maung Aung.

The refugee representatives demand that their repatriation be monitored by the international community.

Myanmar does not entertain the plea, insisting on continuing the ongoing bilateral bid.

Talk of repatriation sparks off tension among the refugees and their violent protests have so far killed four of them.

A fast increasing criminal activities by the refugees are a cause of concern for the Bangladesh authorities and have prompted tightening of security in and around the camps and clamping down on the activities of the NGOs providing aid. There are widespread allegations that some of the NGOs are abetting the anti-repatriation elements.

Human rights rhetoric of the Western groups add to the Catch 22 situation that the Bangladesh authorities are in regarding the repatriation.

Sheltered in 19 makeshift camps in Cox's Bazar and Bandarban districts, some 2.65 lakh people are one of the most well-kept refugee groups around the world, and therefore, say Bangladesh officials, they are fighting to stay back.

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Education Day observed

Country's student community yesterday observed in a befitting manner the historic 'Education Day' with the slogan: Education is a right, not privilege, reports UNB.

On the day in 1962, three students were killed in Dhaka when police opened fire during a student strike to protest recommendations of a Commission on education.

Mostafa, Babul and Wazullah laid down their lives to uphold the demand for withdrawal of the 'anti-people' report and introducing universal scientific education system in the country.

On August 26 in 1959, the commission, headed by former Education Secretary SM Sharif, submitted recommendations on a new education policy.

Later, the Pakistan government decided to implement the recommendations from 1961-62 academic year, touching off a campus storm of protest.

To mark the day, different student organisations held rallies and organised discussion meetings in the city, as elsewhere in the country.

(Related story on Metro page)

Nazrul Islam

From Page 1 Col 8

the late Awami League parliamentarian at the Old Airport before airlifting his body to Chafferson.

Earlier Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia and Leader of the Opposition Sheikh Hasina paid their last respect to the departed soul at the south plaza of Jatiya Sangsad where a janaza of late Islam was held.

The janaza was attended by Speaker Shaikh Razzaque Ali, Deputy Speaker Humayun Khan Pannu, cabinet ministers, MPs, political leaders and officials of Jatiya Sangsad.

Wreaths were placed on the coffin of late Nazrul Islam by Speaker Shaikh Razzaque Ali and Leader of the Opposition Sheikh Hasina. Wreaths were also placed on behalf of the Prime Minister by LGPR Minister Abdus Salam Talukder, on behalf of Sangsad members by Chief Whip Khondaker Delwar Hossain and on behalf of Awami League by party General Secretary Begum Sajeda Chowdhury.

Principal Nazrul Islam was born on October 16, 1942 at Chandpur under Bhola. He graduated from Brojomohun College of Barisal in 1964 and passed MA in economics in 1966 from Dhaka University.

He began his teaching profession in 1968 as founder principal of Chafferson College under Bhola. He worked there till his death.

He was also elected to the Jatiya Sangsad on Awami League ticket in 1979 from Bakerganj-3 constituency.

He was a member of the standing committees on Public Accounts and Post and Telecommunications.

EC decision

From Page 1 Col 7

The EC will cut its support for the public food distribution system (PFDS) and the figures show no food aid for 1996, Food Ministry sources said.

The EC's proposal for cut in food aid came following a 'possibility' that Bangladesh may become self-sufficient in food in a few years time.

Meanwhile, the concerned ministries including the Food Ministry has shown strong resentment at the IFAD proposal.

The Food Ministry in a letter to the EC's concern said despite an increase in rice production in the country, self-sufficiency is yet to be achieved.

The ministry further said the production of wheat is now dwindling to one million tons as against the country's annual requirement of between 2.5 and three million tons.

The ministry observed that the IFAD cut on food would seriously affect the food reserve of the country and create crisis in the market.

Sources said other relevant ministries also expressed their similar concerns at the IFAD proposal.

Sources said IFAD in its proposal also suggested for integration of financial and technical aid with food aid to make its assistance more target oriented.

Two flee DB custody

By Staff Correspondent

Two alleged terrorists picked up by police for questioning escaped from the high security detective branch office at Minto Road in the capital Wednesday.

Police sources said yesterday that Mohan and Nasiruddin, who were nabbed by DB police from Lalbagh area in Dhaka Tuesday night in connection with terrorist activities, got loose from the duty room of the DB office at about 5 in the morning Wednesday.



Students of Eden Girls College showing their identity cards to enter the college yesterday. The security measure came in the aftermath of a clash between the college students Wednesday.

Eden College tense: Attendance thin

By Staff Correspondent

An uneasy calm prevailed in the Eden Girls College in the capital Thursday following a clash between two rival groups of students Wednesday.

At least 20 girl students were injured in the clash between the activists of pro-government Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) and the supporters of Ekattorer Ghatok Dalal Nirmul Committee at the college ground Wednesday afternoon.

Attendance of the students at the college Thursday was very thin as many of them did not come fearing further clashes.

However, police has been posted at the entrance of the college to prevent further clashes. The students were allowed to enter the college campus after thorough identity check.

Authorities have advised

students to carry ID cards with them.

Many students were refused entry in the college for not having any identification document with them Thursday.

Talking to The Daily Star, the college Principal said that the situation of the college was normal Thursday.

However, she admitted that the presence of students on the campus was thin.

Leaders of Ekattorer Ghatok Dalal Nirmul Committee in a statement Thursday blamed the Vice President of the College Students Union for terrorising the students on the campus and ransacking several rooms of their supporters at the college dormitory.

They also resented the failure of the Principal of the college to ensure security to the common students of the college.

Anti-terrorism ordn under Left fire

By Staff Correspondent

Different political parties and professional organisations Thursday blasted the promulgation of the Curbing of Terrorist Activities Ordinance 1992 terming it a tool to oppress the opposition.

The Central Steering Committee of Patriotic Democratic Front (PDF) at a meeting yesterday at the CPB office said such a controversial ordinance, promulgated ignoring Parliament, would not be good for the democratic system.

The meeting demanded withdrawal of the ordinance. The meeting was attended by Pankaz Bhattacharya, Maulana Abdur Rahman Azme, Alhaj Abdus Samad, Dilip Barua, Abdur Rauf and Ranesh Moitra.

The convenor of central Five-party Alliance, Khalequzzaman in a statement condemned the anti-terrorism ordinance and demanded its withdrawal.

He termed it as a black law and said that it was against the basic rights of the people.

He also urged all the democracy loving people to build up movement against the ordinance.

The Acting President of the Communist Party of Bangladesh (CPB), Shamsuddoha and general secretary, Nurul Islam Nahid in a joint statement said the anti-terrorism ordinance was not acceptable to the people and political parties.

They said the law was undemocratic as it did not have the sanction of Parliament and it could be used to suppress opposition politics.

Ganotantri Party criticized the ordinance saying that it was against the human rights and normal justice. If the government had been honest in curbing terrorism it could do it under the existing laws, the statement issued by Azizul Islam Khan and Mohammad Afzal, President and General Secretary of the party, said.

They called upon all political parties to be united against the ordinance.

Bangladesh Samajtantrik Dal (BSD) at a meeting of its

Central Executive body said the ordinance was aimed at using the state power in suppressing the dissidents and called it another form of terrorism.

BSS adds: Prof Mozaffar Ahmed, chief of National Awami Party (NAP-M), said people wanted peace and restoration of law and order in the country.

Giving his reaction on the promulgation of anti-terrorism ordinance, Prof. Mozaffar said people no longer want to hear high flown talks any more. What they want is action-oriented programmes which would ensure peace in the society enabling them to march ahead to progress, he said.

Pakal Samrak Karmachari Sangram Parishad, Bangladesh Khemajur Samity, Bangladesh Islami Chhatra Samaj, and Bangladesh Nezame Islami Party also slated the ordinance.

Dr Kamal

From Page 1 Col 8

law and order situation. This action committee should comprise members from professional groups and members of parliament belonging to both treasury and opposition benches. These members must enjoy the confidence and respect of the people, he stressed.

Dr. Hossain strongly pleaded for constituting a special parliamentary standing committee in this respect. The parliamentary standing committee should work constantly to monitor the law and order situation and take matching steps to contain this scourge.

It should be equipped with necessary powers to direct the law enforcing agencies to swing into action forthwith when and where it (committee) deems fit, he observed.

Dr. Kamal Hossain expressed his apprehension saying that there was chance of anti-terrorism ordinance's abuse. What is needed at the moment is the will and determination of the government to deal with anarchy and terrorists.

Clash follows BCIC union polls results

DMCH Correspondent

Five employees of Bangladesh Chemical Industries Corporation (BCIC) were wounded in a clash between two rival unions over an election result in the capital Thursday.

The injured were identified as Jinal Abedin (23), Nazrul Islam (25), Lal Mia (35), Abdul Hye (25) and Abdur Rashid (26).

Witnesses said that a clash between two rival unions of BCIC began immediately after announcement of results of the BCIC Karmachari Union Parishad polls Thursday evening.

They said Belayet group unionists attacked the activists of Lutful Rahman Bhuiyan after being defeated in the polls.

The injured were released from the Dhaka Medical College Hospital after first aid.

Shantibahini

See Page 12 Col 4

logue and fix a date and venue for it.

Sources also said that the Shantibahini had accepted the formation of the government committee led by the Communications Minister Col (Rid) Oli Ahmed and agreed to hold a dialogue with it after the preparatory meeting with its 'liaison committee' setting aside all its recent pre-conditions that included the formation of an all party parliamentary committee instead of the present one and the withdrawal of all Bengali settlers from the hill districts.

However, sources further said that the liaison committee leader would make efforts to hold the preparatory meeting September 25 instead of September 28 if possible after contacting the PCJSS.

The government had planned to hold a dialogue with the Shantibahini September 12 but it was deferred as the tribal rebels suddenly put forward some fresh conditions.

During Ershad's rule, six rounds of talks were held between security officials and representatives of the Shantibahini on different occasions at Pujga area of Khagrachari district but all of them ended inconclusively because of some Shantibahini demands that infringed the sovereignty and Constitution of the country.

The government, eyeing the long-drawn hill tracts issue from political angle, made a fresh offer to hold a dialogue to achieve a peaceful solution.

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The Midnight File

ME peace talks conclude

MOSCOW, Sept 17: Multilateral disarmament talks organised here as part of the joint US-Russian sponsored Middle East peace process ended today with no date being fixed for the next meeting, informed sources said. Participants in the meeting, which took place behind closed doors, approved a text on arms control but its details were not made public. Syria boycotted the talks, linking its participation to progress in bilateral negotiations in Washington with Israel over return of the Golan Heights, reports AFP.

OPEC to freeze crude output

GENEVA, Sept 17: OPEC Minister agreed today to freeze crude output near current levels for the rest of the year in bid to push oil prices up to their target of dollars 21 per barrel, Indonesian Minister Gitanjar Kartasumita said. The deal pegs fourth-quarter production by the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries at 24.2 million Barrels Per Day (BPD), ministers emerging from two days of strategy talks said, reports Reuters.

Public meeting venue

From Page 1 Col 7
Selected three places in the city as probable venues for public rallies.

The three places were the western part of the Osmany Uddayan near Gulistan, the park between the Gulistan Cinema and the Bangabhaban and a play ground behind Saidabad bus terminal.

According to sources, the sub-committee will meet tomorrow morning to choose one of the three places. The committee is expected to send its recommendation to the parliamentary standing committee as soon as a consensus is reached.

Sources further said that the sub-committee has specially invited Mir Shaukat Ali and Salauddin Ahmed, two MPs of the Dhaka metropolitan area, to attend the meeting and put forward their suggestions in this regard.

The sub-committee has also asked different officials including the Secretary of the Works Ministry, the Deputy Commissioner (DC) Dhaka, and the Metropolitan Police Commissioner, Dhaka to be present at tomorrow's meeting and give their opinions.

The Mayor of the City Corporation Mirza Abbas MP is also expected to send a representative to let the position of the corporation regarding a suitable venue be known.