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Unanimity remains elusive JS resolution resents India's 'push-back'

Parliament last night adopted a resolution 'strongly' protesting the so-called Operation Push Back terming it inhuman and expressing hope that India would stop the 'illegal' action immediately.

The resolution, adopted by the House was moved by the Deputy Leader of the House Prof Badruddoza Chowdhury. Two other resolutions, moved by Awami League chief Sheikh Hasina and Jatiya Party leader Mizanur Rahman Chowdhury, condemning the Indian action, however, fell flat.

The Treasury bench resolution was passed by 161 votes with 18 from the Jamaat-Islami.

The resolution moved by Hasina secured 67 votes with lone Ganotantri Party MP Suranjit Sengupta supporting it while another resolution moved by Mizanur Rahman Chowdhury obtained votes of 20 JP MPs present in the House.

The Communist Party of Bangladesh (CPB) abstained from taking part in the voting while Maolana Obaidul Hoque of Islami Oikya Jote and Shajahan Siraj of Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal (JSD) and Salauddin Kader Chowdhury of National Democratic Party (NDP) were absent in the House.

Shajahan Siraj, when contacted, however, expressed his solidarity with the resolution moved by Sheikh Hasina.

The Treasury bench resolution passed by the House termed the Indian 'Operation Push Back' as 'illegal, inhuman' and 'contrary to the diplomatic norms'.

Expressing 'deep concern' See Page 12 Col 1

PM has surrendered to India: Hasina

By Staff Correspondent

Sheikh Hasina last night said Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia had 'surrendered' to New Delhi during her May 26-28 trip to the country by 'admitting that a large number of Bangladesh citizens are illegally staying in India'.

"Bangladesh never admitted such an allegation, rather for the last twenty years Bangladesh has termed this Indian plea unrealistic and illogical,"

the leader of the Opposition told newsmen, pointing to the controversial 11th para of the joint communique, just after the House adopted a resolution on the Operation Push Back.

In the House, she moved a resolution that, apart from condemning the Indian move, called for scrapping of the para that she said gave birth to the problem.

See Page 12 Col 5

Hasina's views on Clause 11 of joint communique not acceptable: FM

By Staff Correspondent

Foreign Minister A S M Mostafizur Rahman last night said all the parties in the Jatiya Sangsad were of the opinion that 'Indian Push-in Operation' was unjustified and against all diplomatic norms and practices, reports BSS.

Briefing newsmen after the resolution on 'Indian Push-in Operation' was passed by the Sangsad, the Foreign Minister See Page 12 Col 1



Bangladesh Chhatra Union protesting Indian push in operation in front of the Indian High Commission in city yesterday. — Star photo



By Sabir Mustafa

No sooner had the Battle of Push-Back and Clause 11 ended, than the War of the Mighty Huqs got going in earnest yesterday.

There was a definite lull before the ferocious storm. Deputy Speaker Humayun Khan Panni, not exactly famous for his control over the House, was reading out various notices given by members.

It all began when Panni began to read an adjournment notice given by Awami League member Shamsul Huq from Mymensingh, in which the AL See Page 12 Col 3

Production in domestic industries declines

A quarterly review of the country's economic situation revealed that overall trend in the micro sectors continued to remain destabilised with decline in production nearly in all domestic market oriented industries.

Except pharmaceuticals, fertilizer and petroleum products, industrial production in July-September period of 1992-93 showed a declining growth compared to the corresponding period of the previous fiscal, said the review of the Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce and Industry (MCCI) made available to UNB yesterday (Wednesday).

It is —6.07 per cent for jute goods, —22.47 per cent for cotton textiles, —41 per cent for cement and —14.91 per cent for cigarettes.

Fertilizer, steel and paper products have, however, grown significantly registering growth of 30.39 per cent, 79 per cent and 24.23 per cent respectively.

The review referred to a survey, conducted by a chamber, which revealed smuggling, market shrinkage, labour unrest, power failures and increasing cost of imports to be the leading factors affecting the industrial growth.

All the 63 entrepreneurs representing different sectors, including those from export industries, interviewed by MCCI, expressed the common view that lack of coordination between the economic ministries and agencies was posing serious difficulties in the economic front.

"Everyone stated that lack of coordination was not only defeating government's business-friendly policies but also giving mixed signals to the business community making them hesitant to take any initiatives," the MCCI review said quoting the survey.

The chamber observed that although export sector fetched 620.25 million US dollars during the July-September quarter, almost equalling the target for the period, the export industries have been further marginalised by competitors from the neighbouring countries.

Owners of the export industries complained of harassment by the customs authorities See Page 12 Col 7

'Revolving fund' for loans to jute, tea sectors likely

By Sohel Manzur

The government has agreed in principle to create a 'revolving fund' for providing loans to the entrepreneurs of jute and tea sectors in simple terms and conditions, according to Commerce Ministry sources.

The final decision in this regard would be taken at a meeting of the Parliamentary Standing Committee to be held on October 29, the sources said.

The fund was planned to be raised mainly from the outstanding COMPEX (compensation for loss in export earnings) fund that was founded with the financial assistance of European Community (EC), the sources See Page 12 Col 6

Variety of candidates, various ideas

PASADENA (Calif), Oct 21: If Bush, Clinton or Perot won't do, there are hundreds more presidential candidates out there with a distinct agenda for America's future, reports AP.

Kip Lee stresses the need for global friendship and puts his trust in intergalactic traveler Commander Ashtar. Kenneth E Klammer has a plan to solve '89 per cent of the serious problems facing us today.' Margaret Range believes Michael Jackson is Jesus and wants the pop star as a running mate.

Husband-and-wife artists Ruth Honegger and Marino Pascal have dedicated a conceptual art show to the more than 250 candidates who have registered with the Federal Election Commission, the only official requirement to run for the nation's highest office.

There's no filing fee.

The couple asked all candidates to send in a photo and a statement, and got 112 responses. The result, on display through Dec. 23 at the Army Center for the Arts, is an irresistible collection of personality and political theory.

The candidates range from comedians, politicians and angry housewives to a swingers magazine publisher, a condom smuggler and a man who says he worked for IBM at the same time Ross Perot did.

"We thought he was a jerk then — and he hasn't changed, Frank Abern said in his campaign literature.

While several candidates are clearly loopy, "they're all serious, on some level" about government, Ms. Honegger said.

"I don't want it to be seen as a joke," she said. "A lot of people risked a lot, spent a lot of money, and ruined their families in the process."

Only President Bush, Bill Clinton, Perot and Andre Marrou of the Libertarian Party will appear on the Nov. 3 ballot in all 50 states. Nineteen other candidates appear on at least one state ballot, said Richard Winger, who publishes Ballot Access News, a San Francisco newsletter.

Lenore Fulani of New Alliance will be on 40 state ballots, and John Hagelin, who wants to bring transcendental meditation to Pennsylvania Avenue, will pop up in 29 states, Winger said.

The show's aim is to create a platform where Perot stands no higher than Mrs Frank R Stewart, who is for "a national renaissance in moral excellence."

Or along with Jerry Brown and Pat Buchanan you get J Quinn Brisben and Ray Caplette. See Page 12 Col 8

Storm creates panic in coastal areas

From Our Correspondent

COX'S BAZAR, Oct 21: Panic gripped this coastal tourist town Wednesday as intensified storm packing a maximum speed of 60 kilometre per hour was approaching towards the coast and could hit early Thursday.

Low-lying areas of the Cox's Bazar, offshore islands and char areas would be inundated by storm surges whipped up to 2-3 feet above the normal astronomical tide at 3 am Thursday when the storm would hit the coast, a Met office special bulletin said in Dhaka Wednesday midnight.

Standing crops and kutcha houses are likely to be damaged by the surge and high winds, weathermen forecast.

The deep depression over the Bay which was veering towards the Khulna region suddenly changed its course and started moving towards the Cox's Bazar coast.

Many of some 1,50,000 panic stricken people of Kutubdia, Moheshkhali, Ukia, Teknaf and Cox's Bazar Sadar Upazila left their homes and See Page 12 Col 1

WB prescribed reforms in jute sector begin from next fiscal

By S Y Bakht

The jute sector reform programme recommended by the World Bank (WB) is scheduled to begin during the next fiscal year, according to Jute Minister A S M Hannan Shah.

As part of the assistance to the sector, the bank proposed a comprehensive reform programme — jute sector restructuring project — covering the jute manufacturing industry with the basic objective to eliminate the substantial difference, 42 per cent in 1990-91, between the export price and unit production costs of jute products.

"We are in agreement with the bank's recommendations on all points except one," on the debts incurred by the jute sector, the minister said.

The total outstanding debts of the jute sector to the nationalised commercial banks stood at Taka 3200 crore as of December 1990.

Talking to The Daily Star, Hannan Shah said that once this issue was resolved the whole programme could take off the ground. An agreement on the three-year reform programme is likely to be signed, between the government and the bank next month. A WB team is expected to arrive on November 15.

The two main policy planks recommended by the bank are downsizing the existing mills and deregulating the sector.

The minister noted that the bank suggested reducing the surplus loans — about 35 per cent — and the surplus manpower which stood at 25 per cent as of July 1991.

The excess manpower would be reduced under a voluntary separation programme. The minister noted that the programme had already been initiated at the Bangladesh Jute Mills Corporation and a total of 13,700 workers went on voluntary retirement during 1991-92. Another 2,000 will leave under the programme by November this year.

Hannan Shah pointed out that due to steps already initiated, the production costs in some jute mills had been lowered to an extent. At the Eastern Jute Mills, as of August 1992, the production cost per metric ton of hessian stood at Taka 37,246, for sacking Taka 24,822 and for CBC Taka 42,800 as against Taka 47,565 for hessian, Taka 26,449 for sacking and Taka 48,278 for CBC during 1991-92.

Similar reduction in production costs were also achieved at the Quomi Jute Mills in Sirajganj and the Platinum Jute Mills in Khulna.

The number of man hour required to produce one metric ton of jute goods has also been reduced in some jute See Page 12 Col 3

Haj pilgrims to be sent only under official management

The government has decided to send people to haj next season only under official management, an official hand-out said yesterday, reports BSS.

It was decided at an inter-ministerial meeting on haj management yesterday with Foreign Minister A S M Mostafizur Rahman in the chair, the hand-out said, adding the decision was taken with a view to ensuring more facilities to the pilgrims.

The meeting recommended to fix the plane-fare of pilgrims next season at 41 thousand taka considering the financial condition of the people.

The meeting also recommended to send a five-member advance team that will include a Member of Parliament to Saudi Arabia to contact with Saudi officials and agencies for ensuring better accommodation and other facilities for the pilgrims.

Sarbaharaman killed in gunbattle

JESSORE, Oct 21: A Sarbahara Party activist was killed and six others, including a policeman, were injured in a fierce gunbattle at a village in Baghapara thana early today, reports UNB.

Police seized huge arms and ammunition and captured two gunmen after an hour-long encounter with the Sarbahara outlaws at village Bashuar.

Shafuddin Mollah (30) was gunned down on the spot. The body was sent to the Sadar Hospital for postmortem, police and hospital sources said.

The fire fight began when a police squad fired at a group of Gury Das Ghosh while the outlaws were allegedly claiming toll from the Ghosh at about 3 am.

Five wounded Sarbaharamen were taken away by their comrades who sneaked out while two were nabbed unhurt. They were named Gokenuswar and Wahed.

Mostafiz leaves for Lahore today

Foreign Minister A S M Mostafizur Rahman leaves Dhaka today for Lahore to begin his 10-day tour to four SAARC countries as special emissary of Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia, reports UNB.

During his stay in the four South Asian capitals, Mostafiz will extend official invitations to heads of the state and the government of the SAARC countries for the 7th summit of the forum due in Dhaka early December.

Official sources in Dhaka said yesterday the Foreign Minister will proceed to Islamabad on Saturday to deliver invitation to Pakistan Prime Minister Mian Nawaz Sharif.

He will fly into New Delhi from Islamabad on October 25 to deliver the invitation to Indian Prime Minister Narasimha Rao.

During his sojourn in New Delhi, the Foreign Minister is expected to discuss with Indian leaders the bilateral issues, particularly the burning issue of 'push in operation' by Indian BSF.

Mostafiz is scheduled to fly to Kathmandu on October 27 to extend invitation to King Birendra of the Himalayan Kingdom of Nepal.

Dacoits loot twenty trucks, two buses

SAVAR, Oct 21: Dacoits looted goods worth about Tk ten lakh from 20 trucks and 2 passenger buses near Madhabpur on Nabinagar-Kaliakoir road today, reports UNB.

Police said, a gang of dacoits stopped the vehicles making barricade on the highway at 5 am and looted for more than an hour all the valuables of the passengers and those on the trucks.

They also injured ten including passengers and truck drivers, who were later admitted to a nearby health complex but released after first aid.

However, the miscreants made good to their escape before police rushed to the spot.

In Sylhet, inmates of a house in the town were made unconscious by their maid to let a gang of dacoits enter and loot away valuables Tuesday night.

A newly appointed maid allegedly mixed poison with the meal which she prepared for all the six members of the family living at house no-144 in Ambarkhana area.

The inmates, after taking the meal, fell into deep sleep when the dacoits made their way into the house and looted the valuables.

Tenant of the house found all the six members of the house in deep sleep keeping doors and windows open when he went there after finding an abnormal silence in his landlord's flat.

The victims were rushed to a local clinic this morning and were yet to gain their consciousness till writing of this report at 8.30 pm.

'Delhi must maintain its N-capability for safety'

NEW DELHI, Oct 21: India has to maintain its nuclear capability to produce atomic weapons for 'some more time' for geopolitical reasons, a prominent scientist was quoted as saying today, reports AFP.

"A point of safety where nuclear capability could be dismantled has not been reached," M R Srinivasan, former chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission, said, the Press Trust of India (PTI) reported.

Srinivasan told an Indo-French science seminar near the southern city of Madras that the break-up of the Soviet Union had created many nuclear-capable states 'on our doorstep,' PTI said.

He also cited the 'rise of Islamic fundamentalism' as a factor for India to retain its capability to produce nuclear weapons for 'some more time to come.'

India exploded an atomic device in 1974, proving its nuclear capability, but since then has claimed to have harnessed nuclear energy for peaceful purposes.

It has not signed the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, charging that the pact discriminated in favour of nuclear power states.

Air ticket sale agents falls as continue strike

By Staff Correspondent

Air ticket booking has fallen alarmingly over the past two days because of the strike by the country's travel agents, airlines sources said.

But the passenger load through the Zia International Airport (ZIA) has not yet shown any drastic reduction as most of the bookings were made earlier, according to ZIA and travel agents sources.

More than 300 travel agents across the country started indefinite strike from Monday demanding withdrawal of value added tax (VAT) on the See Page 12 Col 2