



Foreign Minister A S M Mostafizur Rahman receiving Foreign Ministers of Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Maldives, Nepal and India at ZIA yesterday



—PID photo

Import policy to be liberalised

Country's import policy awaits a radical change with relaxation of restrictions on the trade in line with the current economic reforms, reports UNB.

In a sweeping move to ease procedural tangles facing the import trade, the authorities are learnt to have decided to abolish the provision of pass books for industrial importers who now get some preferential treatment in import of raw materials.

Official sources said pass book would be retained only in case of import of the items on the control list.

As per liberalised import rules, any Bangladeshi expatriate can import permissible items on direct payment abroad, without permission from the authorities at home. Price limit in such imports will also go.

Decision has also been taken to relax the mandatory use of Bangladeshi flag vessels in import. Export-oriented industries will now be free to choose the transport.

Sources said the proposed relaxations in import trade, set as per guideline by the World Bank, had recently got endorsement by the cabinet. Formal announcement of the drastic revision of Import Policy Order (1991-93) is likely to be made shortly.

Under the coming changes, sources maintained, LCA form will, henceforth, be required only in case of import to be

transacted through banks. At present, any mode of import requires filling up of LCA form. Alongside indent issued by registered local indenting firms, according to sources, LC (Letter of Credit) will now be allowed to open against invoice of foreign suppliers themselves. The present import policy allows LCS to be opened against indent issued by local indentors.

All export-oriented firms enjoying Special Bondedhouse Warehouse (SBW) facilities will be allowed duty-free import of raw and packing materials, either on back-to-back LC basis or upto four months' requirement without any master export LC.

These firms, sources said, will also not require authorisation from the Bangladesh Bank, which is now compulsory in case of such imports.

Export-oriented garment industries will be exempted from the compulsions of taking permission from the Ministry of Textiles prior to importing knit garment wares.

Decisions has also been taken to remove the import policy provision for foreign-owned or multinational firms to take authorities permission for importing machinery or spares for their emergency renovation or BMRE.

Another decision to squeeze the control list from 199 importables to 99 is also awaiting official announcement.

SAARC summit agreed

From Page 1 Col 7
at the regular evening briefing after the Standing Committee ended its three-day meeting yesterday.

The Foreign Secretary, who is also the official spokesman for the Seventh SAARC Summit, said that the decision on deferring the December 12-13 meeting was taken neither a the insistence of India nor Bangladesh proposed for it, suggesting that an unanimous resolution emerged among all the countries to suit the convenience of Prime Minister Narasimha Rao of India.

Asked if India "imposed" the decision, a quick reply came from Rahman. "No, it's factually wrong, nobody can impose any decision."

Replying to queries on how the agreement was reached, the Foreign Secretary said, "As host country, it was conveyed to us (by India that it's Prime Minister will not be able to attend), and we conveyed it to Sri Lanka."

"Until such time our Prime Minister is formally elected

the chairman, Sri Lanka is the chairman," and that was why, Rahman explained, the formal announcement came from Colombo. "This is just a formal... procedural matter", he added.

On the question who proposed the postponement, he said that "one can propose anything but that has to be unanimously agreed by all... No, Bangladesh did not propose."

"There are many political complexities", he commented at one stage trying to explain the way the postponement came.

The Bangladesh Foreign Secretary admitted that the deferment of the summit has "diminished" the spirit of the event. "Yes, that's an obvious fact."

Asked if there was any possibility of an amendment to the SAARC Charter that bars from holding the summit without any of the heads of state or government, Rahman replied in the negative.

"The fact that they do come is a major commitment (to SAARC)... if any head of state is

substituted by somebody else, that may become a practice."

He informed that "the Standing Committee has concluded its work and prepared a draft report." The report, along with the one of the Programming Committee, will be placed before the Council of Ministers, composed of the Foreign Ministers.

The Council of Ministers begins its two-day meeting today as scheduled, and all the ministers are already in the city.

Rahman said that all the three reports, those of the Programming Committee, the Standing Committee and the Council of Ministers, would be ready for consideration for the summiters when they meet in January.

Asked whether bilateral issues would sneak into the agenda of the bilateral meetings between ministers, an evasive reply came from Rahman. "There has been an open-ended agenda," insisting that he was speaking in his capacity as the SAARC spokesman.

Lankan FM

From Page 1 Col 8

summit for adoption.

He also referred to the proposed South Asian Preferential Trade Arrangement (SPTA) and the South Asian Development Fund.

Replying to a question, the Sri Lankan Foreign Minister said the postponement of the SAARC summit is yet to be officially announced. "The current Chairman of the SAARC will have to formally announce the postponement", he said.

When his attention was drawn to the explosive situation triggered by the razing of the Babri Mosque, Herat said, "We express concern over it and condemn those who demolished the mosque."

Foreign Minister ASM Mostafizur Rahman received his Lankan counterpart at the airport.

Foreign Minister of the Maldives Fatulla Jameel also arrived here last night to attend the meeting of SAARC Council of Ministers.

Talking to reporters at the airport, he said that the past year of the SAARC was an "active period" and hoped the next year will also be so under the chairmanship of Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia.

Kanju

From Page 1 Col 8

Anwar Kemal were present.

Talking to newsmen on arrival, Kanju expressed concern and shock at the demolition of historic Babri Mosque by fanatical Hindus in India. "It's very unfortunate"

In an emotion-choked voice, he said "the incident not only hurt the sentiment of the people of South Asian region but also the peace-loving people of the entire world."

"This is the issue of last two years," he said and regretted that the government of India had failed to fulfil the constitutional obligation for protecting the religious right and ensuring security of the minority as well as honour court verdict and international commitment for protecting life and property of the minority.

Replying to a question, he said he had come here for holding formal discussions with SAARC foreign ministers to prepare the agenda of the forum's summit, which has been deferred by a month in the wake of the worst communal violence in the sub-continent in recent time.

Replying to a question on the postponement of the summit earlier scheduled for December 12-13, he expressed optimism about staging the meet on the revised schedule. "We are looking forward to holding the summit."

He referred to the brotherly relations between the two Muslim countries and expressed solidarity with the people of Bangladesh.

Nepali Minister

From Page 1 Col 8

The Nepalese Minister arrived in Dhaka for the SAARC Council of Ministers' meeting scheduled for December 10-11 to finalise the agenda for the 7th SAARC Summit which will now be held next month.

Joshy parried a question on Indian Prime Minister's recent observation that Nepal could not talk on waters with any other country except India.

Talks with Indian Prime Minister during his recent visit to Kathmandu were confined to the water of Tunak river that flows through Nepal and India, he said.

Earlier in a statement Joshy said he was looking forward to discussing bilateral matters with Bangladesh besides attending the SAARC Council of Ministers' meeting.

He described Nepal's relations with Bangladesh "very good," especially in the field of trade, and expressed the hope that cooperation between the two countries would be expanded in days to come.

Khoka Roy dead

CALCUTTA, Dec 9: Khoka Roy, veteran Communist leader of undivided Bengal and former member of the Bangladesh Communist Party Secretariat, died at his Baranagar residence today. He was 85.

Two more killed, 130 injured

From Page 1 Col 4

Shibir at the parishad auditorium. The Additional District Magistrate of Bhola told The Daily Star over telephone that tension was running high in the town on Wednesday.

A match factory was burned by a group of people in the morning and many houses were damaged during the day, he said adding that the situation was "under control."

Our Sylhet Correspondent adds: With the deterioration of the law and order situation in Sunamganj town, Section 144 has been imposed from noon Wednesday. About 20 persons including one BDR havildar and 2 police personnel were injured there in sporadic incidents. A fire-fighting vehicle was also damaged today.

When contacted, the SP, Sunamganj confirmed all these informations last night. A

number of shops at Hasannagar, Sholaghar and in Kalibari areas were ransacked. Temples at Ramkrishna Mission, Kalibari, Jurgabari and Jagannathbari were damaged badly this noon by the unruly people. Some shops in the bazar were also set on fire.

Meanwhile, the situation in Sylhet was now stated to be normal.

Our Jessore Correspondent reports: Temple at Sukpukuria Daspara under Sukpukuria Union of Chowgacha Dha. Thana in Jessore was burnt to ashes by a group of local people on the night following circulation of the news of damage done to Babri Mosque in India according to a delayed information. When contacted TNO Chowgacha Hazratullah confirming it told Daily Star that he had visited the place of occurrence with O/C Chowgacha Police Station yesterday. The

Nirmul body human chain programme today

By Staff Correspondent

The Ghatak Dalai Nirmul Samannaya Committee will form a human chain in the capital today to project the solidarity of the cross section of people with the committee's four-point demand including trial of Golan Azam for war crimes.

Parliament members, Nirmul committee activists, political leaders and workers, members of different professional groups and trade union bodies will form the one-hour human chain stretching from Bahadur Shah Park to Jatiya Sangsad via Bangabandhu Avenue, Press Club, Shahbag and Farmgate. The programmes starts at 12 noon.

Earlier, gatherings would be arranged at the strategic points on the chain's route.

BSF pushes 120 more into Bangladesh

LALMONIRHAT, Dec 9: Some 120 Bangla-speaking Indian Muslims were pushed into Bangladesh on Monday and Tuesday, resuming a controversial BSF operation even detested widely by Indians themselves, reports UNB.

Witnesses and villagers said the pushes were given through different border points in the district. Bangladesh Rifles, however, put the number of push victims at 5 only.

Among the 120, five were sent back to India by a local Union Parishad authorities.

Govt has failed to tackle communal forces: CPB

By Staff Correspondent

Communist Party of Bangladesh (CPB) Wednesday accused the government of "total failure" in tackling the situation arising here out of the Babri Mosque demolition by Hindu Fundamentalists in India.

"Because of the government's failure the fundamentalist forces here have attacked their political rivals and also the minority community," Saifuddin Ahmed Manik told reporters at a press conference at the party office.

"He said that the unholy fundamentalist forces attacked and set afire the CPB office on Monday in presence of police and Bangladesh Rifles personnel."

Uphold peace

From Page 1 Col 4

He strongly condemned the Ayodhya incident and said that the forbearance shown by the people in upholding social peace and discipline was the expression of Islamic ideals though secularism was not a basic principle of Bangladesh Constitution.

The Information Minister said that the destruction of centuries-old historic Babri Mosque had hurt the religious sentiment of Muslims all over the world including Bangladesh. The Indian government had failed to give protection to the Mosque, he said adding: This had proved that India was not a secular state though secularism was incorporated in the Indian constitution.

incident has been communicated to DC, Jessore, he added.

UNB adds from Sherpur: The district administration imposed Section 144 in the town for an indefinite period since 1 pm Wednesday in the wake of rowdy protest against the razing of historic Babri Mosque.

Law and order situation deteriorated in the town since last Tuesday following demolition of the 16th century mosque at Ayodhya in India's Uttar Pradesh state by Hindu fundamentalists, which touched off shockwaves and protests round the globe.

A number of temples, houses and business establishments came under mob attacks in the last two days, witnesses and officials said.

Police and paramilitary BDR are patrolling the tense town.

Human Rights Day today

Human Rights Day will be observed in Bangladesh as elsewhere in the world today, reports UNB.

The Day, an annual observance of the United Nations, marks the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights by the United Nations General Assembly in 1948.

National body to probe 'paracetamol scandal' demanded

By Staff Correspondent

Bangladesh Pharmaceutical Society at a press conference Wednesday demanded formation of a national commission to probe the 'paracetamol scandal' and recommend ways to avert repetition of such incidents in future.

The society suggested that the commission be headed by a High Court judge and be composed of representatives from the Pharmacy Council of Bangladesh, Bangladesh Medical Association, Aushad Shilpa Samity, Drug Administration, Drug Testing Laboratories and Bangladesh Pharmaceutical Society.

It also demanded punishment to the persons responsible for manufacturing and marketing of the injurious paracetamol syrup.

The Midnight File

150 more Muslim extremists held in Egypt

CAIRO, Dec 9: Police conducting a security sweep of a Muslim extremist stronghold west of Cairo said they rounded up 150 militants in two dawn raids Wednesday. The arrests in the Imbaba district brought the number of suspected extremists detained in the past two days to 411, reports AP.

Russian legislature rejects Gaidar's nomination as PM

MOSCOW, Dec 9: Russia's highest legislature on Wednesday rejected confirmation of Yegor Gaidar in the post of Prime Minister by a vote of 486 to 467. The rejection of Gaidar's candidacy, endorsed by President Boris Yeltsin on Tuesday, marked a major setback for the government and the course of economic reforms in Russia, reports AFP.

BJP, Jamaat

From Page 1 Col 7

them. Muslims in the country must show patience considering the security of other Muslims abroad, she viewed.

Hasina cautioned the people to remain alert against the 'dual role' of Jamaat activists and instructed party workers and others to constitute Peace Brigade at every 'Mahalla' comprising of people irrespective of cast, creed, religion and party affiliations to maintain peace and harmony.

Awami League believes in the freedom of all religions and does not support communal politics in the name of religion, she stated adding the state must protect every citizen's life, property and religion.

In this context, the opposition leader reiterated her allegation that the government had totally failed to carry out its sacred duty.

The Anti-Terrorism Law was enacted to maintain peace, asserting this the AL chief questioned, why this law was not enforced in connection with the acts of arson and loot that occurred in the country as a sequel to the demolition of Babri Mosque? This black law only aims at oppressing the opposition workers, and for snatching people's fundamental rights, she added.

Arranged by AL's city branch at the Bangabandhu Avenue in the afternoon, the Peace Rally was also addressed by the Party President members Abdur Razzak, MP, Sajeda Choudhury, MP, General Secretary Zillur Rahman, Matia Choudhury, MP, AL leaders Mofazzal Hossain Choudhury Maya, Advocate Kamrul Islam, City AL President Mohammad Haniff presided.

Zillur Rahman demanded the government to ensure all religious groups' rights to practise undisturbed their respective religions. Secularism

Rao : Alliance

From Page 1 Col 7

become a war zone. Nightly, raiding parties attack neighboring colonies with knives, hatchets, gasoline-filled bottles and light bulbs filled with acid.

The stock market, the country's largest, was closed for the fourth day in Bombay. Economists and businessmen were concerned that the unrelenting violence would cast doubts on Rao's drive to encourage foreign investment through his liberalizing reforms.

Muslim religious bodies appealed for calm, asking their people not to attack Hindus and refrain from violence. The Dalai Lama, the exiled Tibetan leader and Nobel Peace prize laureate, also issued a call for tolerance and mutual respect.

BJP leaders LK Advani, Murli Manohar Joshi and several other national leaders were to appear in court on Thursday in Faizabad, Ayodhya's twin city, to face criminal charges.

They were indicted on three counts of inciting religious enmity and violence through their speeches allegedly encouraging Hindu zealots to destroy the mosque.

was the spirit of Liberation War, he said accusing late President Ziaur Rahman of destroying the spirit by rehabilitating the 'rajakars' in the country. Following the path of Zia, Zillur continued, Khaleda Zia was now letting the religion peddlers to create anarchy in the country.

Abdur Razak blamed Jamaat for causing communal riots in collaboration with BNP. He deplored demolition of Babri Mosque by the fanatic groups of India which resulted in the postponement of SAARC summit.

Fundamentalist forces of the country patronised by Jamaat damaged temples and looted properties and illegally occupied the houses of the Hindus, he alleged.

Sajeda Choudhury stressed the need for solid unity of all pro-liberation forces to get away from the clutch of fanatic forces.

Sub-judges case

From Page 1 Col 7

he said. At this point the Attorney General sought the adjournment. He submitted to the court that as he had been recently admitted to the Diabetic Hospital for five days, he "could not make any contact" with higher ups in the government as per his earlier statement.

The Attorney General had sought 10 days time, assuring the Court of "discussing the matter with the highest authority of the country with a view to bringing about a happy solution to the working of the constitution," the day the Writ application was moved.

"Since it is a legally important debatable matter and it needs sound deliberations on the matter may be adjourned till the reopening of the Court after the vacation, August Haq said in his submission during the hearing yesterday."

It also transpired in the Court in course of the submission by the Attorney General that the government was considering consulting with the Supreme Court regarding the posting, promotion and grant of leave of Magistrates performing judicial functions.

The Writ was filed challenging the exercise of power by the President while promoting subordinate judges without consulting the Supreme Court and the 'impugne' action of the Law Ministry in allowing two of the sub-judges to be superseded.

The respondents in the petition included the Law Minister and Bangladesh through the Cabinet Secretary, the Secretary, Ministry of Law, and the Secretary, Ministry of Establishment.

The petitioners included Syed Mahbub Ali and Khandaker Abdul Mannan, President and General Secretary respectively of the Dhaka Ainjibi Samity.

Barrister Islam was assisted by, among others, Barrister Shafique Ahmed, Shirin Ahmed Choudhury and Delwar Hossain.

Radda Barnen Reception Postponed

We regret to inform our invitees that due to unavoidable circumstances the reception organised by Radda Barnen (Swedish save the children) on December 10, 1992 from 6:30 P.M. to 8:00 P.M. at Hotel Purbani International has been postponed. We are sorry for any inconvenience this may cause.

Resident Representative
Radda Barnen
House 55, Road 5, Dhanmondi R.A
Dhaka

D-679

Editor : S. M. Ali

Executive Editor : Mahfuz Anam

Published by the Editor on behalf of Mediaworld Ltd., 52, Motijheel C/A, Dhaka-1000 and printed by him at The Sangbad Ltd., 86, Purana Paltan, Dhaka. Editorial, News & Commercial Offices: House No 11, Road No 8, Dhanmondi R/A, Dhaka-1205, PABX: 500091-4. Advertisement: 500091. Fax No 88-02-863035. GPO Box No 3257, GRAM: DAILY STAR DHAKA.

Several hurt in AJM clash

By DMCH Correspondent

Two groups of workers of Adamjee Jute Mills clashed at Sonamia Market in the mills area leaving several people wounded, one of them seriously, Wednesday evening.

A 18-year-old boy Akhter Hossain was admitted to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) with bullet injuries last night.