

France orders warship to Adriatic

PARIS, Jan 26: France ordered its aircraft carrier Clemenceau to head for the Adriatic today after two French peacekeepers were killed in fighting between Serbs and Croats.

He said the carrier would arrive off former Yugoslavia in a few days to protect the nearly 5,000 French soldiers serving with the United Nations peacekeeping forces.

The idea is essentially to ensure the security of the French forces," Joxe told Radio Luxembourg.

Joxe said President Francois Mitterrand had ordered the 27,000-tonne carrier to cut short manoeuvres in the Atlantic and head for the Adriatic.

Navy officials said the eight-ship task force was likely to set sail Thursday from the base in Toulon, on the Mediterranean and could be off the Adriatic coast by the weekend.

The task force will include two frigates with special anti-aircraft capabilities and two designed for anti-submarine warfare, two supply ships and a transport ship.

Officials said the Clemenceau and the transport ship, the Foudre, would carry a total of 30 warplanes and about 15 helicopters.

Meanwhile, Britain rejected suggestions Tuesday by the Clinton administration that Muslims be allowed arms to help them fight Serbs in Bosnia, and that the United Nations enforce a no fly zone.

Overseas Development Minister Lynda Chalker also hinted that the 2,500 British troops guarding humanitarian convoys in Bosnia may be pulled out if the situation worsens.

British troops form the largest single contingent in the UN force in Bosnia.

It is not a simple clear-cut

7 more die of diarrhoea in coastal dists

From Staff Correspondent BARISAL, Jan 26: Seven more people died of diarrhoea and another 668 were attacked in four coastal districts during the last 24 hours, officials said.

They said that five people died and 70 others were affected in Patuakhali district.

One each died in Jhalakathi and Barguna districts.

A total of 454 people were affected in Barguna and 61 in Pirojpur during the last 24 hours.

At least 574 people lost their lives in the four districts and 18,795 were attacked during the last 25 days, officials said.

A total of 237 medical teams, including 20 special teams composed of doctors from the Army Medical Corp, have been working at the epidemic areas.

Comilla-Ashuganj

From Page 12 Col 8 ingful," the Prime Minister said, assuring that the government has given importance to overall development of the energy sector, including power.

The Prime Minister informed the gathering that the government intended to increase power supply by one and a half folds by the year 1995 and mentioned that a 210-megawatt power station in Raouzan thana in Chittagong which would start functioning from April, meeting the demand of greater Chittagong.

Work on the 5th unit of Ghorasal Power Station will begin by the end of this year, which will help improve country's overall power situation.

Referring to the power crisis in southeastern districts due to fall in the generation at Kapati Power Station, Begum Zia said it had been caused by decrease of water level in the lake.

She said the second phase of expansion of grid line from Comilla to Chittagong would be taken up soon to ensure and stabilise power supply to greater Chittagong.

Flying Club's flight to Calcutta today

Bangladesh Flying Club will operate its maiden international charter flight to Calcutta today, reports BSS.

The flight will carry the passengers of Bangladesh Oxygen Limited who have chartered the flight, president of the club Group Captain (Retd) Saiful Azam, MP will see off the passengers.

The club was founded in 1948 for the purpose of providing flying training to Bangladeshi citizens and charter flight to Bangladeshi and foreign nationals.

issue as some seemed to think it was at one stage in Washington," Baroness Chalker said of the policy signals from President Clinton's new administration.

"I believe they understand that (now). They understand we have 2,500 troops on the ground," she added.

She said the US threats to arm Muslims and enforce the no fly zone might be a spur to getting a peace plan by UN and European Community negotiators implemented — but should remain just threats.

Another round of Dhaka-Yangon talks today

From Our Correspondent

COX'S BAZAR, Jan 26: The 13th round of talks between the officials of Bangladesh and Myanmar on the Rohingya refugees will be held at the local Circuit House today (Wednesday).

Officials said at the talks, scheduled to start at 11 am both the countries would discuss fresh plans to resume the repatriation, suspended since January 15.

Bangladesh is likely to hand over a fresh list of more Rohingya refugees for repatriation, they said.

Three cases over Laldighi incident

From Our Correspondent

CHITTAGONG, Jan 26: Three cases have been lodged with the Kotwali Police Station today in connection with the Sunday's violence at Sheikh Hasina's public meeting held at Laldighi Maidan.

One case was filed by the police and another by one Sufian Siddiqui, a Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) leader and yet another one by Golam Mustafa, father of a wounded BCL supporter.

Sufian in his case accused 19 persons of the violence and Mustafa accused 20 persons, the police said but refused to give the names.

10 injured as BCL groups clash in Sylhet

From Our Correspondent

SYLHET, Jan 26: At least 10 persons were injured in clashes between the rival groups of Bangladesh Chhatra League (M-I) in Sylhet town today during the hartal hours.

Of the injured, Pankaj, 22, was admitted to the M A G Osmany Medical College Hospital.

The clashes broke out at about 11 am when a meeting of the Chhatra League began at the Court-Point. The rival groups chased each other and traded stones plunging the area into panic.

The district unit of Awami League in a statement issued to the press said, a number of BCL workers were injured in an attack on a gathering of BCL today at the Court-Point. It blamed "some government-backed hoodlums" for the violence.

Cancer vaccine

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In Europe and North America, the main effect of EBV is to cause glandular fever but recent evidence suggests that it is also associated with Hodgkin's disease, a cancer of the lymph nodes which affects 1,200 people a year in Britain.

Dr. John Arrand, heading the vaccine programme at the CRC's Paterson Institute in Manchester, central England, indicated safety test were due to start within the year on about 20 volunteers.

EBV, a member of the herpes family of viruses, is spread by kissing, the newspaper said. Apart from EBV, three other cancer-causing viruses have been identified.

"It may be 10 years before we can show clearly that the vaccine prevents cancer," Arrand added.

Mayors

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elected by the mayor and commissioners, has been proposed.

Every city corporation would be split into several zones with a commissioner administering a zone.

In the suggested changes, the government would be empowered to dissolve the elected body of a city corporation if it failed to realise 75 per cent of the targeted revenue.



Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia addressing a public meeting at Ranir Bunglow, Mainamati in Comilla yesterday. — PID photo

5 Mongla Port employees dismissed

From Staff Correspondent

KHULNA, Jan 26: Mongla Port Authority has dismissed five of its employees today in connection with the case of defalcation of oil worth Taka three crore 36 lakh.

According to sources, Port authority earlier constituted a four-member committee to probe into the alleged defalcation of oil from 1987 to 1991. The committee submitted its report in June 1992 against 27 employees including 15 high officials. Accordingly some of them were put under immediate suspension.

The officers and employees who were dismissed are Arifur Rahman, Senior Accounts Officer, Abdul Matin, Executive Engineer, Maniruzzaman Khan, Store Officer, Manir Hussain, Store Keeper and Helal Uddin, LD Clerk.

The Port Authority also took punitive action against four other employees on the same day. Recommendation for action against a few high officials is also lying with the ministry.

Number of guest birds dwindling

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In recent years Jahangirnagar University has proved itself warm to these guest birds and so this year also hundreds of them have flocked to the campus.

According to a recent survey by ornithologist Bill Harvey, a total of 199 species of birds migrate into the country during the winter season. Of them 12 species have come to the university this year. A report of the Centre for Nature Studies (CNS) of the University shows that at least 10,000 migratory birds came to the campus in 1990.

But in the last two years the figure has declined. According to the same report the number of birds was 8000 in 1991 and 5000 this season. "Habitat destruction has resulted in the decline in their numbers," says a CNS member.

"Lakes of the campus have been cleaned and weeded... birds cannot camouflage themselves like they used to," he added.

These birds pick weed lice for food. They also have a nocturnal food habit. At night they fly to the adjoining paddy fields to eat grain, clams, shells, snails and other insects.

PM: Hartals

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from local sources without depending on imports. She also stressed the need for bringing the derelict ponds under co-operatives for fish cultivation.

Begum Zia said if we can reduce our dependence on others, we can successfully fight against poverty. She further said we have to blame ourselves for the present state of poverty as we have so long been depending on others.

She said the present government has brought 9000 primary schools under development programme as it attaches top priority to education. She said female education upto class VIII has been made free in schools outside municipal areas.

Responding to some of the local demands the Prime Minister said the government will look into nationalisation of some educational institutions including Janabali College in the light of its policy.

Zillur thanks people

Awami League General Secretary Zillur Rahman (yesterday) thanked the people for observing Tuesday's country-wide hartal in protest against Sunday's firing aimed at party chief Sheikh Hasina at Laldighi Maidan in Chittagong, reports UNB.

By making the half-day hartal a success, the people pressed their demand for arresting those involved in the "conspiracy to kill" the opposition leader, he said.

In a statement, Rahman said the government would have to bear all responsibilities if it failed to arrest the culprits immediately and give them exemplary punishment.

The AL leader recalled that the Ershad regime had also hatched a similar plot to kill Hasina in Chittagong the same day, January 24, in 1988 to silence the anti-government movement. But Ershad could not save himself from the public wrath.

He accused the BNP government of elevating Mirza Raquib Huda who, he said, was masterminded behind the 1988 plot in Chittagong to the post of DMP Commissioner.

Four killed in accident on Dhaka-Mawa road

By SSMCH Correspondent

Four persons were killed and three others injured when a speeding truck hit an auto-tempo on the Dhaka-Mawa Highway Tuesday morning.

Of the tempo passengers, three died on the spot while another succumbed to his injuries on way to the Mitford Hospital. The dead were identified as Mohammad Jabbar, 28, Ali Ahmed, 18, Rawshanara, 36, and Abu Taher, 48.

Two injured sisters, Shaheeda and Salma, were admitted to the Mitford Hospital.

Witnesses said the accident took place near the Rajshahi bridge on the highway at around 7 am. The truck, which was coming from Dhaka, hit the auto-tempo head-on.

Obituary

Shafiqunnesa Chowdhury, the mother of Hasan Shahriar, President of Jatiya Press Club and Special Correspondent of the Ittefaq, died in a city clinic last night. She was 77, reports UNB.

Shafiqunnesa was the wife of Maqbul Hossain Chowdhury, the first Muslim journalist in greater Sylhet.

Her body will be taken to Sylhet today (Wednesday). She will be buried at the graveyard adjacent to the mazar of Hazrat Shahjalal (RA).

She left behind three sons, two daughters and a host of relatives to mourn her death.



Food godown workers staging token hunger strike in front of Jatiya Press Club yesterday. — Star photo

Police remand

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caught the three persons including the Russian who went to release the consignments.

Customs officials handed over the arrested persons to Dhaka Cantonment police Monday night and they were taken to the Minto Road office of Detective Branch Tuesday afternoon.

An assistant Commissioner of DB police has been entrusted with the responsibility of investigation into the gold-case.

A senior DB official last night said that all the three persons were being interrogated.

Lankin, a former Information Officer at the Russian Mission in Dhaka is now a South and Southeast Asian representative of an export-import firm, Poliservice-Orient Limited. He is also running a business consultancy firm, Expatech, at west Malibagh in Dhaka.

Two other arrested persons, Ambrose and Ratan were employees of clearing and forwarding agents of respectively Nasir Alam and Co. and Ms Shajahan and Co.

Meanwhile, a source connected in the primary investigation said that all the arrested persons claimed themselves not guilty.

Lankin said that he came to the airfreight house at the ZIA on request of the staff of the clearing and forwarding agents while two others arrested in connection with the gold incident said that Lankin recruited them to get the consignments released, the source said.

Low quality grain stock : Corrupt officials blamed

By Inam Ahmed

Corrupt practices by a section of Food Department officials have led to the huge stockpile of low quality food-grain in the government silos and godowns, according to Food Ministry sources.

The government had recently taken a new policy to clear its stocks by selling the grain through private traders. However, the response from the traders was poor due to the inferior quality, they added.

According to the sources there has been a stock of about 10 lakh metric tons of grains in the godowns lying for about over a year.

They said that at the present rate of selling, much of this stock would remain unsold by the next procurement season. This delay would make the low quality stock unfit for consumption.

Meanwhile, the government has begun a special drive to stop the malpractices of the unscrupulous food officials. The government already sacked six officials in the last three months and has also filed cases against 30 more officials for their involvement in procuring low quality grains.

Officials of the Food Ministry also visited the procurement camps in the northern districts during the peak procurement period earlier this month to ensure that the right quality of grain was being bought through these camps.

Sources said that this special drive for quality grain was taken so that these could be stored healthily for at least one year.

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The Midnight File

Clinton delivers State of Union message Feb 17

WASHINGTON, Jan 26: President Bill Clinton will deliver his first annual State of the Union message to Congress on February 17, congressional leaders disclosed today. He indicated he wishes to come to the capital on the 17th of February to deliver his State of the Union message, house speaker Tom Foley told reporters after meeting Clinton, reports Reuter.

UN decision a 'double-standard' against Israel: Rabin

JERUSALEM, Jan 26: Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin accused the United Nations Tuesday of exercising a "double standard" against Israel, which the world body is pressuring for the return of some 400 deported Palestinians. The Foreign Ministry rejected recommendations by UN Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali for tighter UN supervision of the Israeli occupied territories. Palestinians applauded the idea, reports AP.

German to die in Iran for 'spying for Iraq'

TEHRAN, Jan 26: Iran has sentenced a German man to death for spying for Iraq. Prosecutor General Abolfazl Mousavi Tabrizi was quoted as saying today. This person, who was arrested in 1991, has been tried and sentenced to death, Kayhan newspaper quoted Mousavi Tabrizi as saying. He said the man was named Helmut but gave no other details, reports Reuter.

Violence-free hartal

From Page 1 Col 7 and Gabtoli terminals resumed after the end of the hartal.

However, motor launches from Sadarghat terminal and train services from Kamalapur were almost normal.

All the marketplaces and roadside shops were closed during hartal. Government and semi-government offices remained open but attendance was thin.

Transactions in the city's commercial banks stayed almost suspended during the hartal hours.

Classes at the educational institutions including the Dhaka University remained suspended yesterday.

A concerned senior officer of the Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP) said that police did not have to face any violent action by the picketers anywhere in the city and no arrest was made in connection with hartal-related incidents.

During the hartal, Awami League city unit and the party's student wing Bangladesh Chhatra League held separate rallies in front of the Jatiya Press Club supporting the programme.

Later, at a brief meeting in front of the party office, AL leaders thanked the people for making the hartal a success and said that the complete hartal once again proved the people's "no-confidence" in the government.

Presidium member Amir Hossain Anu said that the BNP government had adopted a heinous method attacking the opposition leaders and activists.

He said that this method would not help the government run the country and cautioned it to shun the path.

He urged people to vote for the AL candidate in the Mirpur by-election.

Chaired by Mofazzal Hossain Chowdhury Maya, BB, the post-hartal rally was also addressed by Mofazzal Hossain Paltu.

Our Staff Correspondent from Khulna reports: A half-day hartal was observed peacefully here. All roadside shops, private offices, autonomous bodies

remained closed and all types of vehicles also remained off the roads during the hartal period.

However, banks functioned behind closed door with thin attendance.

All mills and factories in Khalishpur, Daulatpur, Atra and Rupsha industrial belts operated normally. Train and launch services remained unhampered. Mongla Port carried with its normal operation during the hartal hours.

No untoward incident was reported.

Our Rajbari Correspondent adds: A complete hartal was observed in the town amid tension over the overnight clashes between AL and Jamaat supporters.

Seven people were injured in clashes on Sunday evening which started when an AL procession came under attack from some Shibir activists.

Two of the injured were sent to Dhaka with severe head injuries.

During hartal hours a bus was set ablaze in front of the Pangsha Thana College.

Our Jessore and Barisal Correspondents said a peaceful hartal was observed in both the districts.

Our Mymensingh Correspondent said: Normal life was paralysed here yesterday during the half-day hartal.

Shops, markets and educational institutions remained closed and rickshaw and other vehicles stayed off the roads.

No untoward incident was reported during the hartal.

Our Correspondent from Natore adds: The six-hour hartal called by Awami League was peacefully observed here as part of its country-wide programme yesterday.

All vehicles except rickshaw and bicycle were off the roads and all shops except drug-stores remained closed during hartal period.

No untoward incidents took place in the town.

Advertisement for Bangladesh Shipping Corporation. Includes text: 'BANGLADESH SHIPPING CORPORATION', 'INAUGURAL CEREMONY OF FEEDER SERVICE BETWEEN CHITTAGONG/SINGAPORE/CHITTAGONG', and a table with sailing schedules for Chittagong, Singapore, and Chittagong. Also mentions 'VALUED IMPORTERS, EXPORTERS & PATRONS ARE REQUESTED TO EXTEND FULL SUPPORT TO BANGLADESH SHIPPING CORPORATION.' and 'Editor: S. M. Ali, Executive Editor: Mahfuz Anam'.