

Bhutanese repatriation Koirala-Wangchuk talks in Dhaka fail

KATHMANDU, Apr 12: Talks between Nepal and Bhutan on the repatriation of over 100,000 Bhutanese refugees in Nepal have failed, Nepalese Prime Minister Girija Prasad Koirala said today, reports AFP.

Speaking to the press at Tribhuvan International Airport in Kathmandu on his return from the two-day summit of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) in Dhaka, Koirala said he had discussed with Bhutan's King Jigme Singye Wangchuk the repatriation of Bhutanese sheltered in southeastern Nepal.

Koirala said adding, "so the Nepalese side also presented a draft describing the destitute Bhutanese as refugees but the Bhutanese side refused to accept it and the talks ended without any results."

Asked whether he was considering a second round of talks with Wangchuk, Koirala said, "to hold further talks with Wangchuk will be futile. We would rather hold talks with different UN bodies for economic assistance for the Bhutanese refugees on humanitarian grounds."

Meanwhile, a Nepalese Home Ministry source said that up to the end of March 102,600 Bhutanese refugees had entered Nepal and over 80 per cent were sheltered in camps run by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees in Southeastern district of Nepal.

The exodus of refugees was continuing at the rate of 150 to 200 daily, the source said. Koirala also told newsmen that he informally informed Indian Prime Minister PV Narasimha Rao of his talks with the Bhutanese King.

Asked if he would invite Rao or other Indian ministers to Nepal to discuss the Bhutanese problem, Koirala said, "That will be my second move. We want to move step by step to solve this problem."

"The Bhutanese refugees are creating social, economic and environmental problems for Nepal," he said.



Firemen extinguish a blaze which tore through some 150 houses, small shops and hotels in Srinagar, Kashmir yesterday following clashes between pro-independence demonstrators and security forces. —AFP photo

8 militants killed in clash with Indian troops in Kashmir

SRINAGAR, Apr 12: Indian troops shot and killed eight suspected Muslim militants on the frontier with Pakistan after they tried to infiltrate into Kashmir to aid the separatist campaign there, a government spokesman said Monday, reports AP.

The spokesman said one soldier was killed in the 30-minute gun battle with the guerrillas in the Kupwara sector of India-Pakistan border on Sunday.

He said this was the first known attempt by militants to enter India this spring after the snows had started melting on the mountainous border.

India routinely accuses Pakistan of training and arming the rebels. Islamabad denies the charge.

In another shoot-out between security forces and separatist militants in Srinagar city, two guerrillas and one soldier were killed.

The spokesman, briefing under the customary rules of anonymity, said there had been half a dozen attacks on security forces in Srinagar during the last 24 hours.

Most parts of the Muslim-dominated state remained paralyzed for the third day in response to a strike call by the pro-Pakistan Hizbul Mujahideen to protest the killing of its leader Mohammed Moqbool Ilaqi Friday.

Seven Sikhs get life-term for hijacking plane

NEW DELHI, Apr 12: A court on Monday sentenced to life imprisonment seven Sikhs in a 1984 hijacking of an Indian Airlines jetliner, reports AP.

The Boeing 737, carrying 87 passengers and 10 crew members, was on a domestic flight from New Delhi to the northern city of Srinagar on Aug 24, 1984 when it was hijacked.

The Sikhs, armed with fake bombs, forced the plane to fly to Pakistan and then to the Middle Eastern Emirate of Dubai, where the hijackers surrendered the next day.

Tonmoy

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the murder of Zahir, no other arrest was made until yesterday.

Meanwhile, a top level police source yesterday said that they had received some clues of Akhtaruzzaman Babu's involvement in the murder. "Investigation is going on, we are looking into all possible sides, we cannot settle down the case in this immature stage," said the source preferring anonymity.

About Tonmoy, the source said, he was a paid agent of a master-mind. One of the police investigators said that they received no new information from him.

So they did not feel the necessity for keeping him in custody, he added. But the source denied to disclose what information they received from Tonmoy.

A top businessman, Humayun Zahir, was shot dead in the premises of his Dhanmondi residence by two gunmen on Thursday. Tonmoy was arrested with a revolver loaded with three rounds of bullets within a radius of one hundred yards of the house immediately after the murder.

Earlier, family members of Zahir said that the murder was a consequence of a feud among the directors of United Commercial Bank Limited and Janata Insurance Company Limited. They accused Akhtaruzzaman Babu MP of the murder in the First Information Report (FIR) lodged with Dhanmondi Police Station.

So far, three formal talks

Five killed in road accidents

By DMCH Correspondent

At least five people were killed in separate road accidents in Dhaka and Narayanganj yesterday.

Fariduddin, 48, an employee of a shipping company in Chittagong died on the spot when a microbus and an autorickshaw collided near the Registrar's Building of Dhaka University in the morning.

Fariduddin, an injured passenger of the autorickshaw was rushed to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) where attending doctors declared him dead.

Abdul Halim, 16, a student of Class X of Shahjahanpur

Railway Colony High School died on the spot when a private car ran over him at Shahjahanpur in the morning.

In another incident Cantonment police yesterday recovered the body of one Abul 45, from the area. Police said that he was killed in a road accident.

In Narayanganj, one Arif Hossain, 13, and a 30-year-old unidentified man were killed in two separate road accidents at Kewdala and in Narayanganj town yesterday.

All the five bodies were sent to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) for autopsy.

Nirmul Samannaya body sit-in programme now Apr 25

By Staff Correspondent

The Ghatk Dal Nirmul Samannaya Committee has shifted its planned sit-in demonstration in front of the Secretariat from April 20 to April 25 as holding of the SSC examinations coincide with the programme, committee sources said.

The shifting of the date was decided at a meeting of the organisation's central body with its chief Jahanara Imam in the chair.

Held at the Col. Taher Auditorium in the JSD (Inu) office, the meeting also discussed preparations for the three-and-half-hour sit-in scheduled to begin at 11 am on the day.

It also decided to organise public rallies and bring out processions all over the country to drum up support for the programme. Jahanara Imam and other central leaders of the committee will address the rallies.

Meanwhile, the Samannaya body will start sending letters urging all its units across the country to participate in the sit-in programme.

Govt-professionals talks

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a reform in the existing administrative structure. But it is humanly impossible to do it overnight," State Minister for Establishment Nurul Huda said.

Talking to The Daily Star over telephone Monday evening, Huda said that the government was keen on resolving the administrative problems, "and this can only be achieved through concerted efforts."

"We have accepted some of their demands in principle and have humbly requested them to postpone their programme," he said, "I am sure that they will respond to our call."

The work-abstention beginning at 10 am everyday follows a week-long campaign by the professionals to wear black badges.

The State Minister for Establishment said that the government had accepted the demands like re-organising the "rules of business" by announcing the ministers as chief executives, re-arranging the present "warrant of precedence", withdrawing the Deputy Commissioners from the development coordination in the districts and amending the service anomalies by cancelling the Matin Committee Report.

He, however, pointed out that the government could not take any step on the demand which pressed for freeing the judiciary from the control of executive power since "only the parliament could decide on such matter".

Ghali to oppose Khmer Rouge ethnic cleansing campaign

HANOI, Apr 12: UN Secretary General Boutros Boutros-Ghali vowed here today to oppose the Khmer Rouge ethnic cleansing campaign in Cambodia and praised Vietnam's support for UN peace efforts in the neighbouring country, reports AFP.

Boutros-Ghali also pledged the United Nations full support for communist-ruled Vietnam's transition to a market economy, but warned that economic development could not be sustained without respect for human rights.

The embattled UN-sponsored peace plan in Cambodia has topped the agenda during Boutros-Ghali's two-day visit to Vietnam the first by a UN chief in 14 years.

In a luncheon toast, he told Vietnamese Prime Minister Vo Van Kiet that the elections scheduled for May 23-27 remained central to the peace effort, and that all those involved must work to make the campaign and vote free and fair.

"All acts of intimidation, whether militarily, ethnically or politically motivated, must be opposed," he said.

SAARC summit: PM thanks city dwellers

Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia yesterday expressed her gratitude to the residents of the capital for their all-out support in holding the Seventh SAARC Summit smoothly and successfully, reports BSS.

In a statement the SAARC Chairperson said she was moved that the city dwellers had taken the troubles in the last few days for the smooth continuation of the programmes of the heads of the state or government of the SAARC leaders.

The Prime Minister said the city dwellers had to face difficulty in their movements as the movement of the vehicular traffic was restricted for a longer time in the city's main thoroughfares.

The SAARC Chairperson also expressed her gratitude to the villagers who had greeted the SAARC leaders from both sides of the river Meghna during their river cruise.

She thanked the officials and employees of the government and non-government organisations and the individuals who contributed to the successful holding of the Seventh SAARC Summit.

Aid Club meet

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random says, adding that there will be a net outflow of 50 million US dollar on account of services.

The 950 million US dollar projected level remittances from the expatriate Bangladeshis, against the estimated level of 900 million of the current fiscal year, will help to hold current account balance at (-) 850 million US dollar in 93-94, the memorandum shows.

According to the same document, there will be a net outflow of 54 million US dollar in the IMF account against the net inflow of 2 million US dollar in '93-94 fiscal year. Outflow on account of short term loans and other capital will, however, stand at 265 million US dollar during the time.

Total import bill is estimated to increase by 11.3 per cent from 4000 million US dollar in '92-93 to 4450 million in 1993-94, the memorandum says.

Import of textiles, capital goods, crude oil, chemicals, dairy products, iron and steel and fertilizer will continue to increase during the next fiscal year while the import of food-grain is estimated to fall to 0.98 million tons during the period.

Premadasa

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taken to evolve trade preferences among the member countries.

The Dhaka Declaration, he said, "not only expresses policies but also indicates the necessary follow-up action."

Endeavours of the Colombo Summit President Premadasa said, has culminated in Dhaka.

He stressed the need to strengthen democracy and said "the people form the foundation of democracy."

"Unless the foundation is strengthened, the structure will not be stable," he said. Praising the role of the new SAARC Chairperson, Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia, the Sri Lanka leader expressed the hope that she would rise fully to the occasion.

UNB adds: President Premadasa said his government was seeking a political solution of the ethnic issues with Tamil rebels and hoped a move now underway to that end would succeed.

He also told a questioner "in Sri Lanka, we had a very dreadful situation in the past... that situation is no more now."

"We have liberated many parts in the northern end, and only in a small area, the incident is taking place," Premadasa said.

Foreign Minister Mostafizur Rahman bade him farewell at the VVIP lounge of the airport.

Shri Lankan High Commissioner to Bangladesh, Dr A N Haniffa, and senior officials of the Foreign Ministry were present.

Earlier, Begum Zia yesterday made a courtesy call on Premadasa at his suit at Sheraton Hotel.

During the call on the Sri Lankan President highly praised Bangladesh for successfully holding the Seventh SAARC Summit. He particularly appreciated the statesmanship of Begum Zia for making the SAARC Summit effective and termed the Seventh Summit most successful one.

The Prime Minister recalled the significant contribution of President Premadasa as the SAARC chairperson of the Sixth Summit in which he had played the pivotal role in identifying poverty alleviation, one of the major problems of the region.

The Midnight File

Gore visits Poland Sunday

WASHINGTON, Apr 12: Vice President Al Gore will visit Poland next week for ceremonies marking the 50th anniversary of the Warsaw ghetto uprising during the Nazi occupation of World War II. It will be Gore's first trip abroad as vice president. Gore is scheduled to fly to Poland on Sunday and return Tuesday. While there, he will meet President Lech Walesa and other government officials, attend ceremonies at a memorial to participants in the uprising and deliver a speech in Poland's Parliament building, reports AP.

Artillery attack on Srebrenica: 20 killed

SARAJEVO, Apr 12: A heavy artillery attack on the Serb-besieged Muslim town of Srebrenica in Bosnia killed 20 people and injured about 45 today, a UN military spokesman said. Commander Barry Frewer told reporters that he had been told of the attack by a representative of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in Srebrenica, reports Reuter.

Seventh minister quits Sharif's cabinet

KARACHI, Apr 12: Pakistani Minister of State for Production Jam Mashooq Ali resigned from the cabinet of Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif today, the seventh minister to quit during the current political crisis, reports AFP.

All told a news conference that despite repeated complaints from him to the Prime Minister, Sharif had left him idle and not a single file had been given him in 15 months.

He said he had already sent his resignation to President Ghulam Ishaq Khan.

Ukraine ship

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patrol team comprising Customs, Navy and BDR personnel Sunday as it arrived at the outer anchorage of the port for unloading the contraband goods.

According to official sources, the seized goods, with an estimated value of over Taka one crore, includes 148 television sets, 61 VCR and VCPs, 56 master carton of cigarettes, 25 cartons of whisky, 720 cartons of beer and another 100 cartons of soaps.

Wangchuk

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He particularly mentioned the endorsement of the SAPTA which he said "opens a new vista of economic cooperation among the South Asian countries."

The Bhutanese King termed the relation between Thimpu and Dhaka as excellent.

He also expressed gratitude to the government of Bangladesh for extending warm hospitality for himself and members of his delegation.

Earlier, Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia made a courtesy call on Bhutanese King Jigme Singye Wangchuck at his hotel Sheraton suit.

Begum Zia thanked the Bhutanese King for his support which made the summit a success. She sought cooperation for the implementation of poverty alleviation and economic programmes taken by the 7-nation forum in the region.

Wangchuck said that the credit for the success of the summit goes to Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia for her relentless endeavours for holding the summit after being postponed twice.

He assured his all out support to new SAARC Chairperson in making the forum more stronger and dynamic.

Diarrhoea takes 7 more lives

Diarrhoea claimed seven more lives and attacked some 1,322 people in 24 hours till 9 am yesterday (Monday), reports UNB.

Control room sources in Dhaka said that with the latest deaths, the toll rose to 1,634 since the outbreak of the disease in early January.

So far, some 1,25,073 people in 16 districts were attacked by the water borne bacteria. The disease first broke out in eight southern districts.

Of the fresh deaths, three were in Noakhali, two in Laxmipur and one each in Jessore and Gopalganj districts.

Nor'wester

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destroyed. Another nor'wester lashed two unions in Kazipur thana of Sirajganj district injuring at least 13 people, two of them seriously yesterday morning, official sources said.

The injured Altaf (38) and Baten (21), were admitted into a local clinic.

The storm, which lasted nearly half an hour damaged at least 150 katcha houses in Nischintapur and Tekanti unions of the thana.

Koirala

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Koirala left for home after attending the two-day (April 10-11) annual conference of the seven-member association. He drove straight in a ceremonial motorcade to the airport from the hotel.

Talking to newsmen at the Zia International Airport, he greeted Begum Zia on her election as Chairperson of SAARC and expressed his conviction that during her tenure, the forum would further strengthen and develop into "a unifying economic force".

Koirala described the SAARC summit as a grand success. "Holding of a summit in Dhaka is an achievement."

The Nepalese leader expressed satisfaction over the measures embodied in the Dhaka Declaration for economic development to eradicate poverty from the region. He also said SAPTA would open a new horizon in economic cooperation among the South Asian nations.

Koirala was seen off at the airport by Foreign Minister ASM Mostafizur Rahman.

Special Drive for Gas Line Disconnection

In view of realising the arrear, special drive for gas line disconnection begins from 17th April, 1993 in all areas including Dhaka Metropolitan area. Hence all classes of respectable consumers are requested to pay their arrear immediately and show the paid bill copy on demand to the disconnection squad on the spot of gas use.



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