



Inside Today

Article

The Tokyo Economic Summit: Was There Anything for the Third World on its Agenda?

Column: On The Record by Shah A M S Kibria Page 4

International

Ghali asks NATO to delay new aerial operation over Bosnia

ASEAN rejects linking aid to human rights again Page 5

Business

China weighing steps to help develop real estate business

Russia to withdraw old roubles from circulation Pages 6,7

Feature

Living

The Loving Couple; Dress and the Dress Code; Beauty Tips; From Sylhet to Downing Street Page 8

Metropolitan

Dhaka Day by Day



Spoiled Holiday Page 3

NEWS BRIEFS

PM donates Tk 20 lakh for hostel

Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia yesterday donated Tk 20 lakh from her Relief and Welfare Fund for construction of the hostel of country's first Women's Medical College at Uttara, in the city. Principal of the private college Prof A Mujibul Haque received a cheque for the amount from Begum Zia at a simple ceremony at the Prime Minister's office in the afternoon, reports UNB.

Lankan minister due today

Shri Lankan Minister for Food, Cooperatives and Janasaviya Weerasinghe Mallimarachi arrives here today on a five-day official visit to Bangladesh. He will be accompanied by Madam P Mallimarachi and Shri Lankan Food Commissioner N B Lyanarachchi, reports UNB.

259 more Rohingyas go home

COX'S BAZAR, July 24: Some two hundred fifty-nine Rohingya refugees comprising 69 families voluntarily returned to their homes in Myanmar through two transit camps at Teknaf here today. An official source told BSS here tonight that with this 68th batch of repatriation, the total number of repatriated persons now stood at 30,552. Local UNHCR along with some Bangladeshi officials save the refugees off at the Rongkhali and Noyapara-2 transit camps.

NCST meet postponed

The meeting of the National Council of Science and Technology (NCST), scheduled to be held today at 8.30 pm at the International Conference Centre (ICC) with Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia in the chair, has been postponed due to unavoidable circumstances. The next date of the meeting will be announced later on, said an official handout yesterday, reports UNB.

Situation in N-dists, CHT improves

Fresh flood likely to hit mid-region soon

By Staff Correspondent

Fresh flood may engulf country's mid-region soon with the onrush of flood waters towards the south from the northern areas, officials feared Saturday.

Meanwhile, the overall flood situation in the northern districts and in the Chittagong Hill Tracts improved Thursday while it remained static in the north eastern region, according to The Daily Star correspondents and district officials.

No fresh death was reported yesterday.

According to BSS, 48 people reportedly died by drowning, lightning and mudslide in six flood affected districts over the last five days. Of the total, 30

died in Rangamati, 9 in Khagrachhari, 5 in Netrakona, 3 in Habiganj and a ten-year old boy in Feni.

A bulletin of the Flood Forecasting Centre (FFC) Saturday said that the water level in the mighty Ganges might cross the danger level at Goalando and Bhagyakul today (Sunday) affecting areas extending from the Bahadurabad down to Serajganj.

The swelling of the Ganges might block the south-bound waters of the Brahmaputra spilling the water all over the districts along the river. Water Development Board (WDB) officials explained.

The mid-region rivers — the

old Brahmaputra, the Buriganga, the Lakhya and the Turag — have already begun to show signs of water rise, they pointed out.

The officials feared that with the water of the northern rivers receding and decrease in some of the eastern rivers including the Surma, Jamalpur, Gogra, Serajganj, Tangail, Mymensingh, Pabna, Manikganj, Dhaka, Gazipur, Narsingdi, Narayanganj and Munshiganj districts are likely to suffer fresh floodings.

Rainfall would only worsen the situation in these districts, they added.

The FFC bulletin forecast that the floods in Sylhet,

Sunamganj, Maulvi Bazar, Habiganj and Comilla districts would remain static during the next 24 hours.

The railway communication between Sylhet and the rest of the country remained snapped for the fourth day.

Water has receded from the Dhaka-Sylhet Highway, according to officials.

But the vehicular traffic movement was yet to start on the part of the highway which earlier went under flood water, they said.

Railway officials hoped that train link with Sylhet might be restored today.

According to reports received here — See Page 12 Col 3

JS probe body faces stalemate again

By Staff Correspondent

The parliamentary probe body faced a stalemate yesterday over the formulation of its terms of reference to investigate into the opposition allegations of corruption against the Ministry of Irrigation and Flood Control and the minister concerned.

In yesterday's meeting of the committee the Treasury Bench legislators were arguing for probe into the specific allegation of corruptions while the Opposition MPs insisting on widening the area of investigation.

The 15-member probe committee, headed by Speaker Shaikh Razzak Ali, was formed in Parliament on July 13.

The House while giving a guideline on the probe body's terms of reference on July 13, suggested that the committee would formulate it on the basis of allegations made in the House by Awami League MP on June 26, reply to the allegations by the Irrigation Minister the

same day and the Speakers' proposal on the issue the next day.

Meanwhile, the opposition members while interpreting the minister's June 26 speech, argued in the meeting yesterday that he had referred to Tofael's 'original allegations' made in the House on June 14. So, allegations pronounced by Tofael Ahmed on that day should also be included for investigations, the Opposition members insisted.

The Treasury Bench members interpreted the opposition idea as violative of the mandate given to the probe body by Parliament. The proposal unanimously adopted by the House did not say anything about June 14 speech of Tofael Ahmed, the Treasury Bench members argued.

According to the meeting records, yesterday's meeting expressed surprise over the press coverage of the proceed — See Page 12 Col 2

Flag meet with Yangon in Teknaf today

COX'S BAZAR, July 24: A flag meeting between Bangladesh Rifles and Nasaca, the border security force of Myanmar will be held tomorrow at Teknaf, reports UNB.

Commanding Officer of 39 battalion of BDR, Major A K M Nazimul Islam will lead the Bangladesh side while Deputy Director of Immigration Department of Myanmar Min Daway will lead the Myanmar side in the meeting.

The meeting is expected to discuss the situation arising out of the arrest of the Myanmar citizens by BDR personnel on charge of illegal entrance in — See Page 12 Col 1

Ogata may visit Myanmar by month-end

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees Dr Sadako Ogata will pay her long-awaited visit to Myanmar by the end of this month, diplomatic sources here said yesterday, reports UNB.

The visit of the UN relief official to Myanmar at the invitation from Yangon, is expected to pave the way for the UN presence there to oversee the on-going repatriation of Rohingya refugees from Bangladesh and their rehabilitation.

Opposition's Demand Day today

The coalition of 15 opposition parties will observe 'Demand Day' across the country today to press for the trial of Jamaat leader Gollam Azam as a 'war criminal' before a special tribunal, reports UNB.

As part of its programme, the coalition will hold a public rally at Bangabandhu Avenue at 4:00 pm today. Leaders of the 15 parties including Awami League, 5-party alliance, CPB, NAP, Ganatantri Party, Gana Azadi League and Janata Party will address the rally.

Meanwhile, the Awami League general secretary Zillur Rahman has urged the pro-liberation and democratic forces to face the 'fundamentalist Jamaat-Shibir axis' unflinchingly and with caution.

'We will have to move forward considering the fundamentalist forces as our arch political enemy,' he told a workers' meeting of the City Awami League at the party central office last evening. The meeting was organised to make the 'Demand Day' a success.

JP emissary meets Huda

By Staff Correspondent

The Jatiya Party high command sent an emissary to dissident leader Shamsul Huda Chowdhury yesterday in a bid to overcome the crisis generated after Huda had convened a meeting on August 1 at his residence.

Presidium member Tajul Islam Chowdhury, MP, held a two-hour meeting with Shamsul Huda on Friday and requested him to refrain from holding the meeting, party sources said.

Shamsul Huda Chowdhury told The Daily Star, he assured Tajul Islam that the move was not aimed at splitting the party. A group of party leaders and workers who feel the party leadership has deviated from the manifesto, will discuss the situation, Huda told Tajul.

Huda, also a presidium member of the JP, said that he would stick to the decision to hold the meeting on August 1 despite requests from the party high command.

Section 144 in Jhenidah

From Our Correspondent

JHENIDAH, July 24: The district administration of Jhenidah clamped Section 144 in the pourashava area from 3 pm to 8 pm today to ease tension prior to protest rallies called at the same venue and same time by two organisations. Bangladesh Chhatra Motritee called the protest rally at the Agrani square of the town demanding trial of the killers of its activist, Babul, today at 4 pm. Another rally was called at the same venue and same time by the Krishak Sangram Committee.



Slums in a low-lying area of the city yesterday went partially under water due to heavy rainfall over the last few days. — Star photo

EC may provide institutional support for SAARC

By Staff Correspondent

The Commission for European Community (EC) would consider a request from Bangladesh, as the current Chairman of SAARC, to provide institutional support for the 7-nation regional forum.

'I think EC can provide (institutional support) to SAARC without any problem and we can also provide enormous amount of experience,' said Manuel Marin, the visiting EC Vice-President while addressing a press conference at the state guest house Padma yesterday. Leading a 3-member delegation the EC Vice-President arrived in the capital on a 3-day official visit on Friday.

The Bangladesh request, seeking EC technical assistance for the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) Secretariat at Kathmandu, was

formally conveyed by Foreign Minister A S M Mostafizur Rahman during a meeting with the EC official. Marin, who has held the post of EC Vice-President since 1986, informed that the commission would also consider participating in the SAARC fund.

Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia asked for EC participation in the fund when he called on the Prime Minister at her secretariat, he said.

During the hour-long press conference, the EC Vice-President also talked about EC's financial participation in the Flood Action Plan (FAP), development assistance, changes in the global aid scenario and about his impressions on the recent changes in Bangladesh. He said he had discussed

the FAP issue during his meeting with the Minister for Agriculture, Irrigation and Flood Control M Majid-ul-Haq.

Saying that the EC now needs to consider how to go about funding the FAP programme, he added 'We have to see what to do in a more specific way.'

Referring to the environmental concerns about the FAP raised recently by the European Parliament, he said 'It is easy for people who are far away to become environmentalists.'

However, he added that a 'balance or an equilibrium' has to be found after taking all factors relating to the issue into consideration.

On EC development assistance to Bangladesh, the EC Vice-President, who is a — See Page 12 Col 7

Tk 144cr CEC grant for food assisted projects

Bangladesh will receive from the Commission of the European Communities (CEC) a grant assistance of ECU 30 million (equivalent to approximately Tk 144.00 crore) under a financing memorandum signed here yesterday between the government of Bangladesh and the CEC, reports BSS.

Finance Minister M Saifur Rahman and visiting EC Vice President Manuel Marin Gonzalez signed the memorandum. The grant will be utilized for implementing 'Integrated Food Assisted Development Projects (IFADEP).'

This grant will be used together with EC's food aid of 562,125 metric ton of food-grains for executing projects including Development of Assetless Women (VDG), development of small scale fisheries and development of growth centre connecting roads under the Annual Development Programme.

Govt to cut recruiting agencies for Malaysia

By Chapal Bashar

The number of registered agencies for sending manpower to Malaysia will be reduced for which government is reviewing their activities.

Labour and Manpower Minister Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan told this correspondent yesterday that the future enlistment of new agencies for recruiting workers for Malaysia will also be restricted.

Out of 300 manpower agencies in Bangladesh, 150 were registered to send workers to Malaysia. According to Labour and Manpower Ministry, over 80,000 Bangladeshis are now employed in Malaysia holding legal work permits. However, there were allegations that some agencies were involved in sending workers there illegally.

Meanwhile, the government has taken action against 31

manpower agencies for various irregularities in sending workers to Malaysia and other countries.

The Labour Minister said the government would take stern actions against unscrupulous recruiting agencies.

'We will spare none,' the Labour Minister said. The minister informed that the authorities have already taken action against those agencies. Licenses of five agents were cancelled while activities of six others suspended. Besides, show cause notices were served against another twenty for irregularities in sending workers to Malaysia, he said.

'The process of taking punitive measures against dishonest agents will continue to check malpractices in manpower recruitments,' said the minister. — See Page 12 Col 8

Ishaq Khan tells newsmen 'US disliked me for opposing compromise on N-plan'

ISLAMABAD, July 24: Former President Ghulam Ishaq Khan, in his first interview with local newspapers since being forced to resign earlier this week, claimed he saved Pakistan's nuclear programme despite threats against his life, reports AFP.

Ishaq Khan charged that Washington disliked him because he had repeatedly intervened to oppose any compromise on Pakistan's nuclear programme.

Ishaq Khan, who occupied the presidency for almost five years, stepped down along with rival Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif on Sunday under an army-brokered settlement that ended a power struggle between the two men. The tussle produced a crisis that threatened

to paralyze Pakistan. He said he was 'even threatened with physical elimination' because of his firm stand on the nuclear issue.

'I did not crumble under such threats even for a while because the nuclear programme is linked with the security and survival of Pakistan,' the English-language daily The Muslim quoted him as saying here Thursday.

The 78-year-old former bureaucrat, who held several senior positions in a 52-year political and administrative career, said that as long as issues separating India and Pakistan, such as the disputed region of Kashmir, remained unsettled, Pakistan had to maintain a very strong defence. Pakistan however could not

afford to compete with India in conventional armament, as India already had a navy seven times the size of Pakistan's, an airforce threefold as large, and an army double Islamabad's, Ishaq Khan told the daily.

'With a nuclear capability, you cannot conquer the other country's capital, but it is a deterrent against breaking out of war,' he said, stressing that this was the only option available to Pakistan while relations with India remained strained.

Ishaq Khan charged that India had planned to go to war with Pakistan at least three times in the last nine years. At one stage, India's late Prime Minister Indira Gandhi had even fixed a date to launch an attack, he said. — See Page 12 Col 8

BNP should tackle anti-liberation forces: JCD

Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) yesterday accused the Jamaat-Shibir of hatching a conspiracy to undo the hard earned democracy and urged the student community to resist the 'fascist force' politically, reports UNB.

At a meeting of the JCD's central committee here yesterday, its leaders also identified the Jamaat-Shibir as the main opponent and suggested that the BNP policy-makers should decide on effective measures to tackle the anti-liberation forces.

JCD president Fazlul Huq Milon presided over the day-long meeting at the National Museum auditorium, attended by presidents and general secretaries of district units.

Most district leaders alleged at the meeting that JCD was facing various problems due to non-cooperation of the central and district BNP leadership.

The meeting thanked the — See Page 12 Col 7

Japan's opposition to form own coalition govt

TOKYO, July 24: Opposition parties on Saturday moved a step closer to putting an end to the 38-year rule of the Liberal Democrats by agreeing in principle to form a coalition government of their own, reports AP.

In a meeting of five non-Communist opposition parties, delegates agreed to move toward a formal acceptance of coalition terms as proposed by two new conservative opposition groups — the Japan New Party and the Saitogake (Pioneer) New Party.

The five groups lining up behind the proposal included the major opposition Social Democratic Party and the Renewal Party, a breakaway group from the long-ruling, scandal-plagued Liberal Democratic Party.

Following what they called a working-level meeting at a hotel in downtown Tokyo, the parties

said negotiations would start as early as Tuesday on details of a coalition arrangement.

In all, the seven parties won a total of 244 seats in the powerful, 511-seat lower house in the general elections of July 18. The Liberal Democratic Party, by far the biggest single group in Parliament after winning 223 seats, lost its lower-house majority for the first time since its formation in 1955.

If the loose seven-party bloc can field a single candidate for premier, in the ballot in the lower house expected to be held in mid-August, they may be able to defeat an LDP candidate as the eighth opposition group, the Communists, would never join the Liberal Democrats as a coalition partner.

The Japan Communist Party won 15 seats in the election. — See Page 12 Col 7