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Inside Today

Article

Parliamentary committees should play a bigger role in the democratic system

Column: Behind The Headlines Page 4

International

Yeltsin firm to hold election in autumn

Heavy rainfall in Nepal

Page 5

Business

OPEC facing worst crisis

Standard of living on decline in S dists

Pages 6, 7

Weekend Magazine

Malacca: A melting pot of cultures; Of Janmashtami and Lord Krishna; Picasso loves things and eats them alive; My World and A commonsense approach to diagnose the diseases of children

Pages 9, 10 & 11

Metropolitan

Dhaka Day by Day

Good News for Pizza Lovers! Page 3

NEWS BRIEFS

City BNP joint meeting today

Wine recovered: 2 arrested

Ranariddh, Hun Sen in Bangkok

Peace mediators doubt pullout, summon Karadzic

Serbs threaten to hit back with N-arms against West

VIENNA, Aug 12: Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadzic today threatened Europe with nuclear strikes if the West decided on military intervention in Bosnia, the Austrian news agency APA reported.

"We are not prepared to give up our own self-defence. It is no problem to buy nuclear weapons on the world market. We will really carry it through. We have nothing to lose," APA quoted Karadzic as telling the Austrian daily Der Standard in an interview to be published tomorrow (Friday).

In Geneva, the international mediators summoned Karadzic for immediate talks today after concluding that his forces had failed to withdraw from Mount Igman as pledged, a UN spokesman said.

Spokesman John Mills said Lord Owen and Thorvald Stoltenberg were not convinced that the Serbs had left the strategic mountain overlooking the besieged Bosnian capital.

Karadzic had said several times today that his forces had in fact left Igman and another key mountain overlooking the city, Mount Bejlanska.

The deadlocked peace talks on Bosnia hovered on the brink of collapse today as Bosnian President Alija Izetbegovic said Serb forces had failed to withdraw from a strategic mountain near Sarajevo.

"They are still on the mountain," said Izetbegovic. He shrugged his shoulders when asked if he would continue negotiations. He has threatened to walk out of the talks if Serbs stay on Mount Igman.

However, Karadzic said his forces had pulled back as promised.

"Conditions now exist for re-summing negotiations," he said.

A spokesman for Karadzic said Serbs had completed the withdrawal by 10 am to "starting positions," that they occupied lower down Mount Igman before a cease-fire was signed July 30.

The spokesman, Jovan Zametica, said UN peacekeepers had replaced the Serb soldiers. He said the UN commander in Bosnia-Herzegovina, Gen. Francis Briquemont, was expected officially to confirm the withdrawal.

Bosnian government army commander Rasim Delic meanwhile denied reports today that Serb forces were withdrawing from the two key mountains.

"Serb forces are still confronting the Bosnian army on Igman and Bjelasnica mountains. Some Serb movements do not mean withdrawal but redeployment instead," he told a news conference in Sarajevo.

Delic also quoted Bosnian army sources as saying the Serbs were deploying "some sort of missile systems, most probably anti-aircraft artillery in case of NATO air-strikes."

See Page 12 Col 6



Supporters of Somali warlord Mohamed Farah Aided scatter Thursday as a US Humvee (machine-gun mounted jeep) drives through their demonstration on Lenin Avenue in Mogadishu. About 1,000 supporters had gathered when three Humvees appeared and forced their way through the crowd. — AFP photo

Planning Minister on public sector

Even throw-away prices better than losses

By Staff Correspondent

Planning Minister A M Zahiruddin Khan has said it would be wiser to divest the loss making public sector industries, even at throw-away prices rather than letting those continue to drain the public exchequer.

The minister also said that an annual loss of Tk 2000 crore in the public sector could not be tolerated any longer.

He was speaking as the guest of honour in the third business session on Industrial Advancement in Bangladesh of the National Convention of Businessmen, organised by the Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FBCCI), which was inaugurated by Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia Wednesday in the city.

Urging all political parties committed to development to act in much more responsible manner, Zahiruddin Khan said, "Before going for strikes, first consider whether the economy can advance by such actions?"

He said, "Please do not launch negative programmes just for the sake of politics. Point out our (BNP government's) mistakes, and we shall try to better our performance."

Regarding problems faced by the industrialists or business people, the Planning Minister said, "The civil servants or the ministers should not feel that they are doing the people any favours because it is their job to serve the people."

The function was presided over by the chairman of the Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FBCCI), which was inaugurated by Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia Wednesday in the city.

See Page 12 Col 1

FBUTA gives govt 10 days to arrest JU culprits

By Staff Correspondent

The Federation of Bangladesh University Teachers' Association (FBUTA) gave the government a ten-day ultimatum to arrest those involved in assaulting the teachers of the Jahangirnagar University last month.

A statement issued after a meeting of the FBUTA Thursday also expressed grave concern at the government's 'indifference' and regretted that the culprits were holding press conferences. Such acts of defiance were obstructing the restoration of congenial atmosphere on Jahangirnagar University campus, the statement said.

The meeting last night decided to strike work in the universities for an hour everyday starting August 21 until August 25.

See Page 12 Col 1

Shifting of Thana Magistrate Courts

Law Ministry against reversing decision

Star Report

The decision to shift the Thana Magistrate Courts to the district headquarters will not be reversed, said an authoritative source in the Ministry of Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs.

However, the existing courts in some areas under the 'Chowki' system — introduced in the British days — will continue to function, while setting up of more Chowki Courts for inaccessible areas will be considered, the source added.

The situation prevailing after the shifting of the Thana Magistrate Courts to the District Headquarters was reviewed and discussed in the cabinet meeting held on 18 July.

After the abolition of the Upazila system, the government last year ordered shifting of the Civil and Thana Magistrate Courts to the District Headquarters by 30 June last. Accordingly, all these courts have been shifted except four — at Paikgacha, Kotra, Taala and Govindaganj.

Meanwhile, the government was requested by some ministers, MPs and others to maintain the Magistrate's Courts in their respective thanas for the benefit of the people and the cabinet meeting advised the Law Ministry to look into the matter.

See Page 12 Col 6

Kamal's attendance at Tungipara yet undecided

By Staff Correspondent

Dr Kamal Hossain will decide today whether to attend a planned discussion organised at Tungipara, Gopalganj, in connection with the 18th death anniversary of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.

Talking to The Daily Star Thursday, Dr Kamal said his planned visit to Tungipara, the village home of slain leader Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, was yet to be finalised because of the on-going 'mini-convention' of the Democratic Forum.

Political sources, however, pointed out that Dr Kamal Hossain was unlikely to go to Tungipara to attend the discussion after some recent comments made by the Awami League General Secretary Zillur Rahman.

Dr Kamal, a foreign minister in the Awami League government, is scheduled to address the discussion meeting at Tungipara tomorrow.

Speaking at a condolence meeting at Tungipara Wednesday, Zillur Rahman launched a scathing attack on Dr Kamal, accusing him of 'conspiring'.

See Page 12 Col 3

Master plan being prepared to make Dhaka 'environmentally healthy'

By Asiuzzaman

Nations Development Programme (UNDP) is the co-financier of the 15.5 crore Taka project in which the Bangladesh government contributed Tk 28,160,000.

Another UN agency, the United Nations Centre for Human Settlement (UNCHS), is executing the project, expected to be completed by the end of 1996 in three phases.

A little over 30 per cent of the project has already been completed.

Under the project, a detailed structural plan, area plan, metropolitan development and plan preparation and management in Dhaka would be made separately.

The project comprises four major components, which include planning, drainage and flood control, computerised data and mapping and a national consultancy survey.

The Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development, the Ministry of Irrigation, Water Development and Flood Control, and the Ministry of Environment and Forests are involved with the project, to be implemented by the Ministry of Works.

The planners, assisted by a number of foreign consultants, have also proposed appointing a city governor for successful and effective implementation of the master plan.

Shaukat Ali Khan also said that a number of autonomous agencies like the Rajuk, City Corporation and WASA had been working in the capital, which sometime create problems due to lack of coordination.

A city governor-like supervisory body can help implement the plan, he added.

The project office, housed at the annex building of the Rajuk Bhaban, has been computerised with a geographical information system (GIS). The experts are analysing a satellite picture of the Dhaka city supplied by a French company.

When a UN agency predicted last month that Dhaka would be the 17th mega-city in the world by the end of this century, Bangladesh experts were already working to prepare a master plan to make Dhaka an environmentally healthy city.

"We are working on a five-year project to draw up a master plan for the capital which is expected to be an environmentally healthy city, free from the present chaotic situation," Shaukat Ali Khan, Chief Town Planner of the Dhaka Metropolitan Development Project, told The Daily Star.

"The future Dhaka will have an area of 590 sq miles rimming Joydebpur, Savar, Keraniganj and Narayanganj," he said, adding that "We are using latest computerised technology and satellite pictures for the project to ensure it does not fall like the first one, prepared in 1959."

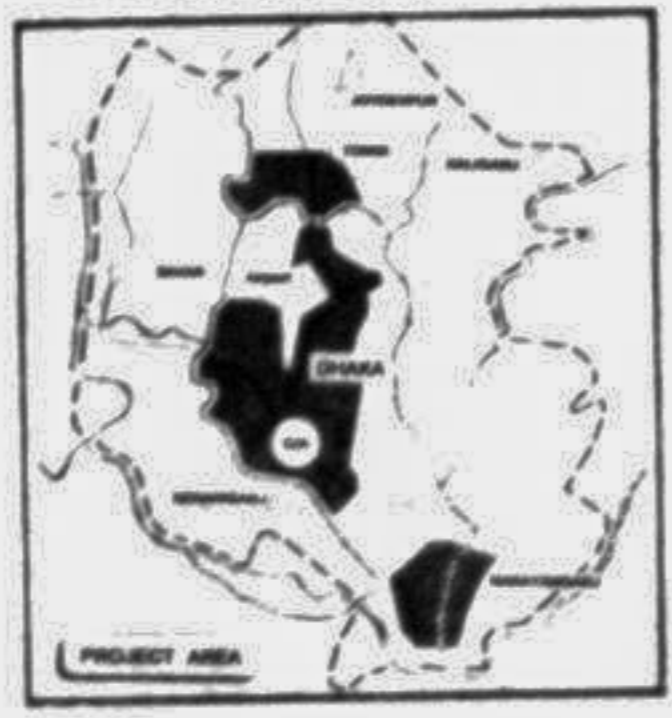
The first master plan for the city covered 320 sq miles of area.

The world population report of the United Nations Family Planning Association (UNFPA), released early last month, said that Dhaka would be one of the 20 most populous cities in the world by the year 2000, with a population of about 1.22 crore.

"There is no way out to avert the possible danger of a population explosion in the capital without an effective master plan," Shaukat Ali Khan said.

A similar project has been taken for the development of the port city of Chittagong.

He said that the United



JS body visits mapping complex

The members of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, headed by Foreign Minister ASM Mostafizur Rahman, yesterday visited the mapping complex at Lal-matia in the city, reports UNB.

The project is aided by the Finnish government.

During the visit, the project manager briefed the MPs on the various aspects of map-making, including the development of technology in this field.

See Page 12 Col 8

Dhaka monitoring Somali situation

The government is closely monitoring the situation in Somalia where Bangladeshi troops were reported to have been fired at on Thursday.

"We are waiting for details," a Foreign Office spokesman told UNB when his attention was drawn to press reports of an incident in which Bangladeshi troops were fired at in the Somali capital.

One Bangladeshi infantry battalion comprising 845 soldiers has been working in civil war-torn Somalia with the United Nations Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM) for maintaining peace there.

Troops from the United States, India, Pakistan, Italy and Morocco have also been working for peace and relief operations in the famine-stricken east African state under the UN flag.

1.5 lakh troops to supervise Pak polls

ISLAMABAD, Aug 12: Pakistan will deploy an unprecedented 150,000 soldiers — almost one-third of its army — to supervise polling and prevent violence during October 6 general elections, military sources said Thursday, reports AP.

Former Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto, who blamed her 1990 election defeat on massive fraud, welcomed the army's involvement.

"We have always demanded that the army supervise the elections," said Salman Taseer, spokesman for Ms Bhutto's left-leaning Pakistan People's Party.

Russian attack may lead to new war: Afghan FM

DUSHANBE, Aug 12: Russia could set off a new war with Afghanistan if it continued shelling in the border region with Tajikistan, which caused casualties among Afghan civilians, visiting Foreign Minister Hedayat Amin Arsala warned here today, reports AFP.

There would inevitably be military escalation if forces stationed in Tajikistan resumed attacks on Afghan territory, he said after two days of talks with Tajik officials. Any boost to military forces in the border region would likewise fail to improve matters, he added.

In separate comments to Interfax news agency, Arsala said troops of the Commonwealth of Independent States should pull back from the frontier, as their presence was a potential threat to his country. He added that the government in Kabul would give no support to armed movements operation its frontiers.

Arsala said he was satisfied with his talks earlier Thursday with Tajik leader Emomali Rakhmonov, the parliamentary speaker who is acting president. The meeting marked the beginning of constructive dialogue to settle the problem of stability at the joint border and the return

See Page 12 Col 1

US, Russia call to resume Mideast talks

WASHINGTON, Aug 12: The United States and Russia have invited participants to resume Middle East peace talks in Washington at the end of this month, the State Department said today, reports Reuters.

"We've asked them to return to Washington at the end of August," Mike McCurry, the Department spokesman, told the daily briefing.

He said the invitations probably went out in the last 24 hours, but he was unaware whether any replies had been received.

The next round of talks would mark the 11th since the peace process began in Madrid in October 1991 between Israel and its Arab adversaries — Jordan, Lebanon, Syria and the Palestinians.

Mideast peace talks could resume in late August or early September and US Secretary of State Warren Christopher said on Wednesday he saw a dim light at the end of the tunnel.

"I see a dim light. It's way out there, and I think we ought to pursue it very hard," Christopher said in a television interview when asked about prospects for peace.

"I think the parties are now determined to... get back to the peace table, and I think they are going to do that," Christopher said in an interview on the public broadcasting service.

In Tunis, the Palestinian leaders were meeting late Wednesday to plan their policy on Middle East peace talks, amid reports that the PLO had named delegates to the talks as its official envoys.

A Palestinian official in Amman who declined to be identified said three delegates who had resigned over a policy rift with the leadership would be appointed the PLO's official envoys to the peace process, forcing the Jewish state to deal directly with the organisation.

The move is aimed at skirting Israeli demands that delegates be strictly limited to Palestinians from the occupied territories, said the official, who declined to be identified.

He said the procedure would allow the Palestine Liberation Organization to become Israel's direct interlocutor. Israel refuses to deal with the PLO.

Earlier, PLO chairman Yasser Arafat surprised the leadership when he told a Jerusalem news agency the organisation's executive committee, or ruling body, would decide what to do about delegation leader Faisal Hussein, spokeswoman Hanan Ashrawi and deputy Saeb Erakat.

"Things are under control and are running in accordance with normal procedures," Arafat said.

Another 115 on death row

Star Report

Multiple-murderers Tajul Islam and Chora Badshah, hanged in the Comilla Central Jail on Wednesday night, were the 67th and 68th convicts to be sent to the gallows since independence.

Of the 183 people sentenced to death by the courts to date, 115 remain on death row in the country's different prisons, according to Home Ministry sources.

The condemned include eight foreign nationals — five Pakistanis, two Sri Lankans and a Nigerian — all awaiting execution in the Dhaka Central Jail, the ministry source said. The source said that of the 115 on death row, more than 45 were in the condemned cells because the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court had rejected their review petitions. The rest of the cases were pending with the higher courts.

The latest death sentence was awarded by a Sessions Judge in Chittagong, according to the source.

The execution of Muntir Hossain alias Suruj, who was hanged on July 26 in the Dhaka Central Jail for murdering his wife Sharmila Sultana Rima, was the 66th in the country.

Before Muntir, another murderer was hanged in the Dhaka Jail in April last year, the source said, adding that only ten prisoners in the country have the facilities to execute death sentences.

Tajul, Badshah buried

BRAHMANBARIA, Aug 12: The bodies of Tajul Islam and Chora Badshah, who were hanged in the Comilla Jail Wednesday night, were brought to their respective villages and buried today, reports UNB.

Tajul and Badshah were hanged for killing one Shashanka Devnath, his wife Biraja Bala and their five minor children of Nidarabad village in the district.

Earlier, relatives received the bodies from the Comilla Central Jail at 7 am today.

Ranariddh, Hun Sen in Bangkok

BANGKOK, Aug 12: The two co-leaders of Cambodia's coalition government arrived in Thailand today for three days of talks. Prince Norodom Ranariddh and Hun Sen will meet Thai Prime Minister Chuan Leekpai on Friday, reports Reuters.