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Inside Today

Article

Of Drug Trafficking, Smuggling, Money Laundering and the Golden Connection

Column: Along My Way
by S B Chaudhuri
Page 4

International

S African parliament meets to okay end of white rule



Former US President Jimmi Carter talks with PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat
Page 5

Business

Rebuilding ruined economy in Gaza challenge to Arafat

OECD of Japan, Dhaka sign five loan accords
Pages 6, 7

Feature

Health

Gall-bladder Stone and Scarless Surgery: Why Grandma Shaba has Her Hands Full; TB Comes Back with a Vengeance
Page 8

Metropolitan

Dhaka Day by Day



Undeterred, a Slum Boy Carries on
Page 3

NEWS BRIEFS

ALWC meet tomorrow

A meeting of the Awami League Working Committee will be held tomorrow at 11 am at the party central office. All members of the committee have been requested to attend the meeting, reports UNB.

One held with drugs

Police yesterday seized a huge quantity of spurious drugs worth about Tk 15 lakh from Babubazar in the capital and arrested one person in this connection. Police raided the Agrani Transport office at the Babubazar in Kotwali thana and seized the medicines and nabbed one Anwar Hossain in this connection, reports UNB.

Indian tortoise seized

RAJSHAHI, Sept 13: Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) seized 2,400 kgs of Indian tortoise worth about Tk 7 lakh at Rajshahi Railway Station today. Following a tip-off a special squad of 20 rifle battalion raided the Khulna bound Sharmokdum mail train and seized the tortoises, reports UNB.

493 Rohingya go home

COX'S BAZAR, Sept 13: Some 493 Rohingya refugees of 113 families today went back to their homeland in Myanmar under the supervision of UNHCR officials, reports UNB.

Momentous step for ME peace



US President Bill Clinton (C) shepherds Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin and PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat (R) to shake hands after the signing of the historic accord on Palestinian autonomy at the White House yesterday. — AFP Photo

WASHINGTON, Sept 13: Enemies without mercy for generations, Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization signed an accord Monday promising self-government for Palestinians. The White House ceremony marked a momentous step toward peace for the Middle East, reports AP.

Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin and PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat stood with President Clinton in brilliant sunshine as aides signed the agreement. After the signing, Arafat extended his hand to Rabin, and after a moment's hesitation, Rabin clasped it.

An invited audience of 3,000 watched on the South Lawn as the deal was sealed. Half a world away, Palestinians flocked festively to the streets of the Biblical city of Jericho to celebrate the pen strokes that would deliver self-rule.

Clinton escorted Rabin and Arafat from the White House to the podium where the signing took place. The Israeli leader was smiling, Arafat, in his military tunic and keffiyeh, beamed and waved to the crowd.

Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres, who signed the pact with PLO chief of external relations, Mahmoud Abbas said, "We are sincere. We mean business... Let us all turn from bullets to ballots, from guns to shovels."

"May there be no more victims on either side," he said. Rabin told the Palestinians, "We who have fought against you, say to you in a loud and clear voice, enough of blood and tears, enough."

Arafat said to the Israelis "the difficult decision we reached together was one that required great and exceptional courage. We will need more courage and determination to build peace and coexistence between us."

Abbas said the accord reflects the PLO's decision "to turn a new page in its relations with Israel."

"We have come to this point because we believe that peaceful coexistence and cooperation are the only means of reaching an

See Page 12 Col 7

A historic handshake

WASHINGTON, Sept 13: PLO chairman Yasser Arafat and Israeli leader Yitzhak Rabin ended decades of enmity with a handshake today at the signing of a peace accord giving self-rule to Palestinians in Israeli-occupied lands, reports Reuters.

The Palestinian and Israeli leaders grasped hands politely just after their deputies signed the historic document at a ceremony on the White House's south lawn. Their gesture brought a cheer of approval from the audience.

Arafat extended his hand first, and President Bill Clinton, who was standing between the two men, touched Rabin on the back — almost seeming to encourage him to make the handshake.

Many observers had wondered whether Rabin, 71, and Arafat, 64, would feel able to bury the hatchet with a handshake at the ceremony. Just two weeks ago it was unthinkable that the two men could ever appear together, much less touch one another.

Rabin had shown no great enthusiasm when a television interviewer asked him on Sunday whether he would shake Arafat's hand. "If it will be needed," Rabin said.

Arabs celebrate accord

JERICHO (West Bank), Sept 13: Arabs in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip erupted in joy today after their leader Yasser Arafat sealed a historic peace accord with Israel in Washington, reports Reuters.

Tens of thousands of Arabs surged through the streets beating drums and waving Palestinian flags after watching on live television Arafat and Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin shake hands on the White House lawn.

More than 50,000 people flooded the streets of Gaza City, some talking and laughing to the Israeli soldiers they have been striving to drive out for the past six years of their uprising.

In the West Bank town of Jericho a huge roar went up as Arafat held out his hand to Rabin, a man who has twice conquered Arab land in the wars that have ravaged the Middle East since the 1948 creation of Israel.

In Arab East Jerusalem, thousands danced while others rode horses, beat drums and played music.

See Page 12 Col 4

TIMETABLE FOR PEACE

WASHINGTON, Sept 13: Israel and the PLO's historic declaration of principles on Palestinian self-rule signed in Washington today envisages a 10-month timetable leading up to elections for a Palestinian council, reports Reuters.

The council will run the West Bank and Gaza Strip for an interim period of five years, during which Israel and the Palestinians will negotiate a permanent peace settlement. Israel and the Palestinians will also immediately start negotiating details of the withdrawal of Israeli troops from the Gaza Strip and the West Bank town of Jericho.

The declaration officially enters into force October 13 and the timetable then unfolds as follows:

Immediately:

- Authority transferred from Israeli military government and civil administration to "authorised Palestinians" in five spheres: Education and Culture, Health, Social Welfare, Direct Taxation, and Tourism. The Palestinians will have authority in the West Bank and Gaza but it is not clear what authority they will have in East Jerusalem.
- Palestinians start building police force. Core will be Palestine Liberation Organisation fighters from outside West Bank and Gaza.
- Joint Israeli-Palestinian liaison committee formed.

Israeli-Palestinian economic cooperation committee established to work on: Water, electricity, energy, finance, transport and communications including Gaza seaport, trade, industry, labour relations, training, environmental protection, and the media; An internationally-supported economic development programme for the West Bank and Gaza and a regional economic development programme.

— Jordan and Egypt invited to join continuing committee to decide on procedures for admission of Palestinians displaced from West Bank and Gaza in 1967 (estimated at about 800,000 people including dependents) and measures to prevent "disruption and disorder."

December 13, 1993:

- Israel and Palestinians sign agreement on Israeli withdrawal from Gaza Strip and Jericho area and detailed arrangements

See Page 12 Col 8



ISRAEL & OCCUPIED TERRITORIES

Indo-Bangla talks on water transit, trade begin

NEW DELHI, Sept 13: The two-day Indo-Bangladesh talks to renew the protocol on inland water transit and trade which began here today would cover various aspects of trade including nomination of additional stations for movement of import land export cargo between the two countries, reports PTL.

The five-member high level Bangladesh delegation is led by Secretary, Shipping, Walail Islam, while the Indian side is led by the Secretary, Surface Transport, SP Bagla.

See Page 12 Col 3

Varsity teachers observe hunger strike, submit memo to PM

By DU Correspondent
University teachers of the country observed a seven-hour token hunger strike at the Dhaka University Club yesterday demanding effective measures against campus terrorism.

During the strike, called by

See Page 12 Col 6

Mir Shawkat, Akbar new ministers Cabinet reshuffled

By Staff Correspondent

Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia has, for the first time in two years, reshuffled her cabinet with the induction of two new ministers and a state minister yesterday.

Li Gen (retd) Mir Shawkat Ali was sworn in as the Minister for Food and Col (retd) Akbar Hossain as the Minister for Environment and Forests. Dr Abdul Moyeen Khan has been given the portfolio of State Minister for Planning.

President Abdur Rahman Biswas administered the oaths at a simple ceremony at Bangabhaban yesterday evening in presence of the Prime Minister.

The strength of the Cabinet now stands at 42 including 23 ministers, 16 state ministers and three deputy ministers.

The Prime Minister also reallocated portfolios of some of the ministers.

Commerce Minister M K Anwar has been given change of

the Ministry of Shipping while Food Minister Shamsul Islam has been moved to the Ministry of Commerce.

Abdullah Al-Noman will look after the Ministry of Fisheries and Livestock. Until yesterday he was also in charge of Forests and Environment.

State Minister for Relief Lutfur Rahman Khan has been moved to the Ministry of Industries and State Minister for Shipping Harun al-Rashid to Relief. Goyeshwar Chandra Roy will now only look after the Ministry of Forest and Environment as a state minister.

This was the first major reshuffle since Begum Zia formed her cabinet in September, 1991 following the Twelfth Amendment to the Constitution which provided for a parliamentary form of government. The first BNP cabinet, formed on March 20, 1991 by

See Page 12 Col 3

Campus violence discussed in JS BNP, AL trade charges

By Staff Correspondent

The Treasury and Opposition benches yesterday accused each other for destabilising academic atmosphere of the educational institutions by sponsoring campus violence and harbouring terrorists.

The controversial issue surfaced twice in Parliament yesterday and Deputy Speaker Humayun Khan Pannu, who presided over the sitting, told the House that the chair will announce a schedule today for a general discussion on the issue during the current session.

The issue generated heat, for the first time yesterday, following the Home Minister's reply to an Awami League (AL) sponsored question relating to the violent incident that took place at the Jahangirnagar University on July 29.

The issue came up for a second time when the Deputy Speaker, in the course of disposing of the notices of the MPs,

disallowed a notice for an adjournment motion on the Jahangirnagar incident.

AL legislator A K M Jahangir wanted to know the number of arrests made in connection with the incident at the university.

Home Minister Abdul Matin Chowdhury informed the House that six students including the vice president of the university's central student union had already been arrested and 15 others had been charge-sheeted.

Incidentally, most of the boys accused of crimes in the incident belong to the ruling party's student wing, the Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD).

The Home Minister, while speaking on the issue, told the House that the government would spare nobody — whoever he might be — to ensure rule of law.

But the opposition MPs, at

See Page 12 Col 4

Businessmen for regular talks with NBR

By Staff Correspondent

The business community yesterday demanded regular dialogue between themselves and the National Board of Revenue (NBR) to remove any anomalies and controversies over government decisions.

They also pointed out that the NBR has been pursuing whimsical policies regarding advance income tax, tax holiday, and VAT and added that the corruption within the NBR must be removed for quick decision making on matters affecting the country's trade and industry.

The observations came at a meeting between the Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce and Industry (MCCI), Dhaka

and the NBR at the MCCI auditorium.

About a hundred entrepreneurs attended the meeting which was presided over by the President of the MCCI, Latifur Rahman. Chairman Dr Akbar Ali Khan along with other senior officials represented the NBR.

"The attitude and accountability of the entire administration need to be changed," the MCCI president said. "We are prepared to extend every cooperation which you may seek either directly or through the consultative committee for your board."

Emphasising the need for a competent and honest civil ser-

vice, Rahman said Bangladesh could not afford to ignore again and again the realities of global competition and the need to help different enterprises win competitive contests.

He pointed out that in order to help the enterprises win competitive contests the government must formulate policies quickly, make changes whenever necessary, and implement those policies effectively.

Regarding tax holidays the MCCI chief said the NBR was arbitrarily rejecting many applications asking for tax holidays although the applicants fulfilled the required conditions of the government.

"The predicament of industries affected by tariff anomalies are well-known by this time," he said. "The innumerable instances submitted to the NBR point out how widespread the problems are, but till now very little redress has been given to the affected industries."

Latifur Rahman pointed out that the sole objective of having tariff value was to prevent under-invoicing and not to increase tax revenue, and quoted Finance Minister Saffur Rahman as having said that if an importer can prove his cost, through a recognised inspection agency, that his purchase price was lower than the tariff

See Page 12 Col 1

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh National Board of Revenue

Dhaka

Subject: Submission of income tax return for the assessment year 1993-94

The last date for filing of normal income tax return under self-assessment scheme, by all assesseees other than companies, for the assessment year 1993-94 is 15th September, 1993. Apart from the existing assesseees, all those persons whose total income exceeded Tk 50,000/- in the corresponding income year, are required to file their returns of income by the above mentioned date and pay taxes on the basis of the returns.

It may be mentioned here that through the Finance Act, 1993, the maximum rate of tax for individual assesseees has been reduced from 30% to 25%. Moreover, individual tax rates have been rescheduled into 4 slabs in such a manner that tax-payers of all the slabs will now pay tax at comparatively reduced rates. In view of this, the Government expects that all persons not yet enlisted as tax-payers but having taxable income during the relevant income year, will submit their tax returns voluntarily and pay taxes according to law.

Income tax return forms are available from Head Post Offices of all the districts. Assesseees filing a return under self-assessment scheme may use the normal income tax return forms superscribing the expression "SELF-ASSESSMENT" on top of these forms. Some important features of the self-assessment scheme for the assessment year 1993-94 are as under:

- All assesseees, other than a limited company registered under the Companies Act, 1913, or a director holding shares exceeding 5% of the paid up capital of a company will be eligible to submit returns under this scheme.
- Under this scheme there is provision to accept initial capital upto Taka 2 lakhs for the new tax-payers engaged in business without any question. But capital upto Taka 3 lakhs will also be accepted without any question if such tax-payers invest their initial capital in small or cottage industries.
- There will be no maximum limit of total income for filing returns under self-assessment scheme.
- A return will not be eligible for self-assessment if it shows loss or lesser income than the income last assessed or if assessment on the basis of such return results in refund.
- It is compulsory for every assessee, being an individual, to submit the statement of assets and liabilities, in the prescribed form, along with the return.
- Tax payable on the total income shown in the return shall not be less than Tk. 1,500/- and the tax is to be paid on or before the date on which the return is filed.

All assesseees concerned are requested to submit their income tax returns within the stipulated time failing which they will be liable to penal action as per law.

Government expects that assesseees will disclose their correct income and file income tax returns in time.

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National Board of Revenue