

## SAARC convention on narcotic drugs ratified

By Shamsad Mortuza back from New Delhi

The SAARC Convention on Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances signed in Male in November 1990, came into force on September 5, 1993, following completion of ratification procedures by all SAARC member countries.

However, in a recent regional meeting in the Indian capital, member nations were urged to adopt necessary legal changes in their respective domestic laws to comply with the SAARC convention.

Agreed during the fifth SAARC Summit in Male, the convention aimed at promoting regional cooperation among member states to introduce legal changes in demand reduction, after the mandate given by the fourth SAARC Summit held in Islamabad, in 1988.

Only one member country, India, has so far brought about necessary legal changes while some others have initiated the process of implementing the provisions of the SAARC convention regarding illicit drugs.

This was disclosed at the follow-up meeting Sept 7 to 10 at a local hotel in New Delhi, attended by five of the SAARC member states.

Chaired by the Indian delegate leader A K Srivastava, the meeting reviewed the mutual legal assistance among member states in investigation, prosecution and jurisdiction.

Most of the member states in the meeting, however, conceded that their laws did not provide obligations to seize illicit drug-related property. The representative members recommended

introduction of necessary laws. All of the member nations, save one, had necessary legislation against drug offenders as defined in Article 5 of the Islamabad Convention of 1988.

Article 3 of the 1988 convention termed production, preparation, sale, cultivation, despatch in transit of psychotropic substances as criminal offences.

Taking the nature of the offences in consideration, treatment, education, aftercare, rehabilitation or social re-integration of the minor offenders were also recommended in the meeting.

It also earmarked to utilise the SAARC Drug Offence Monitoring Desk, established in the Sri Lanka Police Narcotic Bureau, properly to gear up inter-state information exchange regarding drug-related offences.

The meeting also suggested legal assistance to the technical committee to shape a model agreement between neighbouring states. The bilateral agreement between the member states, whose territories or borders are used for drug trafficking, could be designed after the model agreement, the meeting viewed.

The Bangladesh team in the New Delhi meeting was led by Deputy Director of Dhaka Metropolitan Zone of the Department of Narcotics Control.

Bangladesh, Bhutan, Sri Lanka, Nepal and host India participated in the three-day meeting.



Awami League Presidium member Abdur Razzak, MP addressing a public meeting at the Bangabandhu Avenue in the city marking the party's Demonstration Day yesterday. — Star photo

## ALPP meets today to discuss FAP

Awami League Parliamentary Party meets today to discuss, among others, the strategy to raise a debate in the House on the controversial Flood Action Plan (FAP) in Bangladesh, reports UNB.

Donors, environmentalists and NGOs have difference of opinion about the implementation of the much-talked about plan.

Awami League MP Begum Matia Chowdhury was learnt to have submitted a notice to hold a general discussion on the issue.

The issue is expected to be discussed in European Parliament... We also want to discuss this important matter in the House and want to know the government's position," Awami League Whip Abul Hassan Chowdhury told UNB Saturday.

## PM's special fund: Women MPs to act as advisers

Women MPs of the concerned areas will act as advisers in loan distribution programmes from the Prime Minister's special fund for rehabilitation and welfare of the distressed women from now on, reports BSS.

This was decided at a meeting on "Prime Minister's special fund for the rehabilitation and welfare of the distressed women" held at the Bangladesh Secretariat here yesterday with State Minister for Women's Affairs Sarwar Rahman in the chair.

It was also decided that women MPs of the concerned areas from now on will preside over the meeting relating to credit disbursement programme and will give approval to the final list of the distressed women.

The special fund of Taka two crore and 74 lakh was created in early 1992 and Taka 4,600,500 has so far been disbursed.

The loan recipients have been striving to become self-reliant by involving their credit money in poultry farming, sewing projects, pisciculture, cow and goat farming, tailoring, grocery and confectionery shops and small business.

## AL Demonstration Day

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announce a programme for a greater agitation on October 10 from a post-hartal rally if the government did not fulfil all the demands by then.

Accusing the post-75 governments of violating the Constitution, Zillur Rahman said Ziaur Rahman violated the Constitution by incorporating the Indemnity Ordinance while the present government did the same by enacting the undemocratic Anti-Terrorism Law.

He also blamed the government for destroying the country's economy in a planned way by destroying agriculture and industries.

He called upon all to gear up agitation against the government to put an end to the situation.

Tofael Ahmed, MP, reiterated his challenge that if he failed to prove the allegations of corruption against Irrigation Minister Majid-ul-Huq and his ministry he would resign from Parliament.

He also alleged that most of the BNP ministers and leaders were involved in corruption and nepotism. If the BNP high command fails to remove them from the ministries and the party, it would affect everybody like cancer, he said.

Tofael also criticised the government for politicising all the institutions of the country and thereby polluting the working atmosphere.

Abdur Razzak, MP, blamed the government for providing shelter to the terrorists and unleashing a reign of terror.

## Arab League

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Lebanon, which said it weakened the Arab position in the peace process.

But most of the Arab world has backed the deal granting autonomy first to the 775,000 Palestinians in the Israeli-occupied Gaza Strip and the 15,000 in the West Bank town of Jericho.

Syria and Sudan gave the agreement a tepid reception but have done little more than organise meetings with headline opponents of the limited autonomy deal.

The League will be seeking unanimity among its 21 members at the meeting, which is to be attended by Palestine Liberation Organisation Chairman Yasser Arafat, an Arab diplomat said.

He said even the journalists and the teachers have become victims of the terrorism of the BNP activists.

Matia Chowdhury, MP, said the government did not maintain any of its commitments given to the people or the opposition political parties.

Mohammad Nasim categorically blamed a minister for the incident in which the teachers of the Jahangirnagar University were assaulted and said the government was patronising terrorists.

The rally was followed by a procession which, after parading the city streets, ended near the Mouchak Market at Malibagh.

## Sec 144 in Shalika following BNP, JP clashes

MAGURA, Sept 18: The district administration today (Saturday) imposed Section 144 in Shalika thana following clashes between activists of the Jatiya Party and the BNP over holding meetings at the Arpara Dakbungalow premises, reports UNB.

Section 144 was imposed from 8:00 am to 4:00 pm in the area to avert further trouble as clashes between the two groups continued.

Both the parties brought out processions in the area and at one stage chased each other near the local bazar.

## Sharif, Benazir

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Sunday, the official APP news agency said.

In his notice, Tiwana called on both leaders to explain why they should not be convicted of contempt for criticising him for his remarks on the results of an investigation into possible irregularities in their actions while in office.

Tiwana initiated an inquiry this month into the distribution of land plots by Bhutto when she was prime minister from 1988 to 1990 and the use of charity funds by Sharif during his term in office from 1990 to last July.

Bhutto has challenged the judge's action while Sharif defended his distribution of charity funds after devastating floods in September 1992, saying he would have used more money if it had been available.

Tiwana also asked why they should not be disqualified from the October 6 elections.

## Two murdered in city

By Staff Correspondent

Two persons were murdered in separate incidents in the city yesterday.

Police said Karam Ali, 45, was found in critical condition with stab injuries in his body on a road near Sikderbari under Uttara thana yesterday morning and later succumbed to his injuries at about noon at his residence near the Azampur Supermarket in Uttara.

Sources said three unidentified persons called Ali, a vegetable vendor in Kawan Bazar in the city from his house Friday at about 11:30 pm.

Our DMCH Correspondent said one Altaf Hossain, 27, was stabbed by a group of unidentified local miscreants in front of Nuran Mosque at Manikdee at Dhaka Cantonment yesterday afternoon.

Sources said the miscreants stabbed Hossain following a previous enmity centering over a row in a local football match on Thursday.

Hossain was taken to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital in a critical condition where doctors declared him dead upon arrival.

## Sonargaon hotel

From Page 1 Col 5  
soft and piped-in music and whispering chatter of the diners, angry slogans reverberated across the quiet lounge of the hotel. Hundreds of abstaining staff crammed their cafeteria on the mezzanine floor of the hotel. "Target bonus is our rightful demand," "Crush the black hand of the management," they yelled.

The General Secretary of the Employees' Union, Abu Saeed, told newsmen at an impromptu press conference that the board of the HIL is dilly dallying regarding the long due renovation of the hotel and expressed apprehension that the operating company — Pan Pacific Hotels and Resorts — may quit at any moment because of the board's 'whimsical decisions'.

The union claimed that when the staff demanded the target bonus after the hotel reached its target profit last year, the authorities said according to the union's charter of demand any financial claims outside the charter can not be settled in the middle of the year. To this, the union had said that if they were not awarded the bonus, they would stage a hunger strike from September 21.

When newsmen asked General Manager (GM) Andrew J McBurnie, — confined at his office — for his reactions, livid GM exploded: "I refuse to join any press conference which I am forced to attend."

"I am being kept here against my will," McBurnie said. When asked if he had contacted the police to bail him out, he said: "I have no telephone in this room, and I am not allowed to go out. Anyway, how the hell would it help the situation by calling in the police?"

"The union is not allowed to bring out any issue as per its charter," McBurnie said. "Whether their demand is justified or not is another matter. But their action is absolutely diabolical and highly militant."

Set up in 1981, the Sonargaon Hotel is owned by the HIL, a state-owned agency and managed by the Pan Pacific Hotels and Resorts. It posted a profit of Tk 4.68 crore last year.

## Prize land

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The source refrained from disclosing details of the illegally occupied land, since he believed this might disrupt the recovery process.

He indicated that some high-ups and influential persons might be involved in the misappropriation of the land. He, however, did not elaborate.

## Shantibahini

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of Tripura is expected to visit the CHT tomorrow to see if the conditions are favourable for return of the refugees, official sources said.

BSS adds: Convenor of the government committee for Hill Tracts affairs and Communications Minister Oli Ahmed and leader of the PCJSS Jyotindra Bodhipriya Larma (alias Shanto Larma) in a joint press briefing after the meeting said that cooperation of all sections of people and political parties were needed to arrive at an acceptable formula on CHT issues keeping in view the constitutional provisions. Continuous meetings and discussions are needed to find an acceptable solution to the Hill Tracts problem, they added.

## JCD, Shibir clash in Sirajganj

SIRAJGANJ, Sept 18: At least 15 students were injured, two seriously, in a clash between the JCD and Chhatra Shibir activists at the Sirajganj Government University College today, reports UNB.

Both the groups used hockey sticks and rods during the clash which lasted for about an hour.

## The Midnight File

### Ceasefire ignored in Bosnia

SARAJEVO, Sept 18: Bosnian Muslim and Croat foes battled for territory today, ignoring a top-level ceasefire agreement and diplomatic efforts to end the 17 months of bloodshed in Bosnia. The United Nations said Bosnian Muslim forces overran a Croat-held village in central Bosnia as heavy fighting continued beyond a noon ceasefire in the Laava river valley. The UN described it as a general attack on Croat positions in the area, reports Reuter.

### Hussein may postpone polls

AMMAN, Sept 18: King Hussein may postpone parliamentary elections scheduled for November because of a possible exodus of Palestinian refugees to the Israeli-occupied territories, a senior official said Saturday. The refugees account for more than 40 per cent of the 1.6 million voters. Preventing many of them from voting by scheduling elections after any possible exodus would weaken Muslim fundamentalists who base their strategy on Palestinian frustrations. The monarch was reviewing the implications of the move with Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali, said the official, speaking on condition of anonymity, reports AP.

## Militants in Gaza to step up armed struggle

GAZA, Sept 18: Thousands of Palestinian militants opposed to the Israel-PLO peace accord held protests in the occupied Gaza Strip today and vowed to step up their armed struggle against the Jewish state, reports Reuter.

"Jews — the army of Mohammad will come back," one placard read. Witnesses said about 5,000 Islamic fundamentalists waving black flags gathered in a stadium in Gaza city, shouting: "Yes for the armed struggle until we liberate all Palestine" and "Gaza-Jericho is a scandal."

Under the Palestinian self-rule deal signed between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organisation on Monday in Washington, Israeli troops will withdraw first from Gaza and the West Bank town of Jericho.

Supporters of the militant groups Hamas and Islamic Jihad joined PLO dissidents in at least three different rallies in Gaza city against the deal. Witnesses said about 2,000 protesters marched through the city and another 1,500 rallied downtown in Palestine square.

Palestinian sources said Israeli soldiers turned back two buses of Hamas supporters travelling south from the Nusseirat refugee camp to join the protest in Gaza city.

Meanwhile, Foreign Minister Shimon Peres today rejected a call by Israeli opposition parties for a national referendum on the Palestinian self-rule deal signed with the PLO on Monday in Washington.

Peres told Israeli radio a referendum would limit Israel's ability to negotiate. "Every time the other party will ask, 'okay, are you empowered to make a decision, we have to turn to a referendum,'" he said.

The opposition Likud Party, led by Benjamin Netanyahu, has repeatedly demanded of the government to hold a referendum on the deal with the PLO which it says is a step towards the formation of a Palestinian state.

Violence erupted following an altercation over continuing TV programmes during the Maghrib prayers in a hostel room in the campus. Both the rival students groups used firearms and cocktails in the incident for about three from 7 pm on Friday, police said.

At least 25 students were injured in the incidents while 19 of them were admitted to the Rajshahi Medical College for treatment.

Air fare disparity

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fares as per suggestions of the respective governments. The air fare from India is about 40 per cent lower than the published fare from Bangladesh, the official said, adding that Biman often restricts Bangladeshi passengers from purchasing tickets from India.

Purchasing tickets for other airlines is also troublesome for Bangladeshi passengers, he added. But some routes are, however, cheaper from Bangladesh because of the under-cut fares.

Another senior Biman official said air fares are based on supply and demand, not on cost. Almost none except for government officials, pay full fare or even the price marked on the ticket, the official said. Biman realises IATA fare from the government purchased tickets only, he added.

He mentioned another type of under-cut or special fare system — one where a passenger purchases an economy class ticket at a higher or book price, and is upgraded to business or even first class.

The official said it is difficult to check or avoid such 'secret' deals but some of the Asian airlines are trying to force a pact to stop such unhealthy competition.

Kabir Hossain said the Land Ministry is planning to introduce a "Char Development Project" in Sudharam thana of Noakhali district to rehabilitate about 5,000 landless people of the islets.

Land Secretary Aminul Islam and Director of the Swanirbar Adarsha Gram Project Abdul Wadud were also present.

For the engineering, concrete, construction and glass & ceramics industries

Industrial Diamond Association of India in co-operation with De Beers Industrial Diamond Division, U.K. present

A SEMINAR ON DIAMOND TOOL APPLICATIONS

On 10th October, 1993 at Sonargaon Hotel, Dhaka

The Seminar will cover the use of Diamond and CBN in industry. Machining of Glass and Ceramics with Diamond Abrasives. Modern Grinding Technology. Advanced Concrete Surgery. Video films on the subjects will also be screened. The papers will be presented by Mr. Horst Wapler and Mr. Brian Cooley, eminent British experts from De Beers.

Fee Tks. 500 per person including lunch and dinner. For Registration and further details contact: Mr. S. M. Mamoon, Director, Concord Engineers & Construction Ltd., Concord Centre, 43, North Gushan, Dhaka 1212. Tel: 606688/600273/600274. Fax: 683552. Tk: 642563 CORD BJ

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## Strike paralyses much of Karachi: 2 killed

KARACHI, Sept 18: Protesters demanding equal treatment for immigrants from India clashed with police in Pakistan's industrial city of Karachi today, leaving two people dead and nine injured, including four policemen, reports Reuter.

Police said they arrested more than 30 people when a strike called by the Haqiqi splinter group of the Mohajir Quom Movement (MQM), which represents Urdu-speakers who came from India after partition in 1947, turned violent.

One man was shot dead as he emerged from a mosque in Eastern Karachi and a teenage protester died from burns suffered when he was setting up a

## Demonstration against FAP

TANGAIL, Sept 18: Some 3,000 peasants, fishermen and landless people staged a noisy demonstration in front of the DC's office here today (Saturday) demanding scrapping of FAP-20, a flood control pilot project in the district, reports UNB.

The marchers from Sadar, Delduar and Basail thanas of the district also submitted a memorandum to the Deputy Commissioner calling for suspension of the Tangail Compartmentalisation Pilot Project (CPP) under the ambitious Flood Action Plan (FAP) of the government.

## WB help

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The minister, leading a five-member high-level delegation, apprised Wood of the just-concluded "Bangladesh Petroleum Investment Round-Table Conference" in Houston which was attended by 82 representatives of 37 international oil companies from 14 countries.

Dr Mosharraf informed him that preliminary memoranda of understanding were signed with five international oil companies in Houston after the round-table conference. He underlined the need for expeditious conclusion of gas development project and new investment in power sector.

He referred to the new petroleum policy of Bangladesh and highlighted various reform measures initiated by the government to attract foreign investment into energy and mineral sectors.

Joseph Wood lauded the measures of the government which contributed to improvement of the power sector through reduction of system loss and enhancement of revenue collection.

The World Bank executive called for sustaining the development trend in this sector and indicated that the WB was very hopeful about the Bangladesh Gas Infrastructure Development Project (GIDP).

Energy Secretary M Fatur Razzak, alternate Executive Director to the World Bank M A Sayeed and Economic Minister of the Bangladesh Embassy in Washington Ezzul Haq represented the Bangladesh side while the World Bank was represented by Director of Country Department-1 Mrs Ann Hamilton, division chief of Country Department Frederick Temple and Principal Operation Officer Abid Hasan.

## Dhaka elected UNGA session vice-president

Bangladesh has been elected one of the four Vice-Presidents for the 48th session of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) beginning at the world body's headquarters in New York on Tuesday, reports UNB.

Foreign Minister A S M Mostafizur Rahman, who left here yesterday for New York, is scheduled to preside over the session, as one of the Vice-Presidents, on September 28.

## Bureaucracy, JS need overhauling

By Staff Correspondent

Speaker of the Jatiya Sangsad Shaikh Razzak Ali has called for streamlining the bureaucracy and Parliament under the changed political situation.

The suggestion was made by the Speaker while addressing as chief guest a seminar on "The Role of Political Institutions in Strengthening the Democratic Process" in the capital yesterday.

The day-long seminar was sponsored jointly by the Study and Research Group on Democracy and Socio-economic Development (SRG) and the Manabik Shahajya Sangstha (MSS) at the Women's Voluntary Association Hall at Dhanmondi.

While criticising the bureaucracy, Shaikh Razzak Ali accused the civil servants of behaving like masters and also hindering the growth of accountable and democratic government.

"It's the bureaucracy, not the politicians, who ruled the country all through," he said. "Even under the changed perspective, the civil servants consider themselves masters and forget that they are the servants of the people."

According to the Speaker, the government should now give priority to overhauling the bureaucracy and reorganising it in such a manner so that the public servants are imbued with sincerity in performing their prescribed jobs.

Speaking on the functioning of Parliament, the Speaker strongly felt changes in the ex-

isting Rules of Procedure of Parliament were necessary to cater to the needs under the changed form of government.

"The present Rules of Procedure were framed during the days of a Presidential form of government and now need to be amended in conformity with parliamentary democracy," he viewed.

In this context, the Speaker referred to other democratic countries where pre-budget discussions are held on fiscal policies. But, he regretted, no such discussion took place here by

the Members of Parliament (MPs) before the budget was placed in the House.

"Problems can't be solved through debates on the floor only. We will have to strengthen various committees and work through consensus and compromise," he said.

For strengthening democracy, Shaikh Razzak Ali suggested "there has to be a national consensus on the fundamental national issues."

"These problems can easily be solved in the House if we all

possess the right attitude. We must put our heads together to solve our basic problems."

Referring to political agitation outside Parliament, the Speaker emphatically said, "Parliament is the place where we should settle all problems through discussions."

Reminding that the present Parliament was established at the cost of people's long struggle against autocracy, the Speaker warned that democracy would be at stake unless Parliament failed to fulfil people's hopes and aspirations.

The inaugural session was chaired by the MSS convenor Feroz M Hassan while the Dhaka University Vice-Chancellor Prof Emajuddin Ahmed presided over the technical session.

Prof Lutful Haque Chowdhury of the Public Administration Department, DU presented the key-note paper on the topic of the seminar.

Politicians who discussed the topic included Begum Sajeda Chowdhury, MP, of the Awami League, Barrister Ziaur Rahman, MP, and Ansar Ali Siddiqi of the BNP, Suranjit Sengupta, MP, of the Ganatantri Party, Sardar Amjad Hossain, MP, of the Jatiya Party, Shah Moham-mad Rulul Kuddus, MP, of the Jamaat-e-Islami, Salahuddin Kader Chowdhury of the NDP, Saifuddin Ahmed Manik of the Gano Forum, Enayetullah Khan, Editor of the weekly Holiday and former civil servant Shah A M S Kibria.

Speaker Shaikh Razzak Ali speaking at a seminar on 'Role of Political Institutions in Strengthening the Democratic Process' in the city yesterday. Feroz M Hassan, convenor of the Study and Research Group (SRG) — organisers of the seminar — is also seen. — Star photo