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NEWS BRIEFS

ROK navy ships leave Ctg

From Staff Correspondent
CHITTAGONG, Oct 8: The three navy ships of the Republic of Korea which arrived here on October 6 on a goodwill visit to Bangladesh, have left Chittagong Port at 4 pm today, port sources said. The flotilla commanded by Rear Admiral Tae Il Kim has 900 crew members on board. The visit was in commemoration of the 20th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Bangladesh and South Korea.

46 Indian cows seized

RAJSHAHI, Oct 8: A special squad of BDR seized 46 Indian cows worth Taka over 20 lakh from Bhodpur area of the city Wednesday. Acting on a secret information the operation was conducted by commanding officer of 20 Rifle Battalion Major Md Nasirul Gani Chowdhury. The seized cows were later deposited with Rajshahi Customs office, reports BSS.

3 hurt in Myanmar plane crash

BANGKOK, Oct 8: A Myanmar domestic airliner skidded off the runway during a forced landing in southern Myanmar, injuring two or three people, a Thai marine police officer at the border town of Yangon said Friday. The officer quoted Myanmar officials as saying one wing of the Dutch-made Pukker Aircraft was damaged during the landing Wednesday morning, as was the plane's landing gear, reports AFP.

MQM backs PML in provincial elections

Sharif, Benazir fight a do-or-die battle today



Benazir Bhutto (R), co-chairperson of the Pakistan People's Party (PPP), talking yesterday in Lahore with her ally Hamid Nasir Chattha (L) whose party secured six seats. —AFP photo

A trend towards 2-party system

From M J Zahedi Special to The Daily Star

KARACHI, Oct 8: The people have spoken. Rather, they have mumbled. As widely predicted, none of the two major parties has been able to gain a simple majority of the 200 National Assembly general seats whose results have been announced.

Total seats in the NA are 207 Muslim seats and 10 non-Muslim seats. Of these 211 were contested on October 6. One candidate had been returned unopposed, polling in four seats were postponed because of deaths of a candidate each and the result of one seat has been withheld under court orders (NA Speaker Gohar Ayub Khan, son of the late Ayub Khan is contesting from this

seat). Elections were, however, held in the 10 minorities' seats but announcement of their results will take time as ballot papers have to be gathered from all over the country for each seat. One Parsi candidate was returned unopposed.

News Analysis

Based on the available results it will be a safe bet that Pakistan Peoples Party is poised to form the new government which, according to the announced schedule, should be in place on October 19, the day the newly-elected members will elect a new leader of the House by secret ballot. The Assembly

itself will be called to session on October 15 when the members will take oath. October 16 and 17 will be devoted to electing the Speaker and the Deputy Speaker.

The Peoples Party has emerged as the largest single party with 86 seats, with a lead of 14 seats over Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz Group. The PPP has thus improved upon its performance in 1990 and almost repeated the scenario of 1988.

But will the 1988 scenario be re-enacted in full? At first sight, that looks like a safe bet. In that case three rapid national elections in five years will not

LAHORE, Oct 8: Rivals Nawaz Sharif and Benazir Bhutto grided for a do-or-die battle in tomorrow's showdown provincial elections here today, as a southern party announced it had thrown its weight behind Sharif.

Both former premiers have claimed here they can muster the numbers to form a government at the centre after Wednesday's polls which gave Bhutto's Pakistan People's Party (PPP) an 86-72 edge over Sharif's Pakistan Muslim League (PML).

But a beleaguered Bhutto called the political equation untenable unless she could hold the Punjab.

"I lost the government in 1990 because Punjab was not with me, Nawaz Sharif lost it when Punjab went out of his hands," she told AFP here. Bhutto got only two hours sleep Thursday night, staying instead glued to the telephone talking with allies, lambasting losing candidates and mobilising all resources for the final battle, party sources said. As Bhutto worked, Sharif made an unannounced dash by plane to the capital, Islamabad, where the official APP news agency said he had met with interim President Wasim Sajjad and for an hour with powerful Army Chief of Staff General Abdul Waheed to discuss the "post election scenario."

He returned to Lahore right after the meeting.

There was no immediate word on the contents of the talks, but newspapers have called the post-national election

Saifur on WB-IMF meet

Rich states blamed for slow growth of global economy

By Staff Correspondent

The developed countries were severely criticised for their economic mismanagement resulting in a persistent recession and the consequent slow growth of the global economy, at the recently concluded World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF) Board of Governors meeting in Washington.

This was disclosed by Finance Minister M Saifur Rahman at a press conference at the Secretariat yesterday. The minister returned home Thursday from a fortnight-long visit to the Bahamas, where he attended the Commonwealth Finance Ministers' conference, and to the United States.

On the domestic front, Rahman talked about the need to expedite the structural adjustment programme and the

corresponding need to have a targeted safety-net in place for the people likely to be affected during the privatisation, subsidy withdrawal and employee rationalisation drive. He also emphasised the importance of human resource development and poverty alleviation programmes.

He expressed his concern at the slow rate of investment while blaming both the banks for being reluctant to lend and the investors for failing to come up with viable projects to fund.

The World Bank, he said, is likely to restart conditional lending to the power and gas sectors while funding formalities for the Jamuna Bridge and the Jute Sector Restructuring Project (JSRP) would also be

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BIDS to help finalise Fourth FYP document

By Inam Ahmed

The government has decided to involve the Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies (BIDS) in formulating the Fourth Five-Year Plan (FFYP) document because it feels that the Planning Commission is not competent enough to do it alone.

"However, Planning Commission officials feel that the decision is outrageous and the grounds proffered are also flimsy since the past five-year plans were all formulated by the commission.

According to a government

decision, the revised FFYP document would be finalised by both the Planning Commission and the BIDS. The members of the commission would judge the quality of both the documents, and the one deemed the best would be approved and printed.

Although the FFYP is now in its third year the government could not yet finalise it. Sources said the establishment of a democratic government in 1991 necessitated the adoption of new development strategies and perspectives which delayed the

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40 feared drowned in launch capsizing

From Our Correspondent

BARISAL, Oct 8: More than 40 persons are feared dead in a launch capsizing which occurred around 7.30 in the morning near Bhola's Char Zahiruddin.

Twenty-seven bodies have been recovered till the time of filing this report at 10 pm. Of the recovered bodies, two were males, nine females and 16 children. Twenty more are feared missing. Full scale salvage operations are continuing under the supervision of the DC and SP of Bhola.

The launch M L Kazi, a small engine driven passenger craft was proceeding from Bhola's Char Tamjuddin when at one stage its engines failed near Char Zahiruddin. Shortly the vessel was caught in a torrent of current and capsized.

The launch was overloaded at three times its capacity with 160 passengers on board.

Milam tells Khaleda Govt's economic steps yielding good results

The outgoing US Ambassador William B. Milam yesterday expressed his firm belief that the continued pursuit of the present government's economic plans and programmes for development would help Bangladesh get out of the clutches of poverty and underdevelopment, reports BSS.

The US Ambassador said this while making a farewell call on Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia at her residence here.

The ambassador said the present government's economic steps were yielding good results which was evident from the in-

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Hasina returns today

Awami League chief and Leader of the Opposition in parliament Sheikh Hasina returns home today from Singapore after having treatment there, reports BSS.

Sheikh Hasina went to Singapore on September 19 for treatment. She was under constant treatment of the physicians of the Singapore National University Hospital.

The Awami League chief visited eminent artist Hashem Khan at the Singapore National University Hospital where the artist is under treatment.

Sheikh Hasina stayed by the side of the ailing artist and enquired about his treatment.

AL calls 8-hr hartal tomorrow

By Staff Correspondent

The Awami League (AL) has called a country wide eight-hour hartal from 6 am to 2 pm tomorrow.

The hartal was called for repeal of the Indemnity Ordinance, trial of the killers of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, removal of "corrupt" ministers, realisation of four-point demands agreed at the Jatiya Sangad which includes trial of Golam Azam and repeal of the Anti-Terrorism Act.

The AL also demands withdrawal of false cases and release of party members, reduction in the prices of agricultural

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Opposition plans major agitation this winter

By Asiuzzaman

The coming winter promises to be warm politically with most opposition parties planning major anti-fundamentalism and anti-government agitations, opposition sources said.

Awami League chief and Leader of the Opposition in Parliament Sheikh Hasina is due to return today from Singapore after medical treatment. She is expected to hold talks with like-minded parties to draw up a series of action programmes, an AL source said.

Fundamentalist or religion-based politics, alleged government corruption, and a continuing spate of violence country-wide would be the major targets of the agitation programmes, he

said adding that the winter session of Parliament would also be quite stormy.

The AL has already called a hartal on tomorrow on the above issues and also its demand for repeal of the indemnity bill. The Jatiya Party, too, has called for a hartal on the same day demanding restoration of the Upazila system, mid-term elections under a caretaker government and an end to political harassment. A number of political parties have also supported both the hartal calls.

The planned course of actions by the opposition parties include a series of hartals, mass

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Mizan-Zafar 'cold war' threatens JP

Star Report

A cold war between two former prime ministers has jeopardised the future of the Jatiya Party once again, party insiders said.

Kazi Zafar Ahmed who just returned from Bangkok after a prolonged medical treatment, opposed the present JP leadership for towing the Awami League (AL) line and suggested separate action programmes. He also questioned the performance of the present acting party chief Mizanur Rahman Chowdhury, and the political strength the JP had gained so far.

Kazi Zafar replaced Mizan Chowdhury as prime minister and served until President H M Ershad's fall on December 6, 1990.

"If this 'cold war' continues the party will witness another split," a senior party leader told The Daily Star on condition of anonymity.

Earlier, the party faced similar crisis with the dramatic exit of former Speaker Shamsul Huda Chowdhury and his associates.

Mizan Chowdhury and his associates said that October 10 hartal was a parallel programme with the AL and even if the Jamaat-e-Islami had called for anti-government agitations, JP should also consider similar programmes.

But Kazi Zafar, Dr Fazle Rabbi and a number of other leaders said that such programmes would increase dependence on other parties.

The party should show its strength to gain popular support," one leader who opposed Sunday's hartal call told the joint meeting of the presidium and the working committee.

The source said that Kazi Zafar Ahmed has been working for a long time to bring former 'first lady' Roushan Ershad, to politics as party chief. He has a good contact with Roushan, the source added.

But Mizan Chowdhury maintained a regular correspondence with jailed party Chairman Ershad and so far managed to convince him that the 'party is on the right track.'

Ershad was learned to be 'unwilling' to let Roushan enter direct politics.

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College student shot dead in city

By DMCH Correspondent

A college student was shot dead in the city's north Shahjahanpur area yesterday afternoon.

Istiaque Ahmed Chisty, 17, was hit by a bullet in his chin while he came out of his home at 251, North Shahjahanpur at 3:30 pm, his relatives said.

Istiaq was rushed to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) where attending doctors declared him dead. The bullet piercing through the chin hit the back side of his head.

The victim's relatives alleged that a group of unidentified youngsters murdered him. But they did not give any specific names of the 'killers.'

'UN used Bosnia as human experiment'

UNITED NATIONS, Oct 8: Bosnian President Alija Izetbegovic on Thursday denounced the United Nations' failure of will in the Balkans, saying his country has been used as a human experiment in post-cold war politics, reports AFP.

"An experiment of a political vivisection is being exercised against our country," he said in a speech to the UN General Assembly.

"The experiment is performed in vivo by testing various hypotheses on our living and governmental organism. In this experiment, our people are dying, and so is our country and our state."

The Bosnian Muslim leader said the latest peace plan 'being forced on us' was flawed because it was based on ethnic partition and 'seeks to satisfy the aggressor's appetite for an inequitably larger share at the expense of the victim.'

Before it could be acceptable, Izetbegovic said, the peace plan negotiated by Lord Owen and Thorvald Stoltenberg must as a minimum meet four conditions.

— The Bosnian republic within the union of republics envisioned by the plan must be viable geographically, economically, politically and socially.

— Territories in which civilians have been slaughtered and forced from their homes must be surrendered so that refugees can return home.

— Comprehensive and specific guarantees on the plan's implementation must be forthcoming from national and regional organisations enforcing the peace.

— Muslims in Bosnia must be allowed to arm and defend themselves if the international community is not successful in implementing the plan.

"Without the above minimum adjustments being addressed, please do not threaten us into accepting this inequitable peace plan," he said.

Izetbegovic also called for a representative of NATO, as the most likely enforcer of the peace plan, to be included in the mediation team in future negotiations.

He criticised the Security Council for first intervening in Bosnia by imposing an arms embargo and then failing to make Serbia comply with its resolutions.

"This UN intervention, by its half-heartedness and equivocation, combined with its prideful insistence that it is getting the job done ... may well go down in history as the principal instrument of my country's destruction," he said.

ANNOUNCEMENT

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