

Diarrhoea claims 878 lives in 5 months

Authorities braced themselves for a comprehensive combat against diarrhoea as the killer disease took 878 lives and attacked some 1,72,092 in 22 districts in the last five months, reports UNB.

This is the picture of the northern zone of the country, a high official of the health department said today and cautioned that the situation would worsen if the disease erupts in the coastal belt of the country.

The 22 districts, out of the 33 flood-prone ones of the country, showed the high trend of diarrhoeal cases, said the Director General of Health Services, Prof Nurun Nabi, at a press briefing in a local hotel yesterday.

The worst-affected among them are Sirajganj, Bogra, Netrakona, Tangail, Narsingdi, Comilla, Brahmanbaria, Kishoreganj and Habiganj. Nabi said a three-member diarrhoeal disease expert team from the ICDDR,B was now engaged in epidemiological investigation in Sirajganj, Pabna and Bogra. The team has already visited greater Sylhet, Kishoreganj, Comilla and Brahmanbaria in the last two months.

Two specialised teams from the IPH and the IEDCR have been working in the worst-hit areas by rotation since the outbreak of the disease in early June. Some 2,291 medical teams headed by 1021 doctors have been deployed in the diarrhoea-affected areas. Besides, 31 temporary treatment centres are now functioning in the worst-hit areas, he added.

10 hurt as slum dwellers clash

By Staff Correspondent

At least 10 persons were injured when rival groups at the city's Azargaon slum clashed in the early hours of Wednesday.

Sources said, scores of crackers were exploded during the hour-long clash that reportedly began over a pitcher of water.

Mohammadpur police, when contacted, said that they have heard of the matter but failed to give any details.

Govt-Prokrichi talks

From Page 1 Col 8 between the government and the agitating officials since last May.

According to the meeting sources, the government side agreed to meet two demands, including selection grade to all the cadre officers. Following this agreement, the government requested the officials to withdraw their programmes, including an eight-hour token hunger strike scheduled for the 15 this month.

Prokrichi sources said, they refused to withdraw the programmes because the government backed out from their earlier positions. They reminded the government negotiators of their previous commitment to accept a few more demands.

The government negotiators at the meeting said, the issue of the warrant of precedence relating to the status of the government officials and the elected representatives of the people was now under the consideration of a parliamentary standing committee. The government would be able to come out with a clear cut decision on the issue only after the parliamentary body had finalised a report on it, the ministers argued.

On the question of equal status for all district-level officials in the same pay-scale, the ministers said the government needed more time to scrutinise the demand.

About the rest of the demands, the government side maintained its previous position, saying that a few demands such as separation of the judiciary from the executive, could be met through the parliamentary process while the others needed to be studied by a group

of experts. However, the Prokrichi leaders demanded a time frame for the study and that a committee which will be conducting the study for administrative reforms be officially announced. The government side did not accept the proposal.

The meeting ended at 2:05 pm.

A Prokrichi leader, while giving his reactions over the course of the discussions, told The Daily Star that the government still seemed to be reluctant about undertaking any major administrative reforms. He added that the non-administrative cadre officers and professional were now left with only one option — going ahead with the scheduled agitation programmes.

Remove security men for insulting Sultan: BCL

By Staff Correspondent

The Bangladesh Chhatra League (B-K) has demanded removal of the persons responsible or preventing noted artist S M Sultan from attending the inaugural ceremony of the Sixth Asian Art Biennale at the Osmany Auditorium on Tuesday.

The JSD-backed students' front, in a press release yesterday, also felt that by denying the renowned painter entry into the auditorium the security personnel had not only insulted Sultan but also the nation.

Slating the ignorance, irresponsibility and audacity of the security personnel, the BCL (B-K) said: "They did not even bother to apologise, which suggests silent support of the authorities."

Nowhere revisited, again

From Page 1 Col 7 least, the remorseless post-match reaction of former Indian Test star Mohinder Amarnath, now playing the role of Bangladesh's coach, suggested so.

While Dulu wasted valuable time by trying in vain to probe gaps with risky and uncalled for reverse sweeps, guys with better pretensions as batsmen waited their turns with the run rate peaking newer heights at the end of every over.

Not that on Dulu with his unorthodox sent Bangladesh hurtling to defeat. On a slow wicket with no appreciable movement either in the air or off the wicket, Athar Ali was unduly respectful to the Zimbabwean pacers and got out just when he seemed to have found his bearings.

Shipon, the other opener bled only recently, was just overawed by the occasion and skipper Faruque blacked out the glimpses of form with a mindless shot against Steven Peall, easily the best bowler for the visitors.

With his held-back accurate off-spinners, Peall more than justified his choice as the stop-gap replacement for John Traicos, the best office in the world now. He finished with the excellent figures of three for 14 as the Bangladesh innings was stalled at 131 for nine wickets at the end of the revised quota of 38 overs.

Twelve overs were shed in the morning from the original quota of 50 overs for each side sometime after Bangladesh skipper Faruque Ahmed put the Zimbabweans in on winning the toss. The raindrops got bigger and more frequent as the 27th over of the morning came to an end and umpires Chinu and Ashgar, after some deliber-

ation with the two parties, retreated under the shades of the pavilion.

When play resumed the Zimbabwean batting, never appearing promising in the face of some commendably tight bowling and fielding, fell apart. Left-arm spinner Enamul Huq Moni had the batsmen in a fix with his accuracy and guiles to finish with figures of three for 40.

Although statistically not very impressive medium-pacers Saiful and Dulu bowled well within themselves to make up for the loss of kingpin Golam Nowsher Prince who missed the match because of a hamstring injury.

Alistair Campbell, who was richer for Taka 5000 at the end of the day, having been selected man-of-the-match by former Bangladesh captain Lipu, was the mainstay of Zimbabwe's batting with an unbeaten 54 off 88 deliveries.

Grant Flower, who opened with his captain and brother Andy, was the second highest scorer with 29. Houghton, on whom centered the local spectators' hopes of seeing real fireworks with the bat, disappointed with a slow, colourless 21.

All in all, a deluding morning's proceedings that eventually left the success-starved cheerless cricket buffs of the country with the feelings of having revisited nowhere; only another abortive venture in the dark alleys of despair.

Andy Flower, whose error in judgment with the bat cut short his tenure at the wicket, summed up Bangladesh's performance succinctly: "Your players gave it away without a fight; they did not really make us work hard for the wickets."

Editor: Mahfuz Anam
Published by Mediaworld Ltd. 52, Motijheel C/A, Dhaka-1000 and printed at City Publishing House Ltd, 90 Kairali, Dhaka-1000. Editorial, News & Commercial Offices: House No: 11, Road No: 3, Dhanmandi R/A, Dhaka-1205. PABX: 500092-4. Advertisement: 500091 (Direct). Fax No: 88-02-863035. GPO Box No: 3257. Cable: DAILYSTAR DHAKA.

Commentary

From Page 1 Col 4 know it, there will be a lot of finger pointing by other major parties, especially the Awami League, as to how rotten the BNP's student front is. But we know better. Other student parties are no different. Badal, the BCL leader, died last year, as a result of a factional fight. The rot in student politics permeates throughout, and no student wing of any political party is immune to it.

The main point is that gangster and terrorist penetration of student politics has become a national problem, and as such should be dealt with in a collective manner.

We strongly urge the Prime Minister to take the lead in this matter and call for a national convention for devising ways to eliminate terrorism from student politics. The convention may be preceded by an open and frank, and if necessary confidential, discussion between all political parties who harbour armed cadres. Publicly they may not admit, but privately, each knows what the other is doing. So behind closed doors everybody should discuss openly, and come to some understanding about the most knotty issues. Then, in the national convention, all other issues could be dealt with. The Gono Forum must be credited to be the only party to have taken elimination of terrorism from the campus as the prime issue and has gone to the public with it. May be others should follow its lead.

Sycophants will probably advise the PM against such a move, arguing that it will appear as if she is weak and cannot handle the situation herself, and so she is seeking other parties' help. This is poor advice, to say the least. In democracy, seeking cooperation from the opposition on a national problem is a sign of maturity, not weakness.

This paper has been calling for a consensus on this issue ever since the election of 1991. However, both the major parties preferred to proceed alone. With the two-and-a-half years' experience behind them, the two leading parties, especially the BNP, should realise that their 'go-alone' policy was a total disaster, and it has failed to make even the slightest dent on campus violence. It is one thing to point finger at others, but quite another when one's own students' wing comes out totting guns and murdering each other.

The time is now, and the PM should give the type of leadership that the problem demands and call for the convention that we suggest. Petty party politics and personality factors can be put aside. Will we see the leadership — of all parties, especially of the BNP — rising to the occasion?

Raphel, who is the chief of the Bureau of South Asian Affairs in the US State Department, praised Bangladesh's liberal investment policy.

The US State Department official appreciated Bangladesh's generous and humanitarian attitudes toward the Rohingya refugees staying here.

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Begum Zia welcomed the MOU and said it would be good for both Bangladesh and Myanmar if the refugees return to their homeland.

Raphel also lauded Bangladesh's participation in the UN peace keeping missions in different countries, specially in Somalia.

Raphel, who arrived here on Tuesday on a five-day official visit to Bangladesh, will also



A US Forest Service firefighting crew working to clear brush from beneath burning trees near the Malibu Civic Centre in California late Tuesday. The fire has burned numerous homes and thousands of acres of land as the latest wind-driven wildfires hit southern California. At least one death has been reported. — AFP photo

PM: Trade ties with US

From Page 1 Col 8

He told the State Department official that Bangladesh had made headway in the readymade garments sector saying this growing sector was helping the country to provide jobs to the unemployed in one hand and involve the members of the womenfolk in the nation's development and production process on the other.

Referring to the convertibility of the Taka and the liberal industrial and investment policy of her government she said the foreign entrepreneurs could invest in Bangladesh.

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Second brush fires force thousands to flee California

LOS ANGELES, Nov 3: Brush fires swept across Southern California for the second time in a week, forcing thousands to flee their smart, beach front homes, as flames threatened to engulf 1,000 students at Pepperdine University, reports AFP.

"It's here. It's crawling over the hillside, towards the faculty-staff condominiums," said university spokesman Jeff Bliss.

The students and staff were holed up in a campus gymnasium awaiting instructions from the fire department that was closely monitoring the wall of flames surging along Malibu Canyon.

The fires today had destroyed between 50 and 100 homes and burned 8,000 hectares (20,000 acres) from the Santa Monica Mountains to Malibu, injuring nine people, two of them critically.

Mostafiz supports OIC's call to end Hazratbal siege

Foreign Minister ASM Mostafiz Rahman yesterday gave unequivocal support to the OIC call for withdrawal of the siege of Hazratbal shrine in Kashmir by the Indian security forces.

He, however, suggested for a peaceful solution of the problem through dialogues.

"As a member of the OIC, Bangladesh endorses its call to end the siege of the mosque by the Indian security forces," Mostafiz told UNB at the airport yesterday morning on his return from a two-week stay abroad.

Jute confce

From Page 1 Col 5

Referring to the FAO organised international consultation on jute and environment, held in the Hague recently with financial support from the Rockefeller Foundation, Hannan Shah hoped that the IJO and concerned countries would be able to come up with concrete action oriented programmes in accordance with the recommendations of the consultation.

He appealed to both jute exporting and importing countries to contribute funds for the implementation of IJO projects.

In his speech Chisty urged the member countries to provide funds for the implementation of 12 approved projects of the IJO estimated to cost 6.3 million US dollars.

He said during the current year 1993-94, the world production of jute and allied fibres would be slightly higher than that of the last year from 3.06 million tons to 3.19 million tons. He attributed it to the marginal increase in the acreage in the major producing countries. This does not, however, indicate increased availability of the fibre because of the low carry-over stocks from the last year, he added.

Tribal students put off all agitations

CHITTAGONG, Nov 3: The Pahari Chhatra Parishad (PCP) agreed to postpone all agitation programmes after a meeting with the local administration at Dighinala today, reports UNB.

Official sources said the PCP, a tribal students organisation, regretted the recent agitation and agreed to put off all programmes during the ongoing dialogue with the parliamentary committee and the PCJSS, the parent organisation of the outlawed Shantibahini.

Depression over Bay likely

A depression is likely to form over the Bay of Bengal during the current month, a long-range Met Office forecast said, reports UNB.

Weather experts also predicted that due to the depression rainfall in the country might be more than the forecast.

The Midnight File

UNGA condemns US embargo on Cuba

UNITED NATIONS, Nov 3: The UN General Assembly condemned the US embargo against Cuba for the second consecutive year today, demanding that Washington lift the sanctions it imposed more than 30 years ago. In a non-binding resolution adopted 88-four, with 57 abstentions, the General Assembly reiterated its call for all countries to refrain from infringing on free trade and shipping opposing the measure was the United States, Albania, Israel and Paraguay, reports AFP.

682 Russians have AIDS

MOSCOW, Nov 3: At least 682 people have been identified as carriers of the AIDS virus in Russia, a Health Ministry official said Wednesday. Of the HIV carriers, 124 people developed full AIDS and 76 of those have died, said Mikhail Narkevitch, deputy chief of the ministry's prophylaxis department, reports AP.

Jinnah murder case

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Meanwhile, the conditions of the injured university staff Abdus Sattar at the Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) and Abdul Alim and Haider Ali at the Pangu Hospital, were steadily improving yesterday.

Police sources said, the BNP government had given special orders for arresting the murderers of Jinnah. Meanwhile, the Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) Tuesday expelled five members on charges of anti-organisational activities.

Jinnah, 25, a student of the Institution of Nutrition and Food Science and a central leader of the JCD, was shot dead and three university employees — Abdus Sattar, 55, Haider Ali, 30 and Abdul Alim, 45 — received severe bullet wounds when a group of gunmen, reportedly belonging to a faction of the JCD, fired indiscriminately at an office room of the Registrar's building Monday morning.

Witnesses said, Jinnah was the target of the armed goons who chased him from the Suryasen Hall premises before the killing.

The DU authorities, since the independence of the country, had constituted hundreds of probe bodies but without much result. As many as 41 persons have been killed on the DU campus during this period.

The highest number of killings on the campus took place during the present government's time. In the last two and a half years, 16 persons belonging to different political parties or non-political organisations were killed.

During the nine years of the Ershad regime, 15 persons were killed and during the three and a half years of Mujib's rule, seven persons were killed.

The first killing after Khaleda Zia assumed office took place on June 20, 1991. Mahbubur Rahman of the JSD-backed Chhatra League was killed in a gunfight with the Awami League-backed Chhatra League.

In September of the same year, in a gunbattle between the JCD and the BCL, Mirza

PDB revenue

From Page 1 Col 5 Bangladesh Jute Mills Corporation (BJMC) under the Jute Ministry is nearly 7 crore. A total of 5.72 crore taka remained outstanding with the Rural Electrification Board (REB), Bakhrabad Gas and Titas Gas, which are under the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Resources. The PDB itself is one of the organisations controlled by this ministry.

Others in the public sector, which owe PDB huge sums are the Ministries of Civil Aviation and Tourism, Communications, Shipping, Education, Agriculture, Irrigation and Water Development, Finance, Industries, Textiles, Home, Health, Relief and Religious Affairs.

DESA, which also buys electricity from the PDB, hadn't cleared bills for Tk 156 crore and 97 lakh at the end of the last fiscal.

Observers concerned believe that only an initiative by the government and coordination among the ministries can solve this problem of outstanding bills in the public sector. If these bills could be realised in full every year, then the total arrear revenue in the power sector would come down considerably, which could help the PDB to meet the donors' conditionalities.

The conditions of the World Bank and other donors for providing loans include substantial realisation of revenue in the power sector and reduction of system loss.

The PDB is still lagging behind the annual target of realising revenue. In the last fiscal 1992-93, the PDB could collect 1208 crore taka against a target of Tk 1671 crore.

In the current fiscal, the target for revenue collection has been fixed at 1698 crore taka. During the first three months of the year (July-Sept), little over 288 crore taka was realised.

However, PDB authorities claim that the revenue collection of the Board has been increasing gradually. In fiscal 1990-91, Tk 917.29 crore was collected, which increased to Tk 1048.47 crore in the following year.

Galib and Liton of the JCD and Mizan of the BCL were killed. The body of an unknown person was recovered from the Fazlul Huq Hall later that year.

BCL general secretary Moniruzzaman was killed by his own partymen in January '92, while armed JCD men killed a Chhatra Union leader — Moeven Hossain Raju — in mid-March. His death was soon followed by the killings of JCD activist Liton and an unidentified youth at the Zahurul Haq Hall and the Suryasen Hall premises respectively.

An outsider named Lokku, belonging to the BCL, was killed in June of that year at the Zahurul Haq Hall as a result of an inner conflict of the party.

During a gunbattle between the Illias group and the Ratan group of the JCD in August that year, an outsider was killed. Only five days after the murder, in early September the same year, Ashraf Alam Mamun and Mohammad Hossain of the JCD were killed in another clash between these groups. In March last, JCD activist Pavel was clubbed to death, allegedly by his fellow partymen Jinnah, who was killed Monday last.

Although the DU authorities formed innumerable inquiry committees, the only probe body to have taken any notable action was in September '87. According to the findings of the probe body on the murders of two student leaders and one rickshaw-puller, that year, 11 student leaders were expelled from the university, of whom 9 belonged to the JCD.

Shibir-cops clash leaves 10 hurt in Jhenidah

From Our Correspondent

JHENIDAH, Nov 3: At least ten people were hurt in a police action to foil a six-hour road barricade called by the Islamic Chhatra Shibir (ICS) here today. A clash occurred when police moved in to remove road barricades set up at several places on the Jhenidah-Kushtia road.

JCD activists

From Page 1 Col 6 of the JCD brought out two processions today in protest against the attack on BNP leader Abbas Chowdhury and the 'terrorist acts' of the Chhatra League workers yesterday.

It also held a protest rally near District Court with Badruzzaman Selim in the chair.

Preparedness Centre

From Page 1 Col 4

believed to be affected with the deadly disease but only 2002 were reported since 1980s.

Until last July some 700,000 AIDS cases were reported from 184 countries, according to a WHO estimate.

The ministers opined that only preventive measures through sex education could help check the deadly disease.

The governments of the member countries should chalk out their own methods to introduce sex education considering their social and moral values, the conference agreed.

Citing an example, the WHO officials said that more than 90 per cent people in Thailand are aware of the communicable AIDS threat.

Bhutan reported its first HIV infection case at the meeting.

TB has been rising in recent days because of the AIDS pandemic, the ministers said.

Also, malaria can again break out in the region.

Bangladesh is one of the sufferers of malarial outbreak while Nepal complained about the spread of Kalaazar. Bangladesh has recently withdrawn a ban on the use of DDT which can help control malaria and Kalaazar.

"According to a WHO research, the use of DDT under certain condition is not harmful for human health," the WHO executive said.

"The commitments of the ministers will be crystallised by the WHO which provides technical support to all the 11 countries," Krishnamurti said.