

Dhaka district BNP defends Huda

The Bangladesh National Party (BNP) Dhaka district unit and its thana units leaders yesterday hailed the factual statement made by Information Minister Nazmul Huda MP in the Jatiya Sangsad, reports BSS.

In a joint statement they said, it is expected of a patriotic leader that he should present everything to the nation clearly.

The BNP leaders said he has done the job of a wise parliamentarian by expressing his personal regret to assuage the Opposition with a view to keeping the Sangsad effective. This has demonstrated his broadness, they said adding "He is a straight forward man and speaks the truth."

They said that the Opposition leaders boycotted Parliament as he (Information Minister) spoke the truth with determination. They pointed out that the condition put by the Opposition, if accepted, would amount to shifting the very concept of nationalist politics introduced by Shaheed President Ziaur Rahman.

They said BNP cannot move an inch backward from its political ideology because the nation has great expectation pinned in the BNP. Keeping that in view Huda, as a nationalist leader, has just done his duty, they said.

The people of this country have not yet forgotten the statement of Leader of the

Opposition in Parliament Sheikh Hasina as saying, "We will not allow BNP to run the government peacefully even for a moment," they recalled and said, she has been making the just use of this statement one after another.

They said the people of this country watch shedding of crocodile tears of the Awami League for Islam in a different way because of its past deeds. It was the Awami League which had tried to send Islam in exile from the country following independence, they said.

Citing examples they said the Nazrul Islam College was renamed as Nazrul College and Nazrul Islam Hall as Nazrul Hall. They also dropped Rabbi Jidni Elma from the monogram of the Dhaka University and the word "Muslim" from Sir Salimullah Muslim Hall. There are many such examples in different organisations of the country. It is natural that they could not swallow the factual statement of the Information Minister, the BNP leaders said.

These elements, they pointed out, are now trying to identify themselves as promoters of Islam only to win sympathy of the majority Muslims of the country. The people know them and are aware of their activities, they said.

The statement was signed by general secretary of Dhaka district BNP Prof Mohiuddin Ahmed and nine others.

Clinton greets Biswas, Khaleda

US President William J Clinton has felicitated President Abdur Rahman Biswas and Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia on the occasion of holy Eid-ul-Fitr, reports BSS.

In a message to Biswas Clinton said, "Please accept my sincere wishes for a most blessed Eid-ul-Fitr. The American people join me in extending greetings to you and all the people of Bangladesh on this joyous occasion. May you, your family and your country receive the blessings of peace and prosperity at this holy time."

In a separate message sent to Begum Zia, Clinton said, "On the joyous occasion of Eid-ul-Fitr, it gives me great pleasure to extend to you and the people of Bangladesh the best wishes of the American people. Our countries share many common values, and I hope that we will continue to work together to advance the causes of peace and democracy in the world. May you, your family, and the people of Bangladesh enjoy happiness at this holy time."

Biswas, Khaleda, Hasina greet Muslims

President Abdur Rahman Biswas and Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia yesterday expressed their sincere greetings to the Muslims on the occasion of the holy Shab-e-Qadr, reports BSS.

They hoped that this night would inspire us all to dedicate ourselves to the service of the orphans, distressed and helpless people.

In a message on the occasion President Biswas said the holy night of 'Shab-e-Qadr' teaches us to follow the path of equity, fraternity and justice.

The exercise of self-purification, dedication and self-restraint of the Muslims has started through the holy month of Ramadan, the President said and added: This night would inspire us more to follow the ideals of Islam.

Khaleda Zia

In another message Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia underlined the need for working unitedly to build a happy and prosperous society imbuing with the ideals and values of Islam.

Begum Zia said the religious importance and significance of this night is boundless. The Prime Minister expressed her sincere greetings to the Muslims of Bangladesh and the world on the eve of this holy night.

Sheikh Hasina

UNB added, Awami League president and Leader of the Opposition Sheikh Hasina also greeted the Muslims of the country and the world on the eve of the holiest night, Lalatul Qadr.

In a message, she said the holy Quran containing the messages of overall welfare and emancipation of humanity started revealing at this night.

The great holy Quran is the guide for mankind in this world and the world hereafter.

Water plant

From Page 1 Col 8 and ecological balance in and around the capital.

By lifting ground water, the WASA is now able to meet only 40 per cent demand of the city dwellers. Experts have suggested that dependence on ground water be reduced by installing a water treatment plant.

The French government has pledged to give 150 million francs, equivalent to Taka 106 crore, as a tied grant for the machinery of the project while the World Bank is expected to provide a loan of Taka 300 crore.

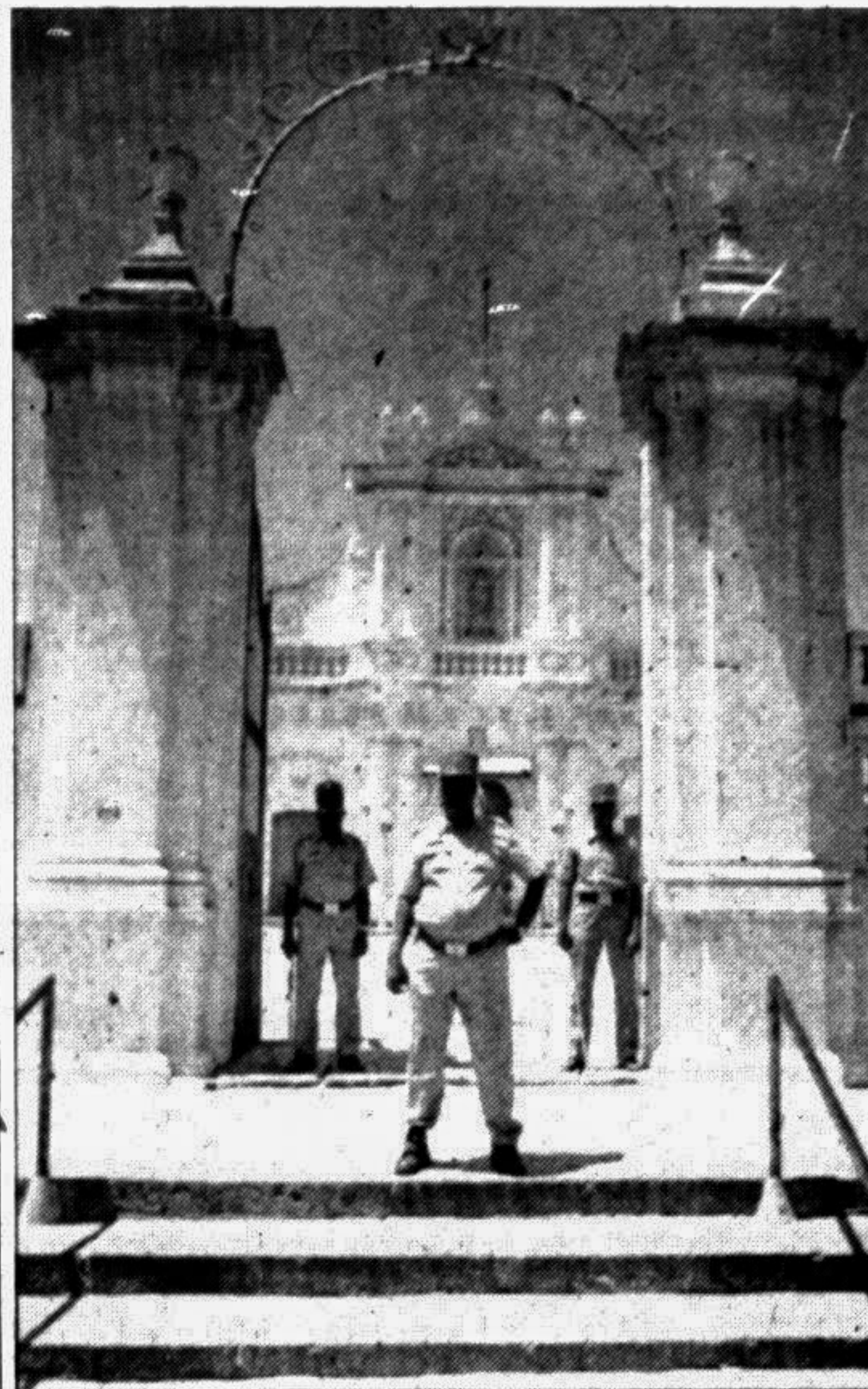
According to sources, vested quarters are insisting that the construction company should have the experience of setting up the water treatment plant of 50 IMGD (Imperial Million Gallons per Day) scale limit. Only one French company, Degre Monte, fulfils this requirement.

Experts at the WASA say, the lowering of the scale to 25 IMGD will enable more world renowned French companies, with experiences of setting up such water treatment plants, to compete which will help reduce the cost of the project.

The WASA engineers accused the high officials of paying no heed to their suggestions regarding specifications of the project and obstructing early implementation of the much-needed water treatment plant for the city.

They also warned that further delay in taking a decision may force the French government to back out of their pledge to supply the project machinery free of cost.

The sources said, the World Bank's conditions for financing the project have almost been met. An appraisal mission of the Bank is expected here next month to finalise its loan.



Indian paramilitary troops are positioned before the 18th century French-built immaculate Conception Cathedral Tuesday in the former French colony of Pondicherry. The extra security follows the claim by a Hindu fundamentalist organisation that the Christian place of worship, built by the French in 1748, shares the site of an ancient temple to Lord Shiva, the Hindu god of destruction. — AFP photo

5 killed, 25 hurt in road accidents

From Staff Correspondent

At least five people were killed and 25 others injured in road mishaps in Dhaka, Sylhet and Khulna on Tuesday and Wednesday.

Two others were also stabbed in the city yesterday. Two persons were killed and four others injured at Dholair par in Demra when an auto tempo collided with a speeding truck yesterday.

A passenger of the three-wheeler, Mohammed Habibur Rahman, 25, died on the spot while another who was not immediately identified died after admission in the Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH).

The injured — Mohammed Zamir Hossain, 18, Abdul Kuddus, 35, Mohammed Monir Hossain, 28 and the driver, Iqbal, 20 — were also admitted to the DMCH.

Police seized the truck but its driver escaped.

In another road mishap, five persons were injured when a speeding truck knocked an auto-rickshaw at Dholair Par about 5:30 am yesterday.

The injured — Abul Hossain, 50, Nur Jahan, 30, Shahida Akther, 25, Zulekha, 60 and auto-rickshaw driver Mohammed Babul, 20 — were admitted to the DMCH.

The auto-rickshaw was going to Dholair Par from Gabtoli. Police sent both the bodies to the DMCH morgue for autopsy.

Meanwhile, in two other incidents, three persons, including a woman, were injured.

Doctors in Barisal resume private practice

From Our Correspondent

BARISAL, Mar 9: Doctors here have resumed private practice from today following a decision of the BMA, Barisal unit.

Doctors were refraining from attending private chambers and clinics as part of their protest programme against the assault on one of their colleagues two weeks ago.

Hospital doctors will, however, continue their token strike from 1 pm to 3 pm until March 19.

Doctors said if their demands were not fulfilled within March 19 they will start an indefinite strike in hospitals and discontinue private practice from the next day.

BCI chairman

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The case in brief is that an FIR was lodged on August 8, 1992 with Motijheel police against Rahman alleging criminal misappropriation and criminal breach of trust in respect of an amount exceeding Tk one crore and 29 lakh spreading over a period from 31.3.91 to 21.4.92 when he was the Chairman and Managing Director of the BCI Limited.

Rokonuddin Mahmood appeared for the petitioner. Dr Rafiqur Rahman appeared for the Bangladesh Bank while Deputy Attorney General A F M Shahid appeared for the state.

Candidates of DCC asked to submit polls expenditures

All contesting candidates of the Dhaka City Corporation elections have been asked to submit report their poll expenditures by March 21, an Election Commission press release said yesterday, reports BSS.

The report will have to be submitted to the returning officer, and the directive is applicable to both the winners and the losers. A copy of the report along with a copy of affidavit will have to be sent to the Election Commission by registered mail, the press release said.

Anyone violating the instruction will have to face a minimum of two years of rigorous imprisonment and maximum seven years with fine.

The official results of the Dhaka City Corporation were published on March 7.

Earlier the Election Commission has appointed the Sub-Judge of First Court of Dhaka as the election tribunal. Any election case could be filed with the tribunal upto April 5.

2 Sarbaharamen arrested in Barisal

From Staff Correspondent

BARISAL, Mar 9: Banaripara thana police arrested two members of the outlawed Sarbahara party last night.

The arrested are Mozammel Haq, 28, and Abdul Mannan, 25, of Baishari village under Banaripara thana of the district.

Police also recovered, one country-made pipegun and 4 rounds of rifle bullets from their possession.

35 shacks gutted in Chittagong

CHITTAGONG, Mar 9: At least thirty five thatched dwelling houses were gutted in a fire which broke out at Pora Colony, Channar Road, Lalikhan Bazar under Double Mooring Police Station here, today, Fire Brigade and police said, reports BSS.

The fire reportedly originated from a kitchen of the colony. It engulfed the entire slum. Six fire fighting units brought the fire under control. More than one hundred people were rendered homeless.

The loss on account of the fire was estimated at about Taka one and a half lakh.

In another fire, which broke out in a bed manufacturing shop in front of the CDA colony at Mehdiagh gutted valuable worth about Taka one and a half lakh.

Train derails

From Our Correspondent

CHUADANGA, Mar 9: An Ishwardi-bound goods train from Khulna was derailed today in the afternoon near Darshana.

Two compartments of the train derailed at around 2 pm disrupting the rail communications between Khulna-Golanda and Khulna-Ishwardi for about seven hours.

Later, a salvage operation was carried out and the communications resumed at 9 pm.

Khulna Mayor

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Khulna mid-town Rotary Club, life member of the Red Crescent Society, Khulna and the Shishu Foundation, Teyebur Rahman also takes part in social and cultural activities in Khulna. His father late Sk Matlur Rahman was a school teacher and imam of a local mosque. Teyebur Rahman is married to Laila Arjumand Banu and has three daughters and a son. He loves games and sports.

Sk Teyebur Rahman said, the people of Khulna city had voted him to the mayoral office considering his past social welfare activities. Teyebur said he would give priority to the supply of drinking water by establishing a water and sewerage authority in Khulna city. Out of the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank financial assistance of 99 crore taka the present government has allocated 10.58 crore taka in the current fiscal year for slum and drainage development in Khulna.

Teyebur said, he would not hesitate to call a conference of all political parties in Khulna to solve the problems of the city. He reiterated that he would not raise holding tax in the next five years and would instead reduce unnecessary expenditure in consultation with the elected commissioners.

Asked about the challenges he might face in implementing his programmes, Teyebur said "With the blessings of the Almighty Allah I hope to succeed in my endeavours to bring about a qualitative change in the life of the people of Khulna city."

Teyebur Rahman urged the residents of Khulna to cooperate with the KCC in keeping the city clean and ensuring necessary civic amenities.

The Midnight File

5 shells fired near Heathrow Airport

LONDON, Mar 9: Five mortar shells were fired near London's Heathrow Airport today, Home Secretary Michael Howard told the House of Commons. There were no immediate reports of casualties, he said, reports AFP.

12 killed in LA truck mishap

LOS ANGELES, Mar 9: Twelve people were killed and several others were injured today when a pickup truck crammed with 20 migrant workers overturned, authorities said.

Ralph Buscemi, a spokesman for the California Transportation Authority, said the 20 were riding in the small Toyota pickup truck when the accident occurred.

Arafat wants int'l protection before resuming talks

TUNIS, Mar 9: PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat insisted on international protection for the Palestinians before resuming autonomy talks, during a telephone conversation with Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, a Palestinian official said here today. Arafat also reiterated PLO's other main conditions following the Hebron massacre: The dismantling of Jewish settlers and dismantling of flash-point settlements in the occupied territories, the official said, reports AFP.

Pak resolution dropped

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campaign for an independent homeland flared into violence.

India and Pakistan have gone to war twice over Kashmir since the 1947 partition of former British colonial India into mainly Muslim Pakistan and Hindu India.

The row in the commission

Khaleda visits Feni

From Page 1 Col 5

spective positions to implement the on-going development programmes.

Addressing roadside meetings, she said her government's programmes aimed at changing the lot of the down-trodden, ensuring people's welfare, increasing production and serving the nation.

Begum Zia stated that the government had introduced compulsory free primary education and food for education programme to ensure education for all, particularly for the poor children and called upon the guardians to send their wards to schools.

"This democratic government is working with utmost sincerity for the wellbeing of the people. If we work unitedly, we will be able to remove our problems and can ensure rapid development," she said.

Local people raised various problems, including gas, electricity and urged the Prime Minister to resolve those. Begum Zia assured them of looking into their problems.

During the visit, Begum Zia offered feteha at her family graveyard at South Sreepur Majumderbari. She also went to her village home and talked with her relatives.

Earlier on arrival at Feni, the Prime Minister inaugurated the newly-constructed Feni Circuit House. She went round different rooms and corridors of the circuit house. She also planted a sapling there.

Hebron

From Page 1 Col 5

corner of the main entrance hall, still out after the cleansing of blood from the stone floor.

Journalists were stopped by military police at the small, green iron gate where Muslims and Jews usually separate to go to their own prayer halls. It is there that the army believes Goldstein mixed in with the Palestinians to enter their mosque and then open fire with an automatic rifle.

"Somebody had to stand and make sure Muslim go to the left and Jews to the right," said army spokesman Capt Ram Ezrach, suggesting the guard at the entrance did not notice Goldstein passing.

The commission toured the massacre site for about four hours, and was briefed by army officers, including the Major on duty at the time.

The judicial commission has no formal power to enforce its recommendations, but Israeli governments traditionally have acted on the findings of investigative panels.

AFP adds from United Nations: The Security Council delayed until late Wednesday a vote on a draft resolution condemning the Hebron massacre after the United States and PLO failed to agree on its final text, the French ambassador said.

But a compromise in the dispute over the PLO's effort to include Jerusalem as part of the occupied territories in the text, which is opposed by Israel and by the United States, looked close, Palestinian sources and western diplomats said.

Another meeting of the Security Council was scheduled for 7:00 PM (0001 gmt Thursday) on Wednesday, said French Ambassador Jean-Bernard Merimee.

The proposed resolution condemns the Hebron massacre and calls for Israel to tighten its control over the settlers and confiscate their weapons.

has dominated newspapers in India and Pakistan for weeks.

Western countries, although concerned about violations in Kashmir, did not want to become involved in the dispute between neighbours.

Other nations, including Islamic countries and China, were anxious not to damage their relations with India.

In the end, only Bosnia-Herzegovina and Saudi Arabia signed up to Pakistan's resolution. As non-members of the commission they do not have voting rights.

Meanwhile, a huge fire swept through a Kashmiri town that has long been a stronghold of separatist guerrillas, destroying many shops and homes, news agencies said Wednesday.

The fire occurred Tuesday night as ambassadors from 10 countries toured Jammu-Kashmir state to study allegations of widespread human rights violations by India troops.

But there was no immediate indication that the fire was caused by Indian forces or the state's many militant groups.

Press Trust of India and United News of India reported that 14 shops and 10 houses were gutted in Anantnag during the blaze late Tuesday night, but neither news agency reported casualties.

Devika Rani dead

NEW DELHI, Mar 9: Film actress Devika Rani Roerich, the idol of million of Indians since her debut in the 1930s, died Tuesday at the age of 86, the Press Trust of India reported, says AFP.

Roerich died after a brief illness in the southern city of Bangalore, where she led a reclusive life following the death of her Russian husband Stetoslav on January 30, 1993, the news agency said.

The Swiss-Educated Roerich started her career when talks were first being made in India and played leading roles in scores of films. She was also a renowned danseuse.

Roerich set up a film studio named Bombay Talkies with her first husband director Himanshu Rai and started producing films after his death.

She wound up Bombay Talkies in 1945 to marry Russian painter Stetoslav Roerich and retired to a sprawling country estate outside Bangalore.

STOL service

From Page 1 Col 7 high frequency omni-directional range (VOR) can provide such facilities.

All the domestic destinations where Biman Bangladesh Airlines is flying, have such facilities, a CAAB source said.

Some of the companies also raised objection about the poor security arrangements at some of the airports, which might create problems for their aircraft as well as the operations.

The authorities, however, recently agreed that STOL aircraft would be allowed to land at Zia International Airport, if necessary.

Sources say, a number of companies had already signed agreements with foreign firms for purchase or lease of aircraft which would be available at short notice.

Mayors

From Page 1 Col 7

Rajshahi on February 10. Elections in the four cities were held simultaneously on January 30. However, repolling in 28 DCC centres was completed on March 3.

In the January 30 polls, the Awami League-backed candidates Mohammad Hanif and A B M Mohiuddin Chowdhury were elected mayors of Dhaka and Chittagong respectively while the BNP nominees Shaikh Teyebur Rahman and Mizanur Rahman Minu won the mayoral polls in Khulna and Rajshahi respectively.

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