

Delhi tries to block int'l confce on Tibet

NEW DELHI, Mar 12: The Indian government is attempting to block an international parliamentary conference on Tibet under pressure from China, an opposition MP involved in its organisation charged here today, reports AFP.

New Delhi has succumbed to pressure from Beijing and is trying to sabotage the three-day world parliamentarians convention on Tibet due to begin next Friday, George Fernandes said.

More than 60 delegates from 30 countries are expected to discuss human rights violations by Chinese authorities in Tibet and appeal to the international community to step up pressure on Beijing to resolve the Tibetan issue.

"The government is taking special steps to sabotage the conference. The Indian Foreign Ministry is behaving like the Chinese Foreign Minister," said Fernandes, a leader of the opposition Janata Dal Party (People's Party).

Fernandes said visas had been denied to delegates from Britain, Estonia, Ireland, Norway and Sweden and permission to use an adjoining auditorium of the federal parliament as the conference venue turned down at the 11th hour.

Routine hotel concessions and travel discounts for delegates were also being denied, he said.

Fernandes, chairman of the All Indian Parliamentary Forum for Tibet which is organising the meet, said the

establishing rights of the Bengali nation. During his long struggle, he had to spend prime time of his life in prison and face gallows twice.

"Bangabandhu and the Bengali nation are one and single entity," Hasina said, claiming that the nomenclature of Bangladesh was given by him. His patriotism and love for the people have established him as a great man of this century, she added.

In observance of the birth anniversary, Awami League has drawn up programmes including garlanding the portrait of the slain leader at Bangabandhu Bhaban at 9 am and a children's rally at 10 am at the same venue.

The celebration committee of the Bangla calendar year 1400 has also organised programmes at Tungipara. Hasina will attend the function on March 17.

Civil service in strife

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which is headed by Cabinet Secretary Ayubur Rahman. Headed by former Planning Commission member Nurunnabi Choudhury, the Administrative Structure Reorganisation Committee was set up last year initially for six months. Now, following an extension, the committee is expected to submit its report by March 31.

Furthermore, the fate of the one man commission headed by the former state minister for Establishment Nurul Huda on administrative reforms, remains unknown.

In addition, a UNDP report on administrative restructuring was placed before the government last year, forwarding a 52-point recommendation including consolidation of the large number of ministries into smaller administrative units.

'And another 4-member Secretary-level committee headed by the Cabinet Secretary also presented a report to the government after studying the administrative structure prevailing in the United Kingdom.

The ministerial committee announced the pay-scale upgradation of the nine cadres on January 8 last. The BCS cadre currently has some 32,000 officials separated in 29 different cadre services.

The nine BCS cadre officials who benefited from the above decision are all affiliated with the Prokrihi-BCS cadre agitation. But after agitations by junior level BCS (Administration) officials in the Bangladesh Secretariat, the government on February 27 decided to withhold the implementation of the earlier order and announced the formation of a new committee with a mandate to submit a report within three months of its formation. But the committee is yet to be constituted.

The 5-member Secretary-level committee advised against rescinding the government order upgrading the pay-scales of the nine cadres. Instead it suggested upgrading of the selection-grade to senior scale of 14 other

cadres, including the administrative cadre, as an appeasement move. But none of these suggestions were accepted by the ministerial committee.

Meanwhile, various BCS cadres, including the Health, Education, Agriculture, Information, Trade, Administration, Judicial and the Economic cadres, are gearing up their activities, seeking to remove existing anomalies in their respective cadres.

The Prokrihi-BCS Action committee is going to take up organisational tours in four divisions after Eid in a move to strengthen its activities among the 70,000 or so members. The action committee has also announced plans to hold a national rally in support of its 17-point charter of demands on April 5 at the Central Shaheed Minar. Further action programmes are also likely to be announced at that meeting.

The BCS (Admin) action committee is also likely to step up its campaign after Eid.

Twenty officers of the BCS (Econ) cadre at the Planning Commission, meanwhile, have served a legal notice on the Secretary, Planning Division relating to the promotion of some officials whose seniority were yet to be finalised, after their lateral entry into the cadre.

They have also made a representation with the Prime Minister's Office and are planning to take legal action if the promotions are carried out.

The BCS (Info) cadre association is currently wearing black badges in protest against the extension of the services of an outsider as the Principal Information Officer (PIO). They are also likely to step up their activities soon because four of the association's top members were recently transferred after they held a meeting protesting the extension of the services of the PIO.

The non-gazetted stenographers and other Third and Fourth class employees at the Secretariat are also planning to take up action programmes demanding higher pay.

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'unexpected' government stand could be interpreted either as pressure from or a pact with China.

The hardened stance was apparent after Prime Minister P. V. Narasimha Rao's September trip to Beijing, he said.

JKLF chief arrested

SRINAGAR, Mar 12: Javed Mir, the president of the Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front (JKLF) and most-wanted Kashmiri Muslim militant, was arrested here today, witnesses said, reports Reuters.

Mir, 30, the former commander-in-chief of the guerilla wing of the Muslim separatist group, was arrested with another unidentified man in Srinagar when the car in which they were travelling was stopped by border guards, they said.

The pair were pulled from the car and whisked away by the troops, the witnesses said. The other man was later released.

Farhad murder: Another held

By Staff Correspondent

Police arrested another accused of involvement in the murder of Sergeant Hasanul Farhad from village Kasba of the Munshiganj thana in the small hours of yesterday, according to police sources.

Arrested Kazi Noor Qayyum Hossain was identified as the second man of the Kaji group and is an accused in several other cases.

Acting on a tip, a group of police men led by Aktaruzzaman, Assistant Commissioner of the Detective Branch, went to village Kasba at about 2:30 am and arrested him from the area.

Qayyum, who hails from the Kotailpara thana of Gopalganj district, was taken on police remand for five days.

Khulna mayor takes over

KHULNA, Mar 12: The newly elected Mayor of Khulna city, Sheikh Tayebur Rahman, assumed his office today expressing his will to work neutrally for the well being of all.

"The City Corporation is an institution of 12 lakh people living in the city... it will not be turned into a party office," he said while talking to UNB after takeover at a simple ceremony.

Abahani

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ting Club 2-0 in the final in Calcutta yesterday.

It was, indeed, a badly-needed upper for the country's millions of sports-mad people who otherwise seemed to be getting used to the habit of receiving unhappy news from every corner of the sporting world.

According to reports reaching Dhaka Abahani, however, had to go through a miserable time in their bid to break the depressive monotony as the Dhanmondi Club had to withstand the pressure of playing in an increasingly hostile environment. But, with the country's pride at stake, the booters kept their cool against all kinds of provocations from the rowdy Calcutta Mohammedan supporters and cruised home with goals from Mamun Joarder and Mintu.

In the semifinal, Abahani eliminated their traditional rivals reigning Star Premier Division football league champions Dhaka Mohammedan Sporting, the other Bangladeshi outfit in the meet.

The tourney was designed to raise funds for distressed Calcutta journalists.

Detailed report on Page 10.

Road accident

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admitted to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital.

Gulshan police seized the minibus.

The body of Abedin was sent to the Railway Hospital.

Abedin left behind one son and a daughter.

The senior government officer, who had the rank of an Additional Secretary of the Communications Ministry, was on a two-year extension following retirement.

Privatisation: Saifur

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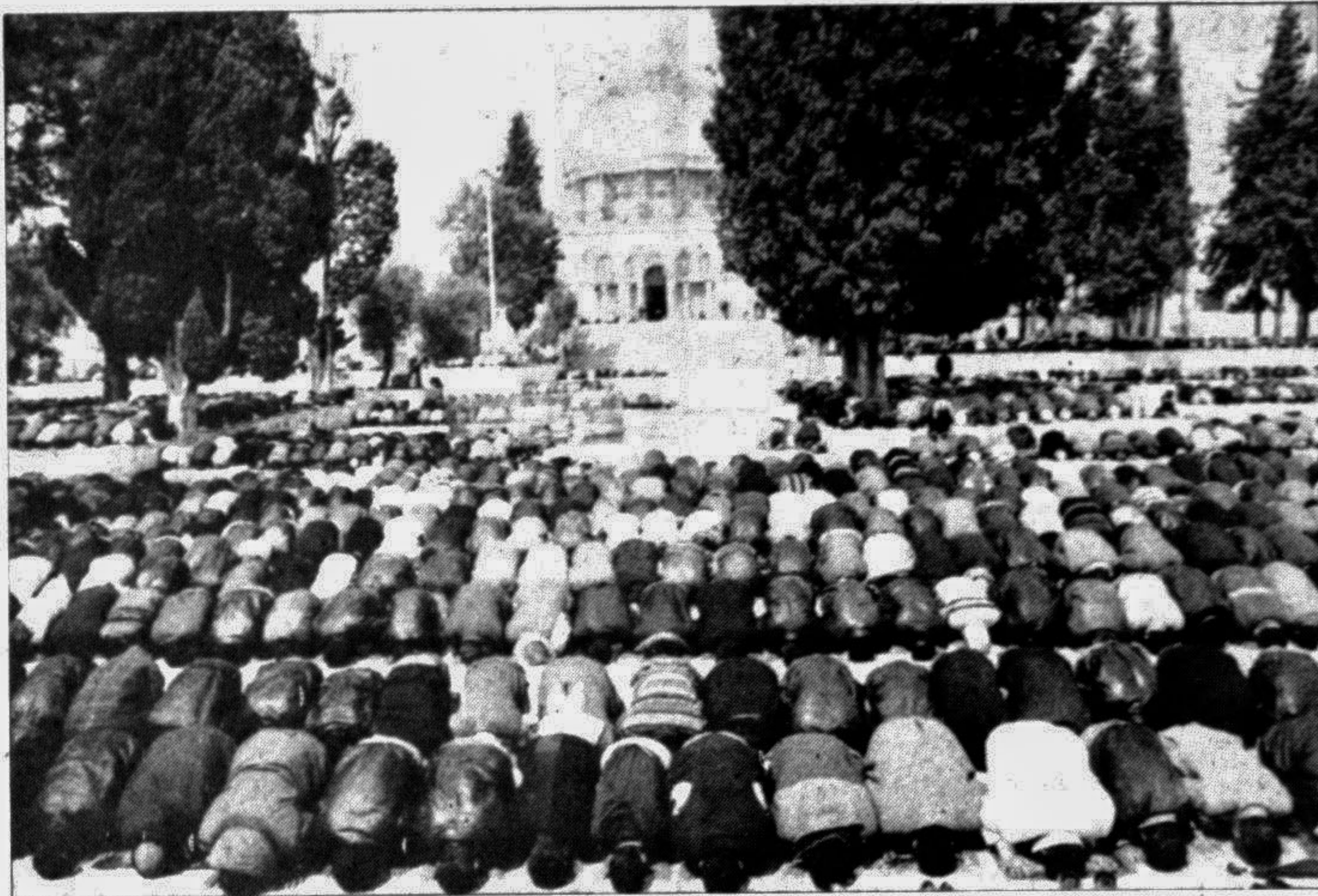
geous reform programme of Bangladesh government, the message said. In reply to her another query about the association of common people with the reform programme, Saifur Rahman elaborated that people were being informed through numerous seminars, symposia and public meetings about these programmes.

As an instance of clear benefits the people could get, Saifur Rahman said, there was now much availability of fertilisers to the farmers as a result of private participation in its distribution, although subsidy had been abolished.

Replying to another query about prospects of future reform and foreign investment climate in Bangladesh, the Finance Minister said the government was committed to carrying through reforms.

Apart from labour rationalisation, administrative and legal reforms were also imperative, he emphasised. Every effort is being made to attract foreign private investment with generous facilities, he said.

Raphel praised Bangladesh government for its commitment to democracy.



Palestinians praying at the Al-Aqsa Mosque compound in Jerusalem during Friday's Jumma prayers. The Al-Aqsa is the third holiest shrine of the world's Muslims. — AFP photo

President, Prime Minister greet Muslim leaders

President Abdur Rahman Biswas and Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia in separate messages yesterday greeted the world Muslim leaders on the auspicious occasion of holy Eid-ul-Fitr, says a PID handout.

In their separate messages of felicitations, President Biswas and Prime Minister Begum Zia sought divine blessings and infinite mercy of Almighty Allah for the Muslim Ummah. They also wished good health and personal well-being and continued peace, progress and prosperity to the brotherly people of the Muslim countries.

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PLO sets conditions for talks

TUNIS, Mar 12: The PLO said today it was ready to resume talks with Israel once the United States and Russia back up a UN resolution condemning the Hebron massacre and ensuring the security of Palestinians in the occupied lands, reports Reuters.

The UN Security Council is expected to vote on the resolution on Monday.

A draft calls for measures to guarantee the safety and protection of the Palestinian civilians throughout the occupied territory, including... a temporary international or foreign presence, which was provided for in the declaration of principles signed by Israel and the PLO last September.

The United States and Russia are asked to 'continue their efforts to invigorate the peace process, and to undertake the necessary support for the implementation' of the measures.

PLO executive committee member Mahmoud Abbas told Reuters today that peace talks with Israel could be resumed 'once the resolution is

adopted and the co-sponsors pledge to guarantee Palestinians' security."

Israel's withdrawal from Jericho and the Gaza Strip and the start of limited Palestinian self-rule there under the September accord have been further delayed by the killings in Hebron Mosque.

AP adds: Militiamen killed two Palestinian guerillas in a shootout Saturday on the snowy foothills of Mount Hermon in an Israeli-occupied part of south Lebanon, security sources said.

A third guerilla was captured by militiamen of the South Lebanon Army and a fourth surrendered to Norwegian soldiers of a UN peacekeeping force, said the sources, speaking on condition of anonymity. They said both survivors were wounded.

In Israel, the army confirmed the clash and the casualties. Army sources said an Israeli ski resort on Mount Hermon was closed while soldiers searched the area to make sure no guerillas had slipped into Israeli territory.

The Lebanese security sources said the guerillas belonged to the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command, a radical Palestinian group based in Damascus and headed by former Syrian Army Capt Ahmed Jibril.

The guerillas were armed with AK-47 assault rifles and each carried a number of hand and rocket-propelled grenades, according to reporters who were allowed to see the bodies before they were removed.

Saturday's encounter followed daylong clashes Friday that pitted Israeli troops and SLA militiamen against Iranian-backed Shi'ite Muslim fundamentalist guerillas of Hezbollah, or the Party of God.

Eleven people, 10 Lebanese civilians and a UN peacekeeper from Fiji, were wounded in the artillery and rocket exchange. The bombardments were triggered by a roadside bomb explosion that targeted an SLA patrol in the security zone. The attack was claimed by Hezbollah.

The Bureau of Anti-Corruption filed five cases against them and four others for having 10 acres of land illegally sanctioned for shrimp culture in 1988 when Rab led a loyal Opposition in Parliament during the Ershad regime.

The other accused are the mother-in-law, a brother-in-law and private secretary of the former Leader of the Opposition, and a bank manager. They were earlier granted bail.

Mostafiz may visit China

Foreign Minister A S M Mostafizur Rahman is likely to pay a four-day official visit to China, beginning April 14.

The visit will take place at the invitation of his Chinese counterpart, Qian Qichen.

The Foreign Minister is scheduled to fly to Tunisia in the last week of April to attend the Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers (ICFMI).

Honorary consuls

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ready representing the Maldives and ABM Badrud Dowah, a reputed businessman.

It is learnt that the Government of Mauritius will act on the advice of the Foreign Ministry in this regard. It is the normal practice to appoint consuls after consultations with the host country.

Presently, the following Bangladeshis are serving as Consul or Consul Generals in Bangladesh.

Md Nurul Islam for Japan in Chittagong, Sayed Kaiser Ally for Sri Lanka in Chittagong, Rasul Nizam for France in Chittagong, AKM Shahidul Islam for Malaysia in Chittagong, Mainul Islam for Austria in Dhaka, Amir Khasru Mahmud Chowdhury for South Korea in Chittagong, Salahuddin Kasem Khan for Turkey in Chittagong, Badrul Huda Rounak Khandaker for Tunisia in Dhaka, Ziaul Huq for Finland in Dhaka, Amir Ahmed for the Philippines in Chittagong, Anwarul Huq for Greece in Chittagong, Hakim Ali for Indonesia in Chittagong and Farooq Ahmed Chowdhury for the Maldives in Dhaka.

Mostafiz also urged the delegation to inform the South Korean investors that Bangladesh offers excellent facilities and attractive incentives for investment.

The Ministry of Information will arrange screening of films

The Midnight File

Gen Shalikashvili in Somalia

MOGADISHU, Mar 12: The United States' military chief General John Shalikashvili flew into Mogadishu today to see his troops before they complete their withdrawal from Somalia after 15 fraught months. US helicopter gunships patrolled over the streets around the UN-controlled airport as the chairman of the joint chiefs of staff landed, reports Reuters.

Muslims, Croats to create joint army

SARAJEVO, Mar 12: Muslims and Croats made strides today towards burying their conflict in Bosnia but the Serbs, the strongest party in the war, were reported to have blasted a Muslim enclave with artillery fire. In the Croatian seaport of Split, Muslim and Croat military chiefs announced they had reached agreement on steps to create a joint federal army in Bosnia, where the two sides had been fighting for almost a year, reports Reuters.

US-Japan accord on Cellular telephone

TOKYO, Mar 12: US Ambassador to Japan Walter Mondale said today that Japan and the United States have reached agreement on a dispute over US access to Japan's Cellular telephone market, reports Reuters.

A statement issued by the US embassy said: "The ambassador said the agreement embodies the government of Japan's commitment to provide to US technologies the same opportunities to compete in the Tokyo-Nagoya Cellular telephone market that Japanese technologies have."

The statement said Japan would monitor and oversee construction and deployment of a North American analogue Cellular phone system by December 1995.

SAARC Press Club confce in city from Mar 19

The two-day South Asian press club conference begins here on March 19 under the auspices of Bangladesh Jatiya Press Club marking its 40th anniversary of founding, reports BSS.

Nineteen journalists from Nepal, Pakistan, India, Sri Lanka, Maldives and Bhutan will take part in the conference on 'Media's effectiveness in bridging gaps among the peoples of SAARC countries.'

Prime Minister and SAARC chairperson Begum Khaleda Zia is expected to inaugurate the conference on March 19 morning at Osmani Auditorium here. SAARC Secretary General Y. K. Siwal will be present as the special guest.

2 Sarbaharamen held in Barisal

From Staff Correspondent

BARISAL, Mar 12: Gournadi thana police arrested Bazlu Howladar, 28, an outlawed Sarbahara Party member of the Kamrul group and recovered arms from a char under the thana today.

According to police they recovered one SIR and a 303 rifle from the house of one Abul Kashem Sardar of a char under Hizla thana.

Fish project

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Dr A K M Nuruzzaman, Member-Director of the Bangladesh Agricultural Research Council (BARC) said the indigenous fish species in the project area might be eventually destroyed due to poisoning of water.

Rotanin was used to eliminate predatory breeds from the project areas causing environmental degradation.

He said the project was initiated four years ago without preliminary surveys on the existing fish stocks in the beels and haors and the socio-economic condition of the people living around the project area.

The full extent of damage to the indigenous fish stock due to poison in the project areas was yet to be ascertained, he pointed out, adding that the project still lacked proper monitoring.

Informed sources said, monitoring and the surveys could not be carried out during the whole project period because of 'chilled relation' now existing between the DOF and the Fisheries Ministry.

A senior government official told The Daily Star that there was an initiative to appoint a consultant firm to carry out the benchmark survey before the project was taken up.

One company was selected through tenders following the guidelines of the ministry. But the tenders were cancelled for some mysterious reasons, sources said.

They said the government was now planning to appoint an individual consultant to conduct a survey as the project was nearing completion.

When contacted, a high official of the DOF said the consultant would conduct surveys in some other areas similar to the present project areas and the final results would be indicative of the benchmark for the present project.

However, an expert termed such an initiative of the DOF 'suicidal' and pointed out that the proposed step would question the credibility of the department.

He announced that he would form anti-terrorism committees in each of the 90 city wards with representatives from all political organisations. These committees would suggest necessary actions against terrorism, extortion and hooliganism.

He predicted it "will be good for both nations."

Firearms workshop unearthed in Pabna

PABNA, Mar 12: Police today unearthed a firearms workshop at Nainamoti in the town and recovered some arms and machinery, reports UNB.

Sultan Mohammad, 30, working in the workshop was taken into custody. On his confessional statement, another youngman Alam, a trader of arms, was arrested from his house at Dakunia in the town.

Police said Alam admitted that he had been buying arms from the workshop for the last three years.

Two pistols, four pipe guns, and some arms making materials were recovered from the workshop, police added.

Indian President hosts iftar party

NEW DELHI, Mar 12: President Dr Shanker Dayal Sharma yesterday hosted an iftar party at the Rashtrapati Bhavan here, reports PTI.

The party was attended by the Prime Minister, PV Narasimha Rao, his cabinet colleagues, the Lok Sabha Speaker, Shivraj Patil, the former president, Zail Singh, and Sonia Gandhi.

Besides diplomats from Muslim countries, leader of the opposition Atal Bihari Vajpayee and leaders of various political parties were present.

Hanif

From Page 1 Col 5

ployees' union, and enquired about the welfare of the staffers.

Hanif recited verses from the Holy Qur'an before addressing the gathering. However, no prominent leader of the AL, of which the new mayor is the city unit chief, was seen in the DCC office yesterday.

Speaking at the introductory meeting with his DCC colleagues, Hanif urged them to discharge their duties with dedication and sincerity with a view to materialising the hopes and aspirations of the city-dwellers.

The new mayor also sought divine blessings to enable him to resolve the problems facing seven million people of the capital and turn the city worth living in for its residents.

Addressing the DCC officials and employees, Hanif reiterated his election pledges of keeping the Corporation about political influence, not raising the municipal holding tax during his five-year tenure, ridding the city of the mosquito menace and curbing terrorism and extortion.

Turning to the criticisms of his resolve not to raise taxes for the next four years, the mayor pointed out that this was possible and could be achieved simply by slashing unnecessary spending in different sectors of the corporation's budget.

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