

Inside Today

Article

Rao's Foreign Trips

Column: Between The Lines
by Kuldip Nayar
Page 4

International

Indian army to protect Hindu pilgrims in Kashmir

US, ROK start talks to break deadlock over North's N-plan
Page 5

Business

World Bank wants Dhaka to ensure private investment in power sector

India, US sign 18 energy production accords
Pages 6, 7

Weekend Magazine

America's lunar walk at 25; From pubs to publishing, one for the record book; A look into the causes of crime; Recalling Moulvi Mujibur Rahman; Tele-View; and My patches of disquiet
Pages 9, 10 & 11

Metropolitan

Dhaka Day by Day



Weddings on the Wire
Page 3

NEWS BRIEFS

Indian floods: PM shocked

Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia has expressed deep shock at the loss of lives and destruction of property by the recent floods in India. In a message to Indian Prime Minister P V Narasimha Rao she said, "It is with a deep sense of shock that we have learnt about the loss of many valuable lives and serious destruction of property due to devastating floods in some states of India in recent days," reports UNB.

Medicines seized at ZIA

Customs Surveillance team seized contraband medicines worth about Tk 2 lakh from a passenger at Zia International Airport (ZIA) yesterday. The medicines were seized from one Fazlur Rahman who came to Dhaka from Karachi by a PIA flight (PK 264) at 1:30 pm. He is a Bangladeshi national. Rahman was freed after a departmental case was lodged against him.

Strike observed at SMC

From Our Correspondent SYLHET, July 21: A complete strike was observed by the students of the Sylhet MAG Osmany Medical College today in protest against the ransacking of a private chamber of a physician by some people. The people went on the rampage over the death of a college student allegedly due to wrong treatment in the hospital on Monday (July 18) last.

Postal stamp on JMB July 24

The Bangladesh Postal Department will release a stamp of Taka four denomination on the Jamuna Multipurpose Bridge on July 24. A first day cover of Taka five denomination will also be released on the occasion and a special cancellor be used, reports BBS.

800 refugees die in one camp alone in 24 hrs

Cholera claims several thousand Rwandans



A Rwandan man throws the body of a baby — a cholera victim — wrapped up in sheets into a mass grave yesterday in Goma, Zaire where hundreds of Rwandan refugees have sought shelter from the civil war in their country.

GOMA (Zaire), July 21: Several thousand Rwandans have died in refugee camps around this Zairean town hit by cholera, doctors from the medical charity Medecins Sans Frontieres (MSF) said today.

Florence Parent of MSF said about 800 people were dead in the Munigi refugee camp alone, some eight kilometres from Goma, where some 100,000 people are crowded together.

Cholera victims and other ill refugees were streaming in constantly for treatment from other centers, she said.

Aid groups said earlier today that 800 people had died in the past 24 hours.

In MSF spokesman in Brussels, Georges Dallemagne, said samples of stool sent to Paris for analysis confirmed the presence of the cholera bacteria.

Earlier, Reuter said: Aid workers warned that thousands of Rwandan refugees could die in the next few days from a suspected cholera outbreak in eastern Zaire as a mass grave was filled to brimming with corpses.

"Hunger, thirst, the cold and the dust are killing us," said a tearful Rwandan woman peering into a trench where she said her mother was among up to 300 bodies dumped on the outskirts of the town of Goma.

Earlier on Wednesday the lifeless forms were laid out in neat rows at the bottom of the 50-metre trench dug into the volcanic soil, but as the hours went on they were thrown in hastily as the bodies piled up.

New groups of bodies,

Upendra Chakma against armed struggle

From Staff Correspondent

TABALCHHARI (Khagrachhari), July 21: Tribal leader Upendralal Chakma said here today that he was against the insurgency by the Shantibahini but supported their demands.

"I don't support the armed struggle but I support the demands of the Shantibahini," Upendralal, who heads the Tripura-based Tribal Refugee Welfare Association, told a group of reporters.

He came to Bangladesh today with a group of Indian officials before the second phase of the repatriation of tribal refugees began on the day.

He said he had no contact with the Shantibahini or its leader Shantu Larma. "I only look after the refugee issue."

A former MP, Upendralal left for India in 1988.

Repatriation resumes

359 more Chakmas return home

From Asiuzzaman

TABALCHHARI (Khagrachhari), July 21: A batch of 359 tribal refugees returned home today ending eight years of camp life in Tri-pura state of India.

At a simple ceremony, Indian authorities handed over the refugees belonging to 69 families to Bangladesh officials at the Tabalchhari-Shillchari border, about 50 kilometres from the Khagrachhari district headquarters.

"I am happy to be back in my homeland again," Bimal Kanti, 52, who was the first to cross the make-shift bamboo bridge on the Feni river at 4:25 pm with his 12-member family, told The Daily Star.

"I longed to return home but could not come earlier because of various reasons," Bimal said, describing the camp life as 'harrowing'.

Bintimoy Chakma, Kanti Rani, Kanchan, Sudipta, Mohini, Maya Larma, Shefall, Nishi Kumar and a number of other refugees expressed similar feelings.

Several hundred people of the area thronged the riverbank to witness the second phase of repatriation which resumed today after a gap of several months. The process was interrupted due to some hitches on either side.

Some 50,000 tribal people

See Page 12 Col 1

29 investigation centres to be set up to check crimes

The National Implementation Committee for Administrative Reforms (NICAR) yesterday in its 81st meeting decided to set up 39 investigation centres across the country to eradicate crimes, maintain law and order, take cases and help expedite investigation process, reports BBS.

The meeting held at the International Conference Centre, with Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia in the chair, decided to man each of these investigation centres with 21 police personnel including two sub-inspectors.

It also laid importance on further slashing the unproductive expenditures and siphoning those resources to the people programmes like setting up hospitals, constructing houses, roads, bridges, cul-

See Page 12 Col 7

Delhi SAARC summit Apr 16-17 likely

The 8th SAARC Summit is expected to be held in New Delhi from April 16-17 next year, diplomatic sources in Dhaka said yesterday, reports UNB.

An Indian proposal to this effect is likely to be endorsed by the forthcoming meeting of the SAARC Council of Ministers comprising foreign ministers of the member countries.

The 7th SAARC Summit held in Dhaka in April, 1993, decided that New Delhi would host the next summit in December, 1994. But India has proposed to postpone the summit assigning the reason of its state elections.

A two-day conference of the SAARC Council of Ministers will begin in Dhaka on July 30. Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia, the current chairperson of the SAARC, will inaugurate the

meeting at the International Conference Centre.

The association grouping Bhutan, Bangladesh, India, the Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka, was formally launched in 1985 to promote the socio-economic condition of more than one billion people in the region.

Foreign Office sources said yesterday that preparations to hold the 14th SAARC Council of Ministers meeting in Dhaka had almost been finalised.

The council would review the progress achieved in different sectors of the 10-year-old association, besides fixing the summit date and recommendations for new action programme.

The ministerial meeting will be preceded by meetings of the SAARC Standing Co-

See Page 12 Col 6

Points of hits on Jupiter still glowing

Final impact comes today

GREENBELT, July 21: The second and third blow from the comet train's triple whammy smash into the cloud tops of Jupiter on Thursday, delivering what one astronomer called 'the greatest one-two-three punch' ever, reports AP.

Fragment Q2 hit the planet on Wednesday, and expert comet watchers said fragments R and S were due Thursday. All were expected to hit so close together that marks left their passage would overlap.

That will leave only one more fragment, called W, in the string of speeding rocks that started hitting Jupiter last Saturday. The final impact comes about 0800 GMT Friday.

The triple whammy — three comet fragments hitting close together just 20 hours apart — could create chemical reactions not seen during the single impacts earlier.

If the triple whammy occurs as expected, it will put three explosive fireballs within a small area. The effects are uncertain, but experts said it could create chemical reactions that would not result from a single impact.

Each of the three pieces is only slightly smaller than fragment G, the largest of the comet shards. G exploded with a force estimated at about 6 million megatons of TNT, an explosive power far larger than all of the world's nuclear bombs put together.

Impact points of earlier comet hits were still glowing with heat on Wednesday.

"We're really interested in seeing what happens when the fragments land almost on top of each other," said Lucky McFadden, a University of Maryland astronomer. "It could be a real boiling pot."

Stee Maran, a National Aeronautics and Space Administration astronomer,

called the triple impact "the greatest one-two-three punch of all time."

McFadden said the three fragments will hit the top of Jupiter's cloud cover so close together that their "footprints," or impact marks, will overlap. He said the resulting circular scars should resemble three of the famed Olympic rings.

See Page 12 Col 8



The photo of the impact of Fragment G released Wednesday by NASA. The fireball is seen 12 minutes after it hit the Jupiter.

— AFP photo

'BNP, AL both backing fundamentalist forces'

By Staff Correspondent

Authors, poets, teachers, actors and leading members of the various professions at a rally in the city yesterday called upon the conscious section of the society to come forward to resist the fundamentalist bid to get a blasphemy law enacted.

They said the religion peddlers were desperately trying for a blasphemy law to suppress the freedom of thought and expression of the progressive writers, journalists and thinkers.

The speakers accused the ruling Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) of patronising the fundamentalists and criticised the largest opposition party Awami League (AL) for providing political shelter to the fundamentalists.

They maintained that the free-thinking and progressive-minded people were now left with no option but to fight back the revival of religion peddlers for the sake of the progress of the nation.

The rally was attended by several hundred writers, university teachers, film makers, painters, journalists and cultural activists.

Organised by the Lekhak Shibir, the rally, held in front of the Jatiya Press Club, was addressed by Professor Sirajul Islam Chowdhury, Shamshur Rahman, Anu Muhammad, Syed Shamsul Huq, Syed Hassan

See Page 12 Col 3

Removal of NU VC demanded

By DU Correspondent

Different organisations yesterday condemned the incident at the National University (NU), Gazipur, where the playing of the national anthem was not included in the opening session of its first Senate meeting held last Tuesday.

The teachers of Dhaka University, while condemning the incident, demanded removal of the Vice Chancellor of the National University.

The Dhaka University

See Page 12 Col 6

Two women murdered

By Staff Correspondent

Two women were allegedly murdered in separate incidents in the city yesterday.

One woman received fatal bullet wounds in Begunbari and died at the hospital.

The body of a housewife was also recovered from a hut in Shapubagh and police arrested the husband.

Suraya Begum, 40, who suffered bullet wounds in her chest and hands, died on way to the Dhaka Medical College

See Page 12 Col 1

Kuwait's 'no' to Islam as sole source of law

KUWAIT, July 21: In a blow to Muslim fundamentalists, Kuwait's Emir has turned down a parliamentary request to amend the constitution and make Islam the sole source of law, newspapers reported Thursday, reports AP.

With all respect for the good spirit in which this proposal was made, the full implementation of Islamic law in the country does not need an amendment in the constitution," the Al-Anbaa daily quoted the royal family as telling parliament in a letter.

Government officials were not available for comment as Kuwait headed into the Muslim

See Page 12 Col 2

Yemeni leaders to meet in Paris

UNITED NATIONS, July 21: The United Nations said Wednesday that Northern and Southern Yemeni officials will meet in Paris next week to begin reconciliation talks after their two-month civil war, reports Reuter.

Spokesman Ahmed Fawzi said special UN envoy Lakhdar Brahimi would arrive in Paris July 28 and remain there for three days to mediate a resumption of the national dialogue.



Such sights are very common — vendors occupying the pavements and sizeable portions of busy city roads

— Star photo

City traffic jam — II

Vendors occupy pavements

By Masud Hasan Khan

A joke popular in the political circle of Dhaka is that any one trying to commit a political suicide should touch the capital's unspecified number of street vendors.

Besides the lighter undertone of the joke, the vendors spreading over the 162.94 kilometer long pavement network in Dhaka have gained quite a bargaining capability in the election of a mayor or fall of another.

Mayor of Dhaka Mohammad Hanif, however, disagrees with the notion but believes that the street hawkers are a section of desperate fellows trying to make out some kind of a living for them, according to an interview with The Daily Star, immediately after his election.

He argues that proliferation of street vendors in the city cannot be checked until more serious issues like economic situation and migration of people from the rural areas were addressed.

Now, the police patrol trucks silently pass as the pedestrians and vendors jostle on the pavements where bazaar have cropped up in the absence of law's strong hand.

"If the pavements are for pedestrians, then its time that these should now be shifted to the middle of the road," quipped a pedestrian, Akhter Hossain, as this correspondent sought his reaction at a bus bay at Farm Gate.

The wide avenue that started from the over bridge

towards the Jatiya Sangsad had narrowed down to a lane, clogging traffic movement.

A kitchen market has comfortably grown on the pavement, the people walk on the roadside while the buses, tempos and minibuses have to stop in the middle.

"Why should I move, I am paying for it," said Jonab Ali, a vendor who sat on the Farmgate pavement with a basket of cucumber. Vendors of the Farmgate area said they regularly pay 'taxes' to the 'local strongmen' to have their rooms confirmed.

Farmgate is the site where a doctor was beaten to death by a section of vendors last year simply because he refused to

See Page 12 Col 8



Tony Blair made British Labour Party leader

LONDON, July 21: Tony Blair, a 41-year-old moderate lawyer, was overwhelmingly elected leader of the British Labour Party today and served notice he was bent on becoming the next prime minister, reports AFP.

Blair got 57 per cent of the vote by nearly one million Labour MPs and party and union members at a leadership conference here, replacing John Smith, who died of a heart attack in May.

"I am ready to serve," he said in his acceptance speech to cheering party members.

"Together, we will make this a turning point... change the course of history and build a new land of opportunity."

See Page 12 Col 2

Attack on Indian HC cars in Islamabad

ISLAMABAD, July 21: Two cars belonging to the Indian High Commission in Islamabad and the Consul General in Karachi were attacked this evening by groups suspected to be from Pakistan intelligence agencies and their windowscreens smashed this evening, an Indian High Commission spokesman said, reports PTI.

The driver of the car in Islamabad, Pillai received injuries when the vehicle's windscreen was stoned at 1830 hours. Pillai was returning to the high commission after dropping three Indian officials home, the spokesman said.

Immediately after receiving the reports regarding the two incidents, the Indian High Commissioner, S K Lambah spoke to the Foreign Secretary Najmuddin Shaikh on telephone and conveyed New Delhi's strong protest.

Bodos kill 11 Muslims in Assam

GUWAHATI, India, July 21: In an escalation of ethnic trouble, Bodo-tribesmen shot, hacked and burned to death 11 Muslim settlers in northeastern India in retaliation for the death of a Bodo woman, news reports said Thursday, says AP.

The riot on Wednesday was the fourth deadly clash in nine months between the Bodos and Muslim migrants who have been flooding into the tribal area of the Indian state of Assam, in the worst incident last October, as many as 40 Muslim settlers were killed.

Worried by the sudden spurt of violence, the state government asked the army to take control of the Barpeta district, said Assam's Chief Minister Hiteswar Saikia. Barpeta is about 150 kilometers (93 miles) north of the state capital, Guwahati.

The latest bloodletting began when migrants attacked a Bodo village and killed a 55-year-old woman to avenge the death of two settlers in a previous clash. Gangs of Bodos responded by raiding 16 Muslim settlements, killing at least 11 people.

S Africa 244 for six at Lord's

Sports Reporter

South Africa were 244 for six wickets at close on the opening day of their first cricket Test against England at Lord's yesterday, according to BBC monitored in Dhaka late last night.

Winning the toss the South Africans, playing in England after more than a quarter-century, owed their total mainly to a captain's knock of 105 by Kepler Wessels. Opener Gary Kirsten made 72.

Darren Gough claimed three of the six South African wickets at a cost of 43 runs.