



Inside Today

Article

International Trade Pessimism: The Old and the New

by Abdul Bayes
Page 4

International

Delhi tightens security around Israeli, 5 west Asian missions

Myanmar opposition urges UN for mediation
Page 5

Business

Japan sets \$ 428b budget for next fiscal
Pages 6, 7

Rising Stars

We liberated our little country; The pied piper of Buenos Aires; A dress for Jashu; Loneliness; and Jokes
Page 8

National

Contributions of BARD in poverty alleviation
Page 9

Metropolitan

Dhaka Day by Day

In Black and White
Page 3

NEWS BRIEFS

Proposed transport strike called off

The Ad-hoc committee of the Bangladesh Sarak Paribahan Samik Federation has called off their token strike scheduled for tomorrow. The decision was taken yesterday by the Federation following a fruitful meeting with the Bangladesh Road Transport Authority (BRTA), reports UNB.

CU AC meet Aug 4

CHITTAGONG, July 29: The meeting of the academic council of the Chittagong University will now be held on August 4, instead of July 30 in the conference room of the administrative building, a university press release said here today, reports BSS.

Trawler capsizes in Surma: 1 dies

From Our Correspondent
SYLHET, July 29: One person died and 25 others were injured when a trawler with about 100 passengers on board capsized in the river Surma at Chhatak last night. The victim, Akiz Ali, 50, hailed from village Shibpur under Dourabazar thana of Sunamganj.

DUJ rally tomorrow

The Dhaka Union of Journalists (DUJ) shifted its scheduled rally in front of the Jatiya Press Club today to protest retrenchment of journalists and the closure of the Daily Janata, due to the general strike called by the Opposition. The rally will now be held tomorrow at 11 am. Meanwhile, the DUJ Janata Unit observed a sit-in before its Shantinagar office yesterday noon. They will observe a similar programme at its Tejgaon office at 7 pm today, reports UNB.

Defamation suit against Sharif

ISLAMABAD, July 29: The Pakistan government has filed a defamation suit against Opposition Leader Nawaz Sharif for accusing President Farooq Ahmed Leghari of corruption, reports said today, reports AFP.



Flags of the seven South Asian countries flutter at the Dhaka Sheraton Hotel where the participants of the two-day 14th SAARC Council of Ministers beginning today will be putting up. — Star photo

SAARC FMs' meet begins today

By Staff Correspondent

The two-day meeting of the 14th Council of Ministers of the SAARC countries begins in the capital today.

SAARC Chairperson and Bangladesh Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia will open the meeting at the plenary hall of the International Conference Centre (ICC) at 10:30 this morning.

The one-hour opening session will be followed by plenary meetings of the Council of Ministers spread over today

FMs of Lanka, Maldives arrive

Foreign Ministers of Sri Lanka and the Maldives, A C S Hameed and Fatullah Jameel, arrived here last night to take part in the two-day 14th session of the SAARC Council of Ministers beginning here today, reports BSS.

They were received at the Zia International Airport by the Foreign Minister, A S M Mostafizur Rahman, Bangladesh

See Page 12 Col 8

SAARC has covered areas of ties: Joshi

Ram Hari Joshi, Minister for Tourism and Civil Aviation of Nepal, arrived in Dhaka yesterday to attend the SAARC council of ministers meeting and said the regional forum has covered a large area of co-operation of collective benefits.

See Page 12 Col 7

meed and Bhutan's Lypno Dawa Tsering are expected to attend.

Indian External Affairs Minister Dinesh Singh, who has expressed his inability to attend, will be represented by R L Bhatia, State Minister for External Affairs. Nepal will be represented by Ram Hari Joshi, Minister for Tourism and Civil Aviation.

An important aspect of the present SAARC meeting will be

India ready to talk to Pakistan: Bhatia

Indian State Minister for External Affairs R L Bhatia said here yesterday that his country is always ready to talk to Pakistan for resolving all bilateral issues, including Kashmir, reports UNB.

"India is always for dialogue. This dialogue alone can solve all bilateral issues", he told newsmen on arrival at the Dhaka airport in the afternoon. See Page 12 Col 7

India must remove 'irritants': Aseff

Pakistan Foreign Minister said here yesterday India must remove 'irritants' with her neighbours in the interest of peace and stability in the region, reports UNB.

"India has got irritants not only with Pakistan over the Kashmir dispute but with every single country of the SAARC", Sarder Aseff Ahmad Ali told newsmen at Zia International Airport on his arrival here yesterday morning to attend the SAARC Council of Ministers Meeting beginning in Dhaka today.

Asked if there is any possibility of immediate talks between New Delhi and Islamabad over the outstanding issue over which the two countries had fought two wars, Aseff said "We are always ready to hold negotiation ... but it's up to India".

The Pakistan Foreign Minister was received at the airport by his Bangladesh counterpart ASM Mostafizur Rahman.

Bangladesh High Commissioner to Pakistan QAMR Rahim and Pakistan High Commissioner to Bangladesh Anwar Kemal were present at the airport.

Pakistan Foreign Secretary See Page 12 Col 8

Students, police clash: 20 hurt at Zero Point

By Staff Correspondent

At least 20 people, including a police constable, were injured when the activists of the Sampradaiyikta Birodhi Chhatra Samaj clashed with police near the Zero Point yesterday evening. The Chhatra Samaj activists brought out a procession at around 6:30 in the evening after holding a rally near the Jatiya Press Club.

Witnesses said, police clubbed some of the processionists for hurling stones at passing vehicles. Immediately, the violence spread to other areas. It lasted for nearly 20 minutes.

The processionists exploded home-made crackers and pelted stones at the police who in turn lobbed teargas shells and even fired at them.

A constable, Nizamuddin who suffered splinter injury, was admitted to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) in a critical condition. Later he was shifted to the CMH.

Thirteen other persons, most of them students, were also admitted to the DMCH with crackers wounds, cuts and bruises.

Police made four arrests from the spot.

Jamaat-Shibir activists attack Instt of Fine Arts

By Staff Correspondent

A group of Jamaat-Shibir activists yesterday allegedly attacked the Institute of Fine Arts where a photo exhibition of late Jahanara Imam is on.

Ektattor Jattrey, the organiser of the exhibition alleged that the armed activists on several trucks shot arrows and hurled stones at the building on the Dhaka University campus.

The attackers fled after the local people resisted them. The exhibition will continue for another two days from August 1.

14 hurt as marchers, cops clash in city

By Staff Correspondent

At least 14 persons were injured in clashes between police and activists of the United Action Council (UAC) who organised a "Quran Day" long-march and rally at the Manik

Child saved from angry mob

By Staff Correspondent

An eight-year-old boy was saved from the wrath of a frenzied mob in the city yesterday thanks to the bravery of a policeman.

Activists of the United Action Council (UAC), an umbrella organisation of 13 religion-based parties who gathered for their 'long march' rally at the Manik Mia Avenue yesterday afternoon nearly lynched the poor boy, a street urchin, on suspicion that he was carrying an explosive.

See Page 12 Col 2

Mia Avenue in the city yesterday.

Of the injured, six are policemen and the rest activists of various religion-based political parties gathered under the umbrella of the UAC to protest anti-religious activities in the country.

Clashes occurred when some UAC activists, agitated by the discovery of several yet unexplained home-made explosives near the meeting podium, gathered near the Sangsad Bhaban and adopted a militant posture. Police on duty asked them to disperse. At this an altercation ensued and at one stage the police resorted to firing rubber bullets, injuring several of the agitated UAC activists.

In retaliation, the activists reportedly opened fire on the police, inflicting shotgun wounds upon the persons of a

See Page 12 Col 1

Islamic groups vow to gear up campaign

By Staff Correspondent

The United Action Council (UAC) of the Islamic parties will demonstrate in front of the Jatiya Sangsad (JS) on the opening day of Parliament's session to press home its 13-point demand, including passage of a blasphemy law.

The programme was announced by the UAC, a combine of thirteen pro-Islamic parties, from a 'grand rally' held at the Manik Mia Avenue yesterday afternoon.

More than 25 pro-Islamic political leaders and mullahs addressed the rally for more than four hours beginning a 2 pm.

Some 35 thousand supporters and activists, coming from different parts of the country, listened to the speakers patiently and chanted slogans demanding hanging of those allegedly trying to belittle Islam and its holy book.

Most of the speakers, including Fazlul Huq of the Islamic Shasantantra Andolon (ISA), Anwar Zahid of the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) and Nazmul Huq of the Jatiya Jubo Command were very critical of the Khaleda Zia government for its 'visible' reluctance to enact a blasphemy law.

They also demanded that anti-Islamic activities of the NGOs be controlled, newspapers propagating against Islamic ideals be closed down and anti-Islamic authors, including Taslima Nasreen be hanged immediately.

ISA leader Fazlul Huq told the audience that Taslima Nasreen and her cronies were the agents of imperialism and that they were working for the anti-Islamic forces of the world.

Referring to the government's alleged indifference towards Taslima and reluctance to enact a blasphemy law providing for severe punishment for anti-Islamic activities, Huq said, complete Islamisation of the state was the only solution to the present problem.

Claiming himself to be a true fundamentalist, Huq asked his audience to start a crusade against the un-Islamic Constitution of the country.

Anwar Zahid of the NDA said, the Muslims of the country were now left with no option but to follow the Islamic path.

See Page 12 Col 4

5 nations okay sanctions against Serbs today

GENEVA, July 29: Senior envoys from the United States, Russia, Britain, France and Germany met Friday to discuss ways to punish Bosnian Serbs for rejecting a peace plan the five nations described as a take-it-or-leave-it deal, reports AP.

Foreign ministers from the five nations will approve the package of reprisals Saturday to try to increase the international isolation of the Serbs and pressure them into ending the 27-month-old civil war.

Defiant Bosnian Serbs, whose parliament Thursday again refused to accept a map of territorial divisions, have warned that reprisals by the five nations will escalate the conflict.

Bosnia's Muslim-led government and Croatia have approved the pact, which would pare the Serbs' territorial holdings by a third to 49 per

cent of the former Yugoslav Republic's land. A Muslim-Croat federation would control the rest.

Diplomats, who asked not to be identified, said there was unanimity on widening economic sanctions against the Serbs. But there was no consensus on military action and weapons sales to the Muslim-Croat federation.

Under the proposed plan, diplomats said the first step would be to clamp down on imports still entering Serb-dominated Yugoslavia and on to the Bosnian Serbs. The embargo would likely be widened to include financial transactions and block vital remittances from other countries.

This may require an additional UN Security Council resolution.

As a final step, the arms embargo against the Muslim-Croat federation would go.

13 top Kashmiri militant leaders arrested

SRINAGAR, India, July 29: At least one person was killed here today when Kashmiri Muslims clashed with Indian troops during protests against the arrest of several top leaders of the Kashmiri Muslim separatist movement, reports AFP.

Police opened fire on a crowd in the city's Maisuma district, killing a vegetable vendor, after protestors torched two vehicles during the unrest, police said.

The Muslim-majority Kashmir valley was paralysed meanwhile by a day-long general strike called by Muslim militant groups to condemn the 13 arrests.

Yasin Malik, head of the outlawed Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front, Shakeel Ahmad Bakshi, leader of the banned Islamic students league, and 11 other prominent Muslim separatist leaders were arrested overnight during a protest at Kashmir's holiest Islamic shrine, the Hazrat

bal Mosque.

They were demanding the removal of bunkers manned by Indian paramilitary troops from around the shrine, which houses a whisker Kashmiri Muslims believe came from the beard of the Prophet Mohammed (SM).

The Muslim separatist leaders were driven away in a bus to an unknown destination by Indian troops.

Thousands of Srinagar residents poured into the streets here today to denounce the arrests, shouting anti-Indian slogans and calling for the release of Malik, Bakshi and the others, witnesses said.

Chants of 'we want freedom' and 'God is great' reverberated in the narrow alleys of Srinagar, they said, as protests broke out in at least half-a-dozen neighbourhoods.

Shops, offices, schools and banks were closed and traffic was off the roads following the call for a protest strike, residents said.

Countrywide hartal today

By Staff Correspondent

Different political parties and organisations have called a day-long country-wide hartal today to protest Tuesday's incidents in Chittagong.

The Awami League has called a half-day hartal from 6 am to 2 pm while the anti-communal students group will enforce the strike till dusk.

At least six people were killed and many others injured in clashes between rival groups during a meeting of the Jamaat-e-Islami at Lalidighi Maidan in Chittagong last Tuesday.

The Mukjoddha Sanghati Parishad, Bangabandhu Smriti Parishad, AL Shechasebok Party, Bangladesh Samajtantrik Dal, Samajtantrik Chhatra Front, Bangladesh Chhatra League (B-K), Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal (JSD-Iau) and the left Democratic Front have extended their support to the hartal.

Different organisations brought out processions in the city yesterday in support of the hartal.

Newspaper vehicles and emergency medical transports will be exempted from the hartal, organisers said.

Make hartal a success: AL

The Awami League appealed

to the people to observe country-wide half-day hartal to protest Tuesday's killing in Chittagong by what it alleged, the anti-liberation Jamaat-Shibir forces under police patronisation, reports UNB.

In a statement, Awami League General Secretary Zillur Rahman said there was no scope of resorting to religion-based politics in independent Bangladesh.

AL workers hurt in bomb blasts, police attacks

Several Awami League leaders and workers were injured in bomb blasts and police attack on a rally in front of the party's central office at Bangabandhu Avenue yesterday, UNB reported last night.

It quoted witnesses as saying that several bombs were exploded near the Awami League office in the afternoon when a rally of the party was being held.

Monaem Sarker, Prof Azad Chowdhury, Ajoy Kar Khokon, Kalkobad, Siddique and Abdul Matin were among those injured.

In a statement, Awami League General Secretary Zillur Rahman protested baton-charge and tear-gas on their rally. He alleged that police and BDR were on the one hand giving protection to the meeting of 'war criminal' Golam Azam and on the other resorting to attacks on the Awami League's 'peaceful' rally.

Prokrichi plans series of strikes

By Staff Correspondent

The members of the Prokrichi-BCS Central Action Council will abstain from their duties for a week next month to press home their demands.

The three-hour strike beginning on August 20, will be observed throughout the country as part of the Prokrichi's on-going campaign for the restructuring of the bureaucracy.

Talking to The Daily Star last night, senior leaders of the Prokrichi said, the functional cadre members would stop providing priority services to the bureaucrats on administration cadre officials.

"From August 20, our doctor members will not provide priority treatment to members of the administration cadre, nor will they render utility services on a priority basis," explained one leader.

The planned three-hour

See Page 12 Col 7

2 boys drown in city

By DMCH Correspondent

Two young boys drowned in a pond near the Agrani Balika Bidyalaya in the city's Azampur Colony yesterday.

Mohammad Alamgir, 16, and Nurul Islam, 15, reportedly went for a bath in the pond after playing football in a nearby field in the morning.

Local people recovered their bodies from the pond at around 11 am and sent them to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH), police said.

Both the boys were residents of Sheikh Saheb Bazar under Lalbagh Police Station.