

The Midnight File

9 killed as building collapses in Pakistan

ISLAMABAD, Dec 23: Nine people were killed today when a dilapidated building collapsed at Faisalabad in Punjab province officials said. The building collapsed when a wall caved in and roof debris buried the people inside. The dead were all from the same family reports AFP.

Yeltsin fires mayor of Vladivostok

MOSCOW, Dec 23: President Boris Yeltsin fired Vladivostok's first democratically elected mayor Friday, nine months after federal riot police in the port city forcefully removed him from office on corruption charges. Viktor Cherepkov, a former submarine captain who was elected last year, had not tried to return to the job since the storming of city hall last March 17, reports AP.

Japanese troupe enthral audience at Shilpakala

The visiting Japanese troupe presented a colourful programme highlighting their traditional culture at the Shilpakala Academy auditorium in the city yesterday, reports UNB. Jointly organised by the Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy, Embassy of Japan and Japan Foundation, the cultural teams presented eight items, including folk-song, folk-song with dance and music on Tsugaru-Shamisen and Shaku-hachi. Speaking on the occasion, the Foreign Minister said Bangladesh has an excellent bilateral relationship with Japan and our cultural agreement with Japan reflect significant progress in this field. He also lauded Japan's effort towards maintenance of the cultural heritage and expressed Bangladesh's determination to preserve its traditional culture. Audiences were charmed at the performance of Japanese Karens kill 15 Myanmar troops

Baby killed

From Page 1 Col 5 fighter squad said, they rescued another middle-aged woman and another baby from the slum and sent them to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) with burn injuries. They could not be identified immediately. Fire men rushed to the spot and took almost two hours to douse the smouldering debris, according to a Fire Service spokesman. Fire Service officials say, the blaze at the cotton processing factory and its godown at Senpara, Mirpur originated from a short-circuit. However, the matter is still under investigations, an officer said. Most of the machinery of the factory and the processed and raw cotton in the godown were gutted. The loss could not be estimated immediately and no casualties were reported.

Gas network

From Page 1 Col 4 Field Limited (SGFL) at Kailastila here today. Under the project, he said, three new wells at Rashidpur in Sylhet will be drilled and Ashuganj-Bakhrabad gas transmission line will be completed along with installing system control and data acquisition (SCADA). SCADA is the central control computer system. The energy minister was informed that the Multicellar Sibe Tarbo Expander (MSTE) plant of the SGFL, first of its kind in Asia, will be commissioned by the end of January next. The plant, being implemented with the financial assistance of ODA, will process the natural gas liquefied (NGL) produced in the SGFL and thereby will augment the country's gas production from the present capacity of 680 million cubic feet to 730 million cubic feet. The minister was further informed that SGFL, a gas producing company in the country, has taken up the appraisal work of Kailastila new gas well No. 4 at a cost of Tk 25 crore. The work of the project, being implemented with the own resources of SGFL is now nearing completion. The energy minister also visited the MSTE plant.

Rao: Opposition

From Page 1, Col 4 Prime Minister is corrupt, the MPs chanted non-stop. Rao, who was meeting Russian Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin, was not present in the House. But furious opposition deputies demanded that he come and answer their charges. Proceedings in the House were suspended till the lunch recess but finding the members unrelenting, Speaker Shivaraj Patil adjourned the House sine die at 1600 hours. In the Rajya Sabha, similar agrimonious scenes prevailed with the vociferous opposition members saying the resignations had made it clear the Prime Minister was 'corrupt'.



Russian soldiers warm up around a fire in the town of Khassayurt at the Chechen-Daghestan border yesterday as they wait for instructions to storm Grozny, the capital of Chechnya. — AFP photo

Ceasefire in Bosnia takes effect today

SARAJEVO, Dec 23: The Muslim-led Bosnian government today signed a ceasefire agreement with Bosnian Serbs to take effect from noon (1100 GMT) tomorrow, the UN said, report Reuters, AP. A text agreed by UN envoy Yasushi Akashi with the Serbs earlier in the day was approved at the Bosnian presidency, allowing the ceasefire negotiated by former UN President Jimmy Carter to take effect a day late. The ceasefire was delayed because Akashi was still discussing the terms with Serbs when this noon deadline agreed by Carter was reached. The text was simplified to prevent obstacles becoming sticking points in UN efforts to secure an immediate end to almost 33 months of fighting. Quoted Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadzic as saying that even before the agreement formally goes into effect, his troops would hold their fire until fired upon. Remaining differences prevented a ceasefire from taking effect at noon (1100 GMT) today, as agreed by both sides with Carter earlier this week. The White House Thursday warmed up its praise of Carter's peace mission to Bosnia, saying it "may have helped." Spokeswoman Dee Dee Myers said the United States remained sceptical of Bosnian Serb intentions under a ceasefire deal brokered by Carter. But it appears that President Carter may have helped move the Bosnian Serbs closer to returning to the negotiating table and I think that's certainly a good thing and we're grateful, she said. On the eve of the planned ceasefire, two shells slammed into a Sarajevo marketplace, killing two people and injuring seven others. UN officials did not say

India, Russia fail to reach accord on N-plant

NEW DELHI, Dec 23: India and Russia signed sweeping accords today to reinforce military, space and trade relations but failed to reach agreement on Russian help for nuclear power plants here, officials said, reports AFP. Russian Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin and his Indian counterpart PV Narasimha Rao signed eight agreements after pledging to further strengthen Indo-Russian relations. The two sides put on hold a pact on the avoidance of double taxation, but took a step towards settling the thorny issue of India's huge debt to Russia, said Yuri Kotov, chief of the Russian Foreign Ministry's Asia Division. Chernomyrdin and Rao signed an accord on military and technical cooperation between the two nations until the year 2000, and another on space cooperation, he said. "The agreement between Russia and the Indian space research organisation is for peaceful purposes," Kotov said without elaborating. India purchased cryogenic rocket engines from Russia last year but a deal to also supply the technology needed to build the engines was called off under US pressure, which argued that they could be used to launch ballistic missiles. Chernomyrdin, whose arrival here was delayed one day by his brother's death, said earlier today he would discuss the delivery of Russian rocket and space technology to India, which launched a satellite launch rocket in October. "I hope our talks will be fruitful," the Russian leader said before his meeting with the Indian premier. A spokesman for Rao said the two sides signed an agreement on the promotion and mutual protection of investments but put back the signing of the accord on avoidance of double taxation to a future date. Diplomatic sources said they also put on hold an agreement on Russian help for the setting up of nuclear power plants in India and described the talks on the key issue as "continuing." India enjoyed close ties with the former Soviet Union, its main supplier of military hardware, but relations between New Delhi and Moscow cooled after the new Russian Federation insisted on hard currency payments for equipment. India hopes to bag licences to assemble Russian Mig 29 jets, T-72 tanks and other hardware which it previously received from the former Soviet Union. New Delhi also wants to buy 36 Mig-29s worth around 780 million dollars. Moscow has offered 30, Su-30 fighter-bombers to India on credit and proposed granting a licence for production of the aircraft.

Kamal again urges Khaleda, Hasina for understanding

President of the Gano Forum, Dr Kamal Hossain, said people had voted for democracy, rule of law and development and not for creating such a situation in parliament, reports BSS. Speaking at a two-day central council meeting of the Forum, Dr Kamal said people were suffering from fear and despair centering on the threat of resignation announcement by the members of the opposition parties from Sangsad on December 28. Dr Kamal Hossain reiterated his call to the Prime Minister and Leader of the Opposition to reach an understanding in the interest of the nation and the people. Member of the council of presidents Advocate Zahirul Islam submitted report on political situation obtaining in the country and organisational activities in the meeting.

Non-stop action after Dec 27, says Zillur

Awami League General Secretary Zillur Rahman urged the people to take all-out preparation for oust-government agitation after December 28, reports UNB. Addressing a rally at Gulshan Natun Bazar premises yesterday afternoon, he blamed the government's stubbornness and autocratic mentality for the present political crisis. If the BNP fails to meet the demand for a caretaker government by December 27, non-stop action programmes will be announced to pull down this government and establish rights to vote and food, he said. Presided over by local AL leader Labiuddin, the rally was addressed by Shahara Khatun, Laizuzzaman, Abbasullah Sikdar and Dr Shahjahan.

DCC action

From Page 1 Col 7 however, said they evicted some 700 hawkers from in and around the New Market last month. But many of them have returned to their places by now, he admitted. He said it was tough to go for a massive action programme against the illegal occupants. "It would be like a 'battle' if we go for stern action since the illegal occupants are organised and in some cases they have connection with different political groups," he said. The DCC has no force of its own to fight against them, he said adding, "even sometimes we have to abandon our regular operation due to lack of adequate police force." Political turmoil and instability also barred the corporation from taking any strong action which, according to him, may have impact on political atmosphere since the Mayor is a political figure. The DCC Mayor could not be contacted for his comments. Talking to this correspondent chief revenue officer of DCC Solaiman Mallick admitted that the response to the notice for vacating occupied shops and spaces was rather poor. But he claimed eviction drives in the New Market and Ahsan Manzil areas had helped recover most of the illegally occupied shops. He, however, could not give an exact figure of such shops. "We are continuing our eviction drive although sometime we are delayed because of a lack of adequate police force," he said. "We are also going to invite applications for allotment of the recovered shops." He contradicted a statement by one of his colleague that political influence could hamper the corporation's eviction programme.

2 murdered

From Page 1 Col 7 the scene. Tomal was also living in the same area. He was also an unemployed, local people said. Subjagh police went to the spot after the murder and recovered two unused bullets from the spot. Kamra police took up the investigation into the murder of Selim while Subjagh police was to investigate into the Tomal murder-case. They, according to police, interrogated several persons regarding the crimes.

Prof Azharul Islam dead

Prof Azharul Islam, a former member of the provincial assembly of the then East Pakistan and also a member of the Public Service Commission, died of a heart attack at his Azampur residence in the city last night, family sources said. He was 72, reports BSS. He left behind his wife, three daughters. He will be buried today at his family graveyard at Kuraila village in Madhupur, Tangail.

DOWN TO EARTH Guest Birds On Annual Visit

By ASM Nurunnabi With the advent of winter, a large number of migratory birds arrive in this country from colder climes in Siberia and Europe. Their arrival reaches its peak in January-February. They start returning to their original habitats from April. According to ornithologists, a total of 632 species of birds are found in Bangladesh of which nearly 200 are migratory. Of these migratory birds, nearly 25 species are ducks that fall prey to the poachers the most. The other duck species are pintail, brahminy, bare-headed shoveller, common poad, common ruddy, shell topped and lag goose. The ornithologists have identified the impulse that drives the migration of birds of many species. According to them, most species of birds, because of their high metabolic rate, require a rich, abundant supply of food at frequent intervals. Such a situation does not prevail throughout the year in any given region. Birds have thus evolved a highly efficient means for travelling swiftly over long distances with great economy of energy. The migration flights follow specific routes sometimes well defined over long distances. The speed of migratory birds depends largely on the species and the type of terrain covered. Most migrations occur at relatively low altitudes. Most birds are gregarious during migration, even those that display a fierce individualism at all other times. Birds of similar habits sometimes travel together. It was estimated by some ornithologists that the volume of their arrival last year was 40 per cent less as compared with the previous year. The position of their influx during this year is yet to be finally estimated, but it may be remembered that these birds are not only good intercontinental

Berlusconi caretaker PM of Italy

ROME, Dec 23: Silvio Berlusconi, now caretaker premier, kept up his press for early elections Friday and asserted he was the best choice to lead the country to the vote, reports AP. Berlusconi, who submitted his resignation to President Oscar Luigi Scalfaro on Thursday, insisted that only he could lead Italy in this time of scandals, political change and reform. But on Friday he did admit that someone else could conceivably replace him. "I don't believe I'm the only premier possible," he told a year-end news conference when asked if he'd be willing to let someone else be premier in order to save his conservative coalition. But he added: "I made it clear (to Scalfaro) that I remain it would be an error to change the composition of this government for the brief period that separates us from the necessary elections." If Scalfaro dissolves parliament, elections could come as early as late March — the one-year anniversary of Berlusconi's sweep into power. But many analysts have seen the possibil-

Cabinet reshuffle in South Korea

SEOUL, Dec 23: South Korean President Kim Young Sam today made a sweeping cabinet reshuffle, replacing Foreign Minister Han Sung-ju and a dozen other members, a presidential spokesman said. Han will be replaced by Gong Ro-myung, a career diplomat who is now ambassador to Japan. Deputy Prime Minister Hong J Ae-Hyong, who is also the Economic Planning Minister, will head the powerful Finance and Economics Board. This was created by the merger of the finance ministry and economic planning board under a government reorganisation plan. Hong will remain as the deputy prime minister. Those dropped from the cabinet included Defence Minister Rhee Byoung-Tae, Trade Minister Kim Chul-Su and Interior Minister Choi Hyung-Woo, the spokesman said. The new Defence Minister will be Lee Yang-Ho, Chairman of Joint Chiefs of Staff. An earlier report said: All South Korea's cabinet ministers except the Prime Minister resigned en masse today ahead of a scheduled cabinet reshuffle by President Kim Young Sam later in the day, a government spokesman said. Prime Minister Lee Hong-Koo, who gathered resignations in a cabinet meeting, was due to go to the presidential

Student jailed for mourning Kim's death

SEOUL, Dec 23: A South Korean court has sentenced a college student to two years in jail for mourning the death of North Korean leader Kim Il-Sung, officials said today, reports Reuters. A court official said Lee Young-Kyu, 23, a student leader of a provincial university, was jailed on Thursday for violating the national security law. The official said Lee was found guilty of taking part in a secret memorial service at the university with 10 other students and of leading illegal anti-government protests.

BNP leaders

From Page 1 Col 3 unless their demand was met. This source sounded quite confident that the new BNP plan would be acceptable to all three major opposition parties — the Awami League, the Jatiya Party and the Jamaat-e-Islami. When pressed to elaborate, the source would only say that the new ruling party plan would not mean a total capitulation to the Opposition. Although it may express the BNP's readiness to concede to the demand for a caretaker government to conduct future national elections after the expiry of the tenure of the Fifth Parliament, it would also lay down its own conditions for such an amendment to the Constitution. Party Secretary General and LCRD Minister Abdus Salam Talukdar, however, told this correspondent that there had been no change yet in the official party position regarding the Opposition demand. The BNP standing committee, the highest policy-planning organ of the party, is scheduled to meet Monday, December 26 to discuss the latest political situation. Meanwhile, Opposition Chief Whip Mohammad Nasim told The Daily Star last night that the threatened resignation seems inevitable because the ruling party has taken rigid stance against the Opposition demand. He said the leaders of the major opposition parties would meet Leader of the Opposition Sheikh Hasina at the Sangsad Bhawan this evening. He said that meeting would finalise the next course of action. Opposition sources also said they might call a countrywide hartal for three consecutive days from January 2. Mizan warns of oust-govt agitation CHANDPUR, Dec 23: Jatiya Party acting Chairman Mizanur Rahman Chowdhury today urged the ruling party to accept the demand for a caretaker government before the December 27 deadline and avert political crisis, reports UNB. Addressing a public meeting at the Baburhat High School ground in the afternoon, the JP leader said still there is time to accept the demand by showing respect to the people's will. otherwise, he warned, the oust-government agitation would begin with the opposition MPs resigning en masse from parliament on December 28. Mizan Chowdhury alleged repression on opposition workers, corruption and nepotism by the BNP government. He said that after assuming power, the prime minister could not fulfil any commitments made to the people.

Editor: Mahfuz Anam

Printed & Published by A. S. Mahmud, Managing Director, on behalf of Media World Ltd, 52, Motijheel C/A, Dhaka-1000, from City Publishing House Ltd, 90 Kakrail, Dhaka-1000. Editorial, News & Commercial Offices: House No: 11, Road No: 3, Dhanmandi B/A, Dhaka-1205. PABX: 600092-4, Commercial: 600091 (Direct), Fax No: 88-02-863036, GPO Box No: 3257, Cable: DAILYSTAR, DHAKA.

ঢাকা ওয়াসা বিজ্ঞপ্তি

ঢাকা মহানগরীর পানি সরবরাহ ব্যবস্থার উন্নয়ন সাধনের লক্ষ্যে তথা পানির লাইনের লিকের নির্ণয় ও অপচয় রোধ সম্পর্কিত কর্মসূচী বাস্তবায়নের জন্য ঢাকা ওয়াসা কর্তৃক নিয়োজিত উপদেষ্টা ফর্ম মেসার্স বেটস-আভান্সড জয়েন্টভেনচার প্রথমিক পর্যায়ে মডস জোন-৩ এর অধীন সাত মসজিদ রোড ও ধানমন্ডি লেক সংলগ্ন এলাকায় এবং মডস জোন-২ এর অধীন-শেখ সাহেব বাজার রোড ও লালাবাগ এলাকায় এক ব্যাপক জরিপ কাজ শুরু করেছে। জরিপ কাজ পরিচালনা কালে উক্ত উপদেষ্টা ফর্মের কর্মরত ব্যক্তি সরেজমিনে প্রতিটি হোন্ডিং এর মালিকের সাথে যোগাযোগ করে সংশ্লিষ্ট এলাকায় পানি সরবরাহ, পানির চাপ, পানি ব্যবহারের পরিমাণ এবং আনুসঙ্গিক বিষয়ে তথ্য সংগ্রহ করবেন। উল্লেখ্য যে, উল্লেখিত প্রক্রিয়ায় সংশ্লিষ্ট তথ্যাদি সংশ্লিষ্ট এলাকায় পানি সরবরাহ ব্যবস্থার উন্নয়নে বিশেষ সহায়ক হবে।

সর্বিক জনস্বার্থে সরেজমিনে কর্তব্যরত ঢাকা ওয়াসার উক্ত উপদেষ্টা ফর্মের কর্মীবৃন্দকে প্রয়োজনীয় সহায়তা ও সহযোগিতা প্রদানের জন্য সংশ্লিষ্ট এলাকাবাসীকে অনুরোধ করা গেলো।

ঢাকা ওয়াসা
ওয়াসা-ভারতঃ-৪৫১/৯৪

ওয়াসা

D-1307