

# Fresh fighting unless Serbs stop attacks, warns Bosnia

SARAJEVO, Dec 25: The Bosnian government threatened today to torpedo a day-old ceasefire and resume fighting unless Serbs stop attacking from neighbouring Croatia, reports AP.

Leaders of the Muslim-led government also said there would be no further peace talks with Bosnian Serbs until the assault in the embattled region of Bihać in the north-western part of the country stopped.

Most of Bosnia appeared calm one day after the start of the newest truce, but UN officials reported fighting south of Velika Kladusa, in the so-called Bihać pocket.

The attackers apparently were Croatian Serbs and their rebel Muslim allies, two groups that did not sign the one-week ceasefire agreement Friday between the government and Bosnian Serbs. The truce took effect Saturday.

The government, however, blamed the fighting in part on Bosnian Serbs.

"If those attacks don't stop, I am stating ... that there will be no ceasefire and that our

army will respond on other fronts," President Alija Izetbegovic told state radio.

The government asked for an urgent UN Security Council meeting on the Bihać fighting, the report said. Bosnian Vice President Ejup Ganic said Bosnian Serbs, wearing Croatian Serb and rebel Muslims insignia, were involved in the attacks.

Ganic said he asked the United Nations to call for NATO air strikes against Serb positions. That request was unlikely to be met.

The United Nations has become increasingly reluctant to call for NATO fire-power, and the Western allies have backed away from using force to bring peace to Bosnia.

In another threat to the ceasefire, Serbs in western Bosnia declared a general mobilisation "because of danger of Croatian aggression," the Bosnian Serb news agency SRNA reported. Croatian soldiers apparently are helping Bosnian Croats in their fight with the Serbs.

"We are warning that if there's no ceasefire, there will be no negotiations on the cessation of hostilities," Izetbegovic said.

The first phase of the truce, brokered during two days of

talks last week by former US president Jimmy Carter, lasts from December 24 to December 31 and is meant to give the warring parties time to work out a wider, four-month cessation of hostilities.

UN officials presented the first draft of the four-month ceasefire agreement to both sides on Saturday. UN officials were expecting replies as early as Sunday, along with more negotiations.

But Ganic said there would be no talks until the Bihać region attacks stopped, and Izetbegovic said there would be no second phase at all until peace came to Bihać.

Izetbegovic said joint overnight provocations by rebel Serbs in Croatia and separatist Muslims intensified after daybreak Sunday. And he said he considered the ceasefire not respected if those forces — who are allied with Bosnian Serbs — continued their attacks.

"We are warning that if there's no ceasefire, there will be no negotiations on the cessation of hostilities," Izetbegovic said.

The Small Share Investors Association, a newly formed organisation to protect the interests of the shareholders, yesterday called for strengthening the foundation of the country's stock market to consolidate the recent gains.

Addressing a press conference at the National Press Club, the secretary general of the association, Kabir Hossain, also urged the authorities to take adequate steps to protect the interests of the shareholders.

He urged the authorities to formulate new measures to keep a major portion of the primary shares reserved for the local investors to meet the increased demand, while noting that a large percentage of shares of listed companies issued this year was given to foreign investors.

He felt that the government should also provide a fund of Tk 1,000 crore through the banks to the small investors to enable them to buy more shares.

"We want to see an active stock exchange as a protector of the interest of small investors," said Maruf Hossain, President of the association.

Association leaders Akhter Hossain, Nasir Hossain, Tapas Kumar Chowdhury and Shamim Ahmed were among others, present at the press conference at Jatiya Press Club.



Two Chechen fire-fighters try to extinguish a blaze at a house after bombing in Grozny on Saturday. — AFP photo

## Violence tearing greater human family: Pope

VATICAN CITY, Dec 25: A weary Pope John Paul II tempered the Catholic Church's joy at Christmas today by recalling conflicts bloodying much of the world, with new flareups on the holiday, reports AP.

As he has done for other Christmases in his 16-year-long papacy, John Paul turned part of his traditional message from the balcony of St Peter's Basilica into a lament for places without the peace as-sociated with the day.

The pope's speech was prepared in advance, but violent events of the day seemed to make his words ring louder.

Near the main entrance to Jerusalem, an Islamic militant blew himself up, wounding 12 people.

In Algiers, passengers on a French jetliner were hostages of Muslim militants, who killed at least two people.

As I look at families in the light of Christmas, I cannot but turn my thoughts to the greater human family, unfortunately torn by persistent forms of selfishness and violence," the pope, 74, said, clearly tired after midnight Mass in

Zail Singh

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Singh was president during the height of the 10-year Sikh rebellion for independence in the northern state of Punjab led by militants who claimed Sikhs were discriminated against by the majority Hindus.

In 1984, the Indian army, acting on orders from Prime Minister Indira Gandhi, stormed the Golden Temple in Amritsar. Sikhism's most sacred shrine, where rebel lead-

## WP backs planned resignation from Parliament

By Staff Correspondent

Bangladesh Workers Party has said resignation from Parliament is not a solution to the present political crisis.

The left-leaning party with a lone MP, however, supported the Opposition's planned resignation if the government does not accept their demand for a caretaker administration for holding elections.

The decision was taken at a two-day meeting of the party's polit bureau that ended yesterday.

The meeting said that resignation was not a means of achieving democratic rights.

It is decided to come out of Parliament because the en masse resignation would leave the Sangsad ineffective.

## 20 hurt in clash over harvesting

From Staff Correspondent

BARISAL, Dec 25: At least 20 people were injured, four of them seriously, in an armed clash over harvesting of paddy at Anipara under Chakamia union of Kalapara thana of Patuakhali district yesterday.

The seriously injured Zakir Hossain, 25, Manir, 24, Suman, 20, and Saheb Ali, 45, were admitted to Kalapara Thana Health Complex in the evening.

The clash was the sequel to an enmity between Mokhtar Mirza and Amjad Talukder over harvesting of paddy, local people said.

The clash began yesterday noon between the Mirza and Amjad groups that left 20 persons injured.

Two separate cases were lodged with Kalapara thana. None has been arrested yet.

## One found clinging to White House fence

From Staff Correspondent

WASHINGTON, Dec 25: In the latest incident at the US White House, a man found clinging to a fence outside the presidential residence on Christmas morning was taken into custody and questioned by the Secret Service, reports AP.

Uniformed officers found Olando Bello, 19, hanging on to the outside of the fence at about 11:10 am, said Secret Service spokesman Carl Meyer.

At the time, the Clintons were back in the White House celebrating the holiday after attending church services earlier.

It appeared he might be trying to go over the fence so the uniformed officers grabbed him, Meyer said.

Incidents on the perimeter of the White House have drawn heightened attention since a small plane crashed on the South Lawn in September, killing the pilot, and prompting a review of security at the presidential mansion.

The plane crash was followed in October by the arrest of Francisco Martin Duran, who opened fire on the front of the building with a semi-automatic rifle.

In the last two weeks, four shots were fired at the rear of the White House in what police said could have been a drive-by shooting. Park Police shot and killed a homeless man who brandished a knife on a sidewalk along Pennsylvania Avenue, a man was arrested after claiming there was a bomb in a car outside; another was arrested and charged with carrying an unregistered firearm after being seen standing near the fence at 2 am, and a man was arrested after he slipped onto the White House grounds through an open gate.

According to police, householder Abdus Sobhan lured her to Dhaka from Nawabganj of Dohar thana under Dhaka district early this month saying she would be given a job.

Rahela Begum was taken on remand for interrogation and Begum Begum was kept under protective custody.

Police were looking for Abdus Sobhan and his associate, one Selim, till the writing of this report at 11:10 last night.

## Girl rescued, mistress held

By Staff Correspondent

Gulshan police rescued one Anguri Begum from a residence at South Badda yesterday and arrested the mistress of the house Rahela Begum for allegedly forcing the girl into prostitution.

According to police, householder Abdus Sobhan lured her to Dhaka from Nawabganj of Dohar thana under Dhaka district early this month saying she would be given a job.

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Printed & Published by A. S. Mahmud, Managing Director, on behalf of Mediaworld 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 R/A, Dhaka-1205. PABX: 500092-4, Commercial: 500091 (Direct), Fax No: 88-02-863035, GPO Box No: 3257, Cable: DAILYSTAR, DHAKA.



The hijacked French A300 Airbus sits on the runway yesterday whilst airport employees approach the aircraft to replenish food supplies and take away rubbish. — AFP photo

## Last-minute parleys

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The source said they might also have discussed the present political situation.

An Opposition source, however, said that they were not optimistic about the last-minute parleys with the ruling party. "As of today resignation seems to be inevitable," the source, an AL leader, said.

He said only if any dramatic development takes place during the next two days, the threatened resignation can be averted.

Meanwhile, in another development, BNP Dhaka city unit at a meeting yesterday decided to launch a massive mass

**Highway robbers loot Tk 5 lakh**

PABNA, Dec 25: At least 15 people were injured and Tk 5 lakh was looted by armed highway robbers who swooped on several trucks, blocking the Pabna bypass road Saturday night, reports UNB.

Police said an armed group of about 25 dacoits halted 12 trucks carrying cattle and looted the cash from the cattle traders.

Traffic on the road was disrupted till 2 pm today as the truck drivers blocked the road putting their vehicles across demanding measures to check highway robbery.

Of the injured, seven were admitted to the Pabna Sadar Hospital where condition of Abdul Khaleque, 35, Atsal, 40 and Firoz, 25, were said to be critical.

**Fire kills 4 in Tokyo**

TOKYO, Dec 25: Four people were killed in a fire at an eight-story building in downtown Tokyo Saturday afternoon, police said, reports AP.

Police and fire department officials said 21 others were injured in the fire.

contact drive from tomorrow to strengthen the party activities and explain the present political scenario to the people through processions, public rallies and personal contacts, reports BSS.

BNP Secretary General and LGRD and Cooperatives Minister Abdus Salam Talukdar attended the meeting, held at the BNP central office, as chief guest while BNP City Unit President and Food Minister Mir Shawkat Ali was in the chair.

The presidents and general secretaries of all the thana units of Dhaka City BNP attended the meeting.

It was observed in the meeting that the people had already begun to refuse the anti-constitutional activities being pursued by some opposition parties to disrupt the developmental activities of the BNP government and discourage foreign investment in the country.

The speakers also expressed their firm opinion that the BNP would be able to complete its tenure to implement its 19-point programme through the political process.

**To realise money**

From Page 1 Col 5 of the money. They also barged the door of the house.

The neighbours, being alarmed by the noise, went to the house. The four youths fired shots, and left the place immediately, police said.

Mahmud, who was inside the house, was hit by one of the bullets.

Hossain lodged a case with Dhamondi Thana in this connection.

**Hijacked Malawi plane lands in Nairabi**

NAIROBI, Dec 25: An Air Malawi Boeing 737 hijacked Friday by deportees from Zambia landed in Nairobi early today after dropping off the last of the deportees in Abidjan, reports AFP.

The plane remained at Nairobi's Jomo Kenyatta International Airport, airport officials said.

Staff at the crew's hotel said they checked out this morning but did not say where they had gone.

The aircraft was chartered by Zambia Thursday for 105 passengers including a group of around 80 illegal West African immigrants from nine separate countries that the government wanted to repatriate.

He, however, said the books now being printed would be available in markets by late January. But it might take up to the end of February to complete the printing of books to meet the total requirement.

NTCB sources also said that unlike in other years, price increase of textbooks by 15 to 50 paisa, this time, might result in price rise of average textbooks by Taka one or even more.

NTCB sources said, textbooks for primary school students have been published well ahead of the scheduled time as papers were imported and costs made from foreign grants.

**Seismic survey**

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The total cost of the survey and drilling in the first year has been estimated at 1.5 million dollars.

The two companies signed an agreement with the government for the exploration in Block-16 on May 5 last after prolonged negotiations from August 1992. The deal allows them to explore an 88sq km area covering the Kutubdia gas fields.

The accord also says that the companies will have to invest at least 2.1 million dollars in the next three years for survey.

They would invest another 10 million for drilling at least two wells in the next four years.

**Hasina**

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last to visit Hasina at 29 Minto Road. They discussed with her the forthcoming congregation.

Family sources said the Opposition Leader would hand over the charge of the Minto Road residence to the PWD engineer and ministry official concerned this morning.

Hasina's husband Wazed Ali Miah and their son and daughter were present when she moved to her new residence.

Seven police guards have started their round-the-clock duty at the new residence.

## The Midnight File

### CIA warns of possible shift in Russian govt

BOSTON, Dec 25: A US intelligence report warns that Boris Yeltsin's military campaign against secessionist Chechnya may prompt a significant shift in Russia's power structure, the Boston Sunday Globe reported. The memo from Moscow said the power shift likely would come in the next few days, if it came at all, the newspaper reported, citing an unidentified Central Intelligence Agency source, reports AP.

**Chemicals caused ozone loss:** An satellite has confirmed that man-made chemicals have caused the ozone hole over the South Pole, scientists said on Monday. AFP reports from Washington.

"This data confirms that chlorofluorocarbons are the major source of chlorine in the stratosphere and are responsible for ozone loss," said Mark Schoeberl, project scientist for NASA's Upper Atmosphere Research Satellite.

**Suicide bomber injures 12 in Jerusalem**

JERUSALEM, Dec 25: An Islamic militant blew himself up near the main entrance to Jerusalem today wounding 12 people including five soldiers, police said, reports AP.

Palestinian police sources and family members said the bomber was a former Palestinian policeman.

The Christmas Day blast outside the Binyanei Ha'ouma convention center scattered debris across the main western road into Jerusalem from Tel Aviv, forcing it shut during rush hour. The explosion occurred at 6:20 am.

Police commissioner Assaf Hefetz said only luck prevented a deadlier explosion.

Izzedine al-Qassem, the militant wing of the Islamic group Hamas, claimed responsibility in a statement faxed to The Associated Press. Hamas has claimed most of the recent attacks, many of them bombings, that left 32 Israelis dead since October 1.

The statement said the

**Japan not ready to let troops join UN forces**

TOKYO, Dec 25: Japan is not ready to let its troops join United Nations-led military forces, Japan defence agency chief Tokuichiro Tamazawa said on Tuesday, reports AFP.

"We have to be cautious in lifting the freeze," Tamazawa said on television when he was asked about the scheduled review of the UN peace